

# J. Basic. Appl. Sci. Res., 2(12)12633-12640, 2012 © 2012, TextRoad Publication

ISSN 2090-4304

Journal of Basic and Applied

Scientific Research

www.textroad.com

# Creative Performance of Pharmaceutical Salesforce: Role of Intrinsic Motivation and Learning Goal Orientation

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of pharmaceutical salesforce intrinsic motivation and learning goal orientation in fostering their creative performance for both sales managers and frontline sales persons. For this purpose, data was collected from the managerial and non-managerial sales persons working in national and multinational pharmaceutical companied operating in Lahore region of Pakistan. Three hundred and sixty five structured survey questionnaires were successfully administered to pharmaceutical salesforce. Regression analyses were employed separately on managerial and non-managerial sales persons to test the study hypotheses. Contrary to expectation of the researchers, neither learning goal orientation nor intrinsic motivation contributed significant variance in creative performance of the managerial salesforce whereas interestingly both had their positive role in nurturing creative ideation and its innovative execution for frontline sales persons. Implications of the study findings for future research and salesforce management were presented, too.

**KEYWORDS**: Creative Performance, Learning Goal Orientation, Intrinsic Motivation, Pharmaceutical Sales person, Pakistan

## INTRODUCTION

Pakistan has a vibrant and growing (PPMA, 2011) pharmaceutical industry. Many different companies sell a diverse range of drugs and pharmaceutical products. Pharmaceutical industry was quite novice to Pakistan and at independence in 1947, there was no pharmaceutical companies locally and multinational to be given the status of 'industry'. Time and by now, Pakistan saw to the situation and developed the industry to a number of 400 pharmaceutical industrial units and a healthy number of about 25 multinationals were operational. As far the need of finished medicine, Pharmaceutical Industry is not yet quite self-sufficient, though it satisfies its needs to around 70%. Proportion-wise, the multinational and national share of the market share is quite evenly distributed and critically speaking, this is not still up to international standards.

Innovative tricks can be a good supplement to all firms to improve the creative performance of their employees [1]. Numerous innovative projects launched with just an unclear idea of what the finish product will be fond of the more inventive the project, the more formless the preparatory point tends to exist. Afterward organize in the prospect must obtain the original performance critically [2]. Possibly, to create creative organization of tomorrow that who will put together and move away from the promise of the models of the recent organizations for the third millennium such as the learning organization [3], the knowledge creating company [4] or the group organization [5]. Moreover, significant facts suggest that employee innovativeness put significant contribution to organizational innovation, effectiveness and survival [6]. Consequently, researchers are very interested to find the social conditions that impact employee creativity [7]. One of these conditions is back-up for creativity, or the degree to which individuals provide support for, and encouragement of people employed' creative performance [8].

Learning-oriented individuals take a dynamic approach to their abilities, believing that they can improve over time with effort and experience [9]. They tend to enjoy, and therefore seek, difficult and challenging tasks, situations that enable them to learn, and that promote their personal growth [10]. They also use new learning strategies and, in the face of failure, reveal persistence [11]. Therefore, whereas a learning orientation can be seen as a matter of improving ability, a performance orientation can be seen as an issue about demonstrating ability [12]. As regards intrinsic motivation like the desire to overcome exceptional challenges was found to have a strong association with the creative process [13, 14]. Numerous researchers have concluded that creative thinking is improved when people

possess sky-scraping level of intrinsic motivation such as self-sufficiency in their day-to-day operations [8, 15, 16]. Intrinsic motivation has been cited as one of the most major personal traits for the development of creativity [17].

Prior researchers investigated many antecedents of workplace creativity such as organizational encouragement for creativity, customer portfolio heterogeneity, autonomy, resource availability, pressures learning goal orientation and intrinsic rewards [8, 15, 18, 19] in other industries. There was dearth of empirical results available in pharmaceutical salesforce particularly in Pakistan. So, this empirical investigation aimed at exploring the role of intrinsic motivation and learning goal orientation in fostering creative performance in both sales managers and frontline sales persons.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The process to which, an employee seeks to develop a novel idea about tangible or intangible product, practices and procedure which are potentially useful for organization is known as employee creativity [20, 21]. A novel idea refers to a signification or substantial changes in the current material or developing throughout the new materials for product or service [22]. Moreover the basic understanding, the ideas are valuable and useful only when they add value in an organization, directly or indirectly for short run or long run [20]. An innovative organization consider those ideas at the organizational level however employee creativity is related to develop the ideas at personal or individual level [22]. Thus, innovation process is actually started from creativity [20, 23].

