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**SALES FORCE INTEGRATION INTO CORPORATE MARKETING
COMMUNICATIONS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SALES FORCE PERFORMANCE
OUTCOMES**

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my mom, Hafeeza. Without her endless love and support, I could not have made it. I am constantly in her prayers and she is the person to whom I made a promise to get my PhD completed one day.

Abstract

This study is based on research examining whether the level of sales force integration with marketing communications influences sales force performance and concludes that it does. In past studies, integration in terms of marketing communications has been studied extensively, but there was a gap in the literature concerning knowledge of the link between the level of sales force integration into communications and performance outcomes.

Good corporate integrated marketing practice is referred to as the manner through which an organisation intends to engage both internal staff (such as the sales force) and external customers. However, much of the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) literature revolves around the needs and interests of consumers without attributing much importance to other potential stakeholders, such as the sales force. The focus on other stakeholders has been highlighted in some IMC definitions and has also been a part of discussions of more generic strategic integration. However, the focus on the sales force in the context of IMC has been ignored in most other research. Therefore, there was considered to be a need to focus on integrated marketing communications in relation to sales force integration.

The idea of having well-integrated marketing communications for those involved in selling is that the sales force should be kept fully informed in all (internal and external) corporate marketing communications. This research attempted to uncover evidence as to the effects of sales force integration into an organisation's communications.

The robust statistical reliability and validity of the research is described, and a high level of validity was found for the research findings. All the dependent variables (performance outcomes) deployed in the current research show a significant and positive relationship with sales force integration in the expected direction.

Chapter 1: Introduction

“The sales-person should not be seen as simply an actor in the distribution process, but rather should be integrated into the processes of product (or service) positioning and marketing communications.” (Baumgarth and Binckebanck, 2011, p.493).

Despite this advice, as late as 2015 it was reported that the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) had rarely been examined, and that there was still little evidence showing how IMC influences performance (Ewing et al., 2015). Further, the notion of internally-integrated marketing communications has not been well developed subsequent to its initial conceptualisation and description (Ferdous, 2008). The importance of internal communications was highlighted in an empirical study of major UK organisations by (Dolphin, 2005), who examined the role of internal marketing communications in nourishing and building employee relations, developing trust, providing reliable and effective information and contributing to motivation. The study concluded that effective communication with the internal audience such as the sales force makes a significant contribution to corporate communications (Dolphin, 2005).

1.1 Introduction

This document is the thesis of a research doctorate with the purpose of analysing whether the level of IMC involving the sales force has a reported effect on sales force performance and related outcomes. For the purposes of this thesis IMC are those communications that are incorporated into all corporate activities, including selling. Sales performance outcomes are broadly defined as being the results of the activities of the employees involved in selling. The aim was to investigate the issues involved and to discover whether there are communications and other organisational benefits from making organisational marketing communications integrated internally (Ferdous, 2008), with the focus being on the key customer-organisation communicators: the sales force. The thesis contains seven main chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results and Data Analysis, Research Findings, Future Recommendations and finally, the Conclusions. These are described in more detail below.

This first chapter provides an introduction to the study and includes a comprehensive description of the background and objectives of the research. It also includes a description of the importance and significance of this particular research area, along with a description of the research paradigm, research originality and implications. Finally, this chapter highlights the research overview, which gives an overall picture of this study. The second chapter incorporates a review of the significant literature relating to sales force integration into corporate marketing communications and its influence on related sales performance outcomes. This includes some critical judgement and assessment of the primary literature examined in the study, along with some definitions of key terms used in this thesis. This chapter also discusses the evolution of IMC, that is, how integration has joined the marketing communications journey. Furthermore, the second chapter reviews the conceptualisation of important elements of IMC and introduces the concept of the 5 'C's as vital components of integrated marketing communications. The conceptual framework is then drawn out from this literature review and is presented at the end of the chapter.

The third chapter presents the methodology used in the research to address the research objectives and hypotheses generated from the literature review. This includes an explanation of the research philosophy, research design, sample used, instrument development (Questionnaire), methodological issues and techniques, and methods of analysing and evaluating the data. The development of the variables is then described along with an outline of the pilot test results and a description of how these pilot test results were used to change and refine the questionnaire that was utilised. Finally, some of the ethical issues that were taken into consideration for this study are discussed in this chapter. The fourth chapter provides a description of the data analysis methods and techniques used in this study. The first part of the chapter provides a commentary on the validity and reliability of the scales, as well as the relationship between the constructs of interest. The second part of the chapter examines different levels of sales force integration along with the statistical differences between the two groups of low- and high-integration sales personnel. The third part of the chapter outlines the testing of the hypotheses used in this research. Finally, the chapter identifies the effect of demographic variables on sales force outcomes. The fifth chapter summarises the empirical results, discusses the findings and then reviews the results in terms of their implications. The sixth chapter of this thesis provides some recommendations and implications for future studies. This chapter also details the limitations of this research. Finally, the seventh chapter sets out the overall conclusion and contribution of the study.

1.2 Background to the Research

Over the last two decades, IMC has become one of the most influential frameworks within marketing management. The focus on measuring the activities and returns on investments of marketing, and the development of integrated approaches towards marketing are among the main priorities of marketing science institutes (Patti et al., 2017). This emphasis has gradually increased, and the priority has been to deliver relevant, real-time and integrated experiences in this context. It is important that all forms of messages and communications are linked together with each other which will help organisations achieve IMC (Kitchen and Burgmann, 2015).

The main principle involved in achieving IMC is that each organisation must speak with ‘one voice’, and that all its communications should be integrated (Nowak and Phelps, 1994, Duncan and Mulhern, 2004). However, most organisations experience marketing communications structures, data and even managers that are isolated from each other. For example, the public relations department often does not keep marketing informed, the sales-force hardly meets people who advertise or promote sales, and so on. Consequently, the sales force is not usually involved in all of the organisational marketing communications because of their isolation from those communications and further, they rarely meet employees from other departments such as advertising or sales promotion (Smith and Taylor, 2004). This clearly shows a lack of internally integrated marketing communication within organisations. Many researchers in the past have emphasised the importance of effective internal communication between an organisation and its employees, and have described it as an element of corporate communications and have explored it in the context of the corporate communications function (Tukiainen, 2001, Foreman and Argenti, 2005, Dolphin, 2005, Welch and Jackson, 2007, Tench and Yeomans, 2009, Conaway and Wardrope, 2010, Chen et al., 2011, Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012).

Nevertheless, very little attention has been paid to internal communications and improvement is still required in this area (Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba, 2013). For example, in a review of the content of ten essays on integration in *Campaign* magazine in 2010, it was found that advertising practitioners did not recognise an internal marketing orientation for IMC, whereas academics did recognise it (Laurie and Mortimer, 2011).

Until now, the lack of, or poor, internal communications has perhaps been one of the most common problems among organisations due to the fact that external customers have generally been the primary focus of organisations, as they aim to enhance public relations and achieve customer loyalty aimed at increasing sales and eventually organisational profitability (Tekin and Erol, 2017). In contrast, internal customers, such as the sales force, have not been prioritised or given as much attention as external customers. Nonetheless, organisations should theoretically communicate well with their salespeople, and clearly share the organisational vision and its values with them, and not just focus on profit making (Jaupi and Llaci, 2015). Marketing managers thus need to consider integration as a holistic concept rather than just as a part of their marketing mix (Kitchen and Burgmann, 2015, Kitchen et al., 2004, Melewar et al., 2017). Therefore, IMC should not be just limited to delivering a consistent message to the consumer to achieve organisational goals, but it should also involve all stakeholders to help achieve the organisation's strategic goals. This should include internal stakeholders such as the sales force, because internal communications are expected to have a role in nourishing employee relations, developing trust, providing effective and timely information to staff, and as result, contributing to general employee motivation, thus making a significant contribution to performance and to a fully established corporate communications strategy (Dolphin, 2005, Ferdous, 2008).

Commentators on IMC have noted that empirical research needs to demonstrate whether or not relationships between IMC and other key marketing variables exist (Šerić, 2018). This current research helps to establish some of these relationships, and this adds to the rationale for the research.

1.3 Primary Research Objectives:

The primary objectives of this research were to investigate the following:

- whether the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influences the level of satisfaction felt by sales force personnel in their jobs
- whether the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influences the level of sales force performance
- whether the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influences the level of sales force involvement
- whether the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influences the level of commitment of the sales force
- whether the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influences the level of motivation of the sales force

In line with these objectives, five hypotheses were developed based on a literature review, as discussed above. The development of hypotheses helps to translate theory into testable statements that can be tested empirically. Commentators on IMC have noted that empirical research needs to demonstrate whether relationships between IMC and other key marketing variables exist or not (Šerić, 2018), and this current research aims to explore some of these possible variables as discussed below. In order to test the research hypotheses in this study, the sales force level of integration was taken as an independent variable, whereas sales force job satisfaction, sales force job performance, sales force job involvement, sales force job commitment and sales force job motivation were deployed as dependent variables. All these variables were chosen because of their relative importance, as identified from a rigorous literature review around the subject of integrated marketing communications and performance outcomes. The empirical findings from the research show that there is a positive correlation between these independent and dependent variables.

1.4 Importance of the Research

The concept of IMC emerged from the late twentieth century and its importance has been growing ever since (Kitchen and Schultz, 2009, Kitchen, 2017, Schultz and Kitchen, 1997). Several challenges are faced by marketers in designing integrated marketing communication strategies as a result of the fact that media, brands, employees and consumers are constantly changing in fundamental and profound ways. Arguably, in this era of globalisation, where the competition is increasing and it is difficult for organisations to compete and grow, there is a need for effective integrated marketing communications strategies that can deliver organisational messages in an effective manner and, by using integrated tactics, synergies can be created among different forms of communications (Melewar et al., 2017).

The importance of the sales force in marketing communications has been acknowledged from past research, and organisations have also admitted that the field salesperson is the first line of contact with consumers, and through their performance they have the ability to gain, keep or lose those consumers. Therefore, sales force integration has its own importance, especially in the field sales setting, where the salesperson operates at the boundaries of the organisation and consequently, this type of inter-departmental and intra-departmental integration can provide a competitive edge (Belich and Dubinsky, 1999, Ingram et al., 2002). Organisational long-term growth and profitability is dependent on the effectiveness of its salespeople but when the sharing of information from sales managers and upper management is restricted, then the organisation may not be making the most of their strategic strength. The salesperson is usually separated physically from - but is dependent upon - other departments such as manufacturing, shipping, inventory or credit (Delvecchio and Anselmi, 2005). Therefore, to be optimally effective, the salesperson must arguably be provided with all the relevant organisational marketing information at the right time and with the correct message in an integrated approach (Khizar et al., 2016).

Considering that for many customers, or potential customers, the salesperson is the representative of the company, being often the only contact that they have with that company, it is therefore vital to keep marketing communications in harmony rather than in isolation. This will only be possible when the sales force is well-integrated into corporate marketing communications.

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research is significant for two main reasons. Firstly, it contributes to the developing body of knowledge of IMC by focusing on whether sales force integration influences key performance outcomes. This research adds significantly to what is already known about this area of research and to the overall body of marketing knowledge, as very little or no research has been undertaken in this area to date (Ewing et al., 2015). This is the main contribution made by this research. Furthermore, the research framework developed in this study highlights the importance of the 5 'C's, in terms of how they influence integrated communications and performance outcomes such as job satisfaction and job performance. Based on the findings of this study, the research suggests several ideas on how human resource management could conduct further research to identify the impact of demographic characteristics on sales force integration. Therefore, this study contributes to the exiting literature and adds value for further research by either validating or disputing exiting ideas.

Secondly, the findings of this research can also be of benefit outside the academic body of literature, and can be brought to the attention of marketers, sales practitioners and corporations that are interested in implementing sales force integration into their marketing communication strategy. Many policymakers may also find this study insightful with regards to evaluating the performance of salespeople in the organisation. In addition, this type of empirical study can provide relevant information to marketing and management educators such as corporate trainers, consultant companies and university and vocational institute professors. Marketers need to conduct a communication audit of any communication plan proposed on a regular basis to assess its integration and the extent to which synergy can be achieved (Batra and Keller, 2016). Therefore, organisations can benefit from the findings of this study by evaluating their current marketing communication practices along with the performance of their sales-team, by identifying the level of sales force integration, improving upon the missing important components (e.g. the 5 'C's of communications), with the aim of improving their sales force and organisational performance. The conclusion to this study implies that the empirical findings can also be generalised to other companies in different marketing industries. Commentators on IMC have noted that empirical research needs to demonstrate whether or not relationships between IMC and other key marketing variables exist (Šerić, 2018). Therefore, the rationale for the choice of this area of research is that it is

arguably highly significant and relevant to marketing professionals working in corporate organisations.

1.6 Research Philosophy and Paradigm

The approach to gaining scientific knowledge adopted in this research is essentially that of positivism. The positivist tradition avoids speculation, attempts to confine itself to what is positively given and is commonly referred to as the scientific point of view (Boddy, 2005b). Positivism disregards metaphysical or theological speculation and holds that the only truth is that which can be established scientifically through observation and measurement. Thus, positivism as an approach actually has been the tradition of western science from the era of Descartes to the advent of postmodernism (Blackburn, 1996, Boddy, 2005b) and is the prevailing scientific paradigm that academic marketers have adopted (Hanson and Grimmer, 2007).

The positivist approach expects to obtain answers from objects, such as those obtained from a survey questionnaire - as is used in this study - is available for the asking and represents the truth. In this positivist approach, social scientists study respondents in a consciously similar way to those of natural scientists (Boddy, 2005b). Thus, if a scientist constantly sees the same result from a common stimuli, then a belief in this happening on a regular and predictable basis is made (Boddy, 2019).

Croft and Boddy, describe the implications of a positivist approach as follows:

“This means that, for modern researchers into organisations there is a 'real' reality that can be observed and measured. ... In this positivist tradition researchers study respondents in a consciously similar way to that of natural scientists ... for example, like a scientist in a physics laboratory studying particles of matter. They look for interrelations of cause and effect, and study respondents using objective criteria, measures and research designs that are available for other social scientists to repeat and thus verify or disprove any conclusions” (Boddy and Croft, 2007).

Positivism can be described as a paradigmatic way of viewing reality, where a paradigm is defined as a commonly accepted world view which encapsulates a way of thinking and a way of approaching problems which is shared by the scientists who share the paradigm (Kuhn, 1962). Positivism usually entails a quantitative methodology - as does this current research - and it seeks to uncover relationships between variables which are applicable to a wider population.

In this current research, one of the aims was to discover whether the previously advantageous relationship between integrated marketing communications and organisational outcomes held true, vis-a-vis the sales force. In other words, the current research, like much positivist research, concerns theory testing. In particular, the theory being tested is the theory that highly integrated marketing communications are associated with greater levels of individual and organisational performance.

1.7 Originality

Integration in communications originates from marketing communications where it transformed into the IMC discipline (Johansen and Andersen, 2012). The first definition of IMC was proposed by the American Association of Advertising Agencies in 1989, and its importance has been growing ever since. Over the last two decades it has become one of the most dominant, universal and repeated themes of many marketing communication texts.

Since 1989, integrated marketing communication scholars have provided a number of definitions and this provides an insight into its evolutionary process from a conceptual standpoint. In summary, many of the IMC studies and concepts have revolved around the consumer perspective with the aim of sending a single, consistent and clear message about services or products from an organisation to maximise the effect on consumers, and to build a profitable long-term relationships them in order to attain the organisation's strategic goals (Kliatchko, 2005, Nowak and Phelps, 1994, Diaconu et al., 2016).

Although much has been written on IMC, authors and practitioners are still not totally in agreement regarding the concept, definition and paradigm in terms of reaching a consensus about what it is and how it can benefit marketers. This need has been highlighted by several researchers, who have called for further definitions that can be accepted for further research

on this topic (Porcu et al., 2012a). This is because IMC has achieved its goal in terms of message integration, but has still arguably failed to achieve complete strategic integration which involves total (internal and external) market integration (Holm, 2006). Strategic integration focuses on IMC across content (control and uncontrolled messages), media and all stakeholders (internal and external) into an overall marketing strategy to deliver “one voice, single approach” in all contact points.

Integration thus involves different levels, as it considers overall strategic integration, i.e. integration of internal (the sales force) as well as external audiences (Johansen and Andersen, 2012). Whilst much has been written about IMC over the last thirty years, there are still gaps in practice and theory, and these can be tackled by further empirical research, based upon the needs related with the needs of the 21st century (Kitchen, 2017; Kitchen et al., 2004; Kitchen and Burgmann, 2015; Kitchen and Schultz, 2009). There is a clear need for empirical research that can add value to existing knowledge and bring forth an improved conceptualisation of integration.

Throughout the IMC journey, very little research has focused on individual communicators in the organisation, and this is especially true in the case of key communicators such as the sales force. The current study aims to fill this gap by investigating the involvement and integration of other stakeholders (specifically the sales force) into marketing communication, which is an issue that appears to have been ignored by many researchers in the past. This contribution will help organisations to decide whether it is worthwhile achieving total (internal and external) market integration, as well as strategic integration (Holm, 2006; Johansen and Andersen, 2012). This study thus goes a step further in IMC research in that instead of focusing on consumers or message integration (which seems to be achieved somehow through IMC), it focuses on internal integration in terms of sales force integration.

It is likely that the views and thoughts offered in this research would be of value to practitioners and scholars seeking to examine the value of achieving and promoting strategic integration through sales force integration. This study also contributes to knowledge by illustrating the sales force performance-related benefits that can be achieved by practicing sales force integration.

1.8 Implications

Organisations with good internal communication systems do not just have higher levels of engagement with their salespeople, but are also known to have a better brand reputation (Thomson, 2000; Dortok, 2006, Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012). This shows the importance and effectiveness of having an integrated communication system on organisational internal and external performance.

The implications of the findings of this study are also not just limited to organisational internal performance issues such as sales force job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, job commitment and job motivation, but also have several other practical implications that can have an impact on organisational external performance such as customer satisfaction, sales and organisational growth. These are summarised below.

Integrated marketing communication practices increase the performance of the sales force, and sales force performance plays a vital role in increasing the sales of the organisation, because it provides product information in a more effective way, which in turn helps salespeople gain the attention of consumers (Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba, 2013; Bolander et al., 2015). Consumers are likely to make more frequent purchases when they are aware of the product specifications. This more frequent purchase of products results in increasing sales for the organisation which also increases its profitability (Kotler et al., 2015).

Through effective corporate marketing communications, organisations can increase their sales which is, of course, profitable for their business. Therefore, the salesperson plays a significant role in increasing or decreasing the organisation's sales because of their influence on a customer's intention to buy products (Maslowska et al., 2016). The buying decision of the consumer depends on the type of information they receive from salespeople. This is because the sales force deals at the front line in organisations and it communicates directly with customers, provides all the information they require and persuades them to make a purchase. Although the trends within marketing and communications have been changing over the years, consumers are still heavily dependent on salespeople, despite the fact that the information regarding the product and services can be provided via different media, such as media channels, websites, magazines and advertisements (Barger et al., 2016). This is because salespeople are deemed to be reliable sources of product information and consumers can be easily influenced by the organisation's sales force (Murphy and Dweck, 2016).

It is therefore potentially crucial for organisations to create an integrated marketing communications system which involves all the tools and techniques collectively used by the organisation in order to market the product (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). The principles and the practices required for this to be achieved, and the benefits that may be accrued, are the key focus of this research.

1.9 Research Overview

1.9.1 Research Aims

The aim of the research is to answer the overall question of whether the level of integration of an organisation's marketing communications has any impact on organisational outcomes.

1.9.2 Research Purpose

The main purpose of this research is to investigate some of the ways in which sales force integration correlates with measures of performance.

1.9.3 Research Statement

The main premise of this research is that the performance outcomes of salespeople are adversely affected in organisations where there is no integration of the sales force into corporate marketing communications and conversely, sales force performance outcomes will be increased through a process of integration.

1.9.4 Research Problem

The research problem centres on the fact that the sales force is not usually involved or included in all corporate marketing communications because of their relative isolation from those communications. As a result, organisations may not be making the most of their strategic sales force strengths. The sales force is the first line of contact with the customer

and should therefore be fully informed about all marketing communications and about product price, promotions, developments and distribution if it is to operate at an optimal level of effectiveness. The focus of this study will be on a developing area of marketing strategy, IMC, where little research has been devoted to the role of the sales force to date. Therefore, there was deemed to be a need for this study into sales force integration in order to identify the potential outcomes of corporate marketing communications integration.

1.9.5 Practical Implications

The existing research will enable the reader to grasp the key conceptual principles of IMC and how these may be adapted to specific communicators in the organisation. Practitioners will be able to judge whether having the sales force fully integrated into marketing communications is desirable.

1.9.6 Thesis Objectives

The objectives of the research are set out below in increasing order of importance. The main objective of the research is to determine whether different levels of sales force integration with corporate marketing communications are associated with different levels of sales force performance related outcomes.

1. To review the literature on integrated corporate marketing communications, and its key principles and practices, and to thereby determine the potential importance of effective inter- and intra-organisational marketing communications.
2. To develop a conceptual framework, illustrating the vital components of integrated marketing communications from the internal perspective of the sales force and potential performance outcomes (in Chapter 2, Figure 1 on page 86).
3. To develop a research instrument in order to investigate levels of current integrated corporate marketing communications within a sample of sales force personnel in corporate organisations, based on the principles of the developed conceptual framework.

4. To analyse the correlation between levels of integrated corporate marketing communications and sales force performance outcomes.
5. To discuss the research findings in relation to the contribution to knowledge that the study provides. Further, to make integration recommendations for practitioners based on the findings (as per hypothesised model in Chapter 2, Figure 2 on page 93).

1.9.7 Vital components of integrated communications

After a meticulous review of the literature relating to IMC, several reflections took place in terms of developing a well-integrated marketing communications programme for the organisation. Although several other elements may be relevant to access integration, the 5 components (5 'C's) of integrated communications namely, consistency, co-operation, co-ordination, clarity and credibility, have been found to be particularly helpful in achieving a successful integration in terms of organisational marketing communications practice. These 5 'C's have been extracted directly from a variety of IMC definitions presented by a number of IMC specialist over the last two decades. The importance of these vital elements of internal communications could not be ignored in an integrated approach and are discussed in more detail in the appendix; however, a brief overview is also given here.

IMC is a multidimensional concept and because of its different dimensions, different scholars have viewed IMC in different ways. The IMC journey initially started when the first formal definition was proposed by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA) in 1989, and this definition has been the most widely used by number of academics and practitioners since that time. This 1989 definition focused on the use of a variety of communication disciplines working in synergy rather than in isolation, and is based on a comprehensive strategy to provide consistent, clear and maximum communication impact (Duncan and Caywood, 1996). Two years after this 1989 definition, Nowak and Phelps (1994) reinforced the notion of coordination, consistency and clarity, along with the creation of 'one look' and 'one spirit'. Subsequently, different concepts were introduced by different scholars, such as IMC being a coordinated marketing communications campaign (Phelps and Johnson, 1996), tactical coordination of marketing communications (Schultz and Schultz, 1998), 'one voice' communication along with consistency and synergy (Ewing et al., 2000),

a process involving the synergy of corporate communication planning (Pickton and Hartley, 1998), a process requiring close cooperation and coordination between the different marketing functions (Barker and Angelopulo, 2005), a process needing unified communications for consistent message and image (Lee and Park, 2007), an activity requiring message consistency (Moriarty and Schultz, 2012), and its being a key component within communications which requires consistency and credibility (Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Kliatchko, 2005; Christensen et al., 2009).

1.9.8 Overall Contribution

IMC is a subject that has been widely studied by many researchers all over the world and the role of the sales force in terms of organisational (external) performance has also been acknowledged a number of times in the past. However, individual communicators in the organisation, which include employees such as salespeople, have been largely ignored in this context. The overall contribution of this research is therefore in the measurement of the extent to which sales force integration into organisational marketing communications influences key performance outcomes. Little research about this wider communications integration context has been conducted to date.

Whilst the study of IMC is growing and developing, no one has yet researched these principles in terms of the sales force. This current research also uncovers findings which could bring about changes in evaluating an organisation's communications. In particular, by introducing the concept of the 5 'C's - namely, consistency, co-operation, co-ordination, clarity and credibility - within the combination of elements involved in IMC, the findings emphasise the importance of addressing all five of these elements if communications are to be maximally effective. The findings of the research highlight that these 5 'C's are positively correlated with related sales force performance outcomes and can be classified as important components of integrated marketing communications. However, as this is not the central focus of the thesis, results containing the 5 C's are in the appendix rather than the main body of the thesis.

This current research could also potentially enhance the role of the sales force in an organisation and help explain why there is a need for sales force integration into marketing

communications and how organisations can satisfy their customers by achieving this integration.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

“Frontline service employees often vary in their delivery of the brand promise, leaving service firms with less direct control on other stakeholders’ brand perceptions. Internal branding efforts (like brand-relevant information) have been suggested to improve employee performance.” (Baker, 2014, p.642).

2.1 Introduction

A 2018 review of 80 empirical studies on IMC revealed reportedly positive influences on brand performance, brand equity and brand loyalty, as well as on communications persuasiveness, sales, market share, financial performance, social marketing outcomes, shareholder value, and customer attitudes, satisfaction and awareness (Šerić, 2018). Thus, IMC is generally viewed positively in terms of its outcomes by practitioners and academics alike. Although considered important, there is reportedly not a complete understanding of what factors influence IMC (Pisicchio and Toaldo, 2020).

The concept of ‘integration’ encompasses multiple disciplines, which include marketing communications, corporate communications and IMC. To understand sales force integration into corporate marketing communications, it is essential to have a basic understanding of these disciplines. Therefore, integration has been explored in a multi-disciplinary context, and the literature around these disciplines has been extensively reviewed. The review covered by this chapter is thus threefold, as set out below.

The first section demonstrates how integration has achieved its dominant place within the marketing discipline. It also reviews a number of other important concepts related to the field, such as what marketing communications, corporate communications and internal corporate communications are all about, how IMC emerged into marketing communications, how important elements of IMC, such as the 5 ‘C’s of consistency, co-operation, co-ordination, clarity and credibility can play a vital role in sales force integration and finally, what the key principles of IMC are, along with some of its implications and benefits.

The second section explores sales force integration in the context of corporate marketing communications. This section explains what the organisation of integrated marketing communications looks like and attempts to shed light on various aspects of sale-force integration, including the role, importance and need for sales force integration into corporate marketing communications.

The third section discusses sales force performance-related outcomes and explains how sales force integration can potentially deliver positive outcomes, such as sales force job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, job commitment and job motivation. Finally, a conceptual framework is proposed along with related hypotheses as a guide for further investigation in this area.

2.2 Marketing Communication

Marketing communication has been viewed and interpreted differently in the literature because of the lack of a universal definition. The emergence of many definitions corresponds with the traditional five main elements of the marketing communications mix (sales promotions, personal selling, advertising, direct marketing and public relations), with the purpose being to use the communications element to persuade the target audience to buy services and products.

In the beginning of the development of marketing as a discipline and activity, marketing communication was only focused on the product, which involved one-way communication with a relatively short-term perspective. However, with the passage of time ‘marketing communication’ evolved into a wider range of media and tools along with a long-term relationship with its stakeholders (Jamieson and Fill, 2011). For example, Rotzoll et al. (1996, p.31) defined marketing communication as *“the collective term for all the communication functions used in marketing a product or a service.”* Broderick and Pickton (2005) also supported this idea and stated that marketing communications should not only cover promotions of products and services but also overall corporate promotions. The use of the terms ‘collective’ and ‘overall’ identify the need for coordination, in that all functions and departments should work together in harmony rather than isolation. In other words, the

understanding of corporate marketing communication is the understanding of the whole marketing communications process, rather than just a focus on products or services.

Szymoniuk reportedly suggested a slightly different definition of marketing communication but still interpreted the concept as being not just limited to products or services, but also as involving all stakeholders (internal and external) in organisational marketing communications practice (Szymoniuk, n.d. cited in Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba, 2013).

According to Melewar et al. (2017), it is better to identify communication from the receiver's point of view to reveal how organisational messages are interpreted, and stakeholders can be passive receivers of organisational communications with a positive influence. However, in order to make these messages effective, integrated communication between internal and external stakeholders is required (Simões et al., 2005).

The initial concept of IMC was usually perceived as dealing with the communications that related to external stakeholders. However, new trends in defining marketing communication began to give importance to internal stakeholders because internal stakeholders not only play an crucial role in enabling organisations to achieve their strategic goals, but also help organisations - directly or indirectly - to attain their marketing communication objectives (Jamieson and Fill, 2011; Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba, 2013).

In the field of marketing, academics and professionals have supported the idea that marketing communications play an important role in maintaining and building stakeholder relationships and, by nourishing these relationships, building value for the customer and the brand. However, in an effort to provide tangible evidence of the efficacy of their marketing communications, managers must explore new marketing communication methods and practices (Reid, 2005). This issue can be resolved with the help of an integrated approach known as IMC, which stresses the sending of coordinated messages with the help of diverse tools and channels to its all stakeholders, regardless of whether they are internal or external (Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba, 2013).

The introduction of the idea of integration took the concept of marketing communications one step further, meaning that integration not only combines the various communication functions, but also integrates these functions (Niemann, 2002). In addition, the importance of

integration grew from the inception of the idea of IMC, because it places greater emphasis on the role of all stakeholder groups, both internal and external (Kitchen and Burgmann, 2015). Furthermore, the perceived value of synergy in IMC theory is that the sum of all the messages has more effect than the individual messages by themselves. Whether it comes from internal or external communications, or formal or informal modes, all these pieces should fit together so that they can create an impression of a coherent brand image, i.e. an image that holds the different communication components but says the same thing. At the most basic level, especially in marketing communications, it was determined that it is vital that all the messages come from one voice and are saying the same thing and give the same impression to the target audiences and stakeholders.

2.3 Corporate Communications

Since 1980, the prospect of ‘corporate communications’ has been a debatable topic at senior organisational levels, as well as among specialists in the field of marketing communication. Corporate communication adopts the corporate point of view, the terms ‘corporate’ originating from the Latin ‘*corpus*’ meaning ‘the whole’ or ‘the total’. This means it invites communication practitioners to focus on the overall communication system, both external and internal (Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007). This term was aptly described by Jackson (1987) who suggested the following definition and appeared to be the pioneer in the international literature. According to this definition, corporate communication is the total communication activity produced by an organisation to achieve its planned objectives (Jackson, 1987). Since 1987, a number of definitions have appeared in the growing literature. However, the overall concept of corporate communication has revolved around the concept of it as ‘a communication that bounds an organisation as a whole’

Blauw (1994) defined corporate communications as the integrated approach to all communication developed by an organisation focused at all relevant target groups. Subsequently, Van Riel (1995) made a distinction by explaining it in more depth and stated that corporate communications consist of three main components: marketing communication, organisational communication and management communication. According to this 1995 study, marketing communication consists of all those communications or activities that

support the sales of particular services and goods, including sales promotions, personal selling, advertising, direct mailing and other elements of marketing communication practice. On the other hand organisational communications includes internal communications such as corporate advertising, public affairs, public relations, environmental communication and other communication at the corporate level (Van Riel, 1995). In other words, organisational communication is the process where organisations seek to communicate directly with their internal stakeholders and build strong relationships with them. Management communication is reported to be the most important. This is communication by managers with their internal and external stakeholders (Van Riel, 1995). Scholars have also viewed management communication as a set of disciplines involved in managing all external and internal communication in a consistent and coordinated manner (Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007). Cornelissen (2008) defined this as the management activity of all communication in an effective and coordinated manner. Illia and Balmer (2012) reported it as a process of creating a favourable starting point within the organisation through orchestrating and managing communication with all the internal and external stakeholders on which an organisation depends. McKenna (2012) saw management communication as a source of good communication in the workplace, where the organisation communicates sufficiently to its all stakeholders (McKenna, 2000).

Arguably, the development of corporate communication is actually the development of an integrated approach, where all the components of corporate communication (marketing communication, organisational communication and management communication) are combined to deliver a single message to its internal and external stakeholder in order to improve corporate performance (Sriyothin, 2016). This shows that the concept of integration has already been established as being one where all the disciplines are combined to deliver a coherent message in a coordinated manner (Cornelissen, 2008).

A review of the literature has revealed that both marketing and corporate communication involve external and internal communication and are not just limited to sales, promotions, products, or services. In corporate marketing communication, external communication was defined as when messages are delivered outside the organisation, for example when an organisation communicates to its external stakeholders such as governmental agencies, customers, clients and other key external audiences, and this can comprise of many forms of

communications such as press releases, advertisements and web pages, and where clients and the public also deliver specific business messages (Truxillo et al., 2013). Internal communication on the other hand, refers to communication inside the organisation which involves communication with its internal stakeholders, such as employees, including salespeople and managers (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012).

According to the literature, in corporate communications, the external communication practices of the organisation must be amalgamated with the internal organisational communications for the organisation to present a single corporate identity to internal and external stakeholders. In addition, internal and external messages including all marketing communications such as public relations, advertising, and online messages should send a single message to internal and external stakeholders in order to build a unified and coherent overall corporate identity for the organisation. Because communications often work as a glue that holds together the various elements of an organisation, usually in a corporate environment, individuals are rarely aware of engaging in the practice of communication (Barker and Angelopulo, 2005).

In the context of this research, the main purpose of the current study was to examine sales force integration into corporate marketing communication, which involves internal integration. Therefore, in order to achieve the aims and objectives of this research, the remainder of this literature review concentrates on internal corporate communication, with more of a focus on salespeople.

2.3.1 Internal Corporate Communications

In corporate communications, effective internal communication is in some cases more important than external communication because it not only increases awareness and interest among employees of an organisation's plans and targets, but also helps solve problems before they become crises. Tannenbaum supported this idea with more focus on the organisation's internal audience and emphasised that internal communications are extremely important for successful marketing campaigns, as they contribute to the communication efforts of the organisation (Schultz et al., 1994).

It is necessary for organisations to realise that the main task of internal corporate communications is to provide all the necessary information to all stakeholders within the organisation. Lovelock and Wright (1999) made the concept of internal communication clearer by defining internal communication in service organisations as all the forms of communication from management to its employees. Therefore, organisations must create a system to improve the level of communication with its employees (such as the sales force) in order to convey a clear mission and vision and provide effective strategies to transfer information and knowledge by using different techniques, such as team briefing and internal memorandums (Roberts-Lombard, 2009). It is important that the organisation develops a positive and a supportive communications environment with its internal stakeholders to make sure that they comply and promote the business in accordance with the desires or goals set by the organisation, and that there is no contradiction between the communication of the organisation and the internal environment (Schultz and Schultz, 2003).

Welch and Jackson (2007) defined the term ‘internal communication’ in more detail by focusing on the people inside the organisation, such as internal stakeholders, and described it as:

“...a process between an organisation’s strategic managers and its internal stakeholders, designed to promote commitment to the organisation, a sense of belonging to it, awareness of its changing environment and understanding of its evolving aims.” (Welch and Jackson, 2007, p.186).

Internal communication is also identified as a necessary procedure to facilitate cross-functional integration (Reid, 2005). There is no doubt that internal communication is the key to internal integration, but internal integration is a great challenge at the present time (Duncan and Mulhern, 2004; Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012). It needs the skills and new ways of thinking to manage and create a successful dialogue with its stakeholders. Internal integration must exist in the organisation to communicate effectively with stakeholders. To implement this, management needs to support, empower and prepare sales teams through the process of vertically integrated communications (Niemann, 2002). In order to achieve an integrated approach throughout the organisation, the various functional departments of the organisation, such as corporate communications, finance, human resources, marketing, etc., must be introduced to the idea of “internal marketing relationships” (Kitchen and Burgmann, 2010).

It is clear then, that internal corporate marketing communication plays a vital role in ensuring that all forms of communication are prudently integrated, and that every department is working collectively to achieve organisational goals. Furthermore, external strategies cannot be improved until the internal strategy has been improved, and this can be only be made possible by developing a better relationship between the internal customers (e.g. the sales force) with the help of better internal communication (Tsai and Tang, 2008).

It is evident from the literature review that the role of the internal customer or stakeholder (e.g. sales force) is indispensable in internal marketing communication and their importance cannot be ignored in this regard. However, the implementation of successful internal marketing communication remains poor. There are considerable gaps in communication theory, as well as in practice. It is, therefore, important for organisations to focus on internal communication practices in order to keep their internal customers (the sales force) satisfied through marketing communication processes. Managers, therefore, need to find ways to improve organisational communications by using an integrated approach (Argenti and Forman, 2002; Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012).

2.3.2 Impact and Benefit of Internal Corporate Communications

Internal corporate communication has a significant role in organisational marketing strategy, as it encourages unity and enthusiasm among employees to achieve the organisation's goals (Fridman, 2016). A number of previous studies have confirmed the benefits of internal communication and acknowledge that integration in marketing communications cannot be achieved until successful internal communication has been established. Nevertheless, it has been a neglected management tool that requires in depth assessment and further understanding (Smidts et al., 2001; Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012).

Internal communication brings confidence between workers and salespeople and the notion that to help to avoid miscommunications and misunderstandings, it is best to use a formal channel feed-back system to keep all employees well informed in the organisation (Ahmad and Aldakhil, 2012).

According to Holá, (2012), 80% of employees agreed with the statement that internal communications significantly affect their behaviour and job performance, and it was also noted that from the employee's perspective, managers often make communication errors. Further, various research papers concerning managers' views, found that 60% of problems in organisations were caused by incorrect communication and employees believed that managers often make these communication errors (Holá, 2012). Therefore, those companies who give importance to internal communications are known to have a better reputation with higher levels of employee engagement (Dortok, 2006; Thomson and Hecker, 2001).

Herstein et al. (2008), while suggesting the importance of internal communication, noted that formal channels such as annual reports, weekly meetings and magazines, and informal channels such as face-to-face communication and special events, help organisations create a stronger corporate communication structure among salespeople. Better internal communications can lead to employee communications satisfaction and this communications satisfaction is positively related to job satisfaction and other functional outcomes. Conversely, communication dissatisfaction leads to a negative correlation with dysfunctional outcomes, such as higher employee turnover, lower employee commitment, greater absenteeism, as well as reduced productivity (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012).

Therefore, a positive internal environment for sales teams is likely to increase the overall performance of the sales force (Holá, 2012; Mafini and Pooe, 2013). In contrast, by not having an effective internal communications system in place, organisations will not only loose in terms of their corporate brand image, but also internal performance will be affected.

2.3.3 Relationship Between the Sales Force and Marketing Departments

Despite the fact that both sales and marketing departments comprise two separate functions, they are very closely interlinked with one another and play an integral role in the marketing activities of the organisation (Kotler et al., 2015). It is therefore important to identify the relationship between the sales force and the marketing department to discuss whether the integration of both these units would be beneficial to the sales team or not.

A number of studies have been conducted in the past to support this argument and have found a strong correlation and association between these two important departments of the organisation. A study was conducted by Dawes and Massey (2001) to analyse and identify the association between sales and marketing, and they described the two departments as 'sister departments' that cannot work without each other. In the study, a self-administered questionnaire was mailed to the sales managers of organisations in Australia and the UK. The overall findings of the study revealed that the marketing department and the nature of the marketing manager influenced the relationship with sales, indicating that if the marketing manager developed a positive relationship with the sales department, the commitment and satisfaction level of the sales team tended to increase (Dawes and Massey, 2001). The role of the sales and the marketing departments becomes prominent and useful particularly when the organisation launches new products. This is the stage in which an immense amount of marketing is required in a coordinated manner, not to just create product awareness, but also to avoid contradictory statements that could originate from the two separate departments.

A study was compiled by Ernst et al. (2010) to identify whether cooperation amongst the sales, marketing and the research & development sector is an indicator of success in the case of new product development. As part of the study, data was gathered from around 420 marketing, sales and research and development managers, along with 106 project leaders of new product development projects, to achieve the study's objectives and to test the proposed hypotheses. The results of the study highlighted that effective collaboration between the research and development, sales and the marketing departments had a substantially positive influence on the overall performance of the project (Ernst et al., 2010). The findings of this 2010 study indicated that the coordination and integration of the sales and marketing department are thus an important factor in a successful and effective product launch. In addition, the results also revealed that cooperation between the sales and marketing departments was also significantly important at the initial or developmental stage when launching new product (Ernst et al., 2010).

History reveals that the relationship between the sales department and the marketing department is generally very unsatisfactory (Rehme and Rennhak, 2011). However, if an improvement or a better relationship somehow develops between these two departments, this

will have an positive influence on the growth of the organisation and growth from the top to the bottom line can be experienced (Kotler, 1984).

Therefore, if an organisation intends to enhance its value, it is recommended that it should improve interaction between the departments. A positive association between the sales and the marketing departments will not only enhance the value of the organisation, but will also provide the skills and capability to become familiarised and accustomed to the drastically changing business environment, in which teamwork is essential to meet consumer needs (Malshe, 2010).

Although the alignment of the sales and the marketing department is a challenging task, it has a positive impact on the performance of the sales-team and, eventually, on the organisation. Sustainability for the organisation becomes difficult in the case when the sales or the marketing department are not working in harmony (Kyckling, 2010). Given how critical it is for the two departments to work together, they are still often at odds with each other. This competition within two major and interrelated departments is not good for the business. Kyckling (2010) carried out a comprehensive study whereby data was collected from 1134 respondents belonging to the upper management of the organisation. The findings of the study suggested that organisations that invested in the improvement in the relationship between sales and marketing generated a relatively higher amount of capital as compared those do not take this issue seriously (Kyckling, 2010).

In the past, there have been serious issues between the sales and marketing departments because of the fact that they are closely related to each another. Unlike any other department within the organisation, the functions of sales and marketing are directly associated with one another. For example, the function of human resources is to hire, train and lay-off employees (Jabbour et al., 2008), the function of the finance department is to look after the financial structure of the firm (Ekpo et al., 2017), the supply chain department is responsible for the supply of raw materials and logistics (Janvier-James, 2012), the role of the marketing department is to develop strategies that can enhance the organisational performance (Gök and Hacıoglu, 2010), whereas the function of the sales department is to ensure that the strategies developed by the marketing department are achieved successfully. Therefore, due to their close association, it is important for them to work in harmony in a coordinated manner rather than in isolation, in order to achieve their strategic goal.

Peterson et al. (2015) identified some of the reasons why there have been differences between the sales and the marketing departments. The salespeople feel that they undertake all the hard work by selling the products and services and by pleasing the consumers, whereas the marketing people feel that the activities they carry out behind the scenes are the most important for overall success of the organisation. There has been a certain amount of contradiction amongst the functions regarding their perception about one another as well. The sales force often feel that the marketing staff lack trustworthiness, while the marketers believe that the salespeople are short-sighted and lack the vision to see the bigger picture (Peterson et al., 2015). The academic qualifications of both departments also tend to create differences. Marketing managers tend to possess higher degrees as compared to the sales managers who generally possess less advanced qualifications. In responding to this criticism, salespeople argue that marketing individuals do not have any knowledge about reality on the ground due to the fact that they are not in direct communication with consumers, rather they are observing based on sales trends, which in the present business scenario tend to change rapidly (Kotler et al., 2015).

The criticism and differences between the two departments are worse at times, making it difficult for the organisation to achieve its strategic goals and objectives. More than 70% of the leads produced by the marketing department are not followed up by the sales department because they think they are useless and do not meet reality on the ground (Sabnis et al., 2013). The difference in the vocabularies of both organisational units also gives rise to strategic differences (Peterson et al., 2015).

It has been evident from past research that coordination and cooperation between departments is crucial for organisational success. It is therefore managers' responsibility to improve internal communication in a coordinated manner among different departments. In other words, in order to achieve organisational goals, there is a need for internal integration.

In the twenty-first century, the path to customer acquisition has been fundamentally altered and there has been a significant change in consumer behaviour in this era of globalisation (Kitchen, 2017). Companies have adopted various strategies to adapt to these changes and in order to survive and grow. Scholars and marketing practitioners seek more flexible

integration, or strategic integration which involves internal and external integration (Christensen et al., 2009; Johansen and Andersen, 2012).

This approach relates to the integration of the whole organisation rather than just marketing, where all the organisational disciplines and functions should be involved in the integration process (Ots and Nyilasy, 2017). This approach is also known as a “firm-wide organisational approach”, where every single department and all stakeholders (internal and external) are integrated in a coordinated manner with the aim of delivering a consistent and ‘one-voice’ message across the organisation (Porcu et al., 2017).

However, to achieve this broader approach or strategic integration, organisations need to first achieve internal integration because without this, an organisation cannot be integrated externally (Duncan and Mulhern, 2004). In order to obtain the insight of internal integration or sales force integration, it is important to understand the basics of integration. Thus, the following section discusses how integration has started its marketing journey and has evolved into marketing communication disciplines. This will include the introduction and exploration of what integrated marketing communications entails and will also discuss the number of topics related to its field.

2.4 Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)

The integration in communication derives from marketing communication, where it merged into IMC practices and disciplines (Johansen and Andersen, 2012). Since the 1950s, attempts have been made to achieve “integration of effort” in communication. The formal conceptualisation of IMC began in the late 1980s and its importance has grown since then because of its core position within marketing communication disciplines (Kitchen and Burgmann, 2015). Despite the fact that the concept continues to attract interest and attention among scholars and practitioners around the world, the literature relating to IMC over the past decade suggests that theoretical and definitional issues still remain unresolved (Porcu et al., 2012b). Because of the change in the marketing environment, the conceptualisation of IMC has developed from narrower “marketing communications” to a broader recent “firm-wide organisational approach”, in which the integration is not just a marketing device, but

rather it involves the whole organisation in the marketing communication process (Porcu et al., 2017). This broader understanding of IMC was utilised for this current research.

2.4.1 Emergence of IMC

It has been more than two decades since IMC emerged as a concept of marketing communication, but it is still branded with various terminology and titles such as “consistent messages”, “one sound” (Caywood and Ewing, 1991), “coordinated messages”, “one voice”, (Nowak and Phelps, 1994), “total branding”, “seamless communication”, “a concept”, “relationship marketing”, “a process”, “one-to-one marketing”, “whole egg”, “integrated marketing”, “integrated communications” (Kliatchko, 2005), “stakeholder orientation” (Kliatchko, 2008), “an interactive and systemic planning process” (Porcu et al., 2012a) and “stakeholder-centred strategic focus” (Porcu et al., 2017). The concept of IMC has witnessed a lack of overall understanding, and perhaps this is the reason it has attracted a variety of definitions since it first emerged. But no matter how it has been defined, this integrated concept of marketing communications has turned out to be the most prominent framework for the management of marketing; it has taken its place in the textbooks of marketing management and it has also become a theme which has been repeatedly used in the literature and has been repeatedly presented and discussed at academic and practitioner conferences (Kitchen, 2017).

2.4.2 Different Thoughts on IMC

In 1991, Northwestern University conducted the first national survey on the subject of IMC among advertisers of consumer goods in collaboration with the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4A) and the Association of National Advertisers in the United States (Caywood and Ewing, 1991). This research sought to understand the concept of IMC, its importance and the extent to which IMC had been implemented by major advertisers in the United States. Since then, IMC has been reviewed by number of scholars as both a ‘concept’ and a ‘process’.

