

The Effect of Sales and Customer Orientation on Salespeople's Work Performance and the Role of Spiritual Intelligence

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Abstract

Spiritual intelligence has been considered an important concept in studies in recent years. Spiritual intelligence, which is one of the mental capacities contributing to the cognitive and emotional competencies of individuals and providing them with values such as self-knowledge and mastery in mental states, also plays an important role in the work performance of salespeople. In this study, which reveals the role of spiritual intelligence in brands' sales and/or customer orientation depending on their understanding and goals, it is seen that spiritual intelligence does not assume a regulatory role but an important mediating role.

Key words: Spiritual Intelligence, Sales Orientation, Customer Orientation, Sales Performance

JEL Code: M12, M30, M54

1. Introduction

With the support of changing and developing technology under today's conditions and the contribution of human cognitive skills, the driving forces of enterprises in reaching the customer are significant to create a difference in the competitive environment. It is an undeniable fact that identification or improvement or good management of the skills which are possessed by salespeople, one of the afore-mentioned driving forces, contributes to the increase in their work performance and is of great use for the enterprise. Spiritual intelligence, one of the cognitive abilities, can contribute to achieving a maximum level of outcome in its effect on the work performance of salespeople, who are the human resources of the enterprise.

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Spiritual intelligence appears as a cognitive ability that produces solutions to problems related to the meanings and values of the person in his/her inner world. In this respect, it positively affects our work performance by contributing to resolving the problems we encounter in our daily work lives. Salespeople, who contribute to the sales or customer orientation of an enterprise in all circumstances, can be influential in finding solutions to the needs and problems of customers by reflecting the creative and practical solutions in their cognitive abilities on their work performance. Work performance is a concept that is extensively researched in the field of psychology, is associated with success, and is said to be mostly related to psychological states and behaviors (Tosun 2020, 77).

Spiritual intelligence can be expressed as an individual resource since it is a personal trait of salespeople. In this context, the Conservation of Resources Theory (or COR for short) has been thought to be a useful approach in terms of supporting the effect of sales and customer orientation on salespeople's work performance and the role of spiritual intelligence on a theoretical basis.

COR is a motivational theory that addresses the supply of effective or valuable resources for individuals to exhibit healthy behaviors and attitudes and the protection and multiplication of existing resources if there is a decrease in resources. Furthermore, it explains what people do when they encounter or do not encounter stress (people's psychological reaction) factors. The theory depicts these resources, which are valuable for individuals, as material resources (car, house, etc.), conditions or situations (health status, age, marriage, divorce, etc.), individual characteristics (self-efficacy, self-esteem, professional skills, social intelligence, self-confidence, leadership characteristics, etc.) and energy (information, time, money, etc.) (Hobfoll 1989, 517; Hobfoll et al. 1990, 466).

COR puts emphasis on individual characteristics in terms of resisting stress management level. The contribution of our individual characteristics and abilities, which help us adapt to current circumstances and resist stress, is expressed. Although COR is described as a stress theory in the literature, it also explains an approach to the sources that affect the individual's perception process. Therefore, it is said that there is a difference between the existing sources and importance given to these sources and the level of stress or perception of circumstances resulting in stress on the same plane. Moreover, it evaluates our individual differences in respect of the source by establishing a connection between both our cognitive and environmental positions (Tosun 2020, 80). The effects of individual characteristics (cognitive abilities, personality, consistent motivational tendencies, physical characteristics and skills, etc.), which are among the determinative variables of individual differences in work performance, are among the most researched topics in the literature (Campbell and Wiernik 2015, 49). Thus, it is expected that the work performance of salespeople will be different from each other.

Our individual characteristics are one of our sources that make a difference in terms of achieving the goals which are important in our lives, balance in our inner world and reflection on our environment, and they are integrative and important in

the blending of our feelings, thoughts, and behaviors with the contribution of physical and social environments and at the center of other types of intelligence. Upon examining the concept of spiritual intelligence that exists only in humans from this point of view, it is predicted that sales and customer orientation is an important source that directly contributes to the work performance of salespeople and the role of spiritual intelligence (Dhote 2017, 53; Chaudhary and Aswal 2013, 1510; Tosun 2020, 82).

2. Literature Review

Sales And Customer Orientation

The sales orientation of a company is an indicator of both its profile and the management approach it adopts. In this respect, it is important to determine whether sales are sales- or customer-oriented (Varinli, Yaraş and Başalp 2009,159). In the literature, sales and customer orientation are classified as two ways salespeople interact with customers (Yi, Cha and Amenuvor 2021, 6).

