
The role of individual ambidexterity in supporting sales force performance based on a personal motivation perspective

Andre Setiawan Omarhadi*, Hatane Samuel
and Serli Wijaya

School of Business and Management,
Petra Christian University,
Surabaya, East Java, 60236, Indonesia
Email: D31230006@john.petra.ac.id
Email: samy@petra.ac.id
Email: serliw@petra.ac.id

*Corresponding author

Abstract: The disruption of post-COVID-19 consumer habits presents challenges for marketing managers, necessitating innovation in sales force management to remain competitive. *Individual ambidexterity* is a strategy employed in sales force management to encourage both explorative behaviour, which seeks new opportunities, and exploitative behaviour, which enhances operational efficiency. This research examines the influence of personal motivation on the development of individual ambidexterity behaviour, which, in turn, boosts sales force performance. A total of 223 salespeople participated in the survey conducted for this study. The participants work in retail stores across various sectors, including food and beverage, personal care, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals in East Java, Indonesia. The research results indicate that personal motivation directly impacts the formation of individual ambidexterity behaviour. Furthermore, individual ambidexterity behaviour positively affects sales force performance. The study also reveals that individual ambidexterity behaviour mediates the relationship between personal motivation and sales force performance.

Keywords: personal motivation; exploitation; exploration; sales force performance; Indonesia.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Omarhadi, A.S., Samuel, H. and Wijaya, S. (2025) 'The role of individual ambidexterity in supporting sales force performance based on a personal motivation perspective', *Int. J. Agile Systems and Management*, Vol. 18, Nos. 3/4, pp.390–404.

Biographical notes: Andre Setiawan Omarhadi is a Doctorate candidate in the School of Business and Management at Petra Christian University. He also responsible as the East Java Marketing Manager of PT, Nutrifood Indonesia. His research field are organisational development, leadership, and marketing management.

Hatane Samuel is a Marketing and Consumer Behaviour Professor at the School of Business Management at Petra Christian University. He majors in consumer behaviour, organisational culture, knowledge management, education, and sustainability.

Serli Wijaya is an Associate Professor at the Master's Program in Management, School of Business and Management, Petra Christian University and currently serves as the Head of the Program. She has extensive research experience, focusing on tourism and hospitality marketing, tourist behaviour and special interest tourism in Indonesia.

This paper is a revised and expanded version of a paper entitled 'The effect of personal motivation on sales force performance in retail stores, with individual ambidexterity as a mediating variable' presented at *Petra International Business and Accounting Conference (PIBACC)*, Surabaya, 21 November, 2023.

1 Introduction

In the increasingly fierce competition of the business world, promotional strategies are a crucial factor in determining the success and continuity of businesses (Kotler et al., 2022). The personal selling strategy is a frequently employed promotional method in the corporate realm (Kotler and Keller, 2016). Many organisations use this approach by deploying a sales force in various retail stores to enhance the sales of their goods (Alexandrescu and Milandru, 2018). In Indonesia, the retail industry is an important contributor to driving household consumption growth. This research leads to increased sales force productivity in retail stores. Therefore, this research is expected to support SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth (Badan Pusat Statistik Republik Indonesia, 2023).

Many businesses are beginning to doubt the efficacy of deploying sales force personal selling tactics considering the global COVID-19 outbreak. The COVID-19 epidemic, which commenced in Indonesia in early March 2020, has prompted many to embrace a stay-at-home lifestyle (Yuswohady, 2021). The rise of this trend has led to a shift in consumers' preferences for online shopping. This change in shopping methods undoubtedly has the potential to decrease the number of in-person visitors to retail businesses (Yuswohady, 2021).

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many companies have reduced the number of sales force personnel in stores as a cost-cutting strategy. However, abandoning this strategy also has the potential to increase unemployment rates, which could negatively impact the national economy (Triatmojo, 2021). Additionally, the personal selling technique offers organisations the advantage of establishing direct connections with customers (Kotler et al., 2022). This paradox prompts firm management to cultivate agility in learning. Enhancing firm management's understanding of the various factors that can improve sales force performance is crucial to providing optimal solutions for increasing the success rate of the sales force deployed in retail outlets (Bouzari and Karatepe, 2018).

To find a solution, Ghoshal and Bartlett (1994) introduced the concept of ambidexterity, which is believed to improve both organisational and individual performance. While a vast array of earlier research focused on organisational ambidexterity, recent studies have shifted the focus to the granular level of employees within organisations (Schnellbacher and Heidenreich, 2020). Individual ambidexterity is

the combination of explorative and exploitative abilities in an individual (O'Reilly and Tushman, 2008). Exploration often involves seeking variations in existing routines that may lead to the creation of innovations. However, explorative behaviour cannot stand alone and must be balanced by exploitative behaviour. In contrast to exploration, exploitation is often associated with seeking improvements and enhancements to existing services, where the nature of the change is generally incremental and aimed at the same consumers or markets (Papachroni and Loizos, 2020).

