

## Understanding experiential value delivery: The important role of salespeople's orientation

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### ARTICLE INFORMATION

#### Article History

Received: 23-01-2026

Revised: 09-05-2026

Accepted: 23-06-2026

Published: 25-06-2026

#### Keywords

Customer Orientation;  
Experiential Value Delivery;  
Proactive Service Behavior;  
Sales Performance;  
Selling Creativity.

### ABSTRACT

Customer orientation is widely regarded as a key driver of firm performance. This study examines how customer orientation, selling creativity, and proactive service behavior affect sales performance by delivering experiential value. This was examined by embedding customer experience within the experiential value that salespeople deliver in the cosmetics industry in developing countries. While traditional frameworks focus on passive customer experience management or static service quality, experiential value delivered introduces a novel behavioral construct. It captures the salesperson's active role in co-creating and operationalizing value in real-time interactions, shifting the focus from organizational systems to dyadic frontline behaviors. Data were collected from 210 salespeople in the Indonesian cosmetics industry and analyzed using a structural equation model in AMOS 25. The results showed that cosmetics companies that adopted a customer-oriented approach and delivered experiential value enhanced sales performance. Experiential value delivery also mediated the relationship between customer orientation and sales performance. Grounded in the service-dominant logic framework, experiential value delivered serves as a crucial behavioral catalyst for value co-creation. This study contributes to the service-dominant logic literature by providing a concrete behavioral mechanism that links a firm's strategic customer orientation to frontline sales performance.

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### 1. Introduction

The cosmetics industry is rapidly developing globally, with significant growth observed across Europe (Bom et al., 2019), South Korea, the United States (Lee et al., 2019), and throughout Asia. Within this landscape, Indonesia represents a highly dynamic and fiercely competitive market, heavily influenced by both domestic and international cosmetic products. According to the 2023 population census by the Central Statistics Agency, Indonesia has a massive female population of 136.3 million, making it a critical hub for

beauty retail. In the current market environment, consumers exert substantial influence (Singhal & Malik, 2018), and their cosmetic choices are determined by highly individualized factors such as skin type, personal aesthetic preferences, and chemical safety considerations (Yeo et al., 2016). To manage this diversity, manufacturers utilize multi-channel distribution networks, including official websites, online marketplaces, specialized cosmetic stores, and supermarkets. These channels are strategically aligned with specific target segments, reflecting the widespread adoption of customer-oriented marketing philosophies across the industry.

Customer orientation is defined as an organizational business philosophy aimed at identifying and meeting customer needs to establish long-term relational value (Domi et al., 2020). This practice has become a cornerstone for retail firms seeking to navigate volatile consumer expectations and replace traditional, transactional interaction methods (Agarwal et al., 2025). Within physical retail environments, salespeople serve as the primary conduit for executing this orientation. A salesperson's capacity to optimize performance is traditionally believed to rest on their ability to decode non-verbal cues, deploy psychological resources during customer showrooming behaviors (Park & Hur, 2023), utilize social media data (Stuhldreier, 2024), and build interpersonal rapport to achieve holistic customer satisfaction (Lee & Wei, 2023). In response to these complex multi-channel dynamics, understanding how customer experiences accumulate across the entire touchpoint journey has become a vital driver of overall retailer performance (Masters et al., 2025).

Despite the widespread strategic adoption of customer orientation, its direct relationship with objective sales performance remains a subject of intense academic debate. While several empirical studies demonstrate that customer orientation exerts a positive, significant impact on sales performance (Lussier & Hartmann, 2017; Zang et al., 2020), a substantial body of counter-evidence reveals that customer orientation often yields non-significant or negligible effects on direct sales outcomes (Terho et al., 2015; Miao & Wang, 2016).

Traditional marketing and organizational theories fail to explain sales performance sufficiently because they treat customer orientation primarily as a strategic, informational asset, focusing on the collection, dissemination, and responsiveness to market intelligence (Feng et al., 2019). These macro-level theories assume that possessing market knowledge automatically translates into market success. However, they overlook the micro-level operationalization of this knowledge on the front line. In retail environments characterized by high-touch, experiential products like cosmetics, sales performance is not driven by information possession, but by the hands-on delivery of value during live interactions. When frontline salespeople lack the behavioral capacity to translate abstract customer data into immediate, lived value actively, the firm's strategic customer orientation becomes completely decoupled from sales performance.

To address this gap in the literature and bridge the disconnect between strategic orientation and frontline performance, this study introduces the concept of experiential value delivery (EVD). Built upon the foundation of service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2014), EVD is defined as the deliberate, real-time behavioral deployment by frontline salespeople to actively co-create, operationalize, and transmit value-in-use during direct customer interactions. Under service-dominant logic, value is never static or inherently embedded in physical goods; instead, it is continuously determined as "value-in-use" based on the customer's personal, subjective experience during product consumption or interaction (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). In a cosmetics retail setting, EVD represents the behavioral mechanism through which a salesperson integrates the firm's resources with the customer's unique needs (e.g., skin type, safety concerns) to generate a positive, immediate value experience at the point of sale.

Established constructs fail to capture the specific interface of frontline behavioral transmission. Customer experience management or generic customer experience frameworks (Masters et al., 2025) are fundamentally organizational, macro-level concepts that evaluate the holistic customer journey across broad corporate touchpoints. They do not capture the micro-behaviors of individual salespeople. Conversely, traditional frontline constructs like service quality (ServQual) focus on static, standardized, and transactional attributes of delivery (e.g., responsiveness, reliability, physical appearance). Similarly, adaptive selling focuses on modifying sales pitches to match buyer types but lacks a value co-creation lens. None of these constructs account for how a frontline actor dynamically operationalizes service-dominant logic by translating raw consumer insights into interactive, experiential value in real time.

