VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, HANOI
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**FACTORS INFLUENCING ON
SALESPERSON PERFORMANCE IN
INFORMATION SERVICE INDUSTRY**

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VIETNAM JAPAN UNIVERSITY**

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ABSTRACT

To examine major factors that influencing on salesperson performance in information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies, researcher proposed research model and hypotheses. A full measurement model was tested by CFA analysis and modeling procedure. Then, structural equation model was tested. Models fit the data well. Proposed hypotheses were supported and interpreted. Factors influencing on salesperson performance in information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies includes adaptive selling behavior, customer orientation, guanxi. It's found that customer orientation, adaptive selling behavior, "ganqing" (apart of "guanxi") has positive influence on salesperson performance, whereas "renqing" (apart of "guanxi") has positive to adaptive selling behavior, but not support salesperson performance. Besides, customer orientation is proved to have strong positive impact on adaptive selling in relationship toward salesperson performance in this industry.

Not only the customer orientation but the relationship between salesperson and his buyer's representatives have strong influence on his selling behavior and performance. The social relationship between salesperson and his customer's representative have strong affect on salesperformance than his adaptive selling behavior and customer orientation. It's the implication for manager to encourage their salespeople to develop emotional attachment among parties networking in order to improve their salesperson performance strategically. The research also affirmed the significance of customer orientation on adaptive selling behavior, toward their positive influence on salesperson performance in information industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies. It then suggested salesperson consider the effects of favors exchanges or reciprocity with his business partner. Therefore, sales manager can identify and orient salespeople the relevant treatment strategy for their customers, in order to improve sales performance.

Keywords: Salesperson performance; Information service industry; Academic publishing; Data analytics companies; Adaptive selling behavior; Customer orientation; Guanxi; Renqing; Ganqing; Xinren.

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATION

Abbreviation	Full term/Meaning
SP	Salesperson Performance
ASB	Adaptive Selling Behavior
CO	Customer Orientation
GX	Guanxi
GQ	Ganqing
RQ	Renqing
XR	Xinren
CRs	Construct Reliability (AVE)
FA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
e.g.	for example
AVE	Average Variance Extracted

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the research problem & Rationale of the Study

The sales force, as the bridge of their company and customers, considered as a factor creating more competitive advantages for each company through financial, product and customer information they manage. Practically, “the success or failure of the organization is mostly determined by performance”. Therefore, measuring or enhancing performance for sales people should be among the highest priorities of sales managers and managers (Walker, OC, 1977). Similarly, Grant & Cravens in 1996, indicated that the performance of a commercial organization depends on the salesperson performance (Grant & Cravens, 1996) so an essential task of sales management is to find out what drives salesperson performance. The sales force always plays a crucial role in the success of these companies by creating the linkage between the customer and the organisation in all industries. In the commercial world with challenges increasing, more and more executives need information from marketing scholars about about “what motivates salespeople and what leads to good sales performance” (Walker, 1977)

Theoretically, salesperson performance, studied as the measurement of sales’ revenue or amount of customer that an employee or salesperson makes for a business, or defined as “the process of overseeing and training employees to advance their sales skills, processes, and results”. Sales performance was stated as “the result of carrying out of some discreet and specific activities which may vary greatly across different types of selling jobs and situations” (Churchill & Ford, 1979.). The research topic of salesperson performance has been considered as a centre concern in order to improve companies’ development, and emerged as a hot topic in recent decades. Over the years, many researchs in this topic published, thousands of articles was found out when “sales performance” search was conducted in Google Scholars and other scholar resources. From the very first studies to examine the relationship between aptitude and salesperson performance conducted by Oschrin in 1918 (G. A. Churchill,

Ford, Hartley, & Walker, 1985), to the latest research by Tom Brashear-Alejandro about examining the longitudinal study of mentoring functions and their effect on salespersons are all related to factors influencing on salesperson performance (Brashear-Alejandro, Barksdale, Bellenger, Boles, & James, 2019)

When information is the key for success in the globalization era of international business and advanced science, the information service industry, a significant part of information industry has been emerging as one of global economy pillars. Since 2006, there was a dramatic development of information service industry with the total global production value increase with US\$ 624.4 billion in 2005 to US\$ 672.4 billion in 2006, reported by Gartner Dataquest. The global book publishing business, one of this industry's components partially reached revenue of \$112bn in 2018 (Ibis world, industry report). "The level of information services has become one of the key factors in measuring national modernization and comprehensive national power" (Zhu Z Y, Li N, Wang J H, 2012). This knowledge-based industry, for these reasons, is considered one of emerging field, which received attention from market analytics experts as well as business scholars over the world in previous decade.

Currently, "both governments and business communities around the world consider the information service industries to be "strategic" industries" (Futoshi Kurokawa et Kiyohiko G. Nishimura, 2006). When the business is healthy, it is not difficult to maintain good returns, but in some crisis periods, managers tend to shift the priority for sales representatives as the most important bridge between company and customers. The trend of "Open access" which encourage authors and publisher to share their knowledge is somehow the barrier for the industry and it's commercialized companies (Bobby Vocile, Strategic Market Analyst, Wiley). Besides, under the fierce competition trend, even the market leaders in the industry have to constantly update the most advanced information technology, and their sales force must always mobilize to upgrade their own as well as their company's competitiveness. However, managers in this field is having lack of information from business scholars to improve productivity of sales force on a regular basis.

In academic aspect, there was recently numbers of research in the information service industry, for instance, Clark, T. D., Zmud, R. W., & McCray, G. E.(1995) investigated the issue of relationships between outsourcing vendors in Information service industry. Research on Spanish Library and Information Science on the basis of academic publications issued between 2000 and 2010 was published by Kawalec (2013). Recently, Wu, Chien-Hsin; Wu, Feng-Shang; Chen, Wei-Yin published a research to explore “the relationship between knowledge attributes and innovation behavior in SMEs in the information service industry” (2015). However, to the best of our knowledge, there are very limited academic research related to salesperson performance that focus on information services industry, but mostly in publishing companies as a one of typical section of the industry over the years. Based on motivation from the both of academic research limitation in information service industry and the emerging excitement as well as practical challenges in academic publishing and data analytics firms, this thesis is motivated to study about the factors that having affect on salesperson performance in the information service industry, and partially expected to contribute a new scholar perspective about salesperson performance in the information service industry, as well as partially help management in the industry, especially in academic publishing and data analytics firms, to improve their sales force’s performance.

1.2 Research objectives

In the light of the above discussions, this thesis is aimed to explore and test the relationships between major factors having affects on salesperson performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies, in order to fulfil the research topic which has limited knowledge about salesperson performance in these focused fields.

1.3 Terminologies and Scope of study

1.3.1 Salesperson Performance

Sales was characterized as a challenging and failure-prone occupation (Boichuk et al. 2014) and deserve to attract both academic and practical study through many empirical and conceptual research published for centuries. Sales performance “was defined as behavior evaluated in terms of its contribution to the goals of the organization” (Johnston and Marshall 2006, p. 412). Since 1985, Churchill, Ford, and Walker established a model of factors or determinants of salesperson performance which included five basic aspects: (1) aptitude, (2) skill level, (3) motivation, (4) role perceptions, and (5) personal, organizational, and environmental variables. Anderson and Oliver (1987) proposed a concept that sales performance containing the results of salespeople as well as their behavior. “Sales results comprise the number of sales’ units, sales’ market share, new accounts and profits”. Other studies also looked at salespeople’s performance including their revenue results and related behaviors (Challagalla and Shervani, 1996).

1.3.2 Information Service Industry

Up to now, there is rare common knowledge about information service industry in academic research. According to Maglitta in 1990, then Shee, Tang and Tzeng in 2003, the concept of ‘information service’ was developed in the 1980s, the information service companies “simply played a role of information suppliers” (Shee et al. 2003). Until 2010, based on an article published by Chen, M.K information service industry is described as the industry designed for providing information services (Chen, M. K., & Wang, S.-C, 2010). Later, the so-called information service is considered as the “provision of baseline hardware and software, the analysis, design, and implementation of custom-made systems, the management of IT equipment, etc” (Tallarico 1998; Tang, Shee and Tang 1999; Shee et al. 2003).

The modern information service industry was indicated to “provide information services to the public or to specific companies, industries or groups of people as well as providing the information, in hard copy or electronic, information professionals also organize and store information” (Xu Limei, 1994). Companies and firms in the

industry, usually having a similar business models and target to provide end-users from organizations to individuals with information products & services such as data, information, related solutions, etc. The database product, therefore, is an important resource for many providers in the industry, which can be compiled, packaged, and updated to end users, in which publishers and data's analytics companies are typical firms of this industry. Based on above classification methods, there are many fields in this industry, but the scope of this thesis study will specialize in international academic publishing and data analytics companies in multi-national scale.

Over the decades, publishing has been considered “a mean for scholars to share their research” to the community and the bridge for end-users to gain knowledge and information via books, magazines, data and electronic textbooks, encyclopedia, and etc (Fyfe et al, 2017). Almost publishers now can provide print and electronic contents, within academic publishing industry considered as a money-making industry during the Cold War due to demands on economic as well as society development. Besides publishing companies, information service industry is also represented data analytics companies, which deliver services based on analyzing data. According to Techpoedia, “data analytics refers to qualitative and quantitative techniques and processes used to enhance productivity and business gain. Data is extracted and categorized to identify and analyze behavioral data and patterns, and techniques vary according to organizational requirements”. As 2 typical fields in the information service industry, publishing and data analytics companies are characterized by knowledge-intensiveness, in which, human capital is not only a labor input, but also an input of knowledge and wisdom (Xu Limei, 1994).

Therefore, the scope of this thesis is among academic publishing and data analytics companies belonging to information service industry, featured with majority of B2B and B2G business model. This study will explore and test the relationships between major factors affecting on salesperson performance in information service industry within 20 international academic publishers and global data analytics companies that have multinational branches over the world in B2B and B2G context.

1.4 Research Methodology

The research was conducted in quantitative analysis methodology. Research data was collected from salesperson in over 15 international academic publishers and global data analytics companies having multinational branches over the world in B2B and B2G context. Data analysis will follow Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) research method with hypotheses.

1.5 The structure of thesis

Regardless of the introduction, references and appendices, the structure of this study is as follows:

- Chapter 2 discusses the literature review about: Sales performance, information service industry, and major factors with reasons to be selected that having influence on sales performance in information service industry.
- Chapter 3 will follow with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) research method with hypotheses developed to test in quantitative analysis methodology
- Chapter 4 then focus in data analysis and research results
- Chapter 5 will run after with some findings and discussions
- The conclusion part of the thesis will presented at Chapter 6 as well as limitations of this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review part for this study was conducted on web-based scholarly information platforms included: Google Scholar, Web of Science, Emerald, Elsevier, TnF, Sage, and Cambridge, CNKI, through research terms: #sales performance/salesperson performance, #information service industry, #publishing company, #data analysis companies #guanxi, #adaptive selling/adaptive selling behavior, #customer orientation. Among the results, there are hundreds conceptual and empirical research about factors on salesperson performance with some a typical relationship, in which, there are 2 factors regularly appear time to time: adaptive selling behavior, customer orientation, and guanxi which have close but flexible relationship to explain sales performance. However, there are scant results of scholar research focus on information service industry, publishing company, data analysis companies.

2.1 Information service industry

2.1.1 Overview

Along with the rapid progress of knowledge-based economy over recent decades, the increasing importance of data and information is proportional with numbers of professional knowledge workers over the world, the proportion of the information service get increased in many fields, that led to the growing role of information service industry over the world. According to a research published in 2006 by Ying Feng Kuo, “the information service industry is designed for providing information service, including software package, turnkey system, system integration, professional service, data processing and network service” (Ying, 2006). This is a high-tech industry influenced by the information technology industry, which has development depends on technology and knowledge investment. A market report in 2009 by McKinsey, the information services industry, which has enjoyed a desired growth rates during 2000s, being described as “composition of professional publishing, syndicated information, and related advisory services targeting decision makers in a wide range of industries as finance, law, health care, media, and scientific research”

(Richard Benson-Armer, 2009). Nowadays, based on more widely application of data and e-commerce in the modern information service industry due to increasing level of the informatization in each nation and national organizations. In line with the principle of information disclosure and resource sharing, e-government construction will be carried out; support for the public welfare development and utilization of information resources will be increased, in addition to political and international competition. In line with knowledge-base economy with the growing demands of knowledge workers, the major customer of academic publishing and data analytics company are institutional level, so B2B and B2G model are considered as typical business models in this sector.

As a booming research field, there was a number of financial and market reports about the information service industry issued, included academic publishing and data analytics companies. The golden age of publishing and data analytics company is during 1995 – 2015 with average increase percentage is up to 10% annually. “Average margins are about 25 percent, and they soar to more than 50 percent for industry leaders. Growth and profitability have been driven by a surge in the number of professional knowledge workers globally and the increasing importance of data and information in decision making trends that are likely to continue unabated” (Richard Benson-Armer, 2009). Based on this market report in 2009, there was many big M&A deals processed in this industry, for instances: 158 acquisitions from 2000 to 2007 by Thomson Reuters, nearly 100 acquisitions announced by Reed Elsevier and Wolters Kluwer before 2009 in the strategy to become the world leading information providers. The market has an excellent record of growth from 6 percent to 8 percent a year in 2000 – 2009 period (Richard Benson-Armer, 2009). Since the data and solutions are associated with the end-user’s workflow, the unique characteristics of the information service companies seem to ensure the stable and predictable revenue stream (Richard Benson-Armer, 2009), but the information service industry has undergone profound changes in recent years indeedly.

When the manufacturing economy tend to shift into service or knowledge-base economy, the pressure on labor force to gain more knowledge and improve their performance become higher, not excluded academic publishing and data analyst companies. In the information service industry, intellectual capital and technology are both important, since they may not only optimize the production investment, but may also improve customer service quality, and enhancing competitive advantages. In the 1980s, thanks to computer technological advance, such as word-processing software or internet, production costs and the time of publishing was considerably reduced. Under the trend of electronic databases such as books, magazines, data and electronic textbooks, the speed and quality of access to the platform on databases and customers is very important as a key to success. In addition, it also makes data and information services overcome the limitation of time and space, and accelerates the modernization process of publishing and information services. These services require a very skillful and knowledgable workforce, especially the product's specialist and sales force in order to deliver consultancy services for knowledgable customers such as top colleges and universities. New technologies and information services cannot be limited to the collection, screening or transmission of information. Information that is both practical and strategic is derived from in-depth research on intelligence. Information service enterprises, therefore, have more pressure on improve their human resource and business performance in order to adapt with these challenges and develop. In academic aspect, these challenges are also chance for business or economist scholars to dig out the problems and solutions in fundamental and implication for managers. However, there was still limited conceptual and empirical researchs conducted in the information service industry, and little attention was paid to character the industry over last decades in academic field.

