ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY ★ GRADUATE SCHOOL

INTERPERSONAL FACTORS AFFECTING B2B RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

Ph.D. THESIS

Hüseyin Ozan PENEKLİOĞLU

Department of Management

Management Programme

JANUARY 2021

ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY ★ GRADUATE SCHOOL

INTERPERSONAL FACTORS AFFECTING B2B RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

Ph.D. THESIS

Ozan PENEKLİOĞLU
(403122002)

Department of Management

Management Programme

Thesis Advisor: Prof. Dr. Ayşe Banu ELMADAĞ BAŞ

JANUARY 2021

İSTANBUL TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ ★ LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ

KİŞİLER ARASI FAKTÖRLERİN ÖRGÜTLER ARASI PAZARLARDA İLİŞKİ KALİTESİNE ETKİSİ

DOKTORA TEZİ

Ozan PENEKLİOĞLU
(403122002)

İşletme Anabilim Dalı

İşletme Doktora Programı

Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Ayşe Banu ELMADAĞ BAŞ

OCAK 2021

Ozan Peneklioğlu, a Ph.D. student of ITU Graduate School student ID 403122002, successfully defended the dissertation entitled "INTERPERSONAL FACTORS AFFECTING B2B RELATIONSHIP QUALITY", which he prepared after fulfilling the requirements specified in the associated legislations, before the jury whose signatures are below.

Thesis Advisor :	**Prof. Dr. Ayşe Banu ELMADAĞ BAŞ** Istanbul Technical University	.....
Jury Members :	**Doç.Dr. Elif KARAOSMANOĞLU** Istanbul Technical University	.....
	Öğr. Gör. Dr. İdil Vedia EVCİMEN Istanbul Technical University	.....
	Prof. Dr. Ahmet ERKUŞ Bahçeşehir University	.....
	Prof. Dr. Nimet URAY Kadir Has University	.....

Date of Submission : 25 December 2020
Date of Defense : 29 January 2021

To my wife and daughter,

FOREWORD

During my career as a salesperson at business markets, I realized that I usually have better relationships with women buyers than men. This awareness encouraged me to think if there are some other personal factors affecting the quality of the relationship between buyers and me. I started reading the academic literature and realized a gap in this subject, and I decided to build my thesis on this. I am proud that my hypothesis was correct, and I was able to identify and prove the effects of interpersonal factors on relationship quality between buyers and sellers.

First, I would like to highlight my gratitude to my advisor, Prof. Dr. Ayşe Banu ELMADAĞ BAŞ. My appreciation for her is indescribable. She has been a great advisor and always helped me find the best way when I had challenges. I also thank my dissertation committee, Dr. İdil Vedia EVCİMEN, and Prof. Dr. Ahmet ERKUŞ, for their helpful observations and remarks. I also appreciate Prof. Dr. Nimet URAY, my master thesis advisor, as well as a member of my dissertation committee during the early stages of my thesis.

Dr. Ömer DEVECİ supported the first study of this thesis as he funded the online survey by letting us use the database of his company (www.sikayetvar.com). Istanbul Technical University funded the second study of this thesis under project number BAP-2016-40202. Last but not least, Dr. Burkay ADALIĞ provided insight about pharmaceutical industry, which helped me a lot to shape the second study. I am indeed grateful for all this support.

I need to raise my special thanks to my dear parents, Jale and İbrahim, my brother, Kağan, my sister-in-law Hale and my grandmother Birsen for their never-ending support during my entire life. I feel fortunate to have them.

Finally, Burcu, my dear wife, and my most generous supporter during my Ph.D. journey. She has always been with me, and my gratitude to her is beyond words. She suffered from loneliness when I had to study and wrote my thesis, but she always supports me with patience and thoughtfulness. Finally, yet importantly, I also want to thank my daughter, my little Pera. One year ago, she joined our lives, and having her in my life motivated me to finish my Ph.D. journey sooner than later.

January 2021

Ozan PENEKLİOĞLU
(B2B Sales and Marketing Professional)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ABBREVIATIONS

AFI : Anticipation of Future Interaction
AVE : Average Variance Extracted
B2B : Business to Business
CFA : Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI : Comparative Fit Index
CMS : Chinese Management Studies
COM : Commitment
COR : Customer Orientation
CR : Composite Reliability
EJM : European Journal of Marketing
FFM : Five-Factor Model
IEX : Information Exchange
IFR : Interaction Frequency
IOR : Interaction Orientation
IJRDM : International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management
IJSIM : International Journal of Service Industry Management
IMM : Industrial Marketing Management
JAMS : Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science
JBBM : Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing
JBIM : Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing
JBR : Journal of Business Research
JGM : Journal of Global Marketing
JM : Journal of Marketing
JMC : Journal of Marketing Channels
JoP&SM : Journal of Purchasing&SupplyManagement
JPSSM : Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management
JRM : Journal of Relationship Marketing
JSM : Journal of Services Marketing
JStm : Journal of Strategic Marketing
KAM : Key Account Management
LB : Loyalty to Brand
LS : Loyalty to Salesperson
M : Mean
MIP : Marketing Intelligence & Planning
NFI : Normed Fit Index
RFI : Relative Fit Index
RMSEA : Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
RQ : Relationship Quality
RSB : Relational Selling Behavior
SAT : Satisfaction
SC : Sellers Conscientiousness
SD : Standard Deviation
SEV : Sellers Extraversion
SE : Standard Error

SEM **:** Structural Equation Modeling
SIM **:** Similarity
SRMR **:** Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
TR **:** Trust
VIF **:** Variance Inflation Factor

SYMBOLS

α	**:** Components Inter-item reliability based on Cronbach alpha value
χ^2	**:** Chi-square value
df	**:** Degrees of freedom
p	**:** Level of statistical significance
$\mathbf{R^2}$	**:** Proportion of the explained variance for a dependent variable
β	**:** Regression coefficient
t	**:** t score based on student t-test

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

INTERPERSONAL FACTORS AFFECTING B2B RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

SUMMARY

During the early 70s, business-to-business (B2B) buying behavior has been initially accepted as rational behavior and is not subject to the influence of relational factors. Through the development of relationship marketing theory, the effects of relational criteria on the B2B buying behavior have also been investigated many times, and there is evidence that the relational factors are also influencing the B2B buying behavior. It has already been established that the organizational goals and purchasing processes are bounded with rational decision criteria at most of the B2B buying situations. However, the decision-makers being human, their evaluations on these decision criteria are still subject to relational factors. Therefore, the relationship quality between the B2B buying decision-maker and the salesperson plays a critical role during the decision making process.

This dissertation encompasses three studies that are related to the relationship quality construct. Firstly, the literature between 2008 and 2019 is systematically and structurally reviewed for studies that are related to relationship quality. Based on this structural review, the dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of the relationship quality construct are classified. In many of those studies, the relationship quality construct dimensions are widely accepted as satisfaction, commitment, and trust. Both the antecedents and consequences are grouped into their respective categories. The most commonly researched consequences of relationship quality are performance-related consequences and interpersonal/relational benefits. The most commonly researched antecedents of relationship quality, on the other hand, are interpersonal and relationship characteristics. Even though the academia focus on investigating the inter-personal factors affecting B2B relationship quality, the research about the similarity between buyer and seller, the personal characteristics of the buyer, the personality traits of the seller, as well as the relational selling behavior of seller has been identified as gaps/inconsistencies in the literature and these antecedents are potential areas that should be developed further. To close these gaps, the author of this thesis conducted two empirical studies.

Secondly, for the second study being the first empirical one, a quantitative research at the B2B sellers' domain is conducted. The aim of this study is to determine interpersonal factors affecting the seller's trust (the most frequently used component of relationship quality) in the buyer and the effect of this trust on the sales process effectiveness. Data has been collected via an online process, and responses from a convenience sample of 235 B2B salespeople have been used to test the research model and hypotheses developed. Findings show that there is a positive relationship between interpersonal factors and trust to the buyer as well as the sales process effectiveness. Moreover, the purchase importance moderates the relationship between trust and sales process effectiveness.

Thirdly, for the second empirical study, research at the B2B buyers' domain was conducted. The purpose of this second empirical study is to explore whether the similarity between salesperson and buyer, as well as the salespersons' personality, have a bearing on anticipation of future interaction and loyalty through relational selling behavior and relationship quality. Using a structured questionnaire, data were collected through personal interviews. Based on 473 responses from buying decision-makers in the pharmaceutical industry, the hypotheses are tested. Results show that interpersonal factors between buyer and seller have an influence on the relationship quality, and relational selling behavior partially mediates this relationship. Consequently, there is evidence of the positive relationship between relationship quality and loyalty and the anticipation of future interaction. The managerial implications of the findings provide some guidance concerning what criteria of salespersons' personality are essential when assigning to an account, and how a salesperson can be hired to perfectly match the buying decision-makers' characteristics to maximize buyers' perceptions of the relationship quality.

Lastly, the findings of the literature review and the two studies are summarized. The contribution of this thesis to the literature is also summarized in this section. Finally, the author mentions the limitations, as well as propose suggestions for future research based on the findings, hot topics, and trends. With these propositions, the author not only tries to shed light on what has been examined already but also the future direction that the relationship quality researches should move.

KİŞİLER ARASI FAKTÖRLERİN ÖRGÜTLERARASI PAZARLARDA İLİŞKİ KALİTESİNE ETKİSİ

ÖZET

Örgütlerarası satınalma davranışının araştırılmaya başlandığı 1970'li yılların ilk yarısında, örgütlerarası satınalma davranışı rasyonel bir davranış olarak kabul edilmiş, ve ilişkisel faktörlerin bu davranışı etkilemediği kabul edilmiştir. İlerleyen yıllarda, ilişki pazarlaması teorisini gelişmesi esnasında, ilişkisel faktörlerin örgütlerarası satınalma davranışı üzerine etkisi defalarca incelenmiş ve ilişkisel faktörlerin örgütler arası satınalma davranışını etkilediği empirik olarak kanıtlanmıştır. Örgütlerarası pazarlarda firmaların, satınalma karar süreçleri rasyonel kriterler göz önünde tutularak tamamlanmakta olup, satın alma süreçleri birçok satınalma durumu için sistematik olarak tasarlanmıştır. Her ne kadar satınalma süreçleri sistematik de olsa, satın alma kararını verecek kişilerin insana ait özellikleri sebebiyle, kişisel ya da kişiler arası faktörlerin satın alma kriterlerinin değerlendirilmesinde etkisi olacaktır. Psikoloji ve örgütsel davranış literatüründe kişisel ya da kişiler arası faktörlerin, bireylerin davranışları üzerindeki etkisi çok defalar araştırılmış ve bu araştırmaların sonucunda teoriler geliştirilmiştir. Örneğin benzerlik-cazibe teorisi, sosyal kimlik teorisi, ve ilişkisel demografi teorileri bunların başlıcaları olarak düşünülebilir. Bu teorilerin çerçevesinde yapılan araştırmalar göze alındığında, satın alma kararı verecek kişilerle, satış yapan personel arasındaki ilişki kalitesi, satın alma kararı üzerinde bir etkiye sahip olabileceği düşünülür.

İlişki kalitesi konsepti üzerine pazarlama literatüründe yapılan birçok araştırma mevcuttur ve bu konseptin birçok performans kriterini olumlu ya da olumsuz etkilemesinden dolayı, günümüzde de konsept üzerine hala bir çok araştırma yapılmaktadır. Günümüze kadar yapılan bir çok araştırmada ilişki kalitesinin birden çok boyutu olan bir kavram olduğunu kabul etmiş, ve ilişki kalitesinin hesaplanmasında en çok kullanılan boyutlar güven, taahhüt ve memnuniyet olarak kayıtlara geçmiştir. İlişki kalitesi yapılan bir çok çalışmada iki taraf arasındaki ilişki kuvvetinin bir göstergesi olarak düşünülmüştür ve bu çerçevede yapılan çalışmalarda ilişki kalitesi, örgütsel performans kriterlerinin öncü değişkeni olarak yer almıştır. Bu çerçevede kişisel faktörlerin ve kişiler arası etkileşimin, ilişki kalitesi üzerinde etkisi olacaktır. Kişiler arası faktörlerin örgütsel pazarlarda ilişki kalitesine etkisi, bu tezin ana temasıdır.

İlk olarak, yazar örgütsel pazarlada ilişki kalitesi konusunda derinlemesine bir literatür taraması yapmıştır ve literatür taraması sonuçlarını kategorize ederek raporlamıştır. İlişki kalitesi kavramı üzerine on yıldan uzun bir süredir derinlemesine bir literatür taraması yapılmadığı için, bu tez kapsamında yapılan literatür taraması, pazarlama literatürüne önemli bir katkı sağlamaktadır. Yapılan literatür taramasına göre, örgütsel pazarlada satın alan taraf ve satış yapan taraf arasındaki ilişki kalitesi kavramının öncüleri ve sonuçları gruplanmış, ayrıca ilişki kalitesi kavramının tanımı ve boyutlarıda raporlanmıştır. 2008 – 2018 yılları arasıda yapılmış olan çalışmalarda yer alan ilişki kalitesi kavramının hem öncüleri hem de sonuçları dört gruba ayrılmıştır. İlişki kalitesi kavramının öncülerini içeren dört grup (1) kişiler arası faktörleri içeren

öncüler, (2) ilişki niteliği ile ilgili öncüler, (3) verilen teklif özelliklerini içeren öncüler ve (4) dış/çevresel faktörleri içeren öncüler olarak sıralanmıştır. İlişki kalitesi kavramının sonuçlarını içeren dört grup ise (1) performans kriteri içeren sonuçlar, (2) kişisel/ilişkisel faydaları içeren sonuçlar, (3) firma seviyesi faydaları içeren sonuçlar, ve (4) değer kavramı ile ilgili sonuçlar olarak sıralanmıştır. Bu gruplar arasında performans kriteri içeren sonuçlar ve kişisel/ilişkisel faydaları içeren sonuçlar en yoğun olarak araştırılmıştır. Öncüler arasında da en yoğun olarak kişiler arası faktörleri içeren öncüler ve ilişki niteliği ile ilgili öncüler araştırılmıştır. Akademik camia her ne kişiler arası faktörleri ve ilişki niteliği ile ilgili öncüler üzerinde yoğunluk göstermiş olsa da satın alan kişi ve satış yapan kişi arasındaki benzerlik, satış yapan kişinin kişilik özellikleri, satın alan kişinin özellikleri, ve ilişkisel satış davranışı kavramları ile ilişki kalitesi kavramı arasındaki ilişkilerin irdelenmeği ya da bulunan sonuçların çekişkili olduğu görülmüştür. Literatürde yer alan bu eksiklikleri kapatmak için, yazar iki adet gözleme dayalı anket çalışması yapmıştır.

Literatür taramasından sonra ikinci olarak, tez de yapılan ilk araştırma yer almaktadır. Bu araştırma örgütler arası pazarlarda görev yapan satış personeli arasında yapılmış olan yapısal bir anket çalışmasıdır. Bu araştırmada yazar, satış personelinin satın alma kararı vericisine olan güveni (ilişki kalitesi kavramının en sıklıkla kullanılan boyutu) ve bu güvenin satış süreci verimliliğine etkisini ele almıştır. Yapılan literatür taramasında güven denildiğinde satın alan kişinin satıcıya olan güveninin ele alındığı görüşmüş ve güvenin çift taraflı olması gerekliliğinden yola çıkarak, bu çalışmada satış personelinin satın alma kararı vericisine olan güveni ele alınmıştır. Bu çerçevede, yapılan bu araştırma literatüre özgün bir katkı sağlamaktadır. Güven ve satış süreci kavramları arasındaki ilişki ele alınırken kişisel / kişiler arası faktörlerden benzerlik, deneyim ve görev bilinci kavramları satıcının, satın alan kişiye olan güveninin öncüsü olarak ele almıştır. Ayrıca, satın alma kararının satın alan şirket açısından önem seviyesi de güven ve satış süreci verimliliği ilişkisini etkileyen bir faktör olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu çalışmaya ait veriler internet üzerinden, kolayda örnekleme yöntemi ile toplanmış ve örgütler arası pazarlarda çalışan 235 satış personelinin verdiği yanıtlara göre araştırma hipotezleri test edilmiştir. Yapısal eşitlik modeli kullanılarak yapılan analizlerin sonuçları, kişiler arası faktörler ve güven arasındaki ilişkiyi ve bu ilişkinin satış süreç verimliliğine olan etkisini doğrulamıştır. Ayrıca, satın alma önem seviyesinin de güven ve satış süreci verimliliği ilişkisi üzerindeki etkisi de ispatlanmıştır.

Üçüncü olarak, tez de yapılan ikinci araştırma yer almaktadır. Bu araştırma örgütler arası pazarlarda satın alma karar vericileri arasında, yapısal anket yöntemi kullanılarak yapılmıştır. Bu çalışma örgütler arası pazarlarda satın alan kişi ve satış personeli arasındaki ilişki kalitesinin öncüleri ve sonuçlarını irdelemektedir. Çalışmanın amacı kişilik ve benzerlik kavramlarının, ilişki kalitesi ve ilişkisel satış davranışı üzerine olan etkilerini ve bu etkilerin gelecekteki etkileşim beklentisi ve bağlılık kavramları üzerindeki etkilerinin, satın alma karar vericisi bakış açısıyla irdelenmesidir. Bu çalışmada psikoloji ve örgütsel davranış literatüründe konu olan teoriler (benzerlik-cazibe teorisi ve beş büyük faktör teorisi) göz önünde bulundurularak araştırma modeli oluşturulmuştur. Eczacılık sektöründe yer alan 473 satın alma karar vericisinden yüzyüze görüşme yöntemi ile toplanan veriler, yapısal eşitlik modeli kullanılarak analiz edilmiş ve araştırma hipotezleri test edilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre, satın alma karar vericisi ve satış personeli arasında kişiler arası faktörlerin, ilişki kalitesi üzerine etkisi bulunmaktadır ve ilişkisel satış davranışı kişiler arası faktörler ve ilişki kalitesi arasındaki ilişkiye kısmen aracılık etmektedir. Ayrıca, ilişki

kalitesinin bağlılık ve gelecekteki etkileşim beklentisi üzerindeki pozitif etkileri de ispat edilmiştir.

Sonuç olarak, yazar, literatür taraması, satış personeli örneklemi kullanılarak yapılan araştırma ve satın alma karar vericisi örneklemi kullanılarak yapılan araştırma sonuçlarını özetlemiş, tezin literatüre olan katkısını da yine bu bölümde tekrar etmiştir. Bu bölümün sonunda yazar, araştırmalardaki kısıtları belirtmiş ve gelecekte ilişki kalitesi çerçevesinde yapılabilecek yeni araştırma konularını belirtmiştir.

1. INTRODUCTION

The earliest two models of Business to Business (B2B) buying behavior, which were proposed almost at the same time (Webster and Wind, 1972; Sheth, 1973), were both robust and served the academia by providing the groundwork of the Business to Business (B2B) Buying Behavior (Webster, 1995). They primarily defined the roles of involved parties in a sales transaction, the buying situations and shaped the initial studies to consider the B2B buying behavior as a complex, systematic, and rational behavior, which is not influenced by subjective and irrational criteria. However, recent research has shown that B2B buying behavior may also be influenced by personal factors (Palmer and Bejou, 1995; Swift and Gruben, 2000; Pullins et al, 2004; Davies and Ryals, 2014; Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014; Wagner and Benoit, 2015). Although the decision itself serves organizational goals and maybe bound with rational processes, the decision-makers are human beings, and every single person has his own personality and values. There are a lot of theories and concepts in the psychology and organizational behavior literature that explain the impact of personal factors on human behavior. Similarity-attraction theory, social identity theory, leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, and the concept of relational demography are some of these theories and concepts. Therefore, major personal characteristics of both seller and buyer and their interpersonal relation linked to these characteristics in the B2B contexts may have a bearing on the decision-making process, thus the performance of the transactions.

Interpersonal factors, which constitute the framework of the research, and the effects of these factors on relationships, can be explained with the perspective of a social exchange theory that argues that the changes of material and social resources are necessary for human interaction (Cook and Emerson 1978). The theory is based on sociology, psychology, and economic theories, focusing on the exchange of benefits and taking into account value and cost (Homans, 1961). Although there is a "give and take" element at the basis of all relationships, the balance in change is not always equal between the parties.

The concept of relationship quality (RQ), which is a multi-dimensional construct, has received substantial interest in the relationship marketing literature and continues to be an important area for further research due to its important consequences that help sustain and improve the key outcomes of the sales process between partners such as anticipation of future interaction (Boles et al, 2000; Sarmento et al, 2015) and loyalty (Rauyruen and Miller, 2007; Alejandro et al, 2011). Relationship quality consists of evaluating many interactions in an organizational relationship based on the results of the expected or desired interaction. This assessment predicts the continuing and long-term strength of the relationship (Lages et al, 2005). The components of relationship quality, mainly commitment, and trust promote a relational bond that exists between partners and facilitate efficient cooperation (Gounaris, 2005). Relationship quality reflects the atmosphere, adaptation and collaboration that already exists in a relationship between businesses (Liu et al, 2010). Stronger relationship quality is comprehended as tactically vital and is the desired condition in business relationships (Johnson et al, 2004). The relationship quality is frequently acknowledged as a degree of the relationship strength existing between two parties (Kumar et al, 1995), and it is accepted as a complete mediating variable between various organizational performance and relationship performance (Grover et al, 1996).

Relationship quality is an expanded sub-branch of relational marketing. Relationship quality reveals to what extent the goals, desires, expectations, and satisfaction in the relations in a business, the relations of the businesses with other businesses are met (Jarvelin and Lehtinen, 1996). Relationship quality refers to the result of positive relationship results, expressing the power of a relationship that exceeds the expectations, and satisfies the needs of the interested parties (Smith, 1998). This relationship creates a general impression of a customer's overall connection with any supplier (Wong and Sohal, 2002).

Generally, in order for a business to be successful in establishing relationships, service providers should not only focus on professional relations but also on social interaction. Although this situation is worth attention in terms of the quality of the relationship between businesses, it is seen that success can be achieved by reducing uncertainty with interpersonal factors (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996).

The relationship quality literature in the business context has initially concentrated on the functional dimensions, which might be related to the fundamental features of B2B

buying behavior such as complexity, systematic, and rationale (Webster and Wind, 1972), However, the personal factors between the salesperson and the buyer (including the emotional and social dimensions) have primarily been investigated in consumer settings, overlooking B2B contexts. Thus, general theories of B2B marketing have not been developed as fast as their counterparts in the consumer marketing context. While B2B buying decision still assists in achieving corporate goals and may be made via structured procedures, the deciders are people. Therefore, the main eccentricities of the deciders or their perceptions of the other party during the buying process may influence their decision-making.

1.1 Unique Aspect

The interaction between the salesperson and the buyer has been studied in the B2B marketing literature widely. Sheth and Sharma (2004) grouped these studies in seven sub-topics, where the interaction and social variables are two of the sub-topics (Sheth and Sharma, 2004). There are limited studies in industrial marketing literature, which is about interaction and social variables. For instance, the framework defined by Dwyer and colleagues (1987) is about emerging buyer-seller relationships grounded on isolated, interactive exchanges. Hallen and colleagues' (1991) model proves that inter-firm orientations, which are based on trust-building and imbalanced dependence, are elements in social exchange. Heide and John (1992) examined the importance of norms in building relationships. Cannon and Perreault (1999) specify six key underlying dimensions (connectors) that characterize the manner in which buyers and sellers relate and conduct relationships.

The recent studies mainly examined relationship marketing (RM) and key account management (KAM) concept. For example, Obal and Lancioni (2013) offered a concept to maximize buyer-supplier relationships in the Digital Era; Davies and Ryals (2014) investigate the influence of a wide range of KAM practices on a number of program-level effectiveness. Gounaris and Tzempelikos (2014) offer empirical evidence regarding the structural and relational implications of a KAM program. Matikainen and colleagues (2015) examine the impact of firms' relationship orientation on new product launch performance, and Wu and Wu (2015) investigate the extent to which strong relationships between a firm and its key suppliers promote effective new product introduction.

This thesis will be different from the previous studies in B2B marketing literature. While many previous studies highlighted the quality of relationships in the B2B field, very few studies mention the impact of interpersonal factors. Therefore, one of the aims of this study is to highlight and investigate personal factors above B2B relationship quality. In other words, this thesis will be the first study in the B2B marketing literature, which aims to find out influences of interpersonal factors between the salesperson and the buying decision-maker affecting the B2B relationship quality. Thus, it is worthwhile to research the interpersonal factors that may have a bearing on B2B relationship quality and the mechanisms that are in play when determining key performance indicators for businesses.

1.2 Content and Purpose of Thesis

Based on the present gap in the literature, the purpose of this thesis is to find out the influence of interpersonal factors among salespersons and buying decision-makers on B2B relationship quality.

Firstly, an extensive literature review about the B2B relationship quality has been performed, and the author of this thesis categorized the findings of literature research similar to the cornerstone research done by Athanasopoulou (2009) about relationship quality. The RQ literature has not been widely reviewed for more than a decade; this thesis provides many contributions to the literature. This literature review scans the antecedents and consequences of relationship quality between a buying organization and selling organization in business-to-business (B2B) contexts. Additionally, it examines the different operationalization of RQ and the studies where RQ is used as a moderating variable. The purpose of this extensive literature research is to discover the next questions: What is the history of relationship quality research, how has it changed over time? What are the most effective outcomes of the relationship quality-centered research models? What are the gaps in the current relationship quality literature that may have value for future research opportunities?

Second, a structural survey was performed among the sellers working in various industries. In this research, the author adopts the sellers' perspective to discover the sellers' trust in buyers and its' influence on sales performance via the sale process efficiency. Sale process efficiency is one way of measuring sales performance, which is the ability of a salesperson to win the opportunity in the right timeframe (Rodriguez

and Honeycutt, 2011). The purpose of this second study is to determine the influence of sellers' trust in buyers on the efficiency of a sale process. When firms increase the efficiency of their sales processes (or can be named as procurement process efficiency from the buying company's perspective), they reduce order cycle times, thus reduce their cost, utilize their human resources more efficiently, and also may gain a competitive advantage against their competitors due to earlier introduction of new offerings to the market place and/or having higher growth than competitors. Often, if not always, the buyer's trust has been the focus of researchers in the B2B marketing literature when examining sales performance, even when data collected was based on the seller's perceptions of buyers' trust. Thus, this study is unique as the author looked from the sellers' perspective to discover the sellers' trust in buyers and its consequences. This study adopts Similarity-Attraction Theory (Byrne, 1971) and the concept of relational demography (Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989) perspectives to better explain the effects of individual buyer-seller relationships and their outcomes in B2B sales situations. In an attempt to have a deeper understanding of the interpersonal factors affecting trust, the most powerful component of relationship quality, the author of this thesis used seller's perceptions of buyer similarity, expertise, and task orientation as antecedents of seller's trust in the buyer and, in turn, sale process efficiency. Moreover, purchase importance is also considered as a moderating factor when determining the effects of intrapersonal factors on trust and sale process efficiency.

Third, a structural survey was performed among the buyers working in the pharmaceutical industry. This study examines the antecedents and consequences of relationship quality between a buyer and salesperson in business to business (B2B) contexts. The purpose of this study is to find out the influence of the personality and similarity between the buyer and the salesperson on relationship quality, the anticipation of future interaction, and loyalty; and outline the mechanisms that are in play when determining the relationship quality. The theories and concepts in the psychology and organizational behavior literatures are used to explain the influence of the personal aspects on the B2B buying behavior. In this study, the author engages the similarity-attraction theory (Byrne, 1971) perspectives and the Big-Five personality model (Goldberg, 1990) to better explain the inter-personal buyer-seller relationships and their consequences. The study uses data from 473 buyers in the pharmaceutical

industry to test the research model and hypotheses developed. Structured questionnaire personal interviews are used to collect the data.

To summarize, this thesis is organized as follows: In the beginning, the author performed an extensive literature review about the B2B relationship quality and summarized the historical development of the relationship quality researches in this chapter. The author also briefly summarized the interpersonal factors that are used as an antecedent of relationship quality in this thesis and defined relational selling behavior as a mediator between the interpersonal factors and relationship quality. After the extensive literature review, the first quantitative research is explained in chapter 3 of this thesis, which was performed at B2B seller's context. The aim of that chapter is to show some of the interpersonal factors affecting trust, the most influencing component of relationship quality from the seller's perspective. In chapter 4 of this thesis, the second quantitative research is performed using the B2B buyer's context. In this chapter, based on the literature review, the author identified and defined the interpersonal factors, which may influence the relationship quality either direct or through relational selling behavior and developed hypotheses concerning how relationship quality is predicted to be linked to some particular relational outcomes from buyer's perspective. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used to test the hypotheses at both of the quantitative researches and finally, in chapter 5 – the conclusion chapter, the outcomes of the extensive literature review and the findings of both quantitative surveys are discussed as a whole. The results are discussed together with the theoretical/managerial implications. Limitations of the study are outlined, and recommendations for further research are offered. The structure of this thesis is presented below in Figure 1.1.

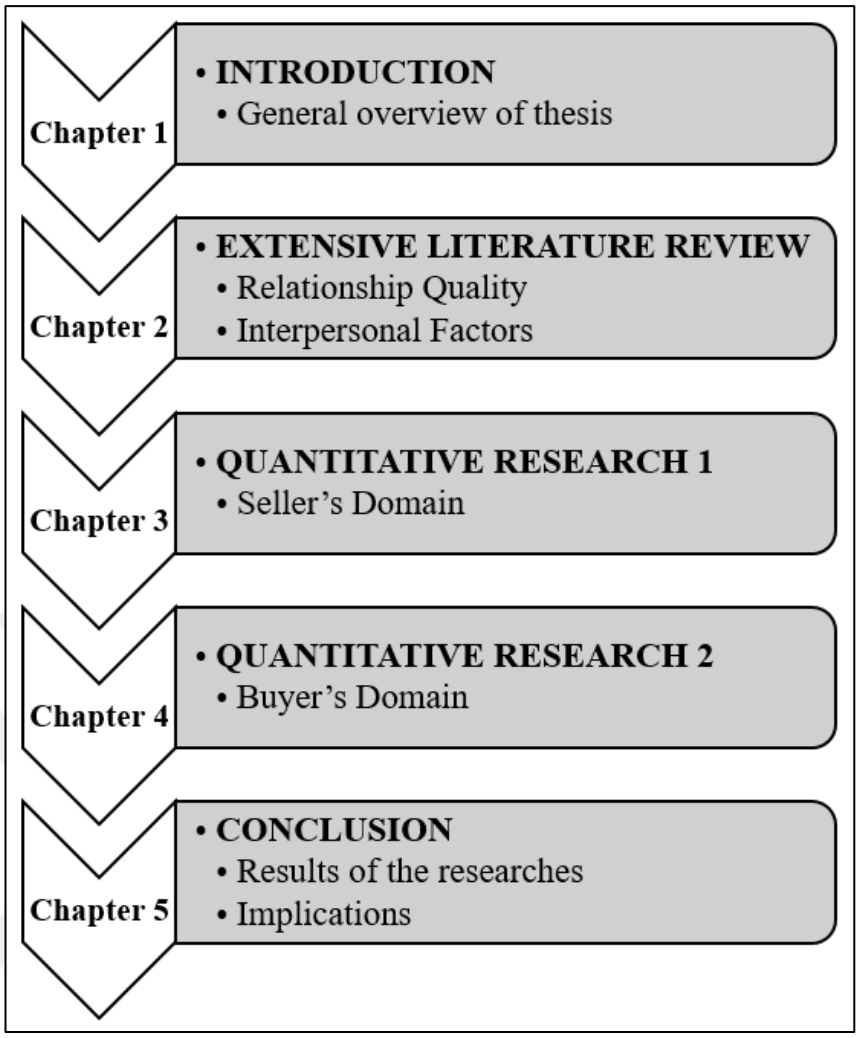

Figure 1.1: Structure of the thesis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Generating and developing cooperative relationships with particular key partners has been a basic norm of relationship marketing, which helps companies to gain some advantage against their competitors (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Buyers at business-to-business (B2B) markets are relatively more dependent on sellers when comparing to the consumer markets because of the associated risks of changing the suppliers (Cannon and Perreault, 1999). For that reason, most of the organizational buyers are trying to develop long-term and jointly beneficial relationships with their suppliers, as well as the organizational sellers try the same to ensure customer loyalty and increase their profitability. This practical outcome drives the interest of researchers, and the relationship quality between buyers and sellers has become a key concept in business-to-business relationship marketing studies for decades.

In this chapter, an extensive literature review about the relationship quality has been performed, and the author of this thesis summarized the historical developments of the B2B relationship quality similar to Athanasopoulou's (2009) study at European Journal of Marketing. After reviewing the relationship quality literature, previous work on interpersonal factors that may have a bearing on relationship quality was scrutinized.

2.1 Relationship Quality

Relationship quality is a higher order construct that affects several key relational consequences on an exchange relationship. These consequences include anticipation of future interaction (Crosby et al, 1990), loyalty (de Ruyeter et al, 2001), repurchase intentions (Hewett et al, 2002), export performance (Lages et al, 2005), economic and non-economic satisfaction (Farrelly and Quester, 2005), strategic performance (Ramaseshan et al, 2006), and long-term solidity of buyer-seller relationships (Hennig-Thurau and Klee, 1997; Hewett et al, 2002; Ulaga and Eggert, 2006). Hutchinson and colleagues (2011) showed that relationship quality affects the behavioral intentions

directly, and it has a mediating role between relationship value and behavioral intentions. Although there are many researches about the relationship quality, there is no consensus at the academia on operationalization of relationship quality construct, and an extensive diversity of measures have been used on relationship quality researches; however, trust, commitment and satisfaction are the three most commonly used dimensions that have been used and validated in diverse setting (Athanasopoulou, 2009). Finally, yet importantly, there is uncertainty about the unit of analysis at relationship quality researches. There should certainly be at least two parties involved to talk about relationship quality, but most of the research has been performed on a monadic perspective (either buyer view on the seller or vice versa), and very limited research has been performed on a dyadic perspective (Athanasopoulou, 2009).

