

THE TYPE A BEHAVIOR PATTERN AND SALES PERFORMANCE: A THEORETICAL CLARIFICATION

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The Type A Behavior Pattern (TABP) has been hypothesized to influence performance in a variety of sales environments. Unfortunately, prior research has been hindered by a lack of established theory. First, the association between two of the primary components of TABP (i.e., achievement striving and impatience-irritability), has not been adequately explained. Second, the presumed relationship between impatience-irritability and performance is counter-theoretical, particularly in service selling where interpersonal skills are especially important. This study provides theoretical clarification and re-tests the revised hypotheses using a sample of travel agents. The results support the hypothesis that achievement striving influences selling performance. The results do not support the hypothesis that impatience-irritability reduces selling performance. It is suggested that individual coping behavior may moderate the relationship. Finally, the relationship between achievement striving and impatience-irritability was not significant. Researchers and sales managers are cautioned to (1) correctly interpret the TABP as a combination of both achievement striving and impatience-irritability and not simply as a motivation construct and (2) consider the context of the work setting, as the TABP is less likely to be accepted in environments that require strong interpersonal skills and relationship building.

INTRODUCTION

The Type A Behavior Pattern (TABP) has been recognized as a predictor of performance in a variety of selling environments including *real estate* (Bartkus, Peterson and Bellenger 1989), *manufacturing* (Lee and Gillen 1989), *insurance* (Matteson, Ivancevich and Smith 1984; Bluen, Barling and Burns 1990), *automobiles* (Barling, Kelloway and Cheung 1996), and *travel services* (Bartkus and Howell 1999). Defined as “an action emotion complex that can be observed in any person who is aggressively involved in a chronic, incessant struggle to achieve more and more in less and less time, and if required to do so, against the opposing efforts of other things or persons” (Bartkus et al. 1989, p. 11; Friedman and Rosenman 1959), the TABP is commonly described by two major traits: *achievement striving* and *impatience-irritability*. Begley et

al. (2000), note that achievement striving reflects the “extent to which people work hard, are active, and take their work seriously” while impatience/irritability “reflects anger, hostility, and obsession with time.” (p. 216)

Bartkus and Howell (1999) have argued that achievement striving should have a *positive* influence on selling performance while impatience-irritability should have a *negative* influence. As such, the positive influence of achievement striving is at least partially mitigated by the proposed negative influence of impatience-irritability. Furthermore, since it has been traditionally hypothesized that the two are correlated, managers are presented with a dilemma with regard to recruiting qualified salespeople. As, Bartkus and Howell (1999) note: “since interviewees tend to accentuate positive traits (e.g., motivation) and downplay negative traits (e.g., impatience-irritability), an unstructured or poorly planned interviewing process is likely to hinder the interviewer’s ability to effectively gauge the qualifications of the potential agent

(Daniel and Valencia 1991). As such, management may unwittingly think they are hiring a qualified agent when, in fact, they are not.” (p. 164)

A careful review of the literature, however, suggests that any managerial prescription based on empirical results from TABP research may be premature since the theoretical rationale for the TABP-sales performance relationship has not been well established. Specifically, the relationship between impatience-irritability and performance has not been well explained nor has the proposed relationship between impatience-irritability and achievement striving.

With regard to the relationship between impatience-irritability and performance, Barling, Kelloway, and Chueng (1996) simply assumed that impatience-irritability was not a factor in the sales performance equation since there is no “...data to suggest that impatience-irritability is associated with sales performance.” (p. 822) Similarly, Bluen, Barling and Burns (1990), hypothesized that impatience-irritability would not be related to selling performance based on other empirical results in non-selling environments. Bartkus and Howell (1999) provide somewhat stronger rationale by arguing that impatience-irritability should have a negative influence on travel service selling because “...impatience-irritability is incompatible with task environments that stress strong interpersonal skills”. (p. 166)

With regard to the relationship between achievement-striving and impatience-irritability, Bartkus and Howell (1999) note that “the theoretical rationale for this relationship has not been fully established” (p. 164). For example, Spence, Helmrich and Pred (1987) simply ask: “can persons who are hard-driving, hard-working, and ambitious usually be characterized as irritable, impatient, and hostile as well?” (p. 523)

