

**CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND CULTURAL
INTELLIGENCE OF SALESPERSON TO CUSTOMER
QUALIFICATION SKILLS, ADAPTIVE SELLING
BEHAVIORS AND SALES PERFORMANCE: THE
CASE OF EXPORT SALESPERSONS IN CHINA**



Jihong Zhou

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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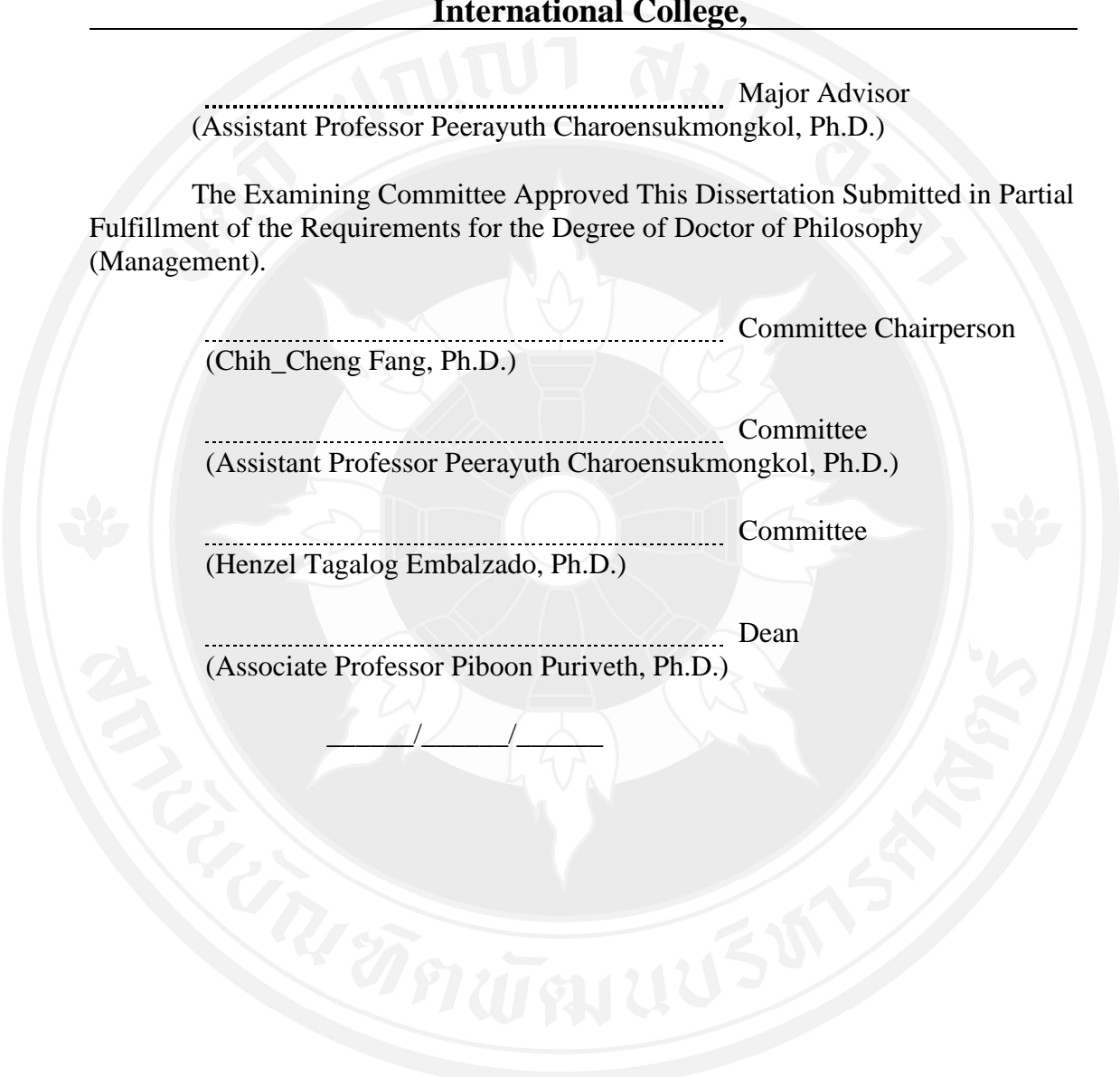
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ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation	CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE OF SALESPERSON TO CUSTOMER QUALIFICATION SKILLS, ADAPTIVE SELLING BEHAVIORS AND SALES PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF EXPORT SALESPERSONS IN CHINA
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With the wide popularity of social media in business and life, there is an increasing trend of social media use in sales in recent years. In international business, social media play an important role in overcoming the time and space barriers between export salespeople and foreign buyers. However, due to the emergence of social media in about a decade, academic research about social media use in sales is lagging behind practice. In particular, scarce research has explored the topic in international business. To fill this void, this study aimed to investigate whether and how export salespeople's social media use could contribute to sales performance. In addition, in view of the effectiveness of cultural intelligence in cross-cultural settings, this study regarded it as an important factor in the context of export selling via social media and aimed to examine its effectiveness in this non-face-to-face cross-cultural settings. The main objective of the study was to investigate the impact of social media use in sales and cultural intelligence on salesperson's outcome performance and relationship performance. Drawing on adaptive selling theory, categorization theory and Social Customer Relationship Management framework, this study proposed that adaptive selling behaviors and customer qualification skills could be mediating factors which would explain the possible impact of social media use in sales and cultural intelligence on salesperson's outcome performance and relationship performance. In addition, this study explored the impact of cultural intelligence on customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors as well. This study adopted a questionnaire survey method to collect data from a sampling framework of 24,191 export salespeople in China. 966 responses were usable for analysis. Results from partial least square analysis showed

that social media use in sales was positively associated with relationship performance, but this positive relationship was not statistically supported. Cultural intelligence was found to have a statistically supported positive association with salesperson's outcome performance and relationship performance. Social media use in sales and cultural intelligence were found to be positively associated with customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors, which were statistically supported. In addition, the total effect analysis showed that customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors were significant factors which explained why export salespeople who used social media in sales and owned high cultural intelligence could reap good outcome performance and relationship performance. Research findings added to sales literature, social media literature and cultural intelligence literature. In view of the research findings, it is recommended that export salespeople and sales organizations that aim to enhance salesperson's performance in export selling via social media need to note that social media use alone is not sufficient to generate direct benefits for them. Salespeople need to integrate characteristics of social media in different sales processes to improve their customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors so that they can reap ideal sales performance. Meanwhile, sales organizations and sales people also need to realize the importance of cultures of foreign customers particularly in cross-cultural selling. Therefore, they also need to develop the ability to understand and to respond effectively in cross-cultural sales situations to enhance their chance to gain superior performance in export selling.

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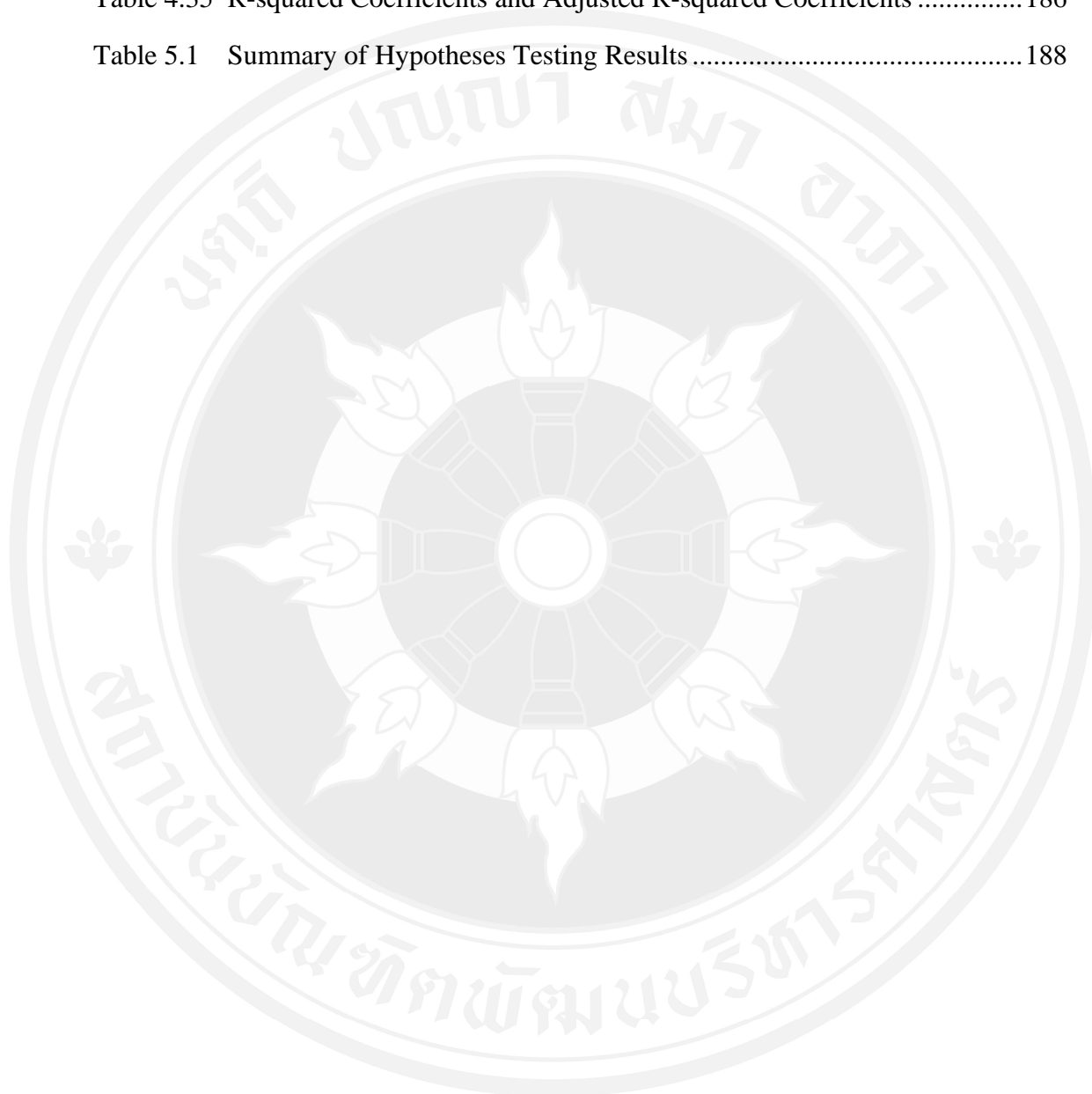
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Social Media Use in Business

With the development of web2.0 technology, social media has become a mainstream communication tool in the world (Dolan, Conduit, Fahy, & Goodman, 2017; Nelson-Field & Taylor, 2012). More than two-thirds of the world's Internet population visits social media sites, spending nearly 10 percent of that time in virtual communities (Moore, Raymond, & Hopkins, 2015). At present, miscellaneous social media applications are available for users, e.g. Facebook; Instagram, Twitter, Weblog, Flickr; YouTube, LinkedIn, QQ and Line etc. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Among them, Facebook enjoys the highest popularity in the world and has 2.27 billion active users as of January 2019, followed by YouTube with 1.90 billion active users and WhatsApp with 1.50 billion active users (Statista, 2019). Table 1.1 presented the most famous social media worldwide ranked by the number of active users as of January 2019 (Statista, 2019).

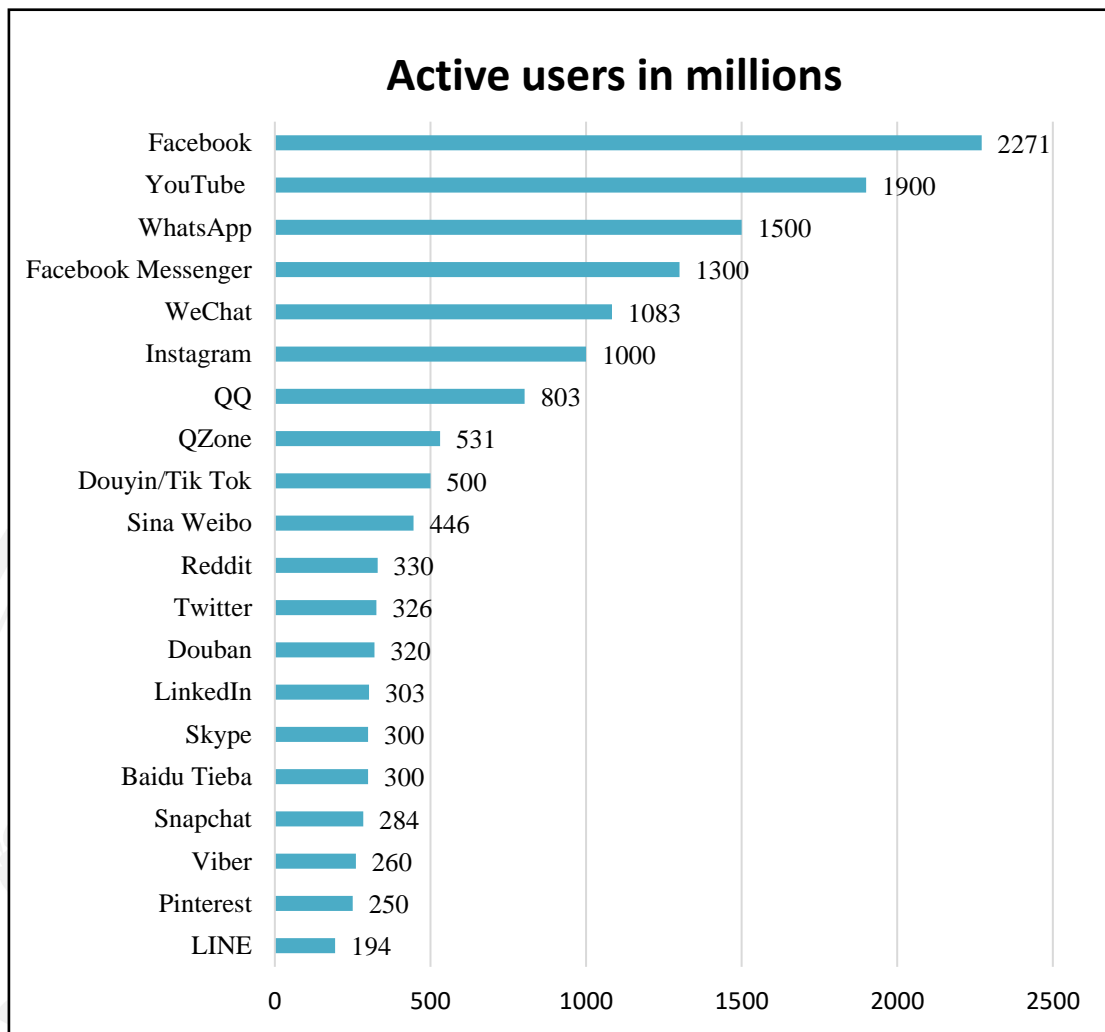


Figure 1.1 Most Famous Social Media Worldwide Ranked by the Number of Active Users

Source: Statista (2019)

It is interesting to note that WeChat, the most popular social media in China, ranks the fifth by the number of active users in the world. However, it ranks the first based on the number of monthly active users by country. According to WeChat (2019), the number of monthly WeChat active users (1.08 billion) is more than four times of the number of Facebook monthly active users in India (0.26 billion), the country which has the largest Facebook monthly active users worldwide (Statista, 2019a). Moreover, Statista (2019b) indicated that while the number of monthly active

social media users worldwide is expected to reach about 3.02 billion by 2021, 750 million of the users are expected to be particularly from China in 2022. These statistics suggest that China is and will remain to be the country with the largest number of monthly active social media users worldwide.

Attracted by the big population of social media users, business organizations have recognized the potential value in social media use and tried to harness its power for their benefits (Arnaboldi & Coget, 2016). It was reported that Fortune 100 companies maintained an average of 20 social media Web sites or accounts in the year 2010 (Rapp, Beitelspacher, Grewal, & Hughes, 2013). IBM, one of pioneering firms, had 76 micro-blog social media sites, 21 online video sharing channels, and 80 employee blogs (Cox, Martinez, & Quinlan, 2008). They leverage the posted content and mutual conversation via social media to influence customer behaviors or forge stronger connections with customers (Rapp, Beitelspacher, et al., 2013).

In general, firms are actively exploring the potential advantages of social media and leveraging it for various purposes such as marketing, internal and external relationship management, product innovation and branding etc. (Alalwan, Rana, Dwivedi, & Algharabat, 2017; Salo, 2017).

Firstly, marketing is one of the first and major areas where business organizations utilize social media (Arnaboldi & Coget, 2016; Tarsakoo & Charoensukmongkol, 2019). In the white paper by Stelzner (2009), as many as 88% of surveyed marketers are using social media in their marketing. They conduct promotional campaigns on promising social media platforms with expectations to attract new customers (Michaelidou, Siamagka, & Christodoulides, 2011), establish relationships with relevant stakeholders (Brennan & Croft, 2012), and communicate with targeted consumers (Gao & Feng, 2016; Harrigan, Evers, Miles, & Daly, 2017; Kohli, Suri, & Kapoor, 2015; Popp & Woratschek, 2016). Barnes et al. (2012) reported an increase in Fortune 500 companies' adoption of social media, such as

blogs, Facebook and Twitter for marketing. Facebook's Annual Reports confirm that these companies are willing to spend a part of their budget on advertising through these main social media platforms (Falls, 2009). Facebook's 2016 Annual Report presented a 134.7% year-over-year increase in its advertising revenue from \$1,974 million in 2010 to \$17,928 million in 2015 (Facebook, 2016). Indeed, promotional activities conducted via social media could meet different marketing goals such as improving customer knowledge about product and service, awareness, perception, preferences, intention to buy, and actual purchase (Dehghani & Tumer, 2015; Duffett, 2015).

Secondly, businesses are taking full advantage of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) interactive consumers create and distribute on social media platforms (Chu & Kim, 2011; Erkan & Evans, 2016; Teng, Khong, Chong, & Lin, 2017). Social media is powerful in its social networking and information sharing function (Erkan & Evans, 2016). So, the e-WOM posted on social media can go viral among the huge social media population and have great impacts on business organizations (Sohn, 2014). Obviously, businesses will reap benefits from positive e-WOMs posted on social media platforms. Ample anecdotal evidence has proved that positive e-WOMs on social media will lead to consumer purchase decisions. For instance, a study by Starcom MediaVest Group and Mashwork in 2012 found 80% of surveyed IT decision-makers considered word-of-mouth as the most important source when making buying decisions and 58% of IT decision-makers use social media to learn from trustworthy peers (Maddox, 2013). A study by the ODM Group found that 74% of consumers rely on social media to guide purchase decisions (Beese, 2011). Another study reported that 43% of social media users purchase a product after sharing product information on Pinterest, Facebook or Twitter (Critical, 2013).

Thirdly, due to its great convenience in instant communication, businesses also use social media as an important tool to manage the internal and external relationship (Alalwan et al., 2017; Arnaboldi & Coget, 2016; Jussila, Kärkkäinen, & Aramo-Immonen, 2014). Internally, social media offers a platform for employees to communicate with each other, disseminate information about management policies, and inform colleagues the latest real-time movement about projects to facilitate the emotional communication between management and employees, strengthen collaboration among employees and heighten employee loyalty and commitment (Arnaboldi & Coget, 2016). Externally, businesses utilize social media to establish and maintain relationships with customers and suppliers (Agnihotri, Dingus, Hu, & Krush, 2016; Alalwan et al., 2017; Rapp, Agnihotri, & Baker, 2013). By increasing the rate of content posting and sharing with customers over social media platforms, firms are more able to foster the level of interactivity and association with their customers, getting customers highly engaged with firms (Alalwan et al., 2017; Eagleman, 2013; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Sanderson & Hambrick, 2012). Jussila et al (2014) made a survey of 125 small and middle-sized enterprises (SME) operating in business-to-business (B2B) markets in Finland, finding that 30% of surveyed SMEs use social media and most of them use it for internal communication and about 13% of them for customer/partner communication. Alalwan et al. (2017) reviewed 23 marketing researchers' academic papers, finding that 91% of these researchers strongly support organizations adopting social media as new tools to help sustain their relationship with targeted customers.

Fourthly, many business organizations make the best of social media for innovation-related purposes (B. Nguyen, Yu, Melewar, & Chen, 2015). Businesses can reach a large number of social media users for crowdsourcing by inviting them to participate in open innovation projects (Arnaboldi & Coget, 2016; Chesbrough, 2011) The quantity of ideas generated by participants will greatly increase the chances of

success in hitting on a winning idea (Ogink & Dong, 2017). Moreover, following customers' advices shows businesses' respect to customers and concern about them, getting them highly engaged in products design and development and service improvement, in turn, beneficial to enhance customer satisfaction and improve customer loyalty and brand image (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström, & Freundt, 2014). As Scuotto, Del Giudice, Della Peruta, and Tarba (2017) pointed out, many companies (like Best Buy, Sears, Procter & Gamble, Adobe, BBC, BMW, Dell, LEGO, Salesforce, and Starbucks) have jumped on the bandwagon of using social media networks to improve their innovativeness. These companies have launched successful innovative campaigns or services such as Coca-Cola's 'Share a Coke' campaign, WeChat's 'red envelopes' and LEGO's new co-creation project entitled 'LEGO Ideas' (Ogink & Dong, 2017), and successfully gathered new innovative ideas through their dedicated online platform (Chesbrough, 2011). For firms, this open innovation tends to become cheaper, more efficient, and faster due to the use of digital social media platforms (Persaud, 2005). Possible valuable commercial outcomes together with lower cost and high efficiency in such an open approach are driving more and more businesses to use social media for innovation purposes.

Fifthly, businesses use social media for branding purposes as well (Kohli et al., 2015; Michaelidou et al., 2011; Swani, Milne, Brown, Assaf, & Donthu, 2017). As social media disseminates information faster and has the ability to amplify its effect, it provides an easier opening for new entrants to establish their brand identity and realize their brand recognition (Kohli et al., 2015). Moreover, social media allows information to be transmitted in various forms including texts, photos and videos. The vividness of the transmitted information and powerful social networking lead to newer and innovative brands go viral quickly (de Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012). Besides that, firms utilize peer influence or powerful social networking to realize brand recognition and build consumer emotional bonds, as people tend to believe their

peers' review or response about a brand (Kohli et al., 2015). The dynamic two-way-communication interaction between firms and consumers on social media platforms is also beneficial to enhance consumer emotional bond with brands and enhance customers' loyalty to brands (Abeza, O'Reilly, & Reid, 2013; Michaelidou et al., 2011). Facing the great influence of social media on branding, businesses act proactively by advertising on their own account pages on social media platforms, telling firm-generated brand stories to guide prospects to recognize their brands, interacting with consumers to strengthen their brand awareness and brand popularity (Swani et al., 2017) and even establishing brand communities for brand innovation (Gamboa & Goncalves, 2014; S. Singh & Sonnenburg, 2012). Zara, a pioneer among fast fashion companies, owns the largest number of and most valuable fans on Facebook. Customers have a large say in determining the brand's line: client suggestions are integrated into the clothes' production (Gamboa & Goncalves, 2014). As a result, fans of the Zara brand on Facebook were found to have a higher trust in the brand, perceived a higher value of Zara, and expressed more loyalty towards Zara, than those who did not follow Zara on Facebook (Gamboa & Goncalves, 2014).

Except for common purposes like marketing, relationship management, product innovation and branding, different businesses take advantage of social media for their unique purposes as well. To name a few, some firms disclose corporate information, financial information such as annual report, earning releases and other sensitive, market-moving news or events to the public on their social media account pages (Shilbury, Quick, & Westerbeek, 2003; Zhou, Lei, Wang, Fan, & Wang, 2014). Other firms utilize the big data collected from social platforms as a source of information to obtain information from competitors, make predictions about market trends, targeted customers' consumption preferences, purchasing intention, and so on (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Hamilton, Kaltcheva, & Rohm, 2016; Patino, Pitta, & Quinones, 2012; X. Wang, Yu, & Wei, 2012; Zhu, Wang, Wang, & Wan, 2016) Still

others may use social media to identify potential candidates to be recruited (Arnaboldi & Coget, 2016).

To sum up, due to its wide popularity and great change in communication manner, social media has been widely used by companies of all sizes, in almost all industry sectors, for various purposes (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Karimi & Naghibi, 2015; Rodriguez, Peterson, & Krishnan, 2013).

However, although social media has been applied in business for various purposes, one emerging trend of social media application in business is in the area of sales management (Nunan, Sibai, Schivinski, & Christodoulides, 2018). As Nunan et al. (2018) have pointed out, there is a recent surge in research focusing on social media use in the sales fields. Research in this area focuses mainly on the topics from the description of status quo about social media use in sales to its impacting factors and outcomes (Agnihotri et al., 2016; Agnihotri, Gabler, Itani, Jaramillo, & Krush, 2017; Agnihotri, Kothandaraman, Kashyap, & Singh, 2012; Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017; Itani, Agnihotri, & Dingus, 2017; Lacoste, 2016; William C. Moncrief, Marshall, & Rudd, 2015; Ogilvie, Agnihotri, Rapp, & Trainor, 2018; Schultz, Schwepker Jr, & Good, 2012). In spite of the soaring research about social media in sales, deeper research focusing on its working mechanism is still scarce and needs further exploration (Guesalaga, 2016; Lacoste, 2016).

1.1.2 Social Media Use in Sales

As mentioned above, social media is characterized with its huge social networking, interactivity, two-way communication and 24-hour-7-day-a-week communication (Lacoste, 2016; Svatošová, 2012). In the sales industry, salespeople can leverage these characteristics and integrate social media into various sales processes such as prospecting, pre-approaching, approaching, presentation, handling objections, closing

a deal and follow-up (Andzulis, Panagopoulos, & Rapp, 2012; Moore et al., 2015). Literature suggested that salespeople utilize social media for the following purposes.

Firstly, salespeople use the wide social networks on social media to generate more sales opportunities (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016; Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). According to Facebook, an average user has 130 friends on the social media (Hudson & Hudson, 2013); this means that salespeople have accesses to approach a large pool of prospects and referrals from customers or acquaintances through social media (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016). Moore et al. (2015) reported that despite preferences in usage, both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) sales professionals use social media in their selling and the most commonly used applications for social and professional networking are Facebook (45.4 percent) and LinkedIn (16.4 percent).

Secondly, as buyers often seek opinions from social networks or professional social media platforms, salespeople use social media to influence buyers' purchase intentions (Agnihotri et al., 2012). According to Forrester Research, over 75 percent of 1200 surveyed business technology decision makers utilize social media to obtain information or opinions on specific product and services (Ramos & Young, 2009). In a soft and gradual manner, salespeople influence buyers' purchase intentions by sharing links or responding to comments in their social media accounts, offering some solutions or suggestions, updating products information frequently via social media platforms, and even draw customers or prospects of interest into their own social networks (Agnihotri et al., 2012). The greater number of publications are posted, shared and commented on social media, the greater influence salespeople have in social networks (Lacoste, 2016).

Thirdly, salespeople use social media to establish and maintain customer relationship (Andzulis et al., 2012; Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017; Lacoste, 2016; Sasatanun & Charoensukmongkol, 2016). Sales scholars regard social media as an ideal tool for relationship-oriented selling as its two-way communication feature allows salespeople to listen to their customers and make repeated interactions with them, which helps build trust and maintain customer relationship (Andzulis et al., 2012; Lacoste, 2016). On the other hand, as salespeople can obtain open information about customers' personal profile on social media account, like their birthday and preferences, salespeople have an opportunity to develop an interpersonal relationship with customers, for instance, sending greetings to customers on birthdays, festivals or other special occasions (Agnihotri et al., 2012). Undoubtedly, a positive interpersonal relationship between seller and buyer complements and facilitates the development of business relationship (Lacoste, 2016).

Fourthly, salespeople use social media to reduce sales cost and enhance sales efficiency (Itani et al., 2017; Schultz et al., 2012). Salespeople can use social media to communicate with prospects or customers in a 24-hour-7-day-a-week manner, which, as a result, greatly reduces the frequency of face-to-face meeting and travel expenses (Itani et al., 2017; Schultz et al., 2012). For exporting sales, such an effect can be augmented due to the great geographic distance between exporters and importers (Bocconcelli, Cioppi, & Pagano, 2017). Moreover, huge amount of free information available on some professional social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Facebook can potentially reduce sales organizations' investment in purchasing "cold call lists" from specialized vendors (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016). In addition, unlike in traditional prospecting processes during which salespeople adopt cold calling and canvassing to talk with unqualified prospects and waste a lot of time before they realize they are doing so (Lacoste, 2016), social media offer open information for salespeople to qualify leads early in the sales process, hence, salespeople can spend

minimal time on less ideal customers but maximal time focusing on more promising opportunities, increasing salespeople's efficiency in the sales process (M.-d.-C. Alarcón-del-Amo, Rialp-Criado, & Rialp-Criado, 2018; William C Moncrief & Marshall, 2005; Rodriguez et al., 2013; Trailer & Dickie, 2006).

From the perspective of sales management, businesses use social media to perform sales management tasks, such as supervision, training, recruiting and so on (William C. Moncrief et al., 2015; Rollins, Nickell, & Wei, 2014). More and better candidate information obtained from social media and convenience in virtual interview will greatly improve the recruiting efficiency and quality (William C. Moncrief et al., 2015). Instant communication via social media reduces face-to-face periodic reporting times, which keeps sales managers informed of the real-time movement, making supervision easier (William C. Moncrief et al., 2015). Social media also makes personalized training at the individual level possible (Rollins et al., 2014).

To sum up, while sales managers can utilize social media for their sales management, frontier salespeople are active in using social media as a sales channel and integrating it into every step of their sales process for more sales opportunities, more influences in buyers' purchasing behaviors, better customer relationship, less sales cost and higher sales efficiency by taking advantage of characteristics of social media. However, despite the potential value of social media in sales, the actual use of social media by salespeople and sales organizations is not without problems (Guesalaga & Kapelianis, 2012; Nunan et al., 2018). Detailed delineation about problems in the current application of social media in sales is presented in the next part.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Due to social media's recent advent, its actual use in sales is still in an early period (Andzulis et al., 2012; Lacoste, 2016). Prior surveys show a low rate of actual adoption of social media in sales and both salespeople's and sales organizations' confusions about its role and value in sales (Durkin, McGowan, & McKeown, 2013; Lacoste, 2016). According to Schultz and his colleague (2012), 99% of business managers in their study believe that the use of social media will have a significant influence in their business but almost two-thirds claim that they are not sure of its meaning. The Sales Management Association in U.S. found that 70% of the surveyed companies were either not using social media in sales, or just exploring its use (Guesalaga, 2016). The OgilvyOne global survey of salespeople found that only 9% of salespeople report any social media-related focus on sales by their own organizations (Featherstonebaugh, 2010). Many companies remain hesitant to leverage social media to assist sales (Agnihotri et al., 2012). For firms who haven't recognized social media as a professional tool, access may even be forbidden on firm premises (Lacoste, 2016).

On the other hand, academic studies report inconclusive findings about social media use in sales contexts. In terms of positive impacts, literature has found that social media use can serve as a selling tool, a helpful learning tool and a sales training aid for salespeople and sales management (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Greg W Marshall, Moncrief, Rudd, & Lee, 2012; Rollins et al., 2014). Social media use in sales can generate high quality sales leads (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016), help salespeople find business opportunities (Quinton & Wilson, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2013), aid salespeople and firms in managing customer relationship (William C. Moncrief et al., 2015; Moore et al., 2015; Rodriguez et al., 2013; Trainor, 2012; Trainor, Andzulis, Rapp, & Agnihotri, 2014), enhance salespeople's responsiveness to

customers' requests and information communication quality (Agnihotri et al., 2017; Hunter & Perreault Jr, 2007; Ogilvie et al., 2018; Rodriguez & Honeycutt Jr, 2011), as well as improve internal administrative performance and firm's sales performance (Hunter & Perreault Jr, 2007; Itani et al., 2017; Quinton & Wilson, 2016; Schultz et al., 2012; Trainor, 2012).

However, research also found some negative outcomes associated with social media use in sales like interruptions, tension, and work-life conflict that salesperson might experience when they use social media for sales activities (Gibbs, Rozaidi, & Eisenberg, 2013; Ollier-Malaterre, Rothbard, & Berg, 2013; Van Zoonen, Verhoeven, & Vliegthart, 2017). For example, Greg W Marshall et al. (2012)'s qualitative research observed salespeople's negative sentiment about the impact of social media in their personal life and found that the 24-hour-7-day communication via social media demands individuals' more commitment and lengthened time to work, thereby causing interruptions in their personal life and work-life conflict. In terms of business performance, although scholars like Agnihotri et al. (2016), Schultz et al. (2012) and Trainor (2012) suggested that social media use in sales contributes to business performance, Rodriguez et al. (2013) found it bore no relationship with outcome sales performance, which is obviously contradictory with other scholars' findings. These inconclusive findings about social media use in sales in academic research cast doubt on whether and how social media can be integrated into sales for both individuals' and firms' benefits.

To conclude, both sales personnel and sales organizations have confusions about the role and value of social media use in sales. Prior inconclusive findings about its outcomes in academic fields may partially account for the relative low rate of social media use in sales in practice and even compound such a situation. These practical and academic issues highlight the importance and necessity of more research about the topic. An investigation into the working mechanism of social media use in

sales will provide insightful knowledge and recommendations for both sales organizations and salespeople.

1.3 Research Gap

As social media has only become popular for about a decade, academic research is relatively lagging behind its wide popularity in practice (Nunan et al., 2018). The earliest research about social media in sales dates back to 2009 (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) and most of them are after 2010 (Andzulis et al., 2012; Charoensukmongkol, 2014; Dong & Wu, 2015; Levin, Hansen, & Laverie, 2012; Rapp, Beitelspacher, et al., 2013; Trainor et al., 2014), 6 years after Facebook coming into being with its active users reaching 500 million. The lagging academic research suggests some limited focus and interests in the study about social media and leaves great space for further exploration.

Literature suggests that the early scholars studying social media use in sales committed to identify its value for salespeople and sales organizations (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Greg W Marshall et al., 2012; Rollins et al., 2014). Some studies in this area also explored factors influencing salespeople and sales organizations' actual use of social media in sales (M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo, Rialp, & Rialp, 2016; Alarcón, Rialp, & Rialp, 2015; Groza, Peterson, Sullivan, & Krishnan, 2012; Itani et al., 2017; Moore, Hopkins, & Raymond, 2013; Schultz et al., 2012). Other scholars also proposed social media strategies for salespeople, sales managers and sales organizations (Agnihotri et al., 2012; Andzulis et al., 2012; J. H. Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011; Lacoste, 2016; William C. Moncrief et al., 2015; Sood & Pattinson, 2012; Trainor, 2012). Recently, some research turned to investigate outcomes caused by salespeople and sales organizations' social media use in sales (Agnihotri et al., 2016; Agnihotri et al., 2017; Agnihotri et al., 2012; Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017; Itani et al., 2017; William C. Moncrief et al.,

2015; Ogilvie et al., 2018; Schultz et al., 2012). Despite previous scholars' great contribution to research about social media use in sales, research focusing on the working mechanism of social media use in sales by sales force is still limited and warrants further exploration (Guesalaga, 2016; Lacoste, 2016).

In terms of the working mechanism of social media use in sales, previous scholars hold that the use of information technology alone is not enough to bring benefits for both salespeople and sales organizations; the effectiveness of information technology can be possible when it is utilized to improve salespeople's behaviors or skills first (e.g., presentation skills, targeting abilities, communication skills and adaptive selling behaviors) (Ahearne, Jones, Rapp, & Mathieu, 2008; Itani et al., 2017; William C. Moncrief et al., 2015; Ogilvie et al., 2018). Among them, adaptive selling behavior draws much attention from scholars (Itani et al., 2017; Ogilvie et al., 2018). Adaptive selling behavior refers to salespeople's adjustments of sales behaviors according to their understanding about customers and selling encounters in the process of interacting with customers (Weitz, Sujan, & Sujan, 1986). It is a crucial skill particularly in the selling situations when salespeople have to deal with various customer types and complex selling encounters (Weitz, 1981). Salespeople need to make adequate adjustments to satisfy different customers' needs so that they can achieve better sales performance (Weitz, 1981). Although scholars have identified the impact of salespeople's social media use in sales on their adaptive selling behaviors and sales performance in domestic selling contexts (Itani et al., 2017; Ogilvie et al., 2018), a limited number of studies have explored the impact of salespeople's social media use in an international selling context, particularly in the area of export sales (M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2016; Alarcón et al., 2015; Bocconcelli et al., 2017). However, given that export salespeople tend to face more complex selling environments than domestic ones, whether the role of adaptive selling behavior in the social media sales applies to export selling contexts remains a question and needs

further empirical research to explore its role in this context (Itani et al., 2017). To address this research gap, this study will retest the impact of salespeople's social media use in sales on their adaptive selling behavior and their sales performance in the context of export selling via social media.

Further, facing a large number of social media users, how export salespeople can deal with the huge amount of information relevant to potential customers and make sure their work is efficient and productive is still a question (Agnihotri et al., 2012). In such a situation, salespeople may need to acquire some specific skills to cope with the complex information proceeding process to achieve better performance (Román & Iacobucci, 2010). The present study proposes that salespersons' customer-qualification skill is such a skill that may play a role in the effect of export salespeople's social media use in sales on salesperson performance. Customer-qualification skill is a kind of customer typology based on human being's categorization ability. According to categorization theory, categorization is one of the most basic functions of all organisms, which reduces the complexity of the external stimulus world, improves the information processing efficiency and offers more efficient and economical knowledge of things and people (J. Cohen & Basu, 1987). Scholars have found that salespeople's customer qualification skills can help increase salespeople's effectiveness and efficiency in dealing with various customers in domestic selling contexts (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015). Given its positive roles in domestic selling contexts, this study argues that salesperson's customer-qualification skill might possibly be an essential skill for export salespeople to deal with novel and diverse customers in exporting selling via social media. Still, the contribution of customer qualification skills in the area of export selling through the social media platforms is the issue that has not received solid clarification in research.

In addition, previous researchers about social media use in sales paid scarce attention to the role of salespeople's intercultural competency in the context of social media export selling. Export selling can be regarded as intercultural selling due to the cultural differences between export countries and import countries (Pandey & Charoensukmongkol, 2019). To achieve better performance in intercultural selling, salespeople may need to acquire some intercultural competency to help fulfill sales tasks (Charoensukmongkol, 2019b). However, the role of intercultural competency in the context of social media export selling is still the rarely discussed topic in research. Considered this research gap as well as the importance of intercultural competency of salesperson in international selling, this study argues that export salespeople's intercultural competency might possibly play an important role in the quality of sales communication that salesperson make with foreign customers through social media. Although there are several conceptualizations of intercultural competence (K. Barker et al., 2017; Bauman & Shcherbina, 2018; Lieberman & Gamst, 2015; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013), this study focuses on cultural intelligence (CQ). Literature shows CQ is an important capability necessary for everyone involving in cross-cultural settings (Ang, Van Dyne, & Tan, 2008). Extant research has proved that individuals with high CQ tend to perform effectively in face-to-face intercultural communication in sojourning countries or host countries (Ang & Van Dyne, 2015; Barakat, Lorenz, Ramsey, & Cretoiu, 2015; L.-Y. Lee & Sukoco, 2010; Suthatorn & Charoensukmongkol, 2018). Whether CQ can play a similar effective role in export selling via social media warrants further exploration. An investigation of whether CQ works in export selling via social media extends prior CQ research that did not investigate the role of CQ in computer-mediated communication, particularly in the context of social media communication.

Another gap in research about social media use in sales is in terms of countries where previous studies were conducted. At the present time, the majority of previous studies about social media use in sales are carried out in western countries (Groza et al., 2012; Greg W. Marshall, Moncrief, Rudd, & Lee, 2013; Michaelidou et al., 2011; Ogilvie et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2013; Schultz et al., 2012; Trainor et al., 2014). There are a limited number of studies that target on the salespersons' social media use in the Asian countries (Ainin, Parveen, Moghavvemi, Jaafar, & Mohd Shuib, 2015; Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017; Itani et al., 2017). Example studies in Asian countries can be Itani et al. (2017)'s research in India and Charoensukmongkol and Sasatanun (2017)'s research in Thailand. Itani et al. (2017) made an empirical study about the antecedents and outcomes of social media use in B2B sales in India. Charoensukmongkol and Sasatanun (2017) investigated the relationship between the intensity of social media use for customer relationship management and the business performance satisfaction among Thai microenterprises. Despite these pioneering studies about social media use in sales in some of the Asian countries, more research about this topic in other Asian countries is still needed for a comprehensive understanding of salespeople's social media use in sales in distinctive Asian countries. This study targets on China as it has the largest number of monthly active social media users in the world (Statista, 2019b). Moreover, as China implements an export-oriented economic development policy and has a large population of export salespeople, the country is supposed to have a huge number of export salespeople who use social media in sales. Therefore, China serves as a suitable context for the study of export salespeople' social media use in sales. An empirical study about Chinese export salespeople's social media use in sales will add to prior research conducted in other Asian countries and offer insightful knowledge for both academia and practitioners interested in knowing more about Asian export salespeople's social media selling behaviors.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objective of this research is not only to fill the research gaps mentioned earlier, but also to provide extra evidence to support the issues that are unclear or inconclusive in previous research. The main objective of the present study is to explore the impact of export salesperson's social media use in sales on salesperson's performance. This research also examines the mediating factors that explain the possible linkage between social media use in sales and salesperson's performance. Regarding the mediating variables, this study proposes that adaptive selling behaviors and salespersons' customer qualification skills might explain why social media use in sales can be linked to salesperson's performance. Further, this study examines the impact of CQ on salesperson's customer qualification skills, adaptive selling behaviors and salesperson's performance as well.

