

Improving Sales Performance Through Shapping Ambience Interaction

Dian Triyani^{1*} Elisabeth Rotua Simamora²

Faculty of economics, Universitas Semarang, Indonesia^{1,2}

diantriyaniyanata@gmail.com¹

ABSTRACT

*Despite the recognized importance of relationship capability in improving salesperson performance, previous studies have reported inconsistent findings regarding its direct contribution to sales outcomes. This study addresses this gap by proposing shaping ambience interaction as a mediating mechanism that explains how relationship capability is translated into superior salesperson performance. Drawing on Service-Dominant Logic and*Interaction Theory, this study develops and empirically tests a comprehensive model linking relation capability, shaping ambience interaction, sales adaptiveness, sales innovativeness, and sales performance. Data were collected from 400 pharmaceutical salespeople in Indonesia using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS. The results demonstrate that relation capability significantly enhances shaping ambience interaction, which subsequently improves salesperson performance both directly and indirectly through sales adaptiveness and sales innovativeness. Among the proposed relationships, shaping ambience interaction emerged as the central mechanism connecting relational capability with salesperson outcomes, while sales adaptiveness exerted a stronger influence on performance than sales innovativeness. These findings extend Service-Dominant Logic and Interaction Theory by introducing shaping ambience interaction as a key interaction-based capability that bridges relational resources and salesperson performance. The study also provides practical implications for pharmaceutical companies seeking to strengthen sales effectiveness through relationship-oriented capability development and customer-centered interaction strategies.*

Keywords : *Relation Capability, Shaping Ambience Interaction, Sales Adaptiveness, Sales Innovativeness, Sales Performance*

1. Introduction

Strong relationships between companies and customers create stronger customer attachment and long-term business sustainability. In this context, salespeople play a strategic role as the primary interface between the company and its customers, acting as representatives who directly influence customers' perceptions, experiences, and purchasing decisions. Therefore, the quality of interactions established by salespeople largely determines the strength of customer relationships.

Once relationships have been established, they need to be continuously developed and maintained. The development of relationship capability involves identifying suitable customers, initiating and nurturing long-term relationships (Homburg & Wielgos, 2022), establishing appropriate governance mechanisms jointly with customers to create effective partnerships (Gatignon & Capron, 2023), and managing value-creating relationships that generate mutual benefits (Bosisio, 2024; Nguyen, 2024). These activities ultimately contribute to improving organizational performance and profitability. Previous studies indicate that successful salespeople are capable of offering products and services that match customer needs, delivering superior value, and implementing innovative selling approaches that enhance sales outcomes (McClure, 2025; Kowalkowski et al., 2025).

Numerous studies have investigated the relationship between relationship capability and salesperson performance; however, the findings remain inconclusive. Singh and Koshy (2011) reported that customer orientation positively influences relationship capability and subsequently improves sales performance. In contrast, Hormiga, Batista-Canino, and Sánchez-Medina (2011) found that relationship capability may negatively affect salesperson performance under certain organizational conditions. These contradictory findings indicate the existence of a research gap regarding the mechanism through which relationship capability contributes to sales performance. This study proposes shaping ambience interaction as a potential mechanism to explain this inconsistency.

The concept of shaping ambience interaction is grounded in two major theoretical perspectives, namely Interaction Theory (Karpen & Bove, 2011) and Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) Theory (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). From the perspective of Interaction Theory, customer interactions can be classified into information exchange, communication, and dialogue as the primary modes through which value is co-created (Aitken, 2007; Lusch & Vargo, 2006). Meanwhile, Service-Dominant Logic emphasizes that value is created through service interactions rather than product transactions alone. Accordingly, effective selling activities should facilitate pleasant interactions, efficient service processes, desirable outcomes, and superior service experiences that ultimately enhance customers' purchasing experiences (Grönroos, 2006; Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996).

Relationship capability plays an essential role in improving sales performance because it contributes to the development of competitive advantage through increased sales volume, higher profitability, and greater customer satisfaction (Simamora, 2025). Consequently, pharmaceutical companies require competent salespeople who possess strong sales adaptiveness and sales innovativeness while simultaneously emphasizing the development of shaping ambience interaction to improve overall sales performance.

