

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPACT OF INTEGRATED MARKETING  
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY ON BRAND AWARENESS:THE CASE OF  
PETROTRADE PRIVATE LIIMITED**

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**Declaration**

I **Esther Tengetile Madovi**, do hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation and research, except to the extent indicated in the acknowledgements, reference and by comments included in the body of the report, and that this dissertation is therefore, my original work and has not been presented in part or in full for any other University.

Signature.....

Date .....

Supervisor's signature ..... Date.....

## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to late mother, my family, friends who encouraged me to pursue the study.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to extend my gratitude to my family and friends for their unwavering support during the course of my studies. Special mention goes to my brothers Samukeliso and Bonginkosi who encouraged me at the last moments of completion of this compilation.

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## Abstract

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate the impact of integrated marketing communications (IMC) on brand awareness. The general conclusion from literature is that the implementation of IMC results in increased brand awareness by making a company's brand familiar to customers and by building a set of associations that they can relate to. However, the literature is largely confined to the developed world, particularly the United States of America, where the widely accepted definition of the approach was crafted. Therefore, there is a research gap. It is against this background that the present study was aimed at filling this gap by evaluating the impact of IMC on brand awareness in a Zimbabwean context through a case study of Petrotrade.

The study employed a qualitative philosophy and an inductive research approach. In order to focus only on respondents who could adequately answer research questions, a purposive sampling strategy was employed. Face-to-face interviews were conducted to collect data from the relevant Petrotrade managers and the company's key customers. Data was analysed through Content Analytic Tables and detailed write-ups.

The study found that: the company only relied on personal selling and advertising (which were not effective), there was no senior management commitment, the communications budget was too small and there was no marketing expertise. In light of these findings the study concludes that Petrotrade communications strategy has a minimal effect on the company's brand awareness.

Given the fore-going, managerial recommendations are that the company recruits requisite skills to manage the marketing function, and also provides enough funding for marketing activities. At policy level, since Petrotrade is Government-owned, it is imperative that the company is privatised to remove the parastatal culture that pervades the company. It is difficult to see how the first two recommendations can be implemented before the company is privatised.



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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

ACEO	Acting Chief Executive officer
AMA	American Marketing Association
BJP	Brian Justice Petroleum
BP	British Petroleum
CBD	central Business District
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSM	Commercial Sales Manager
CTC	Competition and Tariff Commission
CZI	Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries
EMA	Environmental Management Authority
HRAM	Human resources and Administration Manager
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communication
IMC	Integrated marketing Communications
NIEEB	National Indigenization and empowerment Board
NOCZIM	National Oil Company of Zimbabwe
NOIC	National Oil infrastructure Company of Zimbabwe
NRZ	National Railways of Zimbabwe
PRME	Public Relations and Marketing Executive
RBZ	reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
RM	Retail Manager
SOE	State Owned Enterprise

SPB	State Procurement Board
USA	United States of America
USD	United State of America Dollar
ZERA	Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority
ZIMRA	Zimbabwe Revenue Authority
ZMDC	Zimbabwe Mines Development Company
ZPC	Zimbabwe Power Company



# **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.0 Introduction**

According to literature on integrated marketing communications (IMC) is that the benefits of implementing an IMC strategy include: increased profitability, increased brand awareness, enhancement of client-customer relationships and contributing positively to market share growth. However, this literature is weak because it relates experiences outside both Zimbabwe and the oil industry. It is against this background that the present study was aimed at filling this research gap. This study will contribute to the body of knowledge on marketing communications by examining the impact of IMC on brand awareness in the Zimbabwean context through a single case design of Petrotrade.

## **1.1 Background**

The background will discuss the situational analysis (macro environment, industry analysis and SWOT analysis) and the formation of Petrotrade.

### **1.1.1 Petrotrade Private Limited (Petrotrade)**

Petrotrade is a state-owned enterprise that was formed after the restructuring of the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM). In 2010, Cabinet endorsed the liquidation of NOCZIM, under the Companies Act Chapter 20:03 and the formation of two separate business units - an infrastructure company and a trading company - as part of the parastatal's restructuring. It was one of two successor companies. Petrotrade's mandate is to sell fuel products namely petrol, diesel and paraffin.



## **1.1.2 Situational analysis**

### **1.1.2.1 Macro-environment Analysis**

#### **1.1.2.1.1 Political**

A political factor that influences the political outlook of the macro-environment is perceived high country risk. The pending national elections have created uncertainty in the macro-environment thus deterring investors. The CZI Manufacturing Sector Survey Report (2012) highlighted that due to the perceived high country risk, there has been a decline in international private capital flows and the credit lines are availed with stringent disbursement conditions (p. 6). This outcome has had immediate impacts on businesses. Businesses have remained small due to lack of affordable funding. As a result of low growth rates fuel demand has remained stagnant resulting in Petrotrade having to compete aggressively for market share.

#### **1.1.2.1.2 Economic**

The mining and manufacturing sectors experienced growth in the 2012, thereby presenting Petrotrade with opportunities to increase market share. According to the RBZ Monetary Statement policy announced in January 2013, commodity prices for Zimbabwe's major mineral export commodities, notably gold and platinum performed relatively well during 2012 (p.13). With such positive performances, it can be said there is an increase in mining operations nationwide thereby creating demand for fuel and other petroleum based products. This therefore means that the mining and manufacturing sectors present opportunities for Petrotrade to increase its market share. The awareness of Petrotrade brand therefore becomes pivotal if Petrotrade is to harness the opportunities presented by the prevailing macro-environment.

#### **1.1.2.1.3 Social**

The oil industry has presented economic empowerment opportunities through employment creation as the industry grows and also through dealership arrangements. Dealerships have enabled individuals will idle service stations to utilise the Petrotrade brand name. This has encouraged entrepreneurship and thus improved the livelihoods.

#### **1.1.2.1.4 Technological**

There have been technological changes to the industry in the form of production of fuel-grade ethanol and the subsequent re-introduction of its blend with petrol. The Ministry of Energy and Power Development gazetted Statutory Instrument 17 of 2013 which makes it mandatory for all licensed oil companies to sell petrol blended with a minimum of 5 percent of locally-produced ethanol. The mandatory blending requirement means that oil companies need to have infrastructure that can store the fuel. Storage tanks where ethanol blend will be stored must not allow water to enter. This means that companies have to assess their storage tanks and undertake repairs where necessary. These will translate to additional expenditures. In light of this oil companies have to perform well so as to sustain the additional costs.

#### **1.1.2.1.5 Legal**

Activities in the industry are regulated by Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority (ZERA) and the Environmental Management Agency (EMA). ZERA is a regulatory that commenced operation in 2011 with the mandate to regulate all players in the energy sector, oil companies included. ZERA licenses the oil companies for importing, wholesaling and retailing. The license fees are range from US500 to US23 000. EMA also licenses some of the activities of the trade. EMA licenses the service stations (at US510) and the vehicles that transport the fuel products (at US

610 each). Companies and individuals wishing to trade in fuel products are therefore expected to have all licensing requirements in place before operations can commence. With such exorbitant licensing fees, entry into the oil industry has become very deterrent to new entrants and those individuals who might want to get into the industry for speculative purposes.

#### **1.1.2.1.6 Environment**

The operations of oil companies are regulated by the Environmental Management Agency (EMA). The fuel business operations can pollute the environment. EMA therefore has a framework that regulates the sector through penalties and license. This framework can effectively present barriers to entry to new entrants.

#### **1.1.2.2 Industry analysis**

Porter (2008) identified five forces that shape industry competition as bargaining power of suppliers, bargaining power of buyers, and threat of new entrants, threat of substitute products and services and rivalry among existing competitors (p.80).

##### **1.1.2.2.1 Bargaining power of suppliers**

Diesel, petrol and illuminating paraffin fuels are imported into the country from international suppliers based the Middle East and Europe. The fuel is received at Beira and Maputo. A company can opt to import directly from suppliers or through middlemen at Beira and Maputo. The middlemen import from suppliers for resale. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of middlemen at Beira and Maputo. This has led to intense competition, among themselves, for customers. As a result, the bargaining power of suppliers is weak as customers are able to choose from numerous suppliers. Petrotrade thus has to offer

competitive prices to customers, if they are to consider it as a supplier of fuel. Additionally the company has to come up with strategies to encourage customer loyalty. These include discounts and attractive terms of payment.

#### **1.1.2.2.2 Bargaining power of buyers**

The liberalization of the oil industry has led to a proliferation of fuel companies. Consequently customers have a wide choice in terms of where they wish to buy their fuel. Additionally fuels in Zimbabwe are not particularly different in terms of quality and specifications. Hence consumers deem the fuels sold as being generally the same.

#### **1.1.2.2.3 Threat of new entrants**

The domestic oil industry is very lucrative but has deterring barriers to entry. These are costly licensing requirements regulated by Zimbabwe Energy regulatory authority (ZERA) and Environmental Management Agency (EMA). ZERA regulates the oil industry through inspections and issuance of license. It issues licences to fuel importers, retail and wholesalers ranging from USD575 to USD25000 per annum. EMA regulates the activities of oil companies, with a key focus on their environmental implications, through issuance of licenses and inspections. EMA has especially punitive penalties for accidental environmental disasters and non-compliance to regulations. The penalties range from USD1000 upwards. In light of these costs, new entrants tend to be discouraged from entering the oil industry, especially for speculative purposes.

The threat of new entrants is also reduced by the high working capital requirements. Fuel is a basic commodity that has common characteristics. Consequently fuel sold by a particular oil company is not deemed to be different from that sold by a competitor. Additionally, the profit margins are low. When these two factors are jointly considered it means that, in order for an oil company to be profitable it has to opt for a cost leadership strategy. This will enable it to retail more volumes of fuel, at a lower cost when compared to its competitors. Large amounts of working capital are

therefore required to source the fuel for retail. The current liquidity constraints presently in the economy make it difficult for new entrants to access funds for working capital.

#### **1.1.2.2.4 Threat of substitute products and services**

The oil industry has witnessed the threat of a substitute product in the emergence of a new fuel: ethanol. A substitute performs the same or similar function as an industry product by a different means (Porter, 2008, p. 31) Ethanol is an import substitute for petrol as it locally produced fuel. The threat of a substitute is high if, it offers an attractive price-performance trade-off to the industry's product. The better the relative value of the substitute, the tighter the lid on an industry's potential (Porter 2008 p.31)

#### **1.1.2.2.5 Threat of rivalry**

The oil industry was liberalized through the Petroleum Bill in 2006(Petroleum Bill, 2006, p.26). This has led to an increase in the number oil companies operating in Zimbabwe since the inception of the Bill. According to the Ministry of Energy and Power Development's website (2010) oil companies register of, there were 73 companies that had been registered. In light of increased competition Petrotrade therefore needs to attain a sustainable competitive advantage.

Market share values are derived from the total national consumption data based on the amount of fuel cleared through Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA). When oil companies import fuel, they pay duty to ZIMRA. Thus ZIMRA is a good source of information since all the fuel consumed in the country is cleared by the authority. In the derivation of Petrotrade's market share, the company looked at what it had sold to the market as a percentage of the total amount that was cleared by ZIMRA. This makes the Petrotrade's market share a close proxy for the actual market share. In the case of competitors, however, the proxies are based on what they choose to divulge. Thus it is against the background of these calculations the market shares are tabulated below:

**Table 1. 1: Market shares of Zimbabwean oil companies in 2012**

	<b>Name of Company</b>	<b>Market Share</b>
1.	Redan	21%
2.	Petrotrade	7%
3.	Sakunda	16%
4.	Zuva	20%
5.	Engen	9%
6.	Others	10%

Source: Adapted From “Petrotrade Strategic Review June 2012”, p.15

Petrotrade’s market share has been growing from 6% to 7% since its inception. This slow growth in market is not commensurate with the growth being experienced by the domestic oil sector.

Players in the sector already have sizeable portions of the market that differ by small margins. For example, Redan and Sakunda have a difference of 5% and Redan and Zuva have a difference of 1%. With such small differences in market share, Petrotrade as well as the rest of the players in the sector, aggressively compete for any meaningful increase in market share.

### **1.1.3 SWOT Analysis**

#### **1.1.3.1 Strengths**

Petrotrade is a company that inherited infrastructure in the form of service stations. These are valuable in the industry as they provide a channel to retail fuel. Being a state owned enterprise, Petrotrade can also leverage on Government to Government

relationships for business growth. Examples include the Bi-lateral agreement signed between South Africa and Zimbabwe.

### **1.1.3.2 Weaknesses**

Petrotrade has poor corporate identity, with the market generally referring to it by its predecessor's name, NOCZIM. This means that even its stakeholders still conduct business as they would with NOCZIM.

### **1.1.3.3 Opportunities**

As discussed in the macro-environmental analysis (Section 1.1.1.1.2) the mining and various manufacturing sectors are growing. These present opportunities for Petrotrade to grow its business. There are also opportunities in meeting the demand of the growing passenger fleet in Zimbabwe.

### **1.1.3.4. Threats**

Petrotrade faces threats from growing indigenous giants such as Sakunda and Redan.