EVD warrants a distinct construct status because it isolates a unique behavioral variance that cannot be captured by strategic orientation or systemic customer experience frameworks. Value delivery, alongside value creation and value capture, constitutes one of the three core pillars of business model analysis (Siebold, 2020). While a firm strategically establishes customer orientation, salespeople stand at the forefront of the actual delivery process (Ryari et al., 2020). EVD operates as a separate behavioral mediator because a firm can be highly customer-oriented in its culture yet still fail to achieve strong sales outcomes if its frontline employees lack the specific behavioral capability to deliver experiential value. By establishing EVD as an independent construct, researchers can empirically isolate, measure, and manage the concrete actions salespeople take to turn strategic intent into real-time value co-creation.

Consequently, this study aims to analyze the direct impact of customer orientation on sales performance and evaluate the exact extent to which the EVD mediates and strengthens this relationship. Furthermore, the roles of selling creativity and proactive service behavior are examined as critical, concurrent factors that may enhance the performance of cosmetic retail salespeople. By empirically testing this proposed model using a sample of 210 cosmetic retail salespeople in Indonesia, this study leverages a highly unique geographic and market context. As an archipelagic nation characterized by diverse cultures, uneven population densities, and highly varied economic distributions, Indonesia provides an ideal, rigorous testing ground to observe how frontline salespeople adaptively deploy EVD to navigate diverse consumer needs and drive firm performance.

This study analyzes the impact of customer orientation on sales performance and evaluates the extent to which the delivery of experiential value strengthens this relationship. The roles of selling creativity and proactive service behavior are also examined as potential factors that may further enhance cosmetic retail salespeople's sales performance. The research specifically targets cosmetic retail salespeople in Indonesia to empirically test the proposed model. According to the 2023 population census by the Central Statistics Agency, Indonesia has 136.3 million female residents. Given this significant female demographic, Indonesia's dynamic cosmetics market merits further scholarly attention. As an archipelagic nation characterized by diverse and uneven population and economic distribution, Indonesia offers a distinctive context for investigating the orientation of cosmetic salespeople.

## 2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

### 2.1. Literature Review

#### 2.1.1. Experiential Value Delivery

Value refers to phenomenological experience, and, through the quality-resonating process, it motivates the recipient to make purchasing decisions (Brodie et al., 2019). The value customers received resulted from the integration of resources. In value cocreation, companies and customers integrate resources to

achieve comprehensive (Vargo & Lusch, 2017) and specifically targeted experiences (Le et al., 2021). The experience gained from consuming a product or service undoubtedly forms a consumption memory (Hiong et al., 2020), which is considered the driving force behind product appeal. Additionally, it refers to the input for customers when asked to engage in the value co-creation process, either directly or indirectly through participative (Prabowo et al., 2015) or voluntary resonating engagement (Singjai et al., 2018). Salespeople need to form networks to create shared value with customers (Monavvarifard et al., 2019). Maintaining a strong social network with customers enables salespeople to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse needs and desires. Furthermore, companies become more innovative and improve customer retention by focusing on various needs and wants.

Customers may have researched the product they are about to purchase, including looking forward to the interaction process (Holmqvist et al., 2020). The intended value to be received might also be anticipated, prompting companies to prepare for potential customers. These companies use technology and social media to gain a detailed understanding of customer needs, enabling them to offer value propositions (Matarazzo et al., 2021). Additionally, the value proposition planning process can be conducted through customer communication. The differing interests between relevant parties, where customers are focused on the benefits received, with the companies prioritizing organizational and financial performance (Taylor et al., 2020) potentially obstructed the value proposition planning process. In this context, the strength of the relationship between customers and companies served as the key to the success of shared value.

Value propositions designed by companies should be communicated to customers, which consists of three steps, namely selecting, providing, and communicating value to customers (Taylor et al., 2020). The three steps constituted the process of delivering value to customers. The delivery process was also carried out through technology and various companies' sales channels. However, in marketing, communicating value to customers was prioritized. Companies adopt a salesperson's role when communicating value to customers. The ability to get equipped with complete product knowledge made it easier for salespeople to share personal experiences with customers.

A significant perspective of the service-dominant logic theory was that knowledge and experience formed the basis of competitive advantage (Jaziri, 2019). Customer knowledge and expertise were obtained from information provided by salespeople, which was in the form of product experience. This enabled a clearer understanding of the value proposition anticipated by the companies, thereby influencing customer behavior (Le et al., 2024). The customer experience was previously regarded as part of the value proposition, in the form of a personalized product to enhance appearance. Therefore, salespeople should engage in experiential value delivery, the process of conveying the value of using a product to enhance customers' appearance. With experiential value delivery, sales performance could be improved, and companies could gain a competitive advantage (Alghamdi & Agag, 2024). A creative method of selling adopted by salespeople was sharing experiences gained from other customers, social media, and personal experience with the product.

The delivery of value to customers was accentuated, and the capture process depended on companies' prioritization of value delivery (Hiong et al., 2020). Accentuation refers to prioritizing the value gained from using a beauty product to enhance appearance. The accentuated experience could take the form of hedonic

value (Lavuri et al., 2022), arising from the impression that cosmetics were manufactured abroad and used by influencers or famous artists. These experiences were a source of customer interest in a product. In addition, companies transferred value to customers as business dynamics evolved rapidly (Ghezzi & Cavallo, 2018). Value transferred to customers should align with the planned proposition.

