

# Online Social Cleverness of the Salesmen and Its Impact on Building the Relationship with Customers \_Empirical Study

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*Abstract:* - This study aimed to explore the extent to which social cleverness impacts online relationship-building with customers through variables such as situational awareness, presence, Originality, clarity, and empathy among salesmen. The researcher analyzed the data and tested hypotheses using descriptive analysis to achieve the study's objectives, considering it the optimal analysis for this study. A representative sample of the study community was used, with the researcher distributing 450 surveys using Google Forms. Approximately 113 surveys, or 25% of the total surveys, were not returned, while 337 valid surveys, or 75%, were included in the actual analysis. The results indicate that there is statistically significant awareness regarding the impact on customer relationship building, with situational awareness contributing to approximately 19.8% of customer relationship building. Presence, Originality, clarity, and empathy also have a significant impact on building customer relationships. Empathy has the greatest contribution to building relationships with customers. The study recommends enhancing empathy online to achieve customer relationship building and focusing on the other variables that have an impact.

*Key-Words:* - Online social cleverness, Building the Relationship, situational awareness, presence, Originality, clarity, empathy.

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## 1 Introduction

Social intelligence is one of the personal dimensions and cognitive abilities that help the individual positively adapt to his social environment. Thus, through his understanding of himself and his abilities, as well as understanding others, however, social intelligence relies on many factors, such as individual cognitive abilities, besides the various developmental processes. Therefore, social intelligence levels vary from one individual to another, [1]. Hence, what distinguishes the human being from the rest of living beings is conscious as well as purposeful behavior, whereas he possesses characteristics and capabilities that make him a unique and distinguished being. Additionally, his social behavior is almost one of his most distinctive and unique characteristics, [2], [3].

Eventually, social intelligence is considered one of the significant aspects of the salesman's personality since it is related to the individual's ability to deal with others, in addition to his formation of successful and profitable social

relationships. As a consequence, the importance of studying social intelligence is evident in that it represents a kind of necessary cognitive ability for social interaction between the individual and others, [4].

Also, its importance can be seen accompanying the emergence of relationship management with customers through a one-to-one rule, which was clearly spread after the emergence of technology. [5], and so, with the rapid spread of technological changes, organizations use them accordingly to manage their relationships with customers. Taking into consideration that salesmen are among the most prominent elements of electronic marketing communications, they have a direct impact. Eventually, the social intelligence of the salesmen results in having a positive relationship with customers.

Therefore, due to the need for operating organizations in Jordan to have highly professional salesmen, whether in their performance or direct contact with customers, that means salesmen whose

social intelligence is low will not meet the organization's expectations. This affects the performance of salesmen, especially after the corona-virus pandemic, where organizations dealt with the Internet as a method of selling. Also, direct selling, namely, selling through salesmen, has become more common, and accordingly, it creates a challenge in Jordanian society since dealing with the Internet is a new matter. Consequently, this study was an effort to address the following key issue: How does this affect online salesmen's social cleverness (situational awareness, presence, originality, clarity, and empathy) in building customer relationships?

## 2 Study Importance

### 2.1 Scientific Importance

The scientific significance of this study lies in focusing on the importance of social intelligence for online salesmen and its impact on building relationships with customers in operating organizations in Jordan. Also, this study will play a role in enriching libraries. Given that the variables used in the study are characterized by relative scarcity, and considered as a scientific reference for students in the field of e-marketing.

### 2.2 Practical Importance

The practical importance of this study is grounded on the positive aspects of social intelligence and the way it will affect the performance of online salesmen and their excellence in their work and dealings with customers. Which achieves organizations' competitiveness in the field of personal selling. Moreover, organizations that focus on social intelligence are more capable of achieving their goals. Alternatively, the study has a part in developing the sales process and building customer relationships, which contributes to the upcoming development of marketing strategies.

## 3 Study Objectives

In this study, we to achieve the following:

- Identify the impact of situational awareness of online salesmen in building customer relationships.
- Identify the impact of the presence of online salesmen in building customer relationships.
- Identify the impact of the originality of online salesmen in building customer relationships.

- Identify the impact of clarity of online salesmen in building customer relationships.
- Identify the impact of empathy of online salesmen in building customer relationships.

