The Effect of Perceptual Differences between Firm Market Orientation and Salesperson Customer Orientation on Salesperson Performance

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A national random sample of industrial salespeople was surveyed to examine whether a long-term profit focus should be a component of market orientation, and to study the effects of salespersons' perceptions of the differences between firm market orientation and salesperson customer orientation (DIFF) on salesperson performance. The results indicated that DIFF was unrelated to salesperson outcome performance, but was significantly negatively related to selling behavioral performance. Consequently, when firm orientation is not aligned with salesperson orientation, salespeople's selling behavioral performance, such as, utilization of technical knowledge and sales presentation quality suffers. The study underscores the importance of assessing the perceptual congruence of firm market orientation and salesperson customer orientation of salespeople. The managerial implications of these findings were discussed and several directions for future research were proposed.

Over the last two decades, the effects of market orientation (hereafter referred to as MO) have attracted a great deal of research attention. These studies have focused on the antecedents and consequences of MO (e.g., Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005; Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Narver and Slater 1990), and the moderators or mediators of the relationships between MO and its consequences (e.g., Hult, Ketchen, Jr., Slater 2005; Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005; Im and Workman, Jr. 2004; Grewal and Tansuhaj 2001; Han, Kim, and Srivastava 1998). However, two major gaps exist in the MO literature. First, researchers have not answered whether the conceptualization of MO should include a *long-term profit focus*, as originally hypothesized by Narver and Slater (1990). Second, the extensive body of literature on MO has been primarily developed at the organizational level with the respondents being top or mid-level managers. Although salespeople are responsible for implementing the marketing concept (Saxe and Weitz 1982), the effects of salespeople's perceptions of firm MO on sales performance have not been studied. Studies that did measure salespeople's perceptions of firm MO (e.g., Siguaw, Brown, and Widing 1994; Mengüç 1996) focused on its effects on role perceptions and job attitudes. Although a rich body of literature exists on the MO→performance relationship from managers' perspective (e.g., Hult, Ketchen, Jr., and Slater 2005), there is a need to study this relationship from salespeople's point of view.

In their boundary spanning role, salespeople represent the selling organization to the customers. That is, customers infer the customer orientation (hereafter referred to as CO) of the firm from the behaviors of salespeople who interact with them. Consequently, it is important that salespeople's CO matches the selling firm's MO. Highly market oriented firms need their salespeople to be highly customer oriented to successfully implement the firm's strategies. Although intuitively appealing, empirical studies show that there might be a lack of perceptual congruence between firm MO and salesperson CO, and the difference between firm MO and salesperson CO (hereafter referred to as DIFF) may affect salespeople. For example, Mengüç (1996) reported that as DIFF decreased, salespeople perceived less role conflict and role ambiguity, and reported higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Since role stress, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are related to sales performance (e.g., Onyemah 2008; Jaramillo, Mulki, and Marshall 2005; Brown and Peterson 1993), DIFF is expected to affect sales performance. The purpose of this study was to reconceptualize MO as

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a five-component model, and to examine the direct effect of DIFF on sales performance. Although past studies have identified several antecedents of MO, such as, top management emphasis and risk aversion, interdepartmental conflict, and organizational systems, such as, formalization and centralization (Jaworski and Kohli 1993), the current study excluded these variables since these antecedents are typically beyond the control of salespeople.

BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

Market Orientation

As a business philosophy, the role of MO in sustaining long-term profitability has been discussed over the last four decades (e.g., Levitt 1960; Shapiro 1988; Webster 1988). A market oriented firm implements the marketing concept by generating, disseminating, and utilizing information on changing customer needs by engaging in behaviors that reflect a combination of customer orientation, competitor orientation, and interfunctional coordination (Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Narver and Slater 1990). Thus, highly market oriented firms attempt to outperform their competitors by utilizing market information to provide superior value to their customers.

In their seminal work on MO, Narver and Slater (1990, p. 22) hypothesized that "market orientation is a one-dimension construct consisting of three behavioral components and two decision criteria – customer orientation, competitor orientation, interfunctional coordination, a long-term focus, and a profit objective – and that each of the five can be measured reliably with a multi-item scale." In their study, the authors focused only on the three behavioral components since the measures of the two decision criteria were not reliable. The authors called for future research to determine "whether the two decision criteria in fact are two components of a one-dimension construct, two components of a second dimension, or neither."