Sales orientation refers to the development of a sales program (increasing profitability, expanding market share, etc.) according to the needs of a company and the continuity of this program and its consistent activities. A sales-driven company provides a convenient environment for salespeople to achieve their goals via its policies, strategy, and resource allocation (Sumrall and Sebastianelli 1999, 72). Furthermore, it has been thought that sales orientation is not customer-oriented since it is an approach that focuses on selling to customers at that time and aims to sell as much as possible (Yi, Cha and Amenuvor 2021, 6). In this sense, salespeople and managers who adopt a sales-oriented approach turn to outcome-oriented elements (market share, sales targets, increasing profitability, etc.) (Sezer and Baydaş 2020, 1969).

Customer orientation can be described as the application of the marketing concept, which is the cornerstone of marketing thinking, at the individual salesperson and customer level or the way salespeople do business. In other words, customer orientation refers to the effect of salespeople on customers' purchasing decisions by satisfying their needs and the degree of applying the marketing concept (Saxe and Weitz 1982, 343). Customer-oriented salespeople are also interested in learning how to understand customers by paying attention to their needs, and they try to not only sell but also to find solutions to customers' problems (Yi, Cha and Amenuvor 2021, 6).

In addition to being the level at which salespeople try to reach the customer, customer orientation also means assisting customers in their purchasing behaviors that meet their long-term desires and needs. A totally opposite sales orientation describes the level of importance salespeople give to the needs of the company rather than the needs of customers by trying to sell as much as possible (Arndt and Karende 2012, 354).

The contribution of salespeople's talents, which are their personal characteristics, to their sales skills, such as determining customer needs by

improving customer relations, cannot be denied. Talent can be said to be one of the determinants of sales performance. Companies that consider both the short- and long-term preferences of customers pay attention to the skills of salespeople in ensuring satisfaction by meeting the needs of their customers in the short term and identifying their potential needs to maximize the performance (Yi, Cha and Amenuvor 2021, 7).

Work Performance

Behaviors or activities of an enterprise toward its goals are defined as performance, and this behavior or activity itself is defined as work performance (Daryoush et al. 2013, 100). In general, the contribution of salespeople to increasing the work performance or the value of the enterprise is explained with the concept of work performance (Yang et al. 2021, 606). Organizations that are aware of the positive effects of salespeople's work performance for the enterprise consider work performance as one of the basic dynamics they want to improve (Afacan Fındıklı 2016, 39).

Many organizational psychology and organizational behavior studies and practices focus on the interventions designed to influence performance by increasing the individual knowledge, ability, and motivational determinants of performance (Campbell and Wiernik 2015, 57). In this context, work performance appears as an important structure at the core of organizational psychology. Most personnel are selected from an application pool which includes those who are likely to show better performance at work. Moreover, training programs are mostly designed to improve work performance (Viswesvaran and Ones 2000, 216). The success of organizational goals or the enterprise's income is closely related to the results of salesperson's behaviors. Therefore, salespeople's performance is measured more objectively and frequently than other business personnel (Park et al. 2010, 1131).

It is important for individuals to be unique in their own lives in terms of their own goals. In this respect, salespeople's work believing that they make a difference in others' lives can be said to be among the conditions of better work performance. As a result of balancing work identity and personal identity, salespeople become more motivated by making their work-related duties more personal and developing better relationships with their colleagues, contributing to the increase in their work performance (Geldenhuys, Bakker and Demerouti 2021, 85). Furthermore, it can be said that the quality of the relationship established with the customer is a key variable in the salesperson's work performance in terms of meeting the customer requirements (Park and Deitz 2006, 205).

Spiritual Intelligence

The spirit is defined as an essential nature that includes the thoughts, emotions, and acting abilities of human beings and is believed to be the restorative power of life adventure (Anderson 2000, 16). Spirituality is related to the

characteristics of the human soul (sense of responsibility, being adjusted, love, tolerance, patience, etc.) bringing happiness to the individual and his/her environment (Baloğlu and Karadağ, 2009,172). Intelligence is defined as a biological potential that allows analyzing certain types of information in certain ways (Gardner 2000, 32). The main theme behind the definitions of intelligence in the literature is emphasizing the focus on adaptive problem solving (Emmons 2000a, 6).

