

A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE FACTORS EFFECT ON SALES PERFORMANCE

IN BEVERAGES SECTOR: PAKISTAN

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Abstract: This research is concentrated on examining impacts of various individual, industry and organizational level factors on sales performance. The current research intends to add the variables (factors) in the research model through extensive literature review and tests the model in soft drink industry of Pakistan. This study is set in Pakistan context so it will give you detail insight to Pakistani Market and especially to sales force performance perspective. The study applies few analyses for better understanding and interpretation of results of data gathered through questionnaire from sample size of 280. These analyses include reliability test, Correlation Analysis, Regression Analysis to check the relationship between independent variable (Regulatory Knowledge and Emotional Intelligence) and dependent variable (Sales Performance). In this study we conclude that Regulatory knowledge and Emotional knowledge have significant and positive relationship with Sales Performance. Future research to tests how regulatory knowledge and emotional intelligence can impact Sales performance in Tobacco industry. Researcher can also assess this relationship into other industries as well that how it concludes in other sectors such as auto mobile, FMCG's, pharmaceuticals etc.

Key Words: Sales Performance, Regulatory Knowledge, Emotional Intelligence, Correlation, Regression.

I. INTRODUCTION

This research proposal document presents the overall research idea and relevant research background, underlying theoretical concepts in literature and methodology proposed to conduct the research. Research is concentrated on examining impacts on sales performance through various individual, industry and organizational level factors. This study will adapt the conceptual model of Groza and Groza, (2018), which was applied on insurance sector in United States. However, the current research intends to further add the variables (factors) in the research model through extensive literature review and tests the model in soft drink industry of Pakistan. Soft drink industry is largely dealing in Business-to-Consumer (hereafter, B2C) context whereas, Groza and Groza, (2018) studied the sales performance model in Business-to-Business (hereafter, B2B) setting. This study addresses the future research recommendation by various researchers (e.g. Groza and Groza, 2018; O'Boyle Jr, Humprey, Pollack, Hawver & Story, 2011; Carmeli & Josman, 2006 and Kirca, Jayachandran & Bearden, 2005) and adds further factors in the theoretical model that are related to individuals working in the organization and market orientation along with organizational factors that could affect sales person performance.

1.1 Research Background

The role of salespeople is highly important in modern day competitive world. Market is extremely competitive and that leads to reduction in customer loyalty however, at the same time are becoming more demanding. This increase in complexity of demands by the customers has increased the importance of the role of salespeople for customer relationship development (Kirca, Jayachandran & Bearden, 2005). The role of salesperson is imperative for understanding customer needs and hence, delivering high value to the customers that enhances sales performance of an entity (Grewal et al., 2015). Hence, determining the sales person performance is not something new for the researchers and carries significant importance. Sales persons for business-to-business (hereafter, B2B) customers are not only sellers, but problem solvers. Their role of problem solving has changed over years as customers are now more equipped with information and hence, element if information asymmetry is eliminated (Paparoidamis & Guenzi, 2009). B2B customers recognizes and assess their needs before connecting seller firm and hence, are more knowledgeable of their needs and are specific for their requirements. Therefore, true potential of salesperson performance is in identifying the unidentified needs that are still needed to be identified by the clients (O'Boyle Jr. et al., 2011).

The above discussion upholds the fact that knowledge of salesperson regarding the business environment is of utmost importance with its possible linkage with sales performance. Therefore, this study signifies the importance of most important factors in B2B setting associated with salesperson i.e. regulatory knowledge and emotional Intelligence. This research study framework suggests that sales person knowledge regarding regulatory environment and emotional intelligence affects the sales performance of organization.

Further, regulation / legislations is one of the top three most worrying issues for the CEOs (Groysberg & Connolly, 2015). Increasing costs and associated considerations related to regulatory framework has is a leading concern for the business across the globe (Zeng, Chi, Dong, & Huang, 2017). Regulatory burden affects every business and almost every sector and hence, also affects the sales related performance of an entity. The moderating effects of regulatory turbulence, which is related to the industry has been tested on sales performance (Cote & Miner, 2006). The knowledge management factors especially for the regulatory knowledge also reduces the negative impacts of industry turbulences on sales performance. According to regulatory costs range from 10% (in services sector) to 29% (in manufacturing sector) as a percentage of payroll expenses. Regulation and political involvement in B2B buying process are the recent issues that are under debate and discussion among experts and academicians (Groysberg & Connolly, 2015).

