

The Role of Sales forces in the Integration of Marketing Communication: An Empirical Study on the Tourism Sector in Jordan

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of the sales force's knowledge, planning, creativity, and durability in relationships on the integration of marketing communication (IMC) in the tourism sector in Jordan. The current study utilized the descriptive and analytical approach to gather and analyze data through questionnaires, which were distributed to relevant individuals and organizations in the tourism promotion authority and tourism facilities. The authors received 124 valid responses for analysis out of 190 distributed. The results indicated a positive impact of sales forces, with all sub-dimensions on integration marketing communication. However, the results showed that durability has less impact on IMC. Furthermore, the findings of the current study provided valuable insights for tourism organizations in Jordan to understand better the importance of integration marketing communication and the key factors that affect their success.

Keywords: Salesforce; Knowledge; Planning; Creativity; Relationship Durability; Marketing Communication Integration.

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1. Introduction

The constant changes surrounding the business environment in general and the tourism environment, in particular, forced it to adopt ways to achieve its goals, and among these methods, which are considered an integrated marketing tool and one of the main pillars in the business environment are the sales-forces that have characteristics that qualify them for that (Gordon-Isasi, Narvaiza, & Gibaja, 2021). In particular, the arrival of the sales department to its goals is related to the ability of the sales force to carry out the duties entrusted to them efficiently and effectively (Bachrach, Mullins, & Rapp, 2017).

In addition, attention to sales forces is a central and strategic issue for business organizations due to their important role in the organization's life cycle (Ulaga & Loveland, 2014). It also represents the interface that deals with consumers directly and thus helps to create a positive image if the deal is in a way that satisfies the consumer and achieves what he wants (Mbama, Ezepue, Alboul, & Beer, 2018). Focusing on marketing and promotional activities, persuasion, attraction, searching for potential customers and retaining them successfully, which is in the work of salesmen, is one of the steps of the effective communication process (Fraccastoro, Gabrielsson, & Pullins, 2021). Moreover, the seller uses a follow-up call most of the time by searching and estimating the demand (Syam & Sharma, 2018). Therefore, the first step in the effective marketing communication process is to identify the target audience, and the audience may be potential customers or other people who can influence the decisions of these customers such as employing the word-of-mouth marketing strategy, which is a factor of integrated marketing communication (Araujo, Neijens, & Vliegenthart, 2017). In another step of the marketing communication process, a survey of practical objectives should be done before the marketing communication begins, to understand the customer's attitude and willingness to buy (Dahiya & Gayatri, 2018). In case the target group is not aware of the new product or its salient features, the role of the sales team is to create awareness and knowledge of the new product and its features (Ghauri & Cateora, 2014).

On the other side, the need for well-trained sales teams in organizations in general and the tourism sector, in particular, is a primary purpose to meet the challenges (Gepner, Tien, Dao, & Minh, 2022). Therefore, comes the need for creative marketing based on new and not traditional ideas, and this will only be with the presence of specialists and creators with creative ideas to lead the sector, and this is an integrative role between the marketing and sales departments and its employees (Hemonnet-Goujot, Manceau, & Abecassis-Moedas, 2019). Reaching the influential market sectors, overcoming competitors in the neighborhood and the region, and how to work to penetrate and create new markets requires accurate understanding and great effort by the sales-forces whose work revolves around a circle of interrelated activities, one complementing the other (Buli, 2017). In this study, the researcher deals with four aspects related to the role of sales-forces represented in knowledge, planning, creativity and durability

in relationships and their impact on the integration of marketing communication in the tourism sector in Jordan.

The problem of the study

Integrated marketing communications is considered a model that is based on major factors such as advertising, promotional sales, electronic, interactive, oral marketing, personal selling, and others that are based entirely on sales forces in delivering a message about services and products to create brand awareness followed persuasion, and then action, which is important for all companies in many fields. Of the sectors, it was also adopted by the tourism sector. Dimensions also emerge from sales forces that are considered the core that distinguishes them, which are creativity, the durability of relationships, knowledge, and planning, according to studies (Ahmad & Karim, 2019; Zoltners et al., 2021; & Ismaeel et al. 2019). Therefore, what is on the researcher's mind is how such dimensions can enrich the sales force and present it as a model that contributes to enhancing the position of the industry in general and the tourism sector in particular. How can it be invested in the tourism sector in Jordan, especially since this sector faces challenges in effectively communicating the value of its products and services to local and international markets (Ingrassi et al., 2022). It faces economic challenges and high inflation rates, while also presenting a creative message about its offerings and competition with neighboring countries. Especially the circumstances taking place in the Middle East region have made Jordan a fertile and safe investment environment. But the main question in this context is: How can the tourism sector in Jordan employ the role of sales forces in promoting their goals and delivering an effective message to the target group? Especially since previous research has shown a difference in satisfaction between tourists and sales workers in the sector regarding the delivery of marketing messages, which leads to an urgent need for a more integrated approach to marketing communications (Jahmani et al., 2023).

