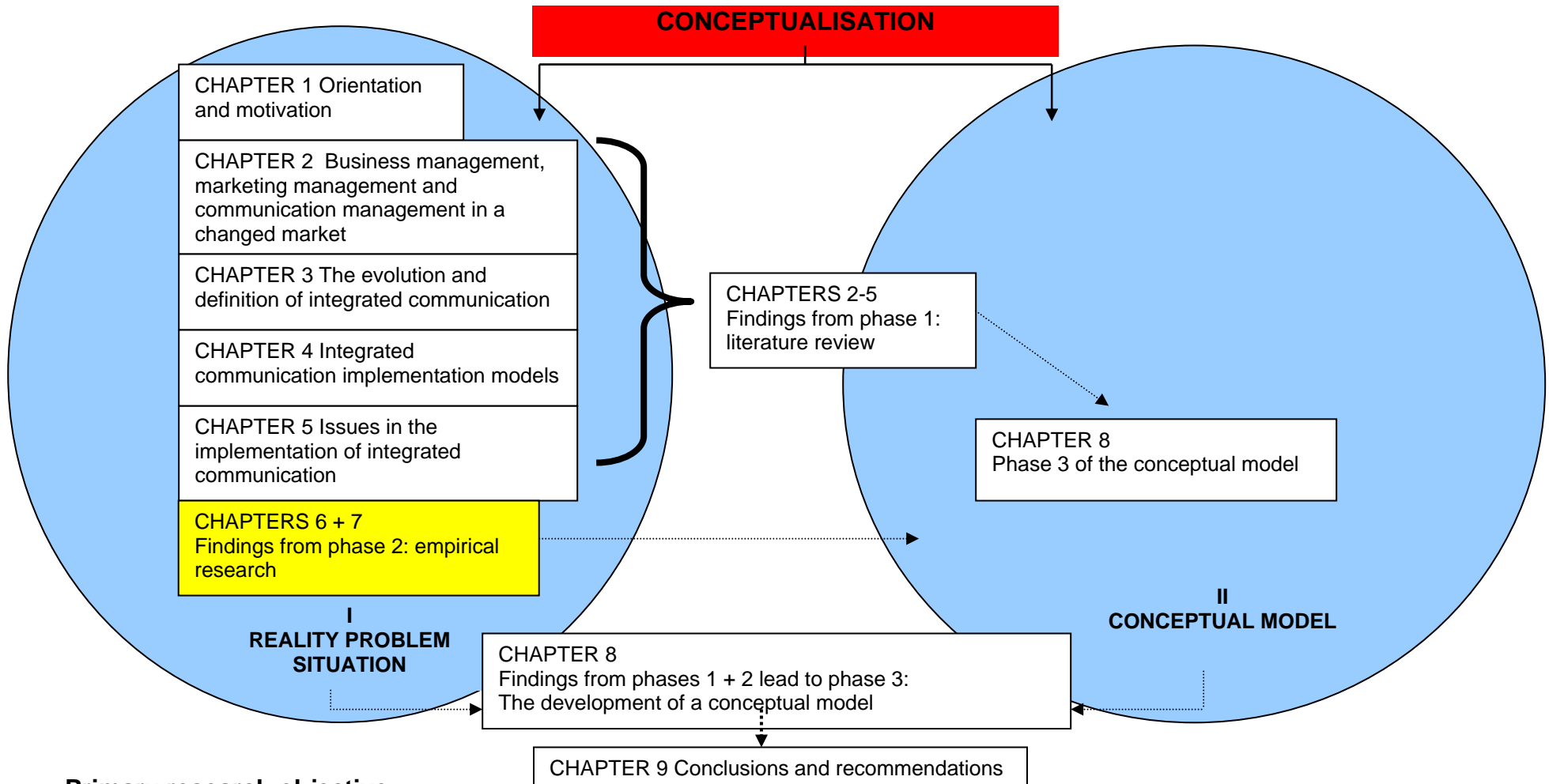

CHAPTER 6

Methodology: empirical research

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Through the literature review undertaken in Chapters 2 – 5 (phase 1 of the current study), it was argued that both communication management and marketing management and not only communication management should be driven by the strategic intent of organisations (business management), through the concept of strategic integrated communication. Strategic integrated communication is therefore seen as a business approach in the organisation, with the strategic intention of the organisation as a whole driving all the communication of the organisation. As stated in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.1, the primary research objective was to develop an implementation model for the management of strategic integrated communication in the South African marketplace. This is predominantly because the South African business landscape cannot be equated to other landscapes, which necessitates a unique South African model. The purpose of this chapter is to focus specifically on the meta-theory of the methodology in the empirical research phase of the study, namely to address secondary research objective 4, which is to ascertain empirically the current state of integrated communication implementation among advertising and communication agencies in South Africa. As stated in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.1, the Mitroff model for problem solving in systems thinking is used as the basis for this research process. It should be noted that, in terms of the Mitroff model, phase 2 of the current study is still focusing on circle I of the Mitroff model for systematic problem solving, which involves the reality problem situation. Figure 6.1 provides an indication in yellow of the focus of this chapter in relation to the Mitroff model, after which the research paradigm is discussed.

Figure 6.1 Application of systematic problem-solving model: phase 2



Primary research objective:

To develop an implementation model for the management of strategic integrated communication in the South African marketplace

6.2 A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PARADIGM

Mouton (1998:37) argues that the highest level of complexity in research is referred to as methodological paradigms, including qualitative and quantitative paradigms. Babbie and Mouton (2001:270), Denzin and Lincoln (1994:2), Du Plooy (2001:29) as well as Marshall and Rossman (1995:1-5) describe qualitative research as a paradigm that allows the researcher to obtain an “insider perspective on social action”.