Different scholars have had various opinions regarding IMC because of its multidimensional concept. For instance, Duncan and Everett (1993) argued that it is difficult to achieve the definition of IMC, since it is reviewed as both a concept and process. Nowak and Phelps (1994) suggested three wider concepts of IMC, which has subsequently been an integral part of most of the IMC literature. The first concept was the 'one voice', where integration was known as having a 'consistent' and 'clear' message in all marketing communication campaigns.

The second concept was 'integrated marketing communications' and the third was 'coordinated' marketing communications, with the focus on coordination across various marketing communications tools, such as direct selling, sales promotion, advertising and public relations.

Brown (1997) also highlighted the unresolved problem regarding viewing IMC as both a concept or process and listed various opinions reflected in the IMC literature that IMC is or should be "one strategy", "one spirit", "synergy", "attitude of mind", "equal status", "merging disciplines", "marketing orientation" and "stakeholder's attention". Eagle et al. (1999) concluded that IMC is not just a whim of leadership, but in reality it is a fundamental change in the perception and practice of marketing and communications between clients and advertising agencies. Schultz and Kitchen (2000) suggested that IMC is still in a "pre-paradigm stage of development" and its value will be evidently increase with the passage of time as further research and experienced is gained. Kliatchko (2002) stated IMC can be considered "operationally new", because of its growing importance among the marketing experts but it is still "conceptually old" because of a lack of understanding of the term.

Later in 2005, Kliatchko claimed that as well as being a process, IMC can also be considered as a concept, but rather than understanding its basic theories and principles, the IMC literature has focused more on its implementation. Kliatchko (2005) also introduced the new term 'audience' deliberately to make it clear that IMC programmes should not just focus on consumers, but on all (internal and external) relevant audiences of the organisation (Kliatchko, 2005). Subsequently, Kliatchko (2008) offered a notable concept of IMC by replacing the term 'audience' with 'stakeholders' in the definition of IMC. More specifically, the author added "stakeholder-centred orientation" as one of the key pillars in the IMC model. The same study also revealed the significance of the coordination of organisational

messages and channels in the conceptual model analysed. Christensen et al. (2008) offered a new concept of IMC by introducing overall organisational communications. In particular the importance of clarity and consistency in messages sent within and outside the formal organisational boundaries was stressed. Moriarty and Schultz (2012) claimed that IMC should not be considered as a single theory, but instead as a group of various interconnected theories contributing to the emergence of the concept, amongst which the “consistency theory” is the predominant one (Thorson and Moore, 1996).

Based on Kliatchko’s (2008) research, Johansen and Andersen (2012) gave a new direction to IMC by focusing on ‘stakeholders’ rather than just ‘consumers’ and also highlighted that there is a need for ‘strategic integration’, which means the integration of the internal as well as external audience. Furthermore, Johansen and Andersen (2012) suggested that strategic discipline must focus on integrated marketing communications, involving all the contact points such as stakeholders, media and content into the overall marketing strategy in order to deliver a ‘one sound’ and ‘one voice’ message.

Ots and Nyilasy (2015) referred to a broader concept of IMC and suggested that in addition to marketing and communication, all corporate disciplines and activities must be involved in the integration process. Another holistic approach was proposed by Porcu, Barrio-García and Kitchen (2017) who introduced the term “stakeholder-centred strategic focus” by giving more importance to stakeholders at a strategic level. This approach emphasised the creation of added value and establishing long-term relationships with all stakeholders and that this should be the main strategic goal for the whole organisation. This 2017 study took Kliatchko’s (2008) and Johansen and Andersen’s (2012) research further by giving stakeholders more importance at a strategic level in the conceptualisation of IMC.

2.4.3 Understanding IMC In Depth

A review of the literature relating to IMC over the past decade has indicated that issues related to concept of IMC continue to be debated by marketing scholars and consequently, still remain unresolved (Porcu et al., 2017). There has been a lack of clarity in understanding the concept of IMC, indicated by the fact that there has not been any consensus on

definitional issues. Moreover, there are no set principles of IMC, the scope of IMC is not yet clear and also it is still not entirely understood whether IMC can be considered a concept or processes (Kliatchko, 2005). Therefore, to obtain a better understanding of IMC, the following section reviews a number of definitions of IMC frequently used by various scholars in the past and provides an evaluation of them by examining their merits and inadequacies.

2.4.4 Definitions of IMC

An early definitive definition of IMC was produced at Northwestern University in 1989 in a collaborative study between the American Association of Advertising Agencies ('4As'), the National Advertisers Association, and Northwestern University, who carried out a survey of major advertising agencies in the United States (Schultz and Schultz, 1998). This definition has not subsequently been globally accepted but nevertheless, the literature review indicated that this '4As' definition has been widely used by practitioners and academics since 1989 (Anantachart, 2006, p.104).

IMC definition by the '4As' (1989)

"A concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines - general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations - and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact." (Chaihanchai and Anantachart, 2017; Anantachart, 2006, p.104).

This definition does not view IMC as a process but as a concept, with the need for such a marketing communications plan that has synergistic effect. This definition also involves the evolution of a "one look", "one spirit", "one voice", effect, through the effective coordination of the various disciplines at the strategic level to ensure clarity and consistency of all messages delivered through different communication tools (Nowak and Phelps, 1994). However, this definition was criticised by various scholars because of inadequacies such as lack of consumer orientation and cost efficiency (Kitchen and Schultz, 2009; Duncan and

Caywood, 1996). Shortly after, Schultz (1991, cited in Kliatchko, 2005) suggested another definition of IMC, given below.

Definition by Schultz (1991)

“IMC is the process of managing all sources of information about a product/service to which a customer or prospect is exposed which behaviourally moves the consumer toward a sale and maintains customer loyalty.” (Schultz, 1991 cited in Kliatchko, 2005, p.16).

This definition highlighted other aspects of IMC that had not been discussed in the earlier 1989 definition. Duncan and Caywood (1996) viewed this definition as customer focused. However, this definition was also criticised by various authors based on shortcomings, as IMC is not just a process but is also a concept. In addition, this definition has not shown any strategic measurability and thinking in the IMC planning process (Kliatchko, 2005). Tom and Duncan (1992, 1994 cited in Kliatchko, 2005) then proposed two further definitions of IMC.

Definitions by Duncan (Duncan and Mulhern, 2004)

The 1992 definition states:

“The strategic coordination of all messages and media used by an organisation to collectively influence its perceived brand value.” (Kliatchko, 2005, p.17).

This definition highlighted the fact that synergy can be achieved in IMC through coordinated communications by an organisation. However, this definition was also criticised because of its limitations, namely that it failed to cover other elements of IMC and was merely limited to messages and media (Duncan and Caywood, 1996). Duncan (1994) then suggested a revised definition as set out below.

The 1994 definition states:

“IMC is the process of strategically controlling or influencing all messages and encouraging purposeful dialogue to create and nourish profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders”. (Duncan, 1994 cited in Kliatchko, 2005, p.17).

This definition was viewed as an expanded version of the original IMC definition and involved all parties such as stakeholders, consumers and prospects that may have a direct influence on the organisation (Duncan and Caywood, 1996). This definition was also not widely accepted because of various aspects, in particular the term “controlling messages”, as Schultz (1996) points out that messages could be both controlled and uncontrolled, whereas the term “control” may indicate the use of one-way communication rather than integrated communication (Schultz, 1996). Another negative aspect of this definition is its inability to state or indicate the communication channels that should be used for the purpose of obtaining “encouraging purposeful dialogue”.

In addition, the means of evaluation and measurability of IMC programmes are not made clear in this definition (Kliatchko, 2005). To overcome these inadequacies, Nowak and Phelps (1994) also contributed to the literature by introducing a conceptual definition of IMC.

Conceptual definition of IMC by Nowak and Phelps (1994)

Nowak and Phelps (1994) did not offer a straightforward definition of the IMC. Nevertheless, they aimed to provide a contribution to the conceptualisation of IMC and proposed three broad conceptualisations based on “one-voice” marketing communications, integrated marketing communications, and coordinated' marketing communications. Nowak and Phelps (1994) explained these concepts and stated that “one-voice” marketing communications is a consistent and clear message sent by the organisation via all marketing communication tools. In other words, every single department in an organisation should speak with single voice in order to deliver a consistent message to customers. ‘Integrated marketing communications’ is related to the emergence of both behavioural responses and brand image that originate from marketing communication disciplines such as advertisements. ‘Coordinated marketing communications’ suggested that the ‘link’ means all marketing activities should be coordinated with each other.

Although Nowak and Phelps’s (1994) definition provided better understanding of the IMC concept with more detail, it did not go beyond the basic notions of IMC, such as one voice, the integrated approach and coordination of marketing tools, which had previously been discussed in the IMC literature (Kliatchko, 2005). Schultz and Schultz (1998) subsequently

introduced a more comprehensive definition in and tried to cover the different aspects of IMC which had not been highlighted in previous definitions.

Definition by Schultz and Schultz (1998)

“IMC is a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute, and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communication programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences.” (Schultz and Schultz, 1998, p.18).

The above definition seems to cover most of the concepts that had been missing from earlier IMC definitions and it also broadens the understanding of communication programmes from the traditional viewpoint (such as public relations, advertising, media, etc.) to internal audiences. The phrase ‘internal audience’ suggests that IMC seeks to achieve a strong and positive relationship with internal employees (e.g. the sales force). In addition, the inclusion of the term ‘external and internal audiences’ gave a new direction to IMC and suggested that IMC is not just limited to marketing communication strategies that focus on consumers but that they also address the needs of all relevant audiences.

The external audience in a corporate organisation may refer to consumers, customers and other entities outside the organisation, whereas the internal audience relates to those who are within the organisation, such as managers, employees, salespeople, and so on (Kliatchko, 2008). Although the Schultz and Schultz’s (1998) definition sets out the scope of IMC in more detail than those previously cited by other scholars, and has placed a considerable emphasis on creating positive relationships with all audiences (internal and external), this definition was criticised because of its length, the fact that it is quite generic in nature, and is not clear in relation to the immediate benefits of the IMC concept (Kliatchko, 2005). The definition of Schultz and Schultz (1998) therefore required further review to avoid generic interpretations and ambiguity of the IMC concept. Kliatchko (2005) then proposed a new definition of IMC, which, in his opinion, covers the essential and distinctive elements of the IMC concept.

Definition by Kliatchko (2005; 2008)

The 2005 definition states:

“IMC is the concept and process of strategically managing audience-focused, channel-centred, and results-driven brand communication programmes over time.”
(Kliatchko, 2005, p.23).

This definition claimed that IMC is both a concept and a process. Here the articulation of three essential and distinguishing elements of IMC made this definition different to previous ones. These three distinctive attributes are “audience-focused”, “channel-centred” and “results-driven”. These attributes, or pillars, synthesise and encapsulate more cohesively various principles related to the IMC concept and process (Kliatchko, 2005). This definition was also criticised because of inadequacies such as the fact that it referred to the term ‘audience’ rather than focusing on individual stakeholder groups (Kitchen and Burgmann, 2010). Kliatchko also found that this 2005 definition was incomplete and limited the scope of IMC, therefore he revisited this 2005 definition and proposed a new definition of IMC in 2008, as follows:

The 2008 definition states:

“IMC is an audience-driven business process of strategically managing stakeholders, content, channels, and results of brand communication programs.” (Kliatchko, 2008, p.140).

This definition introduced a combined, integrated strategic approach based on four pillars of IMC conceptualisation - stakeholders, content, channels and results - with particular importance given to stakeholders at the strategic level rather than as just the audience. A major contribution of this 2008 definition is that it focused more on stakeholders, thereby considering them as one of the main pillars for the development of IMC conceptualisation, and suggesting that each stakeholder group can affect the organisation in a different way. This means that integrated marketing should not only be restricted to managing customer relationships, but also utilised for monitoring and planning relationships with all stakeholder groups. In other words, IMC goes beyond customers and involves other stakeholders, therefore organisations need to communicate with stakeholders in the same way as they do

with customers. Every contact point with stakeholders and customers needs to be integrated strategically

Subsequently, this definition became widely recognised in the literature related to IMC because of its different approach that gave a new direction to theories of IMC, i.e. a move from traditional ‘customer focus’ to integrated ‘stakeholder focus’. However, this definition was also criticised because of a lack of a fundamental strategic IMC process which includes total (market) integration or ‘strategic discipline’ (Holm, 2006; Johansen and Andersen, 2012). Strategic discipline centres on integrated marketing communication that involves all stakeholders, content, customers and media into the overall marketing strategy.

Strategic discipline can also refer to strategic integration which involves the integration of internal and external audiences, including all (controlled and uncontrolled) messages in the marketing communication process (Johansen and Andersen, 2012). Porcu, Barrio-García and Kitchen in 2012 shed further light on Johansen and Andersen’s (2012) broad concept by proposing an extensive definition that can play a role in modern corporations, rather than just as a marketing communication tool for managers.

Definition by Porcu, Barrio-García and Kitchen (2012)

“The interactive and systemic process of cross-functional planning and optimization of messages to stakeholders with the aim of communicating with coherence and transparency to achieve synergies and encourage profitable relationships in the short, medium and long-term.” (Porcu et al., 2012b, p.326).

Porcu et al. (2012b) have used a wider approach in this definition that has taken IMC to the strategic level. This definition revolved around the four multidimensional character aims to combine the strategic elements of IMC such as ‘one voice’, ‘interactivity’, ‘cross-functional planning’ and ‘profitable long-term relationships’. ‘One voice’ referred to clear and coherent messages across all marketing communication practices, or it represents unified marketing activity that can deliver a message with clarity and consistency through either online or off-line marketing communication campaigns. ‘Interactivity’ referred to the need for constant dialogue (or two-way symmetrical communication) not only with customers, but also with stakeholders in order to build good relationship with all stakeholders. ‘Cross-functional

planning’ referred to the need for strategic integration in the organisation as a whole, rather than just the marketing department. In other words, the organisation as whole should be responsible for delivering the same message from all other departments, not just the marketing department. This new paradigm means moving marketing strategy from the traditional marketing mix to overall integration across the whole organisation. The term ‘profitable long-term relationships’ is one of the fundamental strategic dimensions that referred to long-term relationships based on interactive communication (Duncan and Moriarty, 1998; Porcu et al., 2012a). Although this definition by Porcu et al. (2012b) tried to cover the all the aspects of IMC, the need for a more holistic approach also appeared from IMC practitioners, clients and agency managers and the demand was to include the overall business process in IMC, not just the marketing communications (Kliatchko and Schultz, 2014).

This 2012 definition was later revised with a more holistic organisational perspective, suggesting the need for integration across the whole organisation rather than just marketing (Porcu, Barrio-García and Kitchen, 2017). This definition characterises IMC in its broadest application.

Revised Definition by Porcu, Barrio-García and Kitchen (2017)

“The stakeholder-centred interactive process of cross-functional planning and alignment of organisational, analytical and communication processes that allows for the possibility of continuous dialogue by conveying consistent and transparent messages via all media to foster long-term profitable relationships that create value.”
(Porcu et al., 2017, p.964).

In this definition, two dimensions such as ‘message consistency’ and ‘interactivity’ had already been proposed as dimensions of IMC in the earlier 2012 definition (Porcu et al., 2012b). However, the inclusion of two other new dimensions, namely ‘stakeholder-centred strategic’ focus and ‘organisational alignment’, represented IMC as a concept solely focused on stakeholders rather than consumers or customers. Porcu et al. (2017) have used a wider approach in explaining these new two dimensions (stakeholder-centred strategic focus and organisational alignment) in this later definition.

The term ‘stakeholder-centred strategic focus’ emphasised the importance of stakeholders and not just customers in organisational marketing communications at the strategic level. In addition, this term also referred the creation and maintenance of long-term relationships with its stakeholders, and this should be the main strategic goal of the whole organisation. In other words, organisations cannot achieve their strategic goal unless they engage and maintain good relationships with their all stakeholders, including employees, sales people, managers and customers (Porcu et al., 2017).

The ‘organisational alignment’ dimension relates to the need for internal integration at the organisational level, which means that not only marketing or communication but every single marketing activity and function across the whole organisation must be involved in the integration process (Kliatchko and Schultz, 2014).

In this 2017 study, organisational alignment also refers to a vertical communication process among employees, sales people and managers along with cross-functional coordination and collaboration (Porcu et al., 2017).

An in-depth literature review of IMC suggests that definitional issues related to the concept of IMC are still being debated by academicians and practitioners in the industry and there is not yet a universal accepted definition of IMC (Melewar et al., 2017). However, since the early 1990s, studies on IMC have identified that practitioners and scholars are continuously seeking the benefits of this integrated approach to marketing communications and the research in this area is still in a developmental phase (Laurie and Mortimer, 2011; Kliatchko and Schultz, 2014; Muñoz-Leiva et al., 2015).

Reviewing the IMC literature has also indicated that the emergence of IMC has been a two-stage evolutionary process. The first phase took place in the period 1989 to 2005, from the initial definition of IMC (by the ‘4As’), which revolved around the consumer and conceived integration just as a marketing communication device with the aim of delivering consistent messages (Kliatchko, 2005; Schultz, 1992; Duncan and Everett, 1993; Duncan and Caywood, 1996; Nowak and Phelps, 1994). In contrast, the second phase from 2008 to the present has focused on all stakeholders and regards integration as a strategic business process, rather than just as a marketing communication tool (Porcu et al., 2017; Kliatchko, 2008; Christensen et al., 2009; Johansen and Andersen, 2012).

New market trends have introduced and expanded the conceptualisation of IMC and have required corporations to rethink their strategic discipline and communications in a broader sense. Christensen et al. (2008) have also emphasised the need for flexible integration which not only addresses the needs of external stakeholders, but also the requirement to align internal stakeholders with corporate marketing strategies. This approach was also supported by Helm and Jones (2010), who proposed a conceptual framework in a wider context that was not limited to the inclusion of external stakeholders, but also the internal value chain as an integrated part of marketing communications. This 2010 study also mentioned the need for a holistic approach in the integration, rather than just focusing on intra-organisational integration (Helm and Jones, 2010).

In addition, Kitchen and Burghmann (2010) suggested that managers should adapt a different integration approach which is not just limited to their marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion), but as a holistic approach. The approach chosen must use all facets of the marketing mix to promote customer interaction, and distribute messages to all the relevant audiences or stakeholders by using integrated marketing techniques (Melewar et al., 2017). This new trend has moved IMC away from a traditional ‘customer focus’ to an ‘integrated stakeholders focus’ and has identified the need for stakeholder orientation and not just customer orientation (Porcu et al., 2017).

In other words, integration in marketing communication has shifted the concept of IMC from a narrow towards a holistic approach, i.e. from a coordinated promotion mix towards strategic discipline. The holistic approach is more focused on stakeholders rather than solely on customers and has highlighted the need for ‘strategic integration’ which involves the integration of all organisational functions (not only marketing), including internal and external customers (Porcu et al., 2017).

In addition, this broader concept of marketing communication activities emphasises that all stakeholders should be part of this integration but nevertheless, the literature on IMC since 1989 has failed to identify the role of potential stakeholders such as the sale-force that could be the part of integrated marketing communication process. Furthermore, there is no research that discusses the importance of sales force integration in the conceptualisation of IMC. With these premises, the current research has sought to investigate the need for sales force

integration into corporate marketing communication with the aim of filling this gap in the literature as indicated below in Table 1, constructed on the basis of IMC definitions.

Table 1: Thematic Analysis of IMC

Author/s (year)	Concept introduced
American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As) (1989)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination and consistency of messages and communication channels ('one sight, one sound')
Schultz (1991)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of consumers, prospects • Behavioural responses • Nurture relationships and customer loyalty • IMC as a process
Duncan (1992, 1994)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic coordination of all messages • Expanded audience scope from customers to other stakeholders
Schultz & Schultz (1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic business process • Expanded notion of brand communication • Measurability • Specified more explicitly the multiple markets - inclusive of external and internal audiences
Kliatchko (2005, 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process and concept • Audience-focused (internal and external) • Communication program • Results-driven • Stakeholders (orientation) • Content • Channel • (Measurable) results
Porcu et al. (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One voice • Interactivity • Cross-functional planning • Profitable long-term relationships with stakeholders
Porcu et al. (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder-centred strategic focus • Organisational alignment - Organisational integration

By reviewing the literature relating to IMC, it has been possible to determine the points of convergence where all the authors appear to agree on an IMC conceptualisation. All the authors converge in affirming the concepts of consistency, coordination, clarity, co-operation

and credibility as important components of IMC. This is discussed next in this chapter but is not the main focus of this research.

These 5 ‘C’s from the IMC literature have been extracted from the literature summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Research Addressing the Concept of IMC Approach Using 5 'C's

Concept Converged	Author/s (Year)
Consistency	American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As) (1989), Caywood and Ewing (1991), Nowak and Phelps (1994), Thorson and Moore (1996), Ewing et al. (1998), Lee and Park (2007), Christensen et al. (2008), Moriarty and Schultz (2012), Porcu et al. (2012, 2017)
Coordination	Duncan (1992), Keegan, et. al (1992), Nowak and Phelps (1994), Phelps and Johnson (1996), Schultz and Schultz (1998), Barker and Angelopulo (2005), Porcu et al. (2012, 2017) (Johansen and Andersen, 2012).
Clarity	American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As) (1989), Nowak and Phelps (1994), Christensen et al. (2008), Porcu et al. (2012, 2017), (Johansen and Andersen, 2012).
Cooperation	Barker and Angelopulo (2005), Reid (2005), (Niemann, 2002)
Credibility	Balmer and Gray (2000), (Kliatchko, 2005), Christensen et al. (2008), (Johansen and Andersen, 2012).

2.5 Vital Components of Integrated Communications

The importance of these 5 ‘C’s as set out in Table 2 (above) has been highlighted throughout the IMC literature by academicians and industry practitioners. After reviewing a number of papers on integration, it was found that the 5 ‘C’s can potentially play an important role in successful sales force integration practices, and could expand the tradition of the marketing

mix (product, price, place and promotion) by widening its scope to include these components (Balmer and Greyser, 2006). The following section explains how these 5'C's could be vital components of integrated marketing communication.

2.5.1 Consistency

Consistency is one of the most basic dimensions of integration, identified since IMC evolved at the starting point of integration (Caywood et al., 1991; Schultz and Schultz, 1998). The importance of consistency in the IMC literature has been growing since 1989 due to the fact that integration in marketing communication cannot be achieved unless organisations are successful at delivering consistent messages to its all stakeholders. Duncan and Moriarty (1998, p.6) also highlighted that “...*the key to managing the point of perception is to deliver and receive messages on a platform of strategic consistency.*” Consistency of messages can only be achieved if all the communications tools are well-tuned to each other in a harmony rather than isolation, and this can bring synergistic effects in building strong relationships with stakeholders ((Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007; Reid, 2005). Synergy can be achieved when all marketing communications are exposed to all its stakeholders in a consistent and complementary way (Niemann, 2002). Stakeholders have various associations with the organisation and receive multiple messages and these messages must be consistent across all points (Duncan and Moriarty, 1997). The less the consistency in what the brand says, the more communications will be diffused and will not be able to concentrate in marketing campaigns. All messages must therefore have consistent meaning and should not conflict with each other (Niemann, 2002). Thus, an important issue in integrated communications is to manage message ‘consistency’ (Barker and Angelopulo, 2005).

Inconsistencies in marketing communication between salespeople and sales managers in the overall marketing communication process could bring negative impacts on the outcomes related to work. Consistent communications can potentially deliver some positive outcomes, namely salespeople’s job satisfaction, job commitment, job performance job involvement and motivation (Evans et al., 2002).

In recent years, due to the increasing number of challenges related to their activities, corporate organisations are aware of the fact that inconsistency in messages not only

increases contradiction but can also put the credibility and image of the organisation at risk. It has been discussed in several prior studies that the main focus of IMC is to ensure the internal and external communication within different units and its stakeholders are consistent across all sales channels. Consistency is thus referred to as one of the most important constituents of internal communication and is responsible for developing and integrating corporate marketing communication (Wei et al., 2015). According to a study conducted by Skard and Thorbjornsen (2014), the success of marketing communication is dependent on communicating with the right message to the right people in a consistent manner. Therefore, it is a noticeable fact that businesses are required to maintain consistency in communication or the messages they deliver.

However, within the context of organisations, the component of consistency is important for the development of the level of the sales force integrated marketing communication due to the fact that when internal communication is not consistent, then the organisation will not be able to bring essential information to the attention of its salespeople (Challagalla et al., 2014). Providing instructions and communication in an inconsistent manner is a significant limitation that would not allow sales force to develop the necessary sales force performance outcomes such as job satisfaction, and so on. In this regard, the need for consistency is also vital for the development of different sales force performance outcomes, as it is perceived as an important constituent in ensuring and developing integrated corporate marketing communication.

2.5.2 Coordination

Coordination is another important tool for facilitating integration in an organisation, as is considered as the hallmark of effective corporate marketing communication systems (Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007). This dimension was introduced at the very beginning of the conceptualisation of IMC, when Duncan and Caywood (1996) introduced this term in their first definition. Keegan et al. (1992) also emphasised strategic coordination of all the messages when proposing a definition of IMC. Since 1992, coordination has taken its core place in the context of IMC, and its importance has been highlighted by a number of scholars and academic practitioners in the marketing communication literature, as the coordination of complementary messages not only brings synergy, but also the strategic coordination of the

different communication tools maximises the synergistic effect to build strong relationships with stakeholders as well as brand (Niemann, 2002; Reid, 2005).

The management literature has also emphasised integral coordination and has defined it as the highest level of coordinated process that connect all the members of the organisation with each other in the cross-functional integration (Oldroyd and Gulati, 2010). When different employees or business units are well coordinated with one another, they are more inclined towards the same organisational goals and objectives. In addition, Winter and Sundqvist (2009) supported this idea and highlighted such an organisational infrastructure in which marketing communication practice has coordination between other departments and functions. Porcu et al. (2017) also highlighted the importance of cross-functional coordination by using the term ‘organisational alignment’ in their IMC definition.

In Porcu et al.’s (2017) study ‘organisational alignment’ relates to the need for the coordinated communication among every single department rather than just the marketing department, along with internal and external audiences (Johansen and Andersen, 2012). This wider approach thus can be referred to as ‘strategic coordination’ where the coordination of internal and external audiences is required at all contact points (Johansen and Andersen, 2012). Coordination in communication is also perceived as one of the important constituents of internal communication, as Duncan and Moriarty (1998, p.6) considered it as the “*tactical coordination of marketing communications*”. However, previous research has described communication as a challenging task for the majority of businesses.

In light of the study conducted by Luxton et al. (2015), coordination is the process that delivers one individual with the information which the businesses desires for. Effective coordination is referred to as the one necessary and important communication constituent that allow businesses to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of business operations.

According to Foerstl et al. (2013), coordination in communication with internal customers (e.g. sales force) is as important as with external customers for several reasons. For instance, when salespeople are not coordinated with the specific strategies and marketing approaches in the right manner, then they will more likely develop a sense of demotivation. As a consequence, sales personnel will not be able to deliver their level of commitment and involvement to their job. In this regard, it can be stated that when the sales force is well

coordinated and communicated from the important approaches, decisions and all the marketing strategies, then their performance can be improved (Thorson and Moore, 2013). Furthermore, the importance of coordination within the context of internal customers is also indispensable, as whenever an organisation develops new strategies and marketing policies, it then becomes necessary for the organisation to develop a coordinated communication plan that can deliver their newly developed marketing strategies to all its sales teams.

2.5.3 Clarity

Another vital component of IMC is clarity, and its importance has been discussed since the very first definition of IMC (4As) in 1989. A number of practitioners have shed light on this important dimension and indicated its role in IMC conceptualisation (Johansen and Andersen, 2012; Porcu et al., 2017; Nowak and Phelps, 1994). However, the concept of clarity was explained in more detail by using the term ‘one voice’ communication in a number of IMC conceptual models, where it is referred to as the notion of delivering a clear and coherent message through all marketing communication disciplines and tools.

The main purpose of this strategy is to deliver clear and unified messages to all relevant audiences through direct and interactive marketing (Nowak and Phelps, 1994; Porcu et al., 2017). It is therefore responsibility of the organisation to speak with ‘one sound’ with the aim of delivering clear messages across media and markets with an integrated approach (Johansen and Andersen, 2012).

Fully integrated organisation practice is strict in its top-to-bottom communication of a clearly defined mission in actions and words to align the organisation. According to Spotts and Lambert (1998), synergy can be achieved in integrated marketing communications by applying clarity and consistency in communication, and this clear vision should come from management via vertical communication and must be translated to clear brand promises to customer and stakeholders (Niemann, 2002).

Clarity is also an important component of internal communication as it is responsible for driving the message to the mindset of an individual with clear vision and approach. The importance of clarity with the internal customers (e.g. the sales force) is high due to the

noticeable fact that when salespeople are provided with clear message and strategies, then they are more likely to perform in a more committed manner that will ultimately increase their overall performance (Porcu et al., 2012b). For this reason, the clarity of the marketing strategies and instructions are perceived as the first and necessary step for effective communication because it can help salespeople to better understand their job duties and responsibilities (Barker, 2013).

2.5.4 Cooperation

Cooperative marketing communication is perceived as the one important perspective of marketing activity through which internal and external organisational performance is enhanced (Johnson, 2013). Several types of research have been conducted with the focus on highlighting the significance of and need for effective and co-operative marketing communication. According to Niemann (2002), all communications functions must cooperate in the development of a communications programme, as cooperation in communication activity can bring a synergistic affect among different departments by making them work in harmony rather than in isolation.

Integrated communication requires close cooperation and coordination between the different functions, for example marketing, advertising and public relations (Barker and Angelopulo, 2005). In other words, integration in marketing communication cannot be achieved unless there is cooperation in communication practice.

In light of the study conducted by Felzensztein et al. (2012), cooperation is perceived as the one important corporate marketing communication tool through which organisations add value to their business activities. It is noticeable that when a business unit encourages effective cooperation practices between different departments and salespeople, then the performance and the quality of the work within the unit is executed with collaborative and collective efforts. Previous studies have also confirmed that cooperation in communication has resulted in an increase in performance outcomes such as job satisfaction (Hackman and Oldham, 1974; Horstmann, 2005; Bataineh et al., 2015). In contrast, a lack of cooperative communication can cause operational problems and as a result, it will not only have a

negative impact on organisational performance, but it will also reduce sales force performance.

In this regard, cooperation in communication cannot be ignored in the context of effective and integrated marketing communications. It thus becomes important for the organisation to ensure such a practice within the organisation so that marketing communication can be delivered in a cooperative manner to all its contact points.

2.5.5 Credibility

Credibility is another crucial component of IMC, and its concept has become increasingly important within the context of marketing communication (Luxton et al., 2015). Credibility is considered to be valuable for any organisation, as it can be used as a strong selling point in a competitive market (Sallam, 2015). Credibility is based on the organisation's statements about itself, perhaps in its mission statement and the way managers and employees communicate. Credible communications can influence coordination and control to overcome organisational and individual deficiencies and affect perceptions of the quality of work life (Hsu, 2003). Credibility concerns the creation of positive characteristics of the sender which manipulate the recipient (in this case, the sales force) to accept the message sent by the sender. It can also be seen as the validity of communication assertions (Ohanian, 1990). In marketing corporate communications, it is usually not a good sign when two completely contradictory messages about the organisation appear on the same day under same environment. Nevertheless, this often happens and as a result, it can damage the image and credibility of an organisation, both internally and externally (Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007).

Therefore, in marketing communications it is management's responsibility to avoid exaggeration and keep a short distance between words and deeds to make their communication more reliable and credible. According to Bataineh et al. (2015), communication that includes credibility and adequacy can built trust between the sender (organisation) and the receiver (sales force) in such a way that will ultimately enhance the level of satisfaction and commitment (Goodman and Dion, 2001). In other words, sales force performance can be affected negatively if organisations fail to deliver credible marketing information to its stakeholders.

Credibility is described as an important constituent of internal communication in which the sharing and receiving of information proceeds in a trustworthy and acceptable manner. It has been highlighted in several prior studies that the credibility factor plays an instrumental role in making the communication process reliable and effective (Reichelt et al., 2014). However, it is important to highlight that with the advancement in technology, considerable challenges have arisen in maintaining the credibility and reliability of the communication processes. It is evident from previous research that message inauthenticity or incredibility can put the credibility of the organisation at risk (Lencioni, 2012). Therefore, organisations need to make sure that their communications are credible and free from flaws because if sales people cannot make any sense of what is being communicated, then most likely they interpret the efforts as empty rhetoric (Thorbjørnsen and Supphellen, 2011).

The emergence of the integrated marketing communication concept is thus an important development in this regard. Its manifested benefits include increased credibility and transparency in marketing strategies (Kliatchko, 2005; Balmer and Greyser, 2006). The consequences of credible marketing communication allow salespeople to develop a positive work attitude in their professional personality (Peterson et al., 2015).

It can be then stated that credible communication is also associated with the sales force performance outcomes and can serve as an important marketing communication constituent in the development of the integrated corporate marketing communication.

By summarising all 5'C's based on previous studies it can be argued that the rapid and constant changes in the business environment have made it more important for organisations to make their communications 'consistent' and 'clear' in order to develop a 'credible' image through 'cooperative' and 'coordinated' messages across all communications channels.

Organisations can achieve a synergetic effect by bringing the 5'C's into their corporate marketing communications, as these appear to play a vital role in IMC. This idea is also supported by Pickton (2010), who proposed a model for IMC and introduced the 4'C's (coherent, consistency, continuity and complementary) as one of the IMC dimensions (Pickton and Hartley, 1998).

This 2010 study mentioned that once IMC has been achieved, then the 4'C's create verifiable benefits of integration. Argenti et al. (2005) also highlighted 3'C's (clarity, consistency and continuity) as an important component of integrated communication (Argenti and Forman, 2002; Argenti et al., 2005). However, the current study emphasises the same concept but utilising different 'Cs of integrated communications, thereby adding value to the existing literature.

2.6 Key Principles of Integrated Marketing Communications

Nowak and Phelps (1994) defined the key principles of IMC as an 'integrated communication', 'one voice communication,' and 'coordinated marketing-communication campaign'. The 'integrated communications' strategy involves nourishing brand image and directing audience behaviour. The 'one voice' approach reflects the view that the firm should focus on a single positioning approach, stressing the achievement of a level of unity between public relations, brand advertising, advertising, direct-response and consumer sales promotion in a consistent manner. In 'coordinated marketing-communication campaigns', the stress is on the desire to integrate the activities of multiple marketing-communication disciplines (e.g., sales promotions, advertising, and public relations) to reach different audiences in a synergistic manner.

Although the distinction between these three manifestations is not entirely clear, each one has a slightly different approach. However, one aspect that seems common in these principles is that organisations need to seek and create such messages that are uniform and integrated in a way so that the same voice should come from each marketing activity across the organisation (Grove et al., 2007).

Much of the literature has described the key principles of integrated marketing communications and until 2008, the conceptualisation of IMC was based on the key principles of audience-centred planning, touch points of brand-customer, relational and behavioural focus and consistency or synergy, which all place IMC in the context of a customer-driven marketplace (Reid, 2005; Schultz and Patti, 2009). The principles of consistent and customer-centric communications have also been mentioned by most of the authors in their studies (Ang, 2014).

The principle of consistency allows the marketing and communications of the organisation to revolve around a single theme, which means that a single message is displayed across all the media used by the organisation for its communications (Pickton and Hartley, 1998). In contrast, the principle of customer-centric has been defined by Kliatchko (2008) as the aspect of the marketing process that is aimed at addressing the idea that customers can achieve what they want (Kliatchko, 2008).

Over the last decade, the principle and conceptualisation of IMC has taken a new direction, and rather than just focusing on a customer-centric approach, importance has been given to stakeholder-centric communication. However, the common elements of ‘consistency’, ‘clarity’ and ‘coordination’ in communication have been noted throughout in IMC since its evolution (Johansen and Andersen, 2012; Porcu et al., 2012b; Porcu et al., 2019, Porcu et al., 2017).

2.7 Implications of Integrated Marketing Communications

Organisations are continuously on the look for rapid growth opportunities, which involves coordination between different organisational functions, and this where integrated marketing communications play a crucial role. Many organisations have achieved synergy in their communications through the use of IMC. According to a study by Abdullah (2016) on the implications of IMC, the use of IMC allows organisations to develop strong bonds with their customers as well as the stakeholders. It also helps in developing a certain attitude of the customers and stakeholders towards the organisation. Umbreen and Ali (2013) suggested that the use of IMC is the best way to create a perception about the organisation or to target the customers. This is because customers are highly impacted by the implementation of the IMC. In addition to this, integrated marketing communications have been proven by various studies to affect the purchase decision of the customers (Broderick and Pickton, 2005).

The same message is delivered to the customers through different media which acts as a reinforcement of the message and customers’ buying decisions are changed in the favour of the organisation using IMC. Companies are increasingly adopting IMC strategies in order to achieve consistency in their traditional and modern ways of marketing communications (Kliatchko, 2008). However, Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012) believed that just concentrating

on a larger number of customers is not a key factor for the success of the organisation; in the new economy managers should pay more attention at the front-line staff because this is another way to make a profit. Furthermore, integrated marketing communications have an impact on consumption as well as on the perception of the brand. Many researchers have emphasised the implication of IMC for different brands as well as organisations, because IMC is a cross-functional as well a profitable brand management process, and organisations should endeavour to improve integration of all communications activities in order to build strong brands (Reid, 2002).

The implications and importance of integration means that organisations must be able to create an organisational marketing plan whose different components of communication are saying the same thing, i.e. are pushing the same message via all communications channels so that the single voice or message is coming from all departments. If the sales force is receiving a unified message from all departments, this could reduce confusion and conflict, increase customer satisfaction and also enhance the sales force performance outcomes.

2.8 Benefits of Integrated Marketing Communication

The use of IMC by many fast-growing organisations provides evidence of its increasing importance and widespread benefits. There is a wide array of literature available describing the benefits of IMC for organisations, as the role of IMC is very strong in achieving a strong market position and helping in the implementation of competitive market strategies. The benefits of integrated communication have been discussed and recognised since the emergence of the concept of IMC in the early 1990s. Lockshin and others admit the importance and benefits of IMC, and acknowledge that higher integration respondents performed much better in terms of strategic consistency, whereas lower integration respondents needed to improve, or else they would be left behind in such a competitive market (Reid, 2002; Lockshin and Spawton, 2001).

In addition, IMC increases the effectiveness and profitability of the organisation, as the message which is single but consistent holds more weight than an array of different messages (Tsai, 2005). According to a study by Atakora (2013), the use of IMC allows the organisation

to save costs by using only one agency for all of its communications and by avoiding duplication in areas such as graphic design. Moreover, it makes the organisational marketing messages more credible and consistent, which in turn decreases the fear of risk in the consumer's mind. Furthermore, integrated marketing communication also makes the marketing efforts of the organisation more focused, shifting them from a general to a particular targeted group (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012). The implementation of integrated marketing in the corporate and marketing communications of the organisation can lead to achieving competitive advantage as the organisation consolidates its perception into the minds of consumers simultaneously in order to establish good relationships with them (Atakora, 2013). In support of the above-mentioned studies, Kreidly et al. (2014) mentioned the benefits of IMC in great detail. The clarity and the consistency of messages are one of the key benefits that can be achieved using IMC as inferred from the study.

The process of integrated marketing communications wraps the customers around different marketing communications and allows the organisation to move the targeted customers through different phases of the consumer's buying process (Csikosova et al., 2014). In this way, the organisation is able to create a particular image and develop relationships with customers. The development of the relationship through IMC helps the organisation to consolidate loyalty among the customers, which can prove to be very helpful in dealing with increased competition for the organisation (Kreidly et al., 2014). The use of IMC also helps to increase the profitability of the organisation. A clear and synergised message has a much better possibility of reducing the number of commercial messages with which consumers are bombarded on a daily basis (Šerić, 2018). This gives the organisation a better hold over the purchase decisions of customers, which ultimately increase the profitability of the organisation. Niemann (2002) also indicated that the unified (corporate) body is stronger than its many individual parts. Keegan et al. (1992) also suggested that all messages should be used in a collective or unified manner to create a greater impact. The evidence also suggests that all managers responsible for brand or marketing communications should consider implementing integrated communication and must try practicing the IMC process to improve their performance. Therefore, a greater degree of integration in marketing communication implemented by managers can lead to better marketing performance (Vantamay, 2011).

2.9 Sales Force Integration into Corporate Marketing Communications

After an in-depth understanding of IMC, the following section will look insights into sales force integration in the context of corporate marketing communication. However, it may be noted that not all organisations exhibit any level of attempting IMC, especially at a strategic level, where few are reported to achieve it (Manoli and Hodgkinson, 2020).

Before proceeding to the next stage of the research it is important to understand what integrated organisation looks like, what the role of sales force in corporate marketing communications is, why sale-force integration is important in marketing communication and why there is a need for sale-force integration. These are all discussed in the following sections.

2.9.1 Organisation of Integrated Communications

Integrated communication is defined as:

“...a practice of aligning symbols, messages, procedures and behaviours in order for an organisation to communicate with clarity, consistency and continuity within and across formal organisational boundaries.” (Christensen et al., 2008, p.424).

The terms ‘clarity’ and ‘consistency’ define the ‘one voice’, ‘one look’ approach that focuses on organisations presenting the same look and personality across different marketing channels (Duncan and Everett, 1993). Integrated communication can only be implemented if all the communication instruments are consistent in a coordinated manner by applying the ‘one voice’ principle, i.e. each department should speak with same voice at the same time. However, evidence suggests that organisational functions are not always fully coordinated and there is a need for ‘organisational alignment’. ‘Organisational alignment’ relates to ‘internal integration’ at an organisational level, which involves coordination between different departments and the lack of which causes much ineffectiveness (Porcu et al., 2017; Karliček et al., 2013). Therefore, an organisation cannot be called an ‘integrated organisation’ unless internal integration is in place and marketing departments are sending the same information to all departments at the same time.

Similarly, Homburg et al. (2008) noted that the sharing of information between marketing and sales departments is not sufficient, and that sometimes sales departments have a very low level of product knowledge, which can ultimately lead to poor sales or growth in the market. Consequently, if the sales and marketing departments are not fully integrated, then the organisation as a whole cannot achieve its strategic goals. Therefore, in order for the organisation to be receptive to market dynamics, a high level of integration between sales and marketing is required (Lyus et al., 2011).

A 'command and control' structure will not permit them to combine or merge the system, activities or people, as this is simply not effective and will not allow for optimal integration. Some organisational barriers such as language and lack of horizontal communication also create difficulty in the implementation of any integration programme. In addition to horizontal communication problems, problems of ego and managerial parochialism are considered to be important barriers to integration communications as well as in the field of marketing communications (Christensen et al., 2008).

The central question that then arises here is how to make an integrated communications system in an organisation across different departments, or how an organisation can implement sales force integration communication in practice. Previous studies have made it clear that there is no universal solution or remedy that can be applied to all organisations (Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007). However, since the early 1990s, extensive research in the field of management, marketing and corporate communications has developed these concepts and has made it possible for marketing managers today to bring the 5'C's (as previously discussed) to their communication practice in order to implement successful integration. Therefore, this study has extracted this insight concisely by utilising these 5'C's in a sales force integration model to achieve integrated communication in the organisation.

2.9.2 Role of the Sales force in Corporate Marketing Communications

The sales force is amongst the most important parts of the corporate organisation. The sales force works as a middleman between the communications sender and receiver and is an entity that should be fully informed about, and integrated into, corporate marketing communications.

The sales force plays a crucial role in ensuring that the business is able to sell its products to consumers and helping the organisation to generate its sales revenue. If there is a lack of communication within the sales force team or amongst the sales force and other departments of the organisation, the growth of the organisation will be impacted severely. Poor communication not only has a negative effect on organisational external performance, but also it has negative influence on internal organisational performance (Sriyothin, 2016). Thus, effective and integrated communication with key players of the organisation such as the sales force is extremely important.

Baumgarth and Binckebanck (2011) explained two wider concepts about the role of the sales force. In one perspective, the characteristics of the sales force, such as experience, reliability or empathy are a more sustainable and important drivers for the success of the sales force, because customers respond in different ways to different salespeople, depending on their characteristics. The second broad perspective is customer-oriented behaviour which is defined as the ability of sales force to engage their customers to increase customer satisfaction. Baumgarth and Binckebanck's (2011) study, addressed the character of the people in the sales force, in relation to their behaviour, personality, empathy, expertise and long-term relationship with the customer that can bring a significant impact on brand equity, but failed to discuss the fact that the salesperson cannot fully play their important role in the organisation and satisfy their customer unless they are fully informed or integrated into corporate marketing communications. The role of the sales force is vital, as brand equity cannot be optimally increased unless the salesperson provides the information required by the customer.

Adding more to the study, the involvement of the sales team into corporate marketing communication would enable the organisation to set a corporate rationale. This factor has been given consideration with respect to study put forward by Yeshin (2012), which suggested that the sales force of the organisation plays a critical role in setting out the rationale of the organisation due to the fact that the sales personnel possess knowledge of the needs of the market and customers. Moreover, consideration of viewpoints of boundary personnel would enable the organisation to set a direction and capitalise on the opportunity that could only be analysed by the sales- force.

Critically analysing the aforementioned aspect, organisations would not be able to set a corporate rationale without the active involvement of sales force personnel. This fact is

established in the light of arguments put forward by Barker (2012), who reflected that the inactive involvement of boundary personnel in corporate marketing communication will not allow the organisation to set a rationale and a desirable vision and therefore, the organisation would be at a disadvantage in utilising a market gap in an effective and efficient manner. In addition, the organisation could gain advantage by involving the sales team in marketing communication in the sense that customers would be informed without receiving irrelevant information. The delivery of required information only is necessary due to the fact that customers will become frustrated when irrelevant material is delivered (Yeshin, 2008). On the contrary, organisations which do not integrate their sales personnel with corporate marketing communication are at risk of sending irrelevant information through other channels (such as mass media) that may not be required by the customer.

Moreover, the integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communication would enable the organisation to sustain and maintain a competitive edge in the market. This aspect is considered with respect to research conducted by Arendt and Brettel (2010), which suggested that the sales team of the organisation plays a significant role in enhancing the competitive advantage because of the significance that the front-line personnel possess immense insight into key players in the market and the utilisation of this information by the organisation would enable it to increase revenues and net profits to a great extent. This idea was also supported by Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba (2013), who suggested that employees (salespeople) are also an important audience in the internal marketing communications in the same way as customers, therefore it should be the responsibility of managers to pay particular attention to improving internal marketing communications within the organisation.

Furthermore, the organisation would be able to enhance customer relationships due to the integration of the sales team into corporate marketing communication. Profitable relationships with the customer have been the main aspect of the IMC approach, but this relationship cannot be nourished until sales force can play its role in binding the customer with the organisation (Kliatchko, 2005). This factor contains significant importance because of the fact that the sales force of the organisation would have a greater and extensive insight into the attitudes and behaviour of customers. In this respect, Lyus et al. (2011) stated that the front-line personnel possess greater information about latest customer preferences and the consideration of those viewpoints by the organisation would give it a competitive advantage in the market.

This idea was also supported in a study by Baumgarth and Binckebanck (2011), who insisted that nowadays the sales force is not just expected to meet sales targets, but also to develop a long-term and profitable business relationship with the customer. It is thus primary role of the sale-force to nourish a profitable relationship with the customer (Johnston and Marshall, 2005).

