
THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON SALESPERSON PERFORMANCE

Wulandari¹
Didit Darmawan²

^{1,2}Sunan Giri University of Surabaya, Indonesia
Correspondence information: wulandariunsuri@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Salesperson are the frontline connector between organizations and consumers. The attitude aimed at salespeople affects consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions that will be made. The emotions that salespeople experience have a big impact on their attitude. Businesses must be aware of how their salespeople interact with customers in order to build long-lasting partnerships and boost productivity. The purpose of the study is to ascertain how emotional intelligence affects salesperson performance in the Surabaya region. The research sample used 100 smartphone salesperson respondents who were still active in the Surabaya area and analyzed using multiple linear regression techniques which were previously tested for quality using validity, reliability, and classical assumption tests. The findings clarified that salesperson performance is positively and significantly impacted by emotional intelligence. The Adjusted R Square of 52.5% indicates the emotional intelligence variable's impact on salesperson performance.

Keywords: Salesperson Performance, Emotional Intelligence, Smartphone Salesperson

INTRODUCTION

Consumers want services that meet their expectations when visiting a place. Expectations that are owned also apply before deciding to buy a product. Counterproductive behaviors that cause organizational losses persist in the sales profession (Seriki et al., 2020). Salesperson have serious consequences for organizations and millions of consumers. To demonstrate interest, provide services, and get a customer to make a purchase, a salesperson has to be physically close to them (Otterbing et al., 2021). According to Patterson and Sechrest in Wang and Yao (2016), strangers are perceived as more friendly when they sit closer to the target and can produce a good social impression. The closeness made can encourage consumer buying intentions (Esmark & Noble, 2018). According to Saxe and Weitz in *Seriki et al.* (2020), consumer-oriented sales focus on consumer needs and actively provide solutions. A salesperson should make an effort to prevent customers from becoming unhappy with the services they received.

Harris and de Chermatony in Gammoh *et al.* (2014) state that salespeople can be said to be representatives of the organization on the front line who are in direct contact with consumers. Salespeople as boundary-reaching agents play a unique role as brand ambassadors. Barker in Aqmal and Ardyan (2019) explains that sales force performance can be evaluated using factors that can be controlled by the sales force itself and measured through total sales volume and achievement of sales targets. Churchill *et al.* and Moncrief in Herjanto and Franklin (2019) explain that there are factors that determine the performance of salespeople influenced by the types of products that salespeople sell, namely role variables, skills, motivation, personal factors, talent, and organizational or environmental factors. Piercy *et al.* in Aqmal and Ardyan (2019) explain that every effort made by a salesperson has an impact on his individual performance.

Relationship formation between buyers and sellers is significantly influenced by emotional factors. Salesperson are reminded by the dynamics of customer wants throughout time to comprehend and detect shifts in consumer behavior by adapting to changing circumstances and utilizing emotions to accomplish the objective of building positive connections with consumers (Maglajlic et al., 2016). According to Lopes *et al.* in Kidwell *et al.* (2021), emotional intelligence captures the extent to which salespeople perceive, use, understand, and manage emotions in the workplace. The trait construct of emotional intelligence was first proposed by Perides and Furnham in Alegre *et al.* (2019) which relates to personality and represents a combination of personality traits, particularly effective in situations with emotional and social implications. Mikolajczak in Merida-lopez *et al.* (2024) describes emotional intelligence with a tripartite model that suggests three levels, namely knowledge about emotions, the ability to apply knowledge to the real world, and traits that reflect the tendency to behave in certain ways when emotional.

Research conducted by Devi *et al.* (2023) regarding emotional intelligence on salesperson performance from a total of 80 respondents in the executive salesperson and found a significant impact. Anees *et al.* (2020) conducted research on the effect of emotional intelligence on the performance of 286 salesperson in the food industry and found significant

results. Research by Bansal *et al.* (2020) used 233 respondents from sales executives with emotional intelligence variables on performance and found a significant positive relationship.

