

The Authenticity of Business to Business Salespersons on Consultative Selling Competence: The Role of Customer Orientation

Jin-Hwan Lim^a, Min-Jae Park^b

^aCollege of Business, Gachon University, South Korea

^bSchool of Business, Ajou University, South Korea

Received 30 November 2023, Revised 15 December 2023, Accepted 22 December 2023

Abstract

Purpose - The study investigates the role of authenticity of B2B salespersons has on their consultative selling competence. The study also examines the mediating effect of customer orientation between the authenticity of B2B salespersons and their consultative selling competence, as well as the moderating role of trust in the buyer-seller exchange.

Design/methodology/approach - This research utilized a covariance-based structural equation model technique. The study assessed the research model's moderation effects through a stepwise approach, which allowed for an examination of the moderating effect of trust in the buyer-seller relationship.

Findings - As a result of structural equation analysis, this study found that the authenticity of B2B salespersons influences their consultative selling competence by mediating their customer orientation significantly. In addition, trust in the buyer-seller exchange plays a significant role as a moderating variable between customer orientation and competitive selling competence, but it is not significant as a moderating variable between the authenticity and customer orientation of B2B salespersons.

Research implications or Originality - This research proposed the role of authenticity of the B2B salesperson as a key factor in the trust-based relationship and a key variable of consultative selling competence. The study has taken the research on the authenticity of the B2B salesperson one step further from the study of authenticity of the brand and the company's leadership.

Keywords: Authenticity, B2B salesperson, Consultative selling, Customer orientation, Trust in buyer-seller exchange

JEL Classifications: M31, O15, L21

I. Introduction

Trustworthiness is considered one of the most important virtues of salespersons for business-to-business (B2B) buyers (Hayes and Hartley, 1989). Therefore, the salesperson must develop and maintain a buyer-seller relationship that is based on trust (Babin et al. 2004; Bateman and Valentine, 2015; Crosby et al. 1990; Evans et al. 2012; Roman and Ruiz 2005). The customer is able to detect the salesperson who is pretentious and intentionally speeds up the sales process to get the contract in front of them, and this behavior undermines trust and creates a negative

^a First Author, E-mail: jh1lim@gachon.ac.kr

^b Corresponding Author, E-mail: geglove@ajou.ac.kr

© 2023 The Institute of Management and Economy Research. All rights reserved.

impact on the long-term relationship. The behavior of an inauthentic salesperson therefore does harm to the process of relationship selling (Luu, 2020; Schaefer and Pettijohn 2006b). In contrast, the customer responds favorably to the salesperson's authentic behavior. Authenticity is present in low self-monitoring people, who are consistent in their behaviors, assess themselves by their own standards, and arouse trust and favor in the people with whom they interact (Gailiene 2012; Schaefer and Pettijohn 2006a).

The concept of 'consultative selling' emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s as American firms began to focus on their customers' needs and problems, which had become more complicated (Dunn et al. 1981). The consultative selling approach is aimed towards solving the customer's problems, meeting the customer's needs, providing value to the customer, and supporting the customer to achieve strategic goals through long-term relationship development and maintenance (Dunn et al. 1981; Lim 2016; Moncrief and Marshall 2005; Pelham 2002; Pelham 2009). As customers' problems become more diverse and complicated, the value of the solution is recognized much more, and the creation of customer value becomes an important source for establishing the competitive advantage of the company (Sales-Vivó et al., 2020; Töytäri et al. 2011). Consultative selling can achieve this result to a greater extent in the B2B domain than in business-to-consumer (B2C) transactions (Lim 2016). This is because authentic B2B salespersons form long-term relationships with their customers based on trust (Schaefer and Pettijohn 2006b), and this has a positive impact on consultative selling (Pučėtaitė and Lāmsā 2008; Schwepker and Good 2011; Schwepker and Schultz 2015).

Authenticity refers to the true self (Avolio and Gardner 2005). People who are true to themselves are low self-monitors who they think and express themselves as they believe, even though this behavior may be in conflict with what is required in a particular situation (Ibarra 2015; Snyder 1979). The concept of authenticity emerged from the field of philosophy and expanded to sociology, history, anthropology, psychology, and so on (McShane and Cunningham 2012). In terms of business, fierce competition and the erosion of trust in the marketplace causes consumers to lose faith in companies, and a company therefore needs to deploy authenticity as a positioning strategy of competitive advantage (Ballantyne et al. 2006; Eggers et al. 2013; Grayson and Martinec 2004). The research on authenticity is underway in various aspects of business such as brand, leadership, and business ethics. On the other hand, the research on the authenticity of sales and the authenticity of salespersons, an important factor in building trust-based relationships, has not gone very far. The study of the relationship between authentic leadership and sales performance is just beginning (Aydin 2016; Rego et al. 2015).

This study first examines the current status of the business management view of authenticity that has been widely studied in the academic fields mentioned above. Secondly, this research analyzes the effect that the authenticity of B2B salespersons has on their consultative selling competence. This study does this by analyzing the relationship between consultative selling and the salespersons' authenticity, which positively affects the long-term relationship with the customer. Thirdly, this paper examines the mediating effect of customer orientation between the authenticity of B2B salespersons and their consultative selling competence, as well as the moderating role of trust in the buyer-seller exchange. Fourthly, this research develops the scale of the authenticity of the B2B salesperson based on the existing authentic leadership, in order to activate the research of this variable in the future. This study targets a sample of Korean

B2B salespersons who are engaged in direct and indirect sales in various industries such as IT, pharmaceutical, consulting, service, healthcare, and manufacturing. This study has managerial implications to demonstrate the effect of trust on transaction channel and authenticity in order to increase salesperson's competence. This research has an academic contribution for the authenticity of the B2B salesperson as a key factor in the trust-based relationship and a key variable of consultative selling competence. This research has taken the research on the authenticity of the B2B salesperson one step further from the study of authenticity of the brand and the company's leadership.

II. Literature Review

The concept of authenticity has roots in Greek philosophy (“To thine own self be true”) (Avolio and Gardner 2005) and expanded to social sciences such as sociology, history, anthropology, psychology and management (McShane and Cunningham 2012). Authenticity involves being true to oneself first, rather than looking to others to determine one’s behavior (Avolio and Gardner 2005). Psychologist Mark Snyder identified two psychological profiles of their personal styles –High self-monitors and Low self-monitors (Ibarra 2015; Snyder 1979). High self-monitors or chameleons are naturally able and willing to adapt to the demands of a situation without feeling fake and Low self-monitors or true to selfers tend to express what they really think and feel, even when it runs counter to situational demands (Ibarra, 2015). People who are true to themselves are low self-monitors (Snyder 1979). Authenticity refers to a person who thinks and expresses what he or she truly believes and consistently makes value-based choices (Avolio and Gardner 2005; Ibarra 2015; Snyder 1979).

Authenticity is part of one’s moral character (Jackson 2005) and a manifestation of an individual’s search for what is real (Leigh et al. 2006). People who are authentic are consistent in both their personal and public behavior (Galilienne 2012). Authenticity in terms of business has been used in various ways to imply various meanings (Beverland 2005). Many terms are used to describe authenticity, such as genuineness, realness, truthfulness, sincerity, innocence, originality, unaffectedness, naturalness, honesty, and simplicity (Alexander 2009; Fine 2003; Napoli et al. 2014). Business authenticity has two main aspects: the authenticity related to product and service offerings and the authenticity of individuals in relationship (Gilmore and Pine 2007, pp. xii–xiii). Research on authenticity in business in the areas of branding, ethics, and leadership is underway. Moreover, despite the attempts to ‘fake’ authenticity as a marketing strategy, the appeal of authenticity has remained unchanged over time, which makes it an important and interesting subject for business research (Grayson and Martinec 2004).

