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Assessing the Effect of Sales Skill on Personal Selling Performance: A Case Study at Ethio Telecom in North West Region

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**ASSESSING THE EFFECT OF SALES SKILL ON
PERSONAL SELLING PERFORMANCE: A CASE
STUDY AT ETHIO TELECOM IN NORTH WEST
REGION**

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
MARKETING MANAGEMENT PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE
IN MARKETING MANAGEMENT**

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I declare that this thesis is my original work and all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged. I solely declare that this thesis is not submitted to any other institution anywhere for the award of any academic degree, diploma or certificate.

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Place: College of business and economics Bahir Dar

Date of Submission: February 2019

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| Internal Examiner | Signature | Date |

ABBREVIATIONS

BA Bachelor of Arts

B2B Business to Business

ET Ethio Telecom

ETC Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation

E.C Ethiopian calendar

FGN Forth Generation Network

MA Master of Arts

SPSS Statistical Package for Social Science

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study are dual. Firstly, it's to understand the effect of sales skill dimensions namely: interpersonal, salesmanship, technical and marketing skills on sales person performance in Ethio Telecom North West Region sales force. Secondly, it's sought to find out the effect of Organizational Commitment both as moderator and independent variable. The research design is quantitative, particularly, it uses inferential statistics. Data was collected from all the population of the study, 129 sales persons working for commercial domain in North West Region. The findings from this research inferred that from the dimensions of sales skills, technical and interpersonal skills appeared to be significant predictors of sales performance. Surprisingly, the findings also revealed that salesmanship skills, and marketing skills do not influence salesperson performance. The research confirmed that organizational commitment of the sales person has no direct influence on personal selling performance. But it has moderating influence on personal selling performance. From the demographic variables, sales experience has significant and positive impact on personal sales performance.

KEY WORD:- sales skills, sales person performance, Ethio telecom, North West Region

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

In this competitive and dynamic world we live in, the role of personal selling is immense and fundamental. Today, service industries play an important role in growth and economic development of countries. The growing complexity of products, coupled with the expensiveness of advertising, induced company to rely more on personal selling. Personal selling is defined by Meredith (2009) as an interpersonal process whereby a seller tries to uncover and satisfy a buyer's needs in a mutually, long-term beneficial manner suitable for both parties. Even more it is important in Business to Business marketing. According to (Gross, C. A., Banting, M. P., Merendith, N. L. & Ford, D.I., 1998)Gross et al., (1998), personal selling dominates the business marketer's promotion mix. Because the organizational buyer requires the help of the supplier in solving technical problems and because the buyer negotiated with the supplier, the business marketer's promotion mix emphasizes personal selling.

One of the key issues relating to managing sales force is how to improve a B2B sale personal's performance (Singh and Koshy, 2009). They further forwarded that the answer is to identify and measure factors that determine B2B salespersons' performance. In one of the most cited authors in the area Churchill et al., (1985) sales skill is recognized as one of the most important variable in explaining personal selling performance. In their own words Churchill et al., (1985) have noted that "while differing sales situation, markets conditions, product types, etc. all likely affect which factors contribute to sales success, one of the most striking and important commonalties across differing explanations of salesperson job performance is the importance each ascribes to selling skill" Even if salespersons' importance in the telecommunication industry is critical, Ethio Telecom have been giving less emphasis to personal selling. Different reasons can be mentioned for this but the most important ones are lack of competition in the industry because of regulation and lack of management knowledge. However, after the reborn of Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation (ETC) as Ethio Telecom with a management contract with French Telecom (Orange Telecom), a paradigm shift is being observed towards marketing and sales management.

The objectives of this paper are dual to know. Firstly to understand the influence of sales skills dimensions, namely interpersonal, salesmanship, technical and marketing skills on salesperson performance in Ethio telecom specially in north west region ,and secondly, to investigate the effect of organizational commitment as a moderating variable on the above relationship.

1.2. Operational definitions of terms

- ✚ **Interpersonal skill:** refer to mental and communication algorithms applied during social communication and interaction to achieve certain effects and results (Ahmed et al., 2010). According to Rentz et al, (2002) as cited in Ahmad et al. (2010)p.55 the dimensions of interpersonal skills are listening, empathy, optimism and perceived observation skills.
- ✚ **Technical skill:** refers to sales person skill in proceeding information about design and specification of products and the applications and functions of both the products and services (Ahmed et al., 2010).
- ✚ **Marketing skill:** refers to knowledge about the industry and trends in general such as customers, markets and products, competitors' products, services, sales policies; knowledge of competitors' products lines, and knowledge of customer operations (Behrman and Perreault, 1982 as cited Ahmed et al. 2010) p.54.
- ✚ **Salesmanship skill:** refers to adoptability, consultative selling, negotiation and questioning and sales person's cues and communication style skills.
- ✚ **Organizational commitment:** “a committed employee is the one who stays with the organization through thick and thin, attends work regularly, puts in a full day (and be more), protects company assets, shares company goals and others” (Meyer and Allen, 1997; as cited in Ahmad et al., (2010) p. 184.

1.3. Statement of the problem

Many researchers have emphasized the importance of sales person’s skill levels in relation to their performance (Churchill et al.,1985; Rentz et al., 2002 as cited in Ahmad et al. (2010) p.53. Churchill et al., (1985), Ford et al.,(1988) and Ahmed et al.,(2010) also argued that beside aptitude, role perception, motivation, personality and organizational factors, sales skills also

affect a sales persons performance. The dimension of sales skills are adopted from Ahmed et al.,(2010)who in turn adopted it from different studies. The three dimensions; interpersonal, salesmanship and technical from Rentz et al., (2002); which are found to be useful predictors of sales performance. And the fourth dimension, marketing skills is adopted from Aherne and Schilleweart (2000). Although these sales skills dimensions have long been recognized as predictors of sales performance, the majority of the previous studies had been conducted in advanced countries. In a sales oriented company, selling products and service is very important. Even more it is important in highly complex and high-tech industry like telecommunication because by nature in this industry customer knowledge and confidence on the product and services is very low that sales people role in this regard is critical to the success of the company. The importance of personal selling is greater in the business to business marketing. Ethio-Telecom as the only telecommunication service provider in the country, there is tremendous opportunity to sale more service and products to the whole customer in the country. In addition to its monopoly power, the company also deployed much network capacity by the expansion project called Forth Generation Network(FGN) in order to satisfy telecommunication demand in the country. Moreover, the demand for telecommunication technology is ever changing and far beyond the demand, especially in developing country. Having all the above mentioned advantage and capacity, ETC didn't give much attention to personal selling practice as a means of sales strategy. However, after the management contract with France telecom in 2010, ETC renamed as Ethio Telecom(ET) and start putting a great effort on marketing particularly selling and sales management (The Management Contract with France Telecom concluded: *January 02, 2013*).

As per my last eight years sales experience in Ethio Telecom, I have realized that even if the company shift from non-personal selling to heavily spreading on personal selling, it doesn't have a clear picture on what skills its sales people should acquire, what are personal selling key success factors in the industry, what type of training is needed and what kind of personal selling strategy to follow to enhance sales performance.

Therefore, this study assessed the effect of sales skills on personal selling performance of Ethio telecom in North West region sales force. It also assessed both the direct and moderating impact of organizational commitment on the relationship between sales person's skills and sales performance.

Research Questions which were answered by its major findings.

1. What are the major influences of technical skill on sales people performance?
2. What is the effect of interpersonal skill on salesperson performance?
3. Does marketing skill have a determinant effect on salesperson performance?
4. Does salesmanship skill affect the sales performance?
5. What are the direct impacts of organizational commitments on sale people performance?

1.4. Objectives of the study

General Objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the effect of sales skills on sales person's performance in Ethio-telecom.

Specific Objectives

The study aimed to conduct the research to answer the following specific objectives:

- ✚ To find out the impact of technical skills on sales persons performance.
- ✚ To find out the impact of interpersonal skills on sales persons performance.
- ✚ To investigate the influence of marketing skills on sales persons performance.
- ✚ To investigate the influence of salesmanship skills on sales persons performance.
- ✚ To find out the direct impact of organizational commitment on sales persons performance

1.5. Hypothesis

As indicated on the review of related literature many researchers have indicated a positive impact of sales skills on salesperson performance. Hence, it can be hypothesized that a similar relationship would occur in this study too. The entire hypothesis is derived from the review of related literature.

H1: Technical skills and sales person's performance are significantly and positively related.

H2: Interpersonal skills and sales person's performance are significantly and positively related.

H3: Marketing skills and sales person's performance are significantly and positively related.

H4: Salesmanship skills and sales person's performance are significantly and positively related.

H5: Organizational Commitment and sales person's performance are significantly and positively related.

H6: The influence of sales skills on salesperson performance is higher when organizational commitment is high.

1.6. Scope /delimitation of the Study

The study has limited itself on assessing only the impact of selling skills but sales person's performance is affected by many other variables including personality factors, role variables, motivation, aptitude and organizational factors. In terms of the universe of the study, it is limited to single industry sales persons (Telecommunication). Even within Ethio Telecom, the study is limited only to the North West Region sales force.

1.7. Significance of the study

The following are the relevancies of the study;

- For Ethio Telecom it helps:
 - ✚ To investigate sales skills which are highly relevant for the industry in general and for the company in particular
 - ✚ To identify key success factors in the telecom personal selling.
 - ✚ To give recommendations that can be used by the management.
- For Academicians, it provides a base for future researchers in the field

1.8. Theoretical Framework

This paper is built upon Churchill *et al.*, (1985) seminal work to examine the influence of sales skills on salesperson performance in an emerging economy context.

Specifically, the paper investigated the influence of four sales skills dimensions on salesperson performance. Three sales skills dimensions interpersonal, salesmanship and technical skills – are derived from Ford *et al.*, (1988; cited in Churchill *et al.*, 2000), and the other dimension of marketing skill is derived from Ahearne and Schillewaert (2000). Although there have been numerous studies on the direct relationship between organizational commitment and job performance, however, there have been few studies conducted treating organizational commitment as a moderator. According to Meyer and Allen (1997), a committed employee is the one who stays with the organization through thick and thin, attends work regularly, puts in a full

day (and maybe more), protects company assets, shares company goals and others. Thus, having a committed workforce is an added organizational advantage. From a different perspective, Chang (1999) examined the effect of organizational commitment as a moderator on the relationship between perceptions of a company's career practices and turnover intention. The results showed that organizational commitment had some bearing on turnover intention., in sum, organizational commitment can and does play a role in influencing job performance. Nonetheless, the literature reviewed showed that no previous study utilized organizational commitment to see the direct impact and moderating the relationship between sales skills dimensions and salesperson performance.

The present study examined the relationship between selling skills dimensions (interpersonal, salesmanship, technical, and marketing) and salesperson performance. The effect of organizational commitment on this relationship is explored as a moderating variable.