Studies and intention given to the concept of emotional intelligence or EI is not new as various investigations have been conducted by researchers and practitioners of different disciplines e.g. organizational behavior (Carmeli & Josman, 2006), organizational management (Humprey et al., 2008). In these researches, it has been indicated that emotional intelligence is significantly related to trust, citizenship, work life balance, leadership characteristics and workplace performance (Groza and Groza, 2018).

For instance, various studies have been conducted that have made conclusion on a direct association among work performance and emotional intelligence (e.g. Côté and Miners, 2006; Jennings & Palmer, 2007; O'Boyle Jr. et al., 2011). In a meta-analysis conducted, it has been established that Emotional intelligence and personnel performance their cognition and psychographics e.g. personality is related. Additionally, Emotional intelligence was found as an interpreter of workplace performance Adamson, Dixon, & Toman, 2012. The relationship between EI and success at workplace should be examined so that it can be improved through practice and continuous learning (Moon and Hur, 2011). The evaluation of EI with reference to soft drinks sector is rarely tested particularly as an antecedent of sales performance.

1.2 Research Questions

This research has following queries/questions

- To what extent salespersons uses sales regulatory knowledge to increase their sales performance?
- Does salesperson use emotional intelligence to increase their sales performance?

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

Aim

Aim of research is to define salespersons knowledge management factors on sales performance in soft drink industry of Pakistan.

Objectives

For supporting research aim following are research objectives:

- 1.To determine the importance of salespersons regulatory knowledge management factors and its potential influence on salesperson performance through primary research.
- 2.To evaluate the impact of Emotional Intelligence on sales performance in soft drink industry of Pakistan.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review has been conducted on the existing work done by the previous researchers published in articles, journals, books and relevant industry resources. The focus of the gathered literature is to get the understanding of the area of study which is the performance of salesperson in sales and other important factors and aspects that are needed to get the know how about this topic. At the beginning of the literature we try to get the understanding of this study, then afterwards in details the relationship between variables that we get after studying various previous papers. This section provides a detailed review of literature. The literature working that laid foundation of the relationships between variables is used to make hypotheses and then conceptual framework for this study that we used to test via different techniques for research.

2.1 Sales Performance

Research discussions are trying to figure out what is necessary to describe a performance of salesperson, factors that have an impact on their performance and controlling and predicting their performance. A person who represents the organization for selling to meet the customers is known as a salesperson (Sabnis, Chatterjee, Grewal & Lilien, 2013). Function of selling is considered as the most important for the organization. This is the main marketing expenditure in marketplace as agreed by the various authors who are doing research on this topic.

According to repeated surveys this thing comes to know that sales talent is very rare. The survey of 2012 about Talent shortage have the review of almost many countries of the Asia region including India. It is a thing to be noted that filling the sales position is most difficult job filling in Asia Pacific. Since the beginning of the surveys in 2006 this position remains at the top. Buyers were holding a bad thinking about salesperson according to Global survey of 2015-16 (Person, Snelders & Schoormans, 2016). A vast number of countries, including Germany, U. K, France and Canada when here the buyers were asked that if they feel proud to call themselves a salesperson they responded negatively (Brown, 2014). When a question rose in front of buyers, they called it a "necessary evil" only few of them feel proud to say them as the business partners. The top ten things commonly said to salespersons is "Pond scum", "Leg humping dogs", "Shark trolling the water", "School graduates who are charming with full of promises about marketing", "Cut-throat", "Irritators", "Leeches", "like a beggar who steal and go", "Bribery trail" and many more. With the raining in expectations about sales expertise, at least third of the buyers, a vast majority of the people have a feeling that it is getting worse.

