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CAN A PIVOT BALANCE A QUADRATE – A SALES COMMUNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Extant writings were reviewed to determine the sales manager's communication routine in B2B settings for the purpose of formulating a multidimensional conceptual model with sales manager's communication routines as its base/pivot and a quadrate of four significant variables as its constructs. Thereby validate relationship amid sales manager's communication routines and a quadrate of four significant variables viz a) sales person's dilemma b) sales person's contentment c) sales person's performance and d) sales person's commitment. The outcomes supported the conceptual model and indicated that communication routines adopted by sales managers have considerable amount of influence on quadrate of afore mentioned significant variables.

KEYWORDS: *Quadrate, Significant, Communique, Enunciate.*

INTRODUCTION:

Prevailing writings in the area of sales management have substantiated about sales person's contentment, performance and commitment using individual, organizational and managerial variables. Among these, the 'managerial' variable is having direct influence on sales person's job outcomes, because sales force are in direct contact with sales managers in executing their daily tasks; thus sales manager's behaviours have considerable influence on sales people (Johnston, Mark, Parasuraman, Futrel, & Black, 1990) (Kohli, Tassaduq, & Gautham, 1998) therefore, a greater insights into sales managers behaviours and their impact on sales people is a necessary. The effectiveness and efficiency of sales managers behaviour depends on the method of communication used by them to interact with sales people on a daily basis. As per the report published by (Dartnell, 1999) majority of the sales people opined communication skill as most important skill to be possessed by sales manager. Communication is a means for mutual exchange of information and to influence other's behaviour (Jablin & Frederic, 1979). Effective functioning of organization vests on seamless two-way communication process which enables members to internalize information, avoid vagueness and execute a task in a synchronized manner (Johnson, 1993).

(Keller, 1994) in their study observed that manager's communication routine had a significant impact on sales people's job outcomes and also in reducing their role dilemma. The term 'dilemma' here refers to a situation resulting from insufficiency of information, lack of

knowledge and fear of uncertainty; sales manager's communication routines are expected to reduce such dilemma for amplification of sales people's job outcomes. Researchers such as, (Behrman, Douglas, & William, 1982) (Walker, Orville, Gilbert, Churchill, & Neil, 1975) have examined the relation between sales manager-sales person communication vis-à-vis sales person's role dilemma. On the other hand, (Churchill, Gilbert, Neil, & Orville, 1974) examined the connection between the organization climate (within which communication takes place) and sales person's job outcomes. Whereas, (Jaworski, Bernard, & Ajay, 1991) investigated the influence of supervisor's feedback on the sales people's job outcomes. The above-mentioned explorations neither considered all sorts of communication routines which explain the manager-sales person dyads, nor they addressed the intricacy of effects of communication. Therefore, this paper attempts to comprehend in detail about the sales manager's communication routine, by determining the potential of quadrate (four characteristics) influencing on sales people's job outcomes; the following sections enunciate the methodology used to test the conceptual model, analytical techniques applied followed by discussion of results, implications and conclusion.

COMMUNICATION ROUTINE OF SALES MANAGERS:

The two frequently explored areas with limiting characteristics in sales manager-sales person dyads are a) Complexity of communication - wherein, communication is measured only in terms of regularity of interaction between members of sales team and its supervisor. b) Impact of communication – communication is usually viewed as directly influencing the sales people's performance outcomes. Intricacy of Communication: Communication is a multifaceted aspect which is difficult to comprehend by studying only one of its aspects (Dance, 1970). Extant research is flooded with explorations relating to sales manager-subordinate communication routines concentrating on only one aspect viz 'regularity of interaction by manger with sales persons', this limits the substantial comprehension of sales manager – sales person communication routine. Majority of prevailing researches in the area of sales communication have boiled down to operational outlook, which states that communication routine is mainly composed of four distinct aspects: a) The regularity of interaction b) communication channel or mode used c) communication content d) direction of communication flow. (Krone, Kathleen, Fredric, & Linda, 1987). These aspects were used to evaluate the communication routines amid distribution channels (Mohr, Jakki, & John, 1990), diffusion of market intelligence (Maltz & Ajay, 1996) and interactions amongst the organizational units such as, marketing-production-R&D-product development (Fisher, Robert, Elliot, & Bernard, 1997). This paper attempts to make use of all the afore-mentioned four aspects of communication routine to render substantial comprehension of sales manager and sales people communication process.

IMPACT OF **COMMUNICATION ROUTINE:**

In their observation (Likert & Rensis, 1967) (Jablin & Frederic, 1979) found that communication routines adopted by sales managers have strong influence on sales person's job performance outcomes. As a corollary, numerous researches in the area of sales communication arrived at a consensus that, sales manager's communication routines have strong and favourable influence on sales people's job outcomes (Alaxendar, Elmore, Marilyn, & Ronnie, 1989) (Oh, Kyoungjo, Youngbae, & Jinjoo, 1991). On the other hand, (Schuler & Randall, 1979) identified that sales person's role perceptions intercedes the impact of manager's communication routines on sales person's job outcomes. As per his observations sales manager's use of job-related information along with his supportive communication used for assisting subordinates is negatively correlated with sales person's role dilemma. This aspect of role dilemma was considered to be a mediating

factor between manager's communication routines and sales person's job outcomes (Keller, 1994). These aforementioned explorations highlighted that, communication routine between manager-subordinate is associated with reduced subordinate role dilemma, which eventually is negatively associated with sales person's job outcomes. Furthermore (Teas, 1983) clearly pointed that sales manager's communication routines have direct and indirect effect on sales person's job outcomes. The success of sales manager's communication is vested on reduced dilemma among sales persons and increased job outcomes; these direct and indirect influences need further substantiation; thus, an attempt is made in this paper to evaluate the direct and indirect influences of communication routines on sales person's performance outcomes. Role Dilemma Among Sales Peoples: In serving very important and high potential buyers, various functional departments of selling organization has to work in tandem to meet customer's expectations and ensuring long-run business relationship with them. Whenever a selling task requires cross functional integration of all functional departments of an organization to execute a sales transaction, this boundary spanning nature of selling task creates confusion among sales persons about their role and scope, which can be termed as 'role dilemma' (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, & Snoek, 1964). According to (Walker, Orville, Gilbert, Churchill, & Neil, 1975) role dilemma emerges when a sales executive is not sure of his role, responsibilities and scope of his activities. this kind of dilemma is more common among the sales executives, as their tasks are often jointly or collectively executed by sales department along with other functional departments of the selling firm. Prevailing researches are at consensus that there exists negative association between sales person's role dilemma and their performance outcomes and job satisfaction (Brown, Steven, & Robert, 1993) (Dubinsky, Alan, & Steven, 1986) (Teas, 1983) (Walker, Orville, Gilbert, Churchill, & Neil, 1975). Majority of these afore-mentioned explorations have used a scale created by (Rizzo, John, Robert, & Sidney, 1970) which considers dilemma as a unidimensional construct. Researchers like (Singh, 1993) expressed doubts about this scale's validity and developed a new scale which considered sales person's dilemma as multi-dimensional construct. Much needed experimental and pragmatic evaluation of validity was provided by the findings of (Singh, 1993), which stated that different aspects of sales person's dilemma have different associations with numerous sales person's performance outcomes. (Singh, 1993) elaborated about the connection between sales person's role dilemma and job outcomes such as job-related contentment of sales person, sales person's commitment towards organization were negatively related to following aspects:

a) Dilemma related to sales person's job elevation & career advancement - it is dilemma about what leads to advancement in job

b) Dilemma related to customers – it is dilemma about what product strengths and benefits has to be presented to persuade and retain customers for long-run

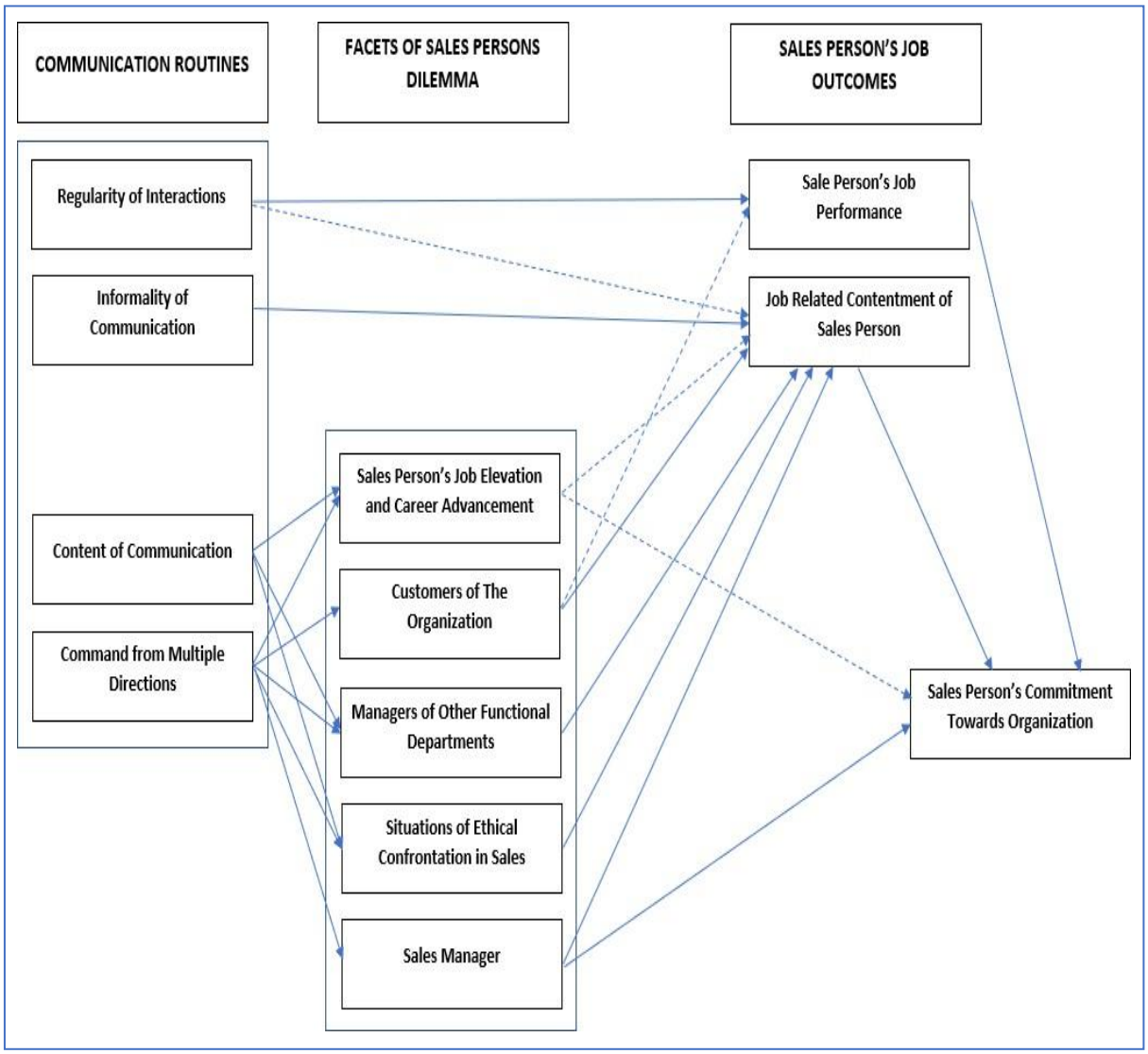
c) Dilemma related to managers of other departments – it is dilemma about the varied expectations of other departmental managers

d) Dilemma relating to ethics – it is dilemma about ethical contradictions in selling situations.

e) Dilemma relating to managerial support – it is dilemma relating to knowing and meeting sales manager's expectations, cooperation, coordination and assistance provided by sales managers for executing sales tasks.

THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL:

Fig-1: Conceptual Model of Communication Routines, Sales Person's Dilemma and Job Outcomes



COMMUNICATION ROUTINES OF SALES MANAGERS:

Regularity of Interaction: Regularity of interaction here means, the frequency and time duration of interaction amongst sales managers and members of the sales team (Farace, Richard, Peter, & Hamish, 1977). Numerous writings in the area of organizational communication have arrived at consensus that regularity of interaction between manager and subordinates was the foremost variable influencing the sales person's job outcomes like sales person's job related contentment, performance and commitment towards organization (Behrman, Douglas, & William, 1982) (Churchill, Gilbert, Neil, & Orville, 1974) (Walker, Orville, Gilbert, Churchill, & Neil, 1975). Similarly, few other researchers have also identified that communication duration and frequency have significant impact on sales person's job satisfaction and commitment (Jablin & Frederic, 1979). Therefore, taking into consideration aforementioned discussion, the following conjecture is postulated: H1: Regularity of interaction between sales manager and sales person has positive

influence on job related contentment of sales person. While there are studies to substantiate the influence of frequency of communication on sales person's job contentment. The job-related performance of sales person is not adequately explored. When the regularity of interaction in communication routine increases, it bestows opportunity for sales managers to spend time with sales people, understand and determine their skill gaps, train and coach the sales people to acquire new and better skills, thereby guide sales people towards superior performance. Thus, it is necessary for exploring the influence of regularity of interaction on job related performance of sales persons. Keeping this in mind, the following conjecture is postulated: H2: Regularity of interaction between sales manager and sale person has positive influence on job related performance of sales person. Job related dilemma of sales persons Interestingly, (Walker, Orville, Gilbert, Churchill, & Neil, 1975) have observed no significant association amid regularity of interaction between sales manager-sales people communication vis-à-vis job related dilemma of sales people. This is because, sales people predominantly work in the field/market (outside the organization), the sales managers and sales force do not interact personally (face-to-face) regularly as other members of the organization. Therefore, sales people instead of face-to-face / personal communication, depend on other modes of interactions (communications) to understand and reduce their job-related dilemma. Modes of Communication: As sales people usually work in the field, and are hardly engaged in personal interaction with sales managers in regular office settings. Therefore, sales managers use alternative modes of communications for interacting, diffusing and influencing the sales people. Alternative modes can be categorized into two groups: a) Formal modes and b) Informal modes of communications. a) Formal mode: predominantly written messages and impersonal group meetings, following a particular pattern and hierarchical flow. b) Informal Mode: predominantly face-to-face personalized verbal communications without any formal pattern, which are seldom scheduled or permanent. Sales environment is often dynamic in nature; in order to accustom to ever changing sales environment, informal mode of communication is deemed to be best fit; informal mode of communication has gained significant acceptance and impact among the sales people; because it enables instantaneous exchange of information and customization of content which is vital for establishment of long-term business relationships. But there exist a research gap, which fails to compare and explain the impact of formal vis-à-vis informal modes of communication on sales person's job outcomes (Marrett, Cora, Jerald, & Micheal, 1975) (Muchinsky & Paul, 1997). Taking the aforementioned discussion, the following conjecture is postulated: H3: The Informal mode of communication adopted by sales manager has positive influence on job related contentment of sales person. Customization of Communication Content: Content here means, kind of influence tactic adopted by transmitter / communicator of the message (sales manager) to influence behaviours and actions of the receivers (sales people) (Fisher, Robert, Elliot, & Bernard, 1997). Employees from higher hierarchical levels usually influence the people lower the order using forcible orders and guidelines with no or little scope for sales person's opinion or feedback. If sales manager exclusively instructs sales persons like – actions to be taken, what to accomplish, by when and how; this kind of influencing communication content is termed as direct authoritative communication content. On the other hand, sales managers can use more inclusive, indirect communication content which enables information sharing collective decision making among sales managers and sale people; this kind of communication content is termed as participative communication content (Mohr, Jakki, & John, 1990). Sales manager – sales people relationship is vested on the pedestal of non-forcible and participative communication content (Boyle, Brett, F, Robert, & James, 1992). In their exploration (Teas, 1983) (Walker, Orville, Gilbert, Churchill, & Neil, 1975) have identified that, sales people involved in participative

decision making have less incidences of job-related dilemma. The exploration reported by (Singh, 1993) stated has reported numerous kinds of job-related dilemmas like - dilemma of sales person relating to job elevation and career advancement, customer, role, responsibility and scope. This dilemma is a result of boundary spanning nature of sales person's job. (Singh, 1993) has coined another aspect called 'Empathetic Leader Consideration'; it means, the extent to which sales manager forms non-forcible, empathetic and emotionally supportive environment embedded with trust, cooperation and openness for subordinates to participate and usher with augmented commitment. (Singh, 1993) has reported that 'empathetic leader consideration' is negatively connected with job related dilemma of sales persons; more precisely 'dilemma related to job elevation and career advancement', 'dilemma related to managers of other functional departments' and 'dilemma related to situations of ethical confrontations in sales'; from the aforementioned discussion it is clear that indirect form of communication content underlies 'empathetic leader consideration' is negatively associated with job related dilemma of sales persons. Accordingly the following conjecture is postulated:

H4: The usage of indirect form of communication content by sales managers is negatively associated with 'job related dilemma of sales persons': a) dilemma related to job elevation and career advancement b) dilemma related to managers of other functional department c) dilemma related to situations of ethical confrontation in sales.

TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION:

Organizational communication often takes formal route and unfolds the hierarchical structure, relationships among its members and direction of flow of communication (horizontal/vertical) (Farace, Richard, Peter, & Hamish, 1977). The sales manager's communication routine is usually vertical in nature – as information dissemination starts from the top and travels downwards to reach sales people. This kind of communication is called as one-directional or unidirectional flow of communication. When information exchange happens in both top-down and bottom-up directions, it is often referred as two-way communication, wherein, communication happens sales manager to sales people and also from sales people to sales managers. The two-way communication can be understood as – task-oriented directives and feedback rendered by sales manager to sales people, in return sales people's responses, reactions, information about customers, markets, competitors and other business environmental characteristics. Sales organizations implementing two-way communications usually enable sales people to give their inputs and also acknowledge it by considering while making decisions. (Jablin & Frederic, 1979) stated that, sales people's job-related contentment along with relationship between sales manager and sales people are effectively amplified by two way communications. Numerous researchers have acknowledged that factors like – feedback mechanism, participative style of communication and management have negative correlation with job related dilemma of sales persons (Teas, 1983) (Walker, Orville, Gilbert, Churchill, & Neil, 1975). In organizations where sales manager and sales people indulge in mutual exchange of information for making joint / collective decisions regarding varied sales situations, the incidence of job-related dilemma of sales people is tend to be low (Oliver, Richard, & Erin, 1994). The aforementioned studies have treated 'job related dilemma of sales persons' as unidimensional construct. The impact of two-way communication on 'job related dilemma' is not adequately explored in extant writings. Two-way communication much more than a mere feedback mechanism (Jaworski, Bernard, & Ajay, 1991). The usage of feedback in many situations has led to negative correlation with job related dilemma (Teas, 1983). Even (Singh, 1993) has also supported the argument that, feedback

mechanism by sales manager is negatively correlated with all sorts of job-related dilemma of sales persons. Accordingly the following hypothesis is postulated:

H5: The extent of two-way communication flow in sales manager's communication routine is negatively associated to 'job related dilemma of sales person' relating to a) job elevation and career advancement b) customers of the firm c) managers of other functional departments d) situations of ethical confrontations in sales e) support extended by sales manager to sales people.