Salespeople in the pharmaceutical industry must be capable of creating positive interaction atmospheres during customer encounters. Adaptive interactions enable salespeople to establish a favorable selling ambience that strengthens customer engagement. The underlying principle is that there is no single best selling approach; instead, effective salespeople must continuously adapt their selling behaviors to customers' unique characteristics and needs (Friend, Malshe, & Fisher, 2020). Previous studies consistently demonstrate that adaptive selling positively affects sales performance (Liu, Hochstein, Bolander, Bradford, & Weitz, 2020; Mwesige, Bonuke, & Situma, 2024). Furthermore, salespeople who successfully combine adaptive selling with continuous sales innovation are more likely to achieve superior performance, as recognized by Edwards, Miles, D'Alessandro, and Frost (2023).

Based on these considerations, this study aims to address the inconsistent findings concerning the relationship between relationship capability and salesperson performance. Specifically, it proposes shaping ambience interaction, grounded in Interaction Theory (Karpen & Bove, 2011) and Service-Dominant Logic Theory (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), as an explanatory mechanism that clarifies the roles of sales adaptiveness and sales innovativeness in improving salesperson performance. The proposed conceptual model is empirically tested using pharmaceutical salespeople as the unit of analysis.

2. Literature Review

Relation Capability and Shaping Ambience Interaction

Relationship capability is defined as a set of intangible organizational assets that reflect the quality of interactions occurring among parties engaged in business relationships (Lages, Silva, & Styles, 2009; Zahoor, Al-Tabbaa, Khan, & Wood, 2020). According to Johnsen and Ford (2006), relationship capability consists of four interrelated dimensions. The first is the cultural dimension, which refers to the values embedded in knowledge creation and utilization. Effective

knowledge structures enable salespeople to acquire, integrate, generate, and apply knowledge to improve sales outcomes. The second is the interaction dimension, which represents the ability to learn from partners and exploit emerging opportunities by developing new knowledge, skills, and organizational assets. As trust between buyers and sellers increases, information exchange becomes broader, deeper, and more meaningful, facilitating organizational learning and value creation. Through proactive interactions, organizations can also develop co-adaptation mechanisms that stimulate innovation and generate new opportunities for resource utilization, product development, and production methods (O'Toole & McGrath, 2008).

The third dimension is the technological dimension, which emphasizes the development of technical systems, technological capabilities, and operational procedures that support collaborative product development between buyers and sellers. Effective product development routines require multidisciplinary collaboration involving diverse competencies. The fourth dimension is the management system dimension, which encompasses both formal and informal mechanisms for knowledge creation, coordination, and organizational control. This dimension enables firms to develop appropriate organizational structures, strategic relationships, and governance mechanisms that strengthen partnerships with customers and business partners. Relationship capability therefore includes both intra-organizational relationships, such as operational efficiency, structural interaction, interpersonal relationships, asset development, and cooperative behavior, as well as inter-organizational relationships characterized by commitment, communication, trust, and coordination among business partners (Äyväri & Möller, 2008; O'Toole & McGrath, 2008). Developing both forms of relationships has become increasingly important in today's highly competitive business environment.

Modern selling is no longer purely transactional. Instead, salespeople are expected to develop relationship-oriented selling capabilities that foster long-term customer relationships. Relationship marketing emphasizes the importance of cultivating strong and enduring customer relationships (Singh & Koshy, 2011), facilitating customer value creation, and providing meaningful knowledge that supports customers' decision-making processes (Webster Jr., 1992; Hitt, Dacin, Levitas, Arregle, & Borza, 2000). Developing these relational capabilities requires effective interactions between salespeople and customers. Drawing upon Interaction Theory, Karpen and Bove (2011) identify informative messages, communication, and dialogue-based learning as the primary interaction mechanisms that facilitate relationship development (Varey & Ballantyne, 2006; Grönroos, 2006). Through these interaction processes, salespeople communicate valuable information, generate positive cognitive and emotional responses, and facilitate customer learning that ultimately supports appropriate purchasing decisions.

Mallalieu and Nakamoto (2008) argue that salespeople who successfully create positive interaction atmospheres avoid rigid, formula-based selling approaches and instead focus on understanding customers' motivations when purchasing pharmaceutical products. Accordingly, shaping ambience interaction can be achieved by providing personalized services (Clason, Khanfar, Polen, & Gibson, 2009), establishing synergistic interactions with customers (Hughes, Le Bon, & Malshe, 2012), developing relationships that facilitate customer needs without compromising organizational interests (Boorum, Goolsby, & Ramsey, 1998), creating additional customer value that encourages continuous interaction (Dugan, Hochstein, Rouziou, & Britton, 2019), promoting interaction activities that generate greater customer benefits (Haans & Gijbrechts, 2011; Santini, Sampaio, Perin, & Vieira, 2015), and strengthening customers' willingness to maintain long-term cooperation (Kumar & Reinartz, 2016). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Relation capability positively influences shaping ambience interaction.