The researches in authentic leadership have grown dramatically over the past decade (Gardner et al. 2011; Imam et al., 2020). Luthans and Avolio (2003) stated that authentic leadership is a process of enhancing positive self-development by generating self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and colleagues. Researchers have devoted considerable effort to explaining authentic leadership capabilities, including the values and attributes of authentic leaders (e.g., hope, optimism, resilience, trustworthiness, integrity, accountability, credibility, respect, and fairness), self-awareness, balanced processing, self-regulation, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and authentic behavior (Avolio

and Gardner 2005; Gardner et al. 2005; Hannah et al. 2011; Ilies et al. 2005; Peus et al. 2012; Walumbwa et al. 2008).

Schaefer and Pettijohn (2006b) analyzed the relationship between the B2B salesperson's authenticity and their performance, professional commitment, and intent to stay in the profession. They supported that the authenticity of salespersons is related to sales performance and that the salesperson's feeling of authenticity in their role predicts their performance and commitment to the sales profession. Schaefer and Pettijohn (2006a), on the basis of a literature review of humanistic psychology, developed a verifiable hypothesis that can assess the relationship between salesperson authenticity and related variables such as job satisfaction, customer orientation, selling orientation, job autonomy, role ambiguity, role identity, self-esteem, rejection-sensitivity, and self-efficacy. Kaski et al. (2018) proposed the skills of rapport building in authentic B2B sales interaction and engaging customers for solution co-creation. This study emphasizes the importance of set of collaborative actions and related skills needed to build rapport and move an authentic relationship forward (Lussier and Hall, 2018). Schaefer and Pettijohn (2006b) defined authenticity as the behaviors expressing the inner experiences of people who are self-determined, natural, genuine, and unpretentious. Authenticity of B2B Salespersons can be defined as behaviors and communications of B2B salespersons who are true to themselves. They express themselves as they truly believe and follow the standard of ethics to customers, even though when it runs counter to situational demands (Avolio and Gardner 2005; Ibarra 2015; Snyder 1979). They are genuine, unpretentious, and consistent in personal and public behaviors to customers (Galiliene 2012; Schafer and Pettijohn 2006b).

The symbolic interactionist perspective conceptualizes human interactions as interpretive and social (Blumer 1969). It describes social interaction as people interpreting other individuals' acts and responding according to what these mean or symbolize for them (Charon 2007). The central concept of joint action (Blumer 1969) indicates that individuals make continuous adjustments to their actions and perceptions because they know that they are ultimately dependent on the other to reach their respective goals. From this perspective, an attempt to create authentic value in B2B sales relationship is a social and symbolic activity as individuals try to fit their actions towards each other based on their interpretations of their counterpart's (re)actions and perspective. Thus, the mechanisms of authentic leadership generation and the creation of authenticity of B2B salesperson have similar characteristics. Based on this, this research measured the authenticity of B2B salesperson by using some proxy items of authentic leadership.

III. Hypothesis Development

Consultative selling has been studied not only by scholars but also by consultants because of their close relationship with the competitiveness of companies. This approach to selling means becoming a partner with customers by helping them understand their strategic goals, problems, and opportunities; providing them solutions; and enabling them to achieve their objectives (Coker et al. 2000, p. 53; Rackham and DeVincents 1999 p. 128). Also, consultative selling involves getting to the center of the customer's problem by asking a lot of questions and helping to create high returns for the customer's senior decision maker (Hanan 2011, p. 1; Schultz and Doerr 2014, p. 33).

Researchers approach consultative selling in terms of the sales relationship, which is divided into three types: transactional selling, consultative selling, and enterprise selling. Consultative selling is a very common relationship, especially in the B2B marketplace, providing value and solutions to customers. Both consultative selling and enterprise selling are different from transactional selling in that they are relationship-based (Cron and DeCarlo 2009, pp. 49–53; Johnston and Marshall 2013, pp. 7–8; Spiro et al. 2008 p. 56). Ryals and Marcos (2012) stated that relationship selling is the new norm in business and revealed four categories of skills and capabilities that salespersons need in this new business environment: commercial, relational, managerial, and cognitive. Consultative selling provides value to customers and proposes solutions that are tailored to meet their business objectives. Through this approach, customers recognize the expertise of their salespersons and ensure that the solutions provided are beneficial to their long-term objectives (Dunn et al. 1981; Moncrief and Marshall 2005; Pelham 2002). The characteristics of consultative selling include an accurate understanding of customer business and the commitment and ability to solve customer problems, meet customer needs, provide new value, contribute to the achievement of the customer's strategic goals, and maintain long-term relationships. In terms of B2B sales, consultative selling provides value not only to the customer's company but also to the customer's employees (Lim 2016).

Lim (2016) added ethical selling as one of the measures of consultative selling competence. Ethical selling is the ability to develop trust and is a widely recognized societal norm representing fair play, honesty, and full disclosure (Chonko 2015; Robertson and Anderson 1993). Ethical selling and trust are key factors in sales relationships because they ensure that customers will continue to buy from the company in the future (Babin et al. 2004; Evans et al. 2012; Hansen and Riggle 2009; Roman and Ruiz 2005). Salespersons sometimes pretend to agree with customers to simply please them (Saxe and Weitz 1982). However, authentic salespersons demonstrate to customers' honest communication and behavior, do not overpromise, and provide all the information they need to make their decision. Moreover, when salespersons act authentically, they adhere to their moral obligation to show honest and appropriate care when communicating with customers (Chonko 2015; Ingram et al. 2007; Valentine and Barnett 2002). As a result, the salesperson's ethical behavior that is based on authenticity increases the quality of the consultative selling relationship, thereby positively affecting the creation of customer value in the B2B network (Schwepker and Good 2011). In this study, the first hypothesis based on this idea is as follows:

H1: The authenticity of B2B salespersons has a positive influence on their consultative selling competence.

Customer orientation is a key construct in marketing research. Research on the customer orientation of companies within the larger concept of market orientation has been conducted. On the one hand, there have been various studies on the customer orientation of employees, including salespersons (Franke and Park 2006; Hartline et al. 2000; Homburg et al. 2011). Sax and Weitz (1982) introduced the concept of the salesperson's customer orientation to counter the prevalent selling orientation of many salespersons. They defined customer orientation as the practice of marketing at the level of the individual salesperson and customer and as a commitment to ensure long-term satisfaction by understanding and satisfying customer needs and interests.

Customer-oriented behaviors have become a key factor in building relationships by identifying customer needs and making appropriate propositions to the customer (Homburg et al. 2011; Pelham 2009; Rozell et al. 2004). Since the customer orientation of salespersons was first introduced in the marketing literature, it has been extensively studied as a key determinant of salespersons' performance (Schwepker 2003; Terho et al. 2013). It has been found that customers respond favorably to true customer orientation (Dunlab et al. 1988) and that the most effective salespersons are genuinely interested in customers (MacKay 1988). Customer-oriented selling avoids deceptive or manipulative influence tactics and the use of high pressure (Howe et al. 1994; Sax and Weitz 1982). Customer-oriented salespersons experience themselves as more authentic because they genuinely have their customers' best interests in mind (Schaefer and Pettijohn 2006a). Therefore, the second hypothesis is set as follows.