Resonating value should be accomplished. The delivery process was also achieved by delivering value, alongside the adoption of various efforts (Jelinek, 2017). Value delivered to customers through the resonance process has a significant impact on the product perception. Assuming the resonance was repeated, it would reinforce the customer's purchasing decision (Shang et al., 2017). Resonance can increase the intensity or depth of the psychological bond that customers have with a particular brand through the loyalty mechanism (Chen, 2024). Therefore, resonating value deepens the customer's psychological bond with the brand. The process by which customers resonated with the product's value was observed in their intention to share that value with other customers, which was regarded as an aspect of socialization. In the concept of value sharing, the interaction between customers and companies must be considered. The interaction fostered cordial relationships, thereby motivating the sharing of experiential value.

### **2.1.2. Customer Orientation**

Customer orientation is an important concept discussed by marketing practitioners and researchers. Customer orientation is a valuable psychological resource, encompassing work ethics, attitudes, tendencies, and mindsets, as well as the motivation of salespeople to improve customer engagement and service (Park & Hur, 2023). Customer orientation also represents an internal tendency that manifests specific behavioral patterns needed to deliver service to customers. In relation to value co-creation in service-dominant logic theory, customer orientation is one way salespeople use their resources to generate sales and win customers' hearts. Furthermore, because customer orientation is based on customer concern, it can shift salespeople's mindset from solely focused on sales to focused on customer satisfaction (Lee & Wei, 2023).

### **2.1.3. Proactive Service Behavior**

The ability of salespeople to proactively meet customer needs and accurately assess customer risk profiles is a clear differentiator between high- and low-performing salespeople. Recently, researchers have sought to understand the behavior of high-performing salespeople to provide managers with insights into how to improve sales performance (Wang & Zhang, 2025). Proactive service behavior, described in the literature as service that prioritizes individual factors such as leadership, commitment, emotional intelligence, and work engagement (Ye et al., 2021), was discovered. Proactive service, in addressing future customer needs, is considered an exploration process, while responsive behavior, in meeting current and expressed customer needs, is viewed as an exploitation process. Salespeople's inclination toward these two elements is crucial in selling products, especially cosmetic products.

### **2.1.4. Selling Creativity**

Today's competitive business environment fosters creativity and creates perceived support, which can help enhance employee creativity in many companies. Employee creativity is widely practiced in traditional service industries, such as retail

stores, banks, and hotels, to generate a shared understanding of customers (Yao et al., 2023). Creativity begins with innovation. The innovation process at the salesperson level is complex, comprising two main phases: idea generation and implementation, each with distinct demands for resources, mindsets, and skills (Černe et al., 2018). One of the skills required by salespeople is selling. Therefore, selling requires innovation and fosters creativity in the sales process. Selling creativity is defined as a process that targets salespeople by leveraging their resources, mindsets, and skills. Creativity arises from the ability to identify risks and potential customers, then generate ideas and implement solutions to generate sales.

#### **2.1.5. Sales Performance**

Value co-creation has emerged as a significant challenge for the industry, particularly the cosmetics industry. In another form of service-dominant logic theory, sales performance is the outcome of value co-creation between companies and consumers. Value co-creation is a holistic management strategy or initiative that motivates actors to create shared value (Sohaib & Han, 2023). Sales performance can be improved through the mutual support of resources and capabilities that organizations can leverage when interacting with customers (Crick et al., 2020). Finally, sales performance is the quantitative outcome of a salesperson's efforts to utilize their resources and create shared value for customers.

#### **2.1.6. Service Dominant Logic Theory**

Vargo and Lusch (2014) the formal study of marketing initially focused on the distribution and exchange of manufactured commodities and became the foundation of economics. Initially, marketing focused on tangible goods. This focus, or dominant logic, is based on exchange of products, known as goods-dominant logic. Service-dominant logic focuses on intangible resources, inherent value, and transactions (Vargo & Lusch, 2014). In the goods-centered view, the goal of economic activity is to create and distribute goods for sale, which are then stored until consumers need them.

Service-dominant logic has evolved, with the emergence of a revised logic centered on intangible resources, value creation, and relationships (Vargo & Lusch, 2014). The problem is that there is no complete and adequate understanding of the concept of "service" and its role in business exchange and competition (Lusch et al., 2007). The revised dominant logic, or service-dominant logic, can be a tool for winning in competition through services. This service-dominant logic focuses on the interactions among producers, consumers, and individuals or organizations within the supply chain, and on the creation of value through collaborative processes. This logic arises from the initial goal of doing something for and with others, known as customer-centric. In this logic, service is defined as the application of competence through actions, processes, and performance that benefit other entities as well as the entity itself (Vargo & Lusch, 2014).

## **2.2. Hypothesis Development**

### **2.2.1. The Effect of Customer Orientation on Experiential Value Delivery**

Companies are currently adopting a customer-oriented approach to gain many benefits, including customer acceptance (Sa et al., 2020). Customer orientation is a concept extensively analyzed in the marketing literature, referring to a set of organizational beliefs and behaviors that prioritize buyers' interests. Implementing and following this strategy by all employees is essential for the company to gain both

financial and non-financial benefits. However, salespeople should take tangible actions to ensure their companies' success (Kim & Qu, 2020), while also addressing customer satisfaction and needs.

