

The Stories that B2B Salespeople Tell in Online Job Reviews: Three Essays

**by
In Nga (Joey) Lam**

M.B.A., Simon Fraser University, 2019
B.B.A., The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2007

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Declaration of Committee

Name: In Nga (Joey) Lam
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy (Business Administration)
Title: The Stories that B2B Salespeople Tell in Online Job Reviews: Three Essays
Committee: **Chair:** Christina Atanasova
Professor, Finance

Leyland Pitt
Supervisor
Professor, Marketing

Michael Parent
Committee Member
Professor, Management Information Systems

Karen Robson
Committee Member
Associate Professor, Marketing
University of Windsor

Mila Lazarova
Examiner
Professor, International Business

Carolyn Strong
External Examiner
Professor, Marketing
University of Cardiff

Abstract

This dissertation offers insights into B2B salesforce deployment by analyzing the words in over 50,000 job reviews written by B2B salespeople on Glassdoor and relating the words to their job satisfaction. In essay 1, building on narrative psychology, I used Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC2015) to score the "W5" elements (who, what, when, where, and why) that constitute stories B2B salespeople tell. I analyzed differences in word patterns and uncovered four clusters representing corporate cultures: Work Rewards, Work-Life Balance, Workplace Malaise, and Toxic Interactions. In essay 2, I further explored the links between corporate culture and the linguistic characteristics of job reviews. I adopted Sull, Turconi, and Sull's (2020) Big 9 scores on nine cultural values: agility, collaboration, customer orientation, diversity, execution, innovation, integrity, performance, and respect. I adopted a Multi-Dimension Scaling approach based on the Big 9 scores to create a map of corporate profiles. A projection of the LIWC2015 scores on the corporate profile map uncovered differences in word choices across the profiles. Insights from these two essays can help sales managers understand how B2B salespeople perceive corporate culture and attract talent that can enhance the cultural fit. In essay 3, I focused on the emotions articulated in the words in the job reviews by considering Ekman's (1992) six basic emotions: Anger, Fear, Surprise, Disgust, Joy, and Sadness. I used the NRC emotion lexicon (Mohammad & Turney, 2013) to measure the emotions expressed in B2B salespeople's job reviews of current and former employers. I found three patterns. First, former employees show more joy than current employees when the company rating is three stars or more. Second, all six emotions significantly explain company ratings for current employees, while Surprise was the only insignificant emotion for former employees' company ratings. Third, Joy and Sadness increase as company rating rises for former employees. Understanding these emotional differences contributes to the B2B sales research literature and suggests ways in which sales managers can retain salespeople. Overall, insights from this dissertation also serve as a model for firms considering new automated text analysis approaches to studying employee engagement on social media.

Keywords: Business-to-business salesperson; salesforce deployment; storytelling; job satisfaction; corporate culture; emotion

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the following people who have enormously impacted my life.

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List of Acronyms

B2B	Business-to-business
Big 9	The nine cultural values: agility, collaboration, customer orientation, diversity, execution, innovation, integrity, performance, and respect.
EI	Emotional Intelligence
LIWC2015	Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count version 2015, a dictionary-based content analysis tool

Chapter 1.

Introduction: The Salesforce in the B2B Marketing Mix

Salespeople are vital to the success of most firms. For decades, the literature has emphasized the strategic importance of salesforces as valuable resources across all functional areas. In the resource-based view of the firm, Wernerfelt (1984) includes the employment of skilled (sales) personnel as an example of superior resources. Day and Wensley (1988) claim that superior resources may reside in the breadth of a firm's salesforce. Porter (1991) contends that salesforces play a strategic role as invaluable resources that can determine the success or failure of firms. This is especially true in the case of business-to-business (B2B) enterprises. Salespeople in B2B environments deal with customers who want a more relational approach that requires more time investment and higher quality interactions (Viio & Grönroos 2016). However, B2B salespeople have more repeat purchases from customers than B2C salespeople and are thus more motivated to maintain long-term relationships with customers (Saxe & Weitz, 1982).

Because a salesforce may have a significant impact on most B2B firms, recruiting B2B salespeople is strategically critical. In the strategic marketing literature, Deshpande and Webster (1989) concur with the importance of hiring and state that the marketer's most critical human resources decision in management is personnel selection. However, sales positions are challenging to fill and have historically high turnovers (Bande et al., 2015), a significant concern among sales organizations (Mulki & Jaramillo, 2011). For over half a century, the cost of salesforce turnover, including intangible losses and opportunity costs (Mayer & Greenberg, 1964; Sunder et al., 2017), has remained substantial. The resignation of salespeople leaves the firm more vulnerable to competitors (Jaramillo, Mulki, & Boles, 2013). In particular, losing successful salespeople can create a severe setback (DeConinck, 2011). The sales organization must bear the subsequent costs associated with the selection process and training (Mulki & Jaramillo, 2011). Reducing B2B salespeople turnover provides tremendous financial incentives for B2B firms. Therefore, maintaining a B2B salesforce represents a necessary marketing investment for most B2B firms.

However, retaining B2B salespeople is not as straightforward as it may seem. One of the reasons could be the demanding nature of a B2B sales job. Salespeople are usually out of the office to bring revenue to the firm, engaging in various sales activities. For researchers interested in studying B2B salespeople, getting access to an extensive sample of B2B salespeople can also be difficult. In the tradition of marketing research, researchers are primarily in one of three camps, as their research objectives determine their data gathering and analysis methodologies: surveys for those who strive for generalizability, experiments for those who pursue precision and control, and qualitative methods for those who seek context and richness (Pitt, Mulvey & Kietzmann, 2018). The constraint on accessing B2B salespeople makes conventional empirical research, whether quantitative or qualitative, challenging. Even if such access is granted, it is often limited to one company or a few companies within the same industry. As a result, it might not be ideal to generalize the findings to more than one category of companies or one industry. In this dissertation, I aim to offer quantitative insights into an extensive amount of qualitative data in an attempt to balance all these three research objectives.

Nevertheless, nowadays, thousands of B2B salespeople write job reviews on their past and present employers on the job review platform Glassdoor. Glassdoor is a well-recognized employer review website where employees can anonymously award the employers stars and write about the pros and cons of working at the company. They also give advice to the company to create better work environments. Previous research has used Glassdoor job reviews. It is a valuable source of data related to employee perceptions of their jobs and employers, including corporate culture (Corritore, Goldberg, & Srivastava, 2020). Numerous studies show that reviews on Glassdoor are reflective of company performance (Melián-González, Bulchand-Gidumal, & López-Valcárcel, 2015). While polarized views are common among online review platforms such as Yelp and Amazon, this is not the case on Glassdoor (Chamberlain & Smart, 2017). Glassdoor has implemented various policies such as "Give to Get," which helps to create a balanced perspective (Chamberlain & Smart, 2017).

To obtain an extensive amount of online qualitative data, in this dissertation, I will use more than 50,000 B2B salesperson job reviews from Glassdoor and automated text analysis software to conduct a content analysis of these job reviews. Company rating and textual data from Glassdoor are the focal data of this dissertation. Company rating is the number of stars (from one to five, one = low, 5 = high) salespeople can award their

employers. I will use this company rating as a proxy for how satisfied B2B salespeople are with their jobs. Job satisfaction of B2B salespeople is defined by Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1974) as all job characteristics and the work environment that B2B salespeople find rewarding, fulfilling, and satisfying, or frustrating and unsatisfying. Becherer, Morgan, and Richard (1982) claim that general job satisfaction is an overall measure of the individual's satisfaction and happiness in a job. This company rating appropriately represents B2B salespeople's general job satisfaction.

Anonymity is one of the main benefits of textual data from Glassdoor, as it encourages B2B salespeople to freely tell their employment stories without worrying about potential consequences. Textual data is what B2B salespeople write about their employment experience at the position. They share about a typical day at work, how their managers supervise them, how much workload they have, how they work with their colleagues, etc. These employment stories manifest their companies' corporate cultures and the emotions of B2B salespeople.

Another main benefit of using textual data from Glassdoor is ecological validity, the "extent to which what happens in a study reflects what really happens in everyday life - for more precise measurement" (Shiota & Kalat, 2018; p.30). It is almost impossible to evoke pure emotions in a laboratory or research setting (Bagozzi et al., 1999). Telling their employment stories resembles a real-life situation in which B2B salespeople feel emotions that may not be specific, and B2B salespeople may respond to them differently (Shiota & Kalat, 2018; p.25). I will analyze employment stories that B2B salespeople tell, employing narrative theory, linguistic psychology, content analysis, and statistical analysis.

This dissertation will consist of three essays on the related theme of job reviews by B2B salespeople on Glassdoor. I analyze the words used when B2B salespeople tell stories about their employment experience on Glassdoor and relate the patterns embedded in the words to their job satisfaction. The first two essays are about what these stories tell us about corporate culture. The first essay examines the impact of corporate culture uncovered from these stories on the job satisfaction of B2B salespeople. The second essay investigates corporate culture by exploring how dimensions of corporate culture fit together and their effect on the words used in job reviews. In the third essay, I shift the focus from corporate culture to emotions. In this

essay, I answer the question of what emotions current and former employees express in job reviews and whether these emotions can explain job satisfaction. In these three essays, I aim to provide insights into salesforce deployment. The structure of the three essays is portrayed in Figure 1.1:

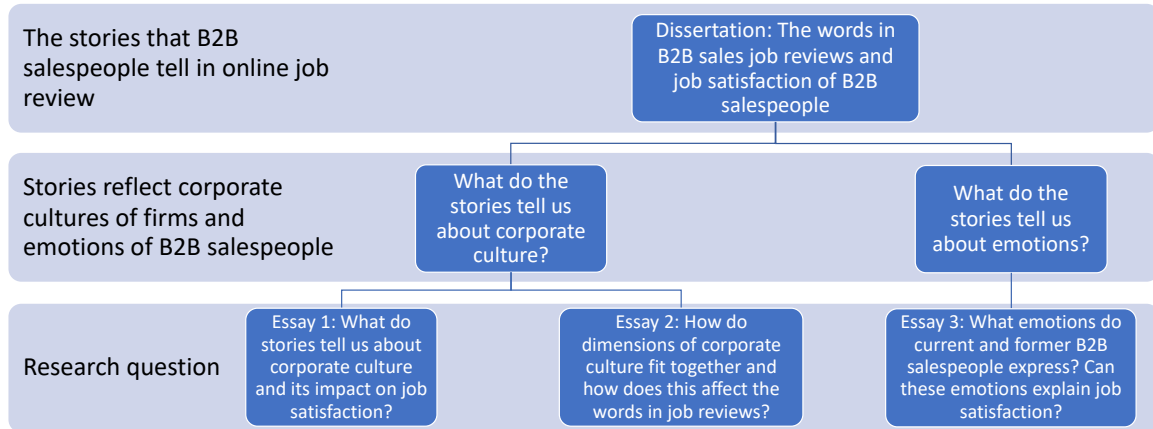


Figure 1.1. A summary model of the three essays

The essays can be summarized as follows:

The first essay of this dissertation investigates the underlying corporate cultures embedded in employment stories articulated by B2B salespeople. In this essay, I analyzed more than 50,000 salespersons' job reviews from Glassdoor to identify the types of stories B2B salespeople tell about their jobs and employers. Building on narrative theory, I used Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC2015) – a dictionary-based content analysis tool – to score the "W5" elements (who, what, when, where, and why) that constitute stories. Next, I analyzed differences in the linguistic characteristics in the job reviews and uncover clusters representing corporate cultures. A good understanding of B2B salespeople's employment experiences could better inform strategies to enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover. Insights from this essay can support B2B sales managers' understanding of employee engagement on social media.

Understanding job reviews written by B2B salespeople could help companies craft better strategies to attract and retain talent. In the second essay of this dissertation, I analyzed job reviews using LIWC2015 to explore the links between corporate culture and linguistic characteristics of reviews articulated by B2B salespeople. I combined two

datasets: scores on the nine cultural values (agility, collaboration, customer orientation, diversity, execution, innovation, integrity, performance, and respect) (Sull, Turconi & Sull, 2020) and more than 42,000 job reviews on Glassdoor. I adopted a multidimensional scaling approach based on the nine cultural value scores to create a multidimensional map of corporate profiles. I projected the LIWC2015 scores onto the corporate profile map to uncover differences in linguistic characteristics across the profiles. B2B sales managers can use insights from this essay to understand how their staff perceives their corporate culture and to attract talent that can preserve or enhance the culture.

In the third essay of this dissertation, I investigate the fundamental emotions of B2B salespeople. Emotions are often overlooked in the B2B sales literature (Briggs, Kalra & Agnihotri, 2018). Most studies of B2B salespeople's emotions tend to focus on the buyer's perspective, not the salesperson's, and often fail to consider the most basic emotions. However, research should necessarily consider these emotions from the seller's perspective in order to better understand the dynamics of buyer-seller relationships. This study aims to contribute to this discourse by considering the emotions of B2B salespeople as expressed in their reviews of current and past employers. I consider six basic emotions as categorized by Ekman (1992): Anger, Fear, Surprise, Disgust, Joy, and Sadness. I used more than 50,000 job reviews by B2B salespeople on Glassdoor and the NRC emotion lexicon (Mohammad & Turney, 2013) to measure the emotions expressed in job reviews. My findings show interesting patterns. First, former employees show more joy than current employees when the company rating is three stars or more. Second, all six emotions significantly explain company ratings for current employees; however, Surprise was the only emotion that was insignificant for former employees' company ratings. Third, Joy and Sadness increase as the company rating increases for former employees. Understanding these differences in emotions contributes to the B2B research literature and offers sales managers and executives greater insights into their salesforces.

This dissertation contributes insights into the implications of and theoretical development regarding the B2B salesperson's employment experience. I hope to add value to the narrative theory and apply storytelling research in sales management. Given the tremendous cost of recruiting, training, and employing B2B salespeople and the benefits of retaining a motivated salesforce, B2B firms can benefit from management

insights that analysis of job reviews can give. I also aim to provide an alternative method to evaluate employment stories that B2B salespeople tell. This research showcases a technique for extracting insight from large datasets. I suggest that insights from my study can support the management of B2B salespeople and serve as a model for firms considering using automated text analysis to 'listen' to their employees.

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Chapter 2.

Essay 1: Looking through the Glassdoor: The stories that B2B Salespeople tell

2.1. Introduction

The Great Resignation (Cohen, 2021) began in April 2021 when the number of workers who quit in a single month reached a record high in the US and continued to soar during the post-pandemic boom in August of the same year (Thompson, 2021). Replacing workers who resign involves a massive investment, which can ideally be mitigated by reducing turnover in the first place. It is particularly true in the case of the salesforce. Salespeople seek customers' patronages, which funds most of the firm's activities. Hence, they are vital to the success of many firms, particularly in the business-to-business (B2B) environment. Moreover, B2B salespeople have more repeat purchases from customers than B2C salespeople and are more motivated to maintain long-term relationships with these customers (Saxe & Weitz, 1982).

For over half a century, the cost of salesforce turnover, including intangible losses and opportunity costs (Mayer & Greenberg, 1964; Sunder et al., 2017), has remained too substantial to ignore. For several reasons, salespeople turnover "inconspicuously swallows" a significant part of the profits and productivity of companies (Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984). First, the resignation of a salesperson not only harms customer relationships immediately (Darmon, 2008) but also leaves a sales territory unserved or underserved, potentially resulting in revenue losses (Parasuraman & Futrell, 1983; Sunder et al., 2017). Second, the unrealized sales potential adds to the opportunity cost while finding a suitable replacement (Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984). Third, the resource loss associated with salesperson turnover includes investments spent on training and incentives (Sunder et al., 2017). Finally, replacing salespeople incurs a cost to recruit and train new hires and a learning curve to establish sales territories and generate revenue (Sunder et al., 2017). The total cost to hire, train, and replace a B2B salesperson whose total wages are \$100,000 amounts to approximately \$79,000 per salesperson (Hudson, 2020). Therefore, maintaining a B2B salesforce represents a necessary marketing investment for most B2B firms.

The notion that high-performing salespeople do not seek outside opportunities as frequently as employees in other roles because of their attractive remuneration packages is only a prevailing myth. Among the five facets of job satisfaction (pay, promotion, co-workers, work, and supervisor) and performance, satisfaction with work is the only significant predictor of propensity to leave at one year and two years (Johnston et al., 1988). If high performers are not satisfied in their jobs, they will, sooner or later, choose to return to the job market, where there are always opportunities for top performers. Therefore, effort should not end at the recruitment stage: job satisfaction is a critical factor to consider. As I discuss later, job satisfaction hinges upon corporate culture (Lund, 2003; Belias & Koustelios, 2014). That is, corporate culture – defined succinctly by Deal and Kennedy (1982) as "how we do things around here" – plays a prominent role in motivating a salesforce.

Yet, job satisfaction (relative to job performance) is an understudied area in the sales management literature, especially in the B2B environment. Brown and Peterson's (1993) meta-analysis on job performance and satisfaction revealed that job performance dominates over job satisfaction. Focusing too much on improving the performance of salespeople versus job satisfaction is problematic. What is the point of investing in achievers if they do not stay because they are unsatisfied with their jobs? Job satisfaction of B2B salespeople is thus an important and fertile research area.

One way of understanding B2B salespeople's job satisfaction is to investigate how they experience and react to corporate culture. This essay aims to offer a new approach to evaluating B2B salespeople's experiences by listening to their stories about their jobs and the degree to which they are satisfied. In this essay, I explore more than 50,000 reviews of jobs that B2B salespeople have shared via the popular job review website Glassdoor.com. The observation that thousands of B2B salespeople are motivated to share their employment experience online is one impetus for me to research B2B salespeople's storytelling. It drives me to contribute to both the narrative theory and methodology in the sales management literature.

In terms of theoretical contribution, my concept of experience originates from narrative psychology and has been previously adopted in consumer research (Padgett & Mulvey, 2009). The premise of narrative psychology is that humans naturally organize information in a story format (Padgett & Allen, 1997). Humans naturally think narratively

(Weick, 1995) and make sense of conversations, events, and outcomes by telling stories (Woodside et al., 2008). When analyzing the stories that B2B salespeople tell, I follow the structure of modern journalism, the "Five Ws" of Who, What, When, Where, and Why, to explore the components of B2B salespeople's employment experience. Telling a story about their employment experience can help B2B salespeople seek clarity about the working environment and corporate culture. As will become apparent, B2B salespeople don't all tell the same job stories. However, the stories can be classified into large homogenous clusters that serve as story archetypes. By understanding these archetypes, B2B sales managers can address and exploit the lessons within them. In addition, sales management researchers can use the story clusters as a springboard for further exploration of salesperson job satisfaction and the factors that drive it.

Apart from a theoretical contribution, this essay offers a methodological contribution by presenting an alternative to the traditional methodologies in sales management. In the tradition of marketing research, researchers are primarily in one of three camps, as their research objectives determine their data gathering and analysis methodologies: surveys for those who strive for generalizability, experiments for those who pursue precision and control, and qualitative methods for those who seek context and richness (Pitt, Mulvey & Kietzmann, 2018). Salespeople are usually out of the office and engaged in various sales activities to generate revenue. For researchers interested in studying B2B salespeople, getting access to an extensive sample of B2B salespeople could be difficult. Such constraint makes conventional empirical research, whether quantitative or qualitative, challenging. Even the access to B2B salespeople is granted, it is often limited to just one single company or a few companies within the same industry. As a result, it might not be ideal for generalizing the findings to more than one category of companies or one industry. In this study, I aim to offer quantitative insights into an extensive amount of qualitative data to balance all these three research objectives.

Nevertheless, thousands of B2B salespeople seem willing to spend time posting job reviews of past and present employers on job review websites such as Glassdoor. They can also award the employers stars (between 1 and 5) and write reviews highlighting the positives and negatives of working for a particular firm. The job reviews can also suggest changes the firms could make to create better working environments. Thus, to overcome the difficulty of accessing B2B salespeople, I use job reviews from Glassdoor and conduct content analysis using the automated text analysis software

LIWC2015 (Pennebaker, Booth, et al., 2015). I will use this company rating as a proxy for how satisfied B2B salespeople are with their jobs. Job satisfaction of B2B salespeople is defined by Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1974) as all job characteristics and the work environment that B2B salespeople find rewarding, fulfilling, and satisfying, or frustrating and unsatisfying. Becherer, Morgan, and Richard (1982) claim that general job satisfaction is an overall measure of the individual's satisfaction and happiness in a job. This company rating appropriately represents B2B salespeople's general job satisfaction. In addition, the text in job reviews in employment stories can help provide context and explanation to the ratings.

In what follows, I integrate the literature to address the impact of corporate culture on salespeople and their job satisfaction and how storytelling can portray corporate culture. Next, I discuss the research design and methodology, including collecting more than 50,000 job reviews on Glassdoor and using LIWC2015, an automated text analysis software, for text analysis. I conclude by acknowledging the limitations of the research, discussing the managerial implications, and identifying avenues for future research.

