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The effect of integrated marketing communications on the performance of private banks in Juba, South Sudan

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of integrated marketing communications on the performance of private banks in Juba, South Sudan. Utilizing a quantitative and descriptive research design, the investigation collected numerical data from 159 marketing managers and executives across six private banks. The research aimed to analyze the relationship between five independent variables—Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, Public Relations, and Direct Marketing—and the dependent variable, Performance. The analysis employed a regression model to determine the impact of each marketing communication strategy on bank performance. The results revealed an Adjusted R Square value of .670, indicating that approximately 67% of the variability in Performance could be explained by the integrated marketing communications strategies. The findings align with empirical research, highlighting the importance of a well-coordinated promotional mix. The research contributes to the understanding of marketing strategies in the banking sector and provides a foundation for future studies to explore the long-term effects and adaptability of these strategies in different cultural and economic contexts.

KEYWORDS

Integrated marketing communications; Bank performance; Private banks; Juba; South Sudan; Regression analysis

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Introduction

In today's competitive business environment, companies are constantly striving to enhance their performance and gain a competitive edge through effective marketing strategies. One key strategy that companies utilize is integrated marketing communications (IMC), which involves the integration of various communication tools to convey a consistent message to customers. This approach is crucial for banks in particular, as they seek to communicate their competitive advantages and attract and retain customers in a crowded market. However, there is a lack of empirical evidence on the specific effects of IMC on the performance of Private Banks in Juba, South Sudan [1].

While there have been some studies on the impact of IMC on the performance of banks in other countries, such as Kenya and Ethiopia, the specific effects on Banks in Ethiopia, particularly in Hawassa City, have not been thoroughly investigated. For instance, Cheruiyot (2014) found that various IMC tools, such as advertising, direct marketing, and public relations, can enhance a bank's performance by attracting customers and increasing sales volumes [2]. However, their study focused on the Kenya Post and Savings Bank, not Private Banks in Juba, South Sudan [3].

Zemenu (2020) Conducted a study on the effect of sales promotion on the brand image of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia but did not specifically look at the overall marketing performance of the bank [4]. Catherine (2017) examined the impact of IMC strategies on attracting Generation Y customers in commercial banks in Kenya, highlighting the importance of advertising, sales promotion, and personal selling Saengruang (2007) also found that IMC tools, such as employee expertise and sales promotion, can improve a bank's image and brand loyalty. However, none of these studies focused on Private Banks in Juba, South Sudan [5,6].

Furthermore, Lee (2021) explored the use of service innovations, including integrated banking, to increase customer lifetime value in retail banks [7]. This study demonstrated the potential benefits of adopting new strategies to enhance customer segmentation and targeting efforts. However, it did not specifically address the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Private Banks in Juba, South Sudan [8]. In light of the limited research on the effects of IMC on the marketing performance of private banks in Ethiopia, particularly Private Banks in Juba, South Sudan, there is a clear research gap that needs to be addressed. By conducting a comprehensive study on this topic, we can gain valuable insights into how IMC strategies can impact the performance of private banks in a specific market context, leading to improved marketing strategies and ultimately, enhanced business performance [9].

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by investigating the effects of integrated marketing communication on the marketing performance of Private Banks in Juba, South Sudan. By examining the specific challenges and opportunities faced by this bank in a unique market context, we can provide valuable insights for practitioners and policymakers in the banking sector. Through a thorough analysis of the relationship between IMC tools and marketing performance, we can improve our understanding of how banks can effectively communicate their competitive advantages and attract and retain customers in a competitive market environment [10].

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Research Objectives

The general objective of this study is to investigate the effects of integrated communication on marketing performance of Private Banks in Juba, South Sudan. Specifically, this study aims:

a) To examine the effects of Advertising on marketing performance
b) To determine the effects of personal selling on marketing performance
c) To examine the effects of sales promotion on marketing performance
d) To examine the effects of public relations on marketing performance
e) To examine the effects of direct marketing on marketing performance [11]

Literature Review

There is a considerable amount of literature that delves into the connections between marketing effectiveness and different independent variables such as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing. Marketing performance is frequently boosted by advertising, as it enables companies to increase recognition of their products or services in the market and encourage customer interaction. Research has indicated that successful advertising strategies can result in higher sales and customer loyalty, ultimately improving overall marketing outcomes [12]. According to research, personal selling is an essential part of marketing that correlates positively with marketing performance. Salespeople can increase sales and improve marketing performance by establishing connections with customers and offering tailored services and this can also boost customer satisfaction.