Thus, the current study attempts to explore the role of sales forces in integrating marketing communications in the tourism sector in Jordan by answering the following questions:

1. What is the role of sales forces in integrating marketing communications in the tourism sector in Jordan?
2. What is the role of knowledge in integrating marketing communications in the tourism sector in Jordan?
3. What is the role of planning in integrating marketing communications in the tourism sector in Jordan?
4. What is the role of creativity in integrating marketing communications in the tourism sector in Jordan?

5. What is the role of the strength of the relationship in the integration of marketing communications in the tourism sector in Jordan?

2. Literature review

The role of the sales force is important as it represents the core of the dimensions of marketing communications and plays a pivotal role in harmonizing the efforts of its employees, which ensures the involvement of the target audience by following a coherent and influential approach in many fields, including the tourism field for many industries (Corsaro & Maggioni, 2022). It acts as a link between the consuming public and organizations. This link takes the form of interactions that influence the formulation of sales strategies for which comprehensive marketing communications aim. Some of the messages adopted by these strategies are to enhance the brand and target individual and group needs, which achieves the satisfaction of the target segment consuming services and products, which helps improve and adapt to changing market dynamics (Mariam, Putra, Ramli, & Aryani, 2023). The elements included in sales forces that work effectively in integrating marketing communications, which authors have adopted by referring to previous literature, include knowledge, creativity, durability in relationships with customers, and planning (Ameen, et al., 2022). On the creativity side, creative sales methods play a decisive role in attracting the attention and interest of local and international tourists, such as providing attractive content, various distinctive travel offers, designing and drafting convincing content, or presenting objective tourist experiences, in addition to displaying catalogs and visual campaigns through modern means of communication (Blakeman, 2023). Furthermore, on the planning side, sales require strategic planning by setting goals, identifying the sector and target audience, working to forecast sales and the extent of aligning resources, in addition to following up on plans promptly, i.e. communication planning (Moi & Cabiddu, 2021). As for the knowledge factor, sales forces must have good knowledge regarding tourist destinations, their history, nuances, and required logistics, which instills tourist confidence. Thus, these forces must be able to provide insights, advice, and facts, and share challenges, in addition to understanding emerging trends and adapting sales strategies accordingly (Pappas, et al., 2023). The factor related to the sustainability of relationships is what leads to enhancing loyalty, trust, and repeat business necessary for successful sales, and this is done through several methods, including communicating with travel agencies that attract tourists and hostels that provide hospitality and overnight services and strengthening the relationship with local partners, in addition to stating preferences and following up on what follows (Arslan, 2020). Excursions and meeting the needs of tourists. More importantly, they benefit from feedback from comments through websites, discussion groups, and forums regarding the outcomes of the services and products provided by them (Nilashi, et al., 2021). These studied factors work to attract and retain tourists. Let us not forget the components of tourism in Jordan and its famous historical sites and natural wonders, which play an important role in the success of what the tourism industry adopts and this is reflected in its economy.

The role of sales forces in the integration of marketing communication has been widely studied in the literature. The sales force is defined as a key component of a company's marketing strategy, responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with customers. They argue that sales force effectiveness is critical to a company's success, thus, companies need to invest in their sales force to ensure they have the necessary skills (Plank & Cavusgil, 2020). The sales force acts as a direct line of communication with customers and plays a critical role in converting products into financial liquidity to support future sales cycles (McDonald, 2016).

One important aspect of sales forces is knowledge, which refers to the understanding, skills, and expertise required by salespeople to effectively sell a company's products or services to customers. Previous studies addressed sales force knowledge and its impact on sales performance from several aspects, including the study of Jumale, Senaji & Omanwa (2023) on the role of knowledge exchange in sales force performance. The study indicated that knowledge exchange is part of the elements of knowledge transfer. Their study aimed to determine the effects of knowledge sharing on the performance of the sales force in commercial banks. Personal and organizational factors and barriers to knowledge sharing affecting sales force performance were considered. The study concluded that there is a relationship that ranges between negative and positive, and it was negative between knowledge of the sales force and performance, as knowledge does not affect performance. There is a positive difference between interpersonal skills and performance, as interpersonal skills are part of knowledge. The current study included the aspect of trust as the most important in attracting tourists, which is consistent with them. However, we agree with the aspect that knowledge did not affect performance, as we indicate that knowledge of sales forces about the details of the tourist product and service increases persuasion and then action.

