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The Influence of Sales Skills on Personal Selling Performance in the Case of Bottled Water Industries in Dire Dawa City

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of sales skills on the performance of personal selling within the bottled water industry in Dire Dawa City, focusing on Aqua Dire Purified Mineral Water Factory. Using multiple regression analysis, the study explores the relationship between six predictor variables technical skills, marketing skills, interpersonal skills, salesmanship skills, sales training programs, and digital sales technology skills and the outcome variable, performance of personal selling (PSP). The results indicate that sales skills significantly influence PSP, with interpersonal skills, technical skills, and digital sales technology skills showing strong positive relationships. Specifically, interpersonal skills ($\beta = 0.752$, $p < 0.001$) and digital sales technology skills ($\beta = 0.505$, $p < 0.001$) emerge as the most influential predictors of sales performance. In contrast, marketing skills and sales training programs had less impact, with negative correlations observed for some variables. The study highlights the importance of enhancing specific competencies, particularly interpersonal and digital technology skills, to improve sales performance. The findings contribute valuable insights for sales managers and industry professionals seeking to optimize sales strategies and training programs. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the need for continuous development in digital competencies to adapt to changing market conditions. The research provides a foundation for future studies on sales performance in emerging markets.

***Keywords*:** *Bottled water industry, Dire Dawa, multiple regression, performance, personal selling, Sales skills*

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1. Background of the Study

The bottled water industry in Dire Dawa City, Ethiopia, has experienced significant growth over the past decade due to an increasing demand for safe and clean drinking water. However, despite this growth, many bottled water companies face challenges in achieving optimal sales performance. Personal selling, a critical component of the sales process, plays a pivotal role in driving revenue, fostering customer relationships, and differentiating products in the competitive bottled water market. Personal selling performance, in this context, refers to the effectiveness of sales personnel in utilizing various sales skills to engage customers, close sales, and maintain long-term relationships.

In the case of Aqua Dire Purified Mineral Water Factory, sales representatives are expected to demonstrate a broad set of competencies, including technical knowledge, interpersonal communication, and proficiency in digital sales technologies. However, there is a gap in the existing literature regarding the specific sales skills that most influence personal selling performance in the Ethiopian bottled water sector. While previous studies have explored sales skills and personal selling performance in broader contexts, such as the consumer goods and technology industries (e.g., Griffith et al., 2018; MacIntyre et al., 2021), few have specifically addressed the bottled water industry in developing economies like Ethiopia.

This study aims to fill this gap by examining the relationship between different sales skills and personal selling performance within the context of the bottled water industry in Dire Dawa City. Specifically, it investigates six key sales skills Technical Skills (TS), Interpersonal Skills (IS), Digital Sales Technology Skills (DST), Salesmanship Skills (SS), Marketing Skills (MS), and Sales Training Programs (STP) and assesses their impact on sales outcomes in the Aqua Dire Purified Mineral Water Factory. By doing so, the study offers valuable insights that can inform sales strategies and improve personal selling performance in the industry.

2. Literature Review

The relationship between sales skills and personal selling performance has been widely studied in different sectors, although limited research has focused specifically on the bottled water industry. According to Jobber and Lancaster (2015), effective personal selling is underpinned by several core competencies, including technical expertise, communication skills, and the ability to use sales tools. Technical skills, such as in-depth product knowledge, are essential for convincing customers of a product's value (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In the context of bottled water, sales representatives need to understand product specifications such as purity, filtration processes, and health benefits, as these are critical factors influencing customer decision-making (Kaufman, 2017).

Interpersonal skills are also crucial for building trust and rapport with customers, leading to stronger customer relationships and increased sales (Grewal et al., 2018). Research by Paparoidamis and Saren (2020) highlights the role of empathy, active listening, and problem-solving in achieving successful sales outcomes, particularly in industries with high customer interaction, such as bottled water.

In recent years, digital sales technology skills have gained significant importance due to the rise of e-commerce and digital marketing tools. According to Crittenden et al. (2019), the ability to leverage digital tools to engage customers and track sales metrics is now a key component of sales performance. In industries such as bottled water, where convenience and accessibility are highly valued, digital sales skills can improve customer outreach and create more efficient sales processes (Vasilenko et al., 2021).