On the contrary, a lack of sales force integration with corporate marketing communication would put the organisation in a vulnerable position due to the fact that the organisation would not be able to identify customer preferences, which could ultimately lead the organisation to face weakened customer relationships. Moreover, one study put forward by Le Meunier-FitzHugh and Piercy (2010) stated that various organisations do not consider the aspect of sales force integration into corporate marketing communication, which causes the organisation to lose market share to a considerable extent. Salespeople have an indispensable role in the development of the positive image of the organisation in the market. However, as stated by Illia and Balmer (2012) senior managers and CEOs have a primary role in orientation but considering the role of each individual in the organisation can make a great difference.

Meanwhile, corporate marketing communication tends to establish the bilateral and on-going positive relationship with organisational customer-stakeholders. Similarly, the relationship tends to help to maintain trust and develop a positive and meaningful reputation, creates value for shareholders through strong and appealing corporate brands, and operates in accordance with the societal, ethical and CSR responsibilities of the organisation.

Therefore, the application and implementation of corporate marketing communication are based on the salespeople having a positive and effective orientation with stakeholders. In this regard, the role of the sales force has a great impact on the implications, since the sales force tends to have relationships and is connected to almost all types of external stakeholders, with whom they may have frequent interaction (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012). Hence, the sales force can play a pivotal role in the establishment of organisational stakeholder relationships, based on a positively envisioned orientation.

It is clear from the literature that the role of the sales force is not just an integral part of the sales and distribution process, but also has other broad roles in the corporate organisation. Because of its core position in the organisation, Baumgarth and Binckebanck (2011) recommended the inclusion of the sales force as an independent variable in future studies.

Whether it is related to sales or customers, brand equity or stakeholders, the role of sales force is indispensable in this regard.

Although a more holistic approach to IMC has gradually moved the focus from customers to a more strategic conceptualisation there is still no agreed proposal as to how to evaluate IMC due to the lack of a commonly accepted definition (Šerić, 2018). However, recently it has been acknowledged that senior managers may create strategies that are detached from employees and it is argued that there is a need for coordination at all levels and that employees should be treated inclusively because they are the connection between the company and its customers (Eriksson, Robertson, and Näppä 2020). To reap the full benefits of integration managers need to overcome organisational structure issues and poor internal communications is one of these issues (Laurie and Mortimer, 2019). This supports the approach taken in this current research where the integration of the sales force into IMC is examined.

2.9.3 Importance of Sales force Integration into Corporate Marketing Communications

Sales force integration with corporate marketing communication has lately been a major field of study for researchers, but much more research is required to enlighten organisations regarding the importance of integration of these two important elements within the organisation, although achieving such a feat is not an easy task and organisations face severe problems while achieving it. According to Kotler et al. (2006), marketers are thinkers, whereas the sales force is the 'doer' within the organisation, and often each one does not fully value the contribution of the other. However, if the organisation fails to integrate both these departments considering how much they are reliable upon the efforts of each other, it can face major losses.

It is an established phenomenon that organisations need to mould their marketing strategies due to changes in the external environment. This fact has been established by Arnett and Wittmann (2014), who state that the front-line personnel, i.e. sales people, need to be informed by the marketing personnel of the organisation when a shift in marketing strategy takes place, as the sale-force would be then able to capture the market in a more efficient and effective manner if they are an integral part of the marketing strategy.

Furthermore, it has also been analysed that the nature of the relationship between customers and salespeople has changed to a large extent over recent years. Customers expect more customised and tailored solutions to their queries than in the past. However, this problem could be resolved by bringing salespeople into the marketing communication. This strategy would enable the organisation to achieve its objectives in a more competitive manner, as the sales team would be able to act in accordance with the directions set by the marketing personnel. This approach could ultimately lead the salespeople to present a more customised solution to customers (Wang and Miao, 2015).

A study put forward by Järvinen and Taiminen (2016) suggested that the evolution of information technology has persuaded the marketing force of the organisation to adapt to digital marketing concepts due to the fact that consumers would be able to complete 60% of the buying process on their own online . However, the remaining part of the purchase process would be completed through the help of salespeople and for this reason, the marketing force of the organisation needs to train and develop the sales team as per the requirements of digital marketing.

This factor is related to the consideration that ineffective communication and training from marketing team to sales team would prevent the front-line personnel from facilitating the consumers, which will ultimately lead to the loss of clientele for the organisation (Moncrief et al., 2015). This factor was put forward due to the fact that consumers' preferences and media have changed dramatically in recent years because of the revolution in information technology. In consideration of this aspect, consumers in the modern era are increasingly involved in multi-tasking, which forms the basis for partial attention. In order to cater for these circumstances, the integration between marketing, sales and other departments of the organisation has evolved to be of significant importance, as proper communication would lead the organisation to achieve its targets in a more cohesive way (Mariadoss et al., 2014).

The information technology aspect also plays a pivotal role in communication between the marketing and sales teams. This is due to the fact that corporate marketing communications could be delivered to the sales force without any major difficulty. In this respect, research conducted by Järvinen and Taiminen (2016) stated that instant marketing communication to the sales team would enable the organisation to gain competitive advantage in the market.

Additionally, Lyus et al. (2011) suggested that the sales force of the organisation possesses comprehensive insights into external competition. Analysing this aspect, the study reflected

that corporate marketing communications should be made in consideration of the knowledge obtained through sales team (Lyus et al., 2011). This is due to the idea that the incorporation of market insights into corporate strategies would enable the organisation to increase revenues in an efficient and effective manner.

Better communication systems not only increase sales force performance but can also decrease promotional costs. According to Zoltners and Lorimer (2000, cited in Longino, 2007), sales forces cost US companies more than US\$500 billion per year, and the cost of a sales call in many industries exceeds US\$200 (Longino, 2007). Sales forces are clearly a big investment for many companies, and this shows that the largest sales forces could cost billions a year to deploy and support. Instead of spending their budget on promotional activates, companies could reduce these costs by bringing the sales force into integrated marketing communications. By keeping the sales force informed about organisational marketing strategies and activities, a company will not only bring down costs, but also increase sales force performance, and ultimately organisational growth.

Moreover, another study put forward by Mariadoss et al. (2014) described that the demands of customers change unexpectedly, which would not always be instantly recognised by the marketing staff. However, effective integration between marketing and sales personnel would help the organisation to include strategies which would cater to the changing needs and desires of customers.

According to a study put forward by Guesalaga (2016), the sales force plays an instrumental role in developing and implementing strategies in the organisation, because the sales force has comprehensive market insights related to the latest developments in consumer and digital marketing media preferences. The ignorance of this information on the part of marketing department would lead to product failure, as consumers would not show the desired interest in the product. Another study conducted by Arnett and Wittmann (2014) suggested that renowned brands would also need to integrate marketing and sales departments in order to keep up with the dynamic situation of consumers. This factor is given importance because of the fact that consumers have high bargaining power due to the availability of various substitutes both locally and internationally. However, if the sales force is fully integrated with the marketing department, then they are more likely to retain customers because of the additional product knowledge. Agnihotri et al. (2009) also believed that salespeople would be able to satisfy their customer through their product knowledge, and it was documented that

customer satisfaction can be enhanced by providing more relevant and accurate product information.

Customers usually receive product information through salespeople communication, package information and advertising. If a salesperson misleads customers by providing incomplete or misleading information, then this can have a negative effect on the customer's perceptions regarding the sale person, product and manufacturer. Therefore, sale-force involvement in the corporate marketing communication is important for achieving customer satisfaction, and without effective communications, the quality of service suffers (Johlke and Duhan, 2001).

It is evident in the literature that the sales force plays a critical role in delivering brand services to consumers, but according to Baker et al. (2014), most of the time salespeople fail to deliver brand message in an appropriate manner. Therefore, it is necessary for organisations to ensure that that sales force integration is in place to deliver the brand message effectively.

2.9.4 Need for Sales force Integration into Corporate Marketing Communications

Recent literature suggests that all stakeholders should be part of communications integration as a variety of stakeholders influence organisational outcomes (Verma, S. and Girdhar, P., 2020) but nevertheless the literature on IMC has failed to identify the role of stakeholders such as the sales force in IMC and on subsequent performance. Strategic communication is positively related to the degree of sales force integration (Cadeaux and Ng, 2012). However, many organisations seem to be a long way from integrating their sales force into their marketing communications because they do not adopt a true strategic approach, but rather they focus on an operational approach to products, and this causes a lack of internal diffusion of the communication strategy (Gabrielli and Balboni, 2010). Therefore, there is a need for integration, and organisations must make additional effort to communicate effectively to salespeople in order to achieve strategic goals and targets (Baker et al., 2014). Providing brand-specific information directly to the sales team could increase their identification with brand and enhance their performance (Baker et al., 2014). Problems could be prevented by implementing a better communication system and it is the responsibility of top management to distribute competences within their company (Karlíček et al., 2013). According to Karlíček

(2013), integration can only be achieved from top to bottom, and it is the responsibility of management to regulate and control an integrated approach across different departments. However, managers frequently have problems of ego or pass on limited information to lower levels, resulting in restricted communication. There must be a commitment from top management in order to bring an integrated programme and remove all the barriers that prevent integration (Christensen et al., 2008).

According to Lyus et al. (2011), the sales force can be a key vehicle for the implementation of marketing campaigns, as well as a rich source of market intelligence. However, communication between the sales force and the remainder of the organisation might create a negative impact on the performance of the organisation as a whole if there are no proper channels of communication between them. Therefore, it is important for marketers to focus on effective and integrated communication with the sales force of the organisation, through which they can target the maximum amount of market share and increase organisational performance. For effective integrated marketing communication, there must be a link between the sales people of the organisation and the organisation itself (Valos et al., 2016). A sales force is an indispensable part of the organisational communication through which organisations can achieve their goals.

It is clear from the literature that integration is a complex and important issue that needs to be addressed (Christensen et al., 2008; Valos et al., 2016). Furthermore, integration cannot be achieved only by middle managers, but it should rather come from the top and cannot be just memo driven or in the form of directives (Karlíček et al., 2013). In other words, the marketing department should be responsible for delivering all messages to salespeople and across the organisation. However, according to Porcu et al. (2017), a systematic 'strategic business process' is required in the organisation, where the organisation as whole should be responsible for delivering the same message from all other departments rather than just marketing. There is a need for 'strategic integration' that involves internal (e.g. sales force) and external integration in order to deliver a 'one voice' message to all contact points in a coordinated manner (Johansen and Andersen, 2012).

These views are quite close to the research undertaken in this study and come to a point of convergence that suggests there is a need for 'integration' in the organisation. However this study will justifiably interpret this in terms of 'sales force integration' (internal integration), because external integration cannot be achieved unless internal integration is achieved first.

(Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012). In addition, it has been noted that integration processes have a significant and positive correlation with organisational performance outcomes (Reid, 2005). However, the study has also revealed some of the benefits that can be gained by achieving 'sales force integration' at a corporate level. These benefits are explained in the following section by using the term 'sales force performance outcomes'.

Recently it has been suggested that IMC implementation remains under researched (Manoli and Hodgkinson, 2020) and this current research seeks to partially address this by examining what factors may influence the internal integration of marketing communications.

2.10 Sales force Performance Outcomes

As discussed previously, sales force integration plays an important and significant role in maintaining efficient marketing communication both within and outside the organisation. The following sections intend to examine how sales force integration is important for the generation of the sales force performance outcomes. Therefore, the aim of this section is to analyse and identify the impact of sales force integration on sales force performance outcomes.

2.10.1 Sales force Job Satisfaction

A considerable amount of research has been conducted to investigate the relationship between key corporate variables (such as job satisfaction) and internal marketing communication. All of them have demonstrated a positive relationship between them. A study conducted by Johlke et al. (2001) sets out a coherent explanation for the relationship between the sales manager's communication practices and the salespeople communication and job outcomes, and introduced a model which demonstrates that a manager's communication practices are positively associated with a salesperson's perceptions of communication quality. Communication quality is positively correlated with salesperson communication satisfaction, and this in turn is also positively associated with job satisfaction of the sales force. This shows that marketing managers' communication and organisational

communication practices on sales force job satisfaction are directly related to internal communications (Carriere and Bourque, 2009). Further empirical research has also proved that better internal corporate communication is positively and directly related to sales force job satisfaction (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012). In all these studies, communication dissatisfaction is correlated with lower level of job satisfaction, which could lead to lower overall performance of the sales force (Rajhans, 2012).

The sales force engagement by top management is another major factor which plays a pivotal role in their satisfaction (Guesalaga, 2016). Sales teams in an organisation could also feel a sense of satisfaction from their job when there is consistency in communication coming from managers relating to the short- and long-term objectives set by the organisation. A clear vision of the company would also enable the sales force to act in the best interest of the organisation as well. The failure of practicing the principle of consistent communication would prevent the company from satisfying its sales force because it would not be able to receive the required information on time.

The integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communication is also a two-way communication process. Rather than just informing, organisations should also attempt to listening their ideas. If the salespeople are made part of the decision-related processes such as marketing of the products or services, it will enhance their level of satisfaction (Thomas et al., 2009). The sales force operates at the front line by dealing with the customer directly and are consequently well aware of the market gaps and customer responses. Involving the sales force in marketing communication and adopting their ideas does not just make them satisfied, but can also lead the organisation to gain a competitive edge in the market (Ariani, 2015).

A study put forward by Kitchen and Burgmann (2010) suggested that the successful introduction of a new product in the market is possible through the integration of corporate marketing communications. Therefore, a lack of sales force integration could lead to total failure of a product and as a consequence, sales people may not possess the confidence to deal with new products and their level of job satisfaction could ultimately decline.

It is evident from the literature that external performance of the organisation also depends on the job satisfaction of the sales team because of the correlation between these two variables. In addition, Lyus et al. (2011) stated that the success of the organisation depends on the satisfaction of the sales force and it is only possible when they are properly informed in a timely manner. Therefore, effective and integrated communications help organisations to

achieve their external goals (brand outcomes), as well as internal (sales force performance outcomes) goals (Sriyothin, 2016). Lack of communication could also restrict the sales force in delivering organisational messages to customers and as a result, the organisation would not be able to achieve its strategic goals.

Therefore, job satisfaction is not just crucial for the sales force itself, but it can also increase the overall organisational performance. It helps the organisation to reduce turnover, it helps in the productivity of the organisation and improves the sales revenue of the business, and this is the source of providing competitive advantage to the organisation over its competitors (Khan et al., 2012; Yee et al., 2008; Ismail et al., 2013).

Integrated marketing communication is thus very important in the corporate organisation, as it has a direct influence on sales force job satisfaction, and it can also help the organisation to achieve its strategic goals. In addition, the literature recognises the importance of job satisfaction on the organisation, and it is considered as a very important constituent of the performance outcomes (Rajhans, 2012).

2.10.2 Sales Force Job Performance

Effective communication from managers will decrease ambiguity in employee (sales force) roles and improve their job performance because it is a power supervisory tool that enables managers to increase the level of job performance of the sales force (Johlke and Duhan, 2001). The role of effective internal communication is crucial for the performance of the sales force because of its strong association with job performance (Gray and Laidlaw, 2002). Kreps (1986) also asserts that effective organisational communication helps individuals to improve their performance and it is important for organisations to fulfil individual goals and self-actualisation. Van Riel and Fombrun (2007) introduced a model that suggested that an effective internal communication system positively contributes to stakeholders (e.g. the sales force) perceptions about the organisation and improves its performance.

According to a study conducted by Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba (2013), salespeople act as the advocates of the organisation in the external environment and their performance can be enhanced if they are well-integrated, especially in the internal organisational communication activities. Another study emphasised effective marketing communication and suggested that

the internal marketing communication of the organisation is directly linked to the performance of the employees, especially customer-interfacing employees (such as the sales force) (Sriyothin, 2016).

Additionally, the performance of the sales force is directly related to the performance of the organisation due to the fact that when the sales force performs well, they are able to connect to consumers in a much more effective manner. To avoid any negative reviews from the consumer, the organisation needs to create an integrated communication system so that salespeople can deliver the positive aspects and advantage of the products and services in a productive manner (Lys et al., 2011). Integrated communication practice allows sales-team to exchange information regarding new developments or customer feedback that can help organisations to overcome external threats and challenges (Husain, 2013). At the same time, it allows managers to improve sales force performance by identifying their weaknesses. Such practices are very useful to the organisation because they provide the opportunity to the sales team to improve their performance (Paulus, 2018).

In the modern era of constant change, it is thus important for organisations to provide constant marketing training to their sales and marketing teams in order to provide and keep up with the changing preferences and choices required by their consumers. Effective communication practice not only increases the performance of the sales force, but also strengthens the gap between the seller (sales force) and the consumer (Ismail et al., 2013).

It is evident from the literature that job performance is a fundamental constituent of the performance outcome, as it has direct link with organisational marketing communications.

2.10.3 Sales Force Job Involvement

In the past, various studies have defined job involvement in different ways. Allport (1943) appears to be the first author among them who defined involvement in work as a method of describing attitudes of work, as it refers to the level of participation in work. The level of job involvement also influences the functioning of organisations. One study has claimed that the higher the level of involvement of the workers (e.g. the sales force) with respect to their job, the higher the organisational output (Shih et al., 2009). Lodahl and Kejnar (1965) reported that job involvement is the identification of an individual with the job and the perceived job

importance on a personal psychological level. Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) indicated that job involvement is the understanding of the importance of work or identification with their work in people's lives. Paullay et al. (1994) suggested that job involvement is the perceived level of dedication and concern of the individual for their current work.

According to Singh and Gupta (2015), the concept of job involvement is similar to job commitment, but it should not be confused with organisational commitment. Job involvement implies a situation where the employees (sales force) are highly committed to the tasks they are assigned to. With high job involvement, the sales force translates the goals and objectives of the organisation on to themselves and ensure that they achieve them (Gupta, 2015). Job involvement is also considered to be the situation when salespeople are psychologically connected to their job and they feel the need to make the job part of their life.

Various research has considered sales personnel with high level of involvement to be 'institutional stars', while the title of 'lone wolves' has been given to those who have low level of involvement (Abdallah et al., 2016). Therefore, it must be the duty of the organisation to encourage job involvement, especially in their sales team, by keeping them informed so that they better understand organisational goals and strategies.

The sales force must possess all the information regarding the products and services that the organisation is offering so that they can confidently interact with the customers without any confusion and deal with their problems effectively. This would highly develop the involvement of the sales team and means that they would be able to support the marketing strategy. Therefore, organisations must have effective modes and channels of internal communication to convey clear messages that are likely to enhance the learning and involvement of the sales force (Verghese, 2017; Singh and Gupta, 2015). Organisations consider their sales team as their internal customers, and it is thus necessary to satisfy their needs by communicating with them effectively (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012).

A sales force that has a high level of involvement is generally considered to have a higher level of job satisfaction and motivation which further leads to enhanced job performance (Abdallah et al., 2016). Since job involvement seems to be related to an increase in the overall performance of the sales force, marketing managers consider job involvement to be an essential part of the overall organisational success, as salespeople with a high level of job involvement are considered to be highly creative and innovative and seem to contribute in the important decision-making process of the organisation. In addition, highly involved

salespeople are more likely to be able to pay more attention to the tasks that have been assigned to them and execute or perform their job with enthusiasm. Moreover, salespeople with a high level of job involvement are keen to learn new techniques and consider their organisational managers to be their teachers (Abdallah et al., 2016).

Furthermore, it is responsibility of the organisation to enhance the lower level of job involvement in the sales force by involving them in organisational marketing strategies. Corporate managers should understand the fact that avoiding a low level of involvement in the sales force can be crucial to the organisational profitability, since it has a direct relationship with customers.

A lack of information for customers could bring organisational revenue down. It is thus very important for the organisation to involve their sales team in their job by keeping them in their marketing activities so that they are able to sell more products and be committed to the targets set by the organisation (Alinein, 2016). When the corporate marketing practice enables the employee to sell their products effectively, it is likely that the marketing strategy will be successful as a consequence (Peterson et al., 2015).

It is evident that organisations that do not involve their sales team in organisational marketing communication strategies are most likely to suffer internally and externally because the involvement of the sales force in their job is also related to the overall organisational performance. Therefore, sales force personnel who acquire adequate and complete marketing knowledge through organisational integrated practices are able to convey organisational messages to the target customers effectively, thereby helping the organisation to achieve its marketing goals. It can therefore be argued that job involvement is one of the important factors of the performance outcomes, and organisations need to involve their sales team in its marketing communications practice to enhance the involvement of the sales force with respect to their job.

2.10.4 Sales Force Job Commitment

Organisational commitment is considered to be the attachment to the organisation, while job commitment is the attachment to the job assigned (Singh and Gupta, 2015). The role of integrated communication in respect to job commitment is pivotal. Effective communication

leads to the creation of a positive atmosphere within the organisation and will eventually result in enhanced job commitment (Jones et al., 2005). In contrast, poor marketing communication then can potentially decrease the commitment of the sales force in their job.

On realising the importance of effective internal communication with respect to their job, a number of studies have mentioned the role of job commitment in the corporate organisation. Lyus et al. (2011) claimed in their study that organisations around the world have started exploring ways of integrated marketing communication with their sales team to make sure that they remain committed to their job.

Furthermore, the integration of corporate marketing communication with the front-line personnel would lead the company to retain their sales team and keep them committed. Usually organisations face difficulties in retaining their sales team, as the design and development of policies do not always suit these boundary personnel. In addition, the strategies adopted by the organisation should be made in consultation with the sales personnel in order to ensure that any hostility with the sales team is minimised and that they remain committed to their job (Kuester and Hildesheim, 2011).

According to Lyus et al. (2011), the change process can result in the development of anxiety within the workforce due to its probable influence on the overall processes, future ventures or resource allocation. It is often observed that the sales force is not involved in the decision-making processes related to them. This leads to dissatisfaction and their levels of commitment also decline. Organisations have generally failed to consider the process or the efficiency of the process through which information is dispersed to all its contact points. There are two main problems that are encountered the most, and where the blame for which is attributed to the sales force. Firstly, the problems faced by the management in assembling the salespeople to participate in marketing intellect and secondly, sufficiently transmitting the collected information to the business. This leads to reduction in commitment. On the other hand, if the organisation is able to build a positive communication corridor between the sales force and the marketing communication, this can lead to enhanced job commitment, and eventually the organisation's performance improves (Lyus et al., 2011). This indicates that sales force integration with corporate marketing communication tends to have a positive impact on the commitment level of the sales force.

Critically analysing this aspect, it is arguable that a lack of integration in corporate marketing communication with sales force would prevent them from remaining committed to their job

and this would affect their internal performance. Additionally, this negative and hostile attitude of the sales force would ultimately adversely affect external organisational performance. Job commitment is therefore one of the essential constituents for measuring performance outcomes of the sales force in organisations (Kumar and Pansari, 2014).

2.10.5 Sales Force Job Motivation

Effective communication is perhaps the most central process in an organisation, and it motivates the sales force to perform well because of communication satisfaction (Octaviannand et al., 2017). Earlier studies also supported this idea that the group with high communication satisfaction had more positive attitudes towards work motivation than low communication satisfaction groups (Chiang and Jang, 2008). This study has also recognised the positive effect of communications on employee motivation and it suggested that managers should improve their communication skills, learn to communicate immediately and accurately, and organise their communication according to employees (or sales force) needs. When the sales- force is highly satisfied with corporate communications, they respond more positively to the components of motivation and are more likely to do their job well when motivated. Zajkowska (2012) also highlighted that marketing communication is considered to motivate employees that can work for the betterment of the organisation and enhance their performance, whereas lack of communication affects every single salesman's behaviour such as a decrease in motivation that can lead to ineffective coordination and ineffectiveness in marketing, ultimately failing to achieve corporate goals (Holá, 2012).

It is evident that sales force motivation is vitally important as it is the one fundamental factor that has a role in enhancing the internal and external performance within the context of corporate marketing communication. A number of studies have confirmed that job motivation has a strong association with overall job performance because job motivation is perceived as an important driving force for improved job performance (Zimmerman and Chu, 2013).

According to Dobre (2013), the motivations within employees consist of two different dimensions that are referred to as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the one important aspect of employee motivation and is mainly achieved through internal satisfaction, as it was defined as “...*the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfaction*”

(Ryan and Deci, 2000, p.56). Several prior studies have found different ways of achieving internal satisfaction, and communication satisfaction is one of them (Sriyothin, 2016).

Coordination in internal communication has been noted as an important component that helps to motivate salespeople in the organisation. For instance, a study conducted by Muogbo (2013) established the link between coordination and sales team motivation.

According to this research, when the salespeople are coordinated with every aspect regarding their queries, given the assistance they require in terms of sharing the information regarding their job responsibilities, then they develop a sense of motivation among them which increases their overall satisfaction and performance, which in turn ultimately results in increased productivity and performance of the organisation (Muogbo, 2013). Another commentary by Quirke (2017) also emphasised the different components of internal communications and highlighted the importance of clarity as one of the important constituents for the development of motivation among sales staff. According to this study, when salespeople are not provided with a clear set of instructions and strategies, then their engagement with their job is affected and as a result, their motivation becomes low.

The development of salespeople motivation through the effective internal communication has been described as one of the major aspects in corporate marketing communication and its importance has been highlighted in several prior studies (Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba, 2013). Consequently, sales force job motivation can also be considered as one of the important constituents when measuring the performance outcomes in this study.

A review of the literature has provided evidence that implementation of integration in marketing communications must be recognised by all brand and marketing communications managers, and they should attempt to implement the IMC process to improve their performance. Therefore, a greater degree of integration in the management of marketing communications in organisations can lead to better marketing performance with better sales force performance (Vantamay, 2011). The results of the *Accenture High Performance Workforce Study* and the *Selling in Turbulent Times Survey* also explain that most business executives believe that a company's performance depends largely on the sales force, and therefore organisations should improve sales force performance in order to maximise their return on investment (Longino, 2007). This means that organisations need to concentrate more on 'learning and listening' instead of 'telling and selling'. Organisational performance

depends on their sales force performance and sales force performance can be increased when they are fully engaged and integrated in the marketing communications process.

2.11 Chapter Conclusion

After an in-depth review of the literature, it can be concluded that IMC has no doubt become one of the most dominant aspects within marketing communications theory and research since the early 1990s (Kliatchko and Schultz, 2014). Nevertheless, the concept of integration remains relatively unclear and still under-researched (Ots and Nyilasy, 2015; Kitchen and Burgmann, 2015). The debate regarding IMC is still underway with academics and practitioners continuing to move gradually towards reaching an agreement.

However, one thing that has been noted in recent years is that the concept of IMC has shifted from a traditional to a twenty-first century approach. This new concept is based on stakeholder orientation rather than just a customer-centric focus (Porcu et al., 2012b). Although the importance of stakeholders in the organisation has been discussed over the last decade and much has been written since then, there is still a gap in theory as well as in practice, because organisations have failed to achieve strategic integration involving internal and external integration (Johansen and Andersen, 2012). Despite the fact that the concept of integrated communication has moved away from narrow marketing communication to a broader concept, there remains a need for a holistic approach which relates to the overall integration in the organisation (as a whole) with a greater focus on stakeholders (Porcu et al., 2017).

Although IMC experts and supporters have recommended extensive and further research in this field in order to strengthen its theoretical foundation (Porcu et al., 2012b; Kitchen, 2017), no single piece of research has introduced the sales force as a potential stakeholder in the context of IMC. All previous studies have ignored and failed to discuss the importance of sales force integration in this regard, but the current study attempts to fill this gap with the aim of introducing the role of sales force integration into corporate marketing communication.

The current research has also tried to investigate the notion that when organisations keep their marketing communications in harmony rather than in isolation, then their sales force will be

able to deliver potentially better performance outcomes such as sales force job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, job commitment and job motivation. By making the sales force part of corporate marketing communications, they can encourage them to perform well and their distinct performance will help organisations to achieve their overall strategic goals. It is also evident from the literature that the role of these five constituents is indispensable when examining performance outcomes in the context of effective organisational marketing communication. However, there is a lack of empirical research to assess these outcomes in the context of sales force integration and therefore, this issue was thought to be worthy for further analysis and also set to fill that gap in the literature. A thorough review of the literature has also facilitated a comprehensive examination of the 5'C's of integrated marketing communication. It has been evident from the marketing and IMC literature that these 5'C's are the vital constituents of integrated communication and could play an important role in the implementation of sales force integration. This will also add value to the existing literature.

Manoli and Hodgkinson recently (2020) reported that findings such as that not all companies are likely to adopt IMC are in desperate need of further investigation, and this current research provides some of this investigation by examining IMC internally. The present paper also seeks to provide an insight into a variety of questions related to understanding how sales force integration can be implemented efficiently and effectively within an organisation and in addition, whether the level of sales force integration into the marketing communication has any impact on sales force performance outcomes.

Based on the critical and extensive review of the existing literature relating to IMC, corporate communication and management that has been set out in this chapter, a specific conceptual framework of integrated sales force communications can now be constructed and is described in the following section in order to establish current IMC principles.

2.12 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a tool that is developed to provide an overview of interlinked concepts in a simple and comprehensible diagrammatic structure. The conceptual framework of the research phenomenon describes the flow of the research in a concise manner. Usually,

it is designed between the dependent and independent variables with the intention of highlighting the impact and influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Wüstenhagen and Menichetti, 2012).

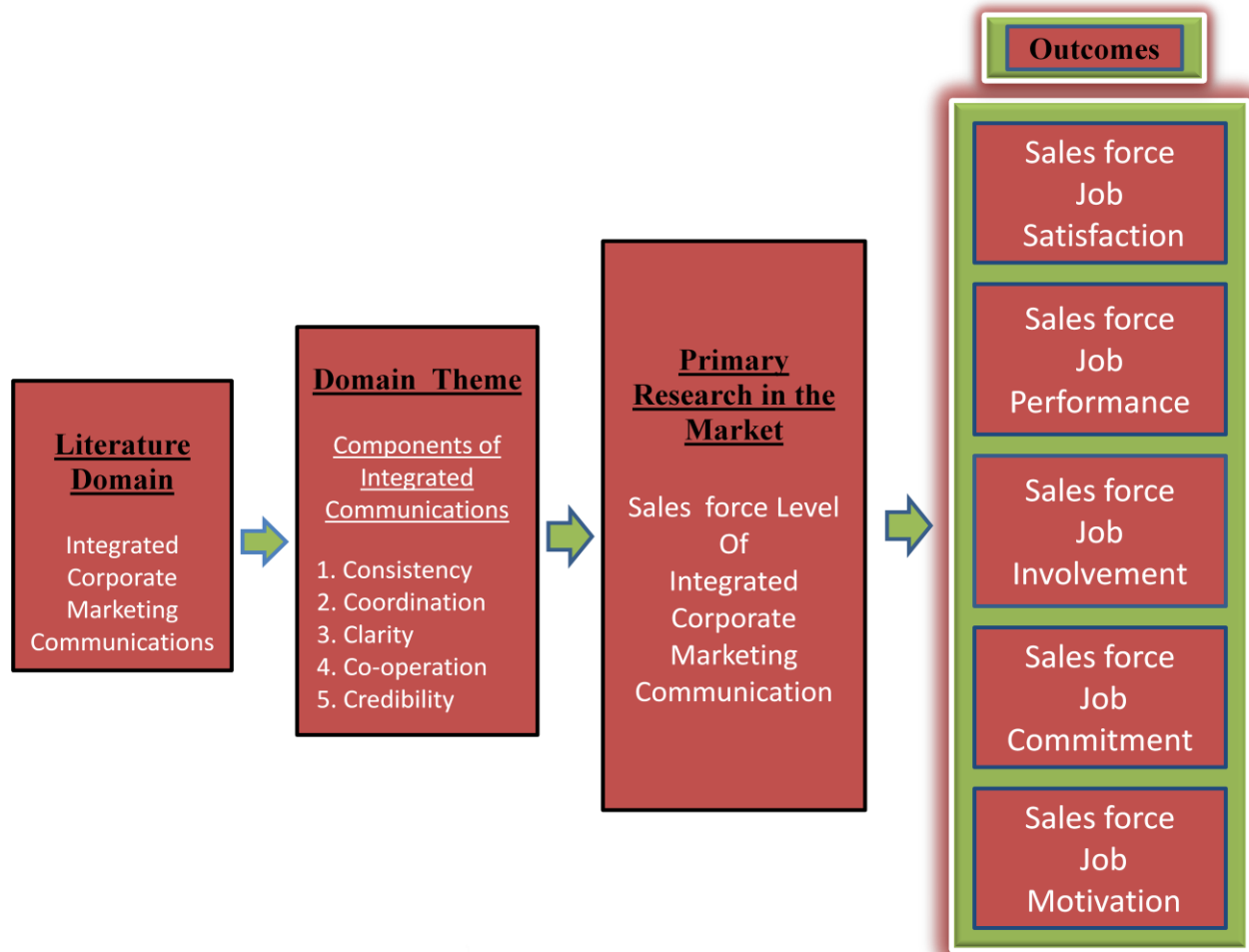
In this particular study, the level of sales force integration has been taken as an independent variable and its influence has been examined over five sales force performance outcomes namely, sales force job satisfaction, job involvement, job performance, job commitment and job motivation.

This conceptual framework illustrated in Figure1 (below) forms the basis for an investigation to be conducted amongst salespeople in a corporate organisation in the UK, with the aim of establishing their opinions regarding the impact of integrated communication in terms of increased level of performance outcomes. The conceptual framework outlines existing corporate marketing communications systems and indicates how sales force integration in organisations can influence selected performance outcomes.

The in-depth literature review on corporate, marketing, management and IMC has helped to identify the 5'C's (consistency, coordination, clarity, cooperation and credibility) as the vital components of integrated communication. These elements will be built into the measurement of integrated communications to be used in this research. This will enable an exploration of how these components could help in engaging the sales force into an integrated organisational communications process.

In summary, this framework highlights the view that by making organisational marketing communications integrated and achieving a high level of sales force integration, organisations can potentially deliver outcomes such as increased levels of sales force job satisfaction, job involvement, job performance, job commitment and job motivation with the help of these 5'C's. Overall, this entire framework proposes that in corporate marketing communication, sales force integration appears to be the only way to overcome the existing disintegration of communications in most organisations. However, this notion will be verified (or not) later in this research process. The following diagram thus proposes a conceptual framework to be tested in this research.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework: Marketing Communications, Integration and Performance Outcomes



2.13 Hypothesis Development

It is clear from the model in Figure 1 (above) that sales force integration comprises of certain outcomes that need to be examined and assessed individually. Therefore, the current study intended to determine and assesses the influence of sales force integration on different outcomes separately. A review of the literature has unveiled a number of possible hypotheses which could be investigated. However, in order to keep the research within the bounds of the overall aim and objectives, along within the resources available to complete the study, the

total number of hypotheses has been limited to five for further investigation and these are discussed in more detail below.

Earlier in this chapter it was discussed that integration of effective sales force communication with organisational marketing activities could potentially deliver enhanced performance outcomes because sales people always want to listen to and to also feel that they are contributing to organisational outcomes (Ahmad and Aldakhil, 2012). Regardless of how much information they receive, they continue to report they need to know more (Thomas et al., 2009).

However, when the sales force have not been kept well informed and their opinions are not considered, then they start to feel insignificant and detached and arguably, this will ultimately lead to decreased levels of sales force performance-related outcomes such as job satisfaction, and so on. Therefore, in order to obtain maximum outputs, an organisation needs to achieve high levels of sales force integration into corporate marketing communications. In other words, the more integrated the sales force, the higher the performance outcomes and conversely, the less integrated the sales force, the lower the outcomes. This argument takes as its point of departure the development of five hypotheses in relation to five sales force performance outcomes, namely job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, job commitment and job motivation.

In terms of job satisfaction, this was described as the extent to which an employee is satisfied and engaged with his job (Khan et al., 2012). The relationship between effective communication and job satisfaction had already been established when Downs and Hazen (1977) developed a comprehensive Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) and its importance has been growing since (Sriyothin, 2016).

A number of prior studies have highlighted the positive relationship between effective organisational communication and job satisfaction (Welch and Jackson, 2007; Du Preez and Bendixen, 2015). It is evident from previous studies that by increasing marketing communication in organisations, job satisfaction can also be increased. A recent study has also found a strong relationship between effective internal communication and job satisfaction (Kulachai et al., 2018). In this 2018 study, one of the hypotheses tested was the positive relationship between internal organisational communication and job satisfaction, where job satisfaction was taken as a dependent variable.

Empirical results of past studies have indicated that when an organisation increases its communication with its employees or sales team, it reduces uncertainty and job satisfaction increases (Thomas et al., 2009). In contrast, when organisations fail to involve their sales team in marketing communications, their level of job satisfaction decreases.

In other words, sales force job satisfaction can be increased by increasing their involvement in the organisational marketing communication process. This positive relationship of the effective communication with job satisfaction has been recognised and confirmed in a number of previous studies. Ferdous (2008) speculated that firms which adopted internal IMC practices directed at employees would be able to promote greater satisfaction among those employees. With regards to this current study, it is thus important to analyse whether sales force integration has any association with job satisfaction. This led to the first hypothesis.

H1: The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job satisfaction.

In relation to job performance, the literature has recognised that organisational communication has a direct link with salespeople's job performance. A considerable amount of research has been done to confirm that the effectiveness of organisational communication can increase the performance of the sales force employees (Pincus, 1986, Kreps, 1990). This means that the relationship between effective communication and job performance has already been established (Sriyothin, 2016).

Gorsi et al. (2000) and Gray and Laidlaw (2002) introduced a positive relationship between effective internal marketing communication and employee (sales force) performance. They considered effective marketing communication as the most important tool to increase sales force performance.

Van Riel and Fombrun's (2007) model also confirmed that effective internal communication is positively associated with the performance of stakeholders (such as the sales force) in the organisation. Further empirical studies have also demonstrated that performance of sales personnel is directly related to internal corporate communication (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012; Ismail et al., 2013). It is evident from previous studies that those organisations that do not involve their sales team in communication strategy, witness a

decline in their job performance (McKenna, 2000), because employees expect to be involved in the organisational communication process (Kreps, 1990).

Kumar and Pansari (2014) highlighted a positive and strong relationship between the amount of communication delivered by the organisation and employee. According to this 2014 study, the more an organisation communicates to its employees, the better performance will be.

The current study is also expected to see the same relationship, i.e. whether increased sales force integration results in an increase in job performance. This led to the second hypothesis.

H2: The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job performance.

The review of the literature has shown that job involvement is one of the important constituents of the sales force performance outcomes. It is evident that effective modes and channels of internal communication can enhance sales force involvement in their job (Verghese, 2017). Salespeople believe that vertical communication (from top management or supervisors) is more relevant than horizontal communication (usually from co-workers) because its more relevant to their task and it helps them to be more involved in their job (Thomas et al., 2009). This shows that the more top managers communicate to their team in the corporate organisation, the more involved their team will be in their job.

A number of studies have confirmed this positive relationship between effective organisational communication and job involvement, and they have found that it can affect the overall performance of the sales team as well. (Khizar et al., 2016; Shaheen and Farooqi, 2014). Empirical results of past studies have shown the importance of job involvement in relation to organisational communication and have chosen job involvement as a dependent variable, because it has been shown to be strongly related with performance outcomes (Thomas et al., 2009; Ye et al., 2007; Major et al., 2007).

Kulachai et al. (2018) also tested a hypothesis in their research regarding a positive relationship between internal organisation communication and job involvement and suggested sufficient and effective communication plays an important role in enhancing the employee participation. On the other hand, a lower level of participation of the sales team in marketing and decision-making processes has been found to lead to lower levels of job

involvement. It was therefore thought to be worthwhile examining whether sales force integration has any impact on job involvement. This led to the third hypothesis in this research.

H3: The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job involvement.

With regard to job commitment, the impact of IMC in organisations is significant, and organisations around the world are attempting to improve their marketing communication practice to keep sales people committed to their job (Lysus et al., 2011). A number of studies have shown a positive and strong association between effective communication and job commitment (Welch and Jackson, 2007; Boon et al., 2006; Brunetto and Farr-Wharton, 2004).

Puth (2002) and Tsai et al. (2009) also highlighted this strong relationship and mentioned that effective management communications help organisations to integrate managerial functions effectively, as well as increase employee commitment. Another study reveals that extending integrated marketing communication in the organisation can help to improve sales force job commitment (Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba, 2013). Sharma and Kamalanabhan (2012) also explained the benefits of internal communication and suggested that communication satisfaction can help to increase employee (sales force) commitment to their job.

Conversely, communication dissatisfaction can result in lower levels of job commitment. Lower job commitment can affect individual performance in different ways, for example showing resistance to accepting guidance, not taking any responsibility at work, or in some cases having an intention to leave their job (Boddy and Taplin, 2016; McKenna, 2000). Therefore, employee interaction and communication satisfaction are very important for keeping them committed towards their job. Kumar and Pansari's (2014) study also confirmed that the role of effective communication in the organisation has a positive relationship and found that the higher the communication satisfaction, the higher the commitment level.

Empirical past studies have shown that the lack of organisational communication practice tends to reduce the level of salespeople's commitment towards their job, whereas an effective communication strategy helps organisation to improve their commitment level. Ferdous (2008) speculated that firms which adopted internal IMC practices directed at employees

would be able to promote greater commitment among those employees. In this current study perhaps, it would logically be assumed that increased level of commitment is due to increased level of sales force integration. This led to the fourth hypothesis in this research.

H4: The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job commitment.

Further, in terms of job commitment, the literature has acknowledge that effective marketing communication has a direct impact on the motivation of the sales team in the organisation, as communication satisfaction plays a crucial role in motivating them in respect of their job (Octaviannand et al., 2017). Effective internal communication practice has a positive impact on employee behaviour in that organisations can deliver its business promises to their customers by motivating their sales team (Du Preez and Bendixen, 2015). Furthermore, another study redefines the term ‘effectiveness of internal communication’ that can lead the achievement of different outcomes, and motivation is one of them (Rogala and Kaniewska-Sęba, 2013). Effective supervisory communication has also a positive influence on the motivation of their sales team (McKenzie, 2015).

A number of studies have measured the extent to which organisational communication motivates and encourages workers to archive their goals (Downs and Hazen, 1977; Zwijze-Koning and de Jong, 2007). High quality organisational communication provides the conditions for employees to fulfil individual goals and achieve self-actualisation, and it is important for the organisation to motivate employees to join and work for the organisation so that their personal development, growth, and self-actualisation are facilitated (Kreps, 1990, p.78).

Motivation has also been described as a necessary constituent of the performance outcomes, as it can impact on overall performance of the sales team. Rajhans (2012) found a link between employee motivation and overall performance. The aim of this study was to analyse the inter-relationship between organisational communication and motivation with its overall impact on employee performance, and the results confirmed the positive association with them (Rajhans, 2012).

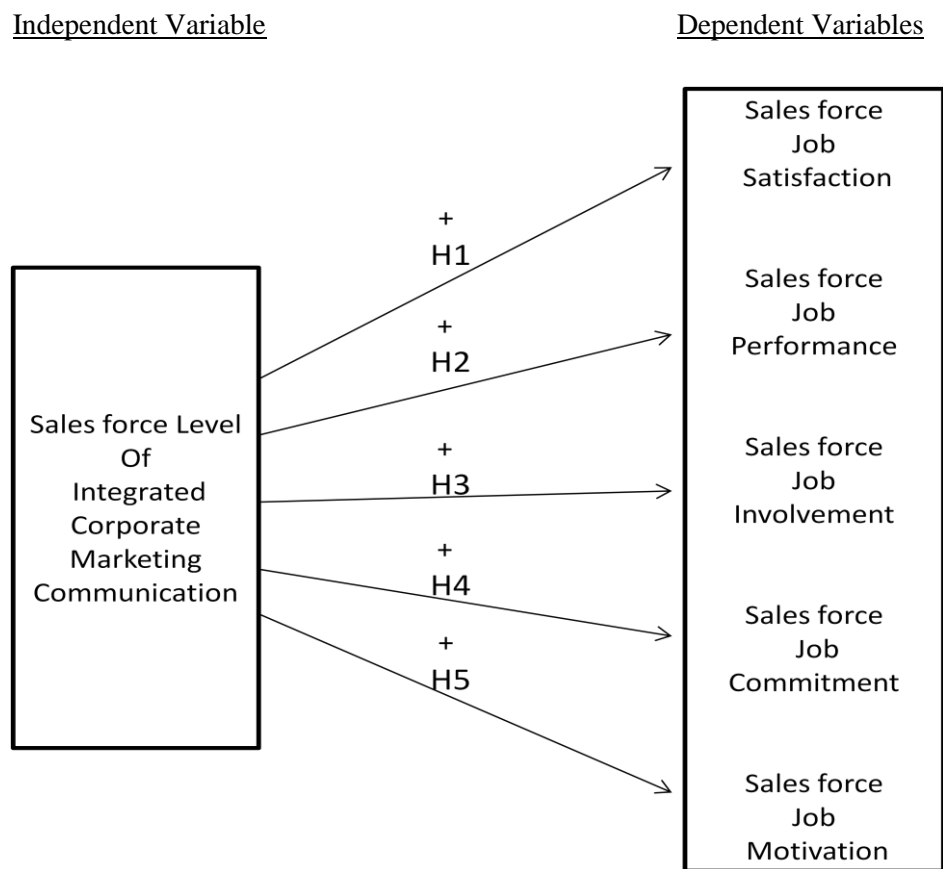
The empirical results of number of studies have confirmed a positive and significant relationship between effective organisational communication and job motivation (Sriyothin,

2016). Poor communication would logically be expected to bring the motivation level of the sales team down. This argument led to the fifth hypothesis in this research namely, to analyse whether higher level of sales integration has any positive association with higher levels of job motivation.

H5: The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job motivation.

The literature has demonstrated a significant association between organisational communication and performance outcomes, and number of scholars and practitioners have confirmed a positive relationship between them. In addition, internal organisational efforts such as increased communication to front line people have also been suggested as way to enhance their performance (Baker et al., 2014). However, many of these previous studies have discussed these performance outcomes in the context of ‘internal’ or ‘effective organisational communication’ in relation to ‘employee performance’. Nevertheless, the literature has generally failed to discuss these outcomes more precisely in relation to front-line staff by using the term ‘sale-force performance outcomes’ in the context of sales force integration. There is a lack of empirical research that investigates some of the ways in which sales force integration correlates with measures of their performance, so this issue was thought to be worthy of further examination. It is for this reason that this research has attempted to fill this gap and add value to the existing literature by generating the following five hypotheses to posit the proposed relationship between sales force integration into corporate marketing communication with sales force performance outcomes. These are outlined in Figure 2 (below), which proposes a hypothesised model to be tested in this research.

Figure 2: Hypothesised Model



Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to set out in detail the research methodology used to test the hypotheses that were generated in the previous chapter (Literature Review). This includes an explanation of the research approach and philosophy chosen for the current study, along with a demonstration of the research method, design and sample used. The process used to generate the research instrument (questionnaire) is then explained, starting from the main concept of questionnaire development to the selection of the actual questions used. This includes an explanation of how the scale of measurement, questionnaire and variables were developed for this study. A number of instruments were deployed in order to measure variables, i.e. six different scales were finalised to measure six different variables. Then the role of the pilot test in refining the final questionnaire is also discussed. Finally, the chapter discusses some of the ethical issues that were taken into consideration when conducting the research.

