

Negotiating Styles Among American Purchasing Managers In The 21st Century: Revisited

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Abstract

This study addresses whether the collaborative negotiation style is the most prevalent among American purchasing managers in the 21st century's landscape created by the global economy. It also examines whether there are relationships between the purchasing manager's negotiation styles and selected personal and organizational characteristics that may affect negotiation styles. The results of the study reveal that the collaborative style is predominant. There are also significant relationships between the purchasing manager's negotiation styles and personal and organizational characteristics.

1.0 Introduction

Paik and Tung (1999) describe negotiation as a special communication task that takes place in order to reach agreement about how to handle both common and conflicting interests between two or more parties. As culture plays an important role in framing the priorities of the negotiators, negotiating skills are not value-free and expectations for outcome differ at the negotiating table (Lasserre, 1995). According to Dawson (1996), negotiation is a process that can be like art. It is governed by rules that can be interpreted differently or even violated by the artist. Before negotiators go to the negotiating table, the parties involved must know what they want, what they will settle for, what their options are, what they will say, and what the other party wants.

The negotiation process is a dynamic process which two parties, each with its own objectives, confer to seek a mutually acceptable agreement on a matter of common interest. The negotiation process occurs within a defined time period, and involves not only the use of data and intuition, but also the willingness of the parties to understand each other's point of view. Without such willingness, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement. Such an arduous process is further complicated by language barriers and differences in cultural values, customs and life styles in cross-national settings (Paik & Tung, 1999; Stone, 2001). When the negotiation process is stalled by disagreements, negotiators must try to resolve these by keeping an open mind, repeating points, using the right language, paying attention to what the other party is really saying, and eliminating distraction. Learning how to negotiate removes pressure, stress and friction from the life of negotiators (Dawson, 1996).

In the context of a business relationship, negotiation is the process of reviewing, planning, and analyzing used by two parties to reach acceptable agreements or compromises (Rubin and Carter, 1990). An example of the most common style of negotiation experienced by purchasing personnel is the contract negotiation. Requirements of contract negotiation are the art of reaching a common understanding through bargaining on the essentials of a contract, such as delivery, specifications, prices, terms, etc. (Bloom, 1966). Apparently, such negotiation is an important component of the purchasing function. In this type of contract negotiation, traditional wisdom has recommended that the buyer and supplier assume the role of adversaries, or quasi-adversaries, when dealing with the exchange of sensitive or confidential _____

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information, such as cost data. Like all adversarial relationships, such a role mandates secrecy. Such thinking permeated the negotiation process of the 1970s. Negotiations performed on a win-lose basis are viewed by both parties as a

battleground. (Rubin and Carter, 1990).

In recent years, relationships between businesses have been changing from traditional adversarial relationships to more cooperative ones (Itchiness and Dialer, 1983; Beck and Long, 1985; Dryer, Schurr and Oh, 1987). This new stance is viewed by some as a partnership. The growing competitive pressure placed on American domestic manufacturers by foreign competitors (e.g. the Japanese) has led to much of the impetus for this evolution (Bartholomew, 1984). Buyers and sellers realized that averting losses for each other is of mutual benefit (Fisher and Ury, 1981). The picture of having a loser and a winner between the seller and the buyer has been modified. A mutual definition of a situation can serve as a rationale for a buyer and supplier to modify their positions, and eventually to accept an agreement that maximizes joint benefit rather than one party's individual benefits (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985).

Such change in buyer-seller relationships has been researched for several years. As early as 1983, *Dunn's Business Month* recognized that a quiet or silent revolution in the aforementioned relationship was taking place in the American industry (Itchiness and Dialer, 1983). Across a broad spectrum, buying firms, companies, or corporations, seem to be discarding their traditional adversarial negotiations with their selling counterparts in favor of relationships built on mutual benefits (Flanagan, 1986). The question as to which viewpoint of industrial market negotiation is predominant is important to industrial sales force managers for a number of reasons. The cost of industrial sales coverage is high and getting higher. Working with a buyer who is collaborative is a very different task than dealing with a trade partner who can be expected to be exploitive. The two negotiation settings require different approaches to the selection, training, and compensation of salespersons (Dion and Banting, 1988).

