



ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

## Customer's Orientation, Show-rooming Behavior, and Sales Performance: Mediated Moderation Model of Taiwan's Services Industry

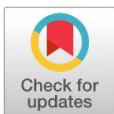
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**Abstract**— The primary aim of this research is to assess the influence of increasing market competition on managers within the service sales division of Taiwan's Telkom Corporation. Specifically, the study examines the role these managers play in shaping customer orientation and showrooming behavior, with firm innovativeness posited as a mediating factor. Furthermore, the study investigates how supervisors' psychological service climate moderates the relationship between these variables and their collective effect on sales performance. The sample comprised 300 frontline employees engaged in service sales at Taiwan's Telkom Corporation, and structural equation modeling was employed to analyze the data. The findings demonstrate that both customer showrooming behavior and customer orientation positively affect sales performance. Additionally, business innovativeness influences showrooming behavior; customer orientation, and sales outcomes, while the psychological service climate created by supervisors mediates the link between innovativeness and sales success. This study offers valuable insights for practitioners in the services industry, particularly in managing showrooming behavior and promoting customer orientation. The findings underscore the critical role of business innovativeness in driving sales performance and emphasize the importance of employees' perceptions of their supervisors' service climate in enhancing organizational practices. While this study makes a substantial contribution, future research should expand the scope by including different organizational types and larger industry samples. Further research could also focus on specific aspects of corporate innovation, considering variables such as relationship longevity and customer loyalty. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to capture evolving trends within the service sector.

**Index Terms**— Customer orientation, Customer showrooming behavior, Firm innovativeness, Supervisor's psychological service climate, Sales performance, Cognitive evaluation theory

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### Introduction

Showrooming is a form of research shopping, whereby customers will be collecting information from brick-and-mortar stores but make purchases through other sales channels, mostly online channels (Neslin et al., 2014). Research shopping is a phenomenon where customers have a high tendency to seek information about a product in a sales funnel and make purchases through other sales channels (Verhoef, Neslin, & Vroomen, 2007).

The global contract logistics industry shrank by 3.3% in 2020, but a notable recovery is expected, with growth of 6.5% predicted in 2021 (Charoensukmongkol & Pandey, 2023). This comeback is ascribed to the rise in internet purchasing and the pandemic-driven

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exponential growth of the e-commerce sector. According to Elche, Ruiz-Palomino, and Linuesa-Langreo (2020), there will be continuous growth between 2022 and 2027, with a 5.7% compound annual growth rate. This points to a renewed sense of urgency in international logistics operations, with estimates indicating that the global contract logistics market would increase by about 24% by 2025, outpacing pre-COVID-19 levels (Kuo, Kao, Tang, & Tsai, 2023). These conversations cover a wide range of topics, including contract lengths, different shipping costs, cargo amounts and specifications, extra services related to logistics, and any unique client demands (Kuo et al., 2023). Frontline sales representatives frequently deal with difficult selling scenarios and stressful customer contacts. Thus, they must apply firm innovation to their approach. Their ability to offer products and services is improved by combining them (Peterson, 2020). Yi, Cha, and Amenuvor (2021) claim that when salespeople are involved, positions requiring negotiation and decision-making are basically interpersonal. Salespeople must employ emotional management techniques to properly engage with customers and operational units.

In order to meet customers' wants and improve their well-being, firms and their workers must be committed to customer orientation (C. M. J. Lee, Norbani, & Alwi, 2021; Rahaman, Kwan, Babalola, & Chen, 2023). In the domains of marketing, organizational behavior, and psychology, customer orientation has gained significant attention since it was first proposed by Baber, Kaurav, and Paul (2020). As shown by numerous studies (Mei Jyin, CheHa, & Syed Alwi, 2020; Park & Hur, 2023; Rahaman et al., 2023; Varela-Neira, Coelho, & Camoiras-Rodríguez, 2023; Yousaf et al., 2020; Zang, Liu, Zheng, & Chen, 2020; Zhao, 2022), it is widely acknowledged as a critical factor in determining the performance of businesses. Employee customer orientation emerges as a critical competitive advantage in an era of severe competition among service businesses, promoting both customer pleasure and organizational performance (Kuo et al., 2023). One of the numerous advantages of customer orientation is that it offers the business a sustained competitive edge. As a result, this motivates companies and establishments to raise the standard of their products (Charoensukmongkol & Pandey, 2023). Customer orientation, whether traditional or non-conventional, is acknowledged as a kind of customer service that contributes to a positive and fulfilling customer experience. Customer service is an essential component of the promises that companies and organizations make to their customers, and it goes beyond simply responding to their inquiries. Consequently, it plays a pivotal role in ascertaining the triumph of any enterprise (Ajer, Ngare, & Macharia, 2023).

When consumers research products in person but decide to buy them online because they are getting a better bargain, this is known as customer showrooming behavior (Park & Hur, 2023). Even with marketers using multichannel tactics to offer smooth shopping experiences (Arora, Sahney, & Parida, 2022), customer showrooming behavior is a big problem for physical retail stores. Due to this behavior, customers may leave the store without making a purchase, which could lower in-store sales and negatively affect salespeople's confidence, morale, and motivation. Salespeople may come to view brick-and-mortar stores as nothing more than product holders rather than marketplaces (Chimborazo-Azogue, Molla-Descals, Miquel-Romero, & Frasquet, 2022). Understanding the different drivers of customer showrooming behaviour Khoshtaria, Matin, Mercan, and Datuashvili (2021) and Su and Tian (2023) and devising successful retailing tactics to offset customer showrooming behaviour Su and Tian (2023) and Viejo-Fernández, Sanzo-Pérez, and Vázquez-Casielles (2020) has garnered significant attention in recent times.