Shaping Ambience Interaction and Sales Performance

Creating a positive selling atmosphere is one of the essential responsibilities of professional salespeople because a favorable interaction environment contributes to successful

customer encounters. Salespeople who demonstrate friendliness, sociability, attentiveness, and comprehensive product knowledge are more capable of facilitating effective information exchange and relationship building (Hughes et al., 2012). According to Chakrabarty, Widing, and Brown (2014), sales ambience reflects a salesperson's ability to create a positive interaction atmosphere that mediates the influence of selling behavior on salesperson performance. Similarly, Weisbuch and Ambady (2009) argue that successful salespeople establish harmonious relationships built upon mutual trust and positive interpersonal interactions.

Consultative selling approaches further strengthen customer relationships by enhancing salespeople's understanding of customer needs. When salespeople adopt customers' psychological perspectives during interactions, closer buyer-seller relationships emerge, enabling both parties to develop shared expectations and stronger relational bonds. Such relationships ultimately enhance salesperson performance. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Shaping ambience interaction positively influences sales performance.

Shaping Ambience Interaction, Sales Adaptiveness, and Sales Innovativeness

Positive interaction atmospheres facilitate continuous dialogue and effective communication between salespeople and customers. However, many sales interactions fail because communication remains one-directional, with salespeople emphasizing excessive product information while neglecting customer feedback and preferences (Grönroos, 2006). Effective shaping ambience interaction begins with meaningful dialogue, where planned messages, communication processes, and interpersonal interactions are synchronized to create mutually beneficial exchanges (Grönroos, 2006).

Developing such interaction atmospheres requires salespeople to understand customers' backgrounds, purchasing motivations, and specific needs, particularly in pharmaceutical selling. This knowledge enables salespeople to adapt their selling behaviors according to different customer situations, thereby improving overall sales performance (Johlke, 2006). Adaptive salespeople continuously modify their selling approaches, experiment with various selling styles, remain flexible during customer interactions, and recognize each customer's uniqueness, all of which contribute to achieving organizational sales targets (Briggs, Jaramillo, & Weeks, 2012; Chai, Zhao, & Babin, 2012; Jaramillo, Locander, Spector, & Harris, 2007; Johlke, 2006). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Shaping ambience interaction positively influences sales adaptiveness.

Relationship investment is another essential component of successful selling. De Wulf, Odekerken-Schröder, and Iacobucci (2001) argue that relationship investment reflects the extent to which salespeople devote resources, effort, and attention to maintaining and strengthening customer relationships beyond individual transactions. Even after a sales transaction is completed, salespeople continue interacting with customers to preserve long-term relationships (Lin & Smith, 1998). Trust, satisfaction, and commitment constitute the fundamental building blocks of enduring customer relationships (Anderson & Narus, 1990).

To sustain satisfying interactions, salespeople must continuously explore innovative selling methods. Innovation plays a critical role in strengthening customer relationships by providing more stable and meaningful interactions throughout the relationship development process (De Wulf et al., 2001). Moreover, innovation facilitates knowledge creation, acquisition, sharing, and utilization, thereby improving both organizational learning and sales performance (Huang, Wu, Lu, & Lin, 2016; Wang & Yang, 2007). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Shaping ambience interaction positively influences sales innovativeness.

Sales Innovativeness, Sales Adaptiveness, and Sales Performance

Sales innovativeness refers to a salesperson's ability to generate creative ideas and adopt innovative approaches during selling activities (L. Chen & Mohamed, 2010). Matsuo, Hayakawa, and Takashima (2013) further define sales innovativeness as the willingness and flexibility to adopt new methods for solving customer problems. As selling environments become increasingly complex and competitive, innovative selling behavior becomes an essential determinant of salesperson success.

Previous studies demonstrate that salespeople possessing creativity, strong self-efficacy, and openness to new ideas achieve higher sales performance, whereas individuals with more rigid characteristics tend to perform less effectively (van Riemsdijk, Ingenbleek, van der Veen, & van Trijp, 2020; Burke & Witt, 2002). Innovation enables salespeople to respond effectively to market changes, uncertainty, and evolving customer needs by continuously generating and implementing new ideas during the selling process (Damanpour & Evan, 1984). Consequently, innovative salespeople are better equipped to solve customer problems, enhance customer satisfaction, and strengthen customer loyalty.