H2: The authenticity of B2B salespersons has a positive influence on their customer orientation.

Customer orientation positively influences consultative selling by providing information to customers, proposing customized solutions to achieve customers' business objectives, delivering value to customers, and helping customers achieve their long-term goals (Dunn et al. 1981; Moncrief and Marshall 2005; Pelham 2002). As the customer orientation of salespersons increases, they tend to engage in behaviors that enhance customer value, which is an effective way to implement overall customer orientation in the B2B marketplace (Cross et al. 2007). Therefore, the following hypotheses can be proposed considering the relationship between the authenticity of the salesperson and consultative selling and customer orientation.

H3: The customer orientation of B2B salespersons has a positive influence on their consultative selling competence.

A salesperson's customer orientation relates positively with sales performance through process variables – emotion regulation and salesmanship skills (Singh and Venugopal, 2015). Within an sales force, individual salesperson's customer orientation is significantly influenced by his/her natural rewards strategies which have important implication for sales force recruitment. Moreover, sales training and other interventions targeted toward building salesmanship skills and emotion regulation abilities may actually enhance effectiveness of customer-oriented sales force. It shows the role of customer orientation as an important mechanism for improving the performance of salespeople. Therefore, in this study, the mediating effect of customer orientation is hypothesized.

H4: The authenticity of B2B salespersons has a positive influence on their consultative selling competence by mediating their customer orientation.

Trust can be defined as the credibility and benevolence of a target of trust (Doney and Cannon 1997; Stahl et al. 2011) and is recognized as a strategic relational asset of business organizations. Trust is a prerequisite for the viability of a business (Audi 2008). It is the belief in a partner that a firm has confidence in (Moorman et al. 1992) and the most important factor in creating and maintaining the relationship values (Powers and Reagan 2007). Trust is a multi-dimensional construct that comprises confidence, predictability, credibility, ability, competence,

expertness, consistence, and friendliness (Morgan and Hunt 1994).

Customer orientation focuses on understanding the needs and interests of customers, offering appropriate suggestions based on these, developing a buyer-seller relationship, and establishing a trust-based relationship (Homburg et al. 2011; Pelham 2009; Rozell et al. 2004; Saxe and Weitz 1982). When a trusting relationship exists and is authentic, a long-lasting customer relationship environment is created (Murphy et al. 2007). In order to extend the understanding of trust in a buyer-seller exchange as a moderator in the relationship between the authenticity of B2B salespersons (Hartmann et al., 2020).

A salesperson who engages in consultative selling is a value advisor rather than someone who promotes a specific product. As a result, the customized solutions provided by the salesperson add value to the customers, which increases their confidence and keeps their business, and is thus a source of sustainable competitive advantage for the sales firm. Salespersons who possess the moral values of justice, fairness, respect, care, and responsibility earn the trust of customers and increase the quality of the relationships, thereby creating customer value as a core competence of the consultative selling process (Crosby et al. 1990; Bateman and Valentine 2015; Pučėtaitė and Lāmsā 2008). Long-term relationships based on trust have a positive influence on consultative selling (Schwepker and Schultz 2015). In order to extend the understanding of trust in the buyer-seller exchange as a moderator in the relationship between the customer orientation of B2B salespersons and their consultative selling competence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

- H5:** When the B2B salespersons' trust in the buyer-seller exchange is high, the effect of authenticity on customer orientation is more positive, and when the trust is low, the effect of authenticity on customer orientation is less positive.
- H6:** When the B2B salespersons' trust in the buyer-seller exchange is high, the effect of the customer orientation of B2B salespersons on their consultative selling competence is more positive, and when the trust is low, the effect of the customer orientation on their consultative selling competence is less positive.

IV. Method

1. Sample and Analytical Procedure

This study defined target respondents as B2B salespersons with at least five years of experience in a Korean domestic company or in a multinational company operating in Korea. The study conducted an online survey with a 7-point Likert scale in November and December 2017. A survey was conducted on members belonging to the Korean B2B sales association. We distributed a link to the Google questionnaire via email to 318 salespersons who agreed to participate in the survey. A total of 273 questionnaires were fully answered (response rate: 85.8%), but several respondents were excluded because of inconsistent or duplicated responses. The study obtained 258 respondents (i.e., 94.5 percent of the raw sample data) and built demographic profiles of the final samples (see Table 1). Samples used in the analysis of this study

were constructed to reflect demographic characteristics engaged in industry-specific B2B Sales tasks. We utilize Stratified Random Sampling, a method that divides the population into several groups and randomly extracts it from each group.

This research utilized an analysis of moment structures (AMOS), which is a covariance-based structural equation modeling technique (Gefen et al. 2011). In order to assess whether each measurement item is more related to its major construct than to the other constructs, the study performed a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) (Agarwal and Prasad, 1998) using SPSS 23.0. The study assessed the research model's moderation effects through a stepwise approach (e.g., path analysis of the model), which allowed for an examination of the moderating effect of trust in the buyer-seller relationship.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents

Category	Item	Frequency (%)	Category	Item	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	194 (75.2%)	Tenure in Sales Job (Unit: Year)	Under 5	46 (17.8%)
	Female	64 (24.8%)		6 ~ 10	81 (31.4%)
	Sum	258 (100%)		11 ~ 15	83 (32.2%)
Degree	High school	13 (5.0%)	Occupational Group (Sales)	16 ~ 20	33 (12.8%)
	Junior college	32 (12.4%)		Over 21	15 (5.8%)
	Bachelor	167 (64.8%)		Sum	258 (100%)
	Master	40 (15.5%)		Direct Sales	148 (57.4%)
	Doctoral Degree	6 (2.3%)		Indirect Sales	110 (42.6%)
Age	Sum	258 (100%)	Industry	Sum	258 (100%)
	20 ~ 29	53 (20.5%)		IT	84 (32.5%)
	30 ~ 39	89 (34.5%)		Pharmaceutical	66 (25.6%)
	40 ~ 49	79 (30.6%)		Consulting	51 (19.8%)
	50 ~ 59	31 (12.0%)		Service	22 (8.5%)
	Over 60	6 (2.4%)		Healthcare	19 (7.4%)
	Sum	258 (100%)		Manufacturing	16 (6.2%)
				Sum	258 (100%)

2. Measurement Items Development

To measure the constructs depicted in the research hypotheses, measurement items were adopted from the previous literature. Table 2 summarizes the constructs in the research hypotheses and the sources from which they were adopted.

Table 2. Measurement Items of the Construct

Construct	Measurement items	Source
Authenticity of B2B salesperson	I try to give my customers the best value with authenticity	- Avolio and Gardner (2005) - Luthans and Avolio (2003)
	I seek feedback to improve interaction with customers	
	I know how my actions affect customers	
	If I make difficult business decisions, I will follow the company's ethical behavior standards.	
	I listen attentively to other perspectives before I make business decisions.	
	I make decisions based on my ethical conviction in the field of sales.	
	I honestly admit it when I make a mistake.	
Customer orientation	I want my colleagues to tell me a lot of conflicting opinions about my position	- Gwinner et al. (1998) - Hennig-Thurau et al. (2006)
	I strive to provide our customers with higher quality service.	
	I do my best to provide customized services to my customers.	
	My business technique and environment are suitable for good relationship with customers.	
	The most important thing when dealing with customers is customer-oriented mind.	
Consultative selling competence	I will do my best to help my customers achieve their goals and achieve my goals.	- Ryals and Marcos (2012) - Liu and Leach (2001)
	I have relational skills and competence based on trust to create and maintain good relationships with customers.	
	I have the managerial skill to lead teamwork and inter-departmental collaboration within the company to provide valuable proposals to customers	
	I have a cognitive skill and ability to solve customer's problems innovatively and to find out sales opportunities by understanding customer's needs empathizing with them	
Trust in buyer-seller exchange	I have a commercial skill and excellent business sense ability to serve as a customer's business consultant by understanding the industry.	- Akrouf et al. (2016) - Doney and Cannon (1997)
	I and my customers are free to talk about situations and difficulties with mutual reciprocity.	
	My customer thinks that I always make the best offer.	
	There is no difficulty in establishing a human relationship based on faith with my customer's representative.	
	I and my customers emotionally empathize with each other and try to understand each other's situation.	
	I and my customers respect each other's performance and future development potential.	
I feel that we are working together to produce satisfactory results in the process of the transaction.		