2.1.2 Publishing and Data Analytics Companies

Theoretically, publisher are described "as content providers to global media and internet enterprises" as one of the creative industries (Delaney, 2000), which is charaterized as "both network and hierachical structures that engage art and

commerce” (Caves 2000). There was scant of academic research in this topic, but many related market reports was published since 2000. Since the research published by Flistein in 2001, publishers was also concerned as an emerging theories of markets in economic sociology (Flistein 2001; White 2002). In 2009, Ware and Mabe reported about “2,000 publishers, including learned societies, other not-forprofit organizations, and commercial enterprises, produce more than 25,000 journals across the disciplines” (Morgan, C., Campbell, B., & Teleen, T. , 2012). Recently, academic publishing has become the subject of controversial discussion within the UK and internationally about pricing practices and business models, by both journalists and academics (Harvie, D. et al, 2013), which is raise the boycott toward commercial publishing companies due to it’s extraordinarily high profit.

Most of traditional publishers that deliver both electronic resources and print publication such as: SpringerNature, Wiley, Pearson, Emerald, SAGE, etc. The other providers offer e-resource packages that comprise a large number e-journals or ebooks, data, across different disciplines from a number of different publishers as third-party publishers, are called “aggregator” such as: ProQuest, EBSCOHost, JSTOR, etc. “Services such as SSRN, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Academia.edu, Mendeley and the Open Access journals are only the visible tips of the iceberg of new players and indeed new services and modes of publishing” (Ponte, D., et al, 2017). Besides above publishing companies, the other business type that provide products and services based on data and information analysis technology, that abstract and index citations to journals articles from the variety of publishers, and deliver scientometric analysis report, is called data analytics company, such as: Elsevier Analytics, Clarivate Analytics, Dimension, etc.

Information technology played a significant role in publishing industry, that help to change traditional single and print service model by enabling the capacity of data and content collection much faster, and upgrade the quality of information of publishing. Previous decades have witnessed the fluctuations in products and service model of publishing and data analytics companies in information service industry. The growth

of technologies have brought critical changes in the publishing, purchasing, management, and delivery of information. “The low cost of providing data relative to its value has driven the industry’s growth and profitability” (Richard Benson-Armer, 2009). Books, journals and database was converted into electronic format, which is so-called electronic resources, that allow users to access and utilize much more easily with advanced discovery methods.

In fact, the use of e-resources require the high cost associated infrastructure of information technology, but the proliferation of web-based full-text publications, or e-resources has encouraged library subscribe access license to the digital collections as increasingly important component of modern digital libraries. University and research libraries, considered as a learning hub that manage and provide information services for higher academic and research institutions, therefore, are not aloof from the trend of scholarly electronic resources subscription. Either in developed or developing countries, more and more end-users in university have demands of using international journals, books, and information service for their research and education activities. As the result, online electronic contents from international publishers become evitable with university and research libraries.

“Publishers are currently an analytics focus of the rapidly evolving of contract theory in economics” (Caves 2000). Electronic resources or data analytics service are normally granted accessing or provided through license grant MOU or license agreement between publishers or information services vendor, and institution or government office through contractual agreements. Librarians was described as "document supply agents for publishers disseminating articles in electronic form. Commissions from sales within their institution and/or to external customers could be re-invested by libraries in improving their service” (Don Schauder, 1993, p3). That’s the reason B2B business model (standing for Business to Business) and B2G (standing for Business to Government) usually take place in the form of contractual supply or main business models of these information service companies.

Indeed, B2B and B2G are business models have been favored by many businesses especially publishing and data analytics companies because the transaction and cooperation between these companies with institutions or government offices often brings diverse and effective benefits, faster results, and competitive advantages of companies through with buyers' representatives will be more sustainable relationships rather than with end-users. “One of the constant obstacles in B2B sales is finding the right type of clients through prospecting efforts, and then discovering the decision makers within the network of external stakeholders” (Rodriguez, M., Peterson, R. M., & Krishnan, V. , 2012). In this industry, B2B comprise not only the direct relationship of buying and selling between publishers and institutions or governments, but also through 2 distribution channels, included the above mentioned publishing aggregators and trading companies in the industry.

Publishers or data analytics companies normally implement selling through vertical integration strategies by supportive and deeply interfering with the distribution system of the information service specialized trading companies, or working with the agregators to build local distribution channels in national or regional levels. In developed countries the B2B business model majorily includes direct distribution between publishing and data analytics companies with their customers or through their aggregators. Due to the differences in culture and legal dimensions, the B2B business model between publishing and data analytics companies with their customers in developing countries will be majorily handled by local trading companies or multinational companies that have reputable businesses network. Normally, publishing or data analytics companies and their institutional or goverment customer tend to exploit relationships with reputable businesses suppliers, having experience in products or services, with adaptive selling solutions in their targeted market.

Today, since education for poor copyright awareness can't catch up the rapid development of electronic resource with convenience and easy access in recent years, publishing and data analytics company business in developing countries have to face

many obstacles. Many university in this market area still underevaluate investments for international e-resources, with low or no return-on-investment, instead of positioning the library as the heart of school as in many developed countries. Only one pressure from international university ranking, for instances: THE (Times Higher Education World University Rankings) or QS (Quacquarelli Symonds university ranking), national accreditation system, credit-based training, research orientation, international publish, and globalization trend, more universities considered online resource and software for research activities. E-resource business under the trend of open access in these developing regions become more struggling, and require salesforce more pressure to penetrate the local markets.

Traditionally, publishers often apply annual subscription or perpetual purchase fee to grant access for institution, in order to handle publication cost included processing fees from printing copies, online hosting to intellectual property protection. However, the research of McGuigan and Russell (2008) revealed that “one publisher’s operating profit margins in journal publishing activities over the three years 1998, 1999 and 2000 were reported at 25.7%, 23.4% and 21%, respectively”. (Harvie, D. et al, 2013), which implied the high profitable rate of the industry. Therefore, many scholars raise a campaign to boycott Elsevier, “where editors were encouraged to resign in protest, and authors and reviewers were to steer clear of the STM market leader” (Simba Information, 2018). At the same time, open access has been emerged as inevitable transition gradually, for instance a considerable amount of budget are being spent on open access in the United Kingdom (Van Noorden, 2013). The e-resources business in developed countries, therefore get more difficulty for many publishing companies.

As the result, in both developed and developing markets, academic publishing or data analytics companies have to face with challenges to maintain existing customers as well as penetrate the new leads for a variety of reasons, such as increased competition, tighten budget issue, commoditization of products. These issues put a big pressure on the salespeople in this field to ensure not good knowledge in products and markets,

but follow customer orientation with adaptive selling strategy to fit the market demands rather than product or selling orientation as in other markets.

2.2 Salesperson Performance

2.2.1 Conceptualization

Performance was described as "behavior that has been evaluated in terms of its contribution to the goals of the organization" (Walker, O. C., Churchill, G. A., & Ford, N. M. 1979). Measuring and managing salesperson performance is considered as an important aspect in management job in every companies, and sales tools are developed for managers be able to measure it. There are some definition of sales performance, for instance: "individual salesperson's relative (to his peers) accomplishments on conventional indicators such as generation of sales revenue, replenishment of the customer base" (Joshi, A. W., & Randall, S., 2001), and "behavior evaluated in terms of its contribution to the goals of the organization" (Johnston and Marshall 2006, p. 412). One of the key points relating to manage the sales force as the bridge between company and customers is how to improve performance. Due to critical position of sales performance improvement in any company in order to remain and develop the business, this topic is considered a hot academic topic with considerable amount of research was generated over the past 100 years, since the paperwork of Oschrein (1918), in which survey research was represented mostly.

2.2.2 Previous research on Salesperson Performance

From 1977 to 1981, there was basically two conceptual research perspectives about sales performance included "WCF and Weitz". It is widely observed and admitted that personal or individual factors affect how salespeople perform and there were many researchs in the past studied on sales profession and factors that negatively or positively influencing on salesperson's performance. Since not all studies have produced entirely consistent results regarding to factors affecting sales performance and the interaction of each relationship, meta-analysis research was conducted aiming

to provide a more adequate interpretation for the previous empirical studies, and generating a relatively consistent summary of results (Churchill et al.,1985). Importing significant perspectives from a research of the antecedents regarding to sales performance by Walker (1977), through a meta-analysis research based on 393 citations from more than 60 journals, around 30 dissertations from 1918 to 1982, Churchill and his collaborators identified that “the determinants for sales performance into six main categories: role perceptions, aptitude, skill level, motivation, personal factors and organizational and environmental” (Churchill et al.,1985). More literature after Churchill has paid attention to the identification of factors affecting sales performance, the relationship among them, or related mental process relating to selling behavior.

Among meta-analyses research conducted on sales performance, for instance: Vinchur et al. (1998) through 198 samples from 98 published and unpublished paper to explore the effect of personality traits on salesperformance; Other review based on 117 studies relating to the “Big Five model of personality” (Barrick and Mount, 1991) affirmed that extraversion and conscientiousness are positively related to sales performance. In the other hand, several research later advocated that “the strength of the association between personality, behavior and performance varies across context, for example salesperson’s autonomy” (Barrick and Mount, 1993). Right after Barrick, many academic research on this topic was conducted and explored common factors that have direct influence in salesperson performance such as: Product knowledge, attitude, teamwork, compensation, sales supportiveness, autonomy, responsibility, personal goals, orientation in customer-oriented selling, adaptive selling, etc (Plank, R. E., & Reid, D. A., 1994).

In 2006, Park & Deitz published other article in meta-analysis research about factors influencing on sales performance, which indicated that role perception, role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload, burnout, aptitude, dispositional triats, personal concerns, identity, cognitive, skill level such as micro selling, interpersonal, and degree of adaptiveness or adaptive selling behavior. Major predictors having negative

affect on salesperformance included: Role perception (adapted from Walker, 1977); Three factors role conflict - role ambiguity - role overload, that was imported from Singh, 1998 and represented by role conflict, role problem, role ambiguity, role clarity, role overload, and difficulty variables; Burnout, represented by reduced accomplishment, emotional exhaustion. Other predictors having positive influence on salesperformance comprised: Cognitive, which was measured by genenral mental ability, verbal intelligence, and quatitative ability that adapted from Vinchur et al, 1985; Skill level, which was imported from Ford's research in 1983, learned proficiency at performing neccesary tasks for the sales job. (Park & Deitz, 2006)

Based on Thompson's statement that there is neither not only one sales situation, nor only one way of selling method (Thompson 1973, p. 8), Weitz affirmed that "an effective salespeople need to use a approach in which they select their sales approach to match the specific situations they encounter" (Weitz, 1981). In the B2B and B2G context, salesperson have to find out decision maker and interact with this buyer's representative as key contact, so their selling behavior and sales approach method will decide the sales result in this situation. "The most significant contributor of the effectiveness of sales comes from salesperson adaptiveness when the selling takes place"(Wren & Simpson, 1996). Weitz had broadly studied on the this factor, the adaptive selling beavior which identified to mostly have positive relationship with sales performance. Weitz, B. A. in 1981 mentioned about major factors that may drive the sales performance, included behavioral tendencies and the interaction between behavior of sales person with their performance, and their ability to adapt to the customer in interaction with them. Adaptive selling behavior, thus, become an important factor may drive the sales perfomance in challenging industries.

As mentioned about B2B context, in order to approach customer and sell products, salesperson always try to find customer's demands and preferences, and decision-makers of the targeted institutions. "Salespeople with high levels of customer orientation truly care about customers, and thus engage in actions that customers value, such as listening to customer feedback and solving customer problems"

(Jaramillo, F., & Grisaffe, D. B., 2009). As a result, knowledge about customer's needs and preferences will help salesperson to serve customer better, then improve the sales revenue, customer orientation thus become a very important variable that appeared in many research on sales performance topic. Salespeople having customer orientation can avoid short run selling method that may negatively influence on customer interests, and engage their relationship with customer in long run (Saxe and Weitz 1982). In an empirical to test the relationship between customer orientation and it's impact on sales performance, Jaramillo et al explained about different impact of customer orientation on individual performance growth and performance level. The effects of customer orientation on sales performance will be greater when the salesperson can support the customer in complex selling tasks when they are under naturally cooperative context. This observation make a whole in research and force us to retest relationship between sales performance and customer orientation, in other specific situation.

If customer orientation was identified as an effective strategy for salespeople in many industry as mentioned above, the knowhow to maintain and utilize the relationship with customer is even more important. Therefore, among factors having close influence on salesperformance, "Guanxi", a concept arised from China, is considered an emerging factor that have direct and indirect relationship with business performance, especially after Microsoft entered China Market in 2004. It's started to add on guanxi in the relationship with salesperson performance in research about China, and recently got more attention in other area's research. Apart from China, Guanxi was used by more scholars in Asia context, that Guanxi has both positive and negative affect on industry performance. It's also indicated in an article published in with the perspective of organizational factors that Guanxi can lead to high performance of the company and is conducive to sales growth (Park, S. H., & Luo, Y., 2001). Guanxi directly influences the growth of the company through market transactions and competitive positioning, and indirectly affects the growth of the company through strategic implementation.

Based on conceptual research on factors that have impact on performance by Saxe, Weitze, and Spiro, it's identified that "customer orientation and adaptive selling have been the focus of two prominent research streams in sales force research" (Jaramillo, F., & Grisaffe, D. B., 2009). Salespeople with ability of adaptive selling can easily find the way to fit customers' needs or preferences (Hunter and Perreault 2006), so that their revenue will be possibly increased as the result. Regarding to B2B and B2G business model of publishing, "guanxi", described as a network that more than a merely symbolic representation of personal and organizational ties, should be adapted as a predictor among relationship between adaptive selling behavior, customer orientation in research of factors that influencing on sales performance. However, there are not any specific research related to adaptive selling behavior, customer orientation, or guanxi as factors affecting on salesperson performance that implemented in information service industry, or publishing and data analysis companies.

2.3 Customer Orientation

2.3.1 Conceptualization

Practically, based on Pareto principle as 80/20 rule, business expert indicated that 80% of the company's profit is usually only based on 20% of customers, or in another word, a small group of customers will bring real profit for the business. Therefore, the goal of company is to keep the group of customers profitable as long as possible by customer orientation, the most effective measure considering customers as a top priority in all their activities. "As early as 1954 Drucker stated that the only reasons for business to be in business was to innovate and satisfy customers at a profit" (Drucker, 1954). As a result, customer orientation, defined as "employee behaviors that are indicative of a customer-oriented culture" (Michael K. and J. Joseph Cronin, 2001) become the core of business success, disseminated throughout the organisation, understood and internalised by everyone. It was also determined as a vital element of marketing management for almost a century since the introduction of the marketing concept (Jaworski and Kohli 1993).