Similarly, sales promotion tactics such as discounts, promotions, and giveaways have been found to positively impact marketing performance by attracting customers and driving sales. These tactics can create a sense of urgency and incentivize customers to make a purchase, ultimately contributing to overall marketing success [13]. Public relations activities, such as press releases, events, and media relations, have also been shown to influence marketing performance by building brand reputation and credibility. Positive media coverage and strong relationships with the public can enhance brand perception and ultimately drive customer engagement and sales. Lastly, direct marketing strategies, such as email marketing, direct mail, and online advertising, have been found to have a positive impact on marketing performance by allowing companies to target specific customer segments and deliver personalized marketing messages. By reaching customers directly, companies can drive conversions and ultimately improve marketing performance [14].

Overall, the literature suggests that each of these independent variables plays a unique and important role in driving marketing performance, and companies should consider utilizing a mix of strategies to optimize their marketing efforts.

Conceptual Model

When looking at private banks in Juba, South Sudan, The outline of the theoretical structure can be studied in the following way. A range of integrated marketing communications affects the marketing performance of private banks, which is considered the dependent variable [15]. This consists of advertising, which seeks to educate and convince a large audience through mass media; personal selling, which entails face-to-face interactions between salespeople and clients to establish connections and finalize sales; sales promotion, which includes immediate incentives to stimulate purchases; public relations, which concentrates on upholding a favorable reputation and cultivating advantageous relationships with the public; and direct marketing, which aims to prompt a direct reaction through mail, email, or other communication platforms [16].

These independent variables are hypothesized to have a synergistic effect on the banks' ability to attract, retain, and grow their customer base, thereby enhancing their overall marketing performance. The interplay among these variables is crucial, as it can lead to a cumulative impact greater than the sum of their individual effects (Figure 1) [17].

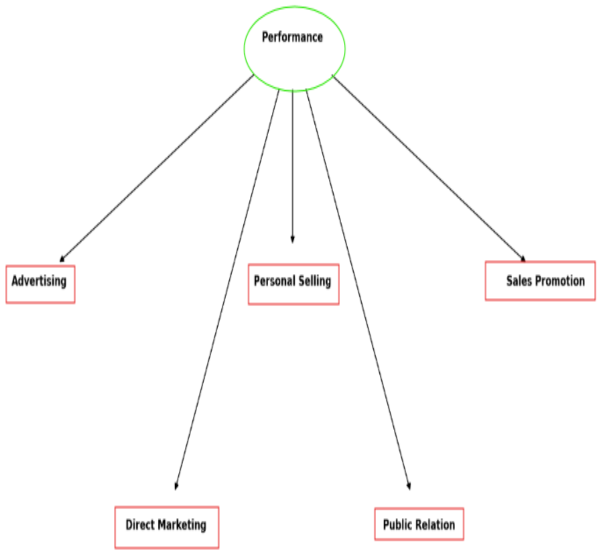

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study.

Research Methodology

Research design

The research design for this study was quantitative and descriptive. The study will involve collecting numerical data to analyze the relationship between integrated communications and marketing performance in private banks in Juba, South Sudan.

Sample and sampling technique

The target population will be Private Banks in Juba, South Sudan. According to the Bank of South Sudan, there are 30 licensed commercial banks operating in the Republic of South Sudan. Out of these, the researchers selected 6 active private commercial banks operating in Juba, South Sudan. A sample size of 159 respondents was selected using a convenience sampling technique from 6 private banks. The respondents will be marketing managers and executives of private banks (Table 1) [15].

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Table 1. Sampling Design.