A decade ago, Hagen and Amin (1991) conducted our first study in which we found that the collaborative negotiating style was predominant among purchasing managers. The global economy created a new competitive landscape in which events change constantly and unpredictably and affect firms of all sizes. Purchasing and sales managers are taking advantage of useful technology tools to help them do their jobs (McCrea, 2001). One may wonder if the collaborative negotiating style is still prevalent in the 21st century. Due to the increase in cooperative types of buyer-seller relationships, we propose that the collaborative negotiating style will continue to prevail among purchasing managers today.

2.0 Background Of This Study

This section includes a brief summary for the concept of seller-buyer partnership that emerged in the last two decades of the 20th century. It also includes major literature on major negotiation styles used by purchasing managers.

3.0 Partnership

Most reported buyer-seller relationships can be identified in one of two ways. One way is that sellers make concessions to accommodate buyer's needs, especially with regard to the scheduling of delivery. Another way is that purchasers assist sellers in improving quality, cost, or speed of delivery of the goods or services in question. In such situations, cost reductions attributable to the partnership arrangement ultimately pass through to the buyers. In some cases, the sellers benefit by applying the same changes to transactions with other buyers. In other cases, the major benefits to the sellers are simply the retention of the customers' business (Reich, 1987).

The traditional buyer-seller relationships have been characterized by short-term contracts (Spekman, 1988). Firms are now shifting from a traditional competitive style to a collaborative one. The new trend has been viewed as a broadening of buyer-seller relationships described by Dryer, Schurr, and Oh (1987) as a partnership. The partnership concept hinges on the notion that performance can be significantly improved through joint, mutually dependent action. Hays and Maidique (1984) conducted a study using the value-added partnerships as a competitive strategy by Italian firms. Results of their study showed that these firms achieved superior performance by working closely together to manage the flow of goods and services along the entire value chain of an industry. Similarly, the concept of building partnerships between buyers and sellers is an effective strategy in manufacturing firms.

Other researchers noted a distinction in the relationship between a transactional style and a partnership style. The transactional style is an arm's length relationship in which the rules of the game are well specified and the failure of commitments by either party can be resolved through litigation. In contrast, the requirements of the partnership-style relationship include: risk taking, the need to view the relationship as a series of exchanges without a definite endpoint, and

the need to establish a range of mechanisms to control and execute the operations of the partnership (Reich, 1987).

Based on this research, Henderson (1990) developed a model to explore two dimensions of partnership-style relationships. The dimensions are partnership in context and partnership in action. Partnership in context is the degree to which the partners believe that the partnership will be sustained. This dimension looks at the key factors that establish the purchasing managers' belief in the longevity, stability, and interdependence of the relationship. It also includes mutual benefits, commitment, and predisposition. Partnership in action is the degree to which partners are able to influence policies and decisions that affect the operational performance of the relationship. This dimension looks at the key factors that create the day-to-day working relationships. It also includes shared knowledge, distinctive competency, resources, and organizational linkage.

Spekman (1988) demonstrated that it has been obvious to many manufacturers that their ability to become world class competitors was based to a great degree on their ability to establish high levels of trust and cooperation with their suppliers. Setting up collaborative relationships with a select number of suppliers is not without risk. But those who subscribe to the partnership approach to vendor management argue that potential gains far exceed potential risks. Those who advocate a partnership approach to purchasing management warn that companies must select partners wisely and encourage trust and commitment. Blind trust with an arbitrary subset of existing suppliers is not the answer. The buyer must believe in the process and educate his or her suppliers about the mutual benefits of closer ties.

4.0 Negotiation styles

There is a wide consensus that negotiation is an important part of industrial buyer-seller relationships. Several researchers (e.g., Mitchell and Dickinson, 1986; Warner, 2000; Hyams, 2000; Beamer, 2001; Stone, 2001) attested to the substantial role of negotiation in both domestic industrial and international markets. Chonko (1982) demonstrated that bargaining ability is an important element of purchasing performance. What is not clear is what kind of negotiation that the industrial salesperson can expect to engage in with the buyer.