Many people believe that salespersons have less temperament, necessary skills for selling, and the desire which the need. What we are expecting from them is respect, advice and support, in spite of this sincerity, truth; product related knowledge and also client are also important after quality (Brown, 2014). Buyers want three qualities in salespersons that include trust, market knowledge, and product advice; others are relationship building, pricing negotiations and delivery expediting. ROI and advice about business comes after qualities of the sales force. Although they are a source of communication between clients, but buyers' today's used the internet more than them to get the information.

2.2 Regulatory Knowledge

Researches divide salesperson knowledge into two aspects either procedural which is about guiding behaviors about strategies or declarative that is knowledge of facts. Procedural knowledge means the sales person tries to use their sale processes to meet demands of customers and declarative means to rate and classify the qualities of sale encounters that helps in identifying the needs of prospective customers. The relationship between the performance and knowledge is well written in the literature. Verbeke et al.'s (2011) analyses define knowledge of the sales person as the sub category of variable having highest correlation with performance. The findings of these helps in making new concepts which make role of sales persons as the knowledge broker that gives value to their customers by offering new deals (Adamson et al., 2012).

Sales persons who are expert in certain knowledge are in a position to guide their prospective customers in buying process and in general also include knowledge about their customers and products and services which they sell (Verbeke et al., 2011). Industry trends, competitor analyses, preferences of the customers and most importantly the decision making processes of the customers are some of the examples (Verbeke et al., 2011). Yet the knowledge of salespersons about his or her industry regulations has an effect on the sales performance is missed in this literature.

Institutional theory describes that performance of the firm is affected by external forces. Both regulatory and legislative actions developed by government actions are coming in external forces. Labor and employment laws, health and safety measures are the lists of public policies. The major challenges for managers are to cope with drastic changes in industry trends and uncertainties through different public policies. Sales persons are the knowledge brokers. Verbeke et al., (2011) they're highly positioned to help in ensuring with regulations. Regulatory knowledge is defined as an explicit knowledge that can be transmitted to others. Sales persons can gain the know-how of these regulations via learning and through experiences. Keeping the regulations in mind you see that every

industry has to face them (Crain & Crain, 2010) and business to business buyers faces difficulty in the hurdles comes from these regulations hurdles (Grewal et al., 2015). Sales persons who are well informed and give knowledge of the dynamically changing regulations in environment to their prospective customers are rewarded with loyalty and better sales performance. Thus, we can say that sales person regulatory knowledge has a direct positive effect on sales performance.

H1 *Regulatory knowledge of Sales Personnel is positively linked to Sales Performance*

2.3 Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is always remains vital subject for researchers in the field of human resource management, psychology and organizational behavior. Salovey and Mayer (1995) defined EI as “it is the understanding of feelings and emotions of you and others and using this knowledge to take action”. Emotional intelligence contains three abilities that are expressions and appraisal of emotions, second emotions regulations and third are effective utilization of emotions. They said that it is a new category of intelligence and have an effect on the performance of the job. Interpersonal and intra personal intelligence are two key components of emotional intelligence are more necessary to get success in life than IQ (Salovey & Mayer, 1995). Skills of EI can be improved via practice unlike IQ, which remains stable and not changeable. This study and others help researchers to examine the relation between success at work and emotional intelligence which is defined as the ability of individuals to meet the goals of the firms (Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997).

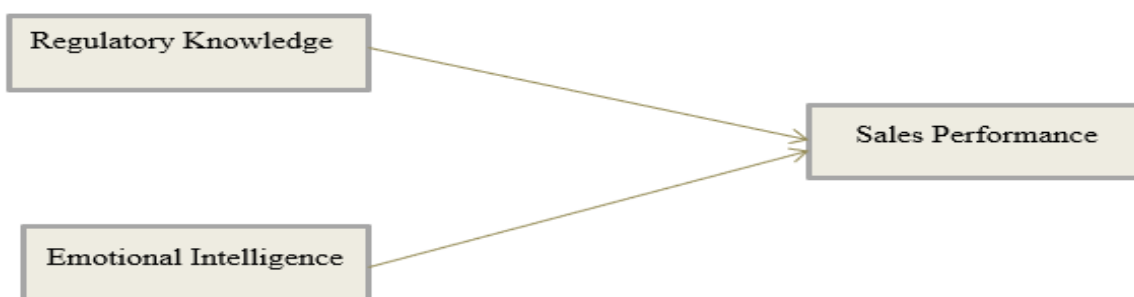
In the analysis, O’Boyle et al. (2011) they try to focus on whether the presence of predictors like measures of performance and cognitive ability, EI predict job performance. The meta analyses of these include three important streams number one is in the study of Mayer and Salovey (1997), ability-based measures. Second on the Mayor-salovey model “self-report measures” and (3) measures that go away from the Mayer-Salovey definition (Mayer & Salovey, 1995).

