

National Culture and Relational Selling: Antecedents, Outcomes and Boundary Conditions of ASB and Customer-Oriented Selling in Korea

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Globalization and the emergence of new markets has placed increased emphasis on cross-cultural sales and marketing research. Despite considerable advances in the personal selling literature, little is known about the cross-cultural transferability of key constructs. Given the degree to which well-accepted relational sales behaviors such as ASB and customer oriented selling reflect Western values such as individualism and low uncertainty avoidance, the relative efficacy of such practices in alternative cultural context is less clear. Using a Korean sample, our results confirm the beneficial direct effects of these relational selling practices upon performance. However, we also find strong work-group interdependence diminishes the effects of ASB and that performance fully mediates the relationship between both sales behaviors and job satisfaction. In contrast to prior results, we find female salespeople and those newer to their position demonstrate stronger ASB.

Key words: ASB, customer-orientation, personal selling, national culture, Korea

I. Cross Cultural Issues in Sales Behavior Research

A long standing goal for sales researchers and managers has been the identification of effective selling behaviors as well as promoting such behaviors through improved hiring, training,

reporting and incentive systems. In recent years, two relational sales behaviors have been the focus of particularly prominent research streams within the personal selling literature. One stream deals with adaptive selling behavior (hereafter ASB), that is “the altering of sales behaviors during a customer interaction or across customer interactions based on perceived information about

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the nature of the selling situation” (Weitz, Sujan and Sujan 1986, p. 175). The second involves customer-oriented selling behavior (hereafter CO), which is “viewed as the practice of the marketing concept at the level of the individual salesperson and customer” (Saxe and Weitz 1982, p. 343). In a recent meta-analysis comprising 155 samples and more than 31,000 salespeople, Franke and Park (2006) identify a number of regularities in the relationships between these constructs, their antecedents, and key sales outcomes. We note, however, that all of the ASB and CO studies examined in the meta-analysis utilized U.S.-based samples. Therefore, even as greater clarity has emerged relating to the outcomes and antecedents of salesperson ASB and CO in Western settings, a relative paucity of research exists examining these variables in alternative cultural contexts.

Culture researchers have found Westerners generally exhibit greater independence and favor the freedom of individual action, whereas East Asians are more interdependent and favor collective acceptance (Nesbitt 2003). Given the extent to which the conceptualization and measurement of sales behaviors such as ASB and CO are more reflective of Western cultural dispositions (e.g., individualism, lower power distance, low uncertainty avoidance), there may be reason to expect differences in the manifestation and efficacy of these sales behaviors in alternative cultures (Smith et al. 2013). The importance of addressing such ‘culture gaps’ in

the marketing literature has gained growing recognition. As increased globalization, less restrictive trade environments and competitive pressures have led firms to explore sales opportunities in emerging new markets, language and social barriers in these countries effectively necessitate the employment of native sales forces. Therefore, developing new knowledge relating to cross-cultural usefulness of Western-originated personal selling and sales management constructs is of considerable interest to practitioners and scholars.

The purpose of this study is to provide a better understanding of the antecedents and consequences of ASB and CO amongst Korean salespeople. Due to this nation’s ethnically homogeneous population and highly collectivist culture, native Korean representation is typically considered vital to the sales success of foreign businesses operating in Korea. As the pace of globalization accelerates, questions regarding the portability of marketing constructs and measures take on mounting importance. Steenkamp (2001) suggests “the further advancement of marketing as an academic discipline requires that the validity of our theories and models be examined in other cultural settings as well as to identify their degree of generalizability and to uncover boundary conditions” (p. 30). Our South Korea sample frame presents an interesting cultural counterpoint to the predominant Western settings predominantly explored in prior personal selling research. Moreover, the study

provides insight into sales practices in an economy of growing significance for global sales and marketing managers.

Using survey data drawn from a multi-firm sample, we test a SEM model that highlights individual and firm-related factors which: (1) promote the use of adaptive selling and customer-oriented sales approaches, and; (2) strengthen sales outcomes associated with these practices. While our results generally support the beneficial effects of salesperson ASB and CO in Korea, several key differences from prior research emerge, suggestive of cultural influences on how these behaviors are enacted and received. In particular, we find performance mediates the ASB → job satisfaction and CO → job satisfaction relationships. Unlike their Western sales counterparts, therefore, Koreans find such behaviors satisfying *only when* they contribute to meeting organizational goals. Further, the link between ASB and performance is weaker for salespeople who are members of more cohesive sales teams. This result is consistent with culture-based theory as it relates to collectivism, which suggests collectivist ingroups place strong demands on individuals to conform to group norms, role definitions and values. In this case, the strength of group ties appears to constrain the ability of salespeople to improve their performance through adaptiveness. In sum, while our findings generally support the cross-cultural usefulness of ASB and CO, they also suggest these behaviors may manifest themselves some-

what differently in non-Western cultures. This finding points to a clear need for further cross-cultural personal selling and multi-national sales management research.

II. The Influence of Culture on Relational Sales Practices

2.1 Characteristics of Korean Culture

In the past three decades, Korea has moved from an agrarian economy to a predominantly young, urban, educated industrial society that has achieved remarkable growth (Hyun 2001). The nation is currently the 13th largest economy in the world and eighth largest export market for the U.S (U.S. Census Bureau 2008). Korea has long been considered a difficult international trade market due to language and culture barriers, the absence of established business relationships, and the oligarchical dominance of *chaebol* groups in Korean politics and economics. In response to the 1997 Asian financial crisis, however, the Korean government and businesses placed increased emphasis on adopting global standards relating to organizational structure, business practices and gender equity in hopes of spurring continued growth and attracting more foreign direct investment. While most observers agree these changes have largely been positive in terms of increasing economic productivity,

the implementation of many of these changes stands in direct conflict with traditional Korean culture.

