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Job Characteristics Model on Role of Employee on Sales Performance and Customer Satisfaction of Retail Stores

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ABSTRACT

This research developed and tested a model of retail employee sales performance that differs from previous efforts by utilizing multi-dimensional conceptualizations of potential antecedents. All the items were measured using multi-items scales drawn from previous studies. The organized model explains retail sales person uncertainty regarding customers and their uncertainty regarding supervisor support, sales people's job satisfaction, their ECMS and the variance in their self-reported sales performance. The results indicated that the characteristics of the retail salesperson's work environment are directly related with both enhanced job attitudes and reduced uncertainty. The greater amounts of retail salesperson job independence may actually lead to increased levels of uncertainty and retail salesperson uncertainty regarding customers is strongly related with reduced salesperson customer service attitudes and performance and retail salesperson customer service attitudes are strongly related with improved sales performance. The limitations is that as the data is cross-sectional and neither longitudinal nor experimental, strictly causal relations cannot be inferred from these results and the samples primarily consists of younger females with less work experience and who are employed at smaller retail organizations. Characteristics of the retail salesperson's job environment were directly related to their job attitudes and to the uncertainty while specific components of employee uncertainty and their level of ECMS are related with enhanced sales performance.

Key words: Retail salesperson's, job characteristics, role uncertainty, job attitudes, sales performance

INTRODUCTION

As retail salespersons are responsible for a variety of tasks, his or her ability to sell effectively is certainly important. As a result, researchers are interested in understanding the major controllable factors related with increased employee sales performance. Advertising and promotional efforts, product availability play an important role in sales performance but they are often a mixture of those that have been pre-established at levels of the organization and thus beyond the front-line manager and salesperson's control (Hughes, 2013; Kacen *et al.*, 2012) and those beyond the control of the retailing organization (Yan and Ghose, 2010). Therefore, store level are focusing their efforts on the factors that are both internal to the retail work environment and

responsive to front-line managerial control offer directly to improve retail employee sales performance. A retail employee sales performance leads to two conclusions: (1) The descriptive variables have been conceptualized as uni-dimensional constructs and (2) The relationship between descriptive variables and sales performance has been modeled not as a comprehensive model which include of a variety of potential independent variables. The goal of this research shows a developing and testing a model of retail employee sales performance that utilizes multidimensional conceptualizations of related descriptive constructs that determine by the salespersons direct, store level, supervisor. According to a variety of research findings from the sales, retailing, marketing, management and organizational behavior, a model containing multidimensional conceptualizations of job

characteristics and role uncertainty and their relations with job attitudes and finally with sales performance is described and this model considers a range of potential internal variables which are controllable at the store level.

THE MODEL

Figure 1 showed internal organizational variables that are represented by three related job characteristics that are directly related the retail salesperson role uncertainty. Different aspects of job characteristics and role uncertainty are hypothesized to be either directly or indirectly related with two related retail salesperson job attitudes and with sales performance.

Job characteristics: At the store level the internal characteristics of the retail work environment are significantly controllable that can be broken down into two categories: Human resource activities (e.g., actual selection and training of salesperson’s) and organizational variables (such as supervisor behavior and the specific day-to-day aspects of the job). Churchill *et al.* (1985) suggested that organizational variables are related with salesperson performance and (Verbeke *et al.*, 2011) reported that internally located salespeople are vulnerable to organizational variables. Because of their powerful influence, internal organizational variables are a necessary component of any proposed model of retail employee sales performance which are directly controllable at the store level. Internal organizational variables which are represent the retail salespersons on-going work environment and impact the salespersons ability to determine customer attitudes and purchase decisions (Sharma *et al.*, 2000). Hackman and Oldham (1975) [Job Characteristics Model (JCM)] is provided utilized conceptualization of internal organizational variables and the work environment. On this model, over 200 studies is based upon Vroom (1964, 1973) expectancy theory of motivation and describes the salespersons work environment using five specific components: Independence, feedback, skill variety, task significance and task identity. These characteristics have been studied in boundary spanning and non-boundary spanning and in sum have been found to be negatively related with employee uncertainty and positively related with desirable job attitudes and outcomes (Kim *et al.*, 2009). Because of the

nature of retail work, front-line retail managers are not able to directly determine the task significance and task identity their salesperson’s experience therefore these two characteristics were not considered. However, through work design and planning front-line retail managers are directly able to determine the level of independence, feedback and skill variety their salesperson’s experience and so these three characteristics are included in the proposed model.