2.2. Literature Review

Over decades, the literature has pointed out the strategic importance of an effective salesforce within firms. For example, Day and Wensley (1988) argue that superior resources may reside in the breadth of a firm's salesforce. Porter (1991) contends that a salesforce plays a strategic role as an invaluable resource that can determine the success of firms. Wernerfelt (1984), in his resource-based view of the firm, includes the employment of skilled (sales) personnel as an example of superior resources for firms. In the strategic marketing literature, Deshpande and Webster (1989) agree with the importance of hiring and state that a marketer's most critical human resources decision in management is personnel selection. Because a salesforce has an enormous impact on most B2B firms, retaining a qualified salesforce is vital. Job satisfaction, defined as all job characteristics and the work environment that B2B salespeople find rewarding, fulfilling, and satisfying, or frustrating and unsatisfying (Churchill, Ford, & Walker, 1974), is indispensable to B2B salesforce management. In this essay, I focus on B2B salespeople and how their job satisfaction relates to intention to leave and turnover. As will be seen, turnover signals corporate culture, and the stories

that B2B salespeople tell about their employment experiences can be used to understand and identify corporate cultures.

2.2.1. Job Satisfaction and Intention to Leave

A large body of research reveals an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and intention to leave. In 1983, Futrell and Parasuraman demonstrated that job satisfaction and propensity to leave are negatively correlated, and in 1984 Futrell and Parasuraman used five dimensions to measure satisfaction and found that these dimensions accounted for nearly one-third of the variance in propensity to leave (Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984). Johnston et al. (1988) replicated and extended the previous work by Futrell and Parasuraman (1984) and demonstrated that satisfaction with work was the single best predictor of propensity to leave. Netemeyer, Johnston, and Burton (1990) found that job satisfaction negatively affected leaving intention. Babakus and colleagues (1996) also found that higher job satisfaction increases organizational commitment. Higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment are associated with a lower propensity to leave. Taken together, the literature suggests that increasing job satisfaction can reduce salespeople's intention to leave.

2.2.2. Job Satisfaction and Turnover

Another key relationship is that between job satisfaction and turnover. Many sales organizations face the challenge of high turnover (Teas, 1983), and Brown and Peterson's (1993) meta-analysis shows that a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover has consistently been found. These authors also state that organizational commitment – which reflects turnover as it represents the strength of the salesperson's involvement and loyalty to the organization (Babakus et al., 1996) – and job satisfaction have constantly demonstrated a strong and positive correlation in salesforce contexts. The causality is from job satisfaction to organizational commitment rather than vice versa (Brown & Peterson, 1993). There is other evidence supporting such a direction in the causal relationship. For example, Sager (1994) showed that job satisfaction significantly affected organizational commitment and intention to leave. Johnston and colleagues find that organizational commitment is a significant predictor of propensity to leave and is related significantly to actual turnover (Johnston et al., 1990).

2.2.3. Corporate Culture of the Salesforce

Corporate culture, also known as organizational climate, represents employees' perceptions of their objective work environment, including the organization's characteristics and the nature of their relationships with other people while doing their jobs (Churchill, Ford & Walker, 1976). Notably, corporate culture is linked to job satisfaction and turnover; and unsurprisingly, corporate culture is one of the most studied topics in management, with 50 distinct definitions in the literature developed over the years (Chatman & O'Reilly, 2016; Sull, Turconi & Sull, 2020; Verbeke, Volgering & Hessels, 1998). Deal and Kennedy (1982) emphasize that people make businesses work and that culture ties people together and gives meaning and purpose to their daily lives. Cultural fit, or the congruence between the characteristics of a firm and the people within the firm, is related to commitment, satisfaction, and turnover (O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). Deal and Kennedy (1982) point out that a firm has an issue with its corporate culture when its employees are chronically unsatisfied. These authors explain that because unsatisfied employees will leave, turnover is one of the indicators of corporate culture. While some turnover is inevitable if turnover is high or increasing, this is often an indicator that something is wrong in the culture (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p.136).

Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1976) investigate the relationship between organizational culture and job satisfaction and find that organizational culture is an essential determinant of salesforce morale. They specify seven variables – fellow workers, supervision, sales training and home office support, top management and the company, pay and company benefits, promotion and advancement, and customers – to reflect the unique job nature of salespeople and demonstrate that these variables explain more than 40% of the variation in total job satisfaction among salespeople (Churchill, Ford & Walker, 1976). These findings suggest that job satisfaction can elucidate a firm's culture (Brown & Peterson, 1993). Brown and Peterson (1993) also argue that greater job satisfaction is associated with shared values, which is one of the portrayals of corporate culture. In this essay, I aim to provide insight into the underexplored research area of B2B salespeople's job satisfaction through the lens of corporate culture and storytelling.

2.2.4. Corporate Culture and Storytelling

Humans tell stories to teach cultural norms and help create shared perspectives (Boyd et al., 2020). Bruner (1987) proposes that an essential way of characterizing a culture is to look into its narratives that describe the course of a life. A culture is portrayed not only by narratives of "canonical" figures (for example, the CEO) but also by narratives of its other members (Bruner, 1987). Understanding B2B salespeople's employment experiences is an excellent way to characterize corporate culture because B2B salespeople within a corporate culture share the same set of general experiences (Bruner, 1986). These general experiences are expressed in story format to communicate the culture's values, norms, and expectations (Padgett & Mulvey, 2009). Weick (1995) explains how storytelling works precisely. He asks, "How do I know what I think until I hear what I say?" Storytelling helps to articulate one's ideas in mind. The storytelling of B2B salespeople's employment experiences has gone through culturally shaped cognitive and linguistic processes (Bruner, 1987). In this essay, I characterize corporate culture by studying the narratives of B2B salespeople during their employment. I hope to add value to the narrative theory and apply storytelling research in sales management. Research on storytelling (e.g., Schank, 1990) is crucial because it helps examine paradoxes in people's minds (Woodside et al., 2008) and the complexity associated with the steps taken to resolve these paradoxes.

I also aim to provide an alternative method to evaluate employment stories told by B2B salespeople. When considering linguistic features of employment stories, I follow the structure of modern journalism, the "Five Ws" of Who, What, When, Where, and Why. I use the five Ws to measure linguistic features and will discuss them in the next section.

2.3. Methodology

This study considers the different employment stories told on the review website Glassdoor by B2B salespersons and asks: What are the basic types of salesforce corporate cultures, and how do these relate to job reviews? I employed latent cluster analysis to answer this question, a statistical procedure used to identify subgroups (or clusters) within a population. More specifically, the method surfaces latent heterogeneity in samples based on patterns of responses to observed variables. Also, latent class

models can accommodate non-normally distributed dependent variables that are continuous or categorical (Magidson & Vermunt, 2002). Accordingly, I used a 3-step latent cluster analysis (Bakk et al., 2013; Mulvey et al., 2020) to examine the relationships among a set of indicator variables (story elements) with a group of covariates (employee tenure status, writing style, and language cues) and a distal outcome variable (company rating).

2.3.1. Data

The data to be used is scraped from the job review website Glassdoor.com. This review website was chosen for two reasons. First, Glassdoor is a well-recognized and prominent outlet for job reviews. It is a valuable source of data related to employee perceptions of their jobs and employers, including corporate culture (Corritore, Goldberg, & Srivastava, 2020). Numerous studies show that reviews on Glassdoor are reflective of company performance (Melián-González, Bulchand-Gidumal, & López-Valcárcel, 2015). Second, polarized views are common among online review platforms such as Yelp and Amazon. However, this is not the case on Glassdoor (Chamberlain & Smart, 2017). In addition, Glassdoor has implemented various policies such as "Give to Get," and Chamberlain and Smart's (2017) study demonstrates that the "Give to Get" policy contributes to creating a balanced platform for company reviews.

Analyzing job reviews from Glassdoor also allows one to look at both sides of the story. Apart from what we can learn from satisfied salespeople, we should also learn from dissatisfied salespeople. Churchill et al.'s (1985) meta-analysis reflected a similar "danger of a single story" (a term coined by Novelist Chimamanda Adichie), where poor-performing salespeople were probably underrepresented. Perhaps, it was because not all companies that participated in the studies had sufficient information about poor performers. As a result, the conclusion might become biased toward salespeople who succeeded rather than those who failed. However, there is no such "danger" while analyzing job reviews on Glassdoor as the reviews include both sides' positive and negative opinions. In this way, researchers can obtain a more balanced perspective. With the help of the automated text analysis software LIWC2015, I measured both the positive and negative emotions expressed in job reviews and will explain in the next section.

While there might be concern about using some online data from Glassdoor, this research has no such issue. First, I used public data that is widely available on Glassdoor. There is no identifier to locate the authors' locations of the job reviews and their personal information. Second, I approached Dr. Andrew Chamberlain, Ph.D., Chief Economist & Director of Research at Glassdoor, and received approval to access the publicly available data on Glassdoor. He confirmed that it was free to access and use for research such as this.

2.3.2. Sample

Sull, Turconi, and Sull (2020) created a list of companies called Culture500. These authors studied the corporate culture of these firms in detail. Their study serves as a foundation for my dissertation. This list comprises more than 500 firms (599 firms in total), and I categorized 303 of these firms as B2B.

2.3.3. Content Analysis

I conducted content analysis to extract insight from more than 50,000 job reviews written by B2B salespeople. To perform the content analysis, I combined texts from the review title, pros and cons, and advice to the company. I used the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC2015) computer-aided dictionary-based software program (Pennebaker, Booth et al., 2015) to generate scores that profile the categories and frequencies of words in individuals' responses. I used the built-in dictionary, which was included in LIWC2015, to generate scores. However, LIWC2015 allows users to adopt a different dictionary, modify an existing one, or even create a new one (Pennebaker, Booth et al., 2015).

2.3.4. Method

In the first step, I tested for clusters of story types based on a set of indicator variables. **Figure 2.1** depicts the variables included in my model, which contends that employment review story types (the latent classes) reflect combinations of story elements that answer the "Five Ws" of who, what, when, where, and why (the indicator variables). These basic questions are fundamental to modern journalism, but one can trace the origins of the approach back to the writings of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas.

These story elements are measured using LIWC by searching the text for 4,655 dictionary words in twenty-two categories within five domains, indicated below as (domain) *category* [number of words]:

- Who? (social processes) *family* [118], *friend* [95], *female* [124], *male* [116].
- What? (personal concerns) *work* [444], *leisure* [296], *home* [100], *money* [226], *religion* [174], and *death* [74].
- When? (time orientations) *past focus* [341], *present focus* [424], and *future focus* [97].
- Where? The workplace is typical to all stories and captured as a "what?" indicator.
- Why? (drives) *affiliation* [248], *achieve* [213], *power* [518], *reward* [120], *risk* [103], and (biological processes) *body* [215], *health* [294], *sexual* [131], and *ingestion* [184].

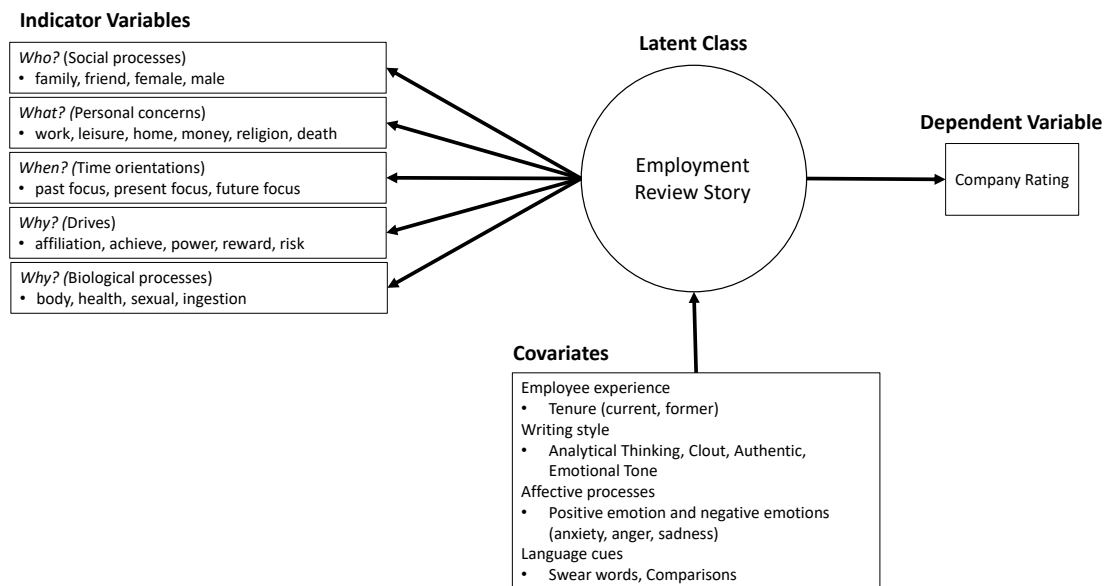


Figure 2.1. Theoretical model: A latent class model of employment review stories

2.3.5. Covariates

In the second step, I tested associations of story types to covariates. Stories on specific topics may use a particular style and structure. Accordingly, my model examines the relationships between the employment review story types with a series of covariates:

- Tenure Status: Stories share individual experiences but may reflect shared concerns based on commonalities. Accordingly, I will examine the relationship between tenure status (current employee = 0, former employee =1) and employment review stories.
- Writing Style: The LIWC software calculates four summary variables:
 - Analytical thinking is a score generated by LIWC2015 that measures the degree to which people write in formal, logical, and hierarchical thinking patterns (Pennebaker et al., 2015).
 - Clout is a score generated by LIWC2015 that captures people's relative social status, confidence, or leadership in their language (Pennebaker et al., 2015).
 - Authenticity is a score generated by LIWC2015, referring to when people reveal themselves authentically or honestly. People who score high in this measurement are more personal, humble, and vulnerable (Pennebaker et al., 2015).
 - Emotional tone is a score generated by LIWC2015 that captures both positive and negative emotions, so the higher the number, the more positive the tone.
- I also consider words that associate with *Swear* and *Comparison*.

2.3.6. Distal Outcome

In the final analysis, I tested the impact of story type on the distal outcome of the overall company rating. On Glassdoor, employees give company ratings by awarding their employers stars, ranging from one to five stars, to proxy job satisfaction. I used this company rating to represent B2B salespeople's general job satisfaction (Becherer, Morgan & Richard, 1982). These authors claim that general job satisfaction is an overall measure of the individual's satisfaction and happiness in a job.

2.4. Findings

Descriptive statistics for the indicators, covariates, and the dependent variable are presented in Table 2.1. Notably, the majority of variables exhibit a non-normal distribution (skewness $> \pm 1$); those with a negative (positive) kurtosis statistic are flatter (more peaked) than a normal distribution. My analysis method accommodates data with non-normal distributions.

Table 2.1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable		Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
<i>Indicator Variables</i>					
<i>Who?</i>	family	0.09	0.58	10.01	136.55
	friend	0.22	0.96	6.31	49.86
	female	0.04	0.35	15.45	324.27
	male	0.07	0.48	10.72	162.13
<i>What?</i>	work	14.62	7.35	0.99	1.83
	leisure	0.95	2.03	3.72	26.36
	home	0.31	1.08	5.07	32.35
	money	5.13	4.70	1.49	4.18
<i>When?</i>	relig	0.05	0.39	13.06	227.66
	death	0.03	0.31	15.84	336.16
	past focus	1.63	2.73	2.46	8.15
	present focus	10.77	5.71	0.25	0.55
<i>Why? (drives)</i>	future focus	0.81	1.53	2.77	11.51
	affiliation	1.55	2.55	2.65	10.93
	achieve	5.90	4.92	1.45	3.69
	power	5.35	4.56	1.35	3.49
<i>Why? (biological)</i>	reward	7.25	6.12	1.61	4.32
	risk	0.79	1.77	4.01	30.28
	body	0.13	0.63	7.90	89.46
	health	0.66	1.64	3.50	15.76
<i>Covariates</i>	sexual	0.02	0.22	20.28	537.86
	ingestion	0.12	0.71	11.78	233.29
<i>Writing style</i>	Analytic	75.94	22.94	-1.18	0.72
	Clout	64.31	24.47	-0.63	-0.35
	Authentic	36.33	30.41	0.59	-0.88
	Tone	81.64	29.54	-1.58	1.05
<i>Affective processes</i>	positive emotion	9.85	7.01	1.48	4.15
	anxiety	0.43	1.39	6.26	93.13
	anger	0.28	0.98	5.81	48.11
	sadness	0.35	1.16	5.51	44.41
<i>Language cues</i>	swear words	0.06	0.50	13.82	266.33
	comparison	2.31	2.82	1.76	5.25

Variable (non-metric)		N	%
<i>Covariate</i>			
<i>Tenure</i>	Current	27,991	55.4%
	Former	22,505	44.6%
<i>Dependent Variable</i>			
<i>Company Rating</i>	1-star	5,414	10.7%

2-star	6,677	13.2%
3-star	12,675	25.1%
4-star	14,074	27.9%
5-star	11,656	23.1%

I used the LatentGOLD 6.0 software package to estimate a series of latent cluster analysis models, beginning with a single cluster solution (a comparative baseline) and sequentially increasing the number of latent clusters while examining the fit statistics in search of conceptually and statistically superior solutions (Vermunt & Magidson, 2021). Table 2.2 provides the fit indices for one- through eight-cluster models. Smaller Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) values indicate better model fit, and the BIC statistic decreased with more classes. Given no local minimum, I plotted the model fit values. I found an "elbow" of diminishing returns at 3-classes (akin to a scree plot in exploratory factor analysis). A bootstrapping comparison tested parameter stability and supported a more complex model (500 replications, -LL Diff test, $p < .0000$). Accordingly, I report the results of the four-cluster model – a finding supported by a closer inspection of the results.

Table 2.2. Model fit indices for 1- through 8-cluster solutions

Model	Npar	LL	BIC(LL)	AIC(LL)	AIC3(LL)	Class.Err.	Entropy R ²
1-Cluster	44	-1961536	3923549	3923161	3923205	0.000	1.000
2-Cluster	89	-79518	159999	159213	159302	0.000	1.000
3-Cluster	134	348874	-696297	-697480	-697346	0.000	1.000
4-Cluster	179	492203	-982467	-984047	-983868	0.000	0.998
5-Cluster	224	642166	-1281906	-1283884	-1283660	0.004	0.993
6-Cluster	269	741277	-1479641	-1482016	-1481747	0.000	1.000
7-Cluster	314	842927	-1682454	-1685227	-1684913	0.002	0.996
8-Cluster	359	931168	-1858448	-1861617	-1861258	0.001	0.998

2.4.1. Latent Clusters of Employment Review Stories

Table 2.3 shows the parameter estimates of the covariates for the four-cluster model. Each of the twenty-two indicator variables contributes significantly to the overall model (see intercepts and Wald values), with *work* (intercept = 13.01) and *present focus* (intercept = 10.96) exhibiting the highest level of influence across the four clusters followed by *reward* (intercept = 5.85), *achieve* (intercept = 5.24), *power* (intercept = 5.23), and *money* (intercept = 4.63). As indicated by the Wald test for the equality of effects between classes (Wald=) and R² values, cluster membership is primarily explained by

variance in the indicators *home* ($R^2 = 27.7\%$), *body* ($R^2 = 25.3\%$), *friend* ($R^2 = 18.5\%$), *ingestion* ($R^2 = 15.6\%$), *female* ($R^2 = 13.7\%$), and *death* ($R^2 = 13.0\%$). All of the remaining indicators are also statistically significant, due in part to the large sample size – accordingly, the effect sizes (R^2 and the parameter estimates) are more informative of the capacity of the word category to distinguish story types. The solution satisfied not only statistical criteria but also made conceptual sense.

Table 2.3. Parameter estimates for the 4-cluster solution

	Intercepts				Employment Review Story Clusters			
	Overall	Wald ¹	Wald(=) ¹	R ²	1. Work Rewards	2. Work-Life Balance	3. Workplace Malaise	4. Toxic Interactions
<i>Intercept</i>			34028.1		1.33	-0.10	-0.43	-0.80
<i>Indicators</i>								
work	13.01	162406.4	5116.2	5.7%	2.76	0.87	-1.26	-2.36
reward	5.85	57663.6	5989.0	6.2%	2.45	0.30	-0.86	-1.89
achieve	5.24	58818.0	1997.5	2.2%	1.13	0.48	-0.58	-1.03
money	4.63	48708.7	1034.3	1.3%	0.87	0.00	-0.17	-0.71
power	5.23	60361.0	58.0	0.1%	0.20	0.00	-0.02	-0.18
health	0.62	6519.8	64.6	0.1%	0.08	-0.05	-0.02	-0.02
risk	0.76	9097.0	22.1	0.0%	0.05	-0.03	0.00	-0.02
home	0.55	5796.1	5814.4	27.7%	-0.55	1.05	-0.29	-0.20
affiliation	1.80	17084.8	1584.6	4.4%	-0.55	0.95	-0.30	-0.11
friend	0.39	3340.6	3345.7	18.5%	-0.39	0.77	-0.22	-0.16
family	0.19	1293.9	1377.0	8.2%	-0.19	0.22	-0.19	0.16
leisure	1.03	9813.0	187.9	0.4%	-0.16	0.15	0.09	-0.07
body	0.32	3244.5	3279.1	25.3%	-0.32	-0.32	0.67	-0.03
ingestion	0.29	1786.4	1824.1	15.6%	-0.29	-0.29	0.60	-0.03
relig	0.12	905.1	924.8	8.3%	-0.12	-0.12	0.24	0.00
past focus	1.83	15632.1	413.3	0.7%	-0.32	-0.15	0.02	0.46
female	0.12	674.4	674.4	13.7%	-0.12	-0.12	-0.12	0.37
death	0.10	633.5	633.5	13.0%	-0.10	-0.10	-0.10	0.31
present focus	10.96	159721.2	100.3	0.1%	-0.33	-0.09	0.12	0.30
male	0.17	1449.4	1459.5	8.4%	-0.17	0.11	-0.17	0.23
future focus	0.90	13889.2	365.1	0.5%	-0.15	-0.12	0.08	0.19
sexual	0.06	358.9	358.9	7.8%	-0.06	-0.06	-0.06	0.17

¹. All Wald and Wald(=) values are significant (p<.0001). The maximum values of the indicator (row) parameter estimates are shaded.

