SUPERVISORY ANTECEDENTS TO THE CUSTOMER ORIENTATION AND JOB SATISFACTION OF SALESPEOPLE: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

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This study attempted to identify the relationships of various supervisory behaviors on customer orientation, work related expectancies, and job satisfaction of salespeople. Customer orientation and job satisfaction were also investigated as to how they impact the performance of salespeople. Contrary to Kohli (1985), when arbitrary and punitive supervisory behaviors increased, salespeople's customer orientation and job satisfaction decreased. Discussion of this finding and direction for future research follows.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing emphasis on market orientation in the marketing literature (cf. Narver and Slater 1990; Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Kohli, Jaworski, and Kumar 1993) has highlighted the importance of being responsive to customer needs and competitive actions. An important facet of market orientation is customer orientation. A recent study by Sigauw, Brown, and Widing (1994), highlights the relationship between a firm's market orientation and the customer orientation of its salespeople. The concept of customer orientation is therefore an important one that merits study from both a strategic marketing and a sales management perspective. This study focuses on the latter perspective. Its objectives are two-fold: first to identify the impact of various supervisory behaviors on the customer orientation, work related expectancies, and job satisfaction of salespeople, and second to determine the impact of customer orientation and job satisfaction on the performance of salespeople.

While there are numerous kinds of variables that could be used as antecedents to the customer orientation of salespeople, we chose supervisory behaviors and work-related expectancies for one important reason. Customer orientation as originally conceptualized by Saxe and Weitz (1982) through their SOCO scale examines specific sales behaviors of salespeople. Consequently it seems appropriate to examine the impact of supervisory *behaviors* (cf. Kohli 1985) on the sales *behaviors* of salespeople. For instance, when punishment is meted out by supervisors how does it affect the customer orientation of salespeople? In contrast, what is the impact on the customer orientation of salespeople when supervisors use positive or constructive behaviors? Finally, what is the impact on customer orientation when supervisors stress achievement and high expectations? We recognize that there are other supervisory factors that have been shown to affect the performance of salespeople; specifically, performance feedback (Walker, Churchill, and Ford 1975; Teas, Wacker, and Hughes 1979), closeness of supervision (Churchill, Ford, and Walker 1976; Walker, Churchill, and Ford 1975), and encouraging participation from salespeople in decision making (Teas 1983). The importance of these factors notwithstanding, we leave it to other studies to investigate their efficacy in explaining the customer orientation behaviors of salespeople.

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An important facet of customer orientation is that salespeople work to satisfy the long term needs of their customers. While supervisory behaviors can be expected to have an important impact on such customer orientation, another factor that could affect customer orientation is the work-related expectancy of salespeople. Simply put, work-related expectancies seek to measure the perceived outcomes of working hard (Sims, Szilagyi, and McKemey 1976). Salespeople can be expected to work hard only if they are rewarded for doing so. Work-related expectancies therefore are also included in this study as potential antecedents to the customer orientation of salespeople. The impact of supervisory behaviors on work-related expectancies is also examined to determine the impact of different supervisory behaviors on salespersons' perceptions that they will be rewarded for working hard. Finally, we are interested in determining the relationship between customer orientation and job satisfaction of salespeople with their performance. Underlying our interest in examining this relationship is the evolution in how marketing scholars view performance. Research on sales performance has traditionally focused on the output aspects of performance. In this view, sales performance is "good" when the sales call results in a sale or when the salesperson meets sales targets. For instance, Johnston and Kim (1994) suggest the use of role plays to alter the attributions made by salespeople after the "failure" of a sales call. While recognizing the salutary implications of such research, we follow the lead of other scholars (e.g., Behrman and Perreault 1982; Kohli and Jaworski 1994; Oliver and Anderson 1994) who have focused on the behavioral and output aspects of performance. Behavioral aspects of performance focus on the inputs that sales managers make available to salespeople so that company goals can be achieved. These goals focus on such nonsales aspects of the sales job as account maintenance and service. As a consequence a focus on the behavioral aspects of performance assumes a longer time perspective because immediate results can be balanced with long-term sales relationships and outcomes (Anderson and Oliver 1987). In contrast, output-based performance assumes that the salesperson is motivated by immediate self-interest. In this view, salespeople who are risk prone are considered to be good performers and as a result short-run goals are more likely to be emphasized and long term sales strategies with uncertain outcomes avoided because they may well result in a job change before these strategies bear fruit (Oliver and Anderson 1994). Consistent with this line of thinking, we argue that behavior-based performance mechanisms are more consistent with the notion of customer orientation than are output based performance systems.

