

## PEER REVIEW REPORT

### Peer Review Report for:

Adão, A. L., Kato, H. T., Briggs, E., Deretti, S. (2025). Different sales models, functional and relational customer orientation, and retail salesperson performance. *RAE-Revista de Administração de Empresas*, 65(2), 2025. e2023-0539. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0034-759020250203>

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Adão, A. L., Kato, H. T., Briggs, E., Deretti, S. (2025). Peer review report for: Different sales models, functional and relational customer orientation, and retail salesperson performance. *RAE-Revista de Administração de Empresas*, 65(2), 2025. e2023-0539. *Zenodo*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14031819>

**Disclaimer:** The content of the Peer Review Report is the full copy of the reviewers' and authors' reports. Typing and punctuation errors are not edited.

### Reviewers:

Gabriel Wei En Wee , Swinburne University of Technology, Kuching, Malaysia

Lim Ivon Tze Yin , Swinburne University of Technology, Kuching, Malaysia

The third reviewer did not authorize disclosure of their identity and peer review report.

## ROUND 1

### Reviewer 1 Report

Reviewer: Gabriel Wei En Wee

Date review returned: 21-Dec-2023

Recommendation: Minor revision

Please state any conflict(s) of interest that you have in relation to the review of this paper (state “none” if this is not applicable).

None

### Comments to the Author:

*The introduction clearly states the purpose of the study: to explore the impact of functional and relational customer orientation on retail salesperson performance, considering the moderating effects of different sales models. The introduction also hints at the potential findings, such as the suggestion that simultaneous implementation of functional and relational customer orientations may hinder creativity in retail contexts. This sets the stage for hypothesis testing and analysis in the subsequent sections. The introduction is well-aligned with the topic - however, it can be further strengthened with a short overview of the retail landscape and how it is still relevant and significant. Introduction can also be enhanced with answering why this new application (extension to Miao and Wang's conceptual framework) is significant.*

*The methodology section could address potential biases or limitations in the study design, such as response bias or the implications of self-reported data. While the method of disseminating questionnaires and the focus on performance, creativity, FCO (Functional Customer Orientation), and RCO (Relational Customer Orientation) is appropriate, more detail on the analysis method would strengthen this section. Information on how the data was analyzed using PLS-SEM, the specific statistical techniques employed, and how the dyads were matched could provide more insight into the study's rigor.*

*Consider expanding the discussion on the practical applications of your findings in retail settings and exploring broader implications for different types of retail environments.*

*Lastly, the Abstract can be enhanced with an emphasis on the implications of these findings more distinctly, especially in terms of practical applications in the retail industry.*

## Reviewer 2 Report

**Reviewer:** Lim Ivon Tze Yin

**Date review returned:** 31-Dec-2023

**Recommendation:** Major Revision

**Please state any conflict(s) of interest that you have in relation to the review of this paper (state “none” if this is not applicable).**

None

## Comments to the Author:

*The topic is intriguing and holds the potential for making valuable contributions to the existing literature.*

### Abstract

- *The current study lacks information about the sample size, and there is no mention of the theoretical framework or implications of the research. The originality of the study remains unclear.*

### Introduction

- *The significance of the study is ambiguous. What justifies the need to examine the roles of retail salespersons from a practical perspective? The research objectives lack clarity.*
- *The study's context is unclear. When mentioning the retail industry, it is essential to specify which industry is being referred to and provide a rationale. Further justification is required, supported by robust data and evidence.*

### Literature Review

- *There is no mention of the underpinning theories for the study. This absence creates confusion, as only concepts are presented without a clear theoretical foundation.*
- *Citations are needed to enhance the integrity of the statement. Example: “However, since retail salespeople have a relatively short period of time available to cultivate relationships with customers, we believe that FCO will negatively moderate the influence of RCO on creativity.” (Please refer to Page 5, lines 29-33).*

### Research Methodology

- *The initial introduction fails to incorporate the home improvement and fashion sectors as the study’s context. The introduction sections should integrate both contexts and the reasons for choosing them as focal points.*
- *This section should provide additional elaboration on the rationale for administering two sets of questionnaires. It is essential to clarify why examining the perspective of retail managers is necessary for the current study.*
- *Kindly provide justification for your chosen sample size and elucidate the methodology employed in your sampling technique.*
- *Data Analysis & Findings: Clear.*
- *Discussion: Additional discussion is warranted for the present argument to substantiate the findings, as the current discussion primarily remains descriptive. Is there a specific rationale explaining why RCO (Resource Conservation Orientation) and FCO (Future Customer Orientation) positively interacted to augment salesperson creativity?*

### Implications of the study

- *Please include the discussion of theoretical implications.*

### Communication of the paper

- *Clear.*

## Authors' Responses

Dear Associate Editor, Professor Tat-Huei Cham,

Thank you for allowing my co-authors and I to revise our manuscript, “Different Sales Models, Functional and Relational Customer Orientation and Retail Salesperson Performance” for publication consideration in the Revista de Administração de Empresas (RAE).