This study uses three theories as its theoretical support for hypothesis development. First, this research adopts the Adaptive Selling Theory as the main theoretical support to explain the pathway of the effect of export salespersons' social media use, their adaptive selling behaviors, customer qualification skills and CQ on their performance. According to the Adaptive Selling Theory proposed by Weitz et al. (1986), the characteristics of a salesperson like his capabilities can influence his motivation and behavior to practice adaptive selling, which, in turn, facilitates sales performance. The theory argues that when salespeople adapt their sales approaches in personal selling to fit perceptions of customers, their successful adjustments will improve sales performance. In addition, the effectiveness of a salesperson's adaptive selling behavior depends on his capabilities. A salesperson's capabilities are composed of such abilities as knowledge dimensions and such skills like information collection skills. For instance, they argue that as a kind of salespeople's capabilities, information collection skill is critical for salespeople to practice adaptive selling

effectively because a salesperson needs an elaborate knowledge structure about customers and selling environments to make adequate adjustments during interactions (Weitz et al., 1986). Given this, this study regards social media use in sales as salespeople's information collection skill in that social media offers a channel for salespeople to collect information about foreign customers (Lacoste, 2016). The collected information then forms a basic knowledge structure required to practice adaptive selling behavior. Following the main argument of this theory, this study argues that social media use in sales is conducive to adaptive selling behavior, which in turn improves salesperson performance. Further, as customer-qualification skill reflects a salesperson's refined knowledge structure about customers (Román & Iacobucci, 2010), this study argues that it can be regarded as salespeople's capabilities to practice adaptive selling behaviors as well. In a similar fashion, given CQ itself signifies a person's knowledge structure about different cultures necessary to practice adaptive selling behaviors in cross-cultural settings (Hansen, Singh, Weilbaker, & Guesalaga, 2011), this study holds that it meets with the knowledge dimension of salespeople's capabilities to practice adaptive selling behaviors to satisfy cultural preferences of foreign customers too. All in all, following the main arguments of the adaptive selling theory, this study proposes that social media use, salesperson's customer-qualification abilities and CQ are components of salespersons' capabilities and all three factors contribute to salespersons' performance by improving their adaptive selling behaviors.

In addition, this study uses categorization theory to support the mediating role of customer qualification skills in explaining the contribution of social media use in sales and CQ to adaptive selling behaviors and salespersons' performance. According to categorization theory, people classify things and persons in groups for more efficient and economical knowledge (Cantor & Mischel, 1979). So, categorization reduces people's cognitive burden in information processing and improves

effectiveness and efficiency in various cognitive activities (Jerome Seymour Bruner & Austin, 1956). Salesperson's customer-qualification skill, which is a customer typology based on categorization, is consistent with the categorization theory. The reasons for the consistency are two folds. Firstly, because salespersons' customer qualification skills allow export salespeople to have a refined knowledge structure about customers, they are beneficial to practice adaptive selling behaviors (Román & Iacobucci, 2010); Secondly, because customer qualification skills reduce complexity in proceeding huge amount of information on social media, they improve salespeople's effectiveness and efficiency in information processing (Román & Iacobucci, 2010) These two contributions of customer qualification skills imply that it can mediate the contribution of social media use in sales and CQ to adaptive selling behaviors and salespersons' performance.

Thirdly, this study uses Social Customer Relationship Management (Social CRM) theoretical framework to explain the impact of social media on customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors, which in turn contribute to relationship performance. Social CRM argues that the integration of social media into customer-facing activities can engage customers in collaborative conversations and improve customer relationships (Trainor, 2012). According to Social CRM, firms need to engage in a four-step IDIC process (Identification, Differentiation, Interaction and Customization) to achieve optimal customer relationship performance (Trainor et al., 2014). In the Identification step, firms collect customer information available on social media to identify customers' needs and values. Then, in the Differentiation step, firms classify customers into different groups according to identified customer needs and values. In the Interaction step, firms make multiple interactions with customers for a further understanding of details of customer needs and behaviors. In the customization process, firms make adaptations to selling behaviors to offer customized solutions to meet customer needs and expectations. Social CRM has been

mostly used to explain firms' CRM strategy, but recent scholars argue that it is applicable to salesforces' selling behaviors as well (Peppers & Rogers, 2016). This study keeps in alignment with previous scholars to regard salespeople's selling activities as customer-facing activities and draws on this theory to explain the impact of social media use on customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors, which in turn lead to optimal relationship performance. This study argues that the four steps of IDIC match well with customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors. To be specific, the Identification and Differentiation steps of the IDIC process involve customer qualification skills, and the Interaction and Customization steps of the IDIC process reflect the process of adaptive selling behaviors. Therefore, following Social CRM framework, this study proposes that social media use in sales will first contribute to customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors, resulting in a success in customer relationship performance.

1.5 Contribution of the Study

1.5.1 Academic Contribution

This study will contribute to the current literature in two folds. Firstly, this study will contribute to the existing literature about social media use in export selling contexts. Given the new emergence of social media, scarce empirical research offers direct evidence about whether export salespersons' social media use contributes to their sales performance and explores deeply its working mechanism. The present research findings will help uncover the possible mediating variables that might possibly explain the contribution of export salespersons' social media use to their sales performance.

Secondly, this study will add to the current CQ literature by exploring the role of CQ in non-face-to-face communication, particularly in social media export selling. Given that little research has identified the important role of CQ in non-face-to-face intercultural communication, the results from this research regarding the role of CQ in social media communication will clarify whether CQ tends to matter in this communication context. This study's research findings will offer empirical evidence to explain the possible contribution of CQ to export salespeople's selling skills, behaviors and performances in the context of social media export selling.

1.5.2 Practical Contribution

This research will offer insights for export sales managers and practitioners. As discussed earlier, sales managers and organizations are hesitant to embrace social media in workplace due to their failure in recognizing the potential benefits of social media use in sales and their lack of understanding about working mechanism of social media use in sales. This study's findings are expected to offer empirical evidence from Chinese export industry and clarify how social media use in sales can contribute to salespersons' performance. Export sales managers and their sales representatives will have a better understanding about what capabilities, competencies, skills and behaviors are needed for salespeople to improve their sales performance and generate more revenue for companies in social media exporting contexts.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will first review literature involving the main variables in this research which are social media use in sales, salesperson performance, adaptive selling behavior, salesperson's customer qualification skills and culture intelligence. Then, the author will introduce key theories which offer theoretical support for hypothesis development. The final part of this chapter presents hypothesis proposed in this research.

2.1 Social Media Use in Sales

In general, due to its great access to wide social networks and convenience in mutual interactions between users, social media has been widely used in business for marketing, customer relationship management, product innovation and branding etc. (Rapp, Agnihotri, et al., 2013; Salo, 2017). In sales, both companies and sales personnel find utility in social media use as well (Moore et al., 2015). Prior literature has identified and documented the important role of social media use in sales (Bocconcelli et al., 2017; Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Greg W Marshall et al., 2012; Rollins et al., 2014). For instance, Mangold and Faulds (2009) are among the first researchers to point out the vital role of social media in marketing and sales, arguing that social media should be a hybrid element of a firm's promotion mix. Later, Greg W Marshall et al. (2012)'s research identified social media as a generational and global sales interface, bringing great connectivity for salespeople and customers, and

a dominant selling tool bringing a revolution in buyer-seller relationship. Rollins et al. (2014) also observed that social media can be a helpful learning tool for salespeople and companies. In addition, Bocconcelli et al. (2017)'s research proposed that social media represents an innovative resource in SMEs' sales process with regard to first contact and communication activities, and a strategic resource to implement an effective business networking effort.

Realizing the important role of social media use in sales, salespeople and companies try to experiment with various practices and strategies to leverage them in sales activities (Itani et al., 2017; Schultz et al., 2012). Sales researchers not only depicted the status quo of social media use in sales (Moore et al., 2015; Swani, Brown, & Milne, 2014), but also provided with theoretically suggested strategies for sales managers and companies to follow (Andzulis et al., 2012; J. H. Kietzmann et al., 2011; Lacoste, 2016; Sood & Pattinson, 2012; Trainor, 2012). Researchers find that companies and salespeople use social media with different preferences or in various ways (Swani et al., 2014; Swani et al., 2017). For instance, by comparing B2B and B2C salespeople's social media use in the selling process, Moore et al. (2013)'s research shows that B2B salespeople tend to use social media targeted at professionals whereas their B2C counterparts tend to utilize more social media sites targeted to the general public for engaging in one-on-one dialogue with their customers. They also find that B2B professionals tend to use relationship-oriented social media technologies more than B2C professionals for the purpose of prospecting, handling objections, and after sale follow-up. Moreover, Swani et al. (2014) also showed that Fortune 500 companies posted more messages about direct calls to purchase in B2C tweets than in B2B ones.

Theoretically, researchers drew on varied theories and proposed a series of strategies about social media use for sales professionals and organizations (Agnihotri et al., 2012; Sood & Pattinson, 2012; Trainor, 2012) For instance, Agnihotri, Kothandaraman, Kashyap, and Singh (2013) adopted task-technology fit theory as their theoretical support to propose a social media strategy framework for B2B organizations to increase customer engagement and create customer value. The authors argue that when salespeople's service behaviors fit social media use, the fit creates value for both customers and salespeople. A set of detailed social media strategies about goals delineation, information exchange, competitive intelligence, and performance metrics are proposed for B2B salespeople and organizations to improve service behaviors and create value in the process of social media use in sales. With respect to CRM, Trainor (2012) recommended that companies should integrate social media technology into it to benefit business performance. In Sood and Pattinson (2012)'s research, the authors builds on traditional Industrial Marketing and Purchasing (IMP) interaction model to propose a new IMP interaction model for contemporary B2B sales and marketing interactions. The original IMP interaction model emphasizes the importance of human-to-human interaction for B2B selling and marketing activities. The authors argue that since human-to-human interaction is the heart of social media interaction, social media can be integrated into key thought processes of IMP. In the new IMP social framework, product/service exchange, information exchange, financial exchange and social exchange via various social media all contribute to cooperation and adaptations (Sood & Pattinson, 2012).

In light of Walker, Churchill, and Ford (1979)'s sales management model, William C. Moncrief et al. (2015) examined the impact of social media on sales management from two major aspects: sales management functions (supervision, training, selection, compensation and deployment) and salesperson performance (role, aptitude/skill and motivation). Their research offered some suggestions to help sales

managers and salespersons better adapt to post-social media sales environment. For instance, when sales managers are fulfilling their training functions, a common practice in pre-social media training is to ask a new salesperson to observe a more experienced salesperson or sales manager on the job. In contrast, the post-social media training can be implemented through packaged online programming via social media which is customized to meet the needs of each new hire and allows the trainee to learn at home at his own pace. The impact of social media on sales management is that training becomes personalized at the individual level. To cope with this change, the authors recommended that the sales managers should “recalibrate the menu of training options to meet the learning preferences of a new generation of salespeople” (Moncrief, Marshall & Rudd, 2015, p.51)

Unlike the above scholars’ heavy reliance on borrowing existing theories to propose social media strategies (Agnihotri et al., 2013; Sood & Pattinson, 2012; Trainor, 2012), other scholars establish social media strategies by digging into features of social media communication and integrating these features into sales process and activities (Andzulis et al., 2012; T. C. Kietzmann, Geuter, & König, 2011). Among the pioneering proponents for social media use in sales, Andzulis et al. (2012) proposed detailed social media strategies applicable for salesforce in each step of the sales process which includes understanding the customer, approaching the customer, needs discovery, presentation, close, service and follow-up. For instance, at the step of approaching customers, sales forces are advised to use social media to establish credibility by launching Facebook promotions to invite participation in new product testing. At the stage of needs discovery, salespeople are advised to ask their Facebook fans to vote in polls or comment on proposed changes to products, services or logos. In this way, salespeople can better understand customers’ needs and buying motives.

For sales organizations, J. H. Kietzmann et al. (2011) provided a framework to define social media by seven building blocks (identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups) and offered suggestions for firms about how to develop strategies to monitor, understand and respond to different social media activities in each block. Lacoste (2016) modified the J. H. Kietzmann et al. (2011)'s framework by interweaving virtual relationships via social media into traditional physical relationships and proposed a model for Key Account Managers to use social media in their customer relationship management. Lacoste (2016)'s model consists of five building blocks which are identity (use social media to unveil professional identity), reputation/credibility (use social media to create 'personal 'value), connection (use social media to connect to potential key account customers), retention (use social media to increase customer retention) and engagement (deepen customer engagement by switching from virtual communication to face-to-face relationships). In comparison with Andzulis et al. (2012)'s and J. H. Kietzmann et al. (2011)'s strategies, Lacoste (2016)'s model is more suitable for selling to and managing key account customers. This development suggests that studies focusing on social media use in sales shift from general sales environment to more specific and nuanced sales contexts.

To date, apart from the depiction of status quo of social media use in sales, the identification of its importance, and the theoretically conceptualized strategies for sales professionals and organizations, recent researchers have committed more effort to explore why sales professionals and organizations show different patterns of social media use in sales, as well as what motivates them to adopt social media in sales activities and what are the impacts of social media use in sales (Agnihotri et al., 2012; Itani et al., 2017; Nunan et al., 2018; Ogilvie et al., 2018; Sasatanun & Charoensukmongkol, 2016). In view of this, the following parts will review literature about social media use in sales from four aspects in the following sequence. First, the

next section will begin by providing the definition of social media in sales. Then, the review of literature about factors influencing social media in sales and its outcomes will be provided. The final part will make a conclusion about research contexts in previous research, to further highlight possible research gaps and to pinpoint the research scope of this study.

2.1.1 Definitions of Social Media Use in Sales

Social media use in sales, is defined as “ the intensity with which social media is used in a company's sales organization, considering social media as web-based applications including LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Google+, and similar media that foster social interaction” (Guesalaga, 2016, p.73). Besides, it is defined as a salesperson's utilization and integration of social media technology to perform his or her job (Agnihotri et al., 2012). Guesalaga (2016)’s definition stresses the use of social media by sales organizations and the frequency of social media use for the purpose of social interaction at the firm level. In comparison, Agnihotri et al. (2012)’s definition focuses on salespeople’s application of social media and the integration of social media in their jobs. Overall, these definitions of social media use in sales provided in prior studies are used to formulate the definition of social media use in export activities of salespersons for this research. In this study, social media use in sales refers to a salesperson’s use of social media for exporting sales of goods and services in his daily sales process. This definition narrows the scope of sales activities down and limits it in export sales activities.

2.1.2 Factors Influencing Social Media Use in Sales

Researchers analyzed various factors influencing salespeople's and organizations' adoption of social media in sales (M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2016; Alarcón et al., 2015; Guesalaga, 2016; Itani et al., 2017; Levin et al., 2012; Rapp, Agnihotri, et al., 2013). Regarding the personal characteristics of salespeople, Levin et al. (2012) found three factors that motivate salespersons to use social media for their sales activities include apathetic motivation, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. The three motivations together with voluntariness and past performance influence new sales employees' participation in adopting social media. Itani et al. (2017) note that learning goal orientation plays a significant role in explaining salespersons' attitudes towards social media; they also acknowledge that salespeople who have more positive attitudes about social media tend to have more actual social media use. Moreover, the authors found that for individuals with a high level of learning goal orientation, such a positive effect tends to be stronger. In terms of CRM, Moore et al. (2015) coined a new term social CRM and defined it as the activity that salespeople use relationship-oriented social media to accomplish job-related and selling processes. They observed that the frequency and extent of social CRM depends on the specific social media tools used and the stage of selling process. In particular, B2B sales managers are found to be significantly and far more engaged with social CRM than sales representatives. Interestingly, Schultz et al. (2012) found that age and social media norms are factors influencing salespeople's social media usage as well. They found that younger salespeople are more likely to use social media, and salespeople tend to use social media more when social media norms reflect its usage by supervisors, customers, competitors and colleagues. In addition, Y. Wang, Hsiao, Yang, and Hajli (2016) found that in an online community context (LinkedIn), sellers' social identity and social comparison are key factors motivating

them to develop a series of co-innovation activities with customers in online communities.

Regarding the factors motivating the organizations to use social media in sales activities, Groza et al. (2012)'s research found that the degree of cross departmental cooperation within a firm positively contributes to its sales force's social media use. Rapp, Beitelspacher, Grewal and Hughes (2013) draw on the Contagion theory to investigate the contagion effect of social media use across suppliers, sellers and customers. The Contagion theory holds that people's behaviors, similar to a disease, are transmittable and may change after an interaction with another person or group. Their research findings prove that supplier salesperson's social media use positively influences retailer social media use, and in turn customer social media use. In a similar fashion, Guesalaga (2016) proposed two individual factors (sales manager's competence and commitment with social media), two organization factors (supplier company's competence and commitment with social media), and one customer factor (buying companies' engagement with social media) as antecedents of sales organizations' social media use in sales. Their research findings offered empirical evidence to support all the proposed factors but one individual factor (individual commitment with social media) as antecedents of sales organizations' social media use in sales. In addition, Alarcón et al. (2015) used the Resource-based view (RBV) to explore the effect of export companies' Social Media Competence on their actual social media use and business performance. According to the RBV theory, when a firm adopts strategies based on its strategic resources and capabilities, it will achieve superior firm performance and a sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). Based on this theory, Alarcón et al. (2015) regarded social media as an export company's technological resource and defined Social Media Competence as a company's potential in applying social media to perform communication activities and effectively manage information about companies and customers. They

investigated its role in determining export companies' actual use of social media and found that export companies' Social Media Competence influences their actual social media use indirectly via their intention to use it (Alarcón et al., 2015).

To sum up, salespersons' individual characteristics like age and social identity, their motivations, voluntariness, past performance, attitudes and beliefs towards social media are mostly identified as the main factors influencing their social media use (Itani et al., 2017; Levin et al., 2012; Schultz et al., 2012; Y. Wang et al., 2016). For firms, the management's attitudes and beliefs towards social media, companies' competence relevant to social media, supplier and customer companies' social media use and cross-departmental cooperation predict the actual adoption of social media by companies (M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2016; Alarcón et al., 2015; Groza et al., 2012; Guesalaga, 2016; Rapp, Agnihotri, et al., 2013). A summary of factors influencing salespeople's and companies' social media use in sales is presented in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Summary of Research Findings About Factors Influencing Social Media Use in Sales

Level	Authors	Findings
Individual level	Levin et al. (2012)	Motivations, voluntariness and past performance influence new sales employees' participation in social media use.
	Schultz et al. (2012)	Age negatively affects social media usage, while social media norms positively affect it. The younger a salesperson is, the more likely he will use social media in sales. A salesperson's customers, competitors, peer salespeople and supervisors' social media use have an influence on his adoption as well.
	Moore et al.	B2B managers are significantly and far more engaged

Level	Authors	Findings
	(2015)	with social CRM than sales representatives. The frequency and extent of social CRM usage varies based on the specific tools used and the stage of the selling process.
	Y. Wang et al. (2016)	Sellers' social identity and social comparison are key factors motivating them to develop a series of co-innovation activities in an online community context (LinkedIn).
	Itani et al. (2017)	A salesperson's goal orientation and attitude toward social media interact to positively influence social media use. A salesperson's attitude toward social media usefulness, as well as a salesperson's learning orientation, will influence how much a salesperson uses social media to assist in day-to-day job tasks.
Firm level	Groza et al. (2012)	Social media use among the sales force is greater within firms that have a high degree of cross-departmental cooperation.
	Rapp, Beitelspacher, et al. (2013)	The effect of supplier social media usage on retailer social media usage and in turn on customer social media usage is moderated by brand reputation and service ambidexterity.
	Alarcón et al. (2015)	Social Media Competency (SMC) has an influence on the firm's actual use of these social media applications, which in turn has an impact on the firm's performance. The intention to use social media applications mediates the relationship between the firm's SMC and its social media usage.
	M. C. Alarcón- del-Amo et al. (2016)	Managers' beliefs about social media capabilities for dealing with foreign customers directly influence managerial attitudes toward and intention to use

Level	Authors	Findings
		social media, and also indirectly on the intention to use them through the attitude.
	Guesalaga (2016)	Organizational competence and commitment with social media are key determinants of social media usage in sales, as well as individual commitment to it. Customer engagement with social media also predicts social media usage in sales, both directly and (mostly) through the individual and organizational factors analyzed, especially organizational competence and commitment.

2.1.3 Outcomes of Social Media Use in Sales

Literature shows that social media use in sales can improve a firm's sales capabilities and various business performances (Groza et al., 2012; Quinton & Wilson, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2013). For instance, Rodriguez et al. (2013)'s research reported that a selling organization's social media use improves its ability to create more opportunities, to understand customers and to manage customer relationships in sales processes more effectively. With respect to business performances, social media use in sales has been found to improve a firm's sales performance (Groza et al., 2012; Quinton & Wilson, 2016), relationship performance (Quinton & Wilson, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2013), as well as brand performance, retailer performance and consumer-retailer loyalty (Rapp, Beitelspacher, et al., 2013).

In addition, scholars have investigated more detailed pathways about the impact of social media use on business performance. For instance, Wang, Pauleen, Zhang (2016)'s research stated that SMEs' social media use in sales enhances business performance in terms of marketing, innovation and collaboration via improved communication performance. Ogilvie et al. (2018)'s recent research

concluded that salespeople's social media use in sales contributed to their firms' customer relationship performance and objective sales performance through salespeople's enhanced communication and adaptability behaviors.

Regarding the outcomes that salespersons achieved from social media use in sales, literature shows that a major direct outcome is an improvement in salespeople's behaviors (Agnihotri et al., 2016; Agnihotri et al., 2012; Itani et al., 2017; Ogilvie et al., 2018). According to prior researchers' findings, salespeople's social media use can improve their service behaviors (Agnihotri et al., 2017; Agnihotri et al., 2012), information communication behaviors (Agnihotri et al., 2016; Ogilvie et al., 2018), adaptability behaviors (Ogilvie et al., 2018) and collection of competitive intelligence (Itani et al, 2017). In addition, salespeople's social media use has also been found to enhance their responsiveness to customers' needs and requests and customers' satisfactions with them by improved information communication (Agnihotri et al., 2016).

With respect to salespeople's sales performance, scholars find that salespeople who use social media in sales tend to indicate higher sales outcome performance than those nonusers (Schultz et al., 2012), and those users with high frequency of social media use tend to report higher satisfaction with their business performance than those with less frequencies (Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017). Itani et al. (2017)'s research also found that salespeople's social media use in their daily job tasks can contribute to their sales performance by improving their competitive intelligence and adaptive selling behavior.

To conclude, the current literature has documented the positive impacts of social media use in sales on a wide array of salespeople's behaviors and sales performance (Lacoste, 2016; Nunan et al., 2018). Prior researchers have proved that social media use can help generate high quality sales leads, enhance a firm's sales abilities, and improve various business performances (Agnihotri et al., 2017;

Agnihotri et al., 2012; Lacoste, 2016; Nunan et al., 2018; Ogilvie et al., 2018). A summary of research findings about outcomes of social media use in sales is presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Summary of Research Findings About Outcomes of Social Media Use in Sales

Level	Authors	Findings
Individual level	Agnihotri et al. (2012)	Salespeople's social media use can have a positive influence on service behaviors that influence value creation for customers as well as for salespeople.
	Schultz et al. (2012)	Salespeople who use social media tend to indicate higher sales outcome performance those nonusers.
	William C. Moncrief et al. (2015)	Social media is changing the role of sales managers and sales management functions. Eight lessons are presented for each sales managers to embrace.
	Agnihotri et al. (2016)	Salesperson's social media use is an antecedent of enhancing salesperson behaviors to increase customer satisfaction. Their social media use is found to enhance information communication behaviors, which improve salesperson responsiveness and customer satisfaction.
	Agnihotri et al. (2017)	Salespeople using CRM technology in conjunction with social media are more likely to exhibit higher levels of salesperson service behaviors than their counterparts with low social media technology use.

Level	Authors	Findings
	Charoensukmongkol and Sasatanun (2017)	Entrepreneurs who used social media intensively for CRM tended to report higher satisfaction with their business performance.
	Itani et al. (2017)	Salesperson's social media use contributes to the improved collection of competitive intelligence as well as more adaptive selling behaviors, both of which lead to an increase in sales performance.
	Ogilvie et al. (2018)	Salespeople's social media technology use enhances their communication and adaptability behaviors.
Firm level	Rodriguez et al. (2013)	B2B selling organizations' social media usage has a positive relationship with their ability to create sales opportunities and manage relationships. In terms of performance, the study found that social media usage has a positive relationship with relationship sales performance, but not outcome-based sales performance.
	Groza et al. (2012)	Sales force's social media use contributes to the firm's sales performance and the effect is enhanced by developmental training in the organization.
	Rapp, Beitelspacher, et al. (2013)	A selling organization's social media use positively contributes to its brand performance, retailer performance, and consumer-retailer loyalty.
	Trainor et al. (2014)	The research finds that a firm's social media technology use, when viewed as a resource, improves its social CRM capabilities, which

Level	Authors	Findings
		positively influences customer relationship performance
	Quinton and Wilson (2016)	The use of a particular professional social media platform LinkedIn helps develop business relationship and enhance business performance.
	Järvinen and Taiminen (2016)	The use of marketing automation (involving social media use) in B2B selling process generates high quality sales leads through behavioral targeting and content personalization.
	W. Y. C. Wang et al. (2016)	SMEs' social media use enhances their business performance in terms of marketing, innovation and collaboration through improved communication performance.
	Y. Wang et al. (2016)	Sellers' co-innovation with customers in online communities (LinkedIn) improves their companies' brand performance.
	Ogilvie et al. (2018)	Salespeople's social media technology use enhances their communication and adaptability behaviors, which contributes to the firm's customer relationship performance and objective sales performance.

2.1.4 Previous Research Contexts About Social Media Use in Sales

Although prior studies have identified the important role, factors and outcomes of social media use in sales at both salespeople's individual level and companies' organizational level, social media use in different sales contexts has not been fully explored due to the advent of social media in recent years (Itani et al., 2017; Nunan et al., 2018; Salo, 2017). This study made a detailed analysis of research contexts in previous studies about social media use in sales. The analysis not only depicts the status quo of sales contexts scholars are mainly concerned about and have explored, but also reveals possible research gaps for future research about the topic.

From the in-depth review of literature on social media use in sales from 2004 (the year Facebook established) to present, the author identified thirty relevant research articles on social media use in sales. Excluding conceptual research papers, the author finally got twenty-four empirical research papers. On the basis of sample and data information, these papers are grouped into three research contexts in which social media are used in sales activities including 1) domestic sales, 2) international sales, and 3) both domestic and international sales. Findings regarding current research contexts about social media in sales are presented as follows.

Firstly, in all the twenty-four empirical papers, eighteen papers are conducted in domestic sales contexts (e.g. Lacoste, 2016; Levin et al, 2012; Schultz et al., 2012), four papers cover both domestic and international sales business (Agnihotri et al., 2017; Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017; Itani et al., 2017; Lacoste, 2016) and two papers only focus on export selling (M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2016; Alarcón et al., 2015). These statistics show that the majority of empirical research about social media use in sales focus on domestic sales contexts and less attention is paid to international sales contexts.

In addition, studies on social media use in sales activities in the area of domestic sales contexts are conducted in a few countries as the U.S., U.K., France, India, Thailand and Malaysia. Specifically, in eighteen studies conducted in domestic sales contexts, twelve of them conducted their surveys among American salespeople or companies (Agnihotri et al., 2016; Guesalaga, 2016; Levin et al., 2012; Moore et al., 2013; Moore et al., 2015; Ogilvie et al., 2018; Rapp, Agnihotri, et al., 2013; Rodriguez et al., 2013; Rollins et al., 2014; Schultz et al., 2012; Trainor et al., 2014; Y. Wang et al., 2016). In addition to the research conducted in the USA, there are two studies collecting data from India (Agnihotri et al., 2017; Itani et al., 2017), one from Thailand (Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017), one from Malaysia (Ainin et al., 2015) and one from France (Lacoste, 2016). In Groza et al. (2012)'s research, although they collected data from 40 countries including the U.S., U.K., Germany, Canada and other countries, 51% of the sample in their study come from the U.S. To summarize, most of studies about social media use in sales conducted in domestic sales contexts tended to limit in the number of countries, and the majority of them are based in the U.S., A summary of research contexts about social media use in sales are presented in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Summary of Research Contexts About Social Media Use in Sales

Authors	Sales Contexts			Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International		
Groza et al. (2012)	×			Data were collected from 1699 B2B salesforce from 40 countries, e.g., U.S., U.K., Germany, Australia, and Canada.	Sales force's social media use contributes to the firm's sales performance and the effect is enhanced by developmental training in the organization.
Levin et al. (2012)	×			A quasi-experiment imitated sales context on American campus and enrolled 194 business students as participants.	Motivations, voluntariness and past performance influence new sales employees' participation in social media use.

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Greg W Marshall et al. (2012)			×	A cross national qualitative research was made, collecting data from two focus groups in U.S. and two in U.K.
Rodriguez et al. (2013)		×		Data were collected from 1,699 B2B salespeople in the U.S.

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Schultz et al. (2012)	×		Data were collected from 273 B2B sales professionals in the U.S..	<p>with their ability to create sales opportunities and manage relationships. In terms of performance, the study found that social media usage has a positive relationship with relationship sales performance, but not outcome-based sales performance.</p> <p>Age negatively affects social media usage, while social media</p>

Authors	Sales Contexts			Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International		
Moore et al. (2013)	×			Data were collected from 395 salespeople in B2B and B2C markets in the U.S..	<p>norms positively affect it. The younger a salesperson is, the more likely he will use social media in sales. A salesperson's customers, competitors, peer salespeople and supervisors' social media use have an influence on his adoption as well. B2B managers are significantly and far more engaged with</p>

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Rapp, Beitelspacher, et al. (2013)	×		Data were collected from 28 salespeople, 144 retailers and 445 consumers in the U.S..	<p>social CRM than sales representatives. The frequency and extent of social CRM usage varies based on the specific tools used and the stage of the selling process.</p> <p>The effect of supplier social media usage on retailer social media usage and in turn on customer social media usage is moderated by brand reputation and service ambidexterity.</p>

Authors	Sales Contexts			Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International		
Rollins et al. (2014)	×			Researchers adopted a non-participant netnographic technique and collected 200 personal blogs from salespeople in the U.S. as data.	Writing and reading blogs can be a helpful learning tool for many salespeople and companies should consider using blogging as a sales training tool.
Trainor et al. (2014)	×			Data were collected from members of top-management teams of 308 organizations in the U.S.	The research finds that a firm's social media technology use, when viewed as a resource, improves its social CRM capabilities, which positively influences customer

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Alarcón et al. (2015)	×		Data were collected from 152 Spanish Exporting companies.	relationship performance. Social Media Competency (SMC) has an influence on the firm's actual use of these social media applications, which in turn has an impact on the firm's performance. The intention to use social media applications mediates the relationship between the firm's SMC and its

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Moore et al. (2015)	×		Data were collected from 395 sales professionals in the U.S..	<p>social media usage.</p> <p>A substantial proportion of B2B and B2C salespersons find utility in SM use. B2B managers are significantly and far more engaged with social CRM than sales representatives. The frequency and extent of social CRM usage varies based on the specific tools used and</p>

Authors	Sales Contexts			Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International		
M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo et al. (2016)	×			Data were collected from 152 Spanish Exporting companies.	<p>the stage of the selling process.</p> <p>Managers' beliefs about social media capabilities for dealing with foreign customers directly influence managerial attitudes toward and intention to use social media, and also indirectly on the intention to use them through the attitude.</p>

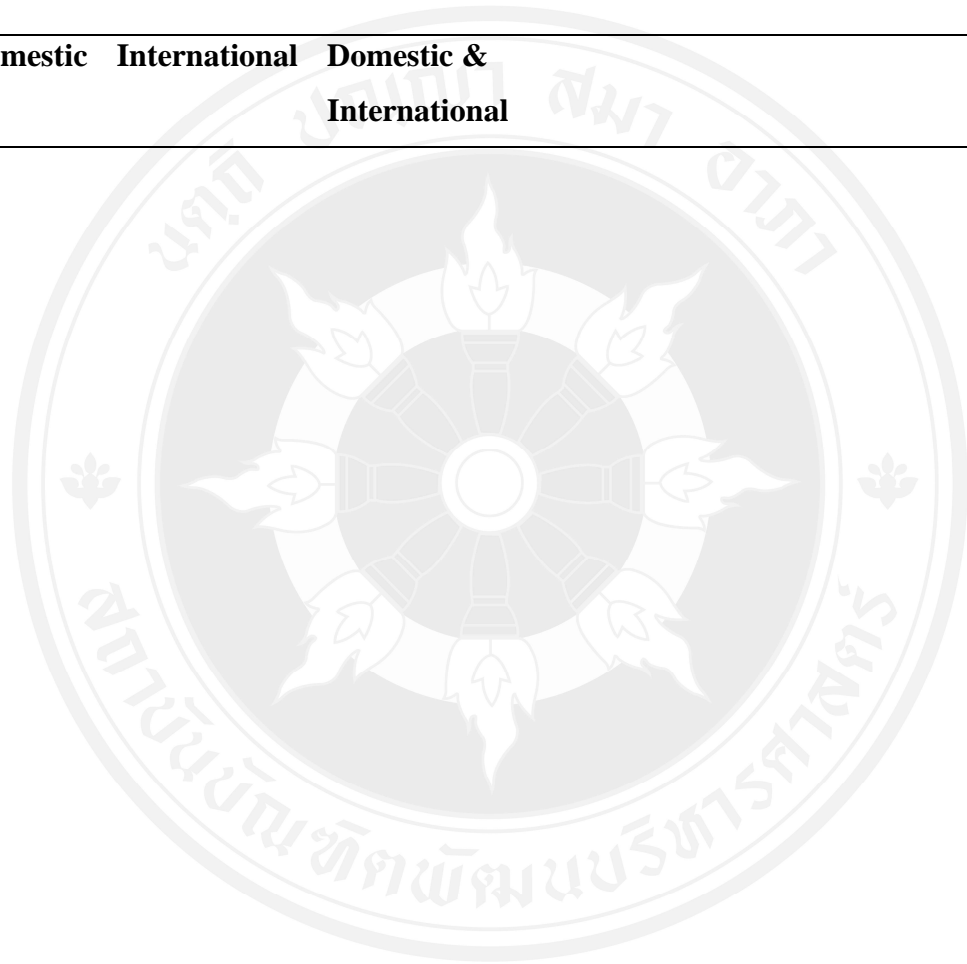
Authors	Sales Contexts			Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International		
Agnihotri et al. (2016)	×			Data were collected from 111 sales professionals in the U.S..	Salesperson's social media use is an antecedent of enhancing salesperson behaviors to increase customer satisfaction. Their social media use is found to enhance information communication behaviors, which improve salesperson responsiveness and customer satisfaction.

Authors	Sales Contexts			Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International		
Guesalaga (2016)	×			Data were collected from 220 B2B sales executives in the U.S..	Organizational competence and commitment with social media are key determinants of social media usage in sales, as well as individual commitment to it. Customer engagement with social media also predicts social media usage in sales, both directly and (mostly) through the individual and organizational factors analyzed,

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Järvinen and Taiminen (2016)			× Data were collected from 4marketing managers,2 sales managers,3 experts in a large global company headquartered in Finland.	especially organizational competence and commitment. The use of marketing automation (involves social media marketing) generates high quality sales leads through behavioral targeting and content personalization.
Lacoste (2016)		×	Data were collected from 40 largest French companies.	The research presents a model of how key account managers

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Quinton and Wilson (2016)			<p>× Data were collected from 554 dynamic interactions between professionals on selected LinkedIn wine groups and 12 interviews with wine industry experts across Australia, Asia, Europe, and U.S.</p>	<p>(KAM) use social media, its benefits and major issues. A key finding differentiates the use of social media by KAM versus salespeople, as KAMs do not rely on social media to nurture relationships</p> <p>The use of a particular professional social media platform LinkedIn helps develop business relationship and</p>

Authors	Sales Contexts	Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic International Domestic & International		<p>enhance business performance. Four key tensions and ties exist in the literature: relational versus transactional exchanges, emergent versus strategic social media network development, the pace of social media network formation versus the development of trust, and the notions of sharing and reciprocity</p>



Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Y. Wang et al. (2016)	×		Data were collected from 190 sellers in the U.S..	<p>versus competitive advantage.</p> <p>Sellers' social identity and social comparison are key factors motivating them to develop a series of co-innovation activities in an online community context (LinkedIn).</p>
Agnihotri et al. (2017)	×		Data were collected from 162 sales professional-customer dyads in India.	Salespeople using CRM technology in conjunction with

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Bocconcelli et al. (2017)			× Data were collected from an Italian SME machinery company with sales in both domestic (Italy) and foreign market.	social media are more likely to exhibit higher levels of salesperson service behaviors than their counterparts with low social media technology use. Social media is identified as an innovative resource in SMEs' sales process mainly with regard to first contact and communication activities, and a strategic resource to

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Charoensukmongkol × and Sasatanun (2017)			Data were collected from 217 owners of micro-enterprises in Thailand.	<p>implement an effective business networking effort.</p> <p>Entrepreneurs who used social media intensively for CRM tended to report higher satisfaction with their business performance. The positive relationship between social media use intensity for CRM and business performance satisfaction tended to be significantly higher</p>

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	
Itani et al. (2017)	×		Data were collected from 120 salesperson-supervisor dyads in India.	for the entrepreneurs who exhibited lower levels of social competency in business, as well as for the companies that generated more sales from social media. A salesperson's goal orientation and attitude toward social media interact to positively influence social media use. A salesperson's attitude toward social media usefulness, as

Authors	Sales Contexts			Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International		
Ogilvie et al. (2018)	×			Data were collected from 375 salespeople in the U.S..	well as a salesperson's learning orientation, will influence how much a salesperson uses social media to assist in day-to-day job tasks. Salespeople's social media technology use enhances their communication and adaptability behaviors.
Ainin et al. (2015)	×			Data were collected from 259 SMEs in Malaysia.	Factors such as compatibility, cost effectiveness and interactivity influence

Authors	Sales Contexts		Samples and Data Collection Methods	Research Findings
	Domestic	International	Domestic & International	<p>Facebook usage among sampled SMEs. Facebook usage positively influences SMEs' financial performance and non-financial performance regarding cost reduction on marketing and customer service, improved customer relations and improved information accessibility.</p>

Although there are many studies conducted on social media use in sales, (M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2016; Alarcón et al., 2015; Itani et al., 2017; Okazaki & Taylor, 2013), scholars have pointed out that there is a paucity of research about social media use in export sales (M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2016; Alarcón et al., 2015; Bocconcelli et al., 2017). They argued that social media can be a ‘panacea’ for export sales in that it helps overcome both time and spacial barriers in exporting contexts. Therefore, they called for more in-depth research about social media use in export sales (M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2016; Alarcón et al., 2015; Mathews, Healy, & Wickramasekera, 2012).

On the other hand, facing the dominant U.S.-based research about social media use in sales, scholars like Okazaki & Taylor (2013) and Itani et al. (2017) have addressed the importance of more relevant research in the non-U.S. contexts. Berthon et al. (2012) argues that the popularity of social media types and how social media are used in a particular country are determined by technology (such as the availability of bandwidth and its speed), culture (shared norms and values) and government (institutional rules and regulations about social media). They hold that social media usage must be adapted to different markets so that cultural factors should be taken into account. In other words, the strategies of social media use applicable in domestic sales contexts in a given country may not work in international sales contexts or in another country. Therefore, more in-depth research about social media use in sales in the non-U.S. contexts are needed to have a whole picture about social media use in sales worldwide (Itani et al., 2017; Okazaki & Taylor, 2013).

Scholars who reviewed research in this area also addressed the importance of selecting salespeople from BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) for research about social media use in sales (Itani et al., 2017; LaPlaca, 2011). They hold that BRICS have exhibited the fastest growing economic growth in the world and are “responsible of a considerable part of the goods and services consumed globally and

intensely trade with one another” (LaPlaca, 2011, p.2). Studies about salespeople from any of the BRICS countries are supposed to provide valuable implications for managers interested in understanding the sales management process in non-western settings (Itani et al., 2017). In response to calls for more research in BRICS, this study focuses on social media use of salesperson in China, which is one of the major BRICS nations. Moreover, China is suitable for research about social media use in export selling because it has the largest number of active social media users in the world (WeChat, 2019) and implements an export-oriented economic development policy (Yan, Wickramasekera, & Tan, 2018) . To the best of the author’s knowledge, this research is among the early studies to explore the working mechanism of the possible impact of Chinese export salespeople’s social media use in sales on their performance. This study views salesperson performance as the main dependent variable and will review literature about it in the next section.