The relationships among the variables are shown in Figure.1

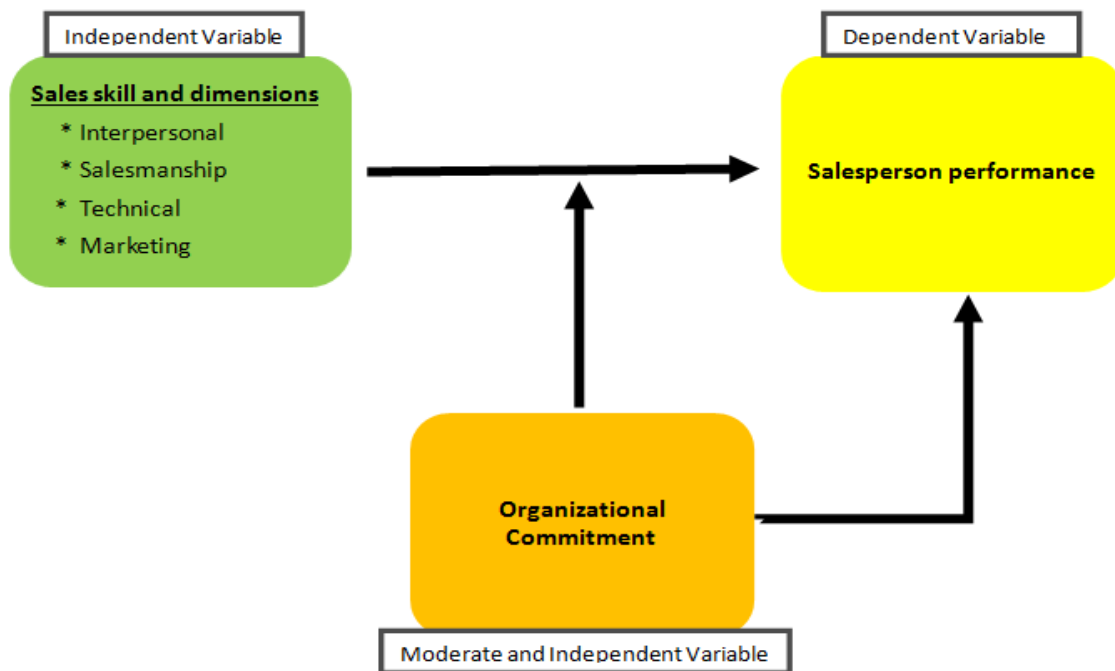


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the study, adopted from Ahmad et al, (2010) p.185

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

An effort has been made to review relevant literature. This chapter demonstrates an introduction about Personal selling, the Personal Selling Process, B2B Personal Selling, Qualities needed in personal selling ,Essential elements of Personal Selling, Sales performance, determinants of Sales performance, Sales Skills and Sales persons Performance, and Organizational Commitment and Sales persons Performance.

2.1. Personal Selling

Personal selling is one of the fundamental elements of the promotional mix and a non-digital design element or marketing process with which consumers are personally persuaded to buy goods and services. Digital Marketing in comparison to personal selling is the marketing of goods and services using digital channels to reach customers. According to Afrina, Sadia and Kaniz (2015), digital marketing also refers to different promotional techniques used to reach customers. Personal Selling is one of the oldest forms of promotion which describes the process whereby the seller or his representative ascertains and activates the needs or wants of the buyer and satisfies the same to the mutual advantage of both buyer and seller. Kotler and Armstrong (2008) viewed personal selling as personal communication between a firm's sales force and customers for the purpose of making sales and building customer relationship.

Personal selling in comparison to other promotional mix elements (advertising, sales promotion and publicity) is fundamentally unique. While Advertising and sales promotion focuses on creating awareness about the existence of a product provide information as to the product features, its availability and price on a mass basis, personal selling is an individualistic approach dealing with the customers on their individual basis.

Personal selling involves two -way flow of communication between a buyer and a seller, often in a face to face encounter, designed to influence a person or group purchase decision. In general, if a product has a high unit value and requires a demonstration of its benefits, it is well suited for personal selling. Robert Louis Stevenson once noted, (pp 464–467) “Everyone lives by selling

something.” Companies around the world use sales forces to sell products and services to business customers and final consumers.

Personal selling can be more effective than advertising in more complex selling situations. Salespeople can probe customers to learn more about their problems and then adjust the marketing offer and presentation to fit the special needs of each customer.

The basic parts of a firm’s promotional effort are personal selling, advertising, publicity, and sales promotion (Futrell, 1992; as cited in Jaramillo & Marshall, 2003)p.156. Personal Selling is defined as “the personal communication of information to persuade a prospective customer to buy something: goods, services, idea, or something else” (Futrell, 1992 as cited in Jaramillo & Marshall, 2003). Jaramillo and Marshall (2003) believe that personal selling messages have the potential to be more persuasive than advertising or publicity due to the face-to-face communication with customers. Brooks bank (1995) suggests that personal selling is a critical component of marketing success. He defines the personal selling process as the “positioning of goods or services in the mind of a particular prospective customer” (Brooks bank, 1995, p. 63 as cited in Jaramillo & Marshall, 2003).

Qualities needed in personal selling

“Field surveys show that top sellers differ from average sellers in approximately eight different qualities or skills. The signs of a top seller repeat over and over again no matter what the field or industry. These signs are attitude, goal-setting, presentation skill, product knowledge, presence, acquiring new customers and additional selling, ability to get along with different persons and the deal closing skills. It is difficult to arrange these signs as each one has their own significance in achieving a great result.” (Rummukainen 2008, p.11)A good salesperson must have the need to accomplish the tasks that are at hand and it is even better if these tasks and the goals related to them are set by one self. It might take a long time before the salesperson can close the deal and this is why also proactively and diligences are needed. Feelings of the buyer and the sales representative himself and acting based on these feelings is crucial and the sales representative must also motivate oneself. Controlling the feelings and emotions is crucial, and the best way to show emotional intelligence is to respond in an appropriate way to the feelings that the customer shows. (Alanenym. 2005 p.18)The salesperson must understand that the world of selling and buying has changed critically in the recent times, although the selling skills might have stayed the same. In the current situation customers appreciate salespersons that are ready to spend time

in getting to know the customer. Trust between the both parties is essential and it takes a long time to establish a trustworthy relationship “Sales executives are always looking for ingenious ways to motivate their teams.

Essential elements of Personal Selling

Personal selling consists of the following elements:

- ✚ **Face-to-Face interaction:** Personal selling involves a salesmen having face-to-face interaction with the prospective buyers.
- ✚ **Persuasion:** Personal selling requires persuasion on the part of the seller to the prospective customers to buy the product. So a salesperson must have the ability to convince the customers so that an interest may be created in the mind of the customers to use that product.
- ✚ **Flexibility:** The approach of personal selling is always flexible. Sometimes salesperson may explain the features and benefits of the product, sometimes give demonstration of the use of product and also faces number of queries from the customers. Looking into the situation and interest of the customers, the approach of the salesman is decided instantly.
- ✚ **Promotion of sales:** The ultimate objective of personal selling is to promote sales by convincing more and more customers to use the product.
- ✚ **Supply of Information:** Personal selling provides information to the customers regarding availability of the product, special features, uses and utility of the products. So it is an educative process.
- ✚ **Mutual Benefit:** It is a two-way process. Both seller and buyer derive benefit from it. While customers feel satisfied with the goods, the seller enjoys the profits.

2.2. Personal Selling Process

The **selling process** consists of several steps that salespeople must master. These steps focus on the goal of getting new customers and obtaining orders from them. However, most salespeople spend much of their time maintaining existing accounts and building long-term customer relationships. The selling process consists of seven steps. Philip Kotler, Gary Armstrong. (**pp 478–481**)

- 1) Prospecting and qualifying
- 2) Pre-approach

- 3) Approach
- 4) Presentation & Demonstration
- 5) Handling Objections
- 6) Close
- 7) Follow Up

1) Prospecting and qualifying

First step in the selling process is **prospecting** identifying qualified potential customers. Approaching the right potential customers is crucial to the selling success. Salespeople also need to know how to *qualify* leads that is, how to identify the good ones and screen out the poor ones. Prospects can be qualified by looking at their financial ability, volume of business, special needs, location, and possibilities for growth.

Prospecting is the method by which salespeople search for new customers and potential customers. One obvious reason for prospecting is to expand the customer base, which is important because most sales organizations lose customers every year (Jolson &Wotruba, 1992 as cited in Marshal and Moncrief, 2005).

Qualifying deals with determining which prospects are most likely to purchase the product. In some firms, prospects are rated A, B, C, D, and E depending on the chance that they will purchase and the amount they might spend. In many firms, prospects that plan on buying the product within 3 months are classified as "hot leads."

2) Pre-approach

Before calling on a prospect, the salesperson should learn as much as possible about the organization (what it needs, who is involved in the buying) and its buyers (their characteristics and buying styles). This step is known as **pre-approach**. "Revving up your sales starts with your preparation," says one sales consultant. "A successful sale begins long before you set foot in the prospect's office." Pre-approach begins with good research. The salesperson can consult standard industry and online sources, connections, and others to learn about the company. Then the salesperson must apply the research to develop a customer strategy.

The pre-approach step occurs on virtually every sales call. Sellers are doing their research on the prospect or customer, familiarizing themselves with the customer's needs, reviewing previous correspondence, and pulling together any other new and relevant material that might be appropriate for bringing to the sales call itself. Pre-approach activities also include talking with

gatekeepers, doing homework on the customer (individual and organization), mentally preparing for the approach and presentation (rehearsal), and breaching the customer's office on entry.

3) Approach

During the **approach** step, the salesperson should know how to meet and greet the buyer and get the relationship off to a good start. This step involves the salesperson's appearance, opening lines, and follow-up remarks. The opening lines should be positive to build goodwill from the outset. This opening might be followed by some key questions to learn more about the customer's needs or by showing a display or sample to attract the buyer's attention and curiosity. As in all stages of the selling process, listening to the customer is **crucial**.

4) Presentation and Demonstration

During the **presentation** step of the selling process, the salesperson tells the "value story" to the buyer, showing how the company's offer solves the customer's problems. The customer-solution approach fits better with today's relationship marketing focus than does a hard sell or glad-handing approach. They want salespeople who listen to their concerns, understand their needs, and respond with the right products and services. Great salespeople know how to sell, but more importantly they know how to listen and build strong customer relationships. One professional said, "You have two ears and one mouth". Today's information-overloaded customers demand richer presentation experiences. And presenters now face multiple distractions during presentations from cell phones, text messages, and mobile Internet devices. Sales people must deliver their messages in more engaging and compelling ways. Thus, today's salespeople are employing advanced presentation technologies that allow for full multimedia presentations to only one or a few people. The venerable old flip chart has been replaced with sophisticated presentation software, online presentation technologies, interactive whiteboards, and handheld computers and projectors.

5) Handling Objections

Customers almost always have objections during the presentation or when asked to place an order. The problem can be either logical or psychological, and objections are often unspoken.

In **handling objections**, the salesperson should use a positive approach, seek out hidden objections, ask the buyers to clarify any objections, take objections as opportunities to provide

more information, and turn the objections into reasons for buying. Every salesperson needs training in the skills of handling objections.

6) Closing

After handling the prospect's objections, the salesperson now tries to close the sale. Some salespeople do not get around to **closing** or handle it well. They may lack confidence, feel guilty about asking for the order, or fail to recognize the right moment to close the sale. Salespeople should know how to recognize closing signals from the buyer, including physical actions, comments, and questions.

7) Follow-Up

The last step in the selling process **follow-up** is necessary if the salesperson wants to ensure customer satisfaction and repeat business. Right after closing, the salesperson should complete any details on delivery time, purchase terms, and other matters. The salesperson then should schedule a follow-up call after the buyer receives the initial order to make sure proper installation, instruction, and servicing occur. This visit would reveal any problems, assure the buyer of the salesperson's interest, and reduce any buyer concerns that might have arisen since the sale.