## 4 Theoretical Framework

The quick advancement of technology has led to a tremendous boom in e-commerce. An effective marketer needs to be aware of every little technological element. Social intelligence is a crucial application in e-commerce that strives to enhance online interactions between buyers and sellers, [6].

Customers on e-commerce sites are increasingly demanding social interaction against the backdrop of a significant digital shift. It enables them to communicate with the business in a manner similar to that of salespeople in actual stores

It can be said that when salesmen enjoy social intelligence, on the one hand, this means that they have the ability to interact with others, which, on the other hand, attracts them to cooperate with them. Further, social intelligence consists of a balanced mixture made up of customers' emotional needs and interests, both explicit and implicit, as well as acquiring a set of skills that enable salesmen to succeed in interacting with customers at all times and places. Therefore, social intelligence gives the salesmen an outstanding ability to communicate, understand, and deal with different situations very effectively. The image can be illustrated by imagining that the salesmen have a radar device that picks up signals and responds accurately and directly. Given that the measurement of intelligence is not limited to mental skills and abilities but rather extends to a combination of these and those, In other words, the power of observation and intelligence in dealing with various situations and interacting with others using the acquired experience and courtesy are all indispensable in achieving success on the professional and personal levels, [7], [8].

Furthermore, social intelligence consists of three components, which are as follows: a cognitive component, an analytical cognitive component, and a behavioral component (skills). In addition to the ability to identify your own cognitive motives, Moreover, the socially intelligent human is capable of producing suitable conduct in order to achieve the intended goals. [9], correspondingly, empathy is one of the social intelligence components, which reflects the desire to alleviate suffering and solve people's problems, and this is the main concern in online salesmen's work. In addition to that, empathy includes three basic elements: (a) perception and

discrimination, i.e., the capacity to notice, define, and classify emotions using relevant information; (b) perspective and turn-taking, that is, the ability to assume and experience another person's point of view; and (c) emotional response, that is, the ability to share the feelings of others, [10].

As a result, social intelligence is required for a successful life in society. The four components discussed before are social awareness, social information processing, and social desire. Meanwhile, the components of social intelligence are variously related to the study variables; these components are as follows: aggression, selflessness, and empathy. Whereas, the most prominent result is that the greater the social intelligence of people, the less aggression they have in dealing with others, and the increase in empathy and compassion in dealing with and helping others, [11], [12].

However, the study of [13] indicated that the skills of individuals, which include awareness of social situations and the social changes that control these situations, as well as their knowledge of personal communications and methods can help the person achieve his goals in dealing with others,

On the other hand, [14] people who have social intelligence are considered more developed, understanding, and flexible in their dealings with society. Thus, they usually enjoy a more satisfying life due to their easy integration into new social structures, as well as their ability to resist and endure different circumstances.

Additionally, the organizations' workers have an impact on social intelligence; in view of this, they find that cognitive empathy, social skills, situational awareness, and responsiveness to circumstances are important to their success. Indeed, these social intelligence factors have direct and indirect effects on strategic participation, [15].

Even though intelligence depends on building customer relationships on an essential component, which is presence, it is the way that affects groups or individuals and thus the self-image presented by the salesmen via the platforms, [7], [16]. Furthermore, the extent of originality, which expresses the extent of honesty and sincerity between the seller and the customer, as well as clarity as an essential component, serves as a measure for the purpose of expressing ideas and goals clearly, [7], [17], [18].

Moreover, social intelligence depends on memorizing names and faces; thus, its importance has been shown by many studies, [19]. Taking into account that marketers have many sources of information and analytical tools in order to put the notion of customized marketing into action, they can do it more effectively than previously.

Social media and Internet mobile device proliferation communications have generated big data about the consumer with regard to marketers' interest. At the same time, data collection and analysis technology has improved dramatically. Consequently, As a consequence, we gain insight into individual consumer preferences and the ability to execute individual marketing with unparalleled effectiveness, too. However, there are countervailing forces that attempt to minimize consumer data use, [19], [20], [21].

Nowadays, because of technological development, doing things has become easier since the used devices save all the customers' information and data, so it is easy to implement building customer relationships on a one-to-one basis. Especially due to the increase in the number of customers instead of their different geographical locations, the salesmen don't have to meet customers.