2.3.2 Previous research on Customer Orientation

In Heinonen and Michelsson's study about creating customer relationships, it's indicated that "prospect initiation is challenging" and is significantly different in B2B relationships. Customer orientation, thus, was also considered a core topic in research in business field. It is widely acknowledged that successful organizations need to have a customer-oriented business culture, for instance: Athanassopoulos, 2000. Customer orientation, considered as an effective knowledge management, was also associated with customer performance in previous conceptual research (Hoffman and Ingram, 1992). "Conventional marketing wisdom holds that a customer orientation provides a firm with a better understanding of its customers, which subsequently leads to enhance customer satisfaction and firm performance" (Voss and Voss 2000, p. 67). Other study indicated that customer-oriented company can get the success at multiple level once they identify and meet consumers' demands. Therefore, the customer-oriented organizations must try to adapt their customer's need information (Narver and Slater 1990).

"Research on sales process effectiveness incorporates understanding customers and is defined as the ability to complete short-term outcomes in the sales exchange by being able to analyze opportunities and improve closing rates" (Stoddard, Clopton, and Avila, 2006). The period of studying customers demands can face challenges based on the length of sales cycle, complexity of the procurement procedure. "To manage these obstacles, sales professionals must maintain continuous collaboration externally with the client and key influencers. From a sales perspective, collaboration involves a value chain model" (Weitz, Castleberry, and Tanner 2004) The skill of utilizing the advantage of customer-orientation to the business performance of salesperson can be understood as opportunity management knowhow from the prospect situation analysis, then the real demands identification, and later close the deal, and after sales service. Therefore, understanding the needs or preferences of customer can be evaluated as key of sales success in many practical study, and

customer-orientation was predicted as an effective factor influence on sales performance in many situations.

However, according to a research by Walker et al. (1979) customer orientation can only explain around 10 percent of the salesperson performance (Walker et al., 1979). 18 years since Walker's research, Jaramillo et al. also conducted a meta-analysis in 2007, in scope of 16 previous studies with 3,477 respondents about customer orientation explains only about 2 percent of in salesperson performance's variance. Other researchers, such as Brown and Peterson in 1993, Holmes and Srivastava in 2002 also about factors influencing on sales performance, either found that: Customer orientation only explained the limited significant at under 4% (Ramendra Singh, Abraham Koshy, 2010). In the published article in 2019, based on a proposition that customer orientation of salespeople was as unsustainable factor leading to a positive business outcome or sales performance, Lifang Shu, and his collaborators examined relationship between customer orientation, adaptive selling behavior, and sales performance and found one factor moderating the influence among customer orientation, adaptive selling, and sales performance, called "Emotional Exhaustion"(Lifang Shu, Haiying Wei, and Leiqing Peng, 2019).

Based on the lack of supportive evidence about the customer orientation on salesperson performance (Franke and Park, 2006), other previous research in 2015 by Rakesh Singh and Pingali Venugopal also explored that salesperson's emotion fully mediated the relationship between customer orientation and salesperson performance (Rakesh Singh, Pingali Venugopal, 2015). "According to Verbeke et al. (2008), a deep understanding of a customer's needs may even reduce sales performance, if the sales task is highly structured (as is often the case for standardized products)". Customer orientation is important method to create clients relationship. However, there is an empirical research found out that customer orientation also require time, finance, and challenge the salesforce and since it take more time of salesperson to serve customer, so they don't have enough time to expand the network

or develop the new prospects, which somehow lead to lower revenue. (Homburg, C., Müller, M., & Klarmann, M., 2011).

9 years ago, a research by Lam et al investigated that “the salesperson’s customer orientation is necessary but not sufficient to achieve outstanding results” in the current competitive and complicated business environment (Lam et al., 2010). For instance, in case of international organizations, when customer information used to be provided by third party or local agent, “customer orientation may have result in poor decisions relative to service quality and physical good strategies” (Gouillart and Sturdivant 1994). This can be the reason leading to the low performance salesforce in the customer-oriented firms. It’s also recognized that the concept of "customer orientation" has remained somewhat vague and imprecise" (e.g., Schwepker 2003), so there will be easily the inconsistent impact in customer orientation with sales performance. Since establishing a customer-oriented culture is still considered as a necessary precondition when salesperson usually take responsibility of taking care customers to create the business outcome (Cross, et al, 2007). Arised from this interesting hole in academic research, this study is motivated to examine the role of customer orientation in relationship with adaptive selling behavior and sales performance, in B2B and B2G context of information service industry.

2.4 Adaptive Selling Behavior

2.4.1 Conceptualization

“Adaptive selling is defined as the altering of sales behaviors during a customer interaction or across customer interactions based upon perceived information about the nature of the selling situation” (Sujan, 1986), which has been suggested as the basis for performance findings may rest in the varied conceptualizations of both sales performance and adaptive selling behavior (e.g., Sujan et al., 1994; Goolsby et al., 1992). Similarly, Spiro and Weitz (1990), defined this behavior as “collecting information about a prospective customer, developing a sales strategy, evaluating the impact of these messages, and making adjustments based on this evaluation” (Weitz,

1981, p. 61). Marks et al. (1996) find adaptive behaviors which was significantly related to performance. Practically, adaptive selling behavior is understood as a type of sales strategy, in which a product or service presented varies according to the type of consumer observing. Adaptive sales strategies take into account the situation in which products or services are presented according to consumers' demographics and feedback has been received about the product or service.

This selling behavior focus on personal factors demonstrated a direct effect of creativity on sales performance, which may vary depending on such factors as the nature of the specific sales activities, the characteristics of the product market enriches theoretical understanding. The application of adaptive selling behavior, thus, has been adopted by advance sales forces since last decades. However, the higher personalization requires employees to be trained carefully to high cost, so adaptive sales strategies can be very costly when applied to retail, and are therefore often used in B2B and B2G. This factor, as a result, has been considered imperative for successful salespeople in many researchs on salesperformance in B2B context, for instance: “Role of adaptive selling and customer orientation on salesperson performance: Evidence from two distinct markets of Europe and Asia” (Erdener Kaynaka, et al, 2016)

2.4.2 Previous research on Adaptive Selling Behavior

Salesperson will be evaluated as adaptive when they apply different approach or dealing activities on each customer and adjust their sales behavior based in each situation. “Jolson (1975, 1989) has identified this sales presentation behavior at the high end of a continuum of sales presentation techniques”. In wider scenario, such as in international business context, adapting to customer is even the ability to flexibly customize products, services, pricing policy based on the regional demands or preferences, which may be considered as an imperative factor for successful market entry. Notarantonio and Cohen (1990) proved that a salesperson can achieve the better sales result if he can adjust his own style during sales encounter, meaning the

"adaptive and flexible communicative behavior seems to be a necessary condition for sales performance" (Keillor, B. D., Stephen Parker, R., & Pettijohn, C. E., 2000).

There are many researchs discussed about adaptive selling behavior's position as a crucial factor on sales performance (Ghazaleh Moghareh Abed, Mohammad Haghighi, 2009), especially in case that salespeople can increase their sales revenue or performance based on their flexible adjustment on treatment and relationship with customer when they have enough information in characteristic and demands of them. Therefore, this factor also has been frequently investigated by researchers among it's relationship with customer orientation, sales planning, product orientation, and so on. Recently, it's appeared in a research by Lifang Shu and research team that mentioned about the positive effect of customer orientation on adaptive sales behavior, under the mediator of the sales' emotional exhaustion. It's indicated that "When the salesman's emotional exhaustion level is high (compared to low), the positive effect between functional customer/relationship orientation and adaptive sales behavior is significantly weakened" (Lifang Shu, Haiying Wei and Lei Qing Peng, 2019).

According to Weitz et al, adaptive selling present the ability to change selling approach or service deliver method in response to the needs and preferences of customer, which may "lead to higher levels of customer orientation" (Weitz, Sujan, & Sujan, 1986). Based on Sigauw's argument about the relationship between the salesperson and the customer, Franke & Park suggested that "adaptive selling may be considered both an antecedent and consequence of customer orientation" and examined the relationship between these 2 factors along with customer satisfaction and sales experience. The meta analysis research, conducted with 31,000 salespeople, found that salesperson that have higher level of customer orientation will be more more satisfied when they apply adaptive selling successfully to improve the performance than the others who don't adopt customer orientation. (Franke & Park, 2006).

However, there are both empirical and meta analysis research showed the difference of the adaptive selling behavior's influence on sales performance, for instance the study on Finland and Macau, in which adaptive selling behavior strongly supported the sales performance in Finland, whereas the relationship in Macau is not similar, but moderated by salesperson satisfaction (Erdener Kaynaka, et al, 2016). Other empirical research conducted by Keillor et al in 2000 turned out that the adaptability of salespeople was not significant in relationship with performance (Keillor, B. D., Stephen Parker, R., & Pettijohn, C. E, 2000). Adaptive selling behavior, therefore become a popular factor, that has appeared in many articles recently due to it's inconsistency on sales performance based on a meta anlysis by Park and Deitz (2006) (see Figure 2.1), which motivate many research to find the moderator factors or control variables having influence in this relationship. For instance: Impact on Pharmaceutical Sales Performance which found Adaptive Selling Behavior does not have significant relationship to Salesperson Performance in this industry).

In other studies, customer orientation and adaptive selling behavior have an inconsistent influence on their performance through the moderation of major factors such as relationship, salesperson satisfaction, or customer need knowledge (Wang et al, 2011). There is also a research proposed “renqing” (in term of reciprocal) as an important factor should be examined with selling behaviors, under the relationship with salesperformance (Ming-Hong Tsai, Shu-Cheng Steve Chi, and Hsiu-Hua Hu, 2009). Since renqing is one of 3 dimensions in guanxi measurement system, this thesis would be much better to examine the relationship between the whole system of guanxi to relationship between customer orientation – adaptive selling behavior and salesperson performance. To the best of knowledge, not any study has examined the effect of guanxi, the “relationship” factor emerged on the Customer Orientation – Adaptive Selling Behavior relationship under the research about salesperson performance's determinents so far.

Figure 2.1: The literature study summary of Adaptive selling behaviors –
(Adopted from Park & Deitz)

Table 1. ASB and performance

Author(s)	Hypothesized relationship	Results
Anglin et al. ⁵⁶	ASB items → performance	Some items were significant, some not significant, and some have negative correlations
Weilbaker ^{29,76}	ASB → sales performance	Some significant and some not significant
Leong et al. ⁶⁵	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Weilbaker ⁷⁵	ASB → sales performance	Not significant
Goolsby et al. ³⁰	ASB → several types of performance	Some significant some not significant
Lollar ⁶⁶	ASB → sales performance	Not significant
Broom ⁵⁸	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Porter ⁷⁰	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Predmore and Bonnice ⁷²	Adaptability → sales success	Significant
Marks et al. ⁵¹	Adaptive belief → performance	Not significant
	Adaptive practice → performance	Significant
McMurrian ⁶⁸	ASB → sales performance	Not significant
Brown ⁶⁰	Working smart → performance	Significant
Broom et al. ⁵⁹	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Spiro and Weitz ²⁷	ASB → Sales performance	Significant
Blackshear and Plank ⁵⁷	ASB → Sales performance	Significant
Johlke ⁶³	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Keillor et al. ⁴⁶	ASB → sales performance	Significant
McIntyre et al. ⁶⁷	ASB → perceived sales performance	Significant
Porter et al. ⁷¹	ASB → Sales performance	Significant
Fang et. al. ¹²	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Franke and Park ³	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Rapp et al. ⁷³	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Kidwell et al. ⁶⁴	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Jaramillo et al. ⁴³	ASB → sales performance	Significant
Jaramillo and Grisaffe ⁶²	ASB → sales performance	Significant

ASB: adaptive selling behavior; Source: Adopted from Park and Deitz.⁹

2.5 Guanxi

2.5.1 Conceptualization

According to a report of the Manta and BIA/Kelsey survey, an existing customer will be able to spend 67% of the product more than a new customer (Jed Williams and Kristy Campbell, 2014). Thus, the loyal customers absolutely deserve better care because the cost to keep them will be much lower than the cost of looking for a new customer. Not only that, loyalty customers can be encouraged to become your brand ambassadors to convey the message of your business to other partner, thereby increasing the number of customers quickly. Therefore, relationship marketing was considered as an important topic in business (McKenna, 1994). There is recently a

more complete concept of “relationship” in business absorbed from China – “Guanxi” This is even wider than above mentioned relationship in business because Guanxi is defined as “a long-term, relational form of trust, and implies a long-term agreement between partners”. It is established and built by following through on promises, treating others with courtesy, and contacting partners frequently. It provides the basis for mutual trust or credit, is regarded as mutually beneficial, and reduces dysfunctional conflicts” (Zhuang et al., 2008). Basically, “guanxi is about building a network of mutually beneficial relationships which can be used for personal and business purposes. In this sense, guanxi is not so much different than the importance of having a strong network when doing business in any country” (Business Insider).

Scholars believe that “Guanxi” is a localized concept with Chinese characteristics, but it is not a unique concept in the context of Chinese culture. In East Asian countries influenced by Confucianism and culture, the existence of Guanxi can also be found through its national language. Words such as Japanese, Korean, Malay, etc. have similar meanings. In Chinese, relations (Guanxi) = Guan (guan) + Department (xi): "Off" as a noun, the ancient meaning refers to "the place where the traffic is in danger or the place where the border enters and exits," such as the "gate", which is now mostly used. Metaphor refers to "important turning points", such as "difficulty"; "system" as a verb, meaning "connection, connection", mostly used for abstract things (Zhuang et al., 2008). Literally, “Guanxi” means the association and connection between individuals, and through mutual help behaviors, activities that cannot be achieved by the individual itself can be realized.

From the meaning of Guanxi, it’s quite easy to be imagined with following features: “cultural, transferable, reciprocal, intangible, utilitarian, long-term persistence (long - term)”. Guanxi” is also translated as “relationship” in Chinese, but it is essentially different from the word “relationship” in English. Therefore, “Guanxi” is different from “Relationship” in Western vocabulary. Guanxi and Relationship can be summarized as follows:

Relationship is the foundation of Guanxi. From the connection between the two, the existence of relationship, which does not automatically generate Guanxi, but will strengthen or promote this concept after it has been established; from the content of coverage, there is no relationship between strangers Guanxi can be generated, that is, a third party is used as a medium to establish a bridge of communication between the two, and the unstructured Guanxi has more “instrumental” content; from the establishment time, it lacks compared with the Guanxi with the relationship.