The four clusters – which I termed *Work Rewards*, *Work-Life Balance*, *Workplace Malaise*, and *Toxic Interactions* – are based on the content analysis of what B2B salespeople write in the job reviews, not the company ratings. The *Work Rewards* cluster recognizes how many employees are motivated by the financial rewards of their work and associated feelings of achievement. Other employees mainly spoke about maintaining a state of equilibrium of *Work-Life Balance* that prioritizes not only one's career but also the demands of one's personal life, including home, affiliation, and friends and family. *Workplace Malaise*, where malaise describes a general feeling of discomfort or uneasiness whose exact cause is difficult to identify, takes a toll on wellbeing, leading to physical and mental burnout, illness, depression, boredom, stress, and conflicting beliefs and values. Finally, *Toxic Interactions* with bosses or co-workers generate drama, conflict, or even abuse, leaving one to wonder, "how did I get here?" and "what is the path forward?". Table 2.4 shows the percentage of sample members in each cluster (1) Work Rewards (39.4%), (2) Work-Life Balance (25.9%), (3) Workplace Malaise (24.9%), and (4) Toxic Interactions (9.8%).

Table 2.4. Parameter estimates for the dependent variable and covariates for the 4-cluster solution

	Wald(=) ¹	R ²	Employment Review Story Clusters			
			1. Work Rewards	2. Work-Life Balance	3. Workplace Malaise	4. Toxic Interactions
<i>Cluster Size</i>			39.4%	25.9%	24.9%	9.8%
<i>Dependent</i>						
Company Rating	2372.6	5.3%	0.146	0.264	-0.050	-0.360
<i>Intercept</i>	83.2		0.293	0.215	-0.187	-0.321
<i>Covariates</i>						
Tenure (1 = former)	78.2		-0.056	-0.018	-0.014	0.088
Analytical Thinking	237.9		0.001	0.004	0.002	-0.007
Clout	1241.3		-0.001	-0.013	0.005	0.009
Authentic	82.8		-0.001	0.001	0.002	-0.001
Emotional Tone	143.3		0.001	-0.005	0.002	0.002
positive emotion	2444.1		0.034	0.092	-0.030	-0.096
anxiety	37.5		0.020	0.031	0.000	-0.052
anger	68.9		-0.037	-0.051	-0.001	0.088
sad	7.0 ²		-0.016	0.006	0.000	0.010
swear words	54.8		-0.155	-0.029	0.044	0.140
comparisons	89.9		-0.004	-0.024	-0.003	0.031

¹. All Wald and Wald(=) values are significant (p<.0001). ². Wald(=) value is not significant (p>.05). The maximum values of the variable (row) parameter estimates are shaded.

The pattern of parameter estimates helps interpret and assign names to the four clusters. Large positive coefficients indicate significant drivers of cluster membership, whereas large negative coefficients indicate word categories that are not characteristic. For example, from Table 2.3, I can see that *home* was highest in the *Work-Life Balance* cluster ($\beta_{\text{home}} = 1.05$) and lowest in the *Work Rewards* cluster ($\beta_{\text{home}} = -0.55$). Similarly, the positive-valued parameter estimates for *female* ($\beta_{\text{female}} = .37$), *death* ($\beta_{\text{death}} = 0.31$), and *sexual* ($\beta_{\text{sexual}} = 1.05$) are unique to *Toxic Interactions* as the parameters in the other three clusters are negative (less prevalent).

2.4.2. Covariates and Distal Outcome

Having established the measurement model (the latent classes), I added covariates and a dependent variable to answer the questions: "Does the composition of the classes differ by other observable variables?" and "Are the classes predictive of overall company rating?". Table 2.4 shows that by having overall company rating as the only dependent variable, the employment review story clusters are predictive of overall company rating ($R^2 = 5.3\%$), with *Work-Life Balance* stories offering the most favorable ratings, followed by *Work Rewards* stories. Predictably, *Workplace Malaise* stories deliver comparatively negative evaluations, and *Toxic Interaction* stories are the most negative. Figure 2.2 illustrates the patterns of star-rating probabilities by cluster. From Figure 2.2, I do not observe any pattern of polarization of opinions. Polarized opinions do not have any direct impact on the cluster membership.

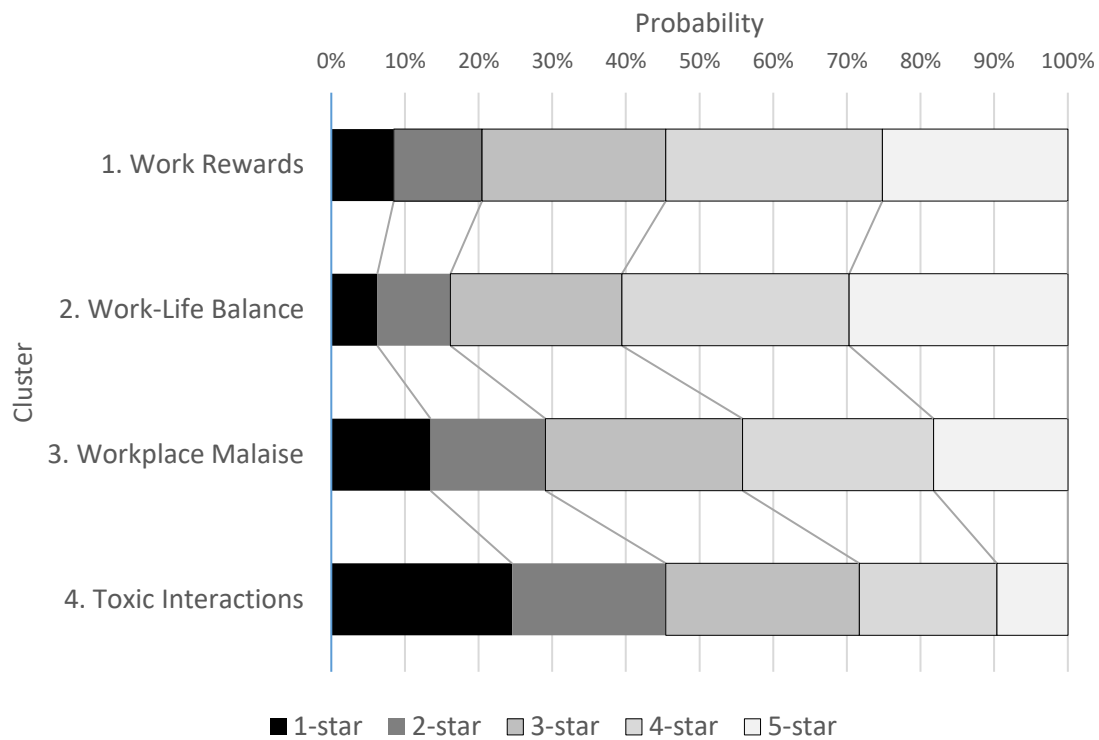


Figure 2.2. Company star-rating probabilities by cluster

The covariates reflect the characteristics of the four clusters. First, stories regarding *Toxic Interactions* are most likely to be told by former than current employees, affirming the role of *tenure* in story incidence. Second, the story clusters exhibit distinct writing styles. Stories of *Work-Life Balance* show higher levels of *analytical thinking*, tales of *Toxic Interactions* exhibit greater confidence or *clout*, and *Workplace Malaise* reviews are more *authentic* or honest and have a slightly more positive *emotional tone*. The latter finding (also found in *Toxic Interactions*) is somewhat paradoxical and perhaps reflects a possible "turning of the corner" and resolution of the reported condition or situation. Third, *Work-Life Balance* stories express the highest levels of positive emotion and anxiety, a complex, mixed emotional state that is not uncommon when people make tradeoffs of consequence. Finally, stories of *Toxic Interactions* are most likely to be charged with anger, swear words, and comparisons.

2.5. Discussion

This essay analyzed more than 50,000 job reviews from Glassdoor.com written by B2B salespeople. My analysis led to the identification of four clusters of cultures present in B2B salesforces – a *Work Rewards* cluster in which progression at work is prioritized, and salespeople are driven by a desire for achievement and rewards, a *Work-Life Balance* cluster in which both career progression and personal life are prioritized, a *Workplace Malaise* cluster in which a job erodes wellbeing and is linked to burnout and illness, and a *Toxic Interactions* cluster in which a workplace is linked to conflict or drama. Recall that the percentage of sample members is higher in the Work Rewards cluster than in the Work-Life Balance cluster. These percentages seem almost paradoxical as I previously argued that B2B salespeople do not only care about money, but many of them are concerned about it most when they write about their employment review stories on Glassdoor.com. However, the two ideas indeed do not contradict each other. Many B2B salespeople rely on the bonus and commission they can earn on top of their base salaries. Therefore, having a clear picture of the commission structure is critical before moving to another company. Furthermore, sharing such insider information on Glassdoor.com helps other peers in the B2B sales job market make the right career decision.

Unsurprisingly, the workplaces in the Workplace Malaise and Toxic Interactions clusters were those least likely to be rated as five-star and most likely to be rated as one-star. Conversely, the Work-Life Balance cluster was the most likely to be rated as five-star and least likely to be rated as one-star. This suggests that job satisfaction of B2B salespeople hinges at least in part on being able to balance personal and professional goals and needs. These results provide support for those found by Robson, Sekhon, and Ning (2016), in which a lack of work-life balance led to resentment among salespeople, as well as for the general need of managers to emphasize work-life balance among their salesforce (Bouzari & Karatepe, 2020; Gabler & Hill, 2015).

2.5.1. Theoretical Contributions

My findings provide evidence to support and extend the narrative theory. First, sales-target-driven B2B salespeople think narratively rather than argumentatively or paradigmatically (Weick, 1995). B2B salespeople give company ratings when writing job

reviews on Glassdoor; however, the text of the job reviews explains what B2B salespeople think in their minds. This is one of the reasons why some reviews seem to be paradoxical, with a high rating for the Workplace Malaise and Toxic Interactions clusters and a low rating for the Work Rewards and Work-Life Balance clusters. In such cases, the narrative speaks louder than the rating.

The narrative of the B2B salespeople also helps sales management researchers understand what is behind the scenes, or, in this case, the text linked to the company rating. Apart from the rating, I am also interested in motives. Burke's (1969) pentad of Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, and Purpose guides me to adopt the "Five Ws" to study what motivates B2B salespeople, how they experience their work environment and interact with the corporate culture. The narratives allow me to categorize corporate culture into four clusters, rather than company ratings which provide relatively less depth of insight. In addition to the five Ws, I demonstrated that writing styles and emotions also matter by incorporating LIWC2015's measures. The stories of the four clusters I identified are distinct in analytical thinking, clout, authenticity, and emotional tone. My findings advocate further investigating the linguistic features of narratives.

I also broaden the horizon of our understanding of narrative theory. The narrative approach has been adopted to study consumers and brands (Padgett & Mulvey, 2009; Woodside et al., 2008) in the B2C settings. My study demonstrates that the narrative theory can also be applied to sales management in the B2B environment. The findings and the theory are critical for enhancing B2B researchers' understanding of how B2B salespeople identify and handle paradoxes they encounter in a typical day at work and how their experience changes over the course of their employment. One example of contradiction is finding a slightly more positive emotional tone in *Workplace Malaise* and *Toxic Interactions*. This finding is somewhat a conflict and perhaps an indication of a resolution. However, it resonates that "narratives are much more than affective experiences" as they also provide information about the characters, conflict, and resolution (Boyd et al., 2020). The narrative theory can help researchers look further into the mysteries of sales management, and next, I will discuss how I contribute to the method for doing so.

2.5.2. Methodological Contributions

My research method of obtaining secondary data online from Glassdoor.com was unobtrusive and did not interrupt the daily work of B2B salespeople. Apart from solving the problem of accessing salespeople, job reviews may provide us with a more accurate description of the corporate culture than could be gathered from external corporate communications. Most firms portray their corporate culture through various public information sources, such as annual reports and company websites. Sometimes what we read about a company from its job advertising might just seem too good to be true. However, while these official statements disseminated by firms can offer "a clue to the culture" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p.131), they might not reflect reality well. While firms might espouse something about corporate culture, a detailed examination of other clues might show it to be "little more than lip service" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p.131), a finding echoed in the recent work of Sull, Turconi, and Sull (2020).

Analyzing job reviews from Glassdoor.com also allowed us to look at both sides of the story: we can learn from a range of people, between highly satisfied and highly unsatisfied. Churchill et al.'s (1985) meta-analysis reflected a similar "danger of a single story" (a term coined by novelist Chimamanda Adichie), where poor-performing salespeople were probably underrepresented. Perhaps it was because not all companies participating in the studies had sufficient information about poor performers. As a result, the conclusion might bias salespeople who succeeded rather than those who failed. However, there is no such "danger" while analyzing job reviews on Glassdoor.com as the reviews include opinions from both sides – positives and negatives – as well as neutral reviews. In this way, researchers can obtain a more balanced perspective.

2.5.3. Managerial Implications

Apart from theoretical and methodological contributions, my findings offer insights to sales managers. First, sales managers must understand that there are a variety of possible employment experiences their salespeople might have. The four clusters of employment experiences I identified – *Work Rewards*, *Work-Life Balance*, *Workplace Malaise*, and *Toxic Interactions* – are distinct and do not sound like experiences at the same company. However, experience is personal for each

salesperson, and firms must prepare for multiple potential interpretations of the same experience (Padgett & Mulvey, 2009). One salesperson may view the employment experience as rewarding, while another might view it as toxic. The key is understanding the gap between the story firms desire salespeople to perceive and the story B2B salespeople tell.

It follows that sales managers must develop a mechanism for understanding salespeople's experiences and categorizing these experiences. The method of my research is an option that firms can consider. My findings illustrate the characteristics of the four clusters in terms of writing styles and emotions. Apart from the paradox that *Workplace Malaise* and *Toxic Interactions* reviews have a slightly more positive emotional tone, *Work-Life Balance* stories also reflect a paradox. These stories express the highest levels of positive emotion and anxiety, which appear to conflict. These "quasi-paradoxes" are what sales managers must pay attention to. While some indicators are apparent and straightforward – for example, anger, swear words, and comparisons shown in *Toxic Interactions* reviews – other experiences can be conflicting and need further investigation.

Experience represents the salespeople's responses during their course of employment while they interact with the corporate culture. I found more former than current employees in the *Toxic Interactions* cluster, indicating that more B2B salespeople chose to leave than stay. When B2B salespeople quit their jobs as a response, it would be too late. Therefore, the mechanism must assess salespeople's reactions to different experiences. Salespeople are the protagonist in the stories of their employment experience. Firms must design the story's plot to guide salespeople's experience by considering factors that affect how the story unfolds. The first step is to decide on a common theme that helps ensure consistency in the experience (Padgett & Mulvey, 2009). This common theme is when corporate culture comes into play. *Work Rewards* and *Work-Life Balance* identified in my research are desirable options that firms can select.

After deciding on a common theme for the experience, the firm must consider how the characters in the story will interact to influence salespeople's experience. Such consideration includes other characters in the story and the nature of the interaction among characters. Firms can use common character types to represent these

interactions (Padgett & Mulvey, 2009). For example, parents/ children, educators/students, and nurses/patients. These character types offer guidelines for interaction between B2B salespeople with sales managers, firms, and customers. Assigning character types communicates firms' values, what they are and what they are not, what kind of salespeople they look for, and what kind of salespeople might not be a good fit. It also sets an expectation on the roles and actions of each character in the story.

Finally, firms must prepare to alter the story of B2B salespeople's experience if the stories B2B salespeople tell are significantly different from the common theme that firms chose. Since the theme is based on experiences firms desire to deliver to salespeople, firms must adjust when salespeople tell a different story. Altering the story of B2B salespeople's experience might involve rethinking hiring policies, redesigning commission structure, reimagining points of intervention if sales go wrong, and adapting new selling strategies. Let's take the selling strategy as an example. Because salespeople will likely have different interpretations, can firms build flexibility into their selling strategy to enhance individual salesperson's experience? How can changes in selling strategy be managed over time? These are some questions that firms must consider.

This essay also provides some insights for companies to improve the job satisfaction of B2B salespeople. First, companies should regularly monitor what B2B salespeople say about their workplaces on social platforms or review websites like Glassdoor.com. When I collected data from Glassdoor.com, I observed that some companies replied to the job reviews. The replies were mainly about showing gratitude for hard work and suggestions and inviting them to discuss the subject further. Replying to job reviews is simple but powerful. It turns the one-to-many-way communication into a two-to-many-way discussion as the voices of the job review writers are heard, and companies can respond. It also shows other audiences reading job reviews that the company has empathy for their employees and cares about improving their job satisfaction. These readers are probably from other organizations interested in exploring the option of working at the company. Therefore, this can help to attract potential talent in the job market. Replying to job reviews does not require much effort; however, not many companies do so, based on my observations on Glassdoor.com. For those who do respond, the role of the person who replies on behalf of the company is often not clear. It

might range from a junior on the social media team, a Human Resource Manager, to a Vice President of the company. Companies should have a consistent strategy on who replies to - and how to reply to job reviews.

Second, companies should not punish B2B salespeople for things beyond their control. Looking into why there are 5-star job reviews in *Toxic Interactions*, I understand some things are not the company's fault. Similarly, B2B salespeople face the same issue. Whether assigned to a good manager or not, employees and their colleagues do not control many factors affecting customer satisfaction surveys. Therefore, blaming B2B salespeople for factors they cannot influence is harmful rather than helpful. It may only serve to make sales staff nervous, anxious, and uncertain about their jobs, reducing job satisfaction.

Third, companies should walk the talk (Sull, Turconi & Sull, 2020). Some companies preach their corporate culture without practicing it. That is, the four clusters I identify – *Work Rewards*, *Work-Life Balance*, *Workplace Malaise*, and *Toxic Interactions* – do not sound equally attractive. The former two clusters would inevitably be much more appealing to job seekers than the latter two, and no organization would preach that they have a *Workplace Malaise* or *Toxic Interactions* culture. Bad jobs with long hours, low pay, no training, demanding bosses, and poor prospects are on their way out (Gratton, 2021). Yet, these cultures exist – meaning that whatever cultures these organizations claim to have are not the cultures that exist in practice. When unemployment is high, many people might have to take bad jobs as there are no other options. However, the recent Great Resignation suggests that the current situation is quite the opposite because the labor market tightens. Companies claiming a *Work Rewards* or *Work-Life Balance* culture must live up to their employees' expectations. If they do not, employees will seek other companies that will change the playing field (Gratton, 2021) by listening to employees' ever-changing needs. In addition, companies that have a *Workplace Malaise* nor *Toxic Interactions* culture must do the hard work to engage in a corporate culture change; otherwise, they will likely lose the best of their salesforce and suffer the negative consequences of this.

2.6. Limitations

There are some limitations to this research. The first limitation is how I scraped the high volume of job reviews from Glassdoor.com. I followed the list of Culture500 (Sull, Turconi & Sull, 2020) and categorized 303 of these 599 firms as B2B. Categorizing some companies might be more challenging than others because they have B2B and B2C business segments. Likely, some jobs of a sales nature do not use the word "sales" in the job titles. For example, the selling responsibility of professional service and consultancy firms may lie on partners instead. However, I tried to minimize such cases by scraping job reviews within the sales function and collecting an extremely large sample size of over 50,000.

Obviously, there is always a potential problem of response bias in work of this nature, with a disproportionate response at the ends of a response spectrum. For example, it is likely that salespeople who are really satisfied with their jobs award high company ratings and write really positive reviews and score employers higher, and vice versa, while those who are moderately (dis)satisfied participate in these types of reviews at a lower rate.

Glassdoor.com is my single source of data. As a result, there might be systematic characteristics of B2B salespeople who write job reviews on this particular platform that I cannot foresee. For example, these B2B salespeople might need insider information on other companies because they are not satisfied with their jobs and are looking for new opportunities. The research would offer more insights if I could combine different data sources. It could be one idea for future research, and I will share more suggestions in the next section.

2.7. Avenues for Future Research

It is vital to continue the current research to address the ever-changing needs of B2B salespeople in the Great Resignation. The first avenue for future research regards the *tenure* of the B2B salespeople. Teas (1983) found that selling experience was significantly positively related to the salesperson's job satisfaction. I am also interested in looking into experience in this study, but I treat it as a covariate. Because of the high turnover in many sales organizations, Teas (1983) uses selling experience as the total

number of years in various positions over the selling career of salespeople. However, I apply experience in the way defined by Walker and colleagues (1975) as the number of years the salesperson has been in their current selling position only. Parasuraman and Futrell (1983) have a similar definition. These authors use the term tenure and define it as the amount of time working at a particular firm. Some studies have conceptualized tenure as the time spent in a specific profession or job title. I follow Parasuraman and Futrell's (1983) logic that, given one of the interests in this study is employees' desire to leave a particular firm, tenure with the firm is more appropriate for this research. When employees write job reviews on Glassdoor, they must identify themselves as current or former employees. I turned tenure into a dichotomous variable (current employee = 0, former employee =1). The way I measure tenure also allows me to compare Johnston et al.'s (1990) turnover measurement. These authors measured turnover as a dichotomous variable (stayer = 0, leaver = 1) (Johnston et al., 1990). The status of former employees indicates turnover as these employees left their positions. Job review authors can also choose to disclose how many years they have/ had been with the company. Such data might provide more insights into how *tenure* affects B2B salespeople's job satisfaction.