Salesperson must act as a liaison between the company and its clients by offering top-notch support. Consumers have various characters that cause salesperson to manage emotions that are felt as a result of consumer behavior. Emotional intelligence is said to be one way for salesperson to be able to improve excellent service to consumers so that it has an impact on purchasing decisions. Emotional intelligence is something that salesperson should learn to improve their performance. The purpose of this research is to ascertain how emotional intelligence affects salesperson performance in the Surabaya region (H1).

RESEARCH METHODS

This quantitative research uses a survey approach with a closed questionnaire instrument of eight Likert scales ranging from one strongly disagree to eight strongly agree. Data collection using purposive sampling is based on purely smartphone salesperson who are tied to the counter. The criteria for respondents to be considered include being at least 18 years old, having worked for at least six months, having at least a high school education or equivalent, and having a supervisor. Regression analysis was used as the analysis technique, which had previously been tested using validity and reliability tests. SPSS v26 software was used as an analysis tool. The sample in this study, namely 100 sales person who are still active in the Surabaya area. According to Hair *et al.* (2018), regression analysis generally uses 100 samples.

Performance is explained as the achievement of salesperson who are evaluated based on the level of productivity and efficiency to achieve organizational goals. Performance indicators according to Krishnan *et al.* in Wulandari *et al.* (2022) is 1) namely sales volume is interpreted as the quantity or number of products sold by a company with a certain period of time, 2) income growth is explained by looking at revenue generation, value added, and expansion of business volume, and 3) managerial evaluation is defined as a formal assessment of workers by their leaders.

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability of salesperson to manage and respond to their own emotions and those of others in order to achieve organizational goals. According to Salovey *et al.* in Aritzeta *et al.* (2020), emotional intelligence is measured using three indicators including 1) attention to feelings refers to the attitude of understanding the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of others, 2) clarity in discrimination of feelings is intended by changing attitudes that are influenced by feelings, and 3) mood repair can be said with workers quickly responding to improve mood professionally.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the data distribution made the research use the majority of female respondents as many as 75 and the rest were men.

Table 1. Gender

Gender	Frequency
Female	75
Male	25
Total	100

Source: Respondent Questionnaire, Processed 2024

Respondents have an age range dominated by 21-25 years old as many as 57 respondents.

Table 2. Age

Age	Frequency
18-20	10
21-25	57
26-30	22
31-35	9
>35	2
Total	100

Source: Respondent Questionnaire, Processed 2024

The most recent level of education taken by respondents was high school or equivalent as many as 76 respondents.

Table 3. Level of Education

Level of Education	Frequency
SMA	76
D3	6
S1	18
Total	100

Source: Respondent Questionnaire, Processed 2024

Income levels are classified on the basis of the regional minimum wage, so the results of the data distribution get as many as 49 respondents have an income of the regional minimum wage.

Table 4. Income

Level of Income	Frekuensi
Under	42
Regional Minimum Wage	49
Above	9
Total	100

Source: Respondent Questionnaire, Processed 2024

The majority of respondents have become permanent salespeople with a majority of 61 respondents and the rest have contract status.

Table 5. Job Status

Level of Income	Frekuensi
Permanent	61
Contract	39
Total	100

Source: Respondent Questionnaire, Processed 2024

The data obtained will be tested for quality using the validity test by comparing the corrected items. The value used is more than 0.3 or a slight tolerance above 0.25 (Azwar, 2018). Based on the results of data processing, the corrected item value for the salesperson

performance variable with 10 statement items has a value exceeding 0.3 and it is stated that all statements representing salesperson performance are valid. The value of 15 statements of emotional intelligence variables exceeds 0.3 so that it is declared valid to represent emotional intelligence.

Next, the reliability test was conducted. The Cronbach's alpha value is compared with the standard value exceeding 0.6 which can be declared reliable (Ghozali, 2016). The results of data processing show the reliability value of the sales force performance variable of 0.836 and the emotional intelligence variable obtained a value of 0.883 so that the statements of each variable are said to be reliable.