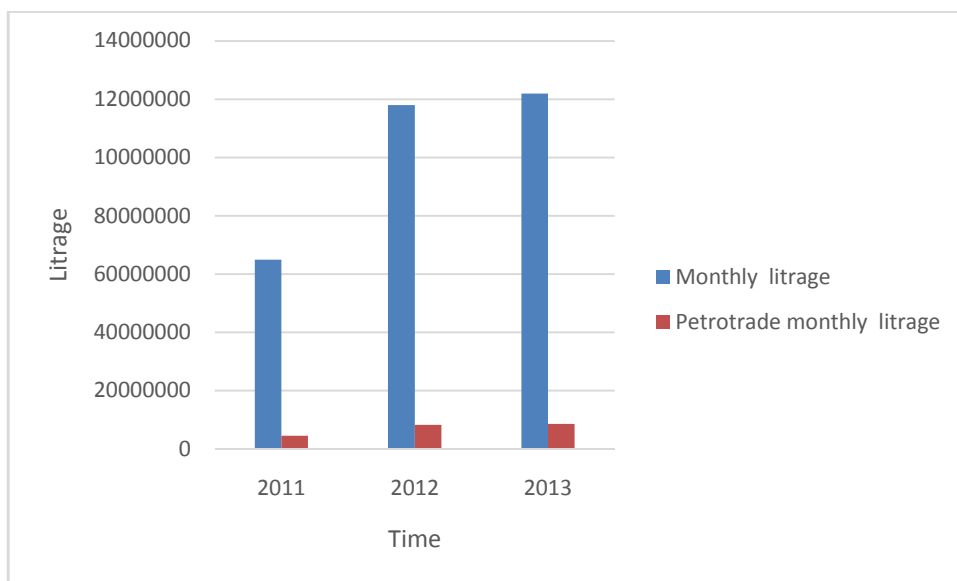
## **1.1.4 Petrotrade Private Limited Performance**

### **1.1.4.1. Market Share**

Petrotrade's performance will be discussed basing on fuel import statistics to serve as proxy to sales at national and at company levels. Since inception in March 2010, Petrotrade's market share has been growing, though slowly. Annual national

fuel imports have been increasing since 2010. The national imports can be taken to be close estimates of the national demand for fuel. This increase means that oil companies have also been steadily increasing their contribution towards meeting the national demand. In tandem with this increase, Petrotrade's imports have increased from 2010-2013. Though this is an increase, it however falls short of the overall growth of the economy. This means that Petrotrade's market share is not increasing at a rate that is related to the growth in demand for fuel.

Similarly, Petrotrade's trend of not contributing in a manner that is commensurate to increasing national demand is shown by the fact that its monthly import average is far below the national average. Petrotrade imports about 7% of national monthly demand as shown in Fig1. 1



**Figure 1. 1: Plot of National fuel import average and Petrotrade's Monthly Fuel Import**

#### 1.1.4.2 Loss of key customers

In tandem with the slow growth in market share, Petrotrade has experienced a reduction in business from key customers such as Zimbabwe Power Company



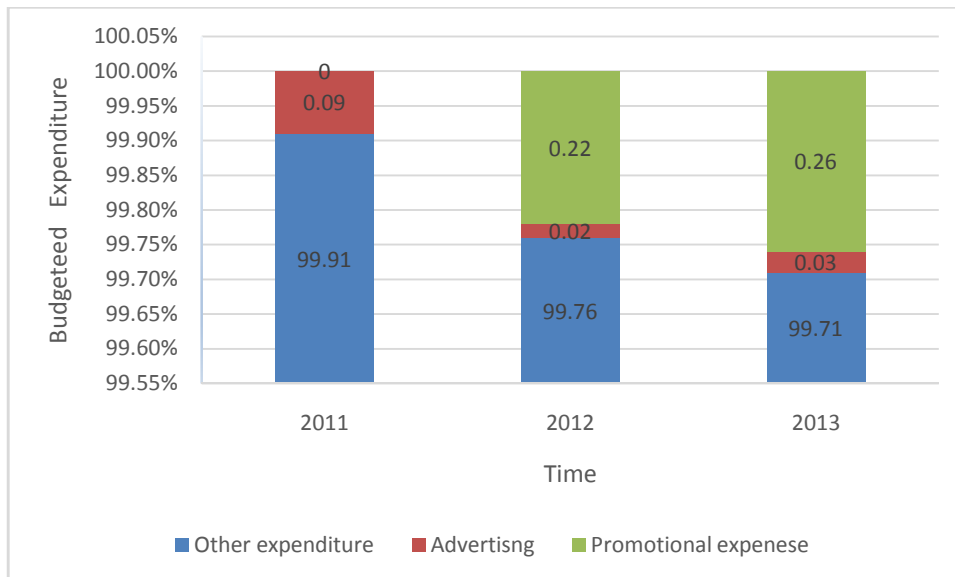
(ZPC) and National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), Zimbabwe Mines Development Corporation (ZMDC) and Unki mine. These were key commercial customers that used to contribute significantly to sales in the times of NOCZIM. The reduction in sales volumes attributable to these customers is an oxymoron since they are active players in growing sectors of the economy. ZMDC, for example is a mining concern that mines diamonds and ZPC generates power from fuel. Thus the demand for fuel has not declined but instead the customers have taken their business elsewhere.

#### **1.1.4.3 Slow increase in retail sales volumes**

The company's retail business through sale of fuel at service stations has been slow in growing. The retail business has suffered from dealers failing to register record sales. A case in point is when a dealer switches to Petrotrade after having been a dealer under a competitor brand. The dealer may fail to generate the historical sales volumes. This reduced sales volumes for Petrotrade.

#### **1.1.4.4 Marketing communications activities**

Figure 3 below shows that advertising expenditure from 2010- 2013 significantly dropped while that for promotion expenses increased. However despite these changes, the total budgeted expenditure remains low (below 1%).



**Figure 1.2: Summary of marketing communication budget allocations**

Since inception, the company has allocated little funding for its promotional activities. These were mainly advertising in print media, physical branding of service stations, and production of promotional materials such as flyers and brochures and corporate wear. The budget allocations are very low and had remained under 1% of the company's total budget from 2011 to date. This is an insignificant level of investment especially when compared to other oil companies in the region. The South African company Sasol's annual report indicated that the proportion of marketing and distribution costs to total cost of sales were 6.7% and 6% for financial periods ended 31 December 2011 and 31 December 2012 respectively. The average for the two periods was 6.35%. Petrotrade marketing communications, on the other hand, were 0.3% of total cost of sales. This falls far short of Sasol Limited by 6.05%. This means that Petrotrade is not dedicating enough resources for marketing and communications as compared to regional players in the oil business.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

The use of IMC yields, among other things, a growth in brand awareness and high brand equity through marketer-controlled brand contacts. Harnessing IMC will therefore mean that a company can improve its brand equity, increase its visibility to customers and ultimately increase the likelihood of sales.

Petrotrade has adopted an IMC strategy hinged on activities of advertising, branding and production of promotional materials. Petrotrade invests in marketing communications, but as it does not seem to be visible on the market and its market share remains stuck at 7%. Literature points out that investing in marketing communications should yield a growth in market share and greater visibility. Petrotrade, however, presents results which are not consistent with literature. If something is not done, Petrotrade market share will begin to decline and will lead to loss of viability of the company. This study is, therefore, aimed at evaluating the impact of IMC on Petrotrade brand awareness with a view of making recommendations which will enable the company to benefit from IMC in line with literature.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

1. To establish how IMC is implemented at Petrotrade
2. To establish the effect of IMC implementation on the marketing communications mix
3. To find out if Petrotrade has the necessary resources to implement an effective IMC strategy
4. To ascertain brand awareness of the Petrotrade brand
5. To make recommendations to improve the situation

### **1.4 Research questions**

1. How is IMC implementation co-ordinated at Petrotrade?

2. What is the effect of IMC implementation on Petrotrade's marketing communications mix elements?
3. What resources are required for successful implementation of IMC at Petrotrade?
4. What is the level of awareness of the Petrotrade brand?

### **1.5 Research proposition**

There is no implementation of IMC at Petrotrade due to lack management commitment, financing and acquisition of qualified expertise.

## **1.6 Scope of research**

This research will focus on the Petrotrade, with particular interest on the marketing communication tools from 2010-2013. The research will focus on the current IMC strategy being employed by the organization.

## **1.7 Justification of the study**

The primary beneficiaries of this study will be Petrotrade management. The study will enable Petrotrade to take a synchronised approach to executing its marketing communication efforts. This more so in light of the fact that Petrotrade is coming out of a monopolistic company where marketing communications were not a determinant of business performance. The prevailing liquidity crisis has also meant that Petrotrade cannot access lines of credit to bolster growth. Petrotrade is also dealing with the impact of information technology, which has resulted in companies having digital marketing presence that is accessible to customers. Companies now use social media to grow a 'fan base' for their products and/services. This is a deviation from mainstream mass media where an organization broadcast its marketing message to the general public, using mass media methods. Through IMC, Petrotrade can leverage online communications as a marketing communication channel for competitive advantage.

The secondary beneficiaries of this research will be the Government as the shareholder of Petrotrade, dealers who sell the company's fuel on its behalf and the general public.

This study will also be important to newly formed companies as it seeks to provide a guide for implementation of marketing communications. This will make their brands visible on the competitive market and to prospective customers. The

Government of Zimbabwe will benefit from dividends that will be declared by new and old state owned enterprises.

## **1.8 Limitations of the research**

This study will explore how a company could use integrated marketing communications strategies to promote its products from 2010 to 2013. This study focuses only on marketing of fuel and not the other products that Petrotrade offers to its customers. This is notwithstanding the fact that customer attrition and the company's poor visibility may be attributable to a plethora of factors other than marketing communications.

## **1.9 Structure of the research**

### **Chapter One**

This chapter introduces the topic, gives background of the case study, statement of the problem and the justification for conducting the study.

### **Chapter Two**

This Chapter gives a critical review of existing literature on the topic of study with a view to ensure that the study makes material contribution to the body of knowledge.

### **Chapter Three**

This Chapter outlines the methodology of the research by discussing the research philosophies that will be used, the research design, data collection methods and methods of analysis.

### **Chapter Four**

Chapter Four will discuss research findings in relation to theories cited in the literature review. This chapter will use the conclusions drawn from the findings to answer the research questions and meet the objectives of the research.

## **Chapter Five**

Chapter Five will conclude the study and propose a theoretical framework for the study.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

The objective of this study was to evaluate the impact of marketing communications on brand awareness. This research will thus aim to answer how marketing communications are conducted at Petrotrade with a view to evaluate their effect on the company's brand awareness.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

According to Neuman (2003) the goals of conducting a review of literature are to enable the researcher to understand existing knowledge related to the topic of study, to elucidate how prior researches were conducted and how this may be used in the study, to synthesize facts about the research topic and to learn and improve on prior research work (p.96). This chapter gives a critical review of literature linked to IMC and brand awareness as four sections. The first section of the chapter defines concepts of IMC and brand awareness. The second discussed theoretical frameworks relating to IMC and brand awareness. The third looked at the dimensions of the IMC implementation and brand awareness to be considered in the study. The last section proposed a conceptual framework that will be used in the study.

### **2.1 Definitions**

#### **2.1.1 Definition of IMC**

The American Association of Advertising Agencies (as cited in Pitta, Weisgal, & Lynagh, 2006) adopted a definition proposed by Schultz which is as follows:

‘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 – for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations– and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communications impact’ (p. 156).



This definition is widely used. Porcu, Del-Barrio-Garcia, & Kitchen (2012), suggested IMC may be viewed as a process guided by customers' and thus will seeks to mainstream their customers' expectations into the communication process (p.322). Porcu, Del-Barrio-Garcia, & Kitchen (2012) also suggested that IMC can be viewed in terms of how customers perceive a brand (p.322). The authors argued that customers view a company's marketing communications in unison as they are delivered along at the various brand contact points. Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn (as cited in Brunello, 2013) defined a contact point as, "any information-bearing experience that a customer or prospect has with the brand, including word-of-mouth and the experience of using the product" (p.10). Keller (as cited in Brunello 2013) argued that customers experience the brand when they come into contact with a brand point (p.10). Customers then condense experiences and marketing communication messages from the various contact points to build a perception of the brand. Contact with the brand creates relationships between itself and the customers.

Marketing communication programs play an important role in developing brand knowledge because their objective is informing, persuading, and reminding consumers about a brand (Delgado-Ballester, Navarro, & Sicilia, 2010, p.32). An IMC strategy is the combination of communication programmes that a company will use to communicate with existing and prospective customers. Brunello (2013) opined that, the use of IMC in today's world is important in influencing a customers purchasing decisions to buy the products of a particular firm (p. 9). This is emphasized by Belch and Belch (2005) who argued that companies use different marketing communications mix elements to raise awareness of a brand during implementation of IMC strategies (p.5).

### **2.1.1.2 Core elements of IMC**

The core elements of IMC are the message, the tools, media channels, the people and the context (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 508). The message is at the

centre of the communication process. It has to be engaging and crafted in a manner that serves to inform or appeal to the targeted audience's emotions.

Tools are elements of the marketing communications mix used to convey and deliver marketing messages (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 508). Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick (2013) argued that there are three groups of tools namely: mass, direct and digital communications, direct marketing and digital promotions and social media communications (p.514). Advertising, sales promotion and public relations fall under mass, direct and digital communications. Personal selling exhibitions and directing are tools in the second category (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 514). The last category includes websites, e-mail marketing, buzz marketing and social media (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 508). The media is the means used to convey the message to the target market (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 508).

The people are the intended target market segment that will receive the message (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 58).

The elements are tabulated in Table 2.1

**Table 2. 1: Core elements of IMC**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Examples</b>
The message	Rational, emotional
The tools	Advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, digital promotions, direct marketing , public relations
The media channels	Broadcast, print, internet, mobile, outdoor
The people	Account managers, clients, agencies, schedulers, planners, web service providers
The context	Industry, consumer, public sector

Source: Adapted from Principles and Practice of Marketing (p.508), by D. Jobber and F. Ellis-Chadwick, Berkshire: McGraw Hill Education

### 2.1.1 Definition of brand awareness

Ghodeswar (2008) defined a brand as, “a distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as logo, trademark, or package design) intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors” (p. 5).