A second avenue for future research would be to explore the emotions expressed in reviews by B2B salespeople. In this research, employment review stories in the *Workplace Malaise* cluster show the highest *authentic* and positive *emotional tone* writing style levels. Similarly, employment review stories in *Toxic Interactions* also offer a positive *emotional tone*. This finding is somewhat paradoxical as these two clusters are generally more negative. On the other hand, *Work-Life Balance* stories simultaneously demonstrate the highest positive emotion and anxiety levels, reflecting a mixed and complicated state of mind. Emotion can be an expression of mental health. Because many people still are concerned about the health implications of returning to work (Gratton, 2021), future research on the emotion of B2B salespeople can offer insights on improving their mental health and hence job satisfaction.

The emotions expressed by salespersons in their job reviews could also be explored by using automated text tools other than LIWC. In the B2B arena, researchers (e.g., Pitt et al., 2019) have reported on the use of another dictionary-based automated text analysis tool called DICTION (Hart, 1984a; 1984b; 2001) to explore employed brand engagement in the B2B environment, also based on employee job reviews in B2B firms on Glassdoor. In addition, IBM's Watson suite of artificial intelligence-based text analysis

tools enables the identification of the fundamental human emotions (Ekman, 1992), namely fear, anger, disgust, sadness, joy, and surprise, expressed in text. For example, researchers have studied the emotions expressed in the text in online forums such as artists' websites (Pitt et al., 2018) and platforms for problem gamblers (Brown et al., 2021).

A final avenue for future research is to explore links between the job satisfaction of B2B salespeople and the corporate culture of their firms. In this research, I identified four clusters of corporate culture, *Work Rewards*, *Work-Life Balance*, *Workplace Malaise*, and *Toxic Interactions*. Are there any other characteristics of these four clusters? If yes, how many are there? How can we measure them? And what features will have a significant impact on job satisfaction? These are all exciting research questions that require further studies to answer.

2.8. Conclusion

Salespeople are vital to the success of B2B firms, making efforts to reduce turnover and improve job satisfaction critically important. To enhance our understanding of B2B salespeople's employment experiences, I analyzed more than 50,000 B2B salespeople's job reviews and company ratings on the job review website Glassdoor.com. I analyzed their stories and the language patterns using a dictionary-based content analysis tool known as LIWC2015. My results uncovered four clusters of corporate cultures, two of which depict unappealing workplace cultures characterized by toxic workplace interactions or general feelings of malaise at work. Given the tremendous expense of recruiting, training, and employing B2B salespeople and the benefits of retaining a motivated salesforce, B2B firms can benefit from management insights that analysis of online reviews can give. This research showcases a method for extracting insight from large datasets. I suggest that insights from this study can support the management of B2B salespeople and serve as a model for firms considering using automated text analysis to 'listen' to their employees.

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Chapter 3.

Essay 2: Corporate Culture and Values in the Workplace: A B2B Salesforce Perspective

3.1. Introduction

In 1943, General Robert Wood Johnson - one of the founders of Johnson and Johnson - articulated the firm's credo in the form of a mission statement that would guide the company's future. An early example of what would be termed "corporate culture," Johnson and Johnson's mission statement lays out the values that the firm regards as critical (see "Living our Values," <https://www.jnj.com/living-our-values>). Over the years, most prominent and many smaller corporations have articulated their values in various forms. These written definitions generally encompass a mission statement for the organization and the values that it will hold, as well as definitions of particular dimensions that will epitomize that organization's culture.

Ultimately, organizational culture impacts how people from the boardroom to the front line work and interact with each other. It determines and affects what managers must do to meet objectives and keep things running smoothly at the departmental level, including the types of coaching, training, incentives, and boundaries they provide. Culture's role in sales departments has been the focus of scholarly attention for many years (Churchill, Ford & Walker, 1976), and company culture is known to affect internal competitiveness, the quality of customer relationships, sales ethics, team dynamics, and a range of other issues.

This essay focuses on how salespersons in business-to-business (B2B) roles perceive, talk about, and are affected by the firm's culture. It is important because a firm's salesforce plays a boundary-spanning role (Spekman, 1979; Spekman & Johnston, 1986), as it bridges the gap between the firm and its external stakeholders. Therefore, it is vital to understand how corporate culture is reflected in how salespeople communicate about their jobs. To what extent do they share the values and norms of their firms?

More specifically, the research described here seeks to answer three questions regarding sales: *First*, how do B2B firms' corporate value profiles differ? *Second*, what underlying dimensions distinguish cultural values within a particular firm? *Third*, how do the various dimensions of a firm's cultural profile correspond to job satisfaction or company ratings, the emotions employees express when talking about their company, and different linguistic indicators of the behavior of individual employees within firms?

The essay proceeds as follows: First, I discuss several culture models with the dimensions that make them unique and explain the one chosen as the guiding framework for this study. Second, I present my research, which examines the connection between corporate culture aspects and the phrases salespeople use to characterize the firms they work for or have previously worked for. In this essay, I use data from online job reviews subjected to automated text analysis to gain greater insight into how salespeople think and act. Third, the data source and the approach used to analyze the data are described before proceeding to data analysis. Finally, I acknowledge the study's limitations, highlight implications for managers, and identify avenues for future research.

3.2. Understanding Organizational Culture

There are dozens of definitions of corporate culture ranging from the very simple "corporate culture is how we do things around here" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982) to more complex ones. A recent definition of corporate culture is that it expresses goals through values and beliefs and guides activity through shared assumptions and group norms within an organization (Groysberg et al., 2018). Organizational cultures are malleable and dynamic. For example, just as Johnson and Johnson's culture was shaped by General Johnson's original articulation of the company's values, these values and norms can change over time. The best leaders within organizations are acutely aware of that organization's cultural norms and values. They can usually judge when change is needed and identify an implementation process. However, in many poorly managed organizations, leaders fail to understand cultural norms and values and cannot craft and implement changes that will make a difference.

Due to its essential impact on organizational outcomes, corporate culture is one of the most studied and researched concepts in the management literature. Management scholars have attempted to identify dimensions that can help distinguish

different cultures. For example, one of the best-known conceptualizations of corporate culture is that of Cameron and Quinn (2011). They identify two dimensions - flexibility versus stability and internal versus external focus – to delineate four different kinds of cultures: clan, hierarchy, adhocracy, and market. Marketing scholars such as Deshpandé and Webster (1989), Deshpandé, Farley, and Webster (1993), and Berthon, Pitt, and Ewing (2001) have used this framework to explore various aspects of marketing decision-making and thought processes in firms. Like Cameron and Quinn (2011), Groysberg and colleagues (2018) suggest that the dimension of flexibility/stability is essential to characterizing and understanding culture. However, they pair this dimension with an interaction dimension, ranging from 'independence' (i.e., working autonomously) to 'interdependence' (i.e., a collaborative work approach). These authors propose eight resultant cultures: caring, purpose, learning, enjoyment, results, authority, safety, and order, which differ in terms of how interactions occur and the extent of the rigidity in the organization. Handy (1978) uses a similar model to facilitate understanding the various types of cultures that can exist in organizations. The author uses the Greek gods Zeus (the club culture), Athena (the task culture), Apollo (the role culture), and Dionysius (the existential culture) as metaphors to illustrate the differences between these cultures.

Sull, Turconi, and Sull (2020) propose another conceptualization of culture based on a review of websites and annual reports from 689 large, mainly US, organizations. From this review, they found that 82% of firms published some official statements of corporate culture, mainly in the form of cultural values. They then grouped these values according to the words used, resulting in 62 distinct cultural themes mentioned by at least 1% of the companies in the sample. Finally, they used data from the 2019 Culture 500 study, which measures company performance across nine cultural values, to identify which companies were articulating most strongly on the nine values. The nine ('Big 9') cultural values: *agility, collaboration, customer orientation, diversity, execution, innovation, integrity, performance, and respect*, form the dimensions of an organization's culture. I can quantify, describe, and compare corporate cultures by scoring an organization on these dimensions. I focus on cultural values in this study and adopt Sull, Turconi, and Sull's (2020) perspective.

3.3. Methodology

This study uses multidimensional scaling analysis (MDS) to map the relational system of differences in company cultures based on the incidence of corporate values mentioned by B2B salespersons in reviews on Glassdoor. I ask three related questions: First, how do companies' corporate value profiles compare according to employees? Second, what underlying dimensions distinguish the most frequently discussed Big 9 cultural values: agility, collaboration, customer orientation, diversity, execution, innovation, integrity, performance, and respect (Sull, Turconi & Sull, 2020)? Finally, how do companies' positions on the corporate values map correspond to external properties, namely the employees' overall company ratings, review word count, emotionality, and four linguistic summary measures (analytical thinking, clarity, authenticity, and emotional tone)?

3.3.1. Data

This study combines two data sources. First, I rely upon the Culture500 index created by Sull, Turconi, and Sull (2020), which measures the cultures of over 500 of the largest companies in the United States on the nine cultural values: agility, collaboration, customer orientation, diversity, execution, innovation, integrity, performance, and respect (Sull, Turconi & Sull, 2020). I use the published company-level scores derived from these authors' research partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as the backdrop for the present study to create a multidimensional scaling plot of 100 B2B sales companies' value profiles. The nine cultural values are an appropriate measure of corporate culture in this research because values are a fundamental element in most definitions of organizational culture (e.g., Barley, Meyer, and Gash, 1988). Chatman (1991) states that individual values within a firm are relatively ongoing beliefs that a particular behavior is more preferred than its opposite. Although it is not likely that all individuals of a firm hold the same values, typically, most "active members are aware of the support for a given value" (Chatman, 1991).

Second, I rely upon the dataset I used in Essay 1. The dataset is a sample of 50,946 job reviews from Glassdoor written by non-managerial employees in the sales function in 303 B2B firms identified from the Culture500 list (Sull, Turconi & Sull, 2020) in June 2021. My firm-centered analysis focuses on 100 companies selected from the

Culture500 list (Sull, Turconi & Sull, 2020) with the most reviews by B2B salespersons on Glassdoor (min = 109, max = 5,255 responses per company). The final sample consists of 42,209 job reviews written by B2B salespersons from the top 100 most reviewed companies. Specifically, I generate a set of company-level scores on various dimensions using Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC2015), a dictionary-based automated text analysis program (Pennebaker et al., 2015). I assume that writing a job review is a behavior performed by its author and that references to values in the content are behavioral expressions of corresponding values (Ponizovskiy et al., 2020). As research on online textual data generated by digital users gains popularity, the benefits of studying such behavioral traces are becoming too significant to ignore (Ponizovskiy et al., 2020). With these two datasets, I examine the correspondence of corporate culture profiles to linguistic properties of employee reviews.

3.3.2. Measures

Unlike essay 1, which uses individual-level measures to analyze employees' employment stories, in this essay, I examine corporate culture profiles, so I need firm-level measures developed as follows:

- *Company Rating*: On Glassdoor, employees award their employers a star rating, ranging from one to five, serving as a proxy for general job satisfaction (Becherer, Morgan & Richard, 1982).

Next, I use LIWC2015 to generate scores that profile the categories and frequencies of words in individuals' job reviews. Then, calculating the mean score for each variable, I create firm-level job review profiles used in subsequent analyses. My analysis will focus on the following categories of LIWC variables:

- *Word Count*: Some Glassdoor reviews are concise, while others are entirely elaborated.
- *Affect and Emotion*: The words used in employee reviews reflect feelings and emotions, which often indicate one's internal state and are implicated in attributional reasoning (Pitt et al., 2018; Vine et al., 2020). Here I consider general categories (affect, positive emotion, and negative emotion) and more specific types of emotion (anger, anxiety, and sadness).
- *Writing Style*: We often observe differences in how people convey their experiences in written texts (Brown et al., 2021; Pennebaker et al., 2015). The LIWC2015 software calculates four summary variables: Analytical Thinking,

Clout (confidence), Authentic (honesty vs. hedging), and Emotional Tone (affect). Analytical thinking measures the degree to which people write in formal, logical, and hierarchical thinking patterns (Pennebaker et al., 2015). People who write with more narrative, focusing on the here-and-now and personal experiences, tend to score low in this measurement. Clout captures people's relative social status, confidence, or leadership in their language (Pennebaker et al., 2015). Authenticity refers to when people reveal themselves authentically or honestly. People who score high in this measurement are more personal, humble, and vulnerable (Pennebaker et al., 2015).

3.4. Findings

3.4.1. Corporate Values Map: Firms and Dimensions

The output of the MDS analysis was a two-dimensional map shown in **Figure 3.1**, with the 100 companies displayed in the left panel and the nine corporate values mapped in the right panel that overlays the space. The next step of our analysis reveals the underlying dimensions that sort the similarities and differences in firms' corporate values profiles and offers a holistic view of the cultural system.

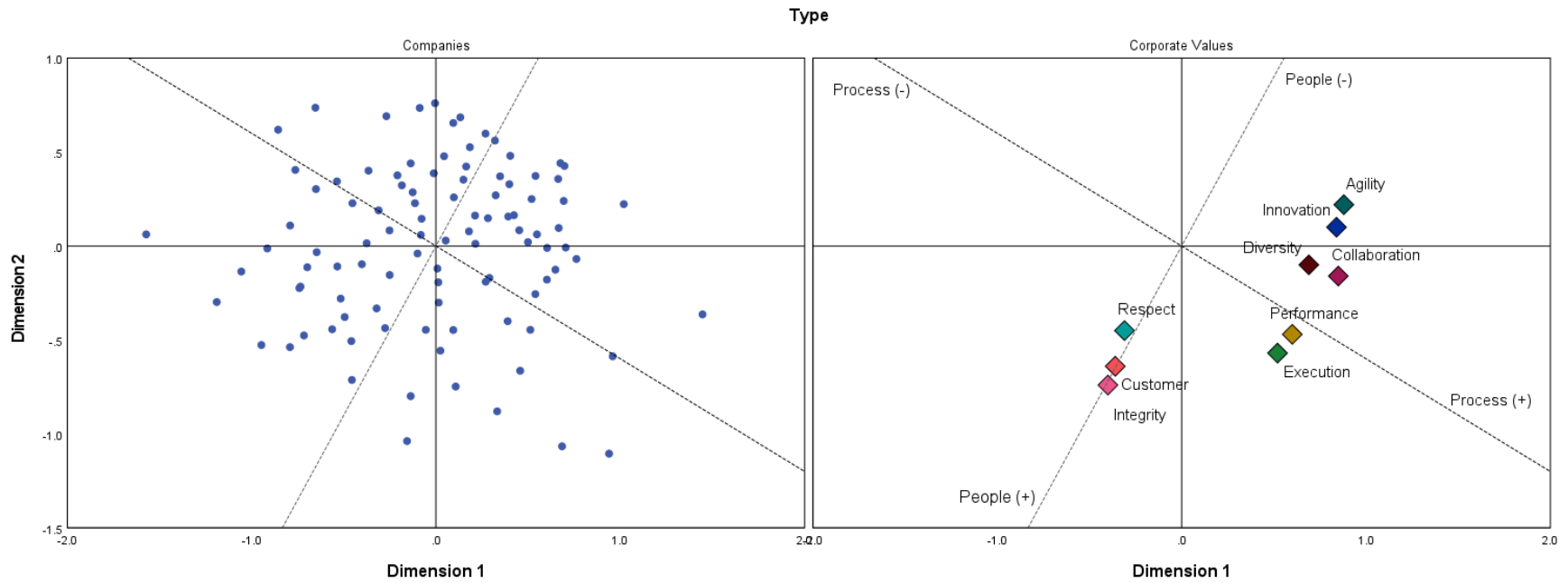


Figure 3.1. Corporate Values Map: Firms and Dimensions

Note: The blue circles indicate firms, and diamonds (arrowheads) indicate corporate values. The vectors extend from the marker (positive end) through the origin to the opposite quadrant (negative end). Markers located far from the origin account for more variance (R^2) in the MDS configuration, and the projections of the points to the X and Y axes are the standardized coefficients (betas).

3.4.2. Labelling the MDS Dimensions

Property fitting (ProFit) regression analysis (Borgatti, 1994; Padgett and Mulvey, 2007; Robinson and Bennett, 1995) measures the extent to which each corporate value is associated with company positions in the two-dimensional space. Property vectors aid in interpreting the spatial map and naming the MDS dimensions expressed in terms of orientation (coordinates) and distance from the origin (coefficient of determination). The property vectors are estimated by regressing each corporate value (dependent values) onto the company coordinates (independent values) (Chang and Carroll, 1968; Kruskal and Wish, 1978). **Table 3.1** provides the correlation coefficients, *F* values, and property vectors (beta weights from the regressions) illustrated on the map. The R^2 values indicate how the company locations on the map are related to a corporate value – the higher the value, the stronger the relationship. All corporate values are significantly different from zero at the .05 level, indicating that each corporate value contributes to the interpretation of the MDS configuration.

Table 3.1. Property Fitting of Corporate Values

Internal Properties	Model Fit			Property Vector			
	R^2	F		Dimension 1		Dimension 2	
Agility	0.82	231.87	***	0.88	***	0.22	***
Collaboration	0.73	137.04	***	0.85	***	-0.16	**
Customer	0.52	54.93	***	-0.36	***	-0.64	***
Diversity	0.47	44.73	***	0.69	***	-0.10	
Execution	0.58	70.27	***	0.52	***	-0.57	***
Innovation	0.71	119.18	***	0.84	***	0.10	
Integrity	0.70	118.94	***	-0.40	***	-0.74	***
Performance	0.56	64.40	***	0.60	***	-0.47	***
Respect	0.29	21.06	***	-0.31	***	-0.45	***

** Significant at the .01 level. *** Significant at the .001 level

In **Figure 3.1**, the two dotted lines divide the Big 9 Cultural Values into people orientation versus process orientation. The configuration features three people-centered corporate values in the lower-left quadrant (customer, integrity, and respect) and six process-oriented corporate values to the right (agility, innovation, collaboration, diversity, performance, and execution). The alignment of these latent dimensions becomes more evident with a space rotation, as illustrated by the two dotted lines. Thus, corporate

culture is a mixture of how employees treat other people (people +/-) and the policies and procedures that guide a company's actions (process +/-). A company's position on the MDS map reflects employees' differential emphasis on these two dimensions in reviews based on the nine corporate value indicators.

It is necessary to point out the directionality of the two dotted lines. The process-focused dotted line goes from the negative end in the top left quadrant to the positive end in the right bottom quadrant. The people-centered dotted line extends from the negative end in the top right quadrant left to the positive end in the bottom left quadrant.

3.4.3. Linking Review Properties (LIWC) to Corporate Values

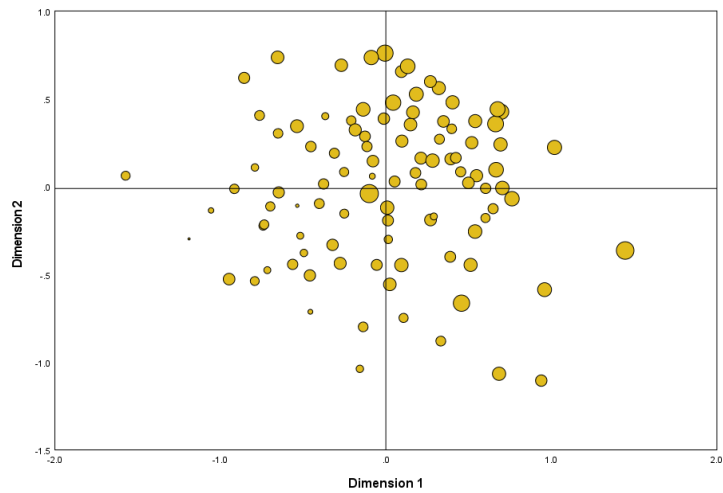
In the next stage, I conduct an external analysis to investigate whether companies' positions on the corporate values map are related to various linguistic properties of the reviews using LIWC scores. I explore four related questions: first, "do company ratings vary in the space?" second, "does the word count of reviews vary?" third, "do the emotional qualities of the reviews vary?" and finally, "does the writing style vary?" **Table 3.2** summarizes test results, reported with a series of related visualizations.

Table 3.2. Property Fitting of Company Rating and LIWC Scores

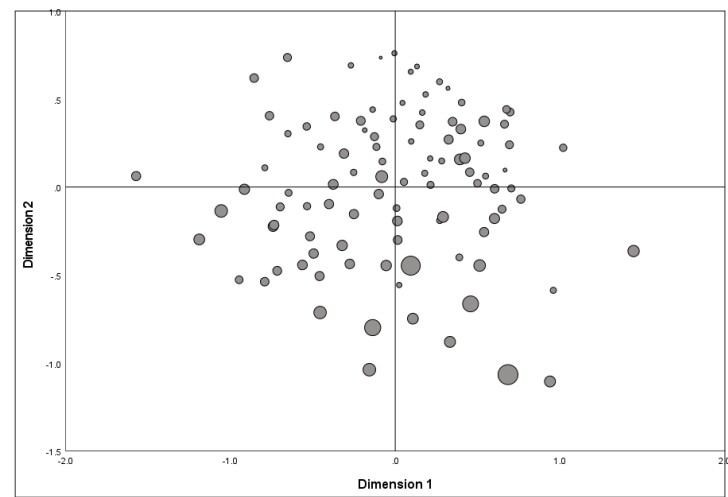
External Attributes	Model Fit			Property Vector			
	R ²	F		Dimension 1		Dimension 2	
Company Rating	0.40	34.2	***	0.57	***	0.29	***
Word Count	0.39	33.2	***	-0.02		-0.64	***
Affect	0.26	18.1	***	0.22	*	0.47	***
Positive Emotion	0.35	27.1	***	0.41	***	0.43	***
Negative Emotion	0.44	40.1	***	-0.67	***	-0.03	
Anxiety	0.20	13.7	***	-0.46	***	0.09	
Anger	0.46	43.0	***	-0.65	***	-0.21	**
Sadness	0.05	3.6	*	-0.26	**	-0.03	
Analytic	0.42	36.9	***	0.57	***	0.32	***
Clout	0.29	21.2	***	0.38	***	-0.40	***
Authenticity	0.07	4.8	*	-0.30	**	-0.04	
Tone	0.51	51.8	***	0.69	***	0.20	**

* Significant at the .05 level. ** Significant at the .01 level. *** Significant at the .001 level.