3.2 Research Approach and Philosophy

According to Carson et al. (2001, p.1), research philosophy aims to “...*understand the philosophy that underpins the choices and decisions to be made in staking a research position.*” The philosophy of the research can be underlined in two fundamental paradigms described as being ‘realist’ or ‘positivist’, and ‘subjectivist’ or ‘phenomenologist’ (Muijs, 2011).

In the current study, the ontology of the purposed research was based on realism because it was found that there is an objective reality that exists in the social sciences which can be measured empirically (Boddy, 2005b). In order to acquire a measure of this single reality and to fill the knowledge gap, a positivist approach was then applied. This also justified the definition of a ‘positivist approach’ in terms of the research paradigm used as it states in positivism that:

“...the social world exists externally and that its properties can be measured through objective methods rather than being inferred subjectively through sensation, reflection or intuition.” (Easterby-Smith and Thorpe, 2001, p.28).

In positivism:

“...the world works according to fixed laws of cause and effect and scientific thinking is used to test theories about these laws, and either reject or provisionally accept them.” (Muijs, 2010, P.4).

It can be argued then that the epistemology of this research was based on positivism, i.e. a knowledge gap was found and there was an attempt to find the relationship between two concepts. In addition, hypotheses were developed to see if any relationship exists between two variables (dependent and independent), and there were then tested by validating the data statistically in an objective way. This justifies the positivist approach to the research problem.

A positivist approach is one of the most commonly used paradigms in marketing research with wider acceptance in the management community because it represents a comprehensive framework for investigating the social world (Sriyothin, 2016; Chilisa and Kawulich, 2012). Positivism is concerned with verifiable, positive and concrete facts and is based on the law-like principle of how those facts interact with each other in relation to a generated hypothesis that can be tested (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). Therefore, positivism is established from facts with the aim of identifying causal relationship by means of objective facts (Carson et al., 2001). In addition, some of the implications of the positivist approach are that it is based on a single reality, has direct links to the real world, understands that it is possible to acquire secure knowledge from objective investigation, has a clear distinction between fact and value judgments, and that the researcher remains detached from the object of study (Sriyothin, 2016, Saunders, 2011).

The main advantage of the positivist approach is that reliability and validity of the results can be cross-checked by another researcher through precise replication of the results (Boddy, 2009). This ability to be cross-checked and replicated provides the opportunity to confirm the reliability and validity of the research with the help of independent verification by other researchers (Gill and Johnson, 1997). It has been acknowledged that the positivist researcher is likely to use a very structured methodology so that results can be replicated. This emphasis

on quantifiable observations entails quantitative statistical analysis for precise results (Gill and Johnson, 1997).

In contrast, the other main alternative phenomenological approach has the idea of subjectivism. It is not based on a single external reality, has no direct link to the real world, is understood through perceived knowledge and possesses less distinction between facts and value judgment (Sriyothin, 2016). Husserl (1960) explained phenomenology as the “*science of the subjective*” (Husserl, 1960), whereas Taylor and Bogdan (1984) mentioned that the phenomenologist tries to understand social phenomena from the actor's point of view and examines how the world is experienced (Carson et al., 2001).

This demonstrates that more consciousness is involved, as it seems impossible to detach the researcher (Brown, 1995). This approach seems to prevail in investigations based on qualitative research in the social sciences. In the context of marketing, research based on a phenomenological approach could be used to establish how managers perceive their role in the marketing decision-making process within their organisation (Carson et al., 2001). This indicates that a phenomenological approach is useful where the involvement of the researcher plays a crucial role.

In contrast, in the context of the current study, the aim is to measure the extent of sales force integration and its related outcomes from a purely objective point of view rather than the researcher's own belief or perceptions. The researcher of this study intended to remain detached from the research methods and the object by maintaining a distance from them. In addition, the current research concerns the testing of theories and aims to uncover the relationships between variables precisely (for reliability and validity purposes), which would require quantitative methodology. Furthermore, the proposed model in this current research aims to determine whether the association between sales force integration and its related performance outcomes holds true. For this purpose, the study will focus on numerical and statistical procedures rather than observations or phenomena. Based on its merits, a positivist research paradigm seems to be the most appropriate and hence was chosen for the current research.

As this argument headed from specific to general, based on testing theory or concepts with the help of hypotheses, this also directed the researcher towards the ‘deductive’ method of research, which led to the use of quantitative methodology (Saunders, 2011).

3.3 Research Method and Design

As stated above, a quantitative method was used to eliminate the researcher's bias and to collect data that could be measured objectively (Horstmann, 2005). The reason for choosing the quantitative method because it can “*strive to be as specific as possible, attempt to narrow the magnitude of the study and develop a framework within which the researcher confines the search*”, whereas in qualitative research “*this specificity in scope, methods and framework is almost completely ignored*” (Kumar, 2011, p.67). Another main advantage of the quantitative method is that it aims to find the relationships between cause and effect, which helps to test the hypotheses and attempts to predict and generalise the findings to a larger population. In contrast, this is not entirely possible with qualitative methods because of its intention to understand the values and beliefs from the researcher’s point of view (Boddy, 2005a). Furthermore, the accuracy in measurement is not possible because rather than numbers, qualitative data is generally expressed in words (Williman, 2011). In other words, the element of transparency in qualitative research is less than quantitative research (Bryman, 2008, Johnson and Christensen, 2012). In addition, qualitative research views the social world as non-statistical and dynamic (Johnson and Christensen, 2012) and as a result, findings are very limited to a particular sample size and hence, cannot be generalised (De Vaus and de Vaus, 2013). Conversely, research conducted via quantitative methods aims to achieve maximum precision and the results can usually be generalised (Kumar, 2019).

In order to achieve the aim and objectives of the current research, it was therefore decided to adopt a quantitative approach. Because of its strength and characteristics, it not only has a dominant place in the research methodology, but is also the most preferable approach in the marketing and management literature for obtaining precise results (Eyisi, 2016). In this quantitative approach, a questionnaire survey technique was employed to collect the data. Babbie (1998) emphasised the use of survey research and stated that it is probably the best method available in the social sciences where original data needs to be collected to describe a

population that is too large to be observed directly. A self-administered questionnaire was selected rather than personal interviews. The rationale for choosing this method was driven by the difficulty of approaching this particular population, and the risk of response bias due to concerns about confidentiality. It has been suggested not to engage in the research process if the researcher is unable to control the bias factor in the research (Kumar, 2019).

Therefore, it is the researcher's responsibility to avoid bias, as much as possible in the research process (Muijs, 2010). Another major advantage of using self-administered questionnaires is that they could be completed in private without any influence from the researcher, whereas face-to-face interviews could be uncomfortable for respondents who may be concerned with the confidentiality of the information provided. In other words, this method provides greater anonymity and helps to obtain accurate information, particularly in response to any sensitive questions (Kumar, 2019).

The aim of the questionnaire was to make sure that its design and wording were easy to understand for the respondents. It was thus decided to use some open-ended question in order to give participants freedom to respond in their own way. In addition, "*...it is necessary to use open ended questions because it is difficult to guess all the possible responses that respondents might make.*" (Pallant, 2013, p.8).

3.4 Research Sample

Primary research was conducted on a sample of 301 participants from a large UK corporate organisation. The target population of the study was defined as 'sales force only' (front-line employees) in the organisation who deal with the customers directly. As the current research is based on the sales force, it was thus decided not to add any supervisors or managers in this sample size. At the main stage of the research, permission to conduct the survey was obtained from the store manager to contact all salespeople in the organisation.

The sample of respondents was of sales personnel of working age of 18 and above. The majority (73.1%) were female and 26.9% were male, while most of them (50.8%) had GCE/GCSE-level of education. Many (41.2%) had worked for 1 to 5 years in this organisation.

A survey pack was distributed to the respondents with the help of the section manager in each department. Respondents were then asked to fill out a self-completion questionnaire and put it in the designated box in the catering unit on completion. To ensure the confidentiality and ease in reporting for the respondents, the box was placed in a safe and secure area.

The survey pack included an information sheet which described the purpose of the study, a consent form, a demographics form and self-administrated survey questionnaire, as set out in Appendix B.

The sample selection was based on the participant's eligibility, which stated that participants had to meet the following criteria at the time of taking the survey:

- must currently be employed in the corporate organisation
- is classified as a non-management employee, i.e. a sales force member only
- must be 18 years of age or older
- must be able to write and read English

Demographic data was collected on participant's gender (Nominal data), age (Interval data), level of education (ordinal data), years of employment at current job (Interval/Nominal data), job experience (Nominal) and ethnicity (Nominal data). Nominal, interval and ordinal levels of measurement for the demographic questions were used. The demographic profile composed of questions including gender, age, level of education, years of employment and ethnicity can be found in the survey pack in Appendix B.

The major motivation for choosing this sales force sample was because of the researcher's background knowledge and experience as a salesperson in the organisation. Babbie (1998) also mentioned that it is potentially a good approach to select a sample which is based on the researcher's knowledge of the population, its environment, elements and the nature of the research intentions (Babbie, 1989).

3.5 Determination of Sample Size

In order to obtain information about a large number of individuals, it is usually impossible to receive responses from all of them. The solution is to investigate some of them and assume that the data collected represents all of the rest and “...*this process of selecting just a small group of cases from out of a large group is called sampling.*” (Williman, 2011, p.93). In quantitative research selecting a sample size depends on a number of factors such as desired accuracy, response rate, time and budget (Saunders, 2011). It is thus vital that the researcher determines the sample size and all these elements before collecting the data.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) mentioned that a sample size of 30 to 500 is appropriate for most academic research. Stutely (2003) also advised that 30 is the minimum number that required for satisfactory statistical analysis where the data is assumed to be closest to a normal distribution. However, a larger sample size is preferable because the results will tend to be more robust. It is therefore useful to obtain a large sample size (especially in quantitative research), as a larger number is most likely to represent the population from which the sample was selected as compared to a smaller sample, because the mean taken from the larger sample is more likely to equal the mean from the population (Saunders, 2011). In the current study, out of a total of 340 questionnaires that were distributed to the sales force, 39 did not respond, making a total of 301 responses received which is considered a good sample size in quantitative research (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003; Saunders, 2011).

Despite having a large sample size, in some cases, the response rate remains low and this could affect the results for the total population. Different techniques such as sensitivity of the questions and distribution or collection of data can affect the response rate. Keeping all these aspects in mind, all efforts were made in the current study to ensure a suitable response rate. In terms of responses from organisations, a response rate of approximately 35% has been considered as reasonable in most academic studies (Baruch, 1999). However, the response rate can be different in each case depending on the methods used, particularly in primary research.

For example, Neuman (2005) suggested that a response rate of between 10% to 50% for postal questionnaires is acceptable, whereas a response rate for face-to-face interview could up to be 90%. The response rate for North American university-based questionnaire surveys of businesses was reported as between 50% to 65 % (Willimack et al., 2002), whereas Saunders et al.'s (2011) study claimed a 52% response rate for a questionnaire survey for a multinational organisation. However, the response rate of the sales force in the current research was very encouraging, with 301 responses received out of 340, and this presented the opportunity to draw conclusions from the data about the total population from which the sample was collected. This process of reaching conclusions about a population based on the data describing the sample is known as 'statistical inference', and this allows the researcher to automatically calculate the results with the help of statistical analysis software, e.g. like SPSS (Saunders, 2011).

Rationale

Evaluating collected data automatically with the help of a statistical package such as SPSS can save a lot of time and effort, and this time can be utilised instead to describe the results (Connolly, 2007; Gorard, 2001; Eyisi, 2016). In quantitative research, it is important for the researcher to provide evidence that the results are accurate and valid. The use of well-established software such as SPSS can provide the accuracy required in statistical analysis (Sampson, 2012, p.4). Although there are many software packages available to process and analyse data, such as SAS, Stata and JMP, SPSS is considered one of the most established and user-friendly software tools in social science research (Bacon-Shone, 2013; Sampson, 2012).

Despite the fact that the number of different types of software packages are growing each year, in this current study SPSS was chosen because of its capability and strength in the analytical process. SPSS has been widely used in quantitative studies, as it is one of the most powerful tools that enable researchers to use various techniques and methods to manipulate data, from simple to complex analyses of multivariate matrices. With the help of this package, data can also be presented in different ways such as bar charts, scatter plots and histograms (Arkkelin, 2014). The use of such a statistical package was thus thought to be the most suitable and was therefore chosen for this current research.

3.6 Measurement Scales

There are various methods of collecting data of a quantitative nature, but ‘rating scales’ remain the most accepted and popular format in designing scales (Lee and Soutar, 2010). According to Kumar (2011, p.330), “*Those (rating) scales that are designed to measure attitudes towards an issue are called attitudinal scale,*” and in the social sciences, attitudes can be measured by three different scales: the Likert scale, Thurstone scale and Gutman scale. Of these three, the Likert scale (also known as the summated rating scale) has been used extensively because it is easy to construct and provides the option of a wider range of possible scores such as, from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ (Pallant, 2013). The Likert scale is based on the concept that each item has equal importance in response to the issue in the question (Kumar, 2019). In contrast, Thurstone and Gutman scales are made up of a number of different items, are difficult to construct, and thus rarely used (Pearse, 2011). Likert scales have been widely used in survey research to measure a respondent’s attitude towards the object. Academic practitioners and scholars commonly use this scale, particularly in marketing, management, health care, and education research, where primary and secondary data in survey research is used to measure the respondent’s attitude towards the object by asking a variety of questions (Awang et al., 2016).

3.6.1 Likert Scales

Although there are two main dimensions of measuring attitude, i.e. positive or negative, measuring attitude is a complex process because a person may not just like or dislike measuring an object, but also there could be a varying degree of intensity or strength involved in holding this attitude (Albaum, 1997). In other words, measuring attitude is a two-stage process, whereby the first stage determines whether there is agreement or disagreement with the statement, and second stage examines the strength of the answer provided in the first stage (Mager and Kluge, 1987). The Likert scale eases this complexity by measuring the direction (agree or disagree) as well as the strength (strongly or otherwise) of the attitude. Because of this level of measurement characteristic, this scale has gained popularity in marketing research applications (Albaum, 1997). The Likert scale has been such a popular and well-established format in quantitative research that researchers nowadays rarely need to

justify or investigate its adoption when using the scale (Foddy and Foddy, 1994; Pearse, 2011).

Although the Likert scale does not measure the attitude itself, it helps the researcher to rate a group of people in either ascending or descending order with regards to their attitudes towards the issues discussed in the question (Kumar and Singh, 2011). This important characteristic of the Likert scale was considered while designing the questionnaire in this study because it provided the opportunity to answer the overall question (of the particular group), namely whether the level of integration of the sales force in the organisational marketing communications has any impact on organisational outcomes. Furthermore, in a closed-ended questionnaire, the number of responses can be categorised with the help of the Likert scale (Pearse, 2011).

In relation to this study, the deployment of Likert scales was then considered useful in categorising the level of sales force integration into different groups against each question asked in relation to sales force performance outcomes. Based on the ability to detect the extent of feeling or satisfaction that respondents have towards their job, the Likert scale was thus used in the current study.

Likert-type scales were initially introduced by Rensis Likert, and recognised as having interval scale properties, where one of the five response options were given to react against each given statement. These options were 'agree', 'strongly agree', 'disagree', 'strongly disagree' with the statement or 'undecided' (Likert, 1932; Likert et al., 1934). This five-point original instruction set out by Likert did not provide the option of 'neutral' or 'neither agree nor disagree' but offered instead the option of being 'undecided'. However, Likert's scales paved the way towards the five-point scale format along with the continuity in the sequence that ranges from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. No doubt this continuum became the more popular format in designing the scale (Kumar, 2011). It has been noted in later studies that the option of 'undecided' was replaced with 'neutral' or 'neither agree nor disagree' by most scholars and then became its standard format in a five-point Likert scale (Albaum, 1997).

3.6.2 Five-Point Likert Scale

There has been extensive debate on the use of the most appropriate number of response categories. Dillman et al. (2011) claimed that four or five categories must be used, whereas Fink (1995) recommended five to seven as the most favourable number, and Foddy and Foddy (1994) suggested that there should be at least seven categories to ensure reliability and validity. Some studies have placed emphasis on the use of a nine-point format (Almli et al., 2015). Nevertheless, the use of a five-point scale was found to be the most optimal and valid format in most studies (Dawes, 2008).

In order to achieve precision, it has been suggested to keep categories clear and meaningful to the responses, as well as providing the option to give a range of possible alternatives (Dillman et al., 2011; Fink, 1995; Pearse, 2011). Furthermore, the level of patience of the respondents should also be taken into account while designing the scale format (Oppenheim, 1966; Cook et al., 2001). This means a scale with more options will take more time and could be more difficult for respondents to complete because of the greater number of alternatives (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999). Achieving precision in designing the questionnaire has been the main concern in the current study. It was thus decided to avoid triviality or ambiguity while designing the scale by using Likert's original five-point scale format with the neutral category as 'neither agree nor disagree' in this study (Likert, 1932).

The inclusion of the neutral category or point has been a debatable topic in the vast majority of the earliest studies, because scholars believed that the exclusion of a neutral point could have a sensitising effect if a respondent expects to find a neutral option and does not find one (Garland, 1991; Guy and Norvell, 1977). In addition, since the inclusion of a middle point does not have any impact on the composite score, it has been argued that a neutral point should therefore always be there (Albaum, 1997). Furthermore, the use of a middle response in a forced-choice attitude range has found to attract about 10% to 20% of responses (Schuman and Presser, 1996) and that is another motivation for the current author to use a five-point Likert scale with the inclusion of a mid-point or neutral category.

3.6.3 Parametric or Non-Parametric

In conducting analyses on the Likert scale data, the use of a parametric or non-parametric method has been in dispute over the last five decades. Academic practitioners have claimed that Likert scale data is ordinal in nature and hence, only a non-parametric test could bring valid results (Jamieson, 2004; Gardner and Martin, 2007). In contrast, Norman (2010) viewed the Likert scale as an interval scale and argued that Likert data can be analysed with the help of parametric tests such as Pearson's correlation and regression analysis without having any fear of obtaining an incorrect conclusion. However, the findings of Murray's (2013) study concluded that the use of parametric (Pearson) and non-parametric (Spearman rho) tests conducted on Likert scales do not have any impact on the conclusions drawn from the results.

This shows that there is no 'right' or 'wrong' decision in selecting either a parametric or non-parametric approach, but rather it is related to the research objective, paradigms and hypothesis (Mircioiu and Atkinson, 2017). In the current research the author has therefore taken a pragmatic approach in justifying the use of parametric analysis on a Likert scale. Carifio and Perla (2008) also tried to solve the 50 year-old controversy by suggesting that the selection of parametric or non-parametric tests lies in the author's views regarding the measurement level of the data itself, i.e. treating the Likert scale as 'ordinal' or 'interval'.

Despite having different views and concepts on each of the scales, academic practitioners and scholars seems to agree to a certain extent that if Likert data is of ordinal nature, then a non-parametric approach is valid (Jamieson, 2004; Gardner and Martin, 2007), and if it is interval in nature, then a parametric approach should apply (Norman, 2010). A researcher with ordinal views should not then conduct empirical research on an interval scale (Carifio and Perla, 2008).

Confusion usually arises because of a lack of the understanding between Likert scales and the Likert scale format. It is thus important to understand the real strength of the Likert scale and to clearly distinguish between ordinal and interval scales (Carifio and Perla, 2008). In social sciences, the ordinal scale has been known as the 'ranking scale' and is suitable for non-parametric tests that usually measure the rank of the object, such as employment length and level of education, etc.

In contrast, the interval scale has been recognised as the 'rating scale' (Likert 1932; Norman 2010) and is considered optimal for parametric tests that are generally used to rate the scales of each elements, for example customer satisfaction, job performance and job motivation, etc. For instance, the current study postulated that the use of ordinal scale (like Likert scale) is appropriate in conducting a parametric approach such as t-test, ANOVA and regression analysis. This argument can be justified with Marcus-Roberts and Roberts's (1987) study, which claimed that the use of an ordinal scale is always appropriate for calculating the mean, but it is inappropriate for interpreting or making statements about such means. This shows that the use of ordinal scale such as Likert scale is useful for obtaining the means but is not comprehensive enough to obtain results in actual research (Awang et al., 2016). In other words, the use of a non-parametric approach is not valid for use in statistical testing (e.g., results from the use of an ordinal scale), especially if the researchers are looking for significant results. It was thus decided to conduct parametric tests to get meaningful results in the current study.

Another reason to use a parametric approach was based on the fact that parametric tests usually aim to measure the intensity or strength of the respondent's attitude and can be conducted for interval data, whereas non-parametric tests intend to measure the rank of their opinion and would be appropriate for ordinal data (Awang et al., 2016). The researcher of the current study aimed to design the questionnaire of interval data to support study hypothesis by using a quantitative method. Therefore, the Likert scale has been treated in this study as a rating or interval scale rather than a ranking or ordinal scale which is also consistent with the original claim of Likert's (1932) study.

The current instrument intends to measure the level of agreement of the respondents against each question asked by rating them in a scale from 1 to 5, rather than their rank. It has been evident from previous empirical research that rating or interval scales are only supported by a parametric approach. Further, it has been suggested that researchers should always use a parametric approach if they are convinced that their data applied are interval (Marcus-Roberts and Roberts 1987; Murray 2013). In the current study, the data obtained was considered to be interval in nature; it was thus thought the use of a parametric approach could be fruitful in obtaining optimal results.

In statistical disciplines, many researchers believed that interval data is more powerful (Knapp, 1990; Velleman and Wilkinson, 1993; Korotayev, 2004; Norman 2010) in

determining the attitude of the respondents and hence, has gained more attraction of the researchers when conducting parametric tests (Awang et al., 2016). This was another motivation for the author to undertake a parametric approach to get precise results.

In inferential statistics it is believed that a parametric approach is useful for high response rates, in-depth analysis can be done by using different techniques such as cross tabulation, scatter plots, or graphical analysis, etc., whereas, conducting non-parametric tests on a larger sample size could result in the loss of information (Mircioiu and Atkinson, 2017). Based on this argument, the large (> 300) sample size obtained in the current research, encouraged the author to conduct parametric tests. It is generally believed that probability sampling is appropriate for parametric test and non-probability sampling is useful for non-parametric tests (Awang et al., 2016). However, the sample distribution of the current study was based on probability sampling technique or normal distribution, so this also justifies the implementation of a parametric approach in the current study.

3.7 Instrument Development

As discussed in earlier chapters, the proposed research was undertaken by testing how measured integration affects the five outcomes (sales force job satisfaction, sales force performance, sales force job involvement, sales force commitment and sales force motivation) in the corporate organisation. To pursue this goal, a number of measurement scales were adapted in this research to measure against the research construct (sales force level of integration and potential outcomes). Six scales modified from the existing IMC Mini-audit scale, Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), Salesperson Performance Scale (SPS), Job Involvement Survey (JIS), Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) and Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) were used. A brief introduction to each construct used for measurement is given below and is summarised in Table 3.

Sales force level of IMC: This construct was measured by adapting the IMC Mini-audit Scale. A modified version of the Duncan and Moriarty (1997) mini-audit scale was used in order to measure the extent to which the sales force was integrated into marketing communications.

Sales force Job Satisfaction: This construct was assessed by using the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) developed by Spector (1985). JSS was adapted to measure how sales force integration affects their job satisfaction.

Sales force Job Performance: This construct was measured by adapting the Sales force Performance Scale (SPS) developed by Behrman and Perreault (1992), in order to measure how sales force integration affects their job performance.

Sales force Job Involvement: This construct was assessed by using the Job Involvement Scale (JIS) introduced in 1965, in order to measure the impact of sales force integration on the sales force job involvement (Lodahl and Kejnar, 1965).

Sales force Job Commitment: This construct was measured by adapting the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979), in order to measure how sales force integration affects their job commitment.

Sales force Job Motivation: This construct was measured by adapting the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) introduced by Hackman and Oldham (1974), in order to measure the impact of sales force integration on sales force job motivation.

Table 3: Description of measurements used in the research

Construct	Measurement Tool	Source
Sales force level of IMC	IMC mini-audit scale	Duncan and Moriarty (1997)
Sales force Job Satisfaction	Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)	Spector (1985)
Sales force Job Performance	Salesperson Performance Scale (SPS)	Behrman and Perreault (1982)
Sales force Job Involvement	Job Involvement Scale (JIS)	Lodahl and Kejner (1965)
Sales force Job Commitment	Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)	Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979)
Sales force Job Motivation	Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS)	Hackman and Oldham (1974)

All the above scales, which were selected to develop a self-administered questionnaire, are valid and reliable and have been used widely in the past by a number of researchers. These scales have been tested already on various occasions. Therefore, there is little doubt about the reliability and the validity of the scales. A description of each scale is given below to support this argument.

3.7.1 IMC Mini-Audit Scale

The IMC mini-audit used in this study has been considered a well-known and strongly useful audit to measure internal performance in an organisation (Porcu et al., 2017; Vantamay, 2011). This mini-audit is based on the IMC (original) in-depth audit, which is “...*an in-depth research method for evaluating IMC relationship-building efforts*” (Duncan, 2001, p.727). Although the IMC in-depth audit was lengthy and complex, its modified version was, designed by Duncan and Moriarty (1997) and known as the IMC mini-audit, was recognised as a simple and quick test to measure the level of integration (Duncan, 2002; Walt, 2006). A set of 20 questions in the IMC mini-audit can “*provide the organisation with an idea of where it stands on the integration scale*” (Niemann et al., 2003, p.32). The IMC mini audit is divided into five sub-categories: (1) organisational infrastructure; (2) Interactivity (3) Mission marketing (4) Strategic consistency, and (5) Planning and evaluation. Each subcategory has 3-4 questions designed to calculate the degree of integration in the organisation (Duncan, 2002).

The mini audit not only investigates the communication network within an organisation, but also provides a way of showing how an organisation can become more integrated (Walt, 2006). It also indicates process barriers and gaps, highlights inadequacies in properly handling purposeful dialogue, and works as a diagnostic tool that is designed to help managers examine strengths and weaknesses of the integration process, as well as measuring the extent to which organisation-created brand messages are strategically consistent (Duncan and Mulhern, 2004; Reid 2005).

The IMC mini audit has been adopted and widely used as an integration scale by number of scholars and practitioners since its development in 1997. For example, a study which sought to establish the extent to which a University (X's) marketing communications strategy was integrated used the IMC Mini-audit scale as its measuring instrument (Niemann et al., 2003).

A modified version of the Duncan-Moriarty IMC mini-audit (1997) was also adopted by Reid (2005) to explore the extent to which the IMC process is associated with brand-related outcomes such as sales performance, customer satisfaction and brand advantage. Walt (2006) adapted the mini-audit scale to determine the levels of integrated internal communication at ICG (International Colleges Group).

In addition, the mini-audit scale has been used as an extremely useful instrument in measuring integration, and has been adopted in number of studies (Vantamay, 2011; Reid et al., 2001; Reid, 2002) and later it was further developed and validated by IMC's scholars in their studies (Porcu et al., 2012a; Porcu et al., 2017).

Reliability and Validity

The IMC mini-audit is a tested research measure with Northwestern University, Colorado, US and is a reliable and valid tool (Niemann, 2002). The IMC mini-audit was also adopted by Vantamay (2011) to measure IMC implementation along with the three basic dimensions of the study, namely sales-related performance, brand-related performance and customer satisfaction, and it was found to be a reliable tool with high internal consistency, i.e., the overall Cronbach's alpha scored 0.80. This 2011 study also emphasised that the IMC mini-audit is a very strong and useful audit to measure internal performance on a range of items related to the IMC process in organisations and is a more validated instrument in terms of measuring the effectiveness of the IMC program (Vantamay, 2011). This mini-audit was also empirically validated by number of academic practitioners and was considered to be a reliable tool in marketing literature (Niemann, 2002; Porcu et al., 2017).

It is clear from previous research that the IMC min-audit is a reliable and valid tool, and has been used a number of times by different researchers as a measuring instrument for the IMC process and because of the appropriateness of this scale, it was adapted and modified in the proposed current research in order to measure the sales force level of IMC in corporate marketing communications. However, in order to keep the questionnaire to a reasonable length, not all of the original items were used. The following statements, set out in Table 4 below, were found to be the most appropriate for instrument development in the current study. The scale consisted of both positively and negatively phrased items in order to reduce response bias (Churchill Jr, 1979).

The items were modified to reflect the retail nature of the environment in which the research was carried out, and to make the statements less verbose and more concise in order to appeal to a UK audience. Items relating to external agencies were dropped as the focus was on the internal sales-force. Four new items were added to address this internal focus.

Table 4: Items used for the construct of sales force level of IMC

<i>Construct</i>	IMC Mini Audit Scale by Duncan and Moriarty (1997) (As modified by Reid, 2005)	<i>Statements</i> IMC Mini Audit Scale by Duncan and Moriarty (1997) (Current modified Version)
<i>Sales force Level Of IMC</i>	<p>Your company does a good job of internal marketing, informing all areas of the organisation about our brand's objectives and marketing programs.</p> <p>The stated objective of your brand's marketing communication program is to create and maintain profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders by ensuring consistency in all messages sent to these groups</p> <p>In your company, the process of managing the brand's reputation is the responsibility of all departments and employees.</p> <p>You carefully coordinate the messages being sent by all of your operations, such as pricing, distribution, product performance, and service operations, to ensure consistency of brand positioning.</p> <p>NA. Item developed based on the understanding that integrated IMC results in goal clarity</p> <p>NA. Item developed based on the understanding that integrated IMC results in increased credibility</p> <p>NA. Item developed based on the understanding that integrated IMC results in clarity of mission understanding</p> <p>NA. Item developed based on the understanding that integrated IMC entails regular communications</p>	<p>My company does a good job of internal marketing, informing all areas of the organisation about our brand's objectives and marketing programs. (Cooperation)</p> <p>All our marketing communications are consistently good and effective. (Consistency)</p> <p>Managing our brand reputation is a part of the responsibility of all employees.</p> <p>My company carefully co-ordinates the messages being sent to everyone in the organisation (Coordination)</p> <p>The goals of this organisation are clear to me. (Clarity)</p> <p>I believe that the company's advertisements and written materials are credible. (Credibility)</p> <p>(R) I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organisation.</p> <p>Employees are regularly kept informed about what is happening at the company.</p>

3.7.2 Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)

The job satisfaction survey (JSS) scale was designed and developed by Spector (1985) to measure the job satisfaction in different organisations and in different sectors such as human service, public and non-profit sectors (Spector, 1985b; Spector, 2006). Spector (1996, p.214) defines job satisfaction as “...an attitudinal variable that reflects how people feel about their jobs overall as well as various aspects of them” (Pouria, 2010). Since its development in 1985, JSS has been considered one of the most broadly used job satisfaction scales, and is composed of 36 elements, which include nine aspects of evaluating an employee's attitudes towards their job and other aspects of their work (Batura et al., 2016).

Each aspect is evaluated with four elements and a total score is derived from all the elements. The JSS was initially created and recommended for use in human service organisations, but has subsequently been found to be applicable for all organisations (Spector, 1985a). In addition, the JSS consists of items which measure each direction, i.e. positive and negative Spector's Instruction (1999). According to Chong et al. (2000), the JSS is the only scale that has the ‘communication’ facet, has simple wording, is thorough, has more facets than some of the other surveys, such as the Job Descriptive Index (JDI), and is concise, applicable and valid (Spector, 1997, p.10; Chong et al., 2000).

The Job Satisfaction Survey not only has specific facets, but has also been designed in a more diverse manner than other satisfaction instruments, such as Job in General scale (JIG) and Global Job Satisfaction (GJS) (Astrauskaite et al., 2011). JSS has been used for studies involving the employees of the same organisation as well as employees of differing organisations (Franěk and Večeřa, 2008). The JSS instrument has been recognised as the most popular and widely used instrument by different academic practitioners in measuring job satisfaction of workers in different organisations on different occasions (Boddy and Taplin, 2016; Astrauskaite et al., 2011; Giri and Kumar, 2010; Liu et al., 2004; Sierpe, 1999).

Reliability and Validity

Spector (2001) analysed two types of reliability, including internal consistency and test-retest reliability of the tool. Internal consistency suggests how good the scale elements are in relation to with each other, and test-retest shows the stability of the scale with the period of time. Based on a sample of 2,870, the internal consistency reliabilities (coefficient Alpha) of

JSS is .91, much higher than the minimum acceptable standard (which is .70) for internal consistency (Nunnally, 1994). Spector measured the reliability of the test reassessment for 43 employees over a period of 18 months, which was 0.71 for total job satisfaction (Spector, 1997, p.10). Spector has validated and showed the reliability of JSS in his studies (as discussed above). Moreover, this scale was also further validated by other researchers in later studies (Pouria, 2010).

The job satisfaction survey was validated by studies that compared the results where JSS was used instead of other scales in the same employees (Spector, 1997). Sierpe states that in previous studies the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) or Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) has been used but with criticism about their validity, whereas JSS is already validated (Pouria, 2010; Sierpe, 1999). The validity and reliability of JSS has been tested by number of scholars in the past on various occasions as well as in different industries.

Moreover, the JSS has been found to be a reliable and valid tool each time (Astrauskaite et al., 2011; Chong et al. 2000; Franěk and Večeřa, 2008; Klein, 2007; Martin, 2006; Pouria, 2010; Puderbaugh, 2006). In addition, another study conducted to measure the job satisfaction of health workers has also claimed that JSS is a reliable and valid tool with high level of internal consistency, and can be generalised (Batura et al., 2016). From previous research, it is clear that this instrument provides sufficient reliability and validity for use in this current research.

This scale was designed in a diverse manner and provided the opportunity to choose its facets as required depending on the nature of the research (Perminas et al., 2011). Therefore, the most appropriate questionnaire items were obtained from JSS in order to measure the sales force level of job satisfaction. No changes were made to the wording of these questions for use in the current research. In order to reduce the respondent bias, both positively and negatively phrased items were selected in the scale (Churchill Jr, 1979). The items set out in Table 5 below relate to the first hypothesis in the research: *‘H1: The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job satisfaction.’*

Table 5: Items selected for the construct of Sales Force Job Satisfaction

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>Source</i>
<i>Sales force Job Satisfaction</i>	(R) I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive. (R) I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated. When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive. (R) I find that I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of the people I work with. (R) I have too much to do at work. (R) I sometime feel my job is meaningless. I like doing the things I do at work. I feel a sense of pride in doing my job. I am satisfied with my chances of promotion. I like the people I work with. My job is enjoyable. (R) Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) by Spector (1985) (modified version)

3.7.3 Salesperson Performance Scale (SPS)

Job performance has been one of the key constructs in industrial and organisational psychology and in human resource management (HRM). Job performance was explained as an individual's behaviour in their job that is relevant to organisational goals (Campbell et al., 1990). To measure this construct, Behrman and Perreault (1982) developed a self-evaluation scale to measure an individual's perception of their own performance, and a final set of 31 performance items set out on scale was created, referred to as the Salesperson Performance Scale (SPS). SPS attempted to evaluate the multidimensional nature of sales people's performance (Florida and Buatsi, 2015). This self-reporting scale was developed and analysed based on the responses of 200 salespeople and 42 managers to measure their performance of five major industrial firms. The employees, who were responsible for their company's sales, were asked to evaluate their current level of performance. The use of self-ratings is appealing, as it offers the researcher to sample several companies without

developing extensive co-operative relationships with host firms (Behrman and Perreault Jr, 1982).

Reliability and Validity

Numerous researchers have used a self-assessment scale adapted by Pruden and Reece (1972) for ambiguous job situations. This scale was easy to administer but was not specific to industrial sales and was also based on only one (or very few) items. In addition, the reliability of the individual item for response categories was not known (Behrman and Perreault Jr, 1982), whereas the estimated internal consistency of SPS (.93) was very high and the test-retest correlation was .70, which is not as strong as internal consistency, but is still within the accepted standards for behavioural research (Behrman and Perreault Jr, 1982). The Behrman and Perreault (1982) scale has frequently been modified to adapt to research situations and has also been used to measure the extent to which salespeople practice effective listening, where the performance scale appeared as a well reliable scale with a Cronbach's alpha of .89 (Castleberry et al., 1993; Jantan, 2000).

Jantan (2000) borrowed this Behrman and Perreault (1982) scale to test a hypothesis relating to the measurement of sales manager's performance and according to Jantan (2000), the perceived sales managers performance scale used in the study satisfied both content and construct validity criteria adopted by Sekaran (1984) (Jantan, 2000; Sekaran, 1984), (Alreck and Settle, 1985); and Craig and Douglas (Douglas and Craig, 1983). Keating et al (2002) utilised this scale to measure the salesperson performance, where 140 individuals and their managers agreed to take part in the study. The results provided evidence that the scale developed by Behrman and Perreault (1982) exhibited construct validity and obtained a reliability of co-efficient of 0.9196. The result therefore demonstrated that the instrument utilised to measure communication apprehension is valid and reliable (Keating et al., 2002).

Empirical past studies have shown that the scale developed by Behrman and Perreault (1982) is valid and reliable because of its high acceptability in the salesperson performance literature, and therefore this scale was adapted to measure the performance of sales force in this research. However, some of the items of SPS were adapted to keep the questionnaire to a reasonable length, as per questionnaire development recommendations (Kirk-Smith and McKenna, 1998; Webb, 2000). The items set out in Table 6 below relate to the second hypothesis in the research: '*H2: The more integrated the sales force with corporate*

marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force performance.' Where changes were made, the original wording is in red. Changes were made to make the statements directly applicable to respondents as in-store salespersons rather than travelling salespersons.

Table 6: Items selected for the construct of Sales Force Job Performance

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>Source</i>
<i>Sales force Job performance</i>	<p>I am helping to increase sales in my department. (Producing a high market share for your company in your territory)</p> <p>I know enough about our products to do my job well. (Knowing the design and specifications of company products)</p> <p>I can give good advice to customers. Listening attentively to identify and understand the real concerns of your customer.)</p> <p>I am able to meet the targets set by my section manager. (Exceeding all sales targets and objectives for your territory)</p> <p>I am submitting required paperwork on time. (Submitting required reports on time.)</p> <p>I am working out solutions to customer questions or objections. (Working out solutions to a customer's questions or objections)</p>	<p>Salesperson Performance Scale (SPS) by Behrman and Perreault (1982) (modified version)</p>

3.7.4 Job Involvement Scale (JIS)

Kanungo (1982) defined job involvement as the psychological identification or commitment of an individual with his/her work (Moncrief, 2001). Job involvement is a vital construct and potentially crucial for corporate success, as it is a related outcome of a salesperson's internal feelings and job environment. Job involvement as a construct is neither new nor under-researched and has been evaluated in a variety of studies on different occasions. Comer and colleagues mentioned that a few studies have examined job involvement within a sales context (Comer et al., 1995). For instance, Dubinsky et al. (1986) included job involvement as a component of the sales force socialization process; Saleh and Hosek (1976) found job involvement of insurance salespeople to be multidimensional; and Brown et al. (1993) found that a salesperson's feelings of success positively and directly affects his or her level of job involvement. To measure this construct, Lodahl and Kejnar developed a scale to measure the involvement of salespeople in respect to their job, and has been extensively used in

subsequent studies (Govender and Parumasur, 2010; Lodahl and Kejnar, 1965; Rizvi, 2013; Shih et al., 2009). A set of 20 items appears to be a multidimensional scale that can be used for various occupations depending on the occupation of the study sample (Moncrief, 2001). The scale consisted of both positively and negatively phrased items in order to reduce the response bias (Lodahl and Kejnar, 1965).

Reliability and Validity

Govender and Parumasur (2010) used the Job Involvement Questionnaire (JIQ) created by Lodahl and Kejnar (1965) to examine the level of employee job involvement in various departments in a financial institution, and found that this is a highly reliable and valid tool. Shih et al. (2009) suggested that JIQ is a valid and reliable instrument, as the Cronbach's alpha of this measurement is 0.93, which is >0.7 , and therefore, revealed sufficient reliability (Shih et al., 2009). Rizvi (2013) identified that the test and re-test reliability of JIQ lies between 0.72 and 0.89, and the convergent validity coefficient was found to be $r = 0.76$, which also indicates that the measure is highly valid.

From previous results, Lodahl and Kejnar (1965) reported that twenty elements of the job involvement scale appeared to be the most appropriate in order to measure the construct of job involvement. However, in order to keep the questionnaire to a reasonable length, some of the items that encompass specific factors relating to job involvement of salespeople were adapted for instrument development. The items set out in Table 7 below relate to the third hypothesis in the research: '*H3: The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job involvement.*'

Where changes were made the original wording is in red. Changes were made to make the statements more understandable to British respondents.

Table 7: Items selected for the construct of Sales Force Job Involvement

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>Source</i>
<i>Sales force job Involvement</i>	<p>I will stay to do overtime to finish a job, even if I am not paid for it. (I will stay overtime to finish a job, even if I am not paid for it.)</p> <p>I usually show up for work a little early to get things done.</p> <p>The major satisfaction in my life comes from my job.</p> <p>For me, mornings at work really fly by/go quickly. (For me, mornings at work really fly.)</p> <p>The most important things that happen to me involve my job.</p> <p>I am really a perfectionist about my work.</p> <p>(R) I have other activities more important than work.</p> <p>I would probably keep working even if I didn't need the money.</p> <p>(R) Quite often I feel like staying home from work instead of coming in.</p> <p>(R) To me, my work is only a small part of who I am.</p> <p>I am very much involved personally in my work.</p> <p>(R) I avoid taking on extra duties and responsibilities in my work.</p> <p>(R) I used to be more ambitious about my work than I am now.</p> <p>(R) Most things in life are more important than work.</p>	<p>Job involvement Scale (JIS) by Lodahl and Kejner (1965) (modified version)</p>

3.7.5 Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)

Commitment in terms of an attitude has been defined as when “...*the goals of the organisation and those of the individual become increasingly integrated or congruent*” (Hall et al., 1970, p.176). According to Mowday et al. (1979), commitment has repeatedly been recognised as an important construct in understanding employee behaviour in organisations, and throughout various studies there has been a significant increase in the evaluation of the organisational commitment concept by social scientists.

Because of the importance of this construct in the literature, Mowday et al. (1979) introduced an instrument to measure employee commitment to work organisations referred to as the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). This 15-item scale was based on a series of studies conducted on 2,563 employees from nine different organisations. These samples consisted of 605 telephone company employees, 569 civil servants, 411 bank employees, 382 hospital employees, 243 university employees, 60 psychiatric technicians, 115 auto company managers, 119 scientists and engineers, and 59 retail management trainees. The questions in this scale were phrased both positively and negatively to control the bias response in the research (Mowday et al., 1979).

Reliability and Validity

Satisfactory reliability was found from test-retest and internal consistency, where internal consistency was calculated as very high with the coefficient alpha between .82 and .93, with a median of .90 (Mowday et al., 1979). Reliability and validity estimates were based on the use of multiple and differing samples. Data was collected from nine different organisations in number of different jobs and then the factor structure, reliability and validity of numerous samples were verified, where adequate results were obtained. Furthermore, evidence emerged of the cross-validation of acceptable levels of convergent, predictive and discriminatory validity for the instrument (Mercurio, 2015).

The OCQ has not only been examined and used frequently in the organisational behaviour literature, but has also been used numerous times in the marketing literature. For example, Michaels et al. (1988) used a sample of 330 employees in a retail sales setting and reported an alpha of 0.90 for the OCQ of 15 items, and reported correlations of .03, -.47, -.48 and -.53 between OCQ and measures of organisational fictionalisation, alienation of work, role ambiguity and role conflict, respectively. Good et al. (1988) used a sample of 595 department store employees and claimed an alpha value of 0.91 for the OCQ of 15 items. Correlations of -.59, -.60, -.41, -.77 and -.81 have been reported between OCQ and role ambiguity measures, role conflict, work-family conflict, job satisfaction and intention to leave, respectively. Johnston et al. (1990) used a sample of 102 retailers and reported a reliability of .88 and .93 for the OCQ of 15 items in two differing time periods.

The correlations of OCQ with role conflicts, role ambiguity, job satisfaction, propensity to leave and rotation were -.49, -.45, .58, -.73 and -.33, respectively. Summarising these three marketing studies, sufficient evidence of the reliability and validity of the OCQ was obtained.

Richards et al. (1994) used the 15-item OCQ scale to measure the organisational commitment of teachers, with a sample of 348 health education teachers and 580 marketing education teachers, and reported a Cronbach's coefficient alpha of .88, well between the range of .82 to .93 reported by Mowday et al. (1979). Richards et al. (1984) found OCQ to be a reliable and valid tool. A six-item version of Mowday, Steers and Porter's (1979) OCQ scale was used by Singh et al. (1994) in their research, where a scale reliability of .79 was reported and correlation with other constructs also supported the validity of the scale.

Evidence from previous research shows that OCQ has been the most frequently used scale to measure employee commitment in various contexts and has been tested as a valid and reliable tool since 1979 (Cook and Wall, 1980; Mercurio, 2015). It has been used a number of times to measure employee commitment in respect of their job as well as the organisation. Because of the high acceptability of this scale, the current this instrument was chosen in the current study in order to measure sales force employee commitment in relation to their job. However, to keep the questionnaire to an appropriate length, not all of the original items were used from this Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) scale.

Some statements were adapted, as set out in Table 8 below, as they were found to be the most appropriate for instrument development in the current study. The items shown in Table 8 relate to the fourth hypothesis in the research: '*H4: The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force commitment.*'

No changes were made to the items in this scale.

Table 8: Items selected for the construct of Sales Force Job Commitment

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>Source</i>
<i>Sales force job Commitment</i>	<p>I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organisation be successful.</p> <p>I talk about this organisation to my friends as a great organisation to work for.</p> <p>(R) I feel very little loyalty to this organisation.</p> <p>I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation.</p> <p>I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar.</p> <p>I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation.</p> <p>(R) I could just as well be working for a different organisation as long as the type of work was similar.</p> <p>This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.</p> <p>(R) It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation.</p> <p>I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.</p> <p>(R) There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.</p> <p>(R) Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees.</p> <p>I really care about the fate of this organisation.</p> <p>For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.</p>	<p>Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) By Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) (modified version)</p>

3.7.6 Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS)

Hackman and Oldham (1974) defined internal job motivation as the degree to which the employee is motivated to perform effectively at work, and they developed a complete instrument to analyse the motivational potential of jobs referred to as the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS). This was based on a particular theory of how work influences employee motivation. This theory also determines how individual differences and characteristics of

their job interact to influence the motivation, productivity and overall satisfaction of individuals at work.

In order to support this argument, the authors built a set of questionnaires that help determine how to better design the job, obtaining information on how people react to their job.

In order to enhance the diagnostic ability of the scale, a report developed by Oldham et al. (1978) provided normative data for JDS, where JDS scale data were subdivided according to employee characteristics, job and organisational properties. The data was gathered from 6930 employees working in 56 organisations in 876 different sectors and jobs, including sales, administrative, managerial and professional work. Public service and manufacturing organisations were also included in the sample. Some of the items in the JDS scale were phrased both positively and negatively to avoid respondent bias (Oldham et al., 1978).