Role uncertainty: Front-line retail salesperson’s must straddle the boundary between the organization and its customers with their contradictory demands should produce innovative solutions to non-routine which needs different customer as well as manage between the disagreeing of role expectations from inside and outside the organization. As a result, the experience of retail salespersons are increased level of role uncertainty. According to role uncertainty which is acknowledged to be a significant and constant part of the sales environment (Babin and Boles, 1996) and it is strongly and consistently related with reduced salesperson (Verbeke *et al.*, 2011) and retail employee sales performance (Arnold *et al.*, 2009) therefore must be accounted for in any attempt to model retail employee sales performance. Singh (1993) claimed that observing role uncertainty as a uni-dimensional construct “Ignored the conceptual thesis” provided by Kahn *et al.* (1964) when they introduced the construct to organizational research and that studies do not explain a significant amount of the variance in employee job outcomes. According to Kahn *et al.* (1964) original theory, Singh and Rhoads (1991) developed a multi-dimensional conceptualization of role uncertainty and the MULTI-RAM scale to measure each of the six proposed aspects: Uncertainty regarding the company, supervisor support, customers, ethical situations, other managers and coworker’s issues. Subsequently, they were able to show the MULTIRAM’s superior descriptive power and how different aspects of uncertainty are differently related with various boundary spanner job outcomes (Singh, 1993; Rhoads *et al.*, 1994). Accordingly, three aspects (uncertainty regarding customers, ethical situations and supervisor support) which are responsive to managerial influence have been found to be related with salesperson job outcomes that are most applicable in the retail salespersons day-to-day work environment.

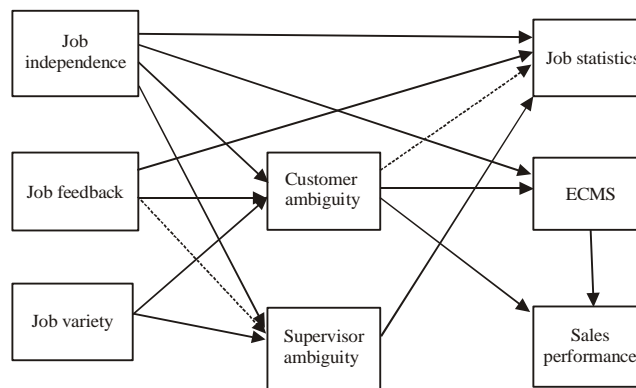


Fig. 1: Hypothesized model and results (Johlke and Iyer, 2013), Dotted line: Paths found to be non-significant

Job attitudes and sales performance: According to Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985) human attitudes lead to specific behaviors. But the relationship provides the basis for research studies focused on identifying both the nature and form of salespersons job attitudes, especially those that may be managerially influenced and that are related to improved job performance. Therefore, attempts to understand the controllable, internal variables related with retail employee sales performance must also consider the employee job attitudes resulting from the characteristics of the salesperson's job and the types of uncertainty encountered. Employee job satisfaction is examined job attitudes for a variety of reasons, pragmatically, employee job satisfaction is of great interest because of its positive establishment of antecedent relation with employee organizational commitment (Brown and Peterson, 1993) and with customer satisfaction (Brown and Lam, 2008). Because job satisfaction is an important employee job attitude because of its importance in-and-of it which it serves as an antecedent to other desirable outcomes it will be included in the model. While job satisfaction and a variety of other job attitudes have been considered in research on both retailing (Kim *et al.*, 2009) and non-retailing (Thakor and Joshi, 2005) salespeople, few of these variables have been found to be strongly related to sales performance. Thus, additional variables identified and considered. Verbeke *et al.* (2011) found that a broad category of employee job attitudes they labeled as "Work engagement" defined as "A positive affective-motivational state of satisfaction" is strongly related to sales performance. Such potential job attitude that has not been researched is employee Customer Outlook (COL). An individual employee believed that satisfying customers, whether internal or external to the organization is central to the proper execution of his or her job (Kennedy *et al.*, 2002). COL is an extension of the complementary beliefs of the "Marketing concept" and "Market orientation" but at the level of the individual employees beliefs. Kennedy *et al.* (2002) state that market orientation is related with firm performance and so its effects should be similar at the individual employee level and that COL is an attitude "Embedded in the organization's culture" which is itself strongly influence by internal organizational variables and managerial actions. Two aspects of COL discussion as: (1) Employee COL is applicable to those both within and outside of the salespersons firm. Internal Customer Outlook (ICOL) refers to the individuals or departments internally receive the output of one's work. In the retail environment this is includes the accounting and credit departments as well as involved in shipping returns. External customer outlook (ECOL) refers to the individuals who receive the output of a salespersons work and in the retail environment this primarily means customers. While both are important, because the focus of this research is on retail employee sales performance only ECOL will be considered further. Second, COL is conceptually and empirically distinct from the known and researched Sales Orientation Customer Orientation (SOCO) construct (Saxe and Weitz, 1982). Regarding the importance of satisfying those who are affected by his/her work and is related to all salespersons of an organization, COL of either the internal or