The resolution of the factor structure of MO is important since the vast literature on MO has assumed that business performance, as measured by sales and profitability, is a consequence of MO. For example, based on an analysis of longitudinal data, Kumar et al. (2011) concluded that the positive relationship between market orientation and sales and profitability decreases over time. The authors concluded that market oriented organizations focus more customer retention than acquisition thereby rendering the role of MO as a failure preventer rather than a success producer. If a long-term profit focus should be modeled as a component of MO, studying the relationship between MO and profitability is conceptually redundant.

Scholarly research has attempted to address the dimensionality of MO. For example, Siguaw and Diamantopoulos (1995) explored the dimensionality of the original 21-item MO scale proposed by Narver and Slater (1990) and found that long-term profit orientation is a dimension of MO in addition to the behavioral dimensions of customer orientation, competitor orientation, and interfunctional coordination. Deng and Dart (1994) developed and validated a four component MO scale where profit orientation was one of the dimensions. The coefficient α of their 5-item Profit Emphasis scale exceeded 0.70. Finally, Lado, Maydeu-Olivares, and Rivera (1998, p. 34) expanded the domain of MO to include the extent to which "firms use information about their stakeholders to co-ordinate and implement strategic actions." Their results indicated that a distributor orientation and an environmental orientation can be included in an overall MO dimension. Consequently, empirical evidence exists for MO to include additional components beyond the three traditional behavioral components of customer orientation, competitor orientation, and interfunctional coordination. In order to outperform competitors, market orientation needs to create economic wealth (profits) for the firm in the long-run, and therefore, the two decision criteria of a long-term focus and a profit emphasis should be closely related to the three behavioral components (Narver and Slater 1990). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

> *Hypothesis 1: Market orientation is a one-dimension construct consisting of five components, namely, customer orientation, competitor orientation, interfunctional coordination, a long-term focus, and a profit emphasis.*

Difference between Perceived MO and CO (Diff)

Although top management is responsible for developing a market oriented culture, salespeople are responsible for implementing the market oriented strategies. Since highly market oriented firms "effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviors for the creation of superior value for buyers" (Narver and Slater 1990, p. 21), salespeople representing these firms should be able to communicate and deliver these values to their customers. That is, salespeople need to be customer oriented to implement the strategies of market oriented firms.

CO refers to "the degree to which salespeople practice the marketing concept by trying to help their customers make purchase decisions that will satisfy customer needs" (Saxe and Weitz 1982, p. 344). According to Saxe and Weitz (1982), highly customer oriented salespeople implement the marketing concept by helping customer assess their needs, and by offering products that will satisfy those needs without using manipulative influence techniques or applying high pressure.

Past studies on the relationship between firm MO and salesperson CO has yielded different conclusions. Although firm MO should encourage market oriented behaviors (Homburg and Pflesser 2000), Farrell (2005) concluded that market-oriented values had no effect on salesperson CO. In contrast, Pelham (2010) reported that salesperson perception of firm MO indirectly affects salesperson CO. However, Jones, Busch, and Dacin (2003) found no relationship between salesperson perception of firm MO and salesperson CO. More importantly, Jones et al. (2003, p. 334) noted that sales manager's perception of firm MO was unrelated to salesperson perception of firm MO and concluded that "salespeople perceive the actions of the firm separately from the actions of the sales manager." More recently, Shoemaker and Pelham (2013) concluded that salesperson perception of firm MO moderates the relationship between salesperson CO and salespersons' retention rates of customers. Customer oriented salespeople were found to outperform their colleagues when their perception of firm MO was low. However, firm MO did not moderate the relationship between salesperson CO and percent of quota achieved. Consequently, it appears that researchers should focus on the effects of differences between salesperson perception of firm MO and salesperson CO since salespeople may or may not choose to align their own orientation with that of the firm.

The extant literature has claimed that for a variety of reasons, there may be differences in salespeople's perception of firm MO and their own CO. Siguaw, Brown, and Widing II (1994, p. 109) argued that as boundary spanners, "salesperson's loyalties can be divided when the policies and programs of the organization are perceived to be at odds with the needs and demands of his or her customers." Further, their separation from the home office and close proximity to customers may also make salespeople more loyal to customers than their employers. Consequently, salespeople may become more customer oriented than what the selling firm dictates by its level of MO, resulting in a difference or DIFF. Alternatively, DIFF may also result from salespeople taking advantage of a lack of close supervision and behaving opportunistically, thereby being less customer oriented than what is desired by the MO of the selling firm (Anderson and Oliver 1987). In either case, as DIFF decreases, the orientations of the selling firm and salespeople gets more aligned. Since employee perceptions of organizational market orientation significantly affect their information acquisition from customers (Celuch, Kasouf, and Strieter 2000), salespeople should be more successful in identifying and satisfying customer needs as DIFF decreases. This should result in higher sales performance. Formally stated:

> *Hypothesis 2: The smaller the difference between the market orientation of the firm and the customer orientation of the salesperson, the greater the salesperson performance.*

Control Variables

Regardless of the level of DIFF, salespeople are expected to expend effort to achieve their sales objectives. The expectancy theory of motivation argues that the "*level of effort* expended by a salesperson on each *job related task* will lead to *some level of performance on some performance dimension*" (Johnston and Marshall 2011, p. 217). Working hard refers to the level of effort expended by a salesperson, and conceptualized as the amount of time spent in trying to achieve sales goals

(Holmes and Srivastava 2002; Sujan 1986). As the expectancy theory of motivation predicts, working hard should result in greater salesperson performance. That is, the more time salespeople spend on various sales activities, such as, sales calls on present customers, sales calls on prospects, etc., the more they should sell. Empirical studies have supported the positive relationship between working hard and salesperson performance (e.g., Sujan, Weiz, and Kumar 1994; Rapp et al. 2006; Holmes and Srivastava 2002). Thus, working hard was included as a control variable.

According to the expectancy theory of motivation, working smart refers to the accuracy of salespeople's expectancy estimates. Therefore, "working smart requires that the salesperson have an accurate understanding of what activities are most critical – and therefore should receive the greatest effort – for concluding a sale" (Johnston and Marshall 2011, p. 219). While working hard refers to the level of effort, working smart involves deciding on what activities the effort should be expended. Scholars have often conceptualized working smart as the degree to which salespeople practice adaptive selling (e.g., Rapp et al. 2006, Holmes and Srivastava 2002; Sujan, Weitz, and Sujan 1988), and the extent to which they plan for the sales call (Rapp et al. 2006). Thus, even when firm MO and salesperson CO are misaligned, salespeople can achieve superior performance by working smart. Consequently, working smart was also included as a control variable.

The total sales experience of salespeople and the annual sales of the selling organizations were also included as control variables. Selling experience has been found to be positively related to sales performance (e.g., Giacobbe et al. 2006), and researchers have used selling experience as a control variable (Jaramillo et al. 2009). The annual sales was used as a proxy for firm size, as large selling organizations may have more resources for salespeople to implement the marketing concept than their smaller counterparts.

METHOD

Sample and Data Collection Procedures

The variables in the current study were measured from the salesperson's perspective using a self-report mail questionnaire as part of a larger study. The mailing list of a national random sample of industrial sales professionals was purchased from Dun and Bradstreet. These salespersons were employed at firms which fall within the Standard Industrial Codes (SIC) 20 through 39 representing industrial firms. Questionnaires were mailed to 3909 salespersons at their places of work. Along with the survey, a cover letter on University letterhead was included explaining the purpose of the study, requesting cooperation, and promising confidentiality. Four weeks after the original mailing, a postcard was mailed to all the salespersons urging them to respond to the survey if they haven't already. The mailing yielded 241 usable responses. After accounting for undeliverable envelopes, partially or uncompleted questionnaires, and ineligible responses, the response rate was 10.39% (Churchill 1991).

Non-response bias was unlikely to affect the results since a comparison of early and late respondents on the study variables yielded no significant differences (Armstrong and Overton 1977). Regarding subject characteristics, about 90% of the respondents were male, 46% of the respondents were college graduates, and approximately 24% attended and/or completed graduate school. The average age of the respondents was 47 years, and their average selling experience was 19 years. Consequently, the subjects were mature, well educated, and highly experienced.

Measures

The constructs used in this study were measured by multiple-item scales drawn from past studies. MO was measured by the 21-item scale developed by Narver and Slater (1990). The scale included five components, namely, a 6-item customer orientation, a 4-item competitor orientation, a 5-item interfunctional orientation, a 3-item long-term focus, and a 3-item profit emphasis. The endpoints ranged from 1 (This business unit does not engage in the practice at all) to 9 (This business unit engages in the practice to an extreme extent). CO was measured by the 24-item SOCO scale developed by Saxe and Weitz (1982). The scale anchors were 1 (True for none of your customers – never) to 9 (True for all of your customers – always). Working hard was measured by the number of hours per week salespeople spent on the job and in job-related

activities. Working smart was measured by the 5-item ADAPTS-SV scale developed by Robinson et al. (2002), and the number of hours per week salespeople spent on planning, forecasts, paperwork, and maintenance. The endpoints of ADAPTS-SV ranged from 1 (Very strongly disagree) to 9 (Very strongly agree).