3. Reliability Test of Research Model

This study implemented the tests on validity and reliability for the appropriateness of the research model and performed the path analysis of structural equation model for hypotheses

examination. The study executed a set of tests for convergent validity, fitness of model, and discriminant validity. The test statistics follow the reference values (see Table 3), and the research model seems to be generally valid. A discriminant analysis indicates the extent to which one construct and its sub-measurements differ from another construct and its sub-measurements. Appendix A shows the result of explorative factor analysis. All correlation values are lower than the rooted average variance extracted (AVE) values (see Table 4), and our measurement model can obtain the composite reliability (CR). In particular, the respective values of items about factor loadings indicate that all values of CR and AVE loading are statistically significant at 0,01 of the p-values (see Table 5). Because all CRs are larger than 0,70, all four constructs seem to obtain convergent validity. As all items are higher than the cut-off value of 0,60 in the factor loading, the model can secure appropriate convergent validity (Park et al., 2016b).

Table 3. Tests of Reliability and Validity

Test	Indices	References	Results
Convergent Validity	Composite reliability (CR)	> 0.7 ^a	All values > 0.712
	Standardized factor loading (SFL)	> 0.6a	All values > 0.677
	Average variance extracted (AVE)	> 0.5 ^{a,b} CR > AVE ^b	All values > 0.619 CR > AVE
Fitness of Model	χ^2 / Degree of freedom	$1 < \chi^2/df < 3^c$	2.339
	Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	> 0.8 ^c	0.912
	Comparative fit index (CFI)	> 0.9 ^c	0.928
	Normed fit index (NFI)	> 0.9 ^c	0.941
	Relative fit index (RFI)	Close to 1 ^c	0.955
	Root mean square of approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.1 ^c	0.062
Discriminant Validity	Maximum shared variance (MSV)	$MSV_{max} < AVE_{min}^d$	0.514 < 0.619
	Average shared variance (ASV)	$ASV_{max} < AVE_{min}^d$	0.487 < 0.619
	Correlation between items (R)	$R <^d$	R <

Note: ^aBagozzi and Yi (1988), ^bChang and Cheung (2001), ^cChin (1998) and ^dFornell et al. (2009).

Table 4. Results for Discriminant Validity about Constructs

	AS	CO	CS	TR
AS	0.972			
CO	0.664	0.979		
CS	0.651	0.466	0.978	
TR	0.533	0.412	0.481	0.973

^aAS: Authenticity of B2B sales person, CO: Customer orientation, CS: Consultative selling competence, TR: Trust in buyer-seller exchange

Table 5. Individual Items' Factor Loading and CR Values about Construct

Construct	Measurement items	Factor loading	CR	AVE
Authenticity of B2B sales person	AS1	0.690	0.712	0.619
	AS2	0.729		
	AS3	0.722		
	AS4	0.677		
	AS5	0.698		
	AS6	0.785		
	AS7	0.812		
	AS8	0.622		
Customer orientation	CO1	0.665	0.825	0.687
	CO2	0.638		
	CO3	0.664		
	CO4	0.708		
	CO5	0.713		
Consultative selling competence	CS1	0.698	0.739	0.792
	CS2	0.722		
	CS3	0.813		
	CS4	0.698		
Trust in buyer-seller exchange	TR1	0.720	0.741	0.772
	TR2	0.711		
	TR3	0.734		
	TR4	0.851		
	TR5	0.745		
	TR6	0.697		

4. Hypotheses Test

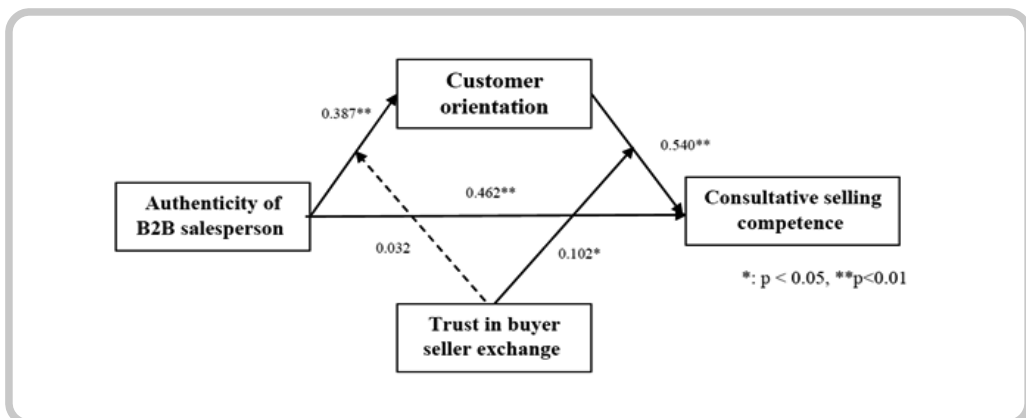
The result of hypotheses testing (see Figure 1) indicates that our research model captures a significant positive relationship between the authenticity of the B2B salesperson and customer orientation ($\beta = 0.387$, $t = 1.681$). The authenticity of the B2B salesperson is also positively related to their consultative selling competence ($\beta = 0.462$, $t = 1.912$) based on path coefficients and t-statistic measurement. The model has statistically significant positive relationships between customer orientation and the users' trust in the consultative selling competence ($\beta = 0.540$, $t = 3.124$). Next, this research examined the mediation effect of the antecedent variable (authenticity of the B2B salesperson) on consultative selling competence through customer orientation. Details of the three analytical conditions to check the mediating effect can be found in the research of Baron and Kenny (1986). This study found that independent variable significantly affected consultative selling competence. This means that the mediating factor passed the second condition of mediating effect testing. Then the research tested the final condition of the mediating effect, when the antecedent predictors were modeled with a mediator. The results indicated that customer orientation partially mediated the effects of authenticity of the B2B salesperson and partially mediated the effect on consultative selling competence.

In addition, this paper conducted a mediating effect analysis of customer orientation using bootstrapping to verify that the effect of authenticity of the B2B salesperson on the consultative selling competence is statistically significant. After estimating the indirect effects, this research derived a 95% confidence interval and determined that the mediating effects were significant if there were no zeroes in the interval (Mallinckrodt et al., 2006). The analysis shows that the authenticity of the B2B salesperson to the consultative selling competence via customer orientation shows that the 95% confidence interval of the *Biascored CI value* is -0.34 to -0.04, with no value of 0 within the confidence interval. And, the analysis result was shown to be statistically significant with p -value < 0.01 .