external variety is concerned with the salespersons attitude. In addition, SOCO is concerned with salesperson behaviors. Kennedy *et al.* (2002) exemplify the importance of this distinction when they describe the experience of being served by an employee who was going through the motions of the required activity. This type of unpleasant interaction is far when dealing with high COL salespersons. Empirically, author found that both ICOL and ECOL show high levels of discriminant validity from SOCO and can be considered separately with it. COL appears for consideration in modeling retail employee sales performance and so will be included in the proposed model.

HYPOTHESES

Job characteristics: While there are no research on the effects of job independence on retail employee job attitudes or outcomes, Christen *et al.* (2006) found that the job satisfaction of retail grocery store managers is related with independence. Generally, research on a variety of work environments and employees found that independence have positively related with employee job satisfaction (Bhuian and Menguc, 2002). Therefore, the first hypothesis states:

H1: Job independence is positively related with retail employee job satisfaction

Job independence also related with ECMS. Parker (2007) reported a positive relation between independence and role orientation while Stock and Hoyer (2005) found that job independence negatively moderates the relationship between salesperson customer-oriented attitudes and behaviors. Retail salesperson's who work in an independent environment have freedom to develop their own set of work-related actions and attitudes, including those related with their external customers. Logically, according to a greater degree of independence retail salespersons developed a deeper pool of behaviors and attitudes regarding their customers and this is include a strong appreciation of the importance of their work and its effect on them. Accordingly, the second hypothesis is:

H2: Job independence is positively related with retail employee external customer outlook

As job independence is negatively related with forms of retail salesperson uncertainty. Singh and Rhodes (1991) found a negative relationship between an internal locus of control (i.e., an individual has control over his/her work and life outcomes) and all six uncertainty aspects while Singh (1993) found that in two samples of salespeople and sales executives, independence was negatively related to all six uncertainty aspects. According to this independence allows salesperson's to investigate, experiment and learn, retail salesperson's working in a highly independent environment are able to discover and they find to be successful in completing their tasks and so they should decrease role uncertainty. Therefore, the following hypotheses will be tested:

H3: Job independence is negatively related with retail employee uncertainty regarding customers

H4: Job independence is negatively related with retail employee uncertainty regarding supervisor support

Job feedback is defined as “The employee receives a clear information” (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). Teas (1981) stated that feedback is directly related with retail employee job satisfaction and this relationship will be tested within the context of the proposed model:

H5: Job feedback is positively related with retail employee job satisfaction

Kahn *et al.* (1964) described a role of uncertainty as “A direct function of differences between the information available to the person and a clear feedback should work to moderate all forms of role uncertainty”. Teas (1981) suggested that feedback is negatively related with a global measure of role uncertainty while Singh (1993) found that feedback is negatively related to all six distinct role uncertainty aspects. There is no reason to believe that this logically and empirically supported relationship would not apply to retail salespersons, so the next set of hypotheses states that:

H6: Job feedback is negatively related with retail employee uncertainty regarding customers

H7: Job feedback is negatively related with retail employee uncertainty regarding supervisor support