Aaker (as cited in Bertsch & Ostermann, 2011) defined brand awareness as, “the strength of the brand in the consumers memory” (p. 107). Gilles (as cited in Ghorbani & Madani (2012) concurred with Aaker by opining that that it is the extent to which a brand is recognized, recalled and is known by customers (p. 8821). Ghorbani & Madani (2012) agreed with the two former authors by postulating that brand awareness assesses customers’ knowledge of a particular brand (p. 8821).

Aaker (as cited in Bertsch and Ostermann, 2011) suggested that there are three levels of brand awareness namely: passive (also called recognition), active and intensive (p. 107). In passive brand awareness, customer customers can recognise brand elements of a particular company (name and logo, slogan) (Bertsch & Ostermann, 2011, p. 107). In active brand awareness customers of a particular category of products can remember that particular brand even when the brand elements are not presented to them (Bertsch & Ostermann, 2011, p. 107). Intensive branding exists when customers recall only one dominant brand, whenever a particular product category is mentioned (p. 107).

Keller (as cited in Mosarrat, 2012) pointed out that brand awareness and associations are important constructs of consumer-based brand equity (p.226). This was reiterated by Aaker (as cited in Tolba, 2011) who postulated that brand awareness contributed to brand equity (p. 56). Brand awareness is a key factor in determining consumer purchase decision/behaviour and brand selection process (Subhani & Osman, 2011, p.18). Brand awareness influences brand familiarity,

brand image, brand knowledge, brand relationships and associations in a manner that ultimately seeks to impact on the customer's purchasing decision in favour of a particular brand.

## **2.2 Theoretical frameworks**

### **2.2.1 Theoretical frameworks on implementation of IMC**

#### **2.2.1.1 The IMC approach**

Kitchen and Schultz proposed a model for the IMC approach. The model is based on empirical research conducted by the authors (Kitchen, 2010, p. 8). The model has four stages:

1. Tactical
2. Redefining scope of marketing objectives
3. Application of information technology (IT)
4. Financial and strategic integration (Kitchen, 2010, p.9).

In the first stage, the company focuses on attaining a minimal level of integration. Kitchen (2010) opined that a distinct occurrence at this stage is that the company delivers marketing messages through using its brand. Departments within the company also aim to deliver a consistent message across all the marketing communications elements used (Kitchen, 2010, p.9). The second stage in the IMC approach advances to a company's need to understand the behaviours of its customers or prospects. At this stage, tracking studies to investigate the behaviour are done. From these studies, information relating to, customer preferences and product purchasing frequencies are condensed to form a database. This becomes the foundation for the third stage of IMC approach: application of IT (Kitchen, 2010, p.9). IT is applied to generate customer knowledge from the database. The knowledge is availed to company marketing staff, suppliers and distributors to ensure that all marketing communications are implemented appropriately (Kitchen, 2010, p.9). Kitchen (2010) opined that the

final stage assumes a strategic perspective whereby marketing research and finance departments work towards a customer-focused communication. This ultimately results in mainstreaming corporate objectives into the objectives of marketing communications (Kitchen, 2010, p.9).

Holms postulated that most firms are implementing IMC at the first and second stages (Holms, 2006, p.23). The author adds that an even smaller number can be identified with Stage Three (Holms, 2006, p.23). The lowest number of organizations is in the fourth stage of implementation (Holms, 2006, p.23).

Kitchen (2010) noted that transitions from one stage to the next is challenging due, in part, to lack of senior management's appreciation of IMC. The transition needs financial investment in "consumer research and new technologies" (p.10). These can be availed through management's commitment to the IMC approach.

The author added that management had to view IMC as not being a preserve of the marketing department but as a corporate business process.

#### **2.2.1.2 IMC as a business process**

IMC as a business process involves definition of corporate and operational tasks for management. Table 2.2. shows the strategic areas of management at both levels within an organisation

**Table 2.2: IMC Business processes**

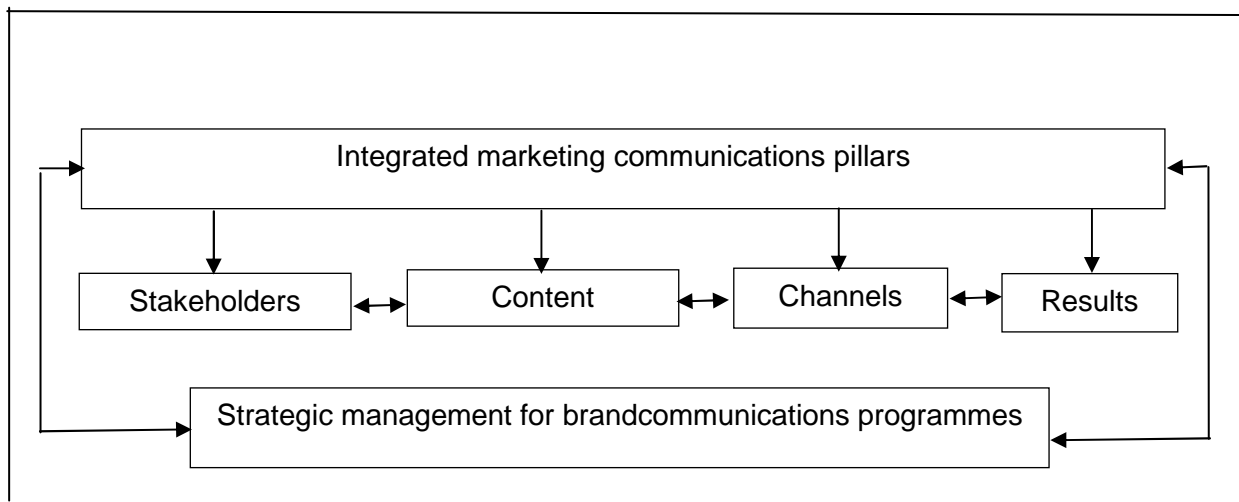
IMC Business process	
Corporate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Makes a holistic view of business</li><li>• Defines scope of business, its goals and objectives</li><li>• Drives brand-building strategies</li><li>• Takes full responsibility for full integration process of functional units</li><li>• Creates a culture of marketing: strong customer orientation</li><li>• Manages integrated systems and organisational structures</li><li>• Views marketing communications as strategic management tool and an investment</li><li>• Safeguards corporate identity, image and reputation</li></ul>
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follows an organisational structure that facilitates effective customer management</li><li>• Develops, manages, implements and measures IMC programme</li><li>• Possesses a strong customer orientation and creates long-term profitable relationships</li><li>• With multiple markets</li><li>• Coordinates the integration process among communication agencies and other suppliers</li></ul>

Source: Adopted from “Revisiting the IMC construct: A revised definition and four pillars”, by J. Kliatchko, (2008), International Journal of Advertising, Volume 27, p. 143.

At corporate level, management provides strategic direction of the organization. Management facilitates inter-departmental cross- functioning to ensure seamless operations. At operational level it anchors a customer-focus within the organizations and leads in fostering long term relationships with customers (Kliatchko, 2008, p.143).

### 2.2.1.3 IMC model

Kliatchko (2008), postulated a model of IMC based on four pillars: stakeholders, content, channels and results (p. 145). These ultimately contribute to strategic management of brand communications programmes. Kliatchko (2008) argued that the pillars function as determinants in the planning and implementation of a new IMC programme (p.145). When the programme has been completed, a feedback mechanism sets in to measure, monitor and evaluate the impact of the programme (p.145). This will subsequently provide a basis for improvements of the same IMC programme (p.145).



**Figure 2.1: The four pillars of IMC**

Source: Adapted from “Revisiting the IMC construct: a revised definition and four pillars”, by J. Kliatchko, 2008, *International Journal of Advertising*, Volume 27, p. 145.

#### **2.2.1.3.1 Stakeholders**

Stakeholders constitute all the customers of a company's products and/or services. They are classified as internal or external. Employees and their managers are internal while customers and prospects are external (Kliatchko, 2008, 145). Customers are at the focal point of IMC (Kliatchko, 2008, p.145). Kliatchko (as cited by Kliachko 2008) argued that that inclusion of customers and prospects in the model means that their communication needs are the focus of brand communications (Kliatchko, 2008, p. 145). Strategic management of brand communication programmes involves delivery of a consistent message at the different contact points of the organization.

#### **2.2.1.3.2 Content**

Fortini-Campbell (as cited in Kliatchko (2008) argued that creation of effective content is based on understanding how consumers build a relationship between themselves and a company's brand (p.147). Aaker (as cited in Ghodeswar, 2008) suggested that a brand signals to the customer the source of the product and protects the customer as well as the producer from competitors who would attempt to provide products that appear to be identical (p. 4).According to Schultz & Schultz (as cited by Kliatchko, 2008), content may be in the form of messages or incentives (p.147). Messages refer to brand concepts, ideas or associations, and all other values or perceptions that marketers transmit to customers (Kliatchko, 2008, p.147). Incentives are short-term offers or rewards to consumers for having done something of value to both the firm and the consumer (Kliatchko, 2008, p.147)

#### **2.2.1.3.3 Channels**



Channels are the media and all the interfaces through customers come into contact with a company's brand (p.149).

#### **2.2.1.3.4 Results**

The IMC process has to be evaluated too see if communication objectives are being met and to identify areas for improvement (Kliatchko, 2008, p.147).

#### **2.2.1.4IMC frameworkfor implementation**

The frameworks discussed above presented salient features of IMC and their implementation. This third framework outlines steps that can be taken in the implementation. The main steps are:

1. Marketing strategy and situational analysis
2. Identification of marketing communications opportunities and setting communication objectives
3. Creative agency selection
4. Promotional mix selection
5. Campaign development and implementation
6. Campaign evaluation
7. Future planning

The implementation process is illustrated in Fig. 6. The steps outlined above are iterative in occurrence. Each of the activities in the implementation of IMC determines the occurrence of subsequent activities.

##### **2.2.1.4.1 Marketing strategy and situational analysis**

In situational analysis, an assessment of internal promotional capabilities and the external environmental factors is done (Caemmerer, 2009, p. 256). This will determine the impact that marketing communications have to make on the target market. Kotler & Keller (2009) opined that an assessment of likely situations where the customer will intercept a company's marketing messages and its products and services has to be done (p. 512).

#### **2.2.1.4.2 Communication objectives and communication opportunities**

Once opportunities have been identified, an organization then has to decide how it will utilise them to reach its target market and meet its communication objectives. This can be done through an 'agent'. An agent can either be from within the organization (in-house) or be out-sourced. Based on the objectives, internal structures are selected to "develop a communication brief and determine the deliverables" (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p.504). These will select a 'creative agent' to deliver the intended marketing message to the targeted audience. Jointly the company and the agency agree on the best marketing mix to use. Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick (2013) argued that the marketing communications mix is the means through which the message will be delivered based on intended outcomes (p. 514).

#### **2.2.1.4.3 Creative agency selection**

Once campaign objectives are set a creative brief is compiled, outlining the company's campaign objectives, the target market and existing market data (Caemmerer, 2009, p. 528). Thereafter, advertising agents are invited to make presentations of ideas and concepts that can deliver the desired effect (Caemmerer, p. 526). The appropriate agency will then be selected.

#### **2.2.2.1.4.4 Promotions tools mix**

Communication objectives are useful guides in selecting promotional tools (Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 507). Objectives affect the manner in which elements of

the promotions mix will be used. Kotler & Keller (2009) opined that each communication tool has distinct capabilities in terms of reach the target market and has different costs associated with it. (p. 526). These two attributes therefore become primary considerations in the selection of a company's promotional mix. Secondary considerations are the extent to which these elements compliment each other to effectively communicate with the target market. For example, promotions can have a greater impact on the target market when advertising is used as well (p. 532).

#### **2.2.1.4.5 Campaign development and implementation**

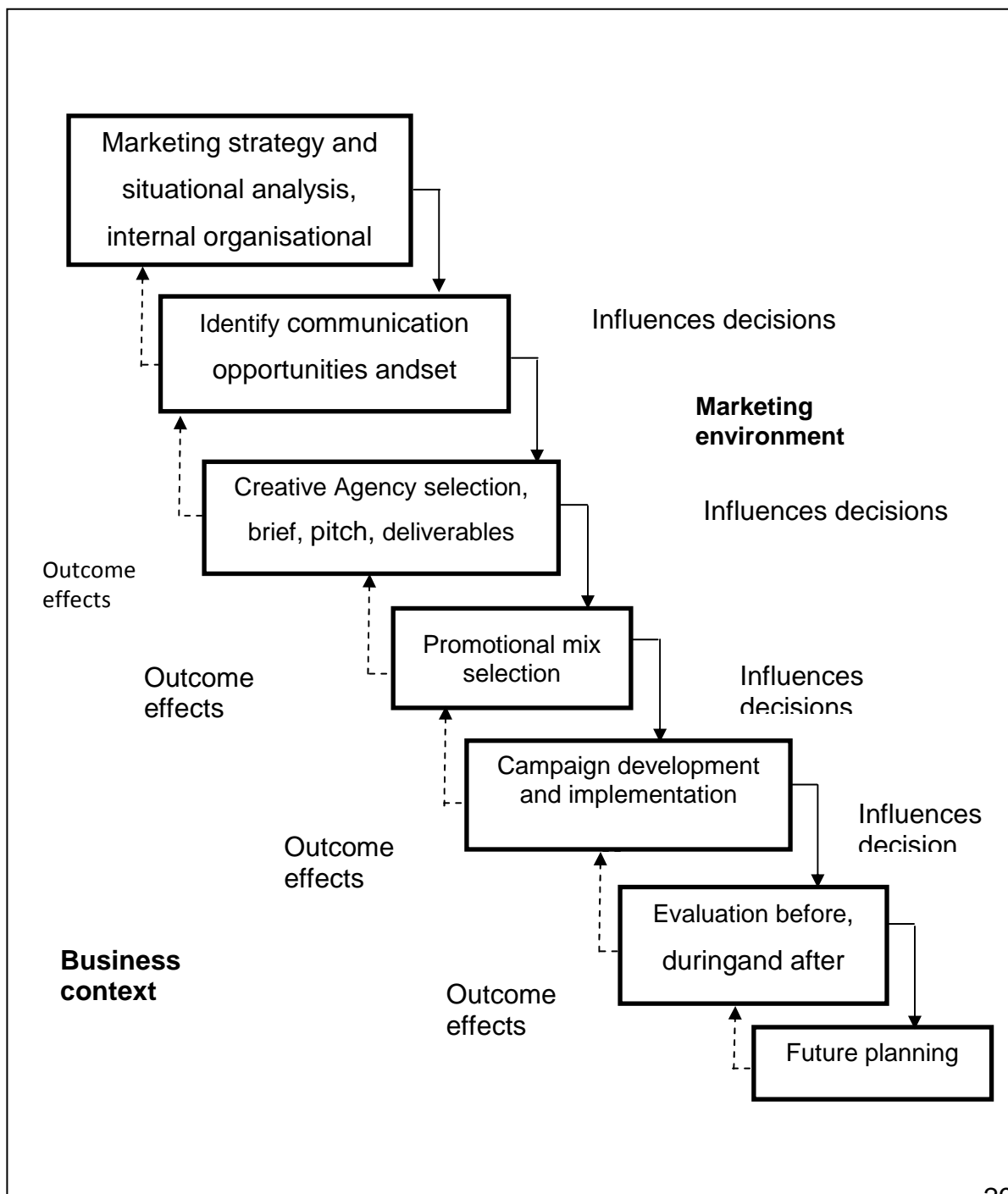
After determining which marketing communications mix elements will be used, the media for their transmission is decided on. The times during which these messages will be delivered are also determined and the campaign is then rolled out.