JOB RELATED DILEMMA OF SALES PERSONS:

(Rhoads, Gary, Jagdip, & Philips, 1994) have reported that, previous researchers have studied job related dilemma of sales persons by selecting factors which were specific to their respective research programs. Hence, (Rhoads, Gary, Jagdip, & Philips, 1994) have identified almost thirteen facets of job-related dilemma of sales persons which have potential impact on job-related outcomes of sales persons. Their study has supported the argument that, job related dilemma of sales persons relating to career advancement, customers, managers of other departments, ethical confrontations are negatively correlated with job satisfaction, performance and organizational commitment. But, later on no explorations have taken place in this regard, which is important for verification and substantiation of their outcomes, for the use of practicing managers. Therefore, the following hypothesis is postulated:

H6: Sales person's dilemma about Job-related elevation and career advancement is negatively correlated to a) job related contentment of sales persons b) sales person's commitment towards organization.

H7: Sales person's dilemma of about customer of the organization is negatively associated to a) job related performance of sales persons b) job related contentment of sales persons.

H8: Sales person's dilemma about managers of other functional departments is negatively associated to job related contentment of sales persons.

H9: Sales person's dilemma about situations of ethical confrontations in sales is negatively related to job related contentment of sales persons.

H10: Sales person's dilemma about the support extended by sales manager to sales people is negatively associated with a) job related contentment of sales persons b) sales person's commitment towards organization.

CONNECTIONS AMONGST JOB RELATED OUTCOMES OF SALES PERSONS:

The last construct of the conceptualized model is related to job related outcomes of sales persons viz – 'job related performance of sales person' 'job related contentment of sales person' and 'sales person's commitment towards the organization'. Job Related Performance of Sales Person: The variable 'job related performance of sales person' can be understood as, "behavioural aspects of the sales person which can be measured in terms of his contribution towards achievement of organization's sales and growth objectives" (Churchill, Gilbert, Neil, & Orville, 1974) (Walker, Orville, Gilbert, Churchill, & Neil, 1975). The sales person's ability to deliver service expected by the customer, ability to influence the decision making of the customer can also be considered as 'job related performance of sales person'. This is revenue generating function hence very significant for the selling organization. Job Related Contentment of Sales Persons: According to (Churchill, Gilbert, Neil, & Orville, 1974) 'Job related contentment of sales person' can be understood as emotional feelings and affinity of a sales person relating to his job, work environment and organization on the whole. It is significant aspect of job-related

outcomes of sales person due to its emotional outlook (sales managers concern towards sales persons contentment and well-being) which eventually augments 'sales person's commitment towards organization' and reduces the sales people's turnover (Babakus, Emim, David, William, & Mark, 1996) (Brown, Steven, & Robert, 1993). It can be stated that, amplification of 'job related contentment of sales persons', would lead to increased retention of sales persons. This is very significant because, it requires consistent and prolonged efforts by selling organization to ensure availability of trained sales persons with assigned sales territories and reciprocative business relationship with customers and marketing channel members.

SALES PERSON'S COMMITMENT TOWARDS ORGANIZATION:

According to (Hunt, Shelby, Lawrence, & Van, 1985) 'Sales person's commitment towards organization' can be understood as "sales person's willingness to continue his association with the organization, inspite of opportunities to change jobs are open to him". This explanation of sales person's commitment is supported by (Mowday, Richard, Richard, Steers, & Lyman, 1979) who coined a concept called affective commitment; which means, sales persons affinity towards selling organization displayed in terms of sales person's faithfulness, willingness to contribute, inclination to remain as member of the said organization for prolonged period of time, even when other lucrative offers are available. When commitment is high, chances of sales person leaving the organization drastically reduces, which eventually reduces - the risk of turnover, increased training costs of new incumbents, disruption stemmed out of sales person leaving a territory etc. According to (Brown, Steven, & Robert, 1993) the 'job related performance of sales person' and 'job related contentment of sales person' are fundamental to 'sales person's commitment towards the organization'. In an observations made by researchers like (Babakus, Emim, David, William, & Mark, 1996) (Behrman, Douglas, & William, 1982) (Dubinsky, Alan, & Steven, 1986) and (Johnston, Mark, Parasuraman, Futrel, & Black, 1990) we can conclude that, there exists a causal relationship amongst 'job related outcomes of sales persons' 'job related performance of sales person' and 'job related contentment of sales person'. In order to complete the conceptualized model, the following conjectures are postulated:

H11: The 'Job related performance of sales persons' is positively associated with 'sales person's commitment towards organization'.

H12: The 'Job related contentment of sales persons' is positively associated with 'sales person's commitment towards organization'.

METHODOLOGY:

Items of Measurement: In order to measure sales person's responses and evaluate the conceptualized model, constructs comprising of multiple items were developed (see appendix). Through this model, sales people's opinions regarding sales manager's communication routines were evaluated.

Facets Of Sales Manager's Communication Routines:

Constructs comprising of numerous items was developed for evaluating Communication routines of sales managers. For this purpose, few items were adopted from the scale designed by (Anderson, Erin, Leonard, & Barton, 1987) which was used for measuring the communication amid distribution channel members and one more scale developed by (House, 1971) which was used for evaluating the leadership behaviour of sales managers. The sales persons were requested to give their opinions on ten items relating to sales manager's communication routines, by means

of Likert's 7-point scale wherein, 1 – refers to Strongly dis agree to 7 – refers to Strongly agree.

Job Related Dilemma of Sales Persons:

For preparing the scale to measure sales person's dilemma, the MULTIRAM scale developed by (Rhoads, Gary, Jagdip, & Philips, 1994) was taken as a base. Suitable items were developed to evaluate the dilemma existing among sales persons due to the boundary spanning nature of their sales job using Likert's 7-point scale. Job Related Performance of Sales Persons: In order to evaluate the job-related performance of sales persons, scale developed by (Behrman, Douglas, & William, 1982) was taken as a base. In a study conducted by (Boorom, Micheal, & Rosemary, 1995) they evaluated the scale developed by (Behrman, Douglas, & William, 1982) and found that items from this scale were having high degree correlation with sales manager's ratings of sales persons job related performances with ($r = 0.66$). Researchers like - (Babakus, Emim, David, William, & Mark, 1996) (Challagalla, Goutham, & Tussaduq, 1996) have used the items of aforementioned scale and found satisfactory uni dimensionality, dependability, and convergent and discriminant validity. Sales people were requested to categorize themselves into one of the five categories starting from initial 30% to top 1% on each of the items.

