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**The influence of supervisors  
on the goal orientations  
of salespeople**

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## Abstract

The success or failure of an organization is determined by the quality of management, and of leadership in particular. The supervisor, a key person in any organization, embraces the difficult function of managing and controlling the organization. Being in direct contact with his workers, the supervisor plays a crucial role inspiring them to learn and to perform. Leadership is exercised by forging a harmonious relationship between management and employees, without sacrificing the quality of subordinates' productivity.

This study was undertaken to understand this phenomenon and to determine if supervisors have influence on their salespersons, in terms of the latter's attitudes to learn and to perform, in short their goal orientations. In this study, *supervisory behavior* has been described as the salespeople's perception of their supervisors' orientation. The researcher has specifically chosen as respondents salespeople in the information technology (IT) and telecommunication (telecom) industries.

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# **The influence of supervisors on the goal orientations of salespeople**

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## **1. Introduction**

The success or failure of an organization is determined primarily by the quality of management, particularly of its leadership. By the turn of the twenty-first century, the corporate thrust has been on sound management and this has evolved an increasing the number of competent managers who efficiently handle the affairs of the business. Managing has grown from mere ownership to a position of vast responsibility. Thus, the critical task in building a good organization is to select capable or competent supervisors. Any supervisory job consists of effectively directing employees along organizational lines and keeping a close eye on the work assigned to them. Through supervision, management sees to it that the organization structure functions well.

The supervisor embraces the difficult function of managing and controlling the organization. He must know how to exercise both responsibility and authority if he expects to be successful and contribute to the attainment of company's goals and objectives. Supervisors are not solely oriented towards building and maintaining the productive level of those supervised. Miranda (1999) writes that the mental health of psychic well-being of workers maybe a subordinate goal of the efforts of supervision, along with productivity. Aside from the notion of psychic well-being of the workers, supervisory practices can be directed to other employee goals such as those that would enhance the employees' morale, loyalty, and commitment to the organization. Supervisors being in direct contact with their subordinates, play a crucial role in inspiring their workers. Their behavior, mind-set, and orientation can motivate or de-motivate their workers. They should then endeavor to exercise their leadership qualities in bringing out harmonious relationship between management and employees. They can do no less, because their failure to do so is to abandon the important role charged upon them by the organization by virtue of their position.

In any field of business endeavor, the relationship between supervisors and their subordinates has always drawn special attention. This study then has been undertaken to understand this phenomenon and to determine if supervisors influence their salespeople in terms of the latter's attitude towards learning and performing, in short, their goal orientations. In this study, supervisory behavior has been described as the salespeople's perception of their supervisors' orientation. This paper will particularly pay attention to sales supervisors and salespeople in the telecommunication and information technology industries.

### **A. Sales Management in the Information Technology and Telecommunication Industries**

Advancements in computer technology and telecommunications have enabled organizations to take advantage of the information explosion. With computer networks, unlimited amount of data can be stored, retrieved, and used in a wide variety of ways from

simple record keeping to controlling complex equipment. The use of the internet to transact business has become so pervasive that *e-commerce* is rapidly becoming an organizational challenge. Furthermore, industries are based on the wonder-works of radio waves, futuristic satellites, high- powered transmitters, lightweight cameras, sophisticated computers and other cutting edge technology. Global dependency on the electronic network and the *internet* is reflected by the tremendous amount of money that moves through its complex maze. Businesses have used information technology (IT) to automate business processes and support the analysis and presentation of information for managerial decision making. With the expansion of IT vis-à-vis *e-commerce* and internet go the boom in mobile communication. All the transactions that a consumer or business undertakes are being repositioned on digital technology. Thus, IT and telecom industries are undoubtedly the flourishing industries.

Sales managers in the information technology (IT) and telecommunication (telecom) industries must have a technical understanding of their businesses. A basic understanding of computer operations, recording system radio waves, signal preparation enables telecom and IT managers to make purchase, expansion and decisions in their complex, high tech industries.

In most IT and telecom companies, the sales supervisor is also the sales manager. He manages the sales staff in the acquisition of liability and asset product accounts that satisfy volume and price requirements and the control of the sales unit's account portfolio yield and overall productivity. Most of all, he has technical knowledge of the company's business. His responsibilities include the following:

1. Works with the company manager in the unit's sales plan preparation.
2. Establishes staff's sales goals within the context of unit sales plan.
3. Regularly reviews/monitors staff's activities and provides individual feedback on performance versus goals.
4. Monitors overall sales results of the unit against plan and initiates/ recommends corrective action to ensure satisfaction of volume and production goals.
5. Recruits, screens, selects, trains, motivates and evaluates staff on accomplishment of goals.
6. Makes actual sales calls for the purpose of maintaining key accounts.
7. Approves pricing on unit's portfolio of accounts for liability products.
8. Keeps manager regularly informed on unit productivity and customer trends from all sales strategies.

In large telecom companies in the Philippines like Smart, Globe and Nextel, the highest position in sales is the National Sales Director. His job is not supervisory in nature by virtue of the size of the companies. Under him are the sales supervisors who are sales managers of smaller units.