To foster individual ambidexterity and support sales force performance, companies need to develop a management system that encourages the creation of individual ambidexterity in each sales representative (Papachroni and Loizos, 2020). Research indicates that individual ambidexterity has various beneficial outcomes, including enhanced customer satisfaction and improved sales performance (Caniëls and Veld, 2016). Although interest in individual ambidexterity is burgeoning, further organisational-level research is needed to understand how ambidextrous capabilities can be cultivated (Panagopoulos et al., 2019). One factor that supports the development of ambidextrous behaviour is the personal motivation of the sales force to fulfil their responsibilities (Luu et al., 2018). Sales force motivation is acknowledged as a significant driver of sales output, directly influencing overall profitability in the long term (Herrera et al., 2024). Each member of the organisation can develop a higher level of explorative and exploitative behaviour in serving customers when they are highly motivated to carry out their responsibilities (Caniëls and Veld, 2016). Organisation members with high motivation tend to align their behaviour with the goals and interests of the organisation (Luu et al., 2018).

To provide the best solution for company management regarding the implementation of sales force placement strategies in retail stores, this research will delve deeper into the influence of personal motivation in fostering individual ambidexterity among the sales force to support increased sales performance (Cheung and Florea, 2009). In fact, several studies discuss the application of individual ambidexterity in various fields, such as civil servants (Luu et al., 2018), health services (Malik et al., 2017), and software technology (Lindskog and Magnusson, 2021). However, the author found a research gap in that no study has been found regarding creating individual ambidexterity in the context of sales force management in retail stores in new normal conditions, especially by utilising personal motivation as an independent variable. The new normal era, which emerged because of the global COVID-19 pandemic, demands changes in how the sales force is managed in retail stores (Yuswohady, 2021).

The shift in consumer habits towards online shopping presents a challenge for the sales force working in offline retail stores to develop individual ambidexterity behaviour that balances exploration and exploitation (Panagopoulos et al., 2019). This research aims to identify the influence of personal motivation on sales force performance through the mediating influence of exploitation and exploration behaviour. Through this research, it is hoped that the results will provide additional knowledge regarding various sales force management practices needed to encourage the creation of individual ambidexterity behaviour in the sales force. This, in turn, should offer management recommendations for more effective and efficient sales force management in this new normal era.

2 Literature review

2.1 Self-determination theory as the grand theory

One important component of effective sales force management is understanding how to improve performance through various influential antecedents. The quality of sales force performance can be managed by improving their overall well-being, motivation, and engagement in work (Gagné et al., 2014; Kuvaas et al., 2017). One theory related to efforts to improve employee performance is self-determination theory. Ryan and Deci (2019) defined self-determination theory as a scientifically supported framework for effectively motivating employees. According to this theory, humans have three psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These needs are essential for creating optimal motivation, well-being, and work behaviour (Deci and Ryan, 2014). Self-determination theory provides substantial guidance for company management on motivating their employees. These three basic psychological needs describe environmental dimensions that facilitate positive motivational outcomes (Baard et al., 2004).

In this research, the performance activities of the sales force can be divided into two types: exploitation and exploration behaviour. Lindskog and Magnusson (2021) stated that exploitation involves processes such as production, efficiency, selection, implementation, refinement, and execution. Meanwhile, exploration involves searching, diversification, risk-taking, experimentation, flexibility, discovery, and innovation. The balance between these two contradictory behaviours is known as individual ambidexterity. Raisch et al. (2009) stated that individual ambidexterity is an important component needed to achieve increased performance by simultaneously exploiting existing resources and exploring new opportunities. To create individual ambidexterity behaviour, it is necessary to satisfy the basic psychological needs of the sales force to encourage motivation and commitment to their job duties and responsibilities (Van den Broeck et al., 2016).

One factor that supports the creation of individual ambidexterity behaviour is the sales force's motivation to carry out their responsibilities. Each organisation member can develop a higher level of explorative and exploitative behaviour in serving customers when they have high motivation to carry out their responsibilities. Organisation members with high motivation will align their behaviour with the goals and interests of the organisation (Luu et al., 2018). Drawing on these theories, this research will analyse the relationship between personal motivation and the formation of individual ambidexterity, which is expected to enhance sales force performance.