2.2 Salesperson’s Performance

Salesperson’s performance refers to the sales results that a salesperson achieves through the deployment of effort and skills (E. Anderson & Oliver, 1987; Román & Iacobucci, 2010). In general, it is a multi-dimensional concept (A. T. Barker, 1999; Kwak, Anderson, Leigh, & Bonifield, 2019; Oliver & Anderson, 1994; Panagopoulos & Avlonitis, 2010) and is often measured and reflected through two dimensions which are (1) outcome performance and (2) behavior performance (E. Anderson & Oliver, 1987; Babakus, Cravens, Grant, Ingram, & LaForge, 1996; Baldauf & Cravens, 2002; Madhani, 2015). The outcome performance represents what a salesperson produces in terms of his contribution to organizational goals (e.g. sales unit, quota achievement, market share, increases in sales productivity, and dollar volume etc.) (E. Anderson & Oliver, 1987; Babakus et al., 1996; Behrman & Perreault Jr, 1982).Scholars also use terms like salesperson outcome-based

performance (Rodriguez & Honeycutt Jr, 2011; Rodriguez et al., 2013), sales performance (Agnihotri et al., 2016; Banin et al., 2016) or job performance (R. E. Anderson et al., 2005) to express a similar meaning. Behavior performance refers to what a salesperson does, i.e., behaviors in meeting his job responsibilities (E. Anderson & Oliver, 1987; Behrman & Perreault Jr, 1982; Piercy, Cravens, & Lane, 2012). Example activities of behavior performance include sales planning, sales report, sales presentation, the use of technical knowledge and teamwork etc. (Babakus et al., 1996; Behrman & Perreault Jr, 1982).

Later, realizing the importance of customer retention and closer customer relationships in relational sales contexts, Hunter and Perreault Jr (2007) further decomposed the behavior dimension of salesperson's performance into administrative performance and relationship-building performance with customer. According to Hunter and Perreault Jr (2007), administrative performance refers to a salesperson's ability to complete his or her required non-selling related activities in a timely manner, such as submitting required reports to managers on time. Relationship-building performance with customer refers to the extent to which a salesperson performs activities to cultivate a relationship that mutually benefits the selling and buying firms. Alternative terms in sales literature are relationship performance (Rodriguez et al., 2013) and customer relationship performance (Agnihotri et al., 2012; Ogilvie et al., 2018). This study will hereafter use relationship performance for conciseness and clearness. In comparison, outcome performance and relationship performance are more customer-centric and externally focused behaviors whereas administrative performance is non-customer-centric and more internally focused (Geiger & Turley, 2006; Hunter & Perreault Jr, 2007; Zallocco, Bolman Pullins, & Mallin, 2009). Therefore, they draw different levels of attention from scholars with diverse research focus and the choice of specific dimensions of salesperson performance varies across studies.

Sales literature finds a plethora of research focuses on outcome dimension of salesperson's performance (e.g. Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015; Rapp, Agnihotri, and Forbes, 2008; Brown & Peterson, 1993; Schultz et al., 2012; Nowlin, Walker, & Anaza, 2018 ; Challagalla & Shervani, 1996; Cravens , Ingram, LaForge, & Young, 1993; Fred Miao & Evans, 2007; Jaramillo & Grisaffe, 2009; Pettijohn , Pettijohn, & Taylor, 2007; Sujan , Weitz, & Kumar, 1994; Jones, Chonko, Rangarajan, & Roberts, 2007; Keillor , Stephen Parker, & Pettijohn, 2000; Miao & Evans, 2013). To name a few, Rapp, Agnihotri, and Forbes (2008) regard the outcome-based measure of percentage of quota as salesperson's performance when they examine the impact of sales technology usage on salesperson's performance. By the same token, Schultz et al. (2012) investigated the impact of B2B salespeople's social media use on their outcome performance and they operationalized it as the extent to which salespeople achieve their sales objectives. Outcome performance attracts the most attention from scholars in that the major percentage of a firm's revenue comes from the act of selling, and outcome performance is tantamount to a firm's overall success. Hence, it is often regarded as one of the most important indicators to measure a salesperson's performance (E. Anderson & Oliver, 1987; Cravens et al., 1993; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1993; Piercy et al., 2012).

Apart from the overwhelming concern about outcome performance, other scholars use different combinations of dimensions to measure salesperson's performance according to their distinctive research objective or focus. For example, Hunter and Perreault Jr (2007) emphasized the importance of relationship-forging tasks in a relational sales context and focused on relationship and administrative dimensions to investigate the influence of sales technology use on salesperson's performance. In Sundaram, Schwarz, Jones, and Chin (2007)'s study, they addressed the importance of information technology in salespeople's expertise and focused on how salespeople's information technology use can improve their performance. They

defined salesperson's performance in terms of IT-enabled administrative performance and IT-enabled sales performance. The former refers to the extent to which the information technology affects the quality of the salesperson's administrative tasks such as call planning and time and expense management. The latter is operationalized as the extent to which the information technology affects the quality of the salesperson's ability to produce key sales results such as exceeding the sales targets and selling high-profit margin products etc. Though the two definitions are more specific to performance related to information technology, they still focus on outcome and administrative dimensions of salesperson's performance.

Given that the objective of the present study is to examine whether social media use contributes to salesperson's performance, this study focuses on outcome and relationship dimensions. Such a practice has been adopted by previous sales scholars (Rodriguez et al., 2013). For example, when examining the social media usage's impact on B2B sales performance, Rodriguez et al. (2013) decomposed the sales performance into two constructs: outcome-based sales performance and relationship sales performance. Their research finds that salespeople's social media use contributes to their relationship sales performance but not outcome-based sales performance.

Based on prior researchers' findings, this study argues that factors like adaptive selling behavior, salesperson's customer-qualification skill and CQ may have an impact on salesperson's performance (Itani et al., 2017; Ogilvie et al., 2018; Pandey & Charoensukmongkol, 2019; Román & Iacobucci, 2010). The following part will review literature about adaptive selling behavior, salesperson's customer-qualification skill and CQ in sequence.

2.3 Adaptive Selling Behaviors

2.3.1 Definition of Adaptive Selling Behaviors

Weitz et al. (1986) defined the adaptive selling behaviors as “the altering of sales behaviors during a customer interaction or across customer interactions based on perceived information about the nature of the selling situation” (p.175). Salespeople who use the “canned” or the standardized sales presentation across sales encounters exhibit a low level of adaptive selling, whereas those who adjust to make different sales presentations during the sales encounters show a high level of adaptive selling (Spiro & Weitz, 1990). In sales encounters, salespeople need to take a series of steps to perform adaptive selling behaviors. Weitz (1978) summarized five major steps in sales processes and proposed an ISTEAsales process model to delineate how salespeople make adjustments in sales processes. According to the model, salespeople undertake the following five activities: impression formulation(I), strategy formulation (S), transmitting messages (T), evaluating reactions (E), and making appropriate adjustments (A). An illustration of ISTEAsales process is introduced as follows.

ISTEAsales process model starts with the impression formation activity. At this step, a salesperson develops his initial impression of the potential prospect for the first interaction according to the information derived from past experience or by observing the prospect during the interaction (Weitz, 1978). Then, according to the impression he develops about the customer, the salesperson develops a communication strategy by choosing a strategic objective and formulating specific message formats and methods to achieve it (Weitz, 1978). Next, the salesperson communicates the messages to the customer, implementing the selected communication strategy (Weitz, 1978). After this, the salesperson will evaluate the effect of the strategy implementation by observing the customer’s reactions and

soliciting his opinions. If the strategic objective is not achieved, the salesperson will make adjustments to change his communication strategy (Weitz, 1981). During interactions, he may need to modify his impression, change implementation method, and alter communication style based on the evaluation of previous interactions (Weitz, 1978). The salesperson keeps making iterative adjustments during interactions, trying to achieve his objective (Spiro & Weitz, 1990). Figure 2.1 summarizes the ISTEAs sales process model in a flow chart.

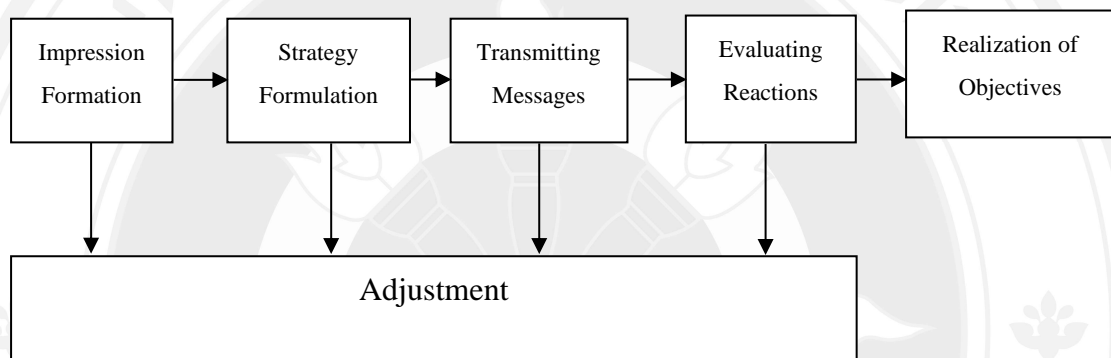


Figure 2.1 ISTEAs Sales Process Model

Source: Adapted from Weitz (1978)

However, as Spiro and Weitz (1990) pointed out, adaptive selling behavior can be undertaken in an effective and an ineffective way. That is to say, adaptive selling behavior does not necessarily guarantee effectiveness of the sales behavior, nor its benefits would outweigh its costs for sure. Literature has documented mixed research findings about the effectiveness of adaptive selling behavior (Ahearne, Jelinek, & Rapp, 2005). The following part will present a detailed review about outcomes of adaptive selling behavior.

2.3.2 Outcomes of Adaptive Selling Behaviors

Regarding outcomes of adaptive selling behaviors, scholars have explored the contribution of adaptive selling behavior to sales people's performance (Chakrabarty, Widing, & Brown, 2014; Y.-c. Chen, Rivas, & Wu, 2018; Franke & Park, 2006; Itani et al., 2017; Robinson Jr, Marshall, & Stamps, 2005; Sujana et al., 1994; Weitz et al., 1986), salespeople's job satisfaction (Chakrabarty et al., 2014; Franke & Park, 2006; Robinson Jr et al., 2005), customer loyalty (C.-C. Chen & Jaramillo, 2014), customer satisfaction (Román & Iacobucci, 2010), rapport building (Kaski, Niemi, & Pullins, 2018; Weitz, 1981), empathy (Limbu, Jayachandran, Babin, & Peterson, 2016), and trust and so on (Guenzi, De Luca, & Spiro, 2016). Among these outcomes, sales scholars like Simintiras, Ifie, Watkins, and Georgakas (2013) and Román and Iacobucci (2010) claim that one primary benefit of adaptive selling behavior is the improved sales performance. A large body of research has explored the impact of adaptive selling behavior on sales performance and most researchers have found direct or indirect positive relationships between them in various contexts (e.g. Weitz et al., 1986; Franke & Park, 2006; Robins et al, 2005; Chakrabarty, Widing, & Brown, 2014; Itani et al, 2017; Román & Iacobucci, 2010). For example, Franke and Park (2006) made a meta-analysis about previous research findings related to the impact of adaptive selling behavior on sales performance. Their meta-analysis research concluded that native English-speaking sales force's adaptive selling behaviors do make a direct contribution to the self-rated, manager-rated, and objective measures of sale performance. Despite this, when Kaynak, Kara, Chow, and Laukkanen (2016) made a cross-country comparison about the impact of salespeople's adaptive selling behaviors on their sales performance, they found a direct relationship between them in the sample of salespersons located in Macau; however, the relationship between adaptive selling behaviors and sales performance was mediated by salesperson satisfaction for the sample of salespersons in Finland. Interestingly, even in the same

industry in different countries, scholars reported totally different research findings about the impact of adaptive selling behavior on salespeople's performance (Abu ELSamen & Akroush, 2018; R. Singh & Das, 2013). For instance, in the context of insurance industry in Jordan, Abu ELSamen and Akroush (2018)'s research found only adaptive selling behavior is not adequate for explaining salespeople's performance and the positive relationship between them must be connected by customer orientation. However, in the same industry in India, R. Singh and Das (2013)'s research found that although customer orientation plays an important middleman role in the positive effect of adaptive selling behavior on salespeople's performance, adaptive selling behavior alone can contribute to salespeople's performance to some extent.

In addition to research findings showing the direct and indirect impacts of adaptive selling on salespeople' performance, a small number of studies found no significant relationship between them (e.g. Ahearne et al, 2005; Pettijohn , Pettijohn, Keillor, & Taylor, 2000; Keillor, Parker & Pettijohn, 2000). For example, Ahearne et al. (2005)'s research found that salespeople's adaptive selling behaviors bear no significant relationship with their job performance measured by the level of sales quota achieved. Pettijohn et al. (2000)'s research also noted that salespeople's adaptive selling behavior is only related to their own rated performance and customer-rated performance of salespersons, but it is not related to salespersons' objective performance measured by sales volume. One possible reason to explain the mixed results about the impact of adaptive selling behavior on salesperson's performance can be sales contexts. In other words, whether and to what extent adaptive selling will contribute to salespeople's performance may be highly contingent on sales context (Keillor et al., 2000).

2.3.3 Antecedents of Adaptive Selling Behavior

To better understand factors impacting salespeople's adaptive selling behavior and contingent factors improving or impeding its effectiveness in various sales situations, sales scholars have identified a plethora of antecedents of adaptive selling behavior from the perspective of characteristics of firms and characteristics of salespeople (e.g. Weitz et al., 1986; Franke and Park, 2006). Literature shows that characteristics of firms like the guidance of corporate management, sales management policies, salesperson-manager relationship quality and behavior-based control system in terms of monitoring, directing, rewarding and evaluation are predictors of salespeople's adaptive selling behaviors (e.g., Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Grant & Cravens, 1996; Piercy, Cravens, & Morgan, 1998; Rapp, Ahearne, Mathieu, & Schillewaert, 2006; Rapp et al., 2008; DelVecchio, 1998; Park & Holloway, 2003). On the other hand, characteristics of salespeople such as salespeople's knowledge, goal orientation, learning orientation, selling abilities, motives, introspection and Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and customer qualification skills have been identified as antecedents of salespeople's adaptive selling. (e.g., Kadic -Maglajlic, Vida, Obadia, & Plank, 2016; Giacobbe, Jackson Jr, Crosby, & Bridges, 2006; Porter & Inks, 2000; Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Boorum, Goolsby, & Ramsey, 1998; Levy & Sharma, 1994; Park & Holloway, 2003; Spiro & Weitz, 1990; Sujan et al., 1994; Verbeke, Belschak, & Bagozzi, 2004).

In recent years, as information technology has developed fast and exerted great influence on people's life and work, its influence has penetrated the sales industry as well (Ahearne et al., 2008). Information technology has been used by salespeople in their job (Ahearne et al., 2008). One typical example of such technology is sales force automation tools, which can be used for sales forecasting, leads management, CRM and sales management (Tanner Jr, Ahearne, Leigh, Mason, & Moncrief, 2005). Given this, sales scholars begin to explore the influence of

information technology in the sales industry (Ahearne et al., 2008; Jones, Brown, Zoltners, & Weitz, 2005; Tanner Jr et al., 2005). In personal selling, sales scholars contend that technology alone is not enough for a salesperson to reap good sales performance. Technology works by influencing a salesperson's behavior first (Ahearne et al., 2008). A stream of sales scholars focuses on the exploration of the influence of information technology on salespeople's behaviors (Ahearne et al., 2008; Robinson Jr et al., 2005). To be specific, salespeople's use of information technology to assist in performing sales tasks has been identified as predictors of their adaptive selling behaviors and effort (Itani et al., 2017; Rapp et al., 2008). For instance, Rapp et al. (2008) reported that the usage of health-care CRM technology tools facilitated adaptive selling behaviors of American salespeople. Recently, in view of the pervasiveness of social media, sales scholars have explored the influence of salespeople's social media use in sales on their behaviors (Itani et al., 2017; Ogilvie et al., 2018). Their studies find that salespeople's social media use in sales is beneficial to the improvement of their adaptive selling behaviors in Indian and American sales contexts. Following this stream of research, this study will retest the effect of social media use in sales on adaptive selling behaviors in Chinese export selling.

All in all, literature shows not only characteristics of the firms and salespeople are identified as antecedents of adaptive selling behaviors, but also salespeople's and firms' integration of information technology in selling can be factors influencing salespeople's adaptive selling behaviors, which warrants up-to-date research due to the continuous advancement of information technology (Ahearne et al., 2008).

2.4 Salesperson's Customer Qualification Skills

When salespeople interact with customers in personal selling, they need to process lots of information about customers and selling environment (A. Sharma & Levy, 1995). To aid in information processing, salespeople need to acquire some basic skills to make this process efficient so that they can quickly identify customers' needs and buying intentions. Salesperson's customer qualification skill is such a basic skill necessary for a salesperson to make his devotion of time and effort efficient and worthwhile. The reason supporting this argument is that customer qualification skill helps reduce the complexity of the selling proposition and communications and "free up" salespeople's mental capacity (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015; Sujan, Sujan, & Bettman, 1988).

According to Román and Iacobucci (2010), salesperson's customer qualification skills refer to a salesperson's learned proficiency to qualify or categorize prospects and customers. To be specific, it is a salesperson's ability to identify and categorize different types of customers, their associated products and selling requirements. In nature, this skill is based on categorization, a cognitive ability fundamental to human beings (A. Sharma & Levy, 1995). In selling, the customer typology based on categorization can help salespeople predict customers' preferences or likely behaviors (Román & Iacobucci, 2010). The underlying assumption of this typology is that people of a certain type will behave in a manner consistent with that of other members of a similar category (Szymanski, 1988; Szymanski and Churchill, 1990).

When salespeople are interacting with customers, whether their categorization about a customer is correct or not depends on the level of their customer qualification skills (Weitz et al., 1986). Further, their categorization about customers are based on the cues from incoming information during interactions with customers (Román & Iacobucci, 2010). Salespeople with a high level of customer qualification skills are likely to make more accurate typology of customers by categorizing sales encounters according to attributes suggesting appropriate selling strategies, whereas salespeople with a low level of customer qualification skills are likely to classify customers according to attributes which suggest surface similarities between customers, such as their titles, gender, styles of dress, or position in firms (Weitz et al., 1986). The accurate typology of customers helps salespeople identify and analyze customers' needs, thereby helping salespeople to have a better understanding about customers' buying motives as well as allowing them to make a better prediction about customers' buying behaviors accordingly (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015; A. Sharma & Levy, 1995). Therefore, a salesperson with a high level of customer qualification skills is characterized with a more accurate classification of customers and a better understanding about customer requirements (Román & Iacobucci, 2010).

Factors influencing a salesperson's customer qualification skills include firm's customer orientation, salesperson's intrinsic motivation and salesperson's information technology use (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015). For instance, in Román and Rodríguez (2015)'s research, they drew on Job Demand-Resource (JDR) theory to explore the influence of salespeople's information technology use on customer qualification skills. According to the JDR theory, job resources can play an intrinsic motivational potential to foster employees' growth, learning and performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Following the theory, the authors regarded sales automation information technology as a kind of job resource available for salespeople

and customer qualification skills as salespeople's learning. The authors argued that salespeople's information technology use helps improve their customer qualification skills because they can take full advantages of computerized memory of customer information to categorize customers and their needs. Their research findings support their argument and confirm the positive contribution of salespeople's information technology use to their customer qualification skills (Román & Rodríguez, 2015).

In terms of the outcome of salesperson's customer qualification skill, previous studies have explored its important role in improving customer-oriented selling, adaptive selling behavior and salesperson's outcome performance as well (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015). For instance, Román and Rodriguez (2015) utilized skills-behavior-performance framework to examine the influence of salespersons' customer qualification skills on their customer-oriented selling and outcome performance. They argued that because salespeople with stronger customer qualification skills have a more appropriate typology of customers and better understanding of customers' needs, they can better practice customer-oriented selling by proposing appropriate solutions to meet customers' needs. In this way, they are more likely to perform customer-oriented selling and reap good outcome performance. So, customer-qualification skill is critical and necessary for salespeople to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in their personal selling (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015).

2.5 Cultural Intelligence

In nature, personal selling is a personal communication in which a salesperson seeks to inform buyers about products and services in an exchange situation (Pride & Ferrell, 2008). However, in export selling, as cultural differences between countries may cause misunderstanding, conflict and disintegration, they pose great threats and barriers for a salesperson to make this personal communication proceed smoothly

(Hofstede, 2001; Sozbilir & Yesil, 2016). There is a widely acknowledged complexity of managing cross-cultural communication effectively (Ang & Inkpen, 2008). Recently, cultural intelligence (CQ), a vital cross-cultural competency, has been proposed for individuals to deal with this complexity in cross-cultural communication (Charoensukmongkol, 2016a; Sozbilir & Yesil, 2016). CQ is a multi-facet concept targeted at situations involving cross-cultural interactions arising from differences in race, ethnicity and nationality (Ang et al., 2007). Scholars have argued that it is an important skill for everyone involved in cross-cultural settings (Ang et al., 2008; D. Thomas & Inkson, 2004).

The term cultural intelligence (CQ) was first formally introduced by Earley and Ang in 2003. Based on Sternberg and Detterman (1986)'s theories about intelligence, they regarded CQ as a multi-dimension conceptual construct and defined it as an individual's capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts (Earley & Ang, 2003). Ever since their introduction of the concept, different scholars have proposed their own definitions from different perspectives (D. Thomas & Inkson, 2004; D. C. Thomas et al., 2008) For instance, D. C. Thomas et al. (2008) drew on theories about intelligence, social cognition and cross cultural interactions to stress CQ as a system of interacting abilities. They defined it as "a system of interacting knowledge and skills, linked by cultural metacognition, which allows people to adapt to, select, and shape the cultural aspects of their environment." (Thomas et al., 2008, p.127) They posited only three constituent components of CQ, i.e. cultural knowledge, cross-cultural skills and cultural metacognition. In view of the wide acceptance of Earley & Ang (2003)'s definition about CQ in management research (Charoensukmongkol, 2015a, 2016a; Hansen et al., 2011; D. C. Thomas et al., 2008), this study keeps in alignment with prior researchers and adopts Earley & Ang (2003)'s ideas for hypothesis development.

According to Earley & Ang (2003), CQ is an aggregate multidimensional construct and consists of four dimensions which are cognitive CQ, metacognitive CQ, motivational CQ, and behavioral CQ. These four dimensions individually represent different capabilities and together form the overall CQ (Ang et al., 2008). Detailed meanings of the four constituent components of CQ are introduced as follows.

Cognitive CQ refers to an individual's level of cultural knowledge or knowledge of the cultural environment (Ang et al., 2008). Cultural knowledge or knowledge of the cultural environment consists of norms, practices and conventions in different cultures like economic, legal, sociolinguistic, and interpersonal systems of different cultures, subcultures and knowledge of basic frameworks of cultural values (Hofstede, 2001). People equipped with high levels of cognitive CQ will better understand different societies' culture and better appreciate the systems that shape and cause specific patterns of social interaction within a culture, consequently, they will have better interactions with people from a culturally different society (Hansen et al., 2011). It is worth noting that although cognitive CQ refers to knowledge about different cultures, it is not only confined to knowledge about a specific culture but indicates knowledge of cultural universals and knowledge of cultural differences as well (Ang et al., 2007). Cognitive CQ can be acquired in direct ways like from personal experiences and in indirect ways like from educational experiences (Ang et al., 2008).

Metacognitive CQ refers to an individual's level of conscious cultural awareness during cross-cultural interactions (Ang et al., 2008). It involves control over one's cognition or thought processes (Ang et al., 2007). It promotes individuals' information processing at a deeper cognitive level and helps them develop new models, rules and knowledge for social interaction in novel cultural environments (Earley & Ang, 2003). Relevant capabilities of metacognitive CQ include planning, monitoring, and revising one's own mental models of cultural norms for different

countries or groups of people (Ang et al., 2007). Metacognitive CQ is regarded as a critical component of CQ as it involves people's deeper mental processing and active thinking about similarities and differences between cultures, doubts about previous thinking and assumptions bounded on their own cultures (Ang et al., 2008). These mental activities may trigger individuals to alter or adjust their own thinking and behaviors about appropriateness in intercultural communication (Triandis, 2006). People with a high level of meta-cognitive CQ will consciously think about their own cultural assumptions, different societies' cultural preference and norms, reflect their own behavior in cross cultural interactions, and adjust their cultural knowledge when interacting with people from different cultures so that they will achieve desired outcomes in cross cultural interactions (Ang et al., 2008). The difference between meta-cognitive CQ and cognitive CQ is that the former emphasizes conscious cognitive processes in human brain, but the latter focuses on cultural knowledge itself. Cognitive CQ can be a part of content which the mental processing activities base on. In this sense, cognitive CQ is also a critical component of CQ as it may serve as a basis of other components of CQ.

Motivational CQ reflects the capability to direct attention and energy toward learning about and functioning in situations characterized by cultural differences (Ang et al., 2008). People with a high level of motivational CQ will be more likely and more readily in psychology to learn and engage in cross-cultural interaction when confronted with conflicts in different cultural situations (X.-P. Chen, Liu, & Portnoy, 2012). According to the expectancy-value theory of motivation (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), when individuals are performing a task, the expectation of successfully accomplishing the task and the value associated with accomplishing it will channel the direction and magnitude of energy to the completion of the task. Facing with novel situations in different societies, to successfully adapt to new cultures, people need to direct their attention and energy to solve various problems caused by cultural

differences (Earley & Ang, 2003). It is another critical component of CQ as it serves as a source of drive or motivation to know about other cultures. As an intrinsic interest, it triggers people's attention and energy to flow towards functioning in novel cultural settings (Ang et al., 2008).

Behavioral CQ refers to the capability to exhibit appropriate verbal and nonverbal actions when interacting with people from different cultures (Ang et al., 2008). When individuals with behavioral CQ are interacting directly in a face-to-face way with people in cross-cultural settings, they usually behave correspondingly by observing their counterparts' verbal and nonverbal behaviors (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008). Their behavioral CQ will help them exhibit verbal and nonverbal actions and transforms their perception and motivations into immediate actions (Ang et al., 2007). Together with the other three components of CQ (cognitive CQ about cultural knowledge, meta-cognitive CQ about mental processing and motivational CQ about intrinsic interest and motivations), behavioral CQ is the last but critical dimension to generate individuals' active engagement or involvement in cross-cultural adaptation. It is the power that transforms the willingness, motivation and intrinsic interest into salient actions or behaviors (Hansen et al., 2011).

The appropriateness of an individual's behavior in cross-cultural interactions bears a close relationship with all four components of CQ (Ang et al., 2008). Therefore, although Earley and Ang's (2003) theories hold that the above four components of CQ are qualitatively different dimensions of the overall capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings, it is implied that the overall CQ construct may be best conceptualized as an aggregate multidimensional construct (Ang et al., 2008).

As an intercultural competence, CQ has been mostly studied in research relevant to intercultural communication settings (Ang et al., 2008; Earley & Ang, 2003). Typically, previous CQ studies mainly choose international students, expatriates, global managers and employees in MNEs as their research objects, because these people's life and work involve a lot of intercultural communication activities in host countries (Adair, Hideg, & Spence, 2013; Ang & Van Dyne, 2015; Moon, 2010). For international students, CQ has been found to have a positive relationship with their task performance (Ang et al., 2007), adaptive performance (Oolders, Chernyshenko, & Stark, 2008), cross-cultural adjustment (Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012), general and interaction adjustment (A. S.-y. Chen, Wu, & Bian, 2014), intention to work abroad (Remhof, Gunkel, & Schlägel, 2013), intercultural cooperation (Mor, Morris, & Joh, 2013), intercultural negotiations and negotiation outcomes (Groves, Feyerherm, & Gu, 2015), mental health (Ahmadi, Hoseini, & Hoseini, 2017), individual creativity (Hu, Wu, & Gu, 2017), language learning strategy (Rachmawaty, Wello, Akil, & Dollah, 2018) and EQ (Rahmatsyah Putranto, Nuraeni, Gustomo, & Ghazali, 2018). For expatriates, CQ has also been found to show a positive impact on their expatriate performance (L.-Y. Lee & Sukoco, 2010), job performance and effectiveness (L.-Y. Lee, Veasna, & Wu, 2013), general, interaction and work adjustment (Huff, Song, & Gresch, 2014; Malek & Budhwar, 2013). For global managers and employees in MNEs, extant studies have documented that CQ helps reduce anxiety (Bücker, Furrer, Poutsma, & Buyens, 2014; Suthatorn & Charoensukmongkol, 2018), enhance their communication effectiveness and job satisfaction (Bücker et al., 2014), promote cross-border leadership (Rockstuhl, Seiler, Ang, Van Dyne, & Annen, 2011), enhance cultural judgement, decision-making, and task performance (Ang et al., 2007), improve intercultural creative collaboration (Chua, Morris, & Mor, 2012), enhance job performance and cross-cultural job satisfaction (Barakat et al., 2015; Sozbilir & Yesil, 2016), facilitate life satisfaction

and career engagement (Le, Jiang, & Nielsen, 2018), increase creativity (Castañeda, Huang, & Avalos, 2018; Yunlu, Clapp-Smith, & Shaffer, 2017), develop entrepreneurship (Baltacı, 2017), and improve intercultural negotiation effectiveness (Imai & Gelfand, 2010).

In a word, academia has identified CQ as an important ability necessary in intercultural interaction settings and proved its positive impact in international business success (Crowne, 2008). However, despite that CQ is powerful in explaining intercultural communication effectiveness (Ang et al., 2007), limited research has touched upon the impact of salespeople's CQ on their intercultural selling activities or performance (Charoensukmongkol, 2019b; C.-C. Chen & Jaramillo, 2014; Pandey & Charoensukmongkol, 2019). Three exceptions are Pandey and Charoensukmongkol (2019)'s, Charoensukmongkol (2019b)'s and X.-P. Chen et al. (2012)'s research. Pandey and Charoensukmongkol (2019) and Charoensukmongkol (2019b) research explicitly targets on export selling and investigates the impact of CQ on Thai salespeople's adaptive selling behavior at international trade shows. X.-P. Chen et al. (2012)'s research focuses on an intercultural selling in America. The authors investigated the impact of American realtors' behavioral CQ on their sales performances when they sell real estate to buyers coming from diverse cultural origins. Their research found that motivational CQ helps increase American realtors' sales performance in intercultural selling. Despite its limitation in considering only one dimension of CQ, their research finding anticipates a positive role of salespeople's CQ in export selling. Given the prior evidence about the contribution of CQ in cross-cultural situations, especially in intercultural sales, this study argues that CQ might play an important role in export selling via social media.

2.6 Theories

This part will introduce two theories supporting the hypothesis development of this study which are adaptive selling theory and categorization theory. Adaptive selling theory will be introduced first as it offers theoretical support for the main conceptual framework of this research. This theory is used to explain the impact of social media use in sales, customer qualification skills, and CQ on adaptive selling behavior and salesperson performance. Then, categorization theory is introduced to explain the mediating role of customer qualification skills in the effect of social media use and CQ on adaptive selling behaviors and salesperson performance.

2.6.1 Adaptive Selling Theory

Adaptive selling theory, also called adaptation theory, is a theoretical framework proposed by Weitz et al. (1986) in their seminal research about adaptive selling framework (Arli, Bauer, & Palmatier, 2018; Giacobbe, Jackson Jr, Crosby, & Bridges, 2006). The theory centers on a specific ability of salesperson, i.e. adaptive selling behavior (Weitz et al., 1986). The underlying reason why adaptive selling behavior has attracted great attention lies in the consensus between both academia and practitioners that there is no single best way to sell in view of the great complexity and uncertainty of sales encounters (Weitz et al., 1986). Salespeople should be adaptive enough in selling processes and adopt a contingency sales strategy based on their understanding about the characteristics of customers and sales situations (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Viio & Grönroos, 2016; Weitz, 1978, 1981).

According to Weitz et al. (1986), the main arguments of the theory consist of three parts. The first part involves the positive outcome of adaptive selling behavior on salesperson's performance improvement and the moderating role of environmental conditions and salesperson's capabilities in the effect of adaptive selling behavior on

salesperson's performance. Weitz et al. (1986) argued that only when selling environment and salespeople's capabilities result in benefits outweighing the costs of practicing adaptive selling behavior, adaptive selling behavior will lead to improved sales performance. The second part involves the role of salesperson's characteristics as antecedents of adaptive selling behavior. The third part is concerned about the role of sales management variables as the antecedents of salesperson's characteristics. Scholars regard salespersons' characteristics as first-level contingencies and sales situations as second-order contingencies (Giacobbe et al., 2006; Spiro & Weitz, 1990; Weitz, 1981; Weitz et al., 1986). Both first-order and second-order contingencies influence the effectiveness of adaptive selling behavior (Giacobbe et al., 2006).

Specifically, this theory holds that salesperson's characteristics comprises two major factors: a salesperson's motivation to practice adaptive selling behavior and his capabilities. A salesperson's motivation to practice adaptive selling behavior includes intrinsic reward orientation and strategy attribution (Weitz et al., 1986). For sales management, factors like non-contingent rewards, cognitive feedback, self-management and organizational culture facilitate the development of intrinsic reward orientation; and factors like environmental cues, cognitive feedback provided by managers and self-management are related to the salesperson's tendency to make strategy attributions (Weitz et al., 1986). On the other hand, salesperson's capabilities consist of his abilities and skills (Weitz et al., 1986). Factors like training and selection can help improve a salesperson's abilities and skills (Weitz et al., 1986). Salespersons' capabilities can motivate the practice of adaptive selling behavior. Moreover, the higher level of capabilities a salesperson has, the more improvement of sales performance his adaptive selling behaviors will contribute to (Weitz et al., 1986).

The great contribution the adaptive selling framework has made to personal selling lies in its emphasis on the effect of salespersons' adaptive selling behavior on sales performance. Such an emphasis is significant because adaptive selling behavior is a factor which an individual salesperson can control and improve by effort (Sujan et al., 1994). Another significance of the adaptive selling framework is that it provides a comprehensive framework by identifying characteristics of salesperson as the antecedents of adaptive selling behavior and salesperson's performance as the consequence of adaptive selling behavior (Arli et al., 2018). The analysis about sales management variables also offers valuable guidance and inspirations for both academia and practitioners in sales and marketing fields to better understand how sales management can contribute to the improvement of an individual salesperson's sales performance from the perspective of sales management. Ever since Weitz et al. (1986)'s introduction of adaptive selling framework, adaptation theory gained its momentum in its development (Giacobbe et al., 2006). Up to now, it has become one of the most influential and prominent theories in sales and marketing fields and has been extensively investigated (Franke & Park, 2006; Kaptein, McFarland, & Parvinen, 2018; Román & Iacobucci, 2010).

As has been discussed in the literature review about adaptive selling, numerous sales and marketing scholars have provided empirical evidence supporting the main arguments of the adaptive selling framework, and further enriched the scope of antecedents or determinants of adaptive selling behavior by identifying more factors about characteristics of salesperson and the sales organizations (Chakrabarty, Brown, Widing, & Taylor, 2004; Franke & Park, 2006; Giacobbe et al., 2006; Levy & Sharma, 1994; Park & Holloway, 2003; Pettijohn et al., 2000; Simintiras et al., 2013). For instance, Giacobbe et al. (2006) followed the adaptive selling framework to view salespeople's characteristics as first-order contingencies and operationalized salespeople's characteristics as their empathic ability toward the buyer, cue perception

ability, presentation modifying skills and knowledge (operationalized as selling experience). Meanwhile, they regard selling situations as second-order contingencies and identified two selling contexts as selling situations which are “adaptive” contexts and “nonadaptive” contexts. They define the “adaptive” contexts as more complex and high demanding selling contexts, e.g., when the offering of goods is complex or customers’ needs change considerably. The “nonadaptive” contexts are in the opposite condition to “adaptive” contexts. They investigated the role of these contingencies on the effect of adaptive selling behavior on sales performance. Their empirical research findings supported the positive role of adaptive selling behavior on sales performance in both “adaptive” and “non-adaptive” selling contexts. Their research also identified the studied salesperson characteristics as determinants of salesperson’s intention to practice adaptive selling behaviors. Their research strengthened the power of the framework and offered more inspirations for further research.

This study uses adaptive selling framework as its theoretical support for hypothesis development. Drawing on the main arguments of the framework, this study would like to regard social media use, salesperson’s customer qualification skills and CQ as characteristics of an export salesperson to explore whether these factors affect an export salesperson’s adaptive selling behavior, and in turn sales performance in the export selling context. According to Weitz et al. (1986), abilities like knowledge and skills like information acquisition skills are components of capabilities of salesperson. The authors argued that a salesperson needs an elaborate knowledge structure of sales situations, sales behaviors and contingencies to practice adaptive selling effectively. To use this knowledge in selling, he needs to be skillful in collecting information about customers, their beliefs and values, situations and contingencies (Weitz et al., 1986). This study holds that an export salesperson’s social media use in sales reflects his capability in terms of information acquisition skills

because social media provide a great channel accessible for exporting salespeople to collect information about their foreign customers and selling environments (Lacoste, 2016). Given this rationale, this study regards an export salesperson's social media use in sales as a component of his capabilities to practice adaptive selling behavior.

Further, because salesperson's customer qualification skills involve the collection of enough information about customers and represent his categorization level of customers and refined knowledge about correct typology of customers (Román & Iacobucci, 2010), salesperson's customer qualification skills meet the requirement of the basic knowledge structure necessary to practice adaptive selling behavior. Thus, this study regards customer qualification skills as another component salesperson's capability to practice adaptive selling behaviors in export selling.

In addition, the cross-cultural selling situation in export selling requires salespeople equipped with cultural knowledge about the importing countries and importers' customs, beliefs and value to meet the requirement of a salesperson's basic knowledge structure about sales situations and contingencies to practice adaptive selling behavior (Hansen et al., 2011). This study argues that CQ meets this requirement because a salesperson's CQ level mirrors the knowledge dimension of salesperson's capabilities to practice adaptive selling behavior. Thus, this study regards CQ as an export salesperson's another component of capability to practice adaptive selling behaviors in export selling.

Based on the above analysis, this study regards social media use, customer qualification skills and CQ as the important components of an export salesperson's capabilities and follows the adaptation theory to propose that these three factors are antecedents of adaptive selling behavior, which will contribute to sales performance. A simplified part of adaptive selling framework used in this study is presented as follows in Figure 2.2.

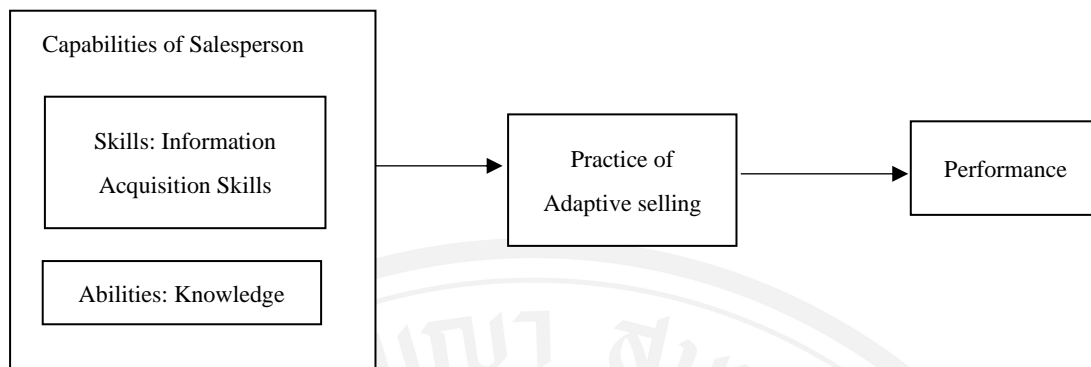


Figure 2.2 The simplified part of adaptive selling framework

Source: Adapted from Weitz, Sujan, and Sujan, (1986))

2.6.2 Categorization Theory

Categorization theory can be dated back to Aristotle's classical philosophy about categories, which holds that all category members have all of the defining features of the category and are equally good category exemplars (Mann, 2000). For example, a geometric object can be categorized as square rather than a rectangle only when it has four equal sides joined at right angles. In other words, the membership of a category depends on possessing all the necessary and sufficient features of the category (Cantor & Mischel, 1979). This traditional all-or-none criterion for category membership fits well in the abstract world of logic and formal systems like the cited classification of rectangle and square (Cantor & Mischel, 1979). However, Wittgenstein, Anscombe, and Wittgenstein (1953) noticed that the classical view of categorization does not apply to common and everyday categories which do not share all the defined critical features for category membership. Wittgenstein et al. (1953) argued that category members show a pattern of overlapping similarities and the membership of a category represents a family resemblance structure. This idea was championed by many other linguists, psychologists and philosophers like Labov (1973), Hedges (1972), Rosch, Mervis, Gray, Johnson, and Boyes-Braem (1976) etc.