Table 6. Validity and Reliability Test

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Y.1	313,19	1108,297	,633	,849
Y.2	313,32	1112,705	,529	,850
Y.3	313,10	1120,293	,631	,851
Y.4	313,37	1102,599	,714	,848
Y.5	313,22	1092,598	,671	,847
Y.6	313,36	1127,889	,498	,852
Y.7	312,54	1129,120	,551	,852
Y.8	312,76	1128,326	,529	,852
Y.9	312,48	1131,545	,529	,853
Y.10	313,10	1116,879	,527	,851
Y	255,30	761,343	,842	,836
X1.1	312,98	1102,848	,675	,849
X1.2	312,75	1114,856	,661	,850
X1.3	313,27	1107,209	,677	,849
X1.4	313,12	1124,127	,553	,852
X1.5	313,51	1105,828	,726	,849
X1.6	312,95	1114,210	,627	,850
X1.7	313,28	1125,113	,460	,852
X1.8	313,08	1128,701	,441	,852
X1.9	312,63	1131,124	,422	,853
X1.10	313,22	1113,446	,589	,850
X1.11	313,37	1106,862	,637	,849
X1.12	313,25	1112,492	,570	,850
X1.13	312,75	1114,735	,663	,850
X1.14	313,41	1124,709	,454	,852
X1.15	312,76	1105,861	,701	,849
X1	223,89	572,947	,905	,883

Source: SPSS Statistic Data, Processed 2024

The next process is the normality test. The results of data processing are presented in Figure 1. The Figure 1 graph shows that the data is around or follows the diagonal axis so that it can be stated that this study has normally distributed data.

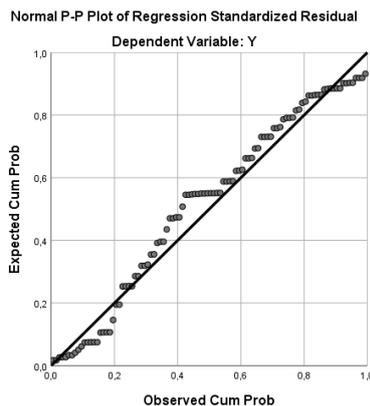


Figure 1. Figure Normality Plot
Source: SPSS Statistic Data, Processed 2024

The next stage is the autocorrelation test. This test is done by comparing the Durbin-Watson value. After processing the data, the DW value is obtained at 2.701 which is greater than 4-dL, this means there is no autocorrelation, see Table 2.

The next process is to test for heteroscedasticity. The test results are presented in Figure 2 and show that the data distribution is evenly distributed on the Y-axis so that the study does not experience heteroscedasticity.

Table 7. Table of Autocorrelation Test and Adjusted R Square

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,728 ^a	,530	,525	5,118	2,701

a. Predictors: (Constant), X1
b. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: SPSS Statistic Data, Processed 2024

Next, a multicollinearity test was conducted. Testing by comparing the VIF value and tolerance value is carried out. The standard VIF value does not exceed 10 while the tolerance value is above 0.1. The results of data acquisition in Table 3 show that the emotional intelligence variable has a VIF value of 1.000 and a tolerance value of 1.000 so that the study does not experience multicollinearity. Data that is worthy of quality is carried out partial regression test (t).

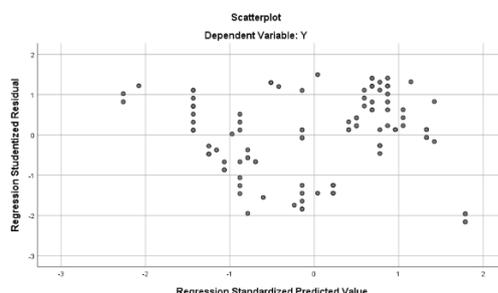


Figure 2. Heteroscedasticity Test
Source: SPSS Statistic Data, Processed 2024

The t test uses a significant value limit of less than 0.05 which is commonly used (Ghozali, 2016). The results show that the emotional intelligence variable has a significant value of 0.000 and provides a change of 0.497. This result means that emotional intelligence

gives a real role to the performance of salesperson. The constant has a positive value which means that if the value of emotional intelligence is zero, there is an increase in the performance of the salesperson. Based on table 3, the regression model $Y = 16.616 + 0.497X_1 + e$ is obtained.

Table 8. Partial and Multicollinearity Test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	16,616	4,556		3,647	,000		
X1	,497	,047	,728	10,503	,000	1,000	1,000

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: SPSS Statistic Data, Processed 2024

The results of data processing in Table 2 show that the Adjusted R Square value is 0.525. This means that the emotional intelligence variable has an influence of 52.5% on salesperson performance. Variables that are not studied but have an influence on salesperson performance contribute 47.5%.