Companies aim to constantly introduce new products to stay ahead of the competition and adapt to shifting market dynamics. The modern period is defined by ongoing advancements and historically significant developments brought about by its rapid expansion throughout several industries, particularly the telecom sector (Mohamad, Ramayah, & Lo, 2020). The ability of these companies' executive leadership to adjust to changing needs and find new ways to differentiate themselves from competitors is highly valued. As a result, the ability to take initiative and actively engage in innovation is directly related to the success of companies in the telecom industry. A company's level of innovation is mostly determined by how well-versed in technology it is (Peterson, 2020). A supervisor's approach promotes particular good work environments, like a service climate, for the members of the workgroup by acting as a catalyst (Varela-Neira et al., 2023).

Rapid changes in customer behavior have presented salespeople with hitherto unheard-of difficulties, especially with the acceleration of the shift to online buying and value-based purchasing (Rahaman et al., 2023). Furthermore, social distancing laws have compelled adjustments to sales tactics, with salespeople now relying more and more on information technology and digital tools to communicate and engage with customers (Kang et al., 2021). According to Mei Jyin et al. (2020), the economic crisis has made matters worse by causing a significant decline in consumer expenditure and increasing competition among firms for new and existing clients. The elusive concept of sales performance has multiple definitions. Among other quantitative results, it typically relates to efficacy as determined by quota fulfilment %, market share, sales volume, and client acquisition. As an alternative, actions that are assessed according to how successfully they further the objectives of the organization may be classified as sales performance (Elche et al., 2020). This dual viewpoint emphasizes the significance of considering both qualitative and quantitative factors when evaluating sales performance accounts.

However, the focus of this study was on how service staff members' digital presence affects consumers' impressions of their human presence on websites through visual cues. Because it provides informational cues and motivating variables on expected behaviours, the organizational climate has a significant impact on how employees behave (Quratulain, Ejaz, & Khan, 2021). In order to prioritize providing a great customer experience, supervisors who sense a positive organizational environment are likely to concentrate their activity on creating rituals and practices that support this approach (Quratulain et al., 2021). When different stakeholders receive what the brand

promises, that brand is considered authentic (Quratulain et al., 2021). Signals to the market should indicate consistent and reliable behaviours resulting from a service climate that highlights the company's dedication to effectively addressing customer expectations. This strengthens the idea that the brand is genuine (Quratulain et al., 2021).

## Literature Review

Showrooming behavior arises for various reasons, including insufficient product knowledge among sales staff, suboptimal service quality, and non-competitive pricing (Albon, Kraft, & Rennhak, 2018; Zimmerman, 2012). Research suggests that enhancing the quality of service and the information provided to customers by sales personnel can mitigate showrooming behavior (Clancy, 2012; Cooper, 2012). However, showrooming not only diminishes the role of salespeople but also negatively impacts their perceived ability to meet sales targets. Consequently, customer showrooming behavior has been shown to undermine salespersons' self-efficacy, defined as the degree to which individuals believe they are capable of achieving successful performance.

## Cognitive evaluation theory

Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET), as developed by Rodriguez and Boyer (2020) and Yi et al. (2021), examines how social and environmental factors can either enhance or undermine intrinsic motivation. According to CET, three core psychological needs must be fulfilled to foster self-motivation: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. In this context, intrinsic motivation is influenced by individuals' perceptions of their proficiency in specific activities. Rodriguez and Boyer (2020) and Yi et al. (2021) argue that a positive attitude towards task success underpins a sense of competence, which is crucial in driving intrinsic motivation. For instance, children's natural desire to be competent is illustrated by the satisfaction derived from task completion, such as solving a puzzle (Chawla, Lyngdoh, Guda, & Purani, 2020). Success, in this sense, motivates individuals to challenge themselves further, creating personal hurdles to overcome (Inyang & Jaramillo, 2020).

A fundamental concept of CET is locus of causality, which determines whether individuals undertake actions for internal (personal enjoyment) or external (e.g., financial gain) reasons. According to Djakasaputra et al. (2021), external factors influence perceptions of competence, shaping individuals' confidence in their ability to interact productively with their environment. CET posits that intrinsic motivation increases when conditions enhance perceived competence and decreases when perceived competence is undermined (Djakasaputra et al., 2021). Three dimensions—motivating, regulating, and informing—impact intrinsic motivation, as they interact with the locus of causality and perceived competence. Informational aspects provide relevant feedback that fosters engagement with the environment, while controlling factors exert pressure on individuals to act, think, or feel in prescribed ways. Demotivating factors, conversely, diminish competence by triggering feelings of failure and self-doubt (Charoensukmongkol & Pandey, 2023; Gul, Batool, Khan, & Jabeen, 2023).

## Customer orientation and sales performance

Customer orientation is a key psychological asset for salespeople, encompassing attitudes, work ethics, and a commitment to customer service (Mei Jyin et al., 2020). This innate trait enables salespeople to adopt a behaviorally-focused approach that aligns with delivering effective service (Zhao, 2022). Customer orientation is critical in evaluating the role of sales representatives in achieving sales targets, as it is tied to individual sales performance rather than broader organizational effectiveness (Charoensukmongkol & Pandey, 2023). Sales performance is typically measured through metrics such as exceeding sales quotas, capturing market share, boosting revenue, launching new services, and securing agreements with key clients (Kuo et al., 2023).