For the purposes of this study, all three phases make use of a qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative research can be described as any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Straus & Corbin, 1998:10). According to Schwartz and Jacobs (1979:7), the qualitative approach focuses on understanding the people studied in terms of their environment, and their perception of their context. Baker (1999:8) agrees and states that qualitative research attempts to understand how an entire social unit such as a group, organisation or community operates in its own terms. Qualitative methods are characterised by the use of non-numeric data, induction and exploratory methods (Smith, 1988:180). Allan and Skinner (1991:16) state that qualitative approaches contain procedures that are not as strictly formalised and explicated, with a limitless range and a more philosophical working method.

Babbie and Mouton (2001:270) and Henning (2004:3) describe the primary goal of qualitative research as describing and then understanding (“Verstehen”), as opposed to merely explaining social action. Furthermore, the qualitative researcher perceives concepts and constructs as meaningful words that can be analysed to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Qualitative research emphasises description rather than observation (Miller, 1991:5). Baker (1999:8) explains that qualitative research is often carried out to investigate some important concerns to be found in some parts of the human view. It can therefore

be concluded that qualitative research can be explained as context specific and the data attained from such studies may be transferred and applied to related contexts for comparative or other purposes.

The qualitative approach is therefore based on the intensive study of as many features as possible of one phenomenon or a small number of phenomena (Miller & Brewer, 2003:193). It is not so much that qualitative refers to the “all roundedness” of one or a number of social phenomena. Rather, qualitative research seeks meaning (rather than generality as with its quantitative counterpart) and contributes to theory development by proceeding inductively. Meaning is achieved not by looking at particular features of many instances of a phenomenon but rather by looking at all aspects of the same phenomenon to see their interrelationships and establish how they come together to form a whole (Henning 2004:10).

To be able to determine the appropriateness of qualitative research methodologies for the purposes of the two phases of the study, it is important to identify the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative research methodology.