Sales innovativeness is also influenced by the salesperson's psychological climate, which encourages individuals to develop new service approaches and innovative selling behaviors (Evans, Landry, Li, & Zou, 2007; Strutton, Pelton, & Lumpkin, 1993). Salespeople who aspire to improve their performance are more likely to demonstrate creativity and innovative behavior (Abdelwhab Ali, Panneer Selvam, Paris, & Gunasekaran, 2019; A. Chen, Peng, & Hung, 2015; Glińska-Neweś, 2017). Innovative salespeople typically think creatively, develop out-of-the-box solutions based on customer information, and transform these insights into new selling methods (Cangemi & Miller, 2007). Successful innovation also requires organizational support, particularly from sales managers who establish performance targets and reward innovative behaviors (Ahearne, Rapp, Hughes, & Jindal, 2010; Atuahene-Gima, 1997; Hultink & Atuahene-Gima, 2000; Matsuo et al., 2013). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Sales innovativeness positively influences sales performance.

Adaptive selling represents another critical determinant of salesperson effectiveness. Previous studies consistently demonstrate that adaptive selling contributes positively to sales performance (Boorum et al., 1998; Franke & Park, 2006). Adaptive selling refers to modifying selling behaviors during customer interactions based on information regarding customer characteristics and situational factors (Boorum et al., 1998). Similarly, Giacobbe, Jackson Jr., Crosby, and Bridges (2006) define adaptive selling as the salesperson's ability to adjust selling approaches according to customer responses during sales interactions. Blackshear and Plank (1994) further emphasize that adaptive selling involves collecting customer information, developing appropriate selling strategies, evaluating customer responses, and continuously modifying sales presentations based on customer feedback.

According to Spiro and Weitz (1990), effective adaptive selling requires salespeople to adopt different selling approaches for different customers, possess confidence in applying various selling strategies, understand diverse customer behaviors, and demonstrate strong customer information-gathering skills. Research by Franke and Park (2006) confirmed through meta-analysis that adaptive selling significantly improves salesperson performance regardless of the performance measurement employed. Likewise, Giacobbe et al. (2006) found that adaptive selling enhances salesperson effectiveness by enabling better alignment between selling behaviors and situational customer characteristics. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: Sales adaptiveness positively influences sales performance.

Based on the theoretical arguments presented above, the conceptual framework of this study is developed and illustrated in Figure 1.

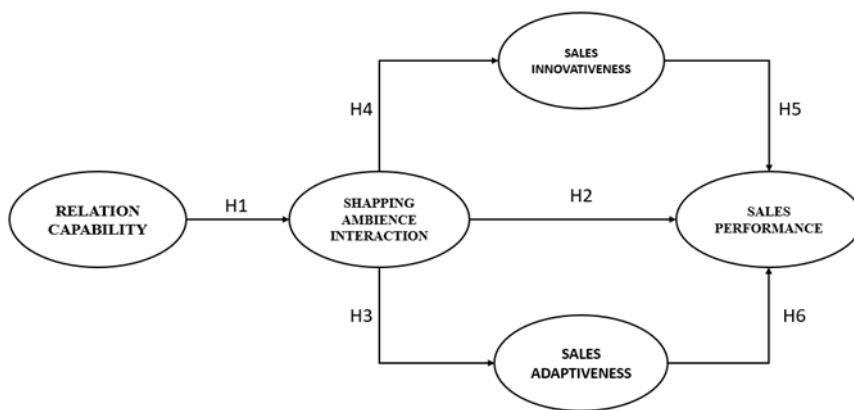


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3. Methods

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on established measurement scales from the existing literature. The questionnaire was designed by adapting validated instruments to ensure the reliability and validity of each construct. Relation capability was measured using the scale developed by Lages et al. (2009). The construct of shaping ambience interaction was measured using five indicators adapted from Chakrabarty, Brown, and Widing (2014) and Dietvorst et al. (2009). Sales performance was measured using the scales developed by Singh and Koshy (2011) and Piercy, Cravens, and Morgan (1997). The measurements for sales adaptiveness and sales innovativeness were adapted from Chen et al. (2015), Morgan, Slotegraaf, and Vorhies (2009), and Spiro and Weitz (1990).