Based on processed data with multiple linear regression analysis, it is known that H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. The emotional intelligence variable has a significant effect on the performance of salesperson significantly with a significant value of 0.000 not more than 0.05. This finding is in line with the research of Devi *et al.* (2023) with the title Role of Emotional Intelligence in Sales Success regarding emotional intelligence on sales force performance from a total of 80 respondents in the executive salesperson and found a significant impact. Anees *et al.* (2020) conducted a study entitled The Effect of Emotional Intelligence and Market Orientation on Sales Performance: The Moderating Role of Entrepreneurial Orientation (Beverage Industry of Pakistan) on the effect of emotional intelligence on the performance of 286 salesperson in the food industry and found significant results. Research by Bansal *et al.* (2020) entitled Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Job Performance: A Study of Sales Executives used 233 respondents from sales executives with emotional intelligence variables on performance and found a significant positive relationship.

These results explain that salesperson who are emotionally intelligent and confident in their emotional abilities tend to remain calm and avoid aggressive behavior when interacting with consumers (Kidwell *et al.*, 2021). Emotional intelligence for salesperson can trigger certain ways of thinking such as new sales presentation approaches (Maglajlic *et al.*, 2016). According to some researchers, interactions between salespeople and various groups within their own organization, as well as with consumer organizations, third-party solution service providers, industry experts, and other groups, influence the overall performance of salespeople (Bolander *et al.*, 2015; Hartmann *et al.*, 2018). According to Baldauf and Cravens in Aqmal and Ardyan (2019), salespeople can gather knowledge about industry trends, economic structure, customer needs, and competitive information. Sales force performance means effectiveness which refers to the evaluation of the results of sales volume, market share, percentage of targets achieved, and the number of new customers added (Chawla *et al.*, 2020). Salespeople must try to avoid consumer dissatisfaction with the services provided. Salespeople can be said to be representatives of the organization on the front line who are in

direct contact with consumers. Harris and de Chermatony in Gammoh *et al.* (2014) state that salespeople as agents who reach the boundaries play a unique role as brand ambassadors.

CONCLUSION

Research that aims to determine the effect of emotional intelligence on the performance of salesperson was significantly found. The finding of a significant effect of emotional intelligence on the performance of salesperson states that the hypothesis can be accepted.

Suggestions that can be taken into consideration for organizations in the Surabaya area to improve the performance of smartphone salesperson, namely increasing empathy and motivation of salesperson by designing a non-formal training in groups in the form of case studies or problems that must be solved together. This training can be an opportunity for salesperson to learn to share responsibilities, resolve conflicts, have discussions, understand other people's perspectives, increase empathy, and improve social skills. Organizations can encourage salespeople to write down their emotions in a journal that contains the name of the emotion, the cause of the emotion, the reaction to the emotion felt, and whether the emotion that arises needs a solution or can still be tolerated. Organizations can enforce that each salesperson must ask one question during briefings by playing on the word why or why so that salesperson can continue to learn something. More and more questions from one salesperson may be difficult to answer so that the organization can find out the hidden emotions of salesperson so that they can be identified for assessment and development. Salesperson are expected to start practicing language skills when expressing opinions or responding to something. Language skills that are trained can make salesperson choose words and think about them before they are delivered.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alegre, A., Perez-escoda, N., & Lopez-cassa, E. (2019). The Relationship Between Trait Emotional Intelligence and Personality. Is Trait EI Really Anchored Within the Big Five, Big Two and Big One Frameworks? *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00866>
- Anees, R. T., Raju, V., Cavaliere, L. P. L., Heidler, P., & Nordin, N. A. (2020). The Effect of Emotional Intelligence and Market Orientation on Sales Performance: The Moderating Role of Entrepreneurial Orientation (Beverage Industry of Pakistan). *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, *17*(7), 6377–639.
- Aqmala, D., & Ardyan, E. (2019). How Does a Salesperson Improve Their Performance? The Important Role of Their Customer Smart Response Capability. *Gadjah Mada International Journal of Business*, *21*(2), 223–241. <https://doi.org/10.22146/gamaijb.35263>
- Aritzeta, A., Mindeguia, R., Soroa, G., Balluerka, N., Gorostiaga, A., Elorza, E., & Aliri, J. (2020). Team Emotional Intelligence in Working Contexts: Development and Validation of the Team-Trait Meta Mood Scale (T-TMMS). *Frontiers in Psychology*, *11*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00893>
- Azwar, S. (2018). *Metode Penelitian Psikologi*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Bansal, J., Rana, S., & Jain, E. (2020). Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Job Performance: A