CUSTOMER ORIENTATION AND WORK RELATED EXPECTANCIES

Though the concept of customer orientation (COS) was first proposed by Saxe and Weitz (1982), only in the past few years has the concept been receiving increasing attention from researchers. As originally conceived by Saxe and Weitz (1982), customer orientation is a selling behavior whereby salespeople assist customers in making purchase decisions that will satisfy long term wants and needs. Michaels and Day (1985) and Tadepalli (1991, 1995) further extended this concept and applied it to an organizational buying setting while Hoffman and Ingram (1991) and Kelley (1992) used it in a services setting. On the whole, there have been relatively few attempts to study customer orientation in a sales setting (cf. O'Hara, Boles, and Johnston 1991; Dunlap, Dotson, and Chambers 1988; Sigauw, Brown, and Widing 1994; Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla 1998). Notwithstanding these studies, to date there has been no attempt to identify in a systematic manner the antecedents to salespersons' customer orientation. If sales organizations are indeed interested in having their salespeople behave in a manner that results in long term customer satisfaction it would seem that research identifying the antecedents and consequences of customer orientation is clearly needed.

As stated earlier, work-related expectancies are a measure of the perceived outcomes of working hard (Cook, et al. 1981). Based on expectancy theory, two work-related expectancies are defined. The first (EPE) is an estimate of the probability that putting effort into one's job will yield good performance (effort-performance expectancy). The second (PRE) is the perceived probability that good performance will lead to rewards (performance-reward expectancy). Research by Sims and Szilagyi (1975) showed that PRE was positively related to a leader's Positive Reward Behavior and the Feedback subscale of the Job Characteristics Inventory. Keller and Szilagyi (1976) found a positive relationship between this expectancy and Positive and Punitive Leader Behavior. The relationships between the first expectancy (EPE) and leader behaviors were found to be relatively weak in these studies.

HYPOTHESES

The theoretical considerations on which the proposed model (See Figures 1 and 2) representing the hypothesized relationships is based are discussed and specific hypotheses offered hereafter.

Supervisory Behaviors, Work Related Expectancies, Job Satisfaction, and Customer Orientation Linkages

The supervisory behaviors that are used in this study were first studied by Kohli (1985). These supervisory behaviors are of four types: arbitrary and punitive, contingent approving, upward-influencing, and achievement-oriented. *Arbitrary and punitive* supervisors are autocratic, insist on conformity to the work methods they favor, and seek to increase performance through punishment (Schriesheim, House, and Kerr 1976). According to Kohli (1985), such supervisors criticize, "needle", and "ride" salespeople. Repeated criticisms, negative feedback, and the punitive behaviors employed by such supervisors may well result in salespeople focusing more on short-term performance measures such as sales and neglecting the long-term satisfaction of their customers. The punitive nature of the supervision may result in salespeople wondering whether their efforts would be sufficient to meet performance expectations. As a consequence they can be expected to put in extra effort to meet performance targets because if they do not punitive behavior is the likely result.

Similarly, the arbitrary nature of such supervisory behavior may cause salespeople to question whether focusing on customers' long-term satisfaction will be rewarded. At the same time salespeople working for an arbitrary and punitive supervisor may conclude that if they do not meet performance targets they will be punished. Therefore, in terms of the performance-reward expectancy they know the consequences of not meeting performance targets. Research by Fulk and Wendler (1982) and Podsakoff et al. (1984) indicated that arbitrary and punitive behaviors employed by managers may result in dissatisfaction among subordinates. Surprisingly, Kohli (1985) found that arbitrary and punitive behavior is related positively to salespeople's job satisfaction and given the counterintuitive nature of this finding calls for more research on this relationship. We therefore hypothesize that *the greater the arbitrary and punitive supervisory behavior (AP), the lesser will be salespersons' customer orientation (COS), and job satisfaction (SAT), and the greater their effort-performance expectancy (EPE) and performance-reward expectancy (PRE).*

Contingent approving supervisors give recognition and approval to subordinates contingent upon effective effort and/or performance (Fulk and Wendler 1982). Salespeople who work for such supervisors therefore may realize that they will be rewarded for meeting performance targets since that is the most effective sales behavior. Such supervisors are likely to stress output based performance measures which tend to focus more on the short-term. While such preoccupation with meeting sales targets may deter salespeople from taking a long-term view, there is no denying the importance accorded by sales managers to short-term measures of performance such as achieving sales quotas or insuring that the sales call is a success (cf. Johnston and Kim 1994). Consequently, salespeople working for such a supervisor may well eschew a long-term focus. Research by Szilagyi (1980), Podsakoff et al. (1984) and Kohli (1985) indicates that supervisors who reward subordinates based on performance increase subordinates job satisfaction. Since contingent approving supervisors also reward good performance on a consistent basis, such behavior could convince salespeople that strong effort will result in good performance and rewards. *We therefore hypothesize that the greater the contingent approving behavior (CA) of the supervisor, the less customer orientation*

(COS) of salespeople, and the greater their job satisfaction (SAT), effort-performance expectancy (EPE), and performance-reward expectancy (PRE).