Sales forces, from the planning side, are often divided according to function, geographic region, market size, and type, or according to customer type if targeting an individual. (Van Tien et al., 2021). A study by Czinkota, et al., (2021) on sales and sales management, stated that the role of the sales team mainly covers prospecting (generating new customers), selling, and support. The structure of the sales entity can be defined by geography, industry, and product. It must take its plans from a theoretical perspective and derive a comprehensive plan for the sales staff through the necessary resources to exploit the potential equivalent to the goal and mission, also dividing the negotiated levels so that the main selling task is for the sales manager. The other aspect, which is the customer interface, may represent the organization's economy. The study indicated that sales force planning is carried out according to several points, the most important of which is identifying potential customers and losers, sales goals, sales expectations, communication, and activity goals. Besides, generating new leads is a numbers game: the more emails you send, the more leads you will have, and ultimately the more customers. This supports the view of the authors in the current study in defining the goals and mission, studying the organization's resources, and employing them in sales force planning.

Creativity is required in various management functions, and everything related to them, so the creative role of the sales force is required and important (Schaefer et al., 2021). Communication between decision-makers and influencers with sales forces constitutes a major challenge. This is because marketing creativity leads to organizational success in the business world and plays an important role in strategic planning and performance development by providing a distinctive service or product. (Darvishmotevali et al., 2020). Creativity and innovation are two sides of the same business and are considered one of the main components for gaining a competitive advantage in today's market (Arditto, et al., 2020). The creative sales force adopts modern methods that give priority to the customer and strives to convince the largest segment with services and products that are in line with the latest business trends and achieve its goals (Tu & Wu, 2021). A study by Sharma, Rangarajan & Paesbrugge (2020) on increasing flexibility by creating an adaptable sales force. This study dealt with adaptive selling, and its results showed that adaptive sales teams must focus on increasing flexibility and adaptability for the functions performed by sales teams, improving the ability to adapt to the size in which sales functions can be outsourced quickly, internally or externally, and the other area is technological adaptation. The sales team adopts the most appropriate technologies for customers. Implications for the company, the sales function and individual salespeople are also derived. Thus, the effects on the organization, the sales function, and the sales force can be deduced through the extent of their ability to respond to changes and employ creative technical methods that would integrate the organizational goal.

Finally, durability in relationships with customers is a deep part of sales force management, as it includes attracting and retaining customers, then building a strong relationship and strengthening this relationship over time (Aldaihani & Ali, 2019). Also, establishing long-term relationships with customers is an organizational marketing goal that enhances current competitive advantage and may give emerging organizations a competitive advantage (Caliskan & Esmer, 2020). Also, effective sales plans that prioritize customer needs and continuously monitor competitor trends are necessary to implement a successful marketing communication model, according to (Zoltners et al., 2021). Based on the study of Al-Zoubi and Al-Shurideh (2022), which tested the effect of product quality dimensions in improving the features that distinguish products from other companies, in addition to satisfying customer needs, the study concluded that performance, characteristics, durability, and perceived quality have a strong relationship with competitive features in the Apparel group in Dubai, and this in turn, works to improve the supporting elements of the quality, durability, and characteristics of a product in the company as a whole, and this is consistent with the authors' point of view that the strength of relationships with customers arises from the practices and activities of the sales force, which represents the organization as an interface to customers. As a dependent and main variable in this study, which showed controversy in integrated marketing communications and the interest and importance in it in the business environment, this is a reason to consider this issue and address it in depth,

especially since the importance demonstrates that the integrated marketing strategy is capable of improving brand awareness and creating value for the customer or not and enabling them to Participate in improvement, development, production and improving business performance. This provides the organization with a market share and perhaps increases it if it already exists and is not an emerging share. In a study by Kliatchko and Lubomirsky (2021), it was proven that integration through multiple and diverse communication channels, such as advertising, sales promotion, interactive marketing, and others, is necessary to create and develop a strong brand image, and that consistent and organized message delivered through these channels works to attract the customer's trust and gain his loyalty well. Moreover, the Varey and Lewis (2020) study showed that the impact of such communication channels as an integrated model affects customer experiences and is an indication that the message that represents the organization must be consistent and harmonious to enhance customers' preferences and choices, which leads to achieving levels that go beyond satisfaction to become brand loyalty. It also highlighted that the effectiveness of marketing communication requires integrated coordination among members of the marketing and sales team to achieve long-term success in the business environment.

Specifically, some studies dealt with sales forces on the one hand and the integration of marketing communications on the other hand, conducted by (Iqbal, A., 2021), aimed to investigate the impact of sales force integration on performance results. I discovered that there is a positive and direct relationship between sales force integration and performance results. Another study by Anyanwu in 2019 and his team investigated the impact of employing sales forces on the growth of commercial bank sales in Nigeria, with positive results as the study showed. Another study was carried out in 2018 by Duralia which investigated the impact of integrated marketing communications on consumer behavior. The study discovered that sales forces use various tools to establish effective communication with potential consumers.