Some researchers indicated that buyer-seller interactions or negotiations can be modeled along two major dimensions: distributive and integrative interactions (Anglemar and Stern, 1978; Clopton, 1986). Distributive interactions are characterized by competitive behavior directed toward self-gain at the expense of the other party (Walton and McKersie, 1965). Distributive behavior is less conducive to agreement and more likely to cause conflict. On the other hand, integrative interactions are characterized by cooperative behavior directed toward finding ways to satisfy the objectives of both the buyer and the seller in a bargaining situation (Pruitt, 1981). Integrative behavior has special relevance to buyer behavior because integrative behavior represents a form of cooperation that is more likely to result in goal achievement by both buyers and sellers in more enduring buyer-seller relationships (Schurr and Ozanne, 1985).

Other researchers described two similar alternative viewpoints. One view is that buyer-seller negotiation is a competitive division of a pie of fixed size. Other terms for this viewpoint are distributive, or zero-sum bargaining. Clopton (1986) suggested that the obligations of buyers and sellers to their respective organizations foster an intransigence which discourages integrative bargaining. Chonko (1982) investigated Machiavellianism as a personality characteristic of purchasing managers. He found that highly Machiavellian people demonstrated higher purchasing performance. Since purchasing managers' performance depends to some extent on their ability and willingness to bargain, it seems reasonable to expect that purchasing managers may possess some Machiavellian tendencies. Christle and Geis (1979) noted that those who were the major contributors to what is known about the Machiavellianism trait describe highly Machiavellian people as being opportunistic, manipulative, resistant to persuasion, and able to profit by avoiding effective involvement with others in social situations (such as negotiation). Implicit in this reasoning is the adoption of a competitive model of industrial market negotiation.

Schurr and Ozane (1985) examined the influences of trust and tough and soft stances on the buyer-seller bargaining styles. The results of this study indicated that buyers' high trust in sellers was associated with the integrative negotiation style. Low trust was associated with the distributive or competitive negotiation style. It was also found that buyer-seller tough bargaining styles have led to fewer agreements, lengthier negotiations, and deadlock. Such tough bargaining styles also created problems when parties failed to discover terms of agreement, believing that no agreements

would be a desirable outcome. However, buyer-seller bargaining styles involved some unilateral concessions. This has been viewed as a broadening of the relationships between buyers and sellers, or as some termed it as collaboration. Perdue, Day, and Michaels (1986) used Thomas' (1976) typology of negotiating styles or behaviors to determine which style predominated among purchasing managers. Perdue, Day, and Michaels (1986) found that collaborative, competitive, and sharing are the only prevalent negotiating styles among purchasing managers.

Prompted by Arndt's (1979) and Manceil's (1980) contrasts of discrete and relation exchange, Dryer, Schurr, and Oh (1987) developed a framework depicting buyer-seller relationships. They shed light on a process of ever-expanding interdependency between buyer and seller. Each party's gratification from the other's role performance and increasing reliance on role expectations secure the parties in a web of interdependencies. Their conclusion was that there is a need for cooperative and collaborative negotiations in the ongoing buyer-seller relationships.

Spekman (1988) revealed that competition from offshore producers, technological innovations, and shortened product life cycles have changed buyer-seller relationships. Traditional relationships no longer suffice; closer and more collaborative approaches are needed. Standard criteria of quality, price, and delivery are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for consideration. Spekman (1988) added that the traditional buyer-seller relationships involve several activities, including a large number of suppliers who are played off against one another, the allocation of purchasing among these suppliers, and the arm's length posture with only short-term contracts. In ongoing buyer-seller relationships, understanding long-term contracts is required. This cannot be achieved now by traditional relationships (competitive), but by collaborative approaches.

Dion and Banting (1988) examined industrial supplier-buyer negotiations. Their results reported a strong support for the collaborative view of buyer-seller negotiations. Purchasing agents were shown to be neither exploitive nor intransigent by the findings that buyer Machiavellianism was negatively related to successful purchasing performance. The collaborative emphasis in overall performance is demonstrated by the fact that trade dimensions such as long-term relationships and an awareness of the needs of the vendors' organization were found to favor openness and honesty when dealing with vendors. Rubin and Carter (1990) revealed that the negotiation process between supplier and consumer in the United States is gradually changing from adversarial to cooperative. The potential benefits of collaborative negotiation typically have been developed only in highly specialized or unique operating situations.