#### **2.2.1.4.6 Campaign evaluation**

After a campaign is rolled out an assessment of the effectiveness of the campaign has to be done (Caemmerer, 2009, p.526). Kotler & Keller (2009) argued that the assessments ensure that financial resources are effectively used (p.514). Assessments also ensure that appropriate communication programmes are designed and implemented (Kotler & Kotler, p. 514). Caemmerer (2009) postulated that the assessment of effectiveness of marketing campaigns has to be done after the implementation (p. 526). Kotler & Keller (2009) emphasized that campaign evaluations had to measure the customer's ability to recall marketing message and find out what was distinctly recalled from the message (p.531). Changes in customer's view towards the "product and the company" also need to be measured (p. 531). Tracking studies may also be commissioned to assess effectiveness of marketing communication campaigns undertaken (Caemmerer, 2009, p.526).

#### **2.2.1.4.7 Future planning**

Caemmerer (2009) indicated that planning for IMC implementation in the future requires an organization to undertake activities that ensure that its products remain in the customers' minds (p.526). Kotler & Keller (2009) concurred with this view arguing that management must come up with strategies to emphasize the company's brand position in the minds of customers (p.517). Follow-up campaign can achieve this.



## **Figure 2.2: A framework for implementing integrated marketing communications**

Source: Adopted from Principles and Practice of Marketing (p. 504), by D. Jobber and F. Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, London, McGraw Hill.

### **2.2.1.5 Resourcing of IMC**

#### **2.2.1.5.1 Role of financial resources**

Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) tend not to be prepared to spend as much on marketing as they perceive it as an unnecessary expense that cannot be immediately linked to company profitability (Wise and Sirohi, 2005, p.10). Marketing budgets are now allocating more towards fostering personal customer relationships as compared to traditional mass marketing (Holms, 2006, p.10) This has promoted IMC as a tool that can enable effective marketing in an organization (p.23). Kotler, Wong, Saunders and Armstrong (as cited in Gabrielli and Balboni, 2009) concurred with this view, pointing out that the numerous ways with which a company can reach the target market has greatly motivated companies to move from mass media to more personalised promotions tools (p. 276).

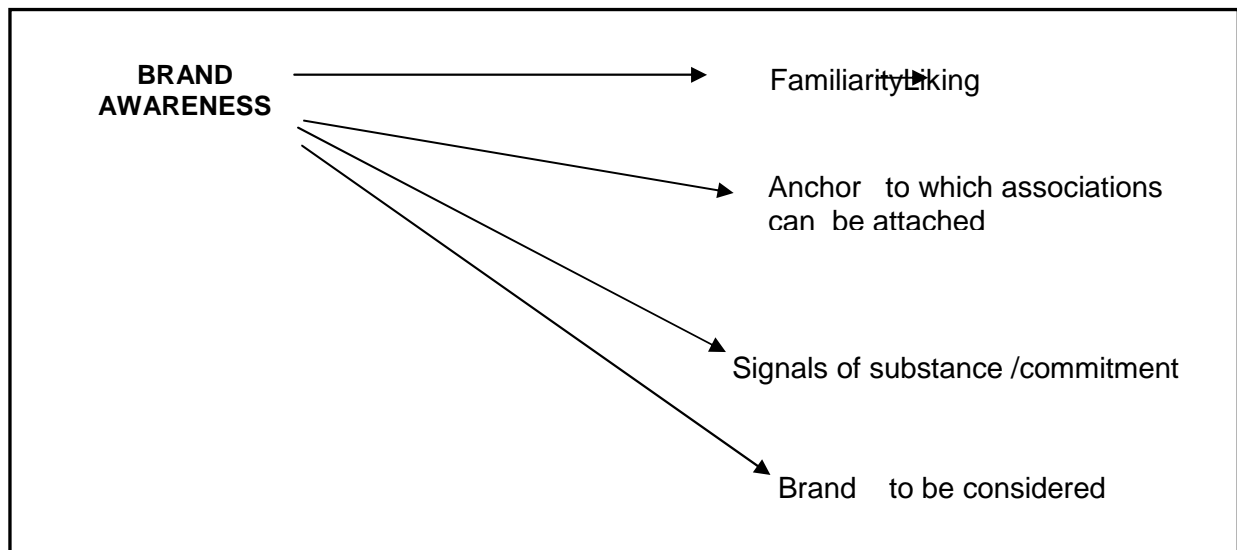
#### **2.2.1.5.2 Role of human resources**

Phelps, Harris and Johnson (as cited in Dennie 2010) opined that a group of personnel skilled in the different marketing communications elements is required for successful implementation of IMC (p.390).

### **2.2.2 Theoretical frameworks on brand awareness**

#### **2.2.2.1 Process of brand awareness**

Subhani & Osman (2011) suggested that awareness is a process that moves a brand from being familiar, to being considered during a purchasing decision (p.15). The process of brand awareness is shown in Figure 2.3:



**Figure 2.3: Brand awareness model**

Source: Adapted from “A study on the association between brand awareness and consumer/brand loyalty for the packaged milk industry in Pakistan”, by M.I. Subhani and A.Osman, 2011, p.16.

Aaker (as cited in Subhani & Osman, 2011) postulated that brand awareness is a process that begins with the customers being familiar with the brand (p. 14). Alba and Hutchinson (as cited in Delgado-Ballester, Navarro, & Sicilia, 2010) opined that brand familiarity is based on consumers experiences (p. 33). Heckler and Childers, Kent and Allen and Low and Lamb (as cited in Haefner, Deli-Gray, & Rosebloom, 2011) found that brand familiarity led to favourable brand evaluations from the

customer (p. 255). These are the basis for associating with the brand. Lee and Lee (as cited in Haefner, Deli-Gray, & Rosebloom, 2011) concurred with this view pointing out that the probability of brand being preferred was higher after it had become familiar to the extent to which brands will be preferred by the customers (p.225). Preference reflects that the brand has met customers' expectations, thus leading to a liking for it.

Boutie (as cited by Haefner, Deli-Gray, & Rosebloom, 2011) suggested that brand liking is a process whose objective is to build favourable views of a brand in the minds of customers through a demonstration of the company's desire to meet customer expectations (p. 256). Consequently a customer can recall the brand whenever a purchasing decision has to be made. Dahlén (as cited in Dahlén & Lang, 2004) supported this view by pointing out that studies reveal that it is ten times more likely for a familiar brand to attract attention as compared to unfamiliar one (p.23).

Campbell and Keller (as cited by Delgado-Ballester, Navarro, & Sicilia, 2010) suggested that customers' are more knowledgeable on the brands they are familiar with than those that they are not. It is therefore easier for them to relate to information about familiar brands as compared to the less familiar ones (ElenaDelgado-Ballester, Angeles Navarro, & Sicilia, 2010, p. 32). These brands are thus more preferred by customers (Delgado-Ballester, Navarro, & Sicilia, p.32). Esch and Didascalou (as cited in Bertsch & Ostermann, 2011) postulated that customers would then consider the brand when making purchasing decisions only if they are aware of it (p. 107).

## **2.3 Dimensions to be considered in the study**

### **2.3.1 Marketing communications mix**

In this study the elements of the marketing communications mix were considered as dimensions (variables) for implementation of IMC. The definition of IMC proposed by American Association of Advertising Agencies outlined in Section 2.1.1 isolated general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations as communication disciplines which together constitute the promotion mix (p. 156). They can be used independently of each other or as a mixture known as a marketing communications mix. Corelock and Wirtz (2007) stated that the different communication elements have unique strengths in that they can be leveraged on depending on the types of messages that need to be conveyed and the target market segments that have the greatest possibility to intercept the specific kind of communication (p.164). Since each element in the communications mix is unique, effective customer education can be achieved through formulating appropriate message and broadcasting them to the correct market segment.

### **2.3.1.1 General advertising**

Kotler & Keller (2009) defined advertising as “any form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor (p.512). Keller, Aaker; Low and Lamb (as cited in Dahlén & Lang, 2004) suggested that advertising aims to establish a relationship between customer and brand with a view to ensure that the former will make a purchasing decision in favour of the company’s brand, in the future (p. 22).

Advertising raises awareness of a brand in two ways (Ragavendran, Devakumar, & Upadhyay, 2009, p.34). It makes the brand name recognizable and informs customers and prospects of the value of innovation that has gone into the product (Ragavendran, Devakumar, & Upadhyay, 2009, p.34). Keller (as cited in Radder & Huang 2008) stated that advertising makes a brand familiar to customers and therefore contributes to its awareness (p.234). Stryform (as cited by Subhani and Osman, 2011) postulated that when advertising is carried out repeatedly it can lead to increased brand awareness (p.14). Keller (as cited by in Radder & Huang 2008) stated that advertising anchors a brand’s name in the consumers’ minds through sounds and images used in the media (p.234).



Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick (2013) opined that through advertising customers can also create a set of associations by placing a product in their minds (p. 542). Creation of a set of associations takes place after brand familiarity has been established. When a brand is positioned in the minds of target customers the objective of advertising may be to remind customers of the brand's existence and to reinforce its images (p. 544). This ultimately increases recollection of the brand.

Keller, Aaker, Low and Lamb (as cited in Dahlén & Lang, 2004) stated that advertising is used best to stimulate sales in the future rather than in the short term (p. 22). Advertising also supports the sales team through its ability to access influential individuals who are important in making purchasing decisions (Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 542).

### **2.3.1.2 Public relations**

Strydom (as cited by Subhani and Osman, 2011) argued that brand awareness can be achieved through publicity (p.14). Amir Ekhlassi, Maghsoodi, & Mehrmane (2012) suggested that "public relations attempt to create and control the brand news, announcements and reminders that are published by public media without spending" (p.762). Public relations are thus concerned with building and maintaining relationships with respected third parties that can influence the market. The third parties can be media houses and independent critics. Authoritative statements from these third parties are viewed by customers as being credible and therefore transmit communication messages. Commentaries from third parties are thus crucial to the reputation of a company's products and services as customers are inclined to believe them.

Public relations is a means of raising awareness that does not need the company to incur a cost to the company because third parties do not need to be paid to make comments on a company's products and services. It offers third-party endorsements and extra reinforcement for the paid advertising messages. Schimmel and Nicholls (2005) (as cited by Stokes (2009) stated that public relations helps break through the message clutter and is not perceived as interruption or intrusion (p.356).

### **2.3.1.3 Personal selling**

Personal selling is an interpersonal relationship by which sales representative fulfill the customer needs to gain mutual benefits (Amir Ekhlassi, Maghsoodi, & Mehrmane, 2012, p.762). It is concerned with face to face interpersonal communication between the product or services marketer and the customer. Personal selling is the most effective and expensive IMC tool (Amir Ekhlassi, Maghsoodi, & Mehrmane, 2012, p.762) since it involves building and nurturing relationships with customers. It is therefore an important part of the marketing communications mix in that it can be used as a cost cutting activity in a marketing communications campaign. Increasing sales volumes is one of the objectives of personal selling (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 597).

### **2.3.1.4 Word- of –mouth**

Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick (2013) argued that word-of-mouth is important to the success of a service because it depends on taking the target customers through an experience (p.379). Personal dialogues between existing customers and prospective ones communicate experiences with the brand. This enables prospective customers to build a set of associations with which they can relate to about the brand and consequently use them when the need to make a purchasing decision.

### **2.3.1.5 Sales Promotion**

Sales promotions are comprised of various marketing techniques which add value to a company's offering. Ailawadi, Beauchamp, Donthu, Gauri, and Shankar; Kotler and Keller and Duncan and Ouwersloot (as cited by Amir Ekhlassi, Maghsoodi, & Mehrmane, 2012) suggested that sales promotion provides short-term buying

motivation presented to the customer to effect an immediate purchase or product, trial (p.762).

The objectives of sales promotions vary. Sales promotions seek to communicate the benefits of an immediate purchase than a future purchase. They seek to induce a customer to make a purchase immediately rather than later. Kotler & Keller (2009) opined that one of the objectives of sales promotions is to reward loyal customers and to increase the repeat purchase rates (p.554).