A customer-oriented approach facilitates salespeople's ability to communicate the value of their services, thereby positively influencing sales performance (Mei Jyin et al., 2020). Salespeople who exhibit strong customer orientation are more inclined to make the necessary sacrifices to meet customer needs and provide exceptional service. By focusing on customer needs, salespeople can foster deeper relationships, acting as both a business partner and a trusted advisor. This dual role enhances the positive impact on sales performance, a phenomenon described as "customer orientation in sales" by Jacobs and Swoboda (2023). Their research highlights how customers often perceive salespeople as solely interested in closing deals, neglecting the importance of understanding their needs. Numerous studies have explored the link between customer orientation and sales performance, showing that customer orientation positively influences performance outcomes (Abdarpoor & Pakseresht, 2023; Ajer et al., 2023). Empirical evidence has further substantiated the positive effects of customer orientation on sales performance (Park & Hur, 2023; Varela-Neira et al., 2023; Yousaf et al., 2020). As customer-centric approaches form the core of this strategy, research has examined the relationship between organizational customer orientation and various customer outcomes. These include customer satisfaction and loyalty (Kopalle, Kumar, & Subramaniam, 2020; C. M. J. Lee et al., 2021), customer perceptions of product and salesperson value (Charoensukmongkol & Pandey, 2023) repurchase intentions (Ajer et al., 2023), and customer-perceived service quality (Mei Jyin et al., 2020). So,

**H1:** There is a significant impact between customer orientation and sales performance.

### **Customer showrooming behavior and sales performance**

The practice of customer showrooming involves them physically perusing brick-and-mortar stores while using their mobile devices to compare and assess goods and services and look for the best deals across several channels (Viejo-Fernández et al., 2020). This practice adds a great deal of unpredictability to sales performance and salespeople's job security. Additionally, Su and Tian (2023) found that showrooming by consumers makes societal pressures associated with them worse. Salespeople that engage in showrooming behavior feel mistreated and encounter ambiguous expectations from clients. No matter how hard salespeople try, most customers utilize services or stores for research purposes. As a result, the feeling of unfairness arises from a mismatch between the salesperson's efforts and customers' expectations Sahu, Naved Khan, and Gupta (2021). Additionally, salespeople struggle to engage clients during showrooming behavior and distract them from using mobile devices because customers do not seem to need help, which creates unclear expectations on the part of the customer (Park & Hur, 2023). Salespeople should only concentrate on consumers who have a purchase intention, according to Khoshtaria et al. (2021), using the "no conversion, no conversation" technique. By focusing on customers who are prepared to buy and building long-term relationships, this strategy may increase in-store sales. However, it may also present difficulties, leading to confusion and inefficiency for salespeople who are ill-equipped to anticipate actual purchases, particularly in low-traffic scenarios (Chimborazo-Azogue et al., 2022). Customer showrooming offers unclear or conflicting environmental stimuli for salespeople when they are servicing their customers, regardless of whether they are targeting potential customers Su and Tian (2023). Showrooming behavior can lower salespeople's chances of success, which lowers their drive, effort, and commitment while interacting with customers and eventually results in disengagement from their jobs. Before implementing technology, professionals who deal directly with customers must outline their business procedures. "A well-defined business process combined with organizational alignment are components of a successful technology initiative within a sales firm," as Charoensukmongkol and Pandey (2023). A sales organization's process capability refers to its ability to go through particular phases, increasing the probability of completing a deal and, as a result, raising sales output. Adhering to a defined and scalable sales process is largely responsible for meeting sales performance targets. After that, salespeople can use the shared data to better serve customers and satisfy their needs. By participating in both relational and functional customer-oriented activities, salespeople can make friends with customers and conduct business at the same time (Chawla et al., 2020). This dual function reinforces the positive effects of both customer-oriented behaviours on sales success. Salespeople who engage in customer showrooming have an enhanced ability to respond swiftly and nimbly to novel and unforeseen situations (Peterson, 2020).

**H2:** There is a significant impact between customer showrooming behavior and sales performance.

### **Mediating role of firm innovativeness**

In order to reduce errors through foresight and assist technology-related businesses—particularly the telecom sector in establishing themselves in technology-intensive sectors, firms must innovate. Consider using innovation depth and breadth to assess innovativeness more broadly (Danneels & Vestal, 2020). According to Yousaf et al. (2020), the former enables businesses to bring new ideas in a variety of sectors, such as products, marketing procedures, and overall organizational innovativeness. Conversely, innovation depth describes an organization's capacity to continuously spot fresh creative chances that go beyond niche markets for new products. Being innovative is very important, especially for companies that do software research. Businesses in the software services industry must adapt to rapid changes and rely largely on cutting-edge technology to succeed in the marketplace (Mohamad et al., 2020). According to C. M. J. Lee et al. (2021), customer orientation is a group of task-related behaviours aimed at supporting customers in making satisfying purchasing decisions. Building long-term, mutually beneficial buying-selling connections between sales performance and customers is the main goal of customer orientation (Rahaman et al., 2023; Varela-Neira et al., 2023). Customer-oriented people are more likely to be sensitive to the needs and issues of their clients and the best possible solutions (Zang et al., 2020; Zhao, 2022). For salespeople for salespeople to complete their selling activities, customer orientation emerges as a critical technique (Park & Hur, 2023). Customers often like to purchase from salespeople who help them make selections about what to buy that specifically solve their problems (Charoensukmongkol & Pandey, 2023). In the initial effort to create a culture that encourages innovative activities, a critical component in guaranteeing sales performance is firm innovativeness. In addition to assisting management, firm innovation empowers employees to provide novel ideas and inventive solutions for a variety of issues. The current study focuses on customer orientation as a crucial factor influencing sales performance, whereas other research has frequently highlighted the impact of corporate innovativeness on firm-level innovation (Rahaman et al., 2023). A team's ability to successfully close sales is essential to inspiring them to adopt innovative work methods that incorporate new products, services, technology, and workflows. One essential component of innovation is the practical application of imagination, which frequently yields original ideas for innovation and their subsequent execution (C. M. J. Lee et al., 2021).