5.0 Purpose Of The Study

The first purpose of this study is to determine the most dominant negotiation style (collaborative, competitive, sharing, avoidant, and accommodative negotiation styles) among American purchasing managers today. The other purpose is to examine the relationships between purchasing managers' negotiation styles and certain personal and organizational characteristics. It seems worthwhile to determine the most dominant negotiating style among purchasing managers in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century. The negotiating style could influence the kind of relationship between buyers and sellers. This relationship could be a traditional or a parenting one. It also seems worthwhile to investigate differences in organizational and personal characteristics that affect the negotiation styles of the purchasing managers.

6.0 Research Questions

The objective of this research study is to determine the most dominant negotiating style among American purchasing managers today, and to examine relationships between purchasing managers' negotiating styles and certain personal and organizational characteristics. To understand such relationships and their effect on negotiation styles, a conceptual framework was developed. Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework used in this study. It illustrates the anticipated predominant negotiation styles among American purchasing managers based on current buyer-seller relationships. It also models the anticipated relationships and linkages between purchasing managers' negotiation styles and certain personal and organizational characteristics. The direction of the expected effects of these variables is indicated by the arrows in the figure. Negotiation styles are the dependent variables, and the set of personal and organizational variables are the independent variables. Based on the stated purpose, the following hypotheses are formulated as a result of the literature review.

- H₁: The collaborative negotiating style will be the most dominant among American purchasing managers.
- H₂: The competitive negotiating style will be the second dominant among American purchasing managers.
- H₃: There are significant relationships between purchasing managers' negotiating styles and certain personal characteristics.
- H₄: There are significant relationships between purchasing managers' negotiating styles and certain organizational characteristics.

7.0 Research Methods

The research methods employed in this study include sample and data collection, and various statistical analyses. Each phase was carried out according to the following procedure.