Although there are many different influences on traditional Korean values, Confucianism is clearly the most dominant one (Lee 1983; Park and Cho 1995). In Confucian thought, the composition of society is hierarchical, based on the vertical structure of superiors and subordinates. The family is the prototype, and the principles of family living are applied to society at large. To ensure harmony and order in the family and in society, members must abide by filial piety, that is, respect for elders, as a cardinal value. Other prevailing cultural values stress the importance of harmonious interpersonal relationships, group solidarity, hard work and self-discipline (Ungson et al. 1997). Another aspect of the autocratic form of Confucianism that developed in Korea beginning in the 14th century was its very rigorous standards of feminine modesty and chastity which constrained women's social behavior (Kendall 1984). As a result, Confucianism has been blamed for the strong discrimination against women in both historical and contemporary Korean society (Hyun 2001).

2.2 National Culture Dimensions and Organizational Behavior

Researchers have long recognized the cultural values of the broader society in which an organization operates may profoundly influence

individual and organizational behavior (Hofstede 1984). Such differences hold significant implications for growing customer relationships and improving sales performance (Doney, Cannon, and Mullen 1998). In comparing U.S. and Korean work forces, strong distinctions between the respective national cultures are commonly recognized across several dimensions, most notably: individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance (Hofstede 1984). Triandis, McCusker and Hui (1990) suggest the relative emphasis placed on individualism versus collectivism is the most critical cultural dimension of social behavior for any society. This aspect of culture relates to whether people desire to work alone and be free to operate as individuals, or prefer to work in groups and be thought of as part of interacting sets of people. In collectivist societies, the group is the dominant structure and most individual action is evaluated in terms of its effects on other people. People define themselves in terms of their membership in specific ingroups and others are distinguished in terms of their belonging to ingroups or outgroups. Collectivist cultures stress maintaining harmony, interdependence and cooperation and avoiding open conflict within the ingroup. There are strong norms of reciprocity between ingroup members, who are related in a network of interlocking responsibilities and obligations (Rhee, Uleman and Lee 1996).

Hofstede (1984) describes uncertainty avoidance as the extent to which people feel threat-

ened by, and try to avoid, uncertainty and ambiguity. In strong uncertainty-avoidant cultures like Korea, there is a need for rules and formality to structure social interactions. Organizations seek to reduce internal uncertainty through the setting and adherence to rules, regulations, and social rituals. As a result, hierarchical structures of organization are clear and distinctions between ranks are respected. While there may be an ideological appeal of consensus-building and consultative leadership, the initiative of subordinates is most often kept under control to assure stability.

Power distance (PDI) relates to the perceived desirability or undesirability of inequality and dependence within a society (Hofstede 1984). Within organizations, the distribution and exercise of power is formalized in a hierarchy, one that reflects the value systems of both bosses and subordinates. For instance, Hofstede (1984) reports subordinates in high PDI countries more positively evaluate close supervision, resulting in a greater number of hierarchical levels and larger proportion of supervisory personnel. On the other hand, managers tend to perceive themselves paternalistically, as benevolent decision-makers acting on behalf of the greater interests of the organizational 'family.'

III. Hypothesis Development

3.1 National Culture and Relational Sales Behavior

With the increased emphasis on relational exchange in marketing and the presence of more competitive, internationalized business environments, firms increasingly rely upon their sales forces to raise customer awareness of seller-added value, boost customer retention and buoy revenue and profit growth. However, as Triandis (1989) notes, the applicability of exchange theories are more limited in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures. Paradoxically, while role relationships within collectivist cultures that include ingroup members are perceived as more respectful and intimate than they are in individualist cultures, those that include outgroup members are perceived to be more manipulative and exploitative (Triandis, Vassiliou and Nassiakou 1968). As the boundary of ingroup membership may shift with the situation, interactions with exchange partners often exhibit strong particularism in collectivist cultures. Consistent with prior culture-based research, therefore, we believe there is reason to expect differences in the manner by which relational behaviors such as ASB and CO are adopted and enacted by salespeople from more collectivistic cultures. Moreover, the receptiveness of customers to such behaviors may also differ.

Over the following section, we develop a series of hypotheses with particular emphasis on noting areas of the model where we expect cultural differences relative to associations which have been reliably demonstrated in Western settings (e.g., Franke and Park 2006).

3.1.1 Adaptive Selling Behavior (ASB) and Performance

The general rationale linking ASB and increased sales performance relates to salespeople using information they learn about a prospect either before or during an interaction in order to customize the content and format of their messages for more effective communication (Weitz 1981). Spiro and Weitz (1990) argue the benefits of ASB are likely to outweigh the costs of gathering and responding to information *under certain circumstances*, such as when the salesperson has the necessary resources, when buying tasks are complex and may result in large orders, and when customer relationships have little conflict and are expected to continue in the future. However, even simple adaptations such as reactions to questions, comments, body language, and so on, may reduce objections and improve rapport (Franke and Park 2006). Accordingly, research largely concludes that ASB improves salesperson performance regardless of circumstance (e.g., Boorum, Goolsby and Ramsey 1998). In their meta-analysis, Franke and Park (2006) confirmed ASB was positively related

to self-rated performance, manager-rated performance and objective performance. Therefore, in reexamining the relationship between salesperson ASB and sales performance within this cultural context, we propose:

H1: For Korean salespeople, ASB is positively associated with performance.