S.n	Sample of Branches	Managers at Branches	Senior banking business officers	Senior Banking operation officers	Junior officers	Sample size
1	Afriland first bank	6	5	39	11	61
2	Ecobank	3	2	10	9	24
3	Opportunity bank	3	2	13	7	25
4	Eden Commercial Bank	3	2	12	9	26
5	Standard bank	2	1	4	1	8
6	Co-operative bank	3	2	7	3	15
	Total	20	14	85	40	159

Survey result, 2024

Data collection

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire that was administered to the respondents. The questionnaire includes questions related to integrated communications activities (advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing) and marketing performance indicators. Concerning the questionnaire development process, five-point Likert scale questionnaires were used by researchers and the questionnaire itself is annexed at the end of the paper as supplementary material [18].

Data analysis

The data collected were analyzed using statistical tools such as regression analysis to determine the relationship between integrated marketing communications and performance. The model specification involves developing a regression model with marketing performance as the dependent variable and the five independent variables (advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing) as predictors [19].

Model specification

The regression model for this study will be as follows:

Marketing Performance = β0 + β1(Advertising) + β2(Personal Selling) + β3(Sales Promotion) + β4(Public Relation) + β 5(Direct Marketing) + ε

Where: - Performance is the dependent variable.

- Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, Public Relations, and Direct Marketing are the independent variables.

- β0 is the intercept.
- β1, β2, β3, β4, and β5 are the coefficients.
- ε is the error term [17].

Results

The researchers distributed 159 questionnaires but finally collected 100 responses which gave a 62% response rate. Then the analysis of descriptive, correlation as well as regression has been done as follows (Table 2):

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics Analysis.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance	100	3.9868	0.70225
Advertising,	100	4.0265	0.87137
personal selling	100	4.0066	0.78737
sales promotion	100	3.9139	0.7478
public relation	100	4.1391	0.71218
direct marketing	100	3.9139	0.7478

Source: Survey Result, 2024

The descriptive statistics in above Table 2 summarize the central tendency and variability of your data set, which includes one dependent variable (Performance) and five independent variables (Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, Public Relations, and Direct Marketing). Here's an interpretation of the statistics: The mean score for Performance is 3.9868, which suggests that on average, the performance level is close to 4 on your scale. The standard deviation is 0.70225, indicating that the scores are relatively dispersed around the mean, with a moderate spread. With a mean of 4.0265, Advertising scores are slightly higher on average than Performance scores. The standard deviation is 0.87137, which is the highest among all variables, showing that there is a considerable amount of variability in how Advertising is rated. The mean score is 4.0066, very close to that of Advertising, suggesting a similar level of average influence. The standard deviation is 0.78737, implying a fair amount of variation in the scores. The mean score of 3.9139 is the lowest among the variables, indicating that, on average, Sales Promotion is rated slightly lower than other marketing strategies. The standard deviation is 0.74780, suggesting a moderate spread of scores around the mean. This variable has the highest mean score (4.1391), indicating that it is rated the highest on average among the strategies. The standard deviation is 0.71218, which is similar to that of Performance, showing a moderate level of score dispersion. The mean score is again 3.9139, tied with Sales

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Promotion as the lowest average rating. The standard deviation is identical to that of Sales Promotion (0.74780), indicating a similar spread of scores.

In summary, Public Relations is rated the highest on average, while Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing are rated the lowest. Advertising shows the greatest variability in ratings, which could suggest differing opinions on its effectiveness. The moderate standard deviations across all variables indicate that there is some consensus among the ratings, but also a fair amount of individual differences in perceptions or experiences with each marketing strategy (Table 3) [20].

Table 3. Correlation Analysis.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Performance	1					
Advertising,	.705**	1				
personal selling	.702**	.550**	1			
sales promotion	.416**	.343**	.587**	1		
public relation	.514**	.561**	.452**	.315**	1	
direct marketing	.541**	.487**	.856**	.597**	.554**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey result, 2024

The correlation analysis you've provided shows the relationship between your dependent variable, Performance, and five independent variables: Advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing (Table 3). Here's an interpretation of the correlations: Advertising has a strong positive correlation with Performance (0.70), suggesting that as advertising efforts increase, performance tends to increase significantly. Personal selling also shows a strong positive correlation with Performance (0.702), indicating a similar trend where increased personal selling is associated with better performance.