For example, the furniture category includes chairs, tables, beds and cabinets etc. These members of the furniture category share some overlapping similarities with each other but do not all share all of the necessary and sufficient features of the furniture category. Rosch and Mervis (1975) argued that there is a prototype or stereotype which serves as the best example of a concept for every category and other less prototypical category members form a continuum away from the central prototypic exemplar. Rosch et al. (1976) and Smith, Shoben, and Rips (1974) argue that people reliably judge members of a category as being better or worse exemplars of a category. Such an idea has been widely accepted and further applied in various fields (Cantor & Mischel, 1979; D. Lee & Ganesh, 1999; Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994; Offermann & Coats, 2018). When it comes to the classification of people in social science domain, scholars argue that the categorization of people is based on a great variety of social, behavioral, and cultural categories, as well as abstract constructs like extrovert personality (Jerome Seymour Bruner & Austin, 1956; Cantor & Mischel, 1979; C. Cohen, 1977). For example, C. Cohen (1977) has described the prototypes of “librarian” and “waitress” based on the commonly held stereotypes of these two typical types of occupations.

Despite the continuing controversy about the categorization process, scholars reach a consensus that categorization is functional rather than structural or representational in that it helps people enhance information processing efficiency and cognitive stability by grouping objects or events together according to their similarities in important respects (Jerome Seymour Bruner & Austin, 1956; J. Cohen & Basu, 1987). Categorization plays an important role in people’s perceptual process (Cantor & Mischel, 1979). It helps people simplify and reduce cognitive burden in a potentially complex cognitive situations with a variety of stimuli (Jerome S Bruner, 1957). It guides people to selectively focus on certain aspects of particular stimuli and to group these stimuli under a unifying category label (Jerome S Bruner, 1957). Based

on categorization, people can predict the specific features of any category member according to the general expectations about the category (Jerome S Bruner, 1957). In social domain, the categorization of people allows perceivers to structure and link their general store of knowledge about people, which provides corresponding expectations about typical behavior patterns and a set of likely variation among different types of people and their characteristic behaviors (Cantor & Mischel, 1979). Given this, not only linguists, philosophers and psychologists show great interest in categorization theory but also management scholars pay great attention to it and actively apply it to the management fields (Cantor & Mischel, 1979; Hedges, 1972; Labov, 1973; Loken, Barsalou, & Joiner, 2008; A. Sharma & Levy, 1995; Wittgenstein et al., 1953).

In management fields, categorization theory has been used to explore leadership perception (Lord, Foti, & De Vader, 1984; Lord, Foti, & Phillips, 1982; H. Nguyen, Ashkanasy, Parker, & Li, 2018), consumer psychology about product categories, product user categories, brand categories and cultural categories etc.(Aaker & Lee, 2001; Alba & Hutchinson, 1987; Loken et al., 2008; Pechmann & Knight, 2002; Viswanathan & Childers, 1999). For instance, Lord et al. (1984) drew on categorization theory to build a leadership categorization theory. The leadership categorization theory identified three hierarchical structures of leadership categories (superordinate, basic and subordinate) and explained leadership perceptions in terms of categorization and how to use properties of categories to improve other information processing tasks. To date, the leadership categorization theory has evolved into implicit leadership theories, which postulates that people's implicit conceptualizations of leaders represent the cognitive structures specifying the expected leader traits and attributes (Offermann & Coats, 2018).

Scholars in personal selling fields apply categorization theory to investigate the effect of salespeople's categorization on their selling abilities, selling behaviors and performance (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; A. Sharma & Levy, 1995; A. Sharma, Levy, & Kumar, 2000; Szymanski, 1988; Szymanski & Churchill Jr, 1990; Weitz, 1978; Weitz et al., 1986). For example, A. Sharma and Levy (1995) investigated retail salespeople's customer category information and identified three categorization styles retail salespeople use to classify customers which are need based categorizers, decision styles categorizers and training based categorizers. Their research also found that retail salespeople use customer category information to aid in selling, positioning and promotion activities. A. Sharma et al. (2000) investigated the relationship between retail salespeople's categorization and their performance. Their research confirmed that the surveyed salespeople with higher sales performance tend to have richer category descriptions about customers, more distinctive customer category structures, more emphasis on customers' needs rather than customers' physical characteristics, and more complete and complex procedural knowledge about selling steps and sales strategies.

Szymanski (1988) pointed out that salespeople's ability to identify customers' product- and selling-related needs is an antecedent of their correct classification of sales leads into sales categories at a set of selling processes like prospecting, sales presentation and closing stages. They also found that the correct classification of sales leads is a determinant of sales performance. This finding is in line with Sujan, Weitz, and Sujan (1988)'s arguments that salespeople who can accurately classify customers and adjust their selling strategies to be more congruent with customers' types tend to reap higher performance.

In view of the great impact of salespeople's categorization on their selling behaviors and performance, Román and Iacobucci (2010) drew on categorization theory to propose a customer typology, which they argue can help salespeople identify customers' needs and predict customers' likely behavior according to their categorization of customers. They defined a new concept called salesperson's customer qualification skills as "the salesperson's learned proficiency to qualify or categorize prospects and customers" (p.368). Their research identified the important role of customer qualification skills as an antecedent of salesperson's adaptive selling behavior. Later, Román and Rodríguez (2015) confirmed the important mediating role of salesperson's customer qualification skills in the effect of salespersons' technology use on outcome performance.

Given the widely acknowledged role of salesperson's categorization in their behaviors and performance, this study uses categorization theory as its theoretical support to explore the mediating role of salespersons' customer qualification skills in the effect of social media use and CQ on adaptive selling behaviors and sales performance.

2.6.3 Social Customer Relationship Management Framework

This study also seeks to get theoretical support from the Social Customer Relationship Management (social CRM) strategic framework. Social CRM is a philosophy and a business strategy deeply rooted in relational marketing (Choudhury & Harrigan, 2014). It is defined as "the integration of customer-facing activities including processes, systems, and technologies with emergent social media applications to engage customers in collaborative conversations and enhance customer relationships" (Trainor, 2012, p.319) . To create value from managed customer relationships, firms must engage in a four-step IDIC process(Identification, Differentiation, Interaction, and Customization) (Peppers & Rogers, 2016). In the first identification step,

customer information like demographic characteristics, habits, preferences and purchase history, is collected to create a customer database ready for use in the later processes of CRM. Next, in the differentiation process, customers are categorized into different groups based on similar customer needs and values to the firm. Then, interactions are made with customers for a further learning about details of customer needs and behaviors. This process is implemented to ensure customer expectations are understood correctly and efficiently in combination with the information in the customer database. Lastly, in the customization process, the firm adapts some aspects of behaviors to customize a product or service to meet customers' expectations according to specific needs and preferences identified in the early stages of CRM. A description of IDIC process is illustrated in Figure 2.3.

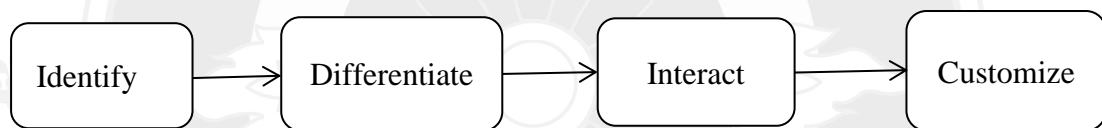


Figure 2.3 IDIC process of managing customer relationship

According to Social CRM framework, the application of social media in customer-facing activities can lead to optimal customer relationship performance through identification, differentiation, interaction and customization. Peppers and Rogers (2016) argue that the four implementation tasks of IDIC methodology not only can help companies create and manage customer experience and relationships, but also are applicable to sales force as well. Following these scholars' studies, this study regards export salespeople's selling activities as customer-facing activities and apply this theoretical framework to explain the effect of salespeople's social media use on customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors, which in turn lead to good relationship performance.

This study argues that the four implementation tasks of IDIC process matches well with customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors. In particular, the first two processes of IDIC which are identification and differentiation represent exactly salespeople's customer qualification processes because customer qualification skills refer to salespeople's competency to identify and qualify customers based on customers' needs and values. On the other hand, the remaining two processes of IDIC which are interaction and customization mirrors the practicing process of salespeople's adaptive selling behaviors in that the concept adaptive selling behaviors itself involves iterative interactions with customers and adjustments to sales behaviors to meet distinctive customer needs.

According to social CRM, the integration of social media in export sales activities will engage foreign customers in collaborative communications with salespeople and enhance customer relationships. For instance, by integrating social media in sales processes, in the identification process, export salespeople can leverage an expansive machinery memory of customers' profiles available on social media platforms to collect a huge amount of information about customers to identify qualified customers. On the one hand, salespeople can track the records of consumers' posts in the past, like the messages that the customers wrote, the pictures that customers posted about the activities they did, the place they travelled to, their lifestyle, etc. Hence, they can have a general understanding about the characteristics and preferences of customers through the analysis of the contents that consumers posted on social media platforms. On the other hand, they can follow customers on social media platforms to update their beliefs and state of knowledge about customers to predict customer's behaviors. In this way, social media can be a powerful "big data" that allow salespeople to do content analysis to understand the characteristics and preferences of consumers. Based on this understanding of customers'

characteristics and preferences, salespeople make a preliminary judgement about the customers' value, fulfilling the initial identification process.

In the differentiation process, salespeople utilize the information collected on social media to categorize foreign customers according to the preliminary identified customer needs. In the identification and differentiation process, the integration of social media into CRM can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of customer qualification, facilitating an improvement of customer qualification skills. For example, some social media platform like WeChat and Facebook has a grouping function, which allows salespeople to manage and classify foreign customers in different groups. Salespeople who fully leverage the grouping function of social media develop their customer qualification skills accordingly. Taking Facebook as an example, a salesperson can join a particular existing group which may have thousands of group members. He or she can post products information in this group and even creates poll to launch interactive communication to collect customers' opinions about products, needs, preferences or purchasing habits etc. The salesperson develops a preliminary understanding about customers' needs and expectations from customers' responses, which help salespeople classify and qualify customers. Further, the salesperson can use grouping function on Facebook to invite customers with similar needs to establish a new group for himself or herself. In this way, the salesperson becomes the owner of this classified customer group and has the rights to manage this group. In the process of using social media functions to engage customers into interactive communication, salespeople practice identifying and differentiating customers' needs and preferences, leading to an improvement of customer qualification skills. To summarize, in the first two IDIC processes, as social media can act as a "big data" by providing a large amount of information for salespeople to make content analysis about customers, salespeople who fully utilize the characteristics of social media have more chances of practicing categorizing and

qualifying customers. This matches well with categorization theory which holds that people categorize information to improve their cognitive efficiency and effectiveness when encountering a flux of information. That's why customer qualification skills play an important role in export selling via social media. On the other hand, the technological support like grouping functions of social media can even assist in managing customers by groups in a convenient and efficient way, which highlights the importance of integrating information technology (social media) in helping customer relationship management.

Next, in the interaction process, salespeople can fully utilize the interactive communication function of social media to engage foreign customers to express their needs and expectations. The collaborative communication on social media can help salespeople gain a clear understanding of customer needs and expectations, paving a way for salespeople to make corresponding adjustments to their behaviors. Lastly, salespeople practice adaptive selling behaviors to prescribe a customized solution based on perceptions about customer's needs and expectations, which mirrors the customization process in IDIC. Customized offers and mutual communication increase customers' trust and satisfaction, leading to optimal customer relationship performance.

Given the above rationale, this study deploys Social CRM framework to underpin the main argument of the present study which proposes that social media use in sales can facilitate an improvement in customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors, which can in turn lead to good customer relationship performance. A plethora of studies have explored the contribution of social media use to the establishment of good customer relationships under the social CRM framework (Choudhury & Harrigan, 2014; Harrigan, Soutar, Choudhury, & Lowe, 2015; Peppers & Rogers, 2016; Trainor, 2012; Trainor et al., 2014). Marketing scholars in the fields of CRM and IT conclude that social media use is not sufficient to yield good customer

relationships; instead, it must work by some mediating factors (Chang, Park, & Chaib, 2010; Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017; R. R. Chen, Ou, Wang, Peng, & Davison, 2015; Choudhury & Harrigan, 2014; Harrigan et al., 2015; Sasatanun & Charoensukmongkol, 2016; Trainor, 2012; Trainor et al., 2014). For instance, Choudhury and Harrigan (2014)'s research confirmed that there was no direct significant relationship between social CRM technology (social media) use and customer relationship performance whereas there was a significant pathway between them linked by relational information process. In addition, Trainor et al. (2014)'s research drew on resources-based view and capabilities-based perspectives to regard social media use as resources to a firm and argued that social media use must be transformed into capabilities first so as to provide relationship performance gains. Their research found that a firm's social CRM capabilities in terms of information generation and information dissemination play an important role in the contribution of a firm's social media use on its customer relationship performance.

It is worth noting that although scholars often regard companies as the main actors of social CRM, scholars like Peppers and Rogers (2016) have pointed out that it is also applicable to sales force as the use of social media blurred the boundaries between marketing and sales activities and glued them in a closer relationship. Empirical evidence has been found in literature supporting that social CRM framework is applicable to individual salespersons (R. R. Chen et al., 2015; Sasatanun & Charoensukmongkol, 2016). For example, Sasatanun and Charoensukmongkol (2016) identified the antecedents and outcomes of social media use in customer relationship management by studying Thai microenterprises and the size of these firms varied from one to five employees. In particular, Chen et al. (2015)'s research found that individual employees who use CRM systems enable their adaptive behaviors to provide personalized service to individual customers, which in turn improves customer service performance. Thus, given the importance of integration of

social media in CRM and the necessity of the underlying IDIC implementation activities to yield good customer relationships, this study uses social CRM as a theoretical framework to support the effect of social media use in sales on customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors, which can result in an enhancement in customer relationship performance.

2.7 Hypotheses Development

2.7.1 Social Media Use in Sales and Salesperson's Customer Qualification Skills

This study proposes that an export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively related to his customer qualification skills. The study argues for a positive link between social media use in sales and salesperson's customer qualification skills for the following two reasons. Firstly, a salesperson needs enough information about customers and selling situations as a basis to qualify and categorize customers (Weitz et al., 1986). However, due to the great time and spatial barriers between countries, export salespeople have difficulty collecting enough information about customers and selling situations. Scholars have stressed that social media use can help overcome these barriers in export selling by offering a channel for export salespeople to get access to prospects and their relevant profiles (M. C. Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2016; Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). In other words, export salespeople can use social media as information acquisition tools to collect information about customers and foreign countries to qualify and categorize customers. Secondly, social media is an ideal platform for salespeople to listen to customers and interact with them, facilitating the identification of customers' needs and expectations (Lacoste, 2016). Thus, this study argues that an export salesperson who has a high level of social media use in their selling processes are more likely to have a right typology of foreign customers

because they can approach more customers, collect more relevant information and better identify customer needs and expectations through social media. The huge amount of information about foreign customers and countries available on social media meets the prerequisite of information base for customer categorization and aids in qualifying customers. Although, to date, no research has linked social media use with customer qualification skills, the proposed relationship between them aligns with Román and Rodríguez (2015)'s research findings about the positive influence of salesperson's information technology use on salesperson's customer qualification skills. Given that social media has been identified as a form of information technology use which helps salespeople perform service behaviors leading to value creation (Agnihotri et al., 2012), this study holds the positive impact of salesperson's information technology use on salesperson's customer qualification skills is applicable to salesperson's social media use in sales as well. The formal hypothesis is stated as follows:

Hypothesis 1: An export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively associated with his customer qualification skills.

2.7.2 Salesperson's Customer Qualification Skills and Adaptive Selling Behaviors

This study proposes that salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his adaptive selling behaviors. Hansen et al. (2011) argues that a salesperson's knowledge structure is a factor determining the quality of his adaptive selling behaviors because adaptation requires elaborate knowledge structures of selling situations (Leong, Busch, & John, 1989; A. Sharma et al., 2000; Sujan, Sujan, et al., 1988). The definition of adaptive selling behaviors also suggests that salesperson's perception about selling situations is a prerequisite for his altering presentations in sales encounters (Weitz et al., 1986). Salespeople with high customer

qualification skills meet this pre-requirement as they have richer and well-developed category knowledge about customer types. They can leverage the well-classified customer types to better organize, interpret and evaluate sales situations, to select personalized sales strategies for well-defined customer types and to make corresponding adjustments to meet different types of customers' needs during sales presentations (Leong et al., 1989). According to A. Sharma and Levy (1995), salespeople with a well-developed category structure practice adaptive selling behavior to a higher degree than those who do not. Román and Iacobucci (2010)'s empirical research also confirmed that salespeople's customer qualification skills bear a positive association with their adaptive selling behaviors. Therefore, this study posits that:

Hypothesis 2: An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his adaptive selling behaviors.

2.7.3 Social Media Use in Sales and Adaptive Selling Behaviors

This study proposes that an export salesperson's social media use in sales and adaptive selling behaviors is positively associated. This study argues that the level of a salesperson's integration of social media use into his sales job can reflect his information acquisition skills, an antecedent of adaptive selling behaviors. As Ogilvie et al. (2018) have pointed out, social media characterized with convenient accessibility and wide network offer a valuable channel for export salespeople to identify a large body of prospects during the pre-approach period and get to know a prospect or customer about his preferences, buying habits and beliefs before approaching or during interactions. It is imperative for salespeople to collect enough information about sales situations, markets, and customers before approaching and during interactions to practice adaptive behavior (Weitz et al., 1986). The reachable profile of customers via social media allows salespeople to develop a deeper

perception of consumers' behaviors, helpful to develop unique sales presentations for specific customers. According to Hunter and Perreault Jr (2007), the more information salespeople have about their customers, the more likely they will adjust their presentations and practice adaptive selling.

In addition, with the development of information technology, social media can support instant message transmission in various forms such as texts, documents, voice mails, videos and pictures etc.(Farrell & Hutasingh, 2018). On the other hand, the present internet technology also equips social media with both synchronous (use at the same time) and asynchronous media characteristics (use at different time) (Moore et al., 2015) These characteristics and functions of social media make export salespeople's alteration of their selling behavior possible and convenient by offering more alternative ways to present their products and/or services during interactions with customers (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). Recent studies have provided supportive evidence proving that salespeople's social media use improves their adaptive selling behaviors in domestic sales contexts in America and India (Itani et al., 2017; Ogilvie et al., 2018). Based on these rationale and findings in recent sales literature mentioned here, this study argues that export salespeople's social media use in sales is conducive to their adaptive selling behaviors. Therefore, this study posits that.

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive association between an export salesperson's social media use in sales and his adaptive selling behavior.

2.7.4 Adaptive Selling Behaviors and Salesperson's Performance

This study proposes that an export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively associated with his sales performance. Ever since the introduction of Weitz's framework about adaptive selling behavior, numerous researchers have examined the positive relationship between adaptive selling behavior and salesperson's performance (e.g. Weitz et al., 1986; Sujana et al., 1994; Franke & Park,

2006; Robins Jr et al., 2005; Chakrabarty et al., 2014 ; Giacobbe et al., 2006; Itani et al, 2017; Y.-c. Chen et al., 2018). The underlying reason supporting this positive relationship is that when a salesperson adopts adaptive selling behavior, he is sensitive to identify the customer's expectations and needs by closely observing the customer's response during the communication process (Weitz et al., 1986). On the one hand, he would adjust his communication strategy to make his presentation manner friendlier and more acceptable to customers; on the other hand, he can make customized offerings about products or service to meet customers' needs and expectations (Román & Iacobucci, 2010). In this way, the salesperson's adaptive selling behavior makes customer satisfied with his offering, increasing the chance of closing a deal (Román & Iacobucci, 2010). Some scholars even argue that thanks to the long-term focus and important role of customer satisfaction in building quality relationships in B2B marketing, adaptive selling approach enhances a salesperson's ability to build quality relationships with customers, which is conducive to increase his sales performance as well (Itani et al., 2017; Jaramillo, Locander, Spector, & Harris, 2007).

In export selling, great barriers in terms of both geographical distance and cultural differences require salespeople to commit more effort to figure out and respond to foreign customer's needs and expectations as people from different cultures often have distinctive needs and preferences (X.-P. Chen et al., 2012). Such requirements highlight the necessity of adaptive selling behavior in export selling. Only when an export salesperson use adaptive selling strategy can they satisfy foreign buyers' distinctive demands and needs and reap more orders from foreign buyers. In addition to the adaption theory's support, empirical evidence supporting a positive relationship between adaptive selling behavior and salesperson performance has also been documented in previous studies (e.g. Leong et al., 1989; Porter, Wiener, & Frankwick, 2003; Predmore & Bonnice, 1994; Fang, Palmatier, & Evans, 2004;

Franke & Park, 2006; Rapp et al., 2008; Jaramillo & Grisaffe, 2009; Kaynak et al., 2016; Ogilvie et al., 2018). To name a few, Román and Iacobucci (2010) observed the positive impact of financial services salespeople's adaptive selling behavior on their customers' satisfaction and salesperson's outcome performance in a bank. Similarly, Itani et al. (2017) reported a positive association between B2B salespersons' adaptive selling behavior and their sales performance in a wide range of industries in India. Given the theoretical rationale and empirical evidence, this study posits that:

Hypothesis 4a: An export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his outcome performance.

Hypothesis 4b: An export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his relationship performance.

2.7.5 Salesperson's Customer Qualification Skills and Salesperson's Performance

This study proposes that an export salesperson's customer qualification skills and his sales performance are positively related. According to Sujan, Weitz, et al. (1988), the purpose of differentiating and categorizing customers is to reduce the complexity and difficulty of the selling proposition and communications. As salespeople with a high level of customer qualification skills have a richer and clearly-defined knowledge structure about customer groups, they can effectively use the past knowledge to assess how much time and effort should be invested in different types of customers and better understand which customers can flow through the sales funnel and result in a sale (Ahearne, Hughes, & Schillewaert, 2007; Sujan, Weitz, et al., 1988). By doing so, a salesperson can spend more time and exert more sales effort in establishing and building up good relationships with the most profitable customers and increasing his outcome performance (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016). When a salesperson makes errors in customer qualification and fails to focus on the most

profitable customers, such errors would result in wasted resources and losses in sales revenue (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016; Monat, 2011). In addition, as salespeople with high customer qualification skills have a better understanding about characteristics of well-defined customer groups and can better predict customers' likely behavior based on their categorization knowledge, they are more likely to propose corresponding solutions or suggestions to satisfy customer needs and expectations (Román & Iacobucci, 2010). Despite scarce research investigating the impact of customer qualification skills on salesperson relationship performance, the positive influence of customer qualification skills on salesperson outcome performance is well established in personal selling (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015; A. Sharma & Levy, 1995; A. Sharma et al., 2000; Sujan, Weitz, et al., 1988). Based on these arguments, this study posits that

Hypothesis 5a: An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his outcome performance.

Hypothesis 5b: An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his relationship performance.

2.7.6 Social Media Use in Sales and Salesperson's Performance

This study proposes that an export salesperson's social media use in sales will positively contribute to salesperson's performance. Firstly, an export salesperson who can successfully integrate social media into his prospecting process can leverage the great social networks via social media to "scout" a large pool of potential customers (Agnihotri et al., 2012). He can even ask friends, acquaintances and even the existing customers for more referrals. The great number of prospects base on social media anticipates more possibilities for a salesperson to increase outcome performance. Moreover, previous research shows that people's purchasing intention tends to be higher when they get the information from their friends or acquaintances (Dehghani &

Tumer, 2015; Duffett, 2015). Therefore, export salespeople selling via social media may have more chances to close a deal. A survey about financial advisors reported those who used social media in sales expanded their client base by 21% and noted a 19% increase in revenue during the previous year (Rodriguez et al., 2013). Alarcón et al. (2015)'s empirical research also confirmed that exporters with more frequent social media use to interact with foreign customers report better firm performance measured by perceived financial indicators than those with less social media use. Thus, this study posits that.

Hypothesis 6a: An export salesperson's social media use is positively related to his outcome performance.

Regarding customer relationship performance, this study argues that an export salesperson's social media use is conducive to the establishment and maintaining of customer relationship. Firstly, as social media allows an anytime-anywhere communication access to both buyers and sellers, an export salesperson using social media can fully leverage this feature to overcome both the time and distance barriers to provide high quality service such as increased responsiveness (Agnihotri et al., 2016), which helps improve customer relationship satisfaction and commitment (Agnihotri et al., 2016; N. Sharma & Patterson, 1999). Secondly, because social media is a platform for dynamic mutual communication, export salespeople who fully use social media in sales are more likely to listen to what customers say and make repeated real-time interactions with customers (Rodriguez et al., 2013). As a result, they build up trust and have a better understanding about each other, which are fundamental for the establishment and maintaining of customer relationship (Lacoste, 2016). In addition, export salespeople skillful at utilizing various functions of social media can present products information in a more diverse and vivid way to attract more prospects (Farrell & Hutasingh, 2018). The vivid presentation of products information is supposed to make interactions more acceptable and persuasive too,

increasing the quality of communication (Andzulis et al., 2012). Communication of high quality (i.e. timely, helpful, easy and pleasant) between a salesperson and a customer influences all facets of the relationship, especially in the aspects of trust, satisfaction, and loyalty (Ball, Simões Coelho, & Machás, 2004). Additionally, the positive interpersonal interactions between export salespeople and customers on social media, like sending greetings for birthdays or special occasions, complements and facilitates business relationship as well (Agnihotri et al., 2013). In sum, this study argues that an export salesperson who can fully integrate social media into his sales processes can build up and maintain a better relationship with customers through his better listening to customers, high quality service, interpersonal interactions and repeated communication assisted by social media. The hypothesis is as follows.

Hypothesis 6b: An export salesperson's social media use is positively related to his relationship performance.

2.7.7 CQ and Salesperson's Customer Qualification Skills

This study proposes that an export salesperson's CQ is positively associated with his customer qualification skills. Hansen et al. (2011) argues that because salespeople with a high level of CQ have richer and more clearly defined hierarchical structures of cultural categories, they have advanced cognitive categorization capabilities to identify similarities and differences across countries. Following this logic, this study holds that salespeople with a high level of CQ tend to have higher customer qualification skills due to their richer and more clearly defined hierarchical knowledge structures about foreign customers' needs, expectations, beliefs, norms, habits and preferences etc. Moreover, because salespeople with a high level of CQ can better become aware of similarities and differences between cultures, they are more likely to classify foreign customers correctly according to their understanding about these similarities and differences (R. Brislin, Worthley, & Macnab, 2006). In

addition, since individuals high in CQ have greater interest in knowing differences between countries, they may be more effective in identifying foreign customers' needs and expectations (X.-P. Chen et al., 2012), which helps them qualify and classify customers as well. Based on these arguments, this study proposes that:

Hypothesis 7: An export salesperson's CQ is positively associated with his customer qualification skills.

2.7.8 CQ and Adaptive Selling Behaviors

This study proposes a positive association between CQ and adaptive selling behaviors. This study draws on the adaptation theory and regards CQ as an export salesperson's characteristics to propose CQ as an antecedent of adaptive selling behavior. This study holds that CQ fits the knowledge dimension of salesperson's characteristics to function as the antecedent of adaptive selling behavior. Drawing on the adaptation theory, this study argues that an export salesperson with a high level of CQ is equipped with more relevant knowledge structure needed to practice adaptive selling behaviors and are motivated to commit more effort to do so. According to Weitz et al. (1986), a salesperson needs an elaborate knowledge structure about the sales situations and customers to effectively practice adaptive selling behaviors. Ang et al. (2008)'s research shows that CQ reflects a person's level of cultural knowledge, which includes the norms, practices and conventions in different cultures. Thus, an export salesperson with a high level of CQ is supposed to know more about economic, legal, business and interpersonal framework of the importing country and have a better understanding about the importer's business environment, beliefs, practices and communication styles etc. In this way, CQ is supposed to serve as a part of knowledge structure required to practice the adaptive selling behavior. A salesperson with a high level of CQ can leverage his intercultural knowledge structure to better adjust his presentation manners and content to communicate with foreign

customers. Further, CQ reflects a salesperson's awareness of cultural similarities and differences between export and import country, represents his motivation to change his selling behavior according to his assessment of customer's reactions during interactions and can transform this motivation into action, making the alteration of sales behaviors during interactions possible (X.-P. Chen et al., 2012). Hansen et al. (2011) argues that salespeople with a high level of CQ are likely to be more effective in intercultural selling because they can better adapt to the foreign customers' cultural backgrounds. Past research findings show that people with a high level of CQ tend to have more adaptive ability Charoensukmongkol (2015a) and make more adjustments to their behaviors and communication styles during their cross-cultural communication (e.g. Ang et al., 2007; Oolders et al, 2008; Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012; A. S.-y. Chen et al., 2014). Recently, Pandey and Charoensukmongkol (2019)'s research confirmed that export salespeople's CQ positively affects their adaptive selling behaviors in international trade shows. Aligning with previous research findings, this study argues that the higher level of CQ an export salesperson has, the more likely he will adjust their communication methods and change his selling behaviors during his interactions with customers in another country. To put it formally, this study proposes that:

Hypothesis 8 There is a positive association between an export salesperson's CQ and his adaptive selling behavior.

2.7.9 CQ and Salesperson's Performance

This study proposes that an export salesperson's CQ is positively associated with salesperson's performance. Given that CQ has been identified as a critical cross-cultural competency to impact effectiveness of cross-cultural interactions, it is supposed to influence the effectiveness of export selling as well (Pandey & Charoensukmongkol, 2019). Firstly, a salesperson with a high level of CQ is equipped

with more cultural knowledge and awareness of similarities and differences about foreign markets, business practices, purchasing habits, and consumption preferences etc., which are necessary and fundamental information required for export selling (Hansen et al., 2011). A salesperson without such information will find it difficult to have effective interactions with foreign buyers (Hansen et al., 2011). Secondly, as Ang et al. (2007) and X.-P. Chen et al. (2012) found, an individual with a high level of CQ tends to have stronger intercultural intrinsic motivation (i.e., intrinsic interest in foreign cultures) and intercultural self-efficacy (i.e., beliefs in one's intercultural effectiveness). Thus, an export salesperson with a high level of CQ tends to show stronger interest in getting to know about foreign buyers and markets, and more intrinsic motivations to exert more efforts, persistence and resilience in face of intercultural barriers, and have more self-confidence in achieving superior performance in cross-cultural situations (G. Chen, Kirkman, Kim, Farh, & Tangirala, 2010; X.-P. Chen et al., 2012; Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2009). Imai and Gelfand (2010) found that in intercultural negotiation, people with a high level of CQ have more cooperative motives and committed more effort to understanding their culturally unfamiliar counterparts. Their research also concluded that CQ is a predictor of effectiveness in intercultural negotiation. Similarly, Shapiro, Ozanne, and Saatcioglu (2008) observed that when export managers are culturally sensitive to foreign customers, they negotiate more efficiently and are more successful in making trade deals. Previous empirical research has provided evidence supporting the positive association between CQ and salesperson's outcome performance in intercultural settings (X.-P. Chen et al., 2012). X.-P. Chen et al. (2012)'s research found that in intercultural sales (realtors and customers coming from different cultures), the realtors in U.S. real estate firms with a high level of motivational CQ have more sales transactions. Therefore, this study proposes that.

Hypothesis 9a: An export salesperson's CQ is positively related to his outcome performance.

Regarding the relationship between CQ and salesperson relationship performance, Charoensukmongkol (2015a) argued that CQ is a critical competency of SME exporters to develop good relationships with foreign customers and other foreign partners. The underlying reasons are three folds. Firstly, an export salesperson with a high level of CQ can better understand and satisfy foreign customers' expectations and needs due to their good cultural knowledge about importing countries and foreign people such as business practices, beliefs and purchasing preferences etc. (Hansen et al., 2011). Given the higher possibility of developing good relationships with satisfied customers (Agnihotri et al., 2016), export salespeople with a high level of CQ tend to develop a better relationship with foreign customers. Secondly, export salespeople's appropriate cultural knowledge represented by CQ helps improve the quality of communication which is an important factor impacting the quality of relationship between business partners (Bstieler & Hemmert, 2008). An export salesperson with a high level of CQ can understand differences in foreign customers' communication styles and communicate in an appropriate way that makes customers feel more comfortable and friendlier, beneficial for the establishment and maintaining of customer relationships (Hansen et al., 2011). Thirdly, due to differences in attitudes, beliefs, values and expectations, relationship-building and maintaining across cultures is more challenging than that within the same culture (Rockstuhl & Ng, 2008). Salespeople with a high level of CQ shows stronger motivations and exert more efforts to cope with these challenges and adversity in export selling (Charoensukmongkol, 2015a). Their persistent commitment and appropriate behaviors positively affect their credibility perceived by foreign partners (Charoensukmongkol, 2015a). Such trust is significant for the establishment and maintaining of good relationship between exporters and importers. Literature has

offered empirical evidence supporting the positive association between exporters' CQ and high-quality relationship with foreign customers (Charoensukmongkol, 2015a). By studying SME export companies in Thailand, Charoensukmongkol (2015a) found that SME export entrepreneurs' CQ is positively associated with the quality of the relationships SMEs develop with foreign customers, foreign suppliers and foreign competitors. Therefore, this study argues that the higher the level of an export salesperson's CQ is, the better relationship performance he will achieve. The hypothesis is presented as follows:

Hypothesis 9b: An export salesperson's CQ is positively related to his relationship performance.

Table 2.4 Summary of Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis	
H1	An export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively associated with his customer qualification skills.
H2	An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his adaptive selling behaviors.
H3	There is a positive association between an export salesperson's social media use in sales and his adaptive selling behavior.
H4a	An export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his outcome performance.
H4b	An export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his relationship performance.
H5a	An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his outcome performance.
H5b	An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his relationship performance.
H6a	An export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively related to his outcome performance.
H6b	An export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively related to his relationship performance.

Hypothesis

H7	An export salesperson's CQ is positively associated with his customer qualification skills.
H8	There is a positive association between an export salesperson's CQ and his adaptive selling behavior.
H9a	An export salesperson's CQ is positively related to his outcome performance.
H9b	An export salesperson's CQ is positively related to his relationship performance.

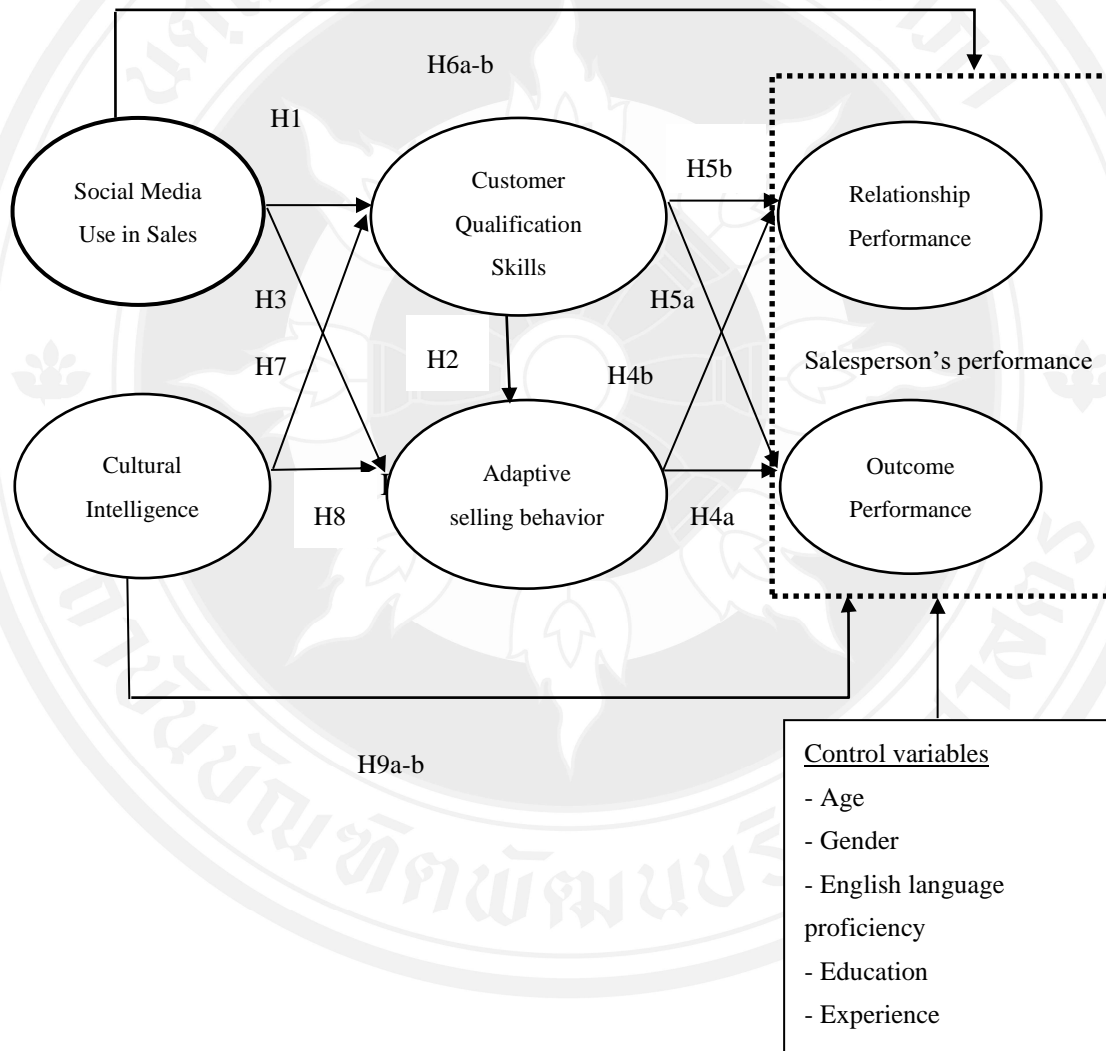


Figure 2.4 The Conceptual Model

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Context

This study focuses on Chinese export salespeople who use social media in their selling processes. As an emerging country, China has experienced rapid economic growth since its accession to World Trade Organization (WTO) in December 2001. According to WTO (2015), the value of China's export in 2000 was about 250 million U.S. dollars and ranked the eleventh in the world. After its accession to WTO, China overtook Japan as the leading Asian exporter in 2004, surpassed the United States in 2007 and Germany in 2009 to become the world's leading exporter. In 2018, the value of China's export reached 2,487 billion U.S. dollars (Customs, 2019) and has ranked the first leading exporter in world merchandise trade for more than a decade (WTO, 2015).

The target population of this study is Chinese export salespeople who use social media in their export sales. Chinese export salespeople are a suitable population for this study because they use social media to assist in performing their export sales activities like finding new prospects, approaching, real-time communication with foreign buyers and online sales presentation etc.(W. Y. C. Wang et al., 2016). They cater to foreign buyers' preferences for social media use and make appropriate choices in social media Apps (W. Y. C. Wang et al., 2016). Given the large population of Chinese export salespeople and their use of social media in export sales, Chinese export salespeople are ideal research population for this study.

3.2 Sample Selection

The sample of this study will be selected using probability methods. In probability sampling, the sample is selected based on randomization and every unit in the population has an equal, known and nonzero probability of being selected (Gary, 1990). Due to its random selection procedure, the probability sampling technique is regarded as the most efficient sampling methodology and the results of the studies based on this sampling technique can be generalized to the target population (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, & Nigam, 2013). In this study, the sampling frame of research is the list of export salesperson provided in FOB business Forum website. The website was built by FOB Shanghai company in 2000 and aimed to offer a platform for foreign trade practitioners to share information and knowledge about international trade. Up to now, the website has 2,631,535 registered members and boasts as the largest professional web portals for Chinese export and import practitioners. From January to December in 2018, the average monthly new posts uploaded to the website is 139,540 and about 8,000 members visit the website daily (FOBShanghai, 2019). Interested members can join their virtual communities like inspection community, logistics community, import community, export community and exhibition community etc. Members publicize their name cards which include the contact information like username, email, company name, location(city) and telephone number. As this study targets on export salespeople, the author focuses on export community on FOB business Forum website. There are 83,100 publicized name cards in total in the export community and the author collected 24,191 export salesperson's information with full contact information. The collected information shows that 24,191 export salespeople in the database come from 24,177 export companies specializing in 22 fields including textiles, clothing and accessories and toys etc. These 24,191 export salespeople from FOB business Forum website

constitute the sampling frame of this study. Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of reachable export salespeople in trade fields.