Salesmanship skills, such as persuasion and negotiation, have traditionally been considered central to personal selling. However, recent studies suggest that these skills may not be as effective in certain industries where customers are less likely to be influenced by traditional sales tactics (Morgeson et al., 2015). In fact, some scholars have found that overly aggressive salesmanship can lead to customer dissatisfaction and attrition (Stone, 2020). The bottled water sector, characterized by low product differentiation, may require less emphasis on salesmanship and more focus on delivering value through technical and interpersonal skills.

Marketing skills, including the understanding of market segmentation and targeting, are typically seen as the domain of the marketing department. However, sales representatives with marketing acumen can better position their products to meet the needs of specific customer segments, thus enhancing their sales performance (Anderson et al., 2019). While marketing strategies are essential for driving demand in the bottled water industry, research indicates that sales performance is more directly influenced by the skills of individual sales personnel (Ahearne et al., 2017).

Lastly, sales training programs (STP) are an essential factor in improving sales performance by equipping salespeople with the necessary skills and knowledge. The effectiveness of sales training, however, can vary depending on how well it aligns with the specific needs of the industry (Marques et al., 2020). In the case of bottled water, a tailored training program that emphasizes technical, interpersonal, and digital sales skills could be more effective than generalized training programs.

In conclusion, while the literature provides a broad understanding of the skills that influence personal selling performance, it remains unclear which specific skills are most critical in the bottled water sector in developing countries like Ethiopia. This study seeks to address this gap by evaluating the impact of six key sales skills on personal selling performance in Aqua Dire Purified Mineral Water Factory.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive and explanatory research design to explore the influence of sales skills on personal selling performance. A quantitative research approach was employed to collect numerical data, enabling statistical analysis to determine the strength and direction of relationships between variables.

3.2.Population and Sample

The target population for this study includes sales representatives working at the Aqua Dire Purified Mineral Water Factory in Dire Dawa City. The total number of sales personnel at the factory is approximately 180. A sample size of 136 sales representatives was selected using a combination of stratified random sampling and simple random sampling methods. The stratified random sampling was employed to

ensure representation from different departments within the factory, while simple random sampling was used to select individuals from each stratum. The final sample was determined based on a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%.

$$n = \frac{NZ^2P(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + Z^2P(1-P)}$$

$$136 = \frac{212 * 1.96^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2(212-1) + 1.96^2 * P(1-0.5)}$$

3.3. Data Collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which was developed to measure the six sales skills (Technical Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Digital Sales Technology Skills, Salesmanship Skills, Marketing Skills, and Sales Training Programs) and the personal selling performance of the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions with Likert-type scales, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questions were designed to assess both the frequency of skill application and the perceived impact of each skill on sales performance.

3.4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Descriptive statistics, including mean, range, and standard deviation, were used to summarize the characteristics of the sample and the distribution of responses. Inferential statistical methods, including Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analysis, were employed to examine the relationships between sales skills (independent variables) and personal selling performance (dependent variable). Pearson's correlation was used to assess the strength and direction of the relationships, while multiple regression analysis, specifically Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression, was used to evaluate the impact of each sales skill on personal selling performance.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant research ethics committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation and confidentiality. Participants were assured that their responses would be used solely for academic purposes and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

4. Results and Discussions

The demographic analysis of the 102 respondents reveals important characteristics such as sex, age distribution, and educational level. In terms of sex, 74.5% of the respondents were male, and 25.5% were female. Regarding age distribution, the majority of respondents (40.2%) were between the ages of 31 and 40 years, followed by 27.5% who were 30 years or younger. Additionally, 20.6% of respondents were between 41 and 50 years old, and 11.8% were over 50 years of age. As for educational qualifications, the largest group (69.6%) held a first degree, while 21.6% had a college diploma, and 8.8% held a second degree (Master's). This demographic distribution suggests that the respondents had a strong educational background, providing confidence in the validity of their responses.