2.5.2 Previous research about Guanxi

The development and improvement of Guanxi theory has made scholars' research perspectives more and more broad. Guanxi has gradually become the focus of scholars in corporate strategy research. Based on the research of Guanxi theory literature, Guanxi achieves two-way communication of personal or social transactions through social networks (relationship networks), gaining the interests of individuals and organizations, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the relationship between the two parties. The organization Guanxi is formed based on the individual Guanxi and is consolidated and strengthened through the diversification of the individual Guanxi. Western scholars have a negative attitude towards Guanxi, linking Guanxi with bribery and partiality, and believe that it undermines the principle of fairness. “As with strategies, it is a business's responsibility to evaluate the ethicality and impact of its moves. Guanxi should not be used as a strategy to change or break the rules of business, instead, it should be considered only as an alternative to smooth the progress of business within legal boundaries” (Chen, 2001). “Thus, despite being part of guanxi practice, the back-door policy is not encouraged for Western firms due to the negative effects that it might cause” (Dunfee & Warren, 2001).

Previous studies showed the variety in role of Guanxi in B2B while some research, for instance: “linked guanxi to supplier communication and trust” (Cheng et al., 2012) or “examining the role of interpersonal liking in developing Guanxi and Et-Moone relationships”. There was some articles included “Does Customer-Salesperson

Guanxi or Salesperson's Influence Tactic Matter in social media context? Empirical Evidence from Vietnam?”, “Wen Kuei Wu, Thị Phương Tống” and Internationalization and the performance of born-global SMEs: the mediating role of social networks - Lijun Zhou, Wei-Ping Wu, Xueming Luo) demonstrated Guanxi as predictor of Sales Performance, which create the positive impact to increase the Sales Performance. The recent research titled Effects of Perceived Organizational Support and Guanxi on Salesperson Performance: The Mediation of Customer Need Knowledge by Guocai Wang et al, which examined role of guanxi in bullwhip effect reduction, and ultimately to improved organizational performance, turned out that: Guanxi has bridge role between salespersons and customers, therefore, salesperson should be aware of guanxi as the effective solution to increase sales performance (Guocai Wang, Dong Liu, Xifeng Wang, 2011)

Based on the globalization trend, especially since China become the world factory, there are gradually more reseach about guanxi under Western theories, in which guanxi was exploited to explain and differentiate cultures of the East and the West. “Further research in the future should link guanxi with various Western concepts and theories, for example, network theory, social exchange theory, resource-based theory, social capital theory and the neo-relationship marketing theory” (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). However, most research in guanxi have been conducted in China and related area, and such studies are limited in other cultural contexts. Therefore, a cross-country/cultural included Europe, US, and Asia in a specific area is very rare. This research gap is motivated for the thesis to explore the role of guanxi as a predictor variable among the relationship with adaptive selling behavior and sales performance in the B2B and B2G context of information service industry.

Since guanxi concept is generated in China and has been appeared in Western research after the 1990s, guanxi’s measurement scale was not so complete, until the research of it’s measurement published in 2009. In this article, guanxi can be measured by 3 contructs included “ganqing”, which can be explained in English as ‘feelings’, and “reflects the tenor of a social relationship between two people or two

organizations, as well as an emotional attachment that exists among parties of a network” (Wang, 2007); “renqing”, which can be explained as “sensibility, human sympathy and human kindness, or (2) favor, favoritism and a gift (Eye, 2007). In practice, “renqing often incorporates humanized obligation such as gift or favor” (Kipnis, 1997), which is similar to “reciprocation” in Western concept; The third dimension is “xinren”, which can be translated as trust (Chen & Chen, 2004), or reliance, credence, belief (Yen et al, 2011).

2.6 Research Gap & Research Questions

Based on major literature reviewed above, the summary of major researchs focused on the influence of Adaptive Selling Behavior (ASB), Customer Orientation (CO), and Guanxi (GX) with Salesperson Performance (SP), and previous research in Information service industry (ISI) are presented as below:

Figure 2.2:

The literature study summary of SP - ASB – CO - GX (included any dimension: Renqing/Xinren/Ganqing), and Information Service Industry by Author

No	Article & Author	SP	ASB	CO	GX (Renqing/ Xinren/ Ganqing)	ISI
1	Walker, Orville C., Gilbert A. Churchill, and (1977), Motivation and Performance in Industrial Selling: Present Knowledge and Needed Research, Journal of Marketing Research, Vol. XIV (May 1977), 156-168	x				x
2	Saxe, Robert, and Barton A. Weitz (1982), “The SOCO Scale: A Measure of the Customer Orientation of Salespeople,” Journal of Marketing Research, 19 (August), 343–351.	x		x		

No	Article & Author	SP	ASB	CO	GX (Renqing/ Xinren/ Ganqing)	ISI
3	Churchill, G. A., Ford, N. M., Hartley, S. W., & Walker, O. C. (1985). "The Determinants of Salesperson Performance: A Meta-Analysis". Journal of Marketing Research	X	X			
4	Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (1991). The Big Five personality dimensions and job performance: A meta-analysis. Personnel Psychology, 44(1), 1-26.	X	X	X		
5	James G. Barnes (1994) "Close to the customer: But is it really a relationship?" Journal of Marketing Management, 10:7, 561-570, DOI: 10.1080/0267257X.1994.9964304	X		X	X	
6	Plank, R. E., & Reid, D. A. (1994). The mediating role of sales behaviors: an alternative perspective of sales performance and effectiveness. Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, 14(3), 43-56.	X	X	X		
7	Gengler, C. E., Howard, D. J., & Zolner, K. (1995). A personal construct analysis of adaptive selling and sales experience. Psychology and Marketing, 12(4), 287–304.	X	X		X	
8	Grant, K., & Cravens, D. W. (1996). Examining sales force performance in organizations that use behavior-based sales management processes. Industrial Marketing Management, 25(5), 361–371.	X	X			

No	Article & Author	SP	ASB	CO	GX (Renqing/ Xinren/ Ganqing)	ISI
9	Keillor, B. D., Stephen Parker, R., & Pettijohn, C. E. (2000). Relationship-oriented characteristics and individual salesperson performance. <i>Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing</i> , 15(1), 7-22.	X		X		
10	Park, S. H., & Luo, Y. (2001). Guanxi and organizational dynamics: organizational networking in Chinese firms. <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> , 22(5)			X	X	
11	Joshi, A. W., & Randall, S. (2001). The indirect effects of organizational controls on salesperson performance and customer orientation. <i>Journal of Business Research</i> , 54(1), 1-9.	X		X		
12	Park, S. H., & Luo, Y. (2001). Guanxi and organizational dynamics: organizational networking in Chinese firms. <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> , 22(5), 455-477	X			X	
13	Van Dolen, W., Lemmink, J., de Ruyter, K., & de Jong, A. (2002). Customer-sales employee encounters: a dyadic perspective. <i>Journal of Retailing</i> , 78(4), 265-279. doi:10.1016/s0022-4359(02)00067-2	X			X	
14	Shee, D.Y., Tang, T.-I., and Tzeng, G.-H. (2003), 'AHP, Fuzzy Measure and Fuzzy Integral Approaches for the Appraisal of Information Service Providers in Taiwan,' <i>Journal of Global Information Technology Management</i> , 6, 8-30.				X	

No	Article & Author	SP	ASB	CO	GX (Renqing/ Xinren/ Ganqing)	ISI
15	Thornton, P. H. (2004). Markets from culture: Institutional logics and organizational decisions in higher education publishing. Stanford University Press.					X
16	Franke, George R. and Jeong-Eun Park (2006), "Salesperson Adaptive Selling Behavior and Customer Orientation," Journal of Marketing Research, 43 (November), 693–702.	X		X		
17	Ying-Feng, Kuo (2006) Influences on Employee Career Strategy Adoption in the Information Service Industry: Superior Leadership Style or Employee Achievement Motivation?	X			X	
18	Wang, C. L. (2007). Guanxi vs. relationship marketing, exploring underlying differences. Industrial Marketing Management, 36(1), 81–86.	X			X	
19	Jaramillo F, Daniel M. Ladik, Greg W. Marshall, Jay Prakash Mulki, (2007) "A meta-analysis of the relationship between sales orientation-customer orientation (SOCO) and salesperson job performance", Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, Vol. 22 Issue: 5, pp.302 310,	X	X	X		
20	Kim, D. J., Ferrin, D. L., & Rao, H. R. (2008). A trust-based consumer decision-making model in electronic commerce: The role of trust, perceived risk, and their antecedents. Decision Support Systems, 44(2), 544–564.	X			X	

No	Article & Author	SP	ASB	CO	GX (Renqing/ Xinren/ Ganqing)	ISI
21	Bosse, D. A., Phillips, R. A., & Harrison, J. S. (2009). Stakeholders, reciprocity, and firm performance. <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> , 30(4), 447–456.	X			X	
22	Tsai MH, Chi, S. C. S., & Hu, H. H. (2009). Salespeople's Renqing orientation, self-esteem, and selling behaviors: An empirical study in Taiwan. <i>Journal of business and psychology</i> , 24(2), 193-200.		X		X	
23	Ying-Wei Shih, Ya-Ling Wu, Yi-Shun Wang & Yu-Min Wang (2009) "Competence maps for the information service industry", <i>The International Journal of Human Resource Management</i> , 20:7, 1618-1633					X
24	Shi, G., Shi, Y., Chan, A. K. K., Liu, M. T., & Fam, K.-S. (2011). The role of renqing in mediating customer relationship investment and relationship commitment in China. <i>Industrial Marketing Management</i> , 40(4), 496–502.		X		X	
25	Zhu Z Y, Li N, Wang J H (2012). "Research on the Effect and Spreading Effect of Shanghai Modern Information Service Industry", <i>Shanghai Journal of Economics</i> , (9), pp. 43-54.					X
26	Morgan, C., Campbell, B., & Teleen, T. (2012). "The Role of the Academic Journal Publisher and Open Access Publishing Models. <i>International Studies Perspectives</i> , 13(3), 228–234.				X	

No	Article & Author	SP	ASB	CO	GX (Renqing/ Xinren/ Ganqing)	ISI
27	Chakrabarty, S., Brown, G., & Widing II, R. E. (2013). Distinguishing Between the Roles of Customer-Oriented Selling and Adaptive Selling in Managing Dysfunctional Conflict in Buyer–Seller Relationships. <i>Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management</i> , 33(3), 245–260	X	X	X	X	
28	Rakesh Singh, Pingali Venugopal, (2015). "The impact of salesperson customer orientation on sales performance via mediating mechanism", <i>Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing</i> , Vol. 30 Issue: 5, pp.594-607,	X		X		
29	Kawalec, A. (2017). "Research trends in library and information science based on Spanish scientific publication 2000 to 2010". <i>Malaysian journal of library & information science</i> , 18(2), 1-13					X
30	Yen-Chun Chen, Adriana Amaya Rivas, Wann-Yih Wu, (2018) "Exploring the determinants and consequences of salesperson market orientation behavior: An empirical study in the financial service industry", <i>Journal of Service Theory and Practice</i> , Vol. 28 Issue: 2, pp.170-195,	X	X	X		
31	Yang, X. (2019). Consumers' decisions in social commerce: the role of guanxi elements. <i>Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics</i> . doi:10.1108/apjml-04-2018-0139				X	

From the previous research, customer orientation, adaptive selling behavior, and guanxi have very inconsistent influence on salesperson performance depending on

the industry, country, or other moderated and mediated factors. To the best of knowledge, there is not any study examined the roles of guanxi, adaptive selling behavior, and customer orientation, and even salesperson performance in the information service industry. Therefore, this thesis, after investigating of major factors influencing on salesperson performance in the information service industry, will focus on exploring and testing the relationship of guanxi, adaptive selling behavior, and customer orientation on salesperson performance in B2B and B2G context of academic publishing and data analytics companies as the major part of the information service industry by answering below research questions:

1. How adaptive selling behavior and customer orientation influence on salesperformance in the information service industry, especially publishing and data analytics companies?
2. Does “guanxi” play an important role as a predictor to adaptive selling behavior toward salesperson performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies?

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH MODEL AND DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Research model - Concept of variables and Development of hypotheses

Building upon the literature review and research gap, this research hypothesize that **adaptive selling behavior, and customer orientation, and guanxi** all have influence on salesperson performance, “which is conceptualized from an attitudinal perspective” (Churchil et al. 1985).

Salesperson performance (SP), defined as “*behavior evaluated in terms of its contribution to the goals of the organization*” (Johnston and Marshall 2006, p. 412), is proposed as the major dependent variable in this research context. Adaptive selling

behavior and customer orientation, the two critical factors or “prominent research streams in sales force research” (Jaramillo, F., & Grisaffe, D. B., 2009), and specially guanxi, under the composite of 3 dimensions (xinren, ganqing, and renqing) are proposed as independent variables.

First, Adaptive selling behavior (ASB) is conceived as “*the altering of sales behaviors during a customer interaction or across customer interactions based upon perceived information about the nature of the selling situation*” (Sujaan, 1986). Customer orientation (CO), was conceived as “*the degree to which salespeople practice the marketing concept by trying to help their customers make purchase decisions that will satisfy customer needs*” (Saxe and Weitz, 1982), or defined as “employee behaviors that are indicative of a customer-oriented culture” (Michael K. and J. Joseph, 2001).

First, the research hypotheses regarding to ASB – CO and SP in this study are developed as below:

ASB is the direct determinant that respectively influence on salesperson performance (Weitz, 1994). “Salespeople with high levels of customer orientation truly care about customers, and thus engage in actions that customers value, such as listening to customer feedback and solving customer problems” (Jaramillo, F., & Grisaffe, D. B., 2009). As mentioned from many trusted literature, there are several researchs indicated about inconsistent impacts of adaptive selling behavior, but also has been considered very critical for successful salespeople in many researchs on salesperformance in B2B context, for instance: “Role of adaptive selling and customer orientation on salesperson performance: Evidence from two distinct markets of Europe and Asia” (Erdener Kaynak, et al, 2016).

Similarly, even the concept that “customer orientation has remained somewhat vague and imprecise” (e.g., Schwepker 2003) with the inconsistent impact in customer orientation with sales performance, customer-oriented culture is still considered as a vital precondition when salesperson usually take responsibility of taking care customers to create the business outcome (Cross et al, 2007). Scholars have often recommended that customer orientation is considered a very important factor to

explain salesperson performance. According to Cross, since establishing a customer-oriented culture is still considered as a necessary precondition when salesperson usually take responsibility of taking care customers to create the business outcome (Cross et al, 2007).