Salesperson performance was measured by using the dimensions of the 31-item scale developed by Behrman and Perreault, Jr. (1982). Outcome performance was measured using the 7-item "sales objectives" dimension of Behrman and Perreault, Jr.'s (1982) scale. This dimension measured the degree to which a salesperson has achieved the overall objectives of the selling firm. Thus, outcome performance is directly attributable to salespeople. In addition, selling behavioral performance was measured by the 6-item "using technical knowledge" and the 6-item "making sales presentations" dimension of Behrman and Perreault, Jr.'s (1982) scale. Salespeople have more control over selling activities than sales outcomes and they spend "much of their time on activities directly related to generating sales" (Cravens et al. 1993, p. 50). For example, they use their technical knowledge to detect causes of operating failure of company products and they also spend time on troubleshooting system problems and conducting minor field service to correct product misapplications and/or product failures. These selling behaviors help generate sales revenues. In addition, the manner in which salespeople identify customer needs and make presentations to sell products that satisfy those needs also generates sales revenues. Consequently, both outcome performance (achieving sales objectives) and selling behavioral performance (utilizing technical knowledge and making sales presentations) are important for overall sales force productivity. The endpoints of these 19 sales performance items ranged from 1 (Your performance is very low compared to an average salesperson) to 9 (Your performance is very high compared to an average salesperson).

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The measures were purified by item analyses and confirmatory factor analyses. Each component of MO was analyzed and based on item-to-total correlations, one item measuring interfunctional coordination and one item measuring profit emphasis was eliminated. Table 1 presents the item-to-total correlations of the 21-item five component MO compared to the findings of Narver and Slater (1990).

As Table 1 indicates, the reliabilities of the three behavioral components (customer orientation, competitor orientation, and interfunctional coordination) were comparable to that of Narver and Slater (1990). However, the reliabilities of the two decision criteria were superior to that of Narver and Slater (1990). After deleting one item with low item-to-total correlation (See Table 1), the reliability of Profit Emphasis was 0.61. Thus, hypothesis 1 can be tested with this data. Note that the same item, "all products must be profitable" was the poor measure of Profit Emphasis in the Narver and Slater (1990) study and the current study.

The measurement properties of the 24-item SOCO scale was assessed by confirmatory factor analyses with partial disaggregation (Bagozzi and Heatherton 1994). The scale consists of 12 items representing the selling orientation and the remaining 12 items representing the customer orientation of salespeople (Saxe and Weitz 1982). According to Bagozzi and Heatherton (1994, p. 47), "when more than about five items per factor are treated as individual measures of factors in a multifactor CFA, it is difficult to achieve a satisfactorily fitting model that is interpretable in an unambiguous sense." Following Bagozzi and Heatherton (1994), three composite indicators were formed for each dimension of SOCO (selling orientation and customer orientation) by randomly aggregating four items that relate to a specific dimension. Thus, the confirmatory measurement models of SOCO had three composite indicators for each of the two dimensions (selling orientation and customer orientation). The covariance matrix of these six composite indicators were input in LISREL 8.72, and a confirmatory factor analysis showed that the data fit the model very well ($\chi^2 = 5.63$, $df = 8$, $p > .10$, CFI = 1.00, GFI = .99, RMSEA = .00, SRMR = .02). The items used to form the composite indicators are displayed in the appendix.