Table 1. Demographic Information

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Sex Group	Female	26	25.5
	Male	76	74.5
Age Distribution	<=30	28	27.5
	31-40	41	40.2
	41-50	21	20.6
	Above 50	12	11.8
Level of Education	Diploma	22	21.6
	First Degree	71	69.6
	Second Degree	9	8.8
Total		102	100

Source: Own Survey, 2024

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

The purpose of this descriptive statistical analysis is to assess how different sales skills influence personal selling performance among sales personnel at Aqua Dire Purified Mineral Water Factory in Dire Dawa City. Several core sales skills were identified based on previous research (Gomgom et al., 2024; Brei, 2018; Amor, 2019; Nils Høgevold et al., 2021), focusing on six competencies: Technical Skills (TS), Marketing Skills (MS), Interpersonal Skills (IS), Salesmanship Skills (SS), Sales Training Programs (STP), and Digital Sales Technology Skills (DST). Respondents rated these skills on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). The analysis calculates the mean and standard deviation for each skill, using composite scores to determine the level of agreement or disagreement among the respondents.

Technical Skills (TS)

Technical skills are crucial for salespeople, enabling them to understand complex products and use digital tools effectively. The respondents demonstrated strong agreement with the importance of technical skills, with a mean score of 3.82, indicating that technical knowledge plays a significant role in explaining product features and answering customer queries. The findings suggest that technical skills help salespeople build credibility, solve customer problems, and close deals effectively (Guenzi & Panzeri, 2015; Ulaga & Kohli, 2018).

Table 2. Technical Skills

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Strong understanding of technical aspects of the product	4.05	1.315
Technical knowledge helps explain product features	3.61	1.118
Confidence in handling customer technical queries	3.99	1.270
Technical skills contribute to closing sales	3.63	1.349
Overall Mean (TS)	**3.82**	**0.992**

Source: Own Survey, 2024

Marketing Skills (MS)

Marketing skills enable salespeople to identify market trends and target the right segments. With a mean score of 3.62, respondents agreed that marketing skills are vital for tailoring the sales approach, adapting to market changes, and enhancing sales efforts through research. This supports the idea that understanding customer needs and leveraging market insights are key to improving sales performance (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Table 3. Marketing Skills

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Ability to target the right market segments	3.89	1.342
Regular application of marketing strategies	3.74	1.357
Understanding market trends to adapt selling techniques	3.63	1.234
Using market research to tailor sales approach	3.24	1.228
Overall Mean (MS)	**3.62**	**0.977**

Source: Own Survey, 2024

Interpersonal Skills (IS)

Interpersonal skills, including communication and relationship-building, are fundamental for establishing trust with customers. Respondents had a moderate level of agreement, with an overall mean of 3.35. This suggests that while interpersonal skills positively impact sales performance, there may be opportunities for improvement in building rapport, handling objections, and managing conflicts effectively (Nils et al., 2021; Shannahan et al., 2015).

Table 4. Interpersonal Skills

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Ease in building rapport with customers	3.01	0.949
Communication skills help persuade customers	3.55	1.040
Skilled in resolving objections during sales	3.25	0.906
Interpersonal skills impact sales performance	3.61	1.091
Overall Mean (IS)	**3.35**	**0.645**

Source: Own Survey, 2024

Salesmanship Skills (SS)

Salesmanship skills, such as presenting product benefits and negotiating, play a critical role in sales performance. Respondents strongly agreed with the importance of these skills, with a mean of 3.63. The results indicate that salesmanship significantly impacts personal selling, helping salespeople build lasting customer relationships and successfully close sales (Weitz et al., 1986; Rapp et al., 2010).

Table 5. Salesmanship Skills

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Effective in presenting product benefits	3.77	0.953
Negotiation skills help achieve favorable outcomes	3.45	1.256
Confidence in closing sales deals	3.58	1.076
Salesmanship skills impact sales performance	3.72	0.979
Overall Mean (SS)	**3.63**	**0.797**

Source: Own Survey, 2024

Sales Training Programs (STP)

Sales training programs are essential for improving sales performance by equipping salespeople with necessary skills. The respondents strongly agreed with the value of training, with a mean score of 3.72. These programs help salespeople apply learned techniques, handle objections, and continuously improve their sales abilities (Ingram et al., 1997; Challagalla et al., 2000).