All constructs were assessed using a ten-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 ("strongly disagree") to 10 ("strongly agree"), allowing respondents to indicate the extent to which each statement reflected their experiences in performing pharmaceutical sales activities.

The study targeted pharmaceutical salespeople working in Indonesia. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that respondents possessed sufficient professional experience relevant to the research objectives. The selection criteria required respondents to have at least two years of working experience as pharmaceutical sales representatives. After the screening process, a total of 400 valid questionnaires were obtained and included in the final analysis.

The operationalization of each construct, including its dimensions and measurement indicators, was based on the adopted theoretical framework and subsequently validated through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using AMOS. The CFA results confirmed the adequacy of the measurement model before testing the proposed structural relationships among the research variables.

4. Result and Discussion

Descriptive statistics on the measurement estimation scale and the results of testing the validity and reliability are presented in table 1.

Table 1. Scale and Measurement Estimation, Validity and Reliability Test Results

Construct	Indicators	Source	Std. Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability	p-value
Relation Capability	Ability to identify customers	Lages et al. (2009)	0.598	0.476	0.712	***
	Building relationships through formal and informal channels		0.627			***
	Providing input for product development		0.619			***
	Implementing mutually agreed solutions with customers		0.631			***
Shaping Ambience Interaction	Creating a positive atmosphere during sales conversations	Chakrabarty et al. (2014); Dietvorst et al. (2009)	0.586	0.535	0.759	***
	Maintaining a positive conversation tone		0.609			***
	Creating customer comfort during interactions		0.621			***
	Developing synergistic interactions		0.618			***
	Building promotional interactions		0.659			***
Sales Performance	Sales volume	Singh & Koshy (2011); Piercy et al. (1997)	0.707	0.594	0.771	***
	Sales value		0.702			***
	Sales growth		0.669			***
	Ability to acquire new customers		0.627			***
Sales Adaptiveness	Using different selling approaches	Spiro & Weitz (1990); Morgan et al. (2009)	0.713	0.580	0.738	***
	Adjusting selling approaches to customer needs		0.689			***
	Demonstrating flexibility during selling activities		0.688			***
Sales Innovativeness	Creative selling capability	Chen et al. (2015)	0.683	0.541	0.723	***
	Ability to solve customer problems creatively		0.651			***
	Ability to implement innovative selling processes		0.712			***

Confirmatory factor analysis produces a loading factor for each variable in the model with a minimum value above 0.50, with a critical ratio greater than 1.96. With the contribution of each indicator for the built variable, it is accepted with a significance below 0.05 at the critical ratio ≥ 1.96 ; so that the indicator can be accepted for further analysis. All have excellent reliability, such as relation capability (0.712), shaping ambience interaction (0.759), sales performance (0.771), sales adaptiveness (0.738), and sales innovation (0.723).

Hypothesis test

To test the acceptance of the proposed model and hypotheses, a full SEM analysis was performed. Here the full SEM analysis is presented in figure 2.

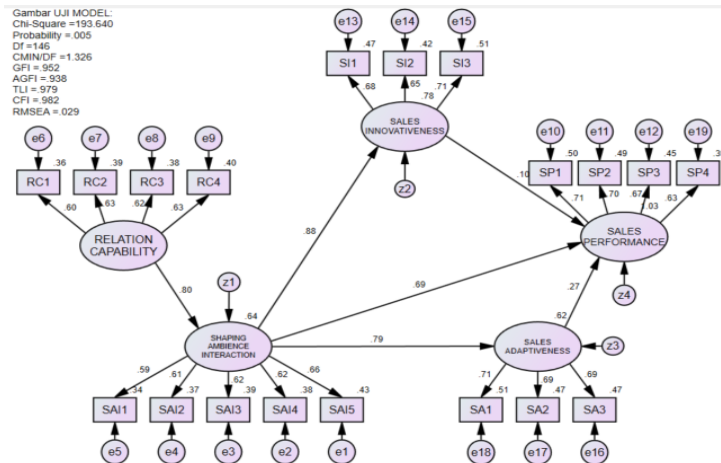


Figure 2. Structure Model Analysis

Based on the inferential statistical measurements of SEM, a summary of the results of hypothesis testing is presented in table 2.

