Nuances of Sales–Service Ambidexterity across Varied Sales Job Types

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An ambidextrous approach to selling, in which salespeople are concurrently responsible for both selling to and servicing the customer, has become the norm in today's selling organizations. To date, the literature points to a 'the more, the better' mentality when it comes to the servicing part of sales–service ambidexterity. However, little is known about the value of servicing across sales jobs with varying demands for selling effort. To address this gap, the authors first propose a more generalizable sales job typology that is based on the amount of effort salespeople are required to invest in selling, that is, sales provision effort (SPe). Second, in two subsequent studies, they show that the value of servicing depends on the type of sales job performed. Interestingly, servicing is less valued among customers in sales encounters with low levels of SPe, while salespeople in such jobs find high demands for servicing to be a welcoming challenge. For managers, this implies the need to find a balance between challenging their salespeople and ensuring effective direction of sales resources towards improvement of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Introduction

The contemporary discourse within the sales domain often expresses concern about how little time business-to-business (B2B) salespeople actually spend on selling (i.e. sales provision) in favour of other administrative and non-selling task (Rapp *et al.*, 2020). The reported percentage of time devoted to sales provision varies across sources but generally falls within the range of up to one third of salespeople's time. Examples include 23%, equivalent to 10.3 hours per 40-hour week (Marketing MO, n.d.); 28%, equivalent to 11.2 hours per 40-hour week (Salesforce, 2022); up to 35.2%, equivalent to 14 hours per 40-hour week (InsideSales Resources, 2019).

These statistics prompt further discussions among practitioners on how to increase the sales provision time of the salespeople (Hubspot, 2022). What the above statistics fail to account for, however, are the differences across the types of sales jobs and how the nature of diverse sales jobs informs sales provision demands.[1] One might intuitively argue, for example, that sales development representatives, by the nature of their job, are expected to invest more time in generating leads, creating opportunities and selling compared to inside sales

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The first three authors contributed equally to the paper; their order of listing therefore does not reflect their respective levels of contribution.

[Correction added on 9 July 2024, after first online publication: The Teaching and Learning Guide link has been updated in this version.]

A free Teaching and Learning Guide to accompany this article is available at: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-8551/homepage/teaching___learning_guides.htm

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[1]While the terms 'sales jobs' and 'sales roles' are often used interchangeably, there is a subtle difference between them that we believe is important to clarify. A sales job is a specific position within a company that is responsible for selling products or services to customers. Examples of sales jobs include sales development representatives, key account managers and business development managers. In contrast, sales roles refer to the broader range of functions and responsibilities involved in the selling process, such as prospecting, lead generation, sales forecasting, negotiating deals and closing sales. Sales roles encompass all the tasks and responsibilities involved in selling a product or service, regardless of whether they are performed by a dedicated sales professional or another member of the organization. In our paper, we focus specifically on sales jobs.

support or acquisition analysts. Furthermore, there are instances – such as those in Procter & Gamble – where, as far back as 2010, the company deployed sales teams to specific accounts with their primary focus on servicing (Glynn and Woodside, 2012), not sales provision. So, perhaps the issue is not whether sales provision time should keep increasing but rather how the nature of the sales job informs the demand for it. This informs our first research question: *Can sales jobs be meaningfully categorized based on the amount of effort individuals in those positions are required to invest in selling (i.e. sales provision effort, SPe)?*

We focus our attention on SPe – which we define as the amount of energy, force and time salespeople need to invest in selling in order to achieve their goals (Brown and Peterson, 1994) – for two reasons. First, the literature to date has put forward sales job typologies that are mainly based on a list of very concrete activities salespeople perform in their jobs (Jobber and Lancaster, 2015; Moncrief, Marshall and Lassk, 2006; Vachhani, 2006) (see Online Appendix A for an overview). These typologies have given scholars a better understanding of the composition of different sales jobs while also being valuable for decision-making in recruitment, training, development, motivation, the organization of selling processes, understanding salespeople's work and health-related outcomes. However, there is a specific limitation to consider. Existing sales job typologies are predominantly focused on a predetermined list of activities salespeople perform in their daily work. If we account for the dynamic and rapidly changing nature of sales jobs, then this entire approach of classifying them according to a definite list of activities seems somewhat obsolete.

Second, we acknowledge that not all sales jobs are created equal and that the nuances found across sales jobs need to be considered to better understand salespeople (Avlonitis and Panagopoulos, 2006; Berkmann et al, 2023). We also argue that we need sales job typology that is resistant to changes and fluid enough to survive the dynamism of the sales profession. To provide this general categorization, we propose that the effort salespeople invest in sales provision is a viable, flexible and more general categorization approach that is fluid enough to resist the dynamism of the sales profession.