Since the inception of Hackman and Oldham's (1974) JDS, numerous practitioners and researchers have used this scale for the measurement of employee motivation (Oldham et al., 1978) in several organisations and it has been subjected to several empirical tests (Dunham, 1976; Dunham et al., 1977; Pierce and Dunham, 1978). Horstmann (2005) used this scale in order to measure staff motivation with the aim of examining factors that influenced histology laboratory staff shortages, particularly issues of employee retention, recruitment, job satisfaction and motivation. Casey and Casey (2014) compared three studies in the retailing, manufacturing and hospital industries, and adapted the JDS scale for assessing staff motivation in their research.

Reliability and Validity

The JDS reliability and validity has been confirmed by Hackman and Oldham (1974). This scale was assessed through at least three rounds of review and pre-test. In general, the results suggested that both the discriminant validity of the items and the internal consistency reliability of the scales were satisfactory (Hackman and Oldham, 1974). JDS has been found as one of the most reliable and valid measures of internal motivation (Horstmann, 2005). An investigation by Pierce et al. (1986) provided an examination of the validity of JDS and the Job Characteristic Inventory (JCI) and concluded that this 1986 study had developed another piece of validation evidence for the JDS. Casey and Casey (2014) also acknowledged that JDS is one of the most reliable and valid tools for the study of staff motivation.

Empirical past results have shown that JDS has been widely used to measure employee motivation since 1974 in organisations of different sizes and for employees working at different levels with varying educational backgrounds. Hackman and Oldham (1974) used four items (2, 6, 10, 14) from section three and two items (1 and 9) from section five of their scale, in order to measure employees' internal job motivation. These six items from JDS appeared to be very appropriate for the development of the questionnaire in this study and hence, were adapted and modified to measure the level of sales force motivation in their work. Where changes have been made the original wording is in red. Changes were made to make the statements more understandable to British respondents.

The selected items shown in Table 9 below relate to the fifth hypothesis in the research: '*H5: The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the sales force motivation.*'"

Table 9: Items selected for the construct of Sales Force Job Motivation

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>Source</i>
<i>Sales force job Motivation</i>	<p>My opinion of myself goes up when I do this job well.</p> <p>I feel a great sense of personal satisfaction when I do this job well.</p> <p>I feel bad and unhappy when I discover that I have performed poorly at my job. (I feel bad and unhappy when I discover that I have performed poorly on this job).</p> <p>(R) My own feelings generally are not affected one way or the other by how well I do at my job. (My own feelings generally are not affected much one way or the other by how well I do on this job.)</p> <p>Most people on this job feel a great sense of personal satisfaction when they do their job well.</p> <p>Most people in this organisation feel bad or unhappy when they find that they have performed their work poorly. (Most people on this job feel bad or unhappy when they find that they have performed the work poorly.)</p> <p>(R) It is hard for me in this job, to care very much about whether the work gets done properly. (It's hard, on this job, for me to care very much about whether or not the work gets done right.)</p>	<p>Job Diagnostic survey (JDS) by Hackman and Oldham (1974) (modified version)</p>

Overall, 61 items were extracted from the above mentioned six scales to develop an instrument (self-administered questionnaire) to ascertain whether the level of integration could then be compared to the performance outcomes, and if any correlations existed. It has been claimed that a well-designed questionnaire must have some reversed items in it so that the respondent's bias in the form of agreement can be reduced (Churchill Jr, 1979).

It was thus decided to select both positively and negatively phrased items to minimise the respondent's bias in the current scale. Each item was scored from 1 to 5 on Likert's scale, however, negatively worded items were reverse scored before analysing the data (Spector, 1999). For example, a score of 5 representing 'strongest agreement' in a positively worded statement must be considered as 1 in a negatively phrased statement. All the selected items from each scale, along with their measurement tools, are set out in Table 32 in Appendix A (page 242). However, in order to give respondents the freedom to respond in their own way, the use of open-ended question has also been recommended (Pallant, 2013).

In a good quantitative survey, it is thus important that the researcher keeps an open mind, rather than looking themselves into either closed- or open-ended questions, as open ended questions in a questionnaire not only provide a wealth of information, but also allow respondents to express themselves freely and helps eliminate the chances of researcher bias (Little, 2013; Kumar, 2019). Consequently, the use of some open-ended question was then considered appropriate in the current research. Therefore, three sub-items in an open-ended question were added at the end of the questionnaire in order to obtain a variety of information from the respondents in terms of organisational marketing communication. These three sub-questions were phrased negatively, positively and neutrally in the instrument to reduce the respondent's bias and are presented below in Table 10.

Table 10: Open-ended question in relation to organisational marketing communications

Items
i. What problem you see when your organisation communicates to its employees? (Negative)
ii. What is the best thing your organisation does to communicate to its employees? (Positive)
iii. Do you have any suggestions how your organisation might improve its communication to its employees? (Neutral)

3.8 Development of Variables

The study variables (sales force level of IMC, sales force job satisfaction, sales force job performance, sales force job involvement, sales force job commitment and sales force job motivation) and demographic variables (gender, age, years of employment and ethnicity) were chosen because of their importance in the integrated marketing communication and performance outcomes literature. Determining variable significance in the marketing communication literature will not only contribute to the literature but would also be helpful for the implementation of successful sales force integration programmes that can ultimately lead to some positive outcomes.

A summary of proposed independent and dependent variables, along with demographic sub-scale variable designed to act as a summary to the idea presented in the section above, are presented below in Table 11 with their measurement method.

Table 11: Research variables (including sub-scales variable) with their measurement

Variable	Description of Variable	Measurement Tool
Independent	Sales force Level of Integration (Sub-scale variables) : Gender Age Level of education Years of Employment Job experience Ethnic group	IMC Mini-Audit Scale (Demographic Questionnaire) Nominal Data Interval Ordinal Data Interval/Nominal Data Nominal Nominal
Dependent	Sales force Job Satisfaction	Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)
Dependent	Sales force Job Performance	Salesperson Performance Scale (SPS)
Dependent	Sales force Job Involvement	Job Involvement Scale (JIS)
Dependent	Sales force Job Commitment	Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)
Dependent	Sales force Job Motivation	Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS)

3.9 Instrument Pilot Testing

Even if the scales are considered valid and reliable, a pilot test must be conducted, as the scales could be reliable with some groups but totally unreliable with others at the same time (Pallant, 2013). Particularly if the instrument is a questionnaire, it is important to ask pre-respondents to identify any difficulties in understanding or interpreting the questionnaire (Kumar, 2011). This helps to ensure that the questionnaire is free from flaws that may arise from its design and incorrect or ambiguous wording. Pilot testing can also help to eliminate any practical problems that may occur in distributing and collecting the questionnaire (Boddy, 2010).

A pilot test was therefore undertaken with the aim of refining the proposed questionnaire, assessing its dimensionality and reliability, and to test the survey distribution procedures (Kitchen, 2017). According to management questionnaire design experts, a small sub-sample of ten participants for a pilot test is acceptable in order to eliminate flaws and wording mistakes from the questionnaire (Webb, 2000). The presence of the researcher is recommended during pilot testing to assist the respondents all the way through completion of the questionnaire because it helps to identify and eliminate the most critical issues, if any exist (Boddy, 2009; Diamantopoulos et al., 1994). The instrument was subsequently verified from illustration and minor wording mistakes after conducting face-to-face interviews with ten sales personnel during the pilot test. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were told about the nature and purpose of the research and were asked to participate in the pilot test but given the option of not participating.

In addition, a frequently use method known as cognitive interviewing was followed during the pilot study. Cognitive interviewing is defined as:

“...the administration of draft survey questions while collecting additional verbal information about the survey responses, which is used to evaluate the quality of the response or to help determine whether the question is generating the information that its author intends.” (Beatty and Willis, 2007, p.287).

This is a two-way process that takes place during the evaluation and development of the questionnaire by asking respondent questions such as whether the questionnaire has logical flow,

whether questions are clear enough, whether the questionnaire are too lengthy and whether questionnaire manage to maintain interest, or any other difficulty in understanding the questionnaire can also be assessed during this interaction (Beatty and Willis, 2007). During the whole process, all the feedback was taken into account to make sure the questionnaire was easy to understand and to avoid any confusion on the part of the respondents. The aim of this procedure was to check the content validity of the scale, and further refinement of the survey design was based on the suggestions made and feedback received during the pilot test (Norland, 1990).

According to Hair et al. (2014), a pilot test must be undertaken from the same sample of respondents who are participating in the actual survey. Therefore, a further sixty questionnaires were pilot tested with the aim of carrying out a reliability test (Radhakrishna 2007). Data gathered from the pilot test was analysed by using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) software in order to check reliability of Cronbach's alphas, internal consistency and 'view alpha if item deleted'; this column in SPSS gives the opportunity of determining whether deleting any item would increase the alpha level in the correlation matrix (Radhakrishna 2007). It was found that Cronbach's alpha values were $>.70$, well above the minimum acceptable level of $.60$, as reported in some studies (Todd et al., 2004). It was also noted that deleting any item only made a marginal difference in Cronbach's alpha values, and so the decision was made to leave all the items as they were in this study. Internal consistency was found to be positive with the help of inter-item correlation matrix in SPSS, as all the items were positively correlated with one another (Boddy, 2009). In line with common research practice, changes made from the initial pilot test (a sub-sample of ten in this case) were not included in the final sample of the respondents, as routing or amendments could impact on the validity of the scale (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). After the pilot test, a survey pack was given to all the sales force personnel in the organisation to conduct further analysis. A copy of the survey pack is included in Appendix B, and included the following:

- An information sheet (describing the purpose of the study)
- Survey questionnaire consisting of three sections:
 - i. Consent form (an agreement of voluntary participation in Section 1)
 - ii. Demographic form (gender, age, level of education, years of employment, job experience and ethnicity in Section 2)
 - iii. Sales force integration questionnaire (the self-administered questionnaire).

Once the survey collection period was completed, the collected data was analysed with the help of the SPSS to see if any correlation existed between the variables by using different statistical techniques.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Research design plays important role in the integrity of the research and this integrity is contingent upon the handling of the research in an ethical manner by following codes of conduct and professional regulations in relation to study participants (Eyisi, 2016). The failure or success of academic research could rely on these ethical procedures. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the researcher to deal with ethical issues seriously, especially when dealing with research involving humans. The researcher must 'do no harm' to the respondents during data collection or upon reporting study findings, to avoid causing physical and psychological harm (Lune and Berg, 2016; Eyisi, 2016).

In line with the principle of ethical procedure, the ethical approval for the survey was obtained from London School of Commerce and Cardiff Metropolitan University (UK). In each case, the most appropriate person in the organisation, such as the marketing executive responsible for marketing communications or brand communications, was contacted. The purpose of the study was explained, and permission sought to contact the sales force with a view to conducting the survey. It was emphasised, and assurance was given to the management and all the sales force personnel, that all information obtained would remain anonymous and be held in confidence and that no one inside or outside of the organisation would have access to individual responses.

A self-administered questionnaire was used to conduct the interview, which allowed for greater anonymity (Kumar, 2011). The participant had the option of not participating and because of the sensitivity of some of the issues in this study, participants had been given an option to not mention their names on the questionnaire, but this was also voluntary. However, in sales research it is usually possible to ensure that each salesperson's responses are confidential or anonymous so that there is less reason for a respondent to give inflated ratings (Behrman and Perreault Jr, 1982). Other than respondents' signatures, there were no

identifiers in the survey pack, thereby protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants.

3.11 Methodological Conclusions

This chapter has achieved its objective by setting out how the research instrument was developed after integrating the theoretical foundations and the literature review developed in Chapters 2 and 3 with the concept of integrated marketing communication, its dimensions and influence of integrated communication on sales force performance outcomes. The combination of different scales has also added value to the existing literature in the context of integrated communication and its related outcomes.

All the scales deployed for the instrument - IMC mini-audit, JSS, SPS, JIS, OCQ and JDS - were found to be suitable for the purpose of this research, as they are well-known, established instruments for measuring integration, job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, job commitment and job motivation. From the evidence available in the literature, it is also clear that these scales have been widely used over the last few decades and have been tested by other researchers in terms of their validity and reliability.

By using these measures relative to the measure developed to gauge the level of integrated marketing communications, the hypotheses generated for this research can be addressed and tested. Organisations will also have a better understanding of how sales forces feel about their job, relative to how integrated they are in the marketing communications generated by their companies.

Chapter 4: Results and Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings from the data collected in the study and align them towards the conceptual framework, research objectives and hypotheses. Firstly, the reliability and validity measurements of the constructs used in the research are investigated and reported on. These show that the instrument used, i.e. the questionnaire, was highly reliable and valid. In particular, the marketing communications integration scale that was utilised can usefully be applied to other sales force integration research studies. This in itself is a contribution to knowledge of both practical and theoretical effectiveness. A number of methods and techniques are used in this chapter to determine the relationship between the observed constructs and whether different levels or groups of integration are statistically different.

Initially, a correlation matrix is used to ascertain whether the vital components of the internal communication, the 5 'C's (independent variable), have any impact on sales force performance outcomes (dependent variable). The correlation matrix was performed again to determine the overall relationship between the independent and dependent variables, i.e. sales force integration and sales force performance outcomes, respectively. This gives an overview of how the total set of constructs interact with each other. This relationship is further examined with the help of scatter plots set out in this chapter. Furthermore, to analyse the relationship between categorical data, cross-tabulations are performed. This statistical method is used to look at differences between the groups, and to look at the difference between the mean values of each construct against categorised sales force integration in this research.

Secondly, the meaningful results are presented and discussed in terms of their means, and of their statistical significance. This shows, as hypothesised, that many of the measures of sales force performance investigated in the research are associated with the level of integration of marketing communications in the corporation to a significant degree. A numerical cut-off score can be used to determine whether the subjects are integrated or not. This logically leads to the analysis of two groups within the survey results: low and high integration groups.

This dichotomy lends itself to the use of t-tests to determine whether the differences between these two groups are significant or not. However, as the integration score is a continuous variable, it also lends itself to regression analysis as an appropriate technique to use to analyse the data. Given these alternative types of analysis being available for use, both have been utilised here. Therefore, simple regression analysis was carried out to show that sales force marketing communication integration has an effect on the dependent variables under consideration. This shows that sales force integration clearly has a role to play in predicting job satisfaction and other dependent variables. This has been demonstrated in this research through the use of these regression analysis models. This is a contribution to the knowledge of sales force integration, which has many practical and organisational policy implications.

Factor analysis is a common research tool, but it is not designed to test a hypothesis or to determine whether there is a significant difference between groups. It condenses a large amount of data down to a smaller set of factors or components, in order to simplify data to carry out further analysis (Pallant, 2013). However, the scale that is used in the research instrument is well established and has been validated by a large number of researchers over a considerable period of time. Hence, it was not considered to be of any benefit to use it here. Factor analysis was thus not used in this analysis. However, in order to test the hypotheses, the most frequent method was utilised, where null hypotheses were tested against an alternative hypothesis in this research.

Lastly, an additional (but optional) demographic analysis was performed to check whether demographic variables such as gender, age, etc. have any impact or correlation with sales force integration.

4.2 Sample Analysed

As discussed earlier, a sample of 301 salespeople was drawn from a single branch of a well-known, national, high street based, UK retail organisation which among other products, sells own-brand clothes and food. The organisation has multiple retail outlets across the UK and employs many thousands of people in these and in its UK headquarters. As this research is based on sales force personnel only, no managerial respondents were included in the sample. Respondents (sales force members) were the age of 18 and above.

The age category of respondents in Table 12 below indicates that 71 (23.6%) of the respondents were between the ages of 18 to 25 years, 86 (28.6%) were between the ages of 26 to 35 years, 82 (27.2%) were between the ages of 36 to 45 years, 41 (13.6%) were between the ages of 46 to 55 years and 21 (7%) respondents were aged over 55 years. The distribution of the respondents by gender illustrated in Table 13 below reveals that out of 301 respondents, the majority were female, i.e. 220 (73%) were female and 81 (29.6%) were males.

Table 12: Age of Respondents

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percent %
18-25	71	23.6
26-35	86	28.6
36-45	82	27.2
46-55	41	13.6
Over 55	21	7.0
Total	301	100.0

Table 13: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent %
Male	81	26.9
Female	220	73.1
Total	301	100.0

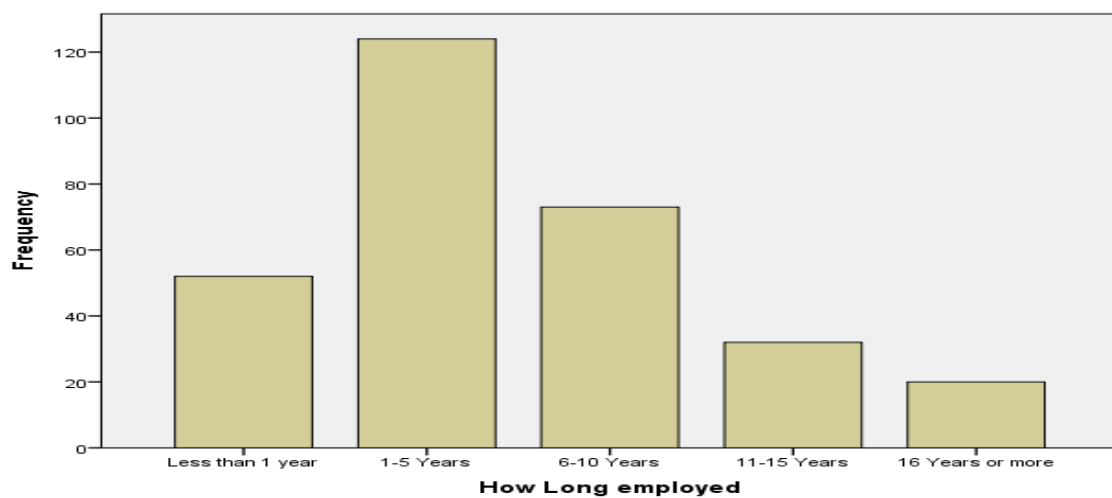
The distribution of respondents by their educational qualification as set out in Table 14 below indicates that 153 (50.8%) had GCE/GCSE-level education and 106 (35.2 %) had A-Levels. The rest of the respondents had various other qualifications, such as vocational, professional, or Bachelor's, Master's, and other degrees with the frequency of 4 (1.3%), 10 (3.3%), 16 (5.3%), 9 (3.0%) and 3 (1.0%), respectively.

Table 14: Educational qualification of Respondents

Qualifications Possessed	Frequency	Percent %
GCE/GCSE	153	50.8
A' Level	106	35.2
Vocational	4	1.3
Professional Qualification	10	3.3
Bachelor's	16	5.3
Master's	9	3.0
Other	3	1.0
Total	301	100.0

In response to the question of how long the respondents had been employed by the organisation,, the data reveals that 52 (17.3%) had worked with the organisation for less than 1 year, 124 (41.2%) had worked for 1 to 5 years, 73 (24.3%) had worked for 6 to 10 years, 32 (10.6%) had worked for 11 to 15 years, and 20 (6.6%) had worked with the organisation for more than 16 years. For better visual understanding this distribution has been explained with the help of a bar chart in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Employment Experience of Respondents



Respondents were also asked if their current job was their first sales job. The distribution of respondents by their work experience reveals that 139 (46.2%) respondents said ‘Yes’ and 162 (53.8%) answered ‘No’. In terms of ethnic groups, the result showed that 276 (91.7%) of the respondents were White, 13 (4.3%) were Asian, 5 (1.7%) were Black and 7 (2.3%) had a mixed ethnic origin. The frequency of each group with percentages can be seen below in Table 15.

Table 15: Ethnic Group of Respondents

Ethnic Group	Frequency	Percent %
White	276	91.7
Asian	13	4.3
Black	5	1.7
Mixed	7	2.3
Total	301	100.0

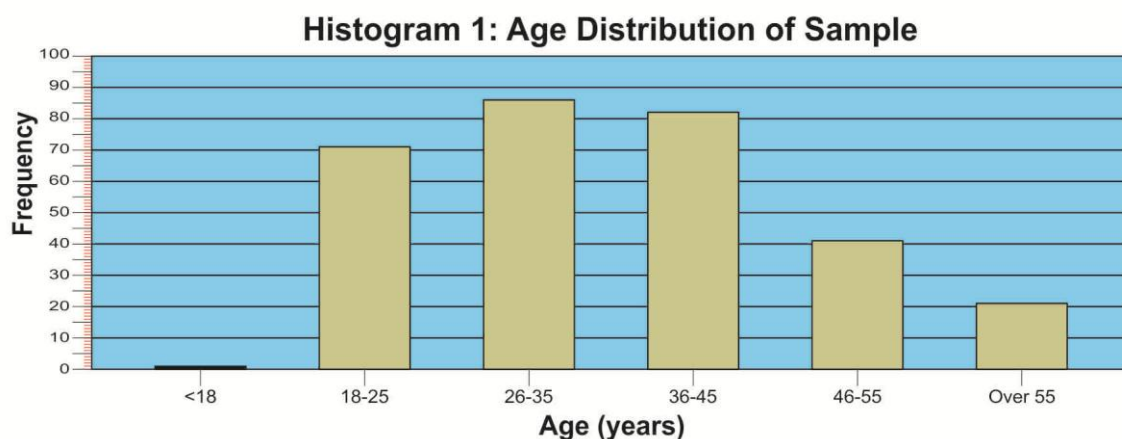
The self-completion questionnaire based on the Likert style question format that was used in this research included some open-ended questions at the end. In this survey, 340 questionnaires were distributed out of which 39 respondents did not reply, making the total response 301.

Out of this 301, all respondents completed the Likert style-based questions, so all responses were included in the analysis. However, only 42 respondents completed the opened-ended questions and results from these are discussed later, in Chapter 5.

As simple regression analysis, which assumes a normal distribution, was used in the data analysis, a test for the normality of the sample by its age was carried out. The normal distribution, also referred to as the Gaussian distribution, is a continuous probability distribution showing data grouped around the mean. The graph of its probability density function is bell-shaped, shows a peak at the mean and is known as the normal curve.

A histogram plot suggests the shape of the distribution and data with normal distribution have a bell shape which is similar to the one for the sample age shown below in Figure 4 (Pallant, 2013). It was not appropriate to test the age distribution via a statistical test such as Kolmagorov-Smirnov, because age data was collected by age category (e.g. 18 to 25) rather than in discrete ages (Boddy, 2010).

Figure 4: Age Distribution of Survey Sample



The second test was to look at the Normal Q-Q plot, which also indicates normality. This graph shows the observed value for each score plotted against the expected value of the normal distribution. This is generated from the SPSS analysis software and is shown in Figure 5 (below) for the sample data here. As the data lies close to the line in the Q-Q plot for the sample age below and a straight line suggests a normal distribution, both tests indicate sample normality by age (Pallant, 2013).

Figure 5: Normal Q-Q Plot of Sample Age



4.3 Categorisation of Data

In research analysis, the samples can be divided into dichotomous or trichotomous groups based on the respondent's scores (Boddy, 2009). In this way differences in the levels of integration of the sales force can be investigated. In a dichotomous subdivision, these subgroups are generally labelled as Low Integration Group and High Integration Group. In a trichotomous subdivision, they are generally labeled as a Low Integration Group, Medium Integration Group and a High Integration Group.

For categorical data, the stacked bar chart is an effective way to visually represent the extent of each subcategory of a variable, as shown in Figure 6 (below), where discrete categories (sales force integration) are shown along the x-axis and number of respondents, or percentage

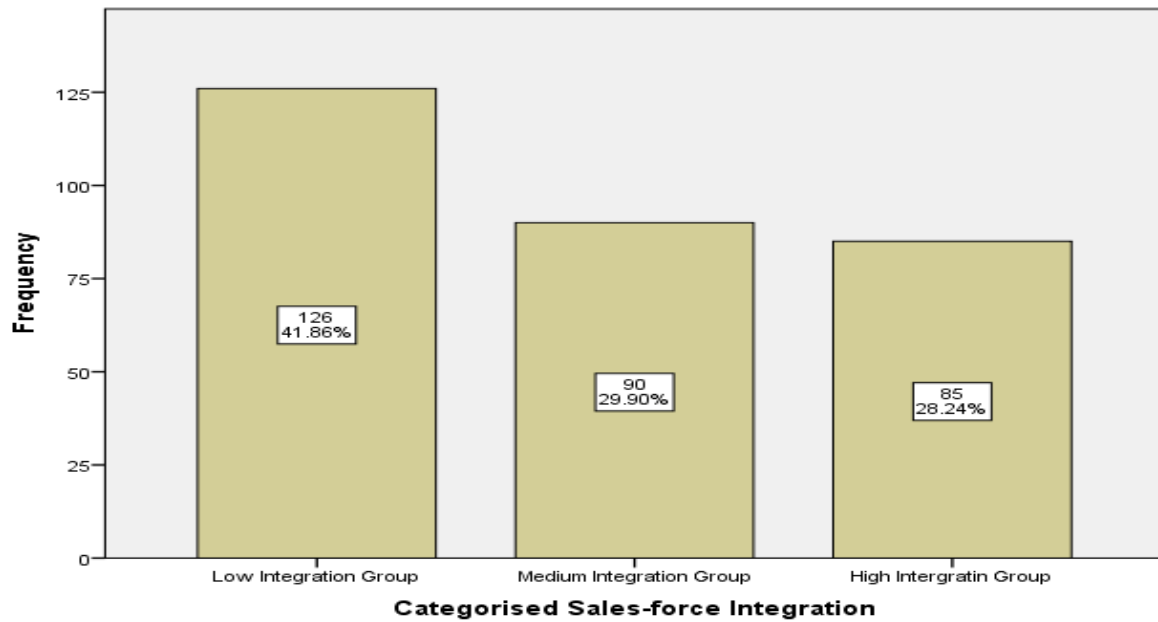
(frequency), on the y-axis (Kumar, 2011). The section of a bar shows the percentages of the groups which they represent in relation to each other.

In a similar previous study, where the level of satisfaction with a job was calculated with the help of a questionnaire, there were ten aspects of the work where respondents were asked to identify their level of satisfaction before and after redistribution by selecting one of the five response categories (Kumar, 2011). In this example, a satisfaction index between 10 and 50 was developed which designates a numerical value; the greater the extent of the response category, the greater the numerical value given to the answer by a respondent. In other words, the greater the score, the higher the level of satisfaction.

This convention is followed in this research, where the level of integration was divided into 3 sub-groups based on their score. The higher the score, the higher the level of integration, and the lower the score, the lower the level of integration, whereas a moderate score was designated a medium integration group. A satisfaction index between 8 and 40 was deployed here because of the eight aspects of sales force integration question (Q1). Respondents were rated on each of the items in this Q1 of integrated marketing communications scale and given the score of 1,2,3,4 and 5, accordingly. The scale of eight items mentioned above was therefore scored as 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree). The minimum score possible, therefore, was 8 (1x8) and the maximum was 40 (5x8).

Based on the above classification, integration groups were categorised based on their scores; a higher score of 30 to 40 (out of 40) was assigned for the high integration group, a moderate score of 20 to 29 for the medium group, and low score of 8 to 19 (8 being the minimum score in this research) was assigned for low integration group. Scores between 8 to 19 indicate that sales force integration in marketing communication is very low (labeled low integration group), scores between 20 to 29 indicate that sales force integration is medium (labeled medium integration group) and scores between 30 to 40 indicate that sales force integration is very high (labeled high Integration group). This division within the groups is clearly illustrated in the bar chart in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Categorisation of Sales force Integration into three groups



The results from the bar chart in Figure 6 (above) show that the highest number of respondents, 126 (41.86%), achieved a lower score and hence fall into the low integration group on the left of the chart, and the lowest number of respondents, 85 (28.24%), achieved the highest score and therefore, fall into the high integration group on the right. 90 (29.90%) respondents acquired a moderate score and were thus placed in the medium integration group. This revealed that the respondents in the low integration group have a lower level and the respondents in the high integration group have a higher level of integration into marketing communications.

The bar chart in figure 6 shows that more salespeople (41.86%) fell into the low integration group than fall into the high integration group (28.24%). In other words, the difference between the low and high integration group is more significant as compared to the medium and low integration groups. In line with statistical usage in social science, where results are significantly different at the 95% level of confidence ($P < .05$), then this is described as being significant and where the results are significantly different at the 99% level of confidence ($p < .01$), then this described as being highly significant (Bryman and Cramer, 2011). If any differences looked to be statistically significant then a series of significance tests were deployed to analyse whether a real difference existed between the two sub-groups with respect to the percentage who had the attribute under consideration. The statistics were

investigated for significance at the .05 critical alpha level (95% confidence level), as well as at levels of .01 (99% confidence level).

4.4 Reliability Measures

Reliability is the degree of accuracy of an instrument in measuring what it claims to be measuring, and its freedom from error (Green and Tull, 1978). Statistically, in test scores it is the proportion of non-error variance, and a test has a degree of reliability ranging from 0 to 1 as estimated by the reliability coefficient (Jensen, 1959), with a higher value indicating greater reliability (Pallant, 2013). If the search tool is consistent and stable, and therefore predictable and precise, then it is considered reliable (Kumar, 2011). Therefore, a reliable tool or scale will produce the same result when repeated under invariable conditions (Moser and Kalton, 1989).

Reliability is necessary for effective discrimination and so is the measure of potential effectiveness. Actual effectiveness also depends on validity, the measure of the degree to which the instrument measures what it purports to measure (Jensen, 1959). It has been considered that reliability is the minimum information needed to assess a measure or instrument and that inferences as to an instrument's validity may be based on its reliability. Validity is said to be much more difficult to establish than reliability (Jensen, 1959). In this research, the concept of sales force integration has all these elements of reliability and validity present; the results make sense in that they are what would be expected from the literature.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software (version 23) was used to analyse the data from the current research and that analysis provided two key pieces of information for this purpose. The first of these was the correlation matrix and the second was the 'view alpha if item deleted' column, which can be used to determine if the alpha level (level of reliability) can be raised by the deletion of items from the scale under consideration (Radhakrishna, 2007). This column was read to see if any entries were greater than the overall alpha for the entire scale. The assumption in doing this is that if alpha increases when an item is deleted, then that item is measuring something other than what the scale is meant to be measuring, and so the item should be deleted as it does not belong in the same scale as the

other items (Todd et al., 2004). Researchers suggest that such decisions should be made by the researchers involved based on their knowledge of the theoretical basis for the questionnaire and not just on the empirical results (Todd et al., 2004). In the case of this investigation, by eliminating any of the eight individual items in the construct, the levels of alpha for the IMC construct would not improve. This indicates that this construct is internally consistent and reliable.

In a questionnaire such as this one, where several questions are designed to assess the same trait such as sales force job satisfaction for example, then the questionnaire reliability addresses the degree to which respondent's observed scores on each item agrees with their universal score on that item. If the item scores all agree with the universal score, then the questionnaire is reliable (Boddy, 2009). The inter-item correlation matrix in SPSS gives some idea about how well the items relate to one another, and all or nearly all of the correlations should be positive.

Reliability implies internal consistency which means that items on a scale should be positively related to one another, irrespective of their number in an instrument (Kumar, 2011). In this study, the inter-item correlations were all positive, suggesting that the individual items are well related to each other and the sales force integration construct has good levels of internal consistency and reliability.

This was measured in the statistical pilot test to ensure that this was the case, and again in the analysis of the results of the whole sample. Using Cronbach's alpha as an internal consistency measure, the figure for the construct of sales force integration looks very good at 0.89, as shown below in Table 16, taken directly from SPSS output results. Such a high level may have been predicted based on the utilisation of such a well-used and validated measure, i.e. a measure with a high level of content validity, because it was designed by experts in the field (Green and Tull, 1978), in this case the field of IMC. However, there was always an element of uncertainty in doing this because of the abbreviated way in which the construct was operationalised for the level of integration purposes.

Table 16: Cronbach's Alpha for construct of Sales Force Integration

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.896	8

A summary of these alpha levels and inter-item correlation scores is shown for the construct of sales force integration in Table 17. These figures are taken directly from the SPSS output and the figures that are most important here are the Cronbach's alphas, whether the inter-item correlations are all positive and whether the 'Cronbach's alphas if item deleted' figures in each table could be improved by deletion or not. The figures for the construct of sales force integration are shown below in detail in Table 17.

After rounding the numbers to 2 decimal places, the summary details for the other constructs used in this research are then presented in Table 18, on page 141.

Table 17: Inter-item Correlations for construct of Sales Force Integration (Q.1)

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Cooperation	21.3223	34.799	.861	.863
Consistency	21.5150	35.984	.794	.870
Brand Reputation	19.5083	48.511	.076	.917
Coordination	21.5449	35.962	.775	.872
Clarity	21.2525	35.143	.836	.866
Credibility	19.7907	44.339	.352	.907
(R) Organisational knowledge	21.2292	36.831	.719	.878
Kept informed	21.3953	35.933	.837	.866

Table 18 below shows summary reliability statistics and the key reliability measure details for all the constructs used in this research.

Table 18: Reliability Statistics Summary (Adapted from Boddy, 2009)

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Inter-item correlations all positive?	Could Cronbach's Alpha be improved by any item deletion?
Sales Force Integration (Q. 1, 8 items)	.90	Yes	Yes, but only very marginally (0.01 and 0.02) in two items
Sales Force Job Satisfaction (Q. 2, 12 items)	.88	Yes	No
Sales Force Job Performance (Q. 3, 6 items)	.70	Yes	Yes, but only very marginally (.01) in one item
Sales Force Job Involvement (Q. 4, 14 items)	.91	Yes	No
Sales Force Job Commitment (Q. 5, 14 items)	.89	Yes	Yes, but only very marginally (.01) in one item
Sales Force Job Motivation (Q. 6, 7 items)	.75	Yes	Yes, but only very marginally (0.02 and 0.03) in two items

From Table 18, the Cronbach's alphas for the sales force integration construct (Q1) look very good at .90, and the inter-item correlations are all positive. Cronbach's alpha is not increased by the deletion of any single item, apart from a marginal increase to .92 and .91, respectively, in two items if the items '*Managing our brand reputation is a part of the responsibility of all employees*' and '*I believe that the company's advertisements and written materials are credible*' were deleted. Because of the positive nature of both constructs, expected results were achieved, where the maximum respondents score positively (either agree or strongly agree). These two items were also observed in the pilot study, where the standard deviation was very low because every single respondent scored these items positively. However, since the construct was already established, it was thus decided to leave these items in, and also the marginal (0.02 and 0.01) improvement was neglected without deleting this item. With the benefit of the current results, it may be suggested that in any future research into sales force integration, it would be better to include other items than these two to achieve more relevant and a better measurement of the construct. However, because this is a well-established construct, it was considered that it would be more useful to keep it intact so that comparisons could be made at a later stage of this research. The construct was therefore used as it is.

Cronbach's alphas for the sales force job satisfaction construct (Q2) also look good at a high .88, and inter-item correlations are all positive. This is in-line with the findings of the original inventors of the scale, Spector (1996), who reported an average internal consistency (coefficient alpha) of .82 across fifteen studies (Spector and Jex, 1998).

Cronbach's alpha is not increased by the deletion of any single item within the construct and it therefore can be used, usefully and reliably as it is. This can be seen in Table 34 in Appendix A (page 245) which displays the data taken directly from SPSS output results.

Cronbach's alphas for the sales force job performance construct (Q3) is comparatively low relative to other constructs at .70, but still within accepted standards for behavioral research as reported by the original inventors of the scale (Behrman and Perreault Jr, 1982). Cronbach's alpha values also depend on the number of items in the scale and this Q3 has only 6 items. Values of alpha can be very small if the scale is fewer than 10 (Nunnally, 1994), it is even common to find Cronbach values of 0.5 in a scale less than ten (Pallant, 2013).

Cronbach's alpha values inter-item correlations are all positive, and this is also in-line with the findings of the original inventors of the scale. In this construct Cronbach's alpha is not increased by the deletion of any single item apart from a very marginal increase (to .71) if the item '*I am working out solutions to customer questions or objections*' was deleted. The values taken directly from SPSS can be seen in Table 35 in Appendix A (page 246). In this item, overall 99% of respondents scored it positively (either 'strongly agree' or 'agree'), and the standard deviation appeared to be the lowest one in this construct. This was also observed during the pilot study, where maximum respondents scored positively with low standard deviation, but because of the nature of this research, it was important to keep this item as it is in order to check whether different levels of integration (especially low and high) have any impact on customer service or not.

With the benefit of the current results, it could be suggested that in any future research into sales force integration, where comparison may not be required, it would be better to include other items than this item to obtain a better and more relevant measure of the construct. However, because this is a well-established construct, and the margin for improvement was very low (0.01), it was used without deleting this item. It was therefore considered that it would be more beneficial in this research to keep it intact so that the comparisons of integration can be checked against customer service at a later stage. Cronbach's alphas for the sales force job involvement construct (Q4) look very good at .91, and the inter-item

correlations are all positive. Cronbach's alpha for this construct is not increased by deletion of any single item within the construct, and the output results achieved directly from SPSS can be seen in Table 36 in Appendix A (page 246). Therefore, it can be used, usefully and reliably, as it is.

Cronbach's alphas for the sales force job commitment construct (Q5) also look very good at .89 and inter-item correlations are again all positive. Cronbach's alpha is not increased by the deletion of any single item, except for a very marginal increase (to .90 if the item '*I feel very little loyalty to this organisation*' was deleted. The values taken directly from SPSS can be seen in Table 37 in Appendix A (page 247). Because of the nature of this item, expected results were obtained with the lowest standard deviation in this question. However, because this is a well-established construct, and the margin of improvement was negligible (0.01), it was therefore decided to keep this item. It was considered that it would be beneficial in this research where the comparison of integration can be checked against the loyalty to the organisation on a larger scale.

Cronbach's alphas for the sales force job motivation construct (Q6) look good at .75, and inter-item correlations are all positive. Cronbach's alpha is not increased by the deletion of any single item, apart from a very marginal increase to .78 and .77, respectively, when the items '*Most people on this job feel a great sense of personal satisfaction when they do their job well*' and '*Most people in this organisation feel bad or unhappy when they find that they have performed their work poorly*' were deleted. The values taken directly from SPSS can be seen in Table 38 in Appendix A (page 247). These two items in the construct of sales force job motivation were under debate in the pilot study, where three respondents mentioned that they can only tell other people's feeling if they are working close to them (in the same department). However, since the construct was established already, it was thus decided to leave these items in. Also, it was interesting to check the overall motivation of the sales force in different departments, for example, whether low integration has caused low motivation (and vice versa). With the benefit of current results, it could be suggested that any future research into sales force integration would be better to include other items than these two to obtain a better or more relevant measure of the construct.

However, these two items are well-established in the construct, and the margin of improvement was only 0.03 and 0.02, respectively, and the scale was used without deleting this item. It was therefore considered that it would be more beneficial to keep it intact so that

the comparisons of integration can be checked against the motivation across the organisation at a later stage. Non-response bias (the danger that respondents are different in some undetermined way to non-respondents, thus affecting reliability and validity) could not be tested for in this research as the usual test for this, which is a test of late versus early responses to test for significant differences in the two, could not be made (Wilcox, 1977). This was because of the questionnaire distribution method used. Questionnaires were not distributed in one single batch but rather over a number of months and it was thus not possible to ascertain which questionnaires were returned early or late and to then test for differences in these.

4.5 Statistical Analysis and Reliability - Conclusions

On the whole, all alpha values were at high levels, and inter-item correlations were positive, which means that research instrument as a whole can be used successfully for market research into this area. Ideally, the Cronbach's alpha of a scale should be above .70 (DeVellis, 2016). Nunnally (1994) also recommends a minimum level of .70, and values above .80 are considered very good (Pallant, 2013). Therefore overall, the IMC scale is considered to be highly reliable and acceptable because of the higher alpha values. Researchers have reported that a measure of good internal consistency is achieved when Cronbach's alpha exceeds .70 (Falkenbach et al., 2007). These criteria also confirm that internal consistency of all the construct is very good as alpha values lie between .70 and .90 in this research. It was explained in face validity that deleting any item in this scale did not make significant changes (Kumar, 2011), so it was therefore decided to use these scales as they were. Furthermore, where comparisons were available, the alpha levels of the constructs used as dependent variables were also quite similar to what was found in previous research. This also logically justifies the use of these scales in that there was nothing unusual in the way they were used in this study and this provides an additional element of reliability to the results.

4.6 Inferential Results

4.6.1 Correlation Matrix

Correlation is a measure designed to analyse whether a relationship exists between the variables (Kumar, 2011). Pearson's correlation is a common method for analysing the

strength of the relationship between continuous variables. This method also provides an indication of the direction, both positive and negative. A positive correlation is indicated if one variable increases, the other also increases, whereas a negative correlation means when one variable increase, the other decreases (Pallant, 2013).

Pearson's Correlation was undertaken in order to analyse the overall relationship between the constructs, where sales force integration was taken as an independent variable and performance outcomes (job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, job commitment and job motivation) were taken as dependent variables, as hypothesised.

Sales force integration was scored from 8 to 40 (as a continuous variable) and the total scores for the other constructs of sales force job satisfaction (JS), sales force job performance (JP), sales force job involvement (JI), sales force commitment (JC) and sales force motivation (JM) is the total correlation of each construct as a whole against each of the others.

Means and SD's were also calculated in this matrix. This allows for the examination of the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable and can be considered a useful tool to determine the relationship between them (Bryman and Cramer, 2005). The results are shown in the Pearson correlation matrix in Table 19, below.

Table 19: Pearson's Correlation Matrix for all Constructs

Pearson's Correlation Matrix for all constructs	Mean	SD	Sales force Integration	JS	JP	JI	JC	JM
Sales force Integration	2.99	.88	1					
Job Satisfaction (JS)	2.98	.72	.785**	1				
Job Performance (JP)	3.84	.57	.689**	.573**	1			
Job Involvement (JI)	2.78	.72	.755**	.775**	.583**	1		
Job Commitment (JC)	3.22	.65	.788**	.732**	.651**	.801**	1	
Job Motivation (JM)	3.38	.77	.574**	.688**	.688**	.493**	.493**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level ($P < 0.01$) (2-tailed)

As may have been expected from the literature, sales force integration into marketing communications has been significantly correlated with all the constructs under consideration in this research. Therefore, it can be concluded that all the dependent variables in this study are related and not independent of the presence of sales force integration. The results from the Table 19 (above) show that the independent variable is positively correlated with all dependent variables.

This suggests that as sales force integration into marketing communication increases, sales force job satisfaction, sales force job performance, sales force job involvement, sales force commitment and sales force motivation also increase, as was hypothesised.

The results also showed that sales force integration correlated the most positively with job commitment and least with job motivation. Integration correlated the second most positively with job satisfaction, then job involvement and finally with job performance. These correlations were all statistically significant.

4.6.2 Scatter Plots

Scatter plots are also used to study the possible relationships between variables, because Pearson's correlation 'r' seriously underestimates the strength of the relationship (particularly if a low r-value is acquired), therefore it is always better to validate using a scatter plot (Pallant, 2013). Scatter plots are an extremely effective and additional way to investigate the relationship between variables. It is a quick visual inspection that shows how one variable changes in relation to a variation in another variable (Kumar, 2011). In this section are scatter plots of measured integration level, plotted against the measures of the other items measured in the constructs of interest in this research. The data was taken in pairs for both constructs and showed as dots in relation to their values on both axes. The measurements of the variables are performed on the y and x axes of the graph, to analyse if there is a relationship between them that can be easily seen visually by the absence or existence of a trend or line of sight in the data.

For each independent variable mentioned on the x-axis, the dependent variable was plotted on the y-axis of the graph. The scatter plots are displayed with an adapted regression line to illustrate the relationship between dependent and independent variables and to see if the data

fits the expected pattern of results. The graphical representation of the mathematical regression equation can be seen in this fitted regression line. It is drawn using the least squares method, which minimises the sum of the squared distances between the fitted line and the point (Boddy, 2009). The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was also calculated for each item, to measure the strength of the linear relationship between the two variables.

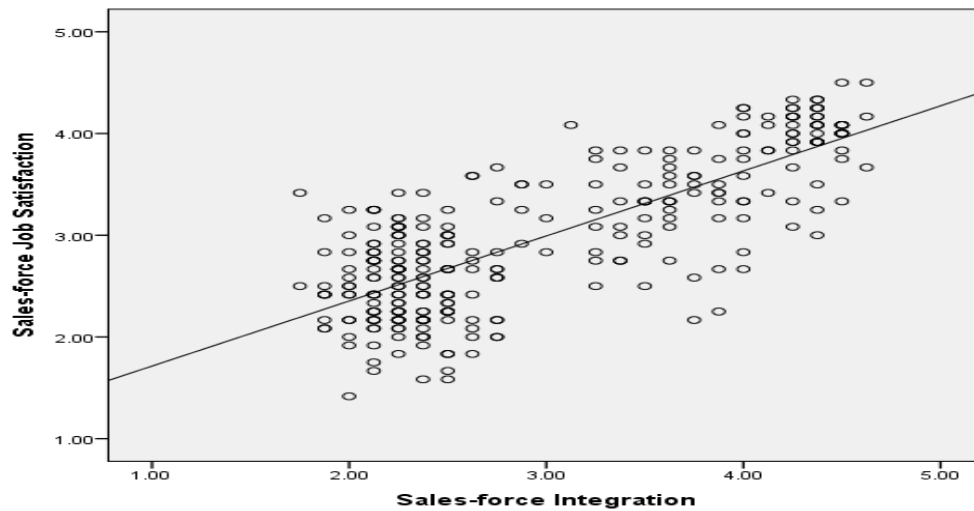
It always ranges from -1 to +1 depending on whether the relationship is positive or negative, between 0 and +1 means positive and between 0 and -1 means a negative relationship. A flat line ($r = 0$) means that no relationship exists between variables (Bacon-Shone, 2013).

A positive relationship shows the line starting from the bottom left and moves upward to the right, whereas a negative relationship shows the line starting from top left and moves down onto the right. This line also provides general information about the strength of the relationship between two variables. Points closely around an imaginary straight line will show a strong relationship, whereas points scattered all over the graph will show that the relationship is weak (Pallant, 2013).

This is what is shown in all scatter plots measured for each variable individually in this research. A P-value was also calculated for each correlation to establish whether the correlation was statistically significant or not.

P and r -values are given in these scatter plots so that the scatter plot results can be compared between each other. Scatter plots are shown below for each of the constructs to illustrate the nature of the linear relationship between the variables. These are all straight-line relationships showing a positive correlation. For the sake of conciseness, all five scatter plots for the five overall dependent variables are shown in this chapter. A scatter plot for the construct of sales force job satisfaction is shown in Figure 7 (below). This graph shows a strong degree of positive correlation between sales force integration and sales force job satisfaction. This is illustrated graphically with the help of the proximity of the points drawn to the regression line, and also by the high correlation value ($r = .785$) and by the fact that the P-value is highly significant ($P = .000$) (Pallant, 2013). In other words, as sales force marketing communications integration increases, so does sales force job satisfaction.