In your last letter, the reviewers requested a “MINOR REVISION” and a “MAJOR REVISION”. In this revision, we have attempted to address each of the points raised by the two reviewers who provided their responses. We believe that you will find this version of the manuscript much more suitable for inclusion in the future issue.

There were some key reviewer concerns that were highlighted in your last letter to us:

1. **Abstract:** We have rewritten the abstract specifying the sample size and the primary contribution of the study and highlighting the relevance of the findings to the retail context, after reading the RAE guidelines to improve the quality of the abstract.
2. **Introduction:** In this version of the manuscript, at a later stage in the introduction, we have inserted the retail context and. In addition, we updated sentences to enhance the presentation of the research problem and constructs pertaining to our model.
3. **Literature review:** In this version of the manuscript, we have inserted a brief explanation related to the

*Creativity Theory at a early stage in the literature review section. Furthermore, we have expanded this section adding new evidences from the current literature on creativity and sales models.*

**4. Method:** *We have icorporated several edits in this section. (i.e. the corresponding context of home improvment and fashion retail in the first paragraph in the methodology section; an argument to consider retail managers as a relevant actor of the strategy implementation in the retail sector - Friebe et al, 2022; the corresponding justification for the sample size and the approach for the sampling; an argument to consider potentioal biases or limitation in the study design - Podsakoff et al, 2003; and several information on the analysis method).*

**5. Discussion results:** *We conducted a detailed analysis of the text to improve the clarity of the study's discussion and contributions. The discussion section has been smoothly integrated into the text, absorbing a substantial portion from the previous version. Additionally, we have developed a completely new section focusing on theoretical contributions, with the intention of improving the overall presentation of the work. In this revised version, we argue that the discussion is articulated more precisely, and the theoretical and managerial contributions are outlined in a clearer manner.*

**6. References:** *We have incorporated nine additional articles, the majority of which were published in highly reputable academic journals within the field of marketing, retail, and management research. Furthermore, we conducted a proofreading to identify any instances of necessary editings in the reference section. We have removed some references that were not cited in the text.*

*We sincerely appreciate your favorable recommendation and hops that you will find the present version of the manuscript substantially improved as to warrant publication in RAE.*

*Should you have any questions, please contact me at any time.*

*Best regards,*

Author

## **Reviewer #1**

**Author Response:** *Thank you for your careful reading of our manuscript. We attempt to address each of your issues in our responses and with changes to the manuscript.*

### **1. Introduction**

*1.1 The introduction clearly states the purpose of the study: to explore the impact of functional and relational customer orientation on retail salesperson performance, considering the moderating effects of different sales models. The introduction also hints at the potential findings, such as the suggestion that simultaneous implementation of functional and relational customer orientations may hinder creativity in retail contexts. This sets the stage for hypothesis testing and analysis in the subsequent sections. The introduction is well-aligned with the topic - however, it can be further strengthened with a short overview of the retail landscape and how it is still relevant and significant. Introduction can also be enhanced with answering why this new application (extension to Miao and Wang's conceptual framework) is significant.*

**Author Response:** *In this version of the manuscript, at a later stage in the introduction, we have inserted the retail context and the relevance in considering an extension to previous research.*

### **2. Methodology**

2.1 The methodology section could address potential biases or limitations in the study design, such as response bias or the implications of self-reported data.

**Author Response:** We added an argument to consider potential biases or limitation in the study design (Podsakoff et al, 2003). We now cite this research in the revision. Please, see the edits presented in the third paragraph in the methodology section.

2.2 While the method of disseminating questionnaires and the focus on performance, creativity, FCO (Functional Customer Orientation), and RCO (Relational Customer Orientation) is appropriate, more detail on the analysis method would strengthen this section. Information on how the data was analyzed using PLS-SEM, the specific statistical techniques employed, and how the dyads were matched could provide more insight into the study's rigor.