## 5 Research Hypotheses

The following main hypothesis underpins this study: The central hypothesis is:

H0: There is no statistically significant impact (at a level of significance  $0.05\alpha\leq$ ) of online social cleverness of salesmen on building customer relationships

Ho1: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of online situational awareness of salesmen on building customer relationships.

Ho2: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of the online presence of salesmen on building customer relationships.

Ho3: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of online Originality of salesmen on building customer relationships.

Ho4: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of online clarity of salesmen on building customer relationships.

Ho5: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of online empathy of salesmen in building customer relationships.

The study hypotheses were formulated using Figure 1 as a guide.

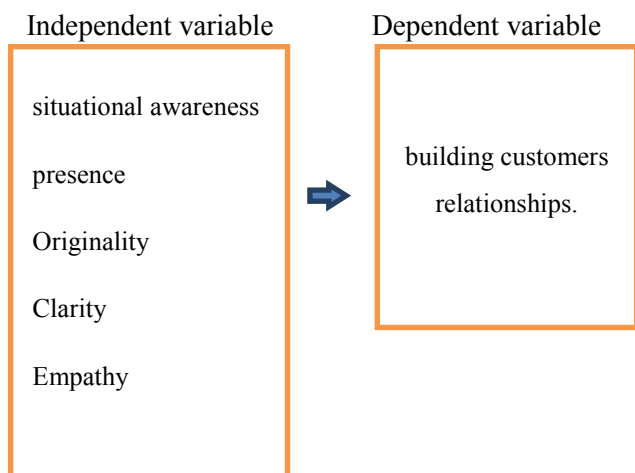


Fig. 1: Research model

After studying the literature on the issue, the research model was created based on the problem, hypotheses, and variables for the study of [11], [12], [13], [14], [18], [21], [22].

## 6 Methodology

### 6.1 Research Methodology

The researcher will analyze the data and test the hypotheses using the descriptive analysis technique to meet the study's aims. The researcher utilized descriptive analysis because it was seen to be an ideal way for gathering information that characterizes relationships as natural and depicts the world as it is.

### 6.2 Sample Size

The sample size is the major substance of any research, and it should be suitable and related to the population size. The sample is part of the study population and was chosen to correctly reflect the population, where it is used to investigate the characteristics of the study population that the researcher distributes. (450) questionnaires by using Google Forms. About (113) questionnaires were not returned, which represented (25%) of all questionnaires, (and 75%) of the questionnaires were valid for actual analysis, which composited (of 337) respondents sample size, it forms more than the sample size mentioned in Sekaran table.

### 6.3 Reliability

According to [23], questionnaire reliability refers to the level of agreement between measurements of the

attribute it is intended to measure. A highly reliable instrument produces consistent results in repeated measurements, while a less reliable one produces more variation. The reliability of a questionnaire is typically assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. For this coefficient, a positive value greater than 0.70 is generally considered acceptable. Table 1 displays the reliability of both independent and dependent variables. The table demonstrates that all variables in the study have Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.7.

Table 1. Internal Consistency of the Questionnaire (Cronbach's Alpha)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient
Situational Awareness	0.767
Presence	0.764
Originality	0.774
Clarity	0.803
Empathy	0.812
Building Customers Relationships	0.789

### 6.4 Test of Hypotheses

The researcher tested the hypotheses using the AMOS program, by Structure Equation Modelling (SEM), the following table shows the results. Figure 2 shows the res model.