“Research on sales process effectiveness incorporates understanding customers and is defined as the ability to complete short-term outcomes in the sales exchange by being able to analyze opportunities and improve closing rates”. (Stoddard, Clopton, and Avila 2006). Salespeople having customer orientation can avoid short run selling method that may negatively influence on customer interests, and engage their relationship with customer in long run (Saxe and Weitz, 1982). A meta analysis research found that salesperson who have higher level of customer orientation will have more satisfaction when they apply adaptive selling successfully to improve the performance than the others who don’t adopt customer orientation. (Franke & Park, 2006).

Arised from trust scholar findings, this study predicts that customer orientation has positive impact on adaptive selling behavior. Besides, customer orientation and adaptive selling together lead to win-win outcomes for both customers and the salesperson. So author hypothesize that both customer orientation and adaptive selling have a positive effect on sales performance in the research’s context as below 3 hypotheses:

H1- Adaptive Selling Behavior has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies.

H2- Customer orientation has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, academic publishing and data analytics companies

H3- Customer orientation has positive impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies

Second, the concepts of Guanxi and it’s related hypotheses in this study are developed as below:

As mentioned above, the research context of this research is academic publishing and data analytics companies, featured with majority of B2B and B2G business model, in which salesperson always need to identify customer's demands and preferences through representative of purchasing department, or decision-maker of the targeted institutions in order to approach and close the deals. Building up on the term of "guanxi" as about: *Setting a strong network of mutually beneficial relationships, that can be used for personal and business purposes from recents presented on literature review research*, Guanxi is identified as an important factor in formulating sales performance in this research context.

Previous studies showed the variety in role of Guanxi in B2B and B2G, for instances: Guanxi was linked to supplier communication and trust or "the role of interpersonal liking was examined in developing Guanxi and Et-Moone relationships" (Cheng et al., 2012). It was indicated in an article published in with the perspective of organizational factors that "Guanxi can lead to high performance of the company and is conducive to sales growth" (Park, S. H., & Luo, Y., 2001). Guanxi also could be considered as bridge role between salespersons and customers, so salesperson should be aware of guanxi as the effective solution to increase their sales performance (Guocai Wang, Dong Liu, Xifeng Wang, 2011).

Based on the measurement model of guanxi presented by Yen et al in 2011 about three dimensions of guanxi included: **Xinren, Renqing, and Ganqing**, author endeavor to check the impact of guanxi in this research through relationship of each dimension with Salesperson performance and Adaptive selling behavior.

The first dimension of guanxi is Xinren, which can be translated as "trust" or trusted relationship (Chen & Chen, 2004; Karlan et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2018), or "reliance", "credence", "belief" (Yen et al, 2011). According to Kim et al, many previous scholar research indicated that "trust" is a mandatory for a successful cooperation, because "consumers are hesitant to make purchases unless they trust the seller" (Kim et al, 2008). A study in 1994 by Ganesan asserted a positive relationship between a manufacturer and their customer under trust basis (Shi et al, 2011). Most of collaborative relationships were built up from exchange agreement, which are

characterized by high levels of trust (Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh 1987; Morgan and Hunt 1994). One of the most successful relationship between buyer and seller was indicated as mutual trust between buyers and sellers, in which partly towards partnering with suppliers may enhance the performance of sales. (Han et al, 1993), or the performance of salesperson could be increased based on “trust” establishment in buyer-supplier relationship.

In 1994, Barners also stated that “buyers and sellers are willing partners in a relationship which rewards both, in which the relationship must be mutually rewarding and convey benefits to both parties” (James G. Barnes, 1994). The high levels of trustful exchange can enable stakeholders to focus on the long-term benefits (Ganesan, 1994), ultimately enhancing competitiveness and reducing transaction costs (Noordewier, John, and Nevin 1990), and trust has a positive relationship with the adaptive selling behavior (Guenzi, 2016). These finding suggest this research to hypothesize that salesperson’s adaptive selling behavior could be more effective in a trusted relationship with customer, or the trusted relationship can enhance the effect of adaptive selling behavior. Given above discussion, Xinren, conceptualized as “trust” (Yen et al, 2011), is predicted as a positive factor influencing on SP with 2 following hypotheses:

H4- Xinren (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies

H5- Xinren (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies

The second dimension of guanxi composite is “renqing”, which can be translated as “sensibility, human sympathy and human kindness, (2) favor-exchanges (Yen et al, 2011), or reciprocity (Tsai et al, 2009). Renqing, in term of reciprocity, was mentioned in some studies relating to performance, for instance: it’s found that “tutors’ renqing orientation positively affected students’ perceived teaching effectiveness, such as motivation, presentation, and attitude” (Chan, 2002). A study

by Douglas A. Bosse et al indicated that reciprocity positively affecting firm performance (Bosse, 2008). It's confirmed that "renqing explained a very high proportion of the variance in levels of customer relationship commitment" under Chinese insurance industry context (Shi, 2011), or favor-exchange between salesperson and his customer will help to strengthen relationships, which lead to better selling effectiveness or sales performance.

Renqing also appeared in one research in 2009 related to adaptive selling behavior, in which it's considered as an important factor recommended to be examined with selling behavior, under the relationship of selling behavior with sales performance, followed Weitz et al.'s (1986) (Tsai et al, 2009). It has shown by many scholars that excellent sales people have tend to adjust their selling behavior on case-by-case consideration (Sujan et al. 1994; Leong et al. 1989). Based on the reciprocate attentiveness theory in purchasing activities, it's suggested that salespeople with renqing orientation are more sensitive to their customers' needs, and more flexible in response to the needs of customer. Following hypotheses are developed as results of these perceptions:

H6- Renqing (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies

H7- Renqing (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies

The third dimension of Guanxi is Ganqing, could be translated in Western term as 'feelings', which "reflects the tenor of a social relationship between two people or two organizations, as well as an emotional attachment that exists among parties of a network" (Wang, 2007). Based on Stoddard's research, sales process effectiveness is resulted from the capacity to complete short-term outcomes in the sales exchange by ability to to understand customers and giving them the good solution. (Stoddard, Clopton, and Avila, 2006). Regarding to B2B and B2G business models, salesperson often have to build good relationship with the representative of purchasing

department, or decision-maker of the targeted institution, so the good feeling between the representatives of buyer-supplier themselves will decide their success of their cooperative or business partnership.

Several research demonstrates that the satisfaction customer depending on the feeling provided by the sales employee. One of the secret or tips in selling a product or service among millions of similar and new arrived ones in today's marketplace is only two things that customers is willing to pay: (1) Good feelings & (2) Solutions to problems. "Customers buy only when they are feeling glad about you and your products and services" (Michael LeBoeuf, 2000). It's also found that "whether the customer and employee are satisfied is determined not only by what they see of themselves, but also by the perceptions of those with whom they are interacting" (Van Dolen, 2002). Therefore, as in reverse, a good feeling with customer also can help to bring a good emotion to salesperson and encourage them to be more effective in selling. Based on above academic findings, the interaction in satisfaction or feelings between salesperson and his customer are considered as potential factor influencing on selling behavior and sales performance, 2 hypotheses are proposed as:

H8- Ganqing (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies

H9- Ganqing (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies

Given evidence from prior researchs, that it's mentioned Adaptive Selling Behavior and Customer Orientation are as 2 typical variables having positive impact on each other and toward Salesperson Performance several industries such as: "An examination of the effects of adaptive selling behavior and customer orientation on performance of pharmaceutical salespeople in an emerging market" (Ali Kara et al, 2013), "Role of adaptive selling and customer orientation on salesperson performance: Evidence from two distinct markets of Europe and Asia (Erdener

Kaynak et al, 2016); “Does customer orientation impact objective sales performance? Insights from a longitudinal model in direct selling” (Fernando Jaramillo & Douglas B. Grisaffe, 2013), etc. As a result, the author come up a model with positive impact from Customer Orientation on Adaptive Selling Behavior and Salesperson Performance as the first part of conceptual model.

Besides, as mentioned in above hypothesis development regarding to previous research models, each dimension of Guanxi included Xinren, Renqing, and Ganqing has tendency to positively influence on Salesperson Performance as well as Adaptive Selling Behavior. Research suggests that nurturing good guanxi connections can speed up economic exchange and leverage the performance (Barnes, Yen, & Zhou, 2011; Yen, Barnes, & Wang, 2011). “Guanxi” was also mentioned as positive factor impact on business performance through prior research, such as: “Internationalization and the performance of born-global SMEs: the mediating role of social networks” (Lianxi Zhou, 2007), “Can High-Tech Ventures Benefit from Government Guanxi and Business Guanxi? The Moderating Effects of Environmental Turbulence” (Dejin Su et al, 2017), or “Guanxi and organizational dynamics: Organizational networking in Chinese firms” (Park, S. H., & Luo, Y., 2001), etc. These reference from previous researchs suggested author to fill up the rest of this research model, in which Xinren, Renqing, and Ganqing play as positive factor to impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior and Sales performance.

Building upon hypotheses development and concept of each variables, this thesis come up with below conceptual framework:

Figure 3.1: Conceptual framework model of research

3.2 Data collection method

The strategy of this research is to test the hypotheses concerning the relationship among guanxi, adaptive selling behavior, and customer orientation with salesperson performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies via structural equation modeling. To test all the above hypotheses, data gathering was focused on all salespeople by online survey method. Participants invited for survey are salespeople, account manager (equal to sales), or project manager(equal to sales), who are conducting selling tasks at junior and senior levels from more than 20 countries belonging to in top academic publishing and data analytics companies, such as: Emerald, Elsevier, Springer, Skillsoft, Oxford, Cambridge, SAGE, EbcoHost, Taylor & Francis, Euro Monitor, IG Publishing, Clarivate Analytics, Wall Street Journals, iGroup Publishing,..., within both Asia and The West (included Autralia/NZ/ and North America) via following questionnaire design and data collection process.

3.3 Questionnaire design and administration

To test all the above hypotheses, author studied some measurements options of major factors: Guanxi, adaptive selling behavior, and customer orientation with salesperson performance from published paper in high quality journals with full questionnaire and finally design the questionnaire for the research as below:

Questionnaire was designed in English with original questions from prior research for the foreign salesperson working the field (Appendix A), and translated into Vietnamese with quality was double checked by Vietnamese supervisor for Vietnamese salesperson in the same area. (Appendix B)

“Guanxi” measurement scale is adopted from the GRX measurement method introduced by Dorothy A. Yen, Bradley R. Barnes, and Cheng Lu Wang in article “The measurement of guanxi: Introducing the GRX scale”. This is the most complicated measurement set of Guanxi comprised by 3 dimensions: “Xinren” (6 items), “Renqing” (5 items), and “Ganqing” (7 items). Based on the research context and targeted respondent as salesperson, questionnaire objects on the original was adjusted from “supplier's representative” into “buyer's representative” to fit the respondent's context. Measurement scale of Adaptive Selling Behavior (ASB), Customer Orientation (CO), and Salesperson Performance (SP) were adopted from research of Adriana et al in 2013. Based on this research, salesperson performance could be resulted from “carrying out a number of discrete and specific activities or based on achievement of sales quotas, and comparative performance of a salesperson within his/her sales unit (e.g. Cravens et al., 1993; Babakus et al., 1996;), customer orientation was defined “the practice of the marketing concept at the level of the individual salesperson and customer” Based on this research, measurement scale of SP has 4 items originally adopted from Miao et al., 2007 (Yen-Chun Chen, Adriana Amaya Rivas, Wann-Yih Wu, 2018), measurement scale of CO has 7 items, was selected from research of Lam et al in 2010, and measurement scale of ASB has 7 items, originally adopted from research of Fang et al in 2004.

Questionnaire item for each variable is measured in Likert measure from 1 to 5, equivalent from Strongly disagree to Strongly agree as detail below

Table 3.1: Detail and Source of Questionnaire

	Questionnaire item for each variable	1	2	3	4	5
	Guanxi Measurement (<i>Yen et al., 2011</i>)					
	Ganqing					
1	“I often interact with my buyer’s representative on a social basis outside of work”					
2	“My buyer’s representative and I are able to talk openly as friends”					
3	“If I were to change this business supplier, I would lose a good friend”					
4	“I consider my buyer’s representative as being almost as close to me as family”					
5	“I would consider whether my supplier representative's feelings would be hurt before I made an important decision”					
6	“I have a brotherhood feeling towards this supplier's Representative”					
7	“I would try my best to help out this buyer’s representative when he/she is in need because he/she is a friend of mine”					
	Renqing					
8	“I feel a sense of obligation to this buyer’s representative for doing him/her a favor”					
9	“I think that “calling in” favors is part of doing business with this supplier's representative”					
10	“The practice of give and take of favor is a key part of the relationship between my buyer’s representative and me”					
11	“I would feel embarrassed if I was unable to provide a requested favor to my buyer’s representative					
12	I know that it is a bad business not to return favors to this buyer’s representative”					

	Questionnaire item for each variable	1	2	3	4	5
13	"I am happy to do a favor for this supplier's representative, when he/she requests one"					
	Xinren					
14	"This buyer's representative has been frank in dealing with us"					
15	"This buyer's representative does not make false claims"					
16	"We think this buyer's representative is completely open in dealing with us"					
17	"This buyer's representative is only concerned about himself/herself"					
18	"This buyer's representative seems to be concerned with our needs"					
19	"The people at my firm do not trust this buyer's representative"					
20	"This buyer's representative is not trustworthy"					
	Customer orientation (<i>Lam et al., 2010</i>)					
21	"I think customer preferences are a key factor to the success of my company"					
22	"I frequently survey customers to find out the products and services they would like to see in the future"					
23	"I try to figure out what a customer's need is"					
24	"I have the customer's best interests in mind"					
25	"I try to help customers achieve their goals"					
26	"I take a problem-solving approach in selling products or services or customers"					
27	"I try to find out which kinds of products or services would be most helpful to customers"					
	Adaptive Selling Behavior (<i>Fang et al., 2004</i>)					
28	"I am very flexible in the selling approach I use"					
29	"I can easily use a wide variety of selling approaches"					
30	"I do not use a set sales approach"					
31	"I vary my sales style from situation to situation"					
32	"I treat all of my buyers pretty much differently"					

	Questionnaire item for each variable	1	2	3	4	5
33	"I like to experiment with different sales approaches"					
34	"I change my approach from one customer to another"					
Salesperson Performance (<i>Miao et al., 2007</i>)						
35	"I am very effective in contributing to my firm's market share"					
36	"I am very effective in generating a high level of dollar sales"					
37	"I am very effective in selling to major accounts"					
38	"I am very effective in exceeding annual sales targets and objectives"					

Each question is a statement followed by a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 as Strongly disagree to 5 as Strongly agree. In which, Part B has 17 mixed questions, and part C has 21 mixed questions, with below descriptions of being measured variables:

Table 3.2: Description of Questionnaire's components

Variables	Description	Sample question
Sales Performance (8)	Evaluation about sales revenue or selling results	I am very effective in contributing to my firm's market share
Adaptive selling behavior (7)	"the altering of sales behaviors during a customer interaction or across customer interactions based upon perceived information about the nature of the selling situation"	I am very flexible in the selling approach I use
Customer Orientation (7)	The method of customer – oriented to push the sales	I think customer preferences are a key factor to the success of my company
Guanxi (20)	Under 3 dimensions – Xinren, Ganqing, and Renqing	
<i>Xinren</i> (7)	Trust	"We think this buyer's representative is

Variables	Description	Sample question
		completely open in dealing with us”
<i>Ganqing (7)</i>	Feelings or The emotional attachment that exists among between two people or two organizations	“My buyer's representative and I are able to talk openly as friends”
<i>Renqing (6)</i>	Favor-exchanges or reciprocity	“I am happy to do a favor for this buyer's representative, when he/she requests one”

3.4 Data collection process

The population for this research was defined to include all salespeople working in academic publishing and data analytics companies at multinational scale, so the data collection was focused on only salesperson in top publishing and data analytics company such as: Emerald, Elsevier, Springer, Skillsoft, Oxford, Cambridge, SAGE, EbcoHost, Taylor & Francis, Euro Monitor, IG Publishing, Vietnam Education Publisher, Thai ha Book, Clarivate Analytics, Wall Street Journals, IDT Vietnam, iGroup Publishing, etc.