Upward-influencing supervisory behavior has the aim of maintaining good rapport between the supervisor and his or her superiors and influencing them to act favorably on behalf of the work unit (Fulk and Wendler 1982). The objective of the upward-influencing supervisor is to obtain more resources and rewards for their work unit from upper-level management. Such supervisors are likely to get along with their superiors and also to be clear on what the superiors expect from the sales unit (Kohli 1985). One way for supervisors to garner increased resources for the work unit is to meet and preferably exceed sales goals set by upper-level management. As a consequence upward-influencing supervisors are likely to be consistent in their expectations of their subordinates. At the same time these expectations are likely to focus on output-based measures of performance which tend to be short-run oriented (Oliver and Anderson 1994). Salespeople who work for such a supervisor are thus likely to believe that they should focus on achieving individual and group level sales targets since that is the most effective measure of good performance. An unintended consequence of such supervisory behavior is that salespeople may attach primary importance to meeting short-term sales targets and in doing so unwittingly reduce the importance of being customer oriented. Further, since upward-influencing supervisors are consistent in their expectations, salespeople may feel working hard will result in good performance and rewards. Fulk and Wendler (1982) found a positive relationship between this behavior and subordinate job satisfaction. On the other hand Kohli (1985) did not find such a relationship. We hypothesize that *the greater the upward-influencing behavior (UI) of the supervisor, the lesser will be the customer orientation (COS) of salespeople, and the greater their job satisfaction (SAT), effort-performance expectancy (EPE), and performance-reward expectancy (PRE).*

Achievement-oriented supervisors set challenging goals, set high performance standards and create an environment where subordinates can meet these goals (House and Mitchell 1974; Kohli 1985). Such supervisors emphasize goal attainment and encourage continuous improvement from their subordinates. Consequently one can expect that such supervisors focus more on behavioral performance measures than output-based performance measures. This kind of supervisory behavior is likely to result in enhancing subordinate effort since achievement-oriented supervisors tend to monitor performance closely (Yukl and Van Fleet 1982). Salespeople therefore are likely to feel that "good" performance will be noticed and rewarded. As a consequence they are likely to focus on the long-term satisfaction of their customers. Salespeople working in such an environment can experience an increased amount of satisfaction. Fulk and Wendler (1982) and Griffin (1980) found a positive relationship between achievement-oriented supervisory behavior and job satisfaction. We therefore hypothesize that *the greater the achievement-oriented (AO) supervisory behavior the greater the customer orientation of salespeople (COS), effort-performance expectancy (EPE), performance-reward expectancy (PRE), and job satisfaction (SAT).*

Customer Orientation, Job Satisfaction, and Performance Linkages

While it is useful to determine the supervisory antecedents of customer orientation and job satisfaction, it is just as important to determine the relationship between customer orientation, job satisfaction and performance. Since customer-oriented salespeople focus on the long term job satisfaction of their customers, one would intuitively expect that the performance of such salespeople would be high. However two issues need to be noted here. The first deals with the manner in which sales performance is rewarded. Our contention is that managerial pronouncements notwithstanding, salespeople in most organizations are rewarded for performance on the basis of outputs (e.g., sales). While there is general agreement among researchers that salespeople should be evaluated based on factors they control, this is most often not the case (Cravens et al. 1993). For instance, numerous studies have documented the use of total sales volume (along with other output measures) to assess the performance of salespeople (Dubinsky and Barry 1982; Jackson, Keith, and Schlacter 1982; Morris et al. 1991). As a consequence, while it would be advantageous for salespeople to be customer oriented in the long term, in the short term they still need to meet their sales quotas in order to increase the commissions they earn and in extreme situations, to retain their jobs. The second issue relating to performance pertains to its definition. Performance has been conceptualized as being comprised of two components: output performance and behavioral performance (Kohli and Jaworski 1994). The behavioral aspects of performance focus on sales behaviors that are part of the sales job (e.g., accuracy of paperwork). Salespeople who work in an environment where performance is behavior based can take the time to learn the company products and procedures as well as sales techniques. Sales managers for their part insure that salespeople provide the necessary inputs to achieve the company's goals. This allows for nonsales goals to be pursued and hence a long-term perspective can be assumed because short-term results can be balanced with long-term sales relationships and outcomes (Anderson and Oliver 1987; Oliver and Anderson 1994). Straight salary is normally the compensation plan that exemplifies a behavior-based performance system because it encourages salespeople to accept the authority of management (John and Weitz 1989). Oliver and Anderson (1994) found that salespeople who were rewarded based on behavioral inputs were more satisfied with their jobs but did not perform at a higher level than salespeople who were rewarded on the basis of output-based performance.