2.3. B2B Personal Selling

For many firms, especially in business-to-business markets, personal selling is the dominant element in the marketing communications mix and the key to implementing marketing strategy successfully. Sales expenditure may be as much as 15 percent of sales, and higher than advertising costs (Barker, 1999 as cited in Sweet, 2007 p.180). Therefore the factors that enhance the performance of the sales function are of critical interest. One important advantage of personal selling is that the selling pitch can be adjusted and individualized to the prospect. Once you determine the prospect's needs, you tailor the sales pitch. Unfortunately, personal selling is extremely expensive. As noted previously, door-to-door selling is disappearing in the area of consumer marketing (Friedman, 2011). This is, however, not true in the area of business-to-business (B2B) marketing. Companies selling complex products such as printing presses, buses, jets, computer systems, power plants, and other expensive "installations" usually use salespeople to sell their products (Friedman, 2011). These salespeople are compensated quite well and a large number of them are college graduates. When selling complex, costly products B2B (business-to-

business), personal selling is extremely important. You need to develop a relationship with customers and may have to answer technical questions. A customer with a question can get an immediate response. Personal selling is also important where prices have to be negotiated and the sale involves a great deal of money (Friedman, 2011). A key disadvantage of personal selling is that it is costly and you have to deal with customers one at a time. Sales organizations have always been under pressure to uncover new opportunities, hit sales targets, and maximize productivity. But in today's new age of the customer where customers are better informed than ever and excellent service often trumps a lower price sales goals cannot be reached simply through hard work. Sales teams need information that enables them to understand customers better and anticipate their needs.

2.4. Sales performance

Sales performance is the quantity of goods sold in number or amount of units during the normal operating times of a company (Moghareh, Ghazaleh&Haghighi., 2009). It is a total amount of aspects comprising gross sales, credit memos, income, delayed billings and delayed shipments (Smith & Rupp, 2003). Sales performance employs unprocessed information concerning the number of consumers' sales representative talks to compare with the quantity of actual sales. However it can signify the rate of customer loyalty to the business hence enhancing sales performance can automatically improve the number of loyal customers (McLelland, 2014). Fitzgerald and Moon (1996) suggested that performance is a multi-aspect concept, amount with which fluctuate and depends on a diversity of reasons that encompass it (Fitzgerald, 1996). Palmer and Pels declared that marketing outcome construct are introduced in order to have an additional openly related marketing practice result (Palmer &Pels, 2003).

According to Salleh and Kamaruddin (2011) sales performance can be evaluated using a sales volume analysis, marketing cost analysis and profitability analysis whereby a sales volume investigation conducted by a careful study of an organization's records of its profits and loss statement on the product lines, territories and key accounts of the customers. Marketing cost investigation is the survey of marketing expenses to determine the effectiveness of various marketing segments while the profitability analysis is the summation of the sales volume analysis and marketing cost analysis(Neema Omary Seukindo 2017 p.6-7)

Sales performance has been previously identified as consisting of a wide range of variables (Evans et al. 2012). The evaluation of sales performance can be conducted by using the

outcomes or evaluating the sales persons behaviors (Anderson & Oliver 1987). Previous research into sales force effectiveness has utilized the outcomes of the organization as a measure of sales effectiveness (Babakus et al. 1996). Typically, the outcomes measured are revenue growth, profit improvement, and return on assets (Cravens et al. 1992; Plank & Reid 1994; Walker et al. 1977; Deeter-Schmelz et al. 2002). Further research has utilized sales volume, market share, and customer satisfaction as outcome measures of sales force effectiveness (Piercy et al. 1997). Additionally, research has been completed, using a synthesis of these outcome measures (Baldauf & Cravens 1999; Piercy 2006; Cravens et al. 2006). These measures, when assessed against historical performance of the sales organization or utilized in intercompany benchmarking, provide the outcome based performance indicators used to describe sales force effectiveness (Churchill et al. 2000) (Jeremy John Noad June 2017 .p 35)

2.5. Determinants of sales performance

By importing significant behavioral science perspectives into sales force research, Walker et al. (1977) developed an integrative conceptual model of the antecedents of sales performance. Churchill et al. (1985) 2011 applied this model in their meta-analysis, dividing the determinants for sales performance into six main categories: **role perceptions, aptitude, skill level, motivation, personal factors and organizational and environmental.** (J. of the Acad. Mark. Sci. (2011) 39:407 -428)

Role Perceptions: Perceptions of demands and expectations by role partners (Walker et al. 1977)

Aptitude: Native abilities and enduring personal traits relevant to the performance of job activities (Walker et al. 1977)

Skill Level: Learned proficiency at performing necessary tasks for the sales job (Ford et al. 1983)

Motivation: The amount of effort a salesperson desires to expend on each activity or task associated with the job (Walker et al. 1977)

Personal factor: Intra-individual factors that might be related to salespeople's performance but which are not part of the aptitude, skill level, motivation and role perceptions components (Churchill et al. 1985)

Organizational & Environmental: Factors such as variations in territory potential and strength of competition (Ford et al. 1983).

2.6. Sales Skills and Sales Persons Performance

2.6.1. Technical Skills

Technical knowledge refers to salesperson's skill in providing information about design and specification of products and the applications and functions of both products and services (Ahmad et al., 2010, p.188). Many researchers have found a significant and positive relationship between technical skills and sales persons performance (e.g. Baldauf et al., 2001; Grants and Cravens, 1999; Baldouf and Cravens, 1999; Katiskeck and Skermeas, 2003; Baldouf and Cravens, 2002).

However there are some researchers who come up with the contrary result (Ahmad et al. 2010; Ahearne and Schillewaert, 2000; Barker, 1999; Piercy et al., 1997). This researchers finding is that technical skills levels possessed by salespersons do not necessarily lead to positive effects in terms of salespersons performance. The first hypothesis emanates from the above literature.

2.6.2. Interpersonal skills

Interpersonal skills refer to mental and communication procedures applied during social, communication and interaction to achieve certain effects and results (Ahmad et al., 2010, p.186). Different researches on the area have found that interpersonal skills significantly predict salespersons performance (E.g. Ahmad et al., 2010; Ford et al., 1988; Pilling and Eroglu, 1994;). Furthermore it is found that interpersonal skills play a significant role in predicting salesperson success (Lockemon and Hallag, 1982). As the finding form Hill and Petty (1995) indicate interpersonal skill can also predict employability. Interpersonal skills are expressed by listening, empathy, optimism and perceived observation skills (Rentz et al., as cited in Ahmad et al., 2010 p.54).As confirmed by Ahmad et al. (2010) this dimensions are likely to collectively realize effective interpersonal skills that will in turn explain sales person performance. The second hypothesis of this study is derived from the above literature.

2.6.3. Marketing skills

Salespersons' marketing skill refers to knowledge about the industry and trends in general such as customers, markets and products; Competitor's products, Services, sales policies; knowledge of competitor's product lines, and knowledge of customer operation|| (Behrman and Perrault,

1982, as cited in Ahmad et al., 2010 p.188). Ahearne and Schillewaert (2000); Leigh and McGraw (1989); Sujana et al., (1988); Smith and Ownes, (1995) found positive and a significant relationship between marketing skills and sales performance. As expressed by Ahmad et al. (2010) extensive knowledge base is importance for a sales person since it allows them to cope with the complex market environment. The third hypothesis of this study is derived from the above literature.

2.6.4. Salesmanship skills

Salesmanship skills can be explained by five dimensions which are adoptability, consultative selling, negotiation, questioning and salesperson cues and communication styles skills (Ahmad et al.2010). Generally most of the studies on the area have found a positive relationship between salesmanship skills and salespersons' performance (Ford et al., 1988; Baldaf et al., 2001; Babakes et al. 1996; Katsikon and Skarmeas, 2003; Baldouf and Cravers, 1999). However still there are other researchers who have found the opposite of the above one's (Ahmad et al., 2010 and Ahearne and Schillewaert, 2000). Most of the previous studies have tried to relate each dimension of the salesmanship with salesperson's performance (Kentz et al., 2002 ascited in Ahmad et al, 2010 p.54). Adaptive selling is defined as the sales person's ability to alter her/his sales behavior when interacting with customers and is important because it shows the amount of customization a salesperson is utilized (Ahmad et al., 2010 p. 186).

Many researchers have found a positive relationship between adoptive selling and sales performance (Babakus et al., 1996; Boorom et al., 1998as cited in Ahmed et al., 2010) According to Morgan and Stoltman (1990) salespersons ability of asking questions, listening and detecting verbal and nonverbal cues, provide the basis for adaptive selling. There are also some findings that salespersons communication style plays on sales person's success (Stafford, 1996; Futrell, 2006). Researchers have found that not only the verbal skills could influence salespersons performance but salesperson's nonverbal cues could influence a person's behavior (Cho, 2001; Leigh and Summors, 2002; Stafford, 1996;). The final skill under salesmanship is consultative skills can also influence salespersons performance (De Cormier and Jobber, 1993; Goolsby et al., 1992). The majority of the researches reviewed lead to salesmanship to be hypothesized as positive influencer. This is the base for the fourth the hypothesis.

2.7. Organizational commitment and sales person Performance

Organizational commitment, defined as the psychological attachment of workers to their organizations, has been an area of active research over the past several decades (cf. Benkhoff, 1997; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Zhen Xiong Chen et al. p.340.

Organizational commitment by salespeople is important because of the demonstrated positive relationships between it and several variables related to sales performance such as customer-oriented selling (Flaherty et al., 1999), turnover intentions (e.g., Johnston et al., 1990; Bashaw and Grant, 1994), absenteeism (e.g., Farrell and Stamm, 1988), and job satisfaction (e.g., Low et al., 2001; Schwepker, 2001). F. Jaramillo et al. P.58 (2005) 705–714.

Relationship between organizational commitment and job performance is positive and stronger for sales employees than for non-sales employees. Stronger correlations between organizational commitment and job performance are found for collectivist compared to individualistic cultures (ferando. Jaramilo June 2005, Pages 705-714)

A committed employee is the one who stays with the organization through thick and thin, attained work regularly, puts in a full day (and maybe more), protects company assets, shares company goals and others (Meyer and Allen, 1997; as cited in Ahmad et al., 2010 p. 184). According to Ahmad et al., (2010) few studies were undertaken on job performance by considering it as a moderator. As explained by Dutto et al., (1994) as cited in Ahmad et al. (2010) activities take place within the organizational contexts, the effects of affective organizational commitment on sales skills dimensions can be expected and anticipated. Irving and Coleman (2003) as cited in Ahmad et al., (2010) examined the moderating effect of organizational commitment on the relationships between role ambiguity and job tension in an organization undergoing significant change. It is found in this research that organizational commitments have a moderating effect on the relationship between role ambiguity and job tension. In addition it is argued that organizational commitment has some influence on employee turnover intention (Chang et al., 1999). Another more related research is conducted by Thanker and Joshi (2002), studied the relationship between customer oriented selling and long term performance, with organizational commitment as a moderator. It appeared that organizational commitments do really moderate the relationship between the two variables. In contrary to the above results, Ahmad et al., (2010) in their work on the relationship between sales skills and performance, found that organizational commitment does not have a significant moderator effect.

As can be seen from the reviewed literature, only one research investigated the moderator impact of organizational commitment on the relationship between sales skills and organizational commitment. Organizational commitment has been only seen from the moderating impact. Its impact as direct influence of sales performance is not researched.