Being a broad theme in relationship marketing studies, the antecedents of relationship quality has also received a great deal of interest in academia. Studies investigating relationship quality have included rational or non-personal factors as the antecedents of relationship quality. For instance, Dwyer and colleagues (1987) examined participation in decision making, formalization, centralization; Lagace and colleagues (1991) researched the effects of ethical behavior, expertise, frequency of interaction, and duration of the relationship to the relationship quality; Wray and colleagues (1994) studied selling orientation, customer orientation, seller's expertise and ethics, and relationship duration as the antecedents of relationship quality. Athanasopoulou (2009) examined various studies related to relationship quality and categorized the antecedents of relationship quality into four major categories of variables: (1) Characteristics of the two parties in the relationship which include similarity, seller expertise, ethical behavior, manufacturer strengths, service provider attributes, the reputation of the supplier and relationship orientation; (2) Relationship attributes including the length of the relationship, structural or social bonds, dependence and power, relationship termination costs, relationship benefits, switching costs and cooperation; (3) Offer characteristics including product performance and after-sales service and service quality; and finally (4) Environmental Factors such as economic, political, legal, technical (Athanasopoulou, 2009). Similarity, as an antecedent of relationship quality), has received some interest in academia (Crosby et al, 1990; Doney and Cannon, 1997; Smith, 1998; Boles et al, 2000).

Undoubtedly, Athanasopoulou (2009) is a key study in the area of relationship quality. Athanasopoulou (2009) reviewed the marketing literature on relationship quality (RQ) comprehensively, established an overall framework, and proposed opportunities for supplementary research. The findings of Athanasopoulou (2009) indicate that RQ research focused on products use survey data, and the research unit was mainly the organizational buying center. Moreover, the previous research has primarily been done in the US or European markets; and there was no generally accepted consensus at the RQ framework. Athanasopoulou's study (2009) helped researchers determine the gaps in the RQ literature and outline future research in the field. To the date Athanasopoulou's study (2009) has been cited more than 550 times by the researches.

2.1.1 Structured literature review

This section is structured similarly to the Athanasopoulou (2009) article. First, the author reviewed the history of relationship quality research, described the research methodology, and summarized the data generation process. As the current development trends in the relationship quality research domain indicate the direction of future research in the field, the author generated the summary on a timeline that is helpful to analyze the hot topics.

Second, the author summarized the review results based on the numerous empirical understandings from previous literature. The author summarizes the conclusions, developments, and trends, including the outcomes of the only relationship quality literature review study that was done by Athanasopoulou (2009). In this section, the author sheds light on the RQ literature from where Athanasopoulou (2009) leaves, 2008 to 2018.

Third and last, based on the tabulation results, the author summarizes the dimensions, antecedents, consequences of relationship quality as well as how the relationship quality construct was used as a moderating variable in previous studies. In this section, the author of this thesis identified the gaps/inconsistencies in the relationship quality literature and listed interpersonal factors that can potentially have any direct or mediating effect on the B2B relationship quality.

2.1.2 Methodology

The method of data collection was impartial. Initially, the author performed a systematic and comprehensive literature scanning for publications regarding relationship quality at the major journal databases including Emerald eJournals Premier, Science Direct, Springer Nature, Taylor, and Francis and Business Source Complete. The author of this thesis defined the selection criteria to include the articles of this study. The author performed an enhanced form of Athanasopoulou (2009) method to apply a systematic literature review and put on the next steps in classifying related papers in the field of relationship quality published in journals available on the above databases.

First, the phrase "relationship quality" has been researched in the databases with the inclusion of titles, abstracts, keywords, and texts of the manuscripts that are included in these databases, where the publication year was filtered from 2008 to 2018, and the paper type is limited to peer-reviewed academic articles. The author limited the search from 2008 as Athanasopoulou (2009) covers the years between 1987 and 2007. Practitioner articles were not included, but it is not because the practitioner articles are not valuable, but it is because their form is typically not presented similar to the academic journal papers, and they generally do not hold a specific research model or don't have clearly set objectives and methodology. There was no other effort at this phase to eliminate the studies based on their contexts, scope, research methods, or findings, so that the included papers could have been broader than the purpose of this research, and they could be reviewed later. All of these 210 articles were summarized in a spreadsheet. In addition, the full copies of these 210 articles were also saved for further review.

Secondly, after the initial compilation of the related articles, a filtering mechanism was performed on the shortlisted papers, and the papers that do not have relationship quality as a construct were eliminated. All the papers included in this study contain the relationship quality construct at least in one of the four categories: antecedent, mediating variable, moderating variable, or consequence. After the second elimination process, 142 articles have remained on the spreadsheet. Table 2.1 shows an indication of articles printed at journals in five-year periods (Findings of Athanasopoulou (2009) are included in this table). Based on this table, it can be seen that there is a growing interest in the topic of relationship quality in later years.

Table 2.1: Number of articles containing the relationship quality construct.

Time Period	Total Articles
1987 - 1990	2
1991 - 1995	9
1996 - 2000	21
2001 - 2005	21
2006 - 2010	45
2011 - 2015	65
2016 - 2018	42
Total	205

Lastly, as this thesis is limited to the papers that are conducted in the business-to-business context, the manuscripts in the business-to-customer context (63) and the conceptual development papers (5) were eliminated. Ultimately, 73 articles are remained after the elimination process.

Using the remaining 73 papers, and similar to Athanasopoulou's (2009) method, the author developed a series of tables for comparison. The author hopes that the outcomes of this effort would be useful for scholars who want to research the relationship quality topic in the future. The table was built to distinguish the major features of each study into eight categories in order to be able to review the similarities and differences of the studies within the specified period:

(1) Paper details (Author – Journal – Year of publication).
(2) Unit of Analysis (Monadic or Dyadic).
(3) Sample Information (Industry, sample size)
(4) Methodology (qualitative, quantitative, in-depth interview)
(5) Relationship Quality Antecedents
(6) Relationship Quality Dimensions
(7) Relationship Quality Consequences
(8) Relationship Quality as Moderating Variable

The data listed on the tables are straight forward, so they cannot be classified due to subjectivity by the author. That being said, in order to avoid any mistake, a secondary control was performed on the data listed on the tables after a certain time. The purpose of the secondary check was to ensure the accuracy of the data with the fundamentals of the summarized article.

2.1.3 Summary of literature review

The relationship quality construct is not something new in the marketing literature. The term 'relationship Quality' was first used by Dwyer and Oh (1987) and recognized more by academia after Crosby and colleagues' (1990) study. Athanasopoulou (2009) has summarized the research on relationship quality, and her literature review covers the years from 1987 to 2007. It is reported that "62.5 percent of studies appeared in just six journals and Industrial Marketing Management alone published 18.75 percent of the studies" (Athanasopoulou, 2009, p.586) until 2007. When the author of this thesis reviewed the articles with 'relationship quality' as a construct, the percentage distribution of the studies by journal had changed dramatically, with the majority of the studies still published in top-tier marketing journals. Top six journals, namely Industrial Marketing Management, Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing, Marketing Intelligence and Planning, and Journal of Global Marketing holds 75% of the articles with 'relationship quality' as a construct. It is notable that just Industrial Marketing Management holds 32% of all studies published between 2008 and 2018. More details about the percentages of studies that found a place in each journal can be seen in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Distribution of articles with relationship quality as constuct by journal.

Journal	# of Studies 2008 - 2018	% 2008 - 2018
Industrial Marketing Management	23	32%
Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing	11	15%
Journal of Business Research	10	14%
Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing	4	5%
Marketing Intelligence & Planning	4	5%
Journal of Global Marketing	3	4%
European Journal of Marketing	2	3%
International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management	2	3%
Journal of Marketing	2	3%
Journal of Purchasing&SupplyManagement	2	3%
Journal of Relationship Marketing	2	3%
Journal of Strategic Marketing	2	3%
Chinese Management Studies	1	1%
International Journal of Service Industry Management	1	1%
Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	1	1%
Journal of Marketing Channels	1	1%
Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management	1	1%
Journal of Services Marketing	1	1%

It is also noteworthy that the classification of studies in terms of relationship sides (being from the buyers' perspective vs. the sellers' perspective) has shown significant difference compared to Athanasopoulou's (2009) literature review, which reported that among 64 studies, most studies (47) reviewed were on the buyer side (Athanasopoulou, 2009). However, in the literature review between 2008 and 2018, it has been found that only 25 (out of 73) studies were on the buyer side. The number of studies having seller's perspective increased notably since 2008. Even though the interaction is the core of buyer and seller relationships, only six of the studies included in this review (Palmatier, 2008; Lai et al, 2009; Wu et al, 2010; Mullins et al, 2014; Sánchez and Santos-Vijande, 2015; Lussier and Hall, 2018) observed both sides of the relationship. The number of dyadic studies is comparable with Athanasopoulou's (2009) literature review.

Similar to Athanasopoulou (2009), 67 (92%) of the 73 studies used quantitative research methods (primarily surveys) to validate their hypothesis, and just 6 of them (Macdonald et al, 2011; Mysen et al, 2012; Sieg et al, 2012; Akrout, 2014; Sjoerdsmaand van Weele, 2015; ALHussan et al, 2017) are conceptual or exploratory qualitative studies. The sample sizes of those 67 quantitative studies vary from 30 to 636 by the context of the study. In general, when the research is conducted in more than one industry, services sector, or retail sector, the sample sizes vary significantly (from 30 to 500), but if the research is conducted in production companies, heavy manufacturing industry, or SMEs, the sample sizes are generally larger (more than 150). It is also worth mentioning that the dyadic studies are predominantly performed in the production sector or services sector, and the sample sizes of the dyadic studies are above average. It is also interesting to see that there is no grouping in samples among the different types of unit of analysis. More details about the industry, respondents, methodology, and sample sizes of the reviewed articles can be seen in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: List of articles that includes relationship quality as a construct.

Author, Year, Journal	Industry	Respondents	Methodology	Sample Size
Gonzalez-Padron et al, 2008, IMM	Mixed	Buyer	Quantitative	200
Han and Sung, 2008, IMM	Mixed	Buyer	Quantitative	279
Lai et al, 2008, IMM	Services	Salesperson	Quantitative	358
Myhal et al, 2008, JSM	Mixed	Salesperson	Quantitative	55
Palmatier, 2008, JM	Services	Seller and Buyer (Dyad)	Quantitative	487
Skarmeas et al, 2008, IMM	Production	Salesperson	Quantitative	177
Wagner and Lindemann, 2008, JBIM	Production	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	142
Bradford and Weitz, 2009, JPSSM	Mixed	Salesperson	Quantitative	235
Lai et al, 2009, IMM	Mixed	Seller and Buyer (Dyad)	Quantitative	71
Ural, 2009, EJM	Services	Salesperson	Quantitative	300
Kuhlmeier and Knight, 2010, JGM	Services	Salesperson	Quantitative	265
Mitręga and Katrichis, 2010, IMM	Manufacturing	Buyer	Quantitative	208
Park et al, 2010, IMM	Production	Salesperson	Quantitative	328
Steward et al, 2010, JBBM	Mixed	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	110
Svensson et al, 2010, JBR	SME	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	212
Wu et al, 2010, JBR	Production	Seller and Buyer (Dyad)	Quantitative	70
Alejandro et al, 2011, IMM	Production	Salesperson	Quantitative	66
Barry and Doney, 2011, JGM	Services	Buyer	Quantitative	202
Bobot, 2011, IJRDM	Retail	Buyer	Quantitative	112
Fang et al, 2011, IMM	Production	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	136
Gu and Wang, 2011, IMM	Services	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	131
Hutchinson et al, 2011, IMM	Production	Buyer	Quantitative	159
Jiang et al, 2011, JBIM	Production	Buyer	Quantitative	636
Kim et al, 2011, JBR	Services	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	157
Macdonald et al, 2011, IMM	Mixed	Buyer	Qualitative	n/a
Mysen et al, 2011, MIP	SME	Buyer	Quantitative	212
Obadia and Vida, 2011, JBR	Services	Salesperson	Quantitative	283
Park et al, 2011, JStm	Mixed	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	211
Terawatanavong et al, 2011, JBR	Services	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	162
Chang et al, 2012, IMM	Mixed	Buyer	Quantitative	104

Table 2.3 (continued): List of articles that includes relationship quality as a construct.

Author, Year, Journal	Industry	Respondents	Methodology	Sample Size
Kashyap and Sivadas, 2012, JBR	Production	Buyer	Quantitative	241
Mitręga, 2012, JBIM	Manufacturing	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	264
Mysen et al, 2012, JBBM	Mixed	Senior Level Employees	Qualitative	77
Sieg et al, 2012, IJSIM	Services	Salesperson	In-Depth Interview	49
Song et al, 2012, JBIM	Production	Buyer	Quantitative	239
Ahamed and Skallerud, 2013, JGM	Production	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	180
Aziz and Noor, 2013, IJRDM	Retail	Buyer	Quantitative	30
Dant et al, 2013, EJM	Retail	Buyer	Quantitative	225
Drollinger and Comer, 2013, JBIM	Mixed	Salesperson	Quantitative	175
Fu et al, 2013, CMS	SME	Salesperson	Quantitative	462
Marquardt, 2013, IMM	Mixed	Buyer	Quantitative	249
Segarra-Moliner et al, 2013, MIP	Services	Buyer	Quantitative	68
Svensson et al, 2013, MIP	Mixed	n/a	Quantitative	500
Tzempelikos and Gounaris, 2013, JStm	Mixed	Salesperson	Quantitative	304
Yen and Hung, 2013, JBIM	Production	Buyer	Quantitative	218
Akrout, 2014, JBBM	Mixed	Buyer	Qualitative	39
de Vries et al, 2014, IMM	Production	Salesperson	Quantitative	70
Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014, IMM	Mixed	Salesperson	Quantitative	304
Guesalaga, 2014, IMM	Mixed	Salesperson	In-Depth Int&Quantitive	27 & 261
Mullins et al, 2014, JM	Services	Seller and Buyer (Dyad)	Quantitative	132
Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014a, JRM	Services	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	297
Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014b, MIP	Services	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	297
Sánchez and Santos-Vijande, 2015, JMC	Production	Seller and Buyer (Dyad)	Quantitative	181
Sarmento et al, 2015, IMM	Production	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	231
Sheu, 2015, IMM	Retail	Buyer	Quantitative	237
Sjoerdsmaand van Weele, 2015, JoP&SM	Mixed	Salesperson	Qualitative	n/a
Tzempelikos, 2015, JBIM	Mixed	Salesperson	Quantitative	304
Vyas and Raitani, 2015, JRM	Services	Buyer	Quantitative	347
Wu et al, 2015, JBR	SME	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	153
Prior, 2016, IMM	Mixed	Buyer	Quantitative	220

Table 2.3 (continued): List of articles that includes relationship quality as a construct.

Author, Year, Journal	Industry	Respondents	Methodology	Sample Size
Yen and Abosag, 2016, JBR	Mixed	Buyer	Quantitative	299
Zaefarian et al, 2016, IMM	Production	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	326
ALHussan et al, 2017, JBIM	Mixed	Senior Level Employees	In-Depth Interview	68
Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2017, IMM	Manufacturing	Buyer	Quantitative	228
Barac et al, 2017, JBIM	Services	Buyer	Quantitative	78
deLeon and Chatterjee, 2017, JAMS	Mixed	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	157
Hirshberg and Shoham, 2017, JBBM	Services	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	104
Tang and Xie, 2017, JBR	SME	Senior Level Employees	Quantitative	152
Badrinarayanan and Sierra, 2018, JBIM	Retail	Salesperson	Quantitative	168
Kros et al, 2018, JoP&SM	Services	Salesperson	Quantitative	130
Lussier and Hall, 2018, IMM	Services	Seller and Buyer (Dyad)	Quantitative	175
Skarmeas et al, 2018, JBR	Services	Buyer	Quantitative	271
Tzempelikos and Kooli, 2018, JBIM	Mixed	Salesperson	Quantitative	228

2.1.4 Definition and dimensions of relationship quality

An agreed upon dimensions list of the relationship quality construct does not exist in the academic literature. Athanasopoulou (2009) reported that "The dimensions of relationship quality include most of the time trust, commitment, and satisfaction. Those three are established as measures of relationship quality" (p.598). A similar outcome was also founded by Hutchinson and colleagues (2011) as they reported, "In reviewing this list of dimensions, it appears that trust, satisfaction, and commitment (affective) are most commonly used to operationalize the relationship quality construct." (p. 467).

In accordance with the literature review made in this dissertation, the definition of relationship quality still differs broadly among selected studies. However, the majority of those manuscripts tend to define the relationship quality construct using the trust, commitment, and satisfaction dimensions. For example, using Kumar and colleagues (1995) conceptualization, Wagner and Lindemann (2008, p.546) define relationship quality "as a higher-order concept, implying that a better-quality relationship results in a lower level of conflict as well as greater trust, commitment, the expectation of continuity, and willingness to invest." Similar to this definition, Guesalaga (2014, p. 1148) defined relationship quality as "a higher-order construct that encompasses satisfaction, trust, and commitment. These three aspects capture attitudinal elements that speak both to the present state as well as to the expectations of the future of the relationship". Gounaris and Tzempelikos (2014, p.1113) also argue, "late work on the notion of relationship quality would seem to come to a consensus that customer satisfaction, trust, and commitment to the supplier are the components upon which the notion of relationship quality grounds."

On the other hand, other scholars studying the relationship quality construct lean towards having their own intuitive understanding of the dimensions of relationship quality; thus, they offer theoretical definitions without boundaries. For example, Myhal and colleagues (2008) offer focusing on customer' needs and wants while defining the relationship quality and determining its dimensions, so they "adopt a new definition of customer-perceived relationship quality: it consists of those characteristics of the focal relationship, viewed as the sum of the interactions between the supplier, and the customer, that satisfy both the customer's personal and business purchasing needs" (Myhal et al, 2008, p. 446). According to Kim and colleagues

(2011, p.880) “relationship quality refers to the level of cooperation and tendency toward long term partnerships.” Song and colleagues (2012) defined the relationship quality with the cooperation, adaptation and external factors that affect the interaction. Lastly, Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar (2017, p.50) “focus on three different dimensions of relationship quality: information sharing, communication quality, and long-term relationship orientation.”

As demonstrated in Table 2.4, trust, commitment, and satisfaction are still the three main pillars of the relationship quality construct, which are widely accepted by researchers. Trust has been used as a dimension of relationship quality construct in 58 out of 73 studies. Commitment and satisfaction have been used 56 and 42 times, respectively, as dimensions of the relationship quality construct. 33 of 73 studies included trust, commitment, and satisfaction all together in the operationalization of the relationship quality, and just 5 of these 33 studies had additional dimensions to the trust, commitment, and satisfaction trio. Svensson and colleagues (2010, 2013) added “cooperation” as a dimension of relationship quality. Nguyen and Nguyen (2014a, 2014b) included “opportunism” as a dimension of relationship quality, and finally, Sjoerdsmaand van Weele (2015) included “cooperation,” “communication quality,” and “information sharing” as additional dimensions of the relationship quality construct.

Table 2.4: Dimensions of relationship quality.

Author, Year, Journal	Trust	Commitment	Satisfaction	Cooperation	Communication Quality	Long Term Orientation	Opportunism	Information Sharing	Competitive Position	External Assosiations	Interpersonal Relationship	Level of Conflict	Relationship Quality	Situational Factors	Adaptation	Assurance	Closeness of management	Exchange Efficiency	Empathy	Fairness	Frequenct of Contact	Loyalty	Mutual Benefit	Nature of relationship	Personal Appeal	Professional Relationship	Reciprocity Norms	Relationship Impact	Responsiveness	Social Capital	Uncertainity
Gonzalez-Padron et al, 2008, IMM		X																				X									
Han and Sung, 2008, IMM			X		X	X		X																							
Lai et al, 2008, IMM	X																			X											
Myhal et al, 2008, JSM									X	X				X														X			
Palmatier, 2008, JM	X	X																X									X				
Skarmeas et al, 2008, IMM	X	X	X																												
Wagner and Lindemann, 2008, JBIM	X	X	X																												
Bradford and Weitz, 2009, JPSSM	X	X																													
Lai et al, 2009, IMM	X	X																													
Ural, 2009, EJM			X		X	X		X																							
Kuhlmeier and Knight, 2010, JGM	X	X		X	X																										
Mitręga and Katrichis, 2010, IMM	X	X																													
Park et al, 2010, IMM	X	X																													
Steward et al, 2010, JBBM	X		X																												
Svensson et al, 2010, JBR	X	X	X	X																											
Wu et al, 2010, JBR	X	X	X																												
Alejandro et al, 2011, IMM	X	X	X																												
Barry and Doney, 2011, JGM	X	X	X																												
Bobot, 2011, IJRDM	X	X																													

Table 2.4 (continued): Dimensions of relationship quality.

Author, Year, Journal	Trust	Commitment	Satisfaction	Cooperation	Communication Quality	Long Term Orientation	Opportunism	Information Sharing	Competitive Position	External Assosiations	Interpersonal Relationship	Level of Conflict	Relationship Quality	Situational Factors	Adaptation	Assurance	Closeness of management	Exchange Efficiency	Empathy	Fairness	Frequenct of Contact	Loyalty	Mutual Benefit	Nature of relationship	Personal Appeal	Professional Relationship	Reciprocity Norms	Relationship Impact	Responsiveness	Social Capital	Uncertainity
Fang et al, 2011, IMM	X	X																													
Gu and Wang, 2011, IMM	X	X										X																			
Hutchinson et al, 2011, IMM	X	X	X																												
Jiang et al, 2011, JBIM		X	X		X	X																									
Kim et al, 2011, JBR		X																													
Macdonald et al, 2011, IMM	X			X	X						X						X						X	X	X						
Mysen et al, 2011, MIP	X	X					X																								
Obadia and Vida, 2011, JBR	X			X		X																									
Park et al, 2011, JStm	X	X																													
Terawatanavong et al, 2011, JBR	X	X																													
Chang et al, 2012, IMM								X													X									X	
Kashyap and Sivadas, 2012, JBR	X	X	X																												
Mitręga, 2012, JBIM		X	X																												
Mysen et al, 2012, JBBM	X	X					X						X																		
Sieg et al, 2012, IJSIM	X		X				X				X															X					
Song et al, 2012, JBIM				X						X					X																
Ahamed and Skallerud, 2013, JGM	X	X	X																												
Aziz and Noor, 2013, IJRDM	X	X	X																												
Dant et al, 2013, EJM	X	X	X																												
Drollinger and Comer, 2013, JBIM		X																													

Table 2.4 (continued): Dimensions of relationship quality.

Author, Year, Journal	Trust	Commitment	Satisfaction	Cooperation	Communication Quality	Long Term Orientation	Opportunism	Information Sharing	Competitive Position	External Assosiations	Interpersonal Relationship	Level of Conflict	Relationship Quality	Situational Factors	Adaptation	Assurance	Closeness of management	Exchange Efficiency	Empathy	Fairness	Frequenct of Contact	Loyalty	Mutual Benefit	Nature of relationship	Personal Appeal	Professional Relationship	Reciprocity Norms	Relationship Impact	Responsiveness	Social Capital	Uncertainity
Fu et al, 2013, CMS	X	X																												
Marquardt, 2013, IMM	X	X	X																											
Segarra-Moliner et al, 2013, MIP	X	X					X																							
Svensson et al, 2013, MIP	X	X	X	X																										
Tzempelikos and Gounaris, 2013, JStm	X	X	X																											
Yen and Hung, 2013, JBIM	X		X																											
Akrout, 2014, JBBM	X	X	X																											
de Vries et al, 2014, IMM	X			X												X			X									X		
Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014, IMM	X	X	X																											
Guesalaga, 2014, IMM	X	X	X																											
Mullins et al, 2014, JM	X	X	X																											
Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014a, JRM	X	X	X				X																							
Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014b, MIP	X	X	X				X																							
Sánchez and Santos-Vijande, 2015, JMC	X	X	X																											
Sarmento et al, 2015, IMM	X	X	X																											
Sheu, 2015, IMM	X	X	X																											
Sjoerdsmaand van Weele, 2015, JoP&SM	X	X	X	X	X			X																						
Tzempelikos, 2015, JBIM	X	X	X																											
Vyas and Raitani, 2015, JRM	X		X																											
Wu et al, 2015, JBR	X	X																												

Table 2.4 (continued): Dimensions of relationship quality.

Author, Year, Journal	Trust	Commitment	Satisfaction	Cooperation	Communication Quality	Long Term Orientation	Opportunism	Information Sharing	Competitive Position	External Assosiations	Interpersonal Relationship	Level of Conflict	Relationship Quality	Situational Factors	Adaptation	Assurance	Closeness of management	Exchange Efficiency	Empathy	Fairness	Frequenct of Contact	Loyalty	Mutual Benefit	Nature of relationship	Personal Appeal	Professional Relationship	Reciprocity Norms	Relationship Impact	Responsiveness	Social Capital	Uncertainity
Prior, 2016, IMM	X	X	X																												
Yen and Abosag, 2016, JBR	X	X		X	X		X					X																			X
Zaefarian et al, 2016, IMM	X	X																													
ALHussan et al, 2017, JBIM	X	X	X																												
Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2017, IMM					X	X		X																							
Barac et al, 2017, JBIM		X	X																												
deLeon and Chatterjee, 2017, JAMS			X																												
Hirshberg and Shoham, 2017, JBBM	X	X	X																												
Tang and Xie, 2017, JBR	X	X	X																												
Badrinarayanan and Sierra, 2018, JBIM	X	X	X																												
Kros et al, 2018, JoP&SM													X																		
Lussier and Hall, 2018, IMM	X	X	X																												
Skarmeas et al, 2018, JBR	X	X	X																												
Tzempelikos and Kooli, 2018, JBIM	X	X	X																												

On the other hand, there are six (Myhal et al, 2008; Kim et al, 2011; Chang et al, 2012; Song et al, 2012; Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2017; Kros et al, 2018) studies, which include neither trust, commitment nor satisfaction in the operalization of relationship quality. These studies measured relationship quality using dimensions including "cooperation" (Song et al, 2012), "communication quality" (Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2017), "long term orientation" (Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2017), "information sharing" (Chang et al, 2012; Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2017), "competitive position" (Myhal et al, 2008), "external associations" (Myhal et al, 2008; Song et al, 2012), "situational factors" (Myhal et al, 2008), "adaptation" (Song et al, 2012), "frequency of contact" (Chang et al, 2012), "relationship impact" (Myhal et al, 2008), "social capital" (Chang et al, 2012). Some of these dimensions, namely "cooperation" (Crosby et al, 1990), "communication quality"(Crosby et al, 1990), "information sharing" (Boles et al, 2000), "adaptation" (Keillor et al, 2000) and "frequency of contact" (Leuthesser, 1997) are considered as dimensions of relational selling behavior rather than relationship quality.

The relationship quality construct consists of at least two dimensions in the majority of the studies, and only four (Kim et al, 2011; Drollinger and Comer, 2013; deLeon and Chatterjee, 2017; Kros et al, 2018) consider relationship quality as a stand-alone construct. The measures of two of these studies (Kim et al, 2011; Drollinger and Comer, 2013) contain measures that intend to measure the commitment level between two businesses where commitment refers to the inclination of two businesses to allocate resources and time to develop a continuing relationship (Mohr and Spekman, 1994). Their operationalization of the relationship quality construct is very similar to the commitment operationalization (Palmatier et al, 2006) that is framed as businesses are not only willing to comply with the conditions of the contract, but also to support and seek activities that need joint contribution. deLeon and Chatterjee (2017) considered relationship quality as similar to relationship satisfaction. Finally, the relationship quality measure in Kros and colleagues' (2018) study contains four items that measure trust, commitment, and satisfaction under a single construct.

To summarize, there is still no single definition of the relationship quality construct, but majority of the studies being reviewed in this thesis consider the relationship quality construct as a multi-dimensional and higher-order construct. The most

commonly used dimension are trust, commitment, and satisfaction. The average number of the dimensions of relationship quality in these studies was 3.00, and 64 of 73 studies hold two to four dimensions of relationship quality construct. As shown in Figure 2.1, there is no trend in the academic literature either to increase or to decrease the number of the dimensions of relationship quality, and the majority of the studies still utilize three dimensions, which are predominantly trust, commitment, and satisfaction.

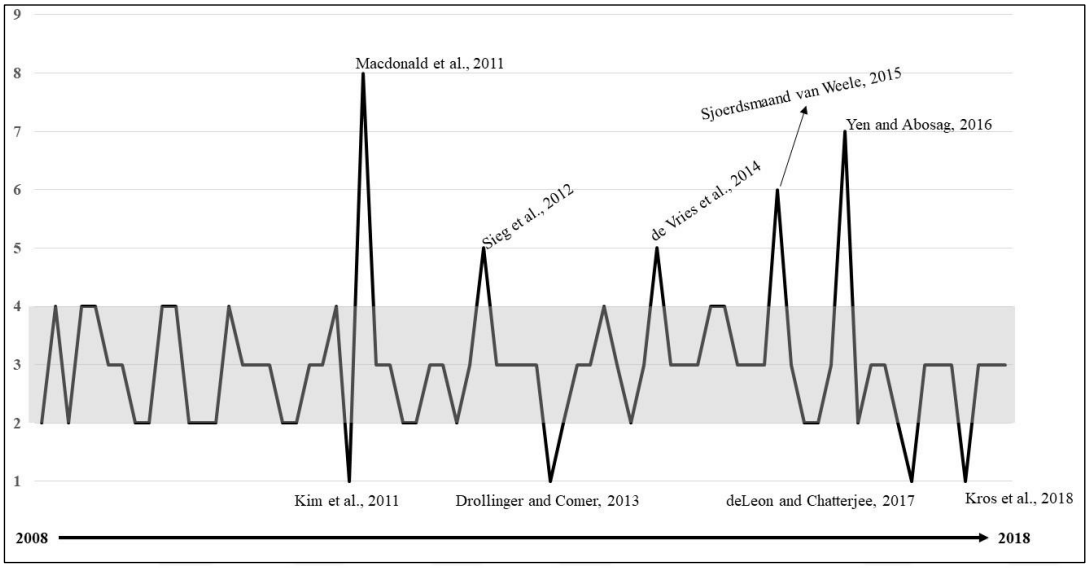

Figure 2.1: Number of dimensions of relationship quality construct.

2.1.5 Antecedents of relationship quality

Similar to Athanasopoulou (2009), the author of this dissertation grouped the antecedents into four categories namely, (1) Antecedents related to inter-personal characteristics of the buyer and/or seller, (2) Antecedents related to the relationship attributes, (3) Antecedents related to the characteristics of the offer, and (4) External/Environmental factors. The frequency and categories of the antecedents used in the reviewed articles are shown in Table 2.5. Based on this tabulation overview, the antecedents grouped under inter-personal characteristics have been used 36 times, the antecedents grouped under relationship characteristics have been used 37 times, the antecedents grouped under offer characteristics have been used 13 times, and the antecedents grouped under external factors have been used 14 times.

Table 2.5: Frequency and assigned categories of relationship quality antecedents.

Antecedent	Frequency	Group of Antecent			
		Inter Personal	Relationship Attributes	Offer Characteristic	External Environmental
No Antecedent	27				
Customer Orientation	6	X			
Relationship Value	5		X		
Adaptation	4	X			
Communication Quality	4		X		
Conflict Resolution	4			X	
Information exchange	4	X			
Market Orientation	4	X			
Distance	3				X
Fairness	3		X		
Individual Factors	3	X			
Power	3	X			
Top Management Involvement	3				X
Trust	3		X		
Active Listening	2	X			
Dependence	2		X		
Environmental Uncertainity	2				X
Loyalty	2		X		
Readiness	2			X	
Relationship Investments	2		X		
Role Performance	2		X		
Transaction Specific Investments	2			X	
Autonomy	1	X			
Better Quality of Alternative Suppliers	1				X
Business Relationship Function	1		X		
Centralization	1				X
Commitment	1		X		
Compliance	1				X
Cooperation	1	X			
Cultural Sensivity	1				X
Empathy	1	X			
Entrepreneurial Innovation	1	X			
Ethnocentrism	1	X			
Face to Face Contacts	1		X		
Flexibility	1	X			
Formalization	1		X		
Imagination	1	X			

Table 2.5 (continued): Frequency and assigned categories of relationship quality antecedents.

Antecedent	Frequency	Group of Antecent			
		Inter Personal	Relationship Attributes	Offer Characteristic	External Environmental
Interaction orientation	1	X			
Internal Relationship Quality	1				X
Mutual Benefits	1			X	
Partner Knowledge	1		X		
Personnel Competencies	1	X			
PRM	1		X		
Relationship Advertising	1		X		
Relationship Benefits	1		X		
Relationship Bonds	1		X		
Relationship Capability	1		X		
Relationship Fulfillment	1		X		
Relationship Sacrifices	1		X		
Reputation	1				X
Self-Efficacy	1			X	
Service Quality	1		X		
Similarity	1	X			
Social Exchange	1			X	
Strategic Decision Making	1			X	
Switching Cost	1		X		
Tactical Decision Making	1			X	

It is certain that not all of the studies should have an antecedent of relationship quality construct, so 27 of the reviewed studies do not have any antecedents of the relationship quality construct. On the other hand, 46 of the studies (equates 63%) have at least one antecedent for the relationship quality construct. Among these 46 studies, most commonly used antecedents are customer orientation (Barry and Doney, 2011; Kim et al, 2011; Tzempelikos and Gounaris, 2013; Guesalaga, 2014; Mullins et al, 2014; deLeon and Chatterjee, 2017), relationship value (Barry and Doney, 2011; Hutchinson et al, 2011; deLeon and Chatterjee, 2017; Skarmeas et al, 2018; Tzempelikos and Kooli, 2018), adaptation (Gonzalez-Padron et al, 2008; Park et al, 2010; Guesalaga, 2014; Skarmeas et al, 2018), communication quality (Mitręga and Katrichis, 2010; Ahamed and Skallerud, 2013; Guesalaga, 2014; Vyas and Raitani, 2015), conflict resolution, (Bradford and Weitz, 2009; Bobot, 2011; Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014;

Hirshberg and Shoham, 2017), information sharing (Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014; Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014b; Sarmento et al, 2015; Skarmeas et al, 2018), and market orientation (Park et al, 2010; Terawatanavong et al, 2011; Segarra-Moliner et al, 2013; Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014b). The antecedents of relationship quality in the selected studies are listed in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Antecedents of relationship quality by study.