**Author Response:** We added several information on the analysis method in the new version. Please, see the edits presented in the fifth paragraph in the methodology section

### 3. Discussion

3.1 Consider expanding the discussion on the practical applications of your findings in retail settings and exploring broader implications for different types of retail environments.

**Author Response:** We undertook a thorough textual examination to enhance the lucidity of the study's discussion and contributions. The discussion section has been seamlessly incorporated into the text, assimilating a significant portion from the prior version. Conversely, we have crafted an entirely new section dedicated to theoretical contributions, aiming to enhance the overall presentation of the work. In this revised rendition, we contend that the discussion is articulated with greater precision, and the theoretical and managerial contributions are delineated in a more elucidated manner.

### 4. Abstract

4.1 Lastly, the Abstract can be enhanced with an emphasis on the implications of these findings more distinctly, especially in terms of practical applications in the retail industry.

**Author Response:** We have rewritten the abstract highlighting the relevance of the findings to the retail context.

## Reviewer #2

**Author response:** Thank you for your careful reading of our manuscript. We attempt to address each of your issues in our responses and with changes to the manuscript.

### 1. Abstract

1.1 The current study lacks information about the sample size, and there is no mention of the theoretical framework or implications of the research. The originality of the study remains unclear.

**Author Response:** We have rewritten the abstract specifying the sample size and the primary contribution of the study.

### 2. Introduction

2.1 The significance of the study is ambiguous. What justifies the need to examine the roles of retail salespersons from a practical perspective? The research objectives lack clarity.

**Author Response:** Since the sentence "salespersons from a practical perspective" in the introduction relates to

characteristics of FCO and RCO, following Miao and Wang, we updated the sentence to read “Functional customer orientation relates to solving common problems in a practical way, while relational customer orientation relates to creating a personal relationship with clients, having strong interactions, and being seen as a friend (Miao & Wang, 2016).

2.2 The study’s context is unclear. When mentioning the retail industry, it is essential to specify which industry is being referred to and provide a rationale. Further justification is required, supported by robust data and evidence.

**Author Response:** In this version of the manuscript, we have inserted the context at a later stage in the introduction. We modified this passage such that now is read as follows:

Specifically, this study aims to investigate the interplay between salesperson creativity, customer orientation (specifically, functional and relational customer orientation), and retail sales performance within the domains of home improvement and retail fashion. Building upon the conceptual model proposed by Miao and Wang (2016), which primarily examined salesperson creativity in business-to-business (B2B) contexts, our research extends this model to the unique context of retail selling in two distinct industries. We seek to explore how the simultaneous implementation of functional and relational customer orientation behaviors in retail sales may impact salesperson creativity, diverging from the findings in B2B contexts. Additionally, we aim to distinguish our research by considering the potential moderating effect of a firm-level trait—namely, the strategic implementation of different selling models for various customer types by retailers in the home improvement and retail fashion sectors. This investigation addresses a notable gap in the literature, contributing valuable insights into the complex dynamics of salesperson creativity, sales model and performance in the specific contexts of home improvement and retail fashion.

### 3. Literature Review

3.1 There is no mention of the underpinning theories for the study. This absence creates confusion, as only concepts are presented without a clear theoretical foundation.

**Author Response:** The theoretical foundation in our study is the Creativity Theory. In this version of the manuscript, we have inserted a brief explanation related to the Creativity Theory at a early stage in the literature review section. In the abstract, we have also incorporated indications asserting that our study is grounded within this theory

3.2 Citations are needed to enhance the integrity of the statement. Example: “However, since retail salespeople have a relatively short period of time available to cultivate relationships with customers, we believe that FCO will negatively moderate the influence of RCO on creativity.” (Please refer to Page 5, lines 29-33).

**Author Response:** We have added the corresponding citation (Miao & Wang, 2016). Furthermore, we conducted a comprehensive review of the entire manuscript to identify any instances of citation omissions. To the best of our knowledge, we did not identify any other sections where additional citations were deemed necessary.

### 4. Research Methodology

4.1 The initial introduction fails to incorporate the home improvement and fashion sectors as the study’s context. The introduction sections should integrate both contexts and the reasons for choosing them as focal points.

**Author Response:** We have added the corresponding context of home improvement and fashion retail in the first paragraph in the methodology section.