Table 6. Sales Training Programs

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Sales training has improved selling skills	3.48	1.225
Applying techniques learned in training	3.90	1.223
Training enhances confidence in handling objections	3.55	1.317
Ongoing training contributes to improvement	3.95	1.338
Overall Mean (STP)	**3.72**	**0.923**

Source: Own Survey, 2024

Digital Sales Technology Skills (DST)

Digital skills are increasingly important in modern sales environments, helping salespeople manage leads and engage with customers. The respondents rated these skills with a mean of 3.55, indicating agreement on their importance for improving sales performance and adapting to technology-driven markets (Marshall et al., 2012; Grewal et al., 2006).

Table 7. Digital Sales Technology Skills

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Proficiency in using digital tools	3.74	1.312
Digital tools help manage sales leads effectively	3.40	1.322
Using digital platforms to engage with customers	3.26	1.107
Ability to use digital technology affects outcomes	3.78	1.011
Overall Mean (DST)	**3.55**	**0.929**

Source: Own Survey, 2024

Performance of Personal Selling (PSP)

Personal selling performance is critical for driving sales and achieving company goals. Respondents expressed moderate agreement, with a mean score of 3.49. These results indicate that effective personal selling leads to consistent achievement of sales targets, better conversion rates, and significant contributions to the company's overall sales success (Ingram et al., 2022; Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Table 8. Performance of Personal Selling

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Sales skills help achieve targets consistently	3.16	0.992
Personal selling performance has improved over time	3.74	0.964
Competencies led to higher conversion rates	3.32	0.997
Personal selling contributes to company success	3.73	1.091
Overall Mean (PSP)	**3.49**	**0.717**

Source: Own Survey, 2024

4.3 Regression Analysis

The regression analysis conducted aims to determine how the predictor variables (Sales Skills) influence the outcome variable (Performance of Personal Selling) in the context of the bottled water industry, specifically focusing on Aqua Dire Purified Mineral Water Factory in Dire Dawa City. The predictor variables under consideration include various competencies such as Technical Skills (TS), Marketing Skills (MS), Interpersonal Skills (IS), Salesmanship Skills (SS), Sales Training Programs (STP), and Digital Sales Technology Skills (DST). The results of the regression analysis are presented with a focus on addressing the underlying assumptions through diagnostic

tests. As highlighted by Gujarati and Porter (2010), it is crucial to assess assumptions like homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, normality, and linearity before proceeding with the regression results, as violations of these assumptions can lead to biased or unreliable conclusions.

4.3. Test for Normality

One of the assumptions of multiple regression is that the residuals (the differences between the observed and predicted values) should follow a normal distribution. To check this assumption, a histogram of the residuals with a normality line was plotted. The distribution of the residuals appeared to be approximately normal, suggesting that this assumption holds true. (Refer to Appendix II for the histogram of normality.) Hence, the assumption of normality is satisfied for this study.

4.4. Checking for Linearity

Multiple linear regression assumes a linear relationship between the outcome variable and the predictor variables. This relationship was visually checked by plotting the residuals against the observed values (Y-values) using scatter plots. According to the guideline from Gujarati and Porter (2010), a linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables is required for the regression model to be valid. The scatter plots (see Appendix III) confirmed that there was indeed a linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Therefore, the assumption of linearity is satisfied in this study.

4.5. Test of Homogeneity of the Variance (Homoscedasticity)

The assumption of homoscedasticity states that the variance of the residuals should be constant across all levels of the independent variables. To test this, a scatter plot of the standardized residuals against the predicted values was examined. In the plot, the points appeared to be randomly and evenly distributed with no noticeable pattern or outliers, suggesting that the assumption of homoscedasticity holds true. (Refer to Appendix IV for the scatter plot). Therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variance is satisfied.

4.5.1. Test of Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity occurs when independent variables are highly correlated with each other, which can distort the results of regression analysis. This assumption was tested

by calculating the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance for each independent variable. According to Gujarati (2004), a VIF greater than 10 or a tolerance value less than 0.2 suggests the presence of multicollinearity. The results of the VIF and tolerance statistics, as shown in Table 12, indicate that all variables have a VIF less than 10 and a tolerance value above 0.2, confirming that there is no multicollinearity among the predictor variables. Hence, the assumption of no multicollinearity is satisfied.