Job variety is defined as “The different job which requires a variety of different activities in accomplish the work which uses a number of different skills and talents of the employees” (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). While there is no research on retail employee job variety and uncertainty which utilize mental health of workers (Kelloway and Barling, 1991) and professional salespeople (Singh, 1998) suggest that it is negatively related with uncertainty. Therefore a salesperson’s who engage in a different activities have to use different skills will develop a knowledge structures which reducing their uncertainty. Therefore, the following hypotheses will be tested:

H8: Job variety is negatively related with retail employee uncertainty regarding customers

H9: Job variety is negatively related with retail employee uncertainty regarding ethical situations

H10: Job variety is negatively related with retail employee uncertainty regarding supervisor support

Role uncertainty: There are number of research on the relations between different aspects of role uncertainty and employees job outcomes but there is no research on retail environment. Similarly, Singh and Rhodes (1991) and Johlke and Duhan (2000), reporting uncertainty regarding customers which negatively related with job satisfaction. Therefore, uncertainty regarding ethical situations has been found to be negatively related with job satisfaction (Singh and Rhodes,

1991; Johlke and Duhan, 2000). While there is no reason to suspect that these relations will not also apply to retail salesperson’s, this research will test the applicability of the multidimensional conceptualization of role uncertainty among retail salesperson’s and the relations between three uncertainty aspects and important job attitudes and sales performance.

H11: Retail employee uncertainty regarding customers is negatively related with job satisfaction

H12: Retail employee uncertainty regarding customers is negatively related with external customer outlook

H13: Retail employee uncertainty regarding customers is negatively related with sales performance

Job attitudes and sales performance: While both of the job attitudes are interested and considered in this model, they are because of their relationship with behavioral and outcomes variables (Brown and Lam, 2008). The relationship between job satisfaction and performance has been widely researched among salespeople but there is no clearly accepted regarding the causal ordering of these job outcomes. Instead, these two variables are just not causally related in any meaningful way (Brown and Peterson, 1993). Therefore, there is no hypothesized relationship between retail salesperson job satisfaction and sales performance in the proposed model. Thus, more research should be done any relationship between either form of customer outlook and performance. This is unfortunate as understanding and developing employee ECOL may offer researchers and managers to determine employee job behaviors and performance. Regarding the importance of satisfying customers, ECMS refers to the salespersons attitude and this attitude is made manifest in specific behaviors that lead to customer satisfaction and increased sales. Higher levels of customer orientation are which related with improved sales performance among external professional salespeople (Jaramillo *et al.*, 2007) and retail salesperson’s (Boles *et al.*, 2001). While employee ECMS is decided from his or her level of customer orientation, the two concepts are similar in their emphasis upon the salespersons dedication to identifying and satisfying customers and so their relations with sales performance should also be similar. In addition, ECMS is conceptually similar to altruism which in organizational settings has been found to be positively related with employee work performance (Loi *et al.*, 2011) and performance ratings (Dulebohn *et al.*, 2005). Therefore, this study will examine the empirical relation between ECMS and job performance, namely that:

H14: Retail employee ECOL is positively related with sales performance

METHODOLOGY

Measures: All the items suggested in the model for job characteristics were measured using multi-items scales drawn from previous studies (Sims *et al.*, 1976). Three-item scale of uncertainty was measured adapted from MULTIRAM scale (Singh and Rhoads, 1991). Items of job satisfaction was

measured and adapted from Churchill *et al.* (1974) while ECOL was measured using items adapted from Kennedy *et al.* (2002). Items of retail employee sales performance was adapted from Behrman and Perreaults Jr. (1982). The way for sales performance (e.g., total sales, etc.) which have been used to measure sales performance but regarding to the sample of respondent from a variety of firms the performance measurement was not available. Unfortunately, managerial rankings could not be used because all the firms in the sample make their internal managerial evaluations of their salespersons available to the researchers. Instead, the items which Behrman and Perreault Jr. (1982) focus on sales success were adapted for this study. All subsequent discussions of sales performance refer to the retail salesperson's self-reported performance ratings.