Job Related Contentment of Sales Persons:

In order to evaluate the job-related contentment of sales persons, scale developed by (Churchill, Gilbert, Neil, & Orville, 1974) was taken as a base using of Likert's 7-point scale.

Sales Person's Commitment Towards Organization:

The scale developed by (Hunt, Shelby, Lawrence, & Van, 1985) for measuring loyalty among the marketing executives towards their organization when other lucrative job offers are in place was used as a base to develop a scale to measure sales person's commitment towards organization. Sales persons were asked to give their opinions on four items aimed at measuring their commitment towards organization.

Development and Testing of a Question Instrument:

With an aim of increasing the correctness of wordings and context of the questions, five practicing managers and 30 sales people were approached to review and correct the question instrument. This question instrument was altered as per the inputs of these professionals and tested on 135 sales people using LISREL 8.10. numerous items with insufficient loadings along with their associated constructs (maximum likelihood estimate < 0.30), alongside substantially cross-loaded on diverse constructs (modification index (MI) > 5.0) coupled with standardized expected parameter change (SEPC) > 0.20) were all removed whereas, numerous other items were rephrased or reworded.

Sample:

The data for evaluating the hypothesized model was garnered from sales people working for six diverse firms viz cement, apparels, insurance, iron and steel, paints and fertilizer industries operating in and around Ballari district - Karnataka. The respondents included mix of mid and upper level sales and marketing managers. The access to sales people for collecting information was obtained through the sales managers; a google form was sent to sales people. All in all, 650 questionnaires were distributed among which 438 were returned which amounted to 67% response rate. The sample characteristics are presented in Table-1.

TABLE-1: SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS AND THEIR DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS		
ITEM	**MEAN**	**MEDIAN**
Age	39	40.02
Sales manager–sales person interaction times per week	4	6.0
Selling experience (yrs)	13	14.03
Duration of service in this firm	4.8	7.35
ITEM	**Number**	**%age**
GENDER		
Male	276	87
Female	42	13
Total	**318**	**100**
BUSINESS		
Cement	76	24
Paints	61	19
Ironandsteel	91	29
Insurance	47	15
Apparels	35	11
Fertilizers	8	03
Total	**318**	**100**
COMPENSATION OFFERED TO SALES PERSONS BY ORGANIZATION		
Salary alone	55	17
Commission alone	74	23
Salary +commission	189	59
Total	**318**	**100**
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE SALES PERSONS		
Graduate	202	64
Postgraduate	62	19
Professional PG diploma	24	8
Others	30	9
Total	**318**	**100**

EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL:

The model was evaluated using LISREL 8.10. majority of the items of all the constructs were adequately loaded (t-value > 2.0), on the other hand, several items depicted unacceptable higher associated standardized residuals (> 2.0 in absolute value) or higher cross-loading on alternative constructs (MI > 5.0 and SEPC > 0.20). These items were deleted post iteration process. The rest of the items recorded full standardized loadings on paths of items connecting to their respective constructs (t value > 2.0) signifying convergent validity. Furthermore, for evaluating discriminant validity amongst constructs, chi-square test was conducted. This was done by evaluating alternative models by assigning diagonal elements of phi-matrix and one-at-a-time fixing of every off-diagonal element to 1.0. The subsequent chi square value of the alternative model was compared with chi-square values of initial model, which indicated that, the chi-square

value surpassed the initial model chi-square value with high degree statistical relevance of (chi-square (1) = 3.86), signifying substantial discrimination amongst the constructs. The model fit statistics reveals the best fit; The comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.97, Non-normed fit index (NNFI) = 0.93, Root mean square residual (RMR) = 0.047, Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA < 0.05) = 1.00. Table-2, depicts path estimates and related error terms of scale items; Table-3 depicts correlations, means, standard deviations, measure of composite reliability and average variable of the constructs.

TABLE-2: ITEM LOADINGS AND STANDARDIZED ERRORS OF CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Constructs	Number of items	Loading	Construct	No.of Items	Loading
Job Related Contentment of Sales Persons [4 items]	Item1	0.75 (0.56)	**Customers with Whom Sales Persons Are Dealing With [5 Items]**	Item1	0.69 (0.54)
	Item2	0.84 (0.37)		Item2	0.65 (0.59)
	Item3	0.87 (0.32)		Item3	0.53 (0.62)
	Item4	.074 (0.56)		Item4	0.71 (0.55)
Job Related Performance of Sales Person [6Items]	Item1	0.73 (0.52)		Item5	0.65 (0.51)
	Item2	0.53 (0.90)	**Regularity of interactions**	Item1	0.71 (0.55)
	Item3	0.73	**[2Items]**	Item2	0.57
		(0.55)			(0.30)
	Item4	0.91		Item1	0.93
		(0.23)	**Informality of Communication [3 Items]**		(0.26)
	Item5	0.85 (0.33)		Item2	0.82 (0.31)
	Item6	0.77		Item3	0.47
		(0.48)			(0.71)
	Item1	0.80		Item1	0.71
Managers of other functional departments		(0.43)	**Two-way communication [3 Items]**		(0.42)
	Item2	0.75 (0.49)		Item2	0.75 (0.48)
	Item3	0.82		Item3	0.90
[4Items]		(0.35)			(0.24)
	Item4	0.85	**Customization of**	Item1	0.75

		(0.40)	**communication**		(0.52)
Job elevation and	Item1	0.87	**content**	Item2	0.84
Career advancement		(0.27)	**[2Items]**		(0.40)
Of sales person	Item2	0.77		Item1	0.58
[2Items]		(0.26)			(0.73)
Support extended by	Item1	0.76	**Salesperson's**	Item2	0.89
salesmanagerto		(0.48)	**Commitment towards**		(0.25)
salespeople	Item2	0.88	**organization**	Item3	0.79
[2 Items]		(0.27)	**[4Items]**		(0.43)
	Item1	0.81		Item4	0.66
Situations of ethical		(0.40)			(0.62)
Confrontations in sales [3Items]	Item2	0.84 (0.25)			
	Item3	0.89 (0.20)			

OUTCOMES:

Hypothesis testing was done using LISREL 8.10. the conceptual model exhibited good fit with the data viz, CFI = 0.96, NNFI = 0.95, SRMR = 0.055, RMSEA = 0.045, p-value for the test of close fit (RMSEA < 0.05) = 1.00. all in all, 17 out of 21 hypothesized were supported. Subsequently the resulting MI and SEPC values did not indicate any missing paths in the conceptualized model.