A study conducted by Mwangi et al., (2022) aimed to study the impact of sales area design on salesforce performance in detergent manufacturing companies in Kenya. The results of the study indicated that sales area design does not significantly affect salesforce performance. In another research, Abdel-Razek et al. (2018) analyzed the effectiveness of integrated marketing communication tools. The study concluded that integrated marketing communication is more comprehensive than traditional marketing communication and has a positive impact on audience behavior.

In 2022, Lazhar conducted a study to discover the significance of integrated marketing communications in the growth of tourism. The study revealed that although tourism exhibitions and internet marketing are crucial, communication processes are often neglected. So, it emphasized the need to enhance the use of integrated marketing communications to improve the overall image of the tourist destination.

According to a study conducted by Al-Nawafaa in 2022, social networks play a crucial role

in promoting Jordanian tourism. However, the use of visual materials in Jordanian tourism promotion may not be as effective. The study highlights the importance of marketing communication integration and its impact on salesforce performance and tourism development.

Research conceptual model

The study's conceptual model is presented in Figure 1. Its main goal is to investigate the role of salesforces, in terms of (knowledge, planning, creativity, and durability), as an independent variable on the integration of marketing communications, which is the dependent variable in the Jordanian tourism industry.

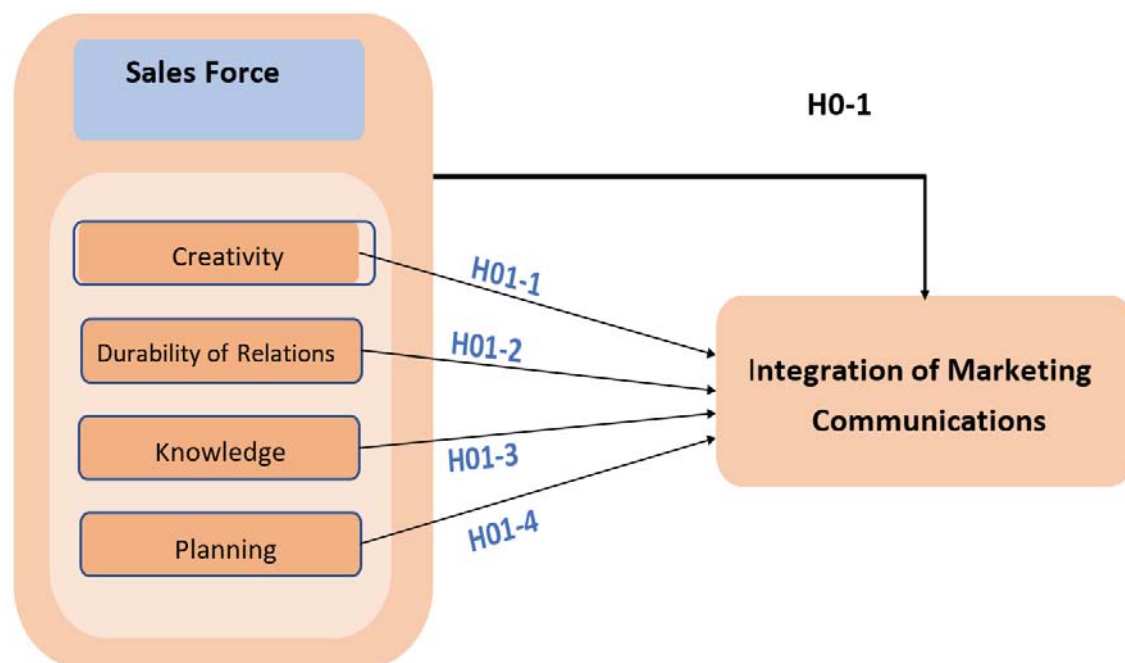


Figure 1 Research conceptual model

**The research model for the study was built with reference to: (Ahmad & Karim, 2019; Zoltners et al., 2021; & Ismaeel et al. 2019)

According to the conceptual framework and with the review of previous studies, the following hypotheses were developed:

- **H01:** Sales forces have no positive effect on the integration of marketing communication at level
- **H01-1:** Creativity has no positive effect on the integration of marketing communication at level
- **H01-2:** Durability of Relationships has no positive effect on the integration of marketing communication at level

- **H01-3:** Knowledge has no positive effect on the integration of marketing communication at level
- **H01-4:** Planning has no positive effect on the integration of marketing communication at level.

3. Research Method and Design

Measures

In this study, a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree) was used to measure the variables. To ensure validity and reliability started with adopting the items from previous studies. Salesforce measures were: creativity, durability, knowledge, and planning, where creativity is measured through (5) statements in a questionnaire adopted from (Ahmad & Karim, 2019; Zoltners et al., 2021; & Ismaeel et al. 2019), durability relationship measure presented in seven items adopted from (Wardoyo et al., 2019; Jaramillo et al., 2009), Knowledge measured through (5) statements in questionnaire adopted from (Ahmad & Karim, 2019a), and finally planning measured through (5) statements in questionnaire adopted from(Zoltners et al., 2021a). From the other side the IMC is a dependent variable presented in (7) statements adopted from (Ismaeel et al., 2019a).