Table 2. SEM Analysis

Goodness of Fit	Std. Estimate	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Conclusion
Relation capability → Shaping ambience interaction	0.798	0.887	0.100	8.829	***	Supported
Shaping ambience interaction → Sales adaptiveness	0.788	0.738	0.072	10.201	***	Supported
Shaping ambience interaction → Sales innovativeness	0.883	0.747	0.070	10.676	***	Supported
Shaping ambience interaction → Sales performance	0.693	0.762	0.182	4.184	***	Supported
Sales innovation → Sales performance	0.102	0.133	0.175	0.753	0.446	Supported
Sales adaptiveness → Sales performance	0.273	0.321	0.099	3.248	0.001	Supported

As presented in Table 2, the proposed structural model demonstrates a satisfactory level of model fit. The goodness-of-fit indices indicate that the model adequately represents the observed data, with GFI = 0.952, CFI = 0.982, TLI = 0.979, and RMSEA = 0.029, all of which meet the recommended threshold values. Furthermore, the χ^2/df , SRMR, IFI, and NFI values also support the adequacy of the proposed model, providing additional evidence of its overall robustness and fit.

The structural model results further reveal that all hypothesized relationships are statistically significant. Specifically, the critical ratio (C.R.) values for H1–H6 exceed the recommended threshold of 1.96, while the corresponding p-values are below 0.05. These findings indicate that all six proposed hypotheses are supported by the empirical data.

Overall, the combination of absolute, incremental, and residual-based fit indices demonstrates that the proposed structural model provides a satisfactory representation of the observed data. The consistency across multiple goodness-of-fit measures strengthens the

credibility of the model and supports its suitability for examining the relationships among relation capability, shaping ambience interaction, sales adaptiveness, sales innovativeness, and sales performance.

Discussion

This study investigates how relation capability contributes to improving salesperson performance by integrating the perspectives of Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) and Interaction Theory through the mediating role of shaping ambience interaction. The empirical findings support all six proposed hypotheses, indicating that the proposed conceptual framework successfully explains the mechanisms through which relational competencies influence salesperson performance in the pharmaceutical industry.

The first important finding demonstrates that relation capability significantly enhances shaping ambience interaction. This suggests that salespeople who are capable of identifying customer needs, developing relationships through formal and informal communication channels, contributing valuable ideas during product discussions, and implementing mutually agreed solutions are more likely to create positive interaction environments with customers. Such interaction environments are reflected in constructive conversations, customer comfort during sales encounters, synergistic communication, and promotional interactions that facilitate long-term relationship development. These findings reinforce the argument that relational capability represents a strategic organizational resource capable of creating superior customer experiences through high-quality interpersonal interactions.

The present findings further extend the theoretical perspectives of Service-Dominant Logic and Interaction Theory. From the SDL perspective, value is co-created through service exchange rather than through product transactions alone. Accordingly, successful pharmaceutical salespeople do not merely provide product information but facilitate meaningful service experiences by understanding customer needs and collaboratively creating value (Ordanini, Parasuraman, & Rubera, 2014). Likewise, Interaction Theory emphasizes that effective customer relationships emerge through various forms of interaction, including relational, empowered, developmental, integrated, and system-oriented interactions (Karpen & Bove, 2011). By integrating these two perspectives, the present study conceptualizes shaping ambience interaction as an interactional mechanism through which relational capability is translated into superior salesperson performance. The significant influence of shaping ambience interaction on sales performance indicates that creating positive interaction atmospheres enables salespeople to improve sales volume, sales value, sales growth, and customer acquisition. These findings are consistent with previous studies by Singh and Koshy (2011), Soliman (2011), and Guenzi, Baldauf, and Panagopoulos (2014).

The second major finding indicates that shaping ambience interaction significantly enhances both sales adaptiveness and sales innovativeness. A positive interaction atmosphere facilitates continuous dialogue, encourages customer participation, and enables salespeople to better understand customers' expectations. Consequently, salespeople become more capable of modifying their selling approaches according to different customer situations while simultaneously exploring innovative ways to communicate product value. These findings support the adaptive selling framework proposed by Spiro and Weitz (1990) as well as the sales innovativeness perspective developed by Chen et al. (2015). Salespeople who continuously adapt their selling approaches (Briggs et al., 2012; Jaramillo et al., 2007) and maintain flexible communication styles (Blackshear & Plank, 1994; Evans, McFarland, Dietz, & Jaramillo, 2012) are more likely to create productive customer interactions. This capability is particularly important in pharmaceutical selling, where products involve relatively high perceived risk, complex

technical information, and long-term professional relationships between pharmaceutical representatives and healthcare professionals.