Sample: In this study 318 completed questionnaires were completed and after all questionnaires had been gathered the researchers reviewed each one to identify and delete surveys from any employee not clearly and directly involved in selling to customers (e.g., officer workers). This procedure led to a final sample of 367 usable responses. One of the researchers recruited students and trained them to administer a printed survey. These students (helpers) were visit different retail stores, to explain the nature of the research study to the first employee who approached them and to ask that she/he participate by completing a questionnaire form. The salespersons were complete confidentiality and those who agreed to participate in the study completed the questionnaire at that time and immediately returned it to the student (helper). Later that day, helpers gave the completed questionnaires to the researchers. Data were collected from retail salespersons of a variety of firms located in a west of Iran cities. Data collection procedures were used in retail field research (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003; Jones and Reynolds, 2006). Table 1 reports the characteristics of this group of retail salespeople.

Table 1: Sample characteristics

Parameters	Percentage
Gender	
Male	67
Female	37
Age	
25-35	37
36-45	23
46-55	25
56 and above	15
Education completed	
High school diploma	25
Under graduate degree	48
Graduate degree	25
Professional degree	2
How long employed at current organization	
1 year or less	23
1-10 years	46
11-20 years	25
More than 20 years	6
Size of the current firm where they are employed	
Less than 10 employees	66
10-25 employees	19
26-49 employees	8
50-99 employees	5
100 or more employees	2

Measurement model: By using covariance matrix generated by PRELIS as in put to LISREL 8.52. The results of covariance matrix shows that each of the items exhibited acceptable loadings (path estimate 42.65 and is significant (t-value 45.02), thus indicating acceptable convergent validity. But none of the confidence intervals of the phimatrix included 1.00 (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Reliability presents the variances among a set of observed variables that measure an underlying construct was compared with the squared phi-estimates (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). All reliabilities for the constructs were above 0.778, than the squared phi-estimate, further supporting sufficient discrimination between the variables which shows acceptable levels of reliability for each construct. Measures of fit Measurement model reproduce the covariance matrix of the observed variables. The measurement model showed significant levels of fit: (Chi-square = 802.21 with 378 degrees of freedom, RMSEA = 0.051, NNFI = 0.97, CFI = 0.97, standardized RMR = 0.043. Therefore, each item loaded significantly on its respective construct (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) and so the set of items was suitable for proposed structural model (Table 2).

Structural model: The organized model explains 76% of retail sales person uncertainty regarding customers, 62% of their uncertainty regarding supervisor support, 52% of the sales people's job satisfaction, 68% of their ECMS and 52% of the variance in their self-reported sales performance. In addition, three retail sales person job characteristics are related with two distinct and desirable outcomes: reduced uncertainty and improved employee job attitudes. However, retail sales person uncertainty regarding supervisor support is related to job satisfaction while uncertainty regarding customers and ECMS are both strongly related with improved self-reported sales performance. Structural model was tested using LISREL 8.52 and was also found the fit of the data to the suggested model was quite good (Chi-square = 955.42 with 391 degrees of freedom, RMSEA = 0.065, NNFI = 0.97, CFI = 0.97, standardized RMR = 0.06). Table 3 shows that of the 15 hypothesized relations 11 were supported (71%). Next, the two non-significant paths were dropped from the model one-at-a-time but this procedure did not lead to any suggested changes to the proposed model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Job characteristics: Retail sales people appear to value greater amounts of job independence and in return it is manifested by satisfaction in their work as well may take care of their customers. Therefore, retail managers have to look for ways to give their sales people margin in their tasks and how to complete them, so is related with improved levels of these two important employee job attitudes. Hypothesis 1 is supported by standardized path estimate = 0.35, t-value = 2.85 and Hypothesis 2 is also directly and positively related with ECMS (standardized path estimate = 0.42, t-value = 5.93). Job

Table 2: Correlations and descriptive statistics construct reliabilities

Measure	Job independence	Job variety	Job feedback	Customer uncertainty	Supervisor uncertainty	Job satisfaction	ECMS	Sales performance
Job independence	0.78							
Job variety	0.45	0.93						
Job feedback	0.49	0.45	0.86					
Customer uncertainty	0.48	-0.36	-0.39	0.93				
Supervisor uncertainty	0.46	-0.53	-0.38	0.51	0.90			
Job satisfaction	0.45	0.54	0.43	-0.39	-0.59	0.84		
ECMS	0.35	0.31	0.36	-0.55	-0.37	0.23	0.87	
Sales performance	0.46	0.44	0.41	-0.66	-0.54	0.35	0.55	0.95
Mean	5.56	4.97	5.00	6.25	5.73	5.46	5.91	5.74
Standard deviation	1.21	1.50	1.34	1.04	1.34	1.05	1.08	1.16
Variance extracted	0.54	0.81	0.67	0.84	0.74	0.55	0.69	0.72