**H3:** There is a mediating impact of firm innovativeness between customer orientation and sales performance.

**H4:** There is a mediating impact of firm innovativeness between customer showrooming behavior and sales performance.

#### **Moderating role of supervisor's psychological service climate**

The first psychological climate perception trait related to organizational sales that will be examined in this study is customer orientation. In the framework of this study, customer orientation, according to C. M. J. Lee et al. (2021), refers to salespeople's evaluation of how much their organization supports and engages in activities that provide high-quality service and happiness to their clients. These businesses should be able to boost the efficiency of their sales team when introducing new products because they place a high priority on customer satisfaction and adding value for customers when developing new products. Based on their perspective, salespeople may readily communicate to prospective clients the benefits of new products (He, McCabe, Jia, & Sun, 2020). Salespeople's belief in their capacity to sell new items is likely to have a bigger impact on their performance when they believe their organization is highly customer-oriented, i.e., knowing what consumers want and need before, during, and after transactions. This is due to the possibility that salespeople believe their organization understands the kinds of new items that customers need, making it easier for them to sell new products. Salespeople's confidence in their ability to complete deals, however, will likely have less of an effect on their effectiveness in the field if they feel that their organization does not know enough about its customers or that the new products they are selling are not necessary. According to studies, employees' emotions of inadequacy won't have an impact on how well they perform at work if they think their bank is particularly customer-focused (Jahanzeb & Raja, 2023; Quratulain et al., 2021). There is still little research that specifically addresses the hospitality business, despite the fact that studies on service atmosphere have been utilized to predict employee attitudes and actions in a range of firms. Furthermore, rather than examining service climate as a predictor of employee attitudes and behavioral intentions, previous research has mostly focused on the impact of service climate on customer outcomes (He et al., 2020). According to Li, So, Chen, Wang, and Sun (2023), creating a positive service climate requires that staff members comprehend that providing high-quality service will result in rewards and that they will receive managerial support to operate efficiently. Although specific performance outcomes are directly impacted by narrow measures of climate Quratulain et al. (2021). We argue that because customer service is implicitly a component of individual performance, service climate has a broader and more direct relevance in service organizations. Most salespeople's success is usually evaluated primarily on how satisfied customers are with the services they offer. For example, performance reviews of healthcare personnel frequently take into account patient experiences or satisfaction ratings. In a similar vein, reviews of the quality of services provided by guests are frequently used to gauge how well hospitality staff are performing. Similarly, by skillfully upholding the law and interacting favorably with the public, police officers and firefighters benefit their communities and society. The goal of integrating police officers into neighborhoods through neighborhood precinct establishment or community engagement is to improve relations with locals. This is significant because people view law enforcement, including police and firefighters, as vital to their sense of community. In addition, these professionals often get rewards for their exceptional work, such as promotions, honors, salary increases, and other incentives. However, the community's passivity usually results in fines or public disapproval. He et al. (2020) assert that it is critical to establish a service climate in this sector where offering excellent service is not only rewarded but also recognized. He et al. (2020) state that by implementing policies and procedures that emphasize delivering great customer service to both external clients and internal customers (i.e., coworkers), workgroups can promote behaviors that go beyond formal criteria (Jahanzeb & Raja, 2023). This is particularly true for service-oriented businesses, where meeting client needs may call for the development of extra-role behaviors in addition to formal procedures (Inyang & Jaramillo, 2020). Meeting clients' requirements as soon as possible is crucial in service businesses where service delivery and reception happen concurrently (Kuo et al., 2023). By promoting the Supervisor's Psychological toward coworkers or the workgroup, a service climate may help with this. W. J. T. Lee, Sok, and Mao (2022) state that consumers display both short- and long-term choices. Companies can maximize sales by meeting consumers' acknowledged wants in the short term while recording and attending to their prospective future needs to maximize performance Li et al. (2023). They highlighted skill as a personal quality, considering it to be the most crucial element. This highlights how important it is to market abilities and other skills, along with other components like attitude, identifying needs, and developing relationships with customers, in order to maximize performance. According to (Mohamad et al., 2020), a salesperson's selling approach and adaptive selling strategies can both positively affect the degree of trust that a customer has in them.

**H5:** There is a moderating impact of a supervisor's psychological service climate on firm performance and sales performance.

#### **Firm Innovativeness and Sales Performance**

Sales performance is a broad term with many different interpretations. Evaluating measurable outcomes like sales volume, market share, quota fulfillment percentage, and client acquisition, it has historically been seen as effective. "Behavior that has been evaluated in terms of its contribution to the goals of the organization" is another definition of sales performance given by Kopalle et al. (2020). Proponents of this viewpoint argue that since achieving quantitative outcomes depends on factors (such market-related variables) that are outside

the salesperson's control, effectiveness may not be the ideal indicator. Sales performance can be evaluated by subjective behavior-based metrics that can be self-reported or obtained from supervisors. Rahman, Aziz, and Hughes (2020) presented a third model that combines habits. The chosen papers included a variety of sales performance metrics arranged according to multiple standards. The measurement method (objective vs. subjective, manager-report vs. self-report, single-item vs. multi-item) and sales type (relational vs. result) are examples of common criteria (Shouman, Vidal-Suñé, & Alarcón Alarcón, 2022). This study incorporated novel criteria, such as performance orientation (market-based versus internally-oriented measures), comparison with peers (absolute versus relative measures without peer comparison), input (resources) use considered or not (effectiveness versus efficiency), time (short-term versus long-term), type of account sales (new versus current account), type of product sales (new vs. current), and direction of change (positive versus negative).

Firms in technology-related fields, like the telecom business, always place a high priority on gathering and integrating new knowledge. Rahman et al. (2020) claim that they invest a significant amount of money in Research and Development (R&D). According to (Jacobs & Swoboda, 2023), these companies have streamlined their services, made direct investments in new technologies, and established robust foundations for innovation. When implemented on time and in the right way, a company's innovation can provide a significant profit for the enterprise. First-movers are businesses that are in the forefront of their sector and can therefore more easily attract customers and establish long-lasting relationships, which enhances their performance and gives them a competitive advantage Heubeck and Meckl (2022). If the firm applies correctly and at the proper moment, innovation has the potential to result in significant financial gain. First-movers gain a competitive advantage and improved performance by attracting clients and creating long-lasting relationships by being innovators (Danneels & Vestal, 2020). Technology-driven companies, especially those in sectors like telecom, frequently share the most recent advancements and information on technology. They continue to give research and development (R&D) processes top attention in order to become more innovative (Ajer et al., 2023). Businesses involved in technology, such as telecoms, constantly seek out fresh information, allocate substantial funds for research and development, and make direct investments in emerging technologies (Heubeck & Meckl, 2022).