- Study of Sales Executives. *Vivekananda Journal of Research*, 9(2), 145–157.
- Bolander, W., Saturnino, C. B., Hughes, D. E., & Ferris, G. R. (2015). Social Networks within Sales Organizations: Their Development and Importance for Salesperson Performance. *Journal of Marketing*, 79(6), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.14.0444>
- Devi, S. C., Madhavi, C., Mohan, C., Swadia, B. U., & Chandnani, M. (2023). Role of Emotional Intelligence in Sales Success. *Journal of Propulsion Technology*, 44(4), 6325–6332. <http://dx.doi.org/10.52783/tjjpt.v44.i4.2175>
- Esmark, C. L., & Noble, S. M. (2018). Retail Space Invaders: When Employees' Invasion of Customer Space Increases Purchase Intentions. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 46(3), 477–496. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-016-0488-3>
- Gammoh, B. S., Mallin, M. L., & Pullins, E. B. (2014). The Impact of Salesperson-brand Personality Congruence on Salesperson Brand Identification, Motivation, and Performance Outcomes. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 23(7), 543–553. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-10-2013-0434>
- Ghozali, I. (2016). *Aplikasi Analisis Multivariete dengan Program IBM SPSS 23*. Semarang: Badan Penerbit Universitas Diponegoro.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2018). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. United Kingdom: Cengage Learning.
- Hartmann, N. N., Wieland, H., & Vargo, S. L. (2018). Converging on a New Theoretical Foundation for Selling. *Journal of Marketing*, 82(2), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.16.0268>
- Herjanto, H., & Franklin, D. (2019). Investigating salesperson performance factors: A systematic review of the literature on the characteristics of effective salespersons. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 27(2), 104–112. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2018.12.001>
- Kidwell, B., Hasford, J., Turner, B., Hardesty, D. M., & Zablah, A. R. (2021). Emotional Calibration and Salesperson Performance. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(6), 141–161. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242921999603>
- Maglajlic, S. K., Vida, R., Obadia, C., & Plank, R. (2016). Clarifying the Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Salesperson Performance. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 31(7), 877–888. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-09-2015-0168>
- Merida-lopez, S., Quintana-orts, C., & Pekaar, K. A. (2024). Knowing is Half the Battle: Regulating and Appraising Emotions Co-protect from Suicidal Ideation. *Death Studies*, 48(6), 621–629. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2024.2305334>
- Otterbing, T., Wu, F., & Kristensson, P. (2021). Too Close For Comfort? The Impact Of Salesperson-Customer Proximity on Consumers' Purchase Behavior. *Psychology & Marketing*, 38(9), 1576–1590. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21519>
- Seriki, O. K., Nath, P., Ingene, C. A., & Evans, K. R. (2020). How Complexity Impacts Salesperson Counterproductive Behavior: The Mediating Role of Moral Disengagement. *Journal of Business Research*, 107, 324–225. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.10.060>
- Wang, L., & Yao, W. (2016). So Near, So Good: Does Near-distance Perception Reduce Interpersonal Psychological Distance? *Social Behavior and Personality*, 44(6), 889–898. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2016.44.6.889>
- Wulandari, W., Nuraini, R., Maghfiroh, F., Darmawan, D., Halizah, S. N., & Mardikaningsih, R. (2022). Pengaruh Kemampuan Interpersonal, Modal Psikologi, dan Dukungan Supervisor Terhadap Kinerja Tenaga Penjualan. *TIN: Terapan Informatika Nusantara*, 3(4), 123–131. <https://doi.org/10.47065/tin.v3i4.4103>