Given the concept of customer orientation, the creation and dissemination of market intelligence and insights into customers, competitors, and the environment across organizational departments should be clearly outlined (Duffy et al., 2020). Implementing this strategy in various policies provided benefits to customers during interaction. The companies conducted training to equip their salespeople with customer-oriented skills, such as adhering to suggestions, addressing problems, and processing these thoughts. Additionally, salespeople's ability to engage in value sharing prompted increased knowledge. **H<sub>1</sub>: Customer Orientation affects Experiential Value Delivery**

### **2.2.2. The Effect of Experiential Value Delivery on Proactive Service Behavior**

The exploration of customer behavior played a crucial role in the dynamic and complex process of delivering experiential value (Alexander & Varley, 2025). Previous research found that customer experience value comprised both functional and emotional value (Prebensen & Rosengren, 2016). The planned experiential value has to be conveyed to customers, either as a product's functional or emotional value. Salespeople create experiential value to attract customers, with the delivery process grounded in product knowledge. As a result, mastery of product information is essential. Salespeople who lack knowledge of the manufactured products engage in passive selling and are unable to convey value to customers effectively.

The description above refers to proactive service behavior aimed at addressing customers' problems. This was exhibited by exploring customers' needs and problems (Hamzah et al., 2020). Salespeople are expected to deliver an excellent customer experience, including proactive behavior. Concerning the delivery of experiential value, salespeople who share experiences with customers are more knowledgeable. As a result, the delivery of experiential value increased proactive service behavior. **H<sub>2</sub>: Experiential Value Delivery Has an Effect on Proactive Service Behavior**

### **2.2.3. The Effect of Experiential Value Delivery on Sales Performance**

Social media was used to convey experiential value because it had a broad reach, allowing customers worldwide to access it. Additionally, companies were able to access information containing reviews of manufactured products, including improved business performance (Garg et al., 2020). Companies should embed videos on how to use their products, alongside user testimonials, on their respective social media platforms. This could also be carried out by all members of the organization, including salespeople, to convey the value to customers more widely. Previous research reported that social media served as a tool to access the knowledge of external actors, particularly customers, thereby facilitating innovation and enhancing companies' performance (Kulikovskaja et al., 2023).

Prospective and highly qualified salespeople should be able to identify and categorize customer types with respect to the products sold (Ohiomah et al., 2019). This would enable the delivery of value through experience, resulting in excellent customer feedback. The feedback received enabled analysis of customer-experienced problems, including the identification of solutions using the appropriate products. Therefore, the interaction between salespeople and customers makes it easier to close sales. Social interaction positively affects sales performance (Zhang et al.,

2020), thereby strengthening customer trust by delivering experiential value. Customer trust also affects sales performance (Itani et al., 2019). **H<sub>3</sub>: Experiential Value Delivery affects Sales Performance**

#### **2.2.4. The Effect of Selling Creativity on Experiential Value Delivery**

Understanding the creativity of individual employees is a strategic interest that can add value to the organization (Ouakouak & Ouedraogo, 2017). Moreover, contemporary organizations are adapting their business models, work environments, and even cultures to enhance employee creativity. Creativity arises from increased access to product information and consumer knowledge of a product (Nilsson & Backman, 2024). The various issues customers experienced were often resolved through creativity. Salespeople should also be creative in terms of providing solutions. Furthermore, companies have prepared product value, and salespeople should deliver that.

Value is the primary factor customers consider when purchasing a product or service. In this perspective, service providers create value desired by target customers, thereby enabling long-term success (Tsai & Wang, 2017). In forming a product's value proposition, companies define the experiential value customers receive when making purchases. With creative sellers, the process of delivering experience value cannot be easily guessed by customers or competitors. Creative, innovative sales methods offer a unique product experience. Moreover, experience value is derived from the start of the product information search process through consumption. **H<sub>4</sub>: Selling creativity affects Experiential Value Delivery**

#### **2.2.5. The Effect of Selling Creativity on Sales Performance**

Creativity in the workplace is often measured using a new method that the organization has never attempted before. The ideas presented must be unique and possess the potential to create additional value. Creative organizations that adopt new marketing, product design, or business model ideas tend to have different advantages in the market compared to competitors (Lussiera et al., 2017). In the world of sales, this attribute greatly influences salespeople's performance. However, a creative salesperson can adjust their selling methods to suit the specific dynamics at hand. The sources of the various dynamics include prospective customers, products, and the leadership of the organization (Jiang & Gu, 2016). The salespeople's creativity enabled them to achieve the planned performance.

Several studies have found that managing the relationship between customers and salespeople affects sales performance. Building upon this viewpoint, salespeople with high mental ability and strong judicial style were able to identify problems crucial for effective selling (Groza et al., 2016). The more creative a salesperson is, the less customers are bored with the same old selling methods, thereby fostering a cordial relationship (Cheng & Chang, 2015). Creative salespeople play an essential role in maintaining a connection with customers. Previous research and practitioners reported that this attribute was a determinant of achieving sales performance (Lussiera et al., 2017). Moreover, the more innovative salespeople are, the better they are at transferring value to customers as a strategic tool to improve sales performance. **H<sub>5</sub>: Selling Creativity affects Sales Performance**

#### **2.2.6. The Effect of Proactive Service Behavior on Sales Performance.**

Customer service behavior is a helpful attribute exhibited by companies when serving customers (Teng, 2019). Proactive behavior by Hamzah et al. (2020)

also improved customer-perceived service quality. Salespeople are expected to resolve potential customers' problems proactively. Therefore, proactive service behavior refers to the character exhibited by salespeople from before the sale to after the sale. This creates a sense of closeness with customers and, of course, affects sales performance.