#### **2.3.1.6 Direct marketing**

Duffy (2005) defined direct selling as “the process of selling a consumer product or service from one person to another, in an environment that is not a permanent retail location”. Armstrong and Kotler (2009) argued that direct marketing has become the fastest form of marketing (p. 416). It is a means of communication that aims to deliver personalised marketing messages to the customer. Corelock and Wirtz (2007) stated that, “direct marketing embraces such tools as mailings, recorded telephone messages, faxes and e-mails (p. 170). Direct marketers communicate directly with customers, often on an interactive basis.

In direct selling a company invites individuals to sell its products, for a commission, on its behalf. The individual communicates the value proposition of the product to the social network within which he/she is found. Consequently direct selling is a flexible channel that enables a company’s products and services to reach a group of customers who would otherwise not have been accessed through traditional retail.

#### **2.3.1.7 Packaging**

Wilson & Gilligan (2005) identified packaging as a component of IMC. Keller (as cited in Radder & Huang, 2008) identified packaging as one of the branding

elements from logo, symbol, slogan of a company that can be selected to identify the brand and distinguish it from competitors and overallly improve brand awareness.

### **2.3.1.8 Events and sponsorships**

Today's customers prefer personal relationships with companies so that they can express the expectations, a provision which mass media does not offer. Amir Ekhlassi, Maghsoodi, & Mehrmane (2012) opined that events and sponsorship were effective in raising public brand awareness (p.761).

The objectives of event sponsorship are to identify with a particular target market or lifestyle in order to increase awareness of a company or product, to create and reinforce perceptions of key brand associations, to enhance corporate image, to create experiences and evoke feelings, to express commitment to the community or in social issues, to entertain key clients or reward key employees and to permit merchandising or promotional opportunities (Kotler & Keller, 2009, p. 561).

Harnessing opportunities to communicate at events is important in three ways. The company can communicate to the prospective market through displaying messages on banners, networking with other invited guests and up-holding the company's image. Through networking, the company receives guidelines for determining the marketing message content thus increasing the likelihood that communication will be more relevant and effective.

### **2.3.1.9 Interactive and addressable media**

Advancements in information and communications technologies have contributed to a form of media that can reach a specific target market, with a unique message and at a unique time. This means that ultimately the message communicated to an

individual is unique and intimate. Such media include e-mails, SMSs and the telephone. Duncan and Ouwersloot (2008) (as cited by Ekhlassi, Maghsoodi, & Mehrmane, 2012) suggested that through such media, a company can send appropriate brand-related messages at the right time to retain current customers. (p.762).

### **2.3.2 Dimensions of the brand awareness**

According to Yoo (as cited by Ghobani and Madani, 2012), brand awareness is measured on the concepts of familiarity, the notion that the brand is well-known, it can be recognized among competitors and it is talked about and the brand is well-known (p.8823). Ragavendran, Devakumar, & Upadhyay (2009) concurred with Yoo stating that brand awareness is measured using the customers' knowledge that the brand is a member of a particular product category (p.34). Examples of such measures include brand recognition, recall and top-of-the-mind awareness (Ragavendran, Devakumar, & Upadhyay, 2009, p. 34).

#### **2.3.2.1 Brand recognition**

Subhani and Osman opined that brand recognition is the consumers' ability to ascertain past experiences with the brand. A brand is the total accumulation of all experiences a customer has had with a particular product. Brand elements also contribute to the awareness of a brand. A brand element is visual or verbal information that serves to identify and differentiate a product (Mosarrat, 2012, p.225). The most common brand elements are names, logos, symbols, characters, packaging and slogans. Aaker (as cited in Mosarrat, 2012) argued that a company's brand name is the primer for awareness and all marketing communications (p.226). Brand elements can be chosen to enhance brand awareness or facilitate the

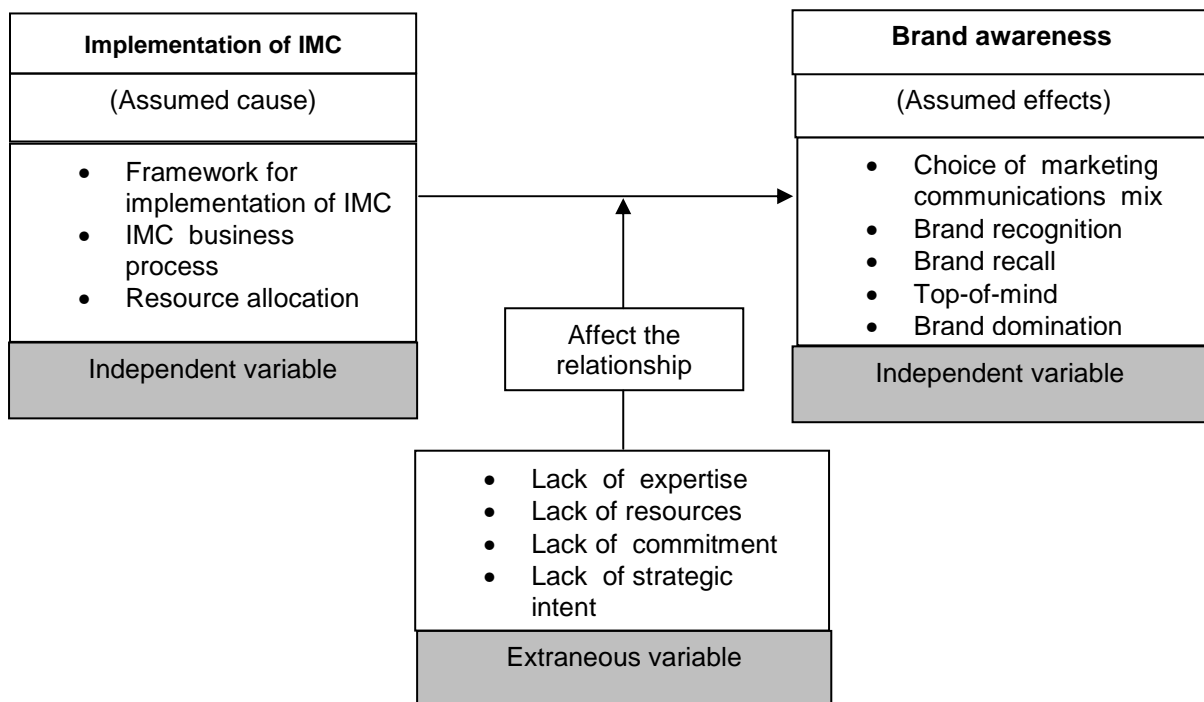
formation of strong, favourable and unique brand associations (Mosarrat, 2012, p.225)

### **2.3.2.2 Brand recall**

Delgado-Ballester, Navarro, & Sicilia (2010) argued that consistency of the marketing messages delivered to the target market, has a bearing on the degree to which a brand can be recalled (p. 34). Sjoödin and Toörn (as cited in Delgado-Ballester, Navarro, & Sicilia, 2010) explain that this is so, especially where familiar brands are concerned. The authors suggest that a moderate consistency in marketing messages creates a specific emphasis in the minds of the customers and thus results in them being more likely to recall it (p. 34). However, where less familiar brands are concerned, inconsistent marketing messages increase the likelihood of a brand being recalled. This is because the customer will be trying to integrate the different messages. This consequently means that the customer will think more about that brand and thus they are more likely to recall it when making a purchasing decision (Elena Delgado-Ballester, Angeles Navarro, & Sicilia, 2010, p.34).

## **2.4 Synthesizing conceptual framework**

Miles and Huberman (as cited in Baxter & Jack, 2008) opine that the conceptual framework serves purposes that include: (a) identifying who will and willnot be included in the study; (b) describing what relationships may be present based on logic, theory and/or experience; and (c) providing the researcher with the opportunity together general constructs into intellectual “bins” (p. 558). Baxter & Jack (2008) add that it is also very functional because it serves as the basis upon which the the study will be premised and is referred to at the stage of data interpretation (p.558). The conceptual framework that will guide this study is shown in Figure 10 below:



**Figure 2.4: Conceptual Framework of study**

## 2.5 Conclusion

The review of literature demonstrates that IMC and brand awareness are studied in the context of developed countries. It highlights the effect of implementing IMC

on brand awareness as increasing customers' recognition and recollection of the brand whenever a purchasing decision has to be made. These benefits are described in the contexts of first world companies. This presents a shortcoming in that the available literature is not as relevant and even more so with regards to answering the research question at hand. Petrotrade is an oil company operating in the Zimbabwean industry context.



## **CHAPTER THREE:RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Research methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This Chapter discusses the methodology used to conduct the research. In this chapter the researcher outlines the research methodologies and then proceeds to select the appropriate ones giving reason for choices made. Silverman (2010) defined a methodology as the choices made about cases to study, methods of data gathering, and forms of data analysis in planning and executing a research study (p.106). The methodology therefore describes the steps taken a researcher to study any phenomenon (Silverman, 2010, p.106).

#### **3.2 Recap of statement of the problem**

Petrotrade has adopted an IMC strategy hinged on advertising, branding and production of promotional materials. Petrotrade, however, presents results which are not consistent with literature. It is apparent that although Petrotrade spends money on marketing communications, it does not seem to be visible on the market and its market share remains stuck at 7%. If something is not done, Petrotrade's market share will decline and will lead to loss of viability of the company. This study is, therefore, aimed at evaluating the impact of IMC implementation on Petrotrade brand awareness with a view of making recommendations which will enable the company to benefit from IMC in line with literature.

### **3.3 Research design**

Research design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to the study's initial research questions and ultimately to its conclusions (Yin, 2003, p. 5). Punch (2008) states that strategy is the basic plan for a piece of research and it includes four main ideas which are: strategy, conceptual framework, who or what will be studied and the tools and procedures to be used for collecting and analysing empirical materials. He also goes on to say that research design deals with four main questions corresponding to these ideas:

- Data will be collected and analysed following what strategy?
- Data will be collected and analysed within what framework?
- Data will be collected from whom and how?
- Data will be collected and analysed within what framework? (p.66)

The present study was a single case design of Petrotrade. The conceptual framework of this study is cited in Chapter 2 (Figure 2.4) and the other components of the research design are detailed below.

### **3.4 Research philosophy**

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009), opined that research philosophy is the development of knowledge and its nature (p.107). The authors argued that as the researcher develops knowledge through conducting a study he/she assumes a particular view of how the knowledge is developed. There are two research philosophies namely: positivism and phenomenology. Saunders et al. (2009) argued that the research philosophy adopted contained important assumptions about the way in which the world is viewed by the researcher(p. 108). The authors add that the researcher's choice of philosophical approach is a reflection of his or her values, as is the choice of data collection techniques (p. 116). In this study interviews were used as a tool for data collection, because the researcher values personal interaction

with respondents as it enables assessment of their emotions and expressions as they are interviewed.

### **3.4.1 Quantitative approach**

Ashley & Boyd (2006) stated that quantitative methodology is associated with the rationale and objective measurement of observable phenomena (p. 70). Quantitative research begins with a problem statement and involves the formation of a hypothesis, a literature review, and a quantitative data analysis (Williams, 2007, p. 66). Leedy and Ormrod, (as cited in Williams, 2007) stated that the aim of quantitative research is to seek explanations and predictions that will generate to “establish, confirm, or validate relationships and to develop generalizations that contribute to theory” (p. 66).

### **3.4.2 Qualitative approach**

According to Creswell (as cited in Williams, 2007) qualitative research is “a holistic approach that involves discovery” (p. 67). The research approach is based on inductive reasoning (Williams, 2007, p.67). Creswell (as cited in Williams, 2007, p.67) describes qualitative research a means through which the researcher becomes active in the occurrence of events as they manifest (p.67).

### **3.5 Selection of research approach**

The researcher selected the qualitative research approach because the phenomena under investigation may require data that the researcher may not be aware of. The qualitative approach therefore provides a platform for respondents to discuss the topic, even beyond the scope that the researcher had anticipated. The advantage of the qualitative approach over the quantitative approach is that it produces rich data (Wood & Welch, 2010, p. 65). Wood and Welch (2010) argued that the term ‘rich data’ means that data has depth, and “avoids making additional assumptions that may be implicit in the word ‘qualitative’ (for example that statistical methods are

not relevant)” (p.65). Use of the qualitative approach therefore gives depth to the data collected.

### 3.6 Research strategy

Yin (2003) argued that what distinguishes research strategies is “(a) the type of research questions posed (b) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events and (c) degree of focus on contemporary as compared to historical events” (p. 5). There are five research strategies namely: experiment, survey, archival analysis, history and case study. Yin explains how each is used in the Table 3.1 below:

**Table 3.1: Relevant situations for different research strategies**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Form of research question</b>	<b>Requires control of behavioural events</b>	<b>Focuses on contemporary events</b>
Experiment	How, why?	Yes	Yes
Survey	Who, what, where, how many, how much?	No	Yes
Archival analysis	Who, what, where, how many, how much?	No	Yes/No
History	How, why?	No	No
Case study	How, why?	No	Yes

Source: Adapted from “Case study research”, by R.K. Yin, 2003, p. 5.

### 3.7 Case study strategy

Miles and Huberman (as cited in Baxter & Jack, 2008) defined a case as, “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context (p. 545). Case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the focus is on contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (Yin, 2003, p.5). In this research the unit of analysis is the case study.

### **3.8 Criticisms of case study**

#### **3.8.1 Lack of correct operational measures**

Yin (2003) pointed out that the inability to establish correct operational measures for the concept to be studied is a short-coming of the case study researches (p. 35). The author adds that the researcher’s opinion used to collect data during the study introduce subjectivity (p. 35). This invariably impacts on the outcomes of the investigation.