Item analysis indicated that one item needed to be deleted from the 5-item ADAPTS-SV (Robinson et al. 2002) scale. The item "I try to understand how one

Table 1. Reliability Analysis: Comparison with Narver and Slater (1990)

Item[1]	Item-to-total Correlation[2]	Coefficient α (Sample 1/Sample 2)[2]	Item-to-total Correlation[3]	Coefficient α[3]
Customer Orientation		0.855/0.867		0.885
Customer commitment	0.702		0.774	
Create customer value	0.658		0.768	
Understand customer needs	0.671		0.689	
Customer satisfaction objectives	0.651		0.647	
Measure customer satisfaction	0.634		0.734	
After-sales service	0.579		0.603	
Competitor Orientation		0.716/0.727		0.669
Salespeople share competitor information	0.547		0.308	
Respond rapidly to competitors' actions	0.591		0.472	
Top managers discuss competitors' strategies	0.542		0.547	
Target opportunities for competitive advantage	0.361		0.511	
Interfunctional Coordination		0.711/0.735		0.678
Interfunctional customer calls[a]	0.409		0.183	
Information shared among functions	0.477		0.536	
Functional integration in strategy	0.662		0.510	
All functions contribute to customer value	0.506		0.545	
Share resources with other business units	0.317		0.416	
Long-Term Horizon		0.477/0.408		0.578
Quarterly profits are primary objective	0.338		0.444	
Require rapid payback	0.302		0.394	
Positive margin in long term	0.261		0.327	
Profit Emphasis		0.139/0.004		0.499
Profit performance measured market by market	0.102		0.389	
Top managers emphasize market performance	0.137		0.443	
All products must be profitable[a]	-0.346		0.148	

[1] Wordings of Narver and Slater's (1990) Table was retained to facilitate comparison. The actual items are displayed in Table 2.
[2] Narver and Slater (1990).
[3] Current Study.
[a] Item deleted based on item-to-total correlation.

customer differs from another" may not be construed by salespeople as reflecting altering their selling behaviors from one customer to another. A confirmatory factor analysis on the covariance matrix indicated that the data fit the 4-item adaptive selling construct very well ($\chi^2 = 0.85$, $df = 2$, $p > .10$, CFI = 1.00, GFI = .99, RMSEA = .00, SRMR = .00).

The measurement property of the 19-item salesperson performance scale was also assessed by Bagozzi and Heatherton's (1994) partial disaggregation approach. The 7-item "sales objectives" dimension was reduced to three item parcels, and the 12 items for "utilizing technical knowledge" and "making sales presentations" were reduced to four item parcels. This was accomplished by randomly aggregating two or three items within each performance dimension, as recommended by Bagozzi and Heatherton (1994). Consequently, salesperson performance was measured by seven item

Table 2. Path Estimates of the Measurement Models

Item	λ (t-value)
Market Orientation	
We constantly monitor our level of commitment and orientation to customers.	0.66 (11.14)
Our market strategies are driven by our understanding of possibilities for creating value for customers.	0.67 (11.34)
We respond rapidly to competitive actions that threaten us.	0.67 (11.33)
Top management regularly discusses competitors' strengths and strategies.	0.74 (12.78)
Information on customers, marketing successes and marketing failures are communicated across functions in the business.	0.68 (11.47)
All our managers understand how the entire business can contribute to creating customer value.	0.81 (14.66)
We share programs and resources with other business units in the corporation.	0.69 (11.73)
Profit performance is measured on a market-by-market basis.	0.66 (10.97)
Higher levels of management (to whom our management reports) require business-unit performance reports on a market-by-market basis.	0.64 (10.66)
Our primary objective is to maximize quarterly profits.	0.74 (12.78)
We require a rapid payback from investments in customer relationships.	0.49 (7.78)
Customer Orientation[1]	
COS1	0.82 (14.44)
COS2	0.89 (16.09)
COS3	0.77 (13.32)
SOS1	0.82 (14.37)
SOS2	0.76 (13.03)
SOS3	0.85 (15.14)
Adaptive Selling	
When I feel that my sales approach is not working I can easily change to another approach.	0.82 (14.66)
I like to experiment with different sales approaches.	0.71 (12.03)
I am very flexible in the selling approach I use.	0.86 (15.70)
I can easily use a wide variety of selling approaches.	0.81 (14.51)
Outcome Performance[1]	
OP1	0.79 (13.16)
OP2	0.81 (13.69)
OP3	0.72 (11.82)
Selling Behavioral Performance[1]	
SBP1	0.97 (18.45)
SBP2	0.82 (14.58)
SBP3	0.60 (9.92)

[1] See appendix for the actual composites.

parcels, three measuring outcome performance and four measuring selling behavioral performance. The covariance matrix of the seven item parcels was input in LISREL 8.72 and a confirmatory factor analysis yielded a measurement model with excellent fit statistics (χ^2 = 19.08, *df* = 8, p < .05, CFI = .99, GFI = .97, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .04). One item parcel measuring selling behavioral performance was deleted based on standardized residuals. The item parcels are presented in the appendix. Table 2 presents the path estimates for each of the measures.