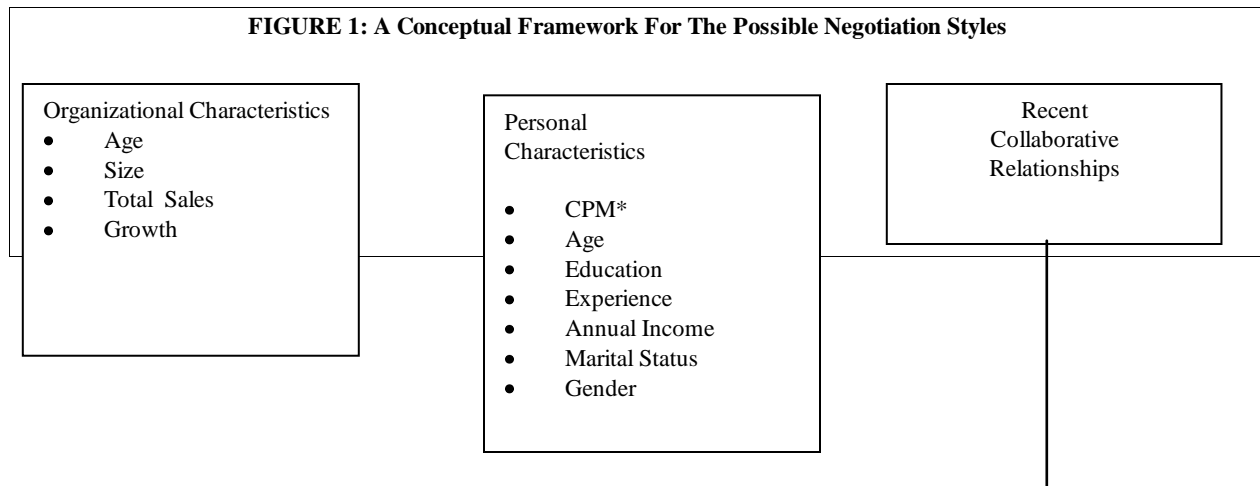
8.0 Sample and data collection

The research sample consisted of 1200 purchasing managers, employed in manufacturing firms, randomly selected from a list of names from the American National Association of Purchasing Management. These managers were mailed a self-administered survey package consisting of a cover letter requesting their participation and cooperation, the questionnaire, and a stamped, pre-addressed envelope. The first part of the questionnaire asked respondents to recall their past negotiations with sales representatives and to indicate their level of agreement with each statement in the inventory of the questionnaire. A seven-point Likert scale, with end points labeled "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" was used for each statement in the questionnaire. The second part of the questionnaire asked for certain personal and organizational information. The personal information included the purchasing manager's certification, (if he/she is certified), education, experience, age, gender, marital status, and 2000 income. Organizational information included organization age, size, 2000 total sales, and growth in 2000 total sales.

9.0 Measurement of variables

Negotiation styles were measured by a twenty-eight item inventory developed by Rahim (1983). This instrument was used in previous research to survey purchasing managers. Questionnaire items in this survey instrument were valid and reliable. The items were slightly modified to fit the industrial buyer-seller context. The inventory includes five multi-item measures which assess behaviors consistent with Thomas' (1976) classification of negotiation styles in buyer-seller relationships.

The five negotiation styles are: (1) collaborative style (seven items) in which the buyer attempts to fully satisfy both his or her own concerns and the concerns of the seller, (2) competitive style (five items) in which the buyer attempts to fully satisfy his or her concerns at the expense of the concerns of the seller, (3) sharing style (four items) in which the buyer settles for only the partial satisfaction of both parties' concerns, (4) accommodative style (six items) in which the buyer tries to fully satisfy the concerns of the seller at his own expense, and (5) avoidant style (six items) in which the buyer is indifferent to the concerns of each party.