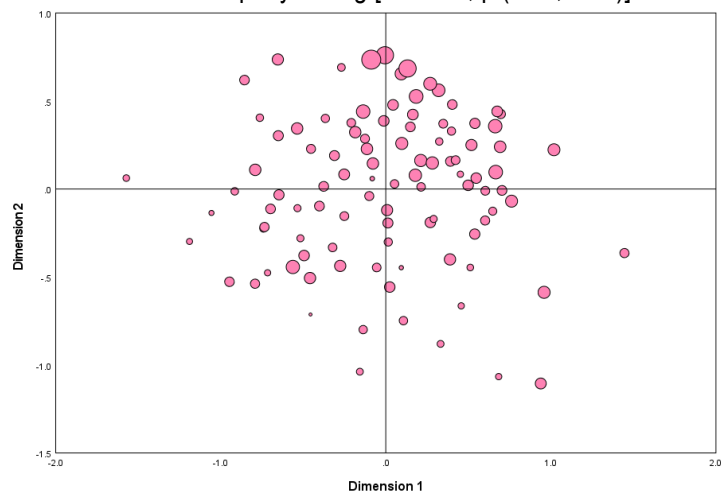
Overall Company Rating: **Figure 3.2.A** shows that the overall company rating varies systematically based on the companies' MDS map positions. In addition, the property vector parameter estimates ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = 0.57$, $\beta_{\text{DIM2}} = 0.29$; $R^2 = .40$) in **Table 3.2**, along with the bubble sizes (proportional to overall company rating), indicate the tendency of companies to the upper right of the map being more highly rated than companies in the opposite direction.



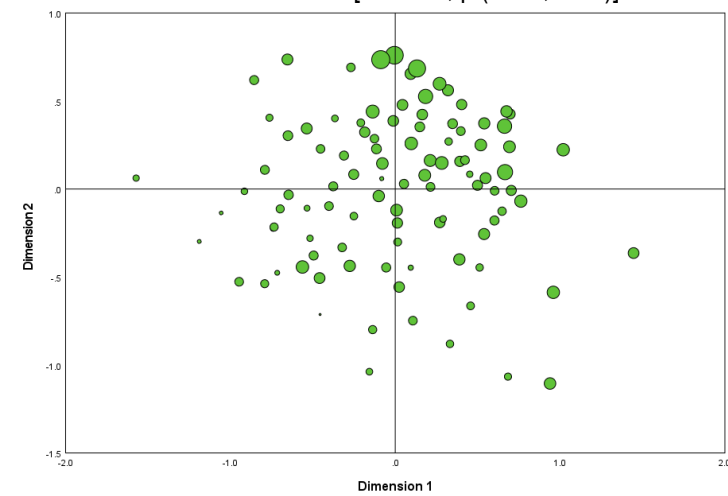
A. Company Rating [$R^2 = .40$, $\beta (0.57, 0.29)$]



B. Word Count [$R^2 = .39$, $\beta (-0.02, -0.64)$]



C. Affect [$R^2 = .26$, $\beta (0.41, 0.43)$]



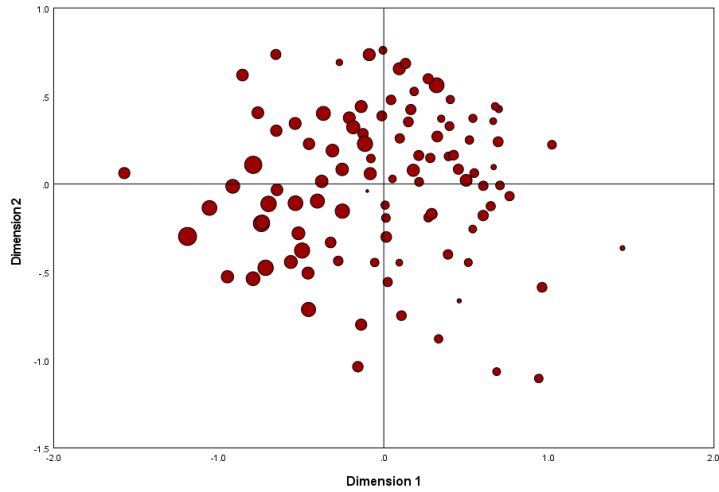
D. Positive Emotion [$R^2 = .35$, $\beta (0.41, 0.43)$]

Figure 3.2. The Fit of Review Properties to the Corporate Values Map

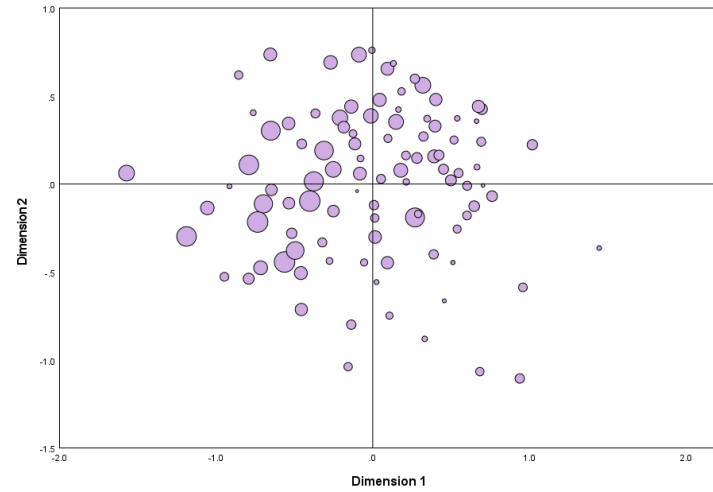
Word Count: **Figure 3.2.B** confirms that the review word count varies systematically with corporate culture value profiles. Companies at the bottom of the MDS map are more elaborated on than those at the top ($\beta_{\text{DIM2}} = -0.64$; $R^2 = .39$).

Affect and Positive Emotion: Companies with affect-charged reviews are generally located toward the top-right of the MDS map ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = 0.22$, $\beta_{\text{DIM2}} = 0.47$; $R^2 = .26$; see **Figure 3.2.C**). Similarly, companies with positive emotion words in the reviews are situated to the top-right ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = 0.41$, $\beta_{\text{DIM2}} = 0.43$; $R^2 = .35$; see **Figure 3.2.D**).

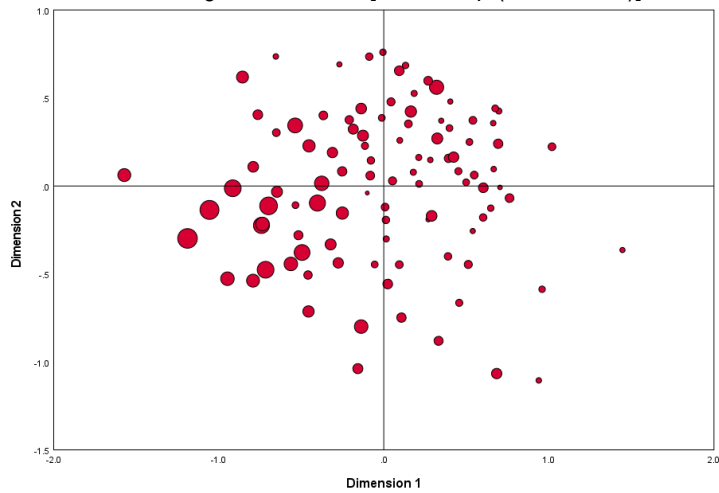
Negative Emotions: Companies with the most negative reviews are located to the left of the MDS map ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = -0.67$; $R^2 = .44$; see **Figure 3.3.A**). Traces of anxiety are most common among companies to the left ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = -0.46$; $R^2 = .20$; see **Figure 3.3.B**). Companies with angry reviews are to the lower left ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = -0.65$, $\beta_{\text{DIM2}} = -0.21$; $R^2 = .46$; see **Figure 3.3.C**). Finally, hints of sadness are shared in reviews to the left of the space ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = -0.26$; $R^2 = .05$; see **Figure 3.3.D**).



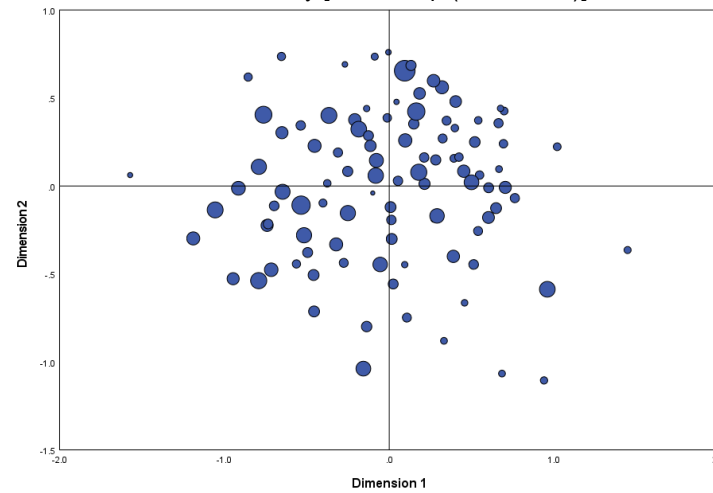
A. Negative Emotion [$R^2 = .44$, $\beta (-0.67, -0.03)$]



B. Anxiety [$R^2 = .20$, $\beta (-0.46, 0.09)$]



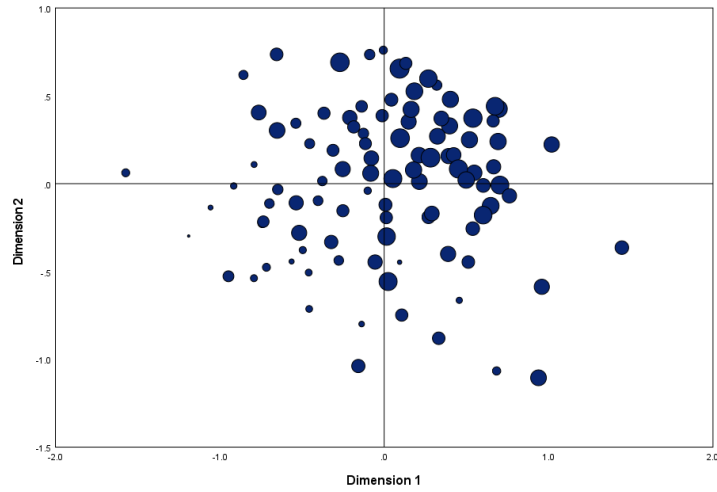
C. Anger [$R^2 = .46$, $\beta (-0.65, -0.21)$]



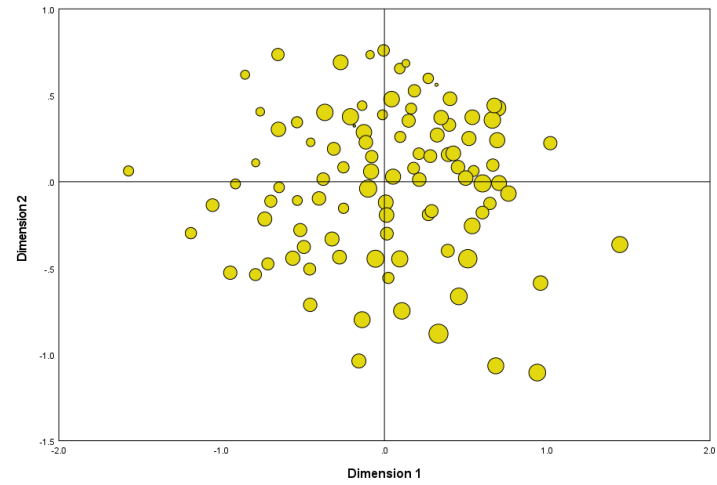
D. Sadness [$R^2 = .05$, $\beta (-0.26, -0.03)$]

Figure 3.3. The Fit of Negative Emotions to the Corporate Values Map

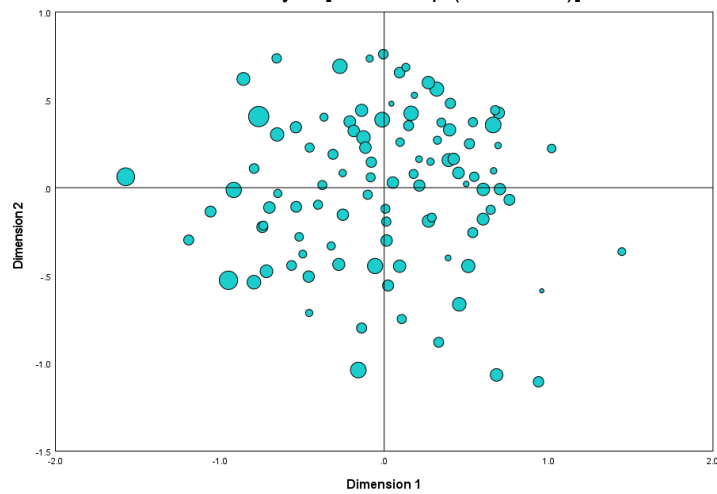
LIWC Summary Scores: Reviews of companies to the upper-right reflect analytical thinking to a greater degree ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = 0.57$, $\beta_{\text{DIM2}} = 0.32$; $R^2 = .42$; see **Figure 3.4.A**). Reviews of companies to the lower-right indicate higher levels of clout, or confidence ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = 0.38$, $\beta_{\text{DIM2}} = -0.40$; $R^2 = .29$; see **Figure 3.4.B**). To the left of the space, authenticity is found among firms to a greater degree ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = -0.30$; $R^2 = .07$; see **Figure 3.4.C**). Finally, the tone of company reviews in the top-right is more positive than in other parts of the map ($\beta_{\text{DIM1}} = 0.69$, $\beta_{\text{DIM2}} = 0.20$; $R^2 = .51$; see **Figure 3.4.D**).



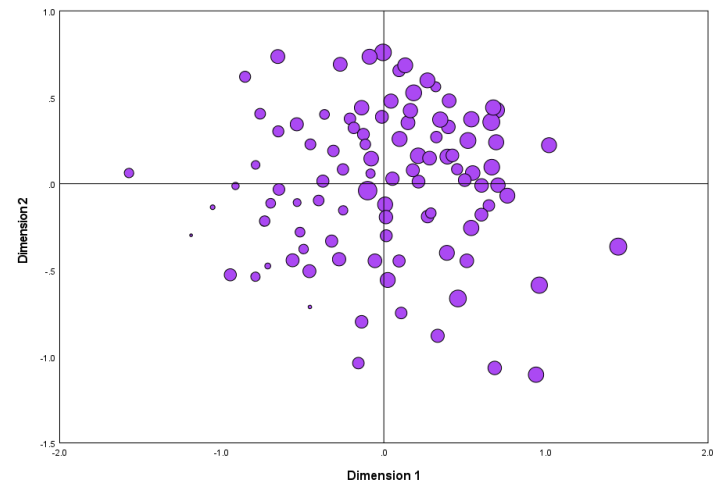
A. Analytic [$R^2 = .42$, $\beta (0.57, 0.32)$]



B. Clout [$R^2 = .29$, $\beta (0.38, -0.40)$]



C. Authenticity [$R^2 = .07$, $\beta (-0.30, -0.04)$]



D. Tone [$R^2 = .51$; $\beta (0.69, 0.20)$]

Figure 3.4. The Fit of LIWC Summary Scores to the Corporate Values Map

3.5. Discussion of Results

In **Figure 3.1**, the two dotted lines divide the Big 9 Cultural Values into people orientation versus process orientation. The arrangement of corporate cultural dimensions illustrates that corporate culture is a mixture of how employees treat other people (people +/-) and the policies and procedures that guide a company's actions (process +/-). Such findings align with what Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1976) call organizational climate. These authors described corporate culture as representing employees' perceptions of their relationships with other people while doing their jobs and the characteristics of the organization they work for (Churchill et al., 1976).

The directionality of the two dotted lines is important: the process-focused dotted line goes from the negative end in the top left quadrant to the positive end in the right bottom quadrant, while the people-centered dotted line goes against the intuitive direction, extending from the negative end in the top right quadrant left to the positive end in the bottom left quadrant. In addition, three people-centered values in the lower-left quadrant, customer, integrity, and respect, lie on the people-oriented line, reflecting greater levels of people orientation. Finally, for the six process-focused values to the right, performance and execution have a positive people orientation, while agility, innovation, collaboration, and diversity are not people-oriented. These results show that companies may achieve cultural values of agility, innovation, collaboration, and diversity at the expense of neglecting people while emphasizing the process.

Figure 3.2.A shows that more highly rated companies are in the upper right quadrant of the corporate values map, where the two corporate values, agility, and innovation, are located (see **Figure 3.1**). **Figure 3.2.B** demonstrates that B2B salespeople use more words to write job reviews for companies in the lower half of the corporate values map than in the upper half. Agility and innovation are the only two corporate values in the upper half of the map. Combining these two findings, I conclude that B2B salespeople do not necessarily elaborate on why they give a higher rating when reviewing companies with cultural values of agility and innovation. On the contrary, B2B salespeople use more words to support or even justify the low rating they give to the company. In addition, they share the details of what made them dissatisfied with the company. This insider information can help other B2B salespeople to make more informed career decisions.

Next, I discuss the emotions expressed in the job reviews written by B2B salespeople. Emotions are crucial when studying corporate culture as emotions are inherent in the working environment (Bande et al., 2015) and are a significant psychological factor that can impact the behavior and performance of salespeople (Kidwell et al., 2011). From **Figure 3.2.C** and **Figure 3.2.D**, companies being reviewed with more affect and positive emotion tend to be in the top-right quadrant. Recall that agility and innovation are the only two cultural values in the upper right quadrant (see **Figure 3.1**). Therefore, B2B salespeople tend to be more positive when reviewing companies with corporate values of agility and innovation.

Figure 3.3.A shows that companies being reviewed with the most negative emotion are generally located to the left of the map. Concerning negative emotion, I can see a similar pattern in both **Figure 3.3.B** and **Figure 3.3.D**. Companies being reviewed with anxious and sad wordings are located on the left. However, the other negative emotion I investigated, anger, does not show the same pattern. Companies with the most significant number of angry reviews concentrate in the lower left quadrant in **Figure 3.3.C**. While there are no corporate values in the upper left quadrant of the MDS map in **Figure 3.1**, there are three corporate values in the lower left quadrant: respect, customer, and integrity. B2B salespeople generally show more negative emotions and are more anxious and sad when writing about companies with a corporate culture of respect, customer, and integrity. They are angrier when companies do not "walk the talk" of these corporate values. When corporate values high on people-orientation are violated, B2B salespeople may lose trust in their firms.

Finally, I discuss the four LIWC Summary Scores in the order of analytical thinking tone, clout, and authenticity. From **Figure 3.4.A**, we can see that B2B salespeople use more analytical thinking when reviewing companies in the top right quadrant. Companies in the top right quadrant also receive reviews with a more positive tone, as shown in **Figure 3.4.D**. Once again, agility and innovation are in the upper right quadrant of the corporate values map (see **Figure 3.1**). B2B salespeople display more analytical thinking and a positive tone when writing job reviews for agile and innovative companies. It may require analytical thinking and positivity to thrive in an agile and innovative environment. Working in such an environment may also cause B2B salespeople to be analytical and to see things positively.

Figure 3.4.B shows that B2B salespeople review companies with higher clout or confidence in the lower right quadrant. Recall that the four cultural values in the lower right quadrant are collaboration, diversity, performance, and execution (see **Figure 3.1**). B2B salespeople demonstrate clout or confidence to a greater extent when reviewing companies with corporate values of collaboration, diversity, performance, and execution than those on the MDS map. **Figure 3.4.C** shows that companies with reviews of a higher level of authenticity are located to the left of the map. These companies emphasize people-oriented corporate values: respect, customer, and integrity (see **Figure 3.1**). People orientation requires B2B salespeople's honesty to build relationships with colleagues and customers.

3.6. Managerial Implications

My findings have several important implications for managers, as they highlight the need to assess cultural fit, be authentic in describing the culture, monitor the extent to which employee feedback or experience is aligned with stated cultural norms, as well as the potential to use negative feedback for constructive and positive change. I discuss each of these in more detail in what follows.

Like any other strategy, companies need to evaluate outcomes and continuously improve their strategy when it comes to the B2B salesforce. Creating a corporate culture to enhance the employer's brand is a critical marketing strategy to attract talent. While a company can define its corporate culture, if recruits cannot identify with, uphold or improve cultural values, these newcomers may hamper organizational goals. Bettenhausen and Murnighan (1985) give an example to demonstrate this idea: when a company that values cooperation hires someone competitive, the company may change over time in such a way that the norm for competition may begin to overshadow the original norm to cooperate. Therefore, hiring companies must continue to monitor and reinforce corporate values. The current study reveals that it is not uncommon to see B2B salespeople share how the culture has changed since new people or management joined the company. Companies can identify a mismatch when employees describe the corporate culture on job review platforms, such as Glassdoor.com.