Not surprisingly, considerable researches have been made on employee creativity antecedents. Particularly role of personality and cognitive style is considered although numerous studies have directed to the personal derivers of employee creativity. Furthermore, role of contextual factors is also considered another important area which is defined as "dimensions of the work environment that potentially influence an employee's creativity but that are not part of the individual" [20]. Employee job's characteristics [21], employee relationships with supervisors [24] and employee relationships with co-workers [8] are numerous contextual factors that have impact on creativity. To concentrate on contextual factors and creativity, latter approach is followed. With reference to managerial behavior who determined work context in a larger extent, an important area for managerial intervention is constituted with intension to affect the employee creativity.

Generally motivation is defined as an internal psychological state that stimulates a person to engage in a particular behavior and is central to the interpret individuals' conscious choices among different alternatives [25, 26]. For more than a century, psychologists have been studying the role of motivation as the energizer of human behavior and have found that it is a critical determinant of job performance [26, 27, 28]. Work behaviors may be viewed as either intrinsically or extrinsically motivated [29, 30]. Intrinsic motivation is a process to which people drive their selves to get internal satisfaction and pleasure whereas extrinsic motivation refers to those means which is out of its own sake [31, 32].

Numerous studies conducted in sales settings have demonstrated that motivation is critical for organizational success due to its influence on salesperson's attitudes, behavioral intentions, and performance [32]. The above discussion indicates that employee motivation is a key component of the performance equation and thus constitutes a strategic asset for competing [28]. Intrinsic motivation is the process to which an individual fit into a place where he performs for the sake of his own interest or enjoyment or even both irrespective to another rewards. Intrinsic component of the motivation is refers to the internal and subjective ability of individuals to deliver on job-related tasks [33]. Intrinsic motivation refers to activities that people find rewarding on their own [34].

The study of [35] stated that an individual can change his/her competences through learning goal concept. [9] one of the crucial factors in Sales person's performance can be improved by enhancing their adaptation behavior which can effectively improve, when they desire to improve their competence. The study results of [36] showed that goals accompanied by self-efficacy improved adaptive behavior and employee performance. Creating positive psychological climate for learning within the organization and discouraging the negative psychological climate to avoid failure is the fundamental strategy to create learning goal orientation among the employees [37]. Sales persons have the ability to boost their learning goal orientation by performing their job better meanwhile they give sales presentation to their customer and particularly with regard to learning goal orientation, they may be able to evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness of changing adaptive selling practice and strategy [9].

With regards to creativity, when an individual seeks to generate novel ideas with respect to organization's product, its procedures etc. which are effective and realistic for an organization is referred as creativity [6, 38]. Prior studies suggest that when an individual having self-sufficiency in their day to day functions and hold high level of intrinsic motivations, their potential to novel thinking is improved [8, 15, 16]. To enhance creativity, one of the most important and the prominent quality which is related to the person is intrinsic motivation [17]. Prior studies show that intrinsic motivation and creativity has been effectively tested [7, 39, 40]. Studies suggest that a motivational determinant of creativity has a consistent and trait like nature [40]. Motivational traits have well-built tendency to

lead creativity. To be creative, an individual must take deep interest to identify certain problems related to the task which would lead them to find effective ways to sort out the problems. As a result, motivation directs to take over the attention of employees which they dedicate to the heuristic problem of creative tasks [22]. As a result, those individuals who enjoy their works while performing job are tend to increase their creativity [21].

Intrinsic motivation has been broadly well thought-out in creativity literature, but it is tested empirically which shows the different results in different settings [21]. Individuals who have high intrinsic motivation to work are intended to lead the creativity at workplace [17]. Those individuals who are intrinsically motivated are likely to be more cognitively flexible, peruse complexity and novelty, and interested in challenging tasks and mastery experience [41]. Intrinsic motivation is the state to which an individual enjoys his work activity and is likely to be more engaged in performing task by personalizing it [22]. As a result, "intrinsically motivated employees will be more excited about their work and this increases their creativity" [21]. For the sake of routine task activities, creative ideas may enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of it, to assist the range of customer base, improve customer satisfaction and in that way contributing to overall sales performance. Our basic intention to study the impact of intrinsic motivation of sales force is the basic characteristic to produce the practical creative ideas which ultimately effect to push sales. Prior research literature do support to it, which includes numerous laboratory studies [21, 42, 43, 44].

Individuals who have intrinsic motivation are found to have a greater disposition for creativity, for they are more likely to be curious, cognitively flexible, persistent, and take risks [45], thus, there is a greater chance that they will exert effort in exploring the problem and finding creative solutions [18, 22, 46]. Hence,

**Hypothesis 1**: Intrinsic motivation will have positive significant impact on creative performance of managerial and non-managerial pharmaceutical salesforce.