In contrast to behavior-based performance, output performance focuses on the measurable outputs of sales activities (e.g., sales commissions). Sales organizations that emphasize output- based performance assume that salespeople are motivated by *immediate* self-interest. As a result, sales techniques may be compromised as short-run goals are emphasized (Cravens et al. 1993). Salespeople who are evaluated on the basis of output-based performance may avoid long-term sales strategies with uncertain outcomes. Their focus may be to move quickly to "close a sale" and to move on to other customers so as to garner more orders. Outcome-based performance systems generally reward salespeople with a "carrot and stick" remuneration mechanism such as straight commission (Oliver and Anderson 1994). Salespeople who are rewarded in this manner may well be less-satisfied individuals with little attachment to their employers.

Notwithstanding these differences between behavioral- and output-based performance systems, it is important to recognize that both have similar goals. Both seek to insure that salespeople make positive contributions to the organization. The question then is how different are these two systems? Anderson and Oliver (1987) conceptualize behavioral and output-based systems as two very distinct systems each being the polar opposite of the other. Cravens et al. (1993) on the other hand view the two systems along a continuum with the behavior-based and output-based performance systems being the extremes. They suggest that few organizations are likely to operate either a completely behavior-based or output-based system. Therefore, while an organization may emphasize either behavioral or output performance, it nonetheless would expect salespeople to meet both behavioral and output related criteria.

For instance, while salespeople may do well on such criteria as sales commissions, units sold, or gross profit (output criteria), the organization's own interest would dictate the need to insure adequate performance on such behavior-based criteria as accuracy of paperwork, time management, and customer presentations. When carried to its logical conclusion this would suggest that in order to do well on such output-based criteria as units sold, gross profit, and commissions, salespeople would need to do well on behavior-based criteria also, i.e., manage their time efficiently, plan and make effective presentations, negotiate well, and keep accurate records. It is not surprising therefore that there is empirical evidence which shows that behavioral performance has a positive effect on output performance (Jaworski and Kohli 1991). We argue that the reverse also holds true. In support of our position we reiterate the view of Craves and his colleagues that behavior-and output-based performance systems should be viewed along a continuum and that salesforce performance systems include both behavioral and output components (1993, p.47). Thus, it is entirely plausible that even as salespeople perform well on output-based criteria they may come to realize that in order to achieve an even higher level of output performance they would need to improve their performance on such behavior-based criteria as time management, making effective presentations, negotiating well, and keeping good records. For example, if a salesperson generates a 20 percent increase in new accounts in a year she can be expected to realize that improved time management is called for simply to insure customers are called on at regular intervals. Similarly, as a salesperson's customer base increases she will recognize the need to maintain an accurate and timely database of her customers and their needs.

On the basis of the preceding discussion, we hypothesize that *the greater the customer orientation (COS), job satisfaction (SAT), and output performance (OPERF) of salespeople, the greater their behavioral performance(BPERF)*. In the case of output performance, we hypothesize that *the greater the customer orientation (COS) , and job satisfaction (SAT) of salespeople, the lesser their output performance (OPERF). Additionally, we hypothesize that the greater their behavioral performance (BPERF), the greater their output performance (OPERF).*

METHODOLOGY

All the variables included in this study were measured through multiple-item scales drawn from previous research. *Customer orientation* was measured using the SOCO scale developed by Saxe and Weitz (1982). *Supervisory behaviors* were measured using scales provided in Kohli (1985) who reports that the four supervisory scales demonstrated convergent and discriminant validity. Work-related expectancies were measured using scales developed by Sims, Szilagyi, and McKemey (1976).

As discussed earlier, this scale consists of two distinct components; the first measuring effort-performance expectancy and the second performance-reward expectancy. Keller and Szilagyi (1976) report that internal consistency reliabilities for the two sub-scales were .87 and .94 respectively. *Job satisfaction* was measured through a 14-item scale developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975) within their broad-ranging Job Diagnostic Survey. The 14 items in this scale tap five specific job satisfactions: Pay, Job Security, Social, Supervisory, and Growth Job satisfaction. Descriptive statistics and psychometric properties data for these items have been published by Hackman, Pearce, and Wolfe (1978), Oldham (1976), and Oldham, Hackman, and Pearce (1976). Oldham, Hackman, and Stepina (1978) report generally high intercorrelations between these sub-scales (ranging from .43 to .55). *Performance* (both behavioral and output) was measured using a scale first developed by Behrman and Perreault (1982) and modified by Kohli and Jaworski (1994). The scale items are based on salespersons' self reports since we felt that they would be accurate and not subject to an upward bias. Such a course of action is supported by the findings of Churchill et al. (1985) who conclude on the basis of a meta-analysis that concerns of an upward bias due to self-reports are without foundation. There was also a question in the survey instrument to determine whether salespeople were compensated on a commission basis.

Sample

Data were obtained by means of self-administered questionnaires, from salespeople in companies manufacturing and selling industrial products. A total of 92 usable responses were obtained for an overall response rate of 89.8 percent. The response rate was high because a sales manager was contacted from each company and asked if their salespeople would participate. Regarding subject characteristics, 9 percent of the respondents were female and 91 percent male. The average age of the respondents was 39 years and the average years of experience in sales was 15 years. The respondents were well educated with 49 percent having completed a college degree and another 12 percent either some graduate level work or a graduate degree. On average the respondents worked for the same sales manager for six years. A vast majority of the respondents (67 percent) held fewer than three jobs prior to their current position. 44 percent of the respondents said they worked on a commission basis.

Scale Refinement

The scales used to measure the variables used in this study were subjected to both a scale refinement and a reliability analysis. Items belonging to individual scales that did not correlate well with other items from their respective instruments were eliminated. Internal consistency estimates of the reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) indicate that the measures employed in the subsequent analysis stages are highly reliable. Table 1 shows the correlation matrix of the variables in this study. Reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) and the number of items constituting each scale are shown along the diagonal. When compared to other studies that used similar scales the reliabilites of measures used in this study compare very favorably.

Kohli (1985) estimated reliabilites for the four supervisory scales as follows: AP (.83), CA (.95), UI (.90), and AO (.70). Our sample yielded the following reliabilites: AP (.87), CA (.97), UI (.90), and AO (.85). Sigauw, Brown, and Widing (1994) used the SOCO scale (Saxe and Weitz 1982) in their study and their estimate of the reliability was .86. Our estimate of the reliability based on the sample used in this study is .82. Echoing the findings of Sigauw, Widing, and Brown (1994), we too feel it important to point out that the sample of salespeople in this study was highly customer oriented. The mean SOCO score in our study of 7.65 (sd=.64), compares favorably with Sigauw, Brown, Widing (1994) SOCO score of 7.8 (sd=.68). With regard to the two components of performance, following the lead of Kohli and Jaworski (1994) the internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the behavioral performance scale was estimated (.68) but the output performance measure was viewed more as a composite and its internal consistency reliability was not computed.

Model Estimation

Ordinary least squares regression was used to test our hypothesized relationships. Estimated coefficients and other results are presented in Table 2. The proposed model (Figure 1) consists of the following six regression equations:

1. COS = AP + UI + AO + CA + EPE + PRE + error (1)
2. SAT = AP + UI + AO + CA + EPE + PRE + error (2)
3. EPE = AP + UI + AO + CA + error (3)
4. PRE = AP + UI + AO + CA + error (4)
5. BPERF = COS + SAT + OPERF + error (5)
6. OPERF = COS + SAT + BPERF + error (6)

COS = Customer orientation
SAT = Job satisfaction
EPE = Effort-performance expectancy
PRE = Performance-reward expectancy
OPERF = Output performance
BPERF = Behavioral performance
AP = Arbitrary and punitive behavior
UI = Upward influencing behavior
AO = Achievement-oriented behavior
CA = Contingent approving behavior

As can be seen from Table 1 the level of intercorrelations among the independent variables in the regression equations is low to moderate, ranging from -.02 to .73. To check for multicollinearity the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for each of the regression coefficients was calculated. The average VIF was 1.74 (range 1.01 to 3.27) much below the cut-off of 10 recommended by Neter, Wasserman, and Kutner (1990). This suggests that multicollinearity is not likely to detract from the substantive conclusions drawn from the parameter estimates.

RESULTS

The results presented in Table 2 and Figure 2 indicate general support for the hypothesized relationships. The first set of hypotheses posit that as supervisors' arbitrary and punitive behavior increases, customer orientation and job satisfaction of salespeople will decrease and their effort-performance expectancy and reward-performance expectancy increase. As hypothesized when arbitrary and punitive supervisory behavior increases, salespersons' customer orientation (b=-.30, p=.002) and their job satisfaction (b=-.53, p=.000) decrease while their effort-performance expectancy (b=.22, p=.035) increases. The hypothesized relationship between arbitrary and punitive behavior and salespersons' performance-reward expectancy was not supported.

TABLE 1
Pearson Correlations, Reliability Coefficients, Means, and Standard Deviations

	COS	AP	CA	UI	AO	EPE	PRE	SAT	OPERF	BPERF	MEAN	S.D.
COS	.82/21										7.65	.64
AP	-.222	.87/7									2.71	1.10
CA	.013	-.127	.97/4								5.01	1.53
UI	.189	-.105	.676	.90/7							5.09	1.19
AO	.263	-.003	.738	.744	.85/4						5.28	1.22
EPE	.136	.223	.172	.109	.248	.92/8					5.36	1.19
PRE	.072	.061	.429	.584	.588	.333	.94/14				4.86	1.12
SAT	.251	-.534	.416	.436	.333	.118	.304	.91/14			5.34	.90
OPERF	-.097	-.054	.065	-.080	.077	-.096	-.032	.105	-/5		3.11	1.13
BPERF	.087	-.137	.536	-.091	-.102	.023	-.026	.208	.376	.68/4	3.77	.60

The figures along the diagonal represent reliability coefficients (Cronbach=s alpha) and the number of items constituting each scale.
Abbreviations
COS - Customer Orientation; AP-Arbitrary and Punitive behavior; CA-Contingent approving behavior; UI-Upward Influencing behavior; AO-Achievement oriented behavior; EPE-Effort-Performance expectancy; PRE-Performance-Reward expectancy; SAT-Job Satisfaction; OPERF-Output performance; BPERF-Behavioral Performance.

FIGURE 1

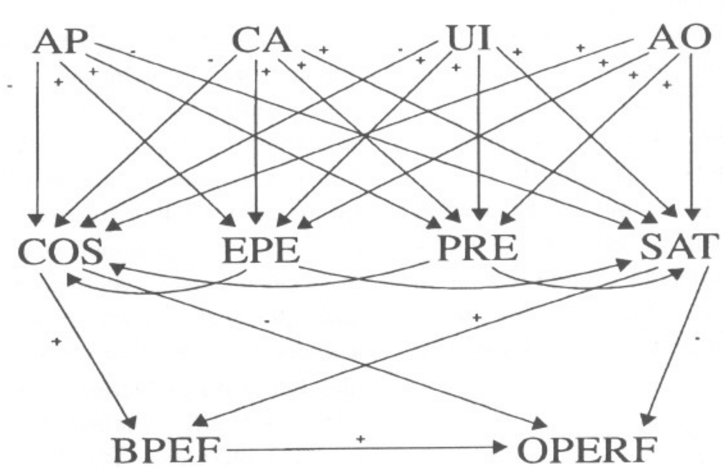
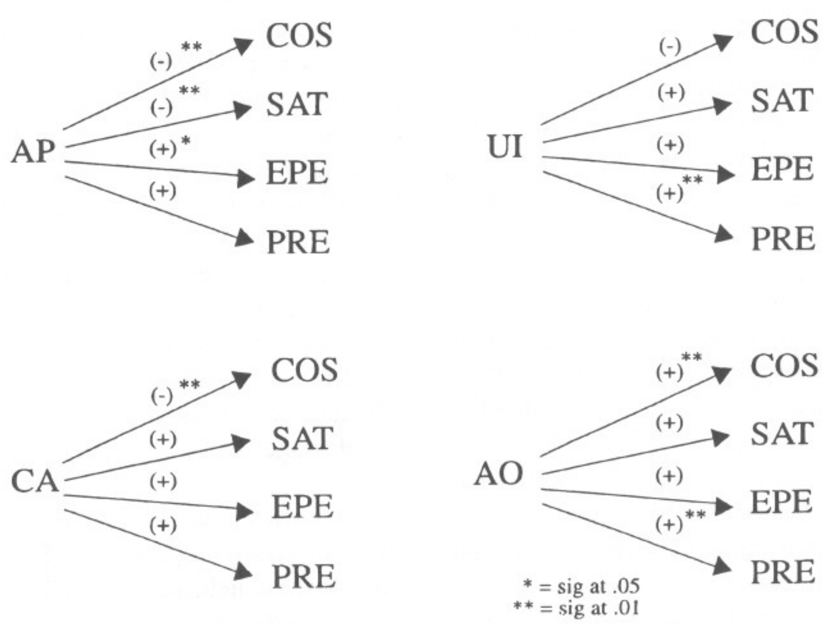


TABLE 2
Results of Ordinary Least Square Regressions (Standardized Regression Weights)
Dependent Variables

Independent Variable	COS Beta	SAT Beta	EPE Beta	PRE Beta	BPERF Beta	OPERF Beta
AP	-.30[b]	-.53[a]	.22[c]	.09	-	-
UI	.16	.24[d]	-.14	.37[a]	-	-
AO	.59[a]	-.08	.29[d]	.38[a]	-	-
CA	-.52[a]	.16	.07	-.09	-	-
EPE	.19[d]	.16[d]	-	-	-	-
PRE	-.19	.12	-	-	-	-
COS	-	-	-	-	.09	-.13
SAT	-	-	-	-	.17[d]	-.03
BPERF	-	-	-	-	-	.47[a]
OPERF	-	-	-	-	.45[a]	-
R^2	.26[b]	.49[a]	.12[c]	.40[a]	.24[a]	.22[a]
df	91	91	91	91	91	91