Author, Year, Journal	RQ Antecedents
Gonzalez-Padron et al, 2008, IMM	Learning orientation, entrepreneurial innovation, autonomy
Han and Sung, 2008, IMM	Brand loyalty, brand trust
Lai et al, 2008, IMM	No Antecedent
Myhal et al, 2008, JSM	No Antecedent
Palmatier, 2008, JM	No Antecedent
Skarmeas et al, 2008, IMM	Psychic distance, environmental uncertainty, role performance, transaction specific investments
Wagner and Lindemann, 2008, JBIM	No Antecedent
Bradford and Weitz, 2009, JPSSM	Type of conflict, conflict management approach
Lai et al, 2009, IMM	No Antecedent
Ural, 2009, EJM	No Antecedent
Kuhlmeier and Knight, 2010, JGM	No Antecedent
Mitręga and Katrichis, 2010, IMM	Communication quality, personnel competencies, relationship investments, better quality of alternative suppliers
Park et al, 2010, IMM	Market information processing, adaptive selling behavior
Steward et al, 2010, JBBM	Supply manager's entrepreneurial ability
Svensson et al, 2010, JBR	No Antecedent
Wu et al, 2010, JBR	Behavioral repertoire, behavioral differentiation
Alejandro et al, 2011, IMM	No Antecedent
Barry and Doney, 2011, JGM	Perceived value, relationship bonds, relationship investment
Bobot, 2011, IJRDM	Type of conflict, conflict management approach
Fang et al, 2011, IMM	No Antecedent
Gu and Wang, 2011, IMM	Compliance, program fairness
Hutchinson et al, 2011, IMM	Relationship benefits, relationship sacrifices, relationship value
Jiang et al, 2011, JBIM	Trust, dependence
Kim et al, 2011, JBR	Customer orientation, technological capability for CRM
Macdonald et al, 2011, IMM	No Antecedent
Mysen et al, 2011, MIP	Environmental uncertainty, bonding structure
Obadia and Vida, 2011, JBR	No Antecedent
Park et al, 2011, JStm	No Antecedent
Terawatanavong et al, 2011, JBR	Supplier market orientation
Chang et al, 2012, IMM	No Antecedent
Kashyap and Sivadas, 2012, JBR	Distributive fairness, procedural fairness, Interactional fairness
Mitręga, 2012, JBIM	Partner knowledge, internal relationships quality
Mysen et al, 2012, JBBM	No Antecedent
Sieg et al, 2012, IJSIM	No Antecedent
Song et al, 2012, JBIM	Business relationship function
Ahamed and Skallerud, 2013, JGM	Communication climate, distance
Aziz and Noor, 2013, IJRDM	Switching costs, termination costs, operational costs

Table 2.6 (continued): Antecedents of relationship quality by study.

Author, Year, Journal	RQ Antecedents
Dant et al, 2013, EJM	Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, imagination
Drollinger and Comer, 2013, JBIM	Active empathetic listening trust
Fu et al, 2013, CMS	Expert power, legitimate power, reward power, coercive power
Marquardt, 2013, IMM	Buyer's attitude toward the sellers corporate brand, buyer's attitude toward the sellers product brand
Segarra-Moliner et al, 2013, MIP	Market orientation, service quality
Svensson et al, 2013, MIP	No Antecedent
Tzempelikos and Gounaris, 2013, JStm	Key account management orientation
Yen and Hung, 2013, JBIM	asset specifity
Akrout, 2014, JBBM	No Antecedent
de Vries et al, 2014, IMM	No Antecedent
Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014, IMM	Centralization, formalization, information sharing, conflict resolution
Guesalaga, 2014, IMM	Strategic customer contact, tactical customer contract, social customer contact, strategic decision making, tactical decision making, organization alignment
Mullins et al, 2014, JM	Self-efficacy, customer orientation, salesperson-customer similarity
Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014a, JRM	Cultural sensitivity, ethnocentrism
Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014b, MIP	Information exchange, market orientation
Sánchez and Santos-Vijande, 2015, JMC	No Antecedent
Sarmento et al, 2015, IMM	Information exchange, social exchange
Sheu, 2015, IMM	Countervailing power, joint action, bargaining power
Sjoerdsmaand van Weele, 2015, JoP&SM	No Antecedent
Tzempelikos, 2015, JBIM	Top management involvement, top management commitment
Vyas and Raitani, 2015, JRM	Relationship advertising, 2-way communications, database marketing, face-to-face contacts, and listening activities
Wu et al, 2015, JBR	No Antecedent
Prior, 2016, IMM	Flexibility, reputation, empathy
Yen and Abosag, 2016, JBR	No Antecedent
Zaefarian et al, 2016, IMM	Procedural fairness, interactional fairness, distributive fairness
ALHussan et al, 2017, JBIM	Top management involvement
Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2017, IMM	No Antecedent
Barac et al, 2017, JBIM	Relationship capability, relationship fulfillment, readiness for new e-business models, social prm, analytical prm, operational prm
deLeon and Chatterjee, 2017, JAMS	Instrumental service, interpersonal service, value mindset, realized value
Hirshberg and Shoham, 2017, JBBM	Use of power, conflict, conflict management strategies
Tang and Xie, 2017, JBR	No Antecedent
Badrinarayanan and Sierra, 2018, JBIM	No Antecedent
Kros et al, 2018, JoP&SM	No Antecedent
Lussier and Hall, 2018, IMM	Perceived cooperation
Skarmeas et al, 2018, JBR	Psychic distance, information sharing, joint sense making, knowledge integration, relationship value
Tzempelikos and Kooli, 2018, JBIM	Relationship value

The antecedents of the relationship quality construct differ broadly in the reviewed studies. It has been reported in Athanasopoulou (2009, p.601) that "the most commonly used variables in all contexts include similarity; seller expertise; relational selling behavior; relationship duration or length, and communication quality". In comparison to this finding about the most commonly used antecedents in 2009, in current study, the only common most frequently used antecedent is "communication quality." In other words, it can be seen that the focus on the relationship quality studies has changed over the time. Athanasopoulou (2009, p.601) also pointed out that "Generally, the studies reviewed study endogenous variables… On the other hand, we can hypothesize that the study of exogenous or environmental effects on relationship quality will be studied when the endogenous variables have been analyzed in depth." Athanasopoulou was correct on her proposition because the external factors were only taken into account in two studies, however the external factors (such as, distance, environmental uncertainty, cultural sensitivity, etc...) were taken into account in 13 of the recent studies as an antecedent of relationship quality. Certainly, endogenous factors are still taken more into account than exogenous factors, but the trend in academia is towards having more exogenous factors as an antecedent of relationship quality.

The author of this thesis also believes that it is worth mentioning that four of the reviewed studies have both personal characteristics and relationship characteristics as antecedents of relationship quality. Mitręga and Katrichis (2010) suggest that the emotional manner of the relationship between the buyer and the seller is associated with the personal competencies as well as corporate level communication quality. Moreover, they argue that the increase in the emotional manner will also increase the relational benefits. Drollinger and Comer (2013) studied the effects of active empathetic listening and trust on the relationship quality in their research and both their hypotheses were supported. Nguyen and Nguyen (2014b) hypothesized that both information exchange and market orientation have positive influences on relationship quality, and in accordance with the performed analysis, both their hypotheses were supported. Interpersonal service, value mindset, and realized value were also found as antecedents of relationship quality (deLeon and Chatterjee, 2017).

2.1.6 Consequences of relationship quality

Similar to the antecedents of relationship quality construct, not all the studies reviewed have a consequence of the relationship quality construct in their research models. 28 of the reviewed 73 studies do not have any consequence of relationship quality construct in their models. The remainder of 45 studies have at least one consequence in their research model.

The consequences of the relationship quality construct in Athanasopoulou's (2009) study were grouped into three categories: (1) "Business or service or channel performance", (2) "Relational benefits" and (3) "Satisfaction-related variables". However, the author of this thesis believes that it will be better to group the consequences of the relationship quality construct for the reviewed studies published between 2008 -2018 into four groups as follows:

(1) Performance related consequences have found their place in 21 of the relationship quality construct related studies. The performance related consequences include "Financial Performance" (Ural, 2009, Chang et al, 2012; Ahamed and Skallerud, 2013; Tzempelikos and Gounaris, 2013; Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014; Tzempelikos, 2015; Yen and Abosag, 2016; Zaefarian et al, 2016; Hirshberg and Shoham, 2017), "Business Performance" (Obadia and Vida, 2011; Mitręga, 2012; Fu et al, 2013; Tzempelikos and Gounaris, 2013; Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014; Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014a; Sheu, 2015), "Seller/Supplier Performance" (Park et al, 2010; Steward et al, 2010; Alejandro et al, 2011; Drollinger and Comer, 2013), "Buyer Performance" (Song et al, 2012), "Intermediary Performance" (Kuhlmeier and Knight, 2010), "Strategic Performance" (Ural, 2009), and "Transaction Performance" (Han and Sung, 2008).

(2) Interpersonal / relational benefits related consequences have been taken into consideration again in 21 of the relationship quality construct related studies. These consequences include "Anticipation of Future Interaction" (Lai et al, 2008; Barry and Doney, 2011; Sarmento et al, 2015; Yen and Abosag, 2016), "Adaptation" (Fang et al, 2011; Chang et al, 2012; Sánchez and Santos-Vijande, 2015), "Information Sharing" (Yen and Hung, 2013; de Vries et al, 2014; Kros et al, 2018), "Loyalty" (Mitręga and Katrichis, 2010; Alejandro et al, 2011; Wu et al, 2015), "Satisfaction" (Ural, 2009; Terawatanavong et al, 2011; Hirshberg and Shoham, 2017), "Behavioral Intention"

(Hutchinson et al, 2011; Tzempelikos and Kooli, 2018), “Commitment” (Han and Sung, 2008; Lai et al, 2008), “Cooperation” (Wu et al, 2015; Hirshberg and Shoham, 2017), “Value Shares” (Wagner and Lindemann, 2008; Kashyap and Sivadas, 2012), “Recommend the Seller” (Mitręga and Katrichis, 2010), and “Trust” (Lai et al, 2008).

(3) Corporate level benefits have been considered as a consequence of relationship quality in 13 of the relationship quality construct related studies. These benefits include “Innovation” (Fang et al, 2011; Kim et al, 2011; Chang et al, 2012), “Benefits” (Kros et al, 2018), “Brand Advocacy” (Badrinarayanan and Sierra, 2018), “Brand Equity” (Marquardt, 2013), “Consistency” (Alejandro et al, 2011), “Cross-buying Intentions” (Vyas and Raitani, 2015), “Cycle Time” (Gonzalez-Padron et al, 2008), “Market Based Learning Process” (Park et al, 2011), “Patronage Concentration” (Mitręga and Katrichis, 2010), “Salesperson Accuracy” (Mullins et al, 2014), and “Specific Asset Investment” (Wu et al, 2015).

(4) Value related consequences has been interested at 3 of the RQ construct related researches. These consequences include “Relationship Value” (Palmatier, 2008; Alejandro et al, 2011), “Emotional Value”, “Functional Value”, and “Social Value” has been researched at the study of Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar (2017).

Athanasopoulou (2009, p.599) also reported that “Since relationships have been analysed more in detail in later years, we observe an increase in the use of relationship-related variables in B-to-B studies from 1998 onwards”. However, the studies published between 2008 and 2018 did not show the same trend. On the contrary, there is no trend among the consequence groups within those years. The trendline of each consequence group is shown in Figure 2.2. That being said, the performance related consequences and the interpersonal / relationship related consequences are still used much more than other consequences in the studies.

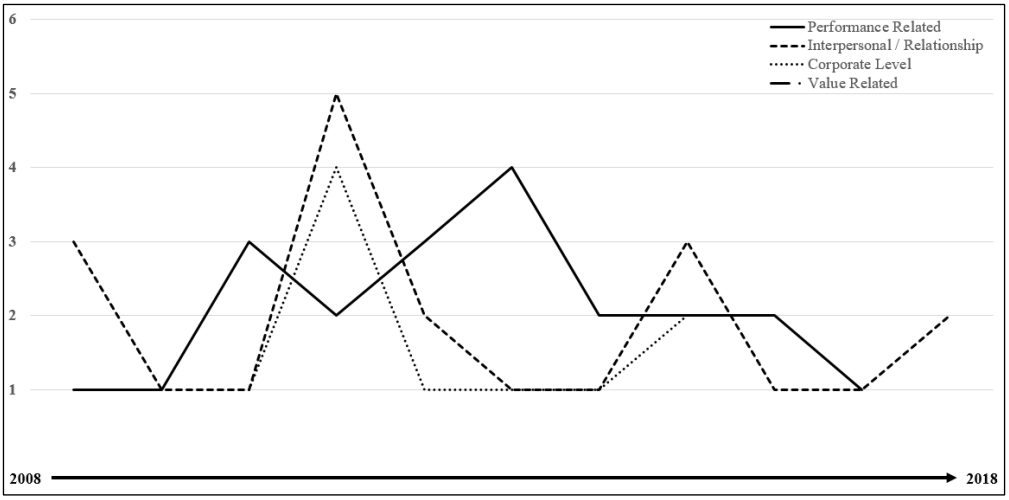

Figure 2.2: Number of studies for each consequence group by year.

The consequences of RQ at the selected studies are shown in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7: Consequences of relationship quality.

Author, Year, Journal	Financial Performance	Business Performance	Seller / Supplier Performance	Buyer Performance	Intermediary	Strategic Performance	Transaction Performance	Anticipation of Future Interaction	Adaptation	Information Sharing	Loyalty	Satisfaction	Behavioral Intention	Commitment	Cooperation	Value Shares	Recommend the Seller	Trust	Innovation	Benefits	Brand Advocacy	Brand Equity	Consistency	Cross-buying Intentions	Cycle Time	Market Based Learning Process	Patronage concentration	Salesperson Accuracy	Specific Asset Investment	Relationship Value	Emotional Value	Functional Value	Social Value
Gonzalez-Padron et al, 2008, IMM																									X								
Han and Sung, 2008, IMM							X							X																			
Lai et al, 2008, IMM								X						X				X															
Palmatier, 2008, JM																														X			
Wagner and Lindemann, 2008, JBIM																X																	
Ural, 2009, EJM	X					X						X																					
Kuhlmeier and Knight, 2010, JGM					X																												
Mitręga and Katrichis, 2010, IMM											X						X										X						
Park et al, 2010, IMM			X																														
Steward et al, 2010, JBBM			X																														
Alejandro et al, 2011, IMM			X								X												X							X			
Barry and Doney, 2011, JGM								X																									
Fang et al, 2011, IMM									X										X														
Hutchinson et al, 2011, IMM													X																				
Kim et al, 2011, JBR																			X														
Obadia and Vida, 2011, JBR		X																															

Table 2.7 (continued): Consequences of relationship quality.

Author, Year, Journal	Financial Performance	Business Performance	Seller / Supplier Performance	Buyer Performance	Intermediary	Strategic Performance	Transaction Performance	Anticipation of Future Interaction	Adaptation	Information Sharing	Loyalty	Satisfaction	Behavioral Intention	Commitment	Cooperation	Value Shares	Recommend the Seller	Trust	Innovation	Benefits	Brand Advocacy	Brand Equity	Consistency	Cross-buying Intentions	Cycle Time	Market Based Learning Process	Patronage concentration	Salesperson Accuracy	Specific Asset Investment	Relationship Value	Emotional Value	Functional Value	Social Value
Park et al, 2011, JStm																										X							
Terawatanavong et al, 2011, JBR												X																					
Chang et al, 2012, IMM	X								X										X														
Kashyap and Sivadas, 2012, JBR																X																	
Mitręga, 2012, JBIM		X																															
Song et al, 2012, JBIM				X																													
Ahamed and Skallerud, 2013, JGM	X																																
Drollinger and Comer, 2013, JBIM			X																														
Fu et al, 2013, CMS		X																															
Marquardt, 2013, IMM																						X											
Tzempelikos and Gounaris, 2013, JStm	X	X																															
Yen and Hung, 2013, JBIM										X																							
de Vries et al, 2014, IMM										X																							
Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014, IMM	X	X																															
Mullins et al, 2014, JM																											X						

Table 2.7 (continued): Consequences of relationship quality.

Author, Year, Journal	Financial Performance	Business Performance	Seller / Supplier Performance	Buyer Performance	Intermediary	Strategic Performance	Transaction Performance	Anticipation of Future Interaction	Adaptation	Information Sharing	Loyalty	Satisfaction	Behavioral Intention	Commitment	Cooperation	Value Shares	Recommend the Seller	Trust	Innovation	Benefits	Brand Advocacy	Brand Equity	Consistency	Cross-buying Intentions	Cycle Time	Market Based Learning Process	Patronage concentration	Salesperson Accuracy	Specific Asset Investment	Relationship Value	Emotional Value	Functional Value	Social Value
Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014a, JRM		X																															
Sánchez and Santos-Vijande, 2015, JMC									X																								
Sarmento et al, 2015, IMM								X																									
Sheu, 2015, IMM		X																															
Tzempelikos, 2015, JBIM	X																																
Vyas and Raitani, 2015, JRM																							X										
Wu et al, 2015, JBR											X				X													X					
Yen and Abosag, 2016, JBR	X							X																									
Zaefarian et al, 2016, IMM	X																																
Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2017, IMM																														X	X	X	
Hirshberg and Shoham, 2017, JBBM	X											X			X																		
Badrinarayanan and Sierra, 2018, JBIM																					X												
Kros et al, 2018, JoP&SM										X										X													
Tzempelikos and Kooli, 2018, JBIM													X																				

2.1.7 Relationship quality as moderating variable

Relationship quality is a higher-order construct that was used in many relationship marketing studies. However, it is interesting that only three studies reviewed (Palmatier, 2008; Lai et al, 2009 and Tang and Xie, 2017) used the relationship quality construct as a moderating variable in their conceptual frameworks. The relationships, on which the relationship quality construct is proposed as a moderating variable, are shown in Table 2.8.

Table 2.8: List of articles that used relationship quality as a moderating valiable.

Author, Year, Journal	Moderated Relationship	Result
Palmatier, 2008, JM	Contact Density ---> Customer Value	Supported
	Contact Authority --> Customer Value	Not Supported
Lai et al, 2009, IMM	Customer Market Orientation --> Relationship Learning	Supported
	Supplier Market Orientation --> Relationship Learning	Not Supported
Tang and Xie, 2017, JBR	Functional Conflict ---> Knowledge Sharing	Supported
	Knowledge Sharing ---> Innovation Capability	Not Supported
	Knowledge Sharing ---> Responsive Capability	Supported

2.1.8 Conclusions

Especially in the past decade, relationship quality has become much more influential on B2B studies. There is still no single definition that researchers agree upon regarding relationship quality. On the other hand, there is some consensus that relationship quality is a higher-level structure with many different but related dimensions (Woo and Ennew, 2004).

Trust, commitment, and satisfaction are still the most commonly used dimensions of relationship quality. These three dimensions, which are known as the cornerstones of relationship quality in the literature, often reveal that good quality relationships have remarkable results. Trust, which is accepted as the first of three structures, is defined as the desire and ability to trust the behavior and honesty of sellers and buyers in order to meet the long-term expectations of the other party. Most researchers claim that buyers' trust is a notable role in building long-term relationships and fostering customer loyalty (Morgan and Hunt, 1994).

Secondly, the concept of commitment is defined as maintaining a valuable relationship. In marketing research and practice, it is recognized that the interdependence between partners in business relations has provided considerable benefits for companies. The concept of commitment in the quality of the relationship was considered important mainly in terms of examining relationships. The concept not

only reveals a permanent constancy at the theoretical level but also serves as a consistent proxy for long-term relations at the empirical and operational level (Moorman et al, 1992).

Thirdly, the concept of satisfaction is understood as a guarantee perceived by the buyers regarding the piece of the relationship quality between the firms in the next period, assumed that the historical performance was constantly satisfactory. Based on the past marketing literature, it is stated that satisfaction is a basic performance indicator in order to evaluate the quality of the relationship between suppliers and customers. In B2B research, a few researchers stated that there is a strong bond between satisfaction and loyalty (Parsons, 2002).

There have been four mainstream antecedents (inter-personal characteristics, relationship attributes, characteristics of offering, and external/environmental factors) in the previous studies, which have a bearing on the relationship quality construct. Among those, the influence of inter-personal characteristics and the influence of the relationship attributes were researched most. Despite this fact, the author of this thesis still identified some gaps and inconsistencies in these two groups of antecedents.

Firstly, there is only a single study (Dant et al, 2013) that investigated the effect of personality on the relationship quality construct in a B2B setting. Dant and colleagues (2013, p.279) claimed that "four of the five personality dimensions had the predicted effect on the outcome variable of relationship quality. Dimensions of "agreeableness", "conscientiousness", and "emotional stability" had a positive effect on relationship quality, while "extraversion" had a negative effect on the dependent variable." The author of this dissertation finds it interesting that "extraversion" has a negative effect on the relationship quality construct, however this might be a consequence of the context of the study which is a franchisee-franchisor relationship.

Secondly, there is also a single study (Mullins et al, 2014) that investigated the influence of similarity on the relationship quality in a B2B setting. However, on this dyadic research authors hypothesized "salesperson–customer similarity has the same effect on customer relationship quality and salesperson relationship quality" (Mullins et al, 2014) and showed that this hypothesis was supported based on the results of difference scores method. However, the authors practically found that similarity does

not have any statistically significant effect on either customer relationship quality or salesperson relationship quality.

Finally, yet as importantly, the author of this dissertation realized that seven of the reviewed articles contain antecedents that are used as components of relational selling behavior higher order construct (Crosby et al, 1990; Boles et al, 2000; Keillor et al, 2000; Leuthesser, 1997). The positive relationship between all these antecedents and the relationship quality construct have been supported in the studies as shown in Table 2.9. However, the author of this dissertation believes that these antecedents are coherent and for that reason merging those antecedents under a higher order construct, such as relational selling behavior, may be beneficial in the future researches related to the relationship quality.

Table 2.9: Relational selling behavior components as an antecedent to RQ.

Author	Hypothesed Antecedent	Result
Skarmeas et al, 2008, IMM	Role performance	Supported
Park et al, 2010, IMM	Adaptive selling behavior	Supported
Kim et al, 2011, JBR	Customer orientation	Supported
Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014, IMM	Information sharing	Supported
Mullins et al, 2014, JM	Customer orientation	Supported
Nguyen and Nguyen, 2014b, MIP	Information exchange	Supported
Sarmento et al, 2015, IMM	Information exchange	Supported

Based on the above literature review on the relationship quality construct, the author of this dissertation found it valuable to review the literature relating to the interpersonal factors including personality (section 2.2.1 of this dissertation), similarity (section 2.2.2 of this dissertation) as well as the relational selling behavior (section 2.2.3 of this dissertation) before finalizing the research model of this dissertation.

2.2 Interpersonal Factors

2.2.1 Personality

Personality is a psychophysical concept, which is defined as a steady set of reactions and behaviors of people in their environments (Kassarjian, 1971). Although different definitions of personality have been made throughout history, two factors dominate the studies on personality theory. These are individual differences and human nature. Human nature encompasses mutual characteristics of people such as shared goals, motives, and psychological mechanisms that are general or relatively general. Human nature, on the other hand, includes the way people make decisions, react to

environmental triggers, and even affect their environment (Buss, 2008). One of the main functions of personality theory is to identify the most important areas where people differ from each other (Buss, 2008).

Although there are similarities between people, people have unique features that set them apart from each other. It is possible to consider personality as a set of permanent and unique character traits that may vary in different situations. However, there is no single agreed-upon definition (Schultz and Schultz, 2017). In order for personality to be defined sufficiently, it is necessary to include more precise expressions in the language. In this direction, tests to evaluate and measure personality have been developed (Schultz and Schultz, 2017). The best techniques applied in these tests adhere to the principles of reliability and validity (Schultz and Schultz, 2017).

2.2.1.1 Measuring personality

There are two different types of measurements that are cornerstones in the literature when measuring personality. The first type begins with creating sets to represent the expressions in the language, with the idea that there are coded expressions for defining personality in each language. Participants score statements that describe their own or someone else's personality. Factor analysis is carried out in order to express the distinctive features of personality by grouping similar features. For example, adjectives such as sad and scared or calm and stable are included in the dimension called emotional balance. Adjectives such as cheerful, warm, solemn are extroverted. Everyone's personalities can be considered in this context (Soto et al, 2016, McCrae and Costa, 2013). Factor analysis was used to measure personality right after it was developed. Factor analysis is suitable for personality measurement studies that have little consensus on the formulation of basic dimensions (Fiske, 1949). In the second type of measurement, five factors relate to previously developed personality inventories are used. With these two types of measurements, it is argued that five factors are reflected in daily language and represented in personality inventories (Soto et al, 2016).

The studies using the five-factor personality theory initiated in 1968, developed in the 1970s, and the studies yielded results in the 1980s. It was confirmed by Goldberg (1990) that personality could be measured in five dimensions. Especially in the third quarter of the twentieth century, the Five-Factor Model turned out to be the leading

model in personality psychology, with a focus on the Big Five factors (Goldberg, 1990). Costa, McCrae, and Dye (1991) revealing that the five-factor personality model has two distinct features. These are:

- Five factors are based on clear and conceptual values.
- Five factors can clearly determine interpersonal differences.

Five Factor Personality Model has been adopted by many psychologists and to different languages and cultures. Thus, different scales were proposed to measure the five factors in terms of format, length, and structure of the items (Goldberg 1990, Costa and McCrae, 1992, Soto et al, 2016). Despite the differences, the scales are similar in terms of reliability (Goldberg, 1990, Soto et al, 2016). This can be interpreted as there is no single scale containing the best standards to measure the five factors (John et al, 2008: 130). Goldberg (1990) described personality with a set of 100 adjectives consisting of 339 expressions, followed by 100 single adjectives. Costa and McCrae's (1992) scale contains 240 items in 30 dimensions. Somer et al, (2002) developed a 187-item scale based on Goldberg's (1990) study. In Turkey, a 40-item scale with two-tailed adjectives has been developed (Bacanlı et al, 2009).

Despite the fact that there are many different scales that measure personality traits, the Five-Factor/Big-Five model (Goldberg, 1990) is the commonly accepted model by academia, especially in psychology and social psychology. Five Factor Personality Model consists of the five general dimensions of personality and their specific personality traits.

The five-factor personality model is seen as a new perspective on personality. Unlike previous theories, it is based on scientific observation, not solely on theory, and deals with personality in five basic dimensions. Rather than categorizing people, it places the person in different personality levels within five hierarchical dimensions (Demirci et al, 2007). These are

- Extraversion
- Conscientiousness
- Agreeableness
- Emotional instability
- Openness to experience

2.2.1.2 Extroversion

The first dimension of the Five-Factor Model is extraversion. Extroversion refers to the personality dimension in which the characteristics that determine the way and intensity of communication with the outside world are gathered (Somer and Goldberg, 1999). While individuals who are at the positive end of the extroversion-introversion dimension (extroverted) generally exhibit friendly, energetic, cheerful, excitement-seeking, and dominant personality traits; individuals at the negative end of the factor (introverted) generally show personality traits that prefer distant, calm, introvert relationships and favor loneliness (Somer and Goldberg, 1999). In other words, extravert individuals like being together with other people, are energetic, positive-thinking, ambitious, talkative, have no problem speaking in front of a group, and are attractive people. These people are easy-going and they like busy environments and meetings. They are interested in developing social relationships (Loveland, 2004).

Although introversion seems to be the opposite of extroversion, in fact, introversion is much more difficult to define. That is to say, introverted individuals may want to be alone, but they do not complain about the social anxiety this situation will cause in their environment (Özer, 2013).

According to Howard and Howard (1995), the factor of Extroversion;

- Warm bloodedness,
- Humanity,
- Initiative,
- Mobility,
- Thrill seeking and
- It can be determined by criteria such as positive mood.

Individuals with extroverted personality traits do not have trouble communicating with people around them. They establish relationships both in a short time and much more easily than other people (Merdan, 2013, p. 143). An extroverted person is defined as the "strong and dominant individual" in his/her social environment. An extrovert individual with a high energy level likes to stay active and busy, and he/she often experiences events with high excitement levels because he/she is very attractive to other people (Costa and McCrae, 1992).

2.2.1.3 Conscientiousness

The second dimension is conscientiousness. Conscientiousness refers to the personal behaviors and attitudes that enable the individual to accept the consequences of events and situations that occur in line with their decisions (Somer and Goldberg, 1999). While individuals who are at the positive end of this continuum (conscientious) generally display systematic, determined, success-oriented, ambitious, and meticulous personality traits; individuals at the negative end of the factor (non-directional / disorganized) generally show unplanned, delayed, easily distracted and irregular personality traits (Somer and Goldberg, 1999).

Conscientiousness factors according to Howard and Howard (1995) are;

- Competitiveness,
- Regularity,
- Sense of responsibility
- Self-discipline and
- Behavior patterns in negotiation.

In other words, conscientious people are organized, systematic, achievement-oriented, patient, hard-working, self-disciplined, punctual; they avoid trouble and plan (Howard and Howard, 1995). The conscientiousness factor is sometimes called reliability (John et al, 1991) as conscientious individuals are individuals who have a high tendency to fulfill the responsibility given to them meticulously and selflessly, and these people do not hesitate to take responsibility in the community (Merdan, 2013). These individuals strive for excellence and are effective in decision making. Their decisions are generally logical and rational (Costa ve McCrae, 1992).

2.2.1.4 Agreeableness

The third dimension of the model is agreeableness. Being together with other people is very important to agreeable people because they are respectful, friendly, generous, and helpful. The opposite of agreeable people are more interested in their gainings instead of others; thus, they are generally considered as selfish and suspicious (Martinez, 2005).

The agreeableness factor is expressed as the ability of an individual to act with others (Somer and Goldberg, 1999). The factor is defined as the factor that reflects values

such as honesty, thinking of other people, generosity, kindness, tolerance, altruism, compassion, and humility (Tatar et al, 2014).

While individuals (agreeable / compatible / mild-headed / compromised) on the positive end of the adaptability-irritability dimension generally exhibit modest, cooperative, sincere, and understanding personality traits, individuals at the negative end of the continuum usually show skeptical, headstrong, stubborn, competitive, and prudent personality traits (Somer and Goldberg, 1999).

According to Howard and Howard (1995), the agreeableness factors can be determined by:

- Reliability
- Openness
- Self-sacrifice
- Status of complaint
- Humility and
- Being sensitive / thoughtful

While the agreeablenss factor is referred to as understandability in some sources, it can also be seen as a combination of friendship and appropriateness (John et al, 1991). Compliant individuals tend to act more moderately and calmly in the face of a negative situation than other people (Merdan, 2013).

2.2.1.5 Emotional instability

The fourth dimension is emotional instability, which explains the tendency towards having negative emotions (Hankin et al, 2007). These people are also called neurotic, who live with at least one of the following emotions: apprehensiveness, fury, or depression. The emotional instability dimension, which is often referred to as emotional lability and emotional fluctuation (Özer, 2013), is the personality dimension related to the individual's degree of control regarding the variability of the individual's emotional state. Including the events and situations that the person encounters, the degree of consistency in the personal reactions to events and situations is examined under the emotional imbalance dimension (Somer and Goldberg, 1999).

While individuals at the positive end of the emotional consistency dimension (emotionally consistent) generally display personality traits that are relaxed, self-

confident, patient, open to criticism and tolerant to stress, individuals at the negative end of the factor (emotionally unstable / emotionally inconsistent) generally show anxious, nervous and timid personality traits (Somer and Goldberg, 1999).

Emotional balance factors according to Howard and Howard (1995) are;

- Worry,
- Nervousness,
- To be discouraged,
- Self-awareness,
- The state of acting without thinking and
- Fragility.

The emotional instability factor is sometimes scored in the opposite direction and called Emotional Stability (John et al, 1991). Because people with this personality trait (emotionally inconsistent) are anxious, angry and nervous, they are often more prone to stress than other individuals (Merdan, 2013), and they have difficulty controlling their impulses and desires under intense stress (Costa ve McCrae, 1992). People who are at the opposite end of emotional imbalance (emotionally balanced) are characterized by adjectives such as calm, balanced, relaxed, unexcited, consistent (John et al, 1991).

2.2.1.6 Openness to experience

The final dimension of the model is openness to experience. The factor of "Openness to Experience," often referred to as Intelligence or Culture, is defined as a dimension related to the way people view the world, their desire to improve themselves, and their creative thinking (Howard and Howard, 1995). While individuals (open to development / open to experience) who are on the positive end of the openness to development-immaturity dimension generally exhibit creative, analytical, open, and sensitive personality traits to others' views and original thinking. The individuals at the negative end of the factor (undeveloped) generally display traditional, conservative, defensive, and irrelevant personality traits (Somer ve Goldberg, 1999). The people, who have a higher degree of openness to experience, are intellectualy curious, related with art, and interested in beauty compared to others and their awareness of their emotions are higher compared to other people (John et al, 1991).

According to Howard and Howard (1995), openness to experience factors increases;

- Fantasies and imagination,
- Interest in aesthetic values,
- Perspective towards emotions,
- Mobility status,
- Intellectual ideas and
- Perspective on values.

Individuals open to development are expressed in the form of individuals with a vibrant imagination and an active fantasy life, are sensitive to music, art, poetry, and the beauty found in nature (Costa and McCrae, 1992). The factor of openness to experience is sometimes referred to as the culture as it emphasizes intellectualism and independence of the mind, and sometimes because it expresses the emphasis on intelligence, complexity, and imagination (John et al, 1991). The fact that the person focuses on terms related to reason, such as intelligence and intellectual perspective, differentiates this factor significantly from other factors (Johnson and Ostendorf, 1993).

2.2.2 Similarity

Similarity is a measure of sharing similar personal attributes or characteristics (Smith, 1998) and also common interests and values (Doney and Cannon, 1997) in a dyadic relation. In general, studies on interpersonal relationships have revealed that similarity has a considerable role in relationship quality due to its significant effect on interpersonal attraction, social incorporation, and likeability (Baron and Pfeffer, 1994).

In studies of similarity and attraction in this context, as the similarity between two people or items increases, the attraction between them also increases (Byrne and Nelson, 1965). A different view has been put forward by Rosenbaum (1986) on the subject from other similarity-attraction based research. This view is that different attitudes affect attractiveness simply because they cause repulsion.

The view of the linear relationship between similar attitudes and interpersonal similarity was revealed the first time in the study conducted by Nelson and Bryan (1965). This relationship found the contradictory and equal effects of similar and different approaches corresponding to the similarity-dissimilarity symmetry

hypothesis. However, recent studies have reported that similar attitudes have a much stronger effect. This situation corresponds to the similarity asymmetry hypothesis (Singh and Ho, 2000; Singh and Tan, 1992; Singh and Teoh, 1999; Smeaton et al, 1989; Tan and Singh, 1995). In general, researchers used interpersonal similarity as the basis for understanding its impact on the relationship.

Other theory-based findings and approaches recommended that a single evaluative answer cannot explain the entire structure of interpersonal communication. For example, studies have suggested more than one sub-element, including admiration and love (Heider, 1958), respect and friendship (Newcomb, 1960), compassion (Rubin, 1973), and social and intellectual appeal (Segal, 1979). This multi-dimensional approach to the subject also helps to understand the subject more clearly.