As Table 2 indicates, the path estimates for each of the latent constructs were significant (t > 2.00). Thus, convergent validity was established (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). To assess discriminant validity, the covariance matrix of all the latent constructs was input in LISREL 8.72, and a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted by specifying each item or item parcel to load on its respective factor. The fit of this unconstrained model was compared to a series of constrained models where the correlation between a pair of latent constructs was set to 1. The fit of each of the constrained model was worse than the unconstrained model and the $\Delta\chi^2$ for 1 df greatly exceeded 3.84. Consequently, the measures exhibited discriminant validity (Bagozzi and Phillips 1982). Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of these variables.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
1. Market Orientation (MO)	1.00				
2. Customer Orientation (CO)	.26**	1.00			
3. Adaptive Selling	.28**	.19**	1.00		
4. Outcome Performance	.36**	.19**	.29**	1.00	
5. Selling Behavioral Performance	.34**	.41**	.15*	.45**	1.00
Means	5.74	7.81	6.59	6.83	7.46
Standard Deviation	1.25	.76	1.56	1.10	.92
Coefficient α	.78	.84	.85	.82	.82

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Hypothesis 1 was tested by a confirmatory factor analysis of the 19-item (two items were already deleted based on item-to-total correlations, as indicated in Table 1) MO scale, where all the items were specified to load on a single factor, as proposed by Narver and Slater (1990). The initial fit of the model was unsatisfactory (χ^2 = 569.94, *df* = 152, p < .01, CFI = .92, GFI = .79, RMSEA = .11, SRMR = .08). The model was respecified by deleting items based on squared multiple correlations, standardized residuals, and modification indices. The final measurement model consisted of 11 items measuring MO, and included each of the five components. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was supported. As hypothesized by Narver and Slater (1990), MO is a one-dimensional construct with five components, customer orientation, competitor orientation, interfunctional coordination, a long-term focus, and a profit emphasis. This finding is very significant since most studies on MO did not include a long-term focus and a profit emphasis while measuring MO. According to Hattie (1985, p. 49), "that a set of items forming an instrument all measure just one thing in common is a most critical and basic assumption of measurement theory." Computation of a composite score of a multi-item scale is meaningful "only if each of the measures is acceptably unidimensional" (Gerbing and Anderson 1988, p. 186). Thus, while computing a summated score of MO, researchers should include all five components of MO, as proposed by Narver and Slater (1990). Past research on the DIFF variable (e.g., Siguaw, Brown, and Widing II 1994; Mengüç 1996) violated this rule.

In order to test hypothesis 2, the DIFF variable was created by taking the absolute value of the difference between the standardized MO score and the standardized CO score (Siguaw, Brown, and Widing II 1994; Mengüç 1996). Unlike past studies, the 11-item MO scale consisting of all five components was used to create the DIFF variable. Hypotheses

2 was tested by OLS regressions where outcome performance and selling behavioral performance was regressed on DIFF, hours/week spent on the job and job-related activities (working hard), and adaptive selling and hours/week spent on planning, forecasting, paperwork, and maintenance (working smart), annual sales, and total sales experience. The regressions results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression Results (One-tailed t-tests)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Standardized Coefficients (t-value)	Summary
Outcome Performance	DIFF	-.09 (-1.28)	Adj. $R^2 = .08$, $F_{6.180} = 3.56$, $p < .01$
	Working Hard	.10 (1.42)[c]	
	Adaptive Selling	.26 (3.56)[a]	
	Hours/week on Planning, etc.	-.004 (-.049)	
	Total Sales Experience	.14 (1.90)[b]	
	Annual Sales	-.001 (-.02)	
Selling Behavioral Performance	DIFF	-.24 (-3.28)[a]	Adj. $R^2 = .08$, $F_{6.180} = 3.65$, $p < .01$
	Working Hard	.05 (.71)	
	Adaptive Selling	.09 (1.30)[c]	
	Hours/week on Planning, etc.	.01 (.17)	
	Total Sales Experience	.20 (2.81)[a]	
	Annual Sales	.01 (.21)	

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

As Table 4 indicates, hypothesis 2 was supported since DIFF was significantly negatively related to selling behavioral performance ($\beta = -.24$, $t = -3.28$, $p < .01$). However, DIFF was not related to outcome performance. These results yield several managerial implications for selling organizations.