In order to examine the moderating effect of trust in the buyer-seller exchange between the authenticity of the B2B salesperson and customer orientation and between customer orientation and consultative selling competence, this research assessed the research model's moderation effects using a stepwise approach (Frazier et al., 2004) with Chin et al.'s (2003) recommendations for analyzing moderation effects. This stepwise approach investigates the impact of each individual moderation effect separately, which is not possible when estimating all moderation effects in a single model due to the uninterpretable effects in the presence of multiple two-way and three-way moderation effects (Carte and Russell, 2003; Park et al., 2016a).

The analysis results of the moderating role of trust in the buyer-seller exchange are as follows. While the moderating effect of trust in the buyer-seller relationship between authenticity of the B2B salesperson and customer orientation ($\beta = 0.032$, $t = 0.458$) was not statistically significant, trust in the buyer-seller relationship significantly moderated between customer orientation and consultative selling competence ($\beta = 0.102$, $t = 1.391$). Trust is formed around a process for a long time, and trust does not affect the relationship between the two variables when the authenticity of B2B salesperson affects customer orientation. The meaning of the statistically insignificant moderating effect of trust shows that the authenticity of B2B salesperson is important regardless of the reliability between partners.

Fig. 1. Results of Analysis



Additionally, the approach proposed by Ping (1993) was applied to verify the moderating effects. Using the variance and measurement error variance of the main effect of authenticity

of the B2B salesperson and the moderating effect of Trust in the buyer-seller exchange, the coefficient and error variance of the moderating variable were calculated to verify the model. The variance value of the moderating variable obtained by this calculation was .08, factor coefficient of the moderating variable .51, and error variance of the moderating variable .04 were fixed to the control model, respectively. The analysis shows that the statistically significant moderating effect of trust in the buyer-seller exchange was shown. The model reliability for this adjustment model were GFI = .92, CFI = .91 and RMSEA = .06, indicating that the adjustment model exceeded acceptable criteria.

V. Conclusion

This research reviewed the literature on authenticity in terms of business management to analyze the relationship between the authenticity of B2B salespersons and their consultative selling competence.

First, this research analyzed the current status of the research on authenticity in business management. This research concluded that the various studies on authenticity in business management have been conducted in relation to brand, business ethics, and leadership. Companies have come to view authenticity as one of critical factors in their competitive advantage under the intensifying competition and erosion of trust in today's business environment (Eggers et al. 2013). However, compared to the research on brand authenticity and authentic leadership, there has been little research on the salesperson's authenticity in the B2B area, in which the customer value creation is a critical source of corporate success, and trust-based relationships are essential to enhance the company's competitive advantage (Crosby et al. 1990; Hansen and Riggle 2009).

Second, this research analyzed the relationship between the authenticity of B2B salespersons and their consultative selling competence, which is becoming more important because it is a critical factor in securing the company's competitive advantage (Lim 2016; Töytäri et al. 2011). This research also analyzed the role of customer orientation and the role of trust in the buyer-seller exchange in this relationship. This research found that the authenticity of B2B salespersons influences their consultative selling competence by mediating their customer orientation significantly. In addition, the trust in the buyer-seller exchange plays a significant role as a moderating variable between customer orientation and competitive selling competence, but it is not significant as a moderating variable between the authenticity and customer orientation of B2B salespersons.

1. Academic Implications

This study makes the following academic contributions. First, this research furthered the study of the authenticity of the B2B salesperson as a key factor in the trust-based relationship

(Schafer and Pettijohn 2006b; Murphy et al. 2007) and a key variable of consultative selling competence. This research has taken the research on the authenticity of the B2B salesperson one step further from the study of authenticity of the brand and the company's leadership.

Second, this study supported that the authenticity of the B2B salesperson has a significant effect on their customer orientation and positively influences consultative selling competence (Dunn et al. 1981; Moncrief and Marshall 2005; Saxe and Weitz 1982). In addition, this study has highlighted the importance of the customer orientation of the B2B salespersons by demonstrating that customer orientation plays a mediating role between the authenticity of the B2B salesperson and their consultative selling competence.

Third, trust is the most important factor in creating and maintaining the relationship value of B2B sales (Powers and Reagan 2007). This study supported that trust in the buyer-seller exchange has a significant moderating effect between customer orientation and consultative selling competence, but has no significant moderating effect between the authenticity of the B2B salesperson and customer orientation. This study examined the moderating effect of trust in the buyer-seller exchange in relationships with the authenticity of B2B salespersons, their customer orientation, and their consultative selling competence.

A fourth academic implication is to develop the scale of the authenticity of the B2B salesperson in order to activate the study of this variable in the future. Existing research for authenticity has focused on suggesting measurement variables related to leadership (Kaski et al., 2018). The development of measurement items for the B2B sales context can enhance the scalability of the research.

2. Practical Implications

The authenticity of B2B salespersons has a positive influence on their consultative selling competence. Therefore, companies and managers can improve their performance by hiring authentic B2B salespersons and further developing their authenticity. Considering this, the practical implications of this study are as follows.

First, it has been confirmed that the authenticity of B2B salespersons has a positive influence on their consultative selling competence and customer orientation. Therefore, sales managers and HR managers need to consider the measurement items of authenticity of the B2B salesperson as one of the main factors when they recruit B2B salespersons. Second, sales managers and HR managers can use the measurement items of authenticity of the B2B salesperson developed in this study in order to evaluate and develop the consultative selling competence of B2B salespersons in terms of human resource management. Third, this research has found that the customer orientation mediates the relationship between the authenticity of B2B salespersons and their consultative selling competence in this study. The sales organization with high consultative selling competence can be made not only by the authenticity of B2B salespersons but also by their customer orientation capability. The managers need to train their sales forces considering these two variables - the authenticity and the customer orientation capability of B2B salespersons. They need to develop the sales forces with their authenticity as well as their customer orientation skill for building up the high performance sales organization.

The mediating and modeling effect analysis results of the research model emphasize the importance of the salesperson's customer-centered perspective and trust in the counterpart of the transaction relationship. By establishing interdependent relationships with customers

and partners, transaction partner transit costs can be increased, and long-term customer relationships can be established to generate sales growth based on customer retention with high loyalty. Salesperson's authenticity can build long-term relationships with customers and make them loyal customers. Salesperson are responsible for identifying customers' needs and persuading customers to satisfy their needs in order to sell products or services that a company has. Therefore, salesperson need to change into relationship-oriented sales that value customer relationships by increasing market-oriented, trading partner-oriented, and trust in partners.

3. Limitations and Future Study

One limitation of this study is whether the samples can represent the attributes of Western companies in general because the target samples are the B2B salespersons of the companies operating in Korea. However, it is possible to overcome this limitation by the fact that the sample's companies are from both Korean domestic companies and multinational companies operating in Korea. However, it will be necessary to prove that these hypotheses apply to Western culture by conducting similar research with a sample of Western countries in the future.

This study examined trust in the buyer-seller exchange as a moderating variable in relation to the authenticity of the B2B salesperson, their customer orientation, and their consultative selling competence. The trust in the buyer-seller exchange has been studied by many marketing researchers as a major variable of B2B sales. Some studies have shown that customer orientation has a positive influence on trust and that trust has a positive influence on consultative selling competence. Considering this research, there may be some controversy about the trust in the buyer-seller exchange as a mediating variable in relation to customer orientation and consultative selling competence. Since this study proved that trust is a moderating variable between customer orientation and consultative selling competence for a specific Asian country and culture, future research on other hypotheses about the role of the trust variable is also indicated.