3.1.2 Customer Orientation (CO) and Sales Performance

CO reflects a salesperson's concern with long-term customer satisfaction, emphasizing high customer concern, low pressure selling, and problem solving approaches (Saxe and Weitz 1982). As such, salesperson customer-orientation has been viewed in terms of the salesperson's ability to translate a market-oriented organizational culture into a successful, long-term partnering relationship with customers (Leigh and Marshall 2001). Given the strong conceptual support linking market-oriented behavior to performance, it is notable that Saxe and Weitz (1982) reported mixed findings linking CO and performance in their initial research, indicating the relationship was positive only for those salespeople with stronger customer relationships and greater ability to help their customers. The link between salesperson self-rated perceptions of CO and performance remains especially unclear, in some studies showing a positive relationship (Boles et al. 2001) and in others a non-significant or

even negative one (e.g., Honeycutt, Siguaw and Hunt 1995; Widmier 2002).

Despite these irregularities, empirical work generally indicates a significant positive association between *customer perceptions* of salesperson CO and satisfaction, trust, and salesperson relationship development (e.g., Stock and Hoyer 2005; Williams and Attaway 1996). Subsequent authors have strongly argued for a positive effect of CO on salesperson performance within B2B as well as retail settings (Keillor, Parker and Pettijohn 2000; Schwepker 2003). Franke and Park's (2006) meta-analytic results found CO was positively associated with self-rated performance, with no effect on manager-rated or objective sales performance. Based upon these results and this study's use of self-rated performance data, we propose that the direct relationship should also be positive in our study. We expect:

H2: For Korean salespeople, CO is positively associated with performance.

3.2 Performance as Mediator of Relational Sales Behavior to Job Satisfaction Relationship

Franke and Park (2006) proposed the practice of ASB and CO would lead directly to increased job satisfaction. They argued that the conscious efforts of salespeople to notice and respond to customer differences is likely to be

more intellectually stimulating than repeatedly delivering canned presentations, thereby increasing the salesperson's enjoyment of the selling experience (Keillor, Parker and Pettijohn 1999; Park and Holloway 2003; Sujan, Weitz and Sujan 1988). Similarly, customer-oriented salespeople should find the process of satisfying customers' needs intrinsically pleasing. Further, Saxe and Weitz (1982) proposed customer-orientation reduced salesperson role conflict and ambiguity.

While the results of Franke and Park's (2006) meta-analysis confirmed the significance of the ASB → job satisfaction and CO → job satisfaction direct paths, we expect performance to mediate this relationship in the collectivist Korean context. Triandis et al. (1988) notes whereas individualists give priority to personal goals over the goals of collectives, collectivists either make no distinction between personal and collective goals, or if they do make such distinctions, they subordinate their personal goals to the collective goals. By placing the benefit to the group ahead of individual benefit, individuals perceive a greater degree of accountability for their actions (Ungson et al. 1997). Thus, Korean salespeople are likely to find ASB and CO satisfying only to the extent to which they judge such behaviors as assisting them in meeting organizational objectives. We propose:

H3a: For Korean salespeople, performance mediates the relationship between ASB

and job satisfaction.

H3b: For Korean salespeople, performance mediates the relationship between CO and job satisfaction.

3.3 Moderating Role of Work Group Interdependence

Reflecting a “Confucian” work ethic, Korean employees’ work effort is primarily group oriented: hard work is done so that the group – i.e., the company, the sales team, etc. – will succeed. A second characteristic drawn from Confucian thought that typifies the Korean work environment is the principle of group harmony, which stresses smooth, constructive and conflict-free interpersonal relations at almost any cost (Ungson et al. 1997). It is everyone’s responsibility to maintain social equilibrium within the group and this responsibility typically supersedes conceptions of individual rights or preferences. Ingroups demand that individuals conform to prescribed norms, role definitions and values. In relatively homogenous societies such as Korea, such demands are even more rigid, or tight, making those norms more clearly defined and more reliably imposed (Pelto 1968). Little deviation from normative behavior is tolerated and severe sanctions may be administered to those who deviate (Triandis 1989).

In addition, being a high PDI culture, Korean organizational hierarchies are purposefully “tall” in order to better maintain social order and de-

cision making is often highly centralized (Ungson et al. 1997). To reduce uncertainty and reinforce group goals, managers aspire to conformity and orderliness and workers show a preference for clear requirements and instructions (Hofstede 1984). In organizations, this trait often manifests itself in a strong emphasis on standardization. Based on these national culture features, success for Korean salesmen on the whole should be comparatively less dependent upon their willingness or ability to independently try out new sales routines or carry out ad hoc alterations of their sales presentations. After all, if the adaptations are received poorly by the customer, it can result in a perceived loss of face for the salesperson and reflect poorly on the salesperson’s organization. This tendency should be even stronger for salespeople within more interdependent work groups. When a pertinent ingroup is relatively small, the collective can notice deviations from the norm more readily and provide sanctions. Therefore, the relationship between ASB and performance will be especially weak in cases where deviations from group norms are observable, or subject to judgment and rebuke, by a manager or other sales team members. We believe:

H4: For Korean salespeople, work group interdependence moderates the relationship between ASB and performance, such that the relationship is weaker for salespeople belonging to more interdependent sales teams.

The behavioral intentions of persons in collectivist cultures appear to be determined by cognitions that are related to the survival and benefit of their collective (Triandis 1989). Collectivist societies are often highly particularistic, such that there is a preference for taking each relationship and situation into account before deciding what rules and procedures should be followed. That is, interactions between ingroup members may be governed by one set of rules, while interactions with outgroup members are governed by another. Thus, the literature suggests ethical judgments within collectivistic cultures often depend upon whether in-groups or out-groups are affected by a behavior (Franke and Nadler 2008).