Table 6.1 Advantages of qualitative research methods

ADVANTAGE	AUTHORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative research methodology lets the researcher view behaviour in natural surroundings without the artificiality that encloses experimental survey research from time to time. 	Wimmer and Dominick (1983:49); Dillon, Madden and Firtle (1993:130)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative research can intensify a researcher’s depth of understanding of the occurrence under investigation. It is apt for this study as the use of this approach will increase the depth of understanding, as there is a need for the development of an integrated communication implementation model in the South African context. 	Wimmer and Dominick (1983:49) Dillon <i>et al.</i> (1993:130)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative methods are flexible and allow a researcher to practise new ideas of concern. This is advantageous for the current study, as this method is adaptable and accepts the practice of new ideas that might appear during the course of the data analysis. Such flexibility is especially important for this study, as if new ideas arise during the 	Wimmer and Dominick (1983:49) Du Plooy (2001:33)

research, the study can be adapted to provide more meaningful results.	
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Table 6.2 Disadvantages of qualitative research methods

DISADVANTAGE	AUTHORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In qualitative research, sample sizes are commonly too small to allow the researcher to generalise the data beyond the sample selected for the specific study. Therefore, qualitative research is often conducted preliminary to quantitative research for the reason of enlightening and operationalising concepts, if the ultimate purpose of such research is intended at quantification or generalisation. 	Wimmer and Dominick (1983:49) Dillon <i>et al.</i> (1993:131)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliability of data can be a difficulty in qualitative research since single observers are describing unique events. The researcher is in close contact with respondents, which may result in a loss of objectivity. 	Wimmer and Dominick (1983:49) Du Plooy (2001:32)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If qualitative research is not properly planned, the project may produce nothing of worth and therefore the researcher who uses qualitative methodology has to make particular provision to focus on the key issues in the research project. 	Wimmer and Dominick (1983:49) Dillon <i>et al.</i> (1993:130)

As stated, a qualitative research paradigm is therefore used for phases 1, 2 and 3 of this study. In the following section, the primary and secondary research objectives for the purposes of this study, as indicated in Chapter 1, are provided.

6.3 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

6.3.1 Primary research objective

To develop an implementation model for the management of strategic integrated communication in the South African marketplace.

6.3.2 Secondary research objectives

Secondary research objective 1:

- To establish theoretically the link between strategic communication and integrated communication in the implementation of strategic integrated communication.

Secondary research objective 2:

- To determine theoretically perceptible current universal problematic issues in the implementation of integrated communication.

Secondary research objective 3:

- To describe the current global approach to integrated communication implementation from a theoretical perspective.

Secondary research objective 4:

- To study existing models of integrated communication implementation in order to conceptualise an implementation model for the management of strategic integrated communication for the South African marketplace.

Secondary research objective 5:

- To ascertain empirically the current state of integrated communication implementation among advertising and communication agencies in South Africa.

Secondary research objectives 1 – 4 were addressed in the literature review. In order to address the fifth secondary research objective, phase 2 and the meta-theory thereof are elaborated on.

6.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY

The development of a research strategy follows logically from the research paradigm. A research strategy is defined as a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem (Mutchnick & Berg, 1996:7).

The main function of a research strategy is therefore to enable the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decisions should be so as to maximise the validity of the eventual results (Mouton, 1996:x).

For the purposes of phase 2 of this study, the research strategy follows that of exploratory research. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:79), a large proportion of social research is conducted to explore a topic or to provide a basic familiarity with that topic. Subsequently, the discussion of the use of an exploratory research strategy is divided into four aspects. It focuses on when exploratory studies are typically done; on research design considerations for an exploratory study; and when exploratory studies are essentially applied. Lastly, the focus is on the most important shortcomings of exploratory research.

- Firstly, Babbie (2002:79) argues that exploratory studies are most typically done for the following reasons: a) to satisfy the researcher's curiosity, b) to test the feasibility of undertaking more extensive research, c) to develop the methods to be employed in any subsequent study, d) to explicate the central concepts and constructs of a study, e) to determine priorities for future research, and f) to develop new hypotheses about an existing phenomenon. The latter reason is specifically applicable to this study, as phase 2 is a means to develop new understandings (not hypotheses) of the existing phenomenon of integrated communication.
- Secondly, Miller and Brewer (2003:302) postulate that the most important research design considerations that apply to exploratory research are: a) the need to follow an open and flexible research strategy, and b) using methods such as literature reviews, interviews, case studies and informants, which may lead to insight and comprehension.
- Thirdly, Babbie and Mouton (2001:80) state that exploratory studies are essential whenever a researcher is breaking new ground and they can almost always yield new insights into a topic for research.