This study is the initial stage of an overall study on the authenticity of B2B salespersons. Therefore, we anticipate further studies on the authenticity of B2B salespersons in relationship to the variables of sales performance, sales effectiveness, adaptive selling, and so on, which are the important variables for the company and salespersons. In addition, the research on the authenticity of B2C salespersons beyond the B2B domain, and the further development of the measurement of the authenticity of salespersons, may be the subject of future studies. In the future, the number of data samples needs to be increased to generalize the results of the study. In terms of methodology, further studies should be conducted that reflect the control variables and demographic characteristics that affect each dependent variable.

References

- Akrouf, H., M. F. Diallo, W. Akrouf and J. L. Chandon (2016). "Affective trust in buyer-seller relationships: a two-dimensional scale", *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 31(2), 260–273.
- Agarwal, R. and J. Prasad (1998). "A conceptual and operational definition of personal innovativeness in the domain of information technology", *Information Systems Research*, 9(2), 204–215.

- Alexander, N. (2009). "Brand authentication: creating and maintaining brand auras", *European Journal of Marketing*, 43(3/4), 551–562.
- Audi, R. (2008). "Some Dimensions of Trust in Business Practices: From Financial and Product Representation to Licensure and Voting", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 80(1), 97–102.
- Avolio, B. J. and W. L. Gardner (2005). "Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership", *Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), 315–338.
- Aydin, S. and N. Kaya (2016). "Authentic Leadership in Sales Management: The Effects on Salespersons's Task Related Outcomes", *Business and Economic Research*, 6(2), 133-154.
- Babin, B. J., M. Griffin and J. S. Boles (2004). "Buyer reactions to ethical beliefs in the retail environment". *Journal of Business Research*, 57(10), 1155–1163.
- Bagozzi, R. P., and Y. Yi (1988). "On the evaluation of structural equation models". *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 16(1), 74–94.
- Ballantyne, R., A. Warren and K. Nobbs (2006). "The evolution of brand choice", *Journal of Brand Management*, 13(4/5), 339–352.
- Baron, R. M., and D. A. Kenny (1986). "The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical consideration", *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 51(6), 1173–1182.
- Bateman, C. and S. Valentine (2015). "The impact of salesperson customer orientation on the evaluation of a salesperson's ethical treatment, trust in the salesperson, and intentions to purchase", *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 35(2), 125–142.
- Bentor, Y. (1993). "Tibetan Tourist Thangkas in the Kathmandu Valley", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 20(1), 107–137.
- Beverland, M. B. (2005). "Crafting Brand Authenticity: The Case of Luxury Wines", *Journal of Management Studies*, 42(5), 1003–1029.
- Beverland, M. B., A. Lindgreen and M. W. Vink (2008). "Projecting Authenticity through Advertising: Consumer Judgments of Advertisers' Claims". *Journal of Advertising*, 37(1), 5–15.
- Bhattacharya, C. B., D. Korchun and S. Sankar (2009). "Strengthening stakeholder-company relationships through mutually beneficial corporate social responsibility initiatives", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 85(2), 257–272.
- Brown, S., R. V. Kozinet and J. F. Sherry (2003). "Teaching old brands new tricks, retro branding and the revival of brand meaning." *Journal of Marketing*, 67(3), 19–33.
- Buss, D. M. (1991). "Evolutionary personality psychology". *Annual Review of Psychology*, 42(1), 459–491.
- Carte, T. A. and C. J. Russell (2003). "In pursuit of moderation: Nine common errors and their solutions." *MIS Quarterly*, 27(3), 479–501.
- Castaldo, S., K. Premazzi and F. Zerbini (2014). "The Meaning(s) of Trust. A Content Analysis on the Diverse Conceptualizations of Trust in Scholarly Research on Business Relationships", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 96(4), 657–668.
- Chang, M. K., and W. Cheung (2001). "Determinants of the intention to use Internet/WWW at work: a confirmatory study", *Information and Management*, 39(1), 1–14.
- Chin, W. W. (1998). "Commentary: Issues and opinion on structural equation modeling". *MIS Quarterly*, 22(1), vii-xvi.
- Chin, W. W., B. L. Marcolin and P. R. Newsted (2003). "A partial least squares latent variable modeling approach for measuring interaction effects: Results from a Monte Carlo simulation study and an electronic-mail emotion/adoption study". *Information systems research*, 14(2), 189–217.
- Chonko, L. (2015). "JPSSM – ethical issues in sales decision making". *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 35(2), 91–92.
- Coker, D. M., E. R. Del Gaizo, K. A. Murray and S. L. Edwards (2000). "High performance sales

- organizations: achieving competitive advantage in the global marketplace". McGraw-Hill Higher Education, New York, NY, p. 53.
- Cron, W. L., and T. E. DeCarlo, (2009). Dalrymple's sales management (10th ed.). John Wiley and Sons, Inc., Hoboken, NJ.
- Crosby, L. A., K. R. Evans and D. Cowles (1990). "Relationship quality in services selling: an interpersonal influence perspective". *Journal of Marketing*, 54(3), 68–81.
- Cross M. E., T. G. Brashear Rigdon, E. E. and D. N. Bellenger (2007). "Customer orientation and salesperson performance". *European Journal of Marketing*, 41(7/8), 821–835.
- Doney, P. M., and J. P. Cannon (1997). "An examination of the nature of trust in buyer-seller relationships". *Journal of Marketing*, 61(2), 35–51.
- Driver, M. (2006). "Beyond the Stalemate of Economics versus Ethics: Corporate Social Responsibility and the Discourse of the Organizational Self", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 66(4), 337–356.
- Dunlap, B. J., M. J. Dotson and T. M. Chambers (1988). "Perceptions of Real Estate Brokers and Buyers: A Sales orientation, Customer orientation Approach?". *Journal of Business Research*, 17(2), 175–187.
- Dunn, D. T., C. A. Thomas and J. L. Lubawski, (1981). "Pitfalls of consultative selling". *Business Horizons*, 24(5), 59–65.
- Eggers, F., M. O'Dwyer, Kraus, S., C. Vallaster and S. Guldenberg (2013). "The impact of brand authenticity on brand trust and SME growth: A CEO perspective", *Journal of World Business*, 48(3), 340–348.
- Evans, K. R., R. G. McFarland, B. Dietz and F. Jaramillo (2012). "Advancing sales performance research: a focus on five underresearched topic areas", *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 32(1), 89–106.
- Ferro-Soto, C., C. Padin, G. Svensson and N. Høgevold (2022). "The role of trust and commitment as mediators between economic and non-economic satisfaction in sales manager B2B relationships" *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*.
- Fine, G. A. (2003). "Crafting authenticity: the validation of identity in self-taught art". *Theory and Society*, 32, 153–180.
- Fornell, C., S. Mithas and F. V. Morgeson III (2009). "Commentary—the economic and statistical significance of stock returns on customer satisfaction". *Marketing Science*, 28(5), 820–825.
- Franke, G. R. and J. E. Park (2006). "Salesperson Adaptive Selling Behavior and Customer Orientation", *Journal of Marketing Research*. 43(4), 693–702.
- Frazier, P. A., A. P. Tix and K. E. Barron (2004). "Testing moderator and mediator effects in counseling psychology research". *Journal of counseling psychology*, 51(1), 115.
- Gailiene, I. (2012). "Self-Monitoring Controversies". *Problems of Psychology in the 21st Century*, 3, 4–5.
- Garcia-Marza, D. (2005). "Trust and Dialogue: Theoretical Approaches to Ethics Auditing". *Journal of Business Ethics*. 57(3), 209–219.
- Gardner, W. L., B. J. Avolio, F. Luthans, D. R. May and F. Walumbwa (2005). "Can you see the real me?" A self-based model of authentic leader and follower development. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), 343–372.
- Gardner, W. L., C. C. Coglisier, K. M. Davis and M. O. Dickens, (2011). "Authentic leadership: A review of the literature and research agenda". *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(6), 1120–1145.
- Gefen, D., D. W. Straub and E. E. Rigdon(2011). "An update and extension to SEM guidelines for administrative and social science research." *Management Information Systems Quarterly*, 35(2), iii-xiv.
- Gilmore, J. H. and J. B. Pine II (2007). Authenticity: What Consumer Really Want. Harvard Business School Publishing, Boston, MA, pp. xii-xiii.
- Grayson, K. and R. Martinec (2004). "Consumer Perceptions of Iconicity and Their Influence on Assessments of Authentic Market Offerings". *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(2), 296–312.

- Gwinner, K. P., D. D. Gremler and M. J. Bitner (1998). "Relational benefits in services industries: the customer's perspective." *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 26(2), 101–114.
- Hanan, M. (2011). *Consultative selling: the Hanan formula for high-margin sales at high level*. AMACOM, New York, NY. P. 1.
- Hansen, J. D. and R. J. Riggle (2009). "Ethical salesperson behavior in sales relationships." *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 29(2), 151–166.
- Harkin, M. (1995). "Modernist Anthropology and Tourism of the Authentic". *Annals of Tourism Research*, 22(3), 650–670.
- Hartline, M. D., J. G. Maxham III and D. O. Mckee (2000). "Corridors of Influence in the Dissemination of Customer-Oriented Strategy to Customer Contact Service Employees". *Journal of Marketing*, 64(2), 35–50.
- Hayes, Michael H. and Steven W. Hartley (1989). "How buyers view industrial salespersons". *Industrial Marketing Management*, 18(2), 73–80.
- Hennig-Thurau, T., M. Groth, M. Paul, and D. D. Gremler (2006). "Are all smiles created equal? How emotional contagion and emotional labor affect service relationships". *Journal of Marketing*, 70(3), 58–73.
- Hirst, G., F. Walumbwa, S. Aryee, I. Butarbutar and C. J. H. Chen (2016). "A Multi-level Investigation of Authentic Leadership as an Antecedent of Helping Behavior". *Journal of Business Ethics*, 139(3), 485–499.
- Holt, D. B. (1997). "Poststructuralist Lifestyle Analysis: Conceptualizing the Social Patterning of Consumption in Postmodernity". *Journal of Consumer Research*, 23(4), 326–350.
- Homburg, C., M. Müller and M. Klarmann (2011). "When Should the Customer Really Be King? On the Optimum Level of Salesperson Customer Orientation in Sale Encounters". *Journal of Marketing*, 75(2), 55–74.
- Howe, V., K. D. Hoffman and D. W. Hardigree, (1994). "The Relationship between Ethical and Customer-Oriented Service Provider Behaviors". *Journal of Business Ethics*, 13(7), 497–506.
- Hsiung, H. H. (2012). "Authentic Leadership and Employee Voice Behavior: A Multi-Level Psychological Process". *Journal of Business Ethics*, 107(3), 349–361.
- Ibarra, H. (2015). "The Authenticity Paradox". *Harvard Business Review*, 93(1/2), 52–59.
- Ilies, R., F. P. Morgeson and J. D. Nahrgang (2005). "Authentic leadership and eudaemonic well-being: Understanding leader follower outcomes". *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), 373–394.
- Ingram, T. N., R. W. LaForge and C. H. Jr. Schwepker (2007). "Salesperson ethical decision making: the impact of sales leadership and sales management control strategy". *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 27(4), 301–315.
- Jackson, K. T. (2005). "Towards authenticity: A sartrean perspective on business ethics". *Journal of Business Ethics*, 58(4), 307–325.
- Johnston, M. W. and G. W. Marshall (2013). *Contemporary selling: building relationships, creating value* (4th ed.). Routledge, New York, NY.
- Kaski, T., J. Niemi and E. Pullins (2018). "Rapport building in authentic B2B sales interaction". *Industrial Marketing Management*, 69, 235–252.
- Kennick, W. E. (1985). "Art and Inauthenticity". *Journal of Aesthetic and Art Criticism*, 44(1), 3–12.
- Kim, S. (2009). "Is Salesperson's Service Faked or Authentic?: The Effects of Authenticity Perceived by Customers about Salespersons' Emotional Labor on Service Quality Evaluation". *Journal of Korean Marketing Association*, 24(3), 1–33.
- Lagace, R. R., R. Dahlstrom and J. Gassenheimer (1991). "The Relevance of ethical salesperson behavior on relationship quality: the pharmaceutical industry". *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*. 11(4), 39–48.

- Liedtka, J. (2008). "Strategy Making and the Search for Authenticity". *Journal of Business Ethics*, 80(2), 237–248.
- Leigh, T. W., C. Peters and J. Shelton, (2006). "The Consumer Quest for Authenticity: The Multiplicity of Meanings Within the MG Subculture of Consumption". *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 34(4), 481–493.
- Lim, J. (2016). "Research on the Consultative Selling Competencies of B2B Salesperson". *Korean Corporation Management Review*, 23(6), 113–143.
- Liu, A. H., and M. P. Leach (2001). "Developing loyal customers with a value-adding sales force: examining customer satisfaction and the perceived credibility of consultative salespersons". *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 21(2), 147–156.
- Lu, S., and G. A. Fine (1995). "The Presentation of Ethnic Authenticity: Chinese Food as a Social Accomplishment". *The Social Quarterly*, 36(3), 535–553.
- Luthans, F., and B. Avolio (2003). Authentic leadership development. In K. S. Cameron, J. E. Dutton, and R. E. Quinn (Eds.), *Positive organizational scholarship* (pp. 241–258). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- MacKay, H. B. (1988). "Humanize Your Selling Strategy". *Harvard Business Review*, 66(2), 36–47.
- Mallinckrodt, B., W. T. Abraham, M. Wei, and D. W. Russell (2006). "Advances in testing the statistical significance of mediation effects". *Journal of counseling psychology*, 53(3), 372.
- Mazutis, D. D. and N. Slawinski (2014). "Reconnecting Business and Society: Perceptions of Authenticity in Corporate Social Responsibility". *Journal of Business Ethics*, 131(1), 137–150.
- McShane, L, and P. Cunningham (2012). "To thine own self be true? Employees' judgments of the authenticity of their organization's corporate social responsibility program", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 108(1), 81–100.
- Moncrief, W. C., and G. W. Marshall (2005). "The evolution of the seven steps of selling", *Industrial Marketing Management*, 34(1), 13–22.
- Moorman, C., G. Zaltman and R. Deshpande (1992). "Relationships between Providers and Users of Market Research: The Dynamics of Trust Within and Between Organizations". *Journal of Marketing Research*, 29(3), 314–328.
- Morgan, R. M., and S. D. Hunt (1994). "The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing", *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3), 20–38.
- Murphy, P. E., G. R. Laczniak and G. Wood (2007). "An Ethical Basis for Relationship Marketing: A Virtue Ethics Perspective", *European Journal of Marketing*, 41(1/2), 37–57.
- Nahm, A. Y., S. S. Rao, L. E. Solis-Galvan and T. S. Ragu-Nathan (2002). "The Q-sort method: assessing reliability and construct validity of questionnaire items at a pre-testing stage", *Journal of Modern Applied Statistical Methods*, 1(1), 114–125.
- Napoli, J., S. J. Dickinson, M. B. Beverland, and F. Farrelly (2014). "Measuring consumer-based brand authenticity", *Journal of Business Research*, 67(6), 1090–1098.
- Newell, S. J., J. J. Jr. Belonax, M. W. McCardle, and R. E. Plank (2011). "The effect of personal relationship and consultative task behaviors on buyer perceptions of salesperson trust, expertise, and loyalty", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 19(3), 307–316.
- Park, M. J., Choi, H., and Rho, J. J. (2016a). "Citizen patronage behavior of government social media services: Extended perspective of perceived value with the moderating effect of media synchronicity", *Information Development*, 32(3), 293–312.
- Park, M. J., D. Kang, J. J. Rho and D. H. Lee (2016b). "Policy role of social media in developing public trust: Twitter communication with government leaders", *Public Management Review*, 18(9), 1265–1288.