The emphasis on achieving group goals and maintaining harmony within the ingroup has been found to result in the more positive evaluation of group-serving partners (Bond, Chiu and Wan 1984). Customer-oriented Korean salespeople are more likely to recognize the importance of customers to organizational goals and as a result are more likely to maintain a more inclusive definition of ingroup boundaries. Further, as social behavior in is a function of ingroup norms to a greater extent in collectivist cultures (Davidson et al. 1976), we expect the presence of tight-knit, supportive work environment will reinforce the relationship between CO and performance. Therefore, we propose:

H5: For Korean salespeople, work group in-

terdependence moderates the relationship between CO and performance, such that the relationship is stronger for salespeople belonging to more interdependent sales teams.

3.4 Antecedents to Relational Selling Behaviors

3.4.1 Relationship between ASB and CO

Sales adaptiveness entails focusing on individual needs and preferences, which may lead to a customer-centered, problem-solving orientation (Saxe and Weitz 1982). An empathetic relationship between the salesperson and the customer may also result from the process of adaptive selling (Siguaw 1991). Franke and Park (2006) examine the relationship between ASB and CO reciprocally, finding support for ASB as a cause rather than an effect of CO. Based upon their finding, we expect:

H6: For Korean salespeople, ASB will be positively associated with CO.

3.4.2 Experience

Franke and Park (2006) proposed increased levels of sale experience will be more positively associated with ASB. ASB draws from skills and knowledge of selling situations, customer types and selling strategies - factors that should

increase with experience. In the present study, we more specifically consider positional tenure, or experience within a specific job. The dominant Confucian tradition within Korean culture emphasizes a strong respect for the wisdom of elders. In organizational life, this trait translates into deference toward more experience and rank. Annual compensation and promotions are typically strongly linked to seniority. Merit compensation is largely avoided except at the highest managerial levels since it is felt that a seniority system contributes more to the maintenance of group harmony (Ungson et al. 1997). In Korean organizational culture, employee's pay, rank and responsibility - in short, his identify not just in his company but also in the outside world - was defined by his job title, and that was determined largely by how long he had served there. For instance, in the past, junior employees were typically addressed by their title (e.g., Mr. Assistant Manager Kim). In order to maintain harmonious relationships within the organization, younger managers were typically expected to walk behind more senior colleagues when meeting with business partners. Such unconditional obedience to the wisdom of more senior members of one's family or organization (*Eui/Suh*) is a sign of one's loyalty and regarded as a superior duty (Lee 2004).

Attitudes toward Confucian values may be determined in part by the extent to which individuals have been advantaged (or disadvantaged) by the value system (Hyun 2001). Thus, younger,

urban, and more educated Koreans who have been socialized to meet the changing demands of their newly industrialized nation have been shown to be more individualistic and to adhere less to traditional Confucian values (Hyun 2001). On the other hand, longer serving employees should tend to cling to these values more strongly as they stand to benefit the most from maintenance of the Confucian mindset. Given the emotional resistance to change often exhibited in high uncertainty avoidant cultures like Korea (Hofstede 1984), longer-tenured salespeople are likely to be more resistant to newly introduced Western selling techniques. Such salespeople will be more likely to stick with presentation styles that have worked well in the past as opposed to experimenting with new approaches. Based upon the above discussion, we expect more experienced Korean salespeople to perceive less need for adaptation in their sales presentation and will tend to be relatively more resistant to implementing adaptive selling techniques. We advance:

H7: For Korean salespeople, positional tenure will be negatively associated with ASB.

Franke and Park (2006) proposed sales experience will be positively associated with CO. Their study suggested more experienced salespeople would be more likely to possess greater ability to identify means of satisfying customer needs, possess a longer-term orientation, and

have more repeat customers. Theory suggests such factors should increase CO (Pettijohn, Pettijohn and Taylor 2002; Saxe and Weitz 1982). In concert with this rationale, we also believe longer-tenured Korean salespeople will be more likely to view their fates as being intertwined with those of their customers. As such, longer-tenured Korean salespeople should be more inclined to view their customers as belonging to a shared ingroup and will demonstrate a stronger CO. As a result, we expect:

H8: For Korean salespeople, positional tenure will be positively associated with CO.

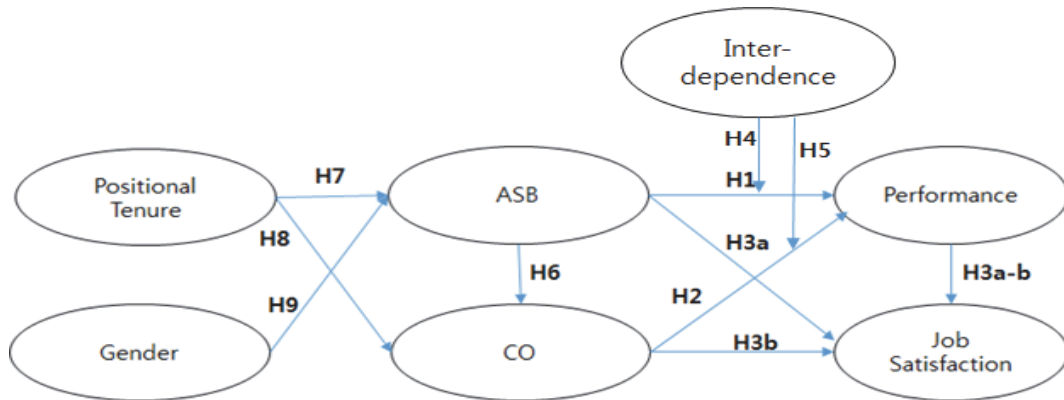
3.4.3 Gender

In spite of rapid economic and socio-cultural changes in Korea, the practice of “male superiority” pervades Korean society and constrains Korean women’s opportunities (Kendall 1984; Yu 1987). In the wake of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the Korean government has instituted numerous reforms aimed at increasing gender equality (Tuten 2004), including the creation of the Presidential Commission for Women’s Affairs (1995), the creation of the Ministry of Gender Equality (2000), adopting the 21st Century Gender Equality Charter, and passing laws such as the Gender Discrimination Prevention and Relief Law (1996), and the Framework Law on Women’s Development (1999). Nonetheless, in comparison to other in-