Another kind of mismatch that occurs is preaching a corporate culture that is not what the company has. Some companies may sugarcoat their corporate culture to speed

up the process of cultural change, appear more attractive to potential recruits, or simply engage in virtue signaling. For example, companies may overpromise how people-oriented they are or how much they respect employees' work-life balance. This strategy will likely backfire in the long term and harm employee relationships. My results show that B2B salespeople are angrier when companies do not practice the corporate values that they claim.

My findings reinforce the importance of monitoring what employees say about the corporate culture online. If there are inconsistencies between the corporate culture companies espouse and the corporate culture that employees perceive, companies should investigate the roots of the discrepancy. Unfortunately, on online job review sites such as Glassdoor.com, there is no way to contact the author of a job review directly. Nevertheless, companies can reply to job reviews by welcoming feedback and inviting further conversation. Alternatively, companies can conduct internal anonymous surveys.

Based on what I observed on Glassdoor.com, the number of B2B companies that respond to employee reviews is minimal. I suggest that responding to online reviews might help companies stand out in the crowd, which may be an especially important step when there are labor shortages. I also suggest that companies keep a record of job reviews to obtain longitudinal data to track the changes in corporate culture, or perceptions thereof, over time. Such a record can demonstrate whether, in the long run, companies successfully narrow any gaps between the corporate culture they espouse and the perceived corporate culture from the employees' perspective.

Job reviews with low ratings and negative emotions are inevitable. Companies should carefully assess these job reviews, as they are not necessarily harmful and may provide a wealth of insight. Importantly, companies can turn the table on these reviews. One of the noteworthy findings of this essay is that B2B salespeople generally elaborate more on the low rating they give to the company than the high rating. By analyzing detailed negative reviews, companies can find out what they are doing poorly from the perspective of others. Indeed, the purpose of review sites such as Glassdoor.com is not only for employees (i.e., B2B salespeople) to share the origin of their dissatisfaction with their peers who are planning for a career move but also so that companies can benefit from the anonymous information provided. As mentioned, the track record of job reviews is longitudinal data. These elaborated job reviews are rich longitudinal data that

companies can utilize to investigate the cause of low ratings and negative emotions by analyzing the content of job reviews over time.

3.7. Limitations and Future Research

Like all research that relies on voluntary participation by respondents, this study is prone to response bias. B2B salespersons who are either highly positive about an employer or extremely negative probably respond to platforms such as Glassdoor.com at proportionately greater rates than those with less strong feelings. While very large samples such as the one in this study might help overcome this problem, it remains. I did not find strong evidence of this in my sample – among approximately 50,000 job reviews, the category with the highest number of reviews is four-star (about 28%), followed by three-star (about 25%), five-star (about 23%), two-star (about 13%), and one-star (about 11%).

Second, while I can provide some insight into corporate cultures and their impact on particular outcomes in salesforce management, I did not intend to identify an 'ideal' corporate culture. For example, one of my findings is that higher-rated companies espouse the corporate values of agility and innovation. While this is insightful, it does not mean that innovation and agility are *all* that matter, but that sales managers should bear this in mind as they strive to create the ideal corporate culture in sales for the business environment they find themselves in.

The high turnover in many sales organizations (Teas, 1983) warrants additional research in this area. Employees who contribute to Glassdoor.com can share information about positions they have previously held or their present jobs. Upon submitting job reviews on Glassdoor.com, the review authors disclose themselves as either current or former employees. Researchers can turn this information (i.e., current employee vs former employee) into a turnover measurement (Johnston et al., 1990). By combining the data on the Big 9 cultural values and linguistic characteristics of how B2B salespeople write, researchers can investigate how it affects B2B salespeople's desire to leave without identifying information such as demographics and years of experience.

Again concerning turnover, another avenue for future research would be to demystify links between the turnover of B2B salespeople and the corporate culture of

companies from which they resign. Exploring the MDS map of corporate profiles based on the Big 9 cultural values raises the possibility of exploring whether there are any differences in turnover among B2B salespeople who work under these cultural values. In other words, are there any cultural values under which B2B salespeople tend to leave disproportionately? Is there any way we can retain B2B salespeople in cultures with higher turnover? Moreover, what features in the language B2B salespeople use will correlate with turnover and alert us to its possibilities? Answers to these questions can lead to a potential solution to retaining B2B salespeople.

3.8. Conclusion

This essay has explored the relationship between the emotions expressed in job reviews by B2B salespersons of their past/present employers and the nature of the corporate cultures of those employers. It finds that these relationships are significant depending not only on the type of culture a firm espouses but also on whether the salesperson is currently in the job or is a past employee.

An effective salesforce is critical to the success of most B2B firms, and efforts to retain and grow talent continue to be strategically important. While a match between the corporate culture of a B2B firm and B2B salespeople involves both sides, the power balance in the talent market tends to side with the employees (Lambert, 2021), and it is, therefore, essential to understanding how B2B salespeople perceive and identify with the corporate culture of their companies. In addition, given the high cost of hiring and training B2B salespeople, the benefit of retaining a salesforce that supports or strengthens the company's culture is significant.

In the first significant work on content analysis in marketing, Kassarian (1977) bemoaned that while marketing scholars study the objects of marketing exchanges, primarily goods and services on the one hand and money on the other, they overlook the most fundamental exchange object of all: words. He drew from the work of Cartwright (1953), who observed that in his discipline of social psychology, the subject matter was largely oral, expressed verbally in the form of attitudes, values, skills, group norms etcetera, but that the focus of the research had been more on the producers of the words than the words themselves. Kassarian (1977, p.8) remarked, "the exchange process in the marketplace and the communication of the values of the exchange

depends upon the written or spoken word" (p.8). He lamented marketing's similar predicament: While the exchange process in marketing also depended so extensively on the written or spoken word, the communication content of marketing had received little scholarly attention. This reflection is certainly true from personal selling and sales management perspectives. There is so much rich data in the words salespeople use to interact with customers, compile sales reports, make presentations, and talk about their jobs on review sites such as Glassdoor.com. Powerful tools such as LIWC help scholars make sense of the patterns and insights these words can provide. This essay is my attempt to shed some light on these words in the context of cultures in the B2B selling environment.

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Chapter 4.

Essay 3: Are Those Who Stay Happier Than Those Who Left? B2B Salespeople's Basic Emotions Expressed in Online Job Reviews and Their Linkage to Job Satisfaction

4.1. Introduction

B2B salespeople experience emotional peaks and valleys in their work (Mulki et al., 2015). The job is filled with the lows of rejection and lost sales, the highs of sales successes, the triumphs of enduring successful customer relationships, and the agonies of customer bonds suddenly broken. Selling is often referred to as emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983), the regulating or managing emotional expressions with others as part of one's professional work role. In the sales job, this involves the management of emotions while interacting with customers (Klein, 2021; Kidwell et al., 2007; Rentz et al., 2002). This is particularly true for salespeople in business-to-business (B2B) environments because many customers will want a more relational approach that requires more time investment and higher quality interactions (Viio & Grönroos 2016). Serving business customers, B2B salespeople often need to deal with multiple decision-makers across various business units, multiplying the emotional demands of their sales job. Besides customers, meeting customers' needs also requires salespeople to deal with colleagues in multiple departments within their sales organizations. Therefore, salespeople need to be capable of managing emotions within and without the organization (Mulki et al., 2015).

Emotions, in general, are overlooked in the B2B sales literature (Briggs, Kalra & Agnihotri, 2018). There is a substantial need for more research on emotions in B2B sales contexts to "incorporate ideas grounded in human behavior and institutional and public action" (Bagozzi, 2006). Studies relating to B2B salespeople's emotions either focus on customers or do not emphasize basic emotions. However, researchers should not neglect B2B salespeople's emotions as emotions are influential psychological forces that affect how salespeople behave and perform (Bande et al., 2015; Brown et al., 1997). B2B salespeople run a gamut of widely varying emotions in their jobs. These can

range, for example, from fear of losing a key account to the sadness that occurs when it is lost, through anger and disgust at an unethical competitor's inappropriate sales tactics to the surprise and joy that will come from winning a closely contested bid. Yet scholarship concerning emotions in B2B sales tends to focus on the buyer's perspective, and not the salesperson's; see works by Kemp and colleagues (2018) and Curasi and colleagues (2018) as examples. However, research should necessarily consider emotions from the seller's perspective in order to better understand the dynamics of buyer-seller relationships.

Being on the frontline of buyer-selling relationships, the emotional demands of B2B salespeople and the large number of interactions can cause strain (Mulki et al., 2015). If salespeople do not have enough coping resources to deal with the stress of their job, this can lead to burnout over time (McFarland & Dixon, 2021). Such emotional exhaustion impacts propensity to leave (Rutherford et al., 2009). Choice of coping strategy also has a significant direct effect on turnover intention, such that emotion-focused coping strategies increase turnover intention (Lewin & Sager, 2010). In this essay, I explore the implications of emotions on turnover. The tenure status of a former employee in a job review indicates a current employee left their job and hence a turnover. B2B salespeople face the ups and downs of their current selling jobs, and those who have undergone the challenge of their former selling jobs may often experience mixed emotions. Understanding the difference between current and former salespeople's emotions might provide insights into reducing salesperson turnover. Salesperson turnover is a significant concern among sales organizations (Mulki & Jaramillo, 2011). Sales positions are challenging to fill and have historically high turnover rates (Bande et al., 2015). High salesperson turnover leaves the firm more vulnerable to competitors (Jaramillo, Mulki, & Boles, 2013; Mulki & Jaramillo, 2011). Losing successful salespeople might create a severe setback (DeConinck, 2011). The sales organization must also bear the subsequent costs associated with the recruitment, selection process, and training (Mulki & Jaramillo, 2011) of new salespeople. Therefore, retaining salespeople is a necessary and advantageous marketing investment for B2B firms.

One way to retain salespeople is to enhance their job satisfaction. Job satisfaction, in turn, is linked to the emotions employees experience (Locke, 1976). A long-standing definition of job satisfaction by Locke (1976) relates job satisfaction to emotion as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of

one's job or job experiences" (p. 1300). In the sales literature, previous research has found a negative relationship between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction (Babakus et al., 1999; Rutherford et al., 2009). In this essay, I adopt Ekman's (1992) six basic emotions: joy, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise, to examine the emotions of B2B salespeople. Ekman (1992) states that emotions occur when talking about a past emotional experience. These six emotions are all relevant when B2B salespeople write a job review about their employment experience at their current or former company. I use the company rating in job reviews to represent general job satisfaction as a proxy. From demystifying B2B salespeople's basic emotions expressed in online job reviews, I explore their linkage to job satisfaction.

In this essay, I aim to respond to the call for more research on the role of emotion in B2B marketing (Bagozzi, 2006) with particular emphasis on the seller's basic emotions. I seek to contribute to the research on emotions in the field of B2B sales by exploring the fundamental emotions expressed by words written by B2B salespeople in online reviews of their jobs. Using Ekman's (1992) classification of basic human emotions and data from more than 50,000 job reviews written by current and former salespeople on Glassdoor, this essay seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What emotions do current and former B2B salespeople express about their jobs and employers?
- 2) To what extent are these expressed emotions similar or different?
- 3) To what extent do the emotions expressed in job reviews help explain job satisfaction?

This essay proceeds as follows: First, I discuss the extant literature on the nature of emotions in B2B selling. Then, I focus specifically on Ekman's classification of basic emotions (1992). Third, I describe a study exploring online reviews of their jobs by an extensive sample of B2B salespeople on the job review website Glassdoor to answer the research questions outlined in the previous paragraph. Next, I discuss measuring emotions using the Canada National Research Council's NRC emotion lexicon (Mohammad & Turney, 2013). After presenting the plan and results of the study, this essay concludes by acknowledging the study's limitations, outlining managerial implications, and identifying avenues for future research.

4.2. Literature Review

Previous research on emotions in B2B marketing reveals five themes: 1) emotional intelligence and salespeople, 2) job stress and burnout, 3) emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction, 4) emotions in the sales process and 5) salespeople and emotion. I will briefly discuss these five areas and then describe the basic emotions used to build the analysis in this study.

4.2.1. Emotional intelligence and salespeople

One of the primary research interests in the sales literature is the sales performance of salespeople. Salespeople's emotional traits and abilities are critical in developing and maintaining business relationships (Bagozzi, 2006). Working well with others and building relationships is essential for sales success (Verbeke, Dietz, & Verwaal, 2011). One of the factors that researchers consider to improve sales performance is emotional intelligence (EI). EI is the ability to understand, use, and manage one's own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and defuse conflict. A prevailing notion is that EI generates a wide variety of favorable outcomes. Researchers have put extensive effort into understanding the sales performance consequences of EI (see Kidwell et al., 2011; McFarland et al., 2016); however, an agreement on the relationship has yet to be reached. Kidwell and colleagues (2021) include a meta-analysis of the EI-salesperson performance relationship and identify 18 studies on the topic. These authors find an approximately equal number of studies that report a nonsignificant or negative correlation as those which convey a positive correlation between EI and salesperson performance.

Other than performance, prior research has investigated other consequences of EI. For example, EI leads to greater customer satisfaction (Kidwell et al., 2011; Martin et al., 2008), buyer-seller interactions (Chen & Jaramillo, 2014; Kidwell et al., 2007), and customer salesperson relationship (Kidwell et al., 2011). Rozell and colleagues (2004) provide evidence of a relationship between EI and customer-orientated sales. Emotionally intelligent salespeople can choose appropriate strategies to respond more efficiently to the emotional demands of various situations (Bande et al., 2015). I will then turn to some of the consequences of the emotional demands of the sales job.

4.2.2. Job stress and burnout

In the sales job, the emotional demands and the large number of interactions can cause strain and affect the job performance of B2B salespeople (Mulki et al., 2015). Selling is often referred to as emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983); emotional labor has negative consequences, such as job stress and burnout for salespeople (Klein, 2021).

Salespeople experience high levels of stress daily (McFarland & Dixon, 2021). It is especially true for professional B2B selling, as the tasks and stressors associated with it can be substantial (Babakus et al., 1999; Lewin and Sager, 2008). First, they may be the victims of rude prospects and rejection (Kemp et al., 2013). Second, salespeople can experience successes and failures on any day, and these quick and unpredictable changes can make their job extremely stressful (Kemp et al., 2013). Third, in a competitive sales environment, salespeople often need to deliver more with fewer resources and are likely to face work overload (Jaramillo, Mulki & Boles, 2011). Fourth, they may have a client failing to move forward with a sale and face incompatible demands from their clients and the organizations (Lewin and Sager, 2008).

If salespeople do not have enough coping resources to deal with the stress of their job, this can lead to burnout over time (McFarland & Dixon, 2021). Salesperson burnout has been a significant concern among sales organizations (Lewin & Sager, 2008), costing businesses hundreds of billions of dollars annually (Lewin & Sager, 2009). Over the decades, researchers have devoted efforts to understanding how salespeople cope with job stress (see Moncrief et al., 1997; Srivastava & Sager, 1999; Nonis & Sager, 2003; Lewin & Sager, 2008; Kraft et al., 2019). However, more research is needed to address the problem, as it can lead to emotional exhaustion, which impacts job satisfaction.

4.2.3. Emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction

Previous research has found a negative relationship between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. Babakus and colleagues (1999) find a significantly negative relationship between emotional exhaustion and overall job satisfaction. Rutherford and colleagues (2009) investigate seven dimensions of salesperson job satisfaction and find that emotional exhaustion relates to five dimensions and

organizational commitment. Job satisfaction is linked with organizational commitment and intention to leave. The results of Rutherford and colleagues' study (2009) indicate that emotional exhaustion impacts propensity to leave indirectly through dimensions of salesperson job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Rutherford et al., 2009).

Other evidence supports the relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention to leave. Boles and colleagues (1997) found that emotional exhaustion was directly linked to propensity to leave. Babakus and colleagues (1999) find a significantly negative relationship between emotional exhaustion and organizational commitment. These authors find that job satisfaction and organizational commitment relate significantly to intention to leave (Babakus et al., 1999). Naumann and colleagues (2000) found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment were linked with propensity to leave. Jaramillo and colleagues (2006) find that emotional exhaustion is directly and significantly related to intentions to quit after accounting for the impact of job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Overall, the literature suggests that increasing job satisfaction improves organizational commitment and intention to leave; understanding emotions could offer insights into job satisfaction and retaining B2B salespeople. Next, I will discuss emotions in the sales process.

4.2.4. Emotions in the sales process

Emotions in the sales process is another stream of sales research, and it recognizes the importance of emotions in the buyer-seller interaction (Andersen & Kumar, 2006; Brown et al., 1997; Kidwell et al., 2011; Kidwell et al., 2007; Rentz et al., 2002). For example, salespeople's display of pleasant emotions to customers affects their performance evaluations (Cote & Morgan, 2002). An organizational decision-making process involves multiple individuals across various departments. Organizational buyers may be driven by logic and emotions (Bagozzi, 2006) because human decision-making often goes through a complicated structure of emotions and rationalizations (Kemp et al., 2018). Kemp and colleagues (2018) have investigated emotions' role in the eight stages of the organizational buying cycle. These authors find that emotions are prevalent at each cycle stage, and various emotions lead to specific buyer behaviors.

Curasi and colleagues' (2018) study also provides evidence that emotions play an important role in B2B sales. These authors explore emotions elicited from key account buying team members during the decision process of awarding multimillion-dollar sales contracts. They find that key account buying team members undergo a diverse range of seven emotions (contentment, discontentment, confidence, surprise, worry, anger, and shame) that affect their decisions. Kidwell and colleagues (2007) study the salesperson's ability to perceive customers' emotions in the buyer-seller interaction. These authors find that high ability to appraise customers' emotions accurately has beneficial effects on selling.

It should be noted that most of the emotion literature on the B2B buyer-seller relationship tends to focus on the buyer's emotions rather than the seller's. To study the dynamics of the buyer-seller interaction, understanding the seller's emotions would also seem worthy of investigation.

4.2.5. Salespeople and emotions

In this essay, I aim to respond to the call for more research on the role of emotion in B2B marketing (Bagozzi, 2006) with particular emphasis on the seller's emotions. In the marketing literature, emotions have been considered a significant influence on the cognitive process (Bagozzi et al., 2010; Bagozzi et al., 1999). However, emotions in the sales literature remain understudied (Bande et al., 2015). Some researchers study emotions broadly. Johnson and colleagues (2021) investigate how salespeople use emotions to build connections and facilitate value proposition co-creation. Locander and colleagues (2014) examine the effect of emotions on adaptive selling. Other researchers study more specific emotions. Mangus and colleagues (2022) focus on two emotions, gratitude, and indebtedness, that salespeople experience. Kumar and colleagues (2018) investigate how job-specific emotions affect the relationship between preset goals and goal achievement. Agnihotri and Krush (2015) examine the impact of a critical social emotion, empathy, on ethical behaviors.

Prior research also covered topics that are relevant to salespeople's emotions. Erevelles and Fukawa (2013) focus on affect, which includes mood and emotion, and how it relates to personal selling and sales management. Nowlin and colleagues (2018) study how affective orientation drives salesperson performance and propose that

emotion is crucial. Emotion is the driving force behind motivation (Brown et al., 1997), and salesperson motivation is a factor in influencing salesperson performance (Badovick et al., 1992). Brown and colleagues (1997) investigate the motivational effects of goal-directed emotions of salespeople. Badovick and colleagues (1992) investigate the impacts of emotional reactions on salesperson motivation and find that emotions affect salesperson motivation. Although these works enhance our understanding of the consequences of salespeople's emotions and their relationships with other constructs, the basic emotions of salespeople per se are not the focus. These basic emotions are what this essay will address, and I will discuss basic emotions in more detail in the next section.

4.2.6. Classification of Basic Emotions

Social scientists have made numerous attempts to distinguish between, classify and define emotions. One of the best-known classifications of emotions is psychologist Paul Ekman (1992), who argues that there are six basic human emotions: joy, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise. He proposed that these primary emotions have many characteristics that distinguish one emotion from another. Ekman (1992) claimed that emotions prepare us to deal with critical events without thinking about them. These emotional responses are unbidden, meaning we don't choose to feel them; they happen to us automatically.

Based on Ekman's (1992) six fundamental emotions, I provide definitions from Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Definitions of Ekman's (1992) Six Fundamental Emotions

Emotions	Definitions
Anger	A strong feeling of displeasure and usually of antagonism (Merriam-Webster, 2014a).
Fear	An unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger (Merriam-Webster, 2014b).
Surprise	The feeling caused by something unexpected or unusual (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)
Disgust	Marked aversion aroused by something highly distasteful (Merriam-Webster, 2014c).
Joy	The emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires (Merriam-Webster, 2014d).
Sad(ness)	Affected with or expressive of grief or unhappiness (Merriam-Webster, 2014e).

What makes people emotional? According to Ekman (1992), emotions occur in response to stimulus (actual, imagined, or re-lived), for example, a physical event, a social interaction, remembering or imagining an event, talking about, thinking about, or physically reenacting a past emotional experience. The research described here focuses on these six emotions, all pertinent to when B2B salespeople talk about and think about a past emotional experience - their selling experience at their company.