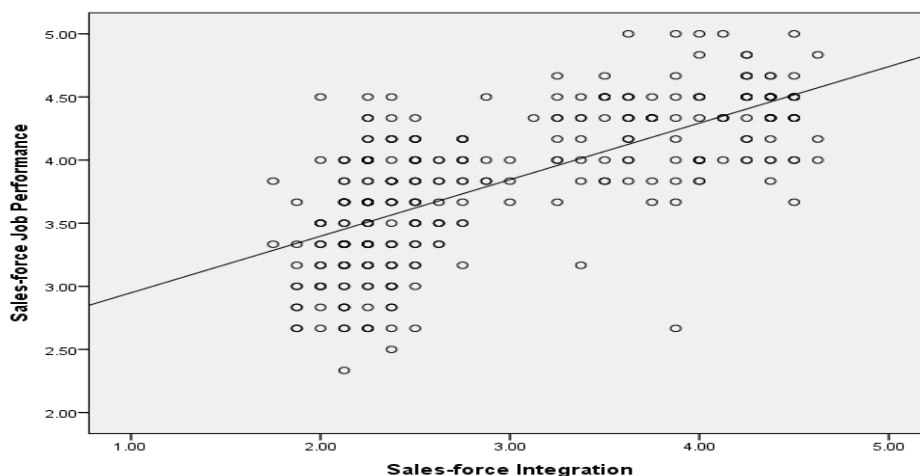
Figure 7: Scatter plot of Sales Force Integration versus Sales Force Job Satisfaction



Person correlation of Sales force integration and Sales force Job Satisfaction Construct; $r = 0.785$, P-Value = 0.000

A scatter plot for the construct of sales force job performance is shown in Figure 8 (below). As can be seen, the levels of sales force job performance measured are fairly well scattered around the regression line compared to several of the other scatter plots, showing a less defined adjustment, but still an expected fit between sales force integration and sales force job performance. In other words, as sales force integration increases, so does sales force job performance. There is a positive and significant correlation ($r = .689$) between the presence of sales force integration in an organisation and sales force job performance and by the fact that the P-value is highly significant ($P = 0.000$) (Pallant, 2013).

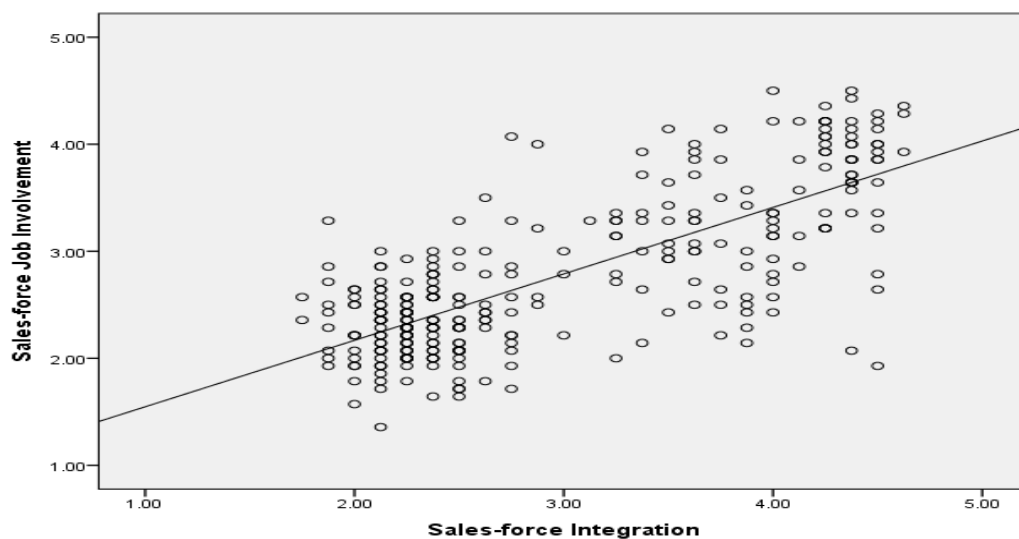
Figure 8: Scatter plot of Sales Force Integration versus Sales Force Job Performance



Person correlation of Sales force Integration and Sales force Job Performance Construct; $r = 0.689$, P-Value = 0.000

A scatter plot for the construct of sales force job involvement is shown in the figure 9 below. This graph shows a comparatively high degree of correlation between sales force integration and sales force job involvement. This is indicated graphically for example, by a reasonable proximity of the points drawn to the regression lines, indicating a predictable fit between sales force integration and sales force job involvement, also by the high correlation value ($r = .755$) and by the fact that the P-value ($P = .000$) is highly significant (Pallant, 2013). In other words, as sales force integration increases, so does sales force job involvement.

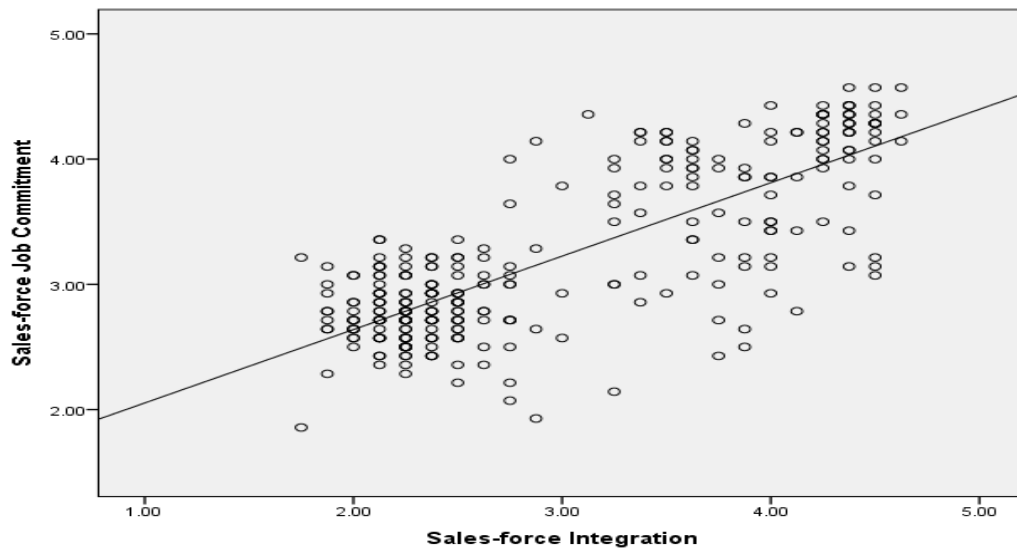
Figure 9: Scatter plot of Sales Force Integration versus Sales Force Job Involvement



Person correlation of Sales force Integration and Sales force Job Involvement Construct; $r = 0.755$, P-Value = 0.000

As sales force integration increases, the sales force job commitment also increases, as shown in the scatter plot in Figure 10 (below). This graph shows a significant degree of correlation between sales force integration and the sales force commitment. This is indicated graphically, for example, by the proximity of the points drawn to the regression lines, and also by the highest correlation value ($r = .788$) and by the fact that the value of P ($P = .000$) is extremely significant (Pallant, 2013).

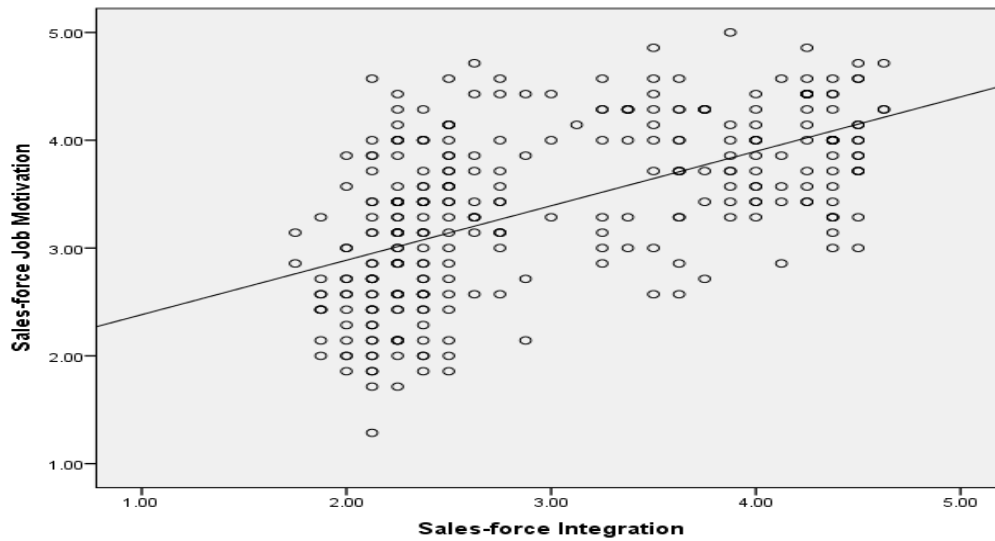
Figure 10: Scatter plot of Sales Force Integration versus Sales Force Job Commitment



Person correlation of Sales force Integration and Sales force Job Commitment Construct; $r = 0.788$, P-Value = 0.000

A scatter plot for the construct of sales force job motivation is shown in Figure 11 (below). As can be seen, the levels of sales force job motivation measured are more scattered along the regression line than the points found in the other scatter plots. This results in a lower correlation coefficient of 0.574 and indicates less of a correlation between sales force integration and the construct of sales force job motivation. However, the correlation remains significantly positive, in other words as sales force integration increases, so does sales force motivation. Therefore, there is a positive and significant correlation between the presence of sales force integration into marketing communications in an organisation and sales force motivation and by fact that the P-value ($P = .000$) is extremely significant (Pallant, 2013).

Figure 11: Scatter plot of Sales Force Integration versus Sales Force Job Motivation



Person correlation of Sales force Integration and Sales force Job Motivation Construct; $r = 0.574$, $P\text{-Value} = 0.000$

The scatter plots set out in this section treat sales force integration as a continuous variable in order to investigate correlation between the variables under investigation and the amount of sales force integration involved. Clear relationships, positive and significant correlation between dependent and independent and variables are shown, as discussed above. To further analyse the relationship between the variable of sales force integration (i.e. treated as a continuum) and the other variables in the research, a regression analysis was also performed. This statistical regression analysis was undertaken to help understand how the values of the dependent variable change when the independent variable changes. Regression analysis gives an estimate of the expected condition of the dependent variable, given the independent variable (Boddy, 2009).

4.6.3 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is commonly used to test a hypothesis (Bryman and Cramer, 2011). The regression analysis, therefore, goes beyond Pearson's correlation analysis (r), which verifies the strength of any relationship between variables and makes the stronger claim that illustrates the predictive properties of one or more variables on another variable. R^2 is known as the coefficient of determination which indicates how much of the variance in the

dependent variable can be explained by independent variables. R^2 can be simply obtained by multiplying the R value by itself (Pallant, 2013).

The idea of regression also summarises the relationship between two variables by generating a line that closely matches the data. This line known as the ‘line of best fit’ (Bryman and Cramer, 2011). Referring back to the scatter diagrams in the previous section, where this line is minimising the deviation of all the dots from the line, where this regression line summarise how good linear fit is on the scale from 0 to 1 (Bacon-Shone, 2013). In this investigation, a simple regression analysis was undertaken to understand how much the independent variable (sales force integration) explained the variance in the dependent variable. Regression analysis was thus used for each of the constructs in turn and the dependant variable and sales force integration as the predictor (independent) variable can be seen below in Table 20. A basic objective of performing this regression analysis is to measure how much variation in one variable affects variations in another variable. The P-value (0.000) obtained for each construct in the table below shows that the model as whole is significant as $P < .001$ (Pallant, 2013).

Table 20: Regression Model: Independent variable is Sales force Integration

Regression Model	Dependent Variables	R2	Standard Error	P-Value
1	Sales force Job Satisfaction	.617	0.44	.000
2	Sales force Job Performance	.475	0.41	.000
3	Sales force Job Involvement	.570	0.47	.000
4	Sales force Job Commitment	.620	0.40	.000
5	Sales force Job Motivation	.330	0.63	.000

However, as discussed earlier and illustrated in Figure 6 in Chapter 4 (page 137), the data were also trichotomised into three groups to analyse the level of sales force integration. Having categorised the data into groups of response categories which are referred to as Low Integration Group, Medium Integration Group and High Integration Group of the sales force, it was then important for the research to compare and investigate whether there were any statistically significant differences between the results for the three groups. Therefore, in

order to check the significant difference, cross-tabulations of the aggregated results formed the initial basis of the analysis, where the mean score was calculated for each item of all the dependent variables against the low, medium and high integration groups, as discussed below.

4.6.4 Cross-Tabulations

Cross tabulation is one of the simplest and most frequently used methods of analysing the presence or absence of a relationship (Bryman and Cramer, 2011). In this statistical procedure, the subcategories of both variables can be examined in relation to each other and it also helps to indicate which aspect affects the level of satisfaction (Kumar, 2011).

The header of the cross-tabulation consisted of the sub-groups of sales force integration, which were labelled low, medium and high integration groups. In the research questionnaire, the lowest score value in a 5-point Likert scale was '1' (strongly disagree) and the highest score was '5' (strongly agree), whereas '3' (neither agree nor disagree) has been considered a middle value. A statistical method was used to look at differences between the groups and to look at the difference between mean values in this research. It is useful to check the mean values in each group to see if they make any sense (Pallant, 2013), i.e., the lowest mean value in the low integration group and the highest mean value in the high integration group.

The mean score was calculated for all five performance outcomes (dependent variables) against categorised data (independent variable). The header used in terms of the answers to each of the questions asked in each construct were cross-tabulated against categorised sales force integration. The data for each of the five constructs are given in Tables 21-25 on pages 154 to 158, where the mean value was calculated with the help of cross tabulation analysis from SPSS. Further details of each table can be seen in Tables 39 to 43 in Appendix A on pages 248 to 255.

The results in Table 21 below show the mean score of each question asked in the sales force job satisfaction construct against categorised sales force integration.

Table 21: Mean Score of Sales force Job Satisfaction against Categorised Sales Force Integration

Question 2 - Sales force Job Satisfaction	Mean Score of Categorised Sales force Integration		
	Low Integration Group N= 126	Medium Integration Group N= 90	High Integration Group N= 85
(R) Not satisfied with beneffits received	2.16	2.68	3.85
(R) Work not appreciated	1.73	2.56	3.93
Receive job recognition	1.88	2.40	3.93
(R) Work harder due to other's incompetence	3.31	3.19	3.45
(R) Too much work to do	2.21	2.72	3.56
(R) Feel job is meaningless	2.48	2.73	3.86
Like doing work	3.04	3.23	4.08
Sense of pride in doing job	2.81	3.30	4.11
Satisfied with promotion chances	1.94	2.20	2.85
Like people work with	3.69	3.89	4.19
Job is enjoyable	2.90	2.94	3.92
(R) Rules make job difficult	2.10	2.89	3.65
Overall Construct Mean	30.25	34.43	45.38

The results in Table 21 show that each item has the lowest mean value in the low integration group and highest mean value is in the high integration group, whereas mean values of medium integration group is moderate apart from only one item, *'I find that I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of the people I work with'*, which appeared as the fourth item in this construct.

The mean score of these three items obtained was 3.31, 3.19 and 3.45 for the low, medium and high integration groups, respectively, seemingly with no significant difference. In the remaining eleven items, the results showed that differences between the three integration groups are in line with expectations, i.e. the difference of mean between the low and high integration groups is more significant as compared to the low and medium integration groups.

It can be observed that all respondents in the low integration group scored less as compared to the other two groups (medium and high). Also, it has been noted in the overall mean score that the difference of mean between low and high integration group is more significant as compared to low and medium group. Table 22 (below) shows the mean score of each question asked in the sales force job performance construct against categorised sales force integration.

Table 22: Mean Score of Sales force Job Performance against Categorised Sales force Integration

Question 3 - Sales force Job Performance	Mean Score of Categorised Sales force Integration		
	Low Integration Group N= 126	Medium Integration Group N= 90	High Integration Group N= 85
Helping increase sales	3.99	4.19	4.32
Have product knowledge	2.46	3.14	4.19
Give good advice to customers	3.13	4.06	4.51
Able to meet set targets	3.21	3.83	4.20
Submitting paperwork on time	3.69	4.16	4.39
Give solutions to customer questions	4.17	4.31	4.34
Overall Construct Mean	20.65	23.69	25.95

The results in Table 22 (above) show that each item has the lowest mean value in the low integration group and the highest mean value in the high integration group, whereas mean values of the medium integration group are closer to the high integration group. In other words, the differences between low and high integration groups are more significant as compared to low and medium integration groups.

The low mean value of the low integration group shows that the majority of respondents did not agree with most of the statements in this sales force job performance construct and hence obtained low mean value scores. The high mean values of the high integration group showed

that the majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed. Also, it has been noted, in the overall mean score that the difference of mean between the low and high integration groups is more significant as compared to the low and medium groups. Table 23 (below) shows the mean score of each question asked in the sales force job involvement construct against categorised sales force integration.

Table 23: Mean Score of Sales force Job Involvement against Categorised Sales Force Integration

Question 4 - Sales force Job Involvement	Mean Score of Categorised Sales force Integration		
	Low Integration Group N= 126	Medium Integration Group N= 90	High Integration Group N= 85
I'll do overtime even without being paid	1.99	2.62	3.78
I show up early at work	2.14	2.59	3.53
Major life satisfaction is from job	2.40	2.46	3.32
Mornings at work fly by	3.70	3.69	4.22
Important events involve job	2.36	2.86	3.45
I'm perfectionist about work	3.63	3.93	4.12
(R) Other activities more important than work	1.81	2.20	2.69
Would keep working without pay	1.40	1.88	2.26
(R) Often feel like staying home	1.84	2.53	3.80
(R) Work is a small part of me	1.90	2.23	2.99
Personally involved in work	2.60	3.23	3.94
(R) Avoid taking extra duties	2.73	3.30	4.16
(R) Used to be more ambitious than now	2.10	2.92	3.79
(R) Most things more important than work	1.85	2.08	3.08
Overall Construct Mean	32.15	38.52	49.13

The results in Table 23 (above) show that each item has the lowest mean value in the low integration group and the highest mean value is in the high integration group, whereas the mean values of the medium integration group are moderate, except for the fourth item in this

construct, namely '*For me, mornings at work really fly by/go quickly*', where the mean value of low integration group is (3.70), marginally higher than the medium integration group (3.69). However, there is still a significant difference between the mean of the low and high integration groups. In the remaining thirteen items, the result was in line with expectations, where all the respondents in the low integration group scored less and achieved the lowest mean values as compared to other two groups. Table 24 (below) shows the mean scores for each item within job commitment, against sales force integration.

Table 24: Mean Score of Sales force Job Commitment against Categorised Sales Force Integration

Question 5 - Sales force Job commitment	Mean Score of Categorised Sales force Integration		
	Low Integration Group N= 126	Medium Integration Group N= 90	High Integration Group N= 85
Will spend great deal of job effort	4.23	4.21	4.27
I say this is a good place to work	2.87	3.42	3.91
(R) I feel little loyalty	4.36	4.31	4.22
I'd accept any job assignment to keep this job	1.93	2.57	3.66
Mine and organisational values are similar	3.06	3.47	3.87
Proud to tell others about this organisation	2.79	3.46	4.05
(R) Could work for different organisation	1.96	2.70	3.79
Organisation inspires best in me	1.88	2.69	3.74
(R) Just a little could cause me to leave	2.40	3.02	3.82
Glad I chose this organisation	3.59	3.63	3.92
(R) Not much to be gained with this organisation	1.62	2.43	3.68
(R) Difficult to agree with org polices	1.90	2.41	3.63
Really care about organisation's fate	4.44	4.31	4.28
Best possible organisation to work	1.83	2.46	3.51
Overall Construct Mean	38.86	45.09	54.35

The results in Table 24 (above) reveal that each item has the lowest mean value in the low integration group and the highest mean value in the high integration group, whereas mean values of the medium integration group are moderate, apart from the first, third and second last item in this construct, namely *‘I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organisation be successful’*, *‘I feel very little loyalty to this organisation’* and *‘I really care about the fate of this organisation’*, where the mean value of these three items appeared very close to each other as (4.23, 4.21, 4.27), (4.36, 4.31, 4.22) and (4.44, 4.31, 4.28), respectively. In other words, the differences between the mean in these three items are not very significant among the three groups.

The results from the remaining eleven items show that differences between the three integration groups are in line with expectations, i.e. the difference between the low and high integration groups is more significant as compared to the low and medium integration groups. Table 25 (below) shows the mean score of each question asked in sales force job motivation construct against categorised sales force integration.

Table 25: Mean score of Sales force Job Motivation against Categorised Sales Force Integration

Question 6 - Sales force Job Motivation	Mean Score of Categorised Sales force Integration		
	Low Integration Group N= 126	Medium Integration Group N= 90	High Integration Group N= 85
Self-opinion goes up by doing job	2.24	3.61	4.19
Get personal satisfaction from job	3.04	4.13	4.39
Feel bad if performance poor	2.83	3.98	4.18
(R) My feelings are not affected by job	2.41	3.19	3.88
Most people satisfied by doing job well.	3.76	3.62	3.36
Most people feel bad when performance is poor	3.74	3.58	3.41
(R) Don't care if work properly	2.17	3.03	4.02
Overall Construct Mean	20.19	25.14	27.43

The results in Table 25 (above) show that each item has the lowest mean value in the low integration group and the highest mean value in the high integration group, whereas the mean values of the medium integration group are moderate, apart from the fifth and sixth item, namely '*Most people on this job feel a great sense of personal satisfaction when they do their job well*' and '*Most people in this organisation feel bad or unhappy when they find that they have performed their work poorly*', respectively. In these two items, although the mean value of the lower group is not the lowest among the group, , the difference of mean between low and high integration is quite significant.

In the remaining five items, the results showed that all the respondents in the low integration group achieved the lowest mean score as compared to the other two groups (medium and high). Also, it has been noted in the overall mean scores that the difference between the mean of the low and high integration groups is more significant as compared to the low and medium groups.

Overall, in this cross-tabulation analysis, all 53 items within the dependent variables used in this questionnaire were measured against the different levels or groups of integration. Out of 53 items, 49 items showed that the difference between low and high integration is more significant as compared to the low and medium groups. Only the remaining 4 items showed that the difference between the low and high integration groups is not significant. It is important to see here if overall the groups differ and whether the independent variable somehow influences scores on the dependent variable. However, rather than checking all groups, the focus should be on specific groups that are more relevant to the study (Pallant, 2007). In this study, results from two different analysis (categorical analysis and cross tabulations) clearly showed that the difference between medium and high integration groups is not that significant, so it was therefore appropriate to leave out the medium group and only compare the low and high groups for further analysis to confirm whether this difference is significant or not.

In a large sample size (like in this study), even a very small difference in mean scores between the groups can become statistically significant (Pallant, 2013). Therefore, another significance test, a T- test, was performed to enable tests across mean, standard deviations and significance scores to see the direction of difference where significant differences did exist (Boddy, 2009). A paired sample T-test is a common method used to compare mean

scores, and indicates whether the difference between the mean score for two groups is significant (Pallant, 2013).

Therefore, the comparison between the low and high integration groups was analysed with the help of the T test, which is used as a different measure of the same thing to confirm the presence of differences.

4.6.5 Tests of Significance

The term ‘significance’, in relation to the differences using probabilities, was first used by English economist and mathematician Francis Edgeworth in 1885 and researchers have used this technique since then (Little, 2013). Significance testing is an objective method of testing whether differences in reported results, expressed in percentages or mean scores, are probably real differences or not at a given level of confidence (Bryman and Cramer, 2011). The level of statistical significance difference does not suggest the strength of the variables, but instead it indicates how much confidence was obtained from the result (Pallant, 2013). Researchers typically use levels of confidence at 90%, 95% and 99% (Burns and Bush 2003; Kumar, 2011). In line with statistical usage in social science and marketing research, where results are significantly different at the 95% level of confidence, ($P < .05$) then this is described as being significant and where results are significantly different at the 99% level of confidence, ($P < .01$) then this is described as being highly significant (Ali, 2016). The following statistics were investigated for 95% and 99% confidence level at critical alpha value of .05 and .01, respectively.

In the following five tables, significance levels were calculated via T-tests for each construct. The mean and standard deviation of each item of the construct was calculated against the low and high integration groups to compare whether a significance difference between these two groups exists. The last column of each table labelled ‘Sig. Level of T-test’ shows the probability (P) value. P-values less than .05 mean that there is a significant difference between two groups at 95% confidence level (Pallant, 2013). Any * (asterisks) next to values listed show where the two groups (low and high) being compared are significantly different from one another. Symbols *** and ** mean the results are significant at 99% ($p < .01$) and 95% ($P < .05$), respectively.

A summary of the statistics relating to the T-test results are shown in Tables 26 to 30 on pages 161 to 165. The key to all these tables is shown here in Key 1 and Key 2:

Key 1:

LIG = Low Integration Group
MIG = Medium Integration Group
HIG = High integration group
 \bar{x} = mean annual frequency
 sd = standard deviation
 N = numbers of respondents

Key 2:

** = Statistically significant at 95% level of confidence ($p < .05$)
*** = Statistically significant at 99% level of confidence ($p < .01$)

Table 26: Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores: Sales Force Job Satisfaction Construct

Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores for Construct of Job Satisfaction Items	LIG \bar{X} $N=126$	LIG sd	MIG \bar{X} $N=90$	MIG sd	HIG \bar{X} $N=85$	HIG sd	T – Test LIG/ HIG	Sig. Level of T Test Result 5%
(R) Not satisfied with benefits received	2.16	0.96	2.68	1.05	3.85	1.01	12.28	0.000***
(R) Work not appreciated.	1.73	0.66	2.56	1.15	3.93	0.91	20.35	0.000***
Receive job recognition	1.88	0.76	2.40	1.10	3.93	0.88	18.02	0.000***
(R) Work harder due to other's incompetence	3.31	1.18	3.19	1.12	3.45	1.07	0.88	0.381
(R) Too much work to do	2.21	0.97	2.72	0.99	3.56	0.99	9.83	0.000***
(R) Feel job is meaningless	2.48	0.95	2.73	1.03	3.86	0.93	10.44	0.000***
Like doing work	3.04	0.98	3.23	0.99	4.08	0.58	8.80	0.000***
Sense of pride in doing job	2.81	0.96	3.30	0.98	4.11	0.67	10.83	0.000***
Satisfied with promotion chances	1.94	0.82	2.20	0.96	2.85	1.09	6.91	0.000***
Like people work with	3.69	0.76	3.89	0.59	4.19	0.50	5.33	0.000***
Job is enjoyable.	2.90	0.98	2.94	1.02	3.92	0.71	8.24	0.000***
(R) Rules make job difficult	2.10	0.90	2.89	1.10	3.65	0.98	11.84	0.000***

The results in Table 26 (above) show that all the items in the sales force job satisfaction construct have significant difference between the low and high integration groups, apart from the fourth item in this construct, namely '*I find that I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of the people I work with*'. This item has already been discussed earlier and appeared with marginal mean difference among three groups in cross-tabulation Table 21 (on page 154), where the difference of mean between groups was not significant.

However, it has been further confirmed in this analysis that this item has no significant difference between the low and high integration groups, as P- value, or significance value, comes out as 0.381, which is more than the critical alpha value of 0.05 ($P > 0.05$) at 95% confidence level. The remaining 11 items have significant differences, where the P-value 0.000 is less than the critical alpha value of 0.05 at 95% confidence level or $P < 0.05$.

Table 27: Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores: Sales Force Job Performance Construct

Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores for Construct of Job Performance Items	LIG \bar{X} <i>N</i> =126	LIG <i>sd</i>	MIG \bar{X} <i>N</i> =90	MIG <i>Sd</i>	HIG \bar{X} <i>N</i> =85	HIG <i>Sd</i>	T – Test LIG/ HIG	Sig. Level of T Test Result 5%
Helping increase sale	3.99	0.54	4.19	0.72	4.32	0.83	3.50	0.000***
Have product knowledge	2.46	0.89	3.14	1.06	4.19	0.55	15.97	0.000***
Give good advice to customers	3.13	1.05	4.06	0.80	4.51	0.50	11.28	0.000***
Able to meet targets	3.21	1.06	3.83	0.78	4.20	0.69	7.59	0.000***
Submitting paperwork on time	3.69	1.05	4.16	0.75	4.39	0.66	5.46	0.000***
Give solutions to customer questions	4.17	0.45	4.31	0.47	4.34	0.63	2.29	0.023**

The results in Table 27 (above) show that all the items in the sales force job performance construct have significant differences between the low and high integration groups, where the P-value is 0.000, except for one item (the last item in this construct), namely '*I am working out solutions to customer questions or objections*', where the P-value is 0.023. Nevertheless, it is less than the critical alpha value of 0.05 (or $P < 0.05$) at 95% confidence level.

Table 28: Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores: Sales Force Job Involvement Construct

Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores for Construct of Job Involvement Items	LIG \bar{X} <i>N=126</i>	LIG <i>sd</i>	MIG \bar{X} <i>N=90</i>	MIG <i>Sd</i>	HIG \bar{X} <i>N=85</i>	HIG <i>Sd</i>	T – Test LIG/ HIG	Sig. Level of T Test Result 5%
I'll do overtime even without being paid	1.99	0.88	2.62	1.03	3.78	1.04	13.46	0.000***
I show up early at work	2.14	0.85	2.59	1.16	3.53	1.22	9.76	0.000***
Major life satisfaction is from job	2.40	0.85	2.46	0.99	3.32	1.19	6.55	0.000***
Mornings at work fly by	3.70	0.81	3.69	0.88	4.22	0.68	4.87	0.000***
Important events involve job	2.36	0.88	2.86	1.06	3.45	1.06	8.12	0.000***
I am perfectionist about work	3.63	1.03	3.93	1.00	4.12	0.75	3.76	0.000***
(R) Other activities more important than work	1.81	0.55	2.20	0.95	2.69	1.13	7.52	0.000***
Would keep working without pay	1.40	0.51	1.88	0.90	2.26	1.20	7.15	0.000***
(R) Often feel like staying home	1.84	0.76	2.53	1.21	3.80	1.11	15.23	0.000***
(R) Work is a small part of me	1.90	0.45	2.23	0.78	2.99	1.17	9.48	0.000***
Personally involved in work	2.60	0.93	3.23	1.08	3.94	0.93	10.26	0.000***
(R) Avoid taking extra duties	2.73	1.11	3.30	1.18	4.16	0.91	9.85	0.000***
(R) Used to be more ambitious than now	2.10	0.80	2.92	1.18	3.79	1.09	12.98	0.000***
(R) Most things more important than work	1.85	0.49	2.08	0.80	3.08	1.20	10.31	0.000***

The results in Table 28 (above) show that all the items in the job involvement construct have significant differences between the low and high integration groups, where the P-value is 0.000 which is less than the critical alpha value of 0.05 (or $P < 0.05$) at 95% confidence level.

Table 29: Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores: Sales Force Job Commitment Construct

Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores for Construct of Job Commitment Items	LIG \bar{X} <i>N=126</i>	LIG <i>sd</i>	MIG \bar{X} <i>N=90</i>	MIG <i>Sd</i>	HIG \bar{X} <i>N=85</i>	HIG <i>Sd</i>	T – Test LIG/ HIG	Sig. Level of T Test Result 5%
Will spend great deal of job effort	4.23	0.54	4.21	0.77	4.27	0.64	0.49	0.625
I say this is a good place to work	2.87	1.03	3.42	1.02	3.91	0.87	7.65	0.000***
(R) I feel little loyalty	4.36	0.66	4.31	0.84	4.22	0.64	1.53	0.128
I'd accept any job assignment to keep this job	1.93	0.74	2.57	1.10	3.66	1.09	13.74	0.000***
Mine and organisational values are similar	3.06	0.99	3.47	0.96	3.87	0.84	6.19	0.000***
Proud to tell others about this organisation	2.79	0.99	3.46	0.90	4.05	0.63	10.40	0.000***
(R) Could work for different organisation	1.96	0.67	2.70	1.08	3.79	0.96	16.31	0.000***
Organisation inspires best in me	1.88	0.59	2.69	1.07	3.74	0.86	18.64	0.000***
(R) Just a little could cause me to leave	2.40	0.96	3.02	1.23	3.82	1.04	10.19	0.000***
Glad I chose this organisation	3.59	0.822	3.63	0.77	3.92	0.54	3.26	0.001***
(R) Not much to be gained with this organisation	1.62	0.67	2.43	1.21	3.68	1.00	17.92	0.000***
(R) Difficult to agree with organisation's policies	1.90	0.67	2.41	0.98	3.63	0.96	15.42	0.000***
Really care about organisation's fate	4.44	0.63	4.31	0.86	4.28	0.70	1.73	0.085
Best possible organisation to work	1.83	0.55	2.46	0.99	3.51	0.95	16.23	0.000***

The data in Table 29 (above) show that all the items in the sales force job commitment construct have significant differences between the low and high integration groups, apart from the first, third and second last items in this construct, namely ‘*I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organisation be successful*’, ‘*I feel very little loyalty to this organisation*’ and ‘*I really care about the fate of this organisation*’, respectively. These items have already been discussed earlier in relation to Table 24 (on page 157) and appeared with marginal mean differences between the three groups.

It has been further confirmed in this analysis that these 3 items have no significant differences between the low and high integration groups, as the P-value comes out as 0.625, 0.128 and 0.085, respectively, which is more than the critical alpha value of 0.05 (or $P > 0.05$) at 95% confidence level. The remaining 11 items have significant differences, where P-value 0.000 is less than the critical alpha value of 0.05 (or $P < 0.05$) at 95% confidence level.

Table 30: Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores: Sales force job Motivation Construct

Means, Standard Deviations and Significance Scores for Construct of Job Motivation Items	LIG \bar{X} <i>N=126</i>	LIG <i>sd</i>	MIG \bar{X} <i>N=90</i>	MIG <i>Sd</i>	HIG \bar{X} <i>N=85</i>	HIG <i>Sd</i>	T – Test LIG/ HIG	Sig. Level of T Test Result 5%
Self-opinion goes up by doing job	2.24	1.09	3.61	1.18	4.19	0.70	14.58	0.000***
Get personal satisfaction from job	3.04	1.34	4.13	0.90	4.39	0.51	8.86	0.000***
Feel bad if performance poor	2.83	1.40	3.98	0.94	4.18	0.66	8.29	0.000***
(R) My feelings are not affected by job	2.41	0.94	3.19	1.16	3.88	0.88	11.43	0.000***
Most people satisfied by doing job well	3.76	1.02	3.62	1.30	3.36	1.33	2.47	0.014**
Most people feel bad when performance is poor	3.74	1.10	3.58	1.25	3.41	1.28	1.99	0.047**
(R) Don't care if work properly	2.17	0.92	3.03	1.11	4.02	0.77	15.27	0.000***

The data in Table 30 (above) show that all the items in the sales force job motivation construct have significant differences between the low and high integration groups, where the P- value is 0.000 ($P < 0.01$) except for the fifth and sixth items, namely ‘*Most people on this job feel a great sense of personal satisfaction when they do their job well*’ and ‘*Most people in this organisation feel bad or unhappy when they find that they have performed their work poorly*’, respectively, where the P-value was 0.014 and 0.047, respectively. Although these two values are more than 0.000, they are still less than the critical alpha values of 0.05 (or $P < 0.05$) at 95% confidence level. In summary, the overall results from Tables 26 to 30 (on pages 161 to 165) demonstrate that it is clear that out of 53 items, 49 have significant differences between the low and high integration groups, where the P-values were less than the critical alpha value of 0.05 (or $P < 0.05$) at 95% confidence level.

4.7 Descriptive Results

4.7.1 Hypothesis Analysis

The traditional quantitative analysis (testing a null hypothesis) for the hypothesis test that was deployed in this research has been frequently used in the past by other researchers to compute the probabilities of the sample results, p calculated, assuming that the sample came from a population where the null hypothesis is being tested is true (or $H_0: \beta = 0$) and given the sample size (Cohen 1994; Thompson, 1996; Little, 2013). The null hypothesis is also known as a ‘hypothesis of no difference’ where no difference is found between groups (Kumar, 2011) or when an expected relationship does not exist in a research hypothesis (Bacon-Shone, 2013). In these studies, the computation and interpretation of P -calculated values was referred to as statistical significance testing, where the P -value is compared against a set P critical value (α). In the results where the P -value obtained was less than α (or $P < \alpha$), the null hypothesis had to be rejected (with the acceptance of an alternative hypothesis (or H_a), and results were described as being statistically significant (Cohen. 1994; Thompson, 1996; Little, 2013). When the null hypothesis is rejected then an alternative hypothesis has to be acceptable (Kumar, 2011). Null and alternative are thus usually statically complementary. There is no other way to reject the alternative hypothesis (H_a). Researchers can only look at the evidence to reject or accept a null hypothesis and then based on that, an analysis can be made as to whether the results which are obtained are in line with expectations or not (Bacon-Shone, 2013). Accepting a null hypothesis (H_0) means that there is no relationship between these two groups, and rejecting H_0 means there is a linear relationship that exists between them (Kumar, 2011).

All five hypotheses in this research were tested using the same technique to check whether the relationship between sales force integration (independent variable) and other dependent variables exists. An ANOVA test was performed to test the null hypothesis and the p -value was obtained for each hypothesis at 99% level of confidence at a critical value of $\alpha = 0.01$ (Little 2013). The purpose of ANOVA is to test if there is any significant difference between two groups (Ali 2016).

Key

Null Hypothesis: $H_0: \beta = 0$ There is no linear relationship

Alternative Hypothesis: $H_a: \beta \neq 0$ A linear relationship exists.

H1. The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job satisfaction.

The P-value obtained from the analysis is .000 or $P < 0.01$, which reveals highly significant results. Therefore, the null version of hypothesis (H_0) will be rejected and alternative hypothesis (H_a) will be accepted here (Ali, 2013). This means that a linear relationship exists between these two variables. In other words, by increasing the level of sales force integration into corporate marketing communications, the level of sales force job satisfaction will also increase.

H2. The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force performance.

The P-value acquired from the analysis is .000, which is highly significant or $P < 0.01$. This suggests the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and the adoption of the alternative hypothesis (H_a) (Ali, 2013). This shows that there is a linear and positive relationship between these two variables. In other words, the more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job performance.

H3. The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job involvement.

The results obtained from the analysis reveals that the P-value is highly significant (.000) or $P < 0.01$. This also suggests the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and the adoption of the alternative hypothesis (H_a) (Ali, 2013). This means a linear and positive relationship exists between these two variables. In other words, higher the level of sales force integration with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job involvement.

H4. The more integrated the sales force is with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force commitment.

The P-value achieved as shown from the analysis is .000, which is highly significant again or $P < 0.01$. Therefore, the null version of hypothesis (H_0) will be rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) will be accepted (Ali, 2013). This shows that there is a linear and positive relationship between these two variables. In other words, by increasing the level of sales force integration with corporate marketing communications, the level of sales force job commitment will also be increased.

H5. The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force motivation.

The P-value achieved as shown from the analysis is .000, which is highly significant or $P < 0.01$. This suggests the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and the adoption of the alternative hypothesis (H_a) (Ali, 2013). Accepting H_a means that there is a linear and positive relationship between these two variables. In other words, the more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job motivation.

Overall, the above results show that there is a strong and positive relationship that exists between the independent (sales force integration) and dependent variables. A positive correlation means if one variable increases, so does the other (Pallant, 2013).

Many academic research theses would end the analysis at this level, as the results and associated discussions align with the research objectives, conceptual model and hypothesis under consideration and provide enough information of what the results mean for the research. The results provide sufficient knowledge to make judgments on the hypothesis under investigation and particularly on whether the null version of the various hypotheses supports the expected results or not. However, additional tests were performed to check whether any other variables (non-opinion characteristics of a respondent) such as gender, age and qualification may have an impact or correlation with sales force integration (independent variables). In order to check demographic effects on sales force integration, various statistical analyses were performed, which are discussed below.

4.7.2 Demographic Results (Additional Analysis)

Additional analysis was carried out to provide an opportunity to develop further investigation of the quantitative data that goes beyond the research question or hypothesis originally presented in the study (Sampson, 2012). The optional additional analysis of the demographic characteristics is discussed below.

In terms of gender, male and female groups were separated by using a Group Statistics table, then Leven's independent-samples t-test was used to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the means in the two unrelated groups, male and female (Bryman and Cramer, 2011). The result from Leven's test revealed that there is no significant difference of sales force integration in terms of gender.

If the comparison of the mean is required for two or more groups, then ANOVA is the most common statistic used to check whether these groups differ (Pallant, 2007). Therefore, an ANOVA test was performed for qualification and ethnic groups. The results from this ANOVA analysis confirmed that there is no significant difference in sales force integration in all seven qualifications and ethnic groups, whereas participant's age and length of employment appeared with significant difference in at least two groups in each variable (qualification and ethnic group). ANOVA will not indicate where the significant different is, therefore, in order to check which groups are significantly different from each other, post-hoc comparison (Tukey's) was conducted (Pallant, 2013). This difference was later confirmed with Tukey's test, showing the group from 46-55 and over in age, and 11-15 and 16 years or more in employment length, have significant differences on sales force integration. This may be a factor influenced by tenure.

In the job experience question, the groups 'Yes' and 'No' were separated by Group Statistics table, then Leven's independent-samples t-test confirmed that there is a significant difference of sales force integration on job experience. However, the difference appeared as marginal and hence is considered negligible. Overall the demographic results showed that the levels of integration amongst the staff did depend on the age and the length of employment in the company, with the higher age groups and the longer serving employees being more integrated, whereas the rest of the characteristics of the respondents such as gender, qualification, job experience and ethnic group did not have a relationship with sales force integration.

4.8 Conclusions to the Data Analysis

In this research, consideration was not only given to the robustness of the results but also the rigour of the investigation. In quantitative research, rigour can be achieved by measuring validity and reliability (Fletcher et al., 2005; LoBiondo-Wood and Haber, 2013). The questions about the validity and reliability of any investigation draws attention to whether a research tool is measuring what it should measure (Bryman and Cramer, 2012) and is reliable enough that repeating a measurement made by it under the same conditions will give the same results (Kumar, 2011). The results of this study show that the scale used was valid and reliable.

In terms of reliability, the measurement procedure of this research shows that the instrument has a high level of internal consistency because of strong correlation between the constructs and higher Cronbach's α value. In terms of validity, a very good level of face validity was observed because the instrument has measured the concept intended (Heale and Twycross, 2015). The findings here appear to be credible and justified to the researcher and therefore have a high level of external validity and thus can be generalised (Gabriel, 1990). Consequently, this instrument appears to be both valid and reliable. This tool can be successfully used to identify whether sales force integration into marketing communications can have any impact on sales force performance outcomes.

The statistical results have clearly demonstrated that sales force integration is positively correlated with and has a significant effect on sales force performance outcomes in a corporate organisation. However, for triangulation, some additional analysis of the data has been also undertaken in order to further explore the extent of the influence of sales force integration into corporate marketing communications on performance outcomes. This is presented in a format (percentages) familiar to salespeople and managers, and shows that the influence of sales force integration is pervasive across many areas of corporate communication. This again is a finding of both theoretical and practical significance and importance, particularly in terms of human resource management, the resource-based view of firm performance and in terms of corporate governance and of furthering the understanding of what a lack of sales force integration into corporate marketing communication implies.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the Research Findings

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the research findings from the data analysis and outline their major implications. Therefore, this chapter can be divided into two main sections. Section 1- Research Findings and Section 2- Research Implications. Chapter 4 covered the various statistical analyses that were carried out in terms of how to deal with the instrument (questionnaire) used in this research. This chapter will explain in more detail how the analysis of quantitative data fits into the research process (research model, objective and hypothesis) - in particular, the quantitative research process. In Section 2, some of the major implication of this research will be discussed in terms of how this research affects the marketing field.

The starting point of the first section is the research domain, where this study aimed to examine the relationship between sales force integration into marketing communications and sales force performance outcomes. Specifically, the study examined whether the level of sales force integration into marketing communications has any impact on sales force performance outcomes. This level of integration was analysed in a corporate organisation and used as a case study in this research with a sample size of 301.

The current study found that a positive, strong and significant correlation exists between sales force integration and performance outcomes; the higher the level of integration, the higher the sales force performance. This relationship was confirmed with the help of correlation and regression analysis. The study also confirmed, with the help of a correlation matrix, that the 5 'C's of communications are strongly and positively correlated with the selected performance outcomes. Furthermore, this research has also found that different levels of sales force integration have a significant influence on performance outcomes. This was confirmed with the help of cross-tabulations, T-tests and other significance tests. The findings relating to each of the five hypotheses, along with the results of the open-ended questions included in the questionnaire, are also discussed in the remainder of Section 1 of this chapter.

5.2 Discussion of Findings in Relation to Sales force Integration

In order to investigate the sales force integration into corporate marketing communications, eight sub-questions were asked in Q1, employing an agreement scale from 1 to 5. The aggregated results calculated as a percentage against each question asked sales force are shown in Table 33 in Appendix A (page 245). The use of proportions is a common procedure in the interpretation of data (Kumar, 2011), therefore aggregated percentages in terms of agreement (agree + strongly agree) and disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree) against each statement were utilised to discuss these findings, as shown in Table 33.

Q1.i. Co-operation - *This item related to whether 'My company does a good job of internal marketing, informing all areas of the organisation about our brand's objectives and marketing programs.'*

The aggregated results confirmed that many of the sales force did not agree with the above statement. 60.8% disagreed, 36.2% agreed, whereas 3% did not agree or disagree. It is evident that most of the salespeople are not positive and believe that there is insufficient informativeness in the organisation in terms of internal marketing communications.

Q1.ii. Consistency - *'All our marketing communications are consistently good and effective.'*

In this question, the overall results revealed that 67.5% of the sales force disagreed with the above statement. 30.2% showed their level of agreement, whereas 2.3 % neither agreed nor disagreed. The results confirmed that the majority of the sales force were not positive with statement above and believe that there is no consistency in marketing communications within the organisation.

Q1.iii. *'Managing our brand reputation is a part of the responsibility of all employees.'*

The aggregated results here were very different here from the rest of the questions. This is because of the very positive nature of this question. This question was added to the questionnaire to check whether the sales force takes responsibility for the brand reputation, even if they are not integrated. The results were interesting in that, regardless of the level of sales force integration, the majority of staff agreed and showed positivity with this statement.

The results revealed that 98.3% agreed and only 1% did not agree, whereas 0.7% did neither agreed nor disagreed.

Q1.iv. Co-ordination - *'My company carefully co-ordinates the messages being sent to everyone in the organisation.'*

The aggregated results of this question indicated that 68.1% of the sales force disagreed with this statement. 28.9 % agreed and 3.0% did neither agreed nor disagreed. It is evident from the results that the majority of the sales force believed that there is not sufficient coordination in terms of marketing communication and hence did not agree with the statement.

Q1.v. Clarity - *'The goals of this organisation are clear to me.'*

In the question above, the aggregated results showed that 56.8% of the sales force disagreed, 36.5% showed their agreement and 6.6% did neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The Results indicated that the majority of the sales force were not positive with the above statement. Their disagreement confirmed that organisational marketing communications are not clear.

Q1.vi. Credibility - *'I believe that the company's advertisements and written materials are credible.'*

The aggregated results of this question were quite different, as only 8.9% of the sales force disagreed with the statement above, whereas 86.3 % agreed and 4.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. Here, the vast majority of the sales force was positive and believed that organisational marketing communications are credible and hence agreed with this statement.

