

## **Salespersons Voice Specifications and Consumers Buying Intention: The mediating effect of cognitive and emotional trust between voice**

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### **Extensive Summary**

#### **Introduction**

As the presentation skills and sales arguments of salespersons are influential on persuasion (Sparks and Areni, 2002), verbal and non-verbal behaviors will have an effect on increasing or decreasing of communication power (Malik and Naeem, 2010; Fennis and Stel, 2011). In addition, several studies have expressed some specifications of salespersons like persuasion, courtesy and competitive characteristics for effective sales performance (Brown et al., 1998; Spence et al., 1987). Specifically, non-verbal communication increases the consumer's trust toward salespersons (Sundaram and Webster, 2000; Wood, 2006). In this context, it is stated that trust toward salespersons is more important than general company trust (Ganesan and Hess, 1997).

Trust is basically the key point of the sales process in for businesses that want to be successful, as there can be no communication because they are based on communication. Therefore, it can be said that confidence is a vital element in the persuasion process at the point of closing the sale. The main purpose of this study is to examine cognitive and emotional trust factors' mediating effect on the relationship between salespersons' voice specifications and consumers purchase intention.

Salespersons need to design their communication styles verbally and non-verbally to build trust. The non-verbal cues are trustworthy and impressive for salespersons. In

general, these cues can easily affect the behavior in interpersonal communication (Rosenthal, 1966). Studies have showed that emotions and feelings derived from non-verbal channels are very important in terms of the impression of the other party (Sommers, Greeno, & Boag, 1989). Moreover, studies have shown that non-verbal communication items affect the perception of salesperson and sales performance. Williams et al (1990) found that using four symbolic non-verbal dimensions, such as voice qualities, non-verbal voices, body movements and physical distance, increase sales performance. Also, Jung and Yoon (2011) concluded that the non-verbal communication of employees in the service sector has a direct effect on consumers' emotional responses and satisfaction. Moving from this point, the voice itself should be examined as a direct factor that acts as a non-verbal cue that affects the purchase intention.

### **Methodology**

Participants listened two-minutes presentations of 5 male salesperson from direct sales programs on TV channels. Male gender has been preferred in order to avoid bias in evaluations between different voices. In order to make the evaluations only on the sound characteristics of the salesperson, information about product name, product price, brand name etc. are excluded from the voice records. In order to increase the efficiency of the study, the sales videos of products that everyone is familiar with are preferred. Each participant evaluated five different voice and as a result 300 data were collected. The scales used in the study consist of questions about trust, voice specifications and purchase intention. Trust was measured with 8 items in the context of cognitive (5 items) and emotional trust (3 items) (Johnson and Grayson, 2000). The proposed hypotheses of the study are at below:

**H<sub>1a</sub>:** Voice specifications have a positive effect on buying intention.

**H<sub>1b</sub>:** Voice specifications have a positive effect on perceived cognitive trust.

**H<sub>1c</sub>:** Voice specifications has a positive effect on perceived emotional trust

**H<sub>2a</sub>:** Cognitive trust has a mediating effect on the relationship between voice specifications and buying intention.

**H<sub>2b</sub>:** Emotional trust has a mediating effect on the relationship between voice specifications and buying intention.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** The effect of cognitive trust on the relationship between voice specifications and buying intention is greater that emotional trust.

### **Findings**

A five point likert scale was used to assess the data. (1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree). IBM SPSS and AMOS 23.0 statistical software was used to analyze the data. %53 percent of the participants was female and %47 percent was male. As a result; H1a, H1b, H1c, H2a, H2b and H3 were supported. The mediating role of cognitive and emotional trust was found partial but strong. In this context, it was concluded that perceived cognitive trust is an important and effective mediator factor designing possible relationship between buying intention and voice specifications. Besides emotional trust has a mediating role in this relationship but not strong as cognitive trust.

### **Discussion**

The results of the path analysis support our research problem. We proposed that cognitive trust contact with emotional trust but it's the primary variable to create a mediating model between voice and buying intention relation. If we analyze why cognitive trust play a bigger role in the model, it can be said that consumers process the voice cues as information and evaluate rationally but with an emotional perception.