Therefore, in addition to testing the relationship between sales skills (technical, interpersonal, marketing and salesmanship) and sales persons performance and the moderating role of organizational commitment in Ethio Telecom business to business sales the present research will also try to fill the research gap by adding organizational commitment not only as a moderator but also as determinant of sales persons performance.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter is about the research methodology adopted and the various data collection methods used for the thesis. Accordingly, the chapter includes Research paradigm /Approach/, the research design, source of data, sampling technique, data collection methods and the method of data analysis. The research design gives the general description of the blue-print of the study whereas sample and sampling techniques deals with the process and techniques of taking samples from population. The data collection technique discuss on the techniques used for data collection. Finally the last part deals with the method of data analysis.

Research paradigm /Approach/

Paradigm is a way of thinking about and conducting research as mentioned by Morgan and Gliner (2000 p.72). Since this study used hypotheses testing, has well defined variables & used quantitative data analysis, positivism is the appropriate approach so as to conduct this typical research.

3.1. Research Design

This research was an empirical one; which focuses on sales person's sales skill. Thus, the study problem was more likely to be answered through quantitative methods. Mainly this research was based on quantitative research method which deals with use of statistical tools and numbers to address the previously mentioned research questions and to test the constructed hypotheses. Quantitative approach is a formalistic and a structured way of collecting data. Quantitative methods are characterized by measurable data which can be expressed in numbers or other quantities. This gives a basis for the presentation of frequencies, distributions and correlations (Limb & Dwyer, 2001).

3.2. Source of data

Ethio-telecom North West region branch has 23 shops. The study population included all shops. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. The primary sources were used in order to achieve detailed data for analysis. Questionnaire was used to address the sales staffs. Secondary data were also collected from different sources like company manuals, documents,

company report, library books and internet sources in order to achieve the main information need of the research.

3.3. Population and Sample of the Study

The target population for this study was sales persons working in Ethio Telecom commercial domain at North West region, who are responsible for business to business customers. One hundred twenty nine sales persons are working under commercial domain at North West Region: Fifty eight female and seventy one male.

Sampling is the selection of a subset of individuals from within a population to yield some knowledge about the whole population, especially for the purposes of making predictions based on statistical inference. There is no sampling mechanism used because the population size is small and manageable, thus the study took all the population that increased the generality of the finding to the company at regional level. There for ,all subjects, 129 sales persons, are a working under Enterprise division at North West Region. Ethio Telecom North West Region salespersons were selected for this study because of its larger customer base and also these sales persons are not mere order takers but rather they are missionary sales persons who are problem solvers, demand initiators.

Moreover this study adopted a supervisory rating evaluation approach i.e. twenty three shop supervisor (rater) rated the subordinate (sales persons) under his or her respective supervision. This means that the immediate supervisors of the respective salespersons were given the questionnaires to rate their subordinates. The supervisor-rating evaluation approach was used in the present study based on Ahmed et.al, (2010); which suggested that supervisor evaluation is superior because supervisors integrate many facets of performance, some of which are not readily quantifiable. The supervisor-rating approach is a meaningful construct as proven by Shore et al., (1995) and Allen (1994) in their studies on managerial perception of employee commitment to the organization (As cited in Ahmed et.et, 2010).In addition Willem et al (1999) in the Self-report versus managerial report, the latter is more effective due to the fact that people generally appraise themselves as better and smarter than others do, which may lead to a “self-enhancing bias”.

3.4. Data Collection Method

A questionnaire survey instrument was employed. The questionnaires, were structured as it is the case in quantitative research design. The study used five point Likert Scale from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. There was no need of translating the questioners from English to the local language Amharic because the supervisors are B.A and M.A holders. To measure all the variables, highly validated measurements were taken from different researchers which are organized into one by Ahmed et al (2010). Very slight modification was made on the questions to fit the existing condition in the Industry. Accordingly, Measurements of Technical, Interpersonal and Salesmanship skill are adopted from Rentz et al (2002) as cited in Ahmed et al (2002); Measurement of Marketing skill are adopted from Ahearne & Schillewaert (2000); Measurement of Salespersons Performance items are adopted from Behrman and Perreault (1982) as cited in Ahmed et al (2002) and Measurements of Organizational Commitment are adopted from Ahmed et al., (2010).

Even if the measurement variables and scale questionnaire are adopted from highly validated instruments, checking it whether they can be applied in Ethiopian context is important and verified using validity and reliability tests.

Note: All questionnaires' items are presented on Appendix 2.

3.5. Procedures

To collect and analyze the data the following procedures were used:

- ✚ First the questionnaires were given to supervisors of the sales people who were respondents of this study to be filled by them.
- ✚ Then a briefing on the questionnaire was given for the supervisors that have rated on the questionnaire for their respective subordinate sales persons.
- ✚ The data was recorded on SPSS version 20.
- ✚ Analysis of the data using different statistics on SPSS was made.
- ✚ Based on the analysis the conclusion was made.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

Different quantitative methods were used in the study. To test all the hypothesis hierarchical regression analysis was utilized. Independent sample T-Test and One way ANOVA were also used to investigate the difference between demographic variables (Sex, Age, Education and

Experience) and personal selling performance. In addition to different descriptive statistical tools like frequency distribution, cross tabulation, mean was used. Charts, tables and graphs were also used to substantiate and describe the data. All the analysis methods use the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software Version 20.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. General Information of Respondents

This section of the paper presents the data analyzed and entails discussions on the results obtained. Out of the distributed 129 questionnaires, 105 were collected back and found useful for the study giving a response rate of 81.39%. After collection, the questionnaires were diligently checked for errors and omissions and recorded on SPSS version 20 (statistical package for social sciences) to generate descriptive statistical reports. Inferential analyses were performed to indicate the possible nature of relationships that exist among the dependent and independent variables in the study

4.2. Measurement of Reliability and Validity

In survey based research, it is important to validate the scales used for reliability and validity. Even if the measurement variables and scale questionnaire are adopted from highly validated instruments, they are checked whether they can be applied in Ethiopian context is important. (Gleam & Rosemary, 2003, p.82) explained that “Oftentimes information gathered in the social sciences, marketing, medicine, and business, relative to attitudes, emotions, opinions, personalities, and descriptions of people's environment involve the use of Likert-type scales. As individuals attempt to quantify constructs which are not directly measurable they often use multiple item scales and summated ratings to quantify the construct(s) of interest. The present study has validated the measurements using Internal Consistency and Predictive Validity.

4.2.1. Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's alpha is a coefficient (a number between 0 and 1) that is used to rate the internal consistency (homogeneity) or the correlation of the items in a test. A good test is one that assesses different aspects of the trait being studied. Cronbach's alpha will generally increase as the inter correlations among test items increase, and is thus known as an internal consistency estimate of reliability of test scores.

Because inter correlations among test items are maximized when all items measure the same construct, Cronbach's alpha is widely believed to indirectly indicate the degree to which a set of

items measures a single construct (Gleam & Rosemary , 2003). George and Mallery (2003) provide the following rules of thumb: “> .9 Excellent, > .8 Good, > .7 Acceptable, > .6 Questionable,> .5 Poor, and < .5 Unacceptable” p.231 (as cited in Gleam & Rosemary, 2003).If correlations between items are too low, it is likely that they are measuring different traits and therefore should not all be included in a test that is supposed to measure one trait.

Table 1: Measure of Internal Consistency- Cronbach's alpha

| Measurements | List of Items | No.of items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|------------------|
| Technical skills | Excellent Knowledge of product development | 4 | .939 |
| | Excellent Knowledge of product benefit | | |
| | Excellent Knowledge of delivery process | | |
| | Knowledge of product features | | |
| Marketing skills | Have a real time information | 3 | .895 |
| | Has a lot information on industry trends | | |
| | Well informed about important events in our industry | | |
| Interpersonal skills | Excellent ability to express oneself | 5 | .847 |
| | Excellent ability in general speaking | | |
| | Excellent awareness and understanding nonverbal communication with others | | |
| | Excellent controlling and regulating emotion | | |
| | Excellent ability to exercise influence over others | | |
| Salesmanship skills | Excellent ability of building relationship with customers | 3 | .842 |
| | Excellent ability in sales presentation | | |
| | Excellent ability to service accounts | | |
| Sales person performance | Excellent in generating high level of sales | 2 | .968 |
| | Very effective in exceeding sales targets | | |
| Organizational Commitments | Puts a great deal of effort | 6 | .874 |
| | Accept any type of assignment | | |
| | Has values similar to company | | |
| | Proud to be associated with organization | | |
| | Delighted employed by the company | | |
| | Care about the wealth of the company | | |

Source: Survey Result

Note: The full result for all items is presented in Appendix

Cronbach's Alpha coefficients are above the cut of point of 0.7. The lowest Alpha registered is 0.842 (Salesmanship skill) and the highest is 0.968 (Sales performance). Therefore it can be inferred that all measures are internally consistent.

1. Checking the Assumptions

Ignoring the regression assumptions contribute to wrong validity estimates (Antonakis and Deitz, 2011). Before the hypotheses were tested with the regression models, the assumptions of Hierarchal regressions include the assumptions of linearity, normality, Multicollinearity and homoscedasticity was be discussed separately in the following sections.

- **Normality Test**

The normality test is used to determine whether the normal distribution of the data exists or not (Santoso, 2010). The normality assumption can be tested through several pieces of information, i.e., visual inspection of data plots, skewness, kurtosis, histogram of the standardized residuals and P-Plots (Osborne and Waters, 2002). The normality can be seen on the data distribution when the curve does not pass through either the left or the right (Ghozali, 2006).

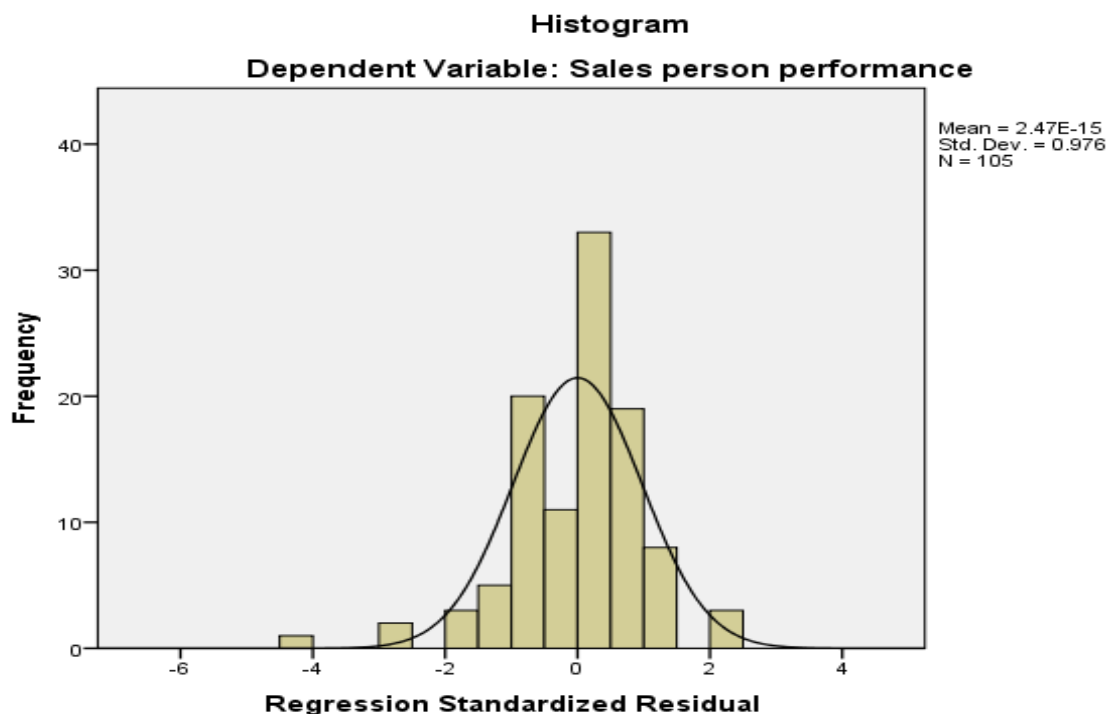


Figure 2: Analysis Result of Histogram

Fig 2 shows shape of the histogram approximately follows the bell shaped of the normal curve. Therefore, the data had spread normally and it can represent the population of this study and acceptable. The normal P-plot also supported the assumptions of normality; the closer the dots lie to the diagonal line, the closer to normal the residuals are distributed. Residuals follow the 45 degree line illustrated in figure 4.2 below and this revealed the assumption of normality. Therefore, the normal P-Plot also revealed that the P-Plot is normally distributed and it assured the normality of this study. Therefore, both the histogram and the p-plot confirmed that this study fulfilled the assumptions of normality test.