In this direction, similarity studies based on interaction models have revealed that real similarities in communication and behavior may be more substantial. In this context, when interpersonal similarity is also in question, it becomes much easier to obtain information about the quality of communication in the future. Thus, the quality of the relationship between businesses is also positively affected. As suggested by Davis (1981), the attitudes that exist in an institution manifest themselves in behaviors, and this situation positively affects the similarity attraction. Findings of this type of research reveal that interpersonal similarity is not only an emotional reaction. The interaction goals of the participants with attitudes that are related to the social context may be important, and they can affect the quality of the relationship in the form of a behavioral attraction response. In cases where behavioral attraction criteria are used in the context of relationship quality between businesses, the similarity effect emerges more clearly.

This dissertation is founded on three theories that can explain the role of similarity on the relationship quality between two people, who are buyers and sellers in a B-2-B context. These theories are similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971), attraction–selection–attrition theory (Schneider, 1987), and the theory of relational demography (Tsui, Egan and O'Reilly, 1992). The author of this dissertation below provides the findings of the literature review (dominantly from the organizational behavior studies) on these three theories.

2.2.2.1 Similarity-attraction paradigm

The similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971) suggests that similar individuals are attracted to each other and people like others who are similar, rather than dissimilar to themselves. According to the approach, because of this attractiveness, individuals have positive experiences and make more positive evaluations about the other person. In other words, the similarity-attraction paradigm proposes that similar individual characteristics between people are related to personal attraction and shape constructive expectations for the future. This attraction increases when new similarities are revealed, and when differences increase, people feel a sense of hate. For these reasons, individuals who share similar personal characteristics find each other attractive (Byrne, 1971).

The similarity-attraction paradigm, which makes arguments compatible with Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1986), claims that individuals with similar individual characteristics and attitudes will perceive each other as similar and attract each other (Jackson et al, 1992). The theory offers a stingy framework, which explains the reasons and mechanisms for people's attachment to others and how the people are affected in their social worlds. Additionally, the theory explains how similar attitudes, personalities, physical attributes between people in the same environment influence their behavior.

The simplified proposition of this theory is "Individuals find people similar to them more attractive," and there is evidence in the literature regarding both interpersonal and workplace relationships. The positive influence of ssimilarities within organizations has been shown in organizational behavior studies. Examples of the positive effects of similarities are the decrease in the intention of a job transfer, the increase in communication, and organizational commitment among employees (Lincoln and Miller, 1979; Tsui et al, 1992; Zenger and Lawrence, 1989). On the other hand, similarity-attraction studies show that when everything is equal, individuals tend to dislike people who are not like them. Based on this, the differences between individuals have potentially negative effects as well (Wells and Aicher, 2013). It is argued in the organizational behavior literature that differences increase the possibility of producing negative outcomes for emotional responses such as satisfaction and attachment, and even it is stated that differences prevent social integration and peer relationships (Jackson et al, 2003).

Similarity in business environment may be the belief of a buyer about having the common interests and values with the salesperson in the selling firm. Personal similarity contributes to the development of trust, which is a risk reducing mechanism in the business relationships (Bradach and Eccles, 1989). In the marketing literature, Doney and Cannon (1997) showed that buyers increase their trust and satisfaction to the salesperson, who are similar to themselves; because they believe that the salesperson shares same values and has similar interests. Morgan and Hunt (1994) also reported a positive relationship between similarity and trust. Based on these, the author of this dissertation believes that similarity between the buyer and the salesperson will contribute towards the relationship quality or it is components such as trust.

2.2.2.2 Attraction - selection - attrition model

Attraction - selection - attrition model (Schneider, 1987) suggests that organizations will eventually evolve into a homogeneous structure. In accordance with the similarity-attraction paradigm, an organization is considered a function of the personalities of the members that make it up. This theory suggests that different types of organizations will attract, choose, and retain different types of people. The attractiveness of organizations with similar characteristics to individuals, the employment of these individuals in those organizations, and the separation of individuals who are different from the general structure of the organization are also compatible with the similarity-attraction paradigm (Dutton et al, 1994).

According to this theory, organizations consisting of individuals who are compatible with their personal characteristics are attractive to them during job applications, these organizations choose these individuals as employees, and employees who are different from the general structure of the organization wear out and leave the organization (Van Hoye and Turban, 2015). As a result of these processes, the organization gradually consists of employees who resemble each other, in other words, as a natural outcome of the cycle in the theory, the organization is defined by the individuals who is in it.

Attraction - selection - attrition is a dynamic process that determines the characteristics of the people in the organization, and as a result, it defines the nature, structure, processes, and culture of the organization (Schneider, 1987). Schneider and colleagues (1995) who put forward the attraction - selection - attrition model do not reveal a clear view on whether similarities will be treated as positive or negative for organizations

in their study. Accordingly, similarities among people can be seen positively in the first years in the organization since the homogeneous structure of employees facilitates coordination, communication, and cooperation. In the later years in the organization, when the organization becomes increasingly successful, the same homogeneous structure may paradoxically cause it to be inflexible, unable to adapt to changes and the organization to complete its life. The heterogeneous structure of the organization can provide different perspectives regarding events, as well as obtaining results from intra-organizational conflicts for the benefit of the organization, coping with changes, and adaptation to innovations. The tendency of organizations to be homogeneous in terms of personality types can also pose a danger to long-term organizational effectiveness.

The author of this dissertation believes that the views based on attraction - selection - attrition theory can also be extrapolated to the marketing area. These fundamental approaches at organizational behavior literature support the similarities between people generate stronger bonds specifically at the beginning of the relationship; thus, the similarities between buyer and seller might also have a bearing on the relationship quality between those individuals.

2.2.2.3 Relational demography

The basic assumption of relational demography is stated that the differences between group members have a negative effect on the functioning of the group (Harrison et al, 1998). According to Pfeffer (1985), the concept of organizational demography refers to the composition of a group in terms of basic characteristics such as age, gender, working time, race, education. Interpersonal relationships are not essential in the concept of organizational demography. In the relational demography concept, there is a comparison of the demographic characteristics of the individuals in pairs or groups. It is assumed that the people in these teams or groups should interact with each other regularly due to their positions. Comparing the differences or similarities between superiors and subordinates (or in other group relationships) in terms of demographic characteristics according to the relational demography understanding will provide additional information about the attitudes and behaviors of the members and, more importantly, what the demographic characteristics that affect the work outcomes are (Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989).

In addition, many studies in the field of demography tend to focus on age as the main demographic variable that affects labor turnover. However, it is clear that social comparison processes cannot be limited to age alone. People differ in terms of many demographic characteristics. For this reason, when analyzing demographic effects, rather than focusing on only one or two demographic characteristics of individuals, their demographic profile should be removed, and the effect of all characteristics should be evaluated (Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989).

The field of relational demography, which can be described as a type of person's harmony within the group, is built on the assumptions of the social categorization theory (Mowday and Sutton, 1993; Tsui et al, 1992). Here, the focus is on the importance of relationships between lower and upper-level employees, or individuals in a group who categorize each other as "ingroup members" or "outgroup members." Ingroup members are considered by stronger trust, support, and rewards, while outgroup members are described by weaker trust, support, and rewards (Mannix and Neale, 2005).

Turner and colleagues (1984) define the concept of a "psychological group" as a community of people who share the same social identity or define themselves as a member of the same social category. The most important feature of a psychological group is that individuals identify themselves with that group and have a social identity without the need to interact with all members of this group or anyone. Based on this, it can be said that many social categories, including organizational and demographic characteristics in the work environment, can be used for self-categorization. A manager's definition of self is partially dependent on his membership in the managerial group, and this group is the opposite of the group of non-managerial employees. Employees also tend to categorize themselves into various professional groups. If the topic is evaluated at a broader level, employees can treat an organization as a social category and go for a self-categorization in this way. In these examples, individuals develop a positive identity as suggested by the concept of a psychological group, without requiring any personal knowledge or interacting with other people in this category. As long as this positive support that members receive from the psychological group in a way that will increase their self-esteem continues, individuals will desire to continue their membership in this group (Tsui et al, 1992).

Based on the above summary about the relational demography, the author of this dissertation believes that similarity between individuals is not only age similarity but also contains other dimensions such as lifestyle, interests, preferences, values, etc. Moreover, the similarity in a B2B selling situation helps to keep the buyer and the salesperson in the same psychological group, and being in the same group provides support to the relationship quality between these two individuals.

2.2.3 Relational Selling Behavior

Relational selling behavior is a tendency that is an essential characteristic of the seller and represents the seller's position towards relationships (Athanasopoulou, 2009). Relational selling generates value while building close partnerships. Social exchange theory argues that social behavior is the consequence arisen from an exchange process, which aims to increase benefits and reduce costs of that exchange, thus maximizes the value of the relationship, and the value moderates the decision of whether or not to continue the exchange (Homans, 1958). When sellers see enough value, they aim to create personal relationships and identify their customers' individual needs during the information development process. One way of creating personal relationships is to use an interaction-oriented communication style, which generates trust in return (Shamdasani and Jung, 2011).

Relational sales methods aim to realize personal sales in line with relational marketing methods and principles and to change the behavior of customer representatives in a way that maintains customer trust, satisfaction, and commitment after the sales. Although relational selling is an element of relational marketing, it cannot be used as a substitute for the concept of relational marketing. While relational marketing often requires a broader organizational effort to maintain customer loyalty and encourage ongoing purchasing, relational selling focuses on the behavior of the salesperson (Foster and Cadogan, 2000).

In B2B contexts, the staff of both parties in the relationship not only cooperate with each other repeatedly but also spend the effort to present the consequences of the work. These types of work environments require a high level of quality communication between partners. In this context, communication is the exchanging of information in two ways, using both official and unofficial methods (Anderson and Narus, 1990). The continuing share of information increases the satisfaction of both sides (Willcocks and

Kern, 1998). Thus, studies in the literature model and measure the quality of relationships in the form of a secondary structure that underlies the quality of communication.

In markets that havea high quality of B2B relationships and high levels of competition, managers take active stances in finding the best method for business employees to maintain long-term relationships with each other and with the outside. In these types of situations, interpersonal factors play the most crucial roles. As a result of achieving success in B2B relationship quality, healthy communication and quality are ensured between customers and businesses (Hennig-Thurau, 2004).

There is not any widely accepted operationalization of salespeople's relational behaviors. Crosby and colleagues (1990) defined relational selling behavior as cooperative intentions, interaction intensity/orientation, and mutual disclosure. Other authors saw it differently: Leuthesser (1997) highlighted the importance of the frequency of interaction; Boles and colleagues (2000) included information exchange, mutual disclosure, and cooperative intentions/customer orientation; Keillor and colleagues (2000) used the dimensions of selling/customer orientation, adaptability, and service orientation; Kennedy and colleagues (2001) operationalized it as the salesperson's demonstration of competence and use of low-pressure selling tactics. Accordingly, the author of this dissertation operationalized the relational selling behavior using four dimensions: (1) Interaction Intensity/Orientation; (2) Customer Orientation; (3) Information Exchange; (4) Interaction Frequency.

2.2.3.1 Interaction intensity/orientation

It is increasingly recognized that the interfaces and sources of sustainable competitive advantage are created by interactions with efficient and effective communication management (Rayport et al, 2005). In the context of new developments in marketing theory, Ramani and Kumar first developed the interaction orientation theory that encompassed fundamental ideas such as customer engagement, co-value generation, customer relationship management, and market orientation. According to Ramani and Kumar (2008), interaction orientation reflects the ability of a firm to interact with its individual customers and benefit from the information obtained through successive interactions to achieve profitable customer relations orientation. In addition, in the same study, interaction orientation constitutes an important resource for achieving

superior business performance with a permanent competitive advantage in an interactive environment (Ramani and Kumar, 2008).

Philip Kotler recommends that “sales-marketing activities should be carried out within the framework of a well-thought social and efficient sales philosophy” (Kotler, 2001, p. 41). In the past, five competing concepts guide a company's sales efforts. These are; product concept, production concepts, selling concept, marketing concept, and social marketing concept. Today, these concepts are intertwined. With the realization of these concepts over the years, product-oriented companies have been replaced by sales-oriented enterprises. Recently, businesses are learning to be successful by implementing an interaction orientation (Matsuno, 2006) that reflects the ability of a business to interact with its personal customers and to benefit from information obtained through successive interactions in order to achieve profitable customer relationships. The interaction orientation, which includes a compound structure, consists of four dimensions (Ramani and Kumar, 2008):

Customer: It is a concept that includes personal customers as an analysis unit of all sales-marketing activities.

Interaction Response Capacity: The degree to which the business offers consecutive products, services and experiences to each customer by dynamically combining feedback from a particular customer and other customers' responses to previous behavior collectively.

Customer Empowerment: Providing customers with a way to attach with the supplier and dynamically participate the transactions or to connect and cooperate with other customers by sharing ideas and information about a business's products and policies.

Customer Value Management: It is the ability of the supplier to define and quantify personal customer value dynamically and to use customer value management as a guideline in order to implement marketing resource allocation decisions.

Existing empirical studies reveal that the interaction orientation has already become a remarkable resource for organizations to achieve permanent competitive benefit and greater corporate performance in a collaborating situation.

2.2.3.2 Customer orientation

Customer relationship management, which is a strategic function for businesses, adopts a customer-focused approach to production and communication processes. With the transition from the traditional marketing approach to the modern marketing approach centered on the customer, the knowledge levels of the consumers have increased, and they have started to direct the businesses in line with their demands. As a result of these changes, the customer got rid of the pattern of only purchasing the goods or services and became the person who should be valued, provided easier access to the goods or services, and desired to establish a long-term relationship (Uysal and Aksoy, 2004).

In today's world, where a challenging competitive environment has emerged, and there are many businesses selling the same product, a customer-oriented sales approach that emphasizes customer satisfaction has started to be preferred instead of a sales-oriented approach. This has enabled companies to create effective and permanent customer relationships as a result of customer value and customer satisfaction. The transformation of the business management style into a customer-oriented approach has helped organizations establish a connection with customers, create value, protect, develop, and continue this bond (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008).

This approach can be achieved with sales representatives who have adopted the relational marketing philosophy within the scope of personal sales. The purpose of the relational sales made in this context is to establish a closer and sincere communication as a continuation of the bond established with the customers during the sale, to maintain their loyalty to the business, and to make this relationship attractive. The principles of customer-oriented personal sales and relational sales, which are at the heart of marketing, to deliver goods and services to the consumer at the appropriate place and time, at an affordable price, overlap with each other. In short, relational sales, as in personal sales, accepts customer satisfaction and maintaining loyalty as indispensable for marketing.

The “customer-oriented” nature of the modern sales approach has made it necessary to determine the value to be offered to customers according to their perspective. Accordingly, the product is named customer solutions, price to customer cost, distribution convenience, and promotion communication with customers. Thus, a

marketing presentation prepared in line with customer expectations constitutes the first step of long-term and permanent relationships with customers. Thanks to this application, the customer profile, which is the most profitable and essential for a business, is determined and information about the customer is collected, and the desired changes are made in order to keep this group in the business, and product or service variety and price flexibility are tried to be achieved. The aim is to create a customer-oriented strategy for the business (Yereli, 2001).

Open communication between customers and businesses provides the business with advantages such as better understanding of buyer's wishes, minimizing surprises, and being sensitive to customer requests while giving customers the opportunity to direct the business in line with their wants and needs by notifying their wishes and complaints so that they can receive a customer-oriented service (Yereli, 2001). While functional benefits are more related to the functionality of the relationship for the customer, social benefits are more related to relationship quality. The high quality of the relationship will increase the satisfaction level of customers with the purchasing process, and this will constitute an important step in increasing customer loyalty.

2.2.3.3 Information exchange

Some researchers have studied possible predictors of relationship quality. For instance, the relational selling behavior of sales representatives and their expertise has been shown to provide a positive effect on the relationship quality between salespeople and customers (Crosby et al, 1990). On the other hand, Smith (1998) identified that there is a relationship between relationship quality and relational ties. In the follow-up of these studies, a significant relationship was found between information exchange and relationship quality.

Various studies have revealed that information exchange is a notable fragment of both traditional B2B sales activities and relationship marketing (eg., Dwyer et al, 1987). Information exchange emerges as a requirement for parties during a relationship development from each other to prevent and correct mistakes. In this case, it also expresses the expectations that the parties will proactively provide useful information for the relevant partners (Heide and John 1992). Thus, the exchange of information can be viewed as a protection for companies selling, provided that buyers can be anticipated to provide unpredictable data that may influence sales process. In this

context, information exchange reduces the perceived risks of buyers and increases the reliability of suppliers (Hakansson 1982).

LaBahn and Harich (1997), on the other hand, argue that a few systematic empirical research has been done to examine how cultural dissimilarities syndicate with relational marketing theories in the international business environment. Although Johnson and colleagues (1996) recognized the part of cultural sensitivity in relation to the exchange of information, there is still something clearly unknown in the context of B2B sales.

2.2.3.4 Interaction frequency

The frequency of interaction varies according to the industry. For example, while a salesperson working for high-tech equipment may deal with one or two clients per day, a salesperson in the pharmaceutical industry may have to communicate with more than one pharmacist a day. Obviously, the variation in the number of employees is also a criterion in terms of interaction frequency. The human resources of a large-scale corporation and the human resources of a small or medium-sized corporation will not have to interact with the same frequency. This situation closely affects the emotional effort to be spent. Customer expectations significantly determine the frequency of interaction between businesses, and accordingly, the frequency of interaction varies. In addition, the frequency of interaction in businesses operating in different sectors may differ according to organizational goals (Kelly and Barsade, 2001). That being said, the frequent exchange of information contributes to the improvement of the quality of the relationship between the two enterprises. The expectation of obtaining information among the ongoing businesses contributes to the companies' coping with the negative conditions they face (Heide and John 1992).

In some professions, it is stated that the frequency of interaction with the customer and the long or short interaction time with the customer affects the emotional effort of the employees. However, Grandey (2000) argued that the fact that some professions require different equations of interaction frequency and knowing the interaction frequency expected to be exhibited by the organization would have an effect on the superficial and deep behavioral display.

Yanchus and colleagues (2010) found that interaction frequency is positively related to superficial and deep behavior, and interaction diversity is negatively related to

superficial behavior. For example, in Diefendorff and colleagues' (2005) study, negative relationships between superficial behavior and extraversion, positive relationships between neuroticism and negative behavior rules were observed, while positive relationships between deep behavior and frequency of interaction and positive behavior rules, negative relationships between interaction routine were found. In this study, the fact that employees in the front office and food and beverage departments, which are considered to be the basic departments of the hotel and where the frequency and intensity of interaction with the customer occur more than the others, exhibit more profound behaviors compared to the employees in other departments, affects the frequency of interaction with the customer and the quality of the relationship (Diefendorff et al, 2005).

Morris and Feldman (1996), who conducted research on the frequency of interaction, investigated the concept of emotional labor. Emotion Display Frequency (interaction frequency), Variety of Emotions Required to be Displayed (interaction frequency), Attention Consumed in Display Rules, Emotional Dissonance are the elements that make up these four dimensions (Morris and Feldman, 1996).

The frequency of interaction expresses how long the emotions will be shown. The higher the frequency, the higher the level of emotional labor spent, which positively affects the quality of the relationship. In addition, the more frequent the job requires showing emotions, the higher the emotional behavior rules, so the frequency of interaction increases (Eroğlu, 2010).

Especially the frequency of interaction is remarkably seen in businesses where the service sector is at the forefront. Accordingly, it is thought that the high frequency of interaction with customers will differ according to the duties of the employees in the workplace. The increase in the frequency of interaction with different customers positively affects the in-depth behavior of employees towards customers. Denser relationships play an important role in the employees' ability to master different issues related to the business process and to be more experienced. It is observed that as the frequency of interaction with customers increases, the probability of displaying superficial behavior decreases. The fact that the content of the work done by the employees and the product support personnel is not the same in the relations of the customers causes the tendency to behave deeply according to the professions to differ (Gardner et al, 2009).

3. A QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH AT SELLER'S DOMAIN

In this chapter, a quantitative research method involving salespeople is employed. This chapter aims to discover the effect of interpersonal factors on the seller's trust in the buyer and, in turn, to the sales process effectiveness. The importance of the purchase, being a sale-specific factor, is also considered when determining the effects of interpersonal factors. The findings indicate the presence of a positive relationship between interpersonal factors (similarity, expertise, task orientation) and trust to buyer and sales process effectiveness. The purchase importance also has a moderation effect on the relationship between trust and sales process effectiveness. In conclusion, from the sellers' perspective, this chapter investigated the antecedents and consequences of trust in a business-to-business sale relationship.

3.1 Theoretical Background

Business-to-Business (B2B) buying behavior had initially been accepted as the rational behavior, which is complex, systematic, and unbiased by an individual or irrational criterion (Webster and Wind, 1972; Sheth, 1973). Moreover, buyers' trust in sellers has been accepted as one of the key influencers on B2B buying decision outcomes (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Johnson and Grayson, 2005; Friend et al, 2011). However, more recent research has shown that trust can be influenced by personal factors and perceptions (Yang et al, 2011; Chakrabarty et al, 2013; Bateman and Valentine, 2015; Newell et al, 2016; Kalra et al, 2017) and that buyers' trust may not be the only trust that influences the relationship (Chakrabarty et al, 2013).

A broad body of research about perceived trust, from the buyer's perspective, shows that trust positively influences performance and other related outcomes (such as satisfaction, conflict resolution, communication quality, conflict resolution, and cooperation) (Graca et al, 2015). Research has repeatedly confirmed that buyers' trust in sellers has a positive impact on knowledge sharing and complementary capabilities (Rungsithong et al, 2017; Swan et al, 1988) as well as on buyers' satisfaction and intention to maintain/extend the relationship (Vázquez-Casielles et al, 2017). As

recently indicated by Bolander and Richards (2018, p.169), the selling and sales management research, conducted over five decades, has a focus on "customer-related research questions." Thus, previous literature emphasizes the influences of buyers' perceptions of sellers in B2B sales situations. However, as in all reciprocal relationships, sellers' trust in the buyer in B2B situations, although neglected by current research, may have a bearing on the sale process, specifically its efficiency. As suggested by Plouffe (2018, p. 241), "despite much practical and empirical attention over five-plus decades, our understanding of the sales role remains limited. ….. While the sales role has been studied for more than half a century, much of what drives performance is still unknown". Therefore, it can be argued that the sellers' trust in the buyer in the sales process may be another driver.

3.1.1 Trust in B2B sales relationships

Trust in the B2B context, as defined by Anderson and Narus (1990), is one partner's confidence that the other partner will perform actions that will result in positive outcomes for the firm and will not take unexpected actions that may produce negative outcomes. In the same way, Crosby and colleagues (1990) mentioned that "trust in relational sales contexts can be defined as a confident belief that the salesperson can be relied upon to behave in such a manner that the long-term interest of the customer will be served" and Moorman colleagues (1992) defined trust as "a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence." Although Crosby and colleagues (1992) only mention trust in the salesperson, later definitions show that trust is available "when one party has confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity" (Morgan and Hunt, 1994), showing that trust is a two-way street. The level of trust between the two businesses forms the basis of an ongoing business relationship (Wilson, 1994). The meaning of trusting a relationship generates anticipation that the declarations undertaken and made are honest and that both buyer and seller will participate in reciprocally useful cooperative activities even when they have opportunities to be opportunistic (Doney and Cannon, 1997).

The concept of trust in the B2B context has developed in different ways since the mid-1980s (Parasuraman et al, 1985; Swan and Nolan, 1985) and has been attracting the continuing interest of academia (Massey et al, 2019). Trust is a cornerstone in the progression of the relationship between buyer and seller (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) and

a key influencer of the efficiency of relationships (Johnson and Grayson, 2005). However, in many trust centric relationship studies, trust is used as a single-sided construct: buyers' trust in sellers (Akrout and Akrout, 2011). Any sale process, nevertheless, includes a certain degree of uncertainty both for buyers and sellers, which can be reduced by building trust (Gao et al, 2005). Thus, as much as buyers' trust in sellers influences sale processes, sellers' trust may also have a bearing on the sale process efficiency.

In B2B literature, researchers have utilized interpersonal (relational) factors (i.e., Swan et al, 1988), sale specific factors such as purchase importance (i.e., Doney and Cannon, 1997; Belonax et al, 2007) and seller specific factors such as ability and expertise (i.e., Swan and Nolan, 1985) as predictors of trust when buyers' trust in salespeople are concerned. Dampérat and Jolibert (2009) showed that individual factors such as relational orientation and expertise influence the relationship between buyers and sellers in the business settings because a relational approach can generate greater trust in salespeople (Bateman and Valentine, 2015) that reduces buyers' perceptions of available alternative suppliers (Friend et al, 2011). When sellers are concerned, based on the relational demography perspective and Similarity Attraction Theory (Byrne, 1971), one important factor that may facilitate the trust in the buyer is the relational proximity to the buyer, which may be operationalized as the perceived similarity.

In a comprehensive review of relationship quality, Athanasopoulou (2009) revealed relationship quality as a higher-level structure that mostly includes many dimensions such as commitment, satisfaction, trust, customer focus, coordination, quality of service, quality of communication, and interaction quality. Since many academics approach the issue from various views, there is no common opinion on the components of relationship quality (Athanasopoulou, 2009). On the other hand, many studies on the subject accept trust as the most vital component of relationship quality (Athanasopoulou, 2009). For that reason, in order to reduce the complexity of the research model, this research is focused only on trust, the most vital component of relationship quality.

3.1.2 Similarity

Similarity-Attraction Theory (Byrne, 1971) suggests that people like others who they think are similar, rather than dissimilar, to themselves, and similarity significantly attenuates interpersonal attraction, social incorporation, and likeability (Baron and Pfeffer, 1994). As expressed by Smith (1998), similarity is the extent to which similar personal attributes or characteristics in a dyadic relation between at least two people in a social group are shared. Moreover, shared common interests and values also increase perceptions of similarity (Doney and Cannon, 1997).

B2B literature affirms the existence of the relation between trust and similarity. For example, Doney and Cannon (1997) showed that buyers increase their trust in and satisfaction with sellers, who are similar to themselves because they believe that sellers share akin values and have similar interests. Hikkerovaa (2011) found evidence that for a buyer shared values are positively linked to trust. Lichtenthal and Tellefsen (2001) propose that buyer-seller similarity can enhance the sales efficiency as a result of the increased attraction between the buyer and the salesperson, which might be a result of the increased capability in perceiving the trust-relevant signals and symbols from more similar people (Child and Möllering, 2003). A recent study by Weck and Ivanova (2013) claims that particularly at the initial phases of a B-to-B relationship, cultural similarity facilitates information exchange.

To summarize, Similarity-Attraction Theory (Byrne, 1971) offers a parsimonious framework, which explains the reasons and mechanisms on people's attachment to others and how people are affected in their social worlds. Moreover, the theory asserts that similar attitudes, personalities, physical attributes among people in the same environment influence their attitudes and behaviors. In the organizational environment, people generally compare their attributes among their group members and assess if they are similar or dissimilar (Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989) based on their relational demographic factors. Similar people develop positive attitudes towards each other and behave positively. Dissimilar individuals, on the other hand, have a tendency to evaluate each other less favorably (Tsui et al, 2002). Thus, the author argues that the more similarity there is between buyers and sellers the more sellers' trust in buyers will be. Therefore, the author offers the following hypothesis:

H_1: Similarity is positively related to sellers' trust in buyers.

3.1.3 Buyer specific factors

The influence of buyer-specific factors on sellers' trust in buyers may be explained based on competence-based trust literature. Competence-based trust is confidence in the counterpart's experience, skills, and consistency, which are required to complete a specified task (Lui and Ngo, 2004). In other words, trust in the counterpart is influenced by technical capability, performance history, and ability based on prior experience (Lee, 2004). For that reason, the counterpart is trusted when there is satisfactory evidence about the counterpart's competence. The competence-based trust is a result of the feeling like "He/she knows what he/she is talking about, and it makes sense" (Parayitam, 2010). In accordance with the competence-based trust literature, the author investigates the influence of the buyer's two core competencies on the seller's trust in the buyer: Task orientation and expertise.

3.1.3.1 Task orientation

Task-oriented individuals focus on the completion of a particular task as a measure of success. In a B2B sales situation, task orientation refers to both buyers and sellers focus on getting the sales job done (Keillor et al, 2000). Venkatesh and colleagues (1995) defined task orientation (from a seller's perspective in a business setting) as an influential strategy and mentioned that task-oriented strategies, information exchange, and recommendations have a more visible, stronger positive influence on sales processes than non-task-oriented strategies. Previous research indicates that task-oriented (conscientious) salespeople drive higher objective sales performance (Yang et al, 2011). Gesteland (2002) mentioned that task-oriented people tend to close the deals as quickly as possible, even occasionally be too pushy and aggressive. This is because the task-oriented buyers are highly result-focused in sales negotiations and try to complete the buying task as effectively as possible (McFarland et al, 2006), which may emerge a higher trust in the buyer at the seller's side. Hence, the author anticipates that sellers' perceptions of higher task-orientated buyers may generate a stronger trust in buyers. This leads the author to the following hypothesis:

H_{2a}: When sellers perceive buyers to be more task-oriented, sellers' trust in buyers' increases.

3.1.3.2 Expertise

In addition to buyers' task orientation, another important personal factor that may enable the sellers' trust in buyers is the buyers' expertise. Expertise is defined as the knowledge or skill in a particular field. In B2B marketing literature, quite a large number of studies have shown that sellers' expertise increases buyers' trust in sellers or if a buyer's perception of the seller's expertise is high, the buyer would be more willing to trust that seller (i.e., Johnson and Grayson, 2005; Lai et al, 2013; Bataineh et al, 2015; Newell et al, 2016). Mansour and colleagues (2016) also showed that a lack of expertise has a negative impact on trust. Moreover, Crosby and colleagues (1990) found out that expertise can influence both short and long-term sales efficiency because expertise strengthens the positive perception of applicable features associated with the goods or service.

As argued earlier, trust is a two-sided relational element. Thus, this study argues that sellers' perceptions of higher levels of buyers' expertise may also have a positive impact on sellers' trust in buyers. Consequently, the author suggests the following hypothesis:

H_{2b}: When sellers perceive higher levels of buyers' expertise, sellers' trust in buyers increases.

3.1.4 Sale process efficiency

The principal aim of any buyer-seller relationship is to increase sales performance, and sales performance has been quantified by academia with different measures including higher profit margin, higher total sales, exceeding sales targets, new product sales, long term customer satisfaction, customer retention, and new account acquisition (Webber et al, 2018). Arndt and Harkins (2013) defined sales performance as "the timely completion of the activity at a quality which is sufficient for the needs of the buyer and the seller at the lowest reasonable cost" (Arndt and Harkins, 2013, p.434), indicating that sale process is a time-sensitive activity. Stoddard and colleagues (2007) also argued that "the sales process efficiency construct includes task outcomes that streamline the sales process (e.g., better time and territory management, enhanced productivity, spending more time with customers, handling more accounts, lower cost of leads, and lower cost of sales)" (p.42). Thus, an important indicator of sales performance is the sale process efficiency since the quicker a sales activity is

accomplished, the faster business transaction can be performed. Sale process efficiency is the capability to successfully close, and complete sales calls in a shorter-term (Stoddard et al, 2006), or in other words, it is the time-bound component of the sales performance. Based on Weitz's (1981) Contingency Framework and Weitz and colleagues (1986) study about improving selling efficiency, this study suggests that the sale process and its nature (i.e., the duration of the sales job) are important indicators of the sales performance. The author believes that sales process efficiency may be more robust in measuring sales performance than behavioral measures, especially in a B2B setting.

The sale process includes certain events, such as customer communications, including the initial sale call, company presentations, and contract negotiations, requiring information exchange during the process. Previous research suggests that obtaining a trustful relationship between a buyer and seller creates a competitive advantage by increasing the sale process efficiency (Dyer and Chu, 2011), as increased trust generates increased information exchange, mutual disclosure, and cooperative intentions of the salesperson (Boles et al, 2000). From this perspective, in order to be able to increase the sale process efficiency, both buyers and sellers would be willing to improve interpersonal and inter-organizational cooperation where trust is a crucial antecedent (Fan et al, 2012).

The relationship between trust and sale efficiency has been studied widely in the literature. For example, Crosby and colleagues (1990); Boles and colleagues (2000); Wagner and colleagues (2003); and Johnson and Grayson (2005) examined the buyer-seller relationships' influence on selling process efficiency and shown that trust is critical in maintaining higher sale process efficiency. Pullins and colleagues (2004), and Johnson and Grayson (2005) also provide evidence that trust positively influences sales performance. On the seller side of the relationship, when sellers perceive the buyer trustworthy, sales performance is increased (Chakrabarty et al, 2013). Similarly, the author expects that when sellers have more trust in buyers, the sale process efficiency will be higher as well, and thus, the author hypothesizes:

H_3: Sellers' trust in buyers is positively related to sale process efficiency.

3.1.5 Purchase importance

In his 1973 model of B2B buyer behavior, Sheth states that purchase importance is a product-specific factor, and it varies based on various factors (Sheth, 1973). Purchase importance is categorized as one of the major situational factors that influence the selling process (Cannon and Perreault, 1999; Homburg et al, 2011), which is defined as buyer's "perceptions of the strategic significance of a particular purchase to the organization's objectives" (Hutt and Speh, 2001, p. 93). As indicated by Anderson and Jap (2005) the as perceived risk increases, purchase importance also increases since the termination costs for both buyer and seller grow for high purchase importance situations, and thus, such "mutual hostages" require higher trust (Anderson and Jap, 2005). Therefore, in cases of higher purchase importance, trust may have a more decisive influence on sale process efficiency, and the author hypothesize:

H_4: When perceived purchase importance is high, the positive influence of the seller's trust in the buyer on sale process efficiency will increase.

3.1.6 Proposed model of trust between B2B buyers and sellers

Based on the developed hypotheses, the proposed model is shown in Figure 3.1.

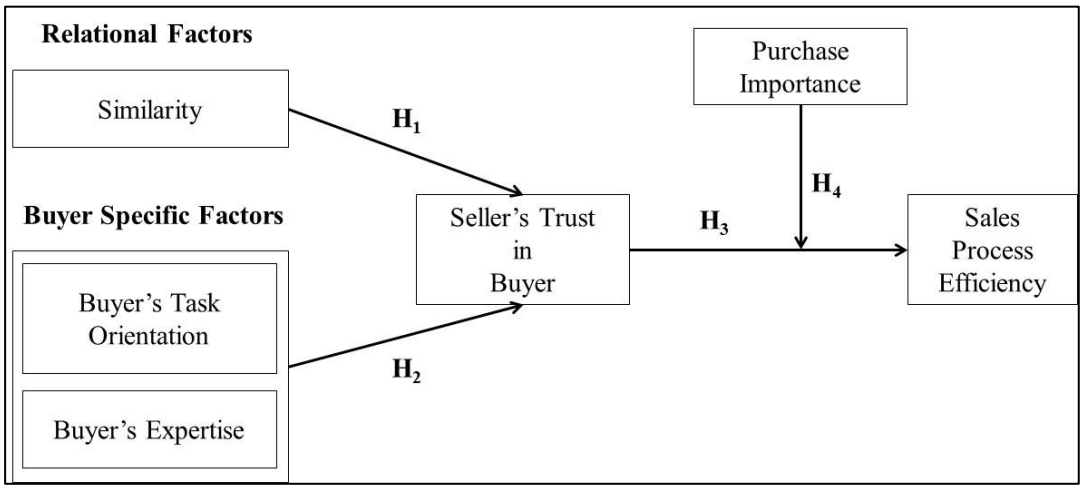

Figure 3.1: Research model of trust between B2B buyers and sellers.