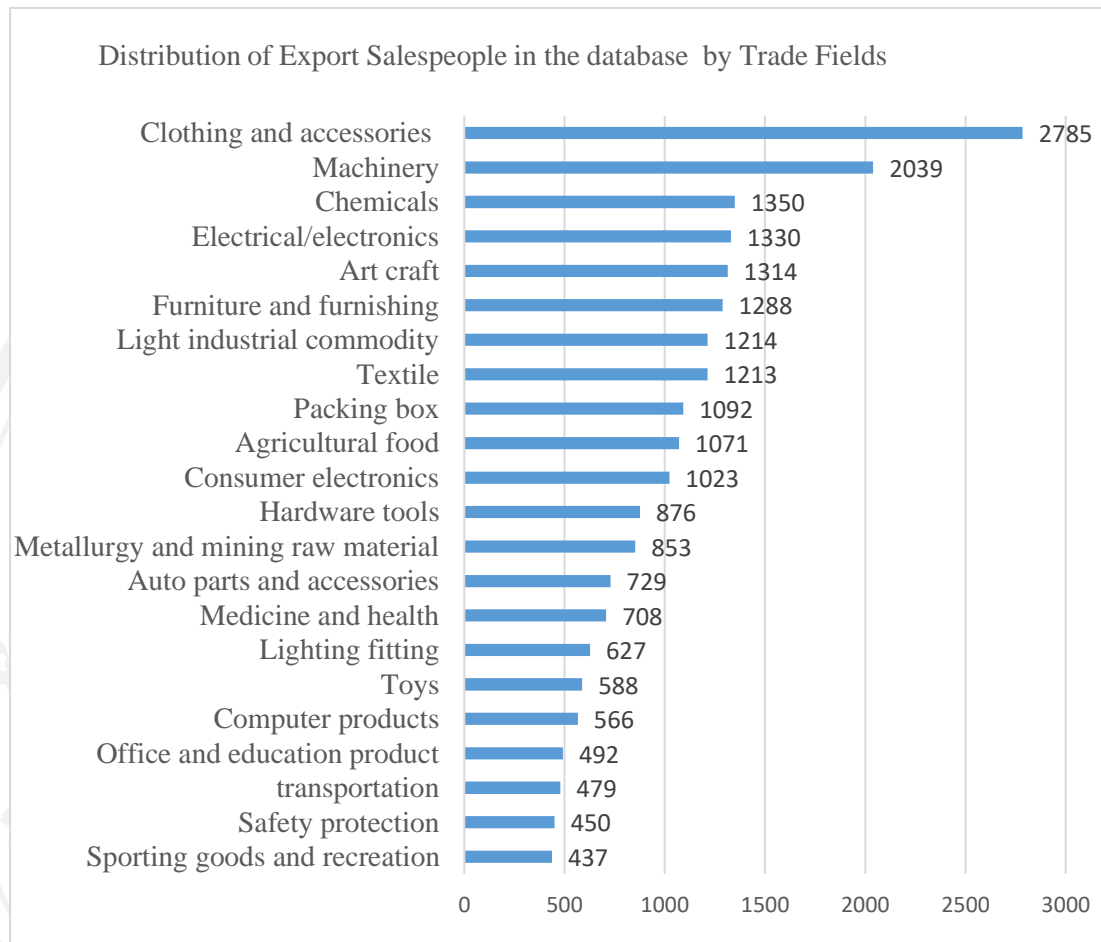


Figure 3.1 Distribution of Export Salespeople in the database by Trade Fields

To ensure the representativeness of the accessible export salespeople, the researcher analyzed the location of these salespeople. Preliminary analysis shows that 95.90% of reachable export salespeople in the database are located in Chinese top 20 provinces and municipalities in terms of export value. The export value of the top 20 provinces and municipalities accounts for 97.76% of total Chinese export value in 2018 (Customs, 2019). Table 6 presents the Chinese top 20 provinces and municipalities ranked by export value (Customs, 2019) and the distribution of

reachable export salespeople in these areas. According to Table 6, the top 20 provinces and municipalities where the reachable export companies locate are almost the same as Chinese top 20 provinces and municipalities ranked by export value (except for the last one Xinjiang) and their distribution patterns are quite similar except for minor variances in three provinces (Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Hebei). The number of reachable export salespeople in Zhejiang province is strikingly higher than that in Jiangsu province. And the percentage of reachable export salespeople in Hebei (3.75%) is much higher than that of its export value in the whole country. Despite these variances, the locations of 95.9% reachable export salespeople in the database cover Chinese Top 20 provinces and municipalities by export value, which increases the generalizability of this research.

Table 3.1 Distribution of Export Salespeople in the Database in Chinese Top 20 Provinces and Municipalities by Export Value

	Export value		Salespeople	
	USD	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Guangdong	646593896545.00	26.00%	7361	30.43%
Jiangsu	404014507134.00	16.24%	2198	9.09%
Zhejiang	321135962836.00	12.91%	5326	22.02%
Shanghai	207159967483.00	8.33%	1704	7.04%
Shandong	160127555499.00	6.44%	1805	7.46%
Fujian	115549506708.00	4.65%	1351	5.58%
Beijing	74105752991.00	2.98%	550	2.27%
Henan	53777606637.00	2.16%	271	1.12%
Chongqing	51355665606.00	2.06%	108	0.45%
Sichuan	50395173712.00	2.03%	144	0.60%
Tianjin	48813085236.00	1.96%	307	1.27%
Liaoning	48795406504.00	1.96%	210	0.87%
Anhui	36198026539.00	1.46%	231	0.95%

	Export value		Salespeople	
	USD	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Hubei	34082623166.00	1.37%	244	1.01%
Hebei	33980535582.00	1.37%	906	3.75%
Jiangxi	33942676483.00	1.36%	104	0.43%
Guangxi	32791439127.00	1.32%	92	0.38%
Shaanxi	31595241708.00	1.27%	144	0.60%
Hunan	30539034324.00	1.23%	153	0.63%
Xinjiang	16413060302.00	0.66%	0	0%
Total	2431366724312.00	97.76%	23209	95.90%
Total export value in China	2487043528112.00		24191	

24191=total number of export companies in the database
export value from China Customs (2019)

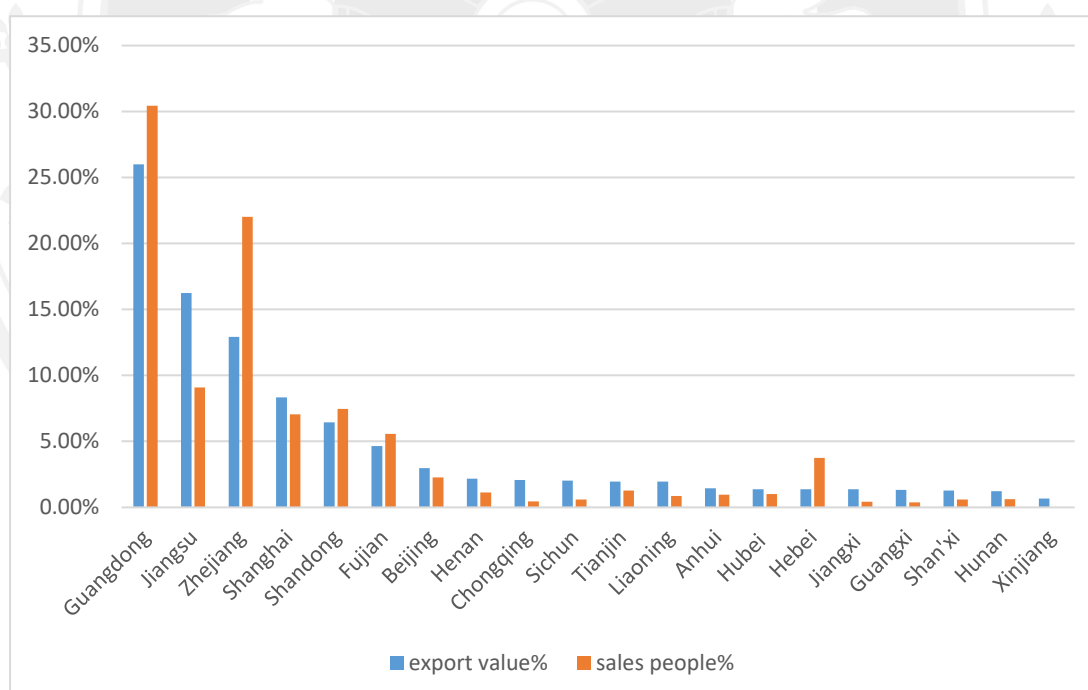


Figure 3.2 A Comparison of Percentage of Export Value and That of Export Salespeople In The Database in Chinese Top 20 Provinces and Municipalities by Export Value

3.3 Data Collection Method

Due to the limitation in time and resources, this study adopts a questionnaire survey method as data collection method because this method allows researchers to collect information from a large number of respondents in a short period of time (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2018). To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, the survey guarantees the anonymity and the use of data for only academic purpose to encourage the respondents to respond truthfully to the questionnaires (Bell et al., 2018). The questionnaire will be distributed in an online form via Wenjuanxing, a Chinese professional survey website popular for its expertise in helping researchers and marketers make surveys (Liu, Chu, Huang, & Chen, 2016; Zheng & Zheng, 2014). The author will send an email to every individual export salesperson in the database. The email contains a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research and a link to the online questionnaire. The respondents can also scan the QR code in the letter and finish the questionnaire on their mobile phone as well. As a token of gratitude, the author will offer monetary incentives for each sincere participant. Each participant who finishes the questionnaire in a reasonable time will receive one dollar through the survey website. This practice has been adopted by prior researchers collecting data in China (Ou, Pavlou, & Davison, 2014).

3.4 Questionnaire Development

This study uses a structured questionnaire to collect data. All the scales measuring dependent and independent variables are adopted from prior studies. Using existing scales measurement to collect data in a study has several advantages. Firstly, because the existing scales have been tested at their first time, they are regarded as good indicators of the measured concepts (Hyman, Lamb, & Bulmer, 2006). Moreover, because the existing scales have been repeatedly tested by other

researchers, their reliability and validity and the quality of data tend to be high (Hyman et al., 2006). Another advantage of using existing scales is that it is more money- and time-saving than developing a new scale (Hyman et al., 2006). Lastly, the use of existing scales also makes the comparison of the research findings with other scholars' findings possible (Meadows, 2003).

As most of the scales used in study are in English (except for an existing Chinese version of CQ scale), this study adopts translation and backtranslation methods to develop the questionnaire in Chinese. Scholars suggest that translation and backtranslation are the most commonly used methods to ensure the quality and validity of instruments in different languages (R. W. Brislin, 1970; Sperber, 2004). The questionnaire is first compiled in English under the instruction of the advisor, translated into Chinese and then back translated by a professional translator to ensure the validity of the questionnaire (Hult et al., 2008).

Scholars argue that a pilot test is crucial for a good research design because it may offer advance warning about where the study may fail or help identify the inappropriate, ambiguous or too complicated instruments (De Vaus & de Vaus, 2013; Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). The author will discuss the content of the questionnaire with three export salespeople and make minor adjustments to make sure the conciseness and clarity of the wording of the questionnaire. A pilot test will be conducted with a small number of respondents (Clark & Watson, 1995).

3.5 Measurement

All the items in the questionnaire to measure dependent variables and independent variables are developed from the existing literature. The measurement of each construct is presented in detail in the following part.

3.5.1 Social Media Use in Sales

This study follows Moore et al. (2015)'s practices to measure social media use in sales. The construct is operationalized as the frequency a salesperson uses social media for each stage of the sales process, i.e., prospecting, pre-approach, approach, sales presentation, handling objections, closing the sale, and follow-up service. Respondents are asked to state which type of social media is used for each stage and how often they use it for each stage. For the first part of each question, the questionnaire will offer a list of common social media Apps and ask the respondents to choose all social media they use for each stage and add the others they use if not included in the list. For the second part of each question, all the question items will be rated on five-point Likert scales ranging from 1(never) to 5 (very often) and details are as follows:

- 1) How often do you use social media for prospecting?
- 2) How often do you use social media for pre-approach?
- 3) How often do you use social media for approach?
- 4) How often do you use social media for sales presentation?
- 5) How often do you use social media for handling objections?
- 6) How often do you use social media for closing the deal?
- 7) How often do you use social media for follow-up service?

3.5.2 Salesperson's Customer Qualification Skills

Salesperson's customer qualification skills are measured by a three-item scale developed by Román and Iacobucci (2010). Respondents are asked to rate themselves on five-point Likert-type items ranging from 1 (needs improvement) to 5 (outstanding). The reliability and validity of the scale has been confirmed in past research (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015). All the question items are as follows.

- 1) My ability to identify and analyze customer's needs is...
- 2) My ability to understand customer's buying motive is...
- 3) My ability to distinguish different kinds of customers is...

3.5.3 Adaptive Selling Behaviors

Adaptive selling behaviors are measured by a five-item ADAPTS-SV scale (Robinson Jr, Marshall, Moncrief, & Lask, 2002). The validity and reliability of the scale has been confirmed in prior research (Chakrabarty et al., 2004; Chakrabarty et al., 2014; Guenzi et al., 2016). Respondents are asked to rate themselves on five-point Likert-type items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All the question items are as follows:

- 1) When I feel that my sales approach is not working, I can easily change to another approach.
- 2) I like to experiment with different sales approaches.
- 3) I am very flexible in the selling approach I use.
- 4) I can easily use a wide range of selling approaches.
- 5) I try to understand how one customer differs from another.

3.5.4 Salesperson's Performance

This study uses self-rated scales to measure salesperson's performance. Salespersons' self-evaluations of their own performance have been extensively documented in sales literature (Babakus, Cravens, Johnston, & Moncrief, 1999; Banin et al., 2016; Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Sujan et al., 1994; Verbeke & Bagozzi, 2000; Wachner, Plouffe, & Grégoire, 2009). Scholars argue that salespeople are in the best position to judge their own performance because they have a good understanding of all the parts of their own sales job (Levy & Sharma, 1993; Román & Iacobucci, 2010). Kock (2017b)'s comparative analysis about the self-reported job performance and official supervisor evaluations finds that self-reported instrument to measure job performance shows good reliability and validity as well as low collinearity and may be better than supervisors' evaluations measurement.

Following previous sales studies (Ogilvie et al., 2018; Rodriguez & Honeycutt Jr, 2011; Sundaram et al., 2007), this study focuses on two dimensions of salesperson performance which are salesperson outcome performance and salesperson customer relationship performance. The measurements are presented in detail in the following part.

3.5.4.1 Salesperson's outcome performance

Salesperson's outcome performance was measured by a four-item scale developed by Behrman & Perrault (1982). The respondents are asked to self-evaluate their sales performance in terms of selling high profit-margin products, generating a high level of dollar sales, quickly generating sales of new company products and exceeding sales targets. All the items are scored by a five-point rating scale, ranging from 1 (strongly negative) to 5 (strongly positive). All the question items to measure salesperson outcome performance are as follows:

Please indicate your opinions about your performance regarding

- 1) Selling high profit-margin products
- 2) Generating a high level of dollar sales
- 3) Quickly generating sales of new company products
- 4) Exceeding sales targets

3.5.4.2 Salesperson's relationship performance

Salesperson relationship performance is measured by a three-item scale developed by Rodriguez et al. (2013). Rodriguez et al. (2013) developed the scale based on Hunter and Perreault Jr (2007)'s relational measures of sales performance that focus on behaviors which strengthen the relationship between buyers and sellers. Items are scored on a five-point Likert scale (1= "strongly disagree", 5= "strongly agree"). All the items are as follows:

- 1) Compared to last year, my new account acquisition has increased.
- 2) Compared to last year, the number of my qualified opportunities/leads has increased.
- 3) Compared to last year, my customer retention rate has increased.

3.5.5 Cultural Intelligence

Cultural intelligence is measured by a set of self-reported cultural intelligence scales developed by Ang et al. (2007). The scales have twenty items, six to measure cognitive CQ, four to measure meta-cognitive CQ, five to measure motivational CQ and five to measure behavioral CQ. All items are measured by five-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All the question items are as follows.

Meta-cognitive CQ:

- 1) I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.
- 2) I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.
- 3) I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.
- 4) I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.

Cognitive CQ

- 5) I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.
- 6) I know the rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) of other languages.
- 7) I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.
- 8) I know the marriage systems of other cultures.
- 9) I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.
- 10) I know the rules for expressing non-verbal behaviors in other cultures.

Motivational CQ

- 11) I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
- 12) I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.
- 13) I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.
- 14) I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.
- 15) I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.

Behavioral CQ

16) I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it

17) I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.

18) I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.

19) I change my non-verbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it

20) I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.

3.6 Control Variables

According to the literature, this study includes five control variables that may influence salesperson's outcome performance and relationship performance. The five control variables are gender, age, experience, education and English language proficiency. They will be explained in detail as follows.

3.6.1 Gender

Literature suggests that gender difference between male and female salespeople may influence salesperson performance (Swan & Futrell, 1978). Although many studies found no significant difference in the self-reported sales performance between male and female sales people (William C Moncrief, Babakus, Cravens, & Johnston, 2000; Palmer & Bejou, 1995; Piercy et al., 2012; Siguaw & Honeycutt Jr, 1995; Wachner et al., 2009), there was a stereotype about women salespeople portrayed as poorer performers than men counterparts (Swan & Futrell, 1978). Swan

and Futrell (1978)'s research findings showed that female salespeople owned less product knowledge and technical ability, territory coverage, activity reporting and overall performance. However, in terms of relationship performance, female salespersons may excel at developing ongoing relationship due to their female traits such as empathy (Palmer & Bejou, 1995), warm, nurturing and supportive role (Siguaw & Honeycutt Jr, 1995) and their greater importance on social relationships than male counterparts (McNeilly & Goldsmith, 1991; Russ & McNeilly, 1995). Gender is measured by dummy variables, with female coded as 0 and male coded as 1.

3.6.2 Age

Previous research found that age and salesperson performance may be related (Landau & Werbel, 1995; Wachner et al., 2009). Ford, Walker Jr, Churchill Jr, and Hartley (1987)'s meta-analysis about factors influencing sales performance found that age explained a significant but small percentage of sales performance. Landau and Werbel (1995)'s research found that older new hires who used a variety of prospecting techniques tend to have higher sale productivity (measured by average monthly commissions for the first six months of employment). Older salespeople are more likely to have higher salesperson performance due to greater social network (Landau & Werbel, 1995) and more sales experience in their industry (Wachner et al., 2009). This control variable is measured by a salesperson' actual age.

3.6.3 Experience

A salesperson's selling experience is a potentially important predictor of his sales performance (Bartkus, Peterson, & Bellenger, 1989; Walker Jr, Churchill Jr, & Ford, 1977). The longer a salesperson works in an industry or field, the more chances he will meet various customers and complex encounters, the more knowledge and

understanding he will have about customer types, sales skills, sales strategy etc, which helps improve his sales performance and establish good relationship with customers (Johlke, 2006; Mintu-Wimsatt & Gassenheimer, 2004; Shoemaker & Johlke, 2002). Previous research findings noted that a salesperson with higher levels of selling experience tended to have higher levels of sales performance (Bartkus et al., 1989; Franke & Park, 2006; Pfeffer, 1985; Wachner et al., 2009). Experience is measured by the number of years salespersons work for as export sales personnel. Such a practice has been adopted by previous studies (Borman, Hanson, Oppler, Pulakos, & White, 1993; Giacobbe et al., 2006; McDaniel, Schmidt, & Hunter, 1988; Schmidt, Hunter, & Outerbridge, 1986).

3.6.4 Education

Education level can be a predictor of salesperson performance (Churchill Jr, Ford, Hartley, & Walker Jr, 1985) because education develops people's critical thinking and abilities to deal with complex situations, which are necessary for a salesperson to fulfil his selling tasks (Levy & Sharma, 1994). Salespeople with a higher level of education can more easily acquire substantial product knowledge and are more capable of efficiently dealing with complex sales encounters than those with a lower one (Kotur & Anbazhagan, 2014). Past empirical research found that a salesperson's education level was positively associated with his sales performance (Cotham, 1969; Lamont & Lundstrom, 1977). This variable is measured by an ordinal scale (1= "high school/high vocational certificate", 2= "diploma", 3= "bachelor's degree", 4= "master's degree and above")

3.6.5 English Language Proficiency

In export selling, salespeople's foreign language competence may influence their communication with foreign buyers and their sales performance (Enderwick & Akoorie, 1994; Enderwick & Gray, 1993). A Higher level of foreign language competence is helpful for smooth communication whereas lower levels may impede communication during interactions or negotiations with foreign customers, harmful for closing a deal (Clarke, 1999; Crick, 1999). As most Chinese export salespeople use English to communicate with importers, this study mainly takes their English language proficiency into consideration for the convenience of comparison. Chinese export salespeople's English language proficiency is measured by an ordinal scale (1= "less than College English Test Band 4"; 2= "College English Test Band 4", 3= "College English Test 6 or Test for English Majors Band 4"; 4= "Test for English Majors Band 8 or above"). In China, College English Test (CET) and Test for English Majors (TEM) are two major and common tests for English Levels. CET bands consist of Band 4 and Band 6, and TEM bands include Band 4 and Band 8. For both CET and TEM, the bigger band number suggests a higher level of English proficiency. Usually, the level of CET Band 6 is regarded as the same level of TEM Band 4.

3.7 Data Processing Tools and Analysis

This study will use Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach to analyze data and estimate the proposed model. PLS-SEM is a representative of variance-based least squares estimation technique (Chin, Marcolin, & Newsted, 2003; Vinzi, Chin, Henseler, & Wang, 2010). Its primary objective is to make causal-predictive analysis of data high in complexity but low in theoretical support (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). In recent years, PLS-SEM has been

widely adopted for data analysis in business research fields such as accounting (L. Lee, Petter, Fayard, & Robinson, 2011), operations management (Peng & Lai, 2012), marketing (Joe F Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012), human resources management (Charoensukmongkol, Daniel, & Chatelain-Jardon, 2013, 2015; Charoensukmongkol & Suthatorn, 2018; Koirala & Charoensukmongkol, 2018; Phungsoonthorn & Charoensukmongkol, 2018; Puyod & Charoensukmongkol, 2019b), psychology (Charoensukmongkol, 2015b, 2016b, 2016d, 2017, 2019a, 2019c, 2019d; Charoensukmongkol & Aumeboonsuke, 2017; Charoensukmongkol, Murad, & Gutierrez-Wirsching, 2016; Nongpong & Charoensukmongkol, 2016) and strategic management (Charoensukmongkol, 2016c; Joe F Hair et al., 2012; Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & G. Kuppelwieser, 2014; Tanchaitranon & Charoensukmongkol, 2016). The wide popularity of PLS-SEM among researchers is mainly due to its following characteristics: prediction-oriented, small sample size, non-normal distribution, formative measurement models and complex models (Joe F Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011; Hair Jr et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009).

This study adopts PLS-SEM approach for the data analysis mainly for the following reasons. Firstly, Hair Jr et al. (2014) suggested that PLS-SEM is a suitable method for analyzing data with a multivariate non-normal distribution. This advantage of PLS-SEM matches with the nature of the data in this study which is likely to be non-normally distributed. Scholars like Peng and Lai (2012) and Hair Jr et al. (2014) have pointed out that data collected in social science research often follow a multivariate non-normal distribution. Secondly, Rigdon, Sarstedt, and Ringle (2017) suggested that PLS-SEM is suitable for exploratory research with low theoretical support and a lack of clear determination of the applicable measurement models. This advantage of PLS-SEM matches with this study's research objectives, which are to some extent exploratory in nature. This study aims to predict the variance of dependent variables from a set of independent variables, and the relationships between social media use in

sales and customer qualification skills, cultural intelligence and customer qualification skills, customer qualification skills and salesperson relationship performance have not been previously explored. Thirdly, Chin (2010) argued that PLS-SEM is advantageous in analyzing complex models with a high number of indicators and constructs. Such an advantage of PLS-SEM matches with the complexity of the proposed model in this study. This study has six constructs and proposed thirteen hypotheses in total. In addition, the CQ construct consists of four dimensions measured by twenty indicators. Considering all these factors, this study adopts PLS-SEM for its data analysis. As for the data processing tools, this study will use WarpPLS version 6.0 software to make data analysis (Kock, 2017a).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter will first report the demographic characteristics of the data collected in the study, then present the results of measurement model assessment and finally the result of regression analysis for hypothesis testing.

4.1 Data

The data were collected by sending an email to 24,191 export salespeople in the database. The e-mail contained a cover letter expressing the purpose of the study and a website link to the questionnaire to invite them to participate in the survey. The e-mail survey is subject to criticism for low response rate and non-response bias (Sax, Gilmartin, & Bryant, 2003). Efforts to increase the response rate and reduce the bias caused by non-respondents include timing efforts (e.g. preliminary notification and follow-up or reminders) and technique (e.g. appropriate questionnaire length, anonymity and rewards etc.) (Kanuk & Berenson, 1975). This study adopted the anonymity and rewards technique to increase the response rate by assuring the respondents of anonymity and informing that each sincere participant would be provided with 8.88 RMB as a token of gratitude. Besides that, this study also adopted a reminder technique to increase the response rate and reduce the non-respondent bias. The early response of data collection started from July 20, 2019 and 4368 of email addresses were not accessible. One week later, the author sent another email to thank those who have answered the questionnaire and reminded those accessible but without any response. After the two waves of data collection in one month, 992

people participated the survey and finished the questionnaire. The author removed the questionnaires without information about export countries, which suggests that the respondent may not be an export salesperson and are disqualified from being an appropriate sample for this study. Finally, 966 questionnaires are available for data analysis, which constitutes a 3.99% response rate.

4.1.1 T-test for Assessing the Non-response Bias Problems

The mail survey is subject to criticism for non-response bias (Armstrong & Overton, 1977). Non-response bias refers to bias in findings caused by respondents who refuse to take part in the research or answer a question. Research findings may become non-representative because the participants may disproportionately possess certain traits affecting the outcome (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Research findings are representative of the population under study only if the respondents and non-respondents do not differ in significant ways (Kanuk & Berenson, 1975). It is assumed that subjects who respond later are more like non-respondents. If the early and late responses differ significantly, the study is determined to suffer from non-response bias problems (Armstrong & Overton, 1977). Thus, it is necessary to make a comparison between the early responses and late responses to assess whether a study suffers from a non-response bias problem or not. Given this, to assess whether this study has a non-response bias problem, this study adopts Armstrong and Overton (1977)'s approach to compare early and late responses for differences in demographics and key constructs. This study compared the early response (N=384) with the late response(N=582) in terms of social media use in sales (key construct) and export sales experience(demographics) by using t-test analysis.

1) Table 4.1 reported the results of independent t-test by comparing the means of export sales experience between the early responses and the late responses. Results show that on average, export sales experience score of the early response is 2.38 and that of late response is 2.48. The result from Levene's Test for Equality of Variances indicated that the variances of the data between the early responses and late responses are equal, because the level of significance is .058, higher than .05. It fails to reject the null hypothesis about the equality of variances of the data between the early responses and the late responses, so the alternative hypothesis about the inequality of variances of the data between the early responses and the late responses is not statistically supported. Therefore, the variances of the data between the early responses and the late responses are equal. The mean difference of export sales experience score between the early responses and the late responses is -0.097. This mean difference is NOT statistically supported because the level of significance under the equal variances of the data between the early responses and the late responses is .067, higher than .05. It suggests failure to reject the null hypothesis about the equality of export sales experience between the early responses and the late responses, and the alternative hypothesis about the inequality of export sales experience between the early responses and the late responses is not statistically supported. Therefore, the mean difference of export sales experience between the early responses and the late responses is not statistically supported.

2) Table 4.2 reported the results of independent t-test by comparing the means of social media use in sales between the early responses and the late responses. Results show that on average, social media use in sales score of the early responses is 3.48 and that of the late responses is 3.57. The result from Levine's Test for Equality of Variances indicated that the variances of the data between the early responses and the late responses are equal, because the level of significance is .067, higher than .05. It fails to reject the null hypothesis about the equality of variances of

the data between the early responses and the late responses, so the alternative hypothesis about the inequality of variances of the data between the early responses and the late responses is not statistically supported. Therefore, the variances of the data between the early responses and the late responses are equal. The mean difference of social media use in sales score between the early responses and the late responses is -0.094. This mean difference is not statistically supported because the level of significance under the equal variances of the data between the early responses and the late responses is .072, higher than .05. It suggests failure to reject the null hypothesis about the equality of social media use in sales between the early responses and the late responses, and the alternative hypothesis about the inequality of social media use in sales between the early responses and the late responses is not statistically supported. Therefore, the mean difference of social media use in sales between the early responses and the late responses is not statistically supported.

To sum up, the results from SPSS analysis show there is no statistically significant difference between the early responses and late responses in terms of social media use in sales and export sales experience. Thus, it can be determined that this study does not have the non-response bias problem.

Table 4.1 Results of T-test for Export Sales Experience Between the Early and Late Responses

Group Statistics										
Responses		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean					
Export sales experience	Early responses	384	2.38	0.853	0.044					
	Late responses	582	2.48	0.764	0.032					
Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Export sales experience	Equal variances assumed	3.595	0.058	-1.835	964	0.067	-0.097	0.053	-0.2	0.007
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.794	4	0.073	-0.097	0.054	-0.202	0.009

Table 4.2 Results of T-test for Social Media Use in Sales Between the Early and the Late Responses

Group Statistics										
Responses		N	Mean		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean				
Social media use in sales	Early responses	384	3.48		0.831	0.042				
	Late responses	582	3.57		0.767	0.032				
Independent Samples Test										
Levine's Test for Equality of Variances					T-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Social media use in sales	Equal variances assumed	3.36	0.067	-1.799	964	0.072	-0.09377	0.05212	-0.19605	0.0085
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.77	772.853	0.077	-0.09377	0.05299	-0.1978	0.01025

4.1.2 Common Method Bias

Self-reported biasness may cause common method variance which could result in inflated relationships between variables (Conway & Lance, 2010). As this study collected data from self-reported surveys, it is necessary to conduct common method bias tests (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). To assess whether the data collected in this study suffer from common method bias problems, this study used Harman's single-factor analysis to evaluate the amount of biasness inherent in the variance proportion distribution of items (Yeap, Ramayah, & Soto-Acosta, 2016). This study conducted Harman's single-factor analysis by taking all the measurement items of the latent variables in the Exploratory Factor Analysis. The result showed that the one factor solution explained 40.217% of the variance, less than the threshold 50% (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Table 4.3 shows the result of Harman's single factor analysis. In addition, the author used Amos software to conduct a one-factor confirmatory factor analysis. The result shows that the one-factor confirmatory factor analysis model did not fit the data well ($\chi^2=2174.92$; d.f.=800; $p<.001$). Thus, it can be determined that CMB is not a problem in the data of this study.

Table 4.3 Result of Harman's Single-factor Analysis

Total Variance Explained						
Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
SM1	17.272	41.123	41.123	16.891	40.217	40.217
SM2	4.512	10.742	51.866	-	-	-
SM3	2.096	4.989	56.855	-	-	-
SM4	1.143	2.721	59.577	-	-	-
SM5	0.954	2.273	61.849	-	-	-
SM6	0.881	2.098	63.947	-	-	-
SM7	0.807	1.921	65.868	-	-	-
QUAL1	0.693	1.649	67.517	-	-	-

Total Variance Explained						
Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
QUAL2	0.658	1.566	69.083	-	-	-
QUAL3	0.641	1.526	70.609	-	-	-
ASB1	0.601	1.431	72.04	-	-	-
ASB2	0.581	1.384	73.424	-	-	-
ASB3	0.553	1.317	74.741	-	-	-
ASB4	0.529	1.258	75.999	-	-	-
ASB5	0.513	1.221	77.22	-	-	-
OP1	0.503	1.197	78.417	-	-	-
OP2	0.48	1.143	79.56	-	-	-
OP3	0.468	1.114	80.674	-	-	-
OP4	0.466	1.11	81.784	-	-	-
RP1	0.455	1.084	82.868	-	-	-
RP2	0.451	1.075	83.943	-	-	-
RP3	0.435	1.035	84.978	-	-	-
CQ1	0.417	0.993	85.971	-	-	-
CQ2	0.409	0.975	86.945	-	-	-
CQ3	0.4	0.953	87.898	-	-	-
CQ4	0.394	0.937	88.835	-	-	-
CQ5	0.367	0.874	89.709	-	-	-
CQ6	0.361	0.86	90.57	-	-	-
CQ7	0.36	0.857	91.427	-	-	-
CQ8	0.352	0.839	92.266	-	-	-
CQ9	0.322	0.767	93.032	-	-	-
CQ10	0.315	0.751	93.784	-	-	-
CQ11	0.306	0.729	94.513	-	-	-
CQ12	0.299	0.711	95.224	-	-	-

Total Variance Explained						
Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
CQ13	0.287	0.684	95.907	-	-	-
CQ14	0.278	0.663	96.57	-	-	-
CQ15	0.267	0.636	97.206	-	-	-
CQ16	0.257	0.611	97.818	-	-	-
CQ17	0.249	0.593	98.411	-	-	-
CQ18	0.233	0.555	98.966	-	-	-
CQ19	0.223	0.531	99.497	-	-	-
CQ20	0.211	0.503	100	-	-	-

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Note: SM = social media use in sales, QUAL= customer qualification skills, ASB = adaptive selling behaviors, OP = salesperson's outcome performance, RP = salesperson's relationship performance, CQ = cultural intelligence.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

This part will report the demographic characteristics about the respondents regarding gender, age, education level, language used in export sales, English level, job title, customer type, experience in export sales industry, target countries, the industries they engage in and the provinces or municipalities they work in. The details are summarized from Tables 4.4 to 4.20.

First, the basic information about the gender and age of the respondents is reported. Of all the 966 respondents, 459 are males (47.5%) and 507 are females (52.5%). The age of the respondents ranges from 19 to 58 years old with a mean value of 32.99 (the standard deviation = 6.148). Table 4.4 and 4.5 summarizes the demographic information of gender and age.

Table 4.4 Gender of the Respondents

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	459	47.5%
	Female	507	52.5%

Table 4.5 Age of the Respondents

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age (year)	19	58	32.99	6.148

The education level is divided into four levels, which are high school and high vocational education level, diploma level, bachelor's degree level, masters' degree and above level. Only 7.9% (76 respondents) of total respondents have high school or high vocational education level, which suggests that 92.1% of respondents in this study have received higher education. Specifically, 22.9% (221 respondents) have diploma education level, 59.1% (571 respondents) have bachelor's degree and 10.1% (98 respondents) have master's degree or above. The details of education level are reported in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Education Level of the Respondents

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Education	High school/high vocational education	76	7.9%
	Diploma	221	22.9%
	Bachelor's degree	571	59.1%
	Master's degree and above	98	10.1%

Regarding the languages used for export sales, 873 (90.4%) respondents use English to communicate with foreign buyers and 93 (9.6%) respondents use other foreign languages. For those who use English, 72 (7.5%) respondents' English level is below CET4. 306 (31.7%) respondents' English level is CET4. 431 (44.6%) respondents have CET6 or TEM4 English level. And 64 respondents (6.6%) have a high English level of TEM8. The detailed information is presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Language Use for Export Selling and English Level

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Language	English	873	90.4%
	Other foreign language.	93	9.6%
English Level	below CET4	72	7.5%
	CET4	306	31.7%
	CET6/TEM4	431	44.6%
	TEM8	64	6.6%

Regarding the job title, 530 (54.9%) respondents are sales representatives, 351 (36.3%) respondents are sales managers and 85 (8.8%) respondents are general sales managers. The information about job title is summarized in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Job Title of the Respondents

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Job title	sales representative.	530	54.9%
	sales managers.	351	36.3%
	general sales manager.	85	8.8%

Regarding the experience in export sales, 75 (7.8%) respondents have been working in export sales industry in less than one year. 506 (52.4%) respondents have one to five years of export sales experience. 269 (27.8%) respondents have six to ten years of export sales experience and 116 (12.0%) respondents have more than 10

years of export sales experience. The information about respondents' export sales experience is summarized in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Experience in Export Selling

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage	
Experience in export sales	less than one year	1-5	75	7.8%
	years		506	52.4%
	6-10 years		269	27.8%
	more than 10 years		116	12.0%

As for the customer type the export salespeople are responsible for, 363 (37.6%) respondents focus on B2B, 272 (28.2%) respondents focus on B2C and 331 (34.3%) respondents deal with both B2B and B2C type. The information about customer type is summarized in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Customer Type

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Customer type	B2B	363	37.6%
	B2C	272	28.2%
	B2B & B2C	331	34.3%

Regarding the product type, 435 (45%) respondents export industrial goods and 531 (55%) export consumer goods. The information about product type is summarized in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Product Type

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Product type	industrial goods.	435	45%
	consumer goods.	531	55%

The respondents in this study specialize in a wide range of industries. 113 (11.7%) respondents specialize in fast consumer goods industry like food, beverage and cosmetics. 110 (11.4%) respondents specialize in textile, clothing and accessories industries. 149 (15.4%) specialize in industries covering furniture, furnishing products, art crafts, toys, office and education products. 224 (23.2%) respondents specialize in communication industries including communication, electronics and computer accessories. 85 (8.8%) respondents specialize in the auto industry exporting auto parts and accessories. 46 (4.76%) respondents specialize in machinery, equipment and industrial equipment industry. 34 (3.5%) respondents specialize in medicine and bioengineering industry, 16 (1.7%) respondents specialize in publication and packing box industry. 17 (1.8%) respondents specialize in transportation and logistics industry. 12 (1.2%) specialize in energy and chemicals industry. 26 (2.7%) respondents specialize in other industries and 134 (13.9) respondents do not report the industries they specialize in. The information about industries export salespeople specialize in is reported in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 Industries the Respondents Specialize in

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Industries export salespeople specialize in	Fast consumer goods (like food, beverage and cosmetics).	113	11.7%
	Textile, clothing and accessories.	110	11.4%
	Furniture & furnishing, art craft, toys, office & education products.	149	15.4%
	Communication, Electronics and computer accessories.	224	23.2%
	Auto parts and accessories.	85	8.8%
	Machinery, equipment & Industrial automation.	46	4.76%
	Medicine, bioengineering and medical equipment.	34	3.5%
	Publication and packing box.	16	1.7%

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
	Transportation & logistics.	17	1.8%
	Energy & chemicals.	12	1.2%
	Others.	26	2.7%
	Missing.	134	13.9%

Regarding the workplace, respondents come from 26 provinces and municipalities in China. The top ten provinces and municipalities which respondents come from are Guangdong province with 138 respondents accounting for 14.3% of the total respondents, Zhejiang province (93 respondents or 9.6%), Beijing municipality (91 respondents or 9.4%), Jiangsu province (89 respondents or 9.2%), Shanghai municipality (88 respondents or 9.1%), Hebei province (81 respondents or 8.4%), Tianjin municipalities (71 or 7.3%), Shan-xi province (46 or 4.8%), Hubei province (43 or 4.5%) and Fujian province (37 respondents or 3.8%). More detailed information about the workplace of the respondents in this study is presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13 Provinces and Municipalities the Respondents Come from

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Workplace	Guangdong	138	14.3%
	Zhejiang	93	9.6%
	Beijing	91	9.4%
	Jiangsu	89	9.2%
	Shanghai	88	9.1%
	Hebei	81	8.4%
	Tianjin	71	7.3%
	Shan-xi	46	4.8%
	Hubei	43	4.5%
	Fujian	37	3.8%
	Liaoning	34	3.5%
	Shandong	33	3.4%

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	Inner-Mongolia	18	1.9%
	Jiangxi	18	1.9%
	Anhui	13	1.3%
	Henan	13	1.3%
	Jilin	13	1.3%
	Heilongjiang	10	1.0%
	Guangxi	9	0.9%
	Chongqing	7	0.7%
	Hunan	6	0.6%
	Sichuan	6	0.6%
	Guizhou	4	0.4%
	Hainan	3	0.3%
	Hongkong	1	0.1%
	Tibet	1	0.1%
	Total	966	100.0%

Regarding the countries to which the respondents export, there are 52 countries in total. Among them, U.S.A is the country which ranks the first according to the frequency of respondents (451 respondents or 46.69%), followed by Japan (273 respondents or 28.26%), U.K.(195 respondents or 20.19%), South Korea (189 respondents or 19.57%), Germany (107 respondents or 11.08%), Canada (92 respondents or 9.52%), France (91 respondents or 9.42%), Russia (72 respondents or 7.45%), India (69 respondents or 7.14%) and Thailand (64 respondents or 6.63%). Detailed information about these top ten countries and the other countries the respondents export to is shown in Table 4.14. Noted that most respondents export to more than one country, hence, the percentage sum exceeds 100%.

Table 4.14 Countries Respondents Export to

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Countries salespeople export to	U.S. A	451	46.69%
	Japan	273	28.26%
	U.K.	195	20.19%
	South Korea	189	19.57%
	Germany	107	11.08%
	Canada	92	9.52%
	France	91	9.42%
	Russia	72	7.45%
	India	69	7.14%
	Thailand	64	6.63%
	Singapore	57	5.90%
	Malaysia	43	4.45%
	Vietnam	38	3.93%
	Italy	34	3.52%
	Holland	31	3.21%
	Brazil	28	2.90%
	Europe	20	2.07%
	New Zealand	17	1.76%
	Indonesia	15	1.55%
	Spain	15	1.55%
Turkey	13	1.35%	
Philippine	11	1.14%	
Pakistan	10	1.04%	
Cambodia	9	0.93%	
Nepal	9	0.93%	
Finland	8	0.83%	
Mexico	8	0.83%	
Mexico	8	0.83%	
Austria	7	0.72%	

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	Dubai	7	0.72%
	Myanmar	7	0.72%
	Belgium	6	0.62%
	Nigeria	6	0.62%
	Tanzania	6	0.62%
	Bangladesh	5	0.52%
	Hongkong	5	0.52%
	Sweden	5	0.52%
	Switzerland	5	0.52%
	Ukraine	5	0.52%
	Iran	4	0.41%
	Denmark	3	0.31%
	Greek	3	0.31%
	Hungary	3	0.31%
	UAE	3	0.31%
	Oman	2	0.21%
	Portugal	2	0.21%
	Zambia	2	0.21%
	Afghanistan	1	0.10%
	Australia	1	0.10%
	Brunei	1	0.10%
	Libya	1	0.10%

Regarding the kinds of social media Chinese export salespeople use for export sales, respondents reported specific social media that they used for each step of export sales and the frequency of use. Results showed that export salespeople may integrate different social media for each step of sales process. For the first step of prospecting, Facebook was the top one social media chosen by 558 respondents (57.76%), followed by WeChat (494 respondents or 51.14%) and WhatsApp (389 respondents or 40.27%). For the step of pre-approach, top three social media reported by the respondents were Facebook (561 respondents or 58.13%), WeChat (379 respondents or 39.27%) and WhatsApp (355 respondents or 36.79%). For the step of approach, the top three social media reported by the respondents were Facebook (486 respondents or 50.31%), WeChat (483 respondents or 50.00%) and QQ (371 respondents or 38.41%). For the step of sales presentation, top three social media reported by the respondents were Facebook (468 respondents or 48.45%), WeChat (456 respondents or 47.20%) and QQ (357 respondents or 36.96%). For the step of handling objections, top three social media reported by the respondents were WeChat (452 respondents or 46.79%), Facebook (446 respondents or 46.17%), WhatsApp (370 respondents or 38.30%). For the step of closing a deal, top three social media reported by the respondents are WeChat (430 respondents or 44.51%), Facebook (399 respondents or 41.30%) and QQ (354 respondents or 36.65%). For the step of follow up service, top three social media reported by the respondents were WeChat (462 respondents or 47.83%), Facebook (425 respondents or 44.00%) and QQ (375 respondents or 38.82%). Detailed information about specific social media adopted for each step of export sales and the corresponding frequency of use is presented in Tables 4.15 to 4.21.