Q1.Vii. - *'I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organisation.'*

Overall, the results confirmed that the majority of the sales force believed that they were not aware of organisational marketing activity, and hence most of them agreed with this statement. 50.7% agreed, 37.9 % disagreed and 4.7 % neither agreed nor disagreed. In other words, the majority were not integrated into this element of marketing communications.

Q1. Viii. - *'Employees are regularly kept informed about what is happening at the company.'*

The aggregated results revealed that the vast majority of the sales force believed that there is a lack of sales force integration in this organisation and that salespeople are not really involved in all of the marketing communication process. 63.1% were not positive or disagreed, 33.5% agreed and 3.3% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

5.3 Discussion of Findings in relation to sales force level of integration

Overall, the results showed that where the marketing communications are good and effective, the sales force seems to respond quite positively against each of the questions. In 7 out of 8 of the items, the vast majority of the sales force was not positive and disagreed with the statements. This confirms that the sales force level of integration in marketing communication is very low in this organisation, as the sales force seems to respond quite negatively. This low level was also confirmed with the help of the satisfaction index in chapter 4, where the data was categorised in Figure 6 (Chapter 4, page 137). The results from this categorical data show that 41.86 % of the sales force (126 out of 301) are not integrated into marketing communications. A minority of the sales force, 28.24% (85 out 301), seemed to be positive with the organisational marketing communications and are classified as highly integrated, whereas 29.90% of the sales force (90 out of 301) showed a moderate level of integration, i.e. neither low nor high and appeared in the medium integration group.

In order to align the results with the conceptual model, questions related to the 5 'C's of communication (co-operation, consistency, co-ordination, clarity and credibility) are extracted from the eight questions above and the findings are discussed below.

5.4 Discussion of Findings in Relation to 5 'C's (vital components of integrated communications)

In terms of the 5 'C's it is confirmed from the results above that there is little co-operation, consistency, co-ordination and clarity with respect to marketing communication, as the majority of the sales force did not agree with their presence. Credibility was the only 'C', which

can be classified as highly present in this company, where the majority of employees were positive about the level of credibility demonstrated in communications. This analysis is therefore valuable, as it supports the view that integrated communications can be improved by corporates focussing on the 5 'C's that were discussed. This supports the view that by increasing the 5 'C's, the level of integration also increases. The study has also found that the 5 'C's are not just positively associated with the sales force integration, but that they also have a positive and significant correlation with performance outcomes. Therefore, the results demonstrate that these 5 'C's are important components of communication and can have a positive impact on performance outcomes. In other words, by increasing the 5 'C's in marketing communication, performance outcomes should also increase.

5.5 Discussion of Findings in Relation to the Research Objectives

In relation to the research objectives, the influence of different levels of sales force integration on sales force performance outcomes was calculated with the help of cross-tabulation analysis in Tables 21-25 (Chapter 4, on pages 154 to 158), where the mean score was calculated. The difference in mean between the low and high integration groups was observed to be more significant as compared to the medium group, and later it was confirmed with the help of a significance test in Tables 26-30 (Chapter 4, on pages 161 to 165) that this difference between the low and high groups is highly significant at 95% and 99% confidence levels.

However, additional descriptions and analysis of the data confirmed this influence of sales force integration on sales force performance outcomes. Here, the same cross-tabulation technique was used, but this time the percentage was calculated instead of the mean (Bryman and Cramer (2011)). The use of proportions is a common procedure in the interpretation of data and results of this analysis are presented in Tables 44-48 in Appendix A (on pages 256 to 259) (Kumar, 2011). These tables show the incidence levels in terms of the percentage of sales force who reported coming across the types of sub-factors investigated in this research (Boddy, 2009). However, aggregated percentages in terms of agreement (agree + strongly agree) with each statement were utilised to evaluate these findings in the following discussion.

The results from both analyses (mean and percentages), confirmed that there is a significant difference between the means and the percentages in terms of the low and high integration groups. A significance test also confirms that the difference between the low and high integration group is highly significant. It was therefore considered appropriate to discuss the more relevant (low and high) groups only in this study (Pallant, 2013), therefore, the medium integration group was not considered in the following discussion.

The findings of the analysis in terms of the mean, significant difference and percentage in relation to each research objective is further discussed below.

5.5.1 Does the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influence the level of satisfaction felt by the sales force in their jobs?

As per the data analysis it was observed that a higher level of sales force integration is associated with a higher level of job satisfaction, and vice versa. The results from cross-tabulation (mean) analysis, in Table 21 (Chapter 4, page 154) confirmed that almost all the sub-items in the sales force job satisfaction measurement can be influenced by sales force integration. A lower mean value in the low integration group and a higher mean value in the high integration group revealed the difference of satisfaction influenced by different levels of integration. In other words, members of the sales force in the low integration group were not positive, disagreed with most of the statements, and hence achieved a low mean score, whereas members of the sales force in the high integration group were more positive, agreed with most of the statement, and hence achieved a high mean score. The difference in the overall mean score seen in Table 21 (on page 154) between the low (30.25) and high (45.38) integration groups shows that the low integration group are less satisfied in respect of their jobs as compared to the high integration group.

Overall, from this construct, 11 out of 12 items were classified as being highly impacted by sales force integration, because of the significant mean difference between the low and high integration groups. Later, it was confirmed that this difference is highly significant at 99% confidence level ($P < 0.01$) (Table 26, page 161), whereas the only remaining item (fourth) was classified as not being impacted by sales force integration because of no significant difference.

The results in terms of percentages shown in Table 44 in Appendix A (page 256) showed that all the sub-items of this construct are affected by sales force integration in this organisation. Based on their level of agreement in percentage terms, the sales force in the low integration group appeared to have a lower level of job satisfaction, whereas the level of job satisfaction of the highly integrated sales-force was high. For example, the item classified with the highest influence was, '*I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated*', where 96.0% of the sales force agreed with this statement in the low integration group. In contrast, in the high integration group only 10.6% of the sales force agreed with the same statement.

Similarly, in another statement '*When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive*', the difference in agreement between the low and high integration groups was very high, as only 7.1% of the sales force agreed with this statement in the low integration group, whereas, in the high integration group, 84.7% of the sales force agreed with the same statement. This difference in satisfaction confirmed that different levels of sales force integration have an impact on sales force satisfaction in terms of their jobs.

Overall, in terms of percentage, all 12 items can be confirmed as being influenced by sales force integration, where the sales force in the low integration group appeared to have less satisfaction in terms of their jobs as compared to the high integration group.

5.5.2 Does the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influence the level of sales force performance?

From the data analysis, it was observed that a higher level of sales force integration is associated with a higher level of sales force performance, and vice versa. The results from the cross-tabulation (mean) analysis, shown in Table 22 (Chapter 4, page 155), confirmed that all the sub-items within sales force performance can be influenced by sales force integration. The lower mean values in the low integration group and higher mean values in the high integration group indicated the difference of performance influenced by different levels of integration. The sales force in the low integration group was not positive, disagreed with most of the statements, and hence achieved a low mean score, whereas the sales force in the high integration group was more positive, agreed with most of the statements, and hence achieved a high mean score.

The difference in the overall mean scores from the same table also confirmed that the sales force in the low (20.65) integration group perform less as compared to the high (25.95) integration group. Overall, from this construct, all 6 items were classified as being highly influenced by sales force integration, due to the significant mean difference between the low and high integration groups. It was later confirmed in Table 27 (on page 162) that this difference is highly significant at a 99% confidence level ($P < 0.01$) for 5 items and at a 95% confidence level ($P < 0.05$) for 1 item (last item) in this construct.

The results obtained in terms of percentages in Table 45 in Appendix A (page 256), indicated that the item classified as having the highest influence was '*I know enough about our products to do my job well*', where 20.6% of the sales force in the low integration group agreed with this statement. In contrast, in the high integration group, 95.3% agreed with the same statement and reported that they have enough product knowledge to perform well. Other results which also have a direct impact on organisational success are, '*I can give good advice to customers*,' and '*I am able to meet the targets set by my section manager*', which showed that 50% and 55.6% of the sales force in the low integration group agreed with these two statements, respectively. In contrast, in the high integration group results are very different and very positive, where 100% and 95.3% of the sales force reported that they can give good advice to customers, and are able to meet their targets, respectively. These differences in percentages clearly show that the sales force in the low integration group are not performing well. These results show that the low integration group is associated with lower job performance.

One item, '*I am working out solutions to customer questions or objection*', appeared with different results and can be classified as having no influence. Because of the nature of this item, the majority of respondents (even in the low integration group) agreed with this statement, where 98.4% and 97.6% of the sales force in the low and high integration group, respectively, reported that they help customers.

The overall result based on percentage analysis confirmed that 5 out of 6 items can be classified as being influenced by sales force integration, where most of the sales force in the low integration group was not positive and their performance was low as compared to the high integration group.

The finding of the current research that performance correlates with internal sales force integration into marketing communications, supports similar findings by Porcu and colleagues in 2019. In an investigation of IMC and market performance in the hospitality industry, conclusions were that there was compelling evidence of a positive link between IMC and market performance (Porcu et al., 2019).

Furthermore in a review of 80 empirical studies of IMC, positive influences were reported on sales, market share, financial performance, brand performance, brand equity, brand loyalty, shareholder value, customer attitudes, satisfaction and awareness; social marketing outcomes and communications persuasiveness (Šerić, 2018).

5.5.3. Does the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influence the level of sales force involvement?

From the data analysis, it was observed that a higher level of sales force integration was associated with a higher level of job involvement and, vice versa. The results from the cross tabulation (mean) analysis, shown in Table 23 (Chapter 4, page 156), confirm that all sub-items of the sales force job involvement scale are highly correlated with the level of sales force integration. The low integration group has a lower mean value and the high integration group has a higher mean value in terms of job involvement. In other words, the sales force in the low integration group disagreed with most of the statements and were not positive, whereas the sales force in the high integration group was more positive and agreed with most of the statements. The results from the overall mean score from the same table also indicated that the difference of the overall mean score between the low (32.15) and high (49.13) integration groups is significant, and it therefore confirmed that the sales force in the low integration group are less involved in their job as compared to those in the high integration group. Overall from this construct, all 14 items were classified as having a high association with sales force integration, due to the significant mean differences between the low and high integration groups. This difference is highly significant at a 99% confidence level ($P < 0.01$), as seen in Table 28 on page 163.

The results from the percentage calculation in Table 46 in Appendix A (page 257), confirm that all of the items within the sales force job involvement measure are correlated with sales force integration. The most influential item that appeared in this construct was '*Quite often I*

feel like staying home from work instead of coming in', where 93.6% of the sales force agreed with this statement in the low integration group. On the other hand, in the high integration group only 16.5% of the sales force agreed with the same statement. The second most influential item appeared in this construct was *'I used to be more ambitious about my work than I am now'*, where in the low integration group 86.5% agreed and in the high integration only 16.5% agreed with this statement. This difference clearly shows how integration affects job involvement. Similar results also appeared in the rest of the 12 items, where the majority of the sales force in the low integration group showed that their level of job involvement was very low as compared to the high integration group. The overall results from this percentage analysis confirmed that all 14 items can be classified as being influenced by sales force integration, where the sales force in the low integration group are less involved in their jobs as compared to the high integration group.

5.5.4 Does the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influence the level of commitment of the sales force?

From the data analysis, it was observed that a higher level of sales force integration was associated with a higher level of job commitment and vice versa.

The results from cross tabulations (means) analysis, shown in Table 24 (Chapter 4, page 157), confirm that almost all the sub-items within the sales force job commitment scale are correlated with sales force integration. Lower mean values in the low integration group and higher mean values in the high integration group illustrate the difference of commitment associated with different levels of integration. Further discussion would mean that the sales force in the low integration group was not positive and disagreed with most of the statements, whereas the sales force in the high integration group was more positive, agreed with most of the statement, and hence achieved a higher mean score. The difference in the overall mean score from the same Table 24 between the low (38.86) and high (54.35) integration groups has also shown that the sale-force in the low integration group are less committed in respect of their jobs as compared to the high integration group. Overall, from this job commitment construct, only 3 items (first, third and second last) were classified as having no association, but the remaining 11 items were classified as having a high association in terms of sales force integration because of the significant mean differences between the low and high integration

groups. This difference (of 11 items) is highly significant at 99% confidence level ($P < 0.01$) and confirmed in Table 29 on page 164.

The results in terms of percentages in Table 47 in Appendix A (page 258) show that almost all the items in the job commitment construct can be classified as being correlated with sales force integration. The two items that appeared to be highly associated were '*There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely*', and '*Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees*', where 94.4% and 93.7% of the sales force, respectively, agreed in the low integration group. In contrast, in the high integration group only 16.5% and 17.6%, respectively, agreed with the same two statements. This difference in commitment clearly shows that the sales force in the low integration group is less committed to their job as compared to those in high integration group.

Two further items, namely '*I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organisation be successful*' and '*I really care about the fate of this organisation*', appeared to have no influence. Because of the nature of these two items, the majority of the sales force (even in the low integration group) appeared with a higher level of agreement, where 97.6% and 96.8% agreed in the low integration group, whereas 91.8% and 90.6% agreed in the high integration group, respectively. Overall, 12 out of 14 items in the percentage analysis confirmed an association with sales force integration. Different levels of commitment in different level of integration confirm that the sales force in the low integration group are less committed with respect to their jobs as compared to those in the high integration group.

5.5.5 Does the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communications influence the level of motivation of the sales force?

From the data analysis, it was observed that a higher level of sales force integration is associated with a higher level of sales force motivation, and vice versa. The results from cross tabulations (means) analysis, shown in Table 25 (Chapter 4, page 158), demonstrate that all the sub- items within job motivation are associated with sales force integration. Lower mean values in the low integration group and higher mean values in the high integration

group revealed the difference in motivation. In other words, the sales force in the low integration group was not positive or disagreed with most of the statements, whereas the sales force in the high integration group was more positive and agreed with most of the statements. The difference in the overall mean score from the same Table 25 between the low (20.19) and high (27.43) integration groups has also confirmed that the level of job motivation of the low integration group is lower as compared to that of the high integration group.

Overall, in this construct of employee motivation all 7 items were classified as having a high association with sales force integration, due to the significant differences in mean between the low and high integration groups. It was later shown in Table 30 (on page 165), that this difference within 5 items is highly significant at a 99% confidence level ($P < 0.01$), whereas the remaining 2 items (second last and third last) are significantly different at 95% confidence level ($P < 0.05$).

The results from data analysis in percentages, shown in Table 48 in Appendix A (page 259) confirmed that almost all the items in the job motivation construct can be classified as being correlated with sales force integration. The item that appeared with the highest influence was *'It is hard for me in this job, to care very much about whether the work gets done properly'*, where 83.3% of sales force personnel agreed in the low integration group. In contrast, in the high integration group only 7.1% showed their agreement with the same statement. The second most influential item appeared in this construct was *'My opinion of myself goes up when I do this job well'*, where 17.5% agreed in the low and 88.2% agreed in the high integration groups with the same statement. This high difference of percentage in the two groups shows the lowest level of motivation experienced by the low integrated group.

Two items, namely *'Most people on this job feel a great sense of personal satisfaction when they do their job well'* and *'Most people in this organisation feel bad or unhappy when they find that they have performed their work poorly'* can be classified as having no influence on sales force integration, where higher level of agreement was displayed in the lower integration group - 74.6% and 71.4% agreed in the low integration group, while in contrast 61.2% and 64.7% agreed in the high integration group, respectively. Overall, the results show from the percentage table that 5 out of 7 items correlated positively with sales force integration.

In summary, the overall results above, obtained with the help of analysis of the means and percentage figures, the findings show that 49 and 48 (out of 53) items from the means and percentage results, respectively, can be classified as being influenced by sales force integration. Therefore, the questionnaire as a whole, for sale-force integration with 53 items, which was the instrument used in this research, variations in their presence or absence do strongly correlate with the variation in the performance outcomes measured. The measure for sales force integration thus appears to be a valid one.

5.6 Discussion of Findings Relating to Each Hypothesis

5.6.1 Sales force integration and sales force job satisfaction

The first hypothesis (H1) posited:

‘The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job satisfaction.’

As discussed in chapter three, this hypothesis was chosen because in the literature it is evident that internal employees see benefits in being included in communications and therefore there should be a relationship between inclusion – measured by integration – and employee satisfaction. In overall terms, this hypothesis is supported by the research findings of this thesis. The results in Table 19 on page 145 (Chapter 4) show that there was a very high, positive and significant correlation coefficient (.785) between sales force integration and the construct of sales force job satisfaction. As sales force integration increases, so does sales force job satisfaction. In terms of the individual elements in the construct of job satisfaction, all twelve of the items measured were positively influenced by the presence of sales force integration within the organisation in an extremely significant manner. This is graphically shown in the scatter plot diagram in Figure 7 in Chapter 4 (page 148), where the regression line ($R = .785$) started from the bottom left and moved upwards to the right, and showed a highly significant ($P = 0.000$) relationship (Pallant, 2013) between these two constructs.

In the regression analysis in Table 20 on page 152 (Chapter 4), the finding, $R^2 = .617$ suggests that 61% of the variation in sales force job satisfaction can be accounted for by sales force integration. In hypothesis testing, the P-value (.000) obtained from the result was highly

significant ($P < 0.01$), which suggested the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis that displays a linear and positive relationship between these two constructs (Ali, 2013). The P-value ($P < 0.01$) obtained from the results also confirms that sales force integration does have a significant correlation with job satisfaction at a 99% confidence level.

Therefore, the findings from the data analysis confirm that a positive, strong and significant correlation exists between sales force integration and sales force job satisfaction. This means that by increasing sales force integration, sales -force job satisfaction may also increase.

5.6.2 Sales force integration and sales force job performance

The second hypothesis (H2) suggested:

‘The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force performance.’

This hypothesis is also supported by the findings from the research in this current study. In terms of the overall correlation between the presence of sales force integration and the construct of sales force job performance, the results have shown in Table 19 on page 145 that there was a high, positive and significant correlation coefficient (.689). As sales force integration increases, so does sales force job performance. In terms of the individual elements in the construct of job performance, all six of the items measured were positively affected by the level of sales force integration in a highly significant manner. This is graphically shown in the scatter plot diagram in Figure 8 in Chapter 4 (page 148), where the regression line ($R = .689$) started from the bottom left and moved upwards to the right and showed a highly significant ($P = 0.000$) relationship (Bacon-Shone, 2013) between these two constructs.

In the regression analysis in Table 20 on page 152, the finding, $R^2 = .475$ suggests that 47% of the variations in sales force job performance can be accounted for by sales force integration. In hypothesis testing the P-value (.000) obtained from the result was highly significant ($P < 0.01$), and this led to the rejection of the null hypothesis with the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, which shows that a linear and positive relationship exists between these two constructs (Little, 2013). This p-value ($P < 0.01$) obtained from the results

also confirm that sales force integration does have a significant correlation with job performance at a 99% confidence level.

The findings from the data analysis illustrate that a positive, strong and significant correlation exists between sales force integration and sales force job performance. This means that by increasing sales force integration, sales -force job performance may also increase.

5.6.3 Sales force integration and sales force job involvement

The third hypothesis (H3) stated:

‘The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force job involvement.’

This hypothesis is also supported by the findings from the research in this current study. In terms of the overall correlation between the presence of sales force integration and the construct of sales force job involvement, the results in Table 19 on page 145 show that there was a very high, positive and significant correlation coefficient (.755). This shows that as sales force integration increases, so does sales force job involvement. In terms of the individual elements in the construct of job involvement, all fourteen of the items that were measured were positively affected by the presence of sales force integration within the organisation in a highly significant manner. This is graphically shown in the scatter plot diagram in Figure 9 in Chapter 4 (page 149), where the regression line ($R = .755$) started from bottom left and moved upwards to the right, and showed a highly significant ($p = 0.000$) relationship between these two constructs (Bryman and Cramer, 2011).

In regression analysis in Table 20 on page 152, the finding, $R^2 = .570$ suggests that 57% of the variation in sales force job involvement can be accounted for by sales force integration. In hypothesis testing, the P-value (.000) obtained from the result was highly significant ($P < 0.01$), and this led to the rejection of the null hypothesis with the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, which shows that a linear and positive relationship exists between these two constructs (Kumar, 2011). The P-value ($P < 0.01$) obtained from the results also confirms that

sales force integration does have a significant correlation with job involvement at a 99% confidence level.

The findings from data analysis have shown that a positive, strong and significant correlation exists between sales force integration and sales force job involvement, and this means that by increasing sales force integration, sales force job involvement may also increase.

5.6.4 Sales force integration and sales force job commitment

The fourth hypothesis (H4) posited:

‘The more integrated the sales force with corporate marketing communications, the higher the level of sales force commitment.’

This hypothesis is also supported by the findings from the research in this current study. In terms of the overall correlation between the presence of sales force integration and the construct of sales force job commitment, the results in Table 19 on page 145 have shown that there was a very high, positive and significant correlation coefficient (.788). This means that if sales force integration increases, so does sales force job commitment. In terms of the individual elements in the construct of job commitment, all fourteen of the items measured were positively affected by the presence of sales force integration within the organisation in a highly significant manner. This is graphically shown in the scatter plot diagram in Figure 10 in Chapter 4 (page 150), where the regression line ($R = .788$) started from the bottom left and moved upwards to the right, and showed a highly significant ($P = 0.000$) relationship between these two constructs (Kumar, 2011).

In regression analysis in Table 20 on page 152, the finding, $R^2 = .620$ suggests that 62% of the variation in sales force job commitment can be accounted for by sales force integration. In hypothesis testing, the P-value (.000) obtained from the result was highly significant ($P < 0.01$), which suggested the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, which confirmed that there is a linear and positive relationship between these two constructs (Bacon-Shone, 2013). The P-value ($P < 0.01$) obtained from the

results also confirmed that sales force integration does have a significant correlation with job commitment at a 99% confidence level.

The findings from data analysis confirm that there is a positive, strong and significant correlation between sales force integration and sales force job commitment. This means that by increasing sales force integration, sales force job commitment may also increase.

5.6.5 Sales force integration and sales force job motivation

The fifth hypothesis (H5) stated:

‘The more integrated the sales force is with corporate marketing communications the higher the level will be of sales force motivation.’

This hypothesis is also supported by the findings from the research in this current study. In terms of the overall correlation between the presence of sales force integration and the construct of sales force job motivation, the results in Table 19 on page 145 show that there was a strong, positive and significant correlation coefficient (.574). As sales force integration increases, so does sales force job motivation. In terms of the individual elements in the construct of job motivation, all seven of the items that were measured were positively affected by the presence of sales force integration within the organisation in a significant manner. This is graphically shown in the scatter plot diagram in Figure 11 in Chapter 4 (page 151), where the regression line ($R = .574$) started from the bottom left and moved upwards to the right and showed a highly significant ($P = 0.000$) relationship between these two constructs (Bryman and Cramer, 2011).

In regression analysis (Table 20, page 152), the finding, $R^2 = .330$ suggests that 33% of the variation in sales force job motivation can be accounted for by sales force integration. In hypothesis testing, the P-value (.000) obtained from the results was highly significant ($P < 0.01$), this led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, which shows that a linear and positive relationship between these two constructs exists (Ali, 2013). The P-value ($P < 0.01$) obtained from the results also confirmed that sales force integration does have a significant correlation with job motivation at a 99% confidence

level. The findings from data analysis illustrate that there is a positive, strong and significant correlation between sales force integration and sales force job motivation. This means that by increasing sales force integration, sales force job motivation may also increase.

5.7 Discussion in Relation to the Findings from the Open-ended Questions

As discussed earlier in chapter 3, it was thought necessary to use open-ended questions as it is very difficult to guess all the possible responses that respondents might make (Pallant, 2013), meaning that the information can be lost (Kumar, 2011). Therefore, in Question 7, three simple sub-questions were added at the end so that respondents had the freedom to respond in their own way. These three questions were asked in terms of internal marketing communications to identify the problems, highlight the best thing the organisation does for its employees, and uncover any suggestions to improve communications to employees. Forty-two salespeople responded to these questions. To discuss the findings of these open-ended questions, some of the typical relevant comments are extracted from the study and quoted in the following section.

5.7.1 Problems in Communicating with Employees

When the question asked to indicate perceived problems in how the organisation communicates to its employees, the findings from the results indicated that many of the sales force believed they are not integrated into the marketing communication process. Some of the quotes, particularly from the low integration group, are given below.

Lack of sales force integration

- *“Lack of information from managers and co-ordinations”*
- *“Sometimes I hear news on TV first”*
- *“They don't consider employees thoughts when changes are being made”*
- *“Sometimes you hear things via other staff members and not management”*
- *“Many employed left out of the loop”*

Lack of consistency

- *“All communication to the sales floor staff seems to be by word of mouth which is often inconsistent”*
- *“Communication is often very poor and issues/concerns are not addressed immediately. Employees are not informed a lot of the time when changes are made and then the staff get in trouble for not doing the correct thing”*
- *“People that work only a few days per week miss communication”*

Lack of co-ordination

- *“The coordinators often don't get a chance to inform the large percentage of staff all at the same time”*
- *“Not all employees communicated to”*
- *“sometime are not aware of any offers or promotions for customers”*

Lack of clarity

- *“There is often too much information, it should be simpler and to the point”*
- *“Things can be explained in a better way”*
- *“Not really applicable, everything done via notice boards”*

Lack of credibility

- *“Often it is simply just written on a white notice board which is not terribly obvious”*

By summarising the overall comments, it can be concluded that there is a lack of sales force integration into marketing communications and that the 5 ‘C’s of communications (co-operation, consistency, co-ordination, clarity and credibility) have not been implemented in the organisational marketing communication strategies.

5.7.2 Reported ‘Best Thing’ in the Organisation’s Communicating with Employees

A second question asked respondents to discuss the best thing that the organisation does to communicate with its employees. Some of the quotes are given below.

- *“Notices are written on a white board”*
- *“Lots of info on the notice board”*
- *“Usage of notice board is good as managers don't have enough time to communicate with”*

A few respondents also mentioned *“pre -opening staff meetings”*, *“team briefs”* and *“Managers keep in touch...”* etc. which is the best thing that an organisation does in terms of communicating with sales staff. The overall results indicated that, most of the communication is done via notice boards and there is a lack of communication at an individual level.

5.7.3 Suggestions for Improving Communication with Employees

Finally, respondents were asked to make suggestions as to how internal communications could be improved. Sales force members from both groups (low and medium integration) mentioned quite similar things, for example:

- *“More interactive, meetings and workshop required”*
- *“Communication via personal emails”*
- *“More time allocated to managers for communicating”*
- *“face to face meetings”*
- *“Newsletters”*
- *“Weekly meetings”*

Some of the responses were very interesting, where the sales force suggested making improvements to communications via the 4 ‘C’s (co-operation, consistency, coordination and clarity). For example:

- *“Managers need to **co-operate** more in communication.”*
- *“More **consistency** in terms of making sure the communications reaches everyone at the same time, emails to personal account with weekly structure/offer or better links between head office/shop-floor colleagues required.”*
- *“**Co- ordinate** regular team meetings for everyone as a whole to give important information rather than to selected staff members.”*
- *“Keep it simple, **clear** and to the point.”*

In terms of **credibility**, no suggestions were made and overall, the sale-force seems to be very positive and they believed that the organisational marketing communications are credible.

In summary, in terms of answers to the open-ended questions, the study found that sales force members believed that they are not integrated into marketing communications, and that the communications could be improved by bringing the remaining 4 'C's into communications. These findings also align with the quantitative results of this study.

5.8 Summary of Findings

The quantitative findings of this study have suggested that sales force integration positively influences all performance outcomes. The study has also identified that the 5 'C's (the vital components of integrated communication) are also positively associated with sales force performance outcomes.

The overall results in terms of the 5 'C's reveal that 4 of the 5 'C's (co-operation, consistency, co-ordination and clarity) were not maximally present in this case study. Credibility was the only 'C' found to be present in this organisation's communications. However, the results confirmed that the 5 'C's have a positive, strong, and significant ($P < 0.01$) relationship with performance outcomes. This means that sales force performance could be increased by integrating these 5 'C's further into marketing communications.

To check the level of sales force integration, another result (where the data was categorised), obtained with the help of Q1, confirmed that the level of integration in this organisation is quite low, as the lowest percentage (28%) of the sales force were classified in the high integration group. Furthermore, the study has found that different levels of sales force integration have different correlations with performance outcomes, i.e. the low integration group has low performance outcomes, and vice versa. This was confirmed with the help of cross-tabulations (where the means were calculated), which show that the sales force in the low integration group perform less well as compared to those who are in the high integration group.

With the help of significance tests, the study has also found that the difference between low and high integration scores is highly significant, where overall results confirmed that 49 items (out of 53) are highly significant at 95% and 99% confidence level (or $P < 0.05$ and $P < 0.01$, respectively). For triangulation, a percentage analysis was also performed to investigate whether different levels of sales force integration have a different association with performance outcomes. Overall, the results from the percentage analysis confirmed that the low integration group is associated with lower performance outcomes. The findings of this analysis also showed that 48 items (out of 53) can be classified as being influenced by sales force integration.

The results achieved in relation to each hypothesis within the study confirmed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the independent variable (sales force integration) and dependent variable (performance outcomes). This was found via correlation, regression, and scatter plot analysis. This strong correlation was also tested with the help of a hypothesis test. For each hypothesis, the P-value (.000) that was obtained from the result was highly significant ($P < 0.01$,). This suggested the rejection of the null hypothesis with the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, confirming a strong, positive and a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables, i.e. between sales force integration and sales force performance outcomes. The findings in relation to the open-ended questions also support the quantitative findings. Those who were less integrated into marketing communications believe that the communications that they received from the organisation were lacking in co-operation, consistency, co-ordination, clarity and sometimes, credibility.

In relation to demographic variables such as gender, age and level of educational qualifications, additional analysis in chapter 4 was performed to see whether any demographic variables had any influence on sales force integration in a corporate organisation. Interesting results were obtained, and the study found that the levels of integration amongst the staff did depend on the age and the length of employment in the company, with the higher age groups and the longer serving employees being more integrated. Additional findings are always useful as they can pave the way for new research, for example divergent thinking about additional variables (e.g. gender and age, etc.) would result in modification or construction of new research questions which were not used in the original research (Sampson, 2012). Therefore, the findings of this additional analysis in the

current study have been recommended to be expanded upon in future studies, to further explore the impact of different demographic variables on sales force integration (see Chapter 6).

5.9 Implications of Research

5.9.1 Implications for practice

The findings from this research show that it is crucial for marketing communications to be internally as well as externally integrated, as internal integration is related to increased performance. It has been noted from the in-depth review of the literature, that sales force integration is not just positively associated with internal performance (sale-force performance) of the organisation, but it also has a significant and positive impact on the overall external performance (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012). Therefore, the benefits of the current study are not just limited to sales force performance outcomes within the organisation, but also have practical implications where some of the areas in the corporate organisation such as customers, organisation, and the brand, can be influenced by integration.

5.9.1.1 Implications for Customers

To demonstrate the implications of sales force integration on customers, it is first necessary to understand how communication works over a ‘customer journey’ from decision making to buying, and through the journey to achieving a sale, particularly in terms of how the customer collects brand information from different sources of communication. It is evident that corporate marketing communication has been referred to as the cornerstone of the activities that are associated with the customer. It is therefore important for businesses to ensure that influential and effective marketing communication strategies and practices are in place in order to ensure that marketing communications practices influence the target audience.

In the twenty-first century, most customers do not just rely on brand information through the mainstream mass media such as radio or TV, but rather actively seek information on the brand through various search engines, brand websites, apps, blogs, mobiles, etc (Batra and Keller, 2016). This is because the use of the internet along with social networking sites has increased rapidly over the years (Wang et al., 2016). As a result, a marketer has less control

over marketing communication now, especially in terms of brand messaging. Although the existence of media interactions and multiple communication channels may be less linear and faster to purchase, none of these individual attempts is likely to complete a successful sale or 'loyalty' job by itself (Batra and Keller, 2016).

Also, a researcher in the past could not explain the best sequence within this complex path, in terms of how to use old and new media so that marketers could utilise these types of media in a coordinated way and integrated manner. These different sources of communications do not fall under one umbrella and can easily overlap because customers need to find different information from different channels. However, the sales force is a unique point of contact for the customer to acquire all the required information at the same time without any confusion (Agnihotri et al., 2016). Consequently, organisations need to integrate the salespeople in this regard, because customers expect to obtain the same information from all the different channels of communications at the right time. In other words, one voice should come from the marketing department, and this more or less defines the integrated marketing approach.

With the growing trend of increasing awareness for digital media, some customers might not receive information on the brand through the mainstream media such as TV (Khamis et al., 2017). For them, salespeople are the only point of contact to inquire about the product and to obtain credible information. Therefore, to avoid any negative reviews from customers, firms are required to train the sales team so that they can communicate the positive aspects and the advantages of the products and services being offered (Lysus et al., 2011). It has been shown that if they want growth, organisations have no choice but to bring sales force right into the marketing process to help customers and to increase sales.

A very good example of the findings of the current study was highlighted where one of the sub-questions (in the job performance construct) '*I can give good advice to customers*' was asked to 301 sales-people, where 50% (out of 126, from the low integration group) of the sales force agreed with this statement. In contrast, 100% (out of 85, from the high integration group) of the sales force believed they can give good advice to customers. This difference in performance between the low and high integration groups clearly demonstrates that a lack of integration into marketing communications affects their performance in terms of customer service. Sales force marketing communication integration could potentially persuade customers to buy the product as a result of their sales force knowledge and performance. It is

also evident from the study conducted by Maslowska et al., (2016), that salespeople in organisations can influence customers to buy products. Therefore, a good corporate marketing practice is referred to as the manner through which an organisation intends to engage both internal (sales force) and external customers (Balmer and Greyser, 2006).

Although marketers encourage customers to engage with their brand awareness on social media (Lee and Bell, 2013; Naylor et al., 2012), the sales force is the best source for obtaining effective and credible information about products (Agnihotri et al., 2016), because organisations can send the information to the customer to a certain extent from this digital platform. It has been evident from much of the past research that social media (including mainstream) was rarely the entire source of marketing communications, and that the sales force or personal selling efforts were found to be more productive when integrated with other forms of marketing communications. For example, Gatignon and Hanssens (1987) indicated how the effectiveness of personal selling, combined with local advertisement, increased Navy recruitment. Gopalakrishna and Chatterjee (1992) found that personal selling effects are much better and less complex than advertising effects. Sale-force interaction was greater than half the size of the main effect of advertising itself (Gopalakrishna and Chatterjee, 1992). Smith, Gopalakrishna, and Smith (2004) demonstrated that follow-up sales-efforts generated higher productivity when customers interact directly with the sale-force at a trade show. This trade show exposure reduced the sales force costs by 50% in generating a certain level of sales. This shows the power of the sales force to customer intention.

After reviewing the literature in detail, the current study argues that it is vital for organisations to bring their sales force right into the heart of marketing strategies, and by doing this, the advertising or communication challenge can be met more easily, along with customer satisfaction. It is evident that since the 1980's, direct sales force interaction with the customer is more efficient, generates more revenue, is less complex, and is cost effective as compared to typical advertising channels including mass media. This shows that in practice, sales force integration has a positive impact on customers.

5.9.1.2 Implications for Organisations

Several authors in the past have indicated that a positive impact on an organisation's performance can be observed due to the integration of sales and marketing communications

(Guenzi and Troilo, 2006; Le Meunier-FitzHugh and Piercy, 2010). The successful integration of different marketing communications can help to drive short-term sales and long-term brand building (Reid, 2005; Luo and Donthu, 2006), although achieving such a feat is not an easy task and organisations face severe problems while achieving it (Kitchen, 2017). It has been noted from prior research, that marketers are thinkers, whereas the sales force are the doers within the organisation, and often both of these groups do not value the contribution of the other. However, if a company fails to integrate both these departments considering how much they are relying upon the efforts of each other, it can face several major losses. This positive impact of integration is also evident from the current study, where one of the sub-questions was added (in the job performance construct) to check the performance of 301 sales forces, namely '*I am able to meet the targets set by my section manager*'. The findings showed that 55.6% of the sales force from the low integration group (out of 126) disagreed with this statement, which means half of the sales force in this group cannot achieve their targets because they are not integrated into marketing communications. In contrast, from the high integration group, 92.9% (out of 85) of the sales force believed they were able to achieve their targets. It is therefore easy to imagine how much loss is being faced by this organisation by not achieving communication integration. This loss could be turned into profit by giving marketing tools and tactics to the sales team to enable them to perform well. Sales force integration allows the sales team to sell their products in a more effective manner and also improves organisational performance.

The performance of the sales force has been found to be the main determinant of either the success or failure of the organisation (Thakur, 2017). This means that there is an inseparable link between sales people and organisational performance (Kelleher, 2011). Organisations, therefore, need to engage their sales team in the research and development of new marketing and sales techniques so that they can enhance their learning regarding the different techniques applied and use the learnt tactics to enhance their performance (Ernst et al., 2010). Since the sales and marketing team are highly engaged with customers and have direct relationships with them, it is important for organisations to facilitate their needs accordingly. Therefore, it can be stated that sales force integration is one of the numerous factors that has an influence on sales force performance and also has a positive impact on organisational performance. Integrated communications helps the organisation in reducing its turnover rate (Khan et al., 2012), and it helps in the productivity of the organisation and improves the sales revenue of the business (Yee et al., 2008). It also motivates the employees to perform well by giving

their maximum potential which improves their performance (Octaviannand et al., 2017) and this is the source of providing competitive advantage to the organisation over its competitors (Ismail et al., 2013). Therefore, organisations can achieve benefits and perform well by ensuring that the sales force is integrated within marketing communication practice.

5.9.1.3 Implications for Brands

It is becoming tougher for businesses to grow and survive because of the variety and availability that has created huge competition in both national and international markets. In order to gain competitive advantage, organisations need to come up with a distinctive marketing approach and an integrated marketing strategy that is unique (Khizar et al., 2016). This means that effective and integrated corporate marketing strategies can add value in achieving brand goals. To ensure the effectiveness of corporate communications, businesses tend to adopt such activities through which communication practices can be enhanced (Doorley and Garcia, 2015). Therefore, it is important that the sales force is well integrated into communications regarding the marketing of the products or services.

Sales force integration with the marketing department has a significant impact on the success of the brand, and after understanding the important roles of the sales force in marketing communications, companies have started exploring the benefits of integrating the sales force with marketing to make sure that they are aligned together with organisational marketing strategies (Lysus et al., 2011). This shows that an integrated sales force can be key for an organisation in achieving its marketing goals, but Lysus et al. (2011) also claim that the sales force is often omitted from marketing strategy development, which can poorly impact the brand's performance.

The empirical findings of the current research also support the argument that the sales force has not been a part of marketing strategies to date. In this study, a variety of sub-questions (in question 1) were asked to 301 salespeople to measure whether the sales force is integrated into marketing communications or are part of marketing strategies. These questions were *'The goals of this organisation are clear to me'*, *'I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organisation'* and *'Employees are regularly kept informed about what is happening at the company'*. The overall findings from these two questions confirmed that

more than 50% of the sales force believe that they are not aware of brand's marketing strategies, and hence are not integrated into marketing communications. As a result, their sales force performance appeared to be low because of the correlation between integration and performance outcomes, i.e. low integration has low performance, and vice versa.

Another good example of the findings of the current study was in relation to the sub-question in the job performance construct '*I know enough about our products to do my job well*', where only 20.6% (out of 126, from the low integration group) of the sales force agreed with this statement. In contrast, 95.3% (out of 85, from the high integration group) of the sales force believed they knew enough about the product to do their job well. This difference in product knowledge in these two groups clearly shows a lack of integration in terms of marketing communications, which affects their performance. In another words, it can be stated that the sale-force may perform better if they are integrated into the marketing communication system.

Past studies have also illustrated that performance of salespeople is positively correlated with brand performance (Herstein et al., 2008; Dortok, 2006; Thomson and Hecker, 2001; Nassazi, 2013). An integrated marketing strategy thus seems to be amalgamated with both internal and external performance (Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012), i.e., an integrated approach increases the sale-force performance (internally) and this result will increase the overall brand performance (externally). Therefore, organisations who make their marketing strategies integrated are more successful, because this integration creates customer loyalty and brand awareness (Kehinde, 2010).

The practices of integrated marketing strategies have a significant impact on customer satisfaction, market share, brand image, brand profitability, and sales revenue (Ercis, 2011). It also increases the overall brand performance (Esposito 2013), business productivity and effectiveness (Sellahvarzi et al., 2014), as well as profitability (Khizar et al., 2016).

It is evident, that an integrated approach has a positive relationship with the overall brand's performance. Organisations who make efforts to have integrated marketing communication systems are more successful and their brands tend to have a competitive edge in the market (Khizar et al., 2016). Therefore, the implications of sales force integration are very important and cannot be neglected in practice.

Chapter 6: Limitations of the Research and Recommendations for Future Studies

6.1 Limitations of the Research

As with any research, this study was subject to some limitations which restricted its size and coverage, and thus restricts the ability to generalise from the findings. A limitation of the research was due to resource restrictions, the research was self-funded with limited resources available to the researcher. One associated limitation of the research was that data was collected from only one branch of an up-market retailer and so the ability to generalise from the conclusions is diminished. To enhance this external validity, further studies could entail replication of the research and verification of findings. Furthermore, it would have been preferable to support performance data with objective measures of sales growth, profitability or market share. However, these were unavailable due to resource limitations and in any case this information was probably restricted in availability because of its commercial sensitivity. The limitations are discussed further in this chapter.

6.1.1 Theoretical Limitations

It was found that the study considered a number of effects and linked them to potential causes in relation to integration. However, these effects could have come about as a result of other potential influences on job satisfaction. A common cause here was the level of integration of the sales force with corporate marketing communication with the effects on the sales force job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, job commitment and job motivation.

Also, although this study highlighted clear and significant correlations, this does not establish cause and effect (Boddy, 2019). As discussed earlier, this does not necessarily mean one variable causes another. There are number of other factors that may affect changes in the dependent variable. The strength of the relationship between dependent and independent variable can increase or decrease by those factors that are not measured in the study (Kumar and Singh, 2011). In this case, variables such as age and employment length were found to be another potential variable having an impact on the observed variables.

6.1.2 Instrument Limitations

Another limitation was that the instrument used was a self-completion questionnaire, where the opportunity for the respondent to clarify issues is lacking, as there is almost no opportunity for them to make issues clear unless they get in touch with the researcher in the event that they do not understand any of questions (Cannell et al., 1977). In contrast, the benefits of this particular methodology were that it reduced the interviewer bias that is always possible, and offered a high level of anonymity, as there was no face-to-face interaction between interviewer and respondent (Kumar and Singh, 2011).

Furthermore, opened-ended question (Q7) were added outside the structured questions (Q1 to Q6), to invite respondents to express any other feelings about the organisational marketing communications. A limitation of this type of question found in this study was a lack of response, because it usually requires a sentence to complete the answer and can therefore be time-consuming for the respondent to complete (Pallant, 2013). On the other hand, an advantage is that respondents have the freedom to express their views in their own way without any restriction of choice provided by the researcher, and this can enable a wealth of information (Kumar and Singh, 2011).

Finally, it was concluded that 49 items (out of 53) are highly significant at 95% confidence level and the P-value obtained was less than alpha critical value ($P < .05$) where the significant difference between the low and high integration groups was calculated with the help of the T-test (Tables 26-30, on pages 161 to 165). Only in 4 cases there was no significant difference highlighted at 95% confidence level. This is another limitation of this study and therefore, these 4 items could possibly be explored further in future research to clarify this finding.

6.1.3 Sampling Limitations

In social science research, findings based on a larger sample size are considered to be more certain than those based on a smaller one (Kumar and Singh, 2011). Although the current response rate was very encouraging in this study, i.e. 301 out of 350, in the final analysis, the survey was conducted only within one organisation and results could potentially be different if the research was conducted in another organisation.

6.2 Recommendations for Future Studies

The following section will explain how the current study could be extended and developed in the future. Over the course of the current study, there was evidence that future research could be extended into a new direction. For example, a number of demographic variables such as age and tenure (employment length) of the participants in the survey were seen to be important (indirectly), but were not specifically relevant to this study's aims and objectives. However, they could play an important role in future studies, and this would fundamentally change the conceptual framework. The link between the demographic variable and sales force integration and performance outcomes may be a fruitful area for further research. Therefore, it would be very useful to discuss the influence of demographic variables on observed constructs in the following section. A developed conceptual model is illustrated later in this chapter as a proposed basis for future research. First of all, the key recommendations contained in this model are analysed and justified in detail.

6.2.1 Influence of Demographic Variables

The findings of the current research in terms of demographic variables confirmed that the levels of integration amongst the staff did depend on age and employment length in the company, as sales force members in the higher age groups and the longer-serving employees were deemed to be more integrated. This study also found that higher integration leads to a better-performing sales force, and this shows that demographic characteristics have an indirect influence on performance, despite the fact that sales force performance also depends on other factors such as integration in this case (Thakur, 2017).

The results obtained from the Doumic et al. (2017) study were quite similar to the findings of this research, where the effect of demographic characteristics (such as gender, age and tenure) were observed on the productivity of the sales force in a pharmaceutical company. The results confirmed that gender, age and employment length did correlate with the performance of the sales force. Particularly in terms of age and employment lengths, the 2017 study found that sales staff become more stable over time and their optimisation was increased in respect of their job (Domic et al., 2017).

Another study was conducted in the banking sector by Jaupi and Llaci (2015) to investigate the demographic determinates of employee engagement with organisational communications. This confirmed that there is a positive relationship between employee engagement and age and employment length. It was found that employees were better communicated with in higher age groups (50-59 years) and those more experience in the organisation (longer tenure). It was also noted in this 2015 study that gender did not have a significant relationship with organisational communications (Jaupi and Llaci, 2015).

Kuya (2013) conducted a study in Standard Chartered Bank and concluded that demographic determinates have a significant impact on staff performance. Fletchl (2010) also refers to demographic variables as the determinants of good performance among sales force sales force personnel. Naseem et al., (2013) also carried out research to determine the influence of demographic variables and identified a significant relationship of these with job commitment and job satisfaction. Ayers (2010) illustrated that characteristics such as age, gender and education are highly associated with job involvement. According to Kumar and Singh (2011), job satisfaction can be affected by a number of personal attributes and age is one of them. Further research has shown that qualifications have a significant impact on sales force job motivation (Griffin and Moorhead, 2011).

It has been noted from prior research that a number of studies have opened this area and illustrated the impact of different demographic variables, not only in different organisations, but also in different industries. A number of different determinates have been used in the past, but this current study has highlighted and elaborated the influence of the most common and widely recognised variables, such as gender, age, qualification, employment length (tenure) and ethnicity, which are discussed below.

- ***Gender***

Regarding gender, different researchers have different opinions. Some researchers believed that women can perform better than men (or at least equal as men) because of their task orientation, whereas in some studies male performance was found to be better because of less absenteeism and the ability to perform difficult tasks (Naseem et al., 2013).

However, there are a number of cases where gender-related differences between men and women were found to be few and so minor, that they were not taken into account because of a negligible impact on their performance as well as on organisational communications (Jaupi and Llaci, 2015; Thakur, 2017).