The conjectures, standardized path estimates along with their related t values are depicted in Table-4. Furthermore, non-critical paths were deleted from the conceptual model one at a time and was reiterated. But, this step did not recommend any subsequent alterations to the conceptualized model. This resultant model also exhibited best fit with the data, viz, CFI = 0.96, NNFI = 0.97, SRMR = 0.057, RMSEA = 0.048, p-value for test of close fit (RMSEA < 0.05) = 1.00. the resultant model enunciates 32% of the variation in 'Job related contentment of sales persons' and 22% of variation in 'Sales person's commitment towards organization', 17% variation in 'Sales person's dilemma about job elevation and career advancement', 2% variance in 'Job related performance of sales person' 13% variation in 'Situations of ethical confrontations in sales', 52% of variance in 'Support extended by sales manager to sales persons', 13% of variation in 'Dilemma related to managers of other functional departments', 22% of variation in 'Dilemma related to customers with whom sales persons deal with'. The communication routines adopted by sales managers lead to two diverse outcomes: a) augmentation in sales person's contentment, performance and commitment b) decrease in sales person's role dilemmas.

Table-3: Correlations, Reliabilities, AVE, Means and Standard Deviations

Constructs	Job related contentment of sales person	Job related performance of sales person	Situations of ethical confrontations in sales	Managers of other functional departments	Job elevation and career advancement of sales person	Customers with whom sales persons deal with	Support extended by sales manager to sales persons	Regularity of interactions	Informality of communication	Two-way communication	Customization of communication content	Sales person's commitment towards organization
Job related contentment of sales person	0.90											
Job related performance of sales person	0.17 0.008	0.93										
Situations of ethical confrontations in sales	-0.26 0.0001	-0.10 0.09	0.92									
Managers of other functional departments	-0.36 0.0001	-0.13 0.06	0.67 0.0001	0.89								
Job elevation and career advancement of sales person	-0.27 0.0001	-0.04 0.77	0.55 0.0001	0.67 0.0001	0.88							
Customers with whom sales persons deal with	-0.45 0.0001	-0.08 0.29	0.55 0.0001	0.48 0.0001	0.44 0.0001	0.83						
Support extended by sales manager to sales persons	-0.15 0.06	-0.05 0.69	0.47 0.0001	0.55 0.0001	0.54 0.0001	0.40 0.0001	0.81					
Regularity of interactions	0.19 0.002	0.16 0.03	0.35 0.0001	-0.29 0.0001	-0.27 0.0001	-0.35 0.0001	-0.40 0.0001	0.78				
Informality of communication	0.15 0.03	0.02 0.84	-0.15 0.05	-0.21 0.0001	-0.19 0.004	-0.13 0.21	-0.28 0.0001	0.30 0.0001	0.83			
Two-way communication	0.25 0.0001	0.02 0.81	-0.27 0.0001	-0.32 0.0001	-0.33 0.0001	-0.35 0.0001	-0.58 0.0001	0.58 0.0001	0.28 0.0001	0.85		
Customization of communication content	0.15 0.03	0.05 0.60	-0.28 0.0001	-0.25 0.0001	-0.30 0.0001	-0.23 0.0001	-0.35 0.0001	0.30 0.0001	0.24 0.0002	0.44 0.0001	0.75	
Sales person's commitment towards organization	0.27 0.0001	0.14 0.05	-0.20 0.001	-0.20 0.001	-0.23 0.0003	-0.29 0.0001	-0.34 0.0001	0.28 0.0001	-0.02 0.87	0.42 0.0001	0.20 0.001	0.83
Mean	5.90	3.30	2.20	3.20	3.35	1.82	2.80	5.52	4.50	5.65	5.10	4.38
Standard deviation	0.91	1.01	1.31	1.30	1.69	0.71	1.39	1.30	1.62	1.31	1.44	1.49
Variance extracted	0.69	0.66	0.77	0.65	0.77	0.47	0.69	0.64	0.60	0.65	0.60	0.55

NOTE: Construct reliabilities are shown on the diagonal. p values shown below correlations are for test of r = 0.

TABLE 4: CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND CORRESPONDING STANDARDIZED PARAMETER VALUES		
HYPOTHESES	**STANDARDIZED ESTIMATES**	**T-VALUE**
Regularity of interaction→job-related contentment of Sales person	0.6	0.60
Regularity of interaction→job-related performance of Sales person	0.15	2.10
Informality of communication→ job-related contentment of sales person	0.14	2.30
Customization of Communication Content →Dilemma about job elevation & career advancement	-0.27	-3.09
Customizationof Communication Content →Dilemma about managers of other departments	-0.20	-2.31
Customization of Communication Content →Dilemma about situations of ethical confrontations in sales	-0.17	-2.10
Two-way communication →Dilemma about job Elevation & career advancement	-0.26	-3.05
Two-waycommunication →DilemmaaboutCustomers withwhomsalesPeople dealwith	-0.50	-6.52
Two-waycommunication →Dilemma about managers Of Other functional departments	-0.26	-2.98
Two-waycommunication →Dilemmaaboutsituations ofethicalconfrontationsin sales	-0.28	-3.31
Two-way communication →Dilemma about sales Managers support to sales people	-0.77	-9.64
Dilemma about job→ Related contentment Of sales person Job-related elevation & career advancement	-0.22	-1.46
Dilemma about job elevation→Commitment of sales & career advancement persons towards	-0.10	-0.94
Customers with whom sales→Job related performance Persons deal with of sales persons	-0.04	-0.34
Customers with whom sales→Job related contentment Persons deal with of sales person	-0.61	-5.72
Dilemma about managers →Job related contentmentof Of other departments sales person	-0.36	-3.01

Dilemma about situations of→ Of Ethical confrontations in sales	Job related contentment	-0.30	-2.45

CONVERSATION:

The facets of sales managers communication routines: 0.20

a) Regularity of Interactions Between Sales Managers And Sales People:

H1 – postulated that job-related contentment of sales person is favourably affect 2.93 ed by regularity of interactions amidst manager and sales person, analysis revealed this conjecture was not supported. Whereas, H2 – which stated that, job related performance of sales person is favourably affected by regularity of interactions amidst manager and sales persons; this conjecture is supported. This is because, regular interaction amidst sales manager and sales person leads to better performance as it allows, sales persons to adapt to the feedback given by managers and steer their activities to meet or surpass the performance goals.

b) Informality of Communication:

The verbal face-to-face communication between sales manager and sales person was assumed to be having favourable effect on job related contentment of sales person. Along with the results of (Marrett, Cora, Jerald, & Micheal, 1975) (Muchinsky & Paul, 1997) the outcomes of this study reiterate that, informal communication routine adopted by sales manager has positive influence on sales person's job contentment, supporting the hypothesis

H3. The sales managers opined that, majority of the communication between sales managers and sales people has become more formal in the form of letter, email, fax etc, ignoring the emotional connect that can be established with informal face-to-face verbal communication modes. On the other hand, sales people believed that face-to-face interaction was more convenient and trust worthy form of communication, as it enables sales people to feel connected with organization and its objectives. This even motivated sales manager to adopt informal mode of communication routine for connecting, communicating and persuading the sales people to embrace high degree commitment towards organization.

Customization of Communication Content:

The conceptual model used in this study revealed that, communication content used by sales manager having unambiguous, straight, short, specific and unswerving exchange of information instructing them about 'what to do', how to do' when to do' reduces their dilemma relating to job elevation and career advancement, dilemma related to managers of other functional departments and situations of ethical confrontations in sales. The ambiguous communication without specific and explicit directions by managers has led to increase in sales person's dilemmas Hypothesis H4a,H4b, H4c & H4d (outcomes supported these relationships). The short and straight communication content enables sales people to understand the significance of their actions, strategies and contributions in realizing outcomes like - customer satisfaction, loyalty, continuous flow of sales, augmented profitability and achievement of overall organization's objectives; Thus, we can conclude that, communication content has significant influence on decreasing sales person's dilemma and augmenting their contribution.

Two-way Communication:

Two-way communication routine adopted by sales manager was assumed to have negative relation with all sorts of sales person's dilemma, the outcomes of this study supported these

assumptions postulated in Hypotheses H5a, H5b, H5c, H5d & H5e. it can be observed that two-way communication routine adopted by sales manager has significant positive influence on reducing various sorts of sales person's dilemmas. Interactions with customers is core aspect of sales person's daily responsibilities; decrease in sales person's dilemma relating to customers, empowers them to understand and meet customers expressed and unexpressed needs and ensure customer satisfaction and business continuity.

DIFFERENT DILEMMAS FACED BY SALES PERSONS:

Dilemma relating to job elevation and career advancement:

The growth prospects, promotion and career advancement policies of organization was assumed to be negatively associated with sales person's commitment towards organization. The factor 'Dilemma of sales person about job elevation and career advancement' recorded highest mean value of (3.33) indicating presence of intense dilemma relating to career growth. Surprisingly, this is not related to job related performance or contentment, hence **Hypotheses H6a and H6b** are rejected.

Majority of the sales people were happy to maintain status quo, I,e., continue in existing sales profile, rather getting elevated to sales management or sales training profiles. This is because, sales persons income is bestowed with sales incentives on reaching targets; whereas higher positions are deprived of incentives, limiting earning potential of sales people. Consequently, sales persons are not clear about what is required to get promoted, this dilemma is not related to either contentment or commitment.

Dilemma Related to Customers with Whom Sales Persons Deal With:

In this study, sales persons dilemma about customers was assumed to be negatively related to job related performance and contentment. Outcomes revealed that dilemma of sales persons regarding customers is negatively correlated only with job related contentment of sales person, therefore, Hypothesis H7b is accepted and Hypothesis H7a is rejected. As customer is pivotal for sales persons job, relation with customers has most significant influence on sales persons job outcomes. Sales people mostly consider the relationship with customers, knowledge of, and trust in their potential to manage customers as vital for effective management of customers and resulting business thereafter. In absence of these conditions, the dilemma among sales persons regarding customers increases eventually leading to decreasing job-related contentment among sales people. Outcomes reveal that sales managers make considerable effort in acquainting sales incumbents with customer characteristics through on and off the job trainings.

Dilemma Related to Managers of Other Functional Departments:

In this study the dilemma of sales person regarding managers of other functional departments is assumed to have negative relationship with job related contentment of sales persons. Outcomes have supported this relationship through Hypothesis H8, which states that sales people possess uncertainty about the perception of managers of other functional department, resulting in increased dilemma and decreased job-related contentment among sales people. Sales people opine that managers of other functional departments influence their jobs by affecting aspects such as, territory assignments, dealing with best customers, transparent performance reviews etc. Regular interaction of sales people with managers of other functional departments is least vis-à-vis dilemma creeping up with demands and expectations of other department managers is highest. To tackle these sales managers can indulge in regular formal meetings, shared work assignments involving cross-functionally integrated teams etc. these initiatives can reduce sales

persons dilemma of other department managers and augment the efficiency and effectiveness of collective sales efforts.

Dilemma Relating to Situations of Ethical Confrontations in Sales:

Outcomes of the study has supported the Hypothesis H9 stating 'dilemma relating to situations of ethical confrontations in sales is negatively related to job related contentment of sales people. Hence sales managers must initiate efforts to help sales people to effectively handle situations of ethical confrontations in sales, which eventually keeps organization away from unnecessary legal suits and ethical mistakes, reduces the sales people's dilemma and increase their job-related contentment.

Dilemma Relating to Support Extended by Sales Manager to Sales People:

Outcomes of the study supported the Hypothesis H10a stating that sales person's 'Dilemma relating to support extended by sales managers to sales people is negatively associated with job related contentment of sales person'. Similarly, results have supported Hypothesis H10b stating that 'Dilemma relating to support extended by sales manager to sales people is assumed to have negative relationship with sales person's commitment towards organization.

As the frequent quitting of experienced and skilled sales persons has negative impact on cost as well as customer relationship and business continuity. Therefore, sales managers must initiate efforts to extend support, be empathetic and back sales people at time of adversities and assure similar kind of continuous support in future as well. By this the dilemma relating to sales managers support can also be reduced.