Table 4.15 Kinds of Social Media and Frequency of Use for Prospecting

Variable	Category	Frequency					total	Percentage
		never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often		
Kinds of social media.	Facebook	9	60	135	268	86	558	57.76%
	WeChat	6	55	130	215	88	494	51.14%
	WhatsApp	4	49	108	171	57	389	40.27%
	QQ	4	44	82	168	67	365	37.78%
	YouTube	5	47	118	141	33	344	35.61%
	Facebook messenger	0	39	84	129	34	286	29.61%
	Skype	4	18	46	81	32	181	18.74%
	Instagram	0	23	56	72	29	180	18.63%
	LinkedIn	2	13	32	66	30	143	14.80%
	google +	1	8	35	69	25	138	14.29%
	sina weibo	2	10	32	51	28	123	12.73%
	Twitter	0	6	29	43	18	96	9.94%
	Reddit	1	8	18	14	14	55	5.69%
	douyin	2	8	12	10	3	35	3.63%
	LINE	0	8	16	24	6	54	5.59%
	Vkontakte	2	14	14	16	5	51	5.28%
	Snapchat	2	8	9	11	5	35	3.62%
	Vibre	0	4	10	10	7	31	3.21%
	karao talk	0	1	6	14	6	27	2.80%
	Pinterest	0	2	7	10	4	23	2.38%
Tumbir	1	1	4	5	7	18	1.86%	
Vimeo	0	2	8	3	4	17	1.76%	
Total		45	428	991	159	588	364	
					1		3	

Table 4.16 Kinds of Social Media and Frequency of Use for Pre-approach

Variable	Category	Frequency					total	Percentage
		never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often		
Kinds of social media.	Facebook	14	71	147	256	73	561	58.13%
	WeChat	5	43	125	145	61	379	39.27%
	WhatsApp	7	50	102	150	46	355	36.79%
	QQ	6	41	88	149	48	332	34.40%
	YouTube	7	51	109	111	32	310	32.12%
	Facebook messenger	8	36	89	119	29	281	29.12%
	LinkedIn	2	15	43	62	27	149	15.44%
	Instagram	5	15	42	57	27	146	15.13%
	google +	0	11	35	59	16	121	12.54%
	Skype	2	14	36	42	18	112	11.61%
	Twitter	0	15	26	43	18	102	10.57%
	sina weibo	1	11	35	36	13	96	9.95%
	Vkontakte	0	4	17	14	9	44	4.56%
	LINE	1	7	15	13	7	43	4.46%
	Reddit	2	9	14	13	3	41	4.25%
	douyin	2	8	12	10	3	35	3.63%
	Snapchat	1	4	11	7	6	29	3.01%
	Pinterest	0	4	12	6	7	29	3.01%
	tumblr	1	7	7	8	4	27	2.80%
	karao talk	1	5	3	15	3	27	2.80%
Vibre	0	4	6	8	8	26	2.69%	
vimeo	0	1	9	4	2	16	1.66%	
Total		65	426	983	1327	460	3261	

Table 4.17 Kinds of Social Media and Frequency of Use for Approach

Variable	Category	Frequency					total	Percentage
		never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often		
Kinds of social media.	Facebook	11	46	120	237	72	486	50.31%
	WeChat	3	41	136	213	90	483	50.00%
	QQ	6	34	85	178	68	371	38.41%
	WhatsApp	5	45	101	165	53	369	38.20%
	YouTube	5	42	104	121	28	300	31.06%
	Facebook messenger	2	24	81	151	30	288	29.81%
	Instagram	0	15	45	74	22	156	16.15%
	Skype	1	8	33	78	33	153	15.84%
	LinkedIn	0	8	34	54	13	109	11.28%
	google +	1	7	25	45	13	91	9.42%
	Twitter	1	3	22	31	16	73	7.56%
	sina weibo	2	4	23	31	7	67	6.94%
	Vibre	0	5	19	19	6	49	5.07%
	Reddit	0	7	19	15	7	48	4.97%
	Vkontakte	1	7	14	20	5	47	4.87%
	LINE	0	6	17	18	3	44	4.55%
	douyin	1	6	13	16	7	43	4.45%
	Snapchat	0	7	17	12	3	39	4.04%
	Karao talk	0	3	2	20	5	30	3.11%
	tumbir	1	2	10	11	3	27	2.80%
Pinterest	0	4	5	12	5	26	2.69%	
vimeo	0	4	5	12	4	25	2.59%	
Total		40	328	930	153	493	332	
					3		4	

Table 4.18 Kinds of Social Media and Frequency of Use for Sales Presentation

Variable	Category	Frequency					Percentage	
		never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often		total
Kinds of social media.	Facebook	13	45	104	233	73	468	48.45%
	WeChat	6	39	118	212	81	456	47.20%
	QQ	8	28	81	176	64	357	36.96%
	WhatsApp	5	33	107	158	49	352	36.44%
	YouTube	6	35	107	128	29	305	31.57%
	Facebook messenger	1	28	84	135	40	288	29.81%
	Instagram	1	17	54	74	30	176	18.22%
	Skype	2	11	33	64	29	139	14.39%
	LinkedIn	3	13	37	57	21	131	13.56%
	sina weibo	1	10	22	35	19	87	9.01%
	google +	2	9	18	42	14	85	8.80%
	Twitter	2	6	27	34	15	84	8.70%
	LINE	0	6	14	19	6	45	4.66%
	Reddit	5	2	16	15	5	43	4.45%
	Vibre	2	8	14	14	5	43	4.45%
	douyin	0	7	17	13	4	41	4.24%
	Vkontakte	2	3	13	17	4	39	4.04%
	Pinterest	2	3	15	9	6	35	3.62%
	Snapchat	1	4	10	14	3	32	3.31%
	tumbir	1	0	7	16	2	26	2.69%
	vimeo	0	6	6	10	3	25	2.59%
	Karao talk	0	1	5	14	4	24	2.48%
Total		63	314	909	1489	506	3281	

Table 4.19 Kinds of Social Media and Frequency of Use for Handling Objections

Variable	Category	Frequency					Percentage	
		never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often		total
Kinds of social media	WeChat	6	38	133	199	76	452	46.79%
	Facebook	8	46	115	222	55	446	46.17%
	WhatsApp	5	47	125	144	49	370	38.30%
	QQ	7	33	92	175	59	366	37.89%
	YouTube	7	37	108	109	26	287	29.71%
	Facebook messenger	3	24	87	136	31	281	29.09%
	Skype	2	14	40	69	32	157	16.25%
	Instagram	1	14	49	67	22	153	15.84%
	LinkedIn	0	10	33	53	18	114	11.80%
	Twitter	0	6	31	41	11	89	9.21%
	google +	0	7	22	48	10	87	9.01%
	LINE	1	8	27	21	5	62	6.42%
	Reddit	1	6	22	23	5	57	5.90%
	sina weibo	0	6	19	28	3	56	5.80%
	douyin	0	6	18	14	6	44	4.55%
	Vibre	2	6	12	14	7	41	4.24%
	Vkontakte	1	4	13	15	6	39	4.04%
	Pinterest	0	9	9	12	5	35	3.62%
	Karao talk	0	2	5	19	3	29	3.00%
	Snapchat	0	4	9	9	3	25	2.59%
	tumbir	0	2	11	8	3	24	2.48%
	vimeo	0	5	7	10	1	23	2.38%
Total		44	334	987	1436	436	3237	

Table 4.20 Kinds of Social Media and Frequency of Use for Closing a Deal

Variable	Category	Frequency					total	Percentage
		Never	Rarely	Some times	Often	Very often		
Kinds of social media.	WeChat	5	35	125	186	79	430	44.51%
	Facebook	7	42	106	185	59	399	41.30%
	QQ	7	32	81	176	58	354	36.65%
	WhatsApp	5	42	99	142	47	335	34.68%
	Facebook messenger	4	29	95	127	36	291	30.12%
	YouTube	8	36	104	106	31	285	29.50%
	email	2	9	41	102	55	209	21.64%
	Instagram	4	16	53	42	25	140	14.49%
	Skype	4	8	31	60	30	133	13.77%
	LinkedIn	0	10	27	29	16	82	8.49%
	Twitter	2	8	17	30	19	76	7.87%
	sina weibo	1	7	27	29	11	75	7.76%
	google +	1	8	19	32	10	70	7.25%
	LINE	2	8	22	11	4	47	4.87%
	Vkontakte	0	5	15	14	9	43	4.45%
	Snapchat	1	3	14	13	9	40	4.14%
	Vibre	1	5	9	11	5	31	3.21%
	Karao talk	1	0	5	20	4	30	3.11%
	Pinterest	0	2	10	10	6	28	2.90%
	vimeo	0	4	6	6	5	21	2.17%
tumbir	1	1	6	7	4	19	1.97%	
Reddit	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.10%	
Total		56	310	913	1338	522	3139	

Table 4.21 Kinds of Social Media and Frequency of Use for Follow-up Service

Variable	Category	Frequency					total	Percentage
		never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often		
kinds of	WeChat	6	44	112	210	90	462	47.83%
social	Facebook	10	48	96	209	62	425	44.00%
media	QQ	7	32	81	185	70	375	38.82%
	WhatsApp	8	26	100	158	52	344	35.61%
	Facebook messenger	6	34	78	134	43	295	30.54%
	YouTube	10	45	88	114	31	288	29.81%
	email	4	17	28	82	49	180	18.63%
	Instagram	4	18	45	50	28	145	15.01%
	Skype	1	12	30	73	27	143	14.80%
	Twitter	1	5	25	34	18	83	8.59%
	LinkedIn	0	13	19	28	14	74	7.66%
	google +	0	9	17	36	12	74	7.66%
	sina weibo	2	10	20	27	12	71	7.35%
	LINE	1	3	19	17	9	49	5.07%
	Vibre	2	7	15	10	14	48	4.97%
	Vkontakte	1	4	16	12	9	42	4.35%
	Snapchat	0	7	14	10	10	41	4.24%
	Reddit	1	3	8	13	10	35	3.62%
	vimeo	0	6	13	6	6	31	3.21%
	Karao talk	0	3	4	18	4	29	3.00%
	Pinterest	0	3	7	9	4	23	2.38%
	tumbir	2	6	7	3	5	23	2.38%
	Total	66	355	842	1438	579	3280	

4.3 Measurement Model Assessment

Before performing the model analysis, it is necessary to conduct a set of reliability and validity assessments to check the quality of measurement scales. Such assessments make sure that the results drawn from the data are free from bias (Joe F Hair et al., 2012). Because the measurement models of all the latent variables in this study are reflective, both convergent validity test and discriminant validity test are conducted for validity analysis. In terms of the reliability assessment, Cronbach's

alpha coefficients and composite reliability analyses are performed and presented (Chin, 2010). Moreover, to evaluate whether the latent variables in the model have a multicollinearity problem, this study performs a full collinearity test, which checks the collinearity of all latent variables in a model (Kock & Lynn, 2012)

4.3.1 Validity Test

Validity test is to check the accuracy of constructs (Joe F Hair et al., 2012). According to Chin (1998), it is essential to perform validity tests of latent variables to confirm that the constructs measure what they are supposed to measure and do not measure what they should not measure. The author performed convergent validity tests and discriminant validity tests to check the validity for all the constructs in this study.

4.3.1.1 Convergent Validity Test

Convergent validity test is to check how well the indicators measure their corresponding constructs (Joe F Hair et al., 2011). For a construct to exhibit high convergent validity, all the question statements that measure the construct are supposed to show high correlations with each other (Joe F Hair et al., 2011). The criterion to conclude that a measurement model has acceptable convergent validity is that the value of factor loading of each indicator should be 0.5 or above and the ideal value should be above 0.7 (Joseph F Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). The author conducts factor loading and cross loading analyses to check the validity of all the main variables in this study and the results are presented in Table 4.21. The results show that the values of factor loading for indicators of all the main latent variables in this study are above 0.5, which suggests that the measurement models in this study have satisfactory convergent validity.

Table 4.22 The Combined Factor Loading and Cross Loadings of All Latent Variables.

	SM	QLF	ASB	OP	RP	CQ
SM1	(0.849)	0.006	0.006	-0.022	0.007	0.020
SM2	(0.831)	-0.128	0.030	0.089	-0.032	0.055
SM3	(0.849)	0.042	-0.030	-0.033	0.010	-0.005
SM4	(0.815)	0.034	0.021	-0.058	0.056	-0.074
SM5	(0.828)	0.032	-0.044	0.037	-0.019	0.021
SM6	(0.813)	0.020	-0.020	0.049	-0.013	0.003
SM7	(0.850)	-0.006	0.036	-0.059	-0.009	-0.023
QLF1	0.003	(0.898)	0.028	-0.035	0.034	-0.023
QLF2	-0.007	(0.873)	-0.011	0.072	-0.009	-0.034
QLF3	0.004	(0.896)	-0.018	-0.036	-0.025	0.056
ASB1	-0.034	0.062	(0.804)	-0.027	-0.053	0.058
ASB2	0.043	-0.003	(0.681)	-0.159	0.101	-0.064
ASB3	0.004	0.088	(0.785)	0.022	0.028	-0.042
ASB4	-0.032	-0.046	(0.792)	0.235	-0.025	-0.014
ASB5	0.026	-0.105	(0.771)	-0.096	-0.037	0.053
OP1	0.019	0.106	0.072	(0.871)	-0.051	-0.020
OP2	0.017	-0.018	0.059	(0.878)	0.006	-0.058
OP3	0.000	-0.044	-0.049	(0.886)	0.016	0.021
OP4	-0.036	-0.044	-0.082	(0.873)	0.029	0.056
RP1	-0.038	-0.025	0.045	-0.033	(0.860)	0.000
RP2	0.052	0.045	0.050	-0.031	(0.802)	-0.044
RP3	-0.011	-0.016	-0.091	0.062	(0.866)	0.041
CQ1	0.048	0.103	0.074	0.004	0.025	(0.734)
CQ2	0.105	-0.088	0.125	-0.084	0.186	(0.668)
CQ3	0.034	0.081	0.070	-0.058	0.082	(0.712)
CQ4	0.031	-0.087	0.110	0.029	0.070	(0.720)
CQ5	0.043	0.035	-0.080	0.062	-0.034	(0.720)
CQ6	-0.057	0.136	-0.107	0.044	0.016	(0.758)
CQ7	-0.015	0.098	-0.05	-0.042	-0.035	(0.753)
CQ8	-0.014	-0.012	-0.111	0.096	-0.002	(0.754)
CQ9	-0.051	-0.033	-0.134	0.207	-0.001	(0.772)
CQ10	-0.005	0.036	-0.065	0.080	-0.052	(0.753)
CQ11	0.003	-0.119	0.094	-0.038	0.059	(0.668)
CQ12	0.023	-0.104	0.02	-0.096	0.048	(0.726)

	SM	QLF	ASB	OP	RP	CQ
CQ13	0.012	0.017	0.025	-0.074	-0.036	(0.751)
CQ14	-0.036	-0.043	-0.023	0.048	-0.007	(0.688)
CQ15	0.013	0.122	-0.047	-0.142	-0.046	(0.725)
CQ16	-0.023	-0.121	-0.022	0.202	-0.201	(0.749)
CQ17	0.003	0.000	0.069	-0.067	-0.134	(0.737)
CQ18	-0.011	0.005	0.006	-0.098	0.080	(0.713)
CQ19	-0.030	-0.021	0.083	-0.083	0.002	(0.736)
CQ20	-0.058	-0.027	-0.003	-0.023	0.016	(0.731)

NOTE: SM = Social Media Use, CQ = Cultural Intelligence, QLF = Customer Qualification Sills, ASB = Adaptive Selling Behaviors, OP = Salesperson's Outcome Performance, RP = Salesperson's Relationship Performance

4.3.1.2 Discriminant Validity Test

Discriminant validity test is to check whether a specific latent variable is discriminated from other latent variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). For a construct to exhibit high discriminant validity, all the indicators that measure the construct must not show high correlations with the indicators that measure other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The criterion to justify a latent variable has satisfactory discriminant validity is that the value of the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) should be greater than any correlation it involved with other variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This study performed discriminant validity tests for each construct by comparing the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) with its correlation with other variables (Kline, 2015). The result of the correlations and the square root of AVE of all latent variables in the study is presented in Table 4.22. The result shows that the square roots of AVEs of all latent variables are greater than their corresponding correlations with other variables, which suggests that all the latent variables in this study have satisfactory discriminant validity.

Table 4.23 The Correlations and the Square Roots of AVE of All Latent Variables

	SM	QLF	ASB	OP	RP	CQ	GND	EXP	EDU	AGE	ENG
SM	(0.834)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
QLF	0.266***	(0.889)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ASB	0.297***	0.738***	(0.768)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OP	0.167***	0.761***	0.686***	(0.877)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
RP	0.226***	0.638***	0.681***	0.676***	(0.843)	-	-	-	-	-	-
CQ	0.235***	0.665***	0.724***	0.680***	0.684***	(0.729)	-	-	-	-	-
GND	-0.041	0.100**	0.023	0.102**	0.063	0.068*	(1.000)	-	-	-	-
EXP	0.185***	0.164***	0.150***	0.122***	0.049	0.066*	0.040	(1.000)	-	-	-
EDU	0.163***	0.148***	0.174***	0.162***	0.175***	0.175***	0.071*	0.076*	(1.000)	-	-
AGE	-0.050	0.054	0.032	0.069*	0.039	0.043	0.070*	0.154***	-0.044*	(1.000)	-
ENG	0.233***	0.026	0.05	-0.004	0.004	-0.005	0.026	0.158***	0.330***	-0.008	(1.000)

NOTE: 1) SM = Social Media Use, CQ = Cultural Intelligence, QLF = Customer Qualification Skills, ASB = Adaptive Selling Behaviors, OP = Salesperson's Outcome Performance, RP = Salesperson's Relationship Performance, AGE = age, GND = Gender, EDU = Education level, EXP = years in export sales, ENG = English Language Proficiency level.

2) *p-value < .05, ** p-value < .01, ***p-value < .001The square root of AVE displays in the parentheses

4.3.2 Reliability Test

For reflective measurement models, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are two quality indices in reliability analysis (Chin, 2010). This study performs both Cronbach's alpha analysis and composite reliability analysis.

4.3.2.1 Cronbach's Alpha Test

Cronbach's alpha coefficients are classic indices to evaluate the internal consistency of a measure (Chin, 2010). For a measure to exhibit high reliability, it produces similar results under consistent conditions. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the acceptable value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for a reliable measure should be 0.7 or above. The results of this study's Cronbach's alpha test are presented in Table 4.23. The results show that Cronbach's alpha coefficients of all the latent variables in this study are greater than 0.7, which shows that all these measures are reliable.

4.3.2.2 Composite Reliability Test

Composite reliability, also called Dillon-Goldstein's or Joreskog's rho, is another quality index in reliability analysis (Kock, 2017a). It measures the homogeneity of a reflective measurement model (Chin, 2010). The value of composite reliability coefficient should be equal to or larger than 0.7 and usually should be higher than the corresponding Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Kock & Lynn, 2012). The results of this study's composite reliability test are presented in Table 4.23. The results show that the composite reliability coefficients of all latent variables in this study are higher than 0.7 and their corresponding Cronbach's alpha coefficient. To conclude, the results of the reliability analysis show that all the measurement scales of latent variables in this study are reliable.

Table 4.24 Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient and Composite Reliability of All Latent Variables

	SM	CQ	QLF	ASB	OP	RP
Cronbach's alpha (α)	0.927	0.953	0.868	0.825	0.900	0.796
Composite reliability	0.941	0.958	0.919	0.878	0.930	0.880

Note: SM = Social Media Use, CQ = Cultural Intelligence, QLF = Customer Qualification Skills, ASB = Adaptive Selling Behaviors, OP = Salesperson's Outcome Performance, RP = Salesperson's Relationship Performance.

4.4 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity refers to a statistical phenomenon that two or more variables in a model are highly correlated (Farrar & Glauber, 1967). This study conducts a full collinearity variance inflation factor (VIF) test to evaluate whether all the variables in the model have a multicollinearity problem. The full collinearity VIF test is advantageous because it examines not only the classic predictor-predictor latent variable collinearity but also the predictor-criterion latent variable collinearity (Kock & Lynn, 2012). In addition, the Full collinearity VIF test can also be used as a superior index to check the common method bias (CMB) in a SEM model (Kock, 2015a; Lindell & Whitney, 2001). The criteria to justify the existence of no multicollinearity problems and no CMB in a model is that the value of full collinearity VIF should be 3.3 or lower (Kock, 2015a; Kock & Lynn, 2012). The results of the full collinearity VIF test are presented in Table 4.25. The results show that the range of full VIFs of all the variables in the model in this study varies from 1.034 to 3.136, lower than 3.3, which suggests that the model does not have multicollinearity problems and is free of common method bias.

Table 4.25 Full Collinearity VIF Statistics of All Overall Models

	SM	CQ	QLF	ASB	OP	RP	ENG	GND	EXP	EDU	AGE
Full VIF	1.213	2.675	3.136	2.416	3.010	2.419	1.200	1.034	1.114	1.183	1.043

NOTE: SM = Social Media Use, CQ = Cultural Intelligence, QLF = Customer Qualification Sills, ASB = Adaptive Selling Behaviors, OP = Salesperson's Outcome Performance, RP = Salesperson's Relationship Performance, AGE = Age, GND = Gender, EDU = Education level, EXP = Years in export sales, ENG = English Language Proficiency level.

4.5 Normal Distribution

The purpose of a normal distribution test of data is to examine whether the data used for analysis are normally distributed. Two tests which are Jarque-Bera of normality test and Robust Jarque-Bera test are performed to check the normality of the data. The results of the normality test of the data in this study are presented in Table 4.26. The results show that all the variables in this study are not normally distributed.

Table 4.26 Normal Distribution of Data

	SM	CQ	QLF	ASB	OP	RP	AGE	GND	ENG	EDU	EXP
Normal-JB	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Normal-RJB	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Note: Normal-JB = Jarque-Bera of normality, Normal-RJB = Robust Jarque-Bera test, SM = Social Media Use, CQ = Cultural Intelligence, QLF = Customer Qualification Sills, ASB = Adaptive Selling Behaviors, OP = Salesperson's Outcome Performance, RP = Salesperson's Relationship Performance, AGE = Age, GND =

Gender, EDU = Education level, EXP = Years in export sales, ENG = English Language Proficiency level. YES = Normally distributed, NO = Not normally distributed.

In addition, skewness, Exc. Kutoris and histogram of all variables are used as other indicators to check the normal distribution of data in this study. The results about skewness and Exc. Kutoris coefficients are displayed in Table 4.27. The results about histogram of all variables are presented in Figures 4.1 to Figure 4.11. The results of normality tests show that the data in this study are not normally distributed, which confirms that PLS is appropriate for data analysis in this study (Hair Jr et al., 2014).

Table 4.27 Skewness and Exc. Kurtosis Coefficients

Variables	SMU	CQ	QLF	ASB	OP	RP	ENG	GND	EXP	EDU	AGE
Skewness	-0.455	-0.783	-1.108	-0.977	-1.201	-0.870	-1.990	0.100	0.440	-0.595	13.411
Exc.kutoris	0.125	1.652	1.116	2.782	1.125	1.256	3.161	-1.990	-0.352	0.212	214.740

Note: SMU = Social Media Use, CQ = Cultural Intelligence, QLF = Customer Qualification Sills, ASB = Adaptive Selling Behaviors, OP = Salesperson's Outcome Performance, RSP = Salesperson's Relationship Performance, AGE = Age, GND = Gender, EDU = Education level, EXP = years in export sales, ENG = English

Language Proficiency level.

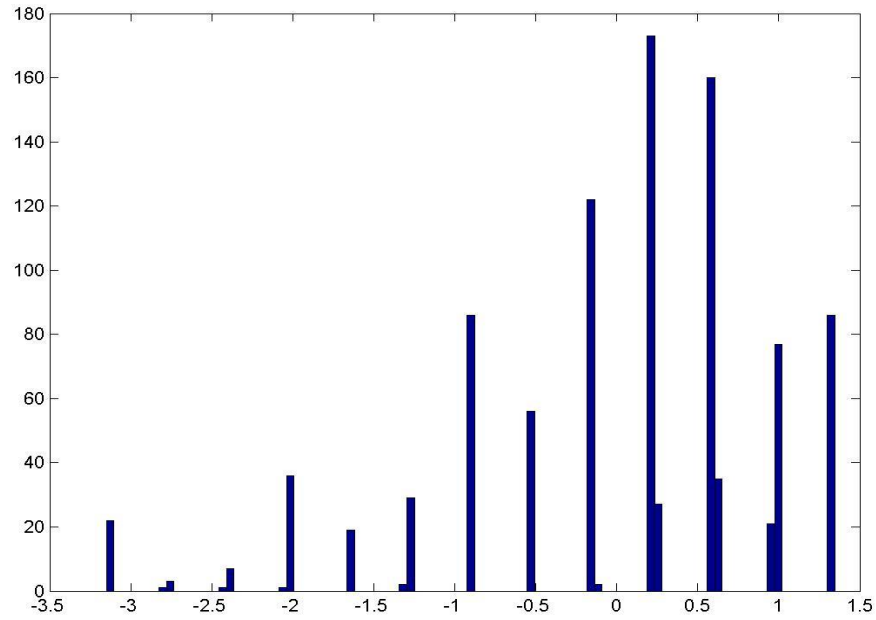


Figure 4.1 Histogram for Social Media Use

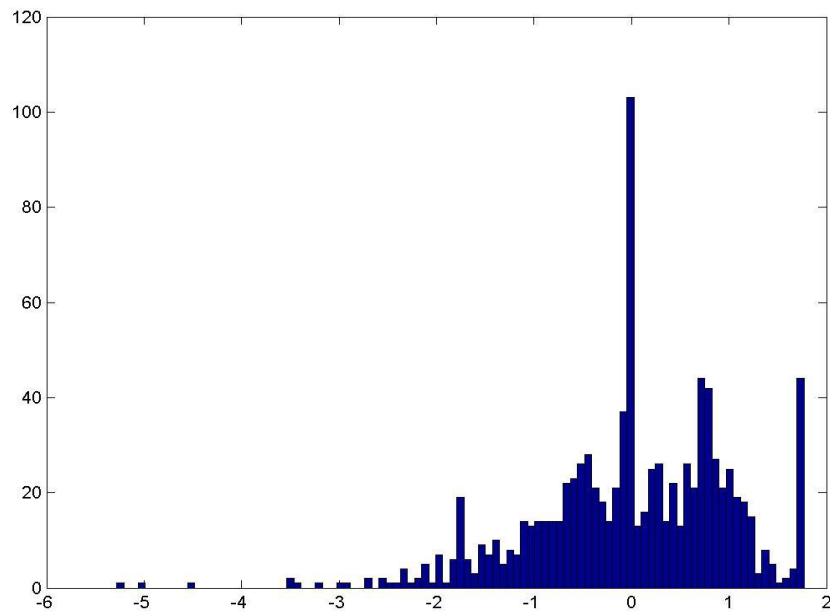


Figure 4.2 Histogram for Cultural Intelligence

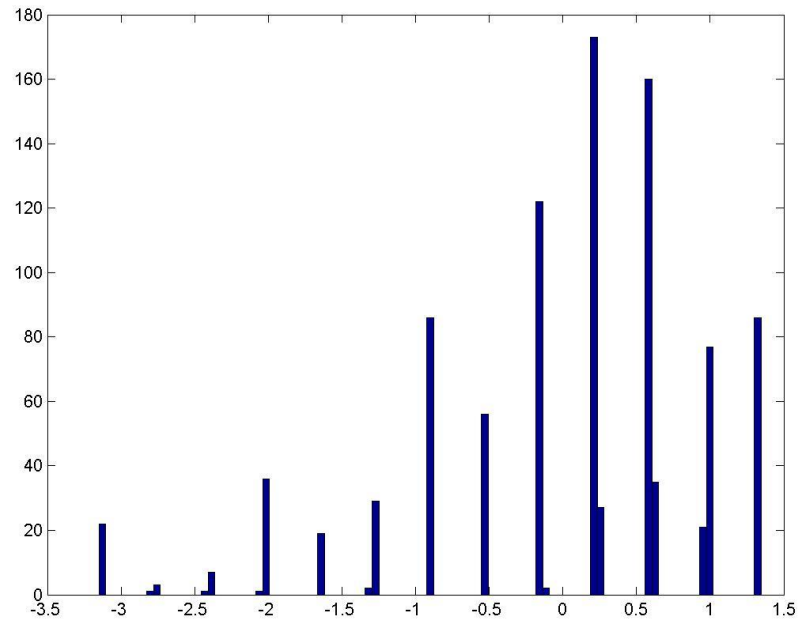


Figure 4.3 Histogram for Customer Qualification Skills

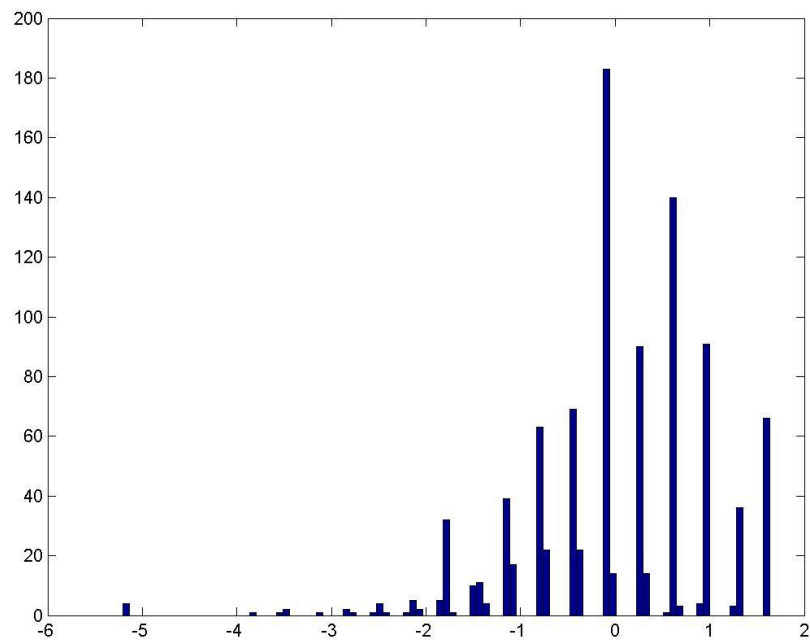


Figure 4.4 Histogram for Adaptive Selling Behaviors

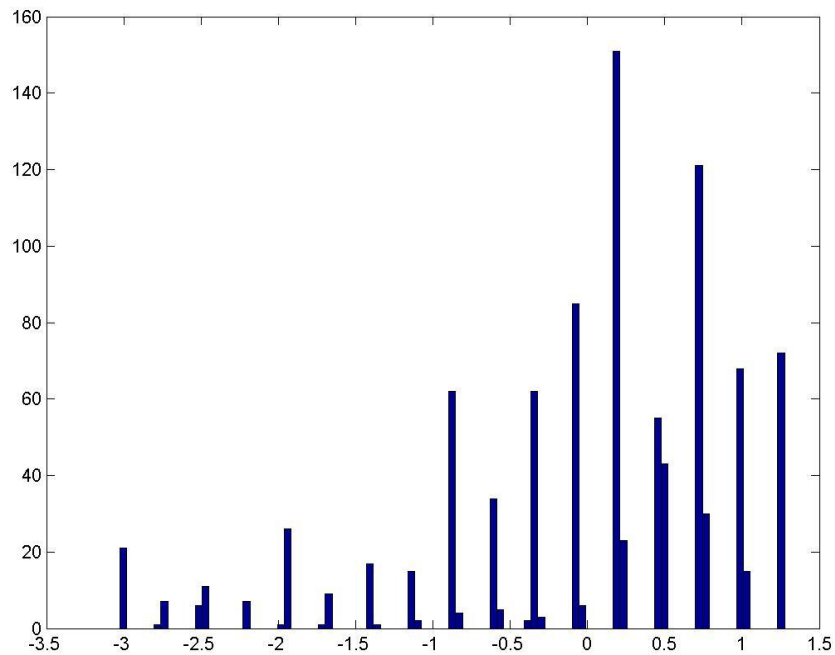


Figure 4.5 Histogram for Salesperson's Outcome Performance

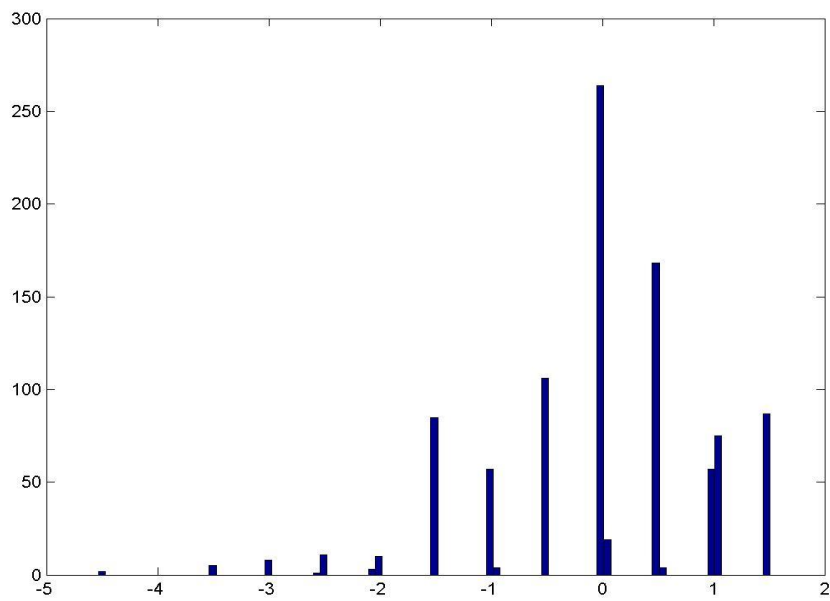


Figure 4.6 Histogram for Salesperson's Relationship Performance

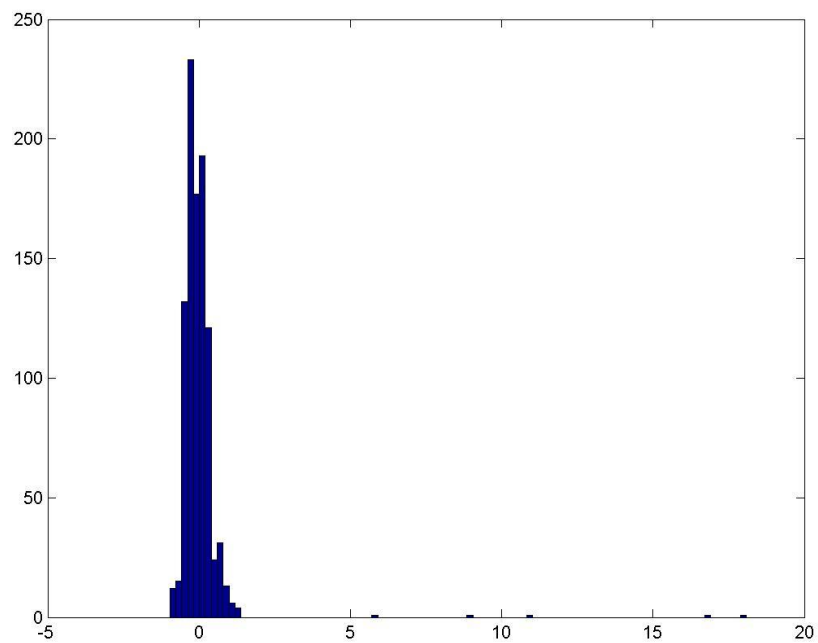


Figure 4.7 Histogram for Age

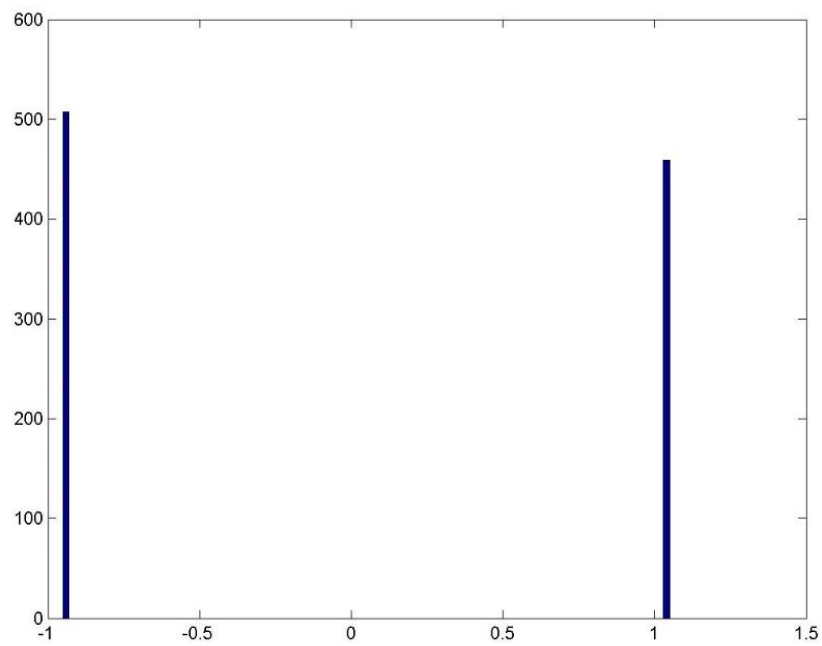


Figure 4.8 Histogram for Gender

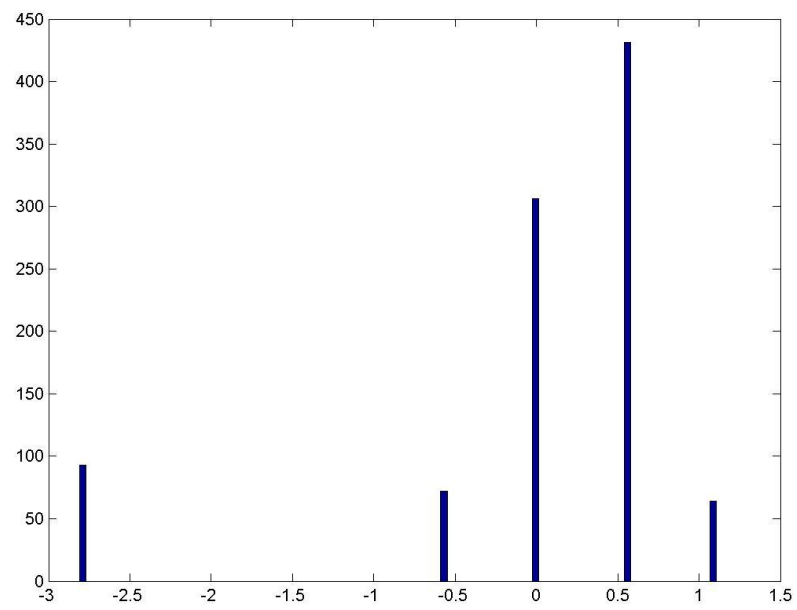


Figure 4.9 Histogram for English Language Proficiency Level

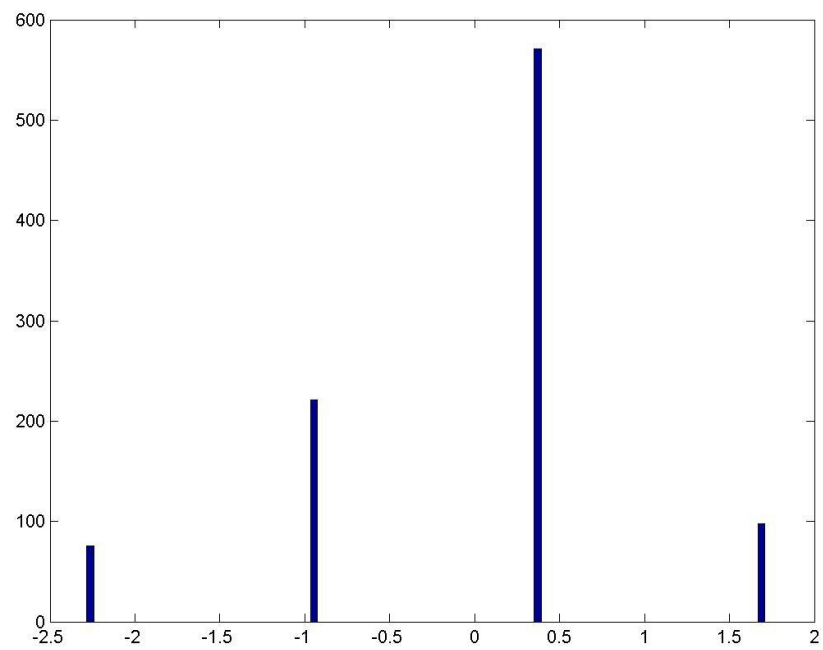


Figure 4.10 Histogram for Education

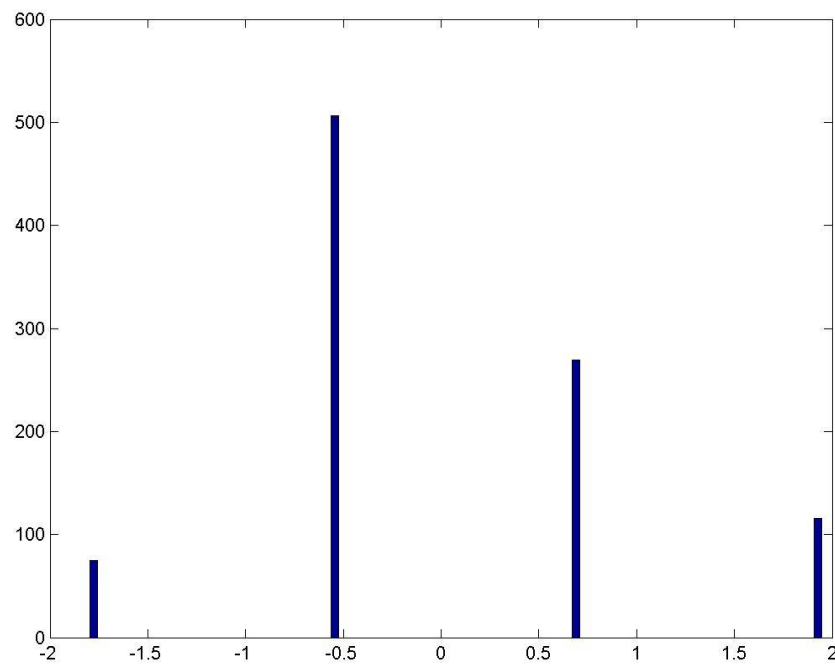


Figure 4.11 Histogram for Experience

4.6 Model Fit Indices

Model fit indices are a set of indicators to assess the quality of a hypothesized model. Warp PLS 6.0 offers ten model fit indices for assessment of model quality, which are average path coefficient (APC), average R-squared (ARS), average adjusted R-squared (AARS), average block VIF (AVIF), average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF), Tenenhaus GoF (GoF), Simpson's paradox ratio (SPR), R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR), statistical suppression ratio (SSR) and nonlinear bivariate causality direction ration (NLBCDR). The following part will present the result of ten model fit indices in sequence.