Sales performance is a key metric often used to benchmark salespeople. The quantitative results of the adopted efforts are referred to as sales performance (Itani et al., 2019). In companies, quantitative results consist of individual or group performance outcomes. Currently, sales performance measurement is based on individual reports, managerial assessments by supervisors, and customer evaluations (Blessing & Natter, 2019). The attitude of successful salespeople is proactive, characterized by initiative, mental strength, and effective communication skills. These abilities determine the achievement of the marketing performance set by companies. Proactive service behavior in serving customers contributes to sales performance (Hamzah et al., 2020). Salespeople who take the initiative to understand customer needs are more likely to generate sales, as consumers will feel that the salesperson is part of them and truly understands their needs. **H<sub>6</sub>: Proactive Service Behavior affects Sales Performance**

#### **2.2.7. Mediating Role of Experiential Value Delivery between Customer Orientation and Sales Performance**

Customer orientation is the commitment to attracting and retaining customers by continuously meeting the diverse needs through various services (Stuhldreier, 2024). As a result, this attribute shows how lasting relationships are built with customers. The importance of customer orientation increases with the shift towards interactivity and connectivity. The relationship with customers triggered strong interactions and enjoyable experiences, creating added value. However, the evaluation of replacement value was obtained from the shopping experience (An & Han, 2020), which consisted of various elements: stores, salespeople, and customer memories. Companies should ensure that these elements support the delivery of experiential value. By delivering experiences that meet diverse needs, the company will attract customers. Accordingly, the right combination of customer-oriented companies delivering appropriate experiential value will result in high sales performance. **H<sub>7</sub>: Experiential Value Delivery Mediates the Relationship between Customer Orientation and Sales Performance**

Figure 1 is motivated by the research gap regarding the relationship between customer orientation and proactive service behavior. To improve proactive service behavior, service-dominant logic was chosen as the framework for developing the research model. Experiential value delivery mediates the relationship between customer orientation and proactive service behavior, while selling creativity also serves as a lever for experiential value delivery. Ultimately, this research model examines how all variables can influence sales performance.

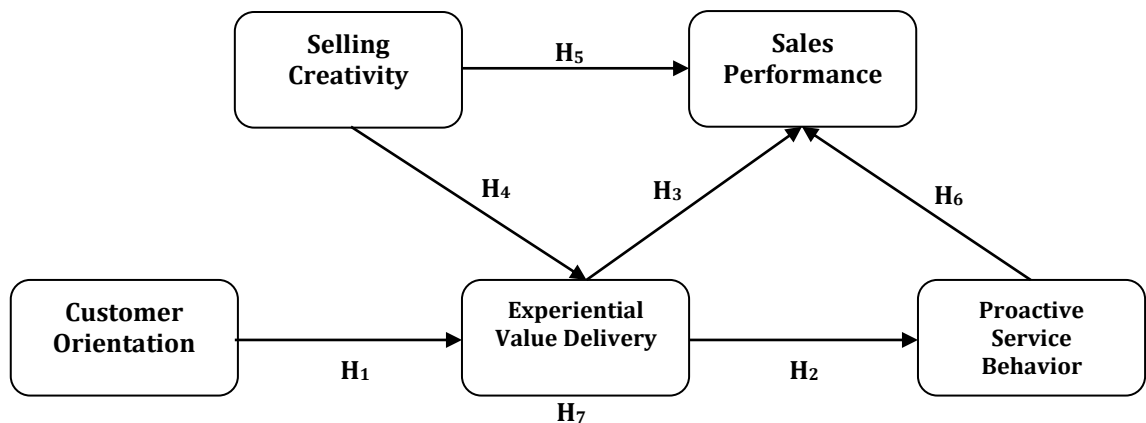


Figure 1. Research Framework

### 3. Research Methods

#### 3.1. Population and Sampling Method

Cosmetics product salespeople were the target population of the present research. The population size is unknown, so this research uses non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique. Moreover, since specific information from experienced salespeople was needed, screening questions were used to ensure that only respondents with more than one year of sales experience participated in the survey. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed, of which 302 were returned, resulting in an 86.3% response rate. After eliminating incomplete responses, 210 valid questionnaires were obtained for further analysis.

#### 3.2. Data Collecting Method

All statement items in the questionnaire were presented using anchoring methods, which were adopted to obtain data in interval form (Kline, 1999). The research instrument was a questionnaire with closed-ended statements, rated on a 1-10 scale, from strongly disagree to agree. To test the formulated hypotheses, measurements were adopted from several previous investigations. The seven indicators of the customer orientation variable were measured using data from (Terho et al., 2015; Zang et al., 2020). However, for sales performance, measurements were taken from prior investigations with four indicators (Terho et al., 2015; Zang et al., 2020). The selling creativity was adopted from measurements with four indicators (Groza et al., 2016; Miao & Wang, 2016). The proactive service behavior used five indicator measurements from (Hamzah et al., 2020). This research introduces a new variable, namely experiential value delivery, with eight indicators from Schemer et al. (2011) and Eklinder-Frick and Åge (2017).

#### 3.3. Data Analysis Method

A one-factor statistical test was conducted to determine whether common method bias influenced the observed relationships in this study. An exploratory factor analysis was performed using SPSS, with extraction limited to a single unrotated factor. The analysis revealed that common method bias is not a significant concern, as the single factor accounted for only 39.72% of the variance, which is below the 50% threshold (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Timur et al., 2025). This was followed by an assessment of the causal model using the structural equation model (SEM) in AMOS 25. The use of SEM enabled the answering of regressive or dimensional questions (Ferdinand, 2002), which

played a relevant role in this research. All indicators had lambda and critical ratio values greater than 0.5 and 1.96, respectively (Hair et al., 2019). The validity and reliability were assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE) and the construct reliability index (CRI). AVE values greater than 0.5 were considered to have good convergent validity (Malhotra et al., 2017).