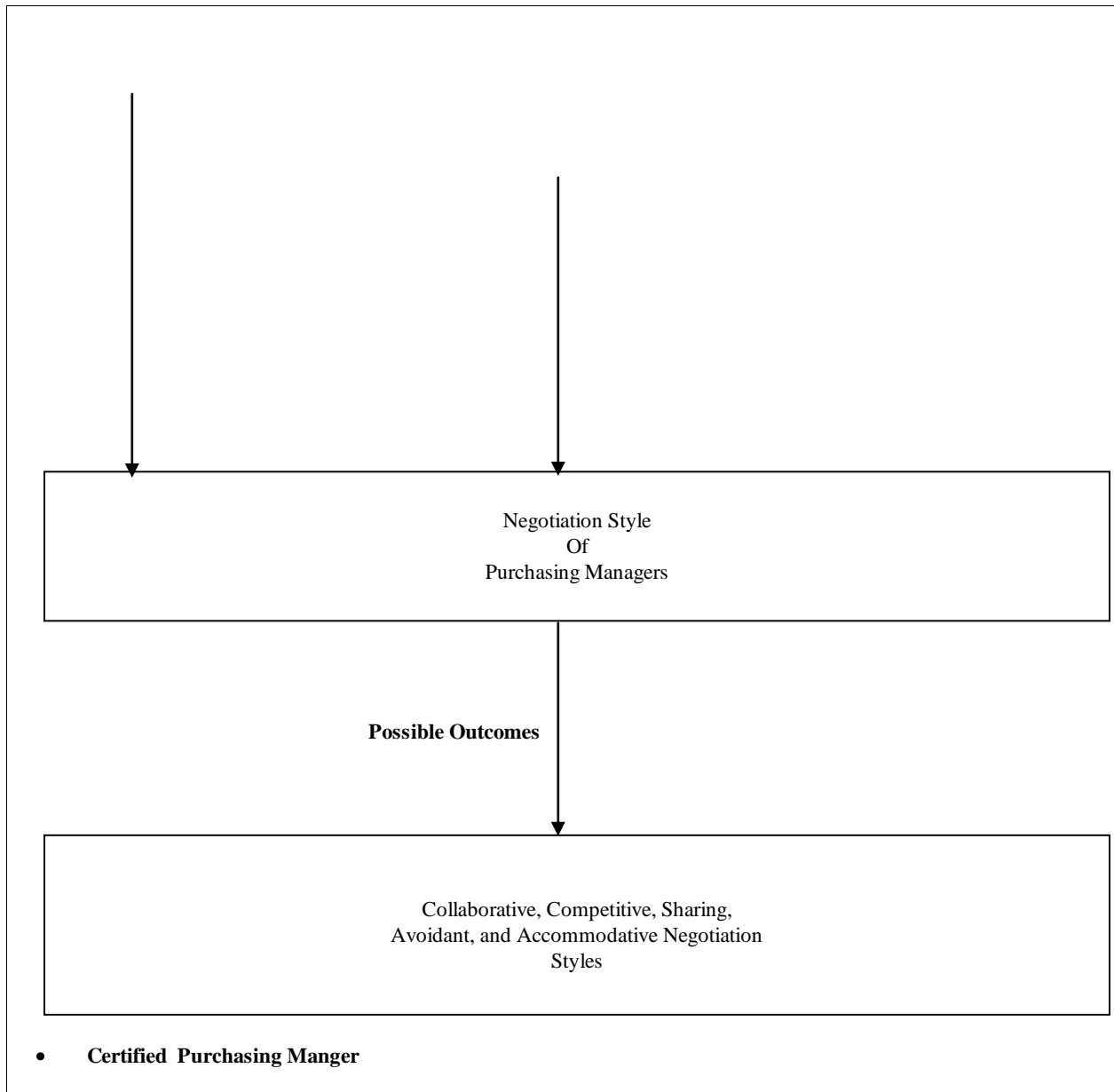


TABLE 1: Factor Analytical Results for Purchasing Managers

ITEMS	FACTOR LOADING *				
	COL	COM	SH	AV	AC
1. I try to investigate issues with sales- persons to find accepted solutions.	<u>.71</u>	-.05	-.03	.03	.06
2. I try to integrate my ideas with those					

of salespersons to come up with a decision jointly.	<u>.62</u>	.07	-.04	.02	.8
3. I try to work with salespersons to find solutions to problems which satisfy our expectations.	<u>.81</u>	.06	-.04	.01	.02
4. I exchange accurate information with salespersons to solve problems together.	<u>.67</u>	-.9	.11	-.06	.06
5. I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way.	<u>.55</u>	-.01	-.11	.03	.12
6. I collaborate with salespersons to come up with accepted decisions to us.	<u>.58</u>	-.04	-.06	.11	.05
7. I try to work with salespersons for a proper understanding of a problem.	<u>.63</u>	-.12	.08	-.01	.12
8. I attempt to avoid being "put on the spot" and try to keep conflict with salespersons to myself.	-.10	<u>.66</u>	.08	.03	.03
9. I usually avoid open discussion of my differences with salespersons..	-.13	<u>.57</u>	.02	.09	.22
10. I try to stay away from disagreement with salespersons.	-.23	<u>.71</u>	-.07	.28	.08
11. I avoid an confrontation with salespersons.	.10	<u>.54</u>	.16	.06	.04
12. I try to keep disagreement with salespersons to myself in order to avoid hard feelings.	.01	<u>.68</u>	.03	.11	.08
13. I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with salespersons	-.03	.02	<u>.64</u>	.11	.06
14. I generally avoid an arguments with salespersons.	.11	.07	<u>.52</u>	.07	.13
15. I use authority to make decision in my favor.	.01	.05	<u>.44</u>	.09	.13

TABLE IC Continues: Factor Analytical Results for Purchasing Managers

ITEMS	FACTOR LOADING *				
	COL	COM	SH	AV	AC
16. I use my expertise to make a decision in my favor.	.09	-.05	<u>.47</u>	-.03	-.01