DISCUSSION

The stream of research on MO has virtually neglected Narver and Slater's (1990) call to examine if a long-term focus and a profit emphasis should be included in the measurement of MO. According to Narver and Slater (1990, p. 22), "a business cannot avoid a long-run perspective." Also, businesses need to be profitable to survive and profitability has been construed as a component of market orientation (Narver and Slater 1990; Kohli and Jaworski 1990). The results of this study showed that MO can be measured as a one-dimension construct with five components, as originally hypothesized by Narver and Slater (1990). Consequently, findings of the studies that limited the measurement of MO to the three behavioral components (customer orientation, competitor orientation, and interfunctional coordination) may have been biased.

The results of this study also revealed the managerial relevance of including a long-term focus and a profit emphasis as components of MO. Saxe and Weitz (1982, p. 343) argued that "the marketing concept requires an organization to determine the needs of a target market and adapt itself to satisfying those needs better than its competitors." Since customer oriented selling involves "the practice of the marketing concept at the level of the individual salesperson and customer" (Saxe and Weitz 1982, p. 343), market oriented firms need their salespeople to be highly customer oriented to successfully implement the marketing concept. Thus, salespeople's perceptions of firm level MO and their own CO should match in order to satisfy customers in the long-run. The results of this study indicated that as the difference between salespeople's perceptions of firm MO and their own CO (DIFF) increased, selling behavioral performance suffered. Since this dimension of performance focuses on salespeople's behaviors while interacting with customers, the lack of a congruence between salespeople's perceptions of firm MO and their own CO may significantly reduce the productivity of salespeople in the long-run for two reasons.

First, although DIFF was unrelated to outcome performance, its negative effect on selling behavioral performance may indirectly undermine outcome performance since selling behavioral performance is expected to significantly positively affect outcome performance (Cravens et al. 1993; Miao and Evans 2007). In the current study, the correlation between outcome performance and selling behavioral performance was 0.45 ($p < 0.01$) (see Table 3). Second, since salespeople are not continuously supervised, sales managers may infer their selling behavioral performance from their outcome performance. However, as DIFF was unrelated to outcome performance, sales managers may fail to diagnose failures in selling behavioral performance, such as, using technical knowledge or making high quality sales presentations, if they relied on outcome measures alone. Over time, increasing levels of DIFF may seriously undermine the long-term productivity of a sales force.

The results of this study yield two key managerial implications for sales organizations. First, the perceptual congruence between firm MO and salesperson CO is important for how salespeople do their job, rather than for figuring out if they are working or not. Consequently, selling firms need to incorporate a long-term profit focus in their measurement of MO, and continuously assess the effects of DIFF on selling behavioral performance. The proper conceptualization of MO and the assessment of DIFF is highly relevant for sales organizations. Second, the lack of perceptual congruence between firm MO and salesperson CO may be construed as sales management's failure in internal marketing to bolster the organizational identity of boundary spanners. Since organizational identity of salespeople is significantly positively related to sales performance, sales organizations should ensure that sales managers exhibit "organizational identity-congruent" behaviors while interacting with salespeople (Wieseke et al. 2009, p. 139). By exhibiting market oriented behaviors, sales managers can minimize DIFF and encourage salespeople to sacrifice short-term gains for long-term success of the firm.

As expected, both working smart and working hard improved salesperson performance. This was consistent with past studies (e.g., Sujan, Weitz, and Sujan 1988; Rapp et al. 2006). However, it seems that working smart was more important since it affected both dimensions of salesperson performance. Apparently, salespersons' choices of activities to allocate efforts on is as much or more important than how much efforts they allocate. Thus, sales managers should be concerned with both the magnitude and the accuracy of salespeople's expectancies (Johnston and Marshall 2011).

Finally, the current study showed that selling experience improved both outcome performance and selling behavioral performance. Thus, highly experienced salespeople performed better despite their perceptual differences between firm MO and their own CO. Although past studies have theorized that sales experience may improve salesperson performance by encouraging salespeople to work hard and smart (Rapp et al. 2006), sales experience seems to have a significant main effect on performance. Thus, as Kohli (1989, p. 47) recommended, sales managers "should be cognizant of differences among their salespeople and engage in adaptive supervision."