- **Linearity Test**

Linearity assumption refers to the presence of a straight-line relationship between each pair of dependent variables. The linearity test is used to determine whether two or more variables have a significant linear relationship or not. Regression assumes that variables have a linear relationship (Berry and Feldman, 1985). This can be assessed in a number of ways. The residual and scatter plots available indicate the presence of linearity (Keith, 2006; Osborne and Waters, 2002).

When we look at a scatter plot of this study on figure 4.2, most scores are laid in a straight line. Visual inspection of P- Plot was also used by the researcher to have information about linearity. The researcher observed in figure 4.2below the normal P-plot follows the 45 degree line and this confirmed as the linearity assumption of this study is fully satisfied.

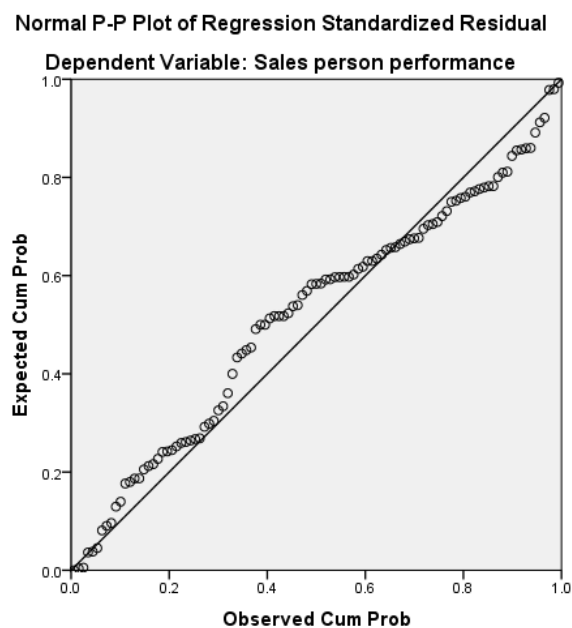


Figure 3: The Analysis Result of Normal P-Plot

- **Homoscedasticity Test**

The assumption of homoscedasticity refers to equal variance of errors across all levels of the independent variables (Osborne and Waters, 2002). Homoscedasticity can be checked by visual examination of a plot of the standardized residuals from the regression standardized predicted value (Osborne and Waters, 2002).

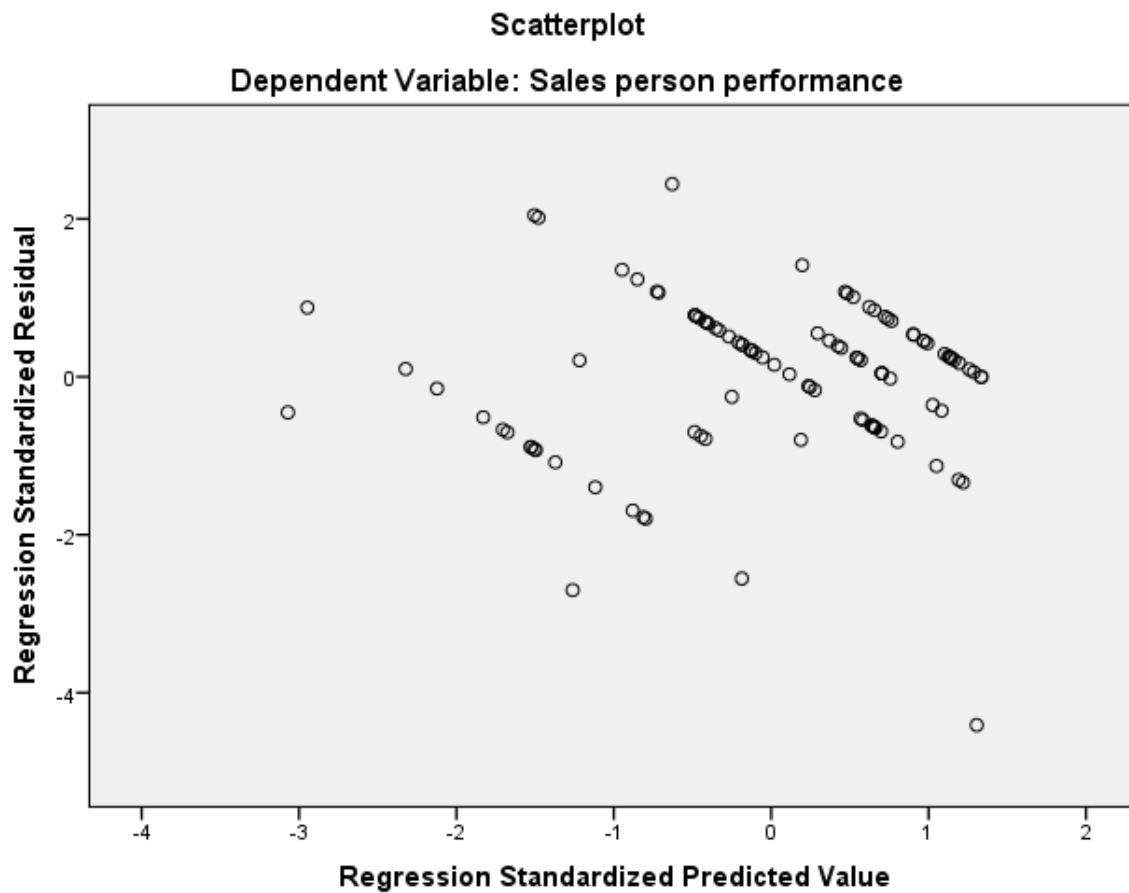


Figure 4: Residuals Scatter Plot of Dependent and Independent Variables

The researcher visually examined homoscedasticity test and as it shows in figure 4.3 that it can be assured that the points are randomly and evenly throughout the scattered diagram and there is no problem of heteroscedasticity. Therefore, the assumption of homoscedasticity is satisfied.

4.2.2. Predictive Validity

Predictive validity is the extent to which a score on a scale or test predicts scores on some criterion measure (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955; as cited in Gleam & Rosemary, 2003). They gave an example; the validity of a cognitive test for job performance is the correlation between test

scores and, for example, supervisor performance ratings. Such a cognitive test would have predictive validity if the observed correlation were statistically significant. It examines a measure's ability to predict some subsequent event.

“One-tailed Pearson Correlation test is important method to assess predictive validity of the variables” (Ahmed et al, 2010 p.96). The present research also employed one-tailed correlation to test the predictive validity of the variables. This method tries to see the correlation between all independent variables and the dependent validity.

Table 2: Predictive Validity, Correlation Matrix

| Correlations | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Technical skills | Marketing skills | Interpersonal skills | Salesmanship skills | Organizational Commitments | Sales person performance |
| Technical skills | Pearson Correlation | 1 | | | | | |
| Marketing skills | Pearson Correlation | .576** | 1 | | | | |
| Interpersonal skills | Pearson Correlation | .733** | .615** | 1 | | | |
| Salesmanship skills | Pearson Correlation | .802** | .506** | .747** | 1 | | |
| Organizational Commitments | Pearson Correlation | .567** | .457** | .540** | .584** | 1 | |
| Sales person performance | Pearson Correlation | .665** | .556** | .667** | .701** | .646** | 1 |
| **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). | | | | | | | |

Source: Survey Result

In this study the results of Pearson correlation coefficient indicate that positive relationship exists between dependent and independent variables.

Table 2 presents the summary of the correlation analysis in matrix form. Please see appendix 1 for full statistical result. As shown in the table, the magnitude of the relationship ranges from a low of 0.556 (between marketing skill and sales performance) to a high of 0.701 (between Salesmanship skill and sales performance). As the detail of the of the correlation analysis shows

in appendix 1, the statistical significance (p-value) is higher than the minimum cut of 0.05 which shows that the degree of association is highly significant.

4.3. Descriptive Analysis

4.3.1. Sales persons' profile

Sales persons' profiles working in Ethio telecom North West Region commercial domain sales are summarized by the following table.

Table 3: Sales Personnel Profile

| Variables | Descriptions | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Gender | Male | 62 | 59.0 |
| | Female | 43 | 41.0 |
| Age Group | <25 years | 0 | 0 |
| | 25 to 35 years | 59 | 56.2 |
| | 36 to 45 Years | 46 | 43.8 |
| | Above 45 years | 0 | 0 |
| Level of education | High school completed | 4 | 3.8 |
| | Diploma | 9 | 8.6 |
| | Bachelor degree | 76 | 72.4 |
| | Master degree | 16 | 15.2 |
| Sales Experience | Less than 5 year | 21 | 20.0 |
| | Between 5 to 10 year | 32 | 30.5 |
| | Between 10 to 20 year | 39 | 37.1 |
| | Above 20 years | 13 | 12.4 |

Source: Survey Result

It is important to note that the majority of the salespersons are concentrated in one group in terms of Gender, Age and Education. In terms of sex the majority (59%) is male and the remaining 41% is female. Based on this, it can be said that the gender composition in the division is fairly dominated by male workers as well over half of the population was found to be male. When it comes to Age most sales persons are at their Young age (25-35) 56.2% which means the work force is largely composed of the young population. This age composition can be taken as good advantage for the company as many of the workers fall within the productive age and this can be

used to the best advantage of the company. Having many young workers could imply good potential for the organization and sales person is not found within the age above 46 years. As a result, to test the difference between the age groups T-test is used; there is no need to use one-way ANOVA. With regards to Education of the sales person, almost all (72.4%) are BA Degree holders. Having a relatively educated composition of workforce in their respective fields can benefit the organization in terms of decreasing the cost incurred for training. This makes it difficult to see the difference between education levels because number of sales person in the groups is very low.