Based on the today proliferation of the Internet, online survey is the best solution of this research for data collection. Data was undertaken during 7 weeks from March to April, 2019. A survey invitation with brief introduction about research topic and rational of study was sent through Email, Facebook message, and especially LinkedIn network due to the characteristics and scope the study focus at all salespeople in with links as below:

English link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1wH8bTjqpQqgKYcYzjQs4IUUOm_wKChVGLQ0dN

Vietnamese link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1o0kTXTQMtO1LCFrFUZuJV5eYhbYDM2NBCcZEt>

In order to prevent the bias of respondent since survey invitation was sent individually, all the questions used to measure variables were mixed together, the online survey have was divided into 3 parts as below: Part A demographic questions with gender and age, job experience time, and their working area (Asia, Western, etc). Part B (17 mixed questions) and Part C (21 mixed questions) was designed to collect assessments from salesperson about their opinion about Guanxi, adaptive selling behavior, and customer orientation and salesperson performance in their work.

Participants who responded to survey invitations were salespeople, account manager, or project manager at junior and senior levels from more than 20 countries, mostly Asia. They all get the notice from survey that their answers are totally confidential, and will be used for researching purpose only. Data then were collected using Google online survey form supported by individual messages to remind, and the participants can access the survey by clicking the URL and fill the answer by ticking the likert scale relevant to their agreement in each question. After 700 survey invitation sent out, there were 207 respondents, included 152 from foreign companies and 55 from Vietnam to complete the 45-item survey. There are 53 survey participants shared their interest in the survey result, and provided their individual email address via the answer responding to ask the research result later.

3.5 Data analysis procedure

Since data collection was proceed in 2 sources, Vietnamese and English respondent reports were merged and converted answers into one table. Second, it was screened to reject all invalid samples, then the final data table with only valid samples. According to Mathottra, the collected data can be subjected to statiscal analysis after being converted into a form suitable for analysis (Mathottra et al, 2004). Therefore, after cleaning and screening process, the data will be encoded for analyzing process. In following chapters, the demographic and descriptive statistics, reliability and validity assessment and regression model will be delivered. The most important part with data analysis will be implemented in SEM, using statistic analysis software SAS

9.3 for preparing the data, calculating for scale reliabilities, then testing measurement model, hypotheses, and answer the questions.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND MEASUREMENT MODEL

This chapter present the most important part of the research process with data analysis and tesing measurement models to calculate composite factors, and identify validity tests. The structure of this chapter comprise 4 steps:

- Data Preparation and descriptive statistics
- Measurement model evaluation
- Testing measurement models
- Composite factors calculation and validity tests

4.1 Data Preparation and descriptive statistics

4.1.1 Data Preparation

As described in Chapter 3, there was 2 sources of raw collected data: Online survey in English and Online survey in Vietnamese. The first step is to ensure that all pre-coding data from the English responds matched with Vietnamese responds' order. The second step is to overturn the value of 3 reversed items belonging to variable "Xinren"(Table 3). Before preprocessing the analysis, data from English and Vietnamese version was double checked and synchronized then encoded for each variables as in table below:

Table 4.1: Encoded Variables

	LABEL	EXPLANATION	NOTE
Adaptive Selling Behavior			
1	ASB1	"I am very flexible in the selling approach I use"	
2	ASB2	"I can easily use a wide variety of selling approaches"	
3	ASB3	"I do not use a set sales approach"	
4	ASB4	"I vary my sales style from situation to situation"	
5	ASB5	"I treat all of my buyers pretty much differently"	
6	ASB6	"I like to experiment with different sales approaches"	

	LABEL	EXPLANATION	NOTE
7	ASB7	"I change my approach from one customer to another"	
Customer Orientation			
1	CO1	"I think customer preferences are a key factor to the success of my company"	
2	CO2	"I frequently survey customers to find out the products and services they would like to see in the future"	
3	CO3	"I try to figure out what a customer's need is"	
4	CO4	"I have the customer's best interests in mind"	
5	CO5	"I try to help customers achieve their goals"	
6	CO6	"I take a problem-solving approach in selling products or services or customers"	
7	CO7	"I try to find out which kinds of products or services would be most helpful to customers"	
Guanxi's dimensions			
Ganqing			
1	GQ1	"I often interact with my buyer's representative on a social basis outside of work"	
2	GQ2	"My buyer's representative and I are able to talk openly as friends"	
3	GQ3	"If I were to change this business partner, I would lose a good friend"	
4	GQ4	"I consider this buyer's representative as being almost as close to me as family"	
5	GQ5	"I would consider whether my buyer representative's feelings would be hurt before I made an important decision"	
6	GQ6	"I have a brotherhood feeling towards the buyer's representative"	
7	GQ7	"I would try my best to help out this buyer's representative when he/she is in need because he/she is a friend of mine"	
Renqing			
1	RQ1	"I feel a sense of obligation to this buyer's representative for doing him/her a favor"	

	LABEL	EXPLANATION	NOTE
2	RQ2	“I think that “calling in” favors is part of doing business with this buyer's representative”	
3	RQ3	“The practice of “give and take” of favor is a key part of the relationship between my buyer's representative and me”	
4	RQ4	“I would feel embarrassed if I was unable to provide a requested favor to my buyer's representative”	
5	RQ5	“I know that it is a bad business not to return favors to this buyer's representative”	
6	RQ6	“I am happy to do a favor for this buyer's representative, when he/she requests one”	
Xinren			
1	XR1	“This buyer's representative has been frank in dealing with us”	
2	Xr2	“This buyer's representative does not make false claims”	
3	XR3	“We think this buyer's representative is completely open in dealing with us”	
4	XR4X	“This buyer's representative is only concerned about himself/herself (Reversed)”	Replaced by reversed Items below
5	XR5	“This buyer's representative seems to be concerned with our needs”	
6	XR6X	“The people at my firm do not trust this buyer's representative (Reversed)”	Replaced by reversed Items below
7	XR7X	“This buyer's representative is not trustworthy (Reversed)”	Replaced by reversed Items below
Salesperson Performance			
1	SP1	“I am very effective in contributing to my firm’s market share”	
2	SP2	“I am very effective in generating a high level of dollar sales”	
3	SP3	“I am very effective in selling to major accounts”	
4	SP4	“I am very effective in exceeding annual sales targets and objectives”	
Xinren (Replaced items for reversed questions)			

	LABEL	EXPLANATION	NOTE
1	XR4R	“This buyer's representative is only concerned about himself/herself”	Reversed value for replacing XR4's in data analysis
2	XR6R	“The people at my firm do not trust this buyer's representative”	Reversed value for replacing XR4's in data analysis
3	XR7R	“This buyer's representative is not trustworthy”	Reversed value for replacing XR4's in data analysis

4.1.2 Descriptive Statistics

The survey respondents yielded a total of 207 responses out of the 700 survey invitations sent, equivalent to a response rate of 30%, which is higher than our prior expectation. Among these 207 responses, 3 were eliminated due to their incomplete answers. The sample used for data analysis, therefore, covers 204 salespeople across the world, who are majorly working in Asia (see profile of respondents in Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Profile Of Respondents

Characteristics	Respondents	
	Frequency (<i>n</i> = 204)	%
Gender		
Female	72	35.29%
Male	131	64.22%
Other	2	0.98%
Age		
Under 25	13	6.37%
25-35	77	37.75%
35-45	69	33.82%
45-55	34	16.67%
Above 55	12	5.88%
Working Experience		
Under 1 year	29	14.22%

Characteristics	Respondents	
1-3 years	51	25.00%
3-6 years	48	23.53%
6-10 years	40	19.61%
Over 10 years	37	18.14%
Working area		
Asia	167	81.86%
Western (Europe/North America)	30	14.71%
Australia/NZ	7	3.43%
Middle East	1	0.49%

As can be seen from table above, gender distribution among participants of Male are higher, at 64.22% proportion accounted (around two-third with 131 responses), while the proportion for Female is 35.29% (with 72 responses), and only 2 participants having other gender.

Figure 4.1: Gender distribution among 204 respondents

In following figure 4.2, it's found that age range from 25 to 35 years old take the biggest proportion, meaning the survey participant majority is from 25 – 35 years old, with total 77 out of 205 participants are included in this range, accounted for 37.56% total participants. The second largest group is in age of 35 to 45 accounted for

33.66%, another 17% is from 45 to 55 years old, whereas the age groups Under 25 and Above 55 years old made up similarly 6% propotion of each group.

Figure 4.2: Age distribution among 204 respondents

Most of participants have working experience in their current company from 1-10 years or above which are accounted for 18% to 25% respectively. Whereas there is impressively statistic of 37 participants have over 10 years experience accounted for 18%, and 14% participants have less than 1year experience, which implied that this research has variety of samples as shown in Figure 4.3

Figure 4.3: Working experience among 204 respondents

Among participants, 81.46% of participants are working in Asia, 15% are working in Western area, included Europe and North America, 3% in Australia/NZ, and only 1 people working in Middle East at propotion of 0.49% among the results. So the major sample for analysis belong to Asia.

Figure 4.4: Working area among 204 respondents

After testing all data from 204 samples, there are few samples was eliminated due to low factor loadings. Following is list of “Descriptive Analyses for Measurement Items”, in which items mean has range from 2.86 to 4.35, and standard deviation of each encoded variable which can support the next analysis steps.

A full descriptive result in table 4.3 below will show mean values and standard deviations of 204 valid respondents. According to the result, it seems that the majority of respondents chose higher levels for the most measurement items at above 3 for 5 likert scale questions

Table 4.3: Descriptive Analyses for Measurement Items

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
ASB4	4.34	0.75
ASB6	4.18	0.87
ASB7	4.04	0.76
CO4	4.20	0.67
CO5	4.35	0.64

GY4	2.86	1.13
GY6	3.14	1.04
GY7	3.51	0.91
RQ2	3.49	1.04
RQ5	3.32	1.06
RQ6	3.72	0.87
XR1	3.72	0.82
XR2	3.50	0.83
XR3	3.53	0.87
SP1	3.97	0.82
SP2	4.01	0.78
<i>*Items were eliminated after pretest due to low factor loadings (< 0.7)</i>		

4.2 Measurement model evaluation

All valid samples was put to SAS 9.3 to test the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and verify the measurements, and get the first valid variables under analysis as table 4.4 below:

Table 4.4: Variables in the CFA Model

Variables in the Model	
Variables	ASB4 ASB6 ASB7 CO4 CO5 GQ4 GQ6 GQ7 RQ2 RQ5 RQ6 XR1 XR2 XR3 SP1 SP2
Factors	ASB CO GQ RQ XR SP
Number of Variables = 16 Number of Factors = 6	

First, we examined the convergent validity of our measurements through estimation of all items' factor loadings; construct reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE)

Table 4.5: Standardized Factor Loading Matrix: Estimate /t-value

Items	Factor loading
ASB4 I vary my sales style from situation to situation	0.7055 (15.1664)
ASB6 I like to experiment with different sales approaches	0.8021 (19.6827)
ASB7 I change my approach from one customer to another	0.7050 (15.1457)

Items	Factor loading
CO4 I have the customer's best interests in mind	0.8856 (17.0717)
CO5 I try to help customers achieve their goals	0.7233 (13.7614)
GQ4 I consider this buyer's representative as being almost as close to me as family	0.7340 (18.3978)
GQ6 I have a brotherhood feeling towards the buyer's representative	0.8444 (26.9796)
GQ7 I would try my best to help out this buyer's representative when he/she is in need because he/she is a friend of mine	0.7742 (21.1995)
RQ2 I think that "calling in" favors is part of doing business with this buyer's representative	0.6853 (14.8049)
RQ5 I know that it is a bad business not to return favors to this buyer's representative	0.7191 (16.4619)
RQ6 I am happy to do a favor for this buyer's representative, when he/she requests one	0.8197 (22.1884)
XR1 This buyer's representative has been frank in dealing with us	0.8011 (23.3224)
XR2 This buyer's representative does not make false claims	0.7613 (20.2375)
XR3 We think this buyer's representative is completely open in dealing with us	0.7844 (21.9820)
SP1 I am very effective in contributing to my firm's market share	0.8509 (23.4411)
SP2 I am very effective in generating a high level of dollar sales	0.9556 (27.2912)
*** $p < 0.001$	

As shown in table 4.5, all indices was indicated as satisfied with all factor loadings for questionnaire's items are greater than 0.5 and significant in t-test. All CRs and AVEs are above their cut-off-points i.e. 0.7 and 0.5, respectively.

Second, discriminant validity was tested throught verifying if AVE scores are higher than the square of the parameters estimated among latent variables.