Study population

The population of the study involved managers in the middle and upper level; their jobs are directly or indirectly related to marketing and sales, operating in five-star hotel groups in Amman totaling 19 hotels (www.jha@johotels.org). By taking a simple random, sample which equals 10 from managers in each hotel. Using online surveys, 190 surveys were distributed (Sekaran, & Bougie, 2016) and clarified in table (1). (124) surveys were returned and were appropriate for analysis. Thus, the return percentage was 65%, which is acceptable according to (De Vaus, 2013)

number	Hotel name	Numbers of upper and middle managers	Sample size
1	Bristol hotel	10	10
2	Fermont hotel	10	10
3	Four season hotel	10	10
4	Sheraton hotel	10	10
5	Land Mark hotel	10	10
6	Royal hotel	10	10
7	Movenpick hotel	10	10
8	Crown Plaza hotel	10	10
9	Grand Hayat Amman Hotel	10	10

10	Intercontennetal Amman Hotel	10	10
11	Kempinski Hotel	10	10
12	Grand Millinium Amman	10	10
13	Regency Palace Amman Hotel	10	10
14	Boulevard Arjan by Rotana Amman	10	10
15	Marriot Amman Hotel	10	10
16	Sant-RegenceAmman Hotel	10	10
17	Double W Amman Hotel	10	10
18	Ritz-Carlton	10	10
19	Thousand Nights Amman Hotel	10	10

Table 2 shows the characteristics of the study sample.

Table (2) Demographics.

Category	Sub-Category	Frequency	Percent %
Gender	Female	48	38.7%
	Male	76	61.3%
Age	Less than 30	43	34.6%
	30 less than 40	52	41.9%
	40 less than 50	14	11.2%
	50 and more	15	12.09%
Edu-level	diploma	20	15.63%
	Bachelor	16	12.9%
	Masters	64	51.6%
	Doctorate	24	19.4%
Experience	Less than 5 years	36	29%
	5 less than 10 years	36	29%
	10 less than 15 years	40	32.3%
	15 years and more	12	9.7%
Management level	High mangers	8	6.5%
	Middle	80	64.5%
	Low	36	29%
Total		124	100%

The majority of the participants (61.3%) were male, while female participants represented 38.7%. On average, participants ranged in age from less than 30 (34.6%), 30 to 40 (41.9%), 40 to 50 (11.2%), and more than 50 (12.09%). The majority of the participants held a Master's Degree (51.6%), followed by Bachelor's Degrees (12.9%), Diplomas (16.1%), and Doctorates (19.4%). Most participants had between 10-15 years of experience (32.3%), with 29% having less than 5 years, and another 29% having 5-10 years. In terms of management level, the majority of the participants were middle management (64%), with high managers at only 6.5% and low-level managers at 29% (as shown in Table 1 above).

Construct analysis

In this study, all items with a path loading greater than 0.55 were accepted for analysis (Falkand Miller, 1992; see Table 2). To ensure the validity and reliability of research constructs, Table 2 provides results for Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted, as well as thresholds for acceptable results. As can be seen in Table 3, all measures met the standards for acceptability.

Table (3) VIF, loadings, Validity and reliability results

Construct	Item	Loadings	VIF	CA	CR	AVE5
Sales force						
Knowledge				0.810	0.828	0.566
	Kn1	0.748	1.527			
	Kn2	0.698	1.505			
	Kn3	0.792	1.705			
	Kn4	0.712	1.530			
	Kn5	0.802	1.627			
Planning				0.717	0.748	0.542
	Pl1	0.807	1.517			
	Pl2	0.720	1.505			
	Pl3	0.588	1.705			
	Pl4	0.640	1.530			
	Pl5	0.653	1.627			
Creativity				0.823	0.836	0.586
	Cr1	0.817	1.795			
	Cr2	0.716	1.829			
	Cr3	0.730	1.866			
	Cr4	0.816	2.061			
	Cr5	0.742	1.711			
Durability				0.773	0.788	0.532
	Du1	0.608	1.294			
	Du2	0.523	1.179			
	Du3	0.702	1.400			
	Du4	0.782	1.959			
	Du5	0.785	2.723			
	Du6	0.693	2.123			
Integration of marketing communication				0.871	0.875	0.566
	IMC1	0.719	1.664			
	IMC2	0.669	1.616			
	IMC3	0.805	2.158			
	IMC4	0.775	1.923			
	IMC5	0.793	2.094			
	IMC6	0.780	1.886			
	IMC7	0.714	1.604			
Standard rate	>0.55(Falk and Miller, 1992)	<5(Hair et al., 2017)	>0.65 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994)	>0.65 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994)	>0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)	

Note: CA: Cronbach's Alpha CR: Composite Reliability, and AVEs: Average Variance Extracted.