#### **3.8.2 Inability to generalise**

Another criticism of case study research is that the conclusion drawn thereof, cannot be generalised to extend to other researches (Yin, 2003, p.38). The author argues that this is incorrect and adds that researchers should instead attempt to generalise findings to ‘theory’ (p.35) much like the scientific approach. This is so that research findings can contribute to building a theory and not necessarily to make deductions.

#### **3.8.3 Trust worthiness**

Given that a research design is meant to represent a logical framework on which a study will be premised, it is important to validate it before using it. Yin (2003) stated that construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability are four tests

that can be used to validate the quality of a case study research design (p.33). Hammersley (as cited in Silverman 2010), defined validity as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers (p. 275). Construct validity relates to establishing correct operational measures of the concept being studied. Internal validity relates to establishing causal relationships. External validity relates to establishing the domain to which a study's findings can be generalised.

### **3.9 Justification for using case study for the research**

Case studies are the preferred strategy when the focus is on contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (Yin, 2003, p.5). The focus in this study is on a current phenomenon within Petrotrade. IMC is being implemented and awareness of Petrotrade's brand is on-going. This makes the use of the case study research design possible.

Baxter & Jack (2008) argued that in determining which type of case study to use, the researcher must be guided by the overall purpose of the study (p. 547). The purpose of this study is explanatory. The researcher sought to explain the relationship between implementation of IMC and the implications of the same, on brand awareness. The type of case study used was explanatory.

The researcher sought to carry out the study in the context of a company that can be viewed as a typical representation of other fuel companies. Petrotrade is representative of other oil companies in Zimbabwe with regards to operations. It is a fuel company that retails and distributes fuel through service stations. Its target market is the motoring public and active players in various economic sectors such as manufacturing and mining. This market is not unique to Petrotrade but is common to all the Zimbabwean fuel companies. Yin (2003) argued that the extent to which a case exhibits common traits is justification to study it using a case study research design to draw conclusions that can be generalised (p. 41). Given the foregoing, the researcher selected a single case study since Petrotrade shares a common pool of customers with other Zimbabwean oil companies. This makes it appropriate as a representative of other oil companies in Zimbabwe's fuel sector.

### **3.10 Data collection**

#### **3.10.1 Population**

According to Saunder et al. (2009) a population is the full set of cases from which a sample is taken (p. 212). The target population of this research was the Petrotrade staff and all existing and prospective customers. Petrotrade has a total staff compliment of 120. The staff compliment is comprised of management, officers at Head Office and service station staff.

#### **3.10.2 Sampling procedure**

Hycner (as cited in Groenewald, 2004) opined that the phenomenon under study determines the type of respondents from which data will be obtained. (p.8).The manner in which the respondents are chosen is called sampling (Silverman, 2010, p. 438). Hycner (as cited in Groenewald 2004) argued that sampling allows the researcher to feel confident about the extent to which a selected sample represents the underlying population and subsequently allows for more extensive use of inferences made from the study (p.438). Probability (also called representative sampling) and non-probabilistic (judgemental sampling) are the two sampling techniques that researchers can use to select respondents for a case study (Saunders et al, 2009, p.213). In probabilistic sampling each case in the population has an equal chance of being selected (Saunders, 2009, p.213). In non-probabilistic sampling the probability of selection among cases in a population varies (Saunders, 2009, p.213).

##### **3.10.2.1 Non probabilistic sampling/ Purpose sampling**

Purposive sampling allows the researcher to select a respondent because he or she demonstrates some feature or process which the researcher is interested in

(Silverman, 2010, p.141). In this study the researcher selected respondents that had an immediate bearing in making IMC implementation decisions. These were the management. The researcher also selected a group of respondents that were actively in the process of looking at the various brands in the fuel industry and making purchasing decision thereafter.

### **3.11 Data sources**

Data will be obtained from primary and secondary sources.

#### **3.11.1 Primary data sources**

The tools and procedures that were used for collecting data were chosen based on the case study strategy. In this study, primary data was collected by means of conducting interviews between Petrotrade managers and Petrotrade dealers. Interviews are one of the tools that can be used in case study research design. Secondary data was obtained from strategic planning documents and budgets of the company. Saunders et al. defined secondary data is data produced through re-analysis of that has been collected for some other purposes (p. 256). In this study strategic documents and financial budgets were used as documentary secondary data.

### **3.12 Research instruments**

The researched used face-to-face interviews. Gill et al. (2008) stated that the purpose of research interviews is to investigate “views, experiences, beliefs and/or motivations of individuals on specific matters (p. 292). There are three types of interviews namely: structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008, p. 291). Gill et al. Chadwick, (2008) argued that structured interviews are basically questionnaires containing pre-determined questions that are administered orally by the researcher. Unstructured interviews



are done when the researcher has no prior information with regards to the subject under study. The interview is therefore a platform for respondent to divulge anything with regards to the subject under study.

Semi-structured interviews are discussions between researcher and respondent that are guided by several key questions that help to define the study subject (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008, p.291). Though this may be so, the interview allows the interviewer or interviewee to digress and follow up on issues that emerge during the discussion. In this study the researcher used semi-structured interview as since it allowed for investigation of concepts that had been found in the literature review process and follow up of emergent issues. This type of interview would be used on both Petrotrade management and dealers to investigate how IMC is implemented and the level of brand awareness respectively.

For purposes of this study the researcher used the following guide for the semi-structured interviews:

Section A: How IMC is implemented,

Section B: Effect of IMC on composition of marketing mix and

Section C: Resource availability

The outline of the interview conducted on Petrotrade's dealers was:

Section A: Brand recognition

Section B: Brand familiarity

Section C: Brand association

Section D: Effectiveness of marketing communications mix currently in use

### **3.13 Data analysis**

Hatch (as cited in Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007) describes data analysis as a way to synthesize data generated through the qualitative research approach to produce information that can be transmitted to others (p. 564). The research topic has two aspects namely: implementation of IMC within Petrotrade and brand awareness. Data for the study was collected through conducting interviews on management and Petrotrade dealers for the two aspects of the respective aspects. Miles and Huberman (as cited by Silverman 2010) state that qualitative data are in the form of words rather than numbers (p. 223). In this study, data transcribed during interviews was analysed. Data was then displayed using data displays. The data was then analysed by identifying common themes present in the data. It was then related to literature.

### **3.14Chapter conclusion**

The study was conducted using a qualitative approach with the variables under consideration being clustered as those related to IMC implementation and those related to brand awareness. The variables for IMC Implementation are marketing agency selection, campaign development, implementation and evaluation and planning; the brand building strategies employed and the elements of the marketing mix. Those related to brand awareness are brand recognition, brand attitudes, customer expectations, IMC message content and marketing channels used. Data relating to these variables was collected by conducting semi-interviews with Petrotrade's management and dealers. Data was then analysed using constant comparison analysis technique. Findings were checked for consistency by obtaining the opinion of one the respondents (management and dealer).

## **CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter aims to discuss findings from the face-to-face interviews that were conducted. The researcher presents data collected from the in-depth interviews with a view to assess the impact of IMC implementation on Petrotrade's brand awareness. Interviews were used to gather data relating to both these aspects and were done with different groups of respondents namely: Petrotrade management and Petrotrade's dealers. Consequently, results are reported in the two respective sections.

### **4.1 Key respondents**

The researcher considered two sets of respondents: Petrotrade management and individuals who sell fuel on its behalf. The second group of respondents are called dealers. The sample sizes for these groups is four and ten respectively.

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with the management. Petrotrade's management is comprised of an Acting Chief Executive Officer (ACEO), Human Resources and Administration manager (HRAM), retail manager (RM) and Commercial Sales manager (CSM). RM and CSM are primarily responsible for the marketing function of the organization. The current team has been with Petrotrade since its inception in 2010 and held related positions in its predecessor, NOCZIM. The ACEO also currently doubles up as Finance Manager of the company. HRAM had headed the Administrative function in NOCZIM while RM and CSM oversaw marketing functions. The dealers who participated in this study had varying backgrounds. Some had been with the organization for as little as six months and others as long as two and a half years. The dealers were either running their own service stations or were operating those belonging to Petrotrade.

There was a 100% response rate from Petrotrade management. This could be because the sample size was small and the dealers were found in one location.

There was a 90% response rate from the dealers, because the researcher was located at Petrotrade Head office where the dealers and their representatives visit frequently.

## 4.2 Research findings

Research findings were obtained from in-depth interviews of the two groups of respondents

### 4.2.1 Findings related to steps involved in IMC implementation

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with Petrotrade’s management team.

#### 4.2.1.1 Communication objectives of Petrotrade

**Table4.1: Communication objectives of Petrotrade**

Respondent	Response
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry is highly competitive and therefore we need re-assure our customers</li> <li>• Objective is to make the company more noticeable to the market</li> </ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase demand of our fuel and increase loyalty</li> <li>• To be different from other oil companies</li> </ul>
HRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectives of marketing activities are guided by our vision, mission and our strategic goals especially for the marketing function market</li> </ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Petrotrade wants to communicate that it is a new organization independent of NOCZIM.</li> </ul>

The members of the management team indicated that the aim of communication was to increase visibility. The ACEO stated that the company’s communications were aimed at making the company more noticeable. The RM reiterated the same

view stating that communications aimed to differentiate the company from others. CSM's response also agreed with ACEO and RM, stating that communications were employed to convey that Petrotrade is an independent company from NOCZIM. HRAM gave an all encompassing response indicating that they were guided by the company's strategic direction as embodied in its vision and mission statements. Petrotrade aims to be the preferred fuel supplier in the region by 2018. This encapsulates supporting the company's marketing strategy through stimulating demand and encouraging brand loyalty as indicated by the RM. The responses reflect general agreement on the purpose of communications. The factors driving the company's communications objectives are stemming from Petrotrade's marketing strategy. This is in line with literature which suggests that implementation can be led by an organization's marketing strategy (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013 p. 505).

#### 4.2.1.2 Environmental factors influencing marketing communications

**Table 4.2: Environmental triggers of marketing communications**

Respondent	Response
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since fuel is a product that is always needed, marketing communications are key in informing the public on price offers</li> <li>• We communicate when internal changes like addition of service station to our distribution network for fuel and coupon redemption sites</li> <li>• When invited to make a feature for a supplement in the press</li> </ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of new site especially for coupon redemption, in which case road signs are made</li> <li>• Generally we do not respond to competitor advertising because we cannot match their offer to the customers</li> </ul>
HRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitor advertising triggers aggressive personal selling to re-assure our customers</li> <li>• Phoning and e-mail customers</li> </ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased competition leads us to increase personal selling visits</li> </ul>

Responses indicate that changes in the company's internal environment trigger implementation of IMC. ACEO stated that changes in the retail network of service stations and prices have to be communicated to the target market. Similarly, RM pointed out changes in the retail network as a trigger. The RM indicated that competitor moves triggered IMC implementation, arguing that the company is unable to match offers. The RM's response indicated that Petrotrade is aware of its limitations in terms of making attractive price offers when compared with its competitors. This response demonstrates that Petrotrade considers its internal promotional capabilities in deciding how to implement IMC. Despite this shortcoming, Petrotrade has to meet its communication needs. Consequently, the company employs personal selling as a communication tool. This is not as conspicuous as advertising used by competition.

Porcu, Del-Barrio-Garcia, & Kitchen (2012), suggested that IMC may be viewed as a process guided by customers' and thus will seek to mainstream their customers' expectations into the communication process (p.322).

### 4.2.1.3 Petrotrade communication opportunities

**Table 4.3: Communication opportunities**

Dealer	Response
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One newspaper once approached us to produce features for publishing, this led to increased enquiries</li> <li>• When Petrotrade is requested by corporate who are not customers to co-sponsor themed events.</li> </ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When dealers agree to have their sites branded. Through this the public has become aware of Petrotrade's existence.</li> </ul>
HRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key clients request sponsorship for their events. This has improved awareness of our company, since we can personally explain our products and services</li> <li>• Introduction of new products has been an opportunity</li> </ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service stations owned and operated by dealers are ideal place to communicate with market especially through branding</li> <li>• This has increased our visibility in the market</li> </ul>

The interviews suggest that event sponsorship, press supplements and instances when the dealer with his/her own site agrees to have it branded were the opportunities cited by management to raise awareness of Petrotrade's brand. ACEO identified free publications in print media supplements and co-sponsoring events. The HRAM indicated that attending events organised by customers was a communication opportunity. These responses indicate that management is aware of opportunities. The impact of using these communication opportunities has been increased visibility on the market as was revealed by the CSM.

#### 4.2.1.4 Factors driving selection of creative agent

**Table 4.4: Selection of creative agent**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Response</b>
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Determined by budget and level of expertise required</li></ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When conceptualisation of new ideas is needed the agency is given the job. Determined by the creativity levels needed</li></ul>
HRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decision is made based on the creativity levels required for the job.</li></ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Levels of creativity and access to the media for delivering the message to customers</li></ul>

The interviews suggest that creativity, financial resources and desired impact on intended customers were key factors considered by management in selection of a creative agent. Responses from RM, CSM and HRAM all suggested that the ability to originate concepts for message delivery was an important factor. The RM explained that creativity is especially important when new concepts need to be developed. This subsequently warrants use of an external media agency. Creativity is essential in delivering message content for a desired effect on the target market. Petrotrade's messages are suited for either the consumer-based (retail sector) or business to business markets (commercial sector). The retail market segment, made up of customers who buy fuel at service stations, can be encouraged to buy through attractive imagery delivered through branding. Thus an agent able to communicate in a creative manner that encapsulates imagery and emotionally reaches out to the customers, is required.

The CSM added access to effective forms of media, as another consideration. The CSM explained that advertising agencies tend to have quicker access to radio and television advertising slots as they are in constant liaison with advertising departments of media organizations. Since they work extensively with radio and television broadcasters, they may be offered discounts or special rates. The agency can pass on these saving to their clients making it cheaper to deliver marketing messages.