A salesperson in the IT / telecom industry has the position of sales representative. Under close supervision, his main responsibility is to sell products such as cellular and mobile phones, two-way radios, simpacks, prepaid cards, pagers, phone accessories and parts. IT companies are engaged in the sales of computers, monitors, hard disks, printers, cad/cam

devices, modems, softwares, fax machines, keyboards, computer ink / toner, computer supplies / accessories, and miscellaneous softwares.

The salesperson's primary objective is to establish and maintain personal contacts and relationship with existing and prospective customers, distributors, and retailers. He must meet expected sales volume and achieve sales goals. His sales activities should conform to the standards of his company. When necessary, he may conduct market analysis and perform other tasks that may be assigned to him from time to time.

## **B. Supervisory orientations and salesperson goal orientations**

The threefold typology of supervisory orientations is rooted in sales control systems literature ( Anderson and Oliver 1987; Chagalla and Shervani 1996; Jaworski 1988 ). Each orientation, end-results, activity, and capability – mirrors the emphasis of a supervisor's behavior. The three (3) supervisor's orientations are not mutually exclusive. They represent three distinct dimensions of supervisory behavior, and a supervisor might favor one particular orientation, some, combination of two, or all three orientations simultaneously. Furthermore, it is possible for supervisors to adjust their orientation across salespeople and situation. Each of the three orientations is discussed below in detail.

*End-results orientation.* Supervisors with an end-results orientation focus their attention on establishing end-results and goals, such as targeting sales and market share, tracking their attainment and providing feedback regarding end results. Their entire focus - goal setting, monitoring and feedback- is on the end results. When supervisors emphasize the importance of end-results, they leave it up to the salespeople to determine the sales strategies and level of effort needed to achieve those results (Oliver & Anderson 1994). Such supervision provided little information to salespeople about why the desired end-results were or were not achieved. Supervisory end-results orientation is rooted in the concept of output or outcome control (Anderson & Oliver 1987; Jaworski 1988).

Furthermore, because it emphasizes end-results without providing guidance on how to achieve those results, an end-results orientation can evoke evaluation anxiety and disrupt task involvement (Elliot & Harackiewicz 1994). On the other hand, Goal Theory suggests that providing clear and unambiguous goals focuses attention on the task, triggering a search for relevant information and strategies that will help achieve those goals (Locke & Latham 1990). In other words, a supervisory end-results orientation might create tension, but it is likely to be a positive tension that can encourage search for information and strategies and thereby enhance a learning orientation.

*Activity orientation.* Supervisors with an activity orientation focus on the routine and mechanical activities a salesperson is expected to perform. Examples of such activities include filling out call reports periodically, making certain number of calls during a week, spending a certain amount of time with customers, maintaining correspondence levels, adhering to budgets, and so on. For these routine-type activities evidence suggests that people prefer low levels of supervisors (Schriesheim & DeNisi 1981). Activity oriented supervisors

specify the activities they expect their salespeople to perform and monitor. If the salespersons are performing those activities, they are informed of how they are meeting the expectations on this dimension ( Merchant 1985).

*Capability orientation.* Capability oriented supervisors focus on the development of salespeople's skills that enhance the quality of their behaviors, such as sales presentations. A supervisor with a capability orientation is more of a coach and is focused on enhancing salespeople's skills and capabilities. When salespeople learn why they have not been successful in the past, their attention is drawn to the content of the selling task. Moreover, by helping salespeople understand, for example, how to negotiate better or make superior presentation, managers can enable salespeople to improve their competence. Weitz and Sujan (1986) suggest that focusing on skills and abilities increases the procedural knowledge of salespeople, thereby enabling and motivating them to learn better ways to perform a task. Capability orientation involves specifying to salespeople what it takes to perform sales tasks effectively monitoring progress and providing them with appropriate feedback regarding their capabilities.

Goal orientation is first an attitude of mind which regards problem in terms of personal objectives to be obtained through creative problem-solving. It is also a technique to encourage such an attitude. This technique translates goals into "how to" statements. With practice it becomes possible to find a whole range of "how to" statements which reveal different ways of looking at any problem. The technique is important to develop because it makes one more aware of mind-sets influencing his initial perception of a problem. Researchers have found that there are two distinct goal orientations of salespeople: learning and performance ( Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994 ).

*Learning orientation.* Persons with a learning goal orientation seek to develop competence by acquiring new skills and mastering new situations. They view challenges as opportunities for growth and development. They pursue goals by determining what it will take to be successful by changing their behavior as needed. Dweck and Leggett 1988 wrote that salespeople with learning orientation, in particular, have a strong desire to improve and master their selling skills continually and see achievement situations as opportunities to hone their competence.

*Performance orientation.* Persons with performance orientation tend to validate competence by seeking favorable judgments and by avoiding negative judgments. They tend to view challenge negatively because of the potential for failure which for them represents the possibility of having their performance drawn into question. This fear can cause them to void accepting a challenge. Ames and Archer in 1988 suggested that salespeople with performance orientation, in particular, focus on performing well because they see good performance as a means to obtaining extrinsic rewards from others (e.g.. supervisors). They are concerned with being judged as able and successful.