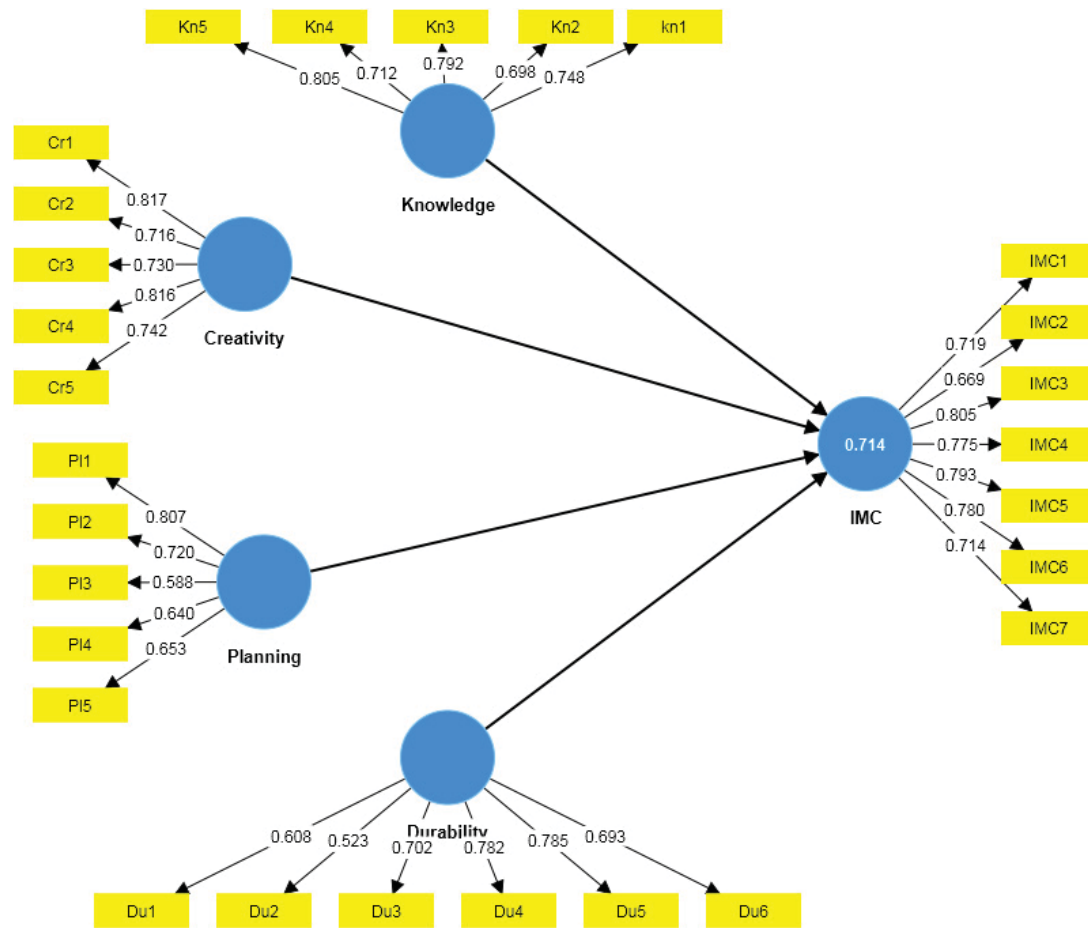


Figure (2) Path loadings for the proposed model

Discriminant Validity

Cross-loading was determined in establishing discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio (HTMT). See Table (4) All the values were less than 0.90 therefore, the measurement model outputs were considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2017).

Table (4) Discriminant validity (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT))

Construct	Creativity	Durability	Knowledge	Planning	IMC
Creativity					
Durability	0.881				
Knowledge	0.724	0.703			
Planning	0.884	0.843	0.801		
IMC	0.894	0.838	0.779	0.701	

Assessment of the proposed model

This research carried out a thorough, practical analysis to present findings and relate them to the hypotheses. Bootstrapping analysis was applied in the Smart-PL 4 software to a sample of 5000 and 124 cases, enabling an examination of the direct effect of the sales force on the integration of marketing communication. Upon implementation of the test, the associated p values and T values were determined, as demonstrated in Figure 3. The value of R2 was (0.714), exceeding 25%, which is an accepted prediction value according to Gaur and Gaur (2006). This robust analysis provides valuable academic insight into the effect of the Sales Force on the integration of marketing communication.