3.1.7 Control variables

Previous research concludes that expertise helps overcome challenging situations, and the natural outcome is the reduced risk due to increased trust between buyers and sellers. For instance, Crosby and colleagues (1990) showed that the seller's expertise reveals his/her relevant capabilities associated with the goods or services, which can

generate trust between buyers and sellers. Even today, in the internet age, with much easier information access at any level, expertise still shows a positive and significant effect on trust (Lai et al, 2013; Bataineh et al, 2015). Therefore, the seller's age, industry experience, and tenure in the company are added as a control variable.

3.2 Method

Different levels of involvement in decision-making and varying importance are given to various criteria by each role in a B2B setting create confounding results when gathering reliable data from the buyer side of the relationship. In this study, buying decision-makers' eccentricities and seller's trust in the buyer are examined by surveying salespeople for two reasons: (1) The non-practicality of finding-out the real buying decision-maker in the B2B environment (Garrido-Samaniego and Gutierrez-Cillan, 2004) during a survey process and (2) the fact that the success of any salespeople lies in determining the real buying decision-maker during the B2B sales processes. Thus, using salespeople as the unit of analysis to measure the study variables is the best way to acquire information about the real decision-maker in a particular sale. Therefore, a quantitative approach that takes salespeople as the unit of analysis is adopted.

3.2.1 Measures

Almost all the measures of this study are derived from the existing literature. The questionnaire contained measures assessing the individual characteristics and demographics of the seller, as well as the seller's perception of the buyer's individual characteristics such as expertise, task orientation, and similarity. Both buyer's expertise (adopted from Johnson and Grayson, 2005) and task orientation (adopted from Homburg et al, 2011) were measured using three items. The similarity measure contained ten items and is adapted from Karaosmanoglu and colleagues (2011). Trust is measured with three items derived from Doney and Cannon (1997) and adopted in accordance with the context of this study. The author of this thesis measured the purchase importance with 5-items derived from Cannon and Perreault (1999). All the constructs were measured using five-point Likert-type scale with the exception of sale process efficiency, for which each respondent was asked to provide the actual duration of the sale process and the industry average for similar situations. In other words, sale

process efficiency is a measure of how timely this specific sale process was completed with respect to a similar situation and operationalized as the ratio of the total duration for the actual decision-making process and the sectoral average of the similar decision-making processes. Finally, control variables, seller's age, industry experience, and tenure in the company are measured by the number of years. (See Appendix A for interview questions)

3.2.2 Sampling and data collection method

A convenience sample of B2B salespeople working in a metropolitan area in Turkey is reached via an online data collection process. Using a large online membership database, 3000 survey invitations were emailed to randomly select sales professionals. The survey link was accessible for three weeks and then a reminder email was sent one week after the initial request. The respondents were asked to think about their most recent (finalized) sale and consider the real buying decision-maker while answering the personal perceptions of the buyer. A total of 547 surveys were collected with a response rate of 18.23%, however, only 235 of them were usable after eliminating the sales professionals working in consumer markets.

181 (77%) of the respondents were male while 54 (23%) were female B2B sales professionals, from 6 different industries. The age range was between 22 and 62 with an average of 35.29 years. 25% of the respondents were below 30 years old, and 25% of the respondents were above 40 years old. The average industry experience of the sellers was 10.84 years, varying from 1 to 40 years. 25% of the respondents had less than 5 years and 25% of the respondents have more than 15 years of experience. The company tenure of the respondents varied from 1 to 39 years, with an average of 6.78 years. Demographics of the sample are presented in Table 3.1, and the industry distribution of the respondents are presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1: Demographics of sample.

Variable	Min	Max	Mean
Seller's Age	22	62	35.29
Industry Experience	1	40	10.84
Tenure in the Company	1	39	6.78

Table 3.2: Industry distribution of sample.

Industry	Percentage
Communications	17%
Construction	6%
Energy	4%
Food and Drug	13%
Services	33%
Production	27%

3.3 Data Analysis and Results

3.3.1 Effects of control variables

Regression analysis was performed to check the effects of the control variables (age, industry experience and tenure in the company) on the overall model. The control variables were first included in the regression on both seller's trust in the buyer and sales process efficiency. Only tenure in the company had a significant effect on seller's trust in the buyer and when expertise, similarity and task orientation was added this effect disappeared. The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 3.3. Secondly, the author looked at the variance inflation factor (VIF), and the largest VIF has a value of 2.364. This result ruled out concerns related to multicollinearity in the data (Hair et al, 1998). Therefore, it was concluded that the data set would not cause systematic sample errors, and the data were pooled for subsequent analyses.

Table 3.3: Regression analysis results.

	Sellers Trust in the Buyer	Sale Process Efficiency
Step 1:		
Control variables		
Age	-.092 (-.876)	-.055 (-.521)
Industry Experience	-.079 (-.638)	-.051 (-.402)
Tenure in the Company	.0231** (2.440)	.082 (.856)
Step 2:		
Control variables		
Age	-.045 (-.532)	-.048 (-.455)
Industry Experience	-.058 (-.577)	-.036 (-.285)
Tenure in the Company	.113 (1.472)	.058 (.602)
Independent variables		
Expertise	.288** (3.642)	-.022 (-.221)
Task Orientation	.298*** (3.711)	.173* (1.719)
Similarity	.147*** (2.675)	.020 (.294)

Standardized coefficients are reported along with t values. *p <.010, **p <.005, and ***p <.001.

To test the hypothesized relationships among the study constructs simultaneously based on a covariance-based procedure modeling of latent variables directly, the author used structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS software version 24.0.0.

3.3.2 Measurement model and structural model fit

First, means and standard deviations of each item, as well as the item loadings of the constructs were examined and listed in Table 3.4. Secondly means and standard deviations, as well as the reliabilities of constructs, were examined. Cronbach's alpha values (α) were well above the suggested benchmark 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978) in all instances. Secondly, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out to establish convergent validity. Table 3.5 shows the means, standard deviations, loadings, and reliability estimates (composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE)) for all study constructs. All CR values were above 0.80 and all AVEs were above 0.50, indicating satisfactory levels of reliability. Moreover, all t values were higher than 6, all factor loadings were greater than 0.5, and all loadings were at least five times greater than its standard error indicating convergent validity (Gerbing and Anderson, 1992). Overall, scales are stable, produce consistent results and measure their intended constructs. Finally, the author tested for non-response bias (Armstrong and Overton, 1977) and were not able to find any bias between early and late respondents.

Based on suggestions by Gerbing and Anderson (1992), the measurement model was evaluated and standardized $\chi 2$ value, comparative-fit index (CFI), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) and root-mean-square-error-of-approximation (RMSEA) are reported. Measurement Model included all items for buyer's expertise, buyer's task orientation, similarity, seller's trust in the buyer and sale process efficiency. The measurement model achieved adequate fit ($\chi 2$=313.758, df=155, $\chi 2$/df=, 2.024, CFI = 0.95, SRMR= 0.0644, RMSEA= 0.066).

Table 3.4: Construct item descriptives and loadings**.**

ID	Construct	#	Item	Descriptives		Item Loadings				
				M	SD	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
[1]	Expertise	#1	He/she has a great experience on his/her job	3.851	.960	.851				
		#2	He/she knowledgeable on his/her job	3.919	1.020	.935				
		#3	He/she knows his or her products very well	3.966	.987	.947				
[2]	Task	#1	He/she easily focus on the task at hand	3.855	1.019		.914			
	Orientation	#2	He/she is highly goal-oriented	3.949	1.045		.930			
		#3	He/she makes sales interactions as efficient as possible	3.889	1.032		.932			
[3]	Similarity	#1	He/she is very similar to me in terms of age	2.991	1.377			.545		
		#2	He/she is very similar to me in terms of life style	2.783	1.254			.808		
		#3	He/she is very similar to me in terms of social status	2.953	1.220			.789		
		#4	He/she is very similar to me in terms of education level	3.366	1.245			.640		
		#5	He/she is very similar to me in terms of income level	2.689	1.272			.677		
		#6	He/she is very similar to me in terms of character	2.715	1.216			.790		
		#7	He/she is very similar to me in terms of appearance	2.387	1.223			.723		
		#8	He/she is very similar to me in terms of values	2.987	1.276			.730		
		#9	He/she is very similar to me in terms of resume	2.332	1.162			.786		
		#10	He/she is very similar to me in terms of achievements	2.668	1.202			.764		
[4]	Trust	#1	I have a trustful business relation with him/her	3.417	1.364				.824	
		#2	He/she does not make false claims	3.804	1.107				.929	
		#3	He/she has been frank in dealing with me	3.796	1.140				.894	
[5]	Purchase	#1	... is very important	4.043	1.057					.865
	Importance	#2	... is very essential	3.779	1.114					.845
		#3	... is very significant	3.991	1.062					.790
		#4	... is high priority	3.821	1.295					.719
		#5	... provides differentiation from its competitors	3.966	1.143					.716

Table 3.5: Dimensionality, reliability and correlations.

#	Construct	Mean	SD	α	CR	AVE	Correlations*			
							[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]
[1]	Expertise	3.912	.902	.899	.912	.770	1	.743	.223	.554
[2]	Task Orientation	3.898	.955	.916	.911	.784		1	.321	.568
[3]	Similarity	2.787	.900	.898	.848	.503			1	.308
[4]	Trust	3.672	1.059	.849	.803	.689				1

α = Cronbach's alpha; CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted; * All correlations are significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed).

3.3.3 Hypothesis testing

The results of analyses, before the inclusion of the moderation effects, indicate that all the studied personal factors and perceptions have positive and statistically significant (all $p < .05$) influence on trust. Similarity ($\beta = .195$, $t = 3.249$) indicated a positive impact on trust; however, buyer-specific factors (buyer's task orientation ($\beta = .474$, $t = 4.821$) and buyer's expertise ($\beta = .162$, $t = 1.725$)) showed stronger positive influence on trust, which also has a positive influence on sale process efficiency ($\beta = .136$, $t = 2.009$). These results are consistent with study expectations, so H_1, H_{2a}, H_{2b}, and H_3 are supported. The result of this research model, comprising of antecedents and consequences of seller's trust in the buyer, is summarized in Figure 3.2, and total effects including the split of direct/indirect effects are reported in Table 3.6.

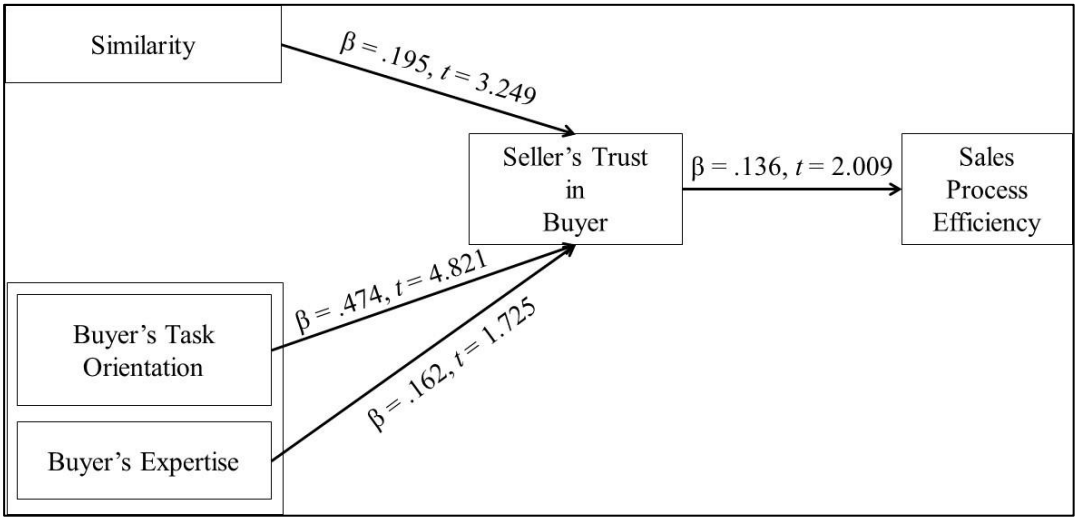

Figure 3.2: Results of SEM model.

Table 3.6: Results of hypothesis tests for the model.

#	Hypothesis			β_{direct}	*t*	P	$\beta_{indirect}$	β_{total}
							On SP Efficiency	
H_1	Similarity	→	Trust	0.195	3.249	<0.01	.027	.027
H_{2a}	Task Orientation	→	Trust	0.474	4.821	<0.01	.065	.065
H_{2b}	Expertise	→	Trust	0.162	1.725	<0.05	.022	.022
H_3	Trust	→	SP Efficiency	0.136	2.009	<0.05	.000	.136

Standardized regression weights for direct effects (β_{direct}) and t-values are given. Standardized regression weights for indirect effects ($\beta_{indirect}$) to SP efficiency and total effects (β_{total}) are given (n = 235, chi-square = 345.612, df = 160, RMSEA = 0.070, CFI = 0.94, SRMR = 0.1255).

3.3.4 Multi-group invariance tests and moderation effects hypothesis testing

The purpose of the moderation analysis is to examine and express the situational effects that may influence the strength of the structural relationships. In order to test the moderating influence of purchase importance on the strength of the relationship between sellers' trust in buyers and sale process efficiency (H_4), a multiple-group analysis was performed using AMOS.

Respondents were split into two groups using a mean split of the perceived purchase importance level of the buyer: (1) Low purchase importance and (2) High purchase importance. First, in testing the measurement invariance, a multi-group model was specified in which all factor loadings and all factor variances were constrained equal across the two groups. In testing whether the relationship between trust and sale process efficiency differ across low and high purchase importance situations (H4), the author first compared a fully constrained model in which the path is constrained ($\chi2$=545.1, df=321) equal across subgroups (i.e., low and high purchase importance) to an unconstrained model ($\chi2$=541.3, df=320) in which the path is allowed to vary freely. The results of the $\chi2$ difference test showed that the groups vary at the model level ($\Delta\chi2(1)$=3,85, p<0.05) indicating that differences in the path relationships between low and high groups exist. Thus, H_4 is supported.

Moreover, to test the relationship at the path level the critical difference ratios regarding the path coefficients were calculated. The coefficient of high purchase importance group (.458) is higher than the low purchase importance group's coefficient (.112) on the sellers' trust in the buyers and sales process efficiency relationship, and the critical difference ratio was significant (t = 1.651, p < .05). Finally, sellers' trust in buyers and sales process efficiency relationship is significant at high purchase importance group (β = .239, t = 2.446, p < .05); but not significant at low purchase importance group (β = .101, t = 1.068, p > .05).

3.4 Discussion on the results of the study

Sale process efficiency is critical for both the selling and the buying organizations in order to reduce the resources spent on each sale process (or buying process for the buying company). Based on the theoretical premise that similarity between buyer and seller (Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989; Doney and Cannon, 1997), buyer's task orientation (Venkatesh et al, 1995) and buyer's expertise (Crosby et al, 1990; Doney and Cannon, 1997) may have a bearing on trust, this study quantitatively tests a model of seller's trust in the buyer and its influence on sale process efficiency.

The antecedents of trust including similarity (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Lichtenthal and Tellefsen, 2001; Child and Möllering, 2003; Weck and Ivanova, 2013), expertise (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Johnson and Grayson, 2005), and task orientation (Gesteland, 2002; McFarland et al, 2006); as well as the sale process efficiency as a consequence of trust (Boles et al, 2000; Wagner et al, 2003; Pullins et al, 2004) have been addressed in several studies in the existing marketing literature; however the studies including these variables have primarily focused on the buyer's trust in the seller, the seller's expertise and the buyer's perceptions of seller similarity. On the other hand, the buyer-seller relationship is a two-way street, and thus this study fills in the gap in the literature about the seller's perception of buyer's similarity, expertise, and task orientation, and their outcomes in terms of seller's trust in the buyer and sale process efficiency.

The results of this study show that when sellers perceive buyers to be more similar, task-oriented experts, the seller's trust in the buyer and sale process efficiency increases. Thus, this study confirms the discussed and hypothesized positive influences of personal factors on the sale process efficiency in B2B settings. These results suggest that the buyer-seller similarity, task orientation, and expertise may be integrated into the current B2B buyer behavior model, which will improve the understanding of B2B salesperson performance.

The outcome of this study also recommends that "similarity" can be a new dimension for "adaptive selling." The general definition of "adaptive selling" is "the altering of sales behaviors during or across customer interactions based upon perceived information about the nature of the selling situation" (Weitz et al, 1986). From this perspective, the fast assessment capability of the seller about the buyer attitudes and

beliefs may help to emphasize points of similarity during sales calls as well as to avoid the discussions related to the points of dissimilarity; an evaluation which is aligned with the "adaptive selling behavior."

Another important finding of this study is the moderating effect of the purchase importance on the relationship between the seller's trust in the buyer and sale process efficiency. When the author split the sample into two groups based on perceived purchase importance levels, the author found interesting results. The hypothesized positive effect of the perceived purchase importance on the strength of the relationship between the seller's trust in the buyer and the sale process efficiency (H_4) is supported. Moreover, when purchase importance is high, there is a significant positive relationship between seller's trust in the buyer and sale process efficiency; however, this relationship becomes statistically insignificant for the low purchase important group. These findings might be related to the sellers' increased risk perception of the buyer for more important purchase situations compared to less important purchase situations (Jackson, 1985). It is reasonable to assume that when a salesperson trusts the buyer, the salesperson may share more information with the buyer, and therefore reduces risk perception of the buyer, which helps to increase the trust in the seller due to reduced uncertainty of consequences (Doney and Cannon, 1997). This risk reduction mechanism helps to expedite the decision period for the buyer, increasing the sale process efficiency. This result might be practically expected, however to the best of the author's knowledge, this study is the first attempt to show this moderation effect in an empirical setting, which can be considered as a contribution to the marketing theory.

3.4.1 Managerial implications

This study proves that the similarity between seller and buyer has a significant positive influence on the trust, which has a significant positive influence on the sale process efficiency in business-to-business contexts. From that perspective, if the sales team managers want to increase the sale process efficiency, they need to assign similar sellers to their buyer counterparts.

This finding is grounded by the previous researches as the findings indicate that similarity supports the development of trust as similar people tend to evaluate each other more favorably compared to dissimilar ones (Tsui et al, 2002). The results of this

study may help the sales team managers understand the influence of similarity between buyer and seller in a sale situation. Such understanding will assist those in assigning the customers to their team members; and develop methods and techniques to enable salespeople to personally assess the degree of similarity with a specific buyer, hence modify their sales behaviors.

Even though matching sellers and buyers based on similarity might sound logical and effective, but it may also pose important managerial problems in an age where customers in some industries may be mostly male or white and enlightened sellers will want to assign women or non-white sales professionals to call on dissimilar prospects. For that reason, team managers also recognize the complex societal and legal factors while assigning the team members to his/her counterparts. Although similarity has a dark side due to possible discriminatory consequences, this study provides an understanding of how the model of similarity can be integrated into salesperson recruiting processes and validates that it is vital for hiring managers to evaluate candidates while considering their awareness and the capability to rapidly examine buyer attitudes and beliefs to determine the similar characteristics.

Another important managerial implication is for procurement organizations. Results indicate that sales (procurement) process efficiency is facilitated by sellers' trust in the buyer when purchase importance is high. If the procurement team managers want to increase their process efficiency for high importance tasks, they may need to assign higher expertise and/or higher task-oriented buyers to this particular procurement activity.

Finally, the results of the moderation analysis reveal that the sales team manager needs to motivate their sellers to trust their buyers more at higher purchase importance situations in order to increase the sale process efficiency in B2B settings. The application of this implication might be more challenging for the sales team managers since the selling situation is not the core competency of a sales team manager, but a sales team member.

3.4.2 Limitations and suggestions for future research

The author has confidence in the theoretical model about the trust between the buyer and the seller in the business setting and its contributions to an important and growing topic for practitioners and researchers in B2B marketing. However, the findings based

on this theoretical model have certain limitations that require future research to develop the field further.

This study breaks new ground by studying perceptions exclusively from the seller's point of view. This one-way perspective is worth investigating and contributes to the understanding of buyer-seller relations. However, the research has been conducted only from one perspective and one level (salesperson – buying decision-maker) of a dyadic, multi-level phenomenon. Yet this dyadic phenomenon involves not just person-to-person but also firm-to-firm, or person-to-firm, or firm-to-person interactions. Thus, the other levels of this dyadic phenomenon, as well as perspectives, are worth investigating as well. As the results of this study are derived exclusively from the seller's perspective, it might be interesting to replicate a similar study with both buyers' and sellers' perspectives concurrently, both from individual and firm levels.

The other concern is about the sale process efficiency as a dependent variable. Sale process efficiency is a time-bound measure of sales performance, which can be defined as the execution of salespersons' correct behaviors and the results of those behaviors to the achievement of organizational goals in a specified timeframe (Hyman and Sager, 1999). However, buyer-seller relationship building is a long-term process, and that might be determined not only by how quickly the sale process is completed but also by the purchase history, size of the order, new account acquisition, or long-term customer satisfaction. Therefore, the replication of this study with not only sale process efficiency but also other aspects of sales performance might be suggested.

The final concern about this research is the generalizability of the results. The survey was conducted on the seller perceptions about buyer similarity or expertise in several industries. However, the ideal situation is conducting the research by one specific industry to eliminate the differences in industry dynamics. Overall, the findings of this study may have interesting implications for marketing theory. This study also suggests significant opportunities for future researches.

4. A QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH AT BUYER'S DOMAIN

The emotional and social aspects of B2B relationships, including the personal factors, have found a place in the B2B studies starting from the new millennium (Swift and Gruben, 2000; Pullins et al, 2004; Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014; Wagner and Benoit, 2015; Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar, 2017) and has increased in intensity. For example, Arslanagic-Kalajdzic and Zabkar (2017) showed in their recent study that there are relational dimensions related to buyers' perceived value, which influences the satisfaction with the seller, a central dimension of relationship quality. Using Similarity-Attraction Paradigm (Berscheid and Walster, 1978), the similarity between the buyer and the seller in a B2B sales transaction has also received some attention from various researchers (Boles et al, 2000; Coulter and Coulter, 2003; Shamdasani and Jung, 2011; Mullins et al, 2014). However, the results of these studies are contradicting. Boles and colleagues (2000) and Shamdasani and Jung (2011) did not find a significant influence of similarity on the relationship quality construct, whereas Coulter and Coulter (2003) found a significant negative effect of similarity on relationship quality. Mullins and colleagues (2014), on the other hand, found a positive effect of similarity on relationship quality. The increased attention to the relationship marketing studies in the B2B context brought some research outcomes into light that confirm the vital role of individual performance (Palmatier et al, 2007a) and personal competencies (Mitręga and Katrichis, 2010) of the salespeople in the B2B context in having a successful outcome from the relational strategies and "the success of such relational strategies is strongly dependent on the ability to create interpersonal bonds between the supplier and the customer" (Guenzi et al, 2007, p.121).

4.1 Theoretical Background

The ultimate target of any business organization is to have profitable continuous sales growth. Excellent relationship quality between the organization and its customers is one of the main enablers to achieve this target. For that reason, finding and determining the effects of relationship characteristics on the relational consequences is one of the core theoretical goals of relationship marketing studies. This is well demonstrated by (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) at the "Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing," where trust and commitment to the relationship drive the relational consequences such as propensity to cooperate/leave, perceived uncertainty, and functional problem-solving. In other words, the success in relationship marketing efforts brings many positive outcomes to the organizations, including growth at market share, higher profit margins, increase in customer retention, and loyalty (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). The beneficial consequences of relationship quality to the company performance have been shown in the B2B literature many times (Caceres and Paparoidamis, 2007; Rauyruen and Miller, 2007; Alejandro et al, 2011).

Next, based on the literature review, factors influencing relationship quality between the buyer and the seller will be laid out, and the consequences of the relationship quality will be examined with the aim of answering the research questions of this study: 1) Whether interpersonal factors affect the relationship quality; 2) Whether relational selling behavior mediates the relationship between interpersonal factors and relationship quality, and 3) Whether relationship quality is related to relational outcomes.

4.1.1 Relationship quality

The relationship between buyers and sellers in the B2B context includes multiple dimensions such as trust, commitment, satisfaction, cooperation, and communication (Palmatier et al, 2007b). RQ is generally accepted as comprising of these dimensions, and it is in the center of relationship marketing (Athanasopoulou, 2009; Dwyer et al, 1987; Crosby et al, 1990). Crosby and colleagues (1990) showed that the RQ provides the best assessment of the relationship strength and reflects the exchange performance between buyer and seller (De Wulf et al, 2001) as well as the quality of relational bonds between the buyer and the seller (Palmatier et al, 2008).

There is a consensus in academia about the two main components of the relationship quality: trust and commitment (Kumar and Scheer, 1995; Roberts et al, 2003; Leonidou et al, 2013). However, some recent researches (Alejandro et al, 2011; Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014; Sarmento et al, 2015) added satisfaction as a third component to relationship quality. The widely accepted construct of relationship quality is reflected by a combination of commitment, trust, and satisfaction (Athanasopoulou, 2009). Jiang and colleagues (2016) have completed a wide search in marketing publications starting from 1990 and summarized the dimensions used to determine relationship quality in 34 studies. 30 of these 34 (88%) studies used trust as first of the dimension, 24 of these 34 (71%) studies used commitment as the second dimension, and 20 of these 34 (59%) studies used satisfaction as the third dimension of the relationship quality. In accordance with this summary, the author operationalized the relationship quality with these three dimensions. These three dimensions cover both present and the expectations of the future state of the relationship and generate many consequences.

Studies about the consequences of relationship quality in business contexts showed that the better relationship quality is correlated with more favorable financial outcomes (Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014) such as business performance (Leuthesser, 1997), sales effectiveness (Boles et al, 2000), and supply chain operational performance (Nyaga and Whipple, 2011). Relationship quality between the buyer and the seller also positively influences the non-financial outcomes (Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014) such as anticipation of future interaction (Ulaga and Eggert, 2006); and all dimensions of relationship quality influence loyalty (Rauyruen and Miller, 2007). Alejandro and colleagues (2011) showed the influence of relationship quality on customer loyalty, performance, and perceptions of relationship value. They also empirically established that relationship quality positively influences customer loyalty and perceptions of relationship value.

4.1.2 Relational selling behavior

Relational selling behavior is a form of sales behavior in which salespeople develop long-term relationships with specific customers of their choice based on mutual trust and loyalty that provide benefits and satisfaction on both sides. Sellers exhibiting relational selling behavior focus on customers who sell and/or are likely to make

purchases rather than working in specific geographical areas and try to establish relationships with them in which long-term mutual trust and satisfaction can be achieved. In order for a relational sale to take place, both the buyer and the seller must be honest, reliable, knowledgeable, talented, have common or similar goals, and sales representatives must apply customer-oriented sales principles (Farber, 1997).

Studies investigating the relationship between relational selling behavior and relationship quality are few in the literature. A supportive study on this subject was conducted by Crosby and colleagues (1990), and it was found that relational selling behavior positively affected relationship quality. In addition, Wray and colleagues (1994) showed that there is a positive relationship between the salesperson's customer focus and relationship quality. Finally, Lagace and colleagues (1991) found a positive relationship between salesperson's ethical behavior and relationship quality in their study.

Barry and Doney (2011), in their cross-cultural study that examines the antecedents and consequences of relationship quality, concluded that investments in the relationship positively affect relationship quality within the context of relational selling behavior. The first studies that explored the connection between relational selling behavior and relationship quality in the consumer context were conducted by De Wulf and colleagues (2001) and Kumar and colleagues (1995). De Wulf and colleagues (2001) demonstrated that clients have a tendency to be more satisfied with vendors who are working in the same direction as them.

More recently, Gounaris and Tzempelikos (2014) showed that the relational selling behavior of the salespeople has a positive influence on the relationship quality between salespeople and buyers. Similar to their findings, the relational selling behavior of a salesperson is more likely to gain the buyer’s trust, commitment, and satisfaction; thus, it will increase the relationship quality. Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

H_1: Relational selling behavior is positively related to relationship quality.

4.1.3 Similarity

The similarity between two people is the degree of common interests and values (Doney and Cannon, 1997) as well as sharing the similar individual traits or physical characteristics (Smith, 1998) in a relationship. As suggested by the Similarity-Attraction Theory (Byrne, 1971), there is higher attraction between similar people rather than dissimilar people; and sharing the same interests, having the same respected values and common living standards increase the perception of similarity among two or more people (Doney and Cannon, 1997). The theory also offers that similarity among people in the same group impacts their personal evaluations, behaviors, and attitudes towards each other in a positive way (Byrne, 1971). As also drawn by the concept of relational demography, similar people develop positive attitudes towards each other and behave positively; whereas, dissimilar individuals have a tendency to evaluate each other less favorably (Tsui et al, 2002). Doney and Cannon (1997) showed that buyers increase their trust in and satisfaction with the salesperson, who are similar to themselves, because they believe that the salesperson shares same values and has similar interests.

Based on the above arguments, the author believes that similarity between the buyer and the salesperson will contribute towards the relationship quality directly and has an indirect effect through its influence on the relational selling behavior of the subsequent salesperson. Therefore, the followings are hypothesized:

H_{2a}: Similarity between the buyer and the salesperson is positively related to the relational selling behavior of that salesperson.

H_{2b}: Similarity between the buyer and the salesperson is positively related to the relationship quality.

H_{2c}: Relational selling behavior partially mediates the relationship between similarity and relationship quality.

4.1.4 Personality

The influence of buyer-seller personalities on their interactions and on the accomplishment of relationship marketing strategies have been recognized in the marketing literature (Odekerken-Shröder et al, 2003). Even in the B2B markets, as the relationship develops between individuals (buyer and seller), the personality of these individuals should have an effect on the relationship (Peterson and Dant, 1990; Weaven et al, 2009). Fournier (1998) states that B2B relationships that are not based on personality are doomed to death in a very short time and/or the relationship quality cannot exceed a certain level, and the B2B relationship success depends on knowing each other's personality traits in any transaction. Previous literature suggests that personality factors may influence the delivery of services to customers (DiPetro et al, 2008) as personality has a bearing on the emotional and relational outcomes such as trust in B2B settings (Elsäßer and Wirtz, 2017). In a meta-analysis conducted by Palmatier and colleagues (2006), it was revealed that personality effects focused first on the corporate level factors. The influence of personality traits on other factors is still in the focus of academia.

Despite the special relationship between personality and B2B relationship quality, surprisingly, the potential effect of personality on relationship quality in the B2B setting has not been examined yet, with the exception of one single study performed by Dant and colleagues (2013). The authors studied the relationship between franchisee-franchisor personalities and relationship quality. Certainly, the franchisee-franchisor relationship is not a typical buyer-seller relationship in a B2B setting, as the buyer (franchisee) in this relationship is generally bound and cannot switch to another franchisor (seller) easily. So, this study will contribute to the literature while researching a more typical B2B relationship is needed.

Moreover, there are many studies conducted by personality researchers that investigate the effects of individual personality traits on job performance. Results indicate that personality traits are influential on business outcomes and work behaviors. Based on Barrick and Mount’s (1991) findings, extraversion and conscientiousness are the most influential individual personality traits on the sales job performance, whereas the other three personality traits (agreeableness, emotional instability, and openness to experience) are less influential or not even related to sales job performance. Even though some personality–performance relationship studies have focused on all five

dimensions of Goldberg's Model, these two personality traits have been in the primary focus of the sales-related personality studies for decades (Hurtz and Donovan 2000; Neubert et al, 2006; Yang et al, 2011). Similar to previous studies, the author also keeps the focus on these two individual personality traits (extraversion and conscientiousness) for this dissertation.

When looking at these two dimensions of the personality, the extravert people like being together with other people, are energetic, positive-thinking, ambitious, talkative, have no problem speaking in front of a group, and are attractive people. They are interested in developing social relationships (Loveland, 2004), which are the desired personal skills for salespeople because these skills are positively related to relational selling behavior, as suggested by Barrick and Mount (1991). Therefore, the author believes that extravert salespeople present more relational selling behaviors than introverts. On the other hand, the author doesn't believe that there is a direct relationship between the salesperson's extraversion level and the relationship quality because none of the relationship quality dimensions (trust, commitment, and satisfaction) are directly influenced by the extravert skills, but these skills only affect the salesperson behaviors. In other words, the author expects a full mediation between extraversion and relationship quality via relational selling behavior.

Conscientious people are organized, systematic, achievement-oriented, patient, hard-working, self-disciplined, and punctual. They avoid trouble, and they are planning towards a target (Howard and Howard, 1995). Thus, conscientiousness skills may have a bearing on the relational selling behaviors because the systematic planning and well-organizedness/preparedness of salespeople may increase the intensity of interaction as well as the intensity of the information exchange. So, the author believes that conscientiousness level of the salesperson is influencing the relational selling behavior. On the other hand, conscientiousness skills are also linked to sales performance (Vinchur et al, 1998). This relation may be a consequence of the increased trust and satisfaction between the salesperson and the buyer. Thus, a salesperson's conscientiousness level may also have a bearing directly on the relationship quality.

To summarize, the author expects these two traits to influence the relational selling behavior and the relationship quality based on the previous research results (Loveland, 2004; Vinchur et al, 1998). Thus, the followings are hypothesized:

H_{3a}: The salesperson's extraversion is positively related to his/her relational selling behavior.

H_{3b}: The salesperson's extraversion is related to the relationship quality.

H_{3c}: Relational selling behavior mediates the relationship between salesperson's extraversion and relationship quality

H_{4a}: The salesperson's conscientiousness is positively related to his/her relational selling behavior.

H_{4b}: The salesperson's conscientiousness is positively related to the relationship quality.