Spiritual intelligence (SQ) is defined as a set of mental capacities that are associated with one's immaterial existence, contribute to his/her awareness of his/her strengths beyond the boundaries of experience and knowledge and their integrated and adapted practice, and result in outcomes such as the development of meaning in existential depth, self-knowledge, and mastery in mental states (King and DeCicco 2009, 69). SQ is the cognitive power that produces solutions by addressing the person's meaning and value problems. Hence, it allows us to evaluate which type of action is more meaningful than the other (Chaudhary and Aswal 2013, 1510).

SQ expresses that we are intertwined with the answers to the questions about who and what we are, why we are in this world, where we come from, and where we need to go. Both the inner life of the mind and soul and their relations with existence in the world are seen as spiritual intelligence (Peerzadah, Mufti and Nazir 2018, 311). SQ enables the growth and development of the individual by solving problems in daily life for the successful survival of the individual, providing results within a certain culture, and offering creative, practical and analytical skills (Antunes, Silva and Oliveira 2017, 12; Peerzadah, Mufti and Nazir 2018, 309).

In the literature, it is reported that spiritual intelligence is at the bottom and center of all intelligence as a source that guides other types of intelligence, is integrative, connects our cognitive (IQ; associated with success in life) and emotional intelligence (EQ; associated with good behaviors in life) (Dhote 2017, 53) and exists only in humans (Chaudhary and Aswal 2013, 1510). Spiritual intelligence includes IQ and EQ and enables the individual to listen to his/her inner voice, be creative and harmonious, and reason morally. A high SQ level, on the other hand, makes it possible for an individual to work beyond his/her boundaries and find meaning and purpose in his/her life for maintaining a more fulfilling life. Additionally, individuals with high SQ act in the direction of positivism, try their best and enjoy helping others. Therefore, they contribute to the improvement of society by using a higher intelligence dimension (Dhote 2017, 53).

First, Gardner (1999) referred to the concept of existential intelligence as applicable in his multiple intelligence theory, which he suggested by claiming that intelligence was more than a single characteristic of the human mind. Emmons (2000) took this one step further and defined the five components of spiritual intelligence by asserting that spirituality met the intelligence criteria (Koražija, Žižek and Mumel 2016, 52). The five main components of spiritual intelligence are described as (1) the capacity to go beyond physicality and materiality, (2) the ability

to experience conditions with a high level of consciousness, (3) the ability to bless daily experience, (4) the ability to use spiritual resources to solve problems, (5) the capacity to exhibit virtuous behaviors (Emmons 2000a, 10). However, the characteristics of spiritual intelligence have been revised to include the first four components upon receiving the criticism that exhibiting virtuous behaviors belongs to the scope of ethics and personality rather than intelligence in the literature (Emmons 2000b, 64). Literature research supports these four basic dimensions with (1) important existential thinking (metaphysical issues such as reality, time, the universe, death, and space in parallel with purpose and meaning), (2) production of personal meaning (creating and managing individual meanings and purposes in all physical and mental experiences), (3) awareness (superiority in the individual's level of perception of himself/herself, others and the physical world), (4) conscious state expansion (the individual's ability to get into and out of high consciousness states with activities such as meditation and prayer at his/her own discretion) (King and DeCicco 2009, 70).

3. Methodology

The research aims to reveal the role of spiritual intelligence in the effect of sales orientation and customer orientation on the work performance of salespeople. In this scope, it was first tested whether there was a difference in the effect of sales and customer orientation on work performance. At the second stage, the role of spiritual intelligence in this effect was examined. This examination involved the testing of two roles of spiritual intelligence, namely mediating and regulatory roles.

The scales of the sales orientation and customer orientation variables were taken from the study by Thomas, Soutar and Ryan (2011), the spiritual intelligence scale was taken from the study by King and Decicco (2009), and the work performance scale was taken from the study by Park and Deitz (2006).

The hypotheses of the research were specified in light of the studies in the literature as follows:

H1: Sales orientation has a significant positive effect on work performance.

H2: Customer orientation has a significant positive effect on work performance.

H3: Spiritual intelligence has a mediating role in the effect of sales orientation on work performance.

H4: Spiritual intelligence has a regulatory role in the effect of sales orientation on work performance.

H5: Spiritual intelligence has a mediating role in the effect of customer orientation on work performance.

H6: Spiritual intelligence has a regulatory role in the effect of customer orientation on work performance.