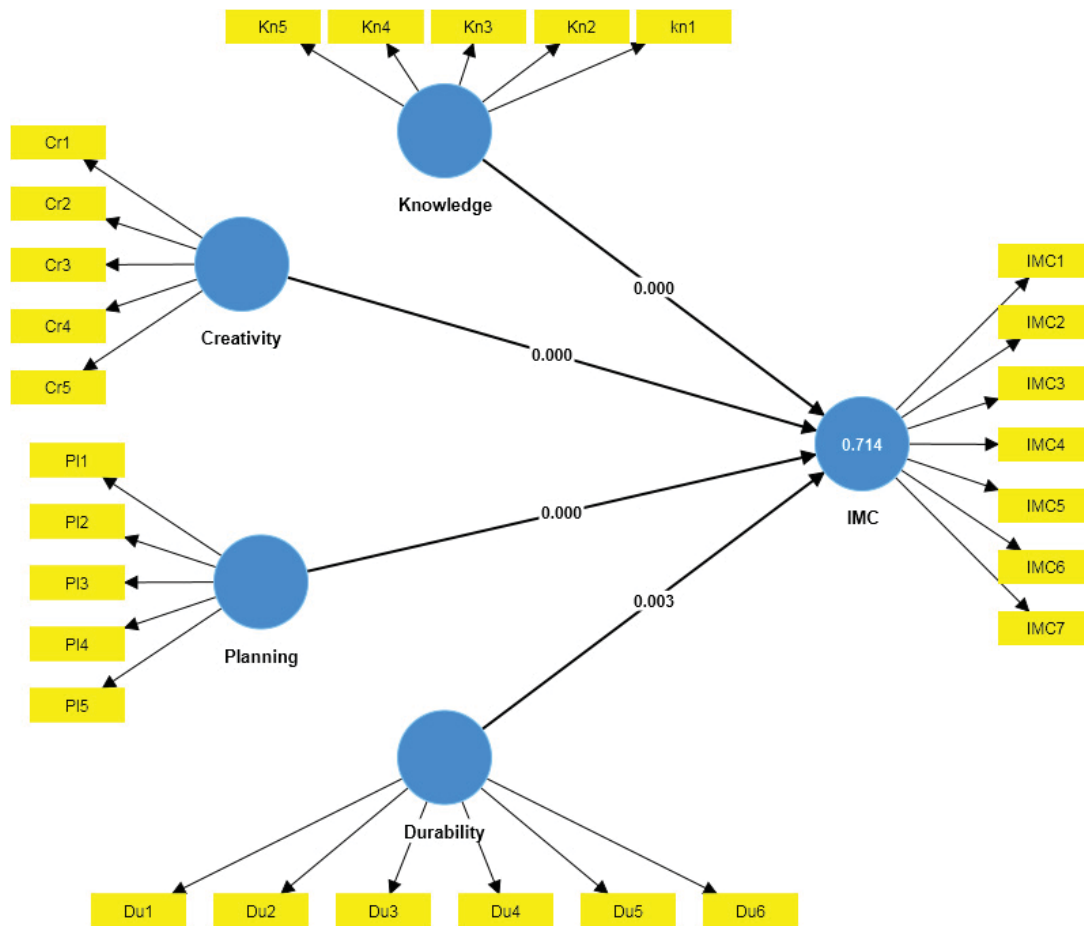


Figure (3) Bootstrapping for the proposed model of Sales Force impact on Integration of Marketing Communication.

Table (5) model assessment

Hypotheses		R ²	B	M	SD	T-Value	P-Value	Status
H01.1	Creativity->IMC	0.714	0.328	0.326	0.055	5.921	0.000	accepted
H01.2	Durability->	0.714	0.166	0.167	0.056	5.971	0.003	accepted
H01.3	Knowledge->	0.714	0.228	0.228	0.043	5.321	0.000	accepted
H01.4	Planning->	0.714	0.258	0.260	0.056	4.635	0.000	accepted
H01	Sales force->IMC	0.684	0.827	0.830	0.018	45.206	0.000	accepted

The study analysis considers the direct effect of four sales force factors (Creativity, Durability, Knowledge, and Planning) on the Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC) as outlined in (H01.1.H01.2, H01.3, and H01.4). Table (5) illustrates that at a significant level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), H01.1 showed that Creativity has a positive influence on the Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC). The statistic T value was found to be (5.921), and the Beta value ratio was (0.328), which indicates that a one-unit increase in Creativity leads to a 32.8% alteration in Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC). Furthermore, H01.2 concluded that Durability has a positive effect on the Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC) at a significant level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). The statistic T value was (2.971), and the Beta value ratio was (0.166), which suggests that a one-unit increase in Durability leads to a 16.6% alteration in Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC). Therefore, it may be determined that both Creativity and Durability have a positive influence on the Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC). While H01.3 showed that knowledge also has a positive effect on IMC. The statistic T value was found to be (5.321), and the Beta value ratio was (0.228), which indicates that a one-unit increase in Creativity leads to a 22.8% alteration in Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC). H01.4: The results of the study indicate that there is a significant effect of Planning ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC), with a statistic T value of 4.635 and a Beta value ratio of 0.258. This implies that a single unit increase in Planning will lead to a 25.8% change in IMC. Therefore, it can be concluded that Planning has a positive effect on the Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC).