On top of the demands for sales provision, the nature of sales jobs has undergone changes, with salespeople now expected to also participate in servicing (Lam, DeCarlo and Sharma, 2019) as part of their non-selling work demands. Furthermore, salespeople are expected to meet service-based metrics (e.g. customer satisfaction, customer service and responsiveness) (Panagopoulos, Rap and Pimentel, 2020), along with sales-based metrics (e.g. number of sales calls and sales quota). In fact, it is estimated that 85% of sales organizations task their salespeople with both increasing sales revenues and providing excellent service to their customers (Agnihotri *et al.*, 2017). Such servicing is directed towards building long-term relationships with customers by helping the customer reach their decision and fulfil their needs (Gabler *et al.*, 2017; Jasmand, Blazevic and de Ruyter, 2012).

This duality of job demands (i.e. sales provision and servicing) has been researched under the term 'ambidexterity' (Becker, Spann and Barrot, 2020; Lam, DeCarlo and Sharma, 2019), but the existing sales job typologies only implicitly consider servicing within the idea of sales job duality. Furthermore, research on sales–service ambidexterity has been silent on the implications of these dual demands across different sales jobs. For example, a commonly accepted logic is that servicing is beneficial for customer satisfaction (Ahearne *et al.*, 2010; Alavi *et al.*, 2022; Tuli, Kohli and Bharadwaj, 2007), regardless of the level of SPe involved in the encounter. Given that sales provision and servicing represent two conflicting demands, each competing for salespeople's limited resources – such as time, emotional capacity and cognitive capacity (Jasmand, Blazevic and de Ruyter, 2012; Sok, Sok and De Luca, 2016; Zheng *et al.*, 2022) – a customer perspective is needed to answer the question of the value of servicing for customers across different types of sales jobs. This perspective will help companies decide when it is appropriate to demand more servicing from their salespeople. In addition, this question should also be tackled from the perspective of salespeople. Such an angle would allow managers to gain better insight into the consequences of increased demands for servicing on salespeople across different sales jobs. To that end, the additional aims of this research (i.e. beyond the first research question) are to investigate *whether servicing is equally beneficial for customer satisfaction for all sales job types* (our second research question) and *how demands for servicing across sales jobs with varying levels of SPe influence salespeople and their work- and health-related (e.g. stress) outcomes* (our third research question).

To answer these three research questions, we conducted three empirical studies (see Figure 1) using the empirics-first approach (Golder *et al.*, 2023). This approach allows us to use conceptualization, research design and research execution, deeply intertwined with insights gleaned from the real world (Habel, Alavi and Heinitz, 2023; Valenti *et al.*, 2023).

We start Study 1 with inspiration from the real world of sales and textual data from Glassdoor, a job review website (Lam, Mulvey and Robson, 2022), to explore whether sales jobs can be categorized based on SPe. To assert these differences, we look at variations in which salespeople felt stress and expressed emotions, as we later argue that these will vary across sales jobs with differing selling demands placed on salespeople. Next, similar to Valenti *et al.* (2023), we
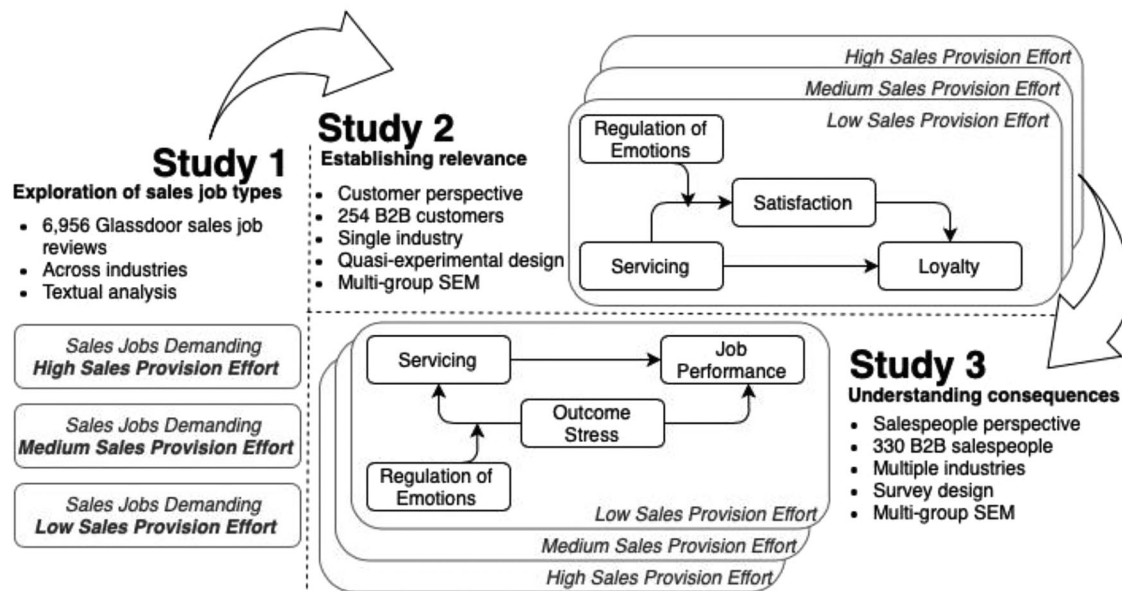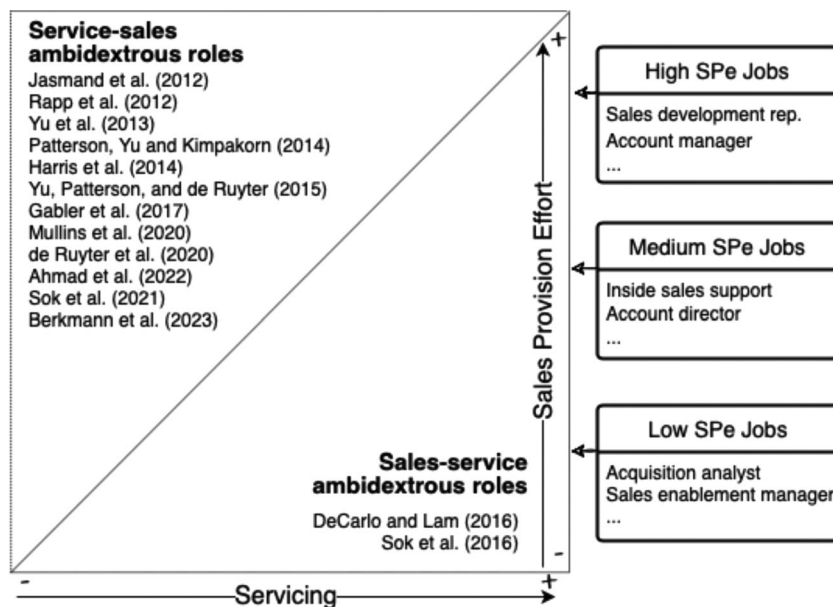
Figure 1. Integrative research model