dustrialized countries, women still play a lesser role in the Korean workplace. According to a report by the Korean Women’s Development Institute, only 47.4 percent of economically active Korean women were employed in 1999, the lowest amongst all OECD nations (Kim 2001). According to a recent report by the Federation of Korean Industries, women account for less than 13 percent of the work force at the 100 largest South Korean businesses.

Ungson et al. (1997) writes that the place of women employees in Korean corporations is perhaps best understood as constituting a separate hierarchy, relatively distinct and subservient to a male hierarchy. While female college graduates earn more and are accorded somewhat higher status and authority than less educated women, male counterparts tend to view them as temporary employees whose role is to serve the organization until marriage or the birth of children. Given the strong patriarchal tradition of Korean culture, the emergence of women into typically male-dominated roles such as professional selling, represents a fairly significant break from tradition. It stands to reason that professional Korean saleswomen who have been historically disadvantaged in male-dominated Korea are likely to hold less traditional values than men (Hyun 2001). Franke and Park (2006) proposed that women tend to be less aggressive, more empathetic and are more relationally-oriented than men (e.g., Feingold 1994), characteristics that promote awareness of situational

<Figure 1> Research Model



factors leading to adaptive behaviors.

H9: In comparison to their male counterparts, Korean saleswomen will demonstrate stronger ASB.

Following Figure 1 shows our testing structural model and hypotheses.

IV. Method

4.1 Data Collection

This study involves a sample of marketing and sales representatives from various Korean companies representing multiple industries. Data collection occurred via a mail-based questionnaire. Surveys were accompanied with a letter encouraging participation from a ranking executive of the firm. This resulted in a response

rate of 57.1%, as 343 of the total 600 managers completed the questionnaire. Of these 343 respondents, 15 were excluded due to incomplete responses leaving a final sample size of 328. Our sample was predominantly male (79.9%), with an average of 7.75 years of job experience and a mean age of 35.2. It also should be noted the respondents come from throughout Korea and all major regions of the country are represented in the sample.

4.2 Measures

All study constructs were drawn from existing literature and adapted for the context of this study. Scales were translated to Korean and back-translated to English following procedures consistent with Brislin (1970). With a few exceptions, the measures in the questionnaire used 7-point Likert-type scales. ASB was measured using five items from Spiro and Weitz' (1990) ADAPTS scale reflecting adaptive sell-

ing behaviors (i.e., we excluded items relating to adaptive selling beliefs). Salesperson CO was measured using four items from Saxe and Weitz (1982). Job satisfaction was operationalized using four items adapted from Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1976) which assessed major facets of job satisfaction, including: pay, opportunity, security and overall satisfaction with work. To measure job performance, we asked salespeople to evaluate themselves, relative to other salespeople working for their company, on achieving quantity and quality sales objectives. Three items were drawn from Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar's (1994) study to assess salespeople's perceived accomplishments as they related to dollar sales, finding new customers and exceeding sales quotas. The work environment scale was adapted from Spiro and Weitz (1990). Finally, job experience and gender were measured using single item indicators. Means, standard deviations, composite reliabilities, and correlations are presented in Table 1.

4.3 Measurement Validity

Structural equation modeling, analyzed using MPlus 5.1, was conducted to test the proposed structural model. Following the two-stage approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), measurement validity of each construct was evaluated to assess unidimensionality, reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Unidimensionality was assessed through a CFA of all items and latent constructs using MPlus 5.1 (Muthen and Muthen 2006). Goodness of fit indices suggest the measurement model is an appropriate fit to the data: $\chi^2_{(187)} = 258.4$, $p < .01$; root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = 0.056; comparative fit index [CFI] = 0.96; Tucker-Lewis index [TLI] = 0.95. All scales proved sufficiently reliable, with composite reliabilities ranging from 0.79 (ASB) to 0.89 (CO).

All estimated factor loadings were significant and all standardized estimates exceeded 0.50, suggesting convergence of the indicators upon

<Table 1> Correlation Matrix

	Mean	SD	CR	ASB	CO	PERF	JS	ENV	Exp.	Gender
ASB	4.63	1.26	0.79	1.00						
CO	4.63	1.24	0.89	.69	1.00					
PERF	4.37	1.28	0.85	.73	.73	1.00				
JS	4.43	1.28	0.85	.58	.53	.67	1.00			
ENV	4.83	1.22	0.85	.58	.65	.53	.62	1.00		
Experience	4.47	3.68	n/a	-.21	-.26	-.12	-.09	-.26	1.00	
Gender	1.20	0.40	n/a	-.29	-.17	-.27	-.17	.00	-.14	1.00

their appropriate underlying factors (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). In addition, pairwise correlations between constructs were significantly different than 1.0 with a 99% confidence interval, providing some evidence of discriminant validity (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). Further, the square root of the AVE for each construct was larger than its respective greatest shared variance with another factor for all pairings save CO-ASB (Fornell and Larcker 1981). For these two variables, we conducted an additional chi-square difference test in which the correlation between CO and ASB was freed to vary in one model and constrained to unity in the second. Goodness of fit diminished significantly in the second model, providing additional reassurance of discrimination between the constructs ($\chi^2_{(1)}=50.6$, $p < .001$). Measurement model results are presented in Table 2.