H_{4c}: Relational selling behavior mediates the relationship between salesperson's conscientiousness and relationship quality

4.1.5 Loyalty

Customer loyalty, the last step, is seen as the most remarkable goal in terms of carrying out marketing activities. Oliver (1997, p. 392) defined customer loyalty as a "deeply held commitment to rebury a preferred product or service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior." A very limited number of loyal customers switch to a rival just because of price, and they habitually buy more than disloyal customers. Therefore, loyal customers are considered the most important asset of a business. Thus, it is important for sellers to retain loyal customers who have the potential to contribute to the long-term profits of businesses. Generally, customer loyalty is seen as an ultimate goal in the marketing practices of businesses (Tseng, 2007).

Customer loyalty has a stronger influence on profitability than market share due to loyal customers' repeated purchases, purchases in larger quantities, willingness to accept higher prices, and, thus, creation of long-term revenue gains; all of which increase profitability of the firm (Hazen and Byrd, 2012). Furthermore, Ehrenthal and Stölzle (2013) demonstrate when customers are unable to find the brand they are looking for in the market, loyal customers are more likely to postpone the purchase until the product is available, on the other hand, customers who are not loyal to a brand, they may look for another supplier or investigate substitute items.

Several researchers demonstrate the positive influence of relationship quality on loyalty, and these studies have presented robust evidence. For instance, Caceres and Paparoidamis (2007) showed a positive relationship between satisfaction (dimension of relationship quality) and loyalty. According to the results of their study, Rauyruen and Miller (2007) showed that all dimensions of relationship quality influence loyalty positively. Alejandro and colleagues (2011) explored the mechanisms between relationship quality and customer loyalty, and empirically proved that relationship quality influences customer loyalty.

Customer loyalty can be separated into two dimensions: Loyalty to the salesperson and loyalty to the brand. In this dissertation, the author decided to investigate the effect of relationship quality in both dimensions: (1) Loyalty to Salesperson and (2) Loyalty to Brand.

The customer's loyalty to the salesperson may be based on buyer-seller interactions. A business friendship is established on a private relationship at the higher levels of loyalty to the salesperson, which is influenced by the salesperson's individual capability, professional skills, and interpersonal relations. Customers benefit from this type of relationship by getting confidence, social interest, and other special interests. Thus, the author proposed the following hypothesis:

H_5: The buyer's perception of relationship quality with the salesperson is positively related to the loyalty to that salesperson.

Brand loyalty has been operationalized and measured in many different ways. Morgan and Hunt (1994) suggested that loyalty is a relational phenomenon. Thus, the author implemented a conceptualization of brand loyalty that includes both positive attitudes and repeat purchase behaviors. Customers show their loyalty to a brand or a salesperson by continuing to buy this brand or from this salesperson, by promoting this brand or this salesperson to others, by recommending this brand or salesperson (Zeithaml et al, 1996). Thus, the following is hypothesized about loyalty to the brand:

H_6: The buyer's perception of relationship quality with the salesperson is positively related to loyalty to the promoted brand by that salesperson.

4.1.6 Anticipation of future interaction

The link between relationship quality and the buyer's intention to continue the relationship has previously been established in the marketing literature. Crosby and colleagues (1990) were able to show that trust (one dimension of relationship quality) in the salesperson increases the chance of relationship continuity. Similarly, Morgan and Hunt (1994) were able to prove the negative relationship between trust and intention to leave, which is the opposite of anticipation of future interaction.

Doney and Cannon (1997) use the term "anticipation of future interaction" the first time, and it was defined as the buyer's intention to continue the relationship. The findings of their study show that trust in the salesperson and trust in the supplier is linked with anticipated future interaction (Doney and Cannon, 1997). Three years after, Foster and Cadogan (2000) also concluded their study with the same relation between trust and anticipated future interaction. Kennedy and colleagues (2001) show similar findings between trust and repurchase intention. More recently, it has been demonstrated that relationship quality has a positive influence on relationship continuity (Lai et al, 2008) and anticipation of future interaction (Sarmento et al, 2015). In line with these findings, the following is hypothesized:

H_7: The buyer's perception of relationship quality with the salesperson is positively related to the anticipation of future interaction with the salesperson.

4.1.7 Proposed model of relationship quality between B2B buyers and sellers

Based on the developed hypotheses, the proposed model is shown in Figure 4.1.

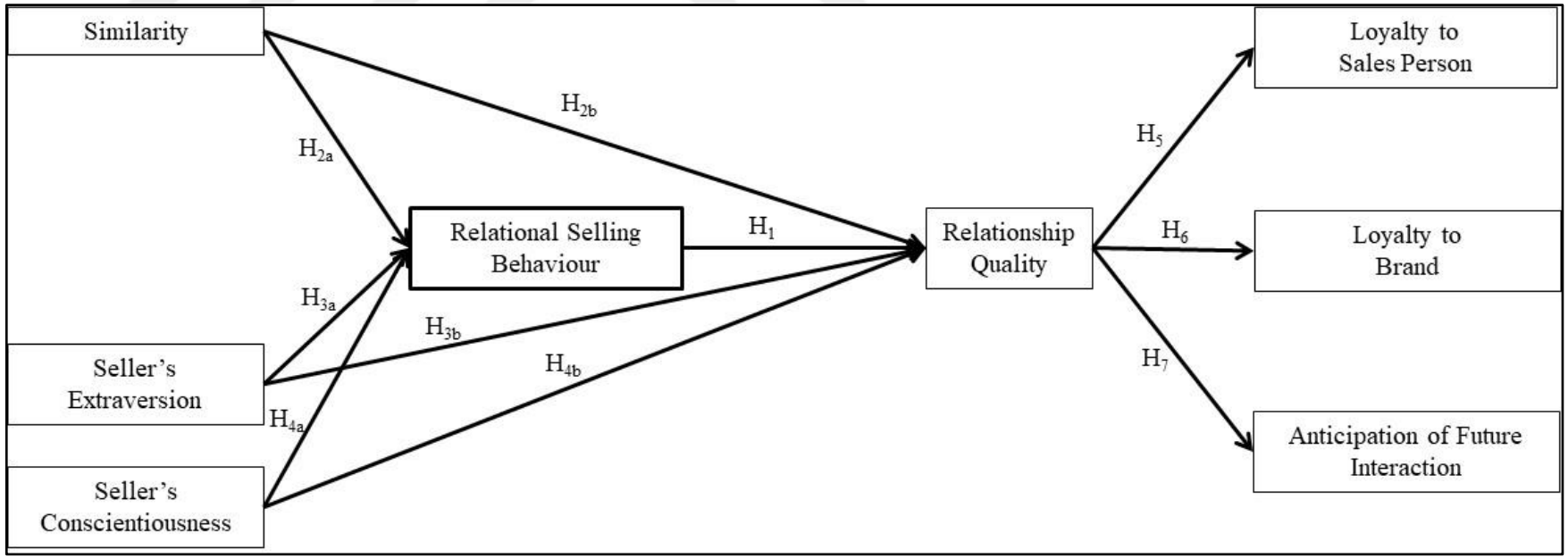

Figure 4.1: Research model and the proposed relationships.

4.2 Method

4.2.1 Sampling and data collection method

The pharmaceutical industry has been used many times (Chakrabarti et al, 2013; Bataineh et al, 2015; Filieri et al, 2014) to investigate the relationship dynamics between the pharmacist and the counterparty. Therefore, the author decided to perform this research to examine the business-to-business relationship between the buying decision-maker of a pharmacy and the pharmaceutical company's sales-representative, which is a typical B2B relationship. The population of this study is determined as all retail pharmacies located in Turkey, and the unit of analysis of this study are pharmacists who are the buying decision-makers at their retail stores. The health-care legislation of Turkey does not allow pharmacy-chains, and the owners of each individual pharmacy must be a pharmacist in accordance with this legislation. The owners can also employ additional pharmacists for business reasons. From that perspective, either the owner of the pharmacy or the chief-pharmacist is the buying decision-maker.

According to the statistics published by the National Pharmaceutical Association (2014), there are 24,319 retail pharmacies located in Turkey. In order to avoid any interviewer or geographical bias during the data collection, the geographical quota sampling frame has been defined according to the number for pharmacies in different regions, based on the number of retail pharmacy stores among that respective region. The distribution of the responses by region is shown in Table 4.1. The data collection was made by 33 interviewers, who visited the pharmacies randomly within these regions and found the buying decision-makers at pharmacies.

Table 4.1: Geographical distribution of responses and pharmacy population.

Geographical Region	**# of Responses**	**# of Pharmacy** (National Pharmacist Association, 2014)	**Ratio**
Region 1	47	2,956	1.59%
Region 2	107	6,883	1.55%
Region 3	75	4,861	1.54%
Region 4	20	1,304	1.53%
Region 5	224	8,315	2.69%
TOTAL	**473**	**24,319**	**1.94%**

The author of this dissertation narrowed the research to relationships between the analgesic drugs sales representatives and the buying decision-maker because the relationship quality between the buyer and seller may be more influential than other drug types due to the following reasons: (1) The analgesic drugs market is highly competitive; (2) Analgesics can be sold to the pharmacy customers without a medical doctor prescription, so pharmacists can influence the final customers about the brand; (3) This market is a profit maker due to the higher volume of profitable sales (Adalig, 2016).

The interviewers reached 525 respondents in total; however, 49 of these respondents were eliminated after answering the filter questions such as "Do you join meetings in-person with the pharmaceutical company sales-representative, who are visiting your retail store?" or "Are you in charge of deciding the retailed products at your pharmacy store?" that helped to find out the real buying decision-makers and/or non-established relationships (less than six months length) and/or the relationships with non-frequent sales calls (the last visit performed longer than three months ago) by the sales representative. All these interviews were supported with a photo of the pharmacy and/or a business card of the pharmacists, and 40% of the respondents were randomly called back by a supervisor for a telephone control. Three of these 476 responses were eliminated during the telephone controls, thus 473 usable responses remained.

Respondents comprise 41% female and 59% male, which has an age range between 18 and 73 with an average of 37.48. 25% of the respondents are below 30 years old, and 25% of the respondents are above 40 years old. The respondents were asked about their judgments about the analgesic drug provider pharmaceutical company sales representative who visited them lastly but maximum within the last three months. 96% of the pharmaceutical company sales-representatives visited the pharmacy within the previous month, and 88% of the respondents have had more than 12 months of relationship with the pharmaceutical company sales-representative. The length of the relationship between buyer and seller; and the most recent visit statistics are very realistic. The cross tabulation of relationship length vs. most recent visit distribution is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Most recent visit time vs length of relationship.

MOST RECENT VISIT	LENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP				TOTAL
	6-12 Months	1-2 Years	2-5 Years	5+ Years	
Last Week	9%	19%	19%	20%	**67%**
Last Two Weeks	2%	9%	3%	3%	**17%**
Last Month	1%	5%	3%	2%	**12%**
Last Three Months	0%	2%	0%	2%	**4%**
TOTAL	**12%**	**35%**	**25%**	**27%**	**100%**

The majority (64%) of the respondents have more than ten years of sectoral experience, and only 0.8% of the respondents have less than one year of sectoral experience. The majority (45%) of the company tenure (working for the current pharmacy) of the respondents is again more than ten years, and only 2.7% of the respondents have less than one year of pharmacy. The cross-tabulation of sectoral experience vs. company tenure is shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Sectoral experience vs. company tenure.

SECTORAL EXPERIENCE	COMPANY TENURE					TOTAL
	Less than 1 year	Between 1 to 3 years	Between 3 to 5 years	Between 5 to 10 years	More than 10 years	
Less than 1 year	.8%					**.8%**
Between 1 to 3 years		5.3%				**5.3%**
Between 3 to 5 years	.4%	1.3%	6.6%			**8.2%**
Between 5 to 10 years	.6%	1.9%	2.7%	16.1%		**21.4%**
More than 10 years	.8%	4.2%	4.7%	9.9%	44.6%	**64.3%**
TOTAL	**2.7%**	**12.7%**	**14.0%**	**26.0%**	**44.6%**	**100.0%**

4.2.2 Measures

All measurement items were adopted from available scales in the literature and modified in accordance with the research context. The questionnaire assessed the buyers' perceptions of the individual characteristics of a specific salesperson, as well as the buyer's perception of the relationship characteristics with that salesperson in a specific sales situation. The reliabilities of all selected scales were well above the suggested benchmark 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978) in the original studies. Relationship quality, which has three components (trust, commitment, and satisfaction), is measured with nine items derived from Palmatier and colleagues (2007a). Relational selling behavior is measured with four components, and the scales of these components were adopted from different resources. Interaction orientation is measured with five items that are adopted from Shamdasani and Jung (2011). Customer orientation is measured with three items that are adopted from Narver and Slater (1990). The four

items of information exchange are taken from Ivens and Pardo (2007), and the three items of interaction frequency are adopted from Damperat and Jolibert (2009). The similarity scale has ten items, which includes both physical and social similarity questions that are adopted from Karaosmanoglu and colleagues (2011). Both personality traits (extraversion and conscientiousness) are measured with five items each which are derived from Somer and Goldberg (1999) as implemented by Bacanli and colleagues (2009). Both of the loyalty factors are measured with four items each. Loyalty to salesperson and loyalty to the brand items are respectively adopted from Shamdasani and Jung (2011) and Han and Sung (2008). Finally, the anticipation of future interaction is measured with three items taken from Crosby and colleagues (1990).

The face and content validities of the questionnaire were evaluated in detail by three academics and one practitioner before launching the survey. On top of that, a pilot survey was conducted and some items were modified to improve their precision and clarity in accordance with the results of the preliminary analysis and received feedback from the experts of the topic. All the items listed on Appendix B were measured using via five-point Likert-type scale (anchored by “strongly disagree” / “strongly agree”).

4.3 Data Analysis and Results

4.3.1 Measurement model and structural model fit

Firstly, the means and standard deviations of each item, as well as the item loadings of the constructs were examined and listed in Table 4.4. Secondly, analysis results on the measurement model are shown in Table 4.5, which includes means, standard deviations, loadings, and reliability estimates (composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE)), and correlations of each construct were calculated. All the reliabilities were well above the suggested benchmark 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978) and the average variances extracted for all measures are greater than the recommended level of 0.50 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). All the correlations among variables are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). All CR values were above 0.80 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) and all AVEs were above 0.50, and all the loadings were at least ten times greater than its standard error (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988), indicating satisfactory levels of reliability. Overall, scales are stable, produce consistent results and they measure what they intend to measure.

Table 4.4: Construct item descriptives and loadings.

#	Construct	α	#	Item	Descriptives		Item Loadings											
					M	SD	TR	COM	SAT	IOR	COR	IEX	IFR	SIM	SEV	SC	LS	LB	AFI
TR	Trust	.95	#1	My salesperson gives me a feeling of trust	3.67	1.04	.92												
			#2	I have trust in my salesperson	3.67	.98	.91												
			#3	My salesperson is trustworthy	3.80	.93	.87												
COM	Commitment	.89	#1	I am willing “to go the extra mile” to work with my salesperson	3.95	.82		.92											
			#2	I feel committed to the relationship with my salesperson	3.96	.77		.89											
			#3	I view the relationship with my salesperson as a long-term partnership	4.03	.81		.93											
SAT	Satisfaction	.93	#1	I have a high-quality relationship with my salesperson	3.99	.73			.92										
			#2	I am happy with the relationship with my salesperson	3.93	.76			.88										
			#3	I am satisfied with the relationship I have with my salesperson	4.03	.69			.91										
IOR	Interaction Orientation	.92	#1	The sales representative is easy to talk with	4.23	.65				.72									
			#2	The sales representative is interested in my not only as a customer, but also as a person	4.07	.85				.81									
			#3	The sales representative is genuinely enjoys helping me	4.14	.75				.79									
			#4	The sales representative is friendly towards me	4.05	.79				.82									
			#5	The sales representative is cooperative person	4.24	.63				.67									

Table 4.4 (continued): Construct item descriptives and loadings.

#	Construct	α	#	Item	Descriptives		Item Loadings											
					M	SD	TR	COM	SAT	IOR	COR	IEX	IFR	SIM	SEV	SC	LS	LB	AFI
COR	Customer Orientation	.87	#1	The sales representative is ensures our satisfaction with the service level	4.14	.72					.84								
			#2	The sales representative understands our needs	4.05	.83					.83								
			#3	The sales representative gives creates value	4.05	.70					.84								
IEX	Information Exchange	.76	#1	The sales representative provides us all necessary information that is useful to us	4.07	.76						.79							
			#2	The sales representative informs us in a timely manner about changes that concern us	4.01	.78						.77							
			#3	The sales representative discusses his own strategic orientation with us	3.70	1.06						.73							
			#4	The sales representative provides us confidential information	3.20	1.33						.62							
IFR	Interaction Frequency	.89	#1	The sales representative frequently visits us	4.02	.79							.90						
			#2	The sales representative takes a lot of time learning our needs	3.98	.79							.79						
			#3	The sales representative contacts us very often (telephone, mail, fax...)	4.03	.79							.89						

Table 4.4 (continued): Construct item descriptives and loadings.

#	Construct	α	#	Item	Descriptives		Item Loadings											
					M	SD	TR	COM	SAT	IOR	COR	IEX	IFR	SIM	SEV	SC	LS	LB	AFI
SIM	Similarity	.79	#1	He/she is very similar to me in terms of age	2.86	1.26								.77					
			#2	He/she is very similar to me in terms of life style	2.81	1.16								.88					
			#3	He/she is very similar to me in terms of social status	2.93	1.15								.88					
			#4	He/she is very similar to me in terms of education level	2.98	1.20								.77					
			#5	He/she is very similar to me in terms of income level	2.74	1.16								.87					
			#6	He/she is very similar to me in terms of character	2.95	1.18								.82					
			#7	He/she is very similar to me in terms of appearance	2.77	1.22								.87					
			#8	He/she is very similar to me in terms of values	3.01	1.15								.87					
			#9	He/she is very similar to me in terms of resume	2.76	1.17								.91					
			#10	He/she is very similar to me in terms of achievements	2.89	1.13								.89					
SEV	Sellers Extraversion	.89	#1	This salesperson easily makes friends	3.88	.82									.78				
			#2	This salesperson feels comfortable around people	3.99	.71									.81				
			#3	This salesperson knows how to captivate people.	4.13	.65									.75				
			#4	This salesperson is skilled in handling social situations	3.96	.74									.78				
			#5	This salesperson is the shining star of the party	3.99	.69									.82				
SC	Sellers Conscientiousness	.88	#1	This salesperson is always prepared	4.13	.72										.83			
			#2	This salesperson always pay attention to details	4.12	.74										.84			
			#3	This salesperson get chores done right away.	4.07	.68										.86			
			#4	This salesperson is ordinary	4.11	.69										.82			
			#5	This salesperson makes plans and stick to them.	4.12	.70										.85			

Table 4.4 (continued): Construct item descriptives and loadings.

#	Construct	α	#	Item	Descriptives		Item Loadings												
					M	SD	TR	COM	SAT	IOR	COR	IEX	IFR	SIM	SEV	SC	LS	LB	AFI
LS	Loyalty to Salesperson	.82	#1	I'll consider this sales representative my first choice to buy other products	3.93	.77											.84		
			#2	I'll encourage the other pharmacies to work with this salesperson	3.85	.79											.84		
			#3	I'll say positive things about this sales representative to other people	3.89	.75											.86		
			#4	I'll recommend this sales representative to other pharmacies	3.90	.75											.86		
LB	Loyalty to Brand	.95	#1	We intend to keep buying this brand	3.96	.72												.84	
			#2	If another brand is having a sale, we will generally not buy the other brand instead of this one	3.83	.79												.83	
			#3	If someone makes a negative comment about this brand, we would defend it	3.81	.79												.87	
			#4	We would recommend this brand to someone who cannot decide which brand to buy in this product class	3.88	.77												.86	
AFI	Anticipation of Future Interaction	0.97	#1	We'll buy again analgesic drugs from this sales representative in next six months	3.96	.70													.88
			#2	We intend to continue this business relationship for a long time	3.95	.73													.90
			#3	We intend to buy the analgesic drugs from this sales representative for a long time	3.93	.71													.88

Table 4.5: Dimensionality, reliability and correlations.

#	Construct	# of Items	Mean	SD	α	CR	AVE	Correlations*							
								RQ	RSB	SIM	SEV	SC	LS	LB	AFI
RQ	Relationship Quality	9	3.892	.683	.934	.956	.801	1							
RSB	Relational Selling Behavior	15	3.999	.532	.897	.900	.509	.797	1						
SIM	Similarity	10	2.869	1.002	.958	.943	.699	.285	.184	1					
SEV	Sellers Extraversion	5	3.990	.569	.845	.910	.513	.688	.698	.241	1				
SC	Sellers Conscientiousness	5	4.112	.593	.904	.945	.631	.723	.657	.218	.728	1			
LS	Loyalty to Salesperson	4	3.893	.649	.871	.921	.630	.721	.626	.244	.665	.654	1		
LB	Loyalty to Brand	4	3.867	.654	.873	.922	.634	.616	.525	.230	.614	.591	.718	1	
AFI	Anticipation of Future Interaction	3	3.950	.632	.865	.927	.682	.635	.551	.239	.567	.615	.790	.657	1

α = Cronbach's alpha; CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted

* All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Next, a multicollinearity analysis was performed among the construct items. The author looked at the variance inflation factor (VIF), and the only variable which has a VIF greater than 5 was "Similarity 9" that has an average VIF value of 5.95, which is still in the grey zone. Therefore, it was concluded that the multicollinearity among the construct items is very limited, and the data were pooled for subsequent analyses (Hair et al, 1998).

Lastly, the author did the confirmatory factor analysis of the research model to check the model fit. In the CFA, author included all items for all constructs. Based on suggestions by (Gerbing and Anderson, 1992), the measurement model was evaluated, and the research model CFA shows an excellent model fit ($\chi 2$ =1,209.4, df=636, CFI = 0.958, NFI = .916, RFI = .907, RMSEA= 0.044 and SRMR= 0.038).

4.3.2 Hypothesis testing

AMOS software version 24.0.0 was used to perform a structural equation model (SEM), which is a covariance-based technique and runs an iterative procedure to model latent variables directly and test relationships simultaneously. The author performed the path analysis and tested the hypothesis shown in the research model is shown in Figure 4.2.

The final model achieved excellent fit statistics ($\chi 2$=1,312.6, *df* =648, CFI = 0.952, NFI = 0.909, RFI = 0.902, RMSEA= 0.047, and SRMR= 0.055) and the results of SEM are shown in Figure 4.2. Additionally, the squared multiple correlations range from 0.43 to 0.84, which proposes that the significant percentage of the variances of hypothesized variables are explained.

The results indicate that 10 out of 13 hypotheses are supported at $p < .05$ level. There is no statistically significant relationship between similarity and relational selling behavior; thus, neither H_{2a} nor H_{2c} are supported. As expected, there is no statistically significant relationship between seller's extraversion and relationship quality; thus, H_{3b} is not supported. For that reason, post hoc analysis suggests that relational selling behavior fully mediates the link between seller's extraversion and relationship quality As a result of being both H_{4a} and H_{4b} are supported, relational selling behavior partially mediates the link between seller's conscientiousness and relationship quality, so (H_{4c}) is also supported. The result of the research model is summarized below in Table 4.6. Indirect effects are also reported.

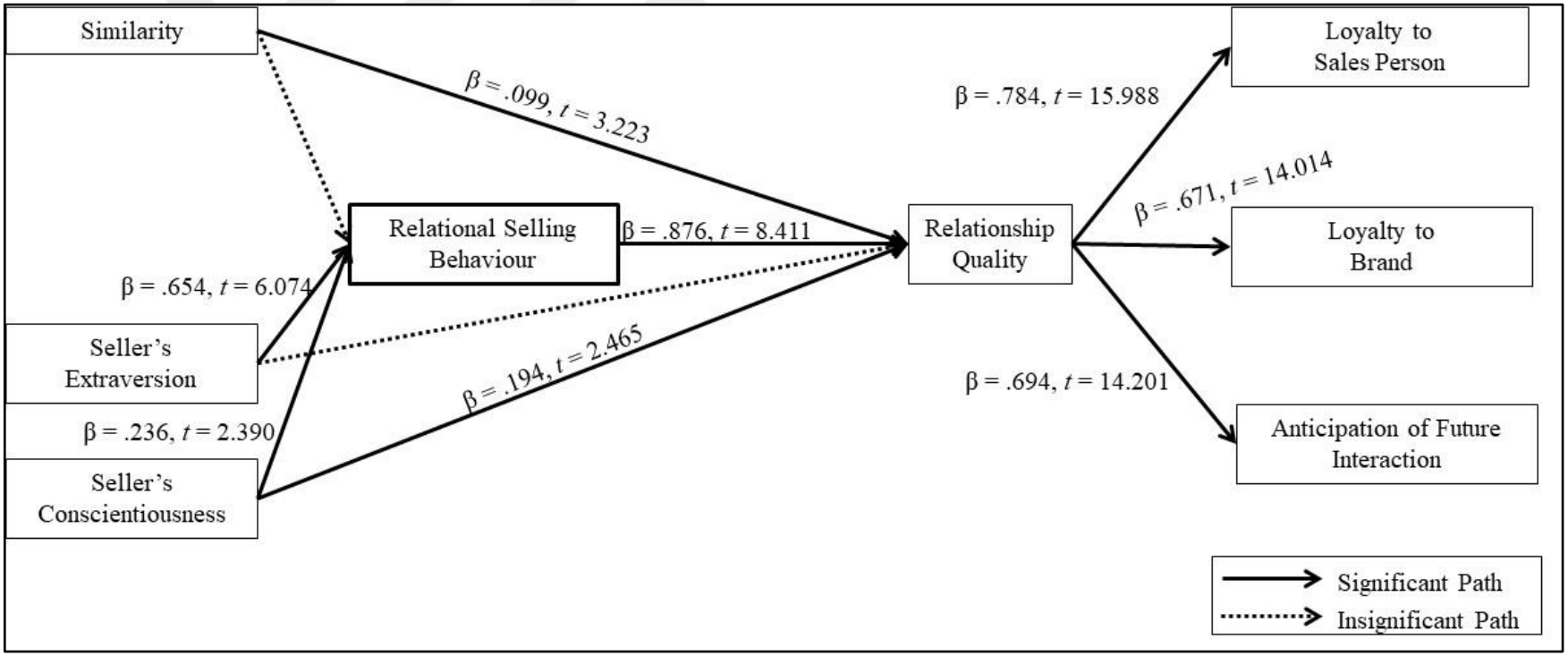

Figure 4.2: The direct effects (β_{direct}) and *t*-values of the proposed relationships.

Table 4.6: Hypothesis testing results for the model of relationship quality.

#	Hypothesis			β_{direct}	*t*	P	$\beta_{indirect}$	β_{total}
H_1	Relational Selling Behavior	--->	Relationship Quality	0.876	8.411	<.01	-	0.876
H_{2a}	Similarity	--->	Relational Selling Behavior			n/s		
H_{2b}	Similarity	--->	Relationship Quality	0.099	3.223	<.01	-	0.099
H_{3a}	Seller's Extraversion	--->	Relational Selling Behavior	0.654	6.074	<.01	-	0.654
H_{3b}	Seller's Extraversion	--->	Relationship Quality			n/s		
H_{4a}	Seller's Conscientiousness	--->	Relational Selling Behavior	0.236	2.390	<.01	-	0.236
H_{4b}	Seller's Conscientiousness	--->	Relationship Quality	0.194	2.465	<.05	0.207	0.401
H_5	Relationship Quality	--->	Loyalty to Salesperson	0.784	15.988	<.01	-	0.784
H_6	Relationship Quality	--->	Loyalty to Brand	0.671	14.014	<.01	-	0.671
H_7	Relationship Quality	--->	Anticipation of Future Interaction	0.694	14.201	<.01	-	0.694

Standardized regression weights for direct effects (β_{direct}) and standard error (*t*) values are given. Standardized regression weights for indirect effects ($\beta_{indirect}$) to effectiveness and total effects (β_{total}) are given
(n=473, $\chi 2$=1,312.6, df =648, CFI = 0.952, NFI = 0.909, RFI = 0.902, RMSEA= 0.047, and SRMR= 0.055)

4.4 Discussion on the results of the study

The present study offers insights about interpersonal factors that are influencing the relationship quality between salesperson and buying decision-maker. The study examines the effect of similarity between the salesperson and the buying decision-maker, the salesperson's extraversion, and the salesperson's conscientiousness on relationship quality and, in turn, how relationship quality relates to relational outcomes including anticipation of future interaction, loyalty to the seller, and loyalty to the brand. Moreover, the mediating effect of relational selling behavior in the relationship between interpersonal factors and relationship quality is also examined.

The results mostly provide support for the relationships anticipated in the conceptual framework. Specifically, the similarity between the salesperson and the buying decision-maker and the salesperson's conscientiousness is positively related to relationship quality, which indicates that interpersonal interaction has an influence in the decision-making process considering the outcomes of the relationship quality. On top of this seller's extraversion also affects the relationship quality with the mediating path of relational selling behavior. Interestingly, the similarity between salesperson and buying decision-maker has a direct effect only on the relationship quality and does not influence the perception of relational selling behavior. This finding indicates that the buyers do not necessarily perceive the behaviors of similar salespeople due to the result of their relational selling skills.

Finally, the results also confirm that the relationship quality between the salesperson and the buying decision-maker positively influences anticipation of future interaction and loyalty. These findings stress the significance of having stronger bonds with customers to accomplish positive, satisfactory, and long-lasting relationships.

4.4.1 Theoretical contributions

This study contributes to the relationship marketing literature in several ways. First, the present research contributes to the understanding of the role of inter-personal factors, namely similarity, seller's extraversion, and seller's conscientiousness, on the relationship quality. B2B buying behavior has initially been accepted by academia as rational behavior, which is complex, systematic, and unbiased by the individual or irrational criteria. However, this belief has changed over time. Although recent studies

have shown that B2B buying behavior is also affected by interpersonal factors (Swift and Gruben, 2000; Pullins et al, 2004; Davies and Ryals, 2014; Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2014; Wagner and Benoit, 2015), the links from the salesperson's personality to the relationship quality and from the similarity between the salesperson and the buyer to relationship quality have been overlooked in the B2B business setting. This study fills this gap by examining these missing links. As such, this study has made the following two contributions to relationship marketing literature.

This study contributes to the relationship marketing literature by concentrating on the salesperson's personality traits which is an area that has received little to no attention from previous studies in the B2B setting. Specifically, the author includes two personality traits (extraversion and conscientiousness) of the salesperson and examines the influences of these two personality traits of the salesperson on the relationship quality both directly and via relational selling behavior. The results of this research not only confirm the important role of salesperson personality traits but also the mediating effect of the relational selling behavior between personality traits and relationship quality. Particularly, the results suggest that the effect of a seller's extraversion on relationship quality is fully mediated by relational selling behavior. On the other hand, the influence of a seller's conscientiousness on relationship quality is partially mediated by relational selling behavior. Although theoretically expected, this study is the first one to show these relationships empirically in a B2B setting.

Finally, this study contributes to relationship marketing literature by validating the importance of a key concept in the relationship quality dynamics. The relationship between similarity and relationship quality has received some interest from academia; however, the results are contradictory. In contrast to some of the previous studies (Crosby et al, 1990; Boles et al, 2000), this study establishes the positive relationship between similarity and relationship quality, confirming Doney and Cannon (1997).

4.4.2 Managerial contributions

It is clear that B2B buying decisions assist companies in achieving corporate goals. Although these decisions may be made via structured procedures, the decision-makers are real people. For that reason, the main eccentricities of these decision-makers or their perceptions of the involved parties during the buying process may influence the outcomes. From a managerial perspective, this study provides several implications.

First, this study highlights the importance of relational selling behavior on relationship quality. The relational selling behavior is operationalized in this study as a construct that consists of interaction orientation, customer orientation, information exchange, and interaction frequency. Interaction orientation and customer orientation can be developed by providing training to salespeople, and changing the company procedures can provide flexibility to salespeople in terms of information sharing and working hours. To summarize, the selling company should design training programs and provide a flexible working environment so that the sales team maintains a high degree of relational selling behavior.

Second, this study suggests that key personality traits are essential and useful in the B2B setting. Particularly, the seller's conscientiousness positively influences relationship quality both directly and indirectly via relational selling behavior. Additionally, the seller's extraversion also affects the relationship quality positively. For managers, these findings may mean a lot while hiring salespeople. For sure the legal and ethical aspects needs to be considered; however, it would be recommended to perform a personality test to the candidates during the hiring process to select the best fit for the company needs.

Third, result of this study provides recommendations to sales team managers in assigning the customers to their team members. This study proves that the similarity between salesperson and buyer has a significant positive influence on the relationship quality, which has a significant positive influence on the loyalty to salesperson, loyalty to brand and anticipation of future interaction in business-to-business contexts. From that perspective, if the sales team managers want to have a profitable sales growth, it is recommended them to assign similar salespersons to the buyers. Obviously, it is not easy for a sales team manager to know each the salesperson's all customers. For that reason, it is suggested to make join visits with the salespersons at least to the key accounts to observe the similarity between salesperson and buying decision-makers.

4.4.3 Limitations of the study

The author has confidence in the theoretical model about the interpersonal factors and the relationship quality in the business setting. This study is one of the first attempts in the B2B contexts that clearly and comprehensively investigate the influences of personality factors on relationship quality. The conceptualization offers an initial point

of view for further empirical research. Although the author has reviewed the literature and conceptualized the dimensions of relationship quality and relational selling behavior, the results are subject to limitations. The first limitation is that this study examines the model only from the buying decision-maker's point of view, as mentioned in the sampling and data collection sections. Thus, the findings of this study should be replicated from the salesperson's point of view or via a dyadic view. The second limitation is the number of personality traits. Because of the complexity of this proposed model, the author of this dissertation was not able to include all the traits of the Big-Five Personality Model (Goldberg, 1990). The left-out traits are agreeableness, emotional instability, and openness to experience. Both the dimensions of relational selling behavior and relationship quality that were not measured for the purposes of this study and the personality dimensions should be taken into consideration in the future research effort. Finally, as this study took place only in the pharmaceutical industry in Turkey, the author recommends replication studies for other industries and countries for the generalization of these results.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 General Discussion and Theoretical Contributions

Most of the time, purchasing decision in the business markets holds more structured, and procedural processes in comparison to consumer markets. For that reason, the initial B2B buying behavior studies only focused on rational criteria. However, during the advancement of the relationship marketing theory, many studies found a place to the show effects of relational factors on B2B buying behavior. In this context, the concept of relationship quality between the buyer and the seller has been evaluated under the scope of relational factors, and it appears that the interpersonal factors are affecting the B2B relationship quality (Crosby et al, 1990).