The conceptual model of the research is presented in Figure 1.

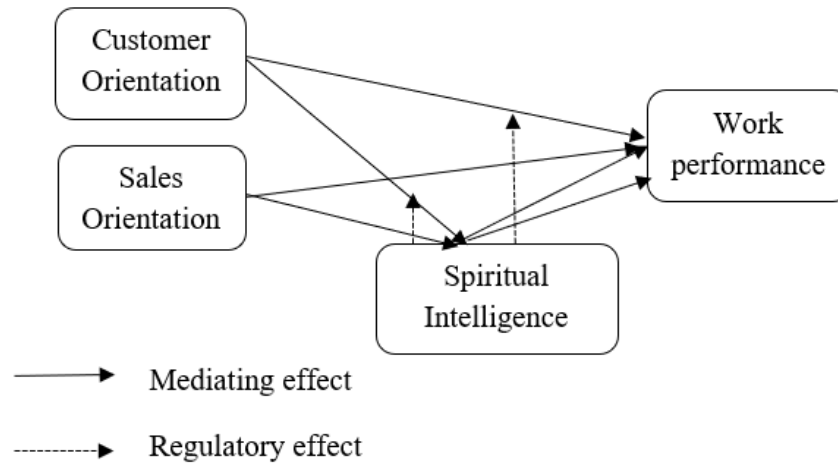


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Research

In the study, in which employees working in retail stores in Istanbul were involved as the main population, all salespeople working in stores in a shopping mall in Istanbul were reached through convenience sampling, and the data were collected from 166 salespeople who voluntarily took part in the study. The demographic characteristics of the salespeople participating in the research are presented in Table 1. It is seen that 78.3% of the salespeople are under the age of 40 and half of them are in the 20-30 age group, 42.1% of them received bachelor's degrees and higher education, and more than half of them are women and single.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Salespeople

Age Groups	Frequency	%	Educational Status	Frequency	%
20 - 30	83	50.0	Primary Education	2	1.2
31 - 40	47	28.3	High School	49	29.5
41 - 50	26	15.7	Associate Degree	45	27.1
51 - 60	10	6.0	Bachelor's Degree	57	34.3
Total	166	100.0	Postgraduate	13	7.8
			Total	166	100.0
Gender	Frequency	%	Marital Status	Frequency	%
Female	90	54.2	Married	67	40.4
Male	76	45.8	Single	99	59.6
Total	166	100.0	Total	166	100.0

Reliability analyses of the scales were carried out, and as seen in Table 2, the scales have high values separately and as a whole. The reliability coefficient of the overall scale consisting of 39 questions was found to be Cronbach's alpha= 0.890.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis of the Scales Related to the Variables

Variable	Number of Questions	Cronbach's Alpha
Sales Performance	5	0.760
Customer Orientation	5	0.860
Sales Orientation	5	0.822
Spiritual Intelligence	24	0.861
Overall Scale	39	0.890

Analysis of the Effect of Sales Orientation and Customer Orientation on Work Performance

The effect of sales orientation and customer orientation on the work performance of salespeople was checked with simple regression analysis, and as seen in Table 3, the regression models showing the effect of both approaches on work performance were found to be statistically significant.

When the correlation and determination coefficients are reviewed, it is seen that the correlation and explanatory power are higher in the effect of customer orientation on work performance compared to sales orientation. Based on this result, there is a noteworthy difference between the regression coefficients in favor of customer orientation.

Table 3. Regression Analysis Results Regarding the Effect of Sales Orientation and Customer Orientation on Work Performance

Model	F	p	R	R ²	B	p
The Effect of Sales Orientation on Work Performance	10.644	0.001	0.247	0.061	0.185	0.001
The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance	93.950	0.000	0.604	0.364	0.626	0.000
The Effect of Sales Orientation and Customer Orientation on Work Performance	63.951	0.000	0.663	0.440	SO:0.206 CO:0.639	0.000 0.000

SO: Sales Orientation CO: Customer Orientation

According to these results, it is concluded that customer orientation has a higher effect on salespeople's work performance compared to sales orientation.

When the effect of sales and customer orientation approaches on work performance is tested together, the results of multiple regression analysis reveal the same findings.