2.2 Relationship between personal motivation and individual ambidexterity

According to Van den Broeck et al. (2016), meeting the fundamental requirements of the sales force is crucial for establishing a competitive advantage within an organisation because it fosters personal motivation to fulfil job obligations. Oren et al. (2013) defined personal motivation as a form of inner strength that encourages an individual to put forth effort in carrying out work. Multiple studies indicate that motivated employees can serve as catalysts for marketers to obtain, utilise, and disseminate explicit knowledge regarding customers, products, and services, and marketplaces to fulfil customer expectations. According to Noe et al. (2010), high motivation encourages employees' willingness to

acquire new knowledge and learn in the workplace. Lee et al. (2016) also noted that motivated employees can help companies create organisational value.

Every company expects the sales force to be highly motivated to provide customer service in alignment with organisational goals. One approach to achieving good performance is the concept of individual ambidexterity, where the sales force can develop higher levels of explorative and exploitative behaviour in serving customers. The ambidextrous behaviour of the sales force, balancing exploitative and explorative behaviour, requires high motivation from within the sales force (Jasmand et al., 2012). Sales personnel with high service motivation tend to appreciate ambidextrous behaviour that aligns with current situations and needs. By applying ambidexterity, each sales force member can seek new solutions to improve current services or experiment with new forms of public service, thereby increasing customer satisfaction. Sales forces with high service motivation will tend to orient their behaviour toward the organisation's and society's interests (Luu et al., 2018). Based on the relationship between research variables, the research hypothesis is prepared as follows:

H₁: Personal motivation influences the formation of sales force exploitative behaviour.

H₂: Personal motivation influences the formation of sales force explorative behaviour.

2.3 Relationship between individual ambidexterity and sales force performance

Salesforce ambidexterity requires attention because it describes a person's ability to show flexibility in two conflicting dimensions: exploration, which involves experimenting with new ideas, and exploitation, which involves utilisation and improvement (Nasution et al., 2023). Newell (2015) stated that in exploitation, the sales force accesses available knowledge to optimise performance. Examples of exploitative behaviour in the context of the sales force include increasing understanding of products and operational systems, as well as improving sales presentation skills (Locander et al., 2014). Meanwhile, during exploration, the sales force accesses new knowledge to produce innovative outcomes. Examples of exploratory behaviour in this context include exploring customer needs and gathering input to generate ideas for future company improvements.

Gibson and Birkinshaw (2004) stated that a sales force with ambidextrous abilities is better equipped to survive in dynamic environmental conditions. Similarly, Sok et al. (2022) noted that when a sales force engages in ambidextrous behaviour, they can add additional value to the buyer-seller exchange process. Ambidexterity has long been viewed as an essential driver of long-term performance, leading to organisational survival (Raisch and Birkinshaw, 2008). Based on the description of the relationship between these variables, the following research hypotheses are prepared as follows:

H₃: Exploitative behaviour influences sales force performance

H₄: Explorative behaviour influences sales force performance

Furthermore, this research model also suggests a mediating influence between variables, as indicated by the following hypotheses:

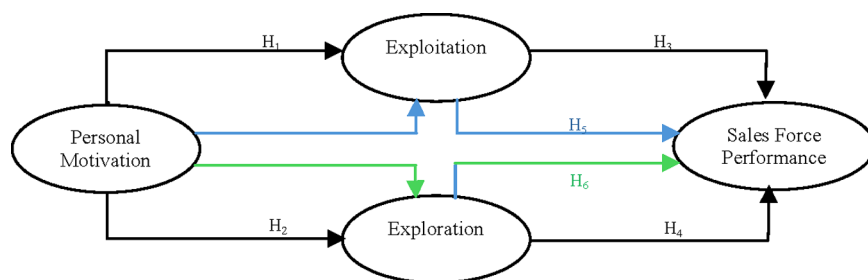
H₅: Exploitative behaviour mediates the relationship between personal motivation and sales force performance.

H₆: Explorative behaviour mediates the relationship between personal motivation and sales force performance.

2.4 Research model

Based on the relationship between variables in this research, Figure 1 displays the framework of the model in this research:

Figure 1 Research model (see online version for colours)



3 Methods

The type of research conducted in this study is explanatory quantitative research. This research aims to study causal relationships between variables by testing hypotheses determined through the analysis of numerical data using statistical techniques. The population for this research consists of sales force members working at retail stores in East Java. Hair et al. (2006) stated that the number of samples needed in a study is five times the number of variable indicators. This research itself has 21 indicators. Therefore, the minimum sample size determined in this study was 105 people.

A non-probability sampling method was employed, specifically using a purposive sampling technique. The reason we chose this sampling technique is because this research needs salespeople with predetermined criteria as respondents. The samples were selected based on predetermined criteria, which included active sales force members currently residing in the East Java region and working in the sales promotions sector for foods and beverages, home care, or personal care products in retail stores. This specific population was chosen as a sample because active sales force members who work in these fields are believed to be able to provide answers to relevant research questions by the new normal conditions. This research was carried out in post-pandemic conditions, where there were changes in the retail industry. Those salespeople are impacted so much that it's relevant to answer the question.