#### 4. Results and Discussion

##### 4.1. Characteristics of Respondents

Based on the demographic characteristics, the majority of respondents, 170 (81%), were female, and the remaining 40 (19%) were male. Furthermore, most respondents (102; 48.6%) were aged 31-40 years. A total of 135 (64.3%) worked on the island of Java, and the remaining 75 (35.7%) were employed in other islands. The results of Levene's Test provided a significance level > 0.05. Therefore, we inferred that the selected respondents were homogeneous. The majority of respondents, 117 (55.6%), were high school graduates or equivalent, and 109 (51.9%) had joined the cosmetics sales force for 1-3 years; these demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Respondent Demographic Data**

Category	Frequency	Ratio (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	40	19
Female	170	81
<b>Age</b>		
< 30 years old	65	31
31-40 years old	102	48.6
41-50 years old	40	19
> 50 years old	3	1.4
<b>Island of Origin</b>		
Java Island	135	64.3
Other	75	35.7
<b>Education Level</b>		
Senior High School	117	55.6
Bachelor's Degree	89	42.4
Others	4	2
<b>Work Period</b>		
< 1 year	15	7.1
1 - ≤ 3 years	109	51.9
3 - ≤ 5 years	61	29.1
>5 years	25	11.9

##### 4.2. Validity and Reliability Test

Customer orientation, experiential value delivery, and proactive service behavior had AVE values of 0.636, 0.604, and 0.631, respectively. However, selling creativity and sales performance had AVE values of 0.572 and 0.520, respectively. It was inferred that all variables accurately captured the indicators observed. The CRI values for the five variables were greater than 0.7 and were considered consistent in measuring the concept. Measurement of variables and indicators, as well as validity and reliability, is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Measurement of Variables, Indicators, Validity, and Reliability**

	<b>Variable and Indicator Scale Item</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Std. Loading</b>	<b>Critical Ratio <math>\geq</math> 1.96</b>
<b>Customer Orientation (CO) (AVE= 0.636; CRI= 0.924 )</b>				
CO1	Trying to find out what kind of product is most useful for customers	(Terho et al., 2015; Zang et al., 2020)	0.727	11.337
CO2	Finding out customer needs		0.760	11.987
CO3	Offering the most appropriate product for customer problems		0.841	13.657
CO4	Taking an approach to solving customer problems		0.840	13.626
CO5	Feeling that good employees should think about customer interests		0.780	12.389
CO6	Adjusting promotions according to customer interests		0.841	13.658
CO7	Talking to customers about objections to using the product in detail		0.786	13.658
<b>Experiential Value Delivery (EVD) (AVE= 0.604); CRI= 0.914 )</b>				
EVD2	Introducing the experience to be experienced by customers	(Schemer et al., 2011; Eklinder-Frick & Åge, 2017)	0.784	13.720
EVD3	Ensuring customers get beauty experiential value		0.845	13.720
EVD4	Transferring information about the experience to customers in a subtle or non-frontal manner		0.810	12.968
EVD5	Willing to share the experience prepared by companies		0.779	12.328
EVD6	Thinking about how to convey the experience to customers		0.780	12.352
EVD7	Echoing the beauty experiential value		0.777	12.300
EVD8	Repeating the beauty experiential value		0.650	9.886
<b>Proactive Service Behavior (PSB) (AVE= 0.631; CRI= 0.868 )</b>				
PSB2	Creating additional service offerings to serve customers	(Teng, 2019; Hamzah et al., 2020)	0.903	16.765
PSB3	Asking if customer expectations have been fulfilled		0.873	16.765
PSB4	Taking the initiative to contact potential customers		0.503	7.646
PSB5	Making more of an effort to serve customers		0.832	15.603
<b>Selling Creativity (SC) (AVE= 0.572; CRI= 0.842)</b>				
SC1	Create creative sales presentations	(Groza et al., 2016; Miao & Wang, 2016)	0.745	10.389
SC2	Perform sales tasks in multiple ways		0.762	10.389
SC3	Come up with new ideas to meet customer needs		0.781	10.627
SC4	Generate various alternative new customer solutions		0.836	10.052
<b>Sales Performance (SP) (AVE= 0.520; CRI= 0.812)</b>				
SP1	Generating the highest possible sales	(Terho et al., 2015; Zang et al., 2020)	0.696	9.302
SP2	Contribute to achieving sales targets		0.724	9.302
SP3	Maximize revenue by upselling		0.750	9.594
SP4	Exceed given sales targets		0.712	9.166

The validity test results indicated that several indicators were invalid. We removed one indicator from the experiential value delivery (EVD1) variable and one from the proactive service behavior (PSB1) variable. This resulted in seven indicators for the experiential value delivery variable and four for the proactive service behavior variable.

### 4.3. Hypothesis Test

This research proposed seven hypotheses, of which two were rejected, and five were accepted, as shown in Tables 3 and 4. The first hypothesis showed a positive relationship between customer orientation and experiential value delivery, with a  $\beta$  value of 0.763 and  $p < 0.05$ . Furthermore, the third (experiential value delivery to sales performance), fourth (selling creativity to experiential value delivery), and fifth hypotheses (selling creativity to sales performance) showed positive and significant results, with  $\beta = 0.612$ ,  $\beta = 0.227$ , and  $\beta = 0.313$ , respectively, all significant at  $p < 0.05$ . The second hypothesis regarding the relationship between experiential value delivery and proactive service behavior had a  $\beta$  of -0.099 ( $p > 0.05$ ). The sixth hypothesis, which focused on the relationship between proactive service behavior and sales performance, was also rejected, with a  $\beta$  value of 0.31 and  $p > 0.05$ . This was followed by the mediation hypothesis, which examined how experiential value delivery mediated the relationship between customer orientation and sales performance. As hypothesized, experiential value delivery fully mediated the relationship between customer orientation and sales performance, given the insignificant direct effect ( $\beta = 0.056$ ;  $p = 0.638$ ) and the significant indirect effect ( $\beta = 0.492$ ;  $p = 0.004$ ). Therefore, experiential value delivery fully mediated the relationship between both variables.