There is no commonly agreed operationalization of relationship quality in the literature. Yet, there is a consensus that relationship quality is a higher-order construct, which consists of more than one component. Trust, commitment, and satisfaction have been used as components predominantly to measure relationship quality. Although there is no general definition of relationship quality construct, these three dimensions of relationship quality are most commonly used, and among those three, trust was used as a component of relationship quality in 80% of the academic studies.

The concept of trust has attracted great interest from researchers for decades. Introduced as an essential success factor in business relationships (Parasuraman et al, 1985), trust is described as being "central to successful relationship marketing" (Morgan and Hunt, 1994, p. 22). In these seminal studies about trust, authors have emphasized that both buyers and sellers need to trust each other to feel secure and comfortable during the selling-buying processes.

The relationship quality construct has been investigated many times by researchers due to its significant consequences on the business. These include performance-related consequences (financial performance, business performance, seller performance, buyer performance, intermediary performance, strategic performance, and transaction performance), interpersonal/relational benefits related consequences (anticipation of

future interaction, adaptation, information sharing, loyalty, satisfaction, behavioral intention, commitment, cooperation, value shares, recommend to seller and trust), corporate-level benefits (innovation, brand advocacy, brand equity, consistency, cross-buying intentions, cycle time, market-based learning process, patronage concentration, salesperson accuracy, and specific asset investment), and value-related consequences (relationship value, emotional value, functional value, and social value). Most of the studies, if not all, found significant positive effects of relationship quality on the above consequences.

The antecedents of relationship quality has also been widely studied, and these antecedents can be grouped under four categories including inter-personal characteristics of buyer and/or seller (customer orientation, adaptation, information exchange, market orientation, personality factors, power, active listening, autonomy, cooperation, empathy, entrepreneurial innovation, ethnocentrism, flexibility, imagination, interaction orientation, personnel competencies, similarity), relationship attributes (relationship value, communication quality, fairness, trust, dependence, loyalty, relationship investments, role performance, business relationship function, commitment, face to face contacts, formalization, partner knowledge, PRM, relationship advertising, relationship benefits, relationship bonds, relationship capability, relationship fulfillment, relationship sacrifices, service quality, switching cost), offer characteristics (conflict resolution, readiness, transaction specific investments, mutual benefits, self-efficacy, social exchange, strategic decision making, tactical decision making), and external/environmental factors (distance, top management involvement, environmental uncertainty, better quality of alternative suppliers, centralization, compliance, cultural sensitivity, internal relationship quality, reputation). As the relationship occurs between at least two individuals, as a minimum between the buyer and the seller, the interpersonal characteristics of those two individuals should have a significant bearing on the relationship quality. Therefore, the author of this dissertation identified the gap in this context and conducted two different empirical studies to close the identified gaps.

It is also worthwhile to mention that there is no commonality about the unit of analysis among relationship quality researchers. This may be the consequence of the relationship itself taking place between at least two parties (the buyer and the seller). This thesis contributes to the literature from this perspective, as the thesis holds two

different studies related to the relationship quality; the unit of analysis are sellers at the first study, and the unit of analysis are buyers at the second study.

The first study of this thesis is conducted at sellers' domain in the B2B context. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influences of similarity between buyer and seller, and the personal characteristics of buyers (including task orientation and expertise) onto the trust, which is the most commonly used component of relationship quality and its' effect on sales process efficiency. In this study, the moderating effect of purchase importance on the relationship between trust and the sales process efficiency was also investigated. Results show that similarity between salesperson and buying decision-maker, as well as the buyers' personal factors, positively influence trust between salesperson and buyer. Additionally, trust positively affects sales process efficiency. Finally, the study results confirm that the purchase importance moderates the relationship between trust and sales process efficiency.

The second study of this thesis is conducted at buyers' domain in the B2B context. This study is the first attempt in the non-franchasie B2B contexts, which clearly investigates the personality factors' influences to the relationship quality. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influences of salesperson personality and the similarity between the salesperson and buyer on anticipation of future interaction and loyalty through relational selling behavior and relationship quality. Results show that similarity between salesperson and buyer, as well as the salespersons' personality factors positively influence the relationship quality between salesperson and buyer. Moreover, relational selling behavior partially mediates this relationship. Finally, relationship quality positively affects the anticipation of future interaction and the loyalty of the buying decision-maker.

The literature review part of this dissertation replicates and extends Athanasopoulou's (2009) study on relationship quality. The RQ literature has not been widely reviewed for more than a decade. The comprehensive literature review performed under this thesis provides a unique contribution to the literature. During the literature review, many academic journals were scanned in a structured way. The operationalization of relationship quality construct in business-to-business (B2B) contexts, as well as its antecedents and consequences, were reviewed carefully, and the findings were reported in table format. Additionally, the studies where the relationship quality construct was used as a moderating variable are also listed.

Last but not least, the results of the two empirical studies, which were designed in accordance with gaps identified at comprehensive literature review, provide theoretical contributions to academia. As this dissertation provides an empirical examination of similarity between the buyer and the seller, the personal characteristics of buyer, the personality traits of seller, as well as the relational selling behavior of seller in B2B relationship quality and it contributes to the B2B relationship marketing theory. The results also offer managerial implications to the practitioners.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This thesis focuses on the effects of interpersonal factors (including similarity between buyer and seller, buyer's task orientation, buyer's perceived expertise, personality traits of the salesperson) on the relational selling behavior and the relationship quality. The author is confident in the theoretical model proposed in both the first and the second study, and he believes that the contribution of both studies is significant both from theoretical and managerial perspectives. However, the findings based on these theoretical models have certain limitations that require future research to develop the field further.

The definition put forward by Holmlund (2001) seems entirely appropriate to better understand the basis and the domain of relationship quality. "Relationship quality is the cognitive evaluation of business interactions by key individuals in the dyad, comparatively with potential alternative interactions" (Holmlund, 2001, p. 22). Although the relationship is a dyad, most research conducted to date is based on a monadic perspective (either the buyer's view on the seller or vice versa). The first limitation of this thesis is the unit of analysis selection of the studies like most of the previous studies. Due to the difficulties with the collection of dyadic data in a B2B setting, the author decided to conduct the first study in the seller's domain and the second study in the buyer's domain. This research methodology is certainly not the best way to demonstrate opinions about both parties in a relationship. Still, it is also clear that the consistent results (i.e., the positive influence of similarity on relationship quality) are very valuable.

The second limitation of the dissertation is related to the first study. In the first study, the author of this dissertation measured the salespeople's perceptions about the decider in the buying center. The limitation here is finding the correct decider in the buying

center. Johnston and Bonoma (1981) suggested in their study that every individual or group in the buying center claims that he/she has the most important and central role during the decision. That is, every individual or group thinks that they hold the decider role (Johnston and Bonoma, 1981), and the author of this dissertation believes that it is the salesperson's core responsibility to find out the real decision-maker in the buying center. However, there is no way to measure if the salesperson had picked the correct person as the decision-maker when he/she answered the survey questions.

The third limitation of this study is related to the reduction of personality traits included in the study from five to two. This selection is needed due to the complexity of the research model, so only two of five traits of Big-Five Personality Model (Goldberg, 1990) were included. Future research can examine the remainder of personality traits of the Big-Five Personality Model (Goldberg, 1990).

The author of this dissertation also believes that gender and gender identity of both the buyer and the seller may have a bearing on the relationship quality in B2B setting, and suggests having this research direction in the future. This is because men are more result-oriented, but women are more relationship-oriented (Karatepe et al, 2006). Gender, which is studied as a demographic variable in marketing literature, is biological sex. However, gender identity, which can be called "psychological sex," is an evaluation of a person based on femininity and masculinity dimensions. Gender and gender identity have been studied in the marketing literature since the 1960s, and there is evidence that both gender and gender identity influence the buying decision in consumer markets. Unfortunately, there are very few studies about gender and gender identity differences in the B2B context in scholarly journals. Thus, the author suggests filling this gap in the future.

REFERENCES

Adalig, B. (2016). Personal interview, May 10, ISTANBUL

Ahamed, A. F. M. J., and Skallerud, K. (2013). Effect of Distance and Communication Climate on Export Performance: The Mediating Role of Relationship Quality, *Journal of Global Marketing*, *26*, 284-300.

Akrout, W., and Akrout, H. (2011). Trust in B-to-B: Toward a Dynamic and Integrative Approach, *Recherche et Applications Marketing (English Edition)*, *26*, 1-21.

Akrout, H. (2014). Relationship Quality in Cross-Border Exchanges: A Temporal Perspective, *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*, *21*, 145-169.

Alejandro, T. B., Souza, D. V., Boles, J. S., Ribeiro, A. P., and Monteiro, P. R. (2011). The outcome of company and account manager relationship quality on loyalty, relationship value and performance, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *40*, 36-43.

ALHussan, F. B., AL-Husan, F. B., and Alhesan, L. (2017). The role of senior executives in managing key customers in Arab context, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *32*, 825-835.

Anderson, E., and Jap, S.D. (2005). The dark side of close relationships, *Sloan Management Review*, *46*, 74-83.

Anderson, E., and Narus, J. (1990). A model of distributor firm and manufacturer firm working partnerships, *Journal of Marketing*, *54*, 42-58.

Armstrong, J. S., and Overton, T. S. (1977). Estimating nonresponse bias in mail surveys, *Journal of Marketing Research*, *14*, 396-402.

Arndt, A. D., and Harkins, J. (2013). A framework for configuring sales support structure, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *28*, 432-443.

Arslanagic-Kalajdzic, M., and Zabkar, V. (2017). Is perceived value more than value for money in professional business services?, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *65*, 47-58.

Athanasopoulou, P. (2009). Relationship quality: a critical literature review and research agenda, *European Journal of Marketing*. *43*, 583-610.

Aziz, M. T., and Noor, N. A. M. (2013). Evaluating the effect of cost related factors on relationship quality: An investigation of retailer-supplier relationship in Bangladesh, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *41*, 545-558.

Bacanlı, H., İlhan, T., and Aslan, S. (2009). Beş faktör kuramına dayalı bir kişilik ölçeğinin geliştirilmesi: Sıfatlara dayalı kişilik testi (SDKT), *Türk Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, *7*, 261-279.

Badrinarayanan, V., and Sierra, J. J. (2018). Triggering and tempering brand advocacy by frontline employees: vendor and customer-related influences, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *33*, 42-52.

Bagozzi, R. P., and Yi, Y. (1988). On the evaluation of structural equation models, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *16*, 74-94.

Barac, D., Ratkovic-Živanovic, V., Labus, M., Milinovic, S., and Labus, A. (2017). Fostering partner relationship management in B2B ecosystems of electronic media, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *32*, 1203-1216.

Baron, J. N., and Pfeffer, J. (1994). The social psychology of organizations and inequality, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *57*, 190-209.

Barrick, M. R., and Mount, M. K. (1991). The Big Five Personality Dimensions and Job Performance: A Meta-Analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, *44*, 1–26.

Barry, J. M., and Doney, P. M. (2011). Cross-Cultural Examination of Relationship Quality, *Journal of Global Marketing*, *24*, 305-323.

Bataineh, A. Q., Al-Abdallah, G. M., Salhab, H. A., and Shoter, A. M. (2015). The Effect of Relationship Marketing on Customer Retention in the Jordanian's Pharmaceutical Sector, *International Journal of Business and Management*, *10*, 117-131.

Bateman, C., and Valentine, S. (2015). The impact of salesperson customer orientation on the evaluation of a salesperson's ethical treatment, trust in the salesperson, and intentions to purchase, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *35*, 125-142.

Belonax J. J., Newell, S. J., and Plank, R. E. (2007). The role of purchase importance on Buyer perceptions of the trust and expertise components of Supplier and Salesperson credibility in Business-to-Business Relationships, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *37*, 247-258.

Berscheid, E., and Walster, E. (1978). *Interpersonal Attraction*. New York: Random House.

Bobot, L. (2011). Functional and dysfunctional conflicts in retailer-supplier relationships, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *39*, 25-50.

Bolander, W., and Richards, K. A. (2018). Why study intraorganizational issues in selling and sales management?, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *38*,169-171.

Boles, J. S., Johnson, J. T., and Barksdale, H. C. (2000). How Salespeople Build Quality Relationships: A Replication and Extension, *Journal of Business Research*, *48*, 75–81.

Bradach, J. L., and Eccles, R. G. (1989). Price, Authority and Trust: from Ideal Types to Plural Forms, *Annual Review of Sociology*, *15*, 97-118.

Bradford, K. D., and Weitz, B. A. (2009). Salespersons' Management of Conflict in Buyer–Seller Relationships, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *29*, 25-42.

Buss, D. M., (2008). Human Nature and Individual Differences: Evolution of Human Personality. In John, O. P., Robins, R. W., Pervin, L. A. (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp.29–60). New York: The Guilford Press.

Byrne D., and Nelson, D. (1965). Attraction as a linear function of proportion of positive reinforcements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1*, 659–663.

Byrne, D. (1971). *The Attraction Paradigm*, New York: Academic Press.

Byrne D. (1997). An overview (and underview) of research and theory within the attraction paradigm. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 14*, 417–431.

Caceres, R. C., and Paparoidamis, N. G. (2007). Service quality, relationship satisfaction, trust, commitment and business-to-business loyalty, *European Journal of Marketing*, 836-867.

Cannon, J. P., and Perreault, W. D. (1999). Buyer-Seller Relationships in Business Markets, *Journal of Marketing Research, 36*, 439-460.

Chakrabarti, R., Ramos, C., and Henneberg, S. (2013). Network dynamics in the UK pharmaceutical network - A network-as-practice perspective. *Industrial Marketing Management, 42*, 356 – 371.

Chakrabarty, S., Brown, G., and Widing II, R. E. (2013). Distinguishing Between the Roles of Customer-Oriented Selling and Adaptive Selling in Managing Dysfunctional Conflict in Buyer–Seller Relationships, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *33*, 245-260.

Chang, M. L, Cheng, C. F., and Wu, W. Y. (2012). How Buyer-Seller Relationship Quality Influences Adaptation and Innovation by Foreign MNCs' Subsidiaries, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *41*, 1047-1057.

Child, J., and Möllering, G. (2003). Contextual confidence and active trust development in the Chinese business environment, *Organization Science*, *14*, 69-80.

Cook, K. S., and Emerson, **R. M.** (1978). Power, Equity, Commitment in Exchange Networks, *American Sociological Review, 43*, 721–738.

Costa, P. T., and McCrae, R. R., (1992). *Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) and NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) professional manual*, Florida: Psychological Assessment Resources.

Costa, P. T., McCrae, R. R., and Dye, D. A. (1991). Facet Scales for Agreeableness Conscientiousness: A Revision of Neo Personality Inventory, *Personality and Individual Differences*, *12*, 887-898.

Coulter, K. S., and Coulter, R. A. (2003). The effects of industry knowledge on the development of trust in service relationships. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 31-43.

Crosby, L.A., Evans, K. R., and Cowles, D. (1990). Relationship Quality in Services Selling: An Interpersonal Influence Perspective, *Journal of Marketing*, *54*, 68-81.

Dampérat, M., and Jolibert, A. (2009). A dialectical model of buyer-seller relationships, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *24*, 207-217.

Dant, R. P. Dant, Weaven, S. K., and Baker, B. L. (2013). Influence of personality traits on perceived relationship quality within a franchisee-franchisor context, *European Journal of Marketing*, *47*, 279-302.

Davies, I. A., and Ryals, L. J. (2014). The effectiveness of Key Account Management practices, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *43*, 1182-1194.

Davis, S.M. (1981). Matching Corporate Culture and Business Strategy, *Organizational Dynamics*, *10*, 30-48.

deRuyeter, K., Moorman, L., and Lemmink, J. (2001). Antecedents of commitment and trust in customer-supplier relationships in high technology markets, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *30*, 271-286.

deVries, J., Schepers, J., vanWeele, A., and van der Valk, W. (2014). When do they care to share? How manufacturers make contracted service partners share knowledge, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *43*, 1225-1235.

deWulf, K., Odekerken-Schröder, G., and Iacobucci, D. (2001). Investments in Consumer Relationships: A Cross-Country and Cross-Industry Exploration. *Journal of Marketing*, *65*, 33-50.

deLeon, A. J., and Chatterjee, S. C. (2017). B2B relationship calculus: quantifying resource effects in service-dominant logic, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *45*, 402–427.

Demirci, M. K., Özler, D. E., and Girgin, B. (2007). Beş Faktör Kişilik Modelinin İşyerinde Duygusal Tacize (Mobbing) Etkileri – Hastane İşletmelerinde Bir Uygulama. *Journal of Azerbaijani Studies*, 13-39.

Diefendorff, J. M., Croyle, M. H., and Gosserand, R. H. (2005). The dimensionality and antecedents of emotional labor strategies, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *66*, 339-357.

DiPetro, R. B., Severt, D. E., Welsh, D. H. B., and Raven, P. B. (2008). Franchisee leadership traits vs manager leadership traits: an exploratory study comparing hope, leadership, commitment and service quality delivery, *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, *4*, 63-78.

Doney, P. M., and Cannon, J. P. (1997). An examination of the nature of trust in buyer-seller relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, *61*, 35-51.

Drollinger, T., and Comer, L. B., (2013). Salesperson's listening ability as an antecedent to relationship selling, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *28*, 50-59.

Dutton, J. E., Dukerich, J. M., and Harquail, C. V. (1994). Organizational images and member identification. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 39, 239–263.

Dwyer, R. F., Schurr, H. P., and Oh, S. (1987). Developing Buyer-Seller Relationships, *Journal of Marketing*, *51*, 11-27.

Dyer, J. H., and Chu, W. (2011). The determinants of trust in supplier-automaker relationships in the US, Japan, and Korea, *Journal of International Business Studies, 42*, 10-27.

Ehrenthal, J. C., and Stölzle, W. (2013). An examination of the causes for retail stockouts. *International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management, 43*, 54-69.

Elsäßer, M., and Wirtz, B. W. (2017). Rational and emotional factors of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty in a business-to-business setting. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, 32*, 138-152.

Eroğlu, E. (2010). Örgütsel iletişimin işgörenlerin duygu gösterimlerinin yönetimine olan etkisi, *Selçuk Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Akademik Dergisi, 6*, 18-33.

Fan, Y. H., Woodbine, G., and Scully, G. (2012). Guanxi and its influence on the judgments of Chinese auditors, *Asia Pacific Business Review, 18*, 83-97.

Fang, S. R., Chang, Y. S., and Peng, Y. C. (2011). Dark side of relationships: A tensions-based view, *Industrial Marketing Management, 40*, 774-784.

Farber, B., and Wycott, J. (1997). Relationships: Six Steps to Success, *Sales & Marketing Management, 12*, No: 44-51.

Farrelly, F. J., and Quester, P. G. (2005). Examining important relationship quality constructs of the focal sponsorship exchange, *Industrial Marketing Management, 34*, 211-219.

Filieri, R., McNally, R. C., O'Dwyer, M., and O'Malley, L. (2014). Structural social capital evolution and knowledge transfer: Evidence from an Irish pharmaceutical network, *Industrial Marketing Management, 43*, 429 – 440.

Fiske, D. W. (1949). Consistency of the factorial structures of personality ratings from different sources, *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 44*, 329–344.

Foster, B. D. and Cadogan, J. W. (2000). Relationship selling and customer loyalty: an empirical investigation, *Marketing Intelligence and Planning, 18*, 185-199.

Fournier, S. (1998). Consumers and Their Brands: Developing Relationship Theory in Consumer Research. *Journal of Consumer Research, 24*, 343-373.

Friend, S. B., Hamwi, G. A., and Rutherford, B. N. (2011). Buyer–Seller Relationships Within a Multisource Context: Understanding Customer Defection and Available Alternatives, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, 31*, 383-395.

Fu, S., Lin, J., and Sun, L. (2013). An empirical examination of the stability of the alliance of "a company + farmers": From the perspective of farmers, *Chinese Management Studies, 7*, 382-402.

Gao, T., Sirgy, M. J., and Bird, M. M. (2005). Reducing buyer decision-making uncertainty in organizational purchasing: can supplier trust, commitment, and dependence help?, *Journal of Business Research*, *58*, 397– 405.

Gardner, W. L., Fitcher, D., and Hunt, J. G. Jr. (2009). Emotional labor and leadership: A threat to authenticity, *The Leadership Quarterly*, *20*, 466-482.

Garrido-Samaniego, M. J., and Gutierrez-Cillan, J. (2004). Determinants of Influence and Participation in the Buying Center. An Analysis of Spanish Industrial Companies, *The Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *19*, 320-336.

Gerbing, D. W., and Anderson, J. C. (1992). Monte carlo evaluations of goodness of fit indices for structural equation models, *Sociological Methods and Research*, *21*, 132-160.

Gerbing, D., and Anderson, J. (1988). An updated paradigm for scale development incorporating undimensionality and its assessment, *Journal of Marketing Research*, *25*, 186-192.

Gesteland, R. R. (2002). *Cross-cultural business behavior Marketing, negotiating and managing across cultures (2nd ed.),* Copenhagen: Handelshøjskolens Forlag, Copenhagen: Business School Press.

Goldberg, L. R. (1990). An Alternative "Description of Personality": The Big-Five Factor Structure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *59*, 1216-1229.

Gonzalez-Padron, T., Tomas, G., Hult, M., and Calantone, R. (2008). Exploiting innovative opportunities in global purchasing: An assessment of ethical climate and relationship performance, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *37*, 2008, 69-82.

Gounaris, S., and Tzempelikos, N. (2014). Relational key account management: Building key account management effectiveness through structural reformations and relationship management skills, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *43*, 1110–1123.

Gounaris, S. (2005). An alternative measure for assessing perceived quality of software house services. *Service Industries Journal*, *25*, 803-823.

Graca, S. S., Barry, J.M., and Doney, P. M. (2015). Performance outcomes of behavioral attributes in buyer-supplier relationships, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *30*, 805-816.

Grandey, A. (2000). Emotion regulation in the workplace: A new way to conceptualize emotional labor, *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *5*, 95–110.

Grover, V., Cheon, M. J. C., and Teng, J. T. C. (1996). The effect of service quality and partnership on the outsourcing of information systems functions. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, *12*, 89-116.

Gu, F. F., and Wang, D. T. (2011). The role of program fairness in asymmetrical channel relationships, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *40*, 1368-1376.

Guenzi, P., Pardo, C., and Georges, L. (2007). Relational selling strategy and key account managers' relational behaviors: An exploratory study. *Industrial Marketing Management, 36,* 121-133.

Guesalaga, R. (2014). Top Management Involvement with Key Accounts: The Concept, Its Dimensions, and Strategic Outcomes. *Industrial Marketing Management*. *43*, 1146–1156.

Hair, J. F. Jr., Anderson, R. E., Tatham, R. L., and Black, W. C. (1998). *Multivariate Data Analysis (5th ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall International.

Hakansson, H. (1982). *International Marketing and Purchasing of Industrial Goods: An Interaction Approach*, Chichester, UK: Wiley.

Hallén, L., Johanson, J., and Seyed-Mohamed, N. (1991). Interfirm Adaptation in Business Relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, *55*, 29-37.

Han, S. L., and Sung, H.-S. (2008). Industrial brand value and relationship performance in business markets - A general structural equation model, *Industrial Marketing Management, 37*, 807-818.

Hankin, B., Lakdawalla Z., Carter L., Abela J., and Adams P. (2007), Are Neuroticism, Cognitive Vulnerabilities And Self Esteem Overlapping Or Distinct Risks For Depression? Evidence From Exploratory And Confirmatory Factor Analyses, *Journal of Social And Clinical Psychology*, *26*, 26-63.

Harrison, D. A., Price, K. H., and Bell, M. P. (1998). Beyond relational demography: Time and the effects of surface-and deep-level diversity on work group cohesion, *Academy of Management Journal*, *41*, 96-107.

Hazen, B. T., and Byrd, T. A. (2012). Toward creating competitive advantage with logistics information technology. *International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management*, *42*, 8-35.

Heide, J.B., and John, G. (1992). Do norms matter in marketing relationships, *Journal of Marketing*, *56*, 32-44.

Heider F. (1958). *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*. Wiley: New York

Hennig-Thurau, T., and Klee, A. (1997). The impact of customer satisfaction and relationship quality on customer retention: A critical reassessment and model development. *Psychology & Marketing*, *14*, 737–764.

Hennig-Thurau, T. (2004). Customer Orientation of Service Employees: Its Impact on Customer Satisfaction, Commitment, and Retention, *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, *15*, 460–478.

Hewett, K., Money, R.B., and Sharma, S. (2002). An exploration of the moderating role of buyer corporate culture in industrial buyer-seller relationships, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *30*, 229–239.

Hikkerovaa, L. (2011). The Effectiveness of Loyalty Programs: An Application in the Hospitality Industry, *International Journal of Business*, *16*, 150-164.

Hirshberg, R. S., and Shoham, A. (2017). A behavioral model of international channel relationships, *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing, 24*, 257-282.

Holmlund, M. (2001). The D&D Model: Dimensions and Domains of Relationship Quality Perceptions, *The Service Industries Journal, 1*, 13-36.

Homans, G. C. (1961). *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms*. London: Routledge/Kegan Paul.

Homans, G. C. (1958). Social behavior as exchange, *American Journal of Sociology, 63*, 597-606.

Homburg, C., Müller, M., and Klarmann, M. (2011). When does salespeople's customer orientation lead to customer loyalty? The differential effects of relational and functional customer orientation, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 39*, 795 – 812.

Howard, P. J., and Howard, J. M. (1995). The Big Five Quickstart: An Introduction To The Five Factor Model Of Personality For Human Resource Professionals. *Center for Applied Cognitive Studies*, 1-21.

Hurtz, G. M., and Donovan, J. J. (2000). Personality and Job Performance: The Big Five Revisited. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*, 869–879.

Hutchinson, D., Wellington, W. J., Saad, M. and Cox, P. (2011). Refining value-based differentiation in business relationships: A study of the higher order relationship building blocks that influence behavioral intentions, *Industrial Marketing Management, 40*, 465-478.

Hutt, M. D., and Speh, T. W. (2001). *Business Marketing Management*, Mason, OH: Thomson Learning.

Hyman, M. R., and Sager, J. K. (1999). Marginally performing salespeople: a definition, *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management, 19*, 67−74.

Ivens, B. S., and Pardo, C. (2007). Are key account relationships different? Empirical results on supplier strategies and customer reactions, *Industrial Marketing Management, 36*, 470-482.

Jackson, S. E., Joshi, A., and Erhardt, N. L. (2003). Recent research on team and organizational diversity: SWOT analysis and implications, *Journal of Management, 29*, 801-830.

Jackson, S. E., Stone, V. K., and Alvarez, E. B. (1992). Socialization amidst diversity: The impact of demographics on work team old timers and newcomers, *Research in Organizational Behavior, 15*, 45-109.

Jackson, B. B. (1985). Build customer-relationships that last, *Harvard Business Review, 63*, 120-134.

Jarvelin, A. and Lehtinen, U. (1996). Relationship Quality in Business-to-Business Service Context. In Johnston, S.W., Scheuing, E.E., and B.B. Edvardsson (Eds.), *QUIS 5 Advancing Service Quality, A Global Perspective* (pp.243-254). UK: Warwick Printing Company Ltd.

Jiang, Z., Shiu, E., Henneberg, S., and Naude, P. (2016). Relationship Quality in Business to Business Relationships - Reviewing the Current Literatures and Proposing a New Measurement Model, *Psychology & Marketing*, *33*, 297–313.

Jiang, Z., Henneberg, S. C., and Naudé, P. (2011). Supplier relationship management in the construction industry: the effects of trust and dependence, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *27*, 3-15.

John, O. P., Donahue, E. M., and Kentle, R. L. (1991). *The Big Five Inventory: Versions 4a and 54.* Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkeley, Institute of Personality and Social Research.

John, O. P., Naumann, L. P., and Soto, C. J. (2008). Paradigm shift to the integrative big-five trait taxonomy: History, measurement, and conceptual issues. In John, O. P., Robins, R. W., Pervin, L. A. (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 114-158). New York: The Guilford Press.

Johnson, D., and Grayson, K. (2005). Cognitive and affective trust in service relationships, *Journal of Business Research*, *58*, 500–507.

Johnston, J. and Bonoma, T. V. (1981). The Buying Center: Structure and Interaction Patterns, *Journal of Marketing*, *45*, 143-156.

Johnson, J., Sohi, R., and Grewal, R. (2004). The Role of Relational Knowledge Stores in Interfirm Partnering, *Journal of Marketing*, *68*, 21-36.

Johnson, J. A. and Ostendorf F. (1993). Clarification of the Five-Factor Model with the Abridged Big Five-Dimensional Circumplex, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *65*, 563-576.

Johnson, J. L., Cullen, J. B., Sakano,T., and Takenouchi, H. (1996), Setting the Stage for Trust and Strategic Integration in Japanese-U.S Cooperative Alliances, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *27*, 981-1004.

Kalra, A., Agnihotri, R., Chaker, N. N., Singh, R. K., and Das, B. K. (2017). Connect within to connect outside: effect of salespeople's political skill on relationship performance, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *37*, 332-348.

Karaosmanoglu, E., Elmadag Bas, A. B., and Zhang, J. (2011). The role of other customer effect in corporate marketing, *European Journal of Marketing*, *45*, 1416-1445.

Karatepe, O.M., Yavas, U., Babakus, E. and Avci, T. (2006). Does gender moderate the effects of role stress in frontline service jobs?, *Journal of Business Research*, *59*, 1087-1093.

Kashyap, V., and Sivadas, E. (2012). An exploratory examination of shared values in channel relationships, *Journal of Business Research*, *65*, 2012, 586-593.

Kassarjian, H. H. (1971). Personality and Consumer Behavior: A Review, *Journal of Marketing Research*, *8*, 409-418.

Keillor, B. D., Parker, R. S., and Pettijohn, **C. E.** (2000). Relationship-oriented characteristics and individual salesperson performance, J*ournal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *15*, 7-22.

Kelly, J. R., and Barsade, S. G. (2001). Mood and emotions in small groups and work teams, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *86*, 99-130.

Kennedy, M., Ferrell, L., and LeClairc, D. (2001). Consumers' trust of salesperson and manufacturer: an empirical study, *Journal of Business Research*, *51*, 73-86.

Kim, D., Basu, C., Naidu, G. M., and Cavusgil, E. (2011). The innovativeness of Born-Globals and customer orientation: Learning from Indian Born Globals, *Journal of Business Research*, *64*, 879-886.

Kotler, P. (2001). A Framework for Marketing Management, Upper Saddle River. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Kotler, P., and Armstrong, G. (2008). *Principles of Marketing.* England: Pearson Education.

Kros, J. F., Kirchoff, J. F., and Falasca, M. (2019). The impact of buyer-supplier relationship quality and information management on industrial vending machine benefits in the healthcare industry, *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, *25*, IN PRESS.

Kuhlmeier, D. B., and Knight, G. (2010). The Critical Role of Relationship Quality in Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprise Internationalization, *Journal of Global Marketing*, *23*, 16-32.

Kumar, N., and Scheer, L. K. (1995). The effects of perceived interdependence on dealer attitudes. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *32*, 348–356.

Kumar, N., Scheer, L. K., and Steenkamp, J. (1995), The effects of supplier fairness on vulnerable resellers, *Journal of Marketing Research*, *32*, 54-65.

LaBahn, D. W., and Harich, R. K. (1997). Sensitivity to National Business Culture: Effects on U.S.-Mexican Channel Relationship Performance, *Journal of International Marketing*, *5*, 29-51.

Lagace, R. R., Dahlstrom, R., and Gassenheimer, J. B. (1991). The relevance of ethical salesperson behavior on relationship quality: the pharmaceutical industry, *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, *11*, 39-47.

Lages, C., Lages, C. R., and Lages, L. F. (2005). The RELQUAL scale: a measure of relationship quality in export market ventures, *Journal of Business Research*, *58*, 1040-1048.

Lai, K., Bao, Y., and Li, X. (2008). Channel relationship and business uncertainty: Evidence from the Hong Kong Market, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *37*, 713–724.

Lai, C. S., Pai, D. C., Yang, C. F., and Lin, H. J. (2009). The effects of market orientation on relationship learning and relationship performance in industrial marketing: The dyadic perspectives, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *38*, 166-172.

Lai, M. C., Chou, F. S., and Cheung, Y. J. (2013). Investigating Relational Selling Behaviors, Relationship Quality and Customer Loyalty in the Medical Device Industry in Taiwan, *International Journal of Business and Information*, *8*, 137-150.

Lee, H. J., (2004). The role of competence-based trust and organizational identification in continuous improvement, *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *19*, 623-639.

Leonidou, C. N., Leonidou, L. C., Coudounaris, D. N., and Hultman, M. (2013). Value differences as determinants of importers' perceptions of exporters' unethical behavior: The impact on relationship quality and performance, *International Business Review*, *22*, 156–173.

Leuthesser, L. (1997). Supplier Relational Behavior: An Empirical Assessment, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *26*, 245-254.

Lichtenthal, D. J., and Tellefsen, T. (2001). Toward a theory of business buyer-seller similarity, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *21*, 1-14.

Lincoln, J. R. and Miller, J. (1979). Work and friendship ties in organization: A comparative analysis of relational networks, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *24*, 181–199.

Liu, Y., Li, Y., and Zhang, L. (2010). Control mechanisms across a buyer-supplier relationship quality matrix, *Journal of Business Research*, *63*, 3-12.

Loveland, J. M. (2004). *Big five and narrow personality traits in the prediction of academic performance* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from https://trace.tennessee.edu/

Lui, S. S., and Ngo, H. Y. (2004). The role of trust and contractual safeguards on cooperation in non-equity alliances, *Journal of Management*, *30*, 471-485.

Lussier, B., and Hall, Z.R., (2018). Cooperation in B2B relationships: Factors that influence customers' perceptions of salesperson cooperation, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *69*, 209-220.

Macdonald, E. K, Wilson, H., Martinez, V., and Toossi, A. (2011). Assessing value-in-use: A conceptual framework and exploratory study, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *40*, 671-682.

Mannix, E., and Neale, M. A. (2005). What differences make a difference: the promise and reality of diverse teams in organization. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, *6*, 31-55.

Mansour,W., Hajlaoui, L. L., Abdulkarim, F., and Nassief, M. (2016). Trust Crisis in Islamic Banking: Empirical Evidence Using Structural Equations Modeling, *International Journal of Business*, *21*, 157-177.

Marquardt, A. J. (2013). Relationship quality as a resource to build industrial brand equity when products are uncertain and future-based, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *42*, 1386-1397.

Martinez, M. T. (2005). *A correlational study between the MMPI–2, PSY–5 and the 16PF global factors* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from: https://www.upress.umn.edu/

Massey, G. R., Wang, P. Z., and Kyngdon, A.S. (2019). Conceptualizing and modeling interpersonal trust in exchange relationships: The effects of incomplete model specification, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *76*, 60-71.