[a] $p < .001$ [b] $p < .01$ [c] $p < .05$ [d] $p < .10$

FIGURE 2



The second set of hypotheses posit that as supervisors' contingent approving behavior increases, salespersons' customer orientation decreases and their job satisfaction, effort-performance expectancy, and performance-reward expectancy increase. Of these hypothesized relationships just one is supported. As contingent approving behavior of the supervisor increases, the customer orientation of salespeople (b=-.52; p=.000) decreases.

The third set of hypotheses posit that the higher the supervisors' upward-influencing behavior the less customer orientation of salespeople and greater their job satisfaction, effort-performance expectancy, and performance-reward expectancy. As posited, when supervisors' upward influencing behavior increases, salespersons' job satisfaction (b=.18, p=.066) and their performance-reward expectancy (b=.35, p=.004) increase. The relationships pertaining to customer orientation and effort-performance expectancy were not supported by the data.

The fourth set of hypotheses posited that as supervisors' achievement-oriented behavior increases, salespersons' customer orientation, job satisfaction, effort-performance expectancy, and performance-reward expectancy increase. Results show broad support for these hypothesized relationships. As supervisors' achievement-oriented behavior increases, salespersons' customer orientation (b=.59, p=.000), effort-performance expectancy (b=.29, p=.092), and performance-reward expectancy (b=.34, p=.009) increase. However, their job satisfaction is not affected in the manner hypothesized.

The fifth group of hypotheses states that the greater the customer orientation, job satisfaction, and output performance of salespeople, the greater their behavioral performance. The results indicate that job satisfaction (b =.17, p =.074) and output performance (b =.45, p =.000) have the hypothesized relationships with behavioral performance. The posited relationship between customer orientation and behavioral performance was not supported. With regard to output performance the hypothesis stated that the greater the customer orientation and job satisfaction of salespeople the less their output performance. Also the greater their behavioral performance, the greater their output performance. As hypothesized, behavioral performance is positively related to output performance (b=.47, p=.000). The hypothesized relationships pertaining to customer orientation and job satisfaction were not supported. However, the beta coefficients were in the hypothesized (negative) direction.

DISCUSSION

Kohli (1985), contrary to expectations, found arbitrary and punitive behavior positively related to overall job satisfaction. On the other hand, our findings concluded just the opposite. As hypothesized, when arbitrary and punitive supervisory behavior increases, salesperson's customer orientation and job satisfaction decrease. It appears that managers' tactics to criticize, needle, and ride salespeople do not result in a salesperson feeling better but worse about their job. Job satisfaction and customer orientation are two key variables to developing positive morale among salespeople. Sales managers may get short-term results (i.e., salesperson meets quota) using these tactics but at the expense of long-term satisfaction of their customers. The difference between the 1985 sample and the 1995 sample may also explain the inconsistent results. Organizations today recruit salespeople to join the team and to be part of team building. Arbitrary and punitive punishment are not consistent with today's sales culture of relationship building. For instance, "the sales manager riding me for making mistakes" does not give the salesperson any indication how to change or improve on a past mistake. The team-building sales manager will show the salesperson how to correct past behaviors with training, self-studies, role plays, etc. Arbitrary and punitive punishment are consistent with traditional selling to meet quotas at any cost irrespective of how that damages the relationship with the customer.

The arbitrary and punitive supervisors tend to be very autocratic in nature. The significant EPE relationships indicates that salespeople understand that if they do not meet performance targets they will be punished. One comment heard from salespeople repeatedly, is "My sales managers want me to make more calls." One sales manager required all his salespeople to make ten or more extra calls per week. Most of these salespeople would estimate that these ten sales calls (more effort) *could* result in more sales (effort-performance expectancy). Hence, salespeople not wanting to be punished, will make the ten extra calls even though they hurt the quality of the other 25 calls they make during the week. It is interesting that the AP - PRE relationship is not significant. An actual incident may help to explain this finding. An autocratic sales manager announced at a weekly sales meeting that for the next month all salespeople would have to make five more calls per week which would result in an additional $50,000 in sales over the next month. The reward for the five additional sales calls per week and the $50,000 in sales would be a professional basketball game and dinner for the entire branch. At the end of the month the quota of calls were accomplished and $49,950 in sales were made. On the first day of the next month a $3,000 order came in and during that 31 day period $52,950 in sales were made. The manager refused to give the reward on the grounds the contest was not won in the 30 days allotted. As a result the sales manager lost the trust of the salespeople. As this incident shows, salespeople who work for arbitrary and punitive supervisors may not trust them to deliver on their word.