Table 3: Hypothesized model standardized path estimates

HYP	Path	Path estimate	t-value	Result
H1	Job independence → Job satisfaction	0.36	2.60	supported
H2	Job independence → External customer mind-set	0.40	5.91	supported
H3	Job independence → Uncertainty regarding customers	1.61	7.67	Not supported
H4	Job independence → Uncertainty regarding supervisor support	1.09	6.85	Not supported
H5	Job feedback → Job satisfaction	0.29	3.28	Supported
H6	Job feedback → Uncertainty regarding customers	-0.41	-3.78	Supported
H7	Job feedback → Uncertainty regarding supervisor support	0.06	0.59	Not Supported
H8	Job variety → Uncertainty regarding customers	-0.69	-4.30	Supported
H9	Job variety → Uncertainty regarding supervisor support	-0.52	-4.28	Supported
H10	Uncertainty regarding customers → Job satisfaction	-0.12	-1.23	Not Supported
H11	Uncertainty regarding customers → External customer mind-set	-0.58	-8.89	Supported
H12	Uncertainty regarding customers → Sales performance	-0.43	-5.25	Supported
H13	Uncertainty regarding supervisor support → Job satisfaction	-0.40	-4.97	Supported
H14	External customer mind-set → Sales performance	0.48	5.99	Supported

independence was also negatively related to all two forms of role uncertainty (Hypotheses 3 and 4). All two paths were significant but instead, job independence was positively related with retail sales person uncertainty regarding customers (standardized path estimate = 1.62, t-value = 7.75) and supervisor support (standardized path estimate = 1.09, t-value = 6.88). In other words, retail salespeople experience in their work is greater than their feelings of uncertainty. Because these findings from both the broad body of research on job characteristics and uncertainty are at odds as well as the amount of empirical research on independence and individual of uncertainty is limited. Singh (1998) have supposed a linear negative relationship between job characteristics and uncertainty and others (Singh, 1998) have demonstrated the theoretical case and the relationship between a particular job characteristic (independence) and an outcome (uncertainty) could be otherwise. In these circumstances, high levels of a job characteristic would be positively related with the amount of uncertainty. Retail salesperson's may be is one of such circumstance, because of the prevalence of insufficiently trained and supervised salesperson's who are primarily "On their own" in accomplishing their duties or because of the multifaceted nature of their responsibilities, not all of which are related to actually selling products to customers. Therefore, salespeople without training and/or supervision working in such an unstructured and independent work environment would experience greater amounts of uncertainty. By testing the relations between job independence and uncertainty, all within a comprehensive model this study suggests that retail sales salespersons may be vulnerable to just such an effect.

Therefore, researchers and managers may wish to further investigate the negative effects of increased job independence among retail salespeople. Job feedback was directly and positively related with retail sales person job satisfaction (Hypothesis 5) and this relationship is supported (standardized path estimate = 0.28, t-value = 3.62). These results suggest that retail managers can determine their sales people's satisfaction and finally the salespersons commitment as well as their customer's satisfaction, through appropriate work design. Retail managers are directly responsible for the amount of independence and feedback their salespersons receive and so they provide their sales people with the amounts of detailed feedback about all aspects of their performance. Hypotheses 6 and 7 proposed that job feedback is negatively related with all two forms of role uncertainty and both the relationships are supported. Job feedback is negatively related with retail sales person uncertainty regarding customers (standardized path estimate = -0.48, t-value = -3.79) but not with uncertainty regarding supervisor support (standardized path estimate = 0.06, t-value = 0.59) and so Hypotheses 5 and 6 are supported but Hypothesis 7 is not. Job feedback appears to be a powerful for retail managers and also decrease the amount of uncertainty they experience, regarding customers situations. However, feedback is not related with sales salespersons uncertainty regarding supervisor support and so retail managers should utilize other job characteristics to combat this type of employee uncertainty. Also job variety was directly related with the three uncertainty aspects and the results from this study strongly support all of these relations. Retail salespeople report higher levels of job variety and also