Finally, results illustrate that H1: there is an effect of Sales Force at a significant level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC) was accepted. Where the statistic T value was found to be (45.206), and the Beta value ratio was (0.827), which provides an implication as to the alteration of one amount in Sales Force as reasoning a change equal (82.7%) in Integration of Marketing Communication (IMC) and R² for this main hypothesis was (0.684).

4. Discussion

This study demonstrated how sales force factors (Creativity, Durability, Knowledge, and Planning) affect the IMC positively in the Jordanian tourism sector. This is due to the reality that the sales forces employed by the tourism sector must be able to communicate with local and foreign people and accordingly have an awareness of their needs and wants, which agree with (Anyanwu et al., 2019). The result of the analysis in the current study shows that creativity among sales representatives can positively affect IMC, which is consistent with Ojasalo and Ojasalo (2018), as sales representatives tend in their approach to creating more effective marketing communication messages because they can understand customers' needs and preferences and create communication messages that suit them. The results also indicated that creative sales representatives are the most capable of communicating the value of products and services, which is necessary for the success of any marketing campaign and bridging the gap between different marketing channels, which makes it easier for organizations to communicate with their target audience. Leung, et al., (2016) also found that sales forces that are innovative and creative can influence marketing communication comprehensively and positively, and this is what the current study agreed upon.

Regarding the durability of relationships with customers, which reflects the ability to maintain strong, long-term relationships, this is linked to the sales force's keenness in dealing with customers by building effective communication channels with them. The efficiency of the sales forces also plays an important role in implementing sales strategies that will strengthen lasting relationships with the target and potential segment, and this is consistent with the study of both (Aldaihani & Ali, 2019, Kabadayi & Gupta, 2013); which indicated that the durability of relationships between the sales forces and customers can positively affect performance results. Customers, organizational behaviors, and communication quality ultimately affect integrated marketing communications efforts. The results of the current study also showed that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that planning as a factor that enhances the role of the sales forces has a significant positive impact on IMC, due to the development of strategic marketing plans and the organization of the sales forces according to the geographical region and type of market, in addition to the ability of the sales forces to participate in designing the marketing mix strategy. And formulating goals, and this is consistent with Udoh, Sharma, Rangarajan & Paesbrughe (2020) and Arditto et al., (2020).

As for the knowledge factor of the sales force, it is considered an important factor in the integration of marketing communications, which is in line with the studies of Morgan and Hunt (1994), Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001), Noble et al. (2002), and Mahlamaki et al., (2020); These studies found that sales representatives who know can positively and directly influence the integration of marketing communication channels. Their studies also indicate that sales representatives with a high level of knowledge can build more integrated marketing campaigns

through multiple communication channels, and this in turn leads to effective communication with customers and a higher level of participation, and this means enabling customers to participate in changing what is possible.

5. Conclusions

The tourism sector in Jordan realizes the importance of sales forces, and this is what the results of the study showed. The surveyed sector looks forward to adopting knowledge and strong relationships with customers in building a model for integrated marketing communication. Knowledge in the sector under study plays a role in determining customer needs when developing and designing products and services and possesses awareness in forecasting sales volume and enables it to communicate with the target group locally and abroad. Moreover, through continuity relationships, the sales force in the tourism sector under study builds long-term relationships by paying attention to customer needs, following up on the level of competitors, developing new services, and diversifying marketing methods. According to researchers, the sales force in marketing products or services must possess planning and creativity as fundamental qualities. It is imperative to consistently monitor the roles of creativity and planning because the business environment is continuously changing, and competitive forces are ever-present requiring these qualities.

Contribution and Implication

The study's conclusions may be used practically, and certain suggestions can be made that are particular to the Jordanian tourist industry. First, the sales force can significantly affect the integration of marketing communications, particularly through creativity and planning for sales. As a result, tourist organizations (the five-star hotels) that make up the study's sample must concentrate on inspiring their sales team's creativity and training them on how to prepare for sales based on adequate environmental analysis. From a different angle, tourist organizations should place a higher priority on creativity in sales than on knowledge. Second, integrating marketing communication is essential for the tourist industry to develop. To do this, use a variety of tools for marketing communication and include your target audience.

Limitations and future research directions

This study has certain limitations, including the use of only a sample of five-star hotels in Jordan and the use of information gathered via an online survey from a simple random sample. Future research should look into using samples from other tourism organizations, in different countries, and investigating the contribution of sales force creativity in integrating marketing communication or conducting a study on the mediating effect of marketing communications on the relationship between marketing effectiveness and creativity to address these limitations.

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