**Table 3. Path Analysis**

Hypothesis	Std. Estimate	CR	P Value	Conclusion
Customer Orientation → Experiential Value Delivery	0.763	9.894	0.000	Supported
Experiential Value Delivery → Proactive Service Behavior	-0.099	-1.323	0.186	Rejected
Experiential Value Delivery → Sales Performance	0.612	6.431	0.000	Supported
Selling Creativity → Experiential Value Delivery	0.227	3.969	0.000	Supported
Selling Creativity → Sales Performance	0.313	3.599	0.000	Supported
Proactive Service Behavior → Sales Performance	0.031	0.582	0.560	Rejected

**Table 4. Mediating Effect**

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P Value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Customer Orientation → Experiential Value Delivery → Sales Performance	0.056 (0.638)	0.492	0.308	0.921	0.004	Full Mediation

#### **4.4. Discussion**

##### **4.4.1. Customer Orientation and Experiential Value Delivery**

First, the relationship between customer orientation and the ability to deliver experiential value was consistent with the theoretical assumptions. Customer orientation is a valuable psychological resource comprising work ethic, attitudes, tendencies, and mindsets that motivate salespeople by increasing engagement and role clarity in customer service (Park & Hur, 2023). This variable addressed customer needs, enhanced value, and fostered meaningful, warm, and empathetic relationships. Salespeople's ability to satisfy customers is not incidental. This capability is supported by company policies, employee training, and internal motivation, ensuring that customer orientation is realized at every customer touchpoint rather than remaining a mere slogan (Alexander et al., 2025). In the context of service-dominant logic, the resources possessed by salespeople contribute to resource integration, which enhances the delivery of experiential value to customers (Zuhroh et al., 2025). Therefore, a customer-focused approach enabled salespeople to improve how they deliver value to customers.

##### **4.4.2. Experiential Value Delivery and Proactive Service Behavior**

The role of experiential value delivery in improving proactive service behavior was explored with the service-dominant logic framework. Value cocreation, which refers to the collaboration between consumers and salespeople, produced in-depth knowledge about the product and the customer's experience. Salespeople, in collaboration with customers, enhanced a product's value. Improvements in experience-based service increased the willingness to adopt proactive service behavior. This was because the resources available from experiential value delivery served as fuel for proactive rather than passive service (Xie et al., 2022). However, experiential value delivery was unable to improve proactive service behavior because salespeople did not actively convey customers' experiences during interactions. The inability could be due to a lack of self-confidence, understanding of customers' problems, or in-depth product knowledge. Experiential value delivery showed that salespeople work with empathy, truly understanding customer needs. This also led to the use of digital flows to provide integrated customer support (Silva et al., 2020). Delivery value could take the form of sharing salespeople's explanations across various digital channels, such as e-commerce platforms, websites, and Google reviews.

##### **4.4.3. Experiential Value Delivery and Sales Performance**

The research findings indicate that experiential value delivery exerts a positive and significant influence on sales performance. Within the framework of service-dominant logic, salespeople create value by leveraging their expertise to address customer problems. To achieve superior sales outcomes, salespeople must adopt adaptive selling behaviors. In all customer interactions, adaptive salesperson skills, such as accurately interpreting nonverbal cues and demonstrating empathy, contribute positively to sales performance (Zheng et al., 2023). Additional benefits arise from an adaptive salesperson's capacity to provide relevant information to the appropriate customer at the optimal time.

In addition to adaptability, salespeople must demonstrate self-confidence to foster consumer trust in the information they provide. The collaborative co-creation approach to problem-solving requires openness and the conscious sharing of information and resources by both consumers and salespeople. This dynamic implies

trust, which is essential for managing the inherent vulnerability of social relationships (Zheng & Li, 2024). The existence of trust thus underpins value co-creation, serving as the foundation for delivering experiential value. Trust develops through the open exchange of information between collaborating parties (Franklin & Marshall, 2019). Consequently, experiential value delivery is positioned as a key driver of improved sales performance.

#### **4.4.4. Selling Creativity and Experiential Value Delivery**

Selling creativity is the result of a process that occurs through an interaction system that responds to a particular problem (Locander et al., 2023). In addition, developing new and valuable ideas for customers was considered a creative endeavor. The right balance between structure and spontaneity led to a service that subtly uses customer knowledge. Selling creativity significantly enhanced experiential service delivery by delivering service that uses information sources from customer experiences. While providing value, salespeople also gained new insights into the problems customers were experiencing. The processing of knowledge, initiative, and empathy produced selling creativity aimed at improving sales performance (Ferdinand & Wahyuningsih, 2018). An in-depth explanation of the relationship between selling creativity and sales performance, with a focus on the innovation process. As a result, innovation enabled various forms, ideas, explanations, and methods for delivering products, attracting and increasing the number of potential buyers.

#### **4.4.5. Selling Creativity and Sales Performance**

Employee creativity is commonly fostered in traditional industries such as retail, banking, and hospitality to enhance shared understanding of customers and improve service design (Yao et al., 2023). A prevalent approach to promoting employee creativity is to provide diverse knowledge resources, enabling employees to acquire, organize, reuse, and transfer information and experience, thereby facilitating innovation. This is particularly relevant in the rapidly expanding cosmetics industry. For sales personnel in this sector, creative selling acts as a catalyst in the exchange of goods, contributing significantly to the customer experience. According to the third foundational premise of service-dominant logic, the transfer of products from companies to consumers represents a transfer of benefits to customers (Klafke et al., 2026).