17. I am generally firm in pursuing my side of the issue.		-.06	-.02	.04	<u>.54</u>	-.03
18. I sometimes use power to win competitive situations.		.12	.10	-.02	<u>.46</u>	.06
19. I generally try to satisfy the need of salespersons.		-.04	.13	.14	<u>.56</u>	.12
20. I usually accommodate the wishes of salespersons.		-.12	.08	.05	<u>.50</u>	.14
21. I give in to the wishes of salespersons		.10	.07	.06	<u>.42</u>	.13
22. I usually allow concessions to salespersons.		.12	-.07	-.02	<u>.40</u>	-.08
23. I often go along with the suggestions salespersons.		.13	.05	.09	.06	<u>.47</u>
24. I try to satisfy the expectations of salespersons.		.07	.11	.12	-.01	<u>.51</u>
25. I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse		.18	.11	.08	.10	<u>.44</u>
26. I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.		.07	.05	-.04	.13	<u>.40</u>
27. I negotiate with salespersons so that a compromise can be reached.		.04	-.02	.05	.12	<u>.46</u>
28. I use "give and take" so that a compromise can be made.		.10	-.11	-.01	.03	<u>.42</u>
Eigen value		6.22	4.11	3.25	2.27	1.8
Percent of variance explained	26.3	19.4	14.7	11.8	5.6	
Cumulative percent of variance		26.3	45.7	60.4	72.2	77.8
* COL = Collaborative COM = Competitive SH = Sharing; AV = Avoiding; AC = Accommodative						

TABLE 2: Predominant Negotiation Styles among American Purchasing Managers

Negotiation Style	Mean	Number	Percent
Collaborative	6.17	370	72.4
Competitive	5.81	74	15.6
Sharing	4.78	47	9.2
Avoidant	4.16	17	2.3
Accommodative	3.56	2	0.5

Total	511	100
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TABLE 3: Probability Values for T-test

Independent Variables	Dependent variables= Negotiation Styles **						
	Collaborative	Competitive	Sharing	Avoidant	Accommodative		
* PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS							
CMP	.05	.03	NS		.001	NS	
Age	NS	NS	NS		.001	.031	
Education	.046	.001	NS		.04	NS	
Experience	.020	.001	.02		.001	NS	
2000 Income	NS	.001	.04		NS	NS	
Marital Status	.034	NS	NS		NS	NS	
Gender	NS	.05	.001		.001	NS	
* ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS							
Age	.05	.001	NS		NS	NS	
Size	NS	.03	NS		NS	NS	
Total Growth In Sales 2000	NS	.01	.02		.001	NS	
Total Sales In 2000	NS	.05	.05		.05	NS	
REGRESSION ANALYSIS							
R square	0.61	0.46	0.38		0.36	0.31	
F	18.37	12.32	7.18		6.13	5.27	
Sig F	0.001		0.001	0.04		0.02	0.05

10.0 Statistical analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-X) was used to examine the research hypothesis in accordance with the conceptual framework as it has been presented in Figure 1. Factor analysis was used to determine negotiating styles. Factor analysis is a statistical technique used to identify a relatively small number of factors that can be used to represent relationships among sets of many inter-related variables (Norusis, 1985). In this study, the factor analysis proceeded in two steps. First, the correlation matrix for all responses of the responding purchasing managers was computed. Second, factor extraction (initial and final) and rotation were performed (using the principal components analysis and varimax method) for all responses to the twenty-eight items of the inventory for these responses.

Frequency analysis was used to determine the most prevalent negotiation styles among purchasing managers. Significance levels for the differences in means could not be determined because the samples were not independent. That is, each respondent had a score for each negotiation style. Regression analysis is an appropriate statistical tool which is widely used by researchers when investigating relationships of a behavioral and/or economic nature. It estimates the relationships of independent variables by explaining the variations in the dependent variables. So, analysis of variance was used for each of the negotiation styles scores included in the personal and organizational characteristics. However, the possible problems of multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, autocorrelation, and the violation of the classical linear model assumption (Johnson, 1986) could exist.

To avoid such suspected problems, the following techniques were utilized. First, the Pearson Correlation Matrix was used to examine the suspected multicollinearity. Second, the graphic method and Spearman Rank Correlation Matrix were used to examine suspected heteroscedasty. Third, the Durbin-Watson (DW) test was used to test autocorrelation. Fourth, the graphic method was used to test the linearity of the models. This test was done by plotting the standardized

residuals (Parsons, 1974; Netter and Wasserman, 1985).