Despite the lack of theory, there is a history of fairly consistent empirical support for the

relationship (e.g., Barling and Charbonneau 1992; Bluen, Barling and Burns 1990; Helmreich, Spence and Pred 1988; MacEwen and Barling 1993; Spence, Helmreich and Pred 1987). More recent research has also provided empirical support but without corresponding hypotheses. Jex, Adam, Elacqua and Bachrach (2002), for example, reported a significant correlation (i.e., $r=.11$, $P<.05$) but did not provide any further elaboration. Similarly, Begley, Lee and Czajka (2000) reported a significant correlation (i.e., $r=.25$, $P<.01$) without additional explanation. Finally, Afzalur and Zubair (1997) reported a relatively strong association (i.e., $.34$, $P<.001$), but did not discuss the relationship in detail.

This review leads to the following questions. Is there any theory to back the previously proposed relationships in the TABP-sales performance model? Specifically, what is theoretical rationale to support the hypothesized relationship between achievement striving and impatience-irritability? Additionally, what is the rationale for hypothesizing that impatience-irritability would have a negative influence on performance? Finally, is the relationship between achievement striving and impatience-irritability contingent on the context in which TABP is measured? The answers to these questions have important implications for sales managers and the future of TABP research. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to revisit the TABP model and provide theoretical clarification for each of the relationships. We then test the revised model using a sample of salespeople in travel services.

THE TABP AND SALES PERFORMANCE

There are three general relationships in the TABP-Performance model: (1) achievement striving and selling performance, (2) impatience-irritability and performance, and (3) achievement striving and impatience-irritability. The following sections provide theoretical clarification for each of the relationships.

Achievement Striving and Sales Performance

Achievement striving has been consistently defined in the TABP literature. For example, Bluen, Barling, and Burns (1990) define it as extent to which “people take their work seriously, are active, and work hard.” (p. 212) Similarly, Barling, Bluen and Moss (1990) define it as the extent to which individuals take work seriously, are hard driving and competitive, and exert considerable effort in behaviors in which they are involved.” (p. 313) Begley, Lee and Czajka (2000) state that it “reflects the extent to which people work hard, are active, and take their work seriously.” (p. 216) Each of these descriptions imply that the concept is founded on the motivational component of “effort”. In a personal selling environment, effort has been defined as “. . . the force, energy, or activity by which work is accomplished” (Brown and Peterson 1994, p. 71).

Prior research investigating the relationship between effort and sales performance has been very consistent. Indeed, the theoretical explanation is perhaps one of the most intuitive in all of selling research. Krishnan, Netermeyer and Boles (2002), for example, state that: “it seems little more than common sense to suggest that the harder a salesperson works (i.e., effort), the better he or she will perform. . .” (p. 288) Hence, it is not surprising that Brown and Peterson (1994) found a strong relationship between effort and sales performance.

VandeWalle et al. (1999) also found effort to be related to sales performance while Mowen et al. (1985) found that the amount of effort expended by a salesperson significantly influenced the sales managers’ evaluations of that salesperson. Finally, Ingram, Schwegker and Hutson (1992) surveyed sales executives to help determine factors most significant to salesperson failure and found that a “lack of sufficient effort” was list among the top six factors.

In the context of TABP research, the relationship is equally consistent (e.g., Bluen, Barling and Burns 1990; Bartkus and Howell 1999). Additionally, achievement striving has been linked to a variety of other performance outcomes such as students’ grade point average (Barling and Charbonneau 1992; Spence, Helmreich and Pred 1987; Spence, Pred and Helmreich 1989) and university professors’ academic publications and citations (Helmreich, Spence and Pred 1988; Taylor, Locke, Lee and Gist 1984).

Given that: (1) achievement striving reflects the level of effort that an individual exerts towards an activity, (2) the established argument that the harder a salesperson works (i.e., effort), the better he or she should perform, and (3) the overwhelming empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is theoretically justified:

Hypothesis 1: Achievement striving will have a positive influence on service selling performance.