- Fourthly, Baker (1999:204) asserts that the chief shortcoming of exploratory studies is that they seldom provide satisfactory answers to research questions, though they could hint at the answers and could give insights into the research methods that could provide definitive answers.

Proposition research and the related research propositions for phase 2 are discussed below.

6.5 PROPOSITION RESEARCH

According to Henning (2004:14), theories are created by developing sets of propositions that establish relationships between things in a systematic manner. Cooper and Schindler (1998:43) argue in this regard that a proposition is a statement about concepts that may be judged as true or false if it refers to observable phenomena. Consequently, Babbie (2001:52) reasons that propositions are drawn from postulates, which are fundamental assertions, taken to be true, on which theory is grounded. He states that, from postulates, propositions are derived, which are specific conclusions about the relationships among concepts. As indicated in Section 6.4, this study is of an exploratory nature. The study will therefore only test propositions due to the exploratory nature. The following research propositions were derived for the purpose of phase 2.

6.5.1 Research propositions

The research propositions to be addressed in phase 2 are as follows, based on the exploration of the concept of integrated communication in the literature review in Chapters 2 – 5:

Table 6.3 Research propositions for phase 2

	RESEARCH PROPOSITION
a:	The concept of integrated communication among South African advertising and communication agencies is understood.
b:	Integrated communication is practised from a strategic perspective.
c:	There is a link between communication objectives and achieving organisational objectives in South Africa.
d:	Structural alignment takes place in organisations with which South African advertising and communication agencies deal, in order to ensure cross-functional communication planning.
e:	Mediums are used to ensure interactivity in building stakeholder relationships.
f:	Mission marketing plays a role in the implementation of integrated communication of the clients of South African advertising and communication agencies.
g:	Measures are taken to ensure strategic consistency in the implementation of integrated communication.
h:	Various means of evaluation are used to determine the integratedness of the actions of South African advertising and communication agencies.

6.5.2 Theoretical statements

The purpose of the theoretical statements is to clarify the concepts utilised in the research propositions. Also, Babbie (2001:52) argues that research propositions should be grounded in theory. Consequently, the theoretical statements are discussed.

- a) Duncan (2001:8) defines integrated communication as “A cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders by strategically controlling or influencing all messages sent to these groups ...”. This is in contrast with the definition of Spotts and Lambert (1998:211) of integrated communication, which states that it is “... the integration of various communication vehicles within a specific campaign”.
- b) Integrated communication has moved from a tactical activity that was practised by historical communication professionals to a more *strategic*,

managerial, customer-driven activity in the current marketplace (Gronstedt, 2000).

- c) Integration refers ultimately to everything the organisation does and does not do. Also, integration is an organisational pursuit, and not a quick-fix solution to communication problems (Niemann, 2002:65).
- d) “A cross-functional process further integrates managers from different departments and agencies who are working on the same brand in order to plan and manage the messages an organisation sends to – and receives from – customers and other stakeholders” (Duncan & Moriarty, 1997:169).
- e) *Interactivity* refers to two-way communication, which allows both the organisation and the stakeholders of the organisation to send and receive messages (Thorson & Moore, 1996:296).
- f) *Mission marketing* is the process that binds the organisation’s marketing communication efforts with the mission of the organisation (Duncan, 2001:765).
- g) *Strategic consistency* is the coordination of all types of messages that create or cue brand images, positions and reputations in the minds of customers and other stakeholders (Kitchen & Schultz, 2000:122).
- h) Evaluation to determine the *integratedness* of organisations includes the measurement and evaluation of brand messages and customer interactions, which include the generation of feedback on brand strategies and the different brand messages and programmes used by the organisation (Duncan, 2001:765).