The results show that these three rivulets have correlations extending from twenty-four to thirty with job performance and differently correlated with extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness, and with cognitive ability. The Five Factor Model (FFM) streams 2 and 3 have highest incremental validity. When predicting job performance using dominance analyses, they found that these three streams of EI are most important in accordance with FFM and intelligence. In conclusion they said that the results are in support of validity of EI. The association among job performance and Emotional intelligence is significant and positive the three streams of EI are related to job performance at a same level. The result of EI with job performance is higher than cognitive ability and influence of personality. In many other studies it have been concluded that emotional intelligence ability of the sales person is predator of sales performance. Sales persons who use emotional intelligence as their toll to deal with their customer are found more effective and have more control over the emotions of the customer to convince them for the desired decision (Rakesh Singh (2015).

Where emotional skills and social skills are given high importance sales persons love to work there. They give better performance if their social and emotional skills are managed fully and to keep motivation level high in the face of problems and to overcome negative feedback and failures (Wang and Miao, (2015). Emotional threatening consequences and failures which are common in the life of sales persons, a person high in emotionally intelligent sales persons is very resilient to handle these situations. Schwepker & Schultz, (2015) conducted in-depth interviews with sales persons revealed that they unknowingly use emotional intelligence in order to be effective. Those sales persons who kept themselves in the customer’s shoes and knowing their problems they reportedly say that they use this ability. They know the importance of others emotions which influenced that how they reached to certain customers. The impression they build in front of their customer’s self-awareness is also seen as an important factor. In order to resolve their customer’s problems, self-regulation is also seen as important also to keep an eye on important issues. Literature covers much of the relationship and importance of job performance and emotional intelligence, in the light of which following hypotheses are made.

H2 *Emotional Intelligence of Sales Person is positively associated with Sales Performance*

2.4 Research Hypothesis



3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A research methodology section aims to clarify and communicate on strategy that shall be employed by researchers conduct data collection and analysis of information. A research methodology is developed based on the objectives and aims of the study as it is a sure and only way to achieve research objectives. In a research methodology, the activities defined may occur simultaneously or may occur parallel. In this chapter a detail on how data collection shall occur, sampling method and various analysis techniques that shall be taken into account are discussed.

For this research, objective information shall be collected by using questionnaire and information shall be depicted in the form of Numerals that is easier to be analyzed by running data into statistical software. For analysis purpose we used SPSS. The study applies few analyses for better understanding and interpretation of results of data gathered through questionnaire from sample size of 280. These analyses include reliability test, Correlation Analysis, Regression Analysis to check the relationship between independent variable (Regulatory Knowledge and Emotional Intelligence) and dependent variable (Sales Performance).

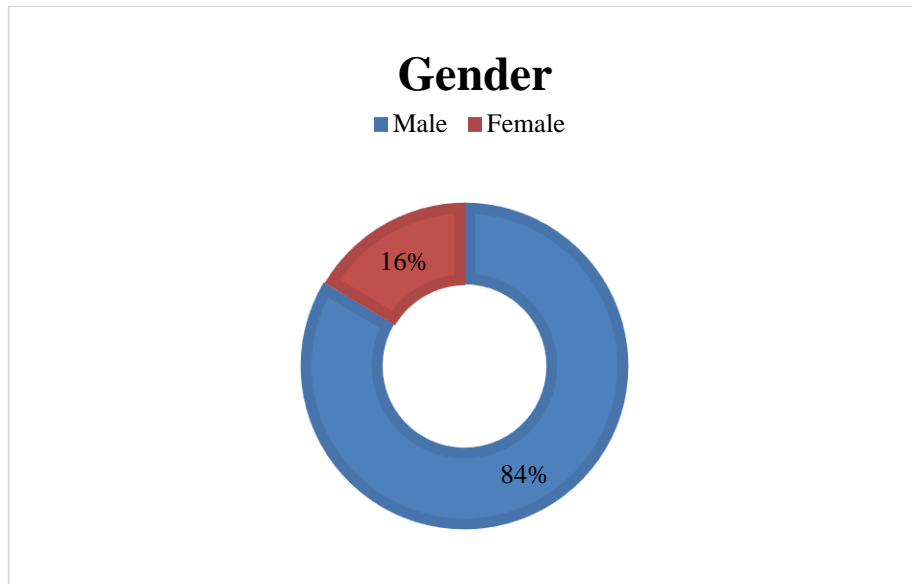
4. DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