Impatience-Irritability and Sales Performance

While theoretical support for the relationship between achievement-striving and selling performance is highly intuitive, corresponding rationale for the relationship between impatience-irritability and selling performance is not as easily understood. It appears, however, that the concepts of *social competence* and *negative affectivity* can provide some theoretical clarification. In the context of personal selling, social competence has been defined as “salespeople’s interpersonal perceptiveness and the capacity to adjust their cognitive abilities to different situational demands to influence and control (if needed) the response of others—predominantly, their customers (see Goleman 2006; Wright 2002).” (Verbeke, Belschak, Bakker and Deitz 2008, p. 46) Verbeke et al. (2008) further note that social competence is “a crucial factor in selling because the personal interaction with people inside and outside the firm is a key aspect of sales.” (p. 46)

Given these descriptions, impatience-irritability appears antithetic to the concept of social competence. As such, one would expect impatience-irritability to adversely influence selling performance. Matteson, Ivancevich and Smith (1984) provide support for this proposition: "To the extent that interpersonal competency plays a role in vocational achievement, the absence of these skills might hinder success". (p. 210) Additionally, Bartkus and Howell (1999) maintain that: "since travel service selling relies more heavily on intangible characteristics, the *character* of the agent plays a more critical role than in the selling of more tangible products such as an automobile. Therefore, any interpersonal trait that interferes with the effective delivery of the travel service selling presentation could be expected to reduce performance." (p. 164, italics added for emphasis)

A second concept that helps explain the relationship between impatience-irritability and sales performance is *negative affectivity*. Defined as a "...higher-order personality variable describing the extent to which an individual experiences, either in terms of frequency or intensity, high levels of distressing emotions such as anger, hostility, fear, and anxiety" (Aquino et al. 1999, p. 261), negative affectivity certainly appears consistent in nature with that of impatience-irritability. Spector and O'Connell (1994) found some support for this proposition, finding a correlation of .43 ($p < .05$) between impatience-irritability and negative affectivity. As such, negative affectivity appears to provide another useful basis for clarifying the relationship between impatience-irritability and sales performance.

The logic is relatively straightforward. First, note that negative affectivity is considered a competence-related characteristic (Cole and Peeke 1999) that has been hypothesized to interfere with the ability perform successfully in work or other social environments. (Verbeke and Bagozzi 2000) Empirical evidence provides support for this hypothesis. Cropanzano et al. (1993) studied the interaction of negative affectivity and job tenure and found

that when tenure was low, negative affectivity reduced performance. In a personal selling context, Sharma (1999) found that if customers perceive salespeople to have a negative affect, lower levels of persuasion are observed. In a study of retail salespeople, Sharma and Levy (2003) found that a salesperson's *positive* affect increased performance.

From this review, impatience-irritability appears to closely reflect a relative lack of social competence and the presence of negative affectivity. Given that these are detrimental to selling performance, the following hypothesis is theoretically justified:

Hypothesis 2: Impatience-irritability will have a negative influence on service selling performance.

Impatience-Irritability and Achievement Striving

The relationship between impatience-irritability and achievement striving stems from early research examining behavioral factors in the development of coronary heart disease. Edwards and Baglioni (1990) note that the TABP was initially conceptualized by Friedman and Rosenman (1959) as: "...a combination of a competitive need for achievement, a sense of time urgency, aggressiveness and hostility." (p. 315) The basis for this description appears to be derived from an observation by Friedman and Rosenman (1974) that this type of individual was "over-represented in their clinical practice". (Evans 1990, p. 147) Subsequent empirical research largely confirmed these observations (e.g., Haynes et al. 1978; Haynes, Feinleib and Kannel 1980), but the theoretical rationale was never fully developed. It is proposed that the concept of *perfectionism* can provide such rationale.

To better understand this proposition, consider the following description of perfectionism by Chang (2000):

...a multidimensional phenomenon involving excessive self-criticism associated with high personal

standards, doubts about the effectiveness of one's actions, concerns about meeting social expectations (typically those of the parents), and an excessive focus on organization and neatness. According to Frost et al. (1990), it is the combination of high standards and self-criticism associated with these different dimensions that differentiate normal perfectionists from neurotic perfectionists. Whereas normal perfectionists might set very high standards for themselves but give themselves latitude from severe negative self-evaluations, neurotic perfectionists are neither likely to accept nor appreciate themselves unless they are able to obtain perfection in everything they do (Hamachek 1978). (Chang 2000, p. 19)

Flett and Hewitt (2006) take exception to this argument and note that "What has been referred to as 'normal' or 'adaptive' perfectionism bears a striking resemblance to conscientiousness and achievement striving..."; therefore, the term perfectionist should be distinguished from these concepts and "reserved only for those individuals who hold rigidly to their standards, even in situations that do not call for perfection, and who continue to place an irrational importance on the attainment of impossibly high standards in not just one but in several life domains." (p. 476)