#### 4.2.1.5 Petrotrade promotional tools

**Table4.5: Determinants of selection of Petrotrade’s communications mix**

Respondent	Response
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of promotional means is determined by desired effect on the intended customers and available financial resources</li> </ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The target market and budget provisions are the basis for selection of tools and media</li> <li>• When the target market is bulk customers, e-mails and telephone calls are used to communicate any changes</li> </ul>
HRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial resources are a deciding factor</li> </ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection is based on financial provisions and required effect on the targeted market</li> <li>• Bulk customers need accurate information. Telephone calls and e-mails are used in the personal selling process. They are a cheap and effective way to communicate with our customers</li> </ul>

All the respondents indicated that financial resources are a factor that is considered in selecting elements of the marketing communications mix. ACEO and CSM suggested that the desired effect on customers is also considered. When customers in the retail market segment are required to increase fuel purchases from service stations, signage indicating prices is placed in the vicinity of the service station. When the marketing message seeks to build an emotional attachment with the target market, conceptualization of aesthetic effects and imagery is required. The advertising agency is used to come up with these concepts, present them to Petrotrade and recommend appropriate promotional tools to use.

RM and CSM indicated the use e-mails and telephone calls. These are forms of interactive and addressable tools used for two way communications with customers. These tools facilitate a personal communication between the company and customers and as such are a platform for delivering information accurately and in

real time. CSM makes special mention that these tools are used in the personal selling process. This reflects the complementary value of these tools in enhancing other elements in the promotional mix.

#### 4.2.1.6 Design of IMC

**Table 4.6: Components, objectives, strategies and budgets for marketing communications mix elements**

Respondent	Response
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising and volume- based price discounting</li> <li>• Objective is to make the Petrotrade brand well known and increase its visibility</li> <li>• Strategy is to have all marketing communications being co-ordinated by PRME in the Commercial sales department and to come up with branding manual to ensure uniformity in communicating this through corporate colours, logo and pay off line</li> </ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising, personal selling and sales promotion are used</li> <li>• Objectives are to build brand awareness and increase sales</li> <li>• Personal selling objectives are to build profitable relationships with customers</li> <li>• Coordination of promotional activities is done by PRME under the Commercial Sales Manager (CSM).</li> <li>• Budget allocation is present</li> </ul>
HRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising and personal selling</li> <li>• The aim of both is to increase sales</li> <li>• Funds allocated through budget</li> </ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising and personal selling are used</li> <li>• The objective of personal selling and advertising are foster relationships with customers and raise awareness of the brand</li> <li>• Promotional activities are co-ordinated by PRME</li> </ul>

All the respondents identified advertising was a marketing communications mix element use at Petrotrade. ACEO, RM and CSM cited that the objectives for advertising were to raise awareness of Petrotrade. This is in line with literature which states that advertising achieves brand awareness (Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 542). RM, CSM and HRAM also indicated that personal selling was a promotional tool also used by Petrotrade. These managers cited varying objectives for undertaking personal selling. The HRAM stated that it was to increase sales. This is in line with literature which suggests that increasing sales is one of the objectives of personal selling. (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick, 2013, p. 597). The RM and CSM indicated that personal selling was done to foster profitable customer relationships. ACEO and RM also identified sales promotions as an element of the company's marketing communications mix. Both stated that its objective is to increase sales volumes. Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick (2013) stated that communication objectives are useful guidance in selection of promotional tools (p. 507). Considering that the Petrotrade's main communication objectives were to grow the company's sales and raise brand awareness, the promotion tools chosen had to be able to achieve this. The tools identified by the management team suggest that company's communication objectives have been taken into consideration. This reflects that objectives of using the chosen promotional tools are in concurrence with literature.

The ACEO, RM and CSM indicated that strategy for use of each of the promotional tools is maintenance of uniformity. In relation to funding of the promotional tools all respondents indicated that this was done through budget allocations.

#### 4.2.1.7 Evaluation of effectiveness of marketing campaigns

**Table 4.7: Evaluation of IMC**

Respondent	Response
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We did a big launch for our coupon product in 2012. A survey was done after indications that coupons were not doing well. It was done to investigate reasons for failure</li> <li>• Other than that one survey no others have been more so with a focus on promotional work</li> </ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We conducted a survey to assess why our coupon product was not doing well</li> <li>• The survey has been the only one that we have conducted</li> <li>• Evaluations are done on ad hoc basis</li> </ul>
HRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys conducted when some facts have to be verified</li> </ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We surveyed customers querying on their perceptions of our coupon product and what concerns they had with the product. was conducted</li> <li>• Promotional issues were not explicitly researched on during the survey</li> </ul>

The interviews suggest that evaluation of marketing communications were not being done. ACEO, RM and CSM referred to a survey carried out to investigate the poor market response to the company's coupon product. Responses from ACEO and CSM indicated that the assessment of the effect of marketing communications was done. The ACEO indicated that no other surveys were conducted thereafter. RM and HRAM's responses suggest that evaluations are done on an irregular basis being driven by some need at the time.

Kotler & Keller (2009) argued that the impact of communications plans on the target market must be measured by evaluating customers recall of the message, what they distinctly recall from the message, and their "previous and current attitudes towards the product and the company" (p. 531). The CSM indicated that marketing communications were not the key focus of the survey that was done by

the company and thus customer recall was not measured as dictated by literature. Petrotrade's surveys are therefore not did not contribute to measuring the results of the implementation of marketing communications. Thus evaluation of IMC implementation is not being done correctly.

#### 4.2.1.8 Follow-up campaigns

**Table 4.8: Follow-up marketing campaigns**

Respondent	Response
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No follow up campaigns done</li> <li>• There is no need for such campaigns since greater presence on the market is a campaign tool in itself</li> </ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No extensive follow-up campaigns are because we haven't launched the brand done but customer visits are done to support marketing campaigns</li> </ul>
HRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No follow-up campaigns are made</li> <li>• Customer visits are done to follow up on expressions of interest</li> </ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No follow-up campaigns are done because we have not yet launched our brand</li> </ul>

The whole management team indicated that no follow-up campaigns were being done. RM and CM explained that follow-up campaigns were not being done because Petrotrade had not yet launched its brand. RM argued that a launch would formally introduce the brand to the market and would be a primer for subsequent marketing communications that would be done by the company. Hence marketing communication activities prior to this would confuse the market. ACEO explained that there was no need for such campaigns arguing that growing the retail network was more effective reminder of company's products. Responses from RM and HRAM indicated that customer visits were done, thus indicating that personal selling was also being done.

#### 4.2.1.9 Resource availability

##### 4.2.1.9.1 Human resources

**Table4.9: Human resources**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Response</b>
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PRME and a branding committee are in place</li><li>• Staff is unskilled</li></ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marketing communications are done by PRME and a supporting committee</li><li>• Staff is unskilled.</li></ul>
HRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PRME undertakes all communications issues</li><li>• Staff unskilled</li></ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff is skilled</li></ul>

Responses from RM, ACEO and HRAM indicate that staff undertaking marketing communications are inadequately skilled. Principally the PRME is at the centre of IMC co-ordination. The PRME is assisted by a 'branding committee' whose key focus is facilitating branding of service stations. The managers explained that the skills were two-fold: in terms of academic qualification and in terms of experience in executing marketing communications. The PRME has a marketing qualification, but has no prior exposure to implementing marketing communications. This is because the PRME was part of staff transferred from NOCZIM to Petrotrade as part of the parastatal's restructuring exercise. The HRAM added that the organization was yet to train PRME to impart requisite skills. The CSM indicated that PMRE was adequately skilled to execute marketing communications. CSM justified this arguing that there had been an increase in promotional activities in the form of development and launch of the company's website and spear-heading branding of service stations.

The fact that three out of four respondents stated that inadequate skills, reflects a lack of capacity in executing marketing communications. Phelps, Harris and Johnson (as cited in Dennie 2010) recommended that companies build teams made up of personnel trained in specific communication areas if implementation of IMC is to be successful (p. 390). Petrotrade’s human resource capacity is therefore contrary to that recommended in literature.

#### 4.2.1.9.2 Financing of IMC

**Table 4.10: Financial resource of IMC**

Respondent	Response
ACEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on what we can afford</li> <li>• Branding and advertising are key areas where funding will be channelled to</li> </ul>
RM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on what the company can afford</li> <li>• Funds are allocated based on advertising and branding of service stations are priority areas</li> </ul>
HARAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on available funds</li> </ul>
CSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund allocated based on available funds and future estimates</li> <li>• Promotional activities are then prioritised.</li> </ul>

All respondents indicated that there is a budget allocation in place. The management team members concurred that funds were allocated to marketing communications based on what the company could afford. When the company is profitable, supplementary funds outside of the annual budget allocation can be availed. Kotler & Keller (2009) state that many companies set aside funds for marketing communications based on what they can afford.(p. 524). Petrotrade is an oil company and should adopt this manner of determining funds for marketing communications. The CSM added that when funds are availed promotional activities are undertaken based on their priority. For example, introduction of new products warrants extensive promotion.

## 4.2.2 FINDINGS RELATED TO BRAND AWARENESS

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with Petrotrade’s dealers.

### 4.2.2.1 Brand recognition and identification

**Table 4.11: Brand recognition and identification**

Respondent	Response
Dealer One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The name is good, however the Zimbabwe bird on the logo reminds me of Air Zimbabwe</li> </ul>
Dealer Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main colour (dark green) is dull for a service station especially at night,</li> </ul>
Dealer Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is need to improve on the colours and the logo. The colour is unattractive</li> </ul>
Dealer Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The name and the colours are alright, however the Zimbabwe bird is does not relate to Petrotrade being a fuel company</li> </ul>
Dealer Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The name is good, it tells customers that Petrotrade is a company that deals in petroleum products</li> </ul>
Dealer Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main colour (dark green) is not eye catching so it is not attractive to customers</li> </ul>
Dealer Seven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The colours are similar to those of NOCZIM. Customers are attracted to the site because they believe that they will get quality fuel</li> </ul>
Dealer Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The brand is generally unattractive</li> </ul>
Dealer Nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The logo is well-designed and attractive, the colours are attractive</li> </ul>
Dealer Ten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The colours are dull and hard to see from a distance, and so not attractive to customers</li> </ul>

Six out of ten of dealers gave unfavourable reviews of the brands identification characteristics. Five of the dealers stated that found Petrotrade’s corporate colours dull and unattractive. One dealer indicated that Petrotrade’s colours were strikingly



similar to those of its predecessor. Two out of ten indicated that they found the company's theme colours attractive. Three out of ten respondents found Petrotrade brand identification features attractive. Dealers One and Five dealers indicated that they were satisfied with the name 'Petrotrade'. The letter indicated that it was befitting since the company is in a business related to petroleum-based products.

Two out of ten respondents made special mention of the national bird embedded in the logo indicating that it was reminiscent of that of the national airliner Air Zimbabwe's and being unrelated to the fuel business. This means that Petrotrade symbol is not distinct and is likely to make an indelible mark in the minds of customers. Thus the characteristics of Petrotrade's brand do not make the brand outstanding. Brand recall and recognition can be achieved through amalgamating qualities of a distinct symbol (Mosarrat, 2012, p. 227).

Responses from the dealers indicate that Petrotrade brand is generally unattractive and may, in some cases, be incorrectly identified NOCZIM. This consequently makes Petrotrade unnoticeable, immediately impacting on brand awareness as it is less likely to be recalled during a purchasing decision.

#### 4.2.2.2 Brand familiarity

**Table 4.12: Brand familiarity**

Respondent	Response
Dealer One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A friend told me about Petrotrade</li> </ul>
Dealer Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A colleague told me about it</li> </ul>
Dealer Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I was visited by Petrotrade</li> </ul>
Dealer Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I was visited by Petrotrade</li> </ul>
Dealer Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Another Petrotrade dealer told me about it.</li> </ul>
Dealer Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I saw an advertisement indicating new sites it has opened around the country</li> </ul>
Dealer Seven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the press.</li> </ul>
Dealer Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dealer told me about Petrotrade</li> </ul>
Dealer Nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I saw Petrotrade signage and asked the service station owner about Petrotrade</li> </ul>
Dealer Ten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word-of-mouth. Some weeks later I then saw an advertisement from Petrotrade, thus convincing me that such a company existed</li> </ul>

Six out of ten dealers got to know of Petrotrade through word-of mouth. Two out of ten dealers got to know of Petrotrade through personal selling (dealers Three and Four). The remaining two dealers got to know through advertising and publicity. For Dealer Ten advertising served to validate what they had heard through word-of mouth. The fact that there was only one dealer indicated that he got to know of Petrotrade suggests that advertising was being used on a small scale. Corelock and Wirtz (2007) pointed out that sources other than the organization can communicate with the target market segment (p. 165). This is a case in point with regards to Dealer Seven who got to know about it through its publicity in the print media articles.

#### 4.2.2.3 Promotional tools

**Table 4.13: Evaluation of Petrotrade based on promotions tools**

Respondent	Response
Dealer One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I thought it was a good company</li> </ul>
Dealer Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Petrotrade is a good company</li> </ul>
Dealer Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I thought Petrotrade was a good brand since I had been informed that it was a successor of NOCZIM</li> </ul>
Dealer Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My evaluation was that Petrotrade is a genuine and reputable company</li> </ul>
Dealer Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance that fuel delivered would be of high quality.</li> </ul>
Dealer Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From this I thought it would be prepared to make me its dealer in the remote location where I am</li> </ul>
Dealer Seven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I thought it was a company that could supply quality fuel given its past history as national fuel company</li> </ul>
Dealer Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I got the impression that it was a reputable company</li> </ul>
Dealer Nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My impression was that it was a good company</li> </ul>
Dealer Ten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It got the impression that it was a company that could supply quality fuels</li> </ul>

Four out of ten dealers indicated that their evaluation based on the promotion tools that had made them familiar with the Petrotrade brand were that it was a good company. Two of the dealers indicated that they thought that Petrotrade was a reputable company. Three of the dealers evaluated it as a company that could supply quality fuel. One dealer thought of the company as being flexible enough to establish presence in a remote location, through his service station.