Last, after removing some selected items with low factor loadings, multiple fit indexes, including Chi-square, degree of freedom, goodness-of-fit (GFI), adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI), noemed fit index (NFI), comparative fit index (CFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and Bentler Comparative Fit Index (BCFI) were considered. All of our results satisfied the rule of thumb: Chi-square divided by degree-of-freedom should be less than five; GFI, NFI, CFI are to be larger than 0.9, AGFI should exceed 0.8; RMSEA should be less than 0.08.

4.3 Composite factors calculation and validity tests

Table 4.6: Confirmatory factor analysis for convergent and discriminant validity

Construct	Construct	AVE	Factor Correlation					
	Reliability		ASB	CO	GQ	RQ	XR	SP
ASB	0.78	0.55	1					
CO	0.79	0.65	0.43	1				
GQ	0.83	0.62	0.34	0.11	1			
RQ	0.79	0.55	0.41	0.04	0.65	1		
XR	0.83	0.61	0.47	0.45	0.63	0.61	1	
SP	0.9	0.81	0.49	0.41	0.37	0.13	0.34	1

In the CFA analysis result, Chi-square (χ^2 , sometimes referred to as T) and parsimony index are considered the original fit index for structural models, (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016). Therefore, all below results from CFA show the multiple fit indices as the rule of thumb, shown by the parsimony index and chi squared as detail below:

Table 4.7: Acceptable level of fit indices

Index		Acceptable Level
Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR)		< 0.08
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)		> 0.9
Parsimony Index	Adjusted GFI (AGFI)	> 0.8
	Parsimonious GFI	> 0.5
ECVI Estimate		As small as possible
Akaike Information Criterion		As small as possible
Bozdogan CAIC		As small as possible

Index	Acceptable Level
Schwarz Bayesian Criterion	As small as possible
James et al. Parsimonious NFI	> 0.5

Table 4.8: Results of multiple fit indices

Model Fit Summary		
Modeling Info	N Observations	204
Absolute Index	Fit Function	0.9055
	Chi-Square	183.8232
	Pr > Chi-Square	<.0001
	Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR)	0.0457
	Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.9017
Parsimony Index	Adjusted GFI (AGFI)	0.8498
	Parsimonious GFI	0.6688
	RMSEA Estimate	0.0724
	RMSEA Lower 90% Confidence Limit	0.0575
	RMSEA Upper 90% Confidence Limit	0.0873
	Probability of Close Fit	0.0079
	ECVI Estimate	1.4109
	Akaike Information Criterion	277.8232
	Bozdogan CAIC	480.7749
	Schwarz Bayesian Criterion	433.7749
Incremental Index	McDonald Centrality	0.7926
	Bentler Comparative Fit Index	0.9371
	Bentler-Bonett NFI	0.8870
	Bentler-Bonett Non-normed Index	0.9152
	Bollen Normed Index Rho1	0.8477
	Bollen Non-normed Index Delta2	0.9383
	James et al. Parsimonious NFI	0.6579

Based on table 7, the CFA analysis got very good results, with Chi-Square at 183.8232, Parsimonious GFI is 0.6688, ECVI Estimate, Akaike, Information Criterion

Bozdogan, CAIC, Schwarz Bayesian Criteria are all small, affirmed the validity of fit indices of conceptual framework model. Next step, author check t-Value of Standardized Results for Error Variances to make sure the validity of model

After getting result of Standardized Results for Error Variances in Table 5.4, SEM and Hypotheses Testing was employed with variables below:

Table 4.9: Variables in the SEM Model

Variables in the Model		
Endogenous	Manifest	ASB4 ASB6 ASB7 CO4 CO5 GY4 GY6 GY7 RQ2 RQ5 RQ6 SP1 SP2 XR1 XR2 XR3
	Latent	ASB SP
Exogenous	Manifest	
	Latent	CO GY RQ XR
Number of Endogenous Variables = 18		
Number of Exogenous Variables = 4		

Model validity in SEM analysis:

Table 4.10: SEM Model Fit Summary

Fit Summary		
Modeling Info	N Observations	204
	N Variables	16
	N Moments	136
	N Parameters	53
	N Active Constraints	0
	Baseline Model Function Value	8.0146
	Baseline Model Chi-Square	1626.9583
Absolute Index	Baseline Model Chi-Square DF	120
	Pr > Baseline Model Chi-Square	<.0001
	Fit Function	0.9055
	Chi-Square	183.8232
	Chi-Square DF	83
	Pr > Chi-Square	<.0001
	Elliptic Corrected Chi-Square	158.9177
	Pr > Elliptic Corr. Chi-Square	<.0001
	Z-Test of Wilson & Hilferty	5.9170
	Hoelter Critical N	117
	Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR)	0.0457
	Standardized RMSR (SRMSR)	0.0551
	Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.9017

Fit Summary		
Parsimony Index	Adjusted GFI (AGFI)	0.8389
	Parsimonious GFI	0.6237
	RMSEA Estimate	0.0774
	RMSEA Lower 90% Confidence Limit	0.0623
	RMSEA Upper 90% Confidence Limit	0.0924
	Probability of Close Fit	0.0020
	ECVI Estimate	1.4754
	ECVI Lower 90% Confidence Limit	1.2968
	ECVI Upper 90% Confidence Limit	1.6959
	Akaike Information Criterion	289.8232
	Bozdogan CAIC	518.6836
	Schwarz Bayesian Criterion	465.6836
	McDonald Centrality	0.7811
Incremental Index	Bentler Comparative Fit Index	0.9331
	Bentler-Bonett NFI	0.8870
	Bentler-Bonett Non-normed Index	0.9033
	Bollen Normed Index Rho1	0.8366
	Bollen Non-normed Index Delta2	0.9347
	James et al. Parsimonious NFI	0.6135

According to Hiep Pham: “All exogenous constructs will be explainable through the endogenous constructs selected in conceptual model” (Pham, HH., Lai, S.L. & Vuong, QH., 2019). Based on the SEM result, Adaptive selling behavior have 3 items got p-value <0.001, customer orientation has 2 items got p-value <0.001, Ganqing have 3 items got p-value <0.001, Renqing 3 items got p-value <0.001, Xinren have 3 items got p-value <0.001, and Salesperson Performance have 2 items got p-value <0.001 as Table below with the SEM results.

Table 4.11: Result of SEM Analysis - Standardized Results for PATH List

Standardized Results for PATH List						
Path				Estimate	t-Value	Hypotheses
	R-Square					
SP	0.34	<---	ASB	0.38	4.09	H1 (supported)
SP		<---	CO	0.23	2.30	H2 (supported)

Standardized Results for PATH List						
Path						Hypotheses
	R-Square			Estimate	t-Value	
SP		<---	GQ	0.44	3.85	H8 (supported)
SP		<---	RQ	-0.29	-2.30	H6 (not supported)
SP		<---	XR	-0.05	-0.33	H4 (not supported)
ASB	0.39	<---	CO	0.37	3.64	H3 (supported)
ASB		<---	GQ	0.02	0.18	H9 (not supported)
ASB		<---	RQ	0.32	2.49	H7 (supported)
ASB		<---	XR	0.09	0.60	H5 (not supported)
*t-Value <1.96: Hypotheses is not supported

Figure 4.5: Model of Structural Equation Model Result

In general, all exogenous constructs are explainable through the endogenous constructs selected in our conceptual model, as detail in Table 4.12 below:

Table 4.12: SEM Model's Standardized Total Effects

Antecedents	Direct Effect (IE)	Indirect Effect (IE)	Total Effect
ASB	0.38	N/A	0.38
CO	0.23	0.37x0.38	
GQ	0.44	N/A	0.44
XR	N/A	N/A	N/A
RQ	-0.29	0.32x0.38	-0.16

Given the results with total effect of each variables analysis:

- Adaptive Selling Behavior (ASB), Customer Orientation (CO), Ganqing (GQ) are independent variables have positive impacts on dependent variable – Salesperson performance (SP), and Renqing (RQ) has negative impact on SP.
- ASB and GQ have the strongest significance in proposed impact relationship with SP

4.4 Data analysis result

Regarding path analyses, 5 of 9 hypotheses in this study are supported as positive impact as by our empirical analysis of SEM; nonetheless, the other 4 are not, in which one relationship is negative impact instead of positive impact in hypotheses.

Particularly, Adaptive Selling Behavior has a significantly direct impact on Salesperson Performance ($\beta = 0.38$; $t = 4.0868$); Customer Orientation directly influences on Salesperson Performance ($\beta = 0.23$; $t = 2.30$); Ganqing also has positive impact on Salesperson Performance ($\beta = 0.44$; $t = 3.85$). Therefore, Hypotheses 1, 2, and 8 are supported (See Table 4.11)

Regarding to Adaptive Selling Behavior, the other data analysis presented significant relationship with Customer Orientation and Renqing via relatively results with Customer Orientation - Adaptive Selling Behavior ($\beta = 0.37$; $t = 3.64$); and Renqing

- Adaptive Selling Behavior ($\beta = 0.32$; $t = 2.49$). Given these results, Hypotheses 7 and 9 are likewise supported.

However, based on the data in analysis result at Table 4.11, regarding to relationships among Xinren and Ganqing with Adaptive Selling Behavior, and relationship among Xinren and Salesperson Performance are not significant. Furthermore, it's found contrast result for the foreseen relationship between in Renqing and Salesperson Performance in Hypotheses 4, that mean a Renqing does not support the Salesperson Performance as proposed in the conceptual framework model (see Figure 3.1 and Figure 4.5).

CHAPTER 5: HYPOTHESES TESTING & DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Hypotheses Testing Results

Based on the above SEM analysis result, Hypotheses 1, 2, 5, 7 and 9 are supported, Hypotheses 4 has reversed result, and the others are not supported as summary below:

Table 5.1: The summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Results
H1- Adaptive Selling Behavior has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies	Supported
H2- Customer orientation has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies	Supported
H3- Customer orientation has positive impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies	Supported
H4- Xinren (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies	Not supported
H5- Xinren (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies	Not supported

H6- Renqing (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies	Not supported
H7- Renqing (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies	Supported
H8- Ganqing (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Salesperson Performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies	Supported
H9- Ganqing (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies	Not supported

5.2 Discussions

First, based on the theories regarding to relationship of adaptive selling behavior and customer orientation to salesperformance, these 2 factors are considered the inconsistent factors that have positive influence on salesperson performance. This research aims to examine the relation ship in the information service industry, especially publishing and data analytics companies. Adopting the above research results, these two factors are proved to be significant in supportive relationship with salesperson performance. Especially, customer orientation has positive impact on adaptive selling behavior toward to increase the salesperson performance. This result is in line with result of some previous research that focus in other industry, for instance: Adaptive selling behavior (Franke & Park, 2006); Customer orientation (Jaramillo, F., & Grisaffe, D. B., 2009). Therefore, customer orientation and adaptive selling behavior play strong positions, that explain and support to increase the

performance of salespeople in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies.

Second, based on the research gap of “guanxi” on sales performance in the industry, this thesis can also solve the research question if “guanxi” play the role of as a predictor to adaptive selling behavior toward salesperson performance in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies. As obviously presented in the summary of hypotheses testing, it’s indicated that in the information service industry, academic publishing and data analytics companies, Ganqing (as part of Guanxi) has positive impact on Salesperson performance, and Renqing has positive impact on Adaptive selling behavior. Due to data analysis result regarding to “Ganqing” (see Table 4.11 and 4.12), the salesperson performance will be increased if the salesperson and the buyer's representative have good feelings with each others, which mean the emotion plays a very important role in dealing business. Similarly, from data analysis result at Table 5.1 regarding to “Renqing”, the orientation of renqing as favor-exchanges or reciprocity of salesperson will support to his adaptive selling behavior. This finding in this research context also confirmed a study from 1994 by Sujan that “excellent sales representatives often alter their selling behaviors on the basis of situational considerations” (Sujan et al. 1994).

Regarding to all unsupported hypotheses under context of the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies, Ganqing (as part of Guanxi) does not have positive impact on Adaptive Selling Behavior; Xinren (as part of Guanxi) does not have positive impact on Adaptive Selling neither on Salesperson Performance, and Renqing does not have positive but negative impact on the SP as shown in the SEM analysis results. This surprised finding among these failed hypotheses with “Renqing” affirms that favors-exchanges or reciprocity in business dealing may not bring sales revenue, or increase the market share. Practically, favor-exchanges between salesperson and his partner may tighten their close relationship, but customer still may not buy product due to pricing policy, product value, etc. In this case, these favors may cause dilemma in this business

relationship or a pseudo-relationship, that may confuse customer and reduce the sales closing chance. Previous research indicated that “What often passes as a relationship, therefore, is really a pseudo-relationship in that it is one-sided, with customers kept in the relationship against their will” (James G. Barnes, 1994). Besides, under the current competitive and challenged business environment, if salesperson take too much time in taking care the relationship with major existing customer who can’t return the sales, they wont’ have enough time to penetrate new market or accounts.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 Conclusions from this study

In conclusion, this study explored major factors that influencing on salesperson performance in information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies, which are adaptive selling behavior, customer orientation, guanxi.

It also explained the relationship and impacts of adaptive selling behavior, customer orientation, and 3 dimensions of guanxi with salesperson performance. In which, both of adaptive selling behavior and customer orientation, and ganqing as a part of guanxi have positive impacts on salesperson performance, even there is unconsistence of adaptive selling and behavior and customer orientation on sales performance in previous research. Furthermore, customer orientation and renqing as a part of guanxi have positive impacts on adaptive selling behavior in this industry. Surprisingly, doing favors as in renqing concept (as a part of guanxi) have negative impact on salesperson performance, and the social relationship between salesperson and his customer's representative have strong support on salesperformance than his adaptive selling behavior and customer orientation. Therefore, sales manager can identify and orient salespeople the relevant treatment strategy for their customers, in order to improve sales performance.

6.2 Constributions

Firstly, the results of this study partially fill the gap of academic research in information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies regarding to topic: adaptive selling behavior, customer orientation, guanxi, and salesperson performance.

Secondly, it contribute to the inconsistent results in the important topic research of relationship between adaptive selling behavior, customer orientation on salesperson performance by testing the relationship between adaptive selling behavior, customer

orientation on salesperson performance in the context of information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies.

Thirdly, this the first time that major factors that explain salesperson performance included adaptive selling behavior, customer orientation gathering in the research with guanxi as a emerging factor on sales performance. Specially, the multinational scale of research help to make a small contribution in studying the role of guanxi outside the border of China.