The Role of Spiritual Intelligence in the Effect of Sales Orientation on Salespeople's Work Performance

In the effect of sales orientation on salespeople's work performance, the mediating effect of spiritual intelligence was tested with the Baron and Kenny model, and the findings are shown in Table 4. Necessary conditions were provided to test the presence of a mediating effect. It was observed that the regression coefficient (0.185), which indicates the effect of sales orientation on work performance, decreased to 0.119 with spiritual intelligence. According to this result, a partial mediating role of spiritual intelligence can be mentioned.

In the effect of sales orientation on salespeople's work performance, it was tested whether spiritual intelligence had a regulatory effect, and the results are shown in Table 5. The regulatory variable was obtained by multiplying sales orientation and spiritual intelligence values, and the model was found to be significant, according to Table 5. The Durbin-Watson value that indicates autocorrelation was found within acceptable limits with 1.511. Independent variables explained the change in work performance by 21.4%, but the regulatory variable (SOSQ) was not seen to be significant. Accordingly, it cannot be said that spiritual intelligence has a regulatory effect on the effect of sales orientation on work performance.

Table 4. Analysis of the Mediating Role of Spiritual Intelligence in the Effect of Sales Orientation on Work Performance

Model	F	p	B	p
The Effect of Sales Orientation on Work Performance	10.644	0.001	0.185	0.001
The Effect of Sales Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	7.591	0.007		
The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	41.927	0.000		
The Effect of Sales Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	24.038	0.000	0.119	0.025

Table 5. Analysis of the Regulatory Role of Spiritual Intelligence in the Effect of Sales Orientation on Work Performance

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Standard Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson	F	p
1	0.478	.228	.214	.65893	1.511	15.964	0.000
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standard Coefficients			
		B	Standard Error	Beta	t	p	
1	Fixed	1.654	1.137		1.455	.148	
	SO	.003	.400	.004	.007	.994	
	SQ	.516	.302	.360	1.711	.089	
	SOSQ	.031	.104	.178	.293	.770	

SO: Sales Orientation SQ: Spiritual Intelligence SOSQ: Regulatory Variable

The Role of Spiritual Intelligence in the Effect of Customer Orientation on Salespeople's Work Performance

In the effect of customer orientation on salespeople's work performance, the mediating effect of spiritual intelligence was tested with the Baron and Kenny model, and the findings are shown in Table 6. Necessary conditions were provided to test the presence of a mediating effect. It was observed that the regression coefficient (0.626), which indicates the effect of customer orientation on work performance, decreased to 0.521 with spiritual intelligence. According to this result, a partial mediating role of spiritual intelligence can be mentioned.

Table 6. Analysis of the Mediating Role of Spiritual Intelligence in the Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance

Model	F	p	B	p
The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance	93.950	0.000	0.626	0.000
The Effect of Customer Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	45.856	0.000		
The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	41.927	0.000		
The Effect of Customer Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	54.518	0.000	0.521	0.000

In the effect of customer orientation on salespeople's work performance, it was tested whether spiritual intelligence had a regulatory effect, and the results are shown in Table 7. According to Table 7, the model was found to be significant, and the Durbin-Watson value indicating autocorrelation was obtained within acceptable limits with 1.633. Independent variables explained the change in work performance by 39.4%, but the regulatory variable (COSQ) was not significant. Accordingly, it cannot be said that spiritual intelligence has a regulatory effect on the effect of customer orientation on work performance.

Table 7. Analysis of the Regulatory Role of Spiritual Intelligence in the Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Standard Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson	F	p
1	0.636	.405	.394	.57865	1.633	36.723	0.000
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standard Coefficients			
		B	Standard Error	Beta	t	p	
1	Fixed	1.554	1.111		1.399	.164	
	CO	.254	.266	.245	.956	.341	
	SQ	-.032	.344	-.022	-.093	.926	
	COSQ	.082	.079	.429	1.039	.301	

Testing the Differences in the Effect of Sales Orientation on Work Performance According to the Demographic Characteristics of Salespeople

The differences in the effect of sales orientation on work performance according to the demographic characteristics of salespeople were tested, and the analysis results are given in Table 8. When the parameters of the simple regression model were checked, the following results were obtained:

- According to the genders of salespeople, the relevant effect was not significant in men at a 5% significance level, while it was significant but weak in women.
- According to age groups, the relevant effect was insignificant in salespeople aged 41 years and over, while it was significant in the 20-30 and 31-40 age groups at a 5% significance level. The regression coefficient was higher in the 20-30 age group compared to the other group.