The concept of perfectionism, therefore, seems to provide a useful basis for developing theoretical clarification on the relationship between impatience-irritability and achievement striving. First, note that Friedman and Rosenman (1974) define the Type A Behavior Pattern as a combination of all relevant attributes, not simply the presence of any single attribute. Hence, the two-factor model is theoretically valid only to the extent that it determines whether or not individuals are Type A (i.e., achievement strivers who are also

impatience-irritable, and vice-versa). As with the conceptualization of perfectionism, it does not make theoretical sense to define an adaptive and maladaptive form of Type A Behavior because any form of so-called adaptive Type A would necessarily require the exclusion of the impatience-irritability component, thereby reducing the measurement of Type A to a form of motivation (i.e., effort).

This argument has important practical implications for the interpretation of TABP by sales management. In particular, a review of popular press articles suggests that the TABP can sometimes be mischaracterized as a motivation construct, implying that Type A individuals are to be admired for their achievement striving rather than scorned for their inclination to be impatient and irritable. For example, Sachs (2007) provides an example of a Type A individual: "Barbara is not a *Type A personality*-she's *Type A+*. She's the first one to be in the office in the morning and the last one to leave in the evening, if it's still evening. Her department is also very hard-working." (p. 38) As such, clarifying what constitutes the Type A Behavior Pattern should help reduce future misperceptions about highly motivated individuals.

In sum, the theoretical rationale for the relationship between achievement striving and impatience-irritability is based on the conceptualization of what the TABP is; that is, the extent to which there is a correlation between the two constructs. Hence, it is possible to find individuals who are relatively low in achievement striving and high in impatience-irritability (and vice-versa). Additionally, it is possible to find individuals who are relatively low in both achievement striving and impatience-irritability (the so-called, Type Bs). It is only when an individual is high in both achievement striving and impatience-irritability that s/he can technically be described as Type A. As such, there is no theoretical justification at this time for hypothesizing a *generalized* relationship between achievement striving and impatience-

irritability. Instead, a high correlation is only evidence of high TABP in the specific sample.

We argue, however, that since impatience-irritability is not a desired personality trait in environments requiring strong interpersonal skills, the correlation between impatience-irritability should be expected to be low in those environments. Travel service selling would certainly appear to reflect such an environment. As such, Hypothesis 3 can be presented:

Hypothesis 3: In environments with an emphasis on strong interpersonal skills, such as travel service selling, impatience-irritability and achievement striving will not be highly correlated.

The rationale for Hypothesis 3 is based, of course, on the assumption of effective recruiting. While it is certainly possible that high levels of both achievement striving and impatience-irritability could occur in environments that stress interpersonal skills, it is reasoned that this combination is not sustainable because sales success is contingent, not only on achievement striving, but on an ability to display an acceptable level of interpersonal competence. In this sense, impatience-irritability is inconsistent with the notion of interpersonal competence. For this reason, even if highly impatient/irritable salespeople are recruited, they are unlikely to be retained. As such, it is hypothesized that impatience-irritability and achievement striving will not be highly correlated in a travel service selling environment.

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The hypotheses were tested using a structural equation model. Adequacy of model fit was assessed using a variety of statistical diagnostics provided by the LISREL output. The initial fit was evaluated using the X^2 statistic. Additional goodness of fit indices were then examined. First, the standardized root mean square residual (RMSR) was examined to determine the extent to which the average size of the standardized difference

between the actual covariance matrix and the reproduced covariance matrix was significant. Although there is no absolute cut-off, residuals above .05 are considered evidence of non-equivalence. Second, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was used to augment the RMSR. The RMSEA measures the probability that the average fitted residuals are below .05. The p-value associated with the RMSEA represents the probability that the average fitted residual is below the cut-off. (Browne and Cudeck 1993) Therefore, high p-values represent better fit. Third, the modification matrices were examined for evidence of a lack of fit. Large individual indices are evidence of a lack of fit in the measurement model. Finally, the size and significance of the model parameters, as measured by the standardized maximum likelihood estimates, were also examined.