4.6.1 Average Path Coefficient (APC)

The average path coefficient (APC) assesses how strong the paths are in the overall model. The acceptable p-value for APC should be equal to or below 0.05 (Kock, 2013). The result of PLS analysis for this study shows that the value of APC is 0.163 and the p-value for APC is lower than 0.001, which indicates that the APC value for this study is statistically significant.

4.6.2 Average R-squared (ARS)

The average R-squared (ARS) assesses the explanatory power of the overall model. The acceptable p-value for ARS should be equal to or below 0.05 (Kock, 2013). The result of PLS analysis for this study show that the value of ARS is 0.578 and the p-value for APS is lower than 0.001, which indicates that the ARS value for this study is statistically significant.

4.6.3 Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS)

The average adjusted R-squared coefficients (AARS) is another quality indicator to assess the explanatory power of an overall model. The value of AARS is generally lower than the value of ARS because AARS corrects for spurious increases in R-squared coefficients caused by predictors that make no contribution to explanatory power in each latent variable block (Kock, 2015c). The acceptable p-value for AARS should be equal to or below 0.05 (Kock, 2013). The result of PLS analysis for this study shows that the value of AARS is 0.576, lower than the value of ARS (0.577) and the p-value for AARS is lower than 0.001, which indicates that the AARS value for this study is statistically significant.

4.6.4 Average Variance Inflation Factor (AVIF)

The average variance inflation factor (AVIF) is an indicator which measures a model's vertical or classic collinearity (Kock & Lynn, 2012). An acceptable criterion of AVIF value is equal to or lower than 5 and the ideal value of AVIF is equal to or less than 3.3 (Kock & Lynn, 2012). The result of PLS analysis for this study shows that the AVIF value of the hypothesized model is 1.550, which means that the vertical collinearity of the model in this study is ideally acceptable.

4.6.5 Average Full Variance Inflation Factor (AFVIF)

The average full variance inflation factor (AFVIF) measures both vertical and lateral collinearity, or multicollinearity of the model. An acceptable criterion of AFVIF value is equal to or lower than 5 and the ideal value of AFVIF is equal to or less than 3.3 (Kock & Lynn, 2012). The result of PLS analysis for this study shows that the AFVIF value of the hypothesized model is 1.921, which means that the multicollinearity of the overall model in this study is ideally acceptable.

4.6.6 Tenenhaus GoF (GoF index)

GoF index, also called Tenenhaus GoF, assesses a model's explanatory power (Kock, 2015c). It is the square root of the product between the average communality index and the ARS (Tenenhaus, Vinzi, Chatelin, & Lauro, 2005). GoF index equal to or greater than 0.1 suggests a small explanatory power of a model, GoF index equal or greater than 0.25 suggests a medium explanatory power of a model and GoF index equal or greater than 0.36 suggests a large explanatory power of a model (Kock, 2015c). The result of PLS analysis for this study shows that GoF index of the model is 0.691 which suggests that the model proposed in this study has a large explanatory power.

4.6.7 Simpson's Paradox Ratio (SPR)

The Simpson's paradox ratio (SPR) measures the extent to which a model is free of Simpson's paradox instances (Wagner, 1982). An instance of Simpson's paradox occurs when the sign of the correlation between two variables is different from the corresponding path coefficient between them (Kock, 2015b). Such an instance indicates a possible causality problem, meaning that the hypothesized path between two variables is either implausible or reversed (Kock & Gaskins, 2016). The criterion to justify that a model is free of Simpson's paradox instances is that the value of SPR should be equal to or larger than 0.7, which means that at least 70 percent of paths in the model are free of Simpson's paradox (Kock, 2015b). The result of PLS analysis for this study shows that SPR value is 0.870, which means 87 percent of paths in the model do not suffer from a Simpson's paradox problem.

4.6.8 R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR)

The R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR) measures the extent to which a model is free from negative R-squared contributions (Kock, 2015b). An acceptable value of RSCR is equal to or above 0.9, which means that the sum of positive R-squared contributions in a model makes up at least 90 percent of the total sum of the absolute R-squared contributions in the model (Kock, 2015b). The result from PLS analysis indicated that RSCR index is 0.994, meaning that the sum of positive R-squared contributions in the model make up 99.4 percent of the total sum of absolute R-squared contributions. Therefore, the RSCR index of this model is acceptable.

4.6.9 Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR)

The statistical suppression ratio (SSR) is an indicator that measures the extent to which a model is free from statistical suppression instances (Kock & Gaskins, 2016). A statistical suppression instance happens when the absolute value of the correlation associated with a pair of variables is smaller than that of the corresponding path coefficient. It indicates an implausible or reversed causality problem of the model (Kock & Gaskins, 2016). The ideal SSR index is 1 and the acceptable value is 0.7. The result of PLS analysis shows that the SSR value of the model in this study is 0.913, which means 91.3 percent of paths in the model are free from statistical suppression instances. Therefore, the hypothesized model in this study is acceptable and does not have a statistical suppression problem.

4.6.10 Nonlinear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR)

The nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR) is another indicator related to the measure of causality problems. Different from SSF, NLBCDR measures the extent to which the hypothesized directions of the causality in a model are supported by bivariate nonlinear coefficients of association (Kock, 2016). The acceptable value of NLBCDR is 0.7 or above, meaning that in at least 70 percent of path-related instances the support for the reversed hypothesized direction of causality is weak (Kock, 2016). It is recommended that the NLBCDR index is suitable for nonlinear relationships (Kock, 2016). As all the relationships proposed in this study are linear ones, the NLBCDR index should not be considered in the study.

To sum up, the results of all model fit indices are acceptable and satisfactory. These results confirm that this study uses an appropriate technique for data analysis and the proposed model in this study is reliable (Browne et al., 1993). All model fit indices are presented in table 4.28.

Table 4.28 Model Fit Indices

Model Fit Indices	Coefficient	Result
Average path coefficient (APC)	0.163***	Significant
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.578***	Significant
Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)	0.576***	Significant
Average block VIF (AVIF)	1.550	Ideally
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	1.921	Ideally
Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)	0.691	Large
Simpson's paradox ratio (SPR)	0.870	Acceptable
R-squared contribution ration (RSCR)	0.994	Acceptable
Statistical suppression ration (SSR)	0.913	Acceptable
Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	1.000	Ideally

Note: *** means significant at 0.001 level

4.7 Alternative Model

Although all the model fit indices for the proposed model is acceptable, it is worth pointing out that the following regression analysis shows that one of the paths in the proposed model suffers from the Simpson's paradox problems. The PLS analysis of this study also shows that the path coefficient between social media use and salesperson's outcome performance is -0.07 ($p < 0.001$), and the correlation between them is 0.167 ($p < 0.001$). The different sign of the path coefficient and correlation associated with social media use and salesperson's outcome performance suggests that the path between them has a Simpson's paradox problem. Given this situation, this study will not consider the hypothesis about the direct link between social media use and salesperson's outcome performance anymore and will present a new model by removing the path between social media use in sales and outcome performance.

Figure 4.12 presents the new model after removing the link between social media use and outcome performance. After removing the path between social media use in sales and outcome performance, the SPR value increases to 0.909, which means 90.9 percent of paths in the model do not suffer from a Simpson’s paradox problem. And in comparison with the model fit indices of the original model, the APC value for the new model increases from 0.163 to 0.167, ARS decreases from 0.578 to 0.577, AARS decreases from 0.576 to 0.575, AVIF increases from 1.550 to 1.56, AFVIF remains the same level at 1.921, GoF remains the same level at 0.691, RSCR increases from 0.870 to 0.999, SSR decreases from 0.913 to 0.909. Except for a slight decrease in indices of ARS and AARS, most changes in model indices indicate a better quality the new model than the original model.

The new conceptual model is presented in Figure 4.12. The model indices for the new conceptual model is reported in Table 4.29.

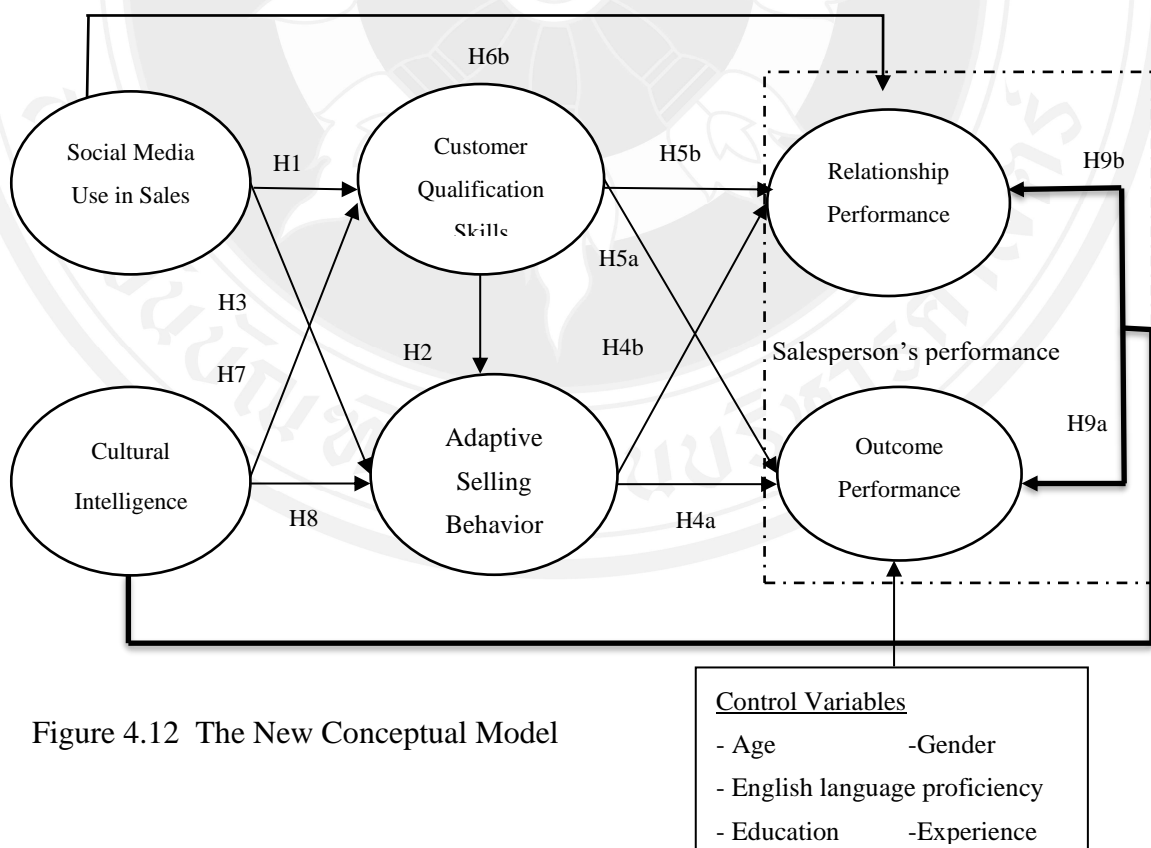


Figure 4.12 The New Conceptual Model

Table 4.29 Model Fit Indices for the New Model

Model Fit Indices	Coefficient	Result
Average path coefficient (APC)	0.167***	Significant
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.577***	Significant
Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)	0.575***	Significant
Average block VIF (AVIF)	1.561	Ideally
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	1.921	Ideally
Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)	0.691	Large
Simpson's paradox ratio (SPR)	0.909	Acceptable
R-squared contribution ration (RSCR)	0.999	Acceptable
Statistical suppression ration (SSR)	0.909	Acceptable
Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	1.000	Ideally

Note: *** means significant at 0.001 level

4.8 Structural Regression Models

4.8.1 Test of Hypothesis

This study proposed thirteen hypotheses with linear relationship which are summarized in Table 2.5. As the relationship between social media use and salesperson's outcome performance suffers from the Simpson's paradox problem, this study will not consider the relationship between them anymore. The following part will report the results of PLS analysis for the twelve hypotheses as indicated in the new conceptual model shown in Figure 4.12.

The PLS results will be explained by three major indicators which are beta coefficient, p-value, and R-squared coefficients. Firstly, path coefficients are explained by beta coefficients. This study reported standardized beta coefficients. Standardized beta coefficients are calculated by using standard deviation as units and can be used to compare the strength of the effect of an independent variable on a

dependent variable (Freedman, 2009). The greater absolute value of the standardized beta coefficient, the stronger the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The positive sign of a standardized beta coefficient indicates a positive effect and vice versa (Freedman, 2009). Secondly, the p-value means statistical significance, which refers to the probability of finding a given deviation from the null hypothesis (Rice, 1989). A “small” p-value ($p < 0.05$) suggests a low probability of the actual statistic supporting the null hypothesis, thus, the null hypothesis will be rejected, and an alternative hypothesis will be supported. A “large” p-value ($p > 0.05$ or $P > 0.1$) suggests a high probability of the actual statistic supporting the null hypothesis, thus, the null hypothesis is considered to be true and cannot be rejected. The alternative hypothesis will be considered to be statistically insignificant (Klein, 2005). Thirdly, the R-squared coefficients (R^2) is an indicator used to measure the predictive or explanatory power of a model (Saunders et al., 2009). It refers to the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable which can be explained or predicted by the independent variable(s). The greater value of R^2 , the larger predictive or explanatory power of the model (Draper & Smith, 1998).

In addition, this study uses bootstrapping resampling technique for model estimation. Henseler et al. (2009) stated that “A bootstrapping procedure can be used in PLS path modeling to provide confidence intervals for all parameter estimates, building the basis for statistical inference”. The bootstrapping technique relies on random sampling to create a number of resamples with replacement. This study followed the recommended size of subsample by setting it as 100 for the accuracy result in PLS analysis (Efron, 1982). The detailed results of PLS analysis for this study are presented in Table 4.29 to Table 4.32.

H1 An export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively associated with his customer qualification skills.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively associated with his customer qualification skills. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .116$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is supported. The result regarding the relationship between social media use in sales and customer qualification skills is reported in Table 4.30.

Table 4.30 Effect of Social Media Use in Sales and CQ on Customer Qualification

Skills	
Variable	Dependent Variable: Customer qualification skills
Beta Coefficients	
Main Independent Variable	
Social media use in sales (H1)	0.116***
CQ (H7)	0.638***
R-squared	0.455

Note: *** p-value <0.001

H2 An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his adaptive selling behaviors.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively related to his adaptive selling behaviors. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .444$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 2 is supported. The results about the relationship between customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors are reported in Table 4.31.

Table 4.31 Effect of Social Media Use in Sales, CQ And Customer Qualification Skills on Adaptive Selling Behaviors

Variable	Dependent Variable:
	Adaptive selling behaviors
	Beta Coefficients
Main Independent Variable.	
Customer qualification skills (H2).	0.444***
Social media use in sales (H3).	0.083***
CQ (H8).	0.409***
R-squared.	0.649

Note: *** p-value <0.001

H3 There is a positive association between an export salesperson's social media use in sales and his adaptive selling behavior.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's social media use is positively related to his adaptive selling behaviors. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .083$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 3 is supported. The results about the relationship between social media use in sales and adaptive selling behaviors are reported in Table 4.31.

H4a. An export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his outcome performance.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his outcome performance ($\beta = 0.149$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 4a is supported. The results about the relationship between adaptive selling behaviors and outcome performance are reported in Table 4.32.

Table 4.32 Effect of CQ, Customer Qualification Skills and Adaptive Selling Behaviors on Outcome Performance

Variable	Dependent Variable:
	Outcome performance
	Beta Coefficients
Main Independent Variables	
Adaptive selling behaviors (H4a)	0.149***
Customer qualification skills (H5a)	0.481***
CQ (H9a)	0.242***
Control Variables	
Age	0.027*
Gender	0.030
English language proficiency	-0.034
Education level	0.033*
Export sales experience	0.002
R-squared	0.644

Note: *** p-value <0.001, * p-value < 0.05

H4b. An export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his relationship performance.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his relationship performance. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .287$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 4b is supported. The results about the relationship between adaptive selling behaviors and relationship performance are reported in Table 4.33.

Table 4.33 Effect of Social Media Use in Sales, CQ, Customer Qualification Skills and Adaptive Selling Behaviors on Relationship Performance

Variable	Dependent Variable:
	Relationship performance
	Beta Coefficients
Main Independent Variables	
Adaptive selling behaviors (H4b)	0.287***
Customer qualification skills (H5b)	0.201***
Social media use in sales (H6b)	0.019
CQ (H9b)	0.333***
Control Variables	
Age	0.014
Gender	0.013
English language proficiency	-0.025
Education level	0.046*
Export sales experience	-0.055*
R-squared	0.562

Note: *** p-value <0.001, * p-value < 0.05

H5a An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his outcome performance.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his outcome performance. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .481$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 5a is supported. The results about the relationship between customer qualification skills and outcome performance are reported in Table 4.32.

H5b An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his relationship performance.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his relationship performance. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .201$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 5b is supported. The results about the relationship between customer qualification skills and relationship performance are reported in Table 4.33.

H6b. An export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively related to his relationship performance.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively associated with his relationship performance. However, the result is statistically insignificant ($\beta = .019$; $p = 0.216$). Therefore, hypothesis 6b is not supported. The results about the relationship between social media use in sales and relationship performance are reported in Table 4.33.

H7 An export salesperson's CQ is positively associated with his customer qualification skills.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's cultural intelligence is positively associated with his customer qualification skills. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .638$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 7 is supported. The result regarding the relationship between CQ and customer qualification skills are reported in Table 4.30.

H8 There is a positive association between an export salesperson's CQ and his adaptive selling behavior.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's cultural intelligence is positively associated with his adaptive selling behavior. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .409$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 8 is supported. The results about the relationship between CQ and adaptive selling behaviors are reported in Table 4.31.

H9a An export salesperson's CQ is positively related to his outcome performance.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's cultural intelligence is positively associated with his outcome performance. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .242$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 9a is supported. The results about the relationship between CQ and outcome performance are reported in Table 4.32.

H9b An export salesperson's CQ is positively related to his relationship performance.

The result shows that the two variables are positively associated, which means that an export salesperson's cultural intelligence is positively associated with his relationship performance. The result is statistically significant ($\beta = .333$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 9b is supported. The results about the relationship between CQ and relationship performance are reported in Table 4.33.

4.8.2 Control Variables

For the effect of the control variables, salespeople's outcome performance was found to have a positive association with their education level, which is statistically significant ($\beta = .033$, $p = .043$). It suggests that salespeople with higher education levels tend to have better outcome performance than those with lower ones.

Salespeople's relationship performance was found to have a positive association with education level, which is statistically significant ($\beta = .046$, $p = .021$). The result suggests that salespeople with higher education levels tend to have better relationship performance than those with lower ones. Salespeople's relationship performance was found to have a statistically significant negative relationship with sales experience ($\beta = -.055$, $p = .009$). It means that salespeople who have less sales experience tend to have better relationship performance than those with more sales experience. Except for these significant findings, the beta coefficients of other variables were not statistically supported. For instance, sales experience was found to have a positive association with outcome performance, but the association was statistically insignificant ($\beta = .002$, $p = .464$). For gender, no significant relationship was found with outcome performance ($\beta = .030$, $p = .069$) and relationship performance ($\beta = .013$, $p = .242$). For age, no significant relationship was found with outcome performance ($\beta = .022$, $p = .053$) and relationship performance ($\beta = .014$, $p = .134$) as well.

4.8.3 Total Effect Analysis

Effect size measures whether the effects indicated by path coefficients are small, medium or large (Kock, 2014). It is calculated as the absolute value of the individual contributions of the corresponding predictor latent variables to the R-square coefficients of the criterion latent variable they point at (Kock, 2014). Values of effect sizes below 0.02 suggest weak effects, values of 0.15 or above suggest middle effects and values of 0.35 or above suggest large effects. This study conducted a total effect analysis to estimate the contribution of social media use in sales and CQ to outcome performance and relationship performance. Firstly, results from PLS estimation showed that the total effects of social media use in sales on outcome performance connected by customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors

are positive and statistically significant ($\beta = .166$; $p < .001$). The effect size of social media use in sales on outcome performance is 0.03. These results indicate that customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors are significant factors which can explain why export salespeople who use social media in export selling can reap high outcome performance. Secondly, the PLS results also confirmed a positive total effect of social media use in sales on relationship performance connected by customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors ($\beta = .235$; $p < 0.001$). The effect size of social media use in sales on relationship performance is .05, which cannot be ignored. The results suggest that customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors are significant factors which can explain why export salespeople who use social media in sales can reap good relationship performance. Thirdly, the PLS results reported a large effect size of CQ on outcome performance, which is 0.454, above the threshold of 0.35 for large effects. The total effect of CQ on outcome performance connected by customer qualification skills and adaptive selling skills is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = .668$; $p < 0.001$). The results indicate that customer qualification skills and adaptive selling skills are significant factors which can explain why export salespeople with CQ can achieve good outcome performance in export selling via social media. Fourthly, the PLS result also reported a large effect size of CQ on relationship performance, which is 0.451. The total effect of CQ on relationship performance connected by customer qualification skills and adaptive selling skills is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = .659$; $p < 0.001$). The results indicate that customer qualification skills and adaptive selling skills are significant factors which can explain why export salespeople with CQ can achieve good relationship performance in export selling via social media.

Table 4.34 Total Effect Analysis

Total Effect Analysis		
	Social media use in sales	Cultural intelligence
customer qualification skills		
adaptive selling behaviors		
outcome performance	$\beta = .166; p < .001$ $f^2 = 0.03(>0.02)$	$\beta = .668; p < .001$ $f^2 = 0.454(>0.35)$
Total Effect Analysis		
	Social media use in sales	Cultural intelligence
customer qualification skills		
adaptive selling behaviors		
Relationship performance	$\beta = .235; p < .001$ $f^2 = 0.05(>0.02)$	$\beta = .659; p < .001$ $f^2 = 0.451 (>0.35)$

4.8.4 R-squared coefficients

The R-squared coefficients (R^2) measure how much percentage a dependent variable can be explained or predicted by the independent variable(s) (Draper & Smith, 1998). The results of R^2 in this study are reported as follows.

Firstly, salesperson's outcome performance has the R^2 of 0.644, which means that nine variables that pointed to salesperson's outcome performance (including social media use in sales, CQ, customer qualification skills, adaptive selling behaviors, age, gender, education level, export sales experience and English language proficiency) can explain the occurrence of salesperson's outcome performance by 64.4 percent. There are another 34.6 percent which can be explained by other variables that are not included in this model.

Secondly, salesperson's relationship performance has the R^2 of 0.562, which means that nine independent variables pointing to salesperson's relationship performance (including social media use in sales, CQ, customer qualification skills,

adaptive selling behaviors, age, gender, education level, export sales experience and English language proficiency) altogether can explain the occurrence of salesperson's relationship performance by 56.2 percent. Another 43.8 percent of the occurrence of salesperson's relationship performance can be explained by other variables that are not covered in this model.

Thirdly, salesperson's adaptive selling behavior has the R^2 of 0.649, which means that three variables pointing to adaptive selling behavior (including social media use in sales, CQ and customer qualification skills) can explain the occurrence of salesperson's adaptive selling behavior by 64.9 percent. Another 35.1 percent of the occurrence of salesperson's adaptive selling behavior can be explained by other variables that are not covered in this model.

Fourthly, salesperson's customer qualification skill has the R^2 of 0.455, which means that two variables in the model pointing to customer qualification skills (including social media use in sales and CQ) can explain the occurrence of salesperson's customer qualification skills by 45.5 percent. Another 54.5 percent of the occurrence of salesperson's customer qualification skills may be explained by other variables that are not covered in this model.

Henseler et al. (2009) proposed a rule of thumb for acceptable R^2 with 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are described as substantial, moderate and weak respectively. To conclude, as the R^2 of adaptive selling behavior (0.649), relationship performance (0.562) and outcome performance (0.644) are greater than 0.50, it suggests that the R^2 of the three variables reach a moderate level. Given that the value of R^2 of customer qualification skills (0.455/0.454) are greater than 0.2 but lower than 0.5, it suggests that the R^2 of customer qualification skills is close to the moderate level.

To have a better understanding of the explanatory power of the model, this study also reported the results of the adjusted R-squared coefficients of customer qualification skills, adaptive selling behaviors, outcome performance and relationship performance. Adjusted R^2 are equivalent to R^2 , with the key difference that they correct for spurious increases in R^2 caused by predictors which add no explanatory value in each latent variable block (Kock, 2017a). Results show the adjusted R^2 of customer qualification skills is 0.454, adaptive selling behaviors 0.647, outcome performance 0.641 and relationship performance 0.558. In comparison, the adjusted R^2 of these four variables are slightly lower than their corresponding R^2 , which indicates that there are few predictors adding no explanatory value which may cause spurious increases in R^2 in the four variable blocks related to customer qualification skills, adaptive selling behaviors, outcome performance and relationship performance. Thus, it can be determined that the proposed model does not have a spurious increase problem in the value of R^2 .

The results of R^2 and adjusted R^2 of customer qualification skills, adaptive selling behavior, outcome performance and relationship performance are summarized in Table 4.35.

Table 4.35 R-squared Coefficients and Adjusted R-squared Coefficients

	Customer qualification skills	Adaptive selling behaviors	Outcome performance	Relationship performance
R-squared	0.455	0.649	0.644	0.562
Adjusted R-squared	0.454	0.647	0.641	0.558

Note: All the results from PLS analysis, including beta coefficients, p-value and R-squares are summarized in Figure 4.13

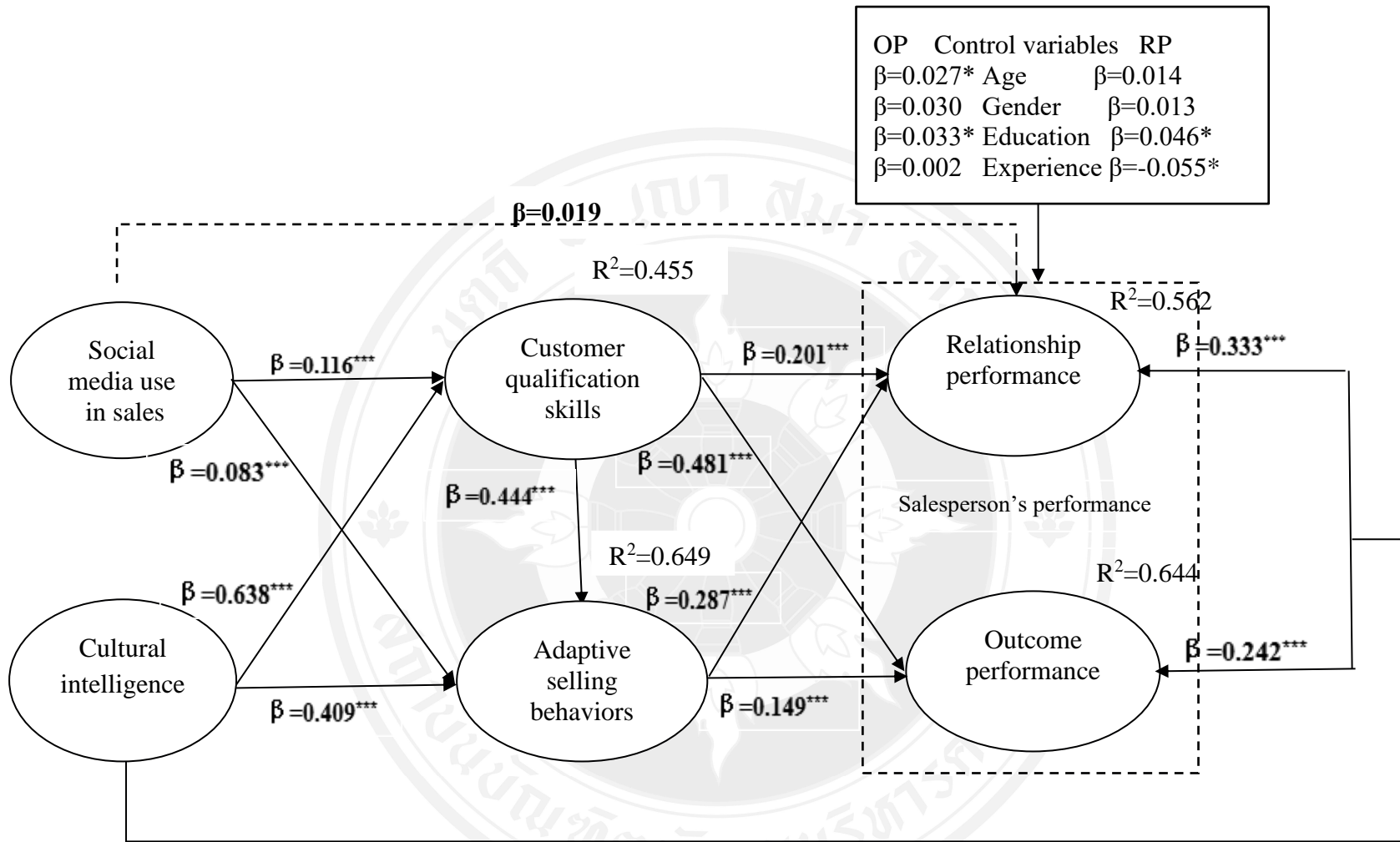


Figure 4.13 PLS Results

Note: 1) * $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$ - OP=outcome performance, RP=relationship performance
 2) Solid lines refer to significant paths and dashed lines refer to non-significant path

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Findings

The results from PLS analysis show that eleven out of twelve hypotheses in this study are statistically supported. The results are reported in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 Summary of Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypothesis	Results
H1 An export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively associated with his customer qualification skills.	Supported
H2 An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his adaptive selling behaviors.	Supported
H3 There is a positive association between an export salesperson's social media use in sales and his adaptive selling behavior.	Supported
H4a An export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his outcome performance.	Supported
H4b An export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively related to his relationship performance.	Supported
H5a An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his outcome performance.	Supported
H5b An export salesperson's customer qualification skills are positively associated with his relationship performance.	Supported
H6b An export salesperson's social media use in sales is positively related to his relationship performance.	Not supported
H7 An export salesperson's CQ is positively associated with his customer qualification skills.	Supported

Hypothesis	Results
H8 There is a positive association between an export salesperson's CQ and his adaptive selling behavior.	Supported
H9a An export salesperson's CQ is positively related to his outcome performance.	Supported
H9b An export salesperson's CQ is positively related to his relationship performance.	Supported

5.2 General Discussion of the Findings

The main objective of the present study was to explore the impact of export salesperson's social media use in sales on salesperson's performance. In addition, the present study also examined the mediating role of customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behavior that could explain the possible linkage between social media use in sales and salesperson's performance. Further, this study examined the impact of CQ on salesperson's customer qualification skills, adaptive selling behaviors and salesperson's performance as well. In general, the results provided evidence supporting the mediating role of customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors in the impact of social media use in sales on salesperson's performance. The results also confirmed strong associations of cultural intelligence with customer qualification skills, adaptive selling behaviors and salesperson's performance. Detailed findings and discussions related to previous studies are as follows.

Firstly, the results provided the evidence that Chinese export salespeople's social media use in sales was positively associated with their customer qualification skills. It means that Chinese export salespeople who had a high level of social media use in sales tended to demonstrate high levels of customer qualification skills. This finding is congruent with Román and Rodríguez (2015)'s research, which identified the contribution of salespeople's information technology use in sales to customer qualification skills in domestic selling contexts. The present research finding showed that social media use in sales can facilitate customer qualification skills in export selling context as well. Similar to the contribution of other information technology use in sales to customer qualification skills, social media use in export sales allows

export salespeople to utilize the computerized memory of customers to gather information about customers, update knowledge about customers and identify customer needs, improving salespeople's skills to qualify and identify customers (Román & Rodríguez, 2015). This is the main reason supporting the contribution of social media use in sales to an improvement of customer qualification skills. This research finding extends prior research about the contribution of information technology use in sales to customer qualification skills and fills a void in identifying the relationship between social media use in sales and customer qualification skills.

Secondly, the present research found that Chinese export salespeople's customer qualification skills were positively associated with adaptive selling behaviors. The result showed that Chinese export salespeople with a high level of customer qualification skills were more likely to adopt adaptive selling behaviors. This finding is consistent with previous studies which support that salespeople with a well-developed category structure practice adaptive selling behavior to a higher degree than those who do not (A. Sharma & Levy, 1995; A. Sharma et al., 2000). In particular, the research finding is congruent with Román and Iacobucci (2010)'s research which confirmed that salespeople's customer qualification skills contribute to an improvement in the extent to which salespeople practice adaptive selling behaviors.

Thirdly, the present research found a positive association between an export salesperson's social media use in sales and his adaptive selling behaviors. It suggests that export salespeople's social media use in sales can facilitate their practice of adaptive selling behaviors. This research finding is consistent with previous studies' findings in domestic selling contexts (Itani et al., 2017; Ogilvie et al., 2018). In Itani et al. (2017)'s research, the authors found that social media use in sales was beneficial for salespeople to adapt their selling behaviors in domestic selling contexts in India. In Ogilvie et al. (2018)'s research, they also found that salespeople's social media use can enhance their adaptive selling behaviors. The efficacy of social media use in sales for adaptive selling behaviors in both domestic and export selling contexts is determined by the characteristics of social media, which allow salespeople to extract customer information to make unique sales presentations, hence, improving adaptive selling behaviors.

Fourthly, this study found that an export salesperson's adaptive selling behavior is positively associated with both outcome performance and relationship performance. The results indicate that export salespeople's adaptive selling behaviors helps improve outcome performance and relationship performance in export sales. The research findings are consistent with a body of research findings which have identified the positive contribution of adaptive selling behaviors to sales performance (e.g. Weitz et al., 1986; Sujana et al., 1994; Franke & Park, 2006; Robins Jr et al., 2005; Chakrabarty et al., 2014 ; Giacobbe et al., 2006; Itani et al, 2017; Y.-c. Chen et al., 2018). The main reason supporting the positive relationship between adaptive selling behavior and outcome performance is that salespeople who adopt adaptive selling behaviors can better meet customers' expectations and needs by closely observing customers' response during communication processes, leading to a higher chance of closing a deal. Meanwhile, export salespeople who adopt adaptive selling behaviors make their communication way friendlier, beneficial to develop a good relationship with customers.

Regarding the research findings about the contribution of CQ, the PLS results supported all the hypothesis related to it. CQ was found to be positively associated with customer qualification skills, adaptive selling behaviors and salesperson's performance in terms of outcome performance and relationship performance. The research finding about the positive relationship between CQ and customer qualification skills confirmed the important role of CQ in equipping export salespeople with enough cultural knowledge about foreign customers to qualify customer in export selling contexts (Charoensukmongkol, 2019b). In other words, export salespeople with high CQ showed high customer qualification skills due to their more cultural knowledge about foreign countries and customers. This finding aligns with previous studies which found that CQ can function effectively in many cross-cultural settings (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008; Hansen et al., 2011). Meanwhile it fills a void by adding to previous studies in which the relationship between CQ and customer qualification skills has not been explored before. Besides that, the research finding about the positive association between CQ and adaptive selling is consistent with previous studies which found that CQ can facilitate export salespeople's practice of adaptive selling behaviors (Pandey & Charoensukmongkol, 2019). In Pandey and

Charoensukmongkol (2019)'s research, they found that for Thai export salespeople who visited trade shows in Vietnam and Japan, the salespeople with high CQ demonstrated a high degree of adaptive selling behaviors. This study advanced their research by providing additional empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of CQ on adaptive selling behaviors in a context of export selling via social media.

Next, the finding about the positive relationship between CQ and salesperson's performance in terms of outcome performance and relationship performance suggests that CQ could make a direct contribution to export salespeople's outcome performance and relationship performance. This research finding is consistent with prior CQ studies which found that CQ can help people achieving superior performance in cross-cultural situations (Ang & Inkpen, 2008; Ang & Van Dyne, 2008). In particular, it is supported by Charoensukmongkol (2016)'s research which found that for SME business owners who engaged in international business, those with high levels of CQ reported more satisfactory export performance. Despite this, this finding is not congruent with Charoensukmongkol (2019)'s latest research finding which reported that CQ bore no direct relationship with international sales performance. The inconsistent findings regarding the direct relationship between CQ and export sales performance suggest that whether CQ has a direct impact on sales performance is contingent on sales contexts. The present research focuses on online export selling via social media, whereas Charoensukmongkol (2019)'s research targeted on face-to-face export selling in international trade shows. In comparison, face-to-face export selling in international trade shows demands a spontaneous understanding of foreign customers and an immediate feedback to customers' inquiries, which forms a big challenge for salespeople. In this context, salespeople have to rely heavily on immediate adjustments to selling behaviors to satisfy foreign customers on the spot. That's why adaptive selling behavior is very important in face-to-face export selling in international trade shows and fully mediates the impact of CQ on sales performance in this context. However, in a context of export selling via social media, the great space distance between exporter and buyers allows a time lag for export salespeople to respond. They can utilize their CQ to a maximum level to respond to customers. In this context, CQ may be directly related to sales performance as salespeople have enough time to take a full advantage of CQ. That's why CQ can

directly contribute to sales performance in the context of export selling via social media but indirectly to sales performance via adaptive selling behaviors in the context of face-to-face export selling in international trade shows. Despite this difference, the finding with respect to the direct impact of CQ on sales performance in a context of export selling via social media extends current understandings about the effectiveness of CQ in export selling contexts. In addition, it is worth noting that while Charoensukmongkol (2019)'s research found that the efficacy of CQ on international sales performance was fully mediated by adaptive selling behaviors, this study advances his study by investigating the important role of customer qualification skills in explaining the underlying working mechanism of CQ on adaptive selling behaviors. The identified role of customer qualification skills in the impact of CQ on adaptive selling behaviors fills a void in CQ literature, expanding current knowledge about the working mechanism of CQ in cross-cultural selling.