The primary data source in this research comes from an online questionnaire distributed to research respondents using Google Forms. Through the distributed questionnaires, each respondent was asked to provide numerical responses on a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for the variables of personal motivation, exploitation, exploration, and sales force performance. The questionnaire was given to 231 respondents, and as many as 223 respondents had filled out the research questionnaire completely and met the predetermined respondent criteria.

The obtained data was processed using SEM-PLS in two stages:

- 1 measurement fit, which aims to ensure measurement validity and reliability
- 2 structural fit, which aims to test hypotheses on structural models (Hair et al., 2017).

4 Results

4.1 Respondent profile

A total of 223 respondents participated in the survey and were confirmed to fall within the predetermined respondent criteria. Table 1 displays the respondent profile of this research:

Table 1 Respondent profile

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Gender	Male	26	11.7
	Female	197	88.3
Age	19–22 years old	15	6.7
	22–39 years old	202	90.6
	>39 years old	6	2.7
Education	Senior High School	177	79.4
	Diploma	2	0.9
	Bachelor's degree	44	19.7
Family status	Not Married	53	23.8
	Married with no children	32	14.3
	Married with children	138	61.9
Business field	Food and Beverages	169	75.8
	Personal Care	25	11.2
	Cosmetics	21	9.4
	Pharmacy	6	2.7
	Others	2	0.8
Length of work	<1 year	19	8.5
	1–3 years	68	30.5
	3–5 years	46	20.6
	>5 years	90	40.4

4.2 Descriptive analysis

Based on respondents' answers to each indicator question, this study calculated the average value of each indicator and variable. Next, the mean value obtained was used to determine the response category for each indicator and variable. Based on the mean values obtained in this study, most indicator mean values fall within the 'strongly agree' category, with the remainder falling within the 'agree' category. Furthermore, based on

the calculation of the Coefficient of Variation value, all indicators have a Coefficient of Variation value of less than 33%, indicating that the data results obtained fall within the homogeneous category (Karpov and Potapova, 2021). Table 2 displays the descriptive analysis results of the research indicators:

Table 2 Descriptive statistics results

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>CoV</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>CoV</i>
PMTV1	4.43	0.74	16.80%	EXL1	4.59	0.57	12.40%
PMTV2	4.15	0.8	19.30%	EXL2	4.59	0.57	12.40%
PMTV3	4.51	0.64	14.10%	EXL3	4.53	0.58	12.70%
PMTV4	4.24	0.74	17.50%	EXL4	4.5	0.58	12.80%
PMTV5	4.22	0.76	18.00%	EXL5	4.51	0.59	13.10%
Average	4.31	0.74	17.10%	Average	4.54	0.58	12.70%
EXT1	4.21	0.73	17.40%	SFP1	4.41	0.59	13.40%
EXT2	4.43	0.59	13.30%	SFP2	4.37	0.63	14.40%
EXT3	4.4	0.59	13.40%	SFP3	4.42	0.62	13.90%
EXT4	4.45	0.57	12.70%	SFP4	4.4	0.58	13.10%
EXT5	4.33	0.68	15.60%	SFP5	4.3	0.72	16.90%
Average	4.37	0.63	14.50%	SFP6	4.21	0.71	16.80%
				Average	4.38	0.63	14.30%

4.3 Outer model testing

In this research, model testing was carried out through discriminant validity and composite reliability testing (Hair et al., 2017). Discriminant validity testing is the result of calculating the Fornell Larcker Criterion values and cross-loading of the variables in this study:

Table 3 Fornell Larcker criterion

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Exploitation</i>	<i>Exploration</i>	<i>Personal motivation</i>	<i>Sales force performance</i>
Exploitation	0.844			
Exploration	0.752	0.874		
Personal motivation	0.715	0.724	0.804	
Sales force performance	0.743	0.816	0.730	0.863

Table 3 shows that all indicators have a higher correlation with their variables compared to other research variables. Thus, all variables in this study have met the Fornell-Larcker Criterion value criteria (Hair et al., 2017). Furthermore, Table 4 shows that all empirical indicators that make up each variable in this study also have higher loading values than the cross-loading values of other variables. Thus, it can be said that all variables in this study have met the discriminant validity standards (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 4 Cross-loadings