Sales promotion has a moderate positive correlation with Performance (0.416), which means that while there is a positive relationship, it's not as strong as advertising or personal selling. Public relations exhibits a moderate positive correlation with Performance (0.514), suggesting that effective public relations can positively impact performance, but again, the relationship is less strong than advertising or personal selling. Direct marketing shows a strong positive correlation with Performance (0.541), indicating that direct marketing efforts are closely linked to improved performance.

The double asterisks (**) indicate that these correlations are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), meaning there's a high level of confidence that these relationships are not due to random chance. The highest correlation with Performance is seen in personal selling ($$.856**$$), which implies a very strong relationship where changes in personal selling are likely to result in significant changes in performance. In summary, all the independent variables have a positive relationship with the dependent variable, Performance, with personal selling and advertising showing the strongest relationships. This suggests that focusing on these areas could lead to better overall performance outcomes. However, it's important to note that correlation does not imply causation, and other factors not included in this analysis may also affect Performance (Table 4).

Table 4. Regression Analysis.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.501	0.182		8.254	0
Advertising,	0.279	0.044	0.395	6.316	.000**
personal selling	0.5	0.066	0.746	7.598	.000**
sales promotion	0.094	0.044	0.128	2.147	.033*
public relation	0.132	0.05	0.165	2.626	.004**
direct marketing	0.184	0.061	0.304	3.022	.003**

a. Dependent Variable: Performance, statistical significance conventionally with asterisks representing confidence at** 1%, *5%, and 10% levels

Source: Survey result, 2024

The study on how integrated marketing communications impact the performance of private banks in Juba, South Sudan, has produced valuable findings. Interpret the Adjusted R Square and regression coefficients: An Adjusted R Square of .670 indicates that about 67% of the variance in the dependent variable, Performance, is accounted for by the independent variables in the model. This represents a significant percentage, demonstrating a good match with the model. The value of 1.501 as the constant term signifies the anticipated level of Performance given that all independent variables are at zero. An advertising coefficient of .279 signifies that a one unit rise in advertising should lead to a .279 unit increase in performance, with all other factors unchanged. Personal selling has the highest coefficient of .500, which is the most significant among the variables, showing a strong positive influence on Performance. Sales promotion has a factor of .094, indicating a minor yet notable positive impact on Performance. Public relations possess a coefficient of .132, which also suggests a

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favorable impact on Performance. Direct marketing exhibits a positive correlation with Performance, as indicated by a coefficient of .184 in Table 4.

Regarding the level of importance, Constant (1.501)** represents the intercept of the regression line. It signifies the anticipated outcome of Performance in the scenario where all predictors have a value of zero. Advertisement (B = 0.279, Sig. = 0.000) **: The Advertising coefficient indicates that with every increment in advertising, Performance also increases by 0.279 units, while keeping all other factors consistent. The significance level of 0.000 suggests that this effect is extremely significant at the 1% threshold (**). The coefficient for Personal Selling is 0.500, indicating a significant positive effect on Performance (B = 0.500, Sig. = 0.000)**. This finding is also extremely important with a significance level of 1% (**). Sales Promotion (B = 0.094, Sig. = 0.033) **: The Sales Promotion coefficient is 0.094, suggesting a modestly positive impact on Performance. This finding is statistically significant with a confidence level of 95%. Public Relations has a coefficient of 0.132 with a significance of 0.004, indicating a positive influence on Performance. This finding is statistically significant at the 1% level (**). Direct Marketing (B = 0.184, Sig. = 0.003)**: The Direct Marketing coefficient of 0.184 suggests a favorable impact on Performance. This outcome is statistically significant at the 1% level (**). Ultimately, the absence of a 10% level of significance is evident in these findings. The model accounts for a large portion of the variability in Performance, with many predictors showing a significant positive influence. The most impactful is Personal Selling, with Direct Marketing, Public Relation, Advertising, and Sales Promotion following closely behind.