The findings also demonstrate that sales innovativeness contributes positively to salesperson performance. Pharmaceutical salespeople who continuously generate creative ideas, introduce innovative selling methods, and effectively solve customer problems are better positioned to improve organizational performance. These findings reinforce previous studies suggesting that innovation functions as a mechanism for responding to changing customer needs and environmental uncertainty. Innovative selling enables salespeople to create greater customer value while simultaneously strengthening long-term customer relationships.

Consistent with previous literature, the present study further confirms that salesperson performance is significantly influenced by both sales adaptiveness and sales innovativeness. Performance, reflected through increased sales volume, sales value, sales growth, and successful acquisition of new customers, depends not only on technical selling competencies but also on salespeople's ability to continuously adjust and innovate their selling behaviors. These findings support earlier studies by Giacobbe et al. (2006), Damanpour and Evan (1984), Han, Kim, and Srivastava (1998), and Selvarajan et al. (2007), all of which emphasize the strategic importance of adaptive and innovative selling behaviors in improving sales outcomes.

Beyond the statistical significance of the proposed hypotheses, the standardized path coefficients provide additional theoretical insights into the relative importance of each relationship within the proposed model. The strongest relationship is observed between Relation Capability and Shaping Ambience Interaction (H1: $\beta = 0.798$), suggesting that relational competencies constitute the primary foundation for developing high-quality customer interactions. This finding is theoretically consistent with both Interaction Theory (Karpen & Bove, 2011) and Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), which argue that value co-creation begins with the effective deployment of relational resources during service encounters.

Furthermore, Shaping Ambience Interaction exhibits substantial effects on Sales Innovativeness (H4: $\beta = 0.883$) and Sales Adaptiveness (H3: $\beta = 0.788$), indicating that positive interaction environments encourage salespeople to both innovate and adapt their selling behaviors. Interestingly, while shaping ambience interaction directly influences sales performance (H2: $\beta = 0.693$), the direct contribution of Sales Innovativeness to Sales Performance is relatively modest (H5: $\beta = 0.102$). This finding suggests that, within the pharmaceutical industry, innovative selling behavior alone is insufficient to generate substantial performance improvements. A plausible explanation lies in the highly regulated nature of pharmaceutical marketing, where promotional activities are constrained by ethical guidelines, standardized product information, and regulatory compliance. Consequently, opportunities to implement highly innovative selling approaches are relatively limited compared with other industries.

By contrast, Sales Adaptiveness demonstrates a stronger influence on sales performance (H6: $\beta = 0.273$), indicating that the ability to adjust communication styles and selling approaches according to physicians' and pharmacists' individual needs provides more immediate performance benefits. These findings suggest a hierarchical mechanism in which relation capability serves as the foundational organizational capability, shaping ambience interaction functions as the primary interactional mechanism, and adaptive and innovative selling behaviors operate as complementary behavioral capabilities. Ultimately, salesperson performance depends not only on these individual competencies but also on organizational support and contextual conditions that enable such behaviors to be effectively implemented and rewarded.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that relation capability enhances salesperson performance through the mediating role of shaping ambience interaction. Drawing on Service-Dominant Logic and Interaction Theory, the findings show that stronger relational capabilities enable salespeople to create positive interaction environments that foster sales adaptiveness and sales innovativeness, ultimately leading to improved sales performance. Among the behavioral capabilities examined, sales adaptiveness exerts a stronger direct influence on performance than sales innovativeness, indicating that the ability to adjust selling approaches to customers' needs is particularly important in the highly regulated pharmaceutical industry. The study contributes theoretically by introducing shaping ambience interaction as the mechanism linking relation capability with salesperson performance and provides practical implications for pharmaceutical companies to strengthen relational competencies, customer interaction quality, and adaptive selling behaviors to achieve sustainable sales outcomes.

This study has several limitations that provide opportunities for future research. First, the sample is limited to pharmaceutical salespeople in Indonesia, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other industries and countries. Second, the cross-sectional design does not allow causal relationships to be examined over time. Third, all variables were measured using self-reported questionnaires, creating the possibility of social desirability bias and common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Future studies are therefore encouraged to employ longitudinal designs, incorporate objective performance measures or supervisor evaluations, and extend the proposed model by examining additional contextual variables such as government policy, organizational support, supply chain integration, digital selling capability, customer relationship management, and different selling channels across diverse industrial settings.

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