Sample Frame and Data Collection

A sample of in-house travel representatives working in major metropolitan areas of the southwestern United States was used to empirically evaluate the revised TABP model. In total, 848 questionnaires were distributed to the agents by mail. Each questionnaire had a brief cover letter asking the agent to complete the questionnaire within a few days and mail it directly to the principal investigator. Anonymity of responses was assured. A follow-up communication was enacted within two weeks of the original mailing to encourage response. In addition, a self-addressed stamped envelop was enclosed with each packet.

Of the 848 questionnaires, 205 were returned for a response rate of 24.2 percent. Fifty-four of these were subsequently removed as a result of either missing data, outside sales agents, part-time help, management respondent, and/or less than six months experience. This left a final sample of 151 travel representatives. A characteristic profile of the sample is presented in Table 1.

**TABLE 1:
Characteristic Profile**

Gender	Percent of Sample
Female	86.8%
Male	13.2

Age	Percent of Sample
<20	0.0%
20-30	31.1
31-40	33.8
41-50	21.9
51-60	9.9
>60	3.3

Marital Status	Percent of Sample
Single	29.8%
Married	55.6
Divorced	13.9
Other	0.7

Education	Percent of Sample
High School	13.0%
Some College	48.3
College Graduate	22.5
Post Graduate	16.2

Measures

The measurement items and sample statistics are presented in Table 2. Achievement Striving is measured by two items adapted from the Steers and Braunstein (1976) measure of need for achievement. The Fornell and Larcker (1981) composite reliability for this scale is .76 indicating adequate reliability for the purposes of this study. Responses for the scale items range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Impatience-irritability is measured by a single item developed in the Framingham study. (Haynes et al. 1978). Responses for the scale item range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Although a single item, it appears to have adequate variance for the purposes of this study. (i.e., mean= 3.8, standard deviation = 1.7)

Selling performance is measured by three self-reported items derived from suggestions by Pride and Ferrell (1991) and others (Jackson, Keith and Schlacter 1983; Behrman and Perreault 1982) as representative of this domain. Responses for the scale items range from 1 (better than 95 percent of agents) to 6 (better than 25 percent of agents). The items were reverse coded so that higher numbers would reflect better performance. The scale has adequate reliability for the purposes of this study (Cronbach Alpha = .75; FLI = .85) (Nunnally and Bernstein 1994; Fornell and Larcker 1981).

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The test results are presented in Table 3. The model has a X^2 of 6.4 with 7 degrees of freedom ($p=.49$) indicating that the covariances reproduced by the hypothesized model do not differ significantly from the observed covariances. With regard to the measurement model, the results show that all factor loadings from the maximum likelihood solution differ non-trivially from zero ($p<.05$). That is, all loadings are greater than two times their respective standard errors. Additional fit criteria also provide evidence of a good fit. The GFI and related indices are all above the recommended cut-off of .90 suggested by Bentler and Bonet (1980). The root mean square residual (RMSR) as well as the standardized residual are both consistent with the recommended cut-off of .05 (.05 and .03 respectively). (Gefen, Straub and Boudreau 2000). Finally, the root mean square error of approximation is below the recommended cut-off as well (.00, $p=.72$). (Browne and Cudeck 1993)

**TABLE 2:
Measures**

Achievement Striving (adapted from Steers and Braunstein 1976)
Scale response categories: 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree
Correlation coefficient = .70 Composite reliability = .76
1. I do my best work when I am confronted with a difficult sale.
2. I try very hard to improve on my past sales performance
Impatience-Irritability (Haynes et al. 1978)
Scale response categories: 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree
Mean = 3.7; Standard Deviation = 1.7
1. I get upset when I have to wait for anything.
Performance (adapted from Jackson, Keith and Schlacter 1983; Behrman and Perreault 1982)
Scale response categories: 1=better than 95% to 6=bottom 25%
Responses were reverse-scored so that higher numbers reflect better performance
Cronbach Alpha reliability = .74 Composite Reliability = .85
1. Total dollar sales
2. Actual dollars sales relative to agency expectations.
3. Overall performance.

Given the adequacy of fit, the structural parameters were examined. With regard to hypothesis 1, the results show that achievement striving increases selling performance. The standardized parameter is .32 ($p < .05$). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is supported. With regard to hypothesis 2, the results show that impatience/irritability does not have a significant influence on selling performance (parameter estimate = .16, $p > .05$). Hence, hypothesis 2 was not supported.