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although the purpose of the study required that data be collected from salespeople's perspective, measuring all the variables by self-reports may have introduced common method variance. To check for common method bias, the fit statistics of the measurement model was compared to a one-factor model, assuming that a single factor can account for all the variances in the data (Podsakoff et al. 2003). The fit of the single-factor model ($\chi^2 = 2642.02$, $df = 324$, $p < .01$, CFI = .69, GFI = .55, RMSEA = .17, SRMR = .13) was much worse compared to the hypothesized multi-factor model ($\chi^2 = 733.43$, $df = 309$, $p < .01$, CFI = .92, GFI = .81, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .07) indicating that common method variance was unlikely to bias the results. However, since the response rate was low and a cross-sectional survey was used to collect data, caution should be exercised in inferring causality.

Future research should confirm the five component one-dimensional structure of MO found in this study. Narver and Slater (1990) recommended generating additional items to measure long-term focus and profit emphasis. If future studies confirm the five-component

measurement model of MO, past studies that used only the three behavioral components to measure MO may need to be replicated to ascertain the effects of not considering the two decision criteria – a long-term focus and a profit emphasis.

Future research is needed to identify the antecedents and additional consequences of DIFF. Since DIFF negatively affects selling behavioral performance, selling organizations should minimize DIFF. DIFF can be caused by a variety of factors, such as, a lack of clear communication between managers and salespeople, opportunism on the part of managers and/or salespeople, inadequate training of salespeople, etc. With regard to the consequences of DIFF, although Siguaw, Brown, and Widing II (1994) and Mengüç (1996) studied the effects of DIFF on role perceptions, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, their results varied and both studies used the three-component measurement model of MO. Thus, more research is needed on effects of DIFF.

Finally, more research is needed to explore the relationship between DIFF and outcome performance. Salesforce control systems may shed more light on this relationship. For example, in outcome-based control systems, salespeople are evaluated and compensated based primarily on outcomes (Anderson and Oliver 1987). In such organizations, salespeople may be forced to achieve their sales objectives by any means, despite the existence of DIFF. In the current study, the relationship between DIFF and outcome performance was negative, though not significant.

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Appendix

Construct	Composite Indicators
Salesperson Customer Orientation	Item Parcels Based on Bagozzi and Heatherton's (1994) Approach
COS1	I offer the product of mine that is best suited to the customer's problem. I try to get customers to discuss their needs with me. I try to figure out what a customer's needs are. I try to influence a customer by information rather than by pressure.
COS2	I answer a customer's questions about products as correctly as I can. A good salesperson has to have the customer's best interest in mind. I try to achieve my goals by satisfying customers. I try to find out what kind of product would be most helpful to a customer.
COS3	I am willing to disagree with a customer in order to help him/her make a better decision. I try to give customers an accurate expectation of what the product will do for them. I try to help customers achieve their goals. I try to bring a customer with a problem together with a product that helps him/her solve that problem.
Salesperson Selling Orientation	
SOS1	I decide what products to offer on the basis of what I can convince customers to buy, not on the basis of what will satisfy them in the long run. I imply to a customer that something is beyond my control when it is not. I spend more time trying to persuade a customer to buy than I do trying to discover his/her needs. I keep alert for weaknesses in a customer's personality so I can use them to put pressure on him/her to buy.
SOS2	I paint too rosy a picture of my products, to make them sound as good as possible. I treat a customer as a rival. I try to sell as much as I can rather than to satisfy a customer. I begin the sales talk for a product before exploring a customer's needs with him/.her.
SOS3	If I am not sure a product is right for a customer, I will still apply pressure to get him/her to buy. I pretend to agree with customers to please them. It is necessary to stretch the truth in describing a product to a customer. I try to sell a customer all I can convince him/her to buy, even if I think it is more than a wise customer would buy.
Outcome Performance	
OP1	Producing sales or blanket contracts with long-term profitability. Exceeding all sales targets and objectives for your territory during the year.
OP2	Generating a high level of dollar sales. Identifying and selling major accounts in your territory.
OP3	Producing a high market share for your company in your territory. Making sales of those products with the highest profit margins. Quickly generating sales of new company products.

Selling Behavioral Performance	
SBP1	Convincing customers that you understand their unique problems and concerns. Keeping abreast of your company's production and technological developments. Working out solutions to a customer's questions or objections.
SBP2	Communicating your sales presentation clearly and concisely. Listening attentively to identify and understand the real concerns for your customer. Using established contacts to develop new customers.
SBP3	Knowing the applications and functions of company products. Being able to detect causes of operating failure of company products. When possible, troubleshooting system problems and conducting minor field service to correct product misapplications and/or product failures.