11.0 Results

Of the 1200 questionnaires mailed to purchasing managers, 511 (42.6%) were completed and returned. The follow-up procedure was used once to increase the initial response rate from 34.8% to 42.6%. Table 1 presents five of seven factors generated by factor analysis utilized in this study. The significant five factors retained in Table 1 explain 77.4 of the variance. The eigen values ranged between 1.8 and 4.1. The factor loadings were at least .40 for each of the twenty-eight items in the inventory and all were included in the analysis. Chronbach's alpha was .87 for the scale of the negotiation styles. The significant factor loadings for the twenty-eight items appear under each of the collaborative, competitive, sharing, avoidant, and accommodative negotiating styles, respectively. Table 1 reveals the practiced negotiating styles used by American purchasing managers in the 21st century.

Table 2 shows that the collaborative negotiating style is the most dominant among the surveyed purchasing managers today. Slightly less than three-quarters (72.4%) of the sample (370 respondents) claimed the use of the collaborative negotiating style more than the other styles. Data analysis in Table 2 also shows that the competitive negotiation style is the second most commonly used style among purchasing managers today. A sizeable number of the sample (15.6% or 74 respondents) claimed the use of this negotiation style. Consequently, data analysis in Table 2 supported the first and the second hypotheses.

Data analysis in Table 3 indicated that there are significant relationships between purchasing managers' negotiating styles, and some personal and organizational characteristics. Those who exhibited a collaborative negotiation style most were: older, married, male and female certified managers with a college degree and more than 10 years experience whose companies have less than 500 employees, total sales less than \$150 million, and less than 10% growth in 2000 total sales.

A competitive negotiation style was more evident among those respondents who were married or single uncertified purchasing managers without a college degree, earning more than \$50,000.00 in 2000 and less than 10 years experience whose companies were small and less than 10 years old.

Similar significant relationships were also found between purchasing managers' other negotiation styles (sharing, avoiding, and accommodative) and some personal and organizational characteristics. Data analysis in Table 3 supported the third and the fourth hypotheses.

12.0 Discussion and Implications

It appears that the collaborative negotiation style is the most dominant style in this study, as we suggested. Although purchasing managers exhibited a collaborative negotiation style today, there are some purchasing managers who emphasized the competitive negotiation style. A possible explanation is that although partnership and cooperation are recognized as substantial for buyer-seller relationships, purchasing managers may have not overcome the traditional attitude of not being open with suppliers. This implies that purchasing managers still may use other negotiation styles besides the collaborative one. This also implies that purchasing managers use different negotiation styles in different situations. As Perdue, Day, and Michaels (1986) suggested, this behavior is similar to Weitz's (1981) adaptive behaviors which has been identified among salespeople.

The significant relationships between purchasing manager's collaborative style and some personal characteristics reveal that certified managers require training and course work. This implies that those who have completed the classes have learned a more cooperative style of negotiation. Those who attained more education, experience, and a stable marriage were more cooperative with the sales force. This suggests that the more experienced the manager is, the more cooperative he or she is. Organization age also provided experience and maturity to purchasing managers to be cooperative. By the same token, education and experience enhance collaboration among purchasing managers.

In contrast, the non-certified managers with less experience, education, and income tend to use the competitive

negotiating style. Young and single purchasing managers also tended to use the competitive negotiation style. Finally, those who work for old and big organizations with large total sales and with high growth in total sales tend to use competitive style. This implies that there are purchasing managers who use the competitive negotiating style despite the current trend of partnership between buyers and sellers. The use of other negotiation styles, such as sharing, avoidant, and accommodative, by purchasing managers implies that there are certain situations that require the use of such negotiation styles.

13.0 Conclusions

As expected, the collaborative negotiating style does predominate among purchasing managers today in the 21st century's landscape and the new global economy. However, other negotiating styles are being used by many purchasing managers based on different situations and cultures. The negotiation process between buyers and suppliers in the United States is changing from the traditional competitive style to the collaborative style due to more partnering types of agreements. It is obvious that there are significant relationships between purchasing managers' negotiating styles and certain personal and organizational characteristics. Therefore, firms must identify the characteristics that affect purchasing managers' ability to negotiate with buyers in a cooperative style. 📖

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