**H6:** There is a significant impact between firm innovativeness and sales performance.

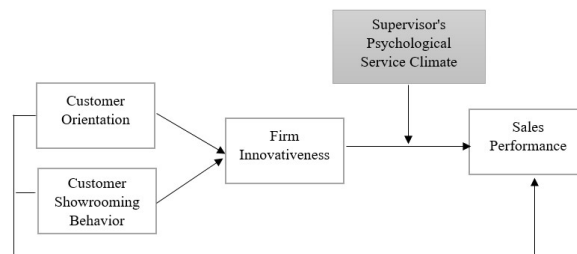


Fig. 1 Conceptual framework

**Methodology**

This research was conducted in Taiwan, specifically targeting the managerial-level service sales division of Telkom Company. The primary aim of the study was to evaluate the contribution of customer orientation and showrooming behavior to sales performance, while also examining the moderating role of the supervisor's psychological service climate and the mediating role of firm innovativeness. A quantitative, descriptive approach was employed to measure these relationships, as the phenomena under investigation were well-explained and suitable for such a method. Data were collected using a cross-sectional design, utilizing a survey methodology. A structured questionnaire, adapted from existing validated sources for each variable, was used to gather primary data.

**Sample**

The respondents for this study were managers employed in the service sales division of Taiwan's Telkom Company. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 300 were returned fully completed, yielding a response rate of 75%. This sample size was deemed significant for hypothesis testing and data analysis. The statistical analysis was performed using SMART PLS, enabling the researchers to assess the relationships between the study variables effectively.

**Data Analysis**

The contextual analysis suggested that sales performance must be studied as a key factor in Taiwan's service industry in the presence of different predictors. The unit of analysis was the managers working in services sales at Telkom Company of Taiwan. These were ap-

proached directly as the population was unknown, which is why the non-probability sampling technique was used and the methods were convenience sampling. Based on the referral chain, the respondents were targeted, and all the available and agreed-to-respond employees at a managerial level were also requested to fill out the questionnaires. No one was forced to respond, and it was taken well into consideration that ethically and with well-mannered data must be collected. It was also ensured to each respondent by mentioning that the provided information must be kept secret and will not be shared with anyone else.

### Research instrument

To investigate the developed framework of the study, a survey approach was used to gather first-hand data for testing the hypotheses. For conducting the surveys, a questionnaire was the instrument for recording the responses of each respondent. The questionnaires were adapted, and different sources were used to adapt the items against each variable. The instrument was face-validated and content-validated as well after maintaining the three parts. The first part of the instrument contains information regarding the study, where the purpose of the study was mentioned, and how the respondents need to respond. The second part contains the demographical questions, and personal information was asked to be marked from the provided close-ended range and options. The third and final part was based on the items against each variable, where questions were asked based on 5 point Likert scale. Customer orientation was the predictor variable, and it was measured by using the 4-item scale developed by Varela-Neira et al. (2023). The other predictor variable of the study was customer show-rooming behaviour, and it was adapted from the scale developed by Park and Hur (2023). A total of 5 items were adapted against the second predictor variable of the study. Firm innovativeness served as the study's moderating variable and was also modified. Ajer et al. (2023) scale was used for measurement, and four items in total were modified. By modifying the four items from the Varela-Neira et al. (2023) scale, the moderating influence of the supervisor's psychological service atmosphere was assessed (2023). Sales performance was the study's outcome variable, and it was assessed using Kuo et al. (2023) 5-item scale.

### Results

According to Cheah, Thurasamy, Memon, Chuah, and Ting (2020), all factor loadings on the intended latent variable were significant and more than 0.7. Additionally, the squared-multiple correlations provided evidence for the items' dependability. Construct reliability was supported because all constructs exhibited composite reliabilities and Cronbach's alphas that were greater than the suggested cutoff of 0.7.

Table I

Composite reliability, cronbach's alpha and AVE values

	Items	Loadings	CA	Rho_A	CR	(AVE)
Customer Orientation	CO1	0.871	0.815	0.830	0.878	0.644
	CO2	0.743				
	CO3	0.755				
	CO4	0.835				
Customer Showrooming Behavior	CSB1	0.850	0.899	0.903	0.925	0.713
	CSB2	0.829				
	CSB3	0.870				
	CSB4	0.883				
	CSB5	0.786				
Firm Innovativeness	FI1	0.887	0.892	0.893	0.925	0.756
	FI2	0.815				
	FI3	0.888				
	FI4	0.885				
Sales Performance	SP1	0.845	0.932	0.935	0.949	0.788
	SP2	0.912				
	SP3	0.927				
	SP4	0.906				
	SP5	0.845				
Supervisor's Psychological Service Climate	SPSC1	0.923	0.935	0.937	0.954	0.837
	SPSC2	0.909				
	SPSC3	0.914				
	SPSC4	0.914				
	SPSC1	0.923				

Note: CR=Composite Reliability; AVE=Average Variance Extracted; CA= Cronbach's Alpha

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and factor loadings were used to evaluate convergent validity. Purwanto, Asbari, and Santoso (2021) define AVE as the average variance shared between a construct and its measurement. Convergent validity was verified, as indicated by Table 1 AVE values, which varied from 0.67 to 0.90 (Cheah et al., 2020). Lastly, the shared variances between each individual construct and the other constructs were compared to the AVE of each construct to evaluate discriminant validity.