Effective management of customer-salesperson relationships plays a critical role in determining sales performance. Salespeople who possess advanced cognitive abilities and a strong judicial style are better positioned to identify customer issues that are essential for creative selling (Groza et al., 2016). The results of this study indicate that selling creativity has a positive and significant impact on sales performance. This association is based on service-dominant logic, which maintains that value delivery arises from the integration of the salesperson's resources (van Tonder et al., 2020). The cognitive and knowledge resources of salespeople promote creativity, which in turn enhances sales performance.

#### **4.4.6. Proactive Service Behavior and Sales Performance**

Cosmetics serve specific functions, including cleansing, perfuming, enhancing appearance, and maintaining optimal body condition (Bom et al., 2019). Given their personal nature, cosmetics cannot be applied universally to all consumers. Sales personnel must assess individual consumers' needs and physical conditions before

making product recommendations. Within the service-dominant logic framework, companies provide value propositions, but customers ultimately determine and select the value they perceive (Vargo et al., 2020). The customer experience varies according to individual experiences, preferences, and attitudes. This dynamic is closely linked to proactive service behavior, in which salespeople demonstrate initiative in selling; however, such behavior may not always be positively received by consumers due to the highly personal nature of cosmetic products.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the results of this study state that proactive service behavior does not contribute to sales performance (Hamzah et al., 2020). The results were consistent with previous research, indicating that not all customers preferred proactive service (Xie et al., 2022). In line with this viewpoint, creative salespeople tend to engage in customer mistreatment (Wang et al., 2023). Customers often preferred low engagement at the start of getting to know a product or salesperson. However, salespeople's enthusiasm could undermine buying interest, undermining marketing performance.

#### **4.4.7. Customer Orientation and Sales Performance through Experiential Value Delivery**

Customer orientation implies a company's efforts to build relationships with its customers, ultimately leading to improved marketing performance (Stuhldreier, 2024). However, sales performance does not result directly from customer orientation, as this study finds no such effect. Instead, experiential value delivery serves as an intermediary process preceding sales performance. Within the context of service-dominant logic, both customer orientation and experiential value delivery are shaped by co-created value. Companies that prioritize customer orientation encourage salespeople to actively attend to customer needs and preferences actively (Park & Hur, 2023). This knowledge enables salespeople to enhance product value. During the delivery process, both salespeople and customers co-create value, which increases benefits for customers and improves sales performance for salespeople (Liu et al., 2020).

## **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that customer orientation and selling creativity are crucial drivers in enhancing experiential value delivery, which ultimately dictates sales performance. Specifically, customer orientation and selling creativity exert significant positive effects on experiential value delivery. Furthermore, experiential value delivery is a powerful direct driver of sales performance and a full mediator of the relationship between customer orientation and sales performance, given the insignificant direct effect and the highly significant indirect effect. This highlights that being customer-oriented alone is insufficient to boost sales; it must be effectively translated into memorable customer experiences. Conversely, proactive service behavior plays no meaningful role in this framework, as it is neither influenced by experiential value delivery nor does it significantly impact sales performance, leading to the rejection of these hypotheses. Consequently, organizations looking to optimize sales performance should prioritize strategic investments in selling creativity and customer-centric strategies that directly enrich the overall customer experience.

Cosmetic products are defined as mixtures of ingredients applied to the body or teeth to alter an individual's appearance (Jaini et al., 2020). In Asia, this industry is the fastest-growing market, attracting approximately 3 billion consumers (Lee et al., 2019). In Indonesia, the cosmetics industry has experienced quite significant development. Beauty

products from Europe, America, and Japan have dominated the premium market because they are known for their luxury and relatively high prices. Meanwhile, domestic cosmetics products have also experienced rapid growth.

Due to the intense competition in the cosmetics industry, several crucial decisions have been made. First, increasing customer engagement with the brand is necessary, given that companies have adopted a customer-oriented approach. Increasing consumer engagement is key to value co-creation because it enables salespeople to deliver experience-based value. Companies that adopt a customer-oriented approach often focus solely on consumers' needs and desires, without engaging them in determining the required service. Second, considering that proactive service behavior has not been proven to affect sales performance, companies need to implement a policy providing a sales operation strategy (Ipsmiller et al., 2021). This should include understanding gestures, expressions, and customer attitudes towards actions exhibited by salespeople. Additionally, proactive actions by salespeople do not necessarily improve sales performance. This research contributed to the service-dominant logic theory, with experiential value delivery offering a new perspective: a value-delivery catalyst. Several actors and related institutions focused on the value delivery system (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). Experiential value delivery also supported the contemporary service-dominant logic view, which presumed that value creation is no longer centered on companies but on systemic and institutional factors (Vargo et al., 2023).

The present research had several limitations that are considered useful for future analyses. First, the concept of experiential value delivery did not affect proactive service behavior. In the context of service-dominant logic, value was co-created between salespeople and customers (Vargo & Lusch, 2017). Future research should include additional considerations, such as how to effectively manage and filter customer knowledge resources for sharing. The management and filtering of resources in the form of knowledge was easier to understand in the reconstruction of other theories, including the resource advantage competition (Hunt & Morgan, 1996). Second, this research examined cosmetics salespeople in Indonesia; although the sample size was sufficient, the data were obtained from a particular geographical area. Expanding the geographical scope would include a more diverse profile of salespeople. Third, although the results made valuable contributions to the cosmetics industry, they failed to differentiate the types of cosmetics sold by salespeople. Future research would be more comprehensive if it used samples with broader geographic coverage and provided information on the categories of cosmetics offered by salespeople.

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