- ***Age***

Past research indicates that age determines the level of sales worker productivity. Many researchers have called for checks on its impact because it can be affected by different age groups in different organisations (Auden, 2009). However, much research has revealed in the past that age is positively associated with job satisfaction and commitment (Ugboro, 2006; Naseem et al., 2013). The performance of salespeople in higher age groups is found to be better than in lower age groups due to their relative maturity, knowledge and skills in comparison to their earlier counterpart. It has been noted that age contributes most to performance as compared to other factors such as gender and tenure (Thakur, 2017).

- ***Qualifications***

Educational qualifications are found to be positively associated with performance in most cases. It has been noted that sales forces personnel are more likely to perform well if they have higher levels of education (Thakur, 2017). However, in some cases their performance appeared to be low, where the sales force has been forced to work in the department where they are less willing to work because of their high qualification (Griffin and Moorhead, 2011).

- ***Tenure***

In terms of employment length, staff performance is expected to improve over time because of their relative knowledge and skills within the organisation. Past research has also supported this argument and has confirmed that long-serving staff perform well as compared to those who have spent less time within the organisation (Thakur, 2017). Sales staff with longer employment lengths seem to be more satisfied and committed to their job, and hence are growing within the organisation. Therefore, longer tenure was found to be positively related with performance as compared to new recruits (Jaupi and Llaci, 2015).

- ***Ethnicity***

De Dreu et al., (2009) concluded that ethnic diversity reduces performance because of the rejection of diverse group members (De Dreu et al., 2009). It has been noted that diverse ethnic groups seem to be less co-ordinated as compared to homogenous groups, and this has a less positive impact on performance (Jehn and Bezrukova, 2003). Some other past studies have also confirmed that diversity tends to reduce communication and co-ordination (Lazear, 1999; Morgan and Várdy, 2009), and if not managed well, this could lead to negative results (Selvaraj, 2015). However, some studies have found a positive relationship between diversity and sales, market share and productivity in the organisation, due to diverse skills and creativity (Van Der Vegt and Bunderson, 2005, Gupta, 2011).

The above research has confirmed the view that each demographic variable has a different degree of impact on the performance of sales staff in different sectors, with either a positive or negative relationship. Past research has also found that there is a significant relationship between demographic variables and the performance of salespeople. Thakur (2017) found that 16.6% of performance depended on demographic variables, and that this could be higher in different organisations. Therefore, priority should also be given to an individual's demographic characteristics, rather than just generalised factors, while managing their performance (Birechi, 2010). This shows that organisations can potentially rely on the demographic variables of the workforce to manage their performance (Kundi and Nawaz, 2010).

6.2.2 Demographic Characteristics as Extraneous Variables

Since the importance of demographic characteristics has increased in the growing literature, most researchers have used these demographics characteristics as independent variables by acknowledging their significance in the organisation. For example, Naseem et al., (2013), Selvaraj (2015) and Thakur (2017) have used gender, age, qualification, tenure and ethnicity as independent variables in their studies.

The findings of the current research have confirmed a positive correlation between the independent variable (sale-force integration) and dependent variables (sales force performance outcomes). However, it does not necessarily mean that one variable causes the other. There is a possibility of a third variable that influences both observed variables and this should be considered (Pallant, 2013). The empirical findings of this research have supported this view, where unmeasured variables such as age and tenure appear to have a positive correlation with both observed variables. The results indicated that the levels of integration amongst the sales staff did depend on age and employment length in the company. In this case, employees in higher age groups and longer-serving employees were more integrated, and it was concluded that integrated staff are more likely to perform well.

Although these additional variables (age and tenure) were not part of the research hypotheses, they nevertheless had a positive impact on the study and affected the relationships, and these can therefore be classified as extraneous variables (Bacon-Shone, 2013). Therefore, for any future study, it would be interesting to analyse other demographic variables such as gender, educational qualifications and ethnicity, by using them as extraneous variables.

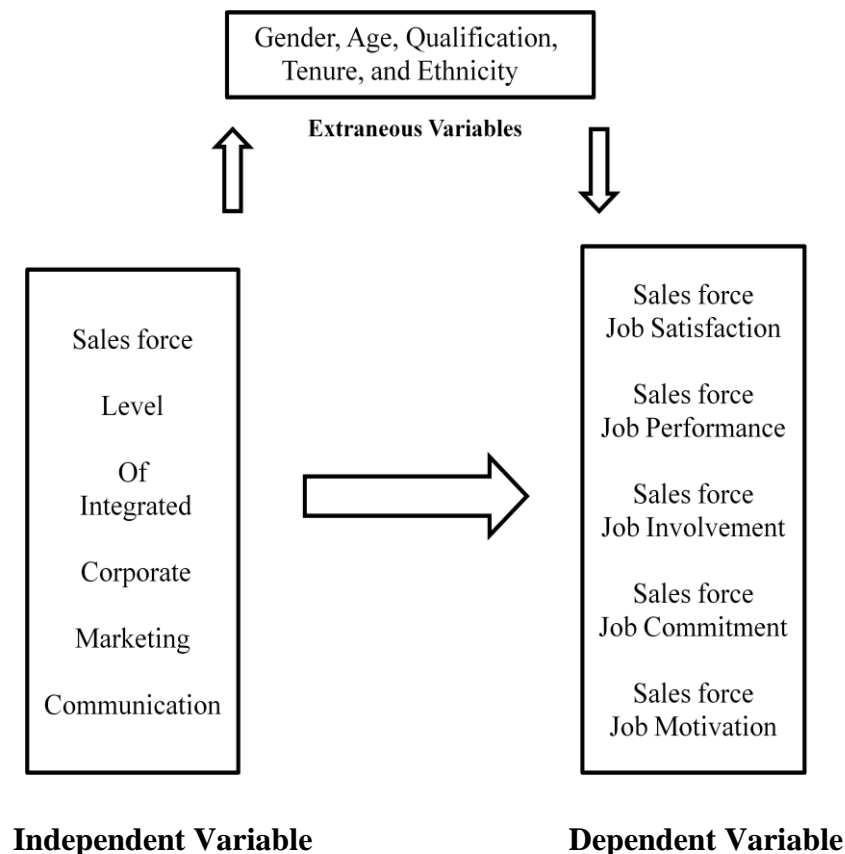
A natural step would be therefore, to propose a comprehensive framework, where the effect of these extraneous variables can be explained in more detail under the same observed (independent and dependent) variables, and this is discussed in more detail below.

6.2.3 Recommended Model for Future Research

This recommended model outlines several extraneous variables such as gender, age, educational qualification, tenure and ethnicity, whereas the same elements of independent and dependent variables have been proposed for future research as discussed above. It would be interesting to take the same concept of this study to the next level by adding these extraneous variables into the (tested) hypothesised model, in order to identify whether sales force integration and its related performance outcomes is impacted in any way by these demographic variables.

A summary of potential fruitful ideas for future research is designed to act as a summary to the idea presented in the section above in the form of a conceptual framework shown below in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Conceptual Recommended Model for Future Research



6.2.4 Future Recommendations

The current research has found that sales force integration into marketing communications was affected by some of these demographic variables (such as age and tenure), and it also identified some other variables (such as gender, educational qualifications and ethnicity) that could be used as extraneous variables to find out the impact of these variables on sales force integration and its related performance outcomes. Prior research has also illustrated the influence of demographic determinants on internal communications and reported that

organisational diversity tends to reduce communication and coordination (Lazear, 1999; Morgan and Várdy, 2009) and hence, can reduce performance (Selvaraj, 2015).

It will be interesting to further explore this area in future studies to analyse the impact of these demographic variables (e.g. gender, age, qualification, tenure and ethnicity) on integration by testing them as extraneous variables.

These extraneous variables could be tested by using the same hypothesised model as used in this current research, due to the fact that in this current model, the other elements of dependent and independent variables have already been tested (with a positive correlation between them), measure the construct of interest, are valid and reliable, and hence can be used as it is. Consequently, the following recommendations can be proposed based on the arguments above:

- Since this study has found a positive impact of age and longer tenure on sales force integration and performance outcomes, any future research could carry out a comparative study to determine the authenticity of the findings in different organisations or in different sectors by testing other variables, such as gender, educational qualifications and ethnicity, that are found to have a significant effect in this regard.
- This could include comparisons between different staff groups or departments, and the identification of areas where improvements could be made, along with the interventions that could potentially be tested across different organisations.
- Cross-analysis could then be undertaken to check the influence of these discussed extraneous variables on sales force integration in the context of different industries or in different regions.

6.3 The Implications of the Recommended Model for Future Research

6.3.1 Practical Implications

Rapid changes in the business environment have brought about a significant change in the media, employees, and consumers, which as a result, has increased the importance of IMC (Batra and Keller, 2016). Therefore, with regards to future implications, this study can be a useful resource for marketers and policymakers who are associated with any type of organisation to better understand the different ways of improving sales force performance by practicing integrated communications. Moreover, the inclusion of extraneous variables in this research study can be useful for future researchers to carry out similar studies in specific regions and sectors, and to evaluate the findings of the study to determine any differences in other industries. In this way, it will allow future researchers to conduct a comparative analysis between two or more organisations (in the same or different regions) to check the levels of integration with different influences of demographic variables. Exploring sales force integration into corporate marketing communications and its influence on sales force performance outcomes would be a great prospect for future researchers and organisations to better understand the influence of sales force integration on sales force job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, job motivation and job commitment under different environments.

6.3.2 Theoretical Implications

With regards to the theoretical implications of this study, it has been recommended that as this study has followed a quantitative research design, researchers in the future can therefore conduct the same study by using a qualitative research design, which would allow a more in-depth comparison of the results. Moreover, the overall findings of the study will allow organisations to understand the significance of integrating marketing communication strategies with regards to improving the overall performance of sales forces. On the other hand, recommendations from this study will also allow marketers and policymakers who are associated with any type of organisation to form effective strategies for sales force integration to ensure a high level of sales force performance, which in turn can assist them in maintaining a strong position in the highly competitive business environment.

Moreover, in the future, similar studies could be conducted by using different research methodological tools and procedures that could allow researchers to evaluate the authenticity and reliability of their research findings. Lastly, the overall discussion, analysis and findings of this current study have significance and can assist future researchers and marketers to gain valuable insights in this field. Furthermore, with the help of this study, marketers and managers can gain a deep insight into the principals of IMC and its significance for the success of their organisation. In this way, it will allow them to form better strategies and enhance the performance of their sales team. Similarly, this study will help organisations to learn about the importance of effective communications between the sales force and management, and what impact this can make on performance outcomes. Consequently, this study helps organisations increase their sales and productivity by implementing effective strategies.

With regards to research instruments, the results from the empirical data were in harmony with theoretical expectations, and the scales used measured the construct of interest. The detectors of the construct were found to be valid with overall high alpha values ($< .70$) and with good internal consistency (DeVellis, 2016). The IMC scale as a whole was found to be highly reliable and valid without any changes. The result of this research, therefore, clearly indicate that the measurement tool used to identify sales force integration does in fact correlate with predicated integration patterns within corporate organisations, and is sensitive to different levels of the traits of integration which were under investigation. It shows that the construct of sales force integration is valid and can be usefully adopted by other marketing researchers investigating this phenomenon.

The illustration of the validity and the usefulness of the instrument itself is an important contribution to knowledge and potentially useful for further research. The instrument could be used for further research to understand sales force job satisfaction, performance, involvement, commitment and motivation, including many other aspects of sales force integration.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Contribution

From the evidence available from prior research, it is clear that IMC is an emerging and developing conceptual area and that a gap in current knowledge as expounded in the literature exists because there has been no focus on the sales force in this context. Behind a lean activity mix, insufficient communication awareness and a short-sighted perspective has been observed in the organisation investigated. There is apparently a large gap between theory and practice in the range of communication activities within the investigated organisation. Some of these communication integration issues had already been identified in previous studies but had not been specifically investigated.

The current research has attempted to fill this gap by investigating the role and importance of the sales force in the context of IMC. The state of sales force integration was broadly defined as the level of assimilation of the sales force into the organisation as a whole, including how well they are incorporated into all marketing communications. The current study highlighted sales force performance related outcomes that can be gained by achieving this integration. The conceptual model examined in this research is unique in that it uniquely applies the concept of integrated marketing communications to an internal audience, the sales force. This extends the focus of IMC, which has up to now been largely an external focus and examines how integration influences important organisational outcomes. This extension of IMC inwards is an important contribution of the research to the literature.

This chapter provides an overall conclusion along with details of the contribution of the current study by summarising the different aspects of the findings that have been discussed in the study.

7.1 Conclusions

The primary focus of this study was to examine the notion of sales force integration into corporate marketing communications and how it influences sales force performance outcomes. The researcher, by undertaking primary research, has focused on understanding sales force performance outcomes that are correlated with the integration of the sales force into corporate marketing communications. On the basis of this primary quantitative research, it can be concluded that sales force integration into corporate marketing communications appears to influence sales force performance outcomes. On the basis of the quantitative findings from this study, it has been shown that sales force integration into corporate marketing communications is significantly correlated with sales force performance outcomes.

The researcher by reviewing the literature identified several different factors that comprise sales effectiveness outcomes. The factors that are associated with the sales force effectiveness were identified as:

- Sales force job satisfaction
- Sales force job performance
- Sales force job involvement
- Sales force job motivation
- Sales force job commitment

Following on from the results of these findings from the literature review, a conceptual model of sales force integration in the wider context of corporate communications was designed and constructed. This model was used as the basis for the primary research and data collection. The key principles of the model were used to both eliminate and to include the questions from previous research studies that were in line with the objectives of this investigation into IMC.

The findings were subjected to a number of statistical analyses. Whether the findings from the measures used in this research are analysed as categorical or continuous variables using correlation coefficients and regression lines in scatter plots to view the correlations, or by testing the hypotheses with the help of regression analysis, the findings are the same. A

comparison of means using cross tabulations and t-tests to establish the difference in findings between groups of low and high integration illustrates the same finding. There are clearly significant associations and correlations between sales force integration and the dependent variables across the board. Based on the evidence presented in this research it is evident that there is a relative lack of sales force integration throughout the organisation studied. However, the study has found a positive outcome from this analysis, in that sales force performance can potentially be increased, as sales employees seem to respond positively to being integrated into marketing communications.

The current study found that the higher integrated salespeople report better outcomes as compared to their lower integrated counterparts. This means that integrated employees are more likely to perform well. In other words, the higher level of sales force integration with corporate marketing communications, the more likely increased sales force performance outcomes are. The performance outcomes that have been comprehensively discussed and examined in the current study are in the form of sales force satisfaction, sales force job performance, sales force job motivation, sales force job involvement and sales force job commitment.

- **Sales force job satisfaction**

The current study has confirmed a positive and significant correlation between sales force integration and sale-force job satisfaction. A higher level of sale-force integration is positively associated with a higher level of job satisfaction. It has been noted that a highly integrated sales force is more satisfied with respect to their jobs compared to less integrated one.

- **Sales force job performance**

The current study found a positive and significant correlation between sales force integration and sale-force job performance. It was found that higher levels of sales force integration were positively associated with higher levels of performance. Sales force staff that are more integrated were found to perform well compared to those who were not so integrated into marketing communications. The findings of the current research that demonstrate a correlation between performance and the level of internal sales force integration into marketing communications support findings by Porcu et al. (2019) where, in a study of IMC

and market performance in the hospitality industry, conclusions suggested that there was convincing evidence of a positive link between IMC and market performance. In the same way, Wickham and Hall (2006) concluded that IMC enabled business-to-business sales force members to better engage with customers in the Tasmanian light shipbuilding industry. An integrated marketing communications approach was reported to have armed the sales personnel within shipbuilding with the information and confidence needed to market their products to clients and help grow the industry (Wickham and Hall, 2006).

- **Sales force job involvement**

The study confirmed that there is a positive and significant relationship between sales force integration and sale-force job involvement. The study also found that sales force members in higher integration groups are more involved in their job as compare to less integrated staff.

- **Sales force job commitment**

The study found a positive and significant association between sales force integration and sale-force job commitment. Through the findings of this study, it was concluded that a higher level of sale-force integration is positively correlated with a higher level of commitment.

- **Sales force job motivation**

The study found a positive and significant correlation between sales force integration and sale-force job motivation. On the basis of the analysed findings, the study concludes that higher levels of sales force integration are positively associated with higher levels of motivation. The study confirms that highly integrated sales force staff are more committed to their job as compared to those who are less integrated into marketing communications.

In terms of the 5 'C's, the research indicated that 4 of the 'C's of communications (co-operation, consistency, co-ordination and clarity) were not as present as they could be in the organisation researched. The only 'C' found to be in place was 'credibility', where the vast majority of employees agreed that this element was present. These 5 'C's are not just

positively associated with sale-force integration, but also have a positive and significant correlation with performance outcomes. This shows that by bringing these 5 'C's into marketing communications, sales force performance could potentially increase. However, the findings from the current study confirm that these 5 'C's are the vital components of IMC, and it is important to have all these in place in corporate marketing communications if better sales force performance is desired.

In conclusion, it can be stated that sales force integration into corporate marketing communications significantly influences sales force performance outcomes. The research indicates that integration is a major factor in sales force effectiveness. This research has opened a new avenue or further research in the context of IMC, and future research conducted in relation to sales forces in different industries could usefully be undertaken to confirm the findings of this research.

7.2 Contribution

- This study has highlighted the importance of the integration of the sales force into marketing communications by investigating it in the wider context of the corporate marketing communications process. This focus on the level of sales force integration into marketing communications has not been the core of previous studies, which have generally concentrated on consumers and other stakeholders. A managerial contribution of this research is thus that it appears to be important for performance, that managers make sure that sales employees are fully integrated into marketing communications. If sales employees are clearly communicated with then they may be more satisfied and more productive.
- The conceptual model which encompasses the key principles of the current research, is purpose built for this investigation, and it is another contribution of this investigation. A contribution of this research for further academic practice is that it emphasises the importance of communications integration not only within the different media used in communicating as already established in the literature, but also within different employee groups such as salespeople. Academics could examine how these levels of integration influence other important corporate outcomes.

- Sales force performance outcomes have been at the centre of this study in relation to sales force integration into marketing communications. This constitutes another contribution to knowledge because while performance outcomes have been widely discussed in past studies this has mainly been in terms of employees or brands without considering the sales force and its level of integration.
- This study has introduced the concept of the 5 'C's (namely; consistency, co-operation, co-ordination, clarity and credibility) and supported the view that these are the vital component of integrated marketing communications and are positively correlated with sales force performance outcomes. This adds knowledge to the existing literature.
- The questionnaire used in the current investigation was adapted to measure the six key variables (independent and dependent). For the first time these different scales were combined in such a way that the extent of sales force integration into marketing communications and its related performance outcomes could be measured.
- The integrated marketing communications scale developed and used here can be the basis of future research into the levels of sales force integration. This demonstration of the IMC scale's effectiveness in terms of research within companies could be a contribution of this research to further academic study of integrated marketing communications.

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APPENDICES

Research Findings and the 5 ‘C’s

The concept of the 5 ‘C’s - namely, consistency, co-operation, co-ordination, clarity and credibility - within the combination of elements involved in IMC, was introduced and investigated in this research. The findings from this, emphasise the importance of addressing all five of these elements if integrated marketing communications are to be maximally effective. The findings of the research findings highlight that these 5 ‘C’s are positively correlated with related sales force performance outcomes and can be classified as important components of integrated marketing communications. However, as this is not the central focus of the thesis, results containing the 5 C’s are presented here in the appendix rather than the main body of the thesis. Pearson Correlation analysis was therefore undertaken to determine whether the 5 ‘Cs’ - a vital component of integrated communication - have any relationship with performance outcomes (job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, job commitment and job motivation). The results can be seen in the Pearson's Correlation matrix in the Table 31 below where the 5Cs were taken as independent variables.

Table 31: Pearson's Correlation Matrix for the 5 ‘C’s versus Performance Outcomes

5 C's - Vital components of internal communication in Q1	Job Satisfaction (JS)	Job Performance (JP)	Job Involvement (JI)	Job Commitment (JC)	Job Motivation (JM)
Cooperation (item 1)	.732**	.610**	.708**	.723**	.494**
Consistency (item 2)	.702**	.577**	.663**	.679**	.513**
Coordination (item 4)	.761**	.537**	.670**	.680**	.436**
Clarity (item 5)	.734**	.598**	.673**	.665**	.480**
Credibility (item 6)	.268**	.481**	.262**	.316**	.466**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level ($P < 0.01$) (2-tailed)

The results shown in the table (above) revealed that all 5 Cs are positively correlated with performance outcomes. This infers a relationship between the 5 ‘C’s and the performance outcomes. The results show that cooperation, consistency, coordination and clarity have the most impact on performance outcomes, as they correlate the most, whereas the impact of credibility on performance is very low as it correlates the least. The results also show that these correlations were all statistically significant.

APPENDIX A - Survey Data

Table 32: Description of items within each construct and their source and scale outline

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Likert Scale:</i> <i>1 2 3 4 5</i>
<i>Sales Force Level of IMC</i>	<p>My company does a good job of internal marketing, informing all areas of the organisation about our brand's objectives and marketing programs. (Cooperation)</p> <p>All our marketing communications are consistently good and effective. (Consistency)</p> <p>Managing our brand reputation is a part of the responsibility of all employees.</p> <p>My company carefully co-ordinates the messages being sent to everyone in the organisation. (Coordination)</p> <p>The goals of this organisation are clear to me. (Clarity)</p> <p>I believe that the company's advertisements and written materials are credible. (Credibility)</p> <p>(R) I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organisation.</p> <p>Employees are regularly kept informed about what is happening at the company.</p>	IMC Mini Audit Scale by Duncan and Moriarty (1997) (modified Version)	Higher score reflects a high level of sales force integration with corporate marketing communication, and vice versa.
<i>Sales Force Job Satisfaction</i>	<p>(R) I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.</p> <p>(R) I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.</p> <p>When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.</p> <p>(R) I find that I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of the people I work with.</p> <p>(R) I have too much to do at work.</p> <p>(R) I sometime feel my job is meaningless.</p> <p>I like doing the things I do at work.</p> <p>I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.</p> <p>I am satisfied with my chances of promotion.</p> <p>I like the people I work with.</p> <p>My job is enjoyable.</p> <p>(R) Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good</p>	Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) by Spector (1985) (modified version)	Higher score reflects a high level of sales force job satisfaction, and vice versa.

	job difficult.		
<i>Sales Force Job Performance</i>	<p>I am helping to increase sales in my department.</p> <p>I know enough about our products to do my job well.</p> <p>I can give good advice to customers.</p> <p>I am able to meet the targets set by my section manager.</p> <p>I am submitting required paperwork on time.</p> <p>I am working out solutions to customer questions or objections.</p>	Salesperson Performance Scale (SPS) by Behrman and Perreault (1982) (modified version)	High score reflects a high level of sales force job performance, and vice versa.
<i>Sales Force Job Involvement</i>	<p>I will stay to do overtime to finish a job, even if I am not paid for it.</p> <p>I usually show up for work a little early to get things done.</p> <p>The major satisfaction in my life comes from my job.</p> <p>For me, mornings at work really fly by/go quickly.</p> <p>The most important things that happen to me involve my job.</p> <p>I am really a perfectionist about my work.</p> <p>(R) I have other activities more important than work.</p> <p>I would probably keep working even if I didn't need the money.</p> <p>(R) Quite often I feel like staying home from work instead of coming in.</p> <p>(R) To me, my work is only a small part of who I am.</p> <p>I am very much involved personally in my work.</p> <p>(R) I avoid taking on extra duties and responsibilities in my work.</p> <p>(R) I used to be more ambitious about my work than I am now.</p> <p>(R) Most things in life are more important than work.</p>	Job Involvement Scale (JIS) by Lodahl and Kejner (1965) (modified version)	High score reflects a high level of sales force job involvement, and vice versa.
<i>Sales Force Job Commitment</i>	<p>I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organisation be successful.</p> <p>I talk about this organisation to my friends as a great organisation to work for.</p> <p>(R) I feel very little loyalty to this organisation.</p>	Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) By Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) (modified version)	High score reflects a high level of sales force commitment, and vice versa.

	<p>I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation.</p> <p>I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar.</p> <p>I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation.</p> <p>(R) I could just as well be working for a different organisation as long as the type of work was similar.</p> <p>This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.</p> <p>(R) It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation.</p> <p>I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.</p> <p>(R) There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.</p> <p>(R) Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees.</p> <p>I really care about the fate of this organisation.</p> <p>For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.</p>		
<i>Sales Force Job Motivation</i>	<p>My opinion of myself goes up when I do this job well.</p> <p>I feel a great sense of personal satisfaction when I do this job well.</p> <p>I feel bad and unhappy when I discover that I have performed poorly at my job.</p> <p>(R) My own feelings generally are not affected one way or the other by how well I do at my job.</p> <p>Most people on this job feel a great sense of personal satisfaction when they do their job well.</p> <p>Most people in this organisation feel bad or unhappy when they find that they have performed their work poorly.</p> <p>(R) It is hard for me in this job, to care very much about whether the work gets done properly.</p>	<p>Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) by Hackman and Oldham (1974) (modified version)</p>	<p>Higher score reflects a high level of sales force motivation, and vice versa.</p>

Table 33: Sales Force Integration Question Q1

Sales Force Integration	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My company does a good job of internal marketing, informing all areas of the organisation about our brand's objectives and marketing programs. (Cooperation)	20.6%	40.2%	3.0%	29.6%	6.6%
All our marketing communications are consistently good and effective. (Consistently)	25.6%	41.9%	2.3%	25.2%	5.0%
Managing our brand reputation is a part of the responsibility of all employees.	0.3%	0.7%	0.7%	52.5%	45.8%
My company carefully coordinates the messages being sent to everyone in the organisation. (Coordination)	27.9%	40.2%	3.0%	22.6%	6.3%
The goals of this organisation are clear to me (Clarity)	18.9%	37.9%	6.6%	28.9%	7.6%
I believe that the company's advertisements and written materials are credible. (Credibility)	1.3%	7.6%	4.7%	47.8%	38.5%
I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organisation.	7.3%	30.6%	4.7%	40.5%	16.9%
Employees are regularly kept informed about what is happening at the company.	19.6%	43.5%	3.3%	30.2%	3.3%

Table 34: Cronbach's Alpha for Sales force Job Satisfaction ($\alpha = .88$)**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
(R) Not satisfied with benefits received	33.0698	60.145	.646	.862
(R) Work not appreciated	33.2625	57.634	.751	.855
Receive job recognition	33.2458	57.959	.752	.855
(R) Work harder due to other's incompetence	32.5482	68.315	.224	.888
(R) Too much work to do	33.1130	62.694	.552	.868
(R) Feel job is meaningless	32.9136	61.366	.633	.863
Like doing work	32.4684	63.297	.603	.866
Sense of pride in doing job	32.5382	62.563	.619	.864
Satisfied with promotion chances	33.5847	65.724	.430	.875
Like people work with	31.9701	69.796	.315	.879
Job is enjoyable	32.6611	62.231	.650	.863
(R) Rules make job difficult	33.0897	60.889	.631	.863

Table 35: Cronbach's Alpha for Sales force Job Performance ($\alpha = .70$)**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Helping increase sales	18.91	9.878	.315	.695
Have product knowledge	19.90	8.119	.372	.693
Give good advice to customers	19.26	7.144	.640	.584
Able to meet set targets	19.38	7.509	.612	.598
Submitting paperwork on time	19.02	8.536	.447	.658
Give solutions to customer questions	18.79	10.706	.232	.712

Table 36: Cronbach's Alpha for Sales force job Involvement ($\alpha = .91$)**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I'll do overtime even without paid	36.2924	86.668	.633	.897
I show up early at work	36.3090	86.281	.661	.896
Major life satisfaction is from job	36.2990	88.124	.658	.896
Mornings at work fly by	35.1329	94.856	.429	.904
Important events involve job	36.1628	87.390	.686	.895
I'm perfectionist about work	35.1196	95.559	.318	.908
(R) Other activities more important than work	36.8007	89.847	.660	.896
Would keep working without pay	37.1894	96.587	.274	.909
(R) Often feel like staying home	36.3754	84.555	.684	.895
(R) Work is a small part of me	36.6678	88.869	.737	.894
Personally involved in work	35.8106	87.127	.674	.895
(R) Avoid taking extra duties	35.6711	86.561	.632	.897
(R) Used to be more ambitious than now	36.1561	85.746	.671	.895
(R) Most things more important than work	36.7110	88.266	.720	.894

Table 37: Cronbach's Alpha for Sales Force Job Commitment ($\alpha = .89$)**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Will spend great deal of job effort	40.8638	80.725	.251	.891
I say this is a good place to work	41.7708	71.951	.604	.879
(R) I feel little loyalty	40.7907	81.799	.133	.895
I'd accept any job assignment to keep this job	42.4917	68.557	.713	.873
Mine and organisational values are similar	41.6910	74.288	.507	.883
Proud to tell others about this organisation	41.7542	73.253	.560	.881
(R) Could work for different organisation	42.4020	68.008	.763	.870
Organisation inspires best in me	42.4518	68.769	.747	.872
(R) Just a little could cause me to leave	42.1096	69.591	.641	.877
Glad I chose this organisation	41.4053	79.322	.312	.890
(R) Not much to be gained with this organisation	42.6545	66.427	.770	.870
(R) Difficult to agree with org polices	42.5581	69.834	.693	.874
Really care about organisation's fate	40.7442	81.171	.180	.894
Best possible organisation to work	42.6080	69.466	.756	.872

Table 38: Cronbach's Alpha for Sales Force Job Motivation ($\alpha = .75$)**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Self-opinion goes up by doing job	20.5183	20.464	.588	.688
Get personal satisfaction from job	19.9701	20.649	.662	.673
Feel bad if performance poor	20.1628	20.490	.635	.678
(R) My feelings are not affected by job	20.6578	22.066	.535	.703
Most people satisfied by doing job well	20.1096	25.578	.183	.776
Most people feel bad when performance is poor	20.1196	25.159	.221	.768
(R) Don't care if work properly	20.7674	22.472	.465	.718

Table 39: Cross tabulation between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Satisfaction

Question 2 - Sales Force Job Satisfaction		Categorised Sales Force Integration		
		Low	Medium	High
		Integration	Integration	Integration
		Group	Group	Group
		Count	Count	Count
(R) Not Satisfied with benefits received	Strongly Disagree	25	9	1
	Disagree	78	40	13
	Neutral	3	13	5
	Agree	18	27	45
	Strongly Agree	2	1	21
Mean		2.16	2.68	3.85
(R) Work not appreciated	Strongly Disagree	44	16	2
	Disagree	77	39	7
	Neutral	0	5	5
	Agree	5	29	52
	Strongly Agree	0	1	19
Mean		1.73	2.56	3.93
Receive job recognition	Strongly Disagree	35	17	1
	Disagree	81	44	9
	Neutral	1	7	3
	Agree	8	20	54
	Strongly Agree	1	2	18
Mean		1.88	2.40	3.93
(R) Work harder due to other's incompetence	Strongly Disagree	9	4	4
	Disagree	35	32	19
	Neutral	2	2	4
	Agree	68	47	51
	Strongly Agree	12	5	7
Mean		3.31	3.19	3.45
(R) Too much work to do	Strongly Disagree	23	4	2
	Disagree	78	48	16
	Neutral	0	7	8
	Agree	25	31	50
	Strongly Agree	0	0	9
Mean		2.21	2.72	3.56
(R) Feel job is meaningless	Strongly Disagree	7	4	1
	Disagree	85	50	11
	Neutral	0	2	4
	Agree	34	34	52
	Strongly Agree	0	0	17
Mean		2.48	2.73	3.86
Like doing work	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0
	Disagree	55	30	3
	Neutral	8	3	2
	Agree	62	55	65
	Strongly Agree	0	0	15
Mean		3.04	3.23	4.08

Sense of pride in doing job	Strongly Disagree	1	1	0
	Disagree	69	28	3
	Neutral	9	6	6
	Agree	47	53	55
	Strongly Agree	0	2	21
Mean		2.81	3.30	4.11
Satisfied with promotion chances	Strongly Disagree	36	20	11
	Disagree	69	45	23
	Neutral	15	13	20
	Agree	4	11	30
	Strongly Agree	2	1	1
Mean		1.94	2.20	2.85
Like people work with	Strongly Disagree	1	0	0
	Disagree	18	5	1
	Neutral	2	6	1
	Agree	103	73	64
	Strongly Agree	2	6	19
Mean		3.69	3.89	4.19
Job is enjoyable	Strongly Disagree	1	3	0
	Disagree	64	40	7
	Neutral	8	6	4
	Agree	53	41	63
	Strongly Agree	0	0	11
Mean		2.90	2.94	3.92
(R) Rules make job difficult	Strongly Disagree	27	7	3
	Disagree	78	37	13
	Neutral	3	6	4
	Agree	18	39	56
	Strongly Agree	0	1	9
Mean		2.10	2.89	3.65

Table 40: Cross tabulation between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Performance

Question 3 - Sales Force Job Performance		Categorised Sales Force Integration		
		Low Integration Group	Medium Integration Group	High Integration Group
		Count	Count	Count
Helping increase sales	Strongly Disagree	0	0	3
	Disagree	2	4	0
	Neutral	13	4	2
	Agree	95	53	42
	Strongly Agree	16	29	38
	Mean	3.99	4.19	4.32
Have product knowledge	Strongly Disagree	8	4	0
	Disagree	78	28	1
	Neutral	14	14	3
	Agree	26	39	60
	Strongly Agree	0	5	21
	Mean	2.46	3.14	4.19
Give good advice to customers	Strongly Disagree	1	0	0
	Disagree	52	8	0
	Neutral	10	2	0
	Agree	56	57	42
	Strongly Agree	7	23	43
	Mean	3.13	4.06	4.51
Able to meet set targets	Strongly Disagree	4	1	1
	Disagree	42	6	1
	Neutral	10	12	4
	Agree	64	59	53
	Strongly Agree	6	12	26
	Mean	3.21	3.83	4.20
Submitting paperwork on time	Strongly Disagree	0	0	0
	Disagree	31	5	1
	Neutral	1	4	5
	Agree	70	53	39
	Strongly Agree	24	28	40
	Mean	3.69	4.16	4.39
Give solutions to customer questions	Strongly Disagree	0	0	1
	Disagree	1	0	0
	Neutral	1	0	1
	Agree	100	62	50
	Strongly Agree	24	28	33
	Mean	4.17	4.31	4.34

Table 41: Cross tabulation between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Involvement

Question 4 - Sales Force Job Involvement		Categorised Sales Force Integration		
		Low	Medium	High
		Integration	Integration	Integration
		Group	Group	Group
		Count	Count	Count
I'll do overtime even without paid	Strongly Disagree	33	7	3
	Disagree	77	49	12
	Neutral	0	6	3
	Agree	16	27	50
	Strongly Agree	0	1	17
Mean		1.99	2.62	3.78
I show up early at work	Strongly Disagree	20	14	4
	Disagree	86	42	22
	Neutral	2	3	2
	Agree	18	29	39
	Strongly Agree	0	2	18
Mean		2.14	2.59	3.53
Major life satisfaction is from job	Strongly Disagree	4	7	6
	Disagree	93	58	21
	Neutral	3	4	9
	Agree	26	19	38
	Strongly Agree	0	2	11
Mean		2.40	2.46	3.32
Mornings at work fly by	Strongly Disagree	2	1	0
	Disagree	17	15	3
	Neutral	3	2	3
	Agree	99	65	51
	Strongly Agree	5	7	28
Mean		3.70	3.69	4.22
Important events involve job	Strongly Disagree	8	4	5
	Disagree	91	44	16
	Neutral	1	5	6
	Agree	26	35	52
	Strongly Agree	0	2	6
Mean		2.36	2.86	3.45
I'm perfectionist about work	Strongly Disagree	2	1	0
	Disagree	27	12	4
	Neutral	5	6	7
	Agree	74	44	49
	Strongly Agree	18	27	25
Mean		3.63	3.93	4.12
(R) Other activities more important than work	Strongly Disagree	29	17	11
	Disagree	95	54	38
	Neutral	0	3	2
	Agree	1	16	34
	Strongly Agree	1	0	0
Mean		1.81	2.20	2.69

Would keep working without pay	Strongly Disagree	76	32	28
	Disagree	49	46	30
	Neutral	1	4	5
	Agree	0	7	21
	Strongly Agree	0	1	1
Mean		1.40	1.88	2.26
(R) Often feel like staying home	Strongly Disagree	37	16	5
	Disagree	81	43	9
	Neutral	1	3	5
	Agree	5	23	45
	Strongly Agree	2	5	21
Mean		1.84	2.53	3.80
(R) Work is a small part of me	Strongly Disagree	17	7	7
	Disagree	106	67	33
	Neutral	1	4	3
	Agree	2	12	38
	Strongly Agree	0	0	4
Mean		1.90	2.23	2.99
Personally involved in work	Strongly Disagree	2	2	1
	Disagree	83	32	11
	Neutral	6	5	0
	Agree	34	45	53
	Strongly Agree	1	6	20
Mean		2.60	3.23	3.94
(R) Avoid taking extra duties	Strongly Disagree	10	4	0
	Disagree	65	29	9
	Neutral	4	4	2
	Agree	43	42	40
	Strongly Agree	4	11	34
Mean		2.73	3.30	4.16
(R) Used to be more ambitious than now	Strongly Disagree	20	9	4
	Disagree	89	34	10
	Neutral	2	7	7
	Agree	15	35	43
	Strongly Agree	0	5	21
Mean		2.10	2.92	3.79
(R) Most things more important than work	Strongly Disagree	24	15	9
	Disagree	99	63	25
	Neutral	1	2	6
	Agree	2	10	40
	Strongly Agree	0	0	5
Mean		1.85	2.08	3.08

Table 42: Cross tabulation between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Commitment

Question 5 - Sales Force Job Commitment		Categorised Sales Force Integration		
		Low Integration Group	Medium Integration Group	High Integration Group
		Count	Count	Count
Will spend great deal of job effort	Strongly Disagree	0	0	0
	Disagree	2	5	1
	Neutral	1	4	6
	Agree	89	48	47
	Strongly Agree	34	33	31
Mean		4.23	4.21	4.27
I say this is a good place to work	Strongly Disagree	2	0	0
	Disagree	67	27	10
	Neutral	4	6	6
	Agree	51	49	51
	Strongly Agree	2	8	18
Mean		2.87	3.42	3.91
(R) I feel little loyalty	Strongly Disagree	0	1	0
	Disagree	4	4	2
	Neutral	1	4	4
	Agree	67	38	52
	Strongly Agree	54	43	27
Mean		4.36	4.31	4.22
I'd accept any job assignment to keep this job	Strongly Disagree	30	13	2
	Disagree	84	41	18
	Neutral	3	9	3
	Agree	9	26	46
	Strongly Agree	0	1	16
Mean		1.93	2.57	3.66
Mine and organisational values are similar	Strongly Disagree	0	2	2
	Disagree	58	16	5
	Neutral	4	18	9
	Agree	63	46	55
	Strongly Agree	1	8	14
Mean		3.06	3.47	3.87
Proud to tell others about this organisation	Strongly Disagree	3	0	0
	Disagree	68	22	2
	Neutral	7	8	9
	Agree	48	57	57
	Strongly Agree	0	3	17
Mean		2.79	3.46	4.05
(R) Could work for different organisation	Strongly Disagree	22	6	0
	Disagree	95	48	15
	Neutral	2	6	5
	Agree	6	27	48
	Strongly Agree	1	3	17
Mean		1.96	2.70	3.79

Organisation inspires best in me	Strongly Disagree	26	7	1
	Disagree	93	46	10
	Neutral	3	7	9
	Agree	4	28	55
	Strongly Agree	0	2	10
Mean		1.88	2.69	3.74
(R) Just a little could cause me to leave	Strongly Disagree	13	6	1
	Disagree	76	38	14
	Neutral	12	4	6
	Agree	23	32	42
	Strongly Agree	2	10	22
Mean		2.40	3.02	3.82
Glad I chose this organisation	Strongly Disagree	0	0	0
	Disagree	23	13	4
	Neutral	10	10	4
	Agree	89	64	72
	Strongly Agree	4	3	5
Mean		3.59	3.63	3.92
(R) Not much to be gained with this organisation	Strongly Disagree	58	25	3
	Disagree	61	29	11
	Neutral	4	9	9
	Agree	3	26	49
	Strongly Agree	0	1	13
Mean		1.62	2.43	3.68
(R) Difficult to agree with organisation's policies	Strongly Disagree	28	10	3
	Disagree	90	55	12
	Neutral	1	3	6
	Agree	7	22	56
	Strongly Agree	0	0	8
Mean		1.90	2.41	3.63
Really care about organisation's fate	Strongly Disagree	1	0	0
	Disagree	0	7	2
	Neutral	3	2	6
	Agree	61	37	43
	Strongly Agree	61	44	34
Mean		4.44	4.31	4.28
Best possible organisation to work	Strongly Disagree	28	8	3
	Disagree	94	56	13
	Neutral	1	4	12
	Agree	3	21	52
	Strongly Agree	0	1	5
Mean		1.83	2.46	3.51

Table 43: Cross tabulation between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Motivation

Question 6 - Sales Force Job Motivation		Categorised Sales Force Integration		
		Low	Medium	High
		Integration	Integration	Integration
		Group	Group	Group
		Count	Count	Count
Self-opinion goes up by doing job	Strongly Disagree	27	2	0
	Disagree	71	23	2
	Neutral	6	5	8
	Agree	15	38	47
	Strongly Agree	7	22	28
	Mean	2.24	3.61	4.19
Get personal satisfaction from job	Strongly Disagree	13	1	0
	Disagree	50	7	0
	Neutral	2	4	1
	Agree	41	45	50
	Strongly Agree	20	33	34
	Mean	3.04	4.13	4.39
Feel bad if performance poor	Strongly Disagree	23	1	0
	Disagree	46	9	2
	Neutral	5	7	6
	Agree	33	47	52
	Strongly Agree	19	26	25
	Mean	2.83	3.98	4.18
(R) My feelings are not affected by job	Strongly Disagree	10	4	1
	Disagree	82	33	9
	Neutral	8	3	5
	Agree	24	42	54
	Strongly Agree	2	8	16
	Mean	2.41	3.19	3.88
Most people satisfied by doing job well	Strongly Disagree	2	7	9
	Disagree	21	17	20
	Neutral	9	6	4
	Agree	67	33	35
	Strongly Agree	27	27	17
	Mean	3.76	3.62	3.36
Most people feel bad when performance is poor	Strongly Disagree	2	8	9
	Disagree	25	14	17
	Neutral	9	7	4
	Agree	58	40	40
	Strongly Agree	32	21	15
	Mean	3.74	3.58	3.41
(R) Don't care if work properly	Strongly Disagree	21	5	1
	Disagree	84	34	5
	Neutral	2	8	3
	Agree	17	39	58
	Strongly Agree	2	4	18
	Mean	2.17	3.03	4.02

Table 44: Proportions between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Satisfaction

Question 2: Sales Force Job Satisfaction	Low Integration Group (LIG) N= 126	Medium Integration Group (MIG) N= 90	High Integration Group (HIG) N= 85
(R) Not satisfied with the benefits received	81.7%	54.4%	16.4%
(R) Work not appreciated	96.0%	61.1%	10.6%
Receive job recognition	7.1%	24.4%	84.7%
(R) Work harder due to other's incompetence	34.9%	40.0%	27.0%
(R) Too much work to do	80.2%	57.8%	21.2%
(R) Feel job is meaningless	73.0%	60.0%	14.1%
Like doing work	49.2%	61.1%	94.1%
Sense of pride in doing job	37.3%	61.1%	89.4%
Satisfied with promotion chances	4.8%	13.3%	36.5%
Like people work with	83.3%	87.8%	97.6%
Job is enjoyable	42.1%	45.6%	87.1%
(R) Rules make job difficult	83.3%	48.9%	18.8%

Table 45: Proportions between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Performance

Question 3: Sales Force Job Performance	Low Integration Group (LIG) N= 126	Medium Integration Group (MIG) N= 90	High Integration Group (HIG) N= 85
Helping increase sales	88.1%	91.1%	94.1%
Have Product knowledge	20.6%	48.9%	95.3%
Give good advice to customers	50.0%	88.9%	100%
Able to meet targets	55.6%	78.9%	92.9%
Submitting paperwork on time	74.6%	90.0%	92.9%
Give solutions to customer questions	98.4%	100%	97.6%

Table 46: Proportions between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Involvement

Question 4: Sales Force Job Involvement	Low Integration Group (LIG) N= 126	Medium Integration Group (MIG) N= 90	High Integration Group (HIG) N= 85
I'll do overtime even without paid	12.7%	31.1%	78.82%
I show up early at work	14.3%	34.4%	67.0%
Major life satisfaction is from job	20.6%	23.3%	57.6%
Mornings at work fly by	82.5%	80.0%	92.9%
Important events involve job	20.6%	41.1%	68.2%
I'm perfectionist about work	73.0%	78.9%	87.1%
(R) Other activities more important than work	98.4%	78.9%	57.6%
Would keep working without pay	0.0%	8.9%	25.9%
(R) Often feel like staying home	93.6%	65.6%	16.5%
(R) Work is a small part of me	97.6%	82.2%	47.0%
Personally involved in work	27.8%	56.7%	85.9%
(R) Avoid taking extra duties	59.5%	36.7%	10.6%
(R) Used to be more ambitious than now	86.5%	47.8%	16.5%
(R) Most things more important than work	97.6%	86.7%	40.0%

Table 47: Proportions between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Commitment

Question 5: Sales Force Job Commitment	Low Integration Group (LIG) N= 126	Medium Integration Group (MIG) N= 90	High Integration Group (HIG) N= 85
Will spend great deal of job effort	97.6%	90.0%	91.8%
I say this is a good place to work	42.0%	63.3%	81.2%
(R) I feel little loyalty	3.2%	5.6%	2.4%
I'd accept any job assignment to keep this job	7.1%	30.0%	72.9%
Mine and organisational values are similar	50.8%	60.0%	81.2%
Proud to tell others about this organisation	38.1%	66.7%	87.1%
(R) Could work for different organisation	92.9%	60.0%	17.6%
Organisation inspires best in me	3.2%	33.0%	76.5%
(R) Just a little could cause me to leave	70.6%	48.9%	17.6%
Glad I chose this organisation	73.8%	74.4%	90.6%
(R) Not much to be gained with this organisation	94.4%	60.0%	16.5%
(R) Difficult to agree with organisation's policies	93.7%	72.2%	17.6%
Really care about organisation's fate	96.8%	90.0%	90.6%
Best possible organisation to work	2.4%	24.4%	67.1%

Table 48: Proportions between Categorised Sales Force Integration and Sales Force Job Motivation

Question 6 - Sales Force Job Motivation	Low Integration Group (LIG) N= 126	Medium Integration Group (MIG) N= 90	High Integration Group (HIG) N= 85
Self-opinion goes up by doing job	17.5%	66.7%	88.2%
Get personal satisfaction from job	48.4%	86.7%	98.8%
Feel bad if performance poor	41.3%	81.1%	90.6%
(R) My feelings are not affected by job	73.0%	41.1%	11.8%
Most people satisfied by doing job well.	74.6%	66.7%	61.2%
Most people feel bad when performance is poor	71.4%	67.8%	64.7%
(R) Don't care if work properly	83.3%	43.3%	7.1%

APPENDIX B - Full Survey Pack along with Questionnaire used