Learning and performance orientations are not the opposite ends of a continuum. These represents, rather two distinct dimensions, and a salesperson can have both high learning and high performance orientation.

In the salesforce literature, there are studies which delved on the role of supervisors in influencing the goal orientations of salespeople. One notable study was that of Sujana, Weitz and Kumar which was published in 1994. The purpose of the study was (1) to identify supervisory behaviors that nurture salespeople's learning orientation, which contributes to the building of a learning organization, (2) to examine the influence of the same supervisory behaviors on salespeople's performance orientation to assess whether supervisory behaviors that promote learning orientation also enhance salespeople's performance orientation or undermine it, and (3) to compare and contrast the impact of supervisory behaviors on experienced and inexperienced salespeople. The article of Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla (1998) titled *Learning and Performance Orientation of Salespeople: The Role of the Supervisor* built on the work of Sujana, Weitz, and Kumar in two respects. First, the authors examined the role of the supervisors in influencing the learning and performance orientations of salespeople. The focus on first-line supervisors is in line with recent thinking that managers as designers or teachers play a crucial role in inspiring learning (Senge 1990). Some supervisors are end-results oriented. They tend to concern themselves with the end-results produced by salespeople. Others are more focused on salesperson's activities that lead to end-results, whereas others emphasize capabilities that can also lead to end-results. When supervisors focus on end-results, they set end-results goals, monitor their attainment, and provide feedback to salespeople on the results attained by them. That is, goal setting, monitoring, and feedback on end-results represent an end-results orientation (Ramaswami 1996). Activity and capability orientation similarly entail goal setting, monitoring, and feedback on activities and capabilities respectively. Accordingly, the objective of the paper was to examine the effects of the three different supervisory orientations on salespeople's learning and performance orientation and investigate whether supervisory orientations that engender a learning orientation also build a performance orientation or tend to undermine it. It is aimed to enhance the richness, range, and usefulness of the study, the authors examined whether the effects of the three supervisory orientations vary depending on the focal salesperson. Path-goal theory contends that a supervisor's effect on an employee depends of the characteristics of the employee (House & Dessler 1994). Consistent with this reasoning, evidence suggests that more experienced salespeople might be less responsive to supervisory intervention than relatively inexperienced salespeople (Kohli 1989). The authors contend that it is useful to investigate the moderating effects of experience, because the findings have clear implications for whether inexperienced salespeople should be supervised differently than experienced salespeople. The article's hypotheses were tested using data from salespeople in two *Fortune 500* companies. The results suggest that supervisory behaviors (as perceived by salespeople) have a significant influence on salespeople's learning and performance orientations. Furthermore, the authors obtained some support for the hypothesized moderating effect of salesperson's experience.

Supervisor-salesperson relationship has indeed caught the attention of human resource experts. Some scholars even argue that this relationship when properly nurtured is undoubtedly an important source of an organization's competitive advantage particularly in the field of sales. Recognizing this importance, this researcher is challenged to investigate further this phenomenon.

The general objective of this study is to determine the extent of influence supervisor's orientations to the goal orientations of salespeople in selected information technology (IT) and telecommunication (telecom) companies.

Specifically, this study aims to: (1) to describe supervisor's orientations as perceived by the salespeople in terms of the three-fold typology: *end-results*, *activity* and *capability orientations*; (2) To describe goal orientations of the salespeople in terms of its two dimensions, learning and performance orientations, as perceived by the salespersons; (3) to determine the degree of influence of supervisory orientations on the goal orientations of salespeople in the telecommunication (telecom) and information technology (IT) companies; (4) and to compare the goal orientations of salespersons, as influenced by their supervisors, in the information technology industry with those of the telecommunication industry.

## 2. Conceptual framework

The framework is composed of two kinds of variables: (1) a set of independent variables which are the three types of supervisory orientations, and (2) a set of dependent variables which are classified as goal orientations of salespeople, namely: learning and performance orientation. This is based on the model proposed by Ajay A. Kohli, Tassaduq A. Shervani, and Goutam N. Chagalla in 1994. See Figure 1 below.

These variables are operationally defined as follows:

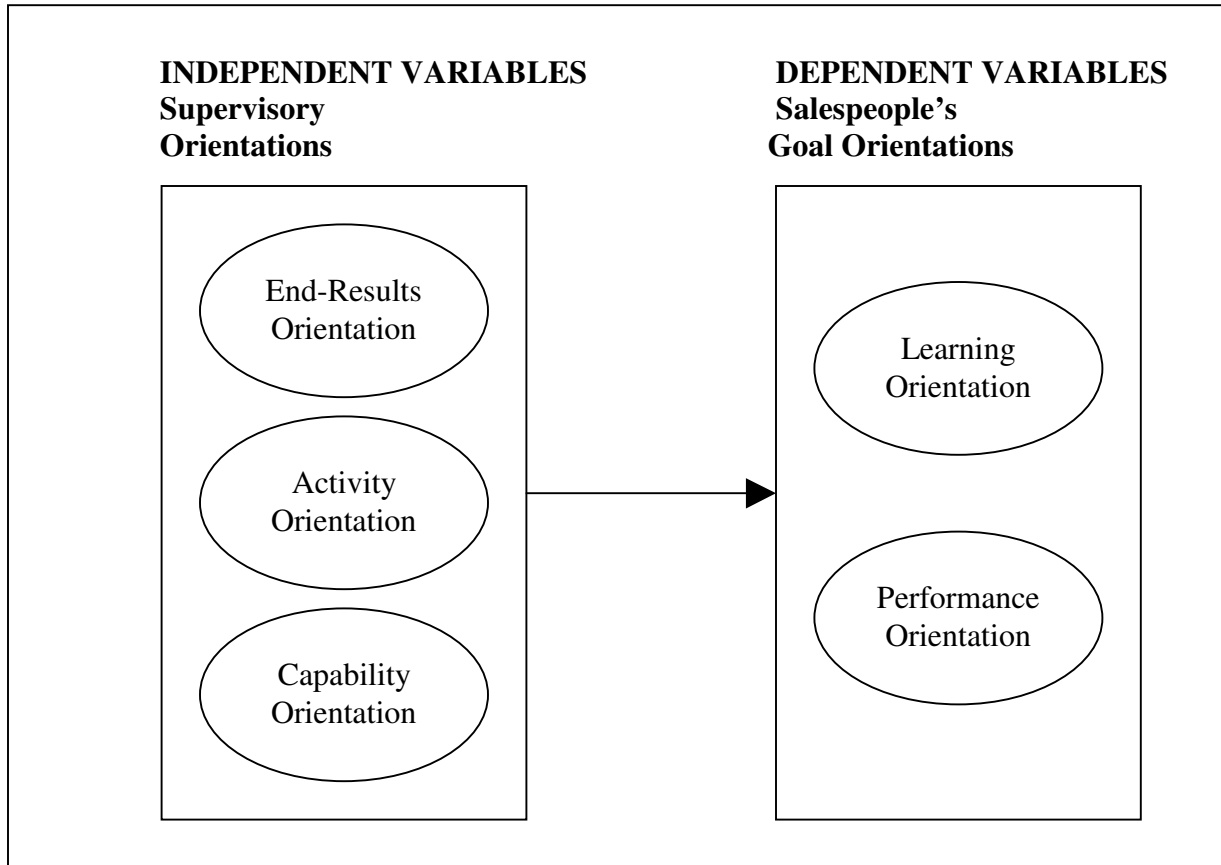
- (1) **End-results orientation** – mirrors the emphasis of a supervisor's behavior with entire focus is goal setting, monitoring and feedback.
- (2) **Activity orientation** – mirrors the emphasis of a supervisor's behavior with focus on the routine and mechanical activities a salesperson is expected to perform.
- (3) **Capability orientation** - mirrors the emphasis of a supervisor's behavior with focus on the development of salespeople's skills and enhance the quality of their behaviors.

The schematic diagram also demonstrates how these types of supervisory orientations influence the dependent variables salespeople's goal orientations that are categorized under learning goal orientation and performance goal orientation. Each variable indicator is operationally defined as follows:

- (1) **Learning goal orientation** – is an attitude that motivates salespeople to improve and master their selling skills and abilities continually and view achievement situations as opportunities to improve their competence.

- (2) **Performance goal orientation-** is an attitude that motivates salespeople to perform well because they see good performance as a means of obtaining extrinsic rewards.

**Figure 1. Supervisory Orientations and their Influence on Salespeople’s Goal Orientations**



### 3. Methodology

To answer the objectives of the study, the causal design was used to establish the extent of influence of the independent variables, the three types of supervisory orientations on the dependent variables: learning goal orientation and performance goal orientation of salespeople.

The survey covered the information technology and telecommunication companies in Metro Manila which are members of the Information Technology Association of the Philippines (ITAP) and the Philippine Electronic and Telecommunication Federation (PETEF), respectively. A sample of 17 IT companies and 7 telecom companies was selected and the survey was conducted on all the 224 salespersons of the 24 companies.

Research data were gathered using the survey questionnaire personally developed by the researcher. Part I of the survey questionnaire contained 4 or 5 items each under three headings, namely: Supervisory end-results orientation, supervisory activity orientation, and supervisory capability orientation. Part II of the instrument has two headings, namely: salespeople's learning orientation and salespeople's performance orientation. There were respectively 4 and 5 items under these headings.

Supervisory Orientation was measured in terms of the following indicators:

- (1) **End-results orientation** - supervisor telling the salesperson about the latter's level of achievement on sales volume, salesperson's receiving feedback on whether he meets expectations on market share targets, supervisor's monitoring salesperson's progress on achieving sales volume, and supervisor's assurance that the company is aware of the extent at which the latter attains market share goals.
- (2) **Activity Orientation** – supervisor informing the salesperson about the sales activities that the latter is expected to perform, whether or not he meets the expectation on sales activities, and to adjust his sales activities; and supervisor monitoring and evaluating salesperson's sales activities.
- (3) **Capability Orientation** - supervisor using standards in evaluating selling skills, supervisor's providing guidance on ways to improve selling skills by suggesting particular sales approaches that may be useful, and supervisor giving evaluations on salesperson's sales presentations and communications with customers.