To further complicate customer interaction, the emotions of salespeople must be genuine to customers during sales interactions (Chaker et al., 2021; Klein, 2021). But how can researchers get access to the genuine emotions of salespeople? Bagozzi and colleagues' paper (1999) noted that "pure emotions are virtually impossible to obtain in the laboratory or any research setting." However, what makes us emotional varies depending on our shared evolution, cultural influences, and uniquely personal experiences (Ekman, 1992). The six emotions: Anger, Fear, Surprise, Joy, Disgust, and Sadness, form the basis of analysis for this study, and I will describe my research setting and how I will measure these emotions in job reviews written by B2B salespeople in the following section.

4.3. Methodology

Words are associated with emotions. For example, shouting and boiling indicate anger; delightful and yummy express joy; gloom and crying show sadness (Mohammad & Turney, 2013). Therefore, when writing a job review, words that B2B salespeople use are also associated with emotions. These emotions are the focus of this study.

4.3.1. Data

I analyzed the 50,496 job reviews written by B2B salespeople from 294 companies on Glassdoor that I used in Essays 1 and 2. Using textual data from Glassdoor can offer ecological validity, the "extent to which what happens in a study reflects what really happens in everyday life - for more precise measurement" (Shiota & Kalat, 2018; p.30). It is almost impossible to evoke pure emotions in a laboratory or research setting (Bagozzi et al., 1999). Writing a job review about their employment resembles a real-life situation in which B2B salespeople feel emotions that may not be

specific, and B2B salespeople may respond to them differently (Shiota & Kalat, 2018; p.25).

4.3.2. Method

I measured the emotions expressed in the job reviews written by B2B salespeople by adopting the NRC emotion lexicon developed by Mohammad and Turney (2013). Among 18 studies, Kidwell and colleagues (2021) identified on EI and performance relationship, and two-thirds employ subjective (i.e., trait-based) measures that may be subject to susceptibility to faking and social desirability bias (Day & Carroll 2008). However, using the NRC emotion lexicon (Mohammad & Turney, 2013) to measure the emotions expressed in B2B salespeople's job reviews has no such issues. Previous research has adopted the NRC emotion lexicon to measure online textual data; see Yu and Wang (2015) as an example.

4.4. Findings

I will first discuss the emotions shared by current employees and then those conveyed by former employees.

Table 4.2. Average Score of Emotions in Job Reviews based on Company Rating (Current Employees)

Company Rating (1-5 Star)	Emotions					
	Anger	Fear	Surprise	Disgust	Joy	Sadness
1	2.05	1.90	1.67	1.46	3.22	1.83
2	1.50	1.41	1.95	0.99	3.65	1.36
3	1.22	1.15	2.70	0.62	4.80	1.09
4	0.88	0.88	2.90	0.40	5.16	0.85
5	0.70	0.72	2.20	0.31	4.62	0.71

According to Table 4.2, I observe two intriguing patterns. First, there is a monotonically decreasing trend as the company rating goes up from one star to five stars for all negative emotions: Anger, Fear, Disgust, and Sadness. I will use Anger to illustrate. Anger scores 2.05 for 1-star company ratings and drops to 1.50 for 2-star company ratings, 1.22 for 3-star company ratings, 0.88 for 4-star company ratings, and 0.70 for 5-star company ratings. Second, there is no monotonic trend for the positive emotions: Surprise and Joy. The scores for Surprise and Joy rise as the company rating

increases from one star, reaching the peak at four stars and then declining at five stars. I will take Surprise as an example. Surprise records 1.67 for 1-star company ratings and increases to 1.95 for 2-star company ratings and 2.70 for 3-star company ratings, reaching the peak of 2.90 for 4-star company ratings. The score of Surprise then drops to 2.20 for 5-star company ratings.

I will turn to B2B salespeople who have left their companies to see whether there will be similar patterns in their job reviews.

Table 4.3. Average Score of Emotions in Job Reviews based on Company Rating (Former Employees)

Company Rating (1-5 Star)	Emotions					
	Anger	Fear	Surprise	Disgust	Joy	Sadness
1	2.24	2.14	1.70	1.88	3.06	1.94
2	1.58	1.48	2.00	1.06	3.59	1.36
3	1.39	1.26	2.81	0.78	4.82	1.17
4	0.97	0.96	3.09	0.46	5.22	0.89
5	0.85	0.75	2.85	0.39	5.32	0.84

Table 4.3 shows a similar pattern for all four negative emotions but not for the two positive ones. I see a monotonically decreasing trend for all four negative emotions as the company rating goes up from one star to five stars. For example, Fear records a score of 2.14 for 1-star company ratings and decreases to 1.48 for 2-star company ratings, 1.26 for 3-star company ratings, 0.96 for 4-star company ratings, and 0.75 for 5-star company ratings. Again, I do not observe the same pattern for the two positive emotions, Surprise and Joy. Former employees express their Surprise similarly to current employees but share their Joy differently. For former employees, only the score for Surprise rises as the company rating increases from one star and reaches the peak at four stars and then declines to five stars. However, Joy is monotonically increasing. Joy records a score of 3.06 for 1-star company ratings, which continues to soar and peaks at 5.32 for 5-star ratings.

To answer the second research question: To what extent are emotions expressed by current and former B2B salespeople similar or different? I provide Figure 4.1 which reflects the emotion scores in each cell in both Table 4.2 and Table 4.3.

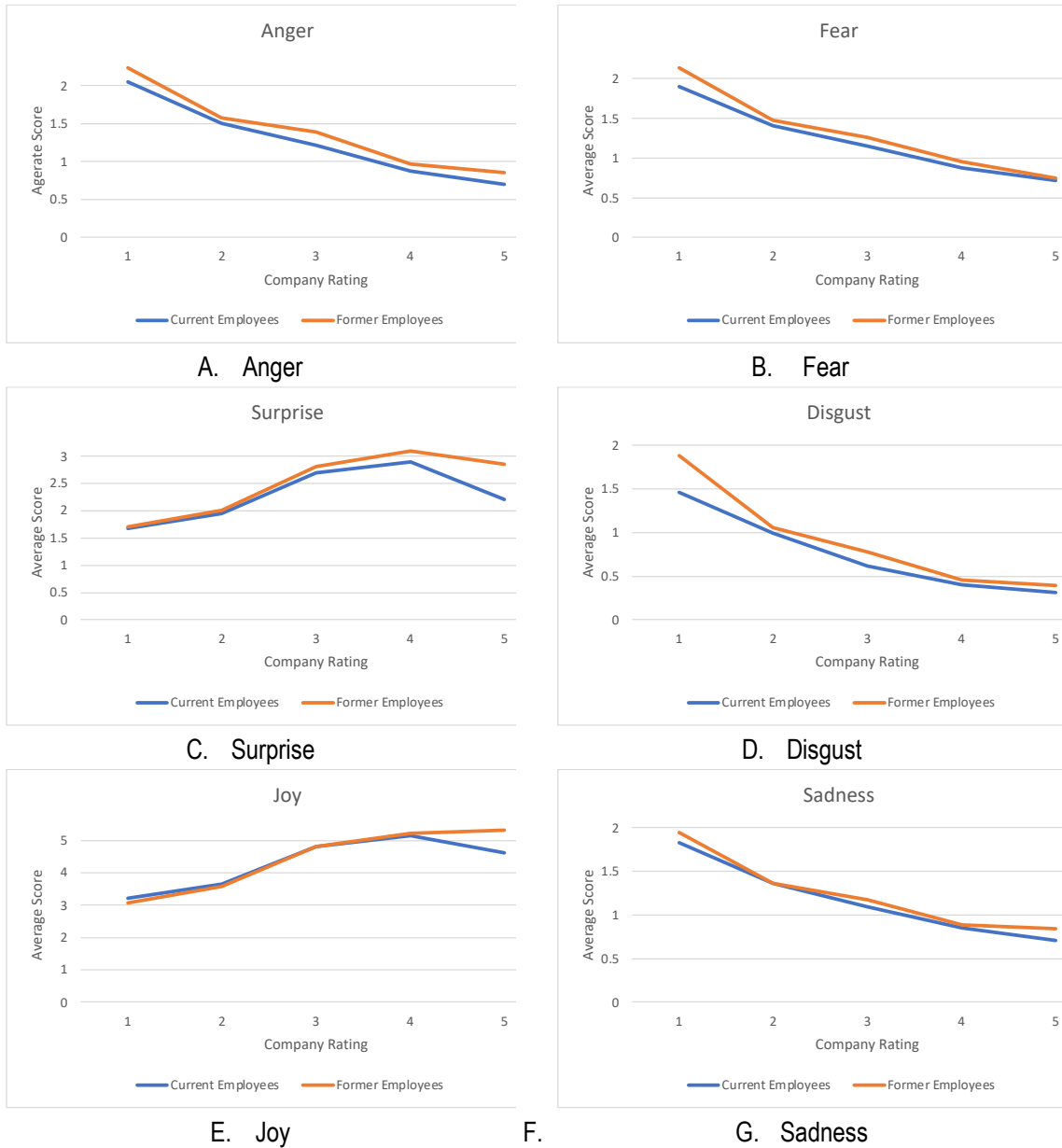


Figure 4.1. Average Score of Emotions in Job Reviews based on Company Rating (Current Employees versus Former Employees)

For the four negative emotions: Anger, Fear, Disgust, and Sadness, the score for Former Employees is higher than that for Current Employees at every single level of Company Rating. I will take Anger as an example. For former and current employees, Anger scores, respectively: 2.24 and 2.05 at 1-star company ratings; 1.58 and 1.50 at 2-star company ratings; 1.39 and 1.22 at 3-star company ratings; 0.97 and 0.88 at 4-star company ratings; 0.85 and 0.70 at 5-star company ratings. Fear, Disgust, and Sadness

all have the same pattern, except Sadness scores 1.36 for both former and current employees when the company rating is two stars.

Surprisingly, like the negative emotions, the score of Surprise for Former Employees is also higher than that for Current Employees at every single level of Company Rating. For Joy, there is a "split" at 3-star. Former employees express less Joy than current employees when the company rating is one and two stars. However, former employees turn the tables at 3-star company rating and score higher in Joy than current employees. Joy scores 4.82 and 4.80 for former and current employees, respectively, when the company rating is three stars. At 4-star, Joy scores 5.22 and 5.16 for former and current employees, respectively. The difference continues to expand at 5-star company rating: Joy scores 5.32 and 4.62 for former and current employees, respectively. After determining how emotions differ between current and former employees based on company rating, I will discuss how they express their emotions by their choice of words next.

One of the advantages of using the NRC emotion lexicon to measure emotions is the ability to go back to the job review to look for B2B salespeople who expressed the highest and lowest scores on the six emotions and determine the precise words that they used. I provide job review examples that scored extremely low and high for the six emotions of current employees (Table 4.4) and former employees (Table 4.5). I will first discuss the examples of current employees, followed by former employees.

B2B salespeople who are currently at the job that they reviewed and whose reviews score extremely high in each of the six emotions are in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. Examples of Job Reviews that score Extremely Low versus High in Emotions (Current Employees)

Emotions	Review with Extremely Low Score	Review with Extremely High Score
Anger	Title: Would recommend to anyone Pros: Takes care of their employees Cons: There are no cons for this position (0)	Title: bad company stay away they will cheat you out of your money Pros: don't work don't deal with them bad company Cons: bad company they will cheat people out money Advice: be fair and honest your business will do better (22.22)

Fear	Title: Great company Pros: Great boss, coworkers and money. Cant complain Cons: No cons. Great money and atmosphere (0)	Title: Low pay, bad culture Pros: Honestly cannot think of any Cons: Low Pay Bad Culture Even Worse Management (17.65)
Surprise	Title: Sales Pros: Great if you hit your numbers Cons: a lot of stress to hit numbers (0)	Title: Sales Pros: Good company, good people good environment Cons: Pay was not so good (30.77)
Disgust	Title: A great growing company Pros: Great people to work with. A fun, energetic team. Management is fantastic. Nothing negative to say at all. Cons: A big company, so it's tough to navigate at first. Once you have contacts, though, it's smooth sailing. (0)	Title: Horrible company Pros: No pros at all horrible company to work for Cons: Horrible company do not offer employees any type of perks. Unhappy employees equal unhappy customers (18.52)
Joy	Title: Professional marketing and sales company. Pros: Top quality products in all markets. Cons: A little too much red tape, but to be expected from a company of this size. (0)	Title: Excellent Company Pros: excellent work atmosphere. Great salary and bonus structure Cons: excellent company to work for (31.25)
Sadness	Title: Sales Executive Pros: Great company and brand!!! Does the right thing with clients and employees!! Cons: Nothing significant ...some processes can be a bit tedious. (0)	Title: Terrible Job Pros: Good pay and good money Cons: Terrible hours and terrible management!! (21.43)

The number in brackets is the score of the emotion for the job review.

The job review that expressed very high Anger scored 22.22. This current employee is very angry because they feel cheated by the company and think it is not "fair and honest." We can sense their Anger by repeated words like "bad" and "cheat" in the job review. Perhaps this salesperson did not receive the commission they were entitled to.

The job review that was very high in Fear scored 17.65. This current employee is fearful, probably because of the uncertainty they can see in the job. "Low pay," "bad culture," and "even worse management" are some factors of an unfavorable working environment, especially when one cannot think of any pros at the job.

The job review that expressed extremely high Surprise scored 30.77. This current employee is extremely surprised to learn that "pay was not so good." The stark contrast between "good company, good people," "good environment," and the pay magnifies the Surprise. Perhaps this B2B salesperson was given the impression that income would be good at the interview.

The job review that recorded very high Disgust scored 18.52. "Horrible company" disgusts this current employee because there are "No pros at all," and the company does "not offer employees any type of perks." They also pointed out that "Unhappy employees equal unhappy customers" – something so straightforward that we can expect all sales managers should have known already. However, not many of them practice it.

The extremely Joyful job review recorded a score of 31.25. This current employee is so joyful to work for the "excellent company" that they point that out twice. "Great salary and bonus structure" and an "excellent work atmosphere" make a workplace full of Joy for this B2B salesperson.

This very sad job review had a score of 21.43, "Terrible job" makes this current employee very sad. We can tell the Sadness from the repeated use of the word "terrible" and exclamation marks. "Good pay and good money" cannot compensate for "Terrible hours and terrible management!!"

How about words former B2B salespeople use when writing a job review? Reviews that score extremely high in each of the six emotions are in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Examples of Job Reviews that score Extremely Low versus High in Emotions (Former Employees)

Emotions	Review with Extremely Low Score	Review with Extremely High Score
Anger	Title: Workplace Culture Pros: Great Culture, Work Hard Play Hard Cons: Leadership, work life at times (0)	Title: Terrible Pros: Money flexibility benefits growth management Cons: Time pressure untrustworthy steal ruined my career (38.46)
Fear	Title: Can't complain Pros: Pretty cool and laid back but can hard at times Cons: none i can't complain about a lot.	Title: AVOID Pros: Good from the outside only Cons: Nightmare avoid like a plague (36.36)

	(0)	
Surprise	Title: Great place to work Pros: Plenty products with a wide variety Cons: Plenty work, keeps you extremely busy (0)	Title: Decent Pros: Good place with good people Cons: Bonus scheme was not good (36.36)
Disgust	Title: Great place, move around a lot Pros: Great benefits and salary a lot of areas to grow Cons: Move around a lot for promotion (0)	Title: Rubbish Pros: Worse job ever ever ever Cons: Long boring awful terrible rubbish (36.36)
Joy	Title: Not great Pros: Commission packages were generally incentivizing. Cons: Low moral. Commission structure changes frequently. (0)	Title: Good Pros: Friendly staff good salary good management Cons: No benefits no set pay schedule (46.15)
Sadness	Title: Great Pros: Big company lots of perks Cons: Number was hard to hit depending on territory. (0)	Title: bad managers Pros: good product and bad management Cons: bad management and bad culture (33.33)

The number in brackets is the score of the emotion for the job review.

"Untrustworthy" is another great challenge at work if you do not know who you can trust, be it your supervisor, colleagues, or clients. This former employee was extremely angry because things were probably beyond their control at the job, such as "Time pressure." In addition, some people "steal" from this former employee. As a result, their career was "ruined." This extremely angry job review scored 38.46 in Anger.

The job review that expressed extreme Fear scored 36.36. The title - "AVOID" and all in capital letters - says how extremely fearful this former employee was. They elaborated why one must "avoid" this company "like a plague" as it was a "nightmare," and there was nothing good about the company from the inside.

This extremely surprising job review recorded 36.36 in Surprise. This former employee is highly surprised that the "Bonus scheme was not good." Such a vast Surprise contrasts with the job review's "decent" title and the pros "Good place with good people." Perhaps this B2B salesperson thought pay would be good at the interview.

The job review that expressed extreme Disgust scored 36.36. This former employee was highly disgusted by the "Rubbish" company and perhaps other "rubbish"

they had to deal with at work. The B2B salesperson intensified such Disgust by writing something intense and in a repeated word - "Worse job ever ever ever" – as a pro. "Long," "boring," "awful," and "terrible" tell us more about why the job disgusted them so much.

The job review scored extremely high in Joy, 46.15. This former employee was exceptionally joyful about all the "Good" things at work. "Friendly staff," "good salary," together with "good management" sound like a dream job. "No benefits" and "no set pay schedule" did not hurt the Joy of working at this company.

This very sad job review recorded 33.33 in Sadness. This former employee was extremely sad to work with "bad managers," They had to repeat "bad management" with pros and cons. The pros of having a "good product" did not help to relieve the Sadness due to "bad culture."

Now I turn to the last question: do the emotions expressed in job reviews predict the company rating? To answer this question, I adopted multiple linear regression by using the company rating as the dependent variable and the six emotions - Anger, Fear, Surprise, Disgust, Joy, and Sadness – as independent variables. I ran one regression for current and former employees, respectively, and I will discuss the results in that order.

Table 4.6. Regression of Company Rating by Emotions (Current Employees)

Effect Summary				
Source	LogWorth			PValue
Anger	17.484			0.00000
Fear	4.937			0.00001
Surprise	9.918			0.00000
Disgust	60.841			0.00000
Joy	60.480			0.00000
Sadness	4.742			0.00002
Summary of Fit				
RSquare			0.066809	
RSquare Adj			0.066609	
Root Mean Square Error			1.186033	
Mean of Response			3.611897	
Observations (or Sum Wgts)			27990	
Analysis of Variance				
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Ratio

Model	6	2818.081	469.680	333.8941
Error	27983	39362.957	1.407	Prob > F
C. Total	27989	42181.038		<.0001*

Parameter Estimates

Term	Estimate	Std Error	t Ratio	Prob> t
Intercept	3.6420897	0.0107	340.38	<.0001*
Anger	-0.042807	0.004916	-8.71	<.0001*
Fear	-0.022269	0.005077	-4.39	<.0001*
Surprise	-0.020179	0.003133	-6.44	<.0001*
Disgust	-0.115474	0.006957	-16.60	<.0001*
Joy	0.0383237	0.002316	16.55	<.0001*
Sadness	-0.021538	0.005023	-4.29	<.0001*

The six emotions explain company rating variance significantly for current employees (p-value <0.0001). The regression model is significant (p-value <0.0001) with an R square of 0.0668. The adjusted R square is almost the same, with a value of 0.0666. The parameter estimates for Anger, Fear, Surprise, Disgust, Joy, and Sadness are -0.043, -0.022, -0.020, -0.115, 0.038, and -0.022, respectively, indicating that Joy is the only emotion that increases as company rating goes up from one star to five stars.

Table 4.7. Regression of Company Rating by Emotions (Former Employees)

Effect Summary				
Source	LogWorth			PValue
Anger	13.20			0.00000
Fear	10.66			0.00000
Surprise	0.20			0.62638
Disgust	52.83			0.00000
Joy	64.56			0.00000
Sadness	1.47			0.03421
Summary of Fit				
RSquare		0.086821		
RSquare Adj		0.086578		
Root Mean Square Error		1.209286		
Mean of Response		3.122462		
Observations (or Sum Wgts)		22505		
Analysis of Variance				
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Ratio
Model	6	3128.046	521.341	356.5036
Error	22498	32900.450	1.462	Prob > F
C. Total	22504	36028.496		<.0001*

Parameter Estimates				
Term	Estimate	Std Error	t Ratio	Prob> t
Intercept	3.0688075	0.012154	252.49	<.0001*
Anger	-0.039105	0.00521	-7.51	<.0001*
Fear	-0.035536	0.005308	-6.70	<.0001*
Surprise	0.0017832	0.003663	0.49	0.6264
Disgust	-0.097531	0.006314	-15.45	<.0001*
Joy	0.0472317	0.002759	17.12	<.0001*
Sadness	0.0114951	0.005428	2.12	0.0342*

Would all the six emotions indicate company rating for former employees, too? The answer is no, and the only emotion that is not indicative of company ratings is Surprise. Anger, Fear, Disgust, Joy, and Sadness significantly explain the company rating variance. The P-values for Anger, Fear, Disgust, and Joy are all less than 0.0001, while the p-value for Sadness is 0.0342. The regression model is significant (p-value <0.0001) with an R square of 0.0868. The adjusted R square is almost the same, with a value of 0.0866. The parameter estimates for Anger, Fear, Surprise, Disgust, Joy, and Sadness are -0.039, -0.035, 0.002, -0.098, 0.047, and 0.011, respectively. While it is intuitive to see that Joy rises as the company rating goes up from one star to five stars, it may seem counterintuitive to see Sadness increase as the company rating increases. I will discuss the intriguing findings from my findings in the following section.