Researchers [47] proposed that there are two types of goals that people adhere to in achievement situations: performance goals and learning goals. Individuals with performance goals give much more importance to maintaining positive judgments of their abilities, and avoiding negative judgments [47]. However, those who are driven by learning goals focus on improving their abilities and promote mastery oriented response pattern.

Later on, these two types of goals were developed into two factors for goal orientation:(a) When an individual focuses upon his development capabilities through tough and challenging situations is referred as learning goal orientation; whereas (b) When abilities of an individual are reinforced in order to peruse their constructive judgments and neglecting their unconstructive feedback is often known as performance goal orientation [48].

However, more current research has found that it was better to define goal orientation into three distinct dimensions: (1) Learning goal orientation, (2) Proving goal orientation, and (3) Avoiding goal orientation [48]. Referring to learning goal orientation, [48] is one of the pertinent researchers who developed Dweck's research and applied goal orientation into the workplace. Furthermore, "individuals with a learning goal orientation would prefer a task that develops their abilities by gaining new skills and mastering new situations" [49]. As a consequence, these individuals view effort as an important factor for success and feedback as an agent to diagnose information [48]. People with learning goal orientation then would seek and accept challenging assignments, and are very much likely to engage in challenging goals [50].

**Hypothesis 2**: Learning goal orientation will have significant positive impact in fostering creative performance in both subsamples of managerial and non-managerial pharmaceutical salesforce.

# RESEARCH METHODS

Data was collected in three months from July, 2011 to September, 2011. The data was collected from respondents who belonged to pharmaceutical industry based in Lahore, Pakistan. We used census sampling method. The criterion of company selection was very simple; For instance, the company should be national or multinational but working in pharmaceutical industry based at Lahore, Pakistan only. The study targets particularly the managerial or non-managerial (front line) sales staff. By using census sampling method, a total of 700questionnaires were distributed in this manner. An achievable sample of 300 questionnaire responses was targeted. However a total of 365 questionnaires from pharmaceutical companies were received.

Creative performance was assessed on 7-items scale presented by [51] and the respondents were asked to give their level of agreement on a 5-point Likert response format (i.e. strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree) to statements such as "I make sales presentations in innovative ways" etc.Intrinsic motivation of sales force, 6-items scale, was measured by the scale of [52]. The respondents were asked to give their level of agreement on a 5-point Likert response format (i.e. strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree) to statements such as "I don't need a reason to sell; I sell because I want to" etc.Learning goal orientation was assessed

on 9- item scale based on [53] measures and The respondents were asked to give their level of agreement on a 5-point Likert response format (i.e. strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree) to statements such as "Making a tough sale is very satisfying" etc,

#### ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATIONS

Table # 1 revealed that out of the 317 valid respondents, 302 were male and 15 were female. This represents 82.7% male and 4.1% female respondents respectively. The age group distribution of the respondents had the higher frequency of 206 (56.4%) respondents below the age of 30 and just 84 (23%) respondents above the age of 30 years, 75 (20.5%) of the respondents did not mention their age. The marriage group distribution of the respondents had the higher frequency of unmarried 187 (51.2%) respondents and 127(34.8%) were the respondents who did not yet married. 51(14%) of the respondents did not mentioned their marital status. The education distribution of the respondents had the higher frequency of graduates 196 (53.7%) respondents whereas 95 (26%) respondents had the master's degree however 74(20.3%) respondents didn't mentioned their education. Out of the 365 respondents, 80(21.9%) respondents had the managerial positions and the higher frequency of the respondent's belonged non-managerial position 222(60.8) however 63(17.3%) respondent didn't mention their position. Furthermore, 300(82.2%) respondents revealed that they are on the company payrolls and only 15(4.1%) respondents belonged to distributor's payroll. However out of the 365 respondents, 50(13.7%) of the respondents didn't mentioned their payroll information.

The company tenure distribution of the respondents had the higher frequency of 233 (63.8%) respondents below 5 years stay with same company and just 72(19.7%) respondents stay above 5 years with the same company, 60 (16.4%) of the respondents did not mention their company tenure. Moreover to this, 176(48.2%) of the respondents had the higher frequency of less than 5 years of total selling experience and 125(34.2%) of the respondents had above 5 years total selling experience. and 64 (17.5%) the respondents didn't mention their total selling experience.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents** 

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents					
Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)			
Age					
Less than 30 years	206	56.4			
More than 30 years	84	23			
Gender					
Male	302	87.2			
Female	15	4.1			
Marital Status					
Unmarried	187	51.2			
Married	127	34.8			
Education					
Graduation	196	53.7			
Masters	74	20.3			
Position					
Managerial Salesforce	80	21.9			
Non-Managerial Salesforce	222	60.8			
Tenure					
Less than 30 years	233	63.8			
More than 30 years	72	19.7			