Salespeople's goal orientations were measured in terms of the following indicators:

- (1) **Learning orientation** - salesperson's observation that he spends a lot of time learning new approaches for dealing with customers, and putting a great deal of effort in order to learn something new about selling; salesperson's realization of the importance of learning from his selling experiences and in learning how to be a better salesperson.
- (2) **Performance orientation** - salesperson's observation that he is: spending a lot of time thinking about how his performance compares with that of other salespeople, evaluating himself using his supervisor's criteria, always trying to communicate his achievement with his manager, feeling good when he knows he outperforms co-workers, and putting importance to his managers good impression of himself.

The answer to each item in the survey questionnaire was weighed using Likert's 5-point scale with the following qualitative responses: 5-Strongly Agree; 4- Agree; 3- Average; 2-Disagree; 1-Strongly disagree

Since the responses were converted into weights, using Likert's 5-point scale, the researcher found it necessary to classify the mean of the responses into levels of quality in order to have a clearer grasp of supervisory orientations and salespeople's goal orientations. A criterion which served as the basis for the interpretation of the mean (adapted from STAR) is as follows:

4.5001 - 5.0000	Very High Level
3.5001 - 4.5000	High Level
2.5001 - 3.5000	Moderate Level
1.5001 - 2.5000	Low Level
1.0001 - 1.5000	Very Low Level

The survey instrument was pre-tested by administering it to 15 salespersons of Homecable Co. The results of the pre-test were subjected to face validity.

After the validation of the instrument, it was administered to the salespersons of the 24 randomly selected IT and telecom companies, 17 of which are members of ITAP (Information Technology Association of the Phils.) and 7 of which are members of PETEF (Philippine Electronic and Telecommunication Federation). A total of 224 salespersons responded to the questionnaire. The results were gathered and tabulated by a research assistant.

The various data gathered from the responses of the respondents were subjected to the following statistical procedures:

- (1) Scoring and computation of the mean of the items under each of the heading in the survey instrument.
- (2) Computation of descriptive statistics such as the grand mean and standard deviation of the 224 responses in the items under each heading in the survey questionnaire.
- (3) The Pearson Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between each of the independent variables and each of the dependent variables in the study.
- (4) The Stepwise Regression Procedure was used to determine the extent of influence of the independent variables in the study.
- (5) The Pairwise Correlation was used to compare the predictions for each of the dependent variables between the IT companies and the telecom companies.

## **A. Results and discussion**

### *Supervisory orientations*

The results of Table 1 or the descriptive data, show the following :

- (1) The mean values of **learning orientation, activity orientation and capability orientation** are within the range of 3.5001- 4.5000. This means that in both companies, the supervisors are perceived to exhibit **high level of supervisory orientations**, as perceived by the salespersons.
- (2) Among the three supervisory orientations in both companies, **end-results orientation** has the highest mean (3.553883 and 3.834711), and **capability orientation**, the lowest means (3.355825 and 3.672315) This means that supervisors are perceived to be good at informing and giving feedback to their salespersons regarding their tasks and achievements. Furthermore, the supervisors are cautious in evaluating salesperson's skills and in providing guidance in improving these skills.

#### *Salespeople's goal orientations*

The results of Table 1 also reveal that the salespersons in both companies exhibit **high levels of goal orientations**. Between the two goal orientations of salespeople in both companies, **learning orientation** has the higher mean in both companies (3.620388 and 3.959091) than performance orientation. This means that the salespersons prefer to learn new approaches in selling and to improve skills in selling than to spend time thinking and evaluating his performance.

**Table 1. Descriptive data – The mean of supervisory orientations and goal orientations**

A. Information Technology Companies 121 respondents

VARIABLE	MEAN
<b>1. SUPERVISORY ORIENTATIONS</b>	
End-results Orientation	3.834711
Activity Orientation	3.784711
Capability Orientation	3.673968
<b>2. SALESPEOPLE’S GOAL ORIENTATIONS</b>	
Learning Orientation	3.959091
Performance Orientation	3.672315

B. Telecommunications Companies – 103 respondents

VARIABLE	MEAN
<b>1.SUPERVISORY ORIENTATIONS</b>	
End-results Orientation	3.553883
Activity Orientation	3.44855
Capability Orientation	3.355825
<b>2.SALESPEOPLE’S GOAL ORIENTATION</b>	
Learning Orientation	3.620388
Performance Orientation	3.351455

**B. Influence of supervisory orientations on salespeople’s goal orientations:**

*Salespeople’s learning orientation*

The correlation results (refer to Table 2) reveal that in both types of companies, each of the three supervisory orientations has a significant positive correlation with salespeople’s learning orientations. In the IT companies, **end-results orientation** has the highest correlation value ( $r = .584$ ), **activity orientation** has the next higher value ( $r = .634$ ), while **capability orientation** has the lowest correlation value ( $r = .466$ ). In the telecom companies, **capability orientation** has the highest correlation value ( $r = .657$ ), **end-results orientation** has the next higher correlation value ( $r = .653$ ), while **activity orientation** has the lowest correlation value ( $r = .611$ ).