6.6 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in phase 2 was face-to-face in-depth interviews. The focus is firstly on in-depth interviews, after which the face-to-face approach to in-depth interviews is discussed.

6.6.1 In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews are less structured and more intensive than a standardised questionnaire (Van Vuuren, Maree & De Beer, 1998:410). In-depth interviewers aim to collect detailed, richly textured, person-centred information from one or more individuals (Kaufman, 1994:123). According to Berg (1998:61), in in-depth interviews, the researcher initiates a dialogue with a real person and engages the interviewee as a human being, not as a study subject. Therefore, the interviewer does not utilise a structured interview, but rather constructs a guide of open-ended questions. The principal advantage of an open interview schedule format is that it does not suggest the terms in which respondents should answer a question (Abrahamson, 1983:318).

Kaufman (1994:125) agrees with the statement by Abrahamson (1983:318) in that the aim of open-ended questions is to elicit subjective idiosyncratic responses that allow for deeper understanding. Open-ended questions allow the researcher therefore to follow up with probing questions in order to deepen the response to the question, thus increasing the richness of the data obtained. These open-ended questions serve as a guide to ensure that all topics, relevant to the research (that is, meeting the aims identified), are covered during the interview (Kaufman, 1994:125). Van Vuuren *et al.* (1998:406) and Patton (1990:288) list the following advantages and disadvantages of in-depth interviews:

Table 6.4 Advantages of in-depth interviews

ADVANTAGE	AUTHORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The respondent is well motivated because of the personal contact. In the study the respondents should be motivated to cooperate, as the personal contact will cause them to feel that their responses are valued highly enough by the researcher to warrant personal attention. 	Van Vuuren <i>et al.</i> (1998:406)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a high question completion rate, because of the personal contact as well as the fact that respondents are less likely to ignore a person sitting in their office than a 	Van Vuuren <i>et al.</i> (1998:406)

written questionnaire by itself.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increased number of questions can be used, as the researcher can tailor the line of questioning as well as the individual questions as the interview progresses to suit the direction in which the interview is heading. 	Van Vuuren <i>et al.</i> (1998:406)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is possible to control the sequence of the questions, in a similar way, as discussed in the previous point. 	Van Vuuren <i>et al.</i> (1998:406)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the topics and issues to be discussed are outlined in advance, the comprehensiveness of the data is increased, making data collection somewhat systematic and allowing for comparison 	Patton (1990:288)

There are, however, also some disadvantages in the use of in-depth interviews as a research method. The disadvantages of in-depth interviews proposed by Van Vuuren *et al.* (1998:406) and Patton (1990:288) are described in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5 Disadvantages of in-depth interviews

DISADVANTAGE	AUTHORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is the most expensive method of data collection. 	Van Vuuren <i>et al.</i> (1998:406)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviewees can become fatigued. 	Van Vuuren <i>et al.</i> (1998:406)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important and prominent topics may inadvertently be omitted. 	Patton (1990:288)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process of in-depth interviews is time consuming. 	Patton (1990:288)

The first two disadvantages are not factors that influenced this study, because the interviews had no financial implication and they were not long enough for the interviewees to become fatigued. However, it could be argued that through the use of in-depth interviews, significant and key issues may unconsciously have been omitted on the implementation of integrated communication in South Africa. Also, it is acknowledged that the in-depth interview process is exceptionally time consuming.

6.6.2 Face-to-face approach to in-depth interviews

A face-to-face approach to in-depth interviews was used as a research method.

Face-to-face administration offers some advantages, but it has some disadvantages as well. The advantages are discussed first in a table containing the views of different authors.