6.3 Managerial Implications

First, adopting the above research results, customer orientation has positive impact on adaptive selling behavior toward to increase the salesperson performance. Customer-oriented salesperson always can capture the demands and preferences from his customer, so this orientation will be useful for information service company, especially in this challenging economic, where customer information is the key for developing business. Besides, due to the challenging and unstable situation of publishing and data analytics companies under open access trend, the salespeople should flexible change their selling approach by apply adaptive selling behavior. Particularly, if international publishers or data analytics companies want to penetrate more regional market, they must create more flexible pricing and supplying model to adapt each market, as one dimension of adaptive selling behavior. Therefore, companies in the information service industry, especially academic publishing and data analytics companies should encourage customer orientation and adaptive selling behavior for salespeople in order to increase the performance of their sales force.

Salesperson

Second, based on some findings about the role of “guanxi” on sales performance in the industry, the sales manager in academic publishing and data analytics companies as well as their sales person should have more study on guanxi in order to fulfill the business culture gap, not only in China, but the whole Asia. The salesperson performance will be increased if the salesperson appreciate the buyer's representative as family, willing to help him or her as a friend, built up a trust on each other.

However, the application of reciprocity or favors- exchanges under the business context in this industry should be carefully considered. Since the practice of favors only can support salesperson when he apply adaptive selling behavior, but it may cause the difficulty or dilemma situation in relationship with the buyer's representative or key contact for business. Especially, under the current competitive and challenged business environment, if salesperson spend too much time and effort on doing or returning favors with a customer who can't purchase as much products as expected, they can't have enough time to penetrate the new accounts, or even close the deals from those favourable customers.

6.4 Limitations and future research

Similar to many other studies, there might be found a number of limitation in this study that author expect to propose other researchers may pay attention and help to improve in the future.

First, the slight impact value of some variables and relationship in the conceptual model might be due to the limited number of data under the multinational scale of the study. Therefore, it's expected to have a meta-analysis research to confirm or retest the results for this research.

Second, during the data analysis, author can't get enough time to analyze the relationship of guanxi as composite of 3 dimensions on salesperson performance. Therefore, it's a recommendation for a further research to fill up this data analysis and compare the results between impact of composite and impacts from each dimension presented in this research.

Third, due to limitation of respondents from Western area to take part in this research (14.71%), the result of this research majorily reflect the opinion from salespeople working in Asian. So this limitation also recommend the future researchs to get more data from salespeople working in Western to compare among working areas, and we may have a comparative picture to the impacts from these factors on salesperson performance.

Forth, the result in relationship between renqing and salesperson performance raised other limitation related to quantitative analysis method. Since this topic is considered the first time in aspect of context and research model, the results could be more reliable in case we have enough time to conduct in-depth interview or intensive individual interviews.

Last but not least, another limitation is about sample, since there is only one sample as salesperson was approached, and considered in this study, instead of both salesperson and his sales manager. Even the measurement scale used in the research applied for salespeople, but some bias still may arise regarding to the performance evaluation of salespeople by themselves during the data collection. So it's believed that the salesperson performance measurement can be better with more approach to the sales managers.

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APPENDIX

A. English Questionnaire For Survey After Mixing Items

Dear Sir/Madam,

In order to conduct my MBA Thesis, I'm conducting a research about "Factors influencing on salesperson performance in information service industry". The expected result of this research may hopefully help salesforce and management to identify important factors influencing on salesperson performance and how to enhance that. Therefore, your kind attention and answers to the following questionnaire is very appreciated and meaningful to me and the research.

****Please be noted that all information obtained is treated as confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this research.**

Part A

Please kindly choose answers reflecting your situation below

1. Please choose your gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

2. Age

- ☐ Under 25
- ☐ 25 – 35
- ☐ 35 – 45
- ☐ 45 – 55
- ☐ Over 55

3. How long have you been working at your current company?

- ☐ Under 1 year
- ☐ 1– 3 years
- ☐ 3– 6 years
- ☐ 6 – 10 years
- ☐ Over 10 year

4. Where are you currently working?

- ☐ Asia
- ☐ Western (Europe/North America)
- ☐ Middle East
- ☐ Australia/NZ

PART B

Could you please kindly rate your level of agreement for the following statements below based on likert scale from 1 to 5?

1 - Strongly disagree 2 - Disagree 3 - Neutral 4- Agree 5 - Strongly agree

*** Please be noted that: “the buyer” in some of statements below could be your customer or your distributor/agent in your business context.

	Questionnaire	1	2	3	4	5
1	I am very flexible in the selling approach I use					
2	I can easily use a wide variety of selling approaches					
3	I do not use a set sales approach					
4	I think customer preferences are a key factor to the success of my company					
5	I frequently survey customers to find out the products and services they would like to see in the future					
6	I try to figure out what a customer's need is					
7	I often interact with my buyer's representative on a social basis outside of work					
8	My buyer's representative and I are able to talk openly as friends					
9	If I were to change this business partner, I would lose a good friend					
10	I consider this buyer's representative as being almost as close to me as family					
11	I would consider whether my buyer representative's feelings would be hurt before I made an important decision					
12	I have a brotherhood feeling towards the buyer's representative					
13	I would try my best to help out this buyer's representative when he/she is in need because he/she is a friend of mine					
14	I feel a sense of obligation to this buyer's representative for doing him/her a favor					

	Questionnaire	1	2	3	4	5
15	I think that “calling in” favors is part of doing business with this buyer's representative					
16	I am very effective in contributing to my firm’s market share					
17	I am very effective in generating a high level of dollar sales					

Part C

Could you please kindly rate your level of agreement for the following statements below based on likert scale from 1 to 5?

1 - Strongly disagree; 2 - Disagree; 3 – Neutral; 4- Agree; 5 - Strongly agree

*** Please be noted that: “the buyer” in some of statements below could be your customer or your distributor/agent in your business context.

	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
18	I vary my sales style from situation to situation					
19	I treat all of my buyers pretty much differently					
20	I like to experiment with different sales approaches					
21	I change my approach from one customer to another					
22	I have the customer’s best interests in mind					
23	I try to help customers achieve their goals					
24	I take a problem-solving approach in selling products or services or customers					
25	I try to find out which kinds of products or services would be most helpful to customers					
26	The practice of “give and take” of favor is a key part of the relationship between my buyer's representative and me					
27	I would feel embarrassed if I was unable to provide a requested favor to my buyer's representative					
28	I know that it is a bad business not to return favors to this buyer's representative					
29	I am happy to do a favor for this buyer's representative, when he/she requests one					

	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
30	This buyer's representative has been frank in dealing with us					
31	This buyer's representative does not make false claims					
32	We think this buyer's representative is completely open in dealing with us					
33	This buyer's representative is only concerned about himself/herself					
34	This buyer's representative seems to be concerned with our needs					
35	The people at my firm do not trust this buyer's representative					
36	This buyer's representative is not trustworthy					
37	I am very effective in selling to major accounts					
38	I am very effective in exceeding annual sales targets and objectives					

B. Vietnamese Questionnaire For Survey After Mixing Items

Xin chào và xin chúc mọi người một ngày nhiều niềm vui!

Tôi là Nguyễn Thuỳ Linh, học viên chương trình thạc sỹ Quản trị kinh doanh, trường Đại học Việt Nhật. Hiện tại tôi đang trong quá trình hoàn thành luận văn tốt nghiệp về đề tài nghiên cứu với phạm vi đa quốc gia có tên "Các yếu tố ảnh hưởng đến hiệu suất của nhân viên bán hàng trong ngành dịch vụ thông tin", một chủ đề quan trọng nhưng chưa từng được thực hiện trên thế giới từ trước đến nay. Do đó, kết quả dự kiến của nghiên cứu này hy vọng có thể giúp lực lượng bán hàng và cấp quản lý trong ngành xác định rõ hơn các yếu tố quan trọng ảnh hưởng, và giúp cho nhân viên bán hàng nâng cao hiệu suất. Sự quan tâm và câu trả lời của các anh/chị cho bảng câu hỏi sau đây vô cùng ý nghĩa đối với nghiên cứu này, đồng thời hy vọng sẽ đóng góp phần nào giá trị mang tính học thuật và thực tiễn cho hoạt động kinh doanh trong ngành dịch vụ thông tin trong nước và khu vực.

* Xin lưu ý rằng tất cả thông tin thu được được coi là bí mật và sẽ chỉ được sử dụng cho mục đích nghiên cứu này.

Phần A

Xin vui lòng chọn đáp án cho các câu trả lời về bạn dưới đây:

1. Giới tính

- ☐ Nam
- ☐ Nữ
- ☐ Khác (Không đề cập)

2 Tuổi

- ☐ Under 25
- ☐ 25 – 35
- ☐ 35 – 45
- ☐ 45 – 55
- ☐ Over 55

3. Bạn làm việc ở công ty hiện tại được bao lâu rồi?

- ☐ Dưới 1 năm
- ☐ 3 – 5 năm
- ☐ 5 – 7 năm
- ☐ 7 – 10 năm
- ☐ Trên 10 năm

4. Hiện bạn đang làm việc ở khu vực nào?

- ☐ Châu Á
- ☐ Châu Âu hoặc Bắc Mỹ
- ☐ Trung Đông
- ☐ Úc/New Zealand

Phần B

Xin vui lòng đánh giá mức độ đồng tin của bạn cho các hỏi dưới đây dựa trên thang đo từ 1 đến 5:

1 - Rất không đồng ý

2 - Không đồng ý

3 - Không rõ

4- Đồng ý

5 - Rất đồng ý

*** Xin lưu ý rằng: Khái niệm "Bên mua hàng" trong những câu hỏi dưới đây có thể là khách hàng hoặc nhà phân phối/đại lý của công ty trong bối cảnh kinh doanh của công ty

	Câu hỏi	1	2	3	4	5
1	Tôi rất linh hoạt việc sử dụng cách tiếp cận bán hàng					
2	Tôi có thể dễ dàng sử dụng nhiều cách tiếp cận bán hàng					
3	Tôi không sử dụng phương thức tiếp tiếp cận bán hàng cố định					

	Câu hỏi	1	2	3	4	5
4	Tôi nghĩ rằng thị hiếu của khách hàng là một yếu tố quan trọng cho sự thành công của công ty tôi					
5	Tôi thường xuyên khảo sát khách hàng để tìm hiểu các sản phẩm và dịch vụ mà họ muốn thấy trong tương lai					
6	Tôi cố gắng tìm hiểu xem nhu cầu của khách hàng là gì					
7	Tôi thường giao lưu với người đại diện bên mua hàng ngoài hoạt động công việc					
8	Đại diện bên mua hàng của tôi và tôi có thể nói chuyện cởi mở như những người bạn					
9	Nếu tôi thay đổi đối tác kinh doanh này, tôi sẽ mất một người bạn tốt					
10	Tôi coi người đại diện bên mua hàng này gần gũi với tôi như người trong gia đình					
11	Tôi sẽ cân nhắc việc có thể làm tổn thương cảm xúc của người đại diện bên mua hàng hay không trước khi tôi đưa ra một quyết định quan trọng					
12	Tôi có cảm giác thân thiết như anh em với người đại diện của bên mua hàng này					
13	Tôi sẽ cố gắng hết sức để giúp đỡ người đại diện của bên mua hàng khi anh ấy / cô ấy cần vì anh ấy / cô ấy là bạn của tôi					
14	Tôi cảm thấy mình có nghĩa vụ giúp đỡ người đại diện của bên mua hàng					
15	Tôi nghĩ rằng những đề nghị giúp đỡ qua lại là một phần trong công việc kinh doanh với người đại diện của bên mua hàng này					
16	Tôi đóng góp vào thị phần của công ty mình khá hiệu quả					
17	Tôi đóng góp rất hiệu quả trong việc tạo ra mức doanh số cao					

Phần C

Rất cảm ơn sự kiên nhẫn của anh/chị. Xin vui lòng dành thêm 5 phút quý báu của anh/chị cho phần cuối của khảo sát.

Xin vui lòng tiếp tục đánh giá mức độ đồng tin của bạn cho các hỏi dưới đây dựa trên thang đo từ 1 đến 5:

1 - Rất không đồng ý

2 - Không đồng ý

3 - Không rõ

4- Đồng ý

5 - Rất đồng ý

*** Xin lưu ý rằng: Khái niệm "Bên mua hàng" trong những câu hỏi dưới đây có thể là khách hàng hoặc nhà phân phối/đại lý của công ty trong bối cảnh kinh doanh của công ty.

	Câu hỏi	1	2	3	4	5
18	Tôi đa dạng hoá phong cách bán hàng của mình tùy thuộc từng tình huống					
19	Tôi đối xử với mỗi đối tác mua hàng tương đối khác nhau					
20	Tôi thích thử nghiệm các phương pháp bán hàng khác nhau					
21	Tôi thay đổi cách tiếp cận với mỗi khách hàng một cách khác nhau					
22	Tôi biết được lợi ích tốt nhất cho khách hàng					
23	Tôi cố gắng giúp khách hàng đạt được mục tiêu của họ					
24	Tôi dùng phương pháp "giải quyết vấn đề" để tiếp cận bán sản phẩm hoặc dịch vụ hoặc khách hàng					
25	Tôi cố gắng tìm ra loại sản phẩm hoặc dịch vụ nào có thể hữu ích nhất cho khách hàng					
26	Việc "cho và nhận lại" sự ưu đãi lẫn nhau là một phần quan trọng trong mối quan hệ giữa đại diện bên mua hàng và tôi					
27	Tôi sẽ cảm thấy ngại ngùng nếu không thể đáp lại yêu cầu về việc ưu đãi từ người đại diện của bên mua hàng					

28	Tôi biết việc hợp tác kinh doanh sẽ khó khăn khi không đáp lại những chuyện ân huệ cho người đại diện của bên mua hàng này					
29	Tôi rất vui khi được giúp đỡ cho người đại diện của bên mua hàng này, khi họ có yêu cầu					
30	Người đại diện của bên mua hàng này đã giao dịch thành thực với chúng tôi					
31	Người đại diện của bên mua hàng không đưa ra những yêu cầu sai					
32	Chúng tôi nghĩ rằng đại diện của bên mua hàng này hoàn toàn cởi mở trong giao dịch với chúng tôi					
33	Người đại diện bên mua hàng này chỉ quan tâm đến quyền lợi của họ					
34	Người đại diện bên mua hàng này có vẻ quan tâm đến nhu cầu của chúng tôi					
35	Mọi người trong công ty tôi không tin tưởng người đại diện của bên mua hàng này					
36	Người đại diện của bên mua hàng này không đáng tin					
37	Tôi bán hàng rất hiệu quả cho các khách hàng lớn					
38	Tôi vượt qua các mục tiêu công việc và doanh số bán hàng hàng năm một rất hiệu quả					