Matikainen, M., Terho, H., Matikainen, E., Parvinen, P., and Juppo, A. (2015). Effective implementation of relationship orientation in new product launches, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *45*, 35-46.

Matsuno, M. (2006). The Effects of Strategy Type on the Market Orientation-Performance Relationship, *Journal of Marketing*, *64*, 1-16.

McCrae, R. R., and Costa, P. T. Jr., (2013). Introduction to the empirical and theoretical status of the five-factor model of personality traits. In Widiger, T.A., Costa, P.T. Jr., (Eds.), *Personality disorders and the five-factor model of personality* (pp.15-27). NY: American Psychological Association.

McFarland, R. G., Challagalla, G. N., and Shervani, T. A. (2006). Influence tactics for effective adaptive selling, *Journal of Marketing*, *70*, 103–117.

Merdan, E. (2013). Beş Faktör Kişilik Kuramı İle İş Değerleri İlişkisinin İncelenmesi: Bankacılık Sektöründe Bir Araştırma, *Gümüşhane Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Elektronik Dergisi*, *7*, 140-159.

Mitręga, M., and Katrichis, J. M. (2010). Benefiting from dedication and constraint in buyer–seller relationships, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *39*, 616-624.

Mitręga, M. (2012). Network partner knowledge and internal relationships influencing customer relationship quality and company performance, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *27*, 486-496.

Mohr, J., and Spekman, R. (1994). Characteristics of partnership success: partnership attributes, communication behavior, and conflict resolution techniques, *Strategic Management Journal*, *15*, 135-152.

Moorman, C., Zaltman, G., and Deshpande, R. (1992). Relationships Between Providers and Users of Market Research: The Dynamics of Trust Within and Between Organizations, *Journal of Marketing Research*, *29*, 314-328.

Morgan, R., and Hunt, S. (1994). The commitment – trust theory of relationship marketing, *Journal of Marketing*, *58*, 20-38.

Morris, J. A., and Feldman D. C. (1996). The dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of emotional labor, *Academy of Management Review*, *21*, 986–1010.

Mowday, R. T., and Sutton, R. I. (1993). Organizational behavior: Linking individuals and groups to organizational contexts, *Annual Review of Psychology*, *44*, 195- 229.

Mullins, R., Ahearne, M., Lam, S., Hall, Z., and Boichuk, J. (2014). Know Your Customer: How Salesperson Perceptions of Customer Relationship Quality Form and Influence Account Profitability, *Journal of Marketing*, *78*, 38-58.

Myhal, G. C., Kang, J., and Murphy, J. A. (2008). Retaining customers through relationship quality: a services business marketing case, *Journal of Services Marketing*, *22*, 445-453.

Mysen, T., Svensson, G., and Payan, J. M. (2011). The key role of opportunism in business relationships, *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, *29*, 436-449.

Mysen, T., Svensson, G., and Högevold, N. (2012). Relationship Quality—Relationship Value and Power Balance in Business Relationships: Descriptives and Propositions, *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*, *19*, 248-285.

Narver, J. C., and Slater, S. F. (1990). The effect of a market orientation on business profitability, *Journal of Marketing*, *54*, 20-35.

National Pharmacist Association. (2014). Retrieved May 7, 2014 from https://www.teb.org.tr/news/6438/Nüfusa-Göre-Eczane-Sayıları-Hakkında

Nelson, D., Byrne, D. (1965). Attraction as a linear function of proportion of positive reinforcements, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *1*, 659–663.

Neubert, M., Taggar, S., and Cady, S. (2006). The Role of Conscientiousness and Extraversion in Affecting the Relationship Between Perceptions of Group Potency and Volunteer Group Member Selling Behavior: An Interactionist Perspective, *Human Relations*, *59*, 1235–1260.

Newcomb T. (1960). Varieties of interpersonal attraction. Cartwright D, Zander A (Eds.), In *Group Dynamics: Research and Theory,* (2nd ed. pp. 104–119). New York: Harper & Row

Newell, S. J., Wu, B., Leingpibul, D., and Jiang, Y. (2016). The importance of corporate and salesperson expertise and trust in building loyal business-to-business relationships in China, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *36*, 160-173.

Nguyen, T. T. M., and Nguyen, T. D. (2014a). Enhancing Business Relationship Quality Through Cultural Sensitization, *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, *13*, 70-87.

Nguyen, T. T. M., and Nguyen, T. D. (2014b). The impact of cultural sensitivity and information exchange on relationship quality, *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, *32*, 754-768.

Nunnally, J.C. (1978). *Psychometric Theory*, New York: McGraw-Hill.

Nyaga, G., and Whipple, J. (2011). Relationship quality and performance outcomes: Achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. *Journal of Business Logistics*, *32*, 345-360.

Obadia, C., and Vida, I. (2011). Cross-border relationships and performance: Revisiting a complex linkage, *Journal of Business Research*, *64*, 467-475.

Obal, M., and Lancioni, R. A. (2013). Maximizing buyer–supplier relationships in the Digital Era: Concept and research agenda, *Industrial Marketing Management, 42,* 851-854.

Odekerken-Schröder, G., De Wulf, K., and Shumacher, P. (2003). Strengthening outcomes of retailer-consumer relationships: the dual impact of relationship marketing tactics and consumer personality, *Journal of Business Research, 56,* 177-190.

Oliver, R. L. (1997). *Satisfaction: A Behavioral perspective on the consumer*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Özer, E. (2013). *Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Psikolojik Sağlamlık Düzeylerinin Duygusal Zeka ve Beş Faktör Kişilik Özellikleri Açısından İncelenmesi* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from: https://acikerisim.erbakan.edu.tr/

Palmatier, R. W., Dant, R. P., Grewal, D., and Evans, K. R. (2006). Factors influencing the effectiveness of relationship marketing: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Marketing, 70,* 136–153.

Palmatier, R. W. (2008). Interfirm Relational Drivers of Customer Value, *Journal of Marketing, 72,* 76–89.

Palmatier, R. W., Scheer, L. K., Evans, K. R. and Arnold, T. J. (2008). Achieving relationship marketing effectiveness in business-to-business exchanges, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 36,* 174-190.

Palmatier, R. W., Scheer, L. K., Houston, M. B., Evans, K. R., and Gopalakrishna, S. (2007a). Use of relationship marketing programs in building customer–salesperson and customer–firm relationships: Differential influences on financial outcomes, *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 24,* 210–223.

Palmatier, R., Dant, R. and Grewal, D. (2007b). A comparative longitudinal analysis of theoretical perspectives of inter organizational relationship performance, *Journal of Marketing, 71,* 172-194.

Palmer, A., and Bejou, D. (1995). The Effects of Gender on Development of Relationships Between Clients and Financial Advisers, *International Journal of Bank Marketing, 133,* 18-27.

Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., and Berry, L. L. (1985). A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research, *Journal of Marketing, 49,* 41– 50.

Parayitam, S. (2010). The effect of competence-based trust between physicians and administrative executives in healthcare on decision outcomes, *Management Research Review, 33,* 174-191.

Park, J. E., Kim, J., Dubinsky, A. J., and Lee, H. (2010). How does sales force automation influence relationship quality and performance? The mediating roles of learning and selling behaviors, *Industrial Marketing Management, 39,* 1128-1138.

Park, J. E., Lee, S., and Morgan, R. M. (2011). A negative side of outsourcing marketing functions and market-based learning process, *Journal of Strategic Marketing, 19,* 471-486.

Parsons, A. (2002). What Determines Buyer-Seller Relationship Quality? An Investigation from the Buyer's Perspective, *The Journal of Supply Chain Management, 38*, 4-12.

Peterson, A. and Dant, R.P. (1990). Perceived advantages of the franchise option from the franchisee perspective: empirical insights from a service franchise, *Journal of Small Business Management, 28*, 46-61.

Pfeffer, J. (1985). Organizational demography: Implications for management. *California Management Review, 28*, 67-81.

Plouffe, C. R. (2018). Is it navigation, networking, coordination … or what? A multidisciplinary review of influences on the intra organizational dimension of the sales role and performance, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, 38*, 241-264.

Prior, D. D. (2016). The impact of service worker personal resources on relationship quality in business solutions, *Industrial Marketing Management, 53*, 216–225.

Pullins, E.B., Reid, D. A., and Plank, R. E. (2004). Gender Issues in Buyer-Seller Relationships: Does Gender Matter in Purchasing?, *Journal of Supply Chain Management, 40*, 40-48.

Ramani, G., and Kumar, V. (2008). Interaction Orientation and Firm Performance, *Journal of Marketing, 72*, 27 45.

Ramaseshan, B., Yip, L. S., and Pae, J. H. (2006). Power, satisfaction and relationship commitment in Chinese store-tenant relationship and their impact on performance, *Journal of Retailing, 82*, 63-70.

Rauyruen, P., and Miller, K. E. (2007). Relationship quality as a predictor of B2B customer loyalty, *Journal of Business Research, 60*, 21-31.

Rayport, J. F., and Jaworski, B. J. (2005). *Best Face Forward.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Roberts, K., Varki, S., and Brodie, R. (2003). Measuring the quality of relationships in consumer services: An empirical study, *European Journal of Marketing, 37*, 169–196.

Rodriguez, M., and Honeycutt, E. (2011). Customer Relationship Management (CRM)'s Impact on B to B Sales Professionals' Collaboration and Sales Performance, *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing, 18*, 335–356.

Rosenbaum, M.E. (1986). The repulsion hypothesis: on the non-development of relationships, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*, 1156–1166.

Rubin Z. (1973). *Liking and Loving: An Invitation to Social Psychology*. New York: Rinehart & Winston.

Rungsithong, R., Meyer, K. E., and Roath, A.S. (2017). Relational capabilities in Thai buyer-supplier relationships, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, 32*, 1228-1244.

Sánchez, J. A. L and Santos-Vijande, M. L. (2015). How Value Creation and Relationship Quality Coalignment Affects a Firm's Performance: An Empirical Analysis, *Journal of Marketing Channels, 22*, 214-230.

Sarmento, M., Simões, C. and Farhangmehr, M. (2015). Applying a relationship marketing perspective to B2B trade fairs: The role of socialization episodes, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *44*, 31–141.

Schneider, B., Goldstiein, H. W. and Smith, D. B. (1995). The ASA framework: An update, *Personnel Psychology*, *48*, 747-773.

Schneider, B. (1987). The people make the place, *Personnel Psychology*, *40*, 437–453.

Schultz, D. P., and Schultz, S. E., (2017). *Theories of personality*. Boston: Cengage Learning.

Segal, M.W. (1979). Varieties of interpersonal attraction and their interrelationships in natural groups, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *42*, 253–261.

Segarra-Moliner, J. R., Moliner-Tena, M. A. and Sánchez-Garcia, J. (2013). Relationship quality in business to business: a cross-cultural perspective from universities, *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, *31*, 196-215.

Shamdasani, P., and Jung, K. (2011). Relationship quality between In-Groups and Out-Groups, *The International Business and Economics Research Journal*, *10*, 33-51.

Sheth, J. N. (1973). A Model of Industrial Buyer Behavior, *Journal of Marketing*, *37*, 50-56.

Sheth, J., and Sharma, A. (2004). Behavioral Approaches to Industrial Marketing Extant and Emerging Research. In Klaus Backhaus and Klaus Backaus (eds.), *Handbook of Industrial Marketing* (pp. 147-174). Gabler Verlag.

Sheu, J. B. (2015). Power shifts and relationship quality improvement of producer–retailer green channel dyads under government intervention, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *50*, 97–116.

Sieg, J. H., Fischer, A., Wallin, M. W., and Krogh, G. (2012). Proactive diagnosis: how professional service firms sustain client dialogue, *Journal of Service Management*, *23*, 253-278.

Singh, R., and Ho, S. Y. (2000). Attitudes and Attraction: a new test of the attraction, repulsion and similarity–dissimilarity asymmetry hypotheses, *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *39*, 197–211.

Singh, R., and Tan, L. S. C. (1992). Attitudes and attraction: a test of the similarity-attraction and dissimilarity-repulsion hypotheses, *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *31*, 227–238.

Singh, R., and Teoh, J. B. P. (1999). Attitudes and attraction: a test of two hypotheses for the similarity-dissimilarity asymmetry, *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *38*, 427–443.

Sjoerdsma, M. and van Weele, A. J. (2015). Managing supplier relationships in a new product development context, *Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management*, *21*, 192–203.

Skarmeas, D., Katsikeas, C. S., Spyropoulou, S., and Salehi-Sangari, E. (2008). Market and supplier characteristics driving distributor relationship quality in international marketing channels of industrial products, *Industrial Marketing Management, 37*, 23-36.

Skarmeas, D., Saridakis, C., and Leonidou, C. N. (2018). Examining relationship value in cross-border business relationships: A comparison between correlational and configurational approaches, *Journal of Business Research, 89*, 280-286.

Smeaton, G., Byrne, D., and Murnen, S. K. (1989). The repulsion hypothesis revisited: similarity irrelevance, dissimilarity bias, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 56*, 54–59.

Smith, J. B. (1998). Buyer-seller relationships: similarity, relationship management, and quality, *Psychology and Marketing, 15*, 3-21.

Somer, O., and Goldberg, L. R. (1999). The Structure of Turkish Trait-Descriptive Adjective, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 76*, 431-450.

Somer, O., Korkmaz, M., and Tatar, A., (2002). Beş faktör kişilik envanteri'nin geliştirilmesi -I: Ölçek ve alt ölçeklerin oluşturulması, *Türk Psikoloji Dergisi, 17*, 21-33.

Song, Y. Su, Q., Liu, Q., and Wang, T. (2012). Impact of business relationship functions on relationship quality and buyer's performance, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, 27*, 286-298.

Soto, C. J., Kronauer, A., and Liang J. K., (2016). Five-factor model of personality. In Whitbourne, S.K. (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of adulthood and aging*, (pp. 506-510). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Steward, M. D., Wu, Z., and Hartley, J. L. (2010). Exploring Supply Managers' Intrapreneurial Ability and Relationship Quality, *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing, 17*, 127-148.

Stoddard, J. E., Clopton, S. W., and Avila, R. A. (2007). Sales Managers' Perceptions of the Benefits of Sales Force Automation, J*ournal of Selling and Major Account Management, 7*, 37-50.

Stoddard, J. E., Clopton, S. W., and Avila, R.A. (2006). An analysis of the effects of sales force automation on salesperson perceptions of performance, *Journal of Selling and Major Account Management, 6*, 38-56.

Svensson, G., Mysen, T., and Payan, J. (2010). Balancing the sequential logic of quality constructs in manufacturing-supplier relationships - Causes and outcomes, *Journal of Business Research, 63*, 1209-1214.

Svensson, G., Mysen, T., Rindell, A., and Billström, A. (2013). Validation of a META-RELQUAL construct through a Nordic comparative study, *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 31, 72-87.

Swan, J. E. and Nolan, J. J. (1985). Gaining Customer Trust: A Conceptual Guide for the Salesperson, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, 5*, 39-48.

Swan, J. E., Trawick I. F. Jr, Rink, D. R., and Roberts, J. J. (1988). Measuring dimensions of purchaser trust of industrial salespeople. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, 8*, 1-10.

Swift, C. O., and Gruben, K. H. (2000). Gender Differences in Weighting of Supplier Selection Criteria, *Journal of Managerial Issues*, *12*, 502-512.

Tajfel, H., and Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In Worchel, S. and Austin, W. G. (eds.). *Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (pp. 7–24). Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall.

Tan, D. T. Y, and Singh, R. (1995). Attitudes and attraction: a developmental study of the similarity-attraction and dissimilarity-repulsion hypotheses. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, *21*, 975–986.

Tang, T. P., Fu, X., and Xie, Q., (2017). Influence of functional conflicts on marketing capability inchannel relationships, *Journal of Business Research, 78*, 252–260.

Tatar, A., Bildik, T., Saltukoğlu, G., and Dinçer, M. G. (2014). Klinik Olmayan Örneklemde Beş Faktör Kişilik Envanteri Belirti Tarama Amaçlı Kullanılabilir mi? Ön Çalışma, *FSM İlmî Araştırmalar İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi*, *4*, 181-199.

Terawatanavong, C., Whitwell, G. J., Widing, R. E., and O'Cass, A. (2011). Technological turbulence, supplier market orientation, and buyer satisfaction, *Journal of Business Research, 64*, 911-918.

Tseng, Yi Ming (2007). The Impacts of Relationship Marketing Tactics on Relationship Quality in Service Industry, *The Business Review*, *7*, 310-314.

Tsui, A. and O'Reilly, C. (1989). Beyond simple demographic effects: The importance of relational demography in superior-subordinate dyads, *Academy of Management Journal*, *32*, 402–423.

Tsui, A., Porter, L., and Egan, T. (2002). When both similarities and dissimilarities matter: Extending the concept of relational demography, *Human Relations*, *55*, 899–929.

Tsui, A. S., Egan, T. D., and O'Reilly, C. A. (1992). Being different: Relational demography and organizational attachment. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *37*, 549–579.

Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Turner, P. J., and Smith, P. M. (1984). Failure and defeat as determinants of group cohesiveness, *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *23*, 97-111.

Tzempelikos, N., and Gounaris, S. (2013). Approaching Key Account Management from a long-term perspective, *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, *21*, 179-198.

Tzempelikos, N., and Kooli, K. (2018). Moderating effects of environmental uncertainty on behavioral intentions in business markets – a study across theoretical perspectives, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *33*, 1037-1051.

Tzempelikos, N. (2015). Top management commitment and involvement and their link to key account management effectiveness, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *30*, 32-44.

Ulaga, W., and Eggert, A. (2006). Relationship value and relationship quality: Broadening the nomological network of business-to-business relationships, *European Journal of Marketing*, *40*, 311-327.

Ural, T. (2009). The effects of relationship quality on export performance: A classification of small and medium-sized Turkish exporting firms operating in single export-market ventures, *European Journal of Marketing*, *43*, 139-168.

Uysal, F., and Aksoy, Ş. (2004). Müşteri İlişkileri Yönetimindeki Temel Boyutlar ve Tıbbi Malzeme Lojistiği Üzerine Bir Uygulama, *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, *4*, 129-144.

Van Hoye, G. and Turban, D. B. (2015). Applicant–Employee fit in personality: Testing predictions from similarity-attraction theory and trait activation theory, *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, *23*, 210-223.

Vázquez-Casielles, R., Iglesias,V., and Varela-Neira, C. (2017). Manufacturer–distributor relationships: role of relationship-specific investment and dependence types, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *32*, 1245-1260.

Venkatesh, R., Kohli, A.J., and Zaltman, G. (1995). Influence Strategies in Buying Centers, *Journal of Marketing*, *59*, 71-82.

Vinchur, A. J., Schippmann, J. S., Switzer, F. S. and Roth, P. L. (1998). A meta-analytic review of predictors of job performance for salespeople, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *83*, 586 - 597.

Vyas, V. and Raitani, S. (2015). A Study of the Impact of Relationship Marketing on Cross-Buying, *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, *14*, 79-108.

Wagner, J. and Benoit, S. (2015). Creating value in retail buyer–vendor relationships: A service-centered model, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *44*, 166-179.

Wagner, S.M. and Lindemann, E. (2008). Determinants of value sharing in channel relationships, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *23*, 544-553.

Wagner, J.A., Klein, N.M., and Keith, J. E. (2003). Buyer–seller relationships and selling effectiveness: the moderating influence of buyer expertise and product competitive position, *Journal of Business Research*, *56*, 295 – 302.

Weaven, S., Grace, D., and Manning, M. (2009). Franchisee personality: an examination in the context of franchise unit density and service classification, *European Journal of Marketing*, *43*, 90-109.

Webber, C. C., Sausen, J. O., Basso, K., and Laimer, C. G. (2018). Remodelling the retail store for better sales performance, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, *46*, 1041-1055.

Webster, F. E., and Wind, Y. (1972). A General Model for Understanding Organizational Buying Behavior, *Journal of Marketing*, *36*, 12-19.

Webster, F. E. (1995): *Industrial Marketing Strategy, 3. Ed*., New York: Wiley, John & Sons.

Weck, M., and Ivanova, M. (2013). The importance of cultural adaptation for the trust development within business relationships, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *28*, 210-220.

Weitz, B., Sujan, H., and Sujan, M. (1986). Knowledge, Motivation, and Adaptive Behavior: A Framework for Improving Selling Effectiveness, *Journal of Marketing*, *50*, 174-191.

Weitz, B., (1981). Effectiveness in Sales Interactions: A Contingency Framework, *Journal of Marketing*, *45*, 85-103.

Wells, J. E. and Aicher, T. J. (2013). Follow the leader: A relational demography, similarity attraction, and social identity theory of leadership approach of a team's performance, *Gender Issues*, *30*, 1-14.

Willcocks, L. P., and Kern, T. (1998). IT outsourcing as strategic partnering: the case of the UK Inland Revenue, *European Journal of Information Systems*, *7*, 29-45.

Wilson, D. (1994). An integrated model of buyer-seller relationships. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *4*, 35-45.

Wong, A., and Sohal, A. (2002). An Examination of the Relationship Between Trust, Commitment and Relationship Quality, *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, *30*, 34–50.

Woo, K. and Ennew, C. T. (2004). Business-to-Business Relationship Quality: An IMP Interaction-Based Conceptualisation and Measurement, *European Journal of Marketing*, *38*, 1252-1271.

Wray, B., Palmer, A., and Bejou, D. (1994). Using neural network analysis to evaluate buyer-seller relationships, *European Journal of Marketing*, *28*, 32-48.

Wu, J., and Wu, Z. (2015). Key supplier relationships and product introduction success: The moderating roles of self-enforcement and interdependence between buyer and supplier, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *46*, 183-192.

Wu, Z., Steward, M., and Hartley, J. (2010). Wearing many hats: Supply managers' behavioral complexity and its impact on supplier relationships, *Journal of Business Research*, *63*, 817-823.

Yanchus, N. J., Eby, L. T., Lance, C. E., and Drollinger, S. (2010). The impact of emotional labor on work–family outcomes, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *76*, 105–117.

Yang, B., Kim, Y., and McFarland, R. G. (2011). Individual Differences and Sales Performance: A Distal-Proximal Mediation Model of Self-Efficacy, Conscientiousness, and Extraversion, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *31*, 371-381.

Yen, D. A., and Abosag, I. (2016). Localization in China: How guanxi moderates Sino–US business relationships, *Journal of Business Research*, *69*, 5724–5734.

Yen, Y. X., and Hung, S. W. (2013). How does supplier's asset specificity affect product development performance? A relational exchange perspective, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *28*, 276-287.

Yereli, A. N. (2001). Müşteri İlişkileri Yönetimi (CRM) ve Günümüz Türkiye'sindeki Yeri, *Yönetim ve Ekonomi Dergisi*, *8*, 29-42.

Zaefarian, G., Najafi-Tavani, Z., Henneberg, S. C., and Naudé, P. (2016). Do supplier perceptions of buyer fairness lead to supplier sales growth?, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *53*, 160-171.

Zeithaml, V.A., and Bitner, M. J. (1996) *Services Marketing*. Singapore: McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., and Parasuraman, A. (1996). The Behavioral Consequences of Service Quality, *Journal of Marketing*, *60*, 31-46.

Zenger, T. R., and Lawrence, B. S. (1989). Organizational demography: The differential effects of age and tenure distribution on technical communication, *The Academy of Management Journal*, *32*, 353–376.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Questionnaire used for the quantitative research in chapter 3

APPENDIX B: Questionnaire used for the quantitative research in chapter 4

APPENDIX A: Questionnaire used for the quantitative research in chapter 3

1) PERSON AND ORGANIZATION DETAILS

A. Do you have any sales responsibility in the company that you have worked for?

- Yes
- No **[Thank & Finish]**

B. Are the majority of the customers of the company you are have worked for other corporates or individuals?

- Corporate Customers
- Individual Customers **[Thank & Finish]**

C. What is your age?

.....

D. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

E. In which country you are working?

.....

F. In which sector you are working?

.....

G. How long have you been working in this sector?

.....

H. How long have you been working for your current company?

.....

2) THE LATEST NEW TAST INTRODUCED CORPORATE CUSTOMER AND BUYING CENTER

A. Please consider the LAST sales/promotion activity that you made to an existing or new customer, which evaluates the SUBJECT PRODUCT AS NEW (This product can be one of your existing or new product). When did this activity happen?

.....

B. Please answer all of the following questions for the LAST SALES/PROMOTION ACTIVITY that you considered above?

i. In which sector does your customer do business for?

.....

ii. Is the target of your customer to resell this product, in other words is this customer one of your distributor, reseller, retailer, merchant, etc...?

- □ Yes
- □ No

iii. How many employees does this customer have?

.....

iv. How much percentage of your annual sales do you make to this customer?

.....

v. How many employees of your customer in which departments involved in the decision process?

- □ Board of Director | # of employee: .....
- □ Purchasing / Procurement | # of employee: .....
- □ Production | # of employee: .....
- □ Planning | # of employee: .....
- □ Engineering / Technical | # of employee: .....
- □ Sales / Marketing | # of employee: .....
- □ Other: ..... | # of employee: .....

vi. Which department was the MOST INFLUENTIAL during the decision process?

.....

3) DECIDER of the BUYING CENTER

Please answer the following questions for the MOST INFLUENTIAL EMPLOYEE in the most influential department.

A. What was the gender of this MOST INFLUENTIAL EMPLOYEE?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

B. Is/will be this person potentially AN ACTIVE USER of your subject product?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, the actual usage will be done in another department/company
- ☐ No, the actual usage will be done in another employee in the same department

C. Please evaluate the similarity between you and the MOST INFLUENTIAL EMPLOYEE?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
He/she is very similar to me in terms of age	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of life style	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of social status	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of education level	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of income level	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of character	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of appearance	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of values	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of resume	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of achievements	1	2	3	4	5

D. Please evaluate the MOST INFLUENTIAL EMPLOYEE in terms of the following criteria:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
He/she easily focus on the task at hand	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is highly goal-oriented	1	2	3	4	5
He/she makes sales interactions as efficient as possible	1	2	3	4	5
He/she has a great experience on his/her job	1	2	3	4	5
He/she knowledgeable on his/her job	1	2	3	4	5
He/she knows his or her products very well	1	2	3	4	5
I have a trustful business relation with him/her	1	2	3	4	5
He/she does not make false claims	1	2	3	4	5
He/she has been frank in dealing with me	1	2	3	4	5

E. Please answer the following questions with the view of the MOST INFLUENTIAL EMPLOYEE:

Comparing to the other products that his/her company purchases this product...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
... is very important	1	2	3	4	5
... is very essential	1	2	3	4	5
... is very significant	1	2	3	4	5
... is high priority	1	2	3	4	5
... provides differentiation from its competitors	1	2	3	4	5

F. Please evaluate the decision duration of the MOST INFLUENTIAL EMPLOYEE during the decision process

i. How many weeks does the decision duration last for this person?

.....Weeks

ii. How many weeks does the similar decision durations last in the same sector on average?

.....Weeks

APPENDIX B: Questionnaire used for the quantitative research in chapter 4

1) FILTER AND DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

A. Do you join meetings in-person with the pharmaceutical company sales-representative, who are visiting your pharmacy store?
   - o Yes
   - o No **[Thank & Finish]**

B. Are you in charge of deciding the retailed products at your pharmacy store?
   - o Yes
   - o No **[Thank & Finish]**

C. What is the daily average number of customer who enters to the pharmacy that you are working for?

   .....

D. What is the daily average number of customer who are willing to buy ANALGESIC DRUGS at your pharmacy?

   .....

2) QUESTIONS ABOUT SALESPERSON

Please reply the following questions for the LATEST VISIT of the pharmaceutical company sales representative made in person.

A. When was this LATEST VISIT?
   - o Within one week
   - o Within two weeks
   - o Within one month
   - o Within three months
   - o More than three months ago **[Thank & Finish]**

B. How long have you been working together with this sales representative.

   .....**[If shorter than 6 months, Thank & Finish]**

C. Please evaluate the SALES REPRESENTATIVE in terms of the following criteria from 1 to 5 "1: Strongly Disagree – 5: Strongly Agree"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The sales representative is easy to talk with	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative is interested in my not only as a customer, but also as a person	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative is genuinely enjoys helping me	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative is friendly towards me	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative is cooperative person	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative is ensures our satisfaction with the service level	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative understands our needs	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative gives creates value	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative provides us all necessary information that is useful to us	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative informs us in a timely manner about changes that concern us	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative discusses his own strategic orientation with us	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative provides us confidential information	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative frequently visits us	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative takes a lot of time learning our needs	1	2	3	4	5
The sales representative contacts us very often (telephone, mail, fax...)	1	2	3	4	5

D. Please evaluate your business relationship with the SALES REPRESENTATIVE in terms of the following criteria from 1 to 5 "1: Strongly Disagree – 5: Strongly Agree"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am willing "to go the extra mile" to work with my salesperson	1	2	3	4	5
I feel committed to the relationship with my salesperson	1	2	3	4	5
I view the relationship with my salesperson as a long-term partnership	1	2	3	4	5
My salesperson gives me a feeling of trust	1	2	3	4	5
I have trust in my salesperson	1	2	3	4	5
My salesperson is trustworthy	1	2	3	4	5
I have a high-quality relationship with my salesperson	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy with the relationship with my salesperson	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with the relationship I have with my salesperson	1	2	3	4	5

E. Please evaluate the SALES REPRESENTATIVE in terms of the following criteria from 1 to 5 "1: Strongly Disagree – 5: Strongly Agree"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This salesperson easily makes friends	1	2	3	4	5
This salesperson feels comfortable around people	1	2	3	4	5
This salesperson knows how to captivate people.	1	2	3	4	5
This salesperson is skilled in handling social situations	1	2	3	4	5
This salesperson is the shining star of the party	1	2	3	4	5
This salesperson is always prepared	1	2	3	4	5
This salesperson always pay attention to details	1	2	3	4	5
This salesperson get chores done right away.	1	2	3	4	5
This salesperson is ordinary	1	2	3	4	5
This salesperson makes plans and stick to them.	1	2	3	4	5

F. Please evaluate the similarity between you and the SALES REPRESENTATIVE in terms of the following criteria from 1 to 5 "1: Strongly Disagree – 5: Strongly Agree"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
He/she is very similar to me in terms of age	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of life style	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of social status	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of education level	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of income level	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of character	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of appearance	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of values	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of resume	1	2	3	4	5
He/she is very similar to me in terms of achievements	1	2	3	4	5

G. Please evaluate the SALES REPRESENTATIVE in terms of the following criteria from 1 to 5 "1: Strongly Disagree – 5: Strongly Agree"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I'll consider this sales representative my first choice to buy other products	1	2	3	4	5
I'll encourage the other pharmacies to work with this salesperson	1	2	3	4	5
I'll say positive things about this sales representative to other people	1	2	3	4	5
I'll recommend this sales representative to other pharmacies	1	2	3	4	5
We'll buy again analgesic drugs from this sales representative in next six months	1	2	3	4	5
We intend to continue this business relationship for a long time	1	2	3	4	5
We intend to buy the analgesic drugs from this sales representative for a long time	1	2	3	4	5

H. Please evaluate the ANALGESIC DRUG BRAND represented by this salesperson in terms of the following criteria from 1 to 5 "1: Strongly Disagree – 5: Strongly Agree"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We intend to keep buying this brand	1	2	3	4	5
If another brand is having a sale, we will generally not buy the other brand instead of this one	1	2	3	4	5
If someone makes a negative comment about this brand, we would defend it	1	2	3	4	5
We would recommend this brand to someone who cannot decide which brand to buy in this product class	1	2	3	4	5

3) QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESPONDENT

A. Your age?

.....

B. Education level?

☐ Primary School ☐ Mid School ☐ High School ☐ University ☐ Graduate

C. How long have you been working for this sector?

☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1-3 years ☐ 3-5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ More than 10 years

D. How long have you been working for this current pharmacy?

☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1-3 years ☐ 3-5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ More than 10 years

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name Surname **:** Hüseyin Ozan Peneklioğlu

Place and Date of Birth **:**

E-Mail **:**

EDUCATION **:**

- **B.Sc.** **:** 2004, Istanbul Technical University, Faculty of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Aeronautical Engineering

- **M.Sc.** **:** 2004, Istanbul Technical University, Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences, Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND REWARDS:

- 2016-Present EMEA Regional Segment Director, PPG Industries
- 2014-2016 EMEA Regional Segment Manager, PPG Industries
- 2012-2014 Turkey Sales Manager, PPG Industries
- 2009-2012 South Europe Regional Sales Manager, THY Technic
- 2007-2009 Sales Executive, THY Technic
- 2005-2006 Marketing Research Executive, Method Research Company
- 2002-2003 Student Assistant, ITU International Office

PUBLICATIONS

Published Articles

- **Peneklioglu, O.** and Elmadag, A.B., (2020). "Trust goes the other way too: sellers' trust in buyers and its influence on sale process efficiency." *Journal of Management, Marketing and Logistics (JMML)*, 7(1), 28-41.
- Elmadag, A.B. and **Peneklioglu, O.**, (2018). "Developing brand loyalty among SMEs: is communication the key?," *Small Enterprise Research*, 25(3), 239-256. DOI:10.1080/13215906.2018.1522271

Conference Presentations

- **Peneklioğlu Ozan** and A. Banu Elmadağ Baş (2018), "How Do Interpersonal Factors Influence The B2B Relationship Quality?", 21st AMS World Marketing Congress, Porto, Portugal, June 27-29 2018 (extended abstract)
- **Peneklioğlu Ozan** and A. Banu Elmadağ Baş (2015), "Gender And Similarity - Match Or Mismatch: When Is B2B Sales Performance Better? ", 18th AMS World Marketing Congress, Bari, Italy, July 14-18 2015 (extended abstract)
- **Peneklioglu, O.** and Deveci, O., (2013), "A Conceptual Model to Measure Success of the Customer Complaint Management and the Effects to the Repurchasing Behavior"; INFORMS Conference; Istanbul.
- Demirci, S. and **Peneklioglu, O.** (2007), "Applicable Strategies Providing Industrial Growth in Turkish MRO Market"; Ankara International Aviation Conference; Ankara.
- **Peneklioglu, O.** (2004), "A Comparison of Gross National Product & Airport Capacity"; Air Transport Research Society Conference; İstanbul
- **Peneklioglu, O.** and Demirci, S. (2007), "Havacılık Bakım&Onarım Faaliyetlerindeki Gelişmeler Ve İzlenebilecek Politikalar"; IV. National Aerospace&Aeronautical Engineering Congress; Eskişehir.