4.3.2. Descriptive statistics of the Variables

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of main variables

| Dimensions | list of variable | Mean variable | Mean Dimensions |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------------|
| Technical skills | Knowledge of product development | 4.06 | 3.9738 |
| | Knowledge of product benefit | 4.04 | |
| | Knowledge of delivery process | 3.82 | |
| | Knowledge of product features | 3.98 | |
| Marketing skills | Have a real time information | 3.68 | 3.7206 |
| | Has a lot information on industry trends | 3.69 | |
| | Well informed about important events in our industry | 3.80 | |
| Interpersonal skills | Excellent ability to express oneself | 4.07 | 3.9333 |
| | Excellent ability in general speaking | 3.97 | |
| | Excellent awareness and understanding non-verbal communication with others | 4.08 | |
| | controlling and regulating emotion | 3.80 | |
| | ability to exercise influence over others | 3.75 | |
| Salesmanship skills | Excellent ability of building relationship with customers | 4.39 | 4.2032 |
| | Excellent ability in sales presentation | 4.07 | |
| | Excellent ability to service accounts | 4.15 | |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|------|--------|
| Sales person performance | Excellent in generating high level of sales | 3.90 | 3.8810 |
| | Very effective in exceeding sales targets | 3.87 | |
| Organizational Commitments | Puts a great deal of effort | 4.16 | 4.2048 |
| | Accept any type of assignment | 4.04 | |
| | Has values similar to company | 4.12 | |
| | Proud to be associated with organization | 4.37 | |
| | Delighted employed by the company | 4.27 | |
| | Care about the wealth of the company | 4.27 | |

Source: Survey Result

To come up with the scores of the variable, items under each dimension are aggregated to one. As indicated in the table, all variables' mean score is greater than the midpoint of the scale which is 3. Of the four independent variables organizational commitment is the highest (4.2), while marketing skill is the lowest (3.7). The mean value of the dependent variable (sales performance) is also above 3.8. As a result, it is expected to ease in determining or indicating which of these sub-dimensions predict sales person's performance.

4.4. T-Test and Onaway ANOVA / Demography and Sales Performance

To assess the difference between demographic variables and salespersons performance independent sample, T-Test and One way ANOVA are used. Before presenting and discussing the results it is worthy to explain what the analysis methods are and why they are selected for this particular study.

4.4.1. Independent Sample T-Test

The t-test is the most commonly used method to evaluate the differences in means between two groups. Independent sample t-test is a statistical technique that is used to analyze the mean comparison of two independent groups. When samples are taken from two different groups, then the mean of the sample may differ. In this case, independent sample t-test is used to draw conclusions about the means of two populations, and used to tell whether or not they are different. Theoretically, the t-test can be used even if the sample sizes are very small (e.g., as small as ten), as long as the variables are normally distributed within each group and the variation of scores in the two groups is not reliably different (Gleam & Rosemary, 2003). Independent sample t-test is performed for variables: Gender and Age.

Table 5: Independent sample t-test for gender on sales person's performance

| | Sex of sales person | N | Mean | t-test result | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----|--------|---------------|---------------|
| | | | | t-value | Sig.(p-value) |
| Sales person performance | Male | 62 | 3.8952 | 0.163 | 0.871 |
| | Female | 43 | 3.8605 | | |

Source: Survey Result

It is shown in the table that there is insignificant (Sig= 0.871) difference between Male and Female sales persons in Ethio Telecom in terms of their performance. Therefore there is no significance difference in sales persons' performance of male & female,

The data set for the variable Education is not suitable to conduct an independent sample T-Test, because almost all sales persons are in the same group (BA). So the present research is unable to see the difference in Educational level cause on personal selling performance.

With regards to Age of the salespersons, since it has values for only two groups, there is no need to use ANOVA.

Table 6: Independent sample t-test for Age on sales person's performance

| | Age of sales person | N | Mean | t-test result | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----|--------|---------------|---------------|
| | | | | t-value | Sig.(p-value) |
| Sales person performance | 25-35 years | 59 | 3.9492 | 0.741 | 0.461 |
| | 35-45 years | 46 | 3.7935 | | |

Source: Survey Result

It can be done by using Independent sample T-Test. As can be seen from Table 6, there is statistically insignificant difference between the Age groups 25-35years old and 35-45 years old in terms of sales performance (at 5% level of significance).

4.4.2. One way ANOVA

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is a general method for studying sampled-data differences. The method enables the difference between two or more sample means to be analyzed, achieved by subdividing the total sum of squares. One way ANOVA is the simplest case. In statistics, one way analysis of variance (abbreviated one-way ANOVA) is a technique used to compare means of two or more samples (using the F distribution). It is a way to test the equality of three or more

means at one time by using variances. Incidentally, if we are only comparing two different means then the method is the same as the T-Test for independent samples.

Table 7: One way ANOVA/ Experience and Sales person performance

| Experience | Mean | One-way ANOVA Result | |
|--------------|--------|----------------------|--------------|
| | | F-value | Sig(p-value) |
| < 5 year | 3.9524 | 3.377 | 0.015 |
| 5 -10 year | 3.8125 | | |
| 10 - 20 year | 4.1538 | | |
| > 20 years | 3.1154 | | |

Source: Survey Result

In a one-way ANOVA (also known as a single-classification ANOVA), there is one measurement variable and one nominal variable. Multiple observations of the measurement variable are made for each value of the nominal variable. Hence, One-way ANOVA is conducted to see the difference between experience and sales persons' performance. As can be inferred from Table 7, it appeared that there is a significant difference in sales performance based on experience.

4.5. Hierarchical Regression Analysis

In statistics, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), a form of multi-level analysis, is a more advanced form of simple linear regression and multiple linear regressions. Hierarchical regression analysis allows variance in outcome variables to be analyzed at multiple hierarchical levels, whereas in simple linear and multiple linear regressions all effects are modeled to occur at a single level (Raudenbush&Bryk, 2002). Hierarchical regression adds terms to the regression model in stages. At each stage, an additional term or terms are added to the model and the change in R^2 is calculated. A hypothesis test is done to test whether the change in R^2 is significantly different from zero. Standard multiple regression is used to evaluate the relationship between a set of independent variables and a dependent variable. Whereas Hierarchical regression is used to evaluate the relationship between a set of independent variables and the dependent variable, controlling for or taking into account the impact of a different set of independent variables on the dependent variable. The independent variables are entered into the analysis in a sequence of blocks, or groups that may contain one or more variables. Support for a

hierarchical hypothesis would be expected to require statistical significance for the addition of each block of variables.

However, many times, we want to exclude the effect of blocks of variables previously entered into the analysis, whether or not a previous block was statistically significant. The analysis is interested in obtaining the best indicator of the effect of the predictor variables. The statistical significance of previously entered variables is not interpreted. In addition R^2 change, i.e. the increase when the predictor's variables are added to the analysis is interpreted rather than the overall R^2 for the model with all variables entered (Jacob and Patricia, 1975).

Thus, in order to test all the hypotheses, hierarchical regression is the most appropriate analysis tool. This is because hierarchical regression is efficient in determining the relationship between sales skills and salesperson performance, and also checks either organizational commitment do actually moderates the relationship.

The hierarchical regression conducted for this study is three steps analysis. On the first steps all the sales skills dimensions (technical, marketing, salesmanship and interpersonal) are entered as an independent variables. On the second steps organizational commitment is entered to see it do have a direct effect and to what extent it increase the goodness of feet.

Finally on the third step, to see the moderating effect of organizational commitment in the relation between sales skills and sales persons' performance, the interaction variables (sales skill dimensions X organizational commitment) are entered. It is important to note that at step 2 and step 3 of the hierarchical regression analysis, the change in R^2 statistics is more relevant for interpretation

Table 8: Hierarchical regression analysis

| Model | Step1 | | Step2 | | Step3 | |
|--|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
| | Beta | Sig | Beta | Sig | Beta | Sig |
| Sales Skills Effects | | | | | | |
| Technical skills | 1.29 | 0.00 | | | | |
| Marketing skills | -0.03 | 0.69 | | | | |
| Interpersonal skills | -0.66 | 0.00 | | | | |
| Salesmanship skills | 0.14 | 0.15 | | | | |
| Moderator Direct Effect | | | | | | |
| Organizational Commitment | | | 0.07 | 0.26 | | |
| Moderator Effect | | | | | | |
| Technical skills X Organizational Commitment | | | | | -0.91 | 0.00 |
| Interpersonal skills X Organizational Commitment | | | | | 0.82 | 0.00 |
| Marketing skills X Organizational Commitment | | | | | 0.07 | 0.31 |
| Salesmanship skills X Organizational Commitment | | | | | 0.37 | 0.00 |
| R² | 0.66 | - | 0.00 | - | 0.06 | - |
| R² Change | 0.66 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.26 | 0.06 | 0.00 |
| F-Change | 56.90 | - | 1.28 | - | 5.59 | - |

Source: Survey Result

As it can be inferred from Table 8, in the first step, the first variable which is technical skill of sales person significantly affect sales performance at 1% level of significant. And its coefficient is the highest of all independent variables (1.29). This result is interesting because in technical complex and dynamic industry like that of telecommunication, sales person technical knowledge about the product and service he/she is selling is critical. This is even more correct in business to business marketing, for the reason that a sales person is consultant who identifies customer needs and problems and tries to fix it with the appropriate product and service. In addition, in this industry customer knowledge about the product is so low that the sales person should have a sufficient technical knowledge to explain and demonstrate the product. This will in turn create confidence and desire for the product and service.

The second variable, marketing skill, appeared not significant in the model. Marketing skill is the skill of the sales person which is related to knowledge about the industry in general, the marketing, customers, and competitors in particular. This result also makes sense in the industry under investigation because it is a monopoly with one operator controlling the market. So, knowledge about the market and competitors is not that much important for a sales person working under Ethio Telecom.

The third variable, interpersonal skill of sales person in Ethio Telecom has statistically significant effect on sales performance. Therefore interpersonal skill which is listening, emphatic, optimism and perceived observation skills; appeared that its impact on sales person performance is statistically significant.

The final variable in Step 1, salesmanship skill, which is related to adoptable, consultative, selling negotiation and communication style skill, is found to be an insignificant determinant of sales performance.

Organizational commitment which is introduced in the 2nd step of the hierarchical regression is found to have no direct effect on personal selling performance. Former researchers in the area of sales performance have only been considering it as a moderator in the relation between sales skills and salesperson performance. In this research the researcher tried to see the direct effect of organizational commitment on personal selling performance, however, as the above result shows, there is no direct effect on personal selling performance.

On the 3rd and final step of the hierarchical regression whether organizational commitment can moderate the relationship between sales skills and personal selling performance is tested. And it is found that organizational commitment has significant moderating effect. As can be referred from Table 8, the addition of the interaction variables improved the percentage of the variance explained by 6% (significant at 1%). Sales skills, even if important determinant of performance, their effect can be aggravated by organizational commitment of the sales person.

4.6. Summary of the Findings

The following table 9 summarizes the major findings of the study:

Table 9:Summary of major findings

| Statement of Hypothesis | Support |
|--|---------|
| H ₁ :Technical skills and salesperson performance are significantly and positively related | Yes |
| H ₂ :Interpersonal skills and salesperson performance are significantly and positively related | Yes |
| H ₃ : Marketing skills and sales persons performance are significantly and positively related | No |
| H ₄ :Salesmanship skills and salesperson performance are significantly and positively related | No |
| H ₅ :Organizational Commitment and salesperson performance are significantly and positively related | No |
| H ₆ :The influence of Sales skills (Technical, Interpersonal, Marketing and Salesmanship) on salesperson performance is higher when organizational commitment is high | Yes |

In addition, with regards to the relationship between demographic variables and sales performance, Experience of the sales person has positive and significant influence on personal selling performance. Age and Sex of sales personnel have no significance on sales performance which shows that there is no difference on salespersons performance whether they are male or female and also age of sales person is no difference on salespersons performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter focuses on the conclusion of the study. It covers summary of major findings, conclusions, recommendations of the thesis and implications for further research.