Table 9. Performance of Personal Selling

Model Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Technical Skills [TS]	0.198	5.058
Marketing Skills [MS]	0.110	9.129
Interpersonal Skills [IS]	0.428	2.338
Salesmanship Skills [SS]	0.386	2.592
Sales Training Programs [STP]	0.176	5.686
Digital Sales Technology Skills [DST]	0.225	4.443

Source: (Own survey, 2024)

Test for Autocorrelation

Autocorrelation occurs when the error terms (residuals) of the model are correlated over time, violating the assumption that the residuals are independent. The Durbin-Watson test was used to check for autocorrelation. According to Hair et al. (2018), a Durbin-Watson statistic between 1 and 2 indicates no autocorrelation. The results from Table 13 show a Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.047, which falls within the acceptable range, indicating that there is no autocorrelation present in the regression model.

Table 10. Durbin-Watson

Model	Durbin-Watson
1	2.047

Source: (Own survey, 2024)

4.5.2. Model Summary of Sales Skills

The model summary of the regression equation indicates a strong relationship between Sales Skills and Performance of Personal Selling. The R^2 value of 0.836 suggests that 83.6% of the variation in the Performance of Personal Selling can be explained by the Sales Skills factors. The remaining 16.4% is unexplained by the model, indicating that other factors not considered in the study may also influence performance.

Table 11. Model summery

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.915	0.836	0.826	0.299	2.047

Source: (Own survey, 2024)

4.5.3. Regression One-Way ANOVA Analysis

The one-way ANOVA analysis tests the overall significance of the regression model. The F-statistic of 80.960 with a p-value < 0.05 indicates that the model is significant and provides a good fit to explain the dependent variable, Performance of Personal Selling.

Table 12: Model ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regressions	43.371	6	7.228	80.960	0.000
Residuals	8.482	95	0.089		
Total	51.853	101			

Source: (Own survey, 2024)

4.5.4. Regression Coefficient Analysis of Sales Skills

The regression coefficient analysis provides insight into the relationship between each predictor variable and the outcome variable. Significant positive coefficients were found for Technical Skills (β = 0.194), Interpersonal Skills (β = 0.752), and Digital Sales Technology Skills (β = 0.505), suggesting that these variables have a positive influence on Performance of Personal Selling. In contrast, Marketing Skills (β = -0.195) and Salesmanship Skills (β = -0.181) showed negative coefficients but were not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 13. Regression Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.308		1.809	0.074		
Technical Skills (TS)	0.140	0.194	2.080	0.040	0.198	5.058
Marketing Skills (MS)	-0.143	-0.195	-1.555	0.123	0.110	9.129
Interpersonal Skills (IS)	0.835	0.752	11.850	0.000	0.428	2.338
Salesmanship Skills (SS)	-0.163	-0.181	-2.705	0.008	0.386	2.592
Sales Training Programs (STP)	-0.116	-0.149	-1.510	0.134	0.176	5.686
Digital Sales Technology Skills (DST)	0.390	0.505	5.776	0.000	0.225	4.443

Source: (Own survey, 2024)

5. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study underscore the crucial role of Sales Skills in influencing the Performance of Personal Selling (PSP), specifically within the bottled water industry in Dire Dawa City. As observed in the regression analysis, the predictor variables collectively explained 83.6% of the variance in sales performance, which is a

significant contribution. This finding aligns with earlier research indicating that sales skills are a fundamental determinant of successful sales outcomes. For example, Interpersonal Skills emerged as the most impactful predictor, with a correlation coefficient of 0.839, signifying a strong relationship with PSP. This result is consistent with studies by Ahearne et al. (2005), who highlighted the importance of relationship-building skills in enhancing sales performance.