The outcome of the research is stated in this section and data from the questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. Descriptive Statistics was used to analyze the demographic profile of the respondents like the gender, age, education level etc. the reliability test was done to test the reliability of each of the independent variable. Correlation was done to test the reliability

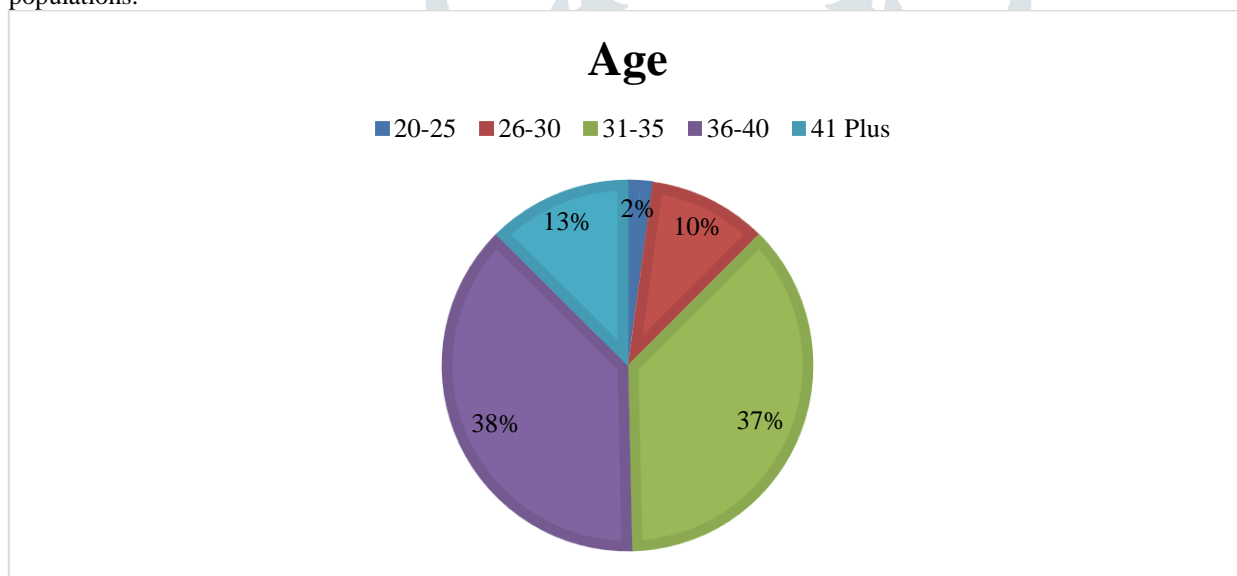
of each of the independent variable. Correction was done to measure the relationship of all variables. Mean test was also done to observe that whether the independent variables relate with the dependent variable or not. Lastly the linear regression was used to analyze that how the dependent variable will be predicted by the independent variables.

4.1 Data Analysis from SPSS Results

Below given graphs represent the demographic traits of the respondents which will give us real idea who they were and their positions. Personal and demographic information of the respondents were collected and given in below charts for better and quick understanding.