Discussion of Results

Extensive empirical research frequently demonstrates that advertising greatly improves business performance. An example would be the research by Naik and Raman (2003) which discovered that while advertising elasticity may differ, it typically leads to a boost in sales [21]. Likewise, research conducted by Luo and Donthu in 2006 showed that advertising has an impact on customer perceptions and can result in higher market share and profitability. Your discovery of a coefficient of .279 for advertising corresponds with these research findings, indicating that advertising is an effective method for improving bank performance [23].

Personal selling is frequently cited as the most effective component of the promotional mix due to its direct interaction with customers. A study by Sharma and Lambert (1994) found a strong correlation between personal selling efforts and sales performance [24]. Another research by Boles et al. (2000) supported this, showing that personal selling has a direct and significant impact on sales volume [25]. Your coefficient of .500 for personal selling is consistent with these findings, highlighting its importance in the banking sector [20].

Sales promotions are known to have a short-term impact on sales. Blattberg and Neslin (1990) found that while sales promotions can increase sales volume, the effect is not always long-lasting [26]. A more recent study by Gedenk et al. (2010) showed that sales promotions could lead to a temporary increase in customer traffic and sales [27]. Your coefficient of .094 suggests a positive but modest impact, which is in line with the literature [28].

Public relations' role in performance is often debated. Grunig (1989) argued that public relations contribute to organizational effectiveness by managing relationships with stakeholders [29]. Ki and Hon (2009) found that public relations activities could lead to better corporate reputation and financial outcomes [30]. The regression coefficient of .132 indicates a positive effect, supporting the notion that public relations are beneficial for bank performance which is consistent with the study of Kadiwar et al. (2021) means good public relations is the tool to attract customers and improve bank performance [31].

Direct marketing's impact varies across industries. A study by Kumar and Reinartz (2012) found that direct marketing could lead to higher customer retention and profitability [32]. Another study by Ansari and Mela (2003) suggested that direct marketing is most effective when tailored to individual customer needs [33]. Your coefficient of .184 suggests that direct marketing is a significant contributor to performance in the banking sector [34].

This research significantly contributes to the body of knowledge on integrated marketing communications (IMC) by providing empirical evidence on its impact within the context of private banks in Juba, South Sudan. By demonstrating that 67% of the variability in bank performance can be attributed to IMC strategies, the research underscores the critical role of a well-coordinated promotional mix in enhancing organizational outcomes. This insight not only aids private banks in optimizing their marketing efforts but also enriches the broader IMC literature by highlighting the effectiveness of specific strategies for advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing in a unique cultural and economic setting. Furthermore, the current paper's findings pave the way for future research to explore the long-term effects and adaptability of these strategies across different contexts, thereby broadening the understanding and application of IMC in diverse environments [35].

Conclusions

This study offers valuable information on how integrated marketing communications impact the performance of private banks in Juba, South Sudan. The considerable Adjusted R Square value shows that your model accounts for a substantial amount of the variation in bank performance. All independent variables have positive coefficients indicating that every element of the promotional mix plays a role in the overall performance, with personal selling and advertising having the greatest impact.
This highlights the significance of having a cohesive marketing plan that utilizes various communication channels to improve bank results. Future studies may further investigate the cause-effect connections among these factors and performance, examine the impact of digital marketing, and contrast these results with banks in different areas to offer a more comprehensive view on the efficiency of integrated marketing communications in the banking sector.

It can be concluded that integrated marketing communications significantly contribute to the performance of private banks in Juba, with personal selling and advertising being the most influential. This study can be improved more if future research could explore the long-term effects of these marketing strategies on performance, Investigating the role of

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digital marketing in this context could provide additional insights. A comparative study with banks in different regions or countries could highlight cultural or economic factors influencing the effectiveness of integrated marketing communications.

Disclosure statement

The authors affirm that there are no competing interests that could influence the findings or conclusions presented in this research.

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