Figure 2. Matrix of sales jobs demanding varying levels of SPe

progressively broaden our exploration (while leveraging our scholarly knowledge) to add depth to the Study 1 findings, through Studies 2 and 3 – both based on survey data. In Study 2, we focus on customers to establish the relevance of the sales job categorization based on SPe by seeking to explore potential variations in the effectiveness of servicing across sales jobs with varying SPe. In Study 3, we further explore the consequences of demands for servicing on salespeople's health- and work-related outcomes (i.e. stress and sales performance), again across sales jobs with differing levels of SPe (see Figure 2).

By merging the empirical insights obtained in Study 1 with the theoretical considerations highlighted in Studies 2 and 3, we bridge the gap between real-world practice and scholarly inquiry, ultimately contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between SPe and servicing across three sales job types. By doing so, our research makes at least three critical theoretical contributions. First, we add to the sales literature by showing that three levels of SPe – low, medium and high – can be used as a criterion for distinguishing between sales job types. Second, we establish the relevance of our job classification by pointing to

differences in customers' perception of importance of servicing across the three sales job types. Third, we contribute, with more fine-grained insights, to understanding the consequences of the two constituents of sales–service ambidexterity in terms of their effect on salespeople's health- and work-related outcomes (i.e. stress and sales performance) above and beyond their aggregated effects – as commonly approached in the current literature. By disentangling the two, we show how the type of sales job influences whether demands for servicing are regarded by salespeople as a hindrance or a challenge (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).

Study 1: Exploration of sales job types

Conceptual background: Sales provision effort within sales job typology

To categorize sales jobs according to the extent of sales provision, we draw from the work of Brown and Peterson (1994) and investigate the effort invested in selling. Thus, we define SPe as the amount of energy, force and time (Brown and Peterson, 1994) salespeople are required to invest in selling in order to achieve their revenue generation outcome goals (Frankwick, Porter and Crosby, 2001). Drawing from the literature on effort (Brown and Peterson, 1994) and on sales job typologies (Jobber and Lancaster, 2015; Moncrief, 1986), we propose three categories of sales jobs that demand low-SPe, medium-SPe and high-SPe.

Salespeople in low-SPe jobs invest the smallest share of their effort in actual selling. Their main goals are neither outcome-based nor related to closing sales; instead, their focus is 'relationship first' through engaging with the customer to better understand their needs, educating them on the company's offerings and building goodwill for the company. Jobs demanding low-SPe can be found in the pharmaceutical industry, where, for example, medical advisors are expected to educate physicians on the company's medications with the aim of influencing them to prescribe and recommend their company's products to their patients (Ahearne *et al.*, 2010). They are not expected to close sales, as physicians are not the end customers.