The stepwise regression procedure (Refer to Table 3A) confirms that the three supervisory orientations are **positively and significantly related to salespeople's learning orientation**. The computed correlation values show that in the IT companies, **end-results orientation** has the highest effect on learning orientation ( $r^2 = .3412386$ ), which further explains that 34.12% of the variance in learning orientation is accounted for by end-result orientation and is considered the best predictor of learning orientation. Similarly, **activity orientation** registered the next higher correlation value, followed by **capability orientation**. For the telecom companies (Refer to Table 3B), **capability orientation** has the highest effect on learning orientation ( $r^2 = .4319543$ ), which further explains that 43.195% of the variance in learning orientation is accounted for by capability orientation. Similarly, **end-results orientation** registered the next higher correlation value followed by **activity orientation**.

As shown in the analysis, salespersons in IT companies are motivated to learn and improve their competence when their supervisors put emphasis on goal setting, monitor their activities and give them feedback on their achievements. These findings are relevant to the views of Locke and Latham (1990) saying that although supervisory end-results orientation may create tension, it is likely to be a positive tension that can encourage the search for information and strategy and thereby enhance a learning orientation. On the other hand, salespersons in telecom companies are motivated to learn when their supervisors put emphasis on the evaluation of their selling skills and provide guidance on ways to improve their selling techniques. These findings are in consonance with the ideas of Sujana and Weitz (1986) stating that focusing on skills and abilities increases the procedural knowledge of salespeople, thereby enabling and motivating them to learn better ways in performing a task. Greater task interest, higher intrinsic motivation, and a focus on the contents of selling task are likely to enhance the learning orientation of salespeople. In general, the findings in the two companies conform with the view of (Fry, Futrell & Parasuman 1996) who pointed out that supervisors who are highly appreciative of the efforts of subordinates who take pains in improving their own skills influence their salespeople.

#### *Salespeople's performance orientation*

The correlation results (refer to Table 2) reveal that in both companies, each of the three supervisory orientations has a significant positive correlation with salespeople's performance orientation. In the IT companies, **capability orientation** has the highest correlation value ( $r = .557$ ), followed by **activity orientation** ( $r = .494$ ), while **end-results orientation** has the lowest correlation value ( $r = .493$ ). In the telecom companies, **end-results orientation** has the highest correlation value ( $r = .660$ ), followed by **capability orientation** ( $r = .601$ ) while **activity orientation** has the lowest correlation value ( $r = .587$ ).

The stepwise regression procedure in Table 3A ascertains that in IT companies, **capability orientation** has the highest effect on salespeople's performance orientation ( $r^2 = .3099586$ ), which further explains that 30.99% of the variance in performance orientation is accounted for by capability orientation and is considered the best predictor of performance orientation. Similarly, **activity orientation** registered the next higher correlation value, followed by **end-results orientation**. For telecom companies (Refer to Table 3B), **end-results orientation** has the highest effect on performance orientation ( $r^2 = .436501$ ) which

explains that 43.65% of the variance in learning orientation is accounted for by end-results orientation and is considered the best predictor of performance orientation. Similarly, **capability orientation** registered the next higher correlation value followed by **activity orientation**.

From the foregoing analysis, it can be deduced that salespersons in the IT companies are highly motivated to perform well when their supervisors provide training to develop their subordinates and evaluate their selling techniques. Lawler and Rhode share their findings that supervisors commit time and effort to assess the capabilities of salespeople in providing guidance to salespeople in improving their skills. Such a commitment of time and effort enables supervisors to become aware of the strength and weaknesses of the individual salespeople and to provide useful tips and knowledge and helpful hints to them. Such interaction is likely to motivate salespeople to perform well on the criteria reestablished by their supervisors and increase salespeople's sensitivity to supervisory appraisals which thereby enhances their performance orientation. In the telecom companies, salespersons are encouraged to perform better when their supervisors put emphasis in monitoring their sales activities and assuring them of the company's awareness at which they attain market share goals. This is supported by the views of Mowen (1985) who noted that the attitude of salespeople to perform well is influenced by increased monitoring. Greater monitoring makes supervisors aware of the effort expended by salespeople. Furthermore, Weitz and Sujana (1986) share the same view when they said that a strong emphasis on end-results is, therefore, likely to foster an extrinsic orientation on the part of salespeople and lead them to perceive achieving end-results goals as a means to acquire valued external ends. Moreover, the greater the supervisory emphasis on end-results, the more likely salespeople will regard the achievement of end-results as a test of their competence, which thereby leads to greater performance orientation.

**Table 2. Correlation matrix**

A. Information technology companies – 121 companies					
	1 End-results	2 Activity	3 Capability	4 Learning	5 Performance
1 End-results		+ .750	+ .634	+ .493	+ .584
2 Activity			+ .634	+ .494	+ .558
3 Capability				+ .557	+ .466
B. Telecommunications Companies – 103 respondents					
	1 End-results	2 Activity	3 Capability	4 Learning	5 Performance
1 End-results		+ .810	+ .803	+ .653	+ .660
2 Activity			+ .737	+ .611	+ .587
3 Capability				+ .657	+ .601

**Table 3. Summary of Stepwise procedures**

A. Information technology companies – 121 respondents			
Salespeople's Goal Orientations Learning Orientation	Supervisory Orientations		
	End-results	Activity	Capability
R =	.584169	.6115876	.615799
R <sup>2</sup> =	.3412486	.3740395	.3792085
Partial R <sup>2</sup> =	.5842	.2231	.0909
Prob.	*.0000002	*.0000001	.6728331
Constant <i>a</i>	1.336487		
Par. Est.	.6485	.6348	.6348
Coefficient B	.41183	.2756763	
Performance Orientation			
R =	.5929926	.5858674	.5567392
R <sup>2</sup> =	.3516402	.3432407	.3099586
Partial R <sup>2</sup> =	.1131	.2196	.4926
Prob.	.0151726	*.0000003	*.000005
Constant <i>a</i>	1.453715		
Par. Est.	.5673626	.5686011	.5803763
Coefficient B		.2075306	.3900841
B. Telecommunications Companies – 103 respondents			
103			
Salespeople's Goal Orientations Learning Orientation	Supervisory Orientations		
	End-results	Activity	Capability
R =	.689866	.6954178	.6572323
R <sup>2</sup> =	.4759152	.4836059	.4319543
Partial R <sup>2</sup> =	.2782	.1211	.6572
Prob.	*.000000		*.0000001
Constant <i>a</i>	1.027657		
Par. Est.	.6236047	.6221308	.6460105
Coefficient B	.340215		.4123119
Performance Orientation			
R =	.6603409		.6707562
R <sup>2</sup> =	.430501		.4499139
Partial R <sup>2</sup> =	.6603		.1566
Prob.	*.0000001		*.0000001
Constant <i>a</i>	1.555472		
Par. Est.	.5097845		.5059905
Coefficient B	.5053579		.1724518
<b>LEGEND</b>	* = significant at .05 level		
	R = coefficient of correlation		
	R <sup>2</sup> = variance		
	Prob.= probability		
	Par. Est. = parameter estimate		

The regression equations that can be deduced from Table 3A are:

For IT companies:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{(PREDICTED) LEARNING ORIENTATION} &= +1.336487 \\ &+ .41183 \text{ END-RESULTS} \\ &+ ..2756763 \text{ ACTIVITY} \end{aligned}$$

For telecom companies:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{(PREDICTED) LEARNING ORIENTATION} &= + 1.027657 \\ &+ .4123119 \text{ CAPABILITY} \\ &+.340215 \text{ END-RESULTS} \end{aligned}$$

From Table 3B, the following regression equations can be deduced:

For IT companies:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{(PREDICTED) PERFORMANCE ORIENTATION} &= +1.453715 \\ &+.3900841 \text{ CAPABILITY} \\ &+.2075306 \text{ ACTIVITY} \end{aligned}$$

For telecom companies:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{(PREDICTED) PERFORMANCE ORIENTATION} &= + 1.555472 \\ &+ .5053579 \text{ END-RESULTS} \\ &+ .1724518 \text{ CAPABILITY} \end{aligned}$$

### **C. Comparison of the goal orientations of salespeople in the Information Technology companies with those of the telecommunication companies**

Finally, the Pairwise Correlation Procedure was used to compare the goal orientations of salespeople, as influenced by their supervisors, in the IT companies with those of the telecom companies (Refer to Table 4)

From this table, the following equations can be deduced:

PREDICTED LEARNING ORIENTATION OF SALESPEOPLE :

$$\begin{aligned} X_1 &= 4.29779 + (-.3387) (1) = 3.96 && \text{in IT companies} \\ X_1 &= 4.29779 + (-.3387) (2) = 3.62 && \text{in telecom companies} \end{aligned}$$

PREDICTED PERFORMANCE ORIENTATION OF SALESPEOPLE:

$$\begin{aligned} X_2 &= 3.99817 + (-.3208563) (1) = 3.67 && \text{in IT companies} \\ X_2 &= 3.99817 + (-.3208563)(2) = 3.35 && \text{in telecom companies} \end{aligned}$$

The values of  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  obtained in the above discussion ascertain the values of the means of the goal orientations of the salespeople in the two industries that are shown in Table 1.

This confirms that salespeople's learning and performance orientations are enhanced by their supervisors, with learning orientation having the higher mean than performance orientation. This comparison confirms that in both companies, salespersons prefer to learn new approaches in selling and improving this skill more than to spend time thinking and evaluating their own performance.