Table 6.6 Advantages of face-to-face interviews

ADVANTAGE	AUTHORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face interviews have the highest response rates and permit the longest questionnaires. 	Babbie (1992:269)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These interviews can be used with people who could not otherwise provide information, such as respondents who are illiterate, blind, bedridden or very old. 	Singleton, Straits, Straits and Mcallister (1988:243)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviewers can also observe the surroundings and use non-verbal communication and visual aids. In this regard, well-trained interviewers can ask all types of questions, can ask complex questions, and can use extensive probes. 	Babbie (1992:269) Bernard (2000:230) Neuman (2000:272)

Consequently, the use of a face-to-face approach in conducting interviews also has some disadvantages. These disadvantages are discussed in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7 Disadvantages of face-to-face interviews

DISADVANTAGE	AUTHORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High cost is the biggest disadvantage of face-to-face interviews. 	Neuman (2000:273)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The training, travel, supervision and personnel costs of interviews can be high. 	Babbie (1992:269)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviewer bias is also greatest in face-to-face interviews. The appearance, tone of voice, question wording, and so forth of the interviewer may affect the respondent. 	Babbie (1992:269) Bernard (2000:230) Neuman (2000:273)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviewer supervision is less than in telephone interviews, which supervisors monitor by listening in. 	Singleton <i>et al.</i> (1988:243-244)

The greatest disadvantage of face-to-face interviews in this study was that interviewer bias could be considered as a possible factor, as the appearance, tone of voice, and question wording of the interviewer might have affected the respondents. However, the other three disadvantages did not have an impact on the interviews, as the interviews did not have major cost implications and all the interviews were conducted by the researcher and therefore no supervision of other interviewers was required.

6.7 SAMPLING DESIGN

In the social sciences, the typical unit of analysis is the person, or groups of people, although there may also be other units of analysis, such as general phenomena. The unit of analysis for the purpose of this study is South African communication agencies. According to Wimmer and Dominick (1983:69), the chances of investigating the entire population are remote, if not non-existent. Therefore, a sample is drawn from the population for research purposes. The population and samples for phase 2 of the study are demarcated and discussed below:

6.7.1 Population

After determining the unit of analysis, the first task in sampling is to define the population of interest – to describe the particular collection of units that make up the population. According to Tudd, Smith and Kidder (1991:130), a population is the aggregate of all the cases that conform to some designated set of specifications. Mouton (1996:134) refers to the population as a collection of objects, events or individuals having some common characteristics that the researcher is interested in studying. Although researchers must begin with a careful specification of their population, poetic licence usually permits them to phrase their reports in terms of the hypothetical universe. The population therefore refers to the complete set of elements and their characteristics about which a conclusion is to be drawn, based on a sample.

The target population of phase 2 of the current research is South African communication agencies, including advertising and so-called full service agencies.

6.7.2 Sampling technique

From the target population of all South African communication agencies, ten agencies are selected via purposive (judgemental) sampling. Purposive sampling is an acceptable type of sampling for special situations. It uses the judgement of an expert in selecting cases or it selects cases with a specific purpose in mind (Neuman, 2000:198). In other words, in this form of sampling, investigators rely on their expert judgement to select units that are “representative” or “typical” of the population. This method of sampling is chosen with the knowledge that it is not representative of the general population: it rather attempts to represent a specific portion of the population. This therefore, involves selecting respondents based on the fact that they are representative of the population (Dillon, *et al.*, 1993:229).

Consequently, a list of South Africa’s top agencies issued by *Adfocus* served as the means for the sample selection. *Adfocus* is an annual publication that is associated with the *Financial Mail*. The purpose of *Adfocus* is to publish the most pertinent issues in the field of advertising and communication on an annual basis and to provide statistics in terms of the most profitable and successful agencies for a specific year. The top ten agencies, according to *Adfocus* (2004:48), were FCB South Africa, TBWA Hunt Lascaris, Ogilvy, Young and Rubicum, J Walter Thompson, Net#work BBDO, Saatchi and Saatchi, HerdBuoys McCann-Erickson, Jupiter Drawing Room and Grey Global South Africa. No distinction is made between the small, medium and large agencies in this edition of *Adfocus*; therefore, it was not taken into consideration and merely the top ten agencies as indicated were used in the research.