4.4 Hypotheses Testing Results

To control for firm-level effects, we included the respondent's organization as a control variable in all regressions. In addition, since ASB and CO and the outcome variables were all measured on Likert-type scales, we added a latent common method factor to the structural model in accordance with Podsakoff et al. (2003). All ASB and CO items were allowed to load onto their theoretical constructs as well as onto an orthogonal latent common methods variance factor. In this way, the variance of

the responses to a specific measure is partitioned into three components: (a) trait, (b) method, and (c) error (Podsakoff et al. 2003). The significance of the structural parameters was then examined both with and without the latent common methods factor in the model in order to evaluate the potential effects of method bias.

Goodness-of-fit statistics for the theorized structural model that included a method factor indicated the data were a reasonable fit for the proposed model: $\chi^2_{163} = 336.6$ ($p < 0.01$); RMSEA = 0.057; CFI = 0.95; TLI = 0.93. Hypothesis 1, which predicted a positive direct relationship between ASB and salesperson performance, was supported ($\beta = 0.32$; $t = 3.34$, $p < .01$). Our results also indicated CO had the expected positive effect on performance ($\beta = 0.55$; $t = 7.51$, $p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 2. The influence of the method factor upon performance was non-significant ($\beta = 0.14$; $t = 0.99$, $p = 0.32$).

Hypothesis 3_{a-b} suggested performance would mediate the ASB \rightarrow Job Satisfaction and CO \rightarrow Job Satisfaction relationships, respectively. We tested these hypothesis following procedures set forth by Iacobucci, Salanha, and Deng (2007), who updated the standard approach advanced by Baron and Kenney (1986) and Sobel (1982) for SEM. Using simulation data, Iacobucci et al. (2007) offer empirical evidence of the superiority of using SEM for mediation testing, particularly for cases in which: (a) multiple indicators are available for constructs,

〈Table 2〉 Measurement Model Results

	Est.	S.E.	t-test
Adaptive Selling Behavior (Spiro and Weitz 1990)			
I can easily use a wide variety of selling approaches.	0.80	0.03	31.29
I vary my sales style from situation to situation.	0.74	0.03	24.58
I change my approach from one customer to another.	0.69	0.03	20.52
I am very flexible in the selling approach I use.	0.78	0.03	29.77
I like to experiment with different sales approaches.	0.65	0.04	17.67
Customer Orientation (Saxe and Weitz 1982)			
I try to influence a customer by information rather than pressure.	0.75	0.03	27.87
I offer the product that is best suited to the customer's problem.	0.87	0.02	49.02
I answer a customer's questions about products as correctly as I can.	0.86	0.02	46.21
I try to bring a customer with a problem together with a product that helps him solve that problem.	0.81	0.02	36.63
Performance (Sujan, Weitz and Kumar 1994)			
<i>Evaluate your sales performance in terms of ...</i>			
Generating a high level of dollar sales.	0.78	0.03	29.88
Identifying major accounts in your territory and selling to them.	0.83	0.02	37.40
Exceeding sales targets.	0.83	0.02	36.14
Job Satisfaction (Churchill, Ford and Walker 1976)			
<i>How satisfied are you with your ...</i>			
Job Overall	0.73	0.03	23.97
Compensation	0.86	0.02	40.11
Opportunities for Advancement	0.79	0.03	30.15
Job Security	0.75	0.03	26.19
Work Group Interdependence (Spiro and Weitz 1990)			
There is a cohesive work environment among the salespeople in my company.	0.84	0.03	33.55
The other salespeople in my company are helpful and supportive.	0.81	0.03	30.88
Salespeople in my company share work related information.	0.77	0.03	26.75

Model Fit Indices: $\chi^2_{(98)} = 210.4, p < .01; RMSEA = .059, CFI = 0.96; TLI = 0.96$

(b) when samples are in the small to moderate size range, and in particular, (c) when the mediating relationship is embedded within a more complex nomological network. Consistent with prior work, we found salesperson performance

was positively related to job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.36; t = 2.74, p < .01$). The corresponding Sobel (1982) tests produced a significant test statistic for the performance-mediated ASB \rightarrow Job Satisfaction path ($z = 2.06, p < .05$) and

the CO \rightarrow Job Satisfaction ($z = 2.42, p < .05$) path. The methods factor was positively associated with job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.17; t = 2.04, p < .05$). However, neither of the direct paths from ASB ($\beta = 0.13; t = 1.22, p = .22$) or from CO ($\beta = 0.10; t = 0.88, p = .38$) to job satisfaction were statistically significant, with or without the inclusion of the methods factor. This indicates performance fully mediated each relationship.

Tests of moderation were conducted through multi-group SEM analysis. The sample was divided into two groups based upon a median split of self-reported work group interdependence. Goodness of fit indices for the two-group model showed reasonable fit, providing a sufficient level of confidence in the parameter estimates: $\chi^2(330) = 542.2, p < .01; RMSEA = 0.063; CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.91$. Hypothesis 4 suggested stronger work group interdependence would suppress the effect of ASB upon performance. This hypothesis was supported ($\chi^2(1) = 4.64, p < .05$). This shows that the relationship is weaker for salespeople belonging to more interdependent sales teams.