In medium-SPe jobs, salespeople invest a significant share of their time in non-selling-related work that may include servicing (i.e. assisting the existing customers) or administrative work (i.e. managing the sales operations). However, a portion of their goals are also tied to outcome performance and revenue generation (Panagopoulos *et al.*, 2018), and thus from time to time they also put their effort into actual selling, for example, cross-selling and up-selling to reach these goals. People in medium-SPe jobs can be situated either within the company (e.g. inside sales representative) or outside the company (e.g. district sales manager).

In high-SPe jobs, salespeople spend the largest proportion of their time actually selling. Indeed, they are responsible for managing and nurturing relationships with customers to maximize sales and profitability. Thus, their final goal is sales, in both the short and long term. They invest a large amount of effort across a variety of selling methods, using cross-selling and up-selling to reach the final goal. A typical example of a high-SPe job is a sales (business) development representative, who communicates value while heavily interacting with customers and who is constantly on the lookout for new ways to drive business growth (Setkute and Dibb, 2022).

Procedure and data

To distinguish between low-SPe, medium-SPe and high-SPe jobs, we analyse stress and emotional expression, with the expectation that salespeople in these jobs will display distinct experiences of the two. We focus on stress, as it is omnipresent in sales, which is often referred to as one of the most stressful jobs (Frank, 2011). Additionally, academic (Sager and Wilson, 1995) and practitioner (Uncrushed, 2019) literatures point to potential variations in the experience of stress across different types of sales jobs. We assume that these differences can be visible across jobs that demand different levels of SPe. Furthermore, we investigate the differences in emotional expression as exhibited across the three sales job groups, as expression of emotions goes hand in hand with felt stress (Kidwell *et al.*, 2021) as a very common strategy for coping with stress (Stanton and Low, 2012).

We use data from Glassdoor (e.g. Lam, Mulvey and Robson, 2022), a job review portal that offers employees the ability to review the pros and cons of their employer (see example reviews, see Online Appendix B). We exported job reviews from Glassdoor for 468 companies (see Online Appendix C for an exemplary sample breakdown of companies) on the Fortune 500 list (Boegershausen *et al.*, 2022). Focusing on Fortune 500 companies gives us a heterogeneous company context and a variety of sales job titles. The number of scraped reviews per company ranges from 1 to 100, giving us a dataset of 26,612 reviews in total for 1274 sales job titles, ranging from titles with a maximum of 3639 reviews (sales associate) to just one review per job title (territory sales officer). We extracted a subsample of sales job titles that had at least 30 reviews (n = 113). Four sales experts, with extensive academic and hands-on sales experience, independently coded each of these job titles as either a B2B sales job (e.g. 'Small Business Sales Consultant'), a business-to-customer (B2C) sales job (e.g. 'Cashier' or 'Retail Sales Associate') or unclear (e.g. 'Cst'). Inter-rater reliability was high (>88%), but we took a conservative approach and omitted all job titles that were deemed unclear or were classified within both B2B and B2C contexts. As a result, we retained

Table 1. Multiple comparisons using Games–Howell test

			Mean difference	SE	Sig.	95% confidence interval	
						Lower bound	Upper bound
Stress	Low	Medium	0.298*	0.093	0.004	0.079	0.518
		High	−0.256*	0.105	0.039	−0.502	−0.010
	Medium	Low	−0.298*	0.093	0.004	−0.518	−0.079
		High	−0.554*	0.066	<0.001	−0.710	−0.399
	High	Low	0.256*	0.105	0.039	0.010	0.502
		Medium	0.554*	0.066	<0.001	0.399	0.710
Emotional expressions	Low	Medium	0.803*	0.239	0.002	0.242	1.366
		High	0.288	0.256	0.497	−0.311	0.888
	Medium	Low	−0.804*	0.239	0.002	−1.366	−0.242
		High	−0.515*	0.147	0.001	−0.861	−0.170
	High	Low	−0.288	0.256	0.497	−0.888	0.311
		Medium	0.515*	0.147	0.001	0.170	0.861

**p-value < 0.01; *p-value < 0.05.

sales job titles that were classified in the B2B context by all raters, which was the case for 47 of them. Our final sample consisted of 6956 reviews.

Next, we reached out to 20 experienced sales academics (see Online Appendix D for more information on the participating academics). We asked them to classify 47 B2B sales job titles based on their perception of the SPe needed in that job (e.g. proposing/presenting solutions to customers, negotiating terms). Based on the responses of 13 academics (we took only the responses where the mean of knowledgeability scale was higher than the mean score; Joshi, 2010: 4.5, 1–6 scale), we were able to create three categories of sales jobs, based on (1) low (n = 780), (2) medