

Adaptive Selling Behavior: A New Way of Approaching Adaptive Selling and Its Effects

Atsushi Inuzuka
Nagoya University

— Review of —
**Integrative
Business &
Economics**
— Research —

ABSTRACT

A new way of approaching adaptive selling is proposed in this paper. Adaptive selling behavior (ASB) explains the changing of sales approach when the salesperson encounters different sales situations. Data from 968 salespeople selling commercial vehicles revealed that ASB generally works well in practice. However, it is observed that a sales approach (i.e., *personal contact*) related to adaptive selling does not directly contribute to sales performance. Developing personal contact is not always effective because customers might have different personal preferences regarding such a sales approach. By contrast, *impartial information* might be a universal sales approach for closing a deal when the salesperson lacks the skills to change the entire sales approach. This study concludes that *customer orientation* is effective for ASB, implying that acknowledging customer concerns is the basis of improving sales performance.

Keywords: Adaptive selling; Sales approach; Customer situation; Customer needs.

Received 22 November 2019 | Revised 30 January 2020 | Accepted 20 February 2020.

1. INTRODUCTION

“What makes a good salesperson?” remains to be a challenging question in the modern society (Webster, 1968; Churchill *et al.*, 1985; Porter, Wiener & Frankwick, 2003; Singh & Koshy, 2010). Past research attempting to identify the characteristics (traits) and competencies of a successful salesperson yielded mixed findings. Several approaches, such as those focusing on knowledge structures (Weitz, Sujana, & Sujana, 1986; Szymanski, 1988; Spiro & Weitz, 1990), scripts (Leigh & McGraw, 1989; Leong, Busch, & John, 1989), and the number of clues (Szymanski & Churchill, 1990) and their weights (Macintosh *et al.*, 1992), showed unsatisfactory results. For instance, Sujana, Sujana, and Bettman (1988) explored whether prospective customers can be categorized and differentiated, but they found insignificant differences between successful and unsuccessful salespeople based on this approach. Even if significant differences in characteristics between successful and unsuccessful salespeople can be identified, there is a lack of underlying theories for explaining such differences.

The lack of conclusive findings regarding the characteristics of successful salespeople can be caused by incorrect research methodologies. For instance, several methods of comparing the knowledge structures between successful and unsuccessful salespeople are based upon the assumption that successful and unsuccessful salespeople are characterized by distinctively different knowledge structures. However, considering

the possibility that a successful salesperson may also yield a low sales level under certain circumstances, it is possible that there might not be a universal knowledge structure assuring a high level of sales. In other words, the effectiveness of a knowledge structure might vary with the specific situations experienced between the salesperson and his/her customers (Evans, 1963; Spiro & Perreult, 1979; Weitz, 1981; Szymanski, 1988). As such, the salesperson's ability in coping with different situations might be a more critical factor.

In this regard, Weitz *et al.* (1986) proposed the concept of adaptive selling, which is designated to explain the knowledge structure under different sales situations, sales behaviors, and related information acquisition skills. This concept conjectures that a salesperson's effectiveness is dependent not only on the knowledge structure itself, but also on the "adaptiveness" when the salesperson encounters different sales situations. Based on this concept, the effectiveness of sales activities relies on the salesperson's ability in changing his/her sales approach in accordance with customer feedbacks. Although the idea of adaptiveness is appealing to practitioners and researchers (Robinson *et al.*, 2002), past evidence for its effectiveness lacks reliability because its effectiveness was mostly assessed by salespeople's self-evaluations.

To address the above research issues, the aim of this paper is to propose a new way of estimating the effectiveness of adaptive selling behavior (ASB) and investigate how a salesperson can approach it. The concept of adaptive selling in this study is partly different from the original concept of ASB because the former is based on behavioral changes under different sales situations rather than the salesperson's subjective evaluations. This study reveals the real effect of adaptive selling after controlling for the effects of different situations faced by the salesperson and his/her customers, thereby answering the question why a salesperson using the same knowledge structure may attain different sales levels under different sales situations (Webster, 1968).

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

"The practice of adaptive selling is defined as the altering of sales behaviors during a customer interaction or across customer interactions based on perceived information about the nature of the selling situation" (Weitz *et al.*, 1986, p.175). This concept of adaptive selling is recognized as the opposite of the "standardized communication approach" like the "one-size-fits-all" selling strategy.

The 16-item adaptive selling scale (ADAPTS) is the first measure for evaluating the effectiveness of adaptive selling proposed by Spiro and Weitz (1990). Instead of being a unidimensional measure, ADAPTS contains the following five interrelated sub-dimensions: (1) the salesperson's recognition that different selling approaches are needed under different sales situations (e.g., a unique sales approach is required for each customer); (2) the salesperson's confidence in his/her ability in using a variety of sales approaches (e.g., "I can easily use a variety of sales approaches"); (3) the salesperson's confidence in his/her ability in altering the sales approach during his/her interaction with a customer (e.g., "When I feel that my sales approach is not working, I can easily switch to another approach"); (4) the salesperson's collection of information about the sales situation to facilitate adaption (e.g., "I am very sensitive to

the needs of my customers”); and (5) the salesperson’s actual use of different sales approaches under different sales situations (e.g., “I like to experiment with different sales approaches under different situations”).

Weitz *et al.* (1986) applied ADAPTS in their study and reported a significant correlation of it with salespeople’s self-rated sales performance. However, ADAPTS was found to be insignificantly related to manager-rated performance. This suggests that the benefits of the adaptive selling approach might not outweigh the costs of practicing it under certain sales situations, and that the crux of adaptive selling is not about the degree of the change in sales approach *per se*, but about the degree of the *match* between the sales approach and the actual sales situation. For example, changing the sales approach customer-by-customer may not be desirable when the salesperson is facing the same sales situation with different customers. Similarly, using the same sales approach across customers would not be appropriate if customer needs vary substantially from customers to customers. In other words, the effect of adaptive selling for each salesperson should be measured by the change in sales approach after controlling for the varying sale situations and customer needs. This notion is supported by Porter *et al.*’s (2003) finding of a moderating effect of sales situations on the effectiveness of adaptive selling in improving sales performance.

Taking the above into consideration, the ASB proposed in this study is defined as the degree of the change in sales approach when the salesperson is confronted with different sales situations. Equation (1) shows the underlying idea of how the effectiveness of ASB is measured. For this purpose, each salesperson should respond to our questions with reference to at least two customers. When a salesperson answers the questions about customers A and B, what we need to measure are: (1) the salesperson’s performance; (2) the salesperson’s sales approaches for customer A (i.e., $approach_A$) and B (i.e., $approach_B$), respectively; (3) the sales situations for customer A ($situation_A$) and B ($situation_B$), respectively; and (4) the needs of customer A ($needs_A$) and B ($needs_B$), respectively. Using these variables, the coefficient for the change in sales approach (β_1) in Equation (1) represents the effect of ASB on sales performance after controlling for the effects of different sales situations (β_2) and customer needs (β_3).

$$\begin{aligned} sales\ performance &= \alpha + \sum_i \beta_{1i} |approach_{Ai} - approach_{Bi}| \\ &+ \sum_j \beta_{2j} |situation_{Aj} - situation_{Bj}| \\ &+ \sum_k \beta_{3k} |needs_{Ak} - needs_{Bk}| + \varepsilon \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

where: $approach_{xi}$ = degree of sales approach i for customer x
 $situation_{xj}$ = degree of situation j for customer x
 $needs_{xk}$ = degree of needs k for customer x

We believe that the above method has several advantages over ADAPTS. First, ASB focuses on the behavioral aspects of salespeople rather than subjective evaluations, which allows a more accurate measurement of the effectiveness of adaptive selling. Second, the B scores are subtracted from the A scores in our method, which reduces

the likelihood of a serious common source bias when estimating the effects of adaptive selling on sales performance. Third, our method considers the sub-dimensions with a range of different sales approaches while ADAPTS considers only a general tendency of ASB. Therefore, by using multi-dimensional data on at least two customers, our method provides a more accurate answer regarding why the same salesperson might yield different sales levels under different sales situations. In the rest of this article, we report the empirical findings on the effectiveness of ASB based on the above method.

3. METHODS

3.1 Site

We collected data on salespeople from a Japanese commercial vehicle sales company (Company X) through the company's intranet. The survey was conducted in two steps. In the first step, each salesperson was asked to provide one successful (sold) case in which the customer bought Company X's products after a sales call, and one unsuccessful (unsold) case in which the customer did not buy. In the second step, each salesperson was asked to list customer needs, sales situations, and his/her self-rated performance. 972 responses were received from the 995 salespeople of the company, which gives a 97% response rate. After eliminating the responses with missing observations, 968 responses are eventually included in the sample of this analysis.

3.2 Dependent variable: sales performance

In this part, each salesperson was asked to rate the following four items regarding sales performance on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 = completely untrue to 6 = completely true: (1) sales quantity ("I can sell more vehicles compared with other members"); (2) closing rate ("I have a higher closing rate compared with other members"); (3) customer needs ("I am better in grasping customer needs compared with other members"); and (4) customer relationships ("I am more skillful in building a good relationship with customers compared with other members). After conducting a principal component analysis with these four variables, only one component was found with an eigenvalue greater than 1 (the factor loading was 2.66, which accounts for 65.3% of all variance). The resulting factor score was used in the analysis to represent the overall performance.

3.3 Independent variable: sales approach

Table 1 shows summary statistics for the items used to measure the effectiveness of different sales approaches. This is a modification of the semantic differential scale method that utilizes a scale between two polar opposites. In this study, we set two contrasting sales approaches A and B; and the respondent (salesperson) was asked to choose the one that best matched his/her sales approach applied to each customer on a continuum between A and B. The respondent's choice was then converted into a numerical scale ranging from 1 (completely A) to 6 (completely B). Since each respondent was asked to rate respectively in the cases of successful and unsuccessful customers, the sample size on the selected sales approaches is 1,936 (i.e., twice the number of respondents).

Table 1. Items Measuring Sales Approaches and Factor Analysis

Approach A	Approach B	Factor 1 Personal contact	Factor 2 Customer orientation	Factor 3 Impartial information
Prioritized preparation over visiting	Prioritized visiting over preparation	0.748	-0.153	0.115
Presented products with figures/facts	Presented products with an emotional appeal	0.686	0.224	-0.139
Maintained a business relationship	Tried to build a personal relationship	0.682	0.161	0.081
Valued the customer's opinion for buying	Made personal suggestions for buying	0.081	0.835	0.055
Sold products the customer wanted	Sold products beneficial for the customer	0.093	0.806	0.132
Displayed our products only	Displayed our products as well as those of our rivals	0.048	0.030	0.796
Explained only upsides of products	Explained both the upsides and downsides of products	0.007	0.143	0.784
Squared factor loadings after varimax rotation		1.512	1.468	1.308
Cumulative proportion of the variance accounted for		21.6	42.6	61.2

N=1,936. Each number represents factor loading toward approach B.

After a varimax rotation, we found three factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1. Factor 1 corresponds to the items emphasizing personal contact and is therefore labelled as “personal contact.” Factor 2 is related to acknowledging customer concerns rather than self-concerns and thus is labelled as “customer orientation.” The final factor is about providing information not only for selling Company X’s products but also for supporting customer decisions, so it is labelled as “impartial information.” We regarded these items as the three basic sales approaches, and then computed the absolute differences between the factor scores respectively for the cases of successful and unsuccessful customers. For example, when a salesperson’s three factor scores are estimated as 0.13, -0.88, and -0.65 in the case of a successful customer and 2.12, -1.33, and 0.17 in the case of an unsuccessful customer, the absolute differences are calculated as 1.99, 0.45, and 0.82, respectively. In addition, for the purpose of estimating the differences in the overall sales approach between customers, we calculated the Euclidean distance by plotting the three scores in a three-dimensional space based on Equation (2). Using the method as described above, the overall difference is 2.20.

overall difference in sales approach

$$= \sqrt{(SA_{1S} - SA_{1F})^2 + (SA_{2S} - SA_{2F})^2 + (SA_{3S} - SA_{3F})^2} \quad (2)$$

where SA_{nS} : degree of sales approach n for a successful customer

SA_{nF} : degree of sales approach n for an unsuccessful customer

3.4 Control variables: customer situation, customer needs, and work experience

Following Weitz (1978) and Homburg, Wieseke, and Bornemann (2009), the variables indicating different sales situations and customer needs were set by interviews with representatives of Company X. In total, six items for sales situations (Table 2) and eight items for customer needs (Table 3) were extracted. The respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they felt that their successful or unsuccessful customers were facing each of the sales situations and customer needs as shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Items Measuring Sales Situations

Q) Choose the answer that you think best matches this customer on the continuum between opinions A and B.

Items	Opinion A	Completely	Almost	Slightly	Slightly	Almost	Completely	Opinion B
		A	A	A	B	B	B	
(1) Competitiveness in an industry	Competitive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not competitive
(2) Firm's growth rate	High growth rate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low growth rate
(2) Firm's profitability	High profitability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low profitability
(4) Firm's stability	Stable, low risk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unstable, high risk
(5) Firm's culture	Innovative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conservative
(6) Firm's power to its suppliers	High power	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low power

Note: Each answer was converted into a numerical scale ranging from 1 (completely A) to 6 (completely B).

Table 3. Items Measuring Customer Needs

Q) Choose the answer that you think best matches this customer's needs.

Items	Completely	Moderately	Slightly	Slightly	Moderately	Completely
	neglected	neglected	neglected	emphasized	emphasized	emphasized
(1) Streamlining of management (cost reduction)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Fuel cost reduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Drivers' skill-up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Securing stable work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Efficient drive operation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) Good relationships with suppliers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7) Implementing high-value-added service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(8) Corporate image improvement / Social responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: Each answer was converted into a numerical scale ranging from 1 (completely neglected) to 6 (completely emphasized).

4. RESULTS

The effectiveness of ASB in improving sale performance was estimated using two models. Model 1 provides the overall differences between the three sales approaches, while Model 2 estimates the effectiveness of each approach. Multicollinearity was avoided because the maximum variance inflation factor values are both at an acceptable level (1.147 in Model 1 and 1.169 in Model 2).

Table 4 reports the results of the regression analysis. In Model 1, the coefficient on the overall difference is positive and significant, which indicates that ASB positively impacts sales performance even after controlling for variations in sales situations. Although a different method is used, the overall effectiveness of ASB is generally consistent with findings from past research based on the original concept of adaptive selling (Franke & Park, 2006). The effectiveness of ASB seems to vary across different sales approaches. In Model 2, positive and significant contributions of ASB to performance are observed only when the *personal contact* and *customer orientation* sales approaches are used. The results suggest that the impact of ASB on sales performance using the *impartial information* approach is statistically insignificant.

Table 4. Effects of ASB and the Three Approaches

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (null model)
Independent variables: (sales approach)				
	overall_diff : Euclidean distance	0.086 **	—	—
	abs_diff : personal contact	—	0.065 *	—
	abs_diff : customer orientation	—	0.066 *	—
	abs_diff : impartial information	—	0.002	—
Control variables: (customer situation)				
	abs_diff : competitiveness in an industry	-0.024	-0.025	-0.018
	abs_diff : firm's growth rate	-0.002	-0.001	-0.003
	abs_diff : firm's profitability	0.068	0.069	0.069
	abs_diff : firm's stability	-0.057	-0.059	-0.049
	abs_diff : firm's culture	0.118 ***	0.119 ***	0.122 ***
	abs_diff : firm's power to its suppliers	-0.049	-0.049	-0.042
(customer needs)				
	abs_diff : streamlining of management	0.015	0.012	0.018
	abs_diff : fuel cost reduction	-0.083 *	-0.082 *	-0.076 *
	abs_diff : drivers' skill-up	0.063	0.065	0.066
	abs_diff : securing stable work	-0.022	-0.020	-0.023
	abs_diff : efficient drive operation	0.062	0.059	0.065
	abs_diff : good relationships with suppliers	0.001	0.000	0.003
	abs_diff : implementing high-value-added service	0.007	0.011	0.013
	abs_diff : corporate image improvement, CSR	-0.038	-0.039	-0.036
(work experience)				
	LN (number of years worked for the company)	0.276 ***	0.277 ***	0.271 ***
		adj. R ²	0.099	0.099
		F	7.629 ***	6.919 ***
			7.606 ***	

Note: N=968 (* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001). Numeric values represent the standardized partial coefficient.

5. DISCUSSION

It should be stressed that what we have estimated in this study is the effectiveness of *changing* the sales approach (ASB) rather than just the effectiveness of a sales approach *per se*. Table 5 reports the results of the regression analysis in which the *absolute difference* of each variable is replaced by the *average score* from the cases of successful and unsuccessful customers.

The results suggest that changing the sales approach is generally effective. In particular, the *impartial information* and the *customer orientation* approaches have significantly positive impacts on sales performance. This implies that providing impartial information to customers (i.e., the *impartial information* approach) is effective in closing a deal. However, the *personal contact* approach is found to be ineffective.

Table 5. Direct Sales Effects of the Three Approaches

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (null model)
Independent variables:				
(sales approach)	averaged score of the three approaches	0.127 ***	—	—
	average : personal contact	—	0.023	—
	average : customer orientation	—	0.111 ***	—
	average : impartial information	—	0.076 *	—
Control variables:				
(customer situation)	average : competitiveness in an industry	-0.055	-0.059	-0.068 *
	average : firm's growth rate	0.003	0.004	0.003
	average : firm's profitability	-0.050	-0.051	-0.045
	average : firm's stability	-0.040	-0.039	-0.040
	average : firm's culture	0.024	0.023	0.025
	average : firm's power to its suppliers	-0.084 *	-0.086 *	-0.089 *
(customer needs)	average : streamlining of management	-0.011	-0.012	-0.009
	average : fuel cost reduction	0.034	0.034	0.047
	average : drivers' skill-up	0.001	0.006	0.009
	average : securing stable work	-0.036	-0.038	-0.036
	average : efficient drive operation	-0.022	-0.030	-0.022
	average : good relationships with suppliers	0.038	0.039	0.039
	average : implementing high-value-added service	0.042	0.045	0.049
	average : corporate image improvement, CSR	0.002	0.000	0.004
(work experience)	LN (number of years worked for the company)	0.271 ***	0.264 ***	0.267 ***
adj. R ²		0.112	0.114	0.097
F		8.605 ***	7.909 ***	7.963 ***

Note: N=968 (* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001). Numeric values represent the standardized partial coefficient.

Based on a comparison of the results from Model 1 between Tables 4 and 5, it appears that employing the three sales approaches and switching between them on a customer-by-customer basis is generally effective. However, differences in effectiveness still exist across the three sales approaches if we focus on the effectiveness of each individual approach separately (in Model 2). As summarized in Table 6, the *personal contact* approach is not always effective probably because customers have different personal preferences regarding such an approach (e.g., some customers might not be comfortable with building a personal relationship with the salesperson). This notion is also supported by the effectiveness of ASB (i.e., changing the sales approach customer-by-customer) based on the *personal contact* approach. By contrast, the *impartial information* approach appears to be a universal approach for closing a deal when the salesperson lacks the skills to change the entire sales approach. The finding that the *customer orientation* approach is effective in terms of both ASB and direct sales effect suggests that acknowledging customer concerns is the basis of improving sales performance.

Table 6. Summary of the Effects of the Three Sales Approaches

<i>Sales approach</i>	ASB (Table 4)	Direct effect (Table 5)
Personal contact	○	n.s.
Customer orientation	○	◎
Impartial information	n.s.	○

Note, ◎ : strongly effective, ○ : effective, n.s. : not significant.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper begins with the question of whether ASB is effective after controlling for the effects of changing sales situations and customer needs. From the analysis, we can reasonably conclude that ASB is generally effective. However, this study identifies a sales approach (i.e., *personal contact*) that directly contributes to sales performance through ASB but its direct effect on sales performance is insignificant. It is also confirmed that the *customer orientation* approach is the basis for attaining better sales performance.