Additionally, the positive effects of Digital Sales Technology Skills and Technical Skills further reinforce the growing importance of modern sales techniques and technical expertise. These findings support the arguments made by Chien & Chen (2014), who suggested that the integration of digital tools into sales strategies significantly enhances sales performance by enabling better customer targeting and engagement. However, the limited impact of Salesmanship Skills and Sales Training Programs presents a nuanced view. While these competencies remain important, they were found to be less predictive of PSP, with weaker correlations in comparison to other sales skills. This could reflect the changing nature of the market, where digital skills and interpersonal connections may be more valued than traditional sales techniques. This aligns with Deeter-Schmelz et al. (2002), who pointed out that traditional sales skills might need to be adapted to meet modern consumer expectations and technological advancements.

5.1. Summary of Key Findings

The study aimed to explore the relationship between various Sales Skills and the Performance of Personal Selling (PSP) in the bottled water sector. The regression analysis confirmed that Sales Skills significantly predict sales performance, with an explained variance of 83.6%. Interpersonal Skills was found to have the strongest influence on performance, followed by Digital Sales Technology Skills and Technical Skills, which were also highly significant predictors. In contrast, Salesmanship Skills and Sales Training Programs were less significant in their contribution to PSP.

These findings are supported by prior research, such as Bamberger & Meshoulam (2000), which suggested that the ability to establish rapport and communicate effectively with clients is critical for achieving high sales performance. Furthermore, the role of digital sales tools as an important factor in sales success has been increasingly emphasized in studies like those by Grewal et al. (2017), who argued that

the effective use of technology helps salespeople meet the evolving demands of customers.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study provides strong evidence that the success of personal selling in the bottled water industry in Dire Dawa City is significantly influenced by Sales Skills, especially Interpersonal Skills, Digital Sales Technology Skills, and Technical Skills. These findings suggest that companies should invest in developing these competencies to enhance sales performance. The relatively weaker influence of Salesmanship Skills and Sales Training Programs implies that traditional sales training models may require updates to incorporate newer, more customer-oriented approaches and digital tools. This is consistent with the conclusions drawn by Leigh & Wise (2001), who emphasized the need for modern sales training programs to adapt to technological changes and evolving customer needs.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings, several practical recommendations can be made for Aqua Dire and similar companies:

- ✓ Enhance Interpersonal Skills: As interpersonal skills were the most significant predictor of sales performance, companies should focus on developing their sales teams' abilities to engage customers, build trust, and maintain long-term relationships. This could involve providing training in active listening, empathy, and customer-centric communication techniques.
- ✓ Invest in Digital Sales Technology: Given the strong positive effect of Digital Sales Technology Skills, companies should provide sales teams with comprehensive training on digital tools, such as CRM systems, data analytics, and online platforms. This would equip sales representatives with the tools they need to meet modern customer demands and stay competitive in the digital age.
- ✓ Revise Sales Training Programs: As Salesmanship Skills and Sales Training Programs were less predictive of PSP, traditional training approaches might need to be reevaluated. It is crucial to integrate digital literacy and customer relationship management into these programs, aligning with Schilling (2013), who highlighted the importance of continuous learning and adaptability in modern sales training.

7.1. Implications for Future Research

Future research can expand upon these findings in several ways. First, it would be valuable to explore the influence of Sales Skills across different industries to determine whether the relationships found in this study hold true in other sectors. Additionally, a longitudinal study could examine the long-term impact of developing various sales skills on Performance of Personal Selling (PSP), shedding light on how skill development influences sales over time. Moreover, cultural factors may play a significant role in shaping the effectiveness of specific sales skills. Future studies could explore how cultural and regional differences affect the importance of skills such as Interpersonal Skills or Sales Training Programs. This would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how sales performance can be optimized in different global contexts. Nesbit et al. (2009) suggested that regional consumer behavior might significantly influence the perceived importance of various sales competencies. In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of evolving sales strategies to prioritize Interpersonal, Digital Sales Technology, and Technical Skills in response to shifting market demands. Further research in this area will help refine sales models and ensure that sales teams remain effective in an increasingly digital and customer-driven marketplace.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is **no conflict of interest** regarding the publication of this article. The research was conducted independently, without any financial, institutional, or personal influences that could affect the objectivity, analysis, or interpretation of the findings.

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