- Pelham, A. M. (2002). "An exploratory model and initial test of the influence of firm level consulting-oriented sales force programs on sales force performance", *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 22(2), 97–109.
- Pelham, A. M. (2009). "An exploratory study of the influence of firm market orientation on salesperson adaptive selling, customer orientation, interpersonal listening in personal selling and salesperson consulting behavior", *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 17(1), 21–39.
- Peus, C., Wesche, J.S., B. Streicher, S. Braun and D. Frey (2012). "Authentic Leadership: An empirical Test of Its Antecedents, Consequences, and Mediating Mechanisms", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 107(3), 331–348.
- Ping Jr, R. A. (1993). "The effects of satisfaction and structural constraints on retailer exiting, voice, loyalty, opportunism, and neglect. *Journal of retailing*", 69(3), 320-352.
- Powers, T. L., and W. R. Reagan (2007). "Factors influencing successful buyer-seller relationships", *Journal of Business Research*, 60(12), 1234–1242.
- Price, L. L., E. J. Arnould and S. L. Deibler (1995). "Consumers' emotional responses to service encounters: the influence of the service provider", *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 6(3), 34–63.
- Pučetaité, R., and A. M. Lämsä (2008). "Advancing organizational trust in a post-socialist context: role of ethics management tools", *Economics and Management*, 13, 381–388.
- Rackham, N., and DeVincentis, J. (1999). *Rethinking the sales force*. McGraw-Hill, New York, NY, p. 128.
- Rego, A., Reis, D. Junior and M. Pina e Cunha (2015). "Authentic Leaders Promoting Store Performance: The Mediating Roles of Virtuousness and Potency", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 128, 617–634.
- Robertson, D. C., and E. Anderson, (1993). "Control system and task environment effects on ethical judgment: an exploratory study of industrial salespersons", *Organization Science*, 4(4), 617–644.
- Roman, S., and S. Ruiz, (2005). "Relationship outcomes of perceived ethical behavior: the customer's perspective", *Journal of Business Research*, 58(4), 439–445.
- Rozell, E. J., C. E. Pettijohn and R. S. Parker (2004). "Customer-Oriented Selling: Exploring the Roles of Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Commitment", *Psychology and Marketing*, 21(6), 405–242.
- Ryals, L., and J. Marcos (2012). *The new skills you need to succeed in sales*. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2012/08/the-changing-face-of-sales>
- Saxe, R., and B.A. Weitz (1982). "The SOCO Scale- a Measure of the Customer Orientation of Salespersons", *Journal of Marketing Research*, 19(3), 343–351
- Schaefer, A.D., and C. E. Pettijohn (2006a). "Authenticity in the Personal Selling Context", *Journal of Selling and Major Account Management*, 6(4), 17–26.
- Schaefer, A.D., and C. E. Pettijohn (2006b). "The Relevance of Authenticity in the Personal Selling: Is Genuineness an Asset or Liability?", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 14(1), 25–35.
- Schultz, M., and J. E. Doerr (2014). *Insight selling: surprising research on what sales winners do differently*. John Wiley and Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey, p. 33.
- Schwepker, C. H., Jr. (2003). "Customer-oriented selling: A review, extension, and directions for future research", *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 23(2), 151–171.
- Schwepker, C. H. Jr., and D. J. Good (2011). "Moral judgment and its impact on business-to-business sales performance and customer relationships", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 98(4), 609–625.
- Schwepker, C. H. Jr., and R. J. Schultz (2015). "Influence of the ethical servant leader and ethical climate on customer value enhancing sales performance", *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 35(2), 93–107.
- Singh, R. and P. Venugopal (2015). "The impact of salesperson customer orientation on sales performance via mediating mechanism", *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 30 (5), 594-607

Snyder, M. (1979). "Self-monitoring process", *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 12, 85–128.

Spiro, R. L., G. A. Rich and W. J. Stanton (2008). *Management of a sales force* (12th ed.). McGraw-Hill Irwin, New York, NY.

Stefanie, L., Phillip, Y., W. Kim and K. Helmut (2010). Relational Governance Mediates the Effect of Formal Contracts on BPO Performance. A Paper Presented at the 18th European Conference on Information Systems (ECIS), June 8th-9th, Pretoria, South Africa. Retrieved from: <http://aisel.aisnet.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1121andcontext=ecis2010>.

Su, Y., Yoo, H., and H. Kim (2014). "A Study on the Influence on Brand Attachment and Loyalty of Cosmetic Brand Authenticity", *Journal of Distribution Research*, 19(2), 87–111.

Thompson, C. J., and S. K. Tambyah (1999). "Trying to be cosmopolitan", *Journal of Consumer Research*, 26(3), 214–241.

Töytäri, P., T. B. Alejandro, P. Parvinen, I. Ollila and N. Rosendahl (2011). "Bridging the theory to application gap in value-based selling", *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 26(7), 493–502.

Tyler, T. L. (1990). "Employee Participation Through Consultative Team Selling: A Case Study", *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 5(2), 37–41

Valentine, S., and T. Barnett (2002). "Ethics codes and sales professionals' perceptions of their organizations' ethical values", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 40(3), 191–200.

Walumbwa, F. O., B. J. Avolio, W. L. Gardner, T. S. Wernsing and S. J. Peterson (2008). "Authentic Leadership: Development and Validation of a Theory-Based Measure", *Journal of Management*, 34(1), 89–126.

Appendix A. Result of Explorative Factor Analysis

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Authenticity of B2B salesperson	0.297	0.690	0.321	0.458
	0.382	0.729	0.297	0.453
	0.180	0.722	0.472	0.433
	0.178	0.677	0.324	0.455
	0.430	0.698	0.191	0.446
	0.463	0.785	0.206	0.346
	0.454	0.812	0.253	0.324
	0.276	0.622	0.404	0.395
Customer orientation	0.665	0.207	0.469	0.253
	0.638	0.426	0.454	0.297
	0.664	0.430	0.478	0.267
	0.708	0.459	0.321	0.204
	0.713	0.346	0.453	0.248
Consultative selling competence	0.336	0.172	0.459	0.698
	0.423	0.463	0.354	0.722
	0.259	0.391	0.372	0.813
	0.451	0.335	0.216	0.698
	0.191	0.244	0.720	0.251
Trust in buyer-seller exchange	0.262	0.366	0.711	0.215
	0.189	0.461	0.734	0.248
	0.166	0.285	0.851	0.447
	0.304	0.237	0.745	0.331
	0.336	0.172	0.697	0.251