Table II  
Discriminant validity

	CO	CSB	FI	SP	SPSC
Customer Orientation	0.803				
Customer Showrooming Behavior	0.608	0.844			
Firm Innovativeness	0.443	0.543	0.869		
Sales Performance	0.434	0.731	0.754	0.888	
Supervisor's Psychological Service Climate	0.380	0.673	0.757	0.766	0.915

We measured internal consistency reliability and discriminant validity in table 2. The general rule of discriminant validity states that an item's correlation with its own variable must be larger than its correlation with other variables. As a general rule, composite dependability for internal consistency needs to be higher than 0.7 (Cheah et al., 2020). The value of composite reliability is shown in table 1.

The *R*-square for each endogenous latent variable will be noted at this point. One way to think of the *R*-square number is the structural model's prediction ability. There are two endogenous and four exogenous factors in this study. The change in the dependent variable with respect to the independent factors is measured using the *R*-square test. A high *R*-square value suggests that the model can adequately forecast the study's target. A value of 0 indicates that the independent variables have insufficient power to explain the variance of the dependent variable, while a value of 1 indicates that the independent variables have total explanatory power (Sarstedt & Cheah, 2019). The *R*-square in a regression model shows how much the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables. According to table 3, the sales performance *R*-square value was 0.736, and the firm innovativeness *R*-square value was 0.316.

Table III  
Assessment of R-square

	<i>R</i> Square
Firm Innovativeness	0.316
Sales Performance	0.736

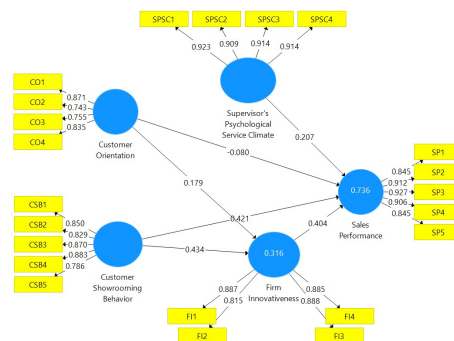


Fig. 2 Measurement model

**Structural model**

The current study used the structural equation modelling technique to evaluate its hypotheses. Based on general evaluation indicators of covariance structural analysis, this model is considered appropriate.



Table IV  
Direct and Indirect Relationship

	Relationships	Original Sample	t Statistics	p Values	Decision
H1	Customer Orientation -> Sales Performance	-0.071	2.239	0.026	Supported
H2	Customer Showrooming Behavior -> Sales Performance	0.435	11.808	0.000	Supported
H3	Customer Orientation -> Firm Innovativeness -> Sales Performance	0.073	3.223	0.001	Supported
H4	Customer Showrooming Behavior -> Firm Innovativeness -> Sales Performance	0.177	8.827	0.000	Supported
H5	Moderating Effect 1 -> Sales Performance	0.074	2.904	0.004	Supported
H6	Firm Innovativeness -> Sales Performance	0.407	11.922	0.000	Supported

The path coefficient set results for this study and the results of the research hypotheses' verification are shown in Table 4. This study utilizes three structural models: the direct relationship structural model, the mediation structural model, and the structural model with moderating variables. Additionally, a measurement will be taken of the importance of the link between the variables. The value in column original sample indicates the influence between variables, whereas the value in *t*-Statistics indicates the significant level. Using components from route assessment, a regression evaluation, and analysis of elements to evaluate both measurement models and structural models, the PLS-SEM bootstrapping technique yielded the statistically determined structural model route parameters promoting the hypothesized relationships. SMART PLS 3.0 software was used in this research model to estimate the path analysis outcomes through the calculation of the route coefficients (Cheah et al., 2020). The suggested structural model's average fit quality metrics are shown. Table 4 displays the standardised coefficients along with the relevant *t*- and *p*-values. In statistical analysis and research, the influence or impact of a third variable, the moderator; on the connection between two other variables, the independent variable and the dependent variable, is referred to as a moderating effect. Essentially, a moderating effect is a useful instrument for identifying the conditions or subjects for whom a link between two variables is stronger, weaker, or even skewed. According to Sarstedt and Cheah (2019), it is relevant when there is an erratic or weak relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The mechanisms and causes of the correlation between these two variables are clarified by the examination of the mediation effect (Cheah et al., 2020).

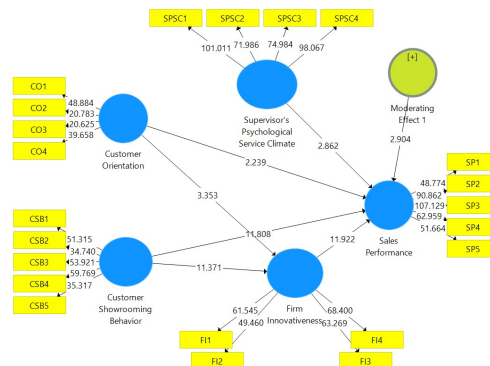


Fig. 3 Structural model

Structural equation modelling is used to thoroughly investigate mediated interactions and indirect effects between variables. Deciphering the sequence and providing explanations for observed effects requires a thorough investigation of mediation effects. We are able to determine the importance of these mediation effects through the evaluation of routes.

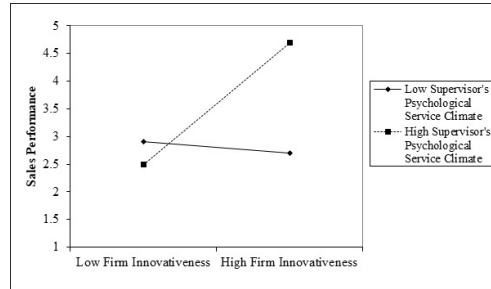


Fig. 4 Moderating effect

## Discussion

This research aims to improve understanding of the complex relationships between showrooming behavior, salespeople's client orientation, and the resulting impact on sales success in Taiwan's growing services sector. A focus is on examining how business innovation functions as a mediator, tying together these essential components of the sales process. Additionally, by presenting a personalized Cognitive Evaluation Theory made to fit the particular needs of the study, this research makes a unique addition. Every theory was approved.