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>Exploitation</i>	<i>Exploration</i>	<i>Personal motivation</i>	<i>Sales force performance</i>
EXL1	New customer finding	0.662	0.876	0.572	0.69
EXL2	New product introduction	0.658	0.855	0.587	0.662
EXL3	New service initiatives	0.654	0.908	0.638	0.705
EXL4	Adaptability skill	0.633	0.849	0.669	0.732
EXL5	New knowledge learning	0.678	0.883	0.687	0.768
EXT1	Knowledge accumulation	0.722	0.459	0.492	0.525
EXT2	Operational excellence	0.875	0.721	0.664	0.683
EXT3	Sop compliance	0.897	0.658	0.657	0.666
EXT4	Focus on KPI	0.877	0.701	0.627	0.638
EXT5	Existing knowledge usage	0.84	0.604	0.558	0.613
PMTV1	Comfort at Work	0.426	0.466	0.712	0.471
PMTV2	Company representativeness	0.516	0.506	0.781	0.582
PMTV3	Desire to be the best	0.643	0.721	0.825	0.696
PMTV4	Readiness to do everything	0.639	0.587	0.84	0.594
PMTV5	Extra mile spirit	0.606	0.586	0.852	0.561
SFP1	Product knowledge skill	0.696	0.757	0.626	0.865
SFP2	Promotion skill	0.68	0.724	0.645	0.903
SFP3	Customer relationship	0.654	0.744	0.633	0.884
SFP4	Probing customer needs	0.657	0.768	0.64	0.899
SFP5	Kpi achievement	0.567	0.599	0.596	0.794
SFP6	Providing feedback skill	0.583	0.612	0.649	0.83

The next stage in testing the model is composite reliability testing, which is used to evaluate the internal consistency and reliability of the construct. The following are the results of calculating the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values in this research:

As seen in Table 5, all variables in this study have a composite reliability value of more than 0.7, which is very satisfactory. Apart from that, all variables in this study also had Cronbach's alpha values exceeding the minimum standard of 0.7. Therefore, it can be said that all variables in this study are in the reliable category (Sarstedt et al., 2017).

Table 5 Reliability test

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Composite reliability</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>
Exploitation	0.925	0.898
Exploration	0.942	0.923
Personal motivation	0.901	0.863
Sales force performance	0.946	0.931

4.4 Inner model testing

The inner model testing begins with determining the coefficient of determination (R^2) and cross-validated redundancy (Q^2). The following are the results of calculating the coefficient of determination (R^2) and cross-validated redundancy (Q^2) values in this study.

Table 6 indicates that the coefficient of determination (R^2) values for the exploitation, exploration, personal motivation, and sales force performance variables range between 0.50 and 0.75, suggesting that the prediction accuracy falls within the medium category (Hair et al., 2017). Furthermore, in calculating the cross-validated redundancy (Q^2) value, it was found that the Q^2 values for the exploitation, exploration, personal motivation, and sales force performance variables exceeded the minimum Q^2 value of 0. This outcome demonstrates that the relevance of the model's prediction paths across all constructs in this research is acceptable (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 6 Coefficient of determination (R^2) and cross-validated redundancy (Q^2)

Variable	Q Square	R Square
Exploitation	0.360	0.511
Exploration	0.394	0.524
Personal motivation		
Sales force performance	0.518	0.705

4.5 Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using non-parametric bootstrapping techniques. This method involves generating multiple subsamples from the original data and estimating model parameters from each subsample (Hair et al., 2017). A total of 5000 bootstrapping samples were utilised, resulting in 5000 PLS path model estimates. This bootstrapping approach enables the statistical testing of research hypotheses, specifically employing the t-test. At a significance level of 5%, if the calculated t-value exceeds 1.96 (from the t-table), a significant relationship between the related constructs is indicated. Additionally, the p-value is employed to determine whether a hypothesis is accepted or rejected. At a significance level of 5%, a p-value below 0.05 indicates a significant relationship between constructs, leading to the acceptance of the hypothesis (Hair et al., 2017).

In this research, the relationship between variables is not only direct but also involves an indirect relationship, suggesting the mediating role of certain variables. Table 7 displays the results of the direct influence hypothesis test calculation:

Table 7 Direct influence test

Path model	Original sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Result
PM → EXT	0.715	17.504	0.000	H1 accepted
PM → EXL	0.724	21.274	0.000	H2 accepted
EXT → SFP	0.298	4.029	0.000	H3 accepted
EXL → SFP	0.592	8.299	0.000	H4 accepted

Meanwhile, Table 8 displays the results of the calculation of the mediation test:

Table 8 Indirect (Mediation) test

<i>Path model</i>	<i>Path coefficient (Indirect effect)</i>	<i>Path coefficient (Total effect)</i>	<i>T Statistics</i>	<i>P Values</i>	<i>VAF</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Mediation effect</i>
PM → EXT → SFP	0.213	0.642	3.619	0.000	33%	H5 accepted	Full mediation
PM → EXL → SFP	0.429	0.642	7.533	0.000	67%	H6 accepted	Full mediation

The results of the hypothesis testing in this research indicated that all research hypotheses were accepted. These findings suggest that the personal motivation variable significantly influences the exploitation and exploration variables. Additionally, both the exploitation and exploration variables significantly affect sales force performance. Furthermore, this research reveals a mediation effect from the exploitation and exploration variables on the relationship between the personal motivation variable and sales force performance.