- The educational status of salespeople was divided into two groups as Primary Education and High School graduates and Those with Associate, Bachelor's and Postgraduate Degrees considering frequencies. The effect of sales orientation on work performance in primary education and high school graduates was higher at a 5% significance level.
- According to marital status, the relevant effect was statistically insignificant in single individuals, whereas it was significant in married salespeople.

Table 8. The Effect of Sales Orientation on Work Performance According to Demographic Characteristics of Salespeople

Variab le		F	p	R	R²	B	p
Gender	Female	8.582	0.004	0.298	0.089	0.198	0.004
	Male	3.461	0.067	0.211	0.045	0.180	0.067
Age Group	20 - 30	5.717	0.019	0.257	0.066	0.233	0.019
	31 - 40	5.884	0.019	0.340	0.116	0.174	0.019
	41 - 50	1.344	0.258	0.230	0.053	0.115	0.258
	51 - 60	0.000	0.992	0.004	0.000	0.004	0.992
Educati on	Primary Education and High School	7.339	0.009	0.361	0.130	0.232	0.009
	Associate, Bachelor's, and Postgraduate Degrees	4.192	0.043	0.189	0.036	0.154	0.043
Marital Status	Married	13.778	0.000	0.418	0.175	0.284	0.000
	Single	2.261	0.136	0.151	0.023	0.120	0.136

Testing the Differences in the Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance According to the Demographic Characteristics of Salespeople

The differences in the effect of customer orientation on work performance according to the demographic characteristics of salespeople were tested, and the analysis results are given in Table 9. When the parameters of the simple regression model were checked, the following results were obtained:

- According to the genders of salespeople, the effect of customer orientation on work performance was higher in men at a 1% significance level.
- While the relevant effect was not statistically significant in the 31-40 and 51-60 age groups, it was significant in the other two groups. Among these

groups, the effect was higher in the 20-30 age group compared to the 42-50 age group.

- Considering the educational status of salespeople, the effect was slightly higher in the group with associate, bachelor's, and postgraduate degrees compared to the other group.
- According to the results of differences in marital status, the effect of customer orientation on work performance was higher in single salespeople than in married salespeople.

Table 9. The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance According to Demographic Characteristics of Salespeople

Variable		F	p	R	R ²	B	p
Gender	Female	15.199	0.000	0.384	0.147	0.416	0.000
	Male	105.804	0.000	0.767	0.588	0.768	0.000
Age Group	20 - 30	123.969	0.000	0.778	0.605	0.820	0.000
	31 - 40	0.000	0.998	0.000	0,000	0,000	0.000
	41-50	7.523	0.011	0.489	0.239	0.381	0.011
	51 - 60	3.491	0.099	0.551	0.304	1.117	0.099
Education	Primary Education and High School	13.846	0.001	0.469	0.220	0.571	0.001
	Associate, Bachelor's, and Postgraduate Degrees	77.462	0.000	0.638	0.407	0.633	0.000
Marital Status	Married	5.005	0.029	0.267	0.071	0.308	0.029
	Single	131.2	0.000	0.758	0.575	0.759	0.000

In the effect of sales and customer orientation on work performance, the test results of differences in the mediating role of spiritual intelligence according to the demographic characteristics of salespeople are shown in Table 10. The findings can be summarized as follows:

- In testing whether spiritual intelligence had a mediating role in the effect of sales orientation on work performance as per the age groups of salespeople, only the conditions in the 20-30 age group were met. It is seen that spiritual intelligence had a full mediating role in this effect.

- In testing whether spiritual intelligence had a mediating role in the effect of sales orientation on work performance as per the genders of salespeople, conditions could not be met.
- In testing whether spiritual intelligence had a mediating role in the effect of sales orientation on work performance as per the educational status of salespeople, conditions were met only in primary education and high school graduates. It is seen that spiritual intelligence had a full mediating role in this effect.
- In testing whether spiritual intelligence had a mediating role in the effect of sales orientation on work performance as per the marital status of salespeople, conditions could not be met.
- In testing whether spiritual intelligence had a mediating role in the effect of customer orientation on work performance as per the age groups of salespeople, conditions were met only in the 20-30 and 42-50 age groups. It is seen that spiritual intelligence had a partial mediating role in the first group and a full mediating role in the second group.
- In testing whether spiritual intelligence had a mediating role in the effect of customer orientation on work performance as per the genders of salespeople, the partial mediating role of spiritual intelligence was confirmed in both groups.
- In testing whether spiritual intelligence had a mediating role in the effect of customer orientation on work performance as per the educational status of salespeople, conditions were met in salespeople with associate and higher degrees, and the partial mediating role of spiritual intelligence was confirmed in this group.
- In testing whether spiritual intelligence had a mediating role in the effect of customer orientation on work performance as per the marital status of salespeople, the mediating effect of spiritual intelligence was identified in both groups.

Table 10. Results of the Difference Test on the Mediating Role of Spiritual Intelligence According to the Demographic Characteristics of Salespeople

Control Variable	Model	F	p	B	p
20 - 30 years	The Effect of Sales Orientation on Work Performance	5.717	0.019	0.233	0.019
	The Effect of Sales Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	10.122	0.002		
	The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	32.576	0.000		
	The Effect of Sales Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	16.634	0.000	0.08	0.380
	The Effect of Sales Orientation on Work Performance	7.336	0.009	0.232	0.009

Primary Education and High School	The Effect of Sales Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	14.261	0.000		
	The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	16.748	0.000		
	The Effect of Sales Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	9.044	0.000	0.101	0.268
20 - 30	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance	123.969	0.000	0.820	0.000
	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	42.531	0.000		
	The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	32.576	0.000		
	The Effect of Customer Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	63.732	0.000	0.746	0.000
41 - 50	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance	7.523	0.011	0.381	0.011
	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	7.379	0.012		
	The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	4.344	0.048		
	The Effect of Customer Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	4.251	0.027	0.304	0.068
Female	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance	15.199	0.000	0.416	0.000
	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	23.513	0.000		
	The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	23.125	0.000		
	The Effect of Customer Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	14.242	0.000	0.239	0.038
Male	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance	105.804	0.000	0.768	0.000
	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	21.258	0.000		
	The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	18.023	0.000		
	The Effect of Customer Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	54.007	0.000	0.719	0.000
Associate Degree and Higher	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance	77.462	0.000	0.633	0.000
	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	53.820	0.000		
	The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	27.876	0.000		
	The Effect of Customer Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	40.018	0.000	0.565	0.000

Married	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance	5.005	0.029	0.308	0.029
	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	9.615	0.003		
	The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	15.587	0.000		
	The Effect of Customer Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	8.363	0.001	0.145	0.296
Single	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Work Performance	131.200	0.000	0.759	0.000
	The Effect of Customer Orientation on Spiritual Intelligence	39.425	0.000		
	The Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	25.547	0.000		
	The Effect of Customer Orientation and Spiritual Intelligence on Work Performance	65.827	0.000	0.722	0.000

4. Conclusions

It is accepted that the cognitive and emotional knowledge of salespeople, who have an important position among employees in the field of marketing, in addition to their knowledge and competence, have a significant effect on their work performance. Spiritual intelligence plays an important role in this effect. Spiritual intelligence, one of the creative, practical, and analytical skills of salespeople, makes significant contributions. The fact that the concept is new and there is not enough research on this concept in the marketing literature indicates the aim of this study to contribute. In line with this aim, the research is based on the Conservation of Resources Theory and is considered a significant resource making a direct contribution to the effect of sales and customer orientation on salespeople's work performance and the role of spiritual intelligence.

Salespeople's sales and customer orientation also play an important role in their work performance. However, this orientation is also shaped by the level of adoption of the brand's marketing approach as well as its goals for that period. Both approaches had positive effects, but it was revealed that customer orientation had a higher effect in the study.

In this study, which was conducted on salespeople working in store retailing in a one-to-one relationship with customers, the effect of sales orientation approaches on salespeople's work performance and the role of spiritual intelligence in this effect were investigated, and the relevant role was found to have a mediating effect. Another noteworthy important result is that the customer orientation approach had a more significant effect on work performance than the sales orientation approach. This result also indicates that the concept of marketing is adopted by the brands represented by salespeople and salespeople.

Despite differences in relationships in terms of demographic characteristics of salespeople, some results were obtained in the difference of the mediating role of spiritual intelligence and in the effect of sales orientation and customer orientation on work performance. While spiritual intelligence had a full mediating role in the effect of sales orientation on work performance in the 20-30 age group and in primary education and high school graduates, it had a full mediating role in the effect of customer orientation on work performance in the 20-30 and 41-50 age groups. Spiritual intelligence had a partial mediating role in the effect of customer orientation on work performance in both gender groups, individuals with associate and higher degrees and in both marital status groups.

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