Still, the research findings regarding the effectiveness of CQ in export selling via social media added to CQ literature in terms of research contexts. CQ has been predominantly explored and identified as an effective cross-cultural competency in face-to-face interactions like travelling in sojourning countries, international studying in foreign countries, expatriates' work in subsidiary companies in different cultures, immigrants' adaptation to a new country, export selling in international trades, air cabin crew's service activities with passengers coming from different countries etc (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008; Hu, Gu, & Zhang, 2017; Pandey & Charoensukmongkol, 2019; Suthatorn & Charoensukmongkol, 2018). This study's findings added to CQ literature by providing additional evidence supporting the effectiveness of CQ in non-face-to-face interactions, particularly in export selling via social media. In particular, this finding is in alignment with Puyod and Charoensukmongkol (2019a)'s research which found that CQ contributed to job performance of call center agents in their non-face-to-face telephone conversations with foreign customers. This consistency indicated that CQ can play an important role in non-face-to-face cross-cultural interactions. The present finding provided extra evidence supporting the effectiveness of CQ in an additional non-face-to-face interactions mediated via social media, thereby expanding knowledge about the contexts in which CQ can function effectively.

However, the results of this study didn't statistically support a significant direct association between social media use in sales and salesperson's performance in terms of both outcome performance dimension and relationship performance dimension. This indicates that social media use in sales didn't make a direct contribution to salespeople's outcome performance and relationship performance. Nonetheless, the significant positive correlation between social media use in sales and sales performance as shown in Table 4.19 (outcome performance: $r=.167$, $p<.001$; relationship performance: $r=.226$, $p<.001$) suggests that social media use in sales alone was insufficient to improve salespeople's outcome performance and relationship performance. Taken all the results of this study into consideration, the mediating factors proposed in this study which are customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors play an important role in mediating the relationship between social media use in sales and salesperson's performance. This finding is in line with previous studies which found that information technology use in sales alone was not enough to bring benefits for salespeople and sales organizations; its effectiveness was possible when utilized to improve salespeople's behaviors or skills first (e.g., presentation skills, targeting abilities, communication skills and adaptive selling behaviors) (Ahearne et al., 2008). In particular, the present research finding about the mediating role of adaptive selling behaviors is consistent with Itani et al. (2017)'s and Ogilvie et al (2018)'s research, which found that adaptive selling behaviors mediated the relationship between social media use in sales and salesperson's performance. The research findings about the mediating role of adaptive selling behaviors provided additional evidence regarding the social media use in sales- selling behavior/ skills -performance path in the export selling context, which is an international business context that didn't receive adequate evidence in sales literature about social media. Importantly, the research finding about the mediating role of customer qualification skills in the relationship between social media use in sales and salesperson's performance reveals that customer qualification skills can be another important factor determining the effectiveness of social media use in sales, extending knowledge about key mediating variables in previous findings.

With respect to the significance of the control variables, this study found a statistically supported direct positive association between age and outcome performance but no statistically significant relationship between age and relationship performance. One possible reason is that older salespeople may be more sophisticated and practical than younger ones and lay more emphasis on outcome performance than on relationship performance. In comparison, outcome performance is objective sales results and easily measurable in number like dollar volume and sales units etc.; whereas relationship performance is subjectively evaluated and difficult to be quantifiable in practice. Moreover, as a company's revenue comes directly from salespeople's outcome performance, managers value outcome performance much and often adopt it as a key indicator to measure a salesperson's performance (Cravens et al., 1993). Hence, in practice, sales organizations' assessment criteria drove salespeople to put more emphasis on outcome performance than on relationship performance. In comparison with younger salespeople, older salespeople may better get used to this assessment criteria and are more practical due to their greater living pressure brought by aging. That's why age is positively related to outcome performance but has no significant association with relationship performance.

Meanwhile, this research also found a statistically supported direct negative association between sales experience and relationship performance, but no significant findings between sales experience and relationship performance. One plausible explanation for this negative relationship could be the so-called "plateau" phenomenon in sale career (Keenan Jr, 1989). The "plateau" phenomenon means that salespeople may enter a "disengagement" stage in their career development, resulting in a negative impact on relationship performance due to a lack of interest, desire or even less psychological commitment to organizations and customers (Wachner et al., 2009). When salespeople have worked in the selling field for a long time, they gain more sales experience. Salespeople with more sales experience may develop a more business-like attitude to develop a professional relationship with customers, which can result in their lack of interest or disengagement in developing and maintaining good interpersonal relationship with customers. In addition, social media literature has documented that some salespeople are complaining about the extra time and effort commitment requirement and the potential work-life conflict caused by social media

use in business (Rodriguez et al., 2013). This phenomenon may add to the reason to explain why export salespeople with more sales experience may be reluctant to commit more time and effort to nurture a good relationship with foreign customers. Such a reluctance and disengagement resulted in a negative relationship between sales experience and relationship performance in this specific context.

In addition, this study found that export salespeople's education level was positively related to both outcome performance and relationship performance. This finding is consistent with previous research findings (Cotham, 1969; Lamont & Lundstrom, 1977). It indicated that salespeople with a higher level of education are more capable of efficiently dealing with complex sales encounters because education develops people's critical thinking and abilities to deal with complex situations. These critical thinking and abilities are necessary for a salesperson to fulfil his selling tasks (Levy & Sharma, 1994). This is a reason why salespeople with a high level of education can harvest good sales performance.

Lastly, this study found that gender was not statistically related to outcome performance and relationship performance. This finding is congruent with many previous research findings which reported no significant difference in the self-reported sales performance between male and female salespeople (William C Moncrief et al., 2000; Palmer & Bejou, 1995; Piercy et al., 2012; Siguaw & Honeycutt Jr, 1995; Wachner et al., 2009). It is argued that the traditional stereotype about women salespeople portrayed as poorer performers than men counterparts has changed greatly as most of the countries in the world have provided equal access to education for both males and females, which result in no difference in job performance between educated males and females (United Nations, 2019). The demographic data shown in table 4.5 confirmed that 92.1% (890) salespeople have received higher education. Among them, 91.7% (421) males and 92.7% (469) female salespeople received higher education. The fact that both female and male salespeople in this study are well educated lend more credence to the explanation for no significant relationship between gender and sales performance.

5.3 Theoretical Discussion of the Findings

Additionally, this study provided extra evidence supporting adaptive selling theory. This theory identifies salespeople's capabilities and skills as antecedents of adaptive selling behaviors and holds that salespeople should practice adaptive selling behaviors to improve sales performance. According to the theory, abilities like knowledge and skills like information acquisition skills are components of capabilities of salesperson (Weitz et al., 1986). Following this theory, social media use in sales and customer qualification skills which represent a salesperson's information acquisition skills as well as cultural intelligence which represents a salesperson's ability regarding knowledge dimension can facilitate the practice of adaptive selling behaviors, which in turn contribute to salesperson's performance. The research findings confirmed the main argument of the theory, suggesting that the contribution of social media use in sales, customer qualification skills and CQ to salesperson's performance can be explained through the lens of the adaptive selling theory. In addition, it is worth noting that this research is among the first few studies to include CQ in the adaptive selling theoretical framework. To date, very limited research has used adaptive selling theory as a theoretical support to explore the role of CQ as an antecedent of adaptive selling behaviors in a context of export selling via social media (Charoensukmongkol, 2019b). This research is a response to Weitz (1986)'s call for studies to examine the effect of cross-cultural competencies on adaptive selling behaviors. The research finding with respect to the effect of CQ on adaptive selling behaviors in the context of export selling via social media provided empirical evidence to support cross-cultural competencies as an antecedent of adaptive selling behavior, expanding current knowledge about adaptive selling framework.

Secondly, this study provided additional evidence supporting categorization theory as well (A. Sharma & Levy, 1995; Szymanski, 1988). According to the theory, salespeople with high customer qualification skills process information in a more efficient and effective way when facing numerous information stimuli in complex situations (Román & Iacobucci, 2010; Román & Rodríguez, 2015). This study found that in complex export selling via social media, export salespeople can rely on their categorization skills, namely, customer qualification skills to make adaptive selling

behaviors, which contributed to an enhancement of salesperson's performance. The research findings confirmed that export salespeople with a high level of social media use in sales demonstrated high customer qualification skills, leading to an improvement in salesperson's outcome performance and relationship performance. That's the main reason explaining the mediating role of customer qualification skills in the impact of social media use in sales on adaptive selling behaviors, outcome performance and relationship performance. Thus, the contribution of customer qualification skills to the effectiveness of social media use in sales can be explained by the categorization theory.

Apart from that, the research identified CQ as an antecedent of customer qualification skills. This study confirmed that CQ facilitated a demonstration of customer qualification skills. Salespeople with high CQ have more refined knowledge about foreign customers, which facilitate the practice of customer qualification skills. To the best of the author's knowledge, no research has explored the impact of CQ on customer qualification skills. The research finding about the direct positive impact of CQ on customer qualification skills added to literature about customer qualification skills and CQ, extending knowledge about the application of categorization theory in export selling contexts as well.

Thirdly, this study provided empirical evidence supporting social CRM framework as well (Choudhury & Harrigan, 2014). According to social CRM framework, the integration of social media use in customer relationship management can lead to good customer relationship through an IDIC process (identification, differentiation, interaction and customization) (Peppers & Rogers, 2016). This study found that social media use in sales can first have an impact on customer qualification skills, then adaptive selling behaviors, leading to an optimal relationship performance finally. This finding empirically supported the main argument of social CRM framework as customer qualification skills reflect identification and differentiation processes and adaptive selling behaviors involve interaction and customization processes. Hence, the effectiveness of social media use in sales on relationship performance enabled by customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors can be explained through the lens of social CRM framework.

To sum up, the findings of this research reveal the working mechanism of social media use in export sales and the contribution of CQ in the context of export selling via social media. The present research findings about the role of adaptive selling behavior in the impact of social media use in sales on salesperson's performance in export selling adds to the prior sales literature about social media in domestic selling contexts; the present research findings about the contribution of customer qualification skills and CQ fill the void in sales literature about social media where there was a lack of investigation about their role in export selling. More academic and practical contributions are presented in the next part.

5.4 Academic Contribution

This study provided additional contribution to fulfill the research gap in the following ways. Firstly, given that scarce empirical research offers direct evidence about whether and how export salespersons' social media use contributes to their sales performance, this study filled the gap by exploring the working mechanism of social media in sales in export selling in China. This study extends knowledge obtained from previous studies mainly conducted in domestic selling contexts in western countries (Itani et al., 2017). Secondly, this study addresses the concern raised by Ogilvie et al. (2018) regarding a lack of theoretical support to explain why the effectiveness of social media use in sales is contingent on an improvement of behaviors first. From the perspective of adaptive selling theory (Arli et al., 2018; Weitz et al., 1986), social media use in sales, customer qualification skills and cultural intelligence serve as the important components of salespeople's abilities, which are key antecedents of adaptive selling behaviors, thereby causing an improvement in salespeople's performance in export sales. In particular, this study contributes to previous research about social media use in sales by integrating the adaptive selling theory, categorization theory and social CRM. Such an integration provides a robust theoretical support for how social media use in sales facilitates export salespeople in qualifying customers to make adaptive selling behaviors, hence achieving high sales performance in export selling.

Thirdly, the present study provides extra contribution to CQ research in the area of export selling via social media. Given that the role of CQ has not been explored in a context of export selling via social media, the present research fills this void by providing empirical evidence supporting the role of CQ in this specific context. Moreover, given that the relationship between CQ and customer qualification skills has never been explored in prior research, the research finding about the positive relationship between them provided new evidence about the role of CQ as an antecedent of customer qualification skills. In addition, this study makes extra contribution to the working mechanism of CQ by showing that the relationship that CQ has with adaptive selling behaviors and salesperson's performance is mediated by customer qualification skills. The mediating role of customer qualification skills provides additional support to categorization theory which explains why people with high CQ can achieve high sales performance in export selling via social media.

5.5 Recommendation for Business

The research findings provide insights for both export salespeople and sales organizations that aim to enhance salesperson's performance in export selling via social media. First, given the results from this research and previous research findings in sales literature which supported the positive contribution of social media, export salespeople and sales organizations are recommended to use social media in export selling for an improvement of salesperson's performance. Besides that, given the research findings with respect to the contribution of customer qualification skills and adaptive selling behaviors, it is advised that both salespeople and sales managers understand that the mere use of social media is not sufficient to harvest optimal sales performance. Instead, they need to consider the characteristics of social media and effectively integrate social media in sales to better understand foreign customers and sales encounters first. Then, based on this understanding, they can better qualify customer leads and make corresponding adjustments to their adaptive selling behaviors. In this way, they can better satisfy foreign customer needs and reap ideal sales performance.

In practice, sales managers and sales people can learn from emerging social media marketing companies like Hootsuite and Social Media Examiner which offer valuable online seminars and training courses about how to integrate different social media platforms in each stage of the sales funnel to generate qualified leads and sales (Hootsuite, 2019; SocialMediaExaminer, 2019). Salespeople can adopt different social media sales strategies at each stage of sales processes according to the characteristics of various social media platforms. For example, at the prospecting stage, salespeople can join or create a field-specific Facebook, LinkedIn or YouTube group, allow open membership to this group to generate a potential prospect list, monitor relevant comments and provide feedbacks to understand foreign customers' purchasing preferences. At the pre-approaching stage, rapport building via social media platform like Facebook, LinkedIn or WeChat is critical to gain trust from foreign customers. Sharing success stories about product innovation or experience on Facebook, LinkedIn or WeChat can also help establish credibility and gain attention from foreign customers. While approaching prospects, the choice of social media for further communication can be determined by discussion between exporters and importers. Due consideration and respect should be paid to foreign customers' preferences for social media use. For export salespeople, following foreign customers on their preferred social media can be a shortcut to understand them.

At the sales presentation stage, salespeople are recommended to discover foreign customers' needs by questioning, listening to and mutual interacting with foreign buyers via social media. Social media like WeChat, QQ, Facebook messenger, WhatsApp can support the instant communication with foreign customers. A combined way of different demonstration including texts, pictures and even short videos about products posted on YouTube or Facebook can also help salespeople present products and services in a vivid way. Salespeople can utilize the obtained information via social media platform to prescribe a customized solution for foreign customers. While handling objections from foreign buyers, success stories shared on LinkedIn, Facebook and WeChat posts can aid in overcoming objections. Direct explanation via WeChat or WhatsApp is a good choice for effective negotiation as well. Following these procedures, salespeople can ask for the closure of sale in a soft and gradual way and avoid hard selling. At the follow-up service stage after the

closure of transactions, following foreign customers and posting success stories with current customers on social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and WeChat can strengthen customers' belief in their own right decision to make such a deal. Such a confirmatory belief is critical for another order from the same customers. In a word, export salespeople need to consider the characteristics of social media platforms and take a full advantage of these characteristics to attract more customers and increase sales performance.

Secondly, given the research findings about the contribution of customer qualification skills in export selling via social media, this study suggests that sales organizations realize the importance of developing salespeople's ability in doing content analysis on social media. As social media contain vast and valuable information about consumers' characteristics, how to extract and analyze relevant information about customers determines the effectiveness and efficiency of salespeople's selling behaviors. While using social media to identify and qualify customers, salespeople are advised to focus on analyzing what information about customer traits to observe, how to recognize those traits and which selling strategies might be appropriate for specific customer categories. For example, customers' posted information on social media about purchasing background, previous job roles, career development and business activities they have involved in will be critical for salespeople to qualify and identify customers in the identification process.

One successful story shared by a respondent of this study may offer some insights for export salespeople to have a better understanding about what information to extract from customers' posts on social media and how to utilize it in sales processes. The respondent got a name card from a lady at an international trade show, from which he could approach her via Facebook. By browsing the lady's Facebook account, the respondent found that the lady had placed large orders about hotel supplies with some big companies. By analyzing her purchasing history, the respondent qualified the lady as a sophisticated key decision maker and can be a significant potential buyer. Thus, he made some adjustments to his selling strategies and proposed a set of competitive quotations to attract the lady's attention and successfully made a big deal with the lady finally. The respondent admitted that the information about the lady's purchasing habits and history which he obtained from her

Facebook account played a crucial role in helping him make a preliminary analysis about the lady's needs and expectations. The respondent's success story suggests that to extract information about a customer's purchasing habits and history from his or her social media account can be an alternative way to qualify and identify customers.

In addition, except for an advice on developing salespeople's ability in making content analysis on social media, sales organizations are recommended to improve export sales personnel's customer qualification skills as well. It was widely recognized that customer qualification skills can be learned by observing from experienced sales managers and can be developed through training as well (A. Sharma & Levy, 1995). Thus, sales managers and organizations are recommended to provide trainings about how to qualify and categorize customers according to information about foreign customers on social media. For instance, salespeople with high customer qualification skills usually categorize customers based on their needs whereas novice salespeople with low customer qualification skills may classify customers based on physical characteristics like race, gender and clothes etc. (Weitz et al., 1986). While acquiring information about foreign customers, expert salespeople often employed a large number of information acquisition steps including asking questions, listening and observing customers to qualify customers and identify their needs (A. Sharma et al., 2000). Hence, sales organizations should teach salespeople how to use a set of combined information acquisition steps to extract useful information about customers and classify customers based on their perception of similarities and differences in different customer groups' needs. Indeed, qualified leads are regarded as the lifeblood of a sales organization (Monat, 2011). Sales organizations or managers should improve salespeople's customer qualification skills to ensure more qualified leads and reap a high possibility of converting leads into sales.

Thirdly, given that the present research found the positive impact of CQ on customer qualification skills, adaptive selling behaviors and sales performance, this study suggests that sales organizations and managers need to consider CQ as an important capability for salespeople to achieve success in export selling. On the one hand, human resources managers can use the measurement scale of CQ as a tool to assess the interviewees' CQ level when recruiting new export salespeople and hire

those with a high CQ level. On the other hand, sales organizations are advised to improve salespeople's CQ by offering more training or chances of business trip to import countries because prior studies have found that CQ can be developed through training and exposure to foreign culture (Ang & Van Dyne, 2015; Ott & Michailova, 2018). For example, to increase the level of cognitive CQ, sales organizations can hold some seminars or lectures to teach more cultural knowledge about their targeted import countries. Teaching content should include general cultural knowledge like cultural values, religious beliefs, living customs, marriage systems, legal and economic systems of other cultures, as well as specific information about business environments, consumption habits and preferences, attitudes towards foreign goods, purchasing habits, negotiation characteristics and so on. To increase the level of metacognitive CQ, training sessions can offer some case studies for salespeople to make a comparison about the similarities and differences between difficult cultures, developing their cultural sensitivity and awareness. To enhance the level of motivational and behavioral CQ, role play is an appropriate way for salespeople to practice making appropriate behaviors in cross-cultural selling. Rodriguez and Boyer (2018)'s research confirmed that international students who took International Negotiation and Selling Courses gained awareness and insights into buyers' requirements and expectations across cultures by a well-designed cross-cultural role play exercise. After the role play exercise, the students developed a better understanding about cultural differences and made appropriate behaviors in a sales meeting during a series of sales processes. Their research revealed that role play did help increase people's motivation to make adjustments to behaviors in cross-cultural selling. Except for suggestions about training courses, this study also suggests that sales organizations offer some motivations to encourage experienced salespeople or sales managers who travelled frequently among different countries to share their experience and stories among sales forces; sales organizations can also compile brochures and tips about cultural knowledge in targeted import countries, informing salespeople of relevant cultural knowledge and reminding them to avoid the cultural conflicts in sales processes. All in all, training courses, experience sharing and exposure to foreign culture are suggested alternatives to help improve salespeople's CQ level.

Given that the present study finds that education level is a significant factor influencing salespeople's performance, sales organizations are advised to hire those well-educated ones or offer opportunities of further study for current employed salespeople. Companies can cooperate with colleges and universities to offer relevant training courses about culture, sales techniques, cross-cultural communication skills and trend analysis about industries to enrich sales personnel's professional knowledge reservoir. Various online and offline workshops and forums organized by relevant industries or trade associations can also be appropriate learning opportunities for salespeople to learn about the latest development in industries. For example, in 2019, International Chamber of Commerce published the latest edition of Incoterms 2020 (International commercial terms) which will come into effect from January 1st, 2020. Incoterms are a common set of rules and legal interpretations for global traders. To make salespeople's practices align with the latest trade practices, salespeople can take either online or offline courses to learn the latest changes in Incoterms 2020. Except for these formal education, sales organizations can also hold informal experience sharing meeting for salespeople to learn from each other; or organize brainstorming activities to increase salespeople's critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. As a result, salespeople with high critical thinking and problem-solving abilities can harvest satisfactory sales performance.

5.6 Limitation

Despite the above-mentioned contributions, there are some limitations that need to be considered. Firstly, this study may be subject to the generalizability problem due to its single-country data in export selling. These research findings are limited to Chinese export salespeople who use social media in export selling. Generalizations of the present research findings can be improved if further research can test the model in different countries. Secondly, this study used cross-sectional data for relationship analysis, thus, the results of this study could only be interpreted as association rather than causation. To confirm a causal effect of social media in sales and CQ, future research can collect longitudinal data to test whether social

media use in sales and CQ can help to improve export salespeople's performance. Thirdly, this study is limited in focusing on the perspective of salespeople's characteristics. There can be other important managerial factors from the management perspective, which may have an impact on sales performance in this specific context. Fourthly, as all the measurement scales used in this study were based on self-evaluation question items, the results of this study may be prone to social desirability bias. Social desirability bias refers to a tendency that the respondents will answer questions in a socially desirable way which will be viewed favorably by others (Saunders et al., 2009). Respondents in this study may over-report their outcome and relationship sales performance. Fifthly, although this study revealed that Chinese export salespeople did use social media to conduct export sales activities, it is limited in depicting how export salespeople use social media for each stage of the sales process and in what way salespeople are utilizing characteristics of different social media platforms to achieve optimal sales performance. Sixthly, as this study uses monetary incentive to increase the response rate, it may be subject to participation bias. Participation bias refer to a phenomenon in which the results of a survey become non-representative because the participants disproportionately possess certain traits which affect the outcome (Hsieh & Kocielnik, 2016). In this study, the monetary incentive can affect the composition of people who choose to participate. The use of monetary incentive can also cause acquiescence bias. Acquiescence may happen when participants are be friendly to the survey (Saunders et al., 2009). This can be possible in this study as participants may become friendly in return for monetary reward.

5.7 Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study yield several recommendations for future research to extend the knowledge about social media use in sales in export selling. Firstly, given scarce research has investigated the working mechanism of social media use in sales in export selling, future researchers can retest or extend the model in export selling in different countries. Secondly, given that the present research findings confirmed that social media use in sales alone was insufficient to improve

salesperson's performance and it worked by enhancing salespeople's competencies, behaviors or skills first, future researchers can focus on investigating different selling behaviors, competencies or skills which may play an important mediating role in the impact of social media use on salesperson's performance. Thirdly, future researchers can explore the role of moderating factors from the perspective of specific kinds of social media adopted by export salespeople, personal characteristics and management factors which may facilitate an improvement of sales performance achieved by social media use in sales in export selling. Fourthly, given the contribution of CQ in export selling via social media, it would be interesting to investigate the moderating role of some external factors (e.g. export salespeople's perceived cultural difference with importing countries and characteristics of market environments in importing countries etc.) that might facilitate or impede the sales performance achieved by export salespeople with high CQ. Lastly, as people in different countries prefer different social media, comparative studies about different usage or characteristics of social media from the perspective of customers' side can help both academia and export sales practitioners develop a better understanding of these burgeoning marketing tools.

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APPENDICES



Appendix A

Questionnaire (English)

This survey is conducted in a voluntary basis and conducted for academic purposes only. You can choose not to participate in the study. The information gathered in this survey is confidential and does not involve any leakage of your privacy. The answers will only be processed as statistical observations. All the questions in this survey only indicate your opinions about them and do not have any right or wrong answers. You can skip answering any questions that you feel uncomfortable to answer.

Part I: Demographics

1. Gender

¹ Male

² Female

2. Age

Please specify _____ years

3. Work experiences in export sales

¹ less than 1year

² 1-5 years

³ 6-10 years

⁴ more than10 years

4. Workplace

Please specify _____ (the city)

5. Education

¹ high school/high vocational certificate

² diploma

³ bachelor's degree

⁴ master's degree and above

6. Monthly salary

- ¹ below 5000 RMB ² 5001-8000RMB
³ 8001-12000RMB ⁴ 12001RMB or above

7. English language proficiency

- ¹ less than College English Test Band 4
² College English Test Band 4
³ College English Test Band 6/ Test for English Majors Band 4
⁴ Test for English Majors Band 8 or above

8. Job title

- ¹ sales representative ² sales manager ³ general sales manager

9. Customer type

- ¹ B2B ² B2C ³ both B2B and B2C

10. Targeted country (please specify countries you sell goods/service to in a sequence of sales value from the most to the least; no more than three countries.)

11. Trade industry

- ¹ industrial goods ² consumer goods

Part II: Questions for Social Media Use in Sales

Please specify all the social media you use in the following seven processes and the frequency you use them.

1A. Please choose all the social media you use for **prospecting** and add the others you use if not included in the list.

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook Messenger 	WeChat 
Skype 	QQ 	QQ zone 	LinkedIn 	Instagram 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumblr 		

1B. How often do you use the social media you indicate in the above for **prospecting**?

- ¹ never ² rarely ³ sometimes
⁴ often ⁵ very often


















2A. Please choose all social media you use for **pre-approach** and add the others you use if not included in the list.

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook Messenger 	WeChat 
Skype 	QQ 	QQ zone 	LinkedIn 	Instagram 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumblr 		

2B. How often do you use the social media you indicate in the above for **pre-approach**?

- ¹ never ² rarely ³ sometimes
⁴ often ⁵ very often

3A. Please choose all the social media you use for **approach** and add the others you use if not included in the list.

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook Messenger 	WeChat 
Skype 	QQ 	QQ zone 	LinkedIn 	Instagram 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumblr 		

3B. How often do you use the social media you indicate in the above for **approach**?

- ¹ never
 ² rarely
 ³ sometimes
⁴ often
 ⁵ very often

4A. Please choose all the social media you use for **sales presentation** and add the others you use if not included in the list.

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook Messenger 	WeChat 
Skype 	QQ 	QQ zone 	LinkedIn 	Instagram 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

4B. How often do you use social media you indicate in the above for **sales presentation**?

- ¹ never ² rarely ³ sometimes
⁴ often ⁵ very often

5A. Please choose all the social media you use for **handling objections** and add the others you use if not included in the list.

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook Messenger 	WeChat 
Skype 	QQ 	QQ zone 	LinkedIn 	Instagram 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

5B. How often do you use social media you indicate in the above for **handling objections**?

- ¹ never ² rarely ³ sometimes
⁴ often ⁵ very often





6A. Please choose all the social media you use for **closing the deal** and add the others you use if not included in the list.

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook Messenger 	WeChat 
Skype 	QQ 	QQ zone 	LinkedIn 	Instagram 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

6B. How often do you use the social media you indicate in the above for **closing the deal**?

- ¹ never ² rarely ³ sometimes
⁴ often ⁵ very often

7A. Please choose all the social media you use for **follow-up service** and add the others you use if not included in the list.

facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook Messenger 	WeChat 
Skype 	QQ 	QQ zone 	LinkedIn 	Instagram 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

7B. How often do you use the social media you indicate in the above for **follow-up service**?

- ¹ never ² rarely ³ sometimes
⁴ often ⁵ very often

Part III: Questions for Salesperson's Customer Qualification Skills

Please rate yourself in terms of the following statements by items ranging from 1 (needs improvement) to 5 (excellent).

8. My ability to identify and analyze customer's needs is...

- ¹ needs improvement ² fair ³ good
⁴ excellent ⁵ outstanding

9. My ability to understand customer's buying motive is...

- ¹ needs improvement ² fair ³ good
⁴ excellent ⁵ outstanding

10. My ability to distinguish different kinds of customers is...

- ¹ needs improvement ² fair ³ good
⁴ excellent ⁵ outstanding

Part IV: Questions for Adaptive Selling Behavior

Please specify your opinions of agreement or disagreement about the following statements.

11. When I feel that my sales approach is not working, I can easily change to another approach.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

12. I like to experiment with different sales approaches.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

13. I am very flexible in the selling approach I use.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

14. I can easily use a wide range of selling approaches.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

15. I try to understand how one customer differs from another.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

Part V: Questions for Salesperson's Performance

Please indicate your opinions about your performance regarding

16. selling high profit-margin products

- ¹ needs improvement ² fair ³ good
⁴ excellent ⁵ outstanding

17. generating a high level of dollar sales

- ¹ needs improvement ² fair ³ good
⁴ excellent ⁵ outstanding

18. quickly generating sales of new company products

- ¹ needs improvement ² fair ³ good
⁴ excellent ⁵ outstanding

19. exceeding sales targets

- ¹ needs improvement ² fair ³ good
⁴ excellent ⁵ outstanding

Please specify your opinions of agreement or disagreement about the following statements.

20. Compared to last year, new account acquisition has increased.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

21. Compared to last year, the number of qualified opportunities/leads has increased.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

22. Compared to last year, my customer retention rate has increased.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

Part VI: Questions for Cultural Intelligence

Please specify your opinions of agreement or disagreement about the following statements.

23. I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

24. I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

25. I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

26. I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

27. I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

28. I know the rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) of other languages.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

29. I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

30. I know the marriage systems of other cultures.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

31. I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

32. I know the rules for expressing non-verbal behaviors in other cultures.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

33. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

34. I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

35. I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

36. I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

37. I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

38. I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

39. I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

40. I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.

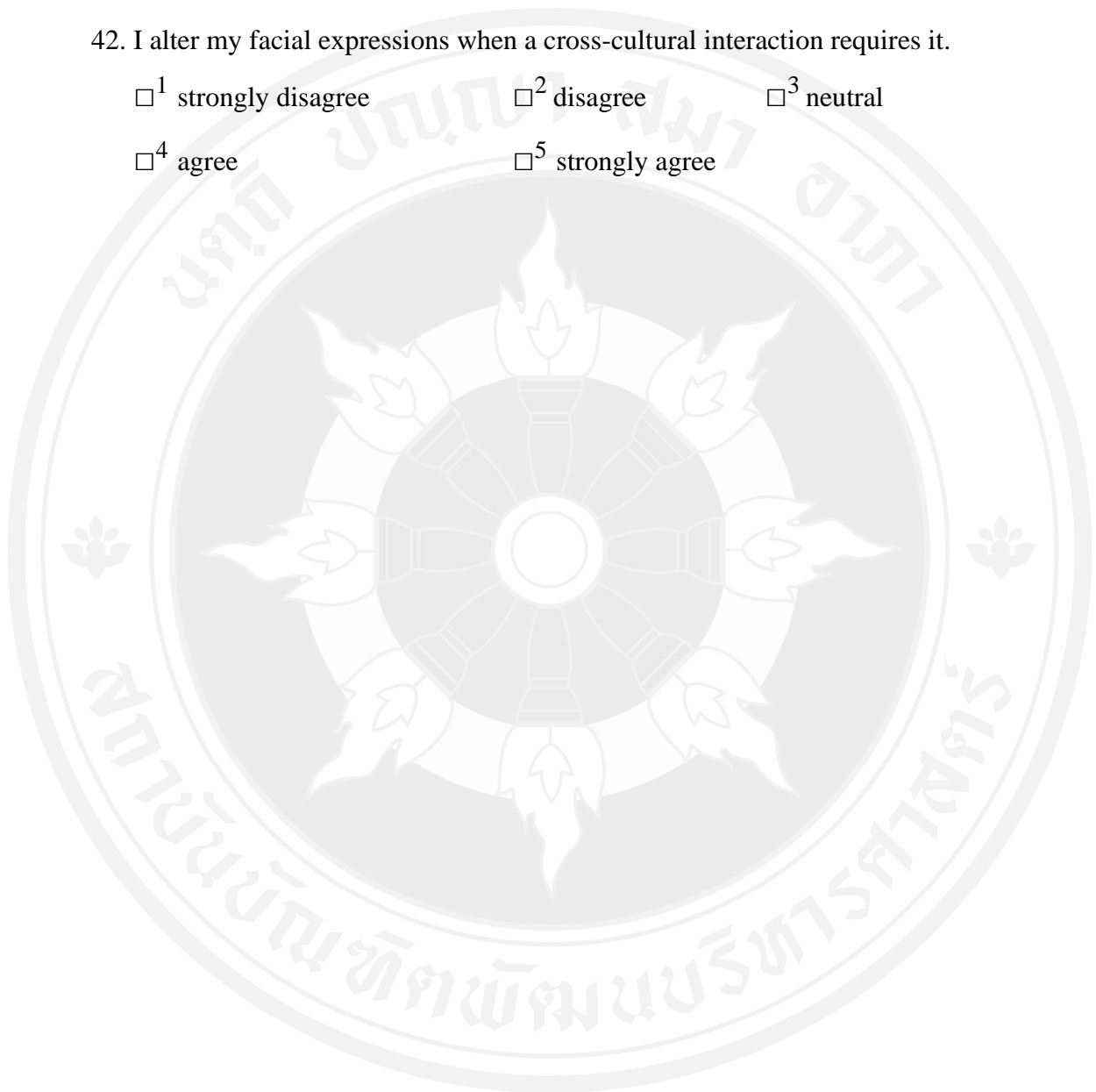
- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

41. I change my non-verbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree

42. I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.

- ¹ strongly disagree ² disagree ³ neutral
⁴ agree ⁵ strongly agree





Appendix B

Questionnaire (Chinese)

感谢您参与此次问卷调查。本问卷仅用于学术目的。问卷收集的信息不涉及您的隐私并将保密。您的回答仅用于数据分析。问卷中的问题仅征询您的态度并无答案对错之分。

Part I: 基本信息

1. 您的性别

¹ 男

² 女

2. 您的年龄

_____ (岁)

3. 您从事出口销售工作年限

_____ 年

4. 您的工作地点 _____ (城市名)

5. 您的受教育水平

¹ 高中/中专

² 大专

³ 本科

⁴ 硕士及以上

6. 您的月薪

¹ 5000 元以下

² 5001-8000 元

³ 8001-12000 元

⁴ 12001 元以上

7. 您的英语水平

¹ 大学英语四级以下² 大学英语四级³ 大学英语六级/英语专业四级⁴ 英语专业八级及以上

8. 您的职位

¹ 销售代表² 销售经理³ 销售总监

9. 您的客户类型

¹ B2B² B2C³ B2B 和 B2C

10. 出口国家（请回答您负责销售的产品所销往的目的国家名，按照销售额数量从高到低进行排列，最多填写三个国家）









11. 您销售的产品所属行业

¹ 工业用品² 消费品

Part II: 关于社交媒体在销售过程中的使用

请选择您在以下七个销售过程中使用的社交媒体种类以及使用频率。(若您使用的社交媒体不在以下列表中, 欢迎您在表后予以补充。补充时只需说明您使用的社交媒体名称即可)

1A. 在您寻找商业机会时, 您使用下列哪一种或几种社交媒体?

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook messenger 	WeChat 
Instagram 	QQ 	QQ zone 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	LinkedIn 	Skype 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

1B. 在您寻找商业机会时, 您使用以上所选社交媒体的使用频率是

¹ 从不





² 很少

³ 有时

⁴ 常常

⁵ 很多时候
























2A. 在您**接触**顾客之前，进行销售事先调查时，您使用下列哪一种或几种社交媒体？

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook messenger 	WeChat 
Instagram 	QQ 	QQ zone 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	LinkedIn 	Skype 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

2B. 在您**接触**顾客之前，进行销售事先调查时，您使用以上所选社交媒体的使用频率是

- ¹ 从不 ² 很少 ³ 有时
⁴ 常常 ⁵ 很多时候








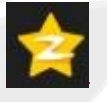















3A. 在您与客户进行接洽时，您使用下列哪一种或几种社交媒体？

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook messenger 	WeChat 
Instagram 	QQ 	QQ zone 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	LinkedIn 	Skype 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

3B. 在您与客户进行接洽时，您使用以上所选社交媒体的使用频率是

- ¹ 从不 ² 很少 ³ 有时
⁴ 常常 ⁵ 很多时候

4A. 在您介绍产品或展示产品时, 您使用下列哪一种或几种社交媒体?

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook messenger 	WeChat 
Instagram 	QQ 	QQ zone 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	LinkedIn 	Skype 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

4B. 在您介绍产品或展示产品时, 您使用以上所选社交媒体的使用频率是

- ¹ 从不 ² 很少 ³ 有时
⁴ 常常 ⁵ 很多时候








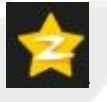















5A. 在您应对客户不同意见，消除客户疑虑时，您使用下列哪一种或几种社交媒体？

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook messenger 	WeChat 
Instagram 	QQ 	QQ zone 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	LinkedIn 	Skype 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

5B. 在您应对客户不同意见，消除客户疑虑时，您使用以上所选社交媒体的使用频率是

- ¹ 从不 ² 很少 ³ 有时
⁴ 常常 ⁵ 很多时候





6A. 在您达成交易时，您使用下列哪一种或几种社交媒体？

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook messenger 	WeChat 
Instagram 	QQ 	QQ zone 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	LinkedIn 	Skype 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumblr 		

6B. 在您达成交易时，您使用以上所选社交媒体的使用频率是

- ¹ 从不 ² 很少 ³ 有时
⁴ 常常 ⁵ 很多时候

7A. 在您的售后跟踪服务过程中，您使用下列哪一种或几种社交媒体？

Facebook 	YouTube 	WhatsApp 	Facebook messenger 	WeChat 
Instagram 	QQ 	QQ zone 	Douyin 	Sinaweibo 
Reddit 	Twitter 	Vkontakte 	LinkedIn 	Skype 
Vimeo 	Snapchat 	Viber+ 	Pinterest 	LINE 
Karao talk 	Google+ 	Tumbir 		

7B. 在您的售后跟踪服务过程中，您使用以上所选社交媒体的使用频率是

- ¹ 从不 ² 很少 ³ 有时
⁴ 常常 ⁵ 很多时候

Part III: 关于确定客户的能力

请根据以下陈述选择与您的能力相符的选项。

8. 我定位客户需求和分析客户需求的能力

- ¹ 需要提高 ² 一般 ³ 好
⁴ 良好 ⁵ 出色

9. 我了解客户购买动机的能力

- ¹ 需要提高 ² 一般 ³ 好
⁴ 良好 ⁵ 出色

10. 我识别不同类别客户的能力

- ¹ 需要提高 ² 一般 ³ 好
⁴ 良好 ⁵ 出色

Part IV: 关于适应性销售

对于以下陈述，请选择与您实际感受或体会最相符的判断。

11. 当我觉得我的销售方法没有效果时，我能轻松地换到另一种销售方法。

- ¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立
⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

12. 我愿意尝试不同的销售方法。

- ¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立
⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

13. 在我使用的销售方法方面， 我很灵活。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

14. 我能轻松运用广泛的销售方法。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

15. 我努力去了解某个客户是如何与其他客户不一样的。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

Part V: 关于销售表现 Questions for Salesperson' s performance

请评价您在以下几个方面的表现

16. 在售出高利润产品方面

需要提高 可以接受 好

良好 优秀

17. 在带来高销售额方面

需要提高 可以接受 好

良好 优秀

18. 在迅速带来新产品销售业绩方面

需要提高 可以接受 好

良好 优秀

19. 在超过销售目标方面

- ¹ 需要提高 ² 可以接受 ³ 好
⁴ 良好 ⁵ 优秀

对于以下陈述，请选择与您实际情况最相符的判断。

20. 同去年相比，我的新客户增加了。

- ¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立
⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

21. 同去年相比，我的高质量客户数量/机会增加了。

- ¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立
⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

22. 同去年相比，我的客户保持率上涨了。

- ¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立
⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

Part VI: 关于文化智力

对于以下陈述，请选择与您实际感受或体会最相符的判断。

23. 我能意识到自己与不同文化背景的人交往时所应用的文化知识。

- ¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立
⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

24. 当与陌生文化中的人们交往时，我调整自己的文化知识。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

25. 我能意识到自己在跨文化交往时所应用的文化知识。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

26. 当与来自不同文化的人们交往时，我检查自己文化知识的准确性。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

27. 我了解其他文化的法律和经济体系。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

28. 我了解其他语言的规则（如：词汇，语法）。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

29. 我了解其他文化的价值观和宗教信仰。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

30. 我了解其他文化的婚姻体系。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

31. 我了解其他文化的艺术和手工艺品。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

32. 我了解其他文化中表达非语言行为的规则。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

33. 我喜欢与来自不同文化的人交往。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

34. 我相信自己能够与陌生文化中的当地人进行交往。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

35. 我确信自己可以处理适应新文化带来的额外压力。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

36. 我喜欢生活在自己不熟悉的文化中。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

37. 我相信自己可以适应一个不同文化中的购物环境。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

38. 我根据跨文化交往的需要而改变自己的语言方式（如口音，语调）。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

39. 我有选择地使用停顿和沉默以适应不同的跨文化交往情境。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

40. 我根据跨文化交往的情境需要改变自己的语速。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

41. 我根据跨文化交往的情境需要而改变自己的非语言行为（如手势，头部动作，站位的远近）。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

42. 我根据跨文化交往的情境需要而改变自己的面部表情。

¹ 强烈不同意 ² 不同意 ³ 中立

⁴ 同意 ⁵ 强烈同意

BIOGRAPHY

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ACADEMIC BACKGROUND Bachelor's degree in English(Economics and Trade) from China University of Geo-sciences(Wuhan) in 2003

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