6.8 PILOT STUDY

The purpose of a pilot study is to improve the success and effectiveness of the questionnaire because modifications can be made after the pilot study and before

the questionnaires are given to the other respondents (De Vos, 1998:183). In the case of this study, the pilot study was used as the comprehending phase in the Morse and Field approach and to ensure the success and effectiveness of the interview schedule in order to ensure the reliability of the study.

6.8.1 Execution of the pilot study

The pilot study was conducted in March 2004 in order to validate the measurement instrument of the final study. The methodological orientation adopted for this pilot study was also a qualitative orientation. In accordance with the requirements of the pilot study, it should be conducted replicating the final study. Therefore, the target population of the pilot study research was also South African advertising and communication agencies. From this target population, five agencies were selected via purposive (judgemental) sampling. Consequently, a list of the country's top agencies issued by *Adfocus* (2003) served as the means for the sample selection. As the 2004 *Adfocus* had not yet been published at the time, the list provided in their 2003 edition was used. The top three large agencies at the time were TBWA Hunt Lascaris, FCB South Africa and Ogilvy & Mather Group (which changed to Ogilvy in June 2004). As Glover (2004) stated that the growth in the industry is being catalysed by midsize agencies, the first two thereof were also selected from the list. This added Net#work BBDO and Jupiter to the sample of the pilot study. It was decided not to include small agencies as many do not necessarily have dedicated strategic planning departments. Five in-depth interviews were administered at the agencies mentioned above with the Strategic Planning Director of each agency. Thus, Tim Allermann, Nicci Kurland, Hayden Townsend, Clive Evans and Alistair Duff (Business Unit Director) respectively were each subject to a 45-minute interview.

6.8.2 Consequences of the pilot study

The timeframe of a 45-minute interview used in the pilot study was found to be sufficient for the purpose of the final study, as it allowed for adequate time to go through all the questions and to allow for suitable responses. However, as notes were taken during these interviews, it was found that this was not a suitable way of data capturing for the final study, as valuable information was lost during this process. This necessitated the use of a Dictaphone in order to ensure better quality and more accurate information gathered from the final interviews.

As the nature of the information was satisfactory in the data gathering through the interviews with the Strategic Planning Directors in the pilot study (as set out in the description of the execution of the pilot study), it was argued that the Strategic Planning Directors were indeed the suitable respondents for the final study. Hence, in the final study seven respondents were also in the position of Strategic Planning Directors of the advertising and communication agencies (and three respondents the equivalent thereof).

In the pilot study, five in-depth interviews were conducted. It was however reasoned that, by increasing the number of in-depth interviews in the final study to ten interviews, it would contribute to the merit of the study. Furthermore, the in-depth interviews in the pilot study were conducted in the offices of the respondents. It was found in the pilot study that the occupational context contributed to the formality of the study. It also added to the fact that the respondents felt comfortable in the surroundings to provide a favourable environment for answering questions regarding their experience of the implementation of integrated communication.

6.9 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS: MORSE AND FIELD APPROACH

The data was analysed by using the Morse and Field approach. Morse (1994:25-35) is of the opinion that creative and solid data analysis entails a persistent search for answers, active observation and truthful recall. De Vos (1998:340) argues that it is the process of corresponding data, making the invisible apparent and relating and attributing consequences. For Morse and Field (1996:103-107), four cognitive processes appear integral to this data analysis method, namely: comprehending, synthesising (decontextualising), theorising and recontextualising. De Vos (1998:341) argues in general comments made on this approach that these four processes occur more or less sequentially, because the researcher must reach a reasonable level of comprehension before being able to synthesise, and until the researcher is able to synthesise, theorising is not possible. Recontextualisation cannot occur until the concepts or models in the investigation are fully developed. These four steps are elaborated on:

6.9.1 Comprehending in the Morse and Field approach

De Vos (1998:341) states that as soon as data collection begins, preparation for data analysis begins. Morse and Field (1996:104) maintain that the process of making sense of the data begins as the researcher makes sense of the setting and learns what is going on. The stage of comprehension is reached when the researcher has enough data to be able to write a complete, detailed, coherent and rich description (Morse, 1994:26). De Vos (1998:341) mentions that when comprehension is reached the researcher is able to identify stories that are part of the topic and patterns of experience, and predict their outcome. When little that is new is learned, then saturation is reached and comprehending is complete. Comprehending of the concepts and theories was done through the literature review in Chapters 2 – 5 (phase 1) as well as through the pilot study, as discussed in Section 6.8.

6.9.2 Synthesising in the Morse and Field approach

De Vos (1998:341) is of the opinion that synthesising begins when the researcher has become familiarised with the setting. Morse (1994:26) argues that indications that the stage of synthesis has been reached are the ability to provide, with confidence, descriptions of phenomena. Morse and Field (1996:105) argue that there are two types of analysis that can be utilised here: inter-participant analysis or the comparison of transcripts from several respondents, and the analysis or the categories sorted by commonalities, consisting of segments of transcripts or notes compiled from transcripts of several participants. During the synthesising component of the current study, three categories and sub-categories were identified based on the in-depth interviews. The questions used in the face-to-face in-depth interviews (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7) were used as a guideline to determine specified categories, in order to facilitate data processing in this phase of the study. The following categories and sub-categories were identified:

- a) *Category 1*: The understanding of the concept of integrated communication
 - Sub-category (a)*: The South African context
 - Sub-category (b)*: The concept of integrated communication
- b) *Category 2*: The implementation of integrated communication
 - Sub-category (c)*: Holistic orientation
 - Sub-category (d)*: Internal communication
 - Sub-category (e)*: Dialogue
 - Sub-category (f)*: Stakeholders
- c) *Category 3*: Barriers to the implementation of integrated communication

The respondents' answers to the various questions were grouped into these categories and subsequent sub-categories. Straus and Corbin (1990:63) also refer to this stage of the Morse and Field approach as categorising. The different responses were then placed into categories to reflect similarities and differences.

De Vos (1998:341) concurs, and states that the analysis enables the researcher to synthesise, interpret, link, see relationships, conjecture and verify findings.

6.9.3 Theorising in the Morse and Field approach

Morse and Field (1996:105) postulate that theorising is the systematic selection and fitting of alternative models to the data. It is the process of constructing alternative explanations and holding these against the data until the best fit is obtained that explains the data most simply. Morse (1994:26) contends that the first step in theorising is to ask questions of the data that will create links to established theory. The second method is to use lateral thinking by examining similar concepts in other settings or seeking other complementary data sources in other contexts. The third method is the systematic and inductive development of substantive or formal theory from the data. De Vos (1998:342) reasons that theoretical sampling is an integral part of this process, whereby characteristics surmised to contribute to an experience are identified in certain participants who are interviewed to verify or refute the surmise. During this process of the Morse and Field approach, the literature review (phase 1) together with the information gathered during the interviews were used to theorise about the implementation of integrated communication within the South African market.

6.9.4 Re-contextualising in the Morse and Field approach

De Vos (1998:342) reports that the goal of recontextualisation is to be able to place the results in the context of established knowledge and to identify the results that support the literature or claim unique contributions. In the re-contextualisation stage of the Morse and Field approach, the conceptual implementation model for strategic integrated communication in the South African landscape is proposed (phase 3), thereby claiming a unique contribution to literature, as no such model currently exists.

6.10 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the meta-theory of the methodology in the empirical research of the study. The focus was on the research paradigm, strategy and method used. It further clarified the sampling design and the method of data analysis, which is done according to the Morse and Field approach. Lastly the pilot study was discussed.

In Chapter 7, the meta-theory of the methodology in the empirical research of phase 2 is applied in discussing integrated communication implementation in the South African context.