reported lower levels of uncertainty regarding customers (Hypothesis 8, standardized path estimate = -0.69, t-value = -4.41) and supervisor support (Hypothesis 10, standardized path estimate = -0.56, t-value = -4.29). It may be that retail sales people who engage in a mixture of tasks there by develop the range of knowledge and experiences that enables them to know how to handle different types of customers as well as what their manager can and will do to support them when necessary. As a result, the range of related uncertainty that these salespeople experience is lower. Retail managers implement a program of job rotation whereby salespersons are formally assigned different tasks on a rotating basis so that everyone has the opportunity to complete different jobs which salesperson's informally arrange among themselves to complete the same tasks.

Role uncertainty: Following the results from studies all uncertainty aspects were negatively related with retail sales person job satisfaction. Only the retail sales person's uncertainty regarding supervisor support is related to employee job attitude, so Hypotheses 11 and 13 are rejected, These results show that managerial support is important to retail salespeople and that their confidence is an important factor in developing the salesperson's affective reaction to their job. Therefore, retail managers should be ensure that their salespeople know the type of extent they can expect as well as to take advantage of opportunities to support their salespeople in their dealings with customers, vendors and even own supervisor. Regarding the salesperson's uncertainty and customers, retail sales people accept that, because of the number and variety of customers they must deal with a high level of customer uncertainty is an inherent part of their job and so do not consider It further informing their affective job satisfaction (Hypothesis 11: standardized path estimate = -0.14, t-value = -1.19). These results show that their uncertainty with their customers is negatively related with both their attitude about the importance of taking care of their customers and sales performance (Hypothesis 12: Standardized path estimate = -0.59, t-value = -8.91, Hypothesis 13: Standardized path estimate = -0.45, t-value = -5.27). In other words, the more uncertainty that retail sales people interact with their customers and it is important to serve them and the lower their sales performance. This exemplifies the notion of cognitive discord, in that sales people cannot embrace the idea that it is important to do so and also fails to perform their central task sufficiently. Retail sales person uncertainty about customers appears to be an extremely important antecedent to their customer service attitudes and sales performance, so retail managers should make sure that their training, feedback, task rotation and other interactions with salespeople contribute to reducing the level of uncertainty that their salespeople experience regarding customers.

ECMS and sales performance: Hypothesis 14 proposes that retail sales person ECMS is positively related with sales performance and this relationship was also strongly supported (standardized path estimate = 0.49, t-value = 5.98). Therefore,

at the organizational level, individual retail sales person attitudes and serving their customers is related with sales performance. These results suggested that salesperson ECMS is important but retail managers should look to develop their salespersons understanding and appreciation of the customer's central importance to the firm and salespersons success.

CONCLUSION

This research utilized a description of the retail salesperson's work environment, uncertainty and job attitudes to build a model describing their interrelations as well as relation with sales performance. Similarly, characteristics of the retail salesperson's job environment were directly related to their job attitudes and to the uncertainty while specific components of employee uncertainty and their level of ECMS are related with enhanced sales performance. In general the results of this analysis show that: (1) Retail salesperson uncertainty regarding customers is important as it is strongly related with reduced salesperson customer service attitudes and performance, (2) Retail salesperson customer service attitudes are strongly related with improved sales performance, (3) The characteristics of the retail salesperson's work environment are indirectly related with both enhanced job attitudes and reduced uncertainty, with exception and (4) This exception is that the retail salesperson job independence may lead to increased levels of uncertainty. While the results from this research strongly support the proposed model and the relations among characteristics of the retail salespersons work environment, uncertainty, job attitudes and sales performance but its limitations must also be acknowledged. First as the data is cross-sectional and neither longitudinal or experimental, strictly causal relations cannot be derived from these results. Second, the sample primarily consists of younger females with less work experience and is employed at smaller retail organizations. While this sample matches many other retail studies, that the results would have been different had a greater number of male respondents, older workers, those with more experience and working for larger retailers. Therefore, future research should test these relations in different samples in order to increase the robustness of the results. Likewise, research using additional aspects of uncertainty that are not in this model may highlight their importance to retail salespeople as well as uncover their relations with job outcome variables of interest.

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