Only one of the second set of hypothesized relationships on contingent approving supervisors is supported. We hypothesized that the greater the contingent-approving behavior of the supervisor, the less the customer orientation of the salesperson and the greater their job satisfaction. Sales managers who focus just on the bottom line as a tool to assess salespeople may be forcing salespeople to use short-term tactics that don't translate into what is best for the customer. Sales managers who stress only output-based performance measures may cause salespeople to focus on behaviors that meet short-term sales targets and not long-term profit opportunities. For example, one salesperson trying to meet quota for a month had customers buy for the next two months hoping he could make up the difference the next month with new orders. Unfortunately, this tactic did not work and he eventually was putting pressure on all his customers to purchase double orders. This all came crashing down six months later when he signed zero orders one month. His customers had all they needed and a few left because of the pressure put on them to buy more than they needed. Sales managers must work with their salespeople by measuring both behavior- as well as outcome- based performance. The catastrophe described above could have been averted if the salesperson would have been allowed to come in under quota one month without punishment. The supervisor could have rewarded the salesperson on his ability to create goodwill and build future business that was in line for the months to come.

The contingent approving-satisfactory relationship was not supported. This may not be as surprising as it seems. If a supervisor only rewards outcome-based performance then the salesperson may feel some of the same pressures that cause customer orientation to decrease. Managers who use both performance measures and reward long-term sales tactics may find a more satisfied salesforce. Conversely, salespeople may become dissatisfied due to the pressure of continuous evaluation on output-based measures. It appears that this sample of salespeople believes that if they perform well, their supervisors will be in a position to influence higher management to reward them. Management must be consistent in how they reward good performance outcomes and support their salespeople in securing just rewards.

The findings addressing achievement-oriented behavior suggest that managers should set challenging goals consistent with improving customer orientation. If improving customer relationships is tied to behavioral performance outcomes then salespeople will be motivated to meet and exceed performance goals consistent with good customer orientation strategies. By setting high performance standards, salespeople who reach their goals are likely to be given rewards consistent with their expectations. Managers must work closely with upper management to properly reward high performing salespeople.

Organizations must emphasize both behavior- and output-based performance measures. Most organizations expect salespeople to meet both behavioral and output-related criteria. It is critical that organizations understand the linkage between behavioral and output-based measures. It appears both of these are needed to measure the full scope of performance. It also appears that a customer-oriented salesperson would relate better to behavioral based performance measures that focus on sales behaviors.

CONCLUSION

Certain limitations of the present research should be discussed. First, because the measures used are of the paper and pencil variety, method variance could influence the results observed. Thus, the results observed could be an artifact of the methods used to gather data. Future research must employ alternate modes of inquiry. It would also be worthwhile to develop more comprehensive measures of the behavior and output-based performance measures. As Kohli (1985) states a more comprehensive measure of punitive behavior is also still needed.

It appears that as sales cultures have changed over the past 15 years so have the attitudes of salespeople toward punishment as a means to motivate them. Kolhi's (1985) findings were not supported. Future research needs to look at this relationship to determine if a shift has taken place in regards to a salespersons' attitudes toward arbitrary and punitive supervisors. It is disappointing to find that customer orientation and job satisfaction do not have a significant relationship with output-based performance. Cravens et al. (1993) and Oliva and Young (1994) point out that the relationship will be weak since output performance is largely determined by situational factors. Future research should investigate such organizational antecedents as: organizational commitment, organizational fairness, and task-goal attributes as they relate to customer orientation.

Finally, it is interesting to note that the literature is largely silent on the output-based to behavior-based performance relationship. Historically, the literature for years has readily found support of a positive relationship between behavior-based to output-based performance. A good argument can be made for both of these relationships. We contend that the reverse also holds true. In support of our position, we reiterate the view of Cravens and his colleagues that behavior- and output-based performance systems should be viewed along a continuum and that sales force performance systems include both behavioral and output components (1993, p.47). Thus it is entirely plausible that even as salespeople perform well on output-based criteria they may come to realize that it in order to achieve an even higher level of output performance they would need to improve their performance on such behavior-based criteria as time management, making effective presentations, negotiating well, and keeping good records. For example, if a salesperson generates a 20 percent increase in new accounts in a year she can be expected to realize that improved time management is called for simply to insure that customers are called on at regular intervals. Similarly as a salesperson's customer base increases she will recognize the need to maintain an accurate and timely database of her customers and their needs. Future research should address this issue.

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