Alba and Hutchinson (as cited in Delgado-Ballester, Navarro, & Sicilia, 2010) opined that brand familiarity describes the experience levels that consumers have with a particular brand (p. 33). The analysis presents a spectrum of evaluations based on different prior encounters with the brand. Dealers One, Two, Five, Eight, Nine and Ten got their first impression of the company through word-of-mouth. Dealer Five's first impression was that Petrotrade was a reliable company that supplies quality fuel. Dealer Two's first impression was that Petrotrade was a good company. The responses suggest that word-of-mouth gave favourable impressions of the company. Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick (2013) argued that word-of-mouth is important to the success of service because it depends on taking the target customers through an experience (p.379).

Dealerships are a form of service that Petrotrade avails to the market. The responses therefore demonstrate the importance of word-of-mouth to Petrotrade promotions mix as highlighted in literature.

Dealers Three and Four were approached by the Petrotrade through personal selling. These dealers associated the brand with a favourable reputation. Kotler & Keller (2009) argued that personal selling is effective in building brand preference, conviction and action (p. 529). The responses of these dealers are in concurrence with literature. This indicates that personal selling and the brand of the service stations made the brand familiar to the market.

Advertising was the least cited with Dealer Six alone mentioning it. This was probably due to Petrotrade's slow advertising. The marketing communications mix elements also gave the perception of the quality of service and the fuel available at Petrotrade. This contributed to these dealers considering Petrotrade as a fuel company that they could become dealers of.

#### 4.2.2.4 Brand associations

**Table 4.14: Brand associations**

Respondent	Response
Dealer One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality service and a helpful management team</li> </ul>
Dealer Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendly staff that serve even after closure of business</li> </ul>
Dealer Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I associate it with long delays in decision-making and implementation. For example branding of service station is taking too long</li> </ul>
Dealer Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel stock-outs. There have been delays in delivery of fuel on several occasions</li> </ul>
Dealer Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality fuel</li> </ul>
Dealer Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality fuel guaranteed</li> </ul>
Dealer Seven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good service</li> </ul>
Dealer Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendly sales department</li> </ul>
Dealer Nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow technical support service</li> <li>• For example, after reporting that dispensing pumps are not working</li> </ul>
Dealer Ten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good after-sales support</li> </ul>

The responses from most of the dealers suggest that Petrotrade brand is strong in terms of delivering quality service. Seven out of ten dealers associated Petrotrade brand with favourable aspects such as supply of quality fuel, friendly sales department and satisfactory after-sales support. It therefore means that there should be high levels of brand awareness. Alba and Chattopadhyay (as cited in Rodrigues,

2010) suggested that brand awareness and brand strength are positively correlated (p. 28). This is however not the case for Petrotrade.

Three out ten dealers indicated that they associated Petrotrade with delays in decision making relating to undertaking repairs, branding of service stations and delivery of fuel. These responses reflect weaknesses in Petrotrade’s brand and consequently affect its awareness.

#### 4.2.2.5 Evaluation of effectiveness of marketing communications mix elements employed by Petrotrade.

**Table 4.15: Use of promotions mix tools in informing dealers of changes**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Response</b>
Dealer One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By telephone</li> <li>• Whenever I visit Head Office to submit reconciliations. This usually weekly</li> </ul>
Dealer Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By telephone</li> </ul>
Dealer Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By telephone</li> </ul>
Dealer Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By e-mail and telephone</li> <li>• Through adverts, especially when they have added coupon redeeming sites to the network</li> </ul>
Dealer Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By telephone</li> </ul>
Dealer Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When I visit head office</li> </ul>
Dealer Seven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By telephone and e-mail</li> </ul>
Dealer Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By telephone</li> </ul>
Dealer Nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During visits</li> </ul>
Dealer Ten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By telephone</li> </ul>

Responses from the interview suggest that, Petrotrade uses mainly interactive media to communicate with dealers. Seven out of ten dealers indicated that they communicate through telephone. This ensures that the message is delivered accurately and in real time. Fewer respondents noted advertising as being used, reflecting that it is less frequently used in communicating with them.

#### 4.2.2.12 Optimization Petrotrade's Promotions mix

**Table 4. 16: Value of current promotions mix to dealers**

Respondent	Response
Dealer One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very valuable as it would make the brand known to our market.</li> </ul>
Dealer Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valuable, especially considering that the service station is not branded.</li> <li>• Customers do not trust our product if they cannot see the site is not branded</li> </ul>
Dealer Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valuable, we have taken to educating our customers on the coupon product, but we worry about mis-representing facts</li> </ul>
Dealer Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since site is not branded customers are not easily attracted to it.</li> <li>• Potential customers are deterred when they realise that they do not know the name</li> </ul>
Dealer Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would be very valuable, this is more so with regards to branding of the service station. Customers question the quality of fuel sold, if they cannot see our trading name</li> </ul>
Dealer Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valuable, customers with potential to buy in bulk shun buying from our service station citing that they do not know the brand</li> </ul>
Dealer Seven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branding is needed to make sites more visible and attractive to motorists.</li> </ul>
Dealer Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branding would make the service station attractive to buy from</li> </ul>
Dealer Nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flyers can educate customers without us running the risk of ill-informing them</li> </ul>
Dealer Ten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would be very valuable, since Petrotrade will become a</li> </ul>

	regular brand to customers
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All dealers indicated that marketing communications done by Petrotrade are valuable to the growth of sales at their service stations. Given the backdrop of the various tools being used by Petrotrade, dealers highlighted a spectrum of areas where they can be used optimally to deliver value. Five out of the ten dealers indicated that their sites could benefit from physical branding. Presently these sites are unbranded. Two dealers indicated that customers are unaware of the brand and so they have to educate the market. Lack of branding affected the dealers in two ways. Firstly the service station was not aesthetically appealing to customers, as indicated by dealers Four, Seven and Eight. Secondly it resulted in customers being suspicious of the quality of the fuel sold at the site.

Three out of ten dealers indicated that marketing communication would be valuable in raising awareness of the brand in their locality.

Two dealers indicated that currently the market is uninformed of Petrotrade's range of products, other than fuel. The product range includes coupons and bulk fuel purchases. From the interviews, dealers indicated that they feared giving incorrect information and so remained conservative about other products offered by Petrotrade. IMC is a plan that assesses the strategic role of the promotions mix and combines them to provide clarity, consistency and maximum impact through seamless integration of messages (Kolter & Keller, 2009, p.531) Petrotrade employs advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, interactive and addressable media for its marketing communications. These are not being used optimally as reflected by responses from the dealers. Customers are not adequately informed of Petrotrade's products and services. Thus the results of Petrotrade's IMC implementation do not tally with literature.

### 4.3 Summary of findings



### **4.3.1 Petrotrade's promotions mix**

The study established that the company's promotions mix consisted mainly of advertising and personal selling. These are tools that it has direct control over. Word-of-mouth and to a lesser extent media-initiated publicity are tools in the company's promotions mix. Both these elements are outside the company's control. Word-of-mouth and media-initiated coverage were tools that contributed to the brand's awareness. The company has no direct control over the content of these two tools. Thus unfavourable messages can easily reach its target market causing damage to the company's brand equity.

### **4.3.2 Resourcing of IMC**

It was also found that the company's efforts to undertake marketing communications were undermined by inexperienced human resources and lack of financial prioritization. Petrotrade's frugality funding has compromised selection of promotion mix elements. This has resulted in dealers having to educate the market consequently compromising the accuracy of marketing information delivered to customers. Additionally the staff implementing IMC is unskilled and are therefore not suited to executing marketing communications.

### **4.4 Conclusion**

This chapter focused on reporting research findings and relating them to current literature. The Chapter also discussed implications marketing communications on Petrotrade dealers as a target market.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Conclusions and recommendations**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This Chapter concludes the study by making deductions from research findings. In this Chapter the researcher reflects on the fundamental underpinnings of implementation of IMC and brand awareness and the extent to which the study can contribute to the current body of knowledge. The researcher also tests the proposition made in Chapter One (Section 1.5) and points out areas for further study.

#### **5.2 Conclusions**

This study concludes that Petrotrade's communications strategy has minimal effect on the company's brand awareness because it is not integrated. There is no IMC at Petrotrade as the company relies on personal selling and advertising out of the eight elements of IMC.

##### **5.2.1 Communications strategy negatively affected by limited funding**

The study also concludes that the effectiveness of the two communications tools mainly employed by Petrotrade is further eroded by the limited communications budget which is below the industry average.

##### **5.2.2 Lack of marketing expertise has worsened the situation**

Further, this work concludes that the lack of the requisite adequate marketing expertise at Petrotrade is a major drawback that has contributed towards near absence of marketing communications tools. The non-marketing personnel does not seem to appreciate the importance of marketing communications in this highly competitive industry.

### **5.2.3 Lack of senior management commitment is a function of NOCZIM culture**

Finally, the study concludes that the lack of Senior management commitment to marketing communications is partly related to the fact that the company is a product of the restructuring of the former National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZM). NOCZM was a monopoly and management has yet to realise that they are now operating in a competitive environment.

The study concludes that limited financial resources for communications and the absence relevant expertise contributed significantly to the ineffective marketing communication strategy

### **5.3 Test of proposition**

The research proposition is restated as follows:

**There is no IMC due to lack of management commitment, financing and expertise.**

To a large extent the study confirmed the proposition in that there is no IMC due to lack of management commitment, financial resources and expertise.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

Given the conclusions drawn above the researcher recommended the following intentions:

#### **5.4.1 Recruit qualified and experienced marketing personnel**

The market is currently innudated with former employees of multinational companies such as BP Shell. Such companies implemented marketing communication on a world class level. In multi-national companies organizational systems are cascaded down from head-offices which are usually located in first

world countries. Employees from such companies are therefore a potential source of expertise that Petrotrade can tap into. These individuals can introduce the same systems used in multi-national companies for implementation of marketing communications.

#### **5.4.2 Enough marketing communications budget (industry average)**

Effective budgetary allocations can improve implementation of marketing communications. Adoption of the industry budget average can keep Petrotrade's marketing communications in tandem with competition. The company can also explore using other media to channel its promotional tools especially advertising. Currently consumer technologies are so advanced to the extent that marketing communications are easily and quickly accessed on an interactive platform. To harness this opportunity, financial resources are needed for production of marketing communications that are compatible with available technologies.

#### **5.4.3 Company privatisation**

Government should privatise the company to change the culture of the company. Petrotrade may be privatised so that it improves on its marketing communications. Privatization will make the company more competitive and hence marketing communications will become vital in establishing the company's brand on the market.

### **5.5 Study limitations and areas of further research**

There was a limited amount of time to conduct the research. Since the research was done using single case methodology, the researcher would have wanted to assess the evolution of management's role in marketing communications as the company grows. This is more-so considering the fact that the company is relatively new (being three years old) and is in transition as it does not have a

substantive Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Literature indicates that organizations go through different stages as they aim to successfully implement IMC.

Another limiting factor was that some of the dealers were worried that the information they provided would be used against them. Thus most of them preferred not to be named in the study and other participants refused to be interviewed.

Successful implementation of marketing communications is premised on other factors other than management alone. One such factor is the proliferation of use of information technologies. These are increasingly being used in Zimbabwe and can have a bearing on the overall extent of integration of marketing communications and their impact on the target market.

## **5.6 Areas for further study**

Marketing communications are greatly influenced by developments in information technologies. Further study would thus be required to evaluate how these developments contribute towards marketing communications.

In this study the researcher focused on the role played by management in marketing communications. Evolving literature alludes to the increasingly important role of employees in successful delivery of various company activities, to which marketing communications are no exception. Further study may also be directed towards investigating the role played by all employees in implementing marketing communications.

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## Appendices

### Appendix One: Interview guide for face-to-face interviews with Petrotrade management

#### Section A: How IMC is implemented

1. Please describe and explain Petrotrade communication objectives.

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2. Please describe and explain the events that trigger implementation of marketing communications in the company

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3. Please describe and explain the communication opportunities that you have used and their impact on brand awareness

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4. Please explain how Petrotrade decides on whether or not production of marketing communications messages should be done in-house or be outsourced

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**Section B: Effect of IMC on composition of marketing mix**

5. Please describe the promotional tools used by the company. Kindly explain how Petrotrade chose the promotional tools and the media that are used

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6. Please describe the objectives and strategies for using the current promotional mix tools. Please explain how the budgets for each of tools is determined

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7. Please explain how effectiveness of marketing campaigns is evaluated

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8. Please explain if follow up campaigns are done

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**Section C: Resourcing of marketing communications**

9. How do you allocate funds for marketing communications

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10. Does the company have requisite skills to carry out marketing communications?

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## **Appendix Two: Interview guide for face-to-face interviews with Petrotrade's dealers**

### **Section A: Brand recognition**

1. Do you find Petrotrade brand attractive (colours, logos and pay-off line)?  
Please explain your answer.

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### **Section B: Brand familiarity**

2. How did you get to know of Petrotrade?

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3. Before you became a Petrotrade dealer, how was your evaluation guided by Petrotrade's marketing communications.

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**Section C: Brand association**

4. What do you associate the Petrotrade brand with as a dealer of Petrotrade?

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**Section D: Effectiveness of marketing communications mix currently in use**

5. How does Petrotrade inform you of its products / services offerings (or changes in the same)?

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6. How valuable would Petrotrade marketing communications be to the growth of your business as a dealer?

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**Appendix Three:Image of Petrotrade brand**