4.2 This section should provide additional elaboration on the rationale for administering two sets of questionnaires.



*It is essential to clarify why examining the perspective of retail managers is necessary for the current study.*

**Author Response:** *We have added the corresponding rationale for administering both questionnaires. Also, we added an argument to consider retail managers as a relevant actor of the strategy implementation in the retail sector (Friebel et al, 2022). We now cite this research in the revision as justification to consider managers' perspective. Please, see both edits presented in the second and third paragraph in the methodology section*

*4.3 Kindly provide justification for your chosen sample size and elucidate the methodology employed in your sampling technique.*

**Author Response:** *We have added the corresponding justification for the sample size and the approach for the sampling. Please, see the edits presented in the third paragraph in the methodology section.*

**5. Data Analysis & Findings:** *Clear.*

**Author Response:** *We appreciate the reviewer's positive feedback.*

## 6. Discussion

*6.1 Additional discussion is warranted for the present argument to substantiate the findings, as the current discussion primarily remains descriptive. Is there a specific rationale explaining why RCO (Resource Conservation Orientation) and FCO (Future Customer Orientation) positively interacted to augment salesperson creativity?*

**Author Response:** *Concerning these aspects, we conducted a comprehensive textual review to refine the clarity of the study's discussion and contributions. The discussion section has been seamlessly integrated into the text, incorporating a substantial portion from the previous version. Conversely, we have composed an entirely new section for theoretical contributions, with the aim of elevating the overall presentation of the work. In this revised version, we assert that the discussion is more meticulously articulated, and the theoretical and managerial contributions are delineated in a clearer manner. We believe that the reviewer made a minor error in writing the acronyms RCO and FCO. However, we acknowledge your observations and hope that the changes incorporated in this version address the suggestions.*

## 7. Implications of the study

*7.1 Please include the discussion of theoretical implications.*

**Author Response:** *We posit that the aforementioned changes outlined in the preceding section also align with this orientation.*

**8. Communication of the paper:** *Clear.*

**Author Response:** *We appreciate the reviewer's positive feedback.*

## ROUND 2

## Reviewer 1 Report

Reviewer: Lim Ivon Tze Yin

Date review returned: 04-Mar-2024

Recommendation: Accept

Please state any conflict(s) of interest that you have in relation to the review of this paper (state “none” if this is not applicable).

None

## Comments to the Author

*The study’s concept is highly promising and appears to be novel. Most of the key concerns regarding the paper have been highlighted and revised. The introduction and literature review sections have provided sufficient explanation, which was lacking in the previous submission. The methodology employed is appropriate, and the implications for research and practice have been addressed.*

## Reviewer 2 Report

Reviewer: Gabriel Wei En Wee

Date review returned: 10-Mar-2024

Recommendation: Minor Revision

Please state any conflict(s) of interest that you have in relation to the review of this paper (state “none” if this is not applicable).

None

## Comments to the Author:

*Dear Authors, this study makes a significant contribution to understanding the dynamics between functional and relational customer orientations, salesperson creativity, and performance in the retail sector. Your responses to the reviewers’ comments and the revisions made have substantially improved the manuscript. A few areas, however, could benefit from further attention:*

- 1) While you have noted the study’s context within Brazilian retail sectors, a more explicit discussion on the implications of these findings for other markets or retail environments would be beneficial. How might these findings translate to different cultural contexts or retail formats?*
- 2) The managerial implications section is insightful but could be expanded to offer more detailed guidance for retail managers. Consider including examples or strategies that could be employed to leverage the findings in practical settings.*
- 3) You’ve outlined avenues for future research, particularly around exploring objective measures of performance and extending the study to different retail environments. Elaborating on these points might offer more direction*



*for subsequent studies and highlight the potential impact of your findings on broader research areas.*

*4) While you have acknowledged the limitations of self-reported measures, considering alternative methodologies or suggesting how future studies might overcome these limitations would strengthen the paper. Could there be a way to incorporate objective performance data, or might a longitudinal design offer further insights?*

*Your research presents a nuanced view of the interplay between different customer orientations and salesperson performance, enriched by the examination of sales models' moderating effects. Addressing these minor points can enhance the clarity and impact of your manuscript.*

## ROUND 3

### Reviewer 1 Report

Reviewer: Lim Ivon Tze Yin

Date review returned: 28-May-2024

Recommendation: Accept

Please state any conflict(s) of interest that you have in relation to the review of this paper (state “none” if this is not applicable).

None

### Comments to the Author:

The current study makes significant contributions to the literature by examining the impact of different sales models on a conceptual framework based on Creativity Theory. The revised discussion and argument have clearly explained in detail how this study expands the existing knowledge in sales performance and retail context.

### Reviewer 2 Report

The reviewer did not authorize disclosure of their identity and peer review report.