With regard to hypothesis 3, the results show that achievement striving and impatience-irritability are not significantly related (parameter estimate = -.11, $p > .05$). The lack of correlation between the two constructs also suggests that the presence of Type A individuals in this sample is low ($r^2 = .01$).

DISCUSSION

This study sought to provide theoretical clarification to the Type A Behavior Pattern

TABLE 3:
Model Results

Relationships	Standardized	Significance
	Parameter	Level
	Estimates	
Achievement Striving to Selling Performance	.32	($p < .05$)
Impatience-Irritability to Selling Performance	.16	($p > .05$)
Inter-factor relationship:		
Achievement Striving and Impatience-Irritability	-.11	($p > .05$)
Fit Diagnostics		
X ² = 6.39 with 7 degrees of freedom ($p = .49$)		
Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI)	= .99	
Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI)	= .96	
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	= .98	
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	= .95	
Root Mean Square Residual	= .05	
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual	= .03	
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	= .00	($p > .72$)

and its relationship to selling performance. It was argued that a significant correlation between achievement striving and impatience-irritability is evidence of a meaningful presence of Type A individuals in the sample. In essence, it is a combination of high impatience-irritability *and* high achievement striving that defines the Type A Behavior Pattern. This explanation helps clarify the range of correlations reported in prior TABP research.

With that said, it is important to note that what constitutes a high level for either attribute is tentative as normed indices for the TABP have yet to be developed. Furthermore, there is no compelling argument to suggest that highly motivated individuals will necessarily possess high levels of impatience-irritability. However, given that the two traits can co-exist, future research will want to examine factors that moderate the relationship. Specifically,

why is it that some highly motivated individuals are impatience-irritable while others are not? In the current study, it was proposed that the low correlation was due to the work environment (i.e., impatience-irritability is inconsistent with service selling). Future researchers will want to explore other factors as well.

The lack of support for the relationship between impatience-irritability and selling performance is the most surprising, but remains consistent with prior empirical research. The underlying theoretical premise for the proposed relationship is that a negative affect in the form of impatience-irritability would reduce selling performance in situations where interpersonal skills are a salient. Clearly, personal selling falls into this category. Therefore, while the theoretical rationale supports the hypothesized relationship, further reflection is needed to provide alternative explanations.

One potential explanation is that the relationship is contingent on the ability of an individual to self-regulate his or her behavior. Specifically, if an individual recognizes that the overt expression of impatience-irritability would adversely affect an important outcome (e.g., performance), he or she might have the ability to suppress negative behavior during that time period. This is commonly referred to in the literature as “coping”; the means by which people consciously or unconsciously rectify stress (Lazarus and Folkman 1984). With regard to personal selling, Nonis and Sager (2003) posit that: “An ability to cope allows a salesperson to lessen the influence of job stress and experience greater satisfaction with work and life, and perhaps achieve higher job performance (Latack 1986).” (p. 139)

Despite the role that coping behavior may play in moderating the relationship, it is important to remember that impatience-irritability has also been associated with a wide variety of maladaptive traits, behaviors, and outcomes. As such, its potential to negatively influence performance (and other aspects of life) is perhaps more global than one might initially

presume. For example, Aziz and Vallejo (2007) found a significant correlation between impatience-irritability and Machiavellian behavior. Hallberg, Johansson and Schaufeli (2007) found impatience-irritability to have a positive correlation with burnout (in the form of cynicism and emotional exhaustion) and a negative correlation with work engagement (in the form of intrinsic motivation). Bluen, Barling and Burns (1990) found that impatience-irritability predicted depression in salespersons. Finally, Conte et al. (2001) found impatience-irritability to be significantly correlated with stress, sleep problems, and headaches. This evidence suggests that impatience-irritability is a highly undesirable characteristic, irrespective of any association with achievement striving or selling performance.

In conclusion, this study is intended to contribute to the ongoing debate concerning the usefulness of the TABP as a explanatory variable in the personal selling equation. We have argued that for TABP research to be meaningful, each proposed relationship needs to be supported by theoretical rationale. While additional development is still needed, this study provides a useful foundation for future research. It is now hoped that TABP research can move beyond the mere search and confirmation of empirical regularities and towards the development of a more general theory of the TABP as it applies to work-related performance outcomes, including service selling.

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