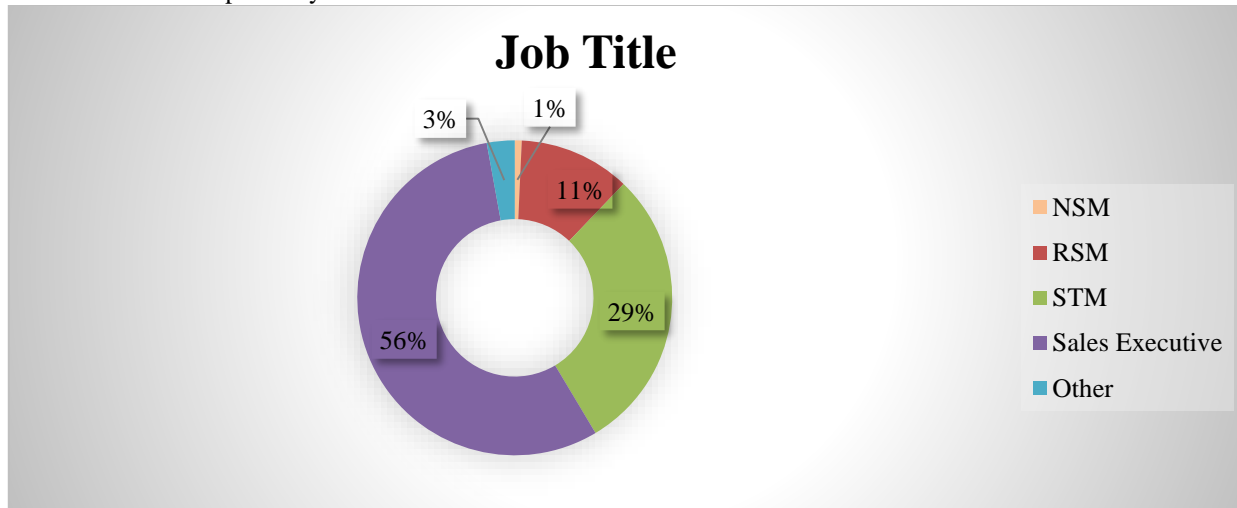
As it can be seen that majority of the respondents were male with representation of 84% and female were only 16% of the total populations.



75% of the respondents had age between 31~40 years. And rests are only 25% of the respondents. This means that most of the respondents were mature enough to participate in such researches and give their opinion to conclude something out of this data.



More than half of the respondents were post graduates and 38% of them were graduates. Diploma and Training Certificate holder were 8% and 1% respectively.



As indicated by the graph 85% of the respondents were at operational level or at supervisor level which have given us more realistic on ground realities of the factor affecting sales performance.

4.2 Reliability Test Analysis

Uma Sekaran (2000) stated that Cronbach’s Alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another. The Cronbach’s alpha was used in this study to test the reliability by measuring the internal consistency.

SCALE	CRONBACH’S ALPHA	REMARKS
REGULATORY KNOWLEDGE	0.793	Good
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	0.655	Moderate
SALES PERFORMANCE	0.834	Very Good

The result is remarked according to UMA SEKARAN (2003)

Table: Reliability test result

Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient usually ranges between 0 and 1. In the reality there is no lower limit to the coefficient. Therefore, the closer Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is to 1.0 the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale. It should be understood that it may give bad returns. It should also be noted that an alpha of .8 is almost certainly a reasonable goal. At the same time as a high value for Cronbach’s alpha indicates good internal consistency of the items in the scale.

The value of Cronbach’s Alpha of variable “Regulatory Knowledge” is 0.793, Based on the statistics suggested by Sekaran (2000, 2003) a Cronbach’s alpha value in the region of .7 to .8 is always considered good. The result shows that this independent variable is ranged as good because the value is more than .7. The questions about congruence between the three items of the independent variable Regulatory knowledge are very reliable.

The Cronbach’s Alpha for the variable Emotional Intelligence was .655. Based on the statistics suggested by Sekaran (2000, 2003) a Cronbach’s alpha value in the region of .6 to .7 is always considered as moderate. The result shows that this independent variable is ranged as moderate because the value is more than .6 but less than 0.7. The questions about congruence between its items of the independent variable Emotional intelligence are just reliable.

The Cronbach’s Alpha for the variable Sales performance was 0.834. Based on the statistics suggested by Sekaran (2000, 2003) a Cronbach’s alpha value in the region of .8 to .9 is always considered as very good. The result shows that these variables are ranged as very good because the value is more than 0.8 and near to 0.9. The questions about congruence between its items of dependent variable Sales Performance are highly reliable.

As a conclusion both the independent variables (Regulatory Knowledge & Emotional Intelligence) and dependent variable (Sales Performance) data are reliable to this research.

4.3 CORRELATIONS

In this section, Pearson Correlation Coefficient is used to test the hypothesis. The hypothesis tested is that linear relationship exists between dependent variable and independent variables, as seen in the correlation coefficient (r). As in all hypothesis tests, the goal is to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. In other words, it is to decide that an effect, in this case a relationship exists. According to Sekaran et al., there could be a perfect positive correlation between variables, which is represented by +1.0 (plus 1), or a perfect negative correlation which would be -1.0 (minus 1).

The tables below shows the summary of the correlation result between dependent variable (Sales Performance) and independent variables (Regulatory Knowledge & Emotional Intelligence)

SCALE	CORRELATION	REMARKS
Regulatory Knowledge	0.786	Very Strong Relationship (Positive Correlation)
Emotional Intelligence	0.357	Moderate Relationship (Positive Correlation)

Dependent Variable: Sales Performance
 **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation Results

The table shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient for the relation between Regulatory Knowledge and dependent variable Sales Performance. The value of correlation between these variables is 0.786 which is highly significant at the level (r = 1) and it also indicates that there is very strong relationship between these variables. The relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Sales performance is moderately positive as the correlation value is only 0.357. So we can conclude that Regulatory knowledge have

positive and strong relationship with Dependent variable and Emotional Intelligence have moderate positive relationship with Sales performance.

4.4 REGRESSION

This section of the study finally tests the model after satisfying the requirements of reliability and validity. The casual relationships of the independent variable were measured on dependent variables.

SCALE	P-VALUE	Beta	REMARKS
Regulatory Knowledge	0.000	0.786	SUPPORTED
Emotional Intelligence	0.000	0.357	SUPPORTED

Table: Regression Results

The regression analysis of Regulatory Knowledge shows that there is positive and significant relationship with Sales Performance. According to the Beta value of Regulatory Knowledge shows that it contributes more than 78.5% into Sales Performance.

The regression analysis of the variables confirms the positive and significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Sales Performance. As beta value shows contribution of 35.7% toward Sales performance.

5. CONCLUSION

Enhancing sales team performance is one of the main objectives for any organization as sales team always remain back bone of any organization. So it is always critical for any organization to have checked all those factors which plays an important role to drive the sales man performance in their organization. This study examines the relationship between Regulatory Knowledge, Emotional Intelligence and Sales Performance in beverages industry of Pakistan, in this study Sales Performance was the dependent variable and on the other hand Regulatory Knowledge and Emotional Intelligence are Independent variables. If there any relationship exists than the objective of the study was to determine the nature of the relationship between these variables. As it has been also observed by many scholars that there is strong positive relationship exist between Regulatory Knowledge and Sales performance. This study also supports this relation between regulatory knowledge and Sales Performance as previously proved by Verbeke et al.'s (2011), (Adamson et al. 2012). This study also supports the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Sales Performance in beverages industry of Pakistan (Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997).

It is concluded in this research that Sales team is capable of using different tools and training to enhance their sales numbers which may include trainings to enhance the regulatory knowledge of the sales force and to give confidence to them so they can use their emotional intelligence to understand their clients for better future relation for business. In this study we conclude that Regulatory knowledge and Emotional knowledge have significant and positive relationship with Sales Performance.

5.1 Limitation:

We acknowledge the following limitations of the study that open avenues for future research. Future research to tests how regulatory knowledge and emotional intelligence can impact Sales performance in Tobacco industry. Researcher can also assess this relationship into other industries as well that how it concludes in other sectors such as auto mobile, FMCG's, pharmaceuticals etc. This limitation implies that the generalization of the findings documented here to other environments should be cautioned and requires further research. Future studies covering several countries would shed light over interesting questions such as: do the patterns identified in this study prevail in other environments? What other relationships exist and how are they different from the patterns that emerged in this study? The model described in this study constitutes a contribution to guide such further studies.

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