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INFLUENCE OF SUPERVISORY FEEDBACK ON GOAL ORIENTATION OF EMPLOYEES – A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with individual goal orientation of employees within the personal selling domain. Individual goal orientation is defined as “a mental framework for how individuals interpret and respond to achievement situations” (Brett & VandeWalle, 1999). In the current study, we have conceptualized goal orientation in the three-dimensional manner, focusing on learning orientation, performance-prove orientation and performance-avoid orientation. Many studies have indicated that these orientations of salespeople had influence on their performance (Silver, Dwyer, and Alford 2006; McFarland and Kidwell 2006; Payne, Youngcourt, and Beaulien, 2007). These studies revealed that learning orientation and performance-prove orientation had a positive influence on the performance of salespeople while performance-avoid orientation had a negative influence. Ultimately, these orientations will have an impact on the overall performance of organization. Therefore, how to enhance learning orientation and performance-prove orientation of salespeople, and how to lower performance-avoid orientation of salespeople will be beneficial for the organization. We focus on supervisory feedback to see whether these objectives can be achieved. Supervisors are likely to be influential not only because of the position they occupy, but also salespeople are likely to have less

personal contact with their peers than other employees and are thus more likely to rely on supervisors for direction and guidance. We tried to analyze how different types of supervisory feedback viz. positive output feedback, negative output feedback, positive behavioural feedback, and negative behavioural feedback influence learning orientation, performance-prove orientation, and performance-avoid orientation of salespeople. The conceptual analysis has shown that supervisors can influence the three dimensions of goal orientation of salespeople. The research framework provides an insight to sales managers for motivating the salespeople to learn and perform at a strategic level.

KEYWORDS: *learning orientation, Negative output feedback, Negative behavioural feedback, Positive output feedback, Positive behavioural feedback, Performance-prove orientation, and Performance-avoid orientation.*