However, our data did not support hypothesis 5, which proposed work group interdependence would strengthen the link between CO and performance ($\chi^2_{(1)} = 1.36, p = .25$). This means that interdependence did not influence the relationship between CO and performance. Results of our moderation tests are depicted in Table 4.

The remaining hypotheses dealt with ante-

cedents to ASB and CO amongst Korean sales people. First, hypothesis 6 proposed the practice of ASB would lead to stronger CO. Consistent with the Franke and Park meta-analysis (2006), this relationship was strongly affirmed in the Korean sample ($\beta = 0.74; t = 13.90, p < .01$). Hypothesis 7, which suggested positional tenure would be negatively associated with the practice of ASB, was also bolstered ($\beta = -0.34; t = -5.72, p < .01$). However, the positive relationship between positional tenure and CO proposed in hypothesis 8 could not be supported by the data ($\beta = -0.05; t = -0.83, p = .41$). Finally, hypothesis 9 suggested Korean saleswomen would demonstrate stronger ASB. This position was supported ($\beta = -0.22; t = -3.30, p < .01$). The results of our structural model and moderation tests are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

V. Discussion

5.1 Globalization and Cross-Cultural Personal Selling Research

Deshpande et al. (2000) note the globalization of markets has created the need for cross-cultural testing and cross-national generalization of hypotheses about marketing management. For sales researchers and managers, gaining greater awareness of the efficacy of certain selling be-

<Table 3> Structural Model Results

Hypothesized Relationships	Estimate	S.E.	t-test
ASB → Performance (H1)	0.32	0.07	4.34**
CO → Performance (H2)	0.55	0.07	7.51**
Performance → Job Satisfaction (H3a-b)	0.36	0.13	2.74**
ASB → Job Satisfaction (H3a)	0.13	0.10	1.22
CO → Job Satisfaction (H3b)	0.10	0.12	0.88
ASB → CO (H6)	0.74	0.05	13.90**
Positional Tenure (Experience) → ASB (H7)	-0.34	0.06	-5.72**
Positional Tenure (Experience) → CO (H8)	-0.05	0.06	-0.83
Gender → ASB (H9)	-0.22	0.07	-3.30**
Controls			
Firm 1 → Performance	0.13	0.06	1.98*
Firm 2 → Performance	0.33	0.11	3.62**
Firm 3 → Performance	-0.00	0.07	-0.03
Firm 4 → Performance	0.15	0.09	1.95*
Method → Performance	0.14	0.14	0.99
Firm 1 → Job Satisfaction	0.10	0.07	1.36
Firm 2 → Job Satisfaction	0.22	0.11	1.92
Firm 3 → Job Satisfaction	-0.05	0.07	-0.72
Firm 4 → Job Satisfaction	0.32	0.09	3.47**
Method → Job Satisfaction	0.17	.08	2.04*
Firm 1 → ASB	0.18	0.09	1.92
Firm 2 → ASB	0.59	0.14	4.25**
Firm 3 → ASB	0.32	0.09	3.58**
Firm 4 → ASB	0.47	0.11	4.33**
Firm 1 → CO	0.00	0.08	0.05
Firm 2 → CO	-0.15	0.12	-1.23
Firm 3 → CO	-0.05	0.08	-0.57
Firm 4 → CO	-0.03	0.10	-0.30

Goodness of Model Fit: : $\chi^2_{163} = 336.6$ ($p < 0.01$); RMSEA = 0.057, 90% CI = .049-.066; CFI = 0.95; TLI = 0.93

* p -value $< .05$

** p -value $< .01$

<Table 4> Two Group SEM (Moderation), Parameter Estimates

	Low Work Group Cohesiveness			High Work Group Cohesiveness		
	Estimate	S.E.	t-value	Estimate	S.E.	t-value
ASB → Performance	0.46	0.13	3.40*	0.08	0.12	0.68
CO → Performance	0.50	0.13	3.93*	0.72	0.14	5.09*

* $p < .01$

haviors across cultures and borders has clear implications in terms of sales performance, recruitment, training, and control systems. In particular, our paper notes that ASB and customer-orientated sales practices are strongly consistent with the Western traits, such as individualism, a strong tolerance for ambiguity, and low power distance (Hofstede 1984). U.S. buyers and salespeople demand recognition as individuals, their sense of identity is not so strongly derived from membership in groups or from their employer. The practice of ASB by U.S. salespeople enables them to better meet unique buyer needs while simultaneously satisfying personal goals.

On the other hand, individuals in Korea perceive ingroups as an integral part of their lives and see themselves and their relations with others as embedded within them (Rhee et al. 1996). Features associated with collectivism include being concerned with the ingroup's fate and giving its goals priority over your own; reciprocity among ingroup members, who are related in a network of interlocking responsibilities and obligations; and distinguishing sharply between ingroups and outgroups. Within Korean organizations, managers value formalization and standardization as a means of reducing uncertainty and reinforcing organizational hierarchies. Given the extent to which our current understanding of constructs like ASB and CO are predisposed to reflect Western values, norms and beliefs (e.g., due to the sample frames uti-

lized in prior work, the cultural backgrounds of sales researchers, reviewers and editors, etc.), our study helps to broaden understanding of these sales behaviors in this contrasting cultural context.

While there is some evidence to suggest that adaptiveness levels may be lower for Korean salespeople relative to Western counterparts (e.g., Smith et al. 2013), results of this study confirm a positive association between Korean salesperson ASB and performance. Similarly, Huff and Kelley (2005) found Korean bank managers possessed lower CO levels relative to U.S. managers. They suggested collectivists may have difficulty in working toward understanding and developing relationships with customers regarded as members of outgroups. Our results suggest that, similar to Western-based salespeople, CO is positively related to performance. We caution that the strength of this result may be influenced by the Korean's interpreting the scale items to refer to customers they consider significant ingroup members. More work needs done to assure the measurement equivalence of these and other personal selling scales.

The study also found that performance mediated the relationships between the practice of the two sales behaviors and job satisfaction. That is, the practice of ASB and CO selling is not intrinsically satisfying to Korean salespeople. Instead, these sales behaviors lead to satisfaction only if it enables the salespeople to contribute to meeting the collective goals of the organization.

Furthermore, we found the ASB to performance path was weaker for salespeople within more closely interdependent sales teams. This suggests that close relationships with other sales team members leads to stronger reinforcement of Confucian-based group norms and standardized organizational practices. The enactment of these norms and practices, in turn, diminishes the likelihood salespeople will try out new sales approaches with their customers. We did not find the expected positive moderating effect of working group interdependence on the CO → Performance relationship. While the moderating effect was not significant, we do note that beta-coefficient did increase in the expected direction.

Lastly, we considered the influence of on the job experience and gender upon ASB and CO. As expected, less-tenured salespeople demonstrated greater adaptive behavior. This result indicates younger, less-experienced Korean salespeople may be less bound to traditional Confucian values, in part because they are disadvantaged by the old ways. On the other hand, we found more experienced salespeople demonstrated higher levels of CO. More experienced salespeople should have more established relationships with their customers and be more inclined to extend the definition of their ingroup to include key customers. Finally, our data suggests Korean saleswomen were more likely to demonstrate ASB. The presence of Korean women in professional marketing and sales roles typically populated by male

employees suggests these women likely hold less traditional values. As such, they are more inclined to adopt new, Western-rooted sales techniques.

5.2 Implications

Korea has witnessed tremendous economic growth in recent decades. While the Korean government and businesses have recently sought to promote global business standards in an effort to fuel further gains, many Western-based practices are in conflict with traditional Korean values. Thus, there is often a great discrepancy between what Koreans see as guiding management principles and external perceptions of these principles at work (Raymond and Mittlestaedt 2001). We see a culture in transition, one in which the successful adoption of new practices may requires managers to account for embedded cultural differences.

Since collectivists are more likely to restrict their social interactions to members of their in-group and develop fewer skills for dealing with strangers (Escovar 1997), it may take relatively longer for out-group salespeople to achieve the benefits Western managers commonly associate with ASB. Further, Korean customers are more likely to limit their exposure to ambiguity by limiting sales interactions to firms and representatives within a closely-knit in-group. Thus, collectivist salespeople will engage in adaptive behaviors relatively cautiously, only after ascertaining whether such modifications can re-

duce uncertainty relating to eventual sales outcomes. It stands to reason that adaptation on the part of salespeople in the collectivist context likely has more to do with the salesperson using information acquired during the sales process to alter their behavior in such a way as to conform to the values and norms stressed by a relevant in-group. Further, salespeople will seek to adapt their presentations in ways that demonstrate interpersonal commonalities as well as how the features and benefits of their firm's offering facilitate the goals sought by the buyer's overall collective.

Korean salesperson CO is likely to be strong in situations where a customer is viewed as part of an in-group or where the relationship is seen as being instrumental to the objectives of the organization. Huff and Kelley (2005) suggest a potential liability affecting the competitiveness of firms from collectivist cultures is that the closer cohesion found within in-groups is often accompanied by a decided distrust and wariness of external trading partners. Members of collectivist cultures are relatively less effective with strangers, commonly use avoidance relationships and behaviors, and compete with, manipulate, and exploit out-groups more extensively than those of individualistic cultures (Watkins and Liu, 1996). Thus, it is entirely feasible that the same Korean salesperson will indeed exhibit a strong customer-orientation when dealing with in-group members, but be more sales-oriented when dealing with outsiders (Smith

et al. 2013).

5.3 Contribution, Limitations and Future Research

This research is among but a few published studies to investigate salesperson behaviors such as ASB and CO within an Asian context. Thus, this paper adds weight to claims of cross-cultural generalizability for ASB and CO theory by testing new and established relationships in a relatively unexplored setting. With this said, we do note some limitations to our study. First, we note our data is all derived from salesperson self-reports. While we do use different scale endpoints for our dependent and independent variables and the scales were proximally separated within the survey, the availability of objective or manager-provided performance data would have been greatly preferred. While our analysis does incorporate a common method variance factor and our results do not appear to be significantly biased, one drawback to this approach is that it allows the researcher to control for only one source of method bias at a time (Podsakoff et al. 2003). While confidence in study results would be somewhat improved if measures of the predictor and criterion variables were derived from different sources, we note that the aim of our research was not to identify new relationships between untested sets of variables. Instead, we sought to assess the extent to which relationships between variables

commonly identified in Western contexts might differ in a contrasting cultural setting.

New research should strive to more clearly define the boundaries of ASB and CO by linking each to further outcomes in cross-cultural studies. For example, the practice of ASB and CO by may be more closely associated with lower role ambiguity and conflict amongst more uncertainty-tolerant and individualistic Western salespeople, in comparison to their Asian counterparts. Additionally, the comparative effects of antecedent individual characteristics, such as salesperson personality, as well as organizational factors, like the firm's structure or compensation plan, remain open as compelling research opportunities. Finding answers to these questions has important implications for researchers and practitioners, particularly for those interested in issues related to managing international sales efforts.

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