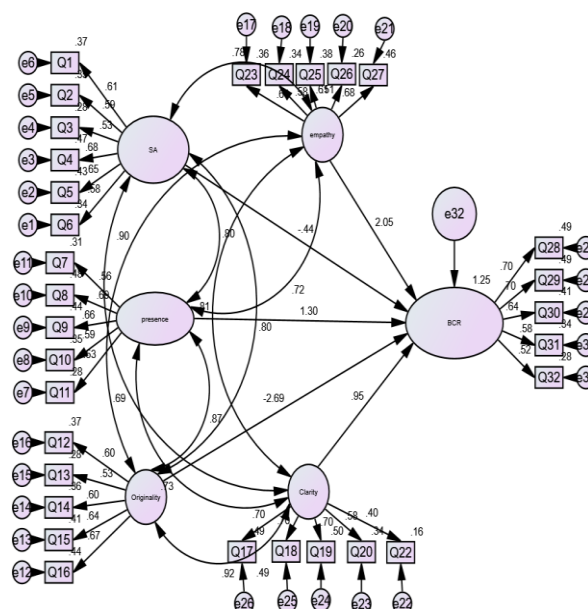


Fig. 2: Structure Equation Modelling

Table 2. Hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis	Standard Estimate	R2	Unstandardized Estimate	S.E	Critical ratio	P-Value
Ho1	0.446	0.198	0.263	0.062	3.448	0.000
Ho2	0.443	0.196	0.560	0.043	4.031	0.000
Ho3	0.303	0.092	0.310	0.071	2.967	0.000
Ho4	0.494	0.244	0.377	0.089	4.753	0.000
Ho5	0.548	0.300	0.429	0.036	5.636	0.000

Ho1: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of online situational awareness of salesmen on building customer relationships

Table 2 indicates that the determined critical ratio value (3.448) surpasses the t-table value (1.986), and the P-value of HO1 is lower than 0.05. This implies that the effect of online situational awareness among salespeople on customer relationship development is statistically significant. Moreover, Table 2 displays a favorable correlation (0.446) and reveals that situational awareness accounts for 19.8% of the impact on building customer relationships.

Ho2: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of the online presence of salesmen on building customer relationships.

Table 2 illustrates that the calculated critical ratio (CR) value (4.031) exceeds the t-table value (1.986), and the P-value of HO2 is less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant impact of the presence of salesmen on building customer relationships. Additionally, the table reveals a positive correlation of 0.443. Moreover, the presence of salesmen contributes to 19.6% of the building of customer relationships.

Ho3: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of the online originality of salesmen on building customer relationships.

The second table reveals that the critical ratio value obtained (2.967) exceeds the t-table value (1.986), while the P-value for HO3 is less than 0.05. These findings suggest a significant statistical influence of salesmen's originality on the development of customer relationships. Moreover, the table shows a positive correlation (0.303) and highlights that originality contributes to building customer relationships by 9.2%.

Ho4: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of the online clarity of salesmen on building customer relationships

Table 2 indicates that the calculated critical ratio value (4.753) exceeds the t-table value (1.986), and the P-value of HO4 is less than 0.05, suggesting a statistically significant impact of salesmen's clarity on the development of customer relationships. Furthermore, the table reveals a positive correlation of 0.494 and a clarity contribution of 24.4% towards the establishment of customer relationships.

Ho5: There is no statistically significant effect (at a significance level of  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of the online empathy of salesmen in building customer relationships.

Table 2 presents findings indicating a significant impact of salesmen's empathy on customer relationship building. This is demonstrated by the calculated critical ratio value (5.636) being higher than the t-table value (1.986) and the P-value of HO5 being less than 0.05. Additionally, the table shows a positive correlation (0.548) between empathy and building customer relationships. The contribution of empathy to building customer relationships is also reported to be 30%. Conclusion

The result indicates there is a statistically significant effect of situational awareness on building customer relationships, and situational awareness contributes about 19.8% to building customer relationships. Also, presence, Originality, clarity, and empathy have a significant effect on building customer relationships. Empathy has the highest contribution to building customer relationships.

## 7 Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, The study recommends the importance of enhancing empathy for its impact on building relationships with customers. It works on addressing customer interactions and understanding their online position. The study also recommends focusing on situational awareness to discuss ideas with customers that achieve teamwork spirit online. Additionally, the study recommends paying attention to online presence, answering customers' inquiries with full attention, and fulfilling promises made by salesmen online. It is also necessary to have multiple terminologies that suit online customers and are characterized by clarity.

## 8 Conclusion

Internet-based social intelligence is seen as crucial to consumer relationships. Sales-people now need to possess social intelligence through the Internet in order to establish rapport with clients and satisfy them through contemporary communication channels. Through the use of the Internet, sales marketing has started to use unorthodox approaches to interact with clients.

## 9 Future Studies

The social cleverness of internet salespeople and how it affects customers' decisions to buy. The contribution of internet salespeople's social cleverness to improving clients' perceptions in their minds. Comparing the impact of social cleverness for traditional salespeople and online salespeople.

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The authors equally contributed in the present research, at all stages from the formulation of the problem to the final findings and solution.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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