The results show that there is a significant impact between customer orientation and sales performance. Research has examined the impact of the customer on a range of customer outcomes since the customer is at the centre of an organization's customer orientation. Customer happiness and loyalty Khoshtaria et al. (2021), customer repurchase intention Park and Hur (2023), consumer attitudes toward products and salespeople (Rahaman et al., 2023), and perceived service quality (Kuo et al., 2023) are a few examples of these. Simultaneously, an independent corpus of literature investigates the possible noteworthy effects of customer orientation on sales performance. These comprise the following: intention to leave Varela-Neira et al. (2023), engagement, marketing behaviour Rodriguez and Boyer (2020), job satisfaction Zang et al. (2020), and weariness Zhao (2022).

The results show that there is a significant impact between customer showrooming behavior and sales performance. Managers must deal with problems like product returns and delivery delays to properly handle the obstacles presented by showrooming (Park & Hur, 2023). They should also provide customers with the option to personally inspect the goods they plan to purchase. Several factors can lead to showrooming, including poor product expertise on the part of the salesperson, subpar customer service, and less competitive pricing (Djakasaputra et al., 2021). If salespeople can provide exceptional service and knowledge to customers, they will be less inclined to showcase (Ajer et al., 2023; Inyang & Jaramillo, 2020). "Showrooming" is the term for the practice of customers visiting a physical business to obtain information prior to making an online purchase. This illustrates how customers visit physical stores but don't finish their purchases. Kopalle et al. (2020) claim that a salesperson's role reduces the likelihood that customers will leave a store empty-handed. Moreover, customers visit physical stores to evaluate the merchandise when they are inclined to make purchases online (Inyang & Jaramillo, 2020; Khoshtaria et al., 2021; Mei Jyin et al., 2020; Peterson, 2020). The findings indicate that the relationship between customer orientation and sales performance is mediated by firm innovativeness. It is commonly known that a customer-focused corporate culture is essential to a company's success (Mohamad et al., 2020; Park & Hur, 2023). A customer-oriented firm should be able to provide sustainably superior value for its customers and attain and maintain competitive advantage in every environmental circumstance through its dedication to delivering superior customer value (W. J. T. Lee et al., 2022; Li et al., 2023). According to empirical research (Park & Hur, 2023; Quratulain et al., 2021; Sahu et al., 2021; Shah & Khan, 2021; Zhao, 2022), customer orientation can generally enhance corporate success.

The findings indicate that the relationship between customer showrooming behavior and sales performance is mediated by corporate innovativeness. Similar to this, a company can gain a competitive edge through market-based sustainability if it strategically aligns with customers' needs and wants for market-oriented products as well as the interests of numerous stakeholders who are concerned with social responsibility issues that have social, environmental, and economic dimensions (Ajer et al., 2023). Additionally, by putting marketing-related ideas into action, a business can achieve sustainability through creative management (Arora et al., 2022). The results show that firm performance and sales performance are both moderately impacted by a supervisor's psychological service climate. One of the most important aspects of sales force management is the creation of a sales force control system, which comprises defined regulations, policies, and practices used to supervise and lead sales personnel toward achieving certain company goals (Elche et al., 2020). A management style that prioritizes service has an impact on the service climate, which is also partially formed by the organization's general support, sometimes referred to as foundational issues (Jahanzeb & Raja, 2023). An essential factor in a company's competitive advantage is innovation. The successful implementation of novel ideas creates competitive advantages in the market by differentiating goods and/or services and optimizing workflows. These innovations, therefore, improve client happiness, repeat business, and overall

company performance. A company dynamically gain knowledge and experience as it keeps incorporating innovations (He et al., 2020; Jahanzeb & Raja, 2023).

The considerable correlation between a firm's innovativeness and sales performance highlights the indispensable function of innovation in propelling prosperous sales results. The research conducted by Wang, Kafouros, Yi, Hong, and Ganotakis (2020) evaluated the performance of salespeople by means of their self-perceived achievements regarding the calibre and volume of sales targets accomplished. In the current study, which focuses on new product sales performance, salespeople's contributions to the organization-established new product sales objectives serve as a proxy for their self-perceived accomplishments. This study uses self-reported, non-financial metrics to assess salesperson effectiveness in selling new items. The technique is based on that described by Djakasaputra et al. (2021), He et al. (2020) and Jahanzeb and Raja (2023). The decision to place a greater emphasis on non-financial factors was made in order to lessen the difficulties that come with asking participants such as salesmen and sales managers for sensitive information and to make comparing businesses of various sizes easier (Jacobs & Swoboda, 2023). Furthermore, it is agreed that there is often a strong correlation between objective and subjective metrics (Jacobs & Swoboda, 2023).

### **Theoretical and practical implications**

Overall, the empirical results fill in important research gaps and provide good support for our suggested conceptual framework, adding insightful information to the body of knowledge on innovation and sales management. The investigation of the sales function's comparatively understudied impact in promoting business innovativeness is one noteworthy area of contribution (Danneels & Vestal, 2020). Salespeople that display avoidance orientation, for example, steering clear of new product sales scenarios where they could be afraid of performing poorly—are more likely to have doubts about their capacity to meet the challenges involved. Salespeople and potential consumers may find it challenging and time-consuming to sell new technological products since they are not familiar with the features of the products. Furthermore, management closely monitors salespeople who are attempting to complete deals on new items because they frequently have high failure rates. Selling new products creates a situation where salespeople may readily reveal their flaws and apparent ineptitude under certain conditions. In the business literature, several studies have looked at the direct implications of client orientation on sales performance of Shouman et al. (2022) or non-direct Mohamad et al. (2020). These inquiries frequently look into the causes of these impacts. Building on previous studies, our research focuses on the logistics sector in particular to investigate the causes of customer-oriented behavior and its effects on sales results. The HR division can work with managers to put processes and policies into place that give staff members continual training so they can carry out their jobs well in order to enhance the service environment. According to a core principle of comprehensive quality management theory, this training should place a high emphasis on applying knowledge and skills to serve both internal and external customers. The establishment of a bidirectional communication line between the HR department and the workforce can also expedite the exchange of vital information and enable efficient problem-solving inside the workplace.