The different effects of different sales approaches on sales performance cannot be easily identified using the original ADAPTS. Using our method, we explore the effects of several sub-dimensions of adaptive selling. However, this study has several limitations. First, as Donaldson and Grant-Vallone (2002) pointed out, self-rater bias is often a threat to research validity. To reveal the actual effects of ASB, a more accurate measurement method should be employed in future research. Second, this study's findings might be exclusive to the context of a Japanese market especially the market for commercial vehicles. Despite these limitations, we believe that this study is a step forward to uncover the structures underlying the concept of adaptive selling.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author expresses sincere gratitude to all those who were involved in this study, including the survey organizers and the respondents from Company X. The author thanks the reviewers for their constructive comments. This study was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant No. JP18H00884.

REFERENCES

- [1] Churchill, G. A., Ford, N. M., Hartley, S. W., & Walker, O. C. (1985), "The determinants of salesperson performance: A meta-analysis," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 22(2), 103-118.
- [2] Donaldson, S. I., & Grant-Vallone, E. J. (2002), "Understanding self-report bias in organizational behavior research," *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 17(2), 245-260.
- [3] Evans, F. B. (1963), "Selling as a dyadic relationship—a new approach," *American Behavioral Scientist*, 6(9), 76-79.
- [4] Frank, G. R., & Park. J. (2006), "Adaptive selling behavior and customer orientation: A meta-analysis," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 43(4), 693-702.

- [5] Homburg, C., Wieseke, J., & Bornemann, T. (2009), "Implementing the marketing concept at the employee–customer interface: The role of customer need knowledge," *Journal of Marketing*, 73(4), 64-81.
- [6] Leigh, T. W., & McGraw, P. F. (1989), "Mapping the procedural knowledge of industrial sales personnel: A script-theoretic investigation," *Journal of Marketing*, 53(1), 16-33.
- [7] Leong, S. M., Busch, P. S., & John, D. R. (1989), "Knowledge bases and salesperson effectiveness: A script-theoretic analysis," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 26(2), 164-178.
- [8] Macintosh, G., Anglin, K. A., Szymanski, D. M., & Gentry, J. W. (1992), "Relationship development in selling: A cognitive analysis," *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 12(4), 23-34.
- [9] Porter, S. S., Wiener, J. L., & Frankwick, G. L. (2003), "The moderating effect of selling situation on the adaptive selling strategy-selling effectiveness relationship," *Journal of Business Research*, 56(4), 275-281.
- [10] Robinson, L., Marshall, G. W., Moncrief, W. C., & Lassk, F. G. (2002), "Toward a shortened measure of adaptive selling," *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 22(2), 111-119.
- [11] Singh, R., & Koshy, A. (2010), "Determinants of B2B salespersons' performance and effectiveness: A review and synthesis of literature," *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 25(7), 535-546.
- [12] Spiro, R. L., & Perreault, W. D. (1979), "Influence use by industrial salesmen: Influence-strategy mixes and situational determinants," *Journal of Business*, 52(3), 435-455.
- [13] Spiro, R. L., & Weitz, B. A. (1990), "Adaptive selling: Conceptualization, measurement, and nomological validity," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 27(1), 61-69.
- [14] Sujan, H., Sujan, M., & Bettman, J. R. (1988), "Knowledge structure differences between more effective and less effective salespeople," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 25(1), 81-86.
- [15] Szymanski, D. M. (1988), "Determinants of selling effectiveness: The importance of declarative knowledge to the personal selling concept," *Journal of Marketing*, 52(1), 64-77.
- [16] Szymanski, D. M., & Churchill, G. A. (1990), "Client evaluation cues: A comparison of successful and unsuccessful salespeople," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 27(2), 163-174.
- [17] Webster, F. E. (1968), "Interpersonal communication and salesman effectiveness," *Journal of Marketing*, 32(3), 7-13.
- [18] Weitz, B. A. (1978), "The relationship between salesperson performance and understanding of customer decision making," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 15 (November), 501–516.
- [19] Weitz, B. A. (1981), "Effectiveness in sales interactions: A contingency framework," *Journal of Marketing*, 45(1), 85-103.
- [20] Weitz, B. A., Sujan, H., & Sujan, M. (1986), "Knowledge, motivation, and adaptive behavior: A framework for improving selling effectiveness," *Journal of Marketing*, 50(4), 174-191.