Outcomes of the study supports the **Hypothesis H11 and Hypothesis H12,** stating that, the betterment of job-related performance and contentment of sales persons increases the sales person's commitment towards organization. The results are consistent with extant writings affirming the positive influence of job-related performance and contentment of sales persons on sales person's commitment towards organization.

Wrap-Up and Window for Further Explorations:

Extant writings on manager-subordinate communication stated communication as number of interactions and presented straight relationship models. On the other hand, this paper, developed multi-faceted conceptual model of communication, through which, various unexplored connects amidst communication routines adopted by sales manager and their influence on job related contentment and performance of a sales person are studied. All-in-all the outcomes accepted the conjectures connecting communication aspects, dilemma facets and job-related outcomes (performance and contentment); these outcomes present more detailed perspective of communication routines and their influence on sales persons for augmented understanding and decision making.

Confines of the Exploration:

Though outcomes supplemented the conjectured model, the study is challenged with confinements. a) this study did not include longitudinal design, which limits the ability to draw causal inferences with assurance. hence, future explorations can include longitudinal design for thorough understanding. b) this study explored the impact of improved communication routines by sales managers on sales person's job-related performance and contentment. But, the impact can be found from opposite direction as well, that is, high performance sales people often

indulge in frequent interactions with sales managers for deciding on offers, discounts, credit limits etc.

Thus, impact of communication from sales people to sales managers also needs detailed exploration. c) several constructs in this study were measured with only two items, future explorations can consider studying these constructs with more items for better understanding. d) the sample of the study comprises of mid aged experienced sales professionals (Table-1), therefore future research can include more balanced sample distribution comprising of new incumbents, experienced and veteran sales professionals, women sales people to augment the generalizability of the findings.

Window for Further Explorations:

The future explorations can focus on influence of sales managers communication routines on other factors of job outcomes such as: role conflict, effectiveness of training, selling skills of sales persons et, for better understanding of communication routines and their impacts. The moderation effect of items such as, gender, motivation level, personality type, level of organizational citizenship; along with environmental factors like, product type, volatility of markets, sales cycles, organizational culture etc are to be considered for examining their moderation effects. This study highlighted that regularity of interaction increases the job-related outcomes, but failed to indicate what is the optimal range of manager-sales person interactions? what is the influence of factors like, experience of sales person, changes in environment, type of customer group etc on the said optimum range of interactions? the explorations in the aforementioned areas would yield more fruitful understanding of impact of communication routines on sales persons job related outcomes.

S.NO	ITEMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A: JOB-RELATED CONTENTMENT OF SALES PERSON:								
1	Sales job is more valuable							
2	Sales job is more fascinating							
3	Sales job gives lot of contentment							
4	Job of sales person is doing something worthwhile							
B: JOB RELATED PERFORMANCE OF SALES PERSON								
1	I have potential to make sales with high profit margins							
2	I have potential to realize more rupee value sales in my territory							
3	I have potential to generate quick demand for New products launched by the organization							
4	I have potential to acquire more market share in my territory							
5	I have potential to surpasssales targets and objectives							
6	I have potential to determine and sell more to Key accounts in my territory							

C: SALES PERSONS COMMITMENT TOWARDS ORGANIZATION								
1	Wouldn't mind shifting to another company when offered 25% pay hike							
2	Wouldn't mind shifting to another company when new organization assures more creative Freedom in work							
3	Wouldn't mind shifting to another company When new organization assures higher status							
4	Wouldn't mind shifting to another company when new organization has know no rmore Friendly people							
D: REGULARITY OF INTERACTION								
1	There exists regular interaction between me and my sales manager							
2	Both of us are interested in regular exchange of Information and ideas							
E: INFORMALITY OF COMMUNICATION								
1	Majority of my interaction with sales managers is On face-to-face basis							
2	Majority of the times me and my sales manager interact through email, WhatsApp, telephone, Fax etc.							
3	Interaction between me and my sales managers Is often pre-planned and rarely impulsive							
F: TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION								
1	The flow of communication in my organization is two-way (from sales manager to sales people and vice-a-versa.							
2	Sales manager provides inputs about market, customers, competitors on regular basis.							
3	Sales manger is open to ideas and information Expressed by sales people							
G: CUSTOMIZATION OF COMMUNICATION CONTENT								
1	Details about do's and don't's of sales job are informed by sales manager to sales people on a regular basis.							
2	Sales manager informs sales people about the actions, changes and improvements to be incorporated in their execution of sales tasks.							
H: DILEMMA OF SALES PERSONS REGARDING THE SUPPORT EXTENDED BY SALES MANAGER TO SALES PEOPLE								
1	I have clear idea about, to what extent my sales Manager backs in times of need and distress							
2	I have clear understanding about, to what extent My sales manager considers my point of view.							

I: DILEMMA OF SALES PERSONS RELATING TO CUSTOMERS WITH WHOM THE SALES PEOPLE DEAL WITH								
1	I have clear understanding about, what product Benefits need to be highlighted formy customers							
2	I have clear understanding about how my organization expects me to interact with customers.							
3	I have clea runderstanding about how much service my organization expects me to deliver to customers.							
4	I have clear understanding about what strengths And positives of organization need tobe presented to customers.							
5	I have clear understanding about how I should behave and deal with customers while executing sales job.							
J: DILEMMA OF SALES PERSONS RELATING TO MANAGERS OF OTHER FUNCTIONAL DEPARTMENTS								
1	I have clear understanding about what managers of other functional departments think about my job performance							
2	I am completely aware about what quantum of information I am supposed to share with Managers of other functional departments							
3	I am aware about how managers of other functional departments expect me to interact With them							
4	I am aware of how should I respond to comments/criticism/questions from managers of Other functional departments.							
K: DILEMMA OF SALES PERSONS RELATING TO JOB ELEVATION AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT								
1	I am aware of the critical factors of my sale job having to potential to affect my prospects of promotion.							
2	I am aware of what I need to do to ensure job Elevation and career advancement.							
L: DILEMMA OF SALES PERSONS RELATING TO SITUATIONS OF ETHICAL CONFRONTATIONS IN SALES								
1	I have clear understanding about handling Situations of ethical confrontations in my sales job.							
2	I am aware of how to p management expects me to handle the situations of ethical confrontations in my salesjob.							
3	I am aware of the kind of ethical behavior my Sales manager expects me to up hold.							

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