**Table 4. Pairwise correlations and predictions**

	<b>Learning Orientation</b>	<b>Performance Orientation</b>
Constant <i>a</i>		
PRED X	4.29779	3.99317
PRED Y	1.917631	2.029996
Correlation	.2019143	.2278207
T-value	-3.071723	-3.486127
+B COEFF X VAR X	-.3387	-.3208563
+B COEFF X VAR Y	1.203702	-.1617618
Prob.	*.0027789	*.0009302
ST.ERR ESTIM.(X)	.8224708	.6865224
ST.ERR.ESTIM.(Y)	.4903118	.4874582
<b>Legend</b>		
* = significant at .05 level	Size : 224	
Pair ( X , Y)	Df : 222	
X for goal orientation		
Y for company		
Prediction Equation: $X_i = a + B_n Y_i$ , where		
<i>a</i> is the constant, <i>n</i> is the number assigned to the company,		
<i>i</i> =1 for learning goal orientation, <i>i</i> =2 for performance goal orientation,		
$Y_1 = 1$ for IT companies, and $Y_2 = 2$ for telecom companies		

## 4. Summary / Conclusions / Recommendations

### A. Summary

#### *Supervisory orientations*

The supervisors in the IT and telecommunication companies exhibit **high level** of end-results orientation, activity orientation and capability orientation.

#### *Salespeople's goal orientations*

The salespersons of the IT and telecommunication companies have **high level** of learning orientation and performance orientation, as influenced by their supervisor.

#### *Relationship of supervisory orientations and salespeople's goal orientations*

Each of the three supervisory orientations is **positively and significantly correlated** with salespeople's goal orientations. End-results orientation has the highest effect on the learning orientation of salespeople in the IT companies, while capability orientation is the biggest predictor of learning orientation of salespeople in the telecom companies. Capability orientation has the highest correlation with performance orientation of salespeople in the IT companies, while end-results orientation has the highest effect on the performance orientation of salespeople in the telecom companies.

### B. Conclusions

It can be concluded, based on the above discussions, that:

The supervisors in both IT and telecom companies exhibit **high level** of end-results, activity and capability orientations. This is manifested in the following ways:

1. Supervisors consistently informing salespersons on their level of achievement on sales volume, giving feedback, monitoring their progress, and regularly assuring them of the company's awareness of the extent at which they attain market share goals.
2. Supervisors regularly following-up salesperson on the activities the latter is expected to perform, consistently monitoring and evaluating his sales activities.
3. Supervisors using standards in evaluating salesperson's skills, providing guidance on skills improvement, suggesting useful sales approaches, and giving evaluation on his sales presentations and communications.

Supervisory orientations in both IT and telecom companies have **high degree of positive influence** on salespeople's goal orientations. The **high level** of supervisory orientations enhances their **learning and goal orientations**. This is manifested in the following ways:

1. Salesperson's observation that he spends a lot of time learning new sales approaches, and putting a great deal of effort in order to learn something new and realizing the importance of learning from his experiences and in learning how to be a better salesperson.
2. Salesperson's observation that he is spending a lot of time thinking about how his performance compares with that of other salespeople, evaluating himself using his supervisor's criteria, trying to communicate his achievement to his manager, feeling good when he outperforms co-workers, and putting importance to his manager's good impression of himself.

### C. Recommendations

The following recommendations are being forwarded in view of the summary and conclusions mentioned above. These are deemed applicable not only to the telecom and IT industries that were studied but also to other related industries.

- (1) **Continuously develop supervisor-subordinate relationship.** This can be done by a continuous evaluation of both parties as a means by which the supervisor lets the employee know how the latter is doing and vice-versa. The feedback of results can be used to stimulate their continued learning and continued improvement in their jobs.
- (2) **Reinforce good supervisory behaviors.** This can be achieved by matching supervisory orientations with the needs of the individual salespeople through judicious assignments of supervisors.
- (3) **Sustain the high level of supervisory orientations.** This can be done by regular sales management training through planned conferences/ courses/ programs that cover topics on immediate problems of supervision and updating technical competence.
- (4) **Maintain the high level of salespeople's goal orientation.** This can be attained by providing opportunities for further skills development, adequate communication between employees and management, and better incentives and remunerations.
- (5) **Direct the high level of goal orientation to salesperson's performance.** This is achieved by providing motivation to enable salespeople to develop selling skills which thereby leads to superior performance and encouraging them to work hard for increased productivity.
- (6) **Conduct research on other related areas.** Future researchers in related fields of human behavior and personnel management may pursue research on the following topics that were not covered by this research:

- The impact of goal orientations on the performance of salespeople.
- The moderating effects of experience on salespeople's perception of supervisory orientations.
- Traits or dispositions of salespeople as control factors on salesperson behavior.
- Peer influence, organizational socialization, and organizational citizenship as other variables that influence salespeople's goal orientation.

(7) **Adopt the questionnaire of this research to evaluate supervisor- salesperson relationship.** The specially designed survey questionnaire of this study may be used as a means to measure and evaluate supervisor-salesperson relationship.

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