Table # 2 reflected the means, standard deviations and inter-item correlations of independent variables and dependent variable for managerial and non-managerial salesforce separately. Correlation statistics revealed that all variables were correlated with each other except intrinsic motivation and creative performance for managerial salesforce. The correlation between the predictors was less than 0.8 meaning that multi-collinearly was not a threat to the regression analysis

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics** 

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics								
	Mean	Std.	Creative	Learning Goal	Intrinsic			
		Deviation	Performance	Orientation	Motivation			
MANAGERIAL SALESFORCE								
Creative Performance	3.86	0.52	1.00					
Learning Goal Orientation	3.87	0.38	0.25***	1.00				
Intrinsic Motivation	3.80	0.49	$0.11^{\text{ N/S}}$	0.36*	1.00			
NON-MANAGERIAL SALESFORCE								
Creative Performance	3.89	0.43	1.00					
Learning Goal Orientation	3.85	0.41	0.18**	1.000				
Intrinsic Motivation	3.74	0.46	0.33*	.29*	1.000			

<sup>\*</sup> Significant at 0.001 Level, \*\* Significant at 0.01 Level, \*\*\* Significant at 0.05 Level, N/S = not significant

To further confirm the study hypotheses, regression analyses (Table # 03) were undertaken for managerial and non-managerial salesforce separately. For managerial salesforce, when creative performance regressed on learning goal orientation, it explained insignificant impact on dependent variable. For non-managerial salesforce, when dependent variable regressed on learning goal orientation, it explained 4% variability with significant F-statistics (F= 7.28, p=0.01). The results also revealed that learning goal orientation had positive and significant impact on creative performance (b=0.30, t=2.70, p=0.01).

**Table 3: Regression Analyses for Learning Goal Orientation** 

		Creative Performance			
		R <sup>2</sup> Change	В	t-statistic	
MANAGERIAL SALESFORCE					
Learning Goal Orientation		0.034 <sup>N/S</sup>	0.22	1.89 <sup>N/S</sup>	
Learning Goal Orientation F-statistics = 3.59 N/S					
NON-MANAGERIAL SALESFORCE					
Learning Goal Orientation		0.039**	0.30	2.70**	
F-statistics = 7.28**					

<sup>\*\*</sup> Significant at 0.01 Level, N/S = not significant

Table # 04 indicated the regression analyses for the impact of intrinsic motivation on creative performance for managerial and non-managerial salesforce. When creative performance regressed on intrinsic motivation for managerial salesforce, itshowed insignificant impact on dependent variable. On the other side, when dependent variable regressed on intrinsic motivation, it explained 14% variability in the dependent variable. The results also showed that intrinsic motivation had positive and significant impact (b=0.43, t=5.46, p=0.001) on the dependent variable. Thus, the second hypothesis of this study was partially supported.

**Table 4: Regression Analyses for Intrinsic Motivation** 

		Creative Performance			
	$R^2$ Change	В	t-statistic		
MANAGERIAL SALESFORCE					
Intrinsic Motivation F-statistics = 0.24 N/S	$0.019^{N/S}$	0.13	1.18 <sup>N/S</sup>		
NON-MANAGERIAL SALESFORCE					
Intrinsic Motivation F-statistics = 29.85*	0.14*	0.43	5.46*		

<sup>\*</sup> Significant at 0.001 Level, N/S = not significant

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of pharmaceutical salesforce intrinsic motivation and learning goal orientation in fostering their creative performance for both sales managers and frontline sales persons. Contrary to expectation of the researchers, neither learning goal orientation nor intrinsic motivation contributed significant variance in creative performance of the managerial salesforce whereas interestingly both had their positive role in nurturing creative ideation and its innovative execution for frontline sales persons. Regarding this study, it provides a better understanding of the variance in creative performance of individual salesperson by introducing a strong theoretical base for the literature related to creative performance and hence can help the further research in future. According to some researchers [54, 55] for many years due to the lack of this very theoretical base which determines the affectivity of sales behavior, sales literature has been the target of criticism.

Self report bias, structured survey questionnaire, quantitative analytical approach, multi-company samples, direct impact of limited predictors, single industrial and cultural context were the limitations of the study. So for future researchers, it is urged that triangulation of data collection methods, approaches and analytical techniques to be employed in studying direct, moderating and mediating mechanisms of many other theoretical and understudied variables on creative performance of sales force across diversified industrial and cross cultural settings. Leadership in selling organizations of pharmaceutical industry is urged to take necessary initiatives to boosting optimism culture at each work group level and select sales force and/or develop their attitudinal optimism to fostering the creative performance of their frontline sales persons which may lead to their improved sales performance, job satisfaction and engagement resulting into improved organizational performance.

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