5.1. Conclusion

From the analysis of the data collected, it can be concluded that:

- ✚ The response rate obtained from the distributed questionnaires was 81.39% (129 were distributed and 105 were collected)
- ✚ Looking at the general/background information of the respondents, the population is male dominated with a predominantly young population with average length of experience mainly falling between 10 to 20 years.
- ✚ Gender and age of the sales person, have no significant influence on performance of Ethio-telecom sales persons. Being male, female or any age level by itself have no statistically significant evidence to affect the performance level of the sales person.
- ✚ Experience also appeared to be a significant and positive predictor of sales performance. As the experience of sales person increases their respective performance increases. More experienced sales person has relatively higher performance when compare with that of less experienced sales person.
- ✚ Technical skill and sales person performance are significantly and positively related. Furthermore, technical skill is the highest predictor of sales person performance compared to other sales skills. As a result, technical skill is the main predictor of sales success in Ethio-telecom selling.
- ✚ Next to technical skill, interpersonal skill has the second highest predictor of sales performance. Therefore having a sales force with greater interpersonal skill like listening, emphatic, optimism and perceived observation skills; can significantly improve sales performance.

- ✚ There is no evidence to support both marketing and salesmanship skill impact on personal selling performance.
- ✚ Organizational commitment, which had been only considered as a moderator in previous research, is found to have no direct effect on sales performance.
- ✚ Finally it is found that not only sales skills are important for an organization sales person to be successful, but also organizational commitment of the sales person which can effectively moderate the impact of sales skills. The addition of moderating variables has significantly improved the percentage of the variance explained by the model.

5.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations can be drawn from the analysis and conclusions made. It is presented in the form of Key Success factors for Ethio Telecom North West region sales personnel.

Key Success Factor for Ethio telecom North West Region sales personnel:

More experienced sales persons

By retaining more sales people to stay on their job for longer time, Ethio Telecom can effectively improve the performance of the sales force. For this Ethio Telecom should have benefit packages (both monetary and non-monetary) which are attractive to sales persons. In addition, when recruiting sales person one of the criteria should be experience in sales.

Sale persons with Excellent Technical knowledge

Having excellent knowledge not only in describing the product and understanding how the product work but also in describing and showing the customer how to use the product and service.

To this end Ethio Telecom should use technically knowledgeable sales personnel (either should hire engineers and train them selling or hire marketers and extensively train them on technical function of the product and service). The bottom line is that sales person should have up-to-date and standard technical skill on: how the product is developed; to what extent it performs; how to use the product (demonstration) and how to configure the product.

Commitment of the sales person toward the organization

Commitment of the sales person towards the organization is the key success factor in Ethio Telecom's context. By moderating the relationship between sales person performances, organizational commitment contributes positively towards achievement of sales person. So Ethio Telecom needs to invest in activities that increase sales person commitment towards the organization. Involving the sales person in planning sales target, designing attractive benefit packages, creating a suitable and attractive working condition, recognizing and appreciating sales person, and creating social network within employee are some of actions that Ethio Telecom should do to increase commitment of the sales person.

Interpersonal Skill

Interpersonal Skill of the sales person; which includes skills like listening, emphatic, optimism and perceived observation; is also key success factor for telecom personal selling. Ethio Telecom, in addition to technical skill, should give due emphasis and training (both on the job and off the job) interpersonal skills.

Implications for Further Research

The researcher suggests the following further research areas:

- ✚ If self-reporting method had been used in tandem with supervisory rating it would have better measured construct and allow for comparing supervisory perception and sales personals perception. In addition, the research could have been more comprehensive if it had included variables other than sales skill like Personality, Role perception, Environmental factors and Aptitude included in the model.
- ✚ Additional researches with samples drawn from differing sales environments, especially researches that rigorously compare different groups of sales people from all regions can be done.
- ✚ In addition, it will be better if researchers in the areaof employ both supervisory and self-reported method of data collection and cross comparisons are made between the two groups.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: RESULT OF SPSS

Appendix 1A: Cronbach's Alpha

| Scale: Technical Skills Case Processing Summary | | | |
|---|-----------------------|------|------------|
| | | N | % |
| Cases | Valid | 105 | 100.0 |
| | Excluded ^a | 0 | .0 |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 |
| a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure. | | | |
| Reliability Statistics | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha | | | N of Items |
| | | .939 | 4 |
| Scale: Marketing skills Case Processing Summary | | | |
| | | N | % |
| Cases | Valid | 105 | 100.0 |
| | Excluded ^a | 0 | .0 |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 |
| a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure. | | | |
| Reliability Statistics | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha | | | N of Items |
| | | .895 | 3 |
| Scale : Interpersonal skills Case Processing Summary | | | |
| | | N | % |
| Cases | Valid | 105 | 100.0 |
| | Excluded ^a | 0 | .0 |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 |
| a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure. | | | |
| Reliability Statistics | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha | | | N of Items |
| | | .847 | 5 |

| Scale : Salesmanship skills Case Processing Summary | | | |
|--|-----------------------|------------|-------|
| | | N | % |
| Cases | Valid | 105 | 100.0 |
| | Excluded ^a | 0 | .0 |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 |
| a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure. | | | |
| Reliability Statistics | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha | | N of Items | |
| | | .842 | 3 |
| Scale : Sales person performance Case Processing Summary | | | |
| | | N | % |
| Cases | Valid | 105 | 100.0 |
| | Excluded ^a | 0 | .0 |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 |
| a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure. | | | |
| Reliability Statistics | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha | | N of Items | |
| | | .968 | 2 |
| Scale : Organizational Commitment Case Processing Summary | | | |
| | | N | % |
| Cases | Valid | 105 | 100.0 |
| | Excluded ^a | 0 | .0 |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 |
| a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure. | | | |
| Reliability Statistics | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha | | N of Items | |
| | | .874 | 6 |

Appendix 1B: Predictive and Discriminate Validity

| Correlations | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Technical skills | Marketing skills | Interpersonal skills | Salesmanship skills | Organizational Commitments | Sales person performance |
| Technical skills | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .576** | .733** | .802** | .567** | .665** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Marketing skills | Pearson Correlation | .576** | 1 | .615** | .506** | .457** | .556** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 |
| Interpersonal skills | Pearson Correlation | .733** | .615** | 1 | .747** | .540** | .667** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 |
| Salesmanship skills | Pearson Correlation | .802** | .506** | .747** | 1 | .584** | .701** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 |
| Organizational Commitments | Pearson Correlation | .567** | .457** | .540** | .584** | 1 | .646** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | | .000 |
| | N | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 |
| Sales person performance | Pearson Correlation | .665** | .556** | .667** | .701** | .646** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | |
| | N | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 1C: Salespersons' Profile

| Sex of sales person | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Male | 62 | 59.0 | 59.0 | 59.0 |
| | Female | 43 | 41.0 | 41.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| Age of sales person | | | | | |
| Valid | <25 years | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6.7 |
| | 25 to 35 years | 59 | 56.2 | 56.2 | 56.2 |
| | 36 to 45 Years | 46 | 43.8 | 43.8 | 100.0 |
| | Above 45 years | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| Educational level of Sales person | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|----------|------------|------------|------------|
| Valid | High school completed | 4 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| | Diploma | 9 | 8.6 | 8.6 | 12.4 |
| | Bachelor degree | 76 | 72.4 | 72.4 | 84.8 |
| | Master degree | 16 | 15.2 | 15.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| Experience of sales person | | | | | |
| Valid | Less than 5 year | 21 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | 5 to 10 year | 32 | 30.5 | 30.5 | 50.5 |
| | 11 to 20 year | 39 | 37.1 | 37.1 | 87.6 |
| | Above 20 years | 13 | 12.4 | 12.4 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 105 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Appendix 1D: Descriptive Statistics

| Statistics Technical skills | | | | | | |
|--|---------|--|--|--|--|---|
| | | Excellent Knowledge of product development | Excellent Knowledge of product benefit | Excellent Knowledge of delivery process | Knowledge of product features | |
| N | Valid | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | |
| | Missing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Mean | | 4.06 | 4.04 | 3.82 | 3.98 | |
| Statistics Marketing skills | | | | | | |
| | | Have a real time information | Has a lot information on industry trends | Well informed about important events in our industry | | |
| N | Valid | 105 | 105 | 105 | | |
| | Missing | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Mean | | 3.68 | 3.69 | 3.80 | | |
| Statistics Interpersonal skills | | | | | | |
| | | Excellent ability to express oneself | Excellent ability in general speaking | Excellent awareness and understanding non verbal communication with others | Excellent controlling and regulating emotion | Excellent ability to exercise influence over others |
| N | Valid | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 |
| | Missing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mean | | 4.07 | 3.97 | 4.08 | 3.80 | 3.75 |

| Statistics Salesmanship skills | | | | | | | |
|--|---------|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | Excellent ability of building relationship with customers | Excellent ability in sales presentation | Excellent ability to service accounts | | | |
| N | Valid | 105 | 105 | 105 | | | |
| | Missing | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| Mean | | 4.39 | 4.07 | 4.15 | | | |
| Statistics Sales person performance | | | | | | | |
| | | Excellent in generating high level of sales | Very effective in exceeding sales targets | | | | |
| N | Valid | 105 | 105 | | | | |
| | Missing | 0 | 0 | | | | |
| Mean | | 3.90 | 3.87 | | | | |
| Statistics Organizational Commitments | | | | | | | |
| | | Puts a great deal of effort | Accept any type of assignment | Has values similar to company | Proud to be associated with organization | Delighted employed by the company | Care about the wealth of the company |
| N | Valid | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 |
| | Missing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mean | | 4.16 | 4.04 | 4.12 | 4.37 | 4.27 | 4.27 |

Statistics Main variable Means

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|---------|---------|--------|----------------|
| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Technical skills | 105 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.9738 | .92243 |
| Marketing skills | 105 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.7206 | 1.03993 |
| Interpersonal skills | 105 | 1.20 | 5.00 | 3.9333 | .84429 |
| Salesmanship skills | 105 | 1.33 | 5.00 | 4.2032 | .80662 |
| Organizational Commitments | 105 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.2048 | .73353 |
| Sales person performance | 105 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.8810 | 1.06636 |
| Valid N (list wise) | 105 | | | | |

Appendix 1E: Independent Samples T- Test

| Group Statistics | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| | Sex of sales person | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Sales person performance | Male | 62 | 3.8952 | 1.04072 | .13217 |
| | Female | 43 | 3.8605 | 1.11444 | .16995 |

| Independent Samples Test | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|------|------------------------------|--------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|--------|--|
| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | |
| | | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper | |
| Sales person performance | Equal variances assumed | .621 | .433 | .163 | 103 | .871 | .03470 | .21262 | -.38699 | .45639 | |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | .161 | 86.406 | .872 | .03470 | .21530 | -.39327 | .46266 | |
| Group Statistics | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Age of sales person | | | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | | | |
| Sales person performance | | 25 -35 years | | | 59 | 3.9492 | .98127 | .12775 | | | |
| | | 35 - 45 Years | | | 46 | 3.7935 | 1.17178 | .17277 | | | |
| Independent Samples Test | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | |
| | | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper | |
| Sales person performance | Equal variances assumed | 3.274 | .073 | .741 | 103 | .461 | .15567 | .21020 | -.26122 | .57256 | |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | .725 | 87.391 | .471 | .15567 | .21487 | -.27138 | .58273 | |