5 Discussions

This research aims to examine the effect of personal motivation on sales force performance, with exploitation and exploration behaviour serving as mediating variables. The researcher employed an explanatory research design with a quantitative approach to delve into the original narratives and meanings associated with the aforementioned concepts and explore the findings. Through this process, the research offers theoretical contributions and practical implications, which will be discussed further.

5.1 Theoretical contribution

This research underscores the significance of applying self-determination theory to motivate employees to exert greater effort in their work (Ryan and Deci, 2019). It demonstrates that personal motivation directly influences individual ambidexterity behaviour and indirectly impacts sales force performance. Additionally, the study delves into the implications of social exchange theory, which posits that a long-term relationship between management and employees involves the exchange of economic and socio-emotional resources (Rupp and Cropanzano, 2022). The findings suggest that integrating social exchange theory with self-determination theory can effectively enhance employees' work engagement.

Furthermore, the research highlights the influence of individual ambidexterity behaviour, encompassing exploitation and exploration behaviour, on sales force performance. This aligns with Holmqvist's assertion that both exploitation and exploration behaviour are essential for supporting sales force effectiveness (Holmqvist, 2004). Despite both variables influencing sales force performance, the path coefficient value of the exploration variable, however, surpasses that of the exploitation variable. This suggests that, amidst the current 'new normal' conditions characterised by rapid technological advancements, shifting consumer preferences, and heightened expectations, exploration behaviour holds greater sway over sales performance compared to

exploitation behaviour. The evolving landscape has propelled changes in customer desires, leading to increased demands and expectations, necessitating a proactive response from sales teams (Yuswohady, 2021). The challenges posed by these changes have prompted a shift towards exploratory behaviour within the sales force. In this context, exploration becomes paramount for sales personnel to effectively navigate the evolving market dynamics and enhance sales force performance. As such, embracing exploration behaviour emerges as a critical strategy for adapting to the multifaceted challenges of the new normal era and driving improvements in sales force effectiveness.

5.2 Practical implication

This study highlights the crucial significance of personal drive in propelling sales team effectiveness. To cultivate personal motivation among sales personnel, effective leadership within company management is essential, which entails fostering interpersonal relationships between management and sales teams (Baard et al., 2004). Our first recommendation for practical implication is a mentoring program. Interpersonal bonds are typically forged through regular interaction between management and sales personnel, with mentoring programs serving as a valuable mechanism for nurturing these relationships. Mentoring programs can be implemented by companies to provide guidance and support for sales personnel, facilitating their ongoing development under the mentorship of experienced individuals. It is imperative for companies to carefully select mentors based on their extensive experience in sales force management. Optimal mentorship entails pairing sales personnel with seasoned professionals, such as senior sales personnel, who possess a deep understanding of sales force dynamics (Noe et al., 2017). By leveraging the expertise of seasoned mentors, companies can effectively empower their sales force to achieve peak performance and drive organisational success.

The results of this research demonstrate that exploration behaviour has a greater influence on sales force performance in this new normal condition. Therefore, companies need to encourage various exploratory behaviour among sales personnel to address the challenges of change in these new conditions. Our second recommendation is a formal education program. However, many companies still prioritise cultivating exploitative behaviour in their formal education programs, focusing on areas such as product knowledge and display management. Therefore, every company must shift its focus toward formal education programs that foster various exploratory behaviour, such as programs aimed at optimising digital marketing (Kotler et al., 2022). Materials for such programs, which promote the development of exploratory behaviour, can be developed by sales force management through internal collaboration with other divisions and by involving external parties such as consultants or influencers with expertise in the digital marketing field (Noe et al., 2017).

As part of their exploration efforts, our third recommendation for practical implication is a new service innovation aimed at providing added value for consumer satisfaction (Kotler et al., 2022). One example of a new service particularly suitable for this new normal era is home delivery. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a shift in consumer shopping habits towards online platforms due to their ease and practicality (Yuswohady, 2021). Implementing a home delivery service can undoubtedly be considered one of the exploratory behaviour undertaken by companies to enhance consumer satisfaction in this new normal era.