Customer-oriented behavior is seen as being crucial to meeting client needs in the service industry. By examining sales performance in light of customer orientation and emphasizing a crucial element for enhancing sales performance, our research contributes something novel to the body of knowledge in the field of logistics. Our understanding of the connection between customer-oriented behaviours and sales outcomes is strengthened by this body of knowledge extension, which provides valuable insights for organizations operating in the logistics sector. Managers need to be innovative and creative in their corporate strategy selection. Customers' perspectives must be carefully considered in strategic decisions if lucrative and highly competitive company models are to be created. Our theory, which is predicated on the notion of cognitive assessment, enhances previous institutional explanations by emphasizing the role that corporate image plays in generating advocacy intentions that are predicated on the perception of company innovation (Heubeck & Meckl, 2022). It strengthens the argument that these variables drive variations in a company's innovativeness and profitability. This emphasizes how crucial a customer-centric mindset and creative strategy are to determining a company's competitiveness and success. Furthermore, in order to complement consumer showrooming behavior and customer orientation, the most recent technical applications must work in tandem with creative processes and other mechanisms. The potential for this combination to greatly improve sales performance exists. Using state-of-the-art technologies and creative strategies helps firms stay ahead of the curve in the industry and increases overall sales effectiveness.

### **Limitations and future research**

The study comes with notable limitations and suggests directions for future research. Although the study has a noteworthy strength, it uses triadic data from supervisors, managers, and customers. The variety of sources limited the responses that could be obtained. Given that hierarchical linear modelling is more prone to skewed estimates with tiny response numbers, the smaller sample size could be problematic. Greater sample sizes should be the goal of future research to strengthen the validity of the results. It is important to understand the limits of the cross-sectional design, which hinder the establishment of causality, even if we used two distinct estimate methods and

acknowledged the consistency of the results. Future investigations may consider doing longitudinal studies to overcome this constraint. Additionally, since the focus of our study was small and medium-sized businesses, future research may broaden its reach to include more varied samples. Examining bigger businesses, which are defined by a more substantial market presence and greater financial and human resources, may provide insightful information and boost the generalizability of results. A key suggestion for upcoming researchers is to make use of multiple responder techniques. It would be beneficial for future researchers to incorporate other antecedents, outcomes, and possible moderators in order to propose a more accurate model for the investigation. Additionally, our understanding of firm innovativeness is predicated on the opinions of our consumers; nonetheless, firm innovativeness may have additional dimensions, such as organizational, process, and service innovation. These aspects of business innovativeness may be investigated in later research projects to provide insightful information to this field of study. To provide fresh viewpoints to the literature on customer behaviour, future researchers might also take into account other crucial elements, including customer trust, relationship age, and customer commitment.

## **Conclusion**

This study aims to increase understanding of the intricate connections between client orientation, showrooming behavior, and sales performance in Taiwan's services industry. The investigator focused on the supervisor's psychological service climate as a moderator and the firm's innovativeness as a mediator. Additionally, in order to offer a distinct perspective on these relationships, our research has produced a modified version of the cognitive assessment theory. Our results suggest that showrooming behavior, client orientation, and sales performance are significantly mediated by company innovativeness. This implies that companies that prioritize innovation will have an easier time taking advantage of customer-focused tactics and showrooming behavior to boost sales. Furthermore, in the context of our study, the supervisor's psychological service climate was discovered to be a significant mediator. Positive service climates improve the positive relationship between client orientation and sales performance, according to employee reports. To better understand the cognitive processes underlying these interactions, we developed a modified version of the cognitive assessment theory, which is our unique contribution. According to this hypothesis, employees' perceptions of the workplace especially those related to innovation and service—have an impact on their intrinsic motivation and, consequently, their productivity.

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Appendix

Table V  
Appendix

Variables	Items	Source
Customer Orientation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I try to help customers achieve their goals.</li> <li>2. I try to get customers to discuss their needs with me.</li> <li>3. I take a problem-solving approach in my relationship with customers.</li> <li>4. I have the customer's best interest in mind.</li> </ol>	(Varela-Neira et al., 2023)
Customer Showrooming Behavior	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Customers look at the products in our store while using their mobile devices.</li> <li>2. Customers use smartphones to examine universal product codes while in our store.</li> <li>3. My customers often use mobile devices to investigate products in the store.</li> <li>4. Customers use technology-enabled devices to find better prices for products online.</li> <li>5. Customers use technology devices while still in our store.</li> </ol>	(Park & Hur, 2023)
Firm Innovativeness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Innovation based in research targeting the technical components of our operations are readily accepted on our firm.</li> <li>2. In our firm, innovation is voluntarily welcomed in our business operations.</li> <li>3. Those who are important to me, think we should innovate in this firm.</li> <li>4. In our firm, we make deliberate efforts to improve our products and services.</li> </ol>	(Ajer et al., 2023)
Supervisor's Psychological Service Climate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In our firm, we are continually working to improve the quality of service we provide to our customers.</li> <li>2. In our firm, we have specific ideas about how to improve the quality of service we provide to customers.</li> <li>3. Employees often make suggestions about how to improve the service quality of our firm.</li> <li>4. Employees put a lot of effort in attempting to satisfy customer.</li> </ol>	(Varela-Neira et al., 2023)
Sales Performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My ability to produce higher market share for my company in my territory.</li> <li>2. My ability to exceed sales targets and objectives assigned to me.</li> <li>3. My ability to quickly generate sales of new company services.</li> <li>4. My ability to generate higher revenue in my territory.</li> <li>5. My ability to identify and sell to major customers in my territory.</li> </ol>	(Kuo et al., 2023)