Appendix 1F:ANOVA

| Sales person performance | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------|
| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | | Minimum | Maximum |
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | | |
| < 5 years | 21 | 3.9524 | .92066 | .20090 | 3.5333 | 4.3715 | 2.00 | 5.00 |
| 5 - 10 years | 32 | 3.8125 | 1.14828 | .20299 | 3.3985 | 4.2265 | 1.00 | 5.00 |
| 10 - 20 years | 39 | 4.1538 | .88224 | .14127 | 3.8679 | 4.4398 | 2.00 | 5.00 |
| >20 years | 13 | 3.1154 | 1.29347 | .35875 | 2.3337 | 3.8970 | 1.00 | 5.00 |
| Total | 105 | 3.8810 | 1.06636 | .10407 | 3.6746 | 4.0873 | 1.00 | 5.00 |
| ANOVA | | | | | | | | |
| Sales person performance | | | | | | | | |
| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | | |
| Between Groups | | 10.781 | 3 | 3.594 | 3.377 | .021 | | |
| Within Groups | | 107.481 | 101 | 1.064 | | | | |
| Total | | 118.262 | 104 | | | | | |
| Post Hoc Tests Multiple Comparisons | | | | | | | | |
| Dependent Variable: Sales person performance | | | | | | | | |
| | (I) Experience of sales person | (J) Experience of sales person | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval | | |
| | | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | |
| Tukey HSD | <5 year | Between 5 to 10 year | .13988 | .28971 | .963 | -.6169 | .8967 | |
| | | Between 10 to 20 year | -.20147 | .27922 | .888 | -.9309 | .5279 | |
| | | Above 20 years | .83700 | .36405 | .105 | -.1140 | 1.7880 | |
| | 5 - 10 year | Less than 5 year | -.13988 | .28971 | .963 | -.8967 | .6169 | |
| | | Between 10 to 20 year | -.34135 | .24605 | .510 | -.9841 | .3014 | |
| | | Above 20 years | .69712 | .33929 | .175 | -.1892 | 1.5834 | |
| | 10 - 20 year | Less than 5 year | .20147 | .27922 | .888 | -.5279 | .9309 | |
| | | Between 5 to 10 year | .34135 | .24605 | .510 | -.3014 | .9841 | |
| | | Above 20 years | 1.03846* | .33037 | .012 | .1754 | 1.9015 | |
| | >20 years | Less than 5 year | -.83700 | .36405 | .105 | -1.7880 | .1140 | |
| | | Between 5 to 10 year | -.69712 | .33929 | .175 | -1.5834 | .1892 | |
| | | Between 10 to 20 year | -1.03846* | .33037 | .012 | -1.9015 | -.1754 | |
| Games-Howell | <5 years | Between 5 to 10 year | .13988 | .28560 | .961 | -.6197 | .8995 | |
| | | Between 10 to 20 year | -.20147 | .24560 | .845 | -.8601 | .4572 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|----------|--------|------|---------|--------|
| | | Above 20 years | .83700 | .41117 | .209 | -.3161 | 1.9901 |
| | 5 - 10 years | Less than 5 year | -.13988 | .28560 | .961 | -.8995 | .6197 |
| | | Between 10 to 20 year | -.34135 | .24731 | .517 | -.9957 | .3130 |
| | | Above 20 years | .69712 | .41219 | .354 | -.4560 | 1.8502 |
| | 10 - 20 years | Less than 5 year | .20147 | .24560 | .845 | -.4572 | .8601 |
| | | Between 5 to 10 year | .34135 | .24731 | .517 | -.3130 | .9957 |
| | | Above 20 years | 1.03846 | .38556 | .069 | -.0655 | 2.1424 |
| | > 20 years | Less than 5 year | -.83700 | .41117 | .209 | -1.9901 | .3161 |
| | | Between 5 to 10 year | -.69712 | .41219 | .354 | -1.8502 | .4560 |
| | | Between 10 to 20 year | -1.03846 | .38556 | .069 | -2.1424 | .0655 |

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix 1G: Hierarchical Regression Analysis

| Variables Entered/Removed ^a | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-----|-----|---------------|
| Model | Variables Entered | | | | Variables Removed | Method | | | |
| 1 | Salesmanship skills, Marketing skills, Interpersonal skills, Technical skills ^b | | | | | . Enter | | | |
| 2 | Organizational Commitments ^b | | | | | . Enter | | | |
| 3 | Technical skills X Organizational Commitments, Marketing skills X Organizational Commitments, Salesmanship skills X Organizational Commitments, Interpersonal skills X Organizational Commitments | | | | | . Enter | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Sales person performance | | | | | | | | | |
| b. All requested variables entered. | | | | | | | | | |
| Model Summary ^c | | | | | | | | | |
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .811 ^a | .657 | .644 | .74240 | .657 | 48.847 | 4 | 100 | .000 |
| 2 | .830 ^b | .690 | .674 | .70967 | .033 | 10.626 | 1 | 99 | .002 |
| 3 | .894 ^c | .799 | .780 | .58272 | .109 | 13.200 | 4 | 95 | .000 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Salesmanship skills, Marketing skills, Interpersonal skills, Technical skills | | | | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Salesmanship skills, Marketing skills, Interpersonal skills, Technical skills, Organizational Commitments | | | | | | | | | |
| c. Predictors: (Constant), Salesmanship skills, Marketing skills, Interpersonal skills, Technical skills, Organizational Commitments, Technical skills X Organizational Commitments, Marketing skills X Organizational Commitments, Salesmanship skills X Organizational Commitments, Interpersonal skills X Organizational Commitments | | | | | | | | | |

| ANOVA a | | | | | | |
|---|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 67.219 | 4 | 16.805 | 32.922 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 51.043 | 100 | .510 | | |
| | Total | 118.262 | 104 | | | |
| 2 | Regression | 73.168 | 5 | 14.634 | 32.127 | .000 ^c |
| | Residual | 45.094 | 99 | .455 | | |
| | Total | 118.262 | 104 | | | |
| 3 | Regression | 85.959 | 9 | 9.551 | 29.795 | |
| | Residual | 32.303 | 95 | .340 | | .000 ^d |
| | Total | 118.262 | 104 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Sales person performance | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Salesmanship skills, Marketing skills, Interpersonal skills, Technical skills | | | | | | |
| c. Predictors: (Constant), Salesmanship skills, Marketing skills, Interpersonal skills, Technical skills, Organizational Commitments | | | | | | |
| c. Predictors: (Constant), Salesmanship skills, Marketing skills, Interpersonal skills, Technical skills, Organizational Commitments, Technical skills X Organizational Commitments, Marketing skills X Organizational Commitments, Salesmanship skills X Organizational Commitments, Interpersonal skills X Organizational Commitments | | | | | | |

| Coefficients^a | | | | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.647 | .324 | | 5.087 | .000 |
| | Technical skills | 1.333 | .184 | 1.289 | 7.621 | .000 |
| | Marketing skills | -.029 | .074 | -.027 | -.0390 | .697 |
| | Interpersonal skills | -.793 | .195 | -.655 | -4.073 | .000 |
| | Salesmanship skills | .144 | .099 | .136 | 1.458 | .148 |
| 2 | (Constant) | 1.485 | .354 | 4.198 | .000 | |
| | Technical skills | 1.322 | .184 | 1.278 | 7.200 | .000 |
| | Marketing skills | -.043 | .075 | -.039 | -.568 | .571 |
| | Interpersonal skills | -.804 | .195 | -.664 | -4.128 | .000 |
| | Salesmanship skills | .129 | .100 | .122 | 1.295 | .198 |
| | Organizational Commitments | .090 | .079 | .073 | 1.130 | .261 |
| 3 | (Constant) | 1.459 | .330 | | 4.422 | .000 |
| | Technical skills | .857 | .212 | .829 | 4.048 | .000 |
| | Marketing skills | .041 | .076 | .038 | .539 | .591 |
| | Interpersonal skills | -.309 | .221 | -.255 | -1.398 | .165 |
| | Salesmanship skills | .406 | .119 | .384 | 3.421 | .001 |
| | Organizational Commitment | -.347 | .133 | -.281 | -2.604 | .010 |
| | Technical skills X Organizational Commitment | -2.323 | .614 | -.907 | -3.785 | .000 |
| | Interpersonal skills X Organizational Commitment | 2.919 | .661 | .820 | 4.416 | .000 |
| | Marketing skills X Organizational Commitment | .213 | .207 | .073 | 1.031 | .305 |
| Salesmanship skills X Organizational Commitment | .866 | .283 | .366 | 3.058 | .003 | |

a. Dependent Variable: Sales person performance

APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire Items

Assessing the effect of sales skills on salesperson performance:
A case study at Ethio telecom in North West region
Bahir Dar University College of business and economics Department of
Marketing management
Master of Marketing management
A Questioner to be filled by North West Region Sales Supervisors

This questionnaire is intended to collect data on sales skill effect on personal selling performance. The objective of this research is to analyze the effect of Sales Skills on Personal Selling Performance (A Case of Ethio Telecom North West Region Sales Personnel) which is prepared in partial fulfillment of master's Degree in Marketing Management. Your active participation is very essential for the success of this study! Your responses will be kept confidential. Thank you very much for your cooperation in advance!

General Guides

- ✚ There is no need of writing your name or the name of the sales person you are supervising and going to rate.
- ✚ In all cases where answer options are available please put “X” in the appropriate box or bracket parallel to the questions.
- ✚ Please think of your Sales Persons that you are supervising currently start with the following demographic characteristic for each and please try to cover all the sales persons step by step. (Remember one questioner is only to rate a single Sales person in your team)

Part 1: Demographic data of sales person (use X to specify)

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Sex: Male | <input type="checkbox"/> | Female | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Age: <25 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> | 26 to 35 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 36-45 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> | above 45 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Education: High school completed | <input type="checkbox"/> | Diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bachelor degree | <input type="checkbox"/> | Master degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Experience: Less than 5 year 5 to 10 year
 11 to 20 year Above 20 years

Part II: Scale Questions Please Score the skill and performance *of your subordinate sales person* on each statement

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | If you strongly disagree |
| 2 | If you disagree |
| 3 | If you are natural |
| 4 | If you agree |
| 5 | Strongly agree |

| R No | Statement | Score(1-5points) | | | | |
|----------|---|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| A | Technical skill | | | | | |
| 1 | He/she has excellent knowledge about product development | | | | | |
| 2 | He/she has excellent knowledge of product benefit | | | | | |
| 3 | He/she has excellent knowledge of delivery process | | | | | |
| 4 | He/she has excellent knowledge of product feature | | | | | |
| B | Marketing skills | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5 | He/she has always real time information | | | | | |
| 6 | He/she have a lot of information industry latest trends | | | | | |
| 7 | He/she is well informed about important events in our industry | | | | | |
| C | Interpersonal skills | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8 | He/she has excellent ability to express oneself | | | | | |
| 9 | He/she has excellent ability in general speaking | | | | | |
| 10 | He/she has excellent awareness and understanding non-verbal communication with others | | | | | |
| 11 | He/she has excellent controlling and regulating emotion. | | | | | |
| 12 | He/she has excellent ability to exercise influence over others | | | | | |

| R No | Statement | Score(1-5points) | | | | |
|-------------|---|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| D | Salesmanship skills | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13 | He/she has excellent ability of building relationship with customers. | | | | | |
| 14 | He/she has excellent ability in sales presentation. | | | | | |
| 15 | He/she has excellent ability to service accounts. | | | | | |
| E | Sales person performance | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16 | He/she is excellent in generating high level of sales | | | | | |
| 17 | He/she is very effective in exceeding sales targets. | | | | | |
| F | Organizational commitments | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 18 | He/she puts a great deal effort | | | | | |
| 19 | He/she accept any type of assignment. | | | | | |
| 20 | He/she has values similar to company. | | | | | |
| 21 | He/she is proud to be associated with organization. | | | | | |
| 22 | He/she is delighted employed by the company. | | | | | |
| 23 | He/she care about the wealth of the company. | | | | | |