6 Limitation and future research

This research concludes that personal motivation has a direct positive effect on the formation of both exploitative and explorative behaviour. Additionally, the study demonstrates that exploitative and explorative behaviour directly influences sales force performance and serves as a mediator in the relationship between personal motivation and sales force performance.

However, this research has limitations in that it only considers the antecedents that encourage increased sales performance in terms of motivation, without considering various other factors, such as the sales force's work environment, which could support their performance. This highlights the need for future research to explore various factors in the work environment that contribute to the sales force's performance in retail stores. Understanding these external factors in the work environment that support sales force performance would be valuable for management in determining where to invest in the sales force in specific stores.

Moreover, this research is limited to the context of sales forces in retail stores. While the findings shed light on the influence of personal motivation on the development of individual ambidextrous behaviour that enhances sales force performance, it is essential to validate these conclusions in other domains. Therefore, future research could explore the implications of these findings in the context of human resource management across different sectors. Additionally, this study did not focus on a specific company or brand context. Factors such as company reputation and brand value could potentially impact the research outcomes. Hence, it would be beneficial for future studies to examine the findings within the context of specific brands to provide further insights.

References

- Alexandrescu, M.B. and Milandru, M. (2018) 'Promotion as a form of communication of the marketing strategy', *Land Forces Academy Review*, Vol. 23, pp.268–274.
- Baard, P.P., Deci, E.L. and Ryan, R.M. (2004) 'Intrinsic need satisfaction: a motivational basis of performance and well-being in two work settings', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Vol. 34, No. 10, pp.2045–2068.
- Badan Pusat Statistik Republik Indonesia (2023) *Berita Resmi Statistik 7 Agustus 2023*, https://www.bps.go.id/website/materi_ind/materiBrsInd-20230807142957.pdf
- Bouzari, M. and Karatepe, O. (2018) 'Antecedents and outcomes of job insecurity among salespeople', *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp.290–302.
- Caniëls, M.C.J. and Veld, M. (2016) 'Employee ambidexterity, high-performance work systems, and innovative work behaviour: how much balance do we need?', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp.565–585, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1216881>
- Cheung, Y.H. and Florea, L.C. (2009) 'The application of performance management in the salesforce: a Chinese and Romanian perspective', *Journal of Euromarketing*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp.139–156, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10496480903146524>
- Deci, E. and Ryan, R.M. (2014) 'The importance for universal psychological needs for understanding motivation in the workplace', in Gagne, M. (Eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of Work Engagement, Motivation and Self-Determination Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- Deci, E.L., Olafsen, A.H. and Ryan, R.M. (2017) 'Self-determination theory in work organizations: the state of a science', *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp.19–43.
- Gagné, M., Forest, J., Vansteenkiste, M., Crevier-Braud, L., Van den Broeck, A., Aspel, A.K., Bellerose, J., Benabou, C., Chemolli, E., Güntert, S.T. and Halvari, H. (2014) 'The multidimensional work motivation scale: validation evidence in seven languages and nine countries', *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp.1–19.
- Ghoshal, S. and Bartlett, C.A. (1994) 'Linking organizational context and managerial actions: the dimensions of quality of management', *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 15, No. S2, pp.91–112.
- Gibson, C.B. and Birkinshaw, J. (2004) 'The antecedents, consequences, and mediating role of organizational ambidexterity', *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 47, No. 2, pp.209–226.
- Hair, J., Black, W., Babin, B., Anderson, R. and Tatham, R. (2006) *Multivariate Data Analysis*, 6th ed., Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Hair, J., Hult, T.G.M., Ringle, C.M. and Sarstedt, M. (2017) *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*, 2nd ed., Sage Publications, Inc, Thousand Oaks.
- Herrera, R., Roberts, L., Høgevoid, N. and Goran, S. (2024) 'Proposing a sales performance motivational framework for B2B sellers in services firms', *European Research on Management and Business Economics*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp.1–14.
- Holmqvist, M. (2004) 'Experiential learning processes of exploitation and exploration within and between organizations: an empirical study of product development', *Organization Science*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp.70–81.
- Jasmand, C., Blazevic, V. and de Ruyter, K. (2012) 'Generating sales while providing service: a study of customer service representatives' ambidextrous behavior', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 76, pp.20–37.
- Karpov, A. and Potapova, R. (2021) *Speech and Computer: The 23rd International Conference SPECOM. 2021*, Springer Nature, Switzerland AG.
- Kotler, P. and Keller, K.L. (2016) *Marketing Management*, 15th ed., Pearson, London.
- Kuvaas, B., Buch, R., Weibel, A., Dysvik, A. and Nerstad, C.G.L. (2017) 'Do intrinsic and extrinsic motivation relate differently to employee outcomes?', *Journal of Economic Psychology*, Vol. 61, pp.244–258.
- Lee, M.T., Raschke, R.L. and St. Louis, R. (2016) 'Exploiting organizational culture: configurations for value through knowledge worker's motivation', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 69, No. 11, pp.5442–5447.
- Lindskog, C. and Magnusson, M. (2021) 'Ambidexterity in agile software development: a conceptual paper', *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp.16–43.
- Locander, D., Mulki, J. and Weinberg, F. (2014) 'How do salespeople make decisions? the role of emotions and deliberation on adaptive selling, and the moderating role of intuition', *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol. 31, No. 6, pp.387–403.
- Luu, T.T., Rowley, C. and Dinh, K.C. (2018) 'Enhancing the effect of frontline public employees' individual ambidexterity on customer value co-creation', *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 33, No. 4, pp.506–522.
- Malik, A., Brendan, B. and Rebecca, M. (2017) 'Contextual ambidexterity and innovation in healthcare in India: the role of HRM', *Personnel Review*, Vol. 46, No. 7, pp.1358–1380.
- Nasution, M., Yunizar, I.M. and Hilmiana (2023) 'The mediating role of employee ambidexterity and work engagement for talent management and medical representatives' performance in Indonesian pharmaceutical companies', *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, Vol. 21, pp.642–655.
- Newell, S. (2015) 'Managing knowledge and managing knowledge work: what we know and what the future holds', *Journal of Information Technology*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp.1–17.