4.5. Discussion: Limitations, Managerial Implications, and Avenues for Future Research

4.5.1. General Discussion

This study offers some compelling evidence to answer my research questions. First, for these four negative emotions, the score for Former Employees is higher than that for Current Employees at all company ratings, except for the Sadness score of 1.36 for both former and current employees when the company rating is two stars. It seems intuitive that B2B salespeople who left their jobs experienced stronger negative emotions than those who stayed. To follow the same logic, one may expect B2B salespeople who remain at their jobs to experience stronger positive emotions than those who have left. Quite the contrary, the score of Surprise for Former Employees is also higher than that for Current Employees at all company ratings. Even though Former Employees experience less Joy than current employees, it happens only at low levels of company

ratings: 1-star and 2-star. Former Employees show more Joy than Current Employees as the company rating hits three stars and more. It is more accurate to say former employees generally have stronger emotions in all company ratings, except for Sadness at 2-star and Joy at 1- and 2-star.

Secondly, there is a monotonically decreasing trend as the company rating goes up from one star to five stars for all negative emotions for current and former employees. However, there is no monotonic trend for positive emotions except Joy for former employees. The scores of Surprise and Joy for current employees rise as the company rating increases from one star, reaching the peak at four stars and then declining at five stars. The score of Surprise shows a similar pattern for former employees. However, the score of Joy for former employees is monotonically increasing. One possible explanation is that writing a review on a previous company allows B2B salespeople to look retrospectively at the job's highlights. Former employees are more clear-headed in recalling the memory without being in the heat of the moment. They can comment on the position more objectively. As a result, former employees may be able to reconcile the reasons why they left the job and the Joy they had from the job, especially when they were not dissatisfied with their experience (when the company rating is three stars or more).

Words that B2B salespeople use when they review their companies portray their emotions to life. While some words, such as good, great, bad, terrible, and horrible, are expected, others, such as fair, honest, cheat, and steal, are less so. Although the examples I provided are minimal compared to the number of job reviews (50,495) I analyzed, I offer a glimpse into what B2B salespeople care about and satisfy with their jobs, such as pay, hours, colleagues, managers, and culture. It adds more evidence to Lam and colleagues' finding of four clusters (2022): Work Rewards, Work-Life Balance, Workplace Malaise, and Toxic Interactions. Likely, many B2B salespeople cannot make ends meet by relying solely on their base salary. Bonus and commissions are the keys to improving the quality of life. Having an unlucrative bonus structure or taking commission away from B2B salespeople might become the deal-breaker and trigger for resignation.

All six emotions explain company rating variance significantly for current employees. However, Surprise does not significantly explain the company rating

variance for former employees. Perhaps former employees looking back at their previous job, what had happened is no longer unexpected or unusual. On the other hand, among the significant indicators for current and former employees, Joy goes in the same direction as company rating. Sadness also increases as the company rating increases for former employees. One possible explanation is that former employees may not realize the satisfaction and Joy they had at their previous company until they wrote a review about it. Consequently, the more satisfied they were with their job, the more Sadness they may experience because of missing out on all the Joy they could have. They may now work for a company that is not as good as their previous company and hence are looking out again, for example, by browsing Glassdoor.

4.5.2. Managerial Implications

The data I obtained from Glassdoor delivers insights into the genuine emotions of B2B salespeople who are ensuring or have endured a demanding sales job. First, since former employees generally have stronger emotions in all company ratings than current, except for Sadness at 2-star and Joy at 1- and 2-star, B2B sales managers must pay attention to the intensity of the emotions of their salespeople. Company rating is a reasonable proxy for job satisfaction (Lam et al., 2022), and B2B sales managers must notice the difference between the emotional level of salespeople. The four negative emotions are more straightforward. Former employees have stronger negative emotions, which may be why they are no longer with the company. Sales managers should periodically check with salespeople about their level of job satisfaction. At the same level of job satisfaction, it is fair to say those who express stronger Anger, Fear, Disgust, or Sadness are more likely to look elsewhere. In contrast, Surprise and, in particular, Joy is more ambiguous. Even though these are positive emotions, they are more vital for former employees than current employees, so it is easy for sales managers to overlook them. Sales managers should pay attention when something unexpected or unusual happens that could trigger salespeople's Surprise. At the same satisfaction level, the more surprised salespeople react, the more likely they might leave the job. Joy is the most complicated emotion among the six. Even though happiness is not tricky to observe, sales managers must look closer at Joy because when salespeople's satisfaction is more than average (3-star or more), those who appear more joyful might be more likely to quit.

Another tricky observation for sales managers is the overall trend of emotions as salespeople's satisfaction increases for positive emotions as the company rating rises from one star to five stars for both current and former employees. The scores of Surprise and Joy for current employees increases as the company rating rises from one star, peaks at four stars, and then drops to five stars. Surprise for former employees demonstrates a similar pattern. There appears to be a "ceiling effect" in these three situations when the company rating is 4-star. The drop in the scores under these situations could become a false alarm for sales managers. What complicates the observation even more, is that Joy keeps increasing for former employees. Therefore, sales managers should pay attention to these potential confusions when employees are more than quite satisfied (4-star or more).

Sadness is another emotion that I found intriguing from my data. Sadness of current employees decreases as the company rating increases, but that of former employees goes in the opposite direction. It may seem paradoxical as the Joy of former employees also rises along with the company rating. How can one feel more sad and joyful at the same time as their satisfaction increases? Mixed positive and negative emotions are uncommon among Westerners, although people do report them occasionally (Shiota, M. N., & Kalat, 2018; p.82). Perhaps, such a conflict of emotions puts B2B salespeople into an emotional dilemma. Seeing no easy exit for their emotions might lead B2B salespeople to jump ship. Sales managers should pay attention to those who show a high level of Joy and Sadness. Ekman (1992) points out that even though we cannot choose the emotions we feel, we can select how we respond through emotional awareness. To equip sales managers with the skill to spot all the observations on salespeople's emotions discussed in this section, selling organizations must offer training to managers. Training is also helpful for salespeople to learn how to handle their emotions, especially when they experience emotions that may seem conflicting. After discussing the implications of salespeople's emotions, I will talk about the words salespeople use when writing job reviews.

Words that B2B salespeople used when they reviewed their companies illustrate what a typical day looks like in their selling job. Some words, such as fair, honest, cheat, and steal, seem to alert what is going on in the job. Sales managers should conduct regular internal reviews to see if anything unfair and dishonest occurs in various sales areas—job interviews, working hours and vacation days, commission calculation, etc.

How can hiring managers accurately describe the hours, earning forecast, and internal collaboration/ competition at the job interview? How many interviews should there be, and who should be the interviewer at different stages of the hiring process? These are some decisions that sales managers must make to manage the expectation of job candidates. When misconduct such as cheating and stealing happens, what is the reporting channel? How can sales managers discourage these behaviors from reoccurring? If sales managers do not take action, salespeople will experience negative emotions. They will be very angry, fearful, disgusted, and sad, so they will be more willing to seek a new opportunity.

Apart from findings, this essay demonstrates that a large volume of public online available data, when used in conjunction with robust natural language processing and statistical software, can offer more generalizability and statistical precision (Pitt et al., 2018). The methodology here offers sales managers insights on how to shed quantitative light on qualitative data. It permits transforming qualitative data into quantitative insights into different salesforce deployment strategies. In addition, the methodology is relatively simple and inexpensive. NRC emotion lexicon is an open-sourced dictionary and free to access for the public. It generates scores on emotions to allow sales managers to investigate how current and former B2B salespeople feel. Demystifying the emotions of those who left is especially helpful in identifying what sales managers can do and avoid doing to retain B2B salespeople. Those involved in salesforce deployment, be they sales managers, recruiters, or trainers, might use these invaluable insights to prepare better B2B salespeople to be on board or help them cope with various challenges through on-the-job training.

4.5.3. Limitations

Although this essay provides some insights into the methodology, there are some limitations. First, I rely on a single data source – Glassdoor – in this study. Perhaps some characteristics of people who write job reviews on Glassdoor will be problematic. For example, writing a review on Glassdoor is the first thing one must do when browsing the website. These acts are what people often do when they are curious to see what is available in the job market. Perhaps some are actively looking out, while others are not. It does not mean those who have not written any job reviews on Glassdoor are not

looking around. However, I tried to compensate for such a potential problem using a considerably large sample size.

One of the strengths of textual data from Glassdoor is anonymity, as it protects authors of job reviews from having consequences of sharing insider information to alert potential job candidates. It is especially crucial for current employees as the punishment could be termination. However, anonymity is a double-edged sword. While millions of employees worldwide welcome the anonymity policy, others question it and the consequent authenticity of the job reviews. For example, in July 2022, a California court ordered Glassdoor to hand over authors' identities who shared their negative experiences working for New Zealand toy giant Zuru (McClure, 2022). Like any other online reviews, I did not and could not judge the authenticity of job reviews on Glassdoor, but I tried to mitigate this by using a large sample of companies.

I did not apply any experiment in the methodology of this study. As a result, I cannot and do not aim to claim any causation in the findings of this study. What I strive to do is to offer various possible explanations of the phenomena. The interpretations I offer are correlations. For example, former employees have stronger negative emotions than current employees, which may be why they are no longer with the company. It is also possible that people who have left their jobs are more willing to share their negative emotions strongly.

Researchers and sales managers should consider the above limitations when interpreting this study's results. Nevertheless, the findings of the research may provide insights to sales managers. These findings, combined with the limitations discussed in this section, may offer future ideas for researchers to consider.

4.5.4. Avenues for Future Research

The research conducted in this study, the findings, and the limitations, suggest several avenues for future research. First, researchers can conduct experiments, longitudinal studies, or interviews to investigate causality. There are several intriguing findings that researchers can explore further as research questions. For example, why did Former Employees show more Joy than Current Employees when the company rating is three stars or more? Why doesn't Surprise explain company rating variance

significantly for Former Employees? Answers to these questions can potentially help retain B2B salespeople.

Second, to further mitigate the potential characteristics of people who write job reviews on Glassdoor, I suggest combining job reviews from Glassdoor with textual data from other data sources, such as Reddit. Many subreddit pages target different audiences in sales on Reddit. For example, *r/sales*, *r/b2b_sales*, and *r/salesjobs*. Researchers and sales managers can obtain textual data from a subreddit that caters to their research questions and managerial problems.

The words B2B salespeople use when talking about their companies illustrate their typical day in their selling job. In this study, terms such as fair, honest, cheat, and steal - seem to alert what is happening on the job. These words together generate a theme that might point researchers and sales managers to ethical issues in selling. Coding textual data into themes could help create themes to dive into specific hiring, training, and compensation policies for salesforce deployment. In this example, how to select salespeople with high moral standards, improve salespeople's moral reasoning, allocate territory, client, or account allocation fairly, design a reasonable commission structure, and prevent and punish cheating and stealing, etc.

Regarding methodology, researchers can analyze qualitative data using other content analysis tools, such as Linguistics Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC); see Vine et al., 2020. Researchers can also apply other statistical tools to analyze quantitative data in various ways. For example, researchers can use structural equation modeling to establish a path diagram of constructs of interest, latent cluster analysis to explore segments of B2B salespeople, and data visualization to assign salespeople to more homogenous groups graphically. These methods can help to provide meaning from an extensive amount of unstructured online textual data.

4.6. Conclusion

The sales literature traditionally focuses on the sales performance of B2B salespeople and relevant constructs, such as emotional intelligence, job stress, and burnout. I pointed out that emotion is also crucial because it is the driving force behind motivation (Brown et al., 1997), and salesperson motivation is a critical factor that

impacts salesperson performance (Badovick et al., 1992). This essay aims to answer Bagozzi's (2006) call for more research on the role of emotion in B2B marketing. Most studies relevant to B2B salespeople's emotions mainly focus on the buyer's perspective, i.e., customers, not the seller, i.e., salespeople. In addition, these works do not emphasize the basic emotions of salespeople per se. In this essay, I go back to the basics and look at the fundamental emotions of B2B salespeople by using Ekman's (1992) six basic emotions classification. I adopted the NRC emotion lexicon (Mohammad & Turney, 2013) to measure the emotions expressed in more than 50,000 job reviews submitted by B2B salespeople to Glassdoor. I found several intriguing patterns from this extensive data. First, former employees show more joy than current employees when the company rating is three stars or more. Second, while all six emotions explain company rating variance significantly for current employees, all emotions but Surprise explain company rating variance significantly for former employees. Third, Joy and Sadness increase as the company rating increases for former employees. Then I provided some possible explanations for these counterintuitive results. Based on the study's results, I offered several managerial implications for sales managers to improve their salesforce deployment. Researchers should notice the limitations of this study while interpreting the study results. I conclude this essay by suggesting several ideas for future research for researchers to consider.

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Chapter 5.

Conclusion

5.1. Findings

Salespeople are vital to the success of B2B firms. Reducing turnover and improving job satisfaction is critically important given the significant expense of recruiting, training, and employing B2B salespeople and the benefits of retaining a motivated salesforce. B2B firms can benefit from management insights that the analysis of online reviews can give. To enhance our understanding of B2B salespeople's employment experiences, in this dissertation, I analyzed over 50,000 job reviews from Glassdoor.com written by B2B salespeople. I offered several intriguing findings that are summarized as follows:

In the first essay of this dissertation, I used a dictionary-based content analysis tool known as LIWC2015 to analyze the employment stories expressed in over 50,000 job reviews and their language patterns. I identified four corporate cultures present in B2B salesforces: *Work Rewards* which prioritizes progression at work and a desire for achievement and rewards; *Work-Life Balance* which balances both career progression and personal life; *Workplace Malaise* which erodes wellbeing and relates to burnout and illness; and the *Toxic Interactions* cluster links to conflict or drama.

The second essay of this dissertation explored the relationship between the nature of the corporate cultures of 100 B2B firms and the characteristics of language used in job reviews written by their current and former employees. I created a corporate values map based on 100 B2B firms' scores on the Big 9 cultural values (*agility, collaboration, customer orientation, diversity, execution, innovation, integrity, performance, and respect*) and discovered two orientations (people and process). I fitted linguistic characteristics of how these employees write job reviews on the corporate values map.

In the third essay of this dissertation, I shifted the focus from the corporate culture of B2B firms to the emotions of B2B salespeople. I explored the fundamental emotions of B2B salespeople expressed in job reviews and found several interesting

patterns. First, former employees show more joy than current employees when the company rating is three stars or more. Second, while all six emotions explain company rating variance significantly for current employees, all emotions but Surprise explain company rating variance significantly for former employees. Third, Joy and Sadness increase as the company rating rises for former employees.

5.2. Theoretical Contributions

This dissertation offers evidence to support and broadens the horizon of our understanding of narrative psychology. My concept of employment experience originates from narrative psychology, whose premise is that humans naturally organize information in a story format (Padgett & Allen, 1997). Humans naturally think narratively (Weick, 1995) and make sense of conversations, events, and outcomes by telling stories (Woodside et al., 2008). Telling a story about their employment experience can help B2B salespeople seek clarity about their jobs. The study demonstrates that narrative psychology can further our understanding of sales management in the B2B environment. B2B salespeople think narratively when writing job reviews on Glassdoor. The text of the job reviews explains what B2B salespeople think and feel about their jobs to a greater extent than the simple company ratings they give. In addition to the company ratings, the narratives allow me to identify four corporate cultures. I demonstrated that writing styles and emotions also matter. The four corporate cultures are distinct in analytical thinking, clout, authenticity, and emotional tone. While some reviews seem paradoxical, with a low rating for Work Rewards and Work-Life Balance and a high rating for Workplace Malaise and Toxic Interactions, the narrative speaks louder than the rating. My findings advocate further research on the linguistic features of narratives. Narrative theory can help researchers look further into the mysteries of salesforce management.

5.3. Methodological Contributions

Apart from theoretical contribution, this dissertation showcases a method for extracting insight from large datasets. It offers a model for firms considering using automated text analysis to 'listen' to their employees. It demonstrates how to shed quantitative light on qualitative data in salesforce deployment strategies. It illustrates how a large volume of publicly available data can be analyzed by natural language

processing and statistical software to offer more generalizability and statistical precision. The method is also discreet and does not intrude into the busy lives of B2B salespeople. Apart from solving the problem of accessing salespeople, job reviews may offer a more accurate description of the corporate culture than what most firms portray through external corporate communications such as company websites and brochures. Analyzing job reviews from Glassdoor also allowed me to include opinions from both sides – highly satisfied and highly unsatisfied – as well as neutral reviews in between. In this way, researchers can obtain a more balanced perspective.

5.4. Managerial Implications

This dissertation also provides sales organizations and managers with a number of managerial implications that can support their salesforce deployment. My findings highlight the need to be authentic in describing the culture, assess cultural fit, use negative feedback for constructive and positive change, and observe and make sense of the emotions of B2B salespeople.

Companies should be authentic in describing their culture. Some companies preach their corporate culture without practicing it. Some cultures are inevitably more appealing to employees than others, and no organization would admit that its culture was unattractive. Yet, these undesirable cultures exist – meaning that whatever cultures these organizations claim to have are not the cultures in place. Not being truthful when portraying their culture will only cause more harm than benefit in the long run.

Assessing cultural fit can help companies to attract and retain talent. While a company puts effort into making its culture desirable, if recruits cannot identify with cultural values, these newcomers may change the corporate cultural values. Companies can locate a mismatch when employees describe the corporate culture on social or job review platforms like Glassdoor. Regularly monitoring what B2B salespeople say about their workplaces on these platforms can help.

Job reviews with low ratings are inevitable. Companies should carefully assess these job reviews to extract insights on making constructive and positive changes. By analyzing negative reviews, companies can investigate what they are doing poorly from

the perspective of employees and the cause of low ratings. Companies can also keep a track record of job reviews to obtain longitudinal data over time.

Insights into the difference between the emotions of current and former employees can contribute to maintaining a successful B2B salesforce. B2B sales managers must be able to notice the intensity of the emotions of their salespeople compared with the level of their job satisfaction. To equip sales managers with the skill to spot all the observations on salespeople's emotions, companies should offer training to managers.

5.5. Limitations

Like any research, this dissertation has several limitations, and researchers and managers must consider them while interpreting the results.

Glassdoor is the single source of data. As a result, there might be systematic characteristics of B2B salespeople who write job reviews on this platform, and some of these characteristics might be problematic. Categorizing some companies as B2B might be more challenging than others because they also have B2C businesses. Some jobs of a sales nature do not use the word "sales" in the job titles. In addition, I could not determine if any job reviews were fake or written by robots. However, I tried to mitigate these issues by scraping job reviews within the sales function and collecting a sample size of over 50,000.

The nature of this research, which relies on voluntary participation by respondents, has a potential problem of response bias, with a disproportionate response at the ends of a response spectrum. However, I did not find strong evidence of this in my sample – among approximately 50,000 job reviews, the category with the highest number of reviews is four-star (about 28%), followed by three-star (about 25%), five-star (about 23%), two-star (about 13%), and one-star (about 11%).

I did not consider when the job review was written in this dissertation. Still, it does not mean that I ruled out the possibility that the corporate culture of some B2B firms is constantly changing. Corporate culture evolves. Indeed, some events, such as mergers and acquisitions and changes in ownership or leadership, can lead to cultural change. In

this dissertation, I am interested in exploring the types of corporate culture rather than the development of corporate culture over time.

I did not apply any experiment in the methodology of this study. As a result, I cannot and do not aim to claim any causation in the findings. While I offer various possible explanations, the interpretations are correlations. Researchers and sales managers should consider the above limitations when interpreting the results. Nevertheless, these findings and the limitations listed provide researchers with future research ideas.

5.6. Avenues for Future Research

Given the significant cost of salesperson turnover and the immense benefit of maintaining an effective salesforce, it is crucial to continue the current research. To further mitigate the systematic characteristics of B2B salespeople who write job reviews on Glassdoor, I recommend combining job reviews from Glassdoor with textual data from other data sources, such as Reddit and subreddit communities with active members of salespeople. Some of these subreddit pages are *r/sales*, *r/b2b_sales*, and *r/salesjobs*.

A second avenue for future research should focus on the tenure of the B2B salespeople. The high turnover in sales positions warrants additional investigation in this area. Upon submitting job reviews on Glassdoor, one must identify as a current or former employee. They can also choose to disclose how many years they have/ had been with the company. Researchers can consider using such tenure data to investigate how tenure affects B2B salespeople's job satisfaction and turnover.

Again, concerning turnover, another avenue for future research would be to demystify links between the turnover of B2B salespeople and the corporate culture of companies from which they resign. Comparing the corporate values map based on the Big 9 cultural values with turnover and tenure helps investigate if there are any differences in turnover and tenure among B2B salespeople who work under these cultural values. In addition, doing so helps explore if there are any characteristics in the language B2B salespeople use that will relate to turnover and tenure.

This dissertation demonstrates that the words used portray the corporate cultures of B2B firms and express the emotions of B2B salespeople by using the built-in dictionary of LIWC2015. These corporate cultures and emotions both, in turn, explain the variance in job satisfaction significantly. Based on definitions of job satisfaction, such as the one by Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1974) for B2B salespeople, researchers can include words that reflect its various dimensions to create a dictionary of job satisfaction.

Researchers interested in demystifying corporate culture development over time can take the job reviews as longitudinal data by incorporating when a job review was submitted. Researchers can also conduct experiments, longitudinal studies, or interviews to investigate causality. Answers to these questions can improve our understanding of corporate culture in a B2B selling context and enhance the fit between B2B salespeople and corporate culture.

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