- Noe, R.A., Hollenbeck, J.R., Gerhart, B. and Wright, P.M. (2017) *Human Resource Management: Gaining a Competitive Advantage*, McGraw-Hill Education, New York.
- Noe, R.A., Tews, M.J. and Dachner, A.M. (2010) 'Learner engagement: a new perspective for enhancing our understanding of learner motivation and workplace learning', *Academy of Management Annals*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp.279–315.
- O'Reilly, C.A. and Tushman, M. (2008) 'Ambidexterity as a dynamic capability: Resolving the innovator's dilemma', *Research in Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 28, pp.185–206.
- Oren, L., Aharon, T., Yulia, N. and Gil, S. (2013) 'Relations between OCBS, organizational justice, work motivation and self-efficacy', *The Protection of Consumer Rights in the Field of Economic Services of General Interest*, Vol. 15, No. 34, pp.505–516.
- Panagopoulos, N., Rapp, A. and Pimentel, M. (2019) 'Firm actions to develop an ambidextrous sales force', *Journal of Service Research*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp.87–104.
- Papachroni, A. and Loizos, H. (2020) 'Ambidexterity as practice: individual ambidexterity through paradoxical practices', *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, Vol. 56, No. 2, pp.143–165.
- Raisch, S. and Birkinshaw, J. (2008) 'Organizational ambidexterity: antecedents, outcomes, and moderators', *Journal of Management*, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp.375–409.
- Raisch, S., Birkinshaw, J., Probst, G. and Tushman, M.L. (2009) 'Organizational ambidexterity: balancing exploitation and exploration for sustained performance', *Organization Science*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp.685–695.
- Rupp, D.E. and Cropanzano, R. (2002) 'The mediating effects of social exchange relationships in predicting workplace outcomes from multifoci organizational justice', *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, Vol. 89, No. 1, pp.925–946.
- Ryan, R.M. and Deci, E.L. (2019) 'Chapter four – brick by brick: the origins, development, and future of self-determination theory', in Elliot, A.J. (Eds.): *Advances in Motivation Science*, Vol. 6, pp.111–156.
- Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C.M. and Hair, J.F. (2017) 'Partial least squares structural equation modeling', *Handbook of Market Research*, Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp.587–632.
- Schnellbacher, B. and Heidenreich, S. (2020) 'The role of individual ambidexterity for organizational performance – examining ambidextrous knowledge seeking and offering', *The Journal of Technology Transfer*, Vol. 45, No. 5, pp.1535–1561.
- Sok, K.M., Bin, D. and Sok, P. (2022) 'How and when do the ambidextrous frontline sales employees achieve superior sales performance?', *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp.505–520.
- Triatmojo, D. (2021) *Kemnaker: 29,4 Juta Pekerja Terdampak Pandemi Covid-19, di-PHK Hingga Dirumahkan*, <https://www.tribunnews.com/bisnis/2021/03/27/kemnaker-294-juta-pekerja-terdampak-pandemi-covid-19-di-phk-hingga-dirumahkan>
- Van den Broeck, A., Ferris, D.L., Chang, C.H. and Rosen, C.C. (2016) 'A review of self-determination theory's basic psychological needs at work', *Journal of Management*, Vol. 42, No. 5, pp.1195–1229.
- Yuswohady (2021) *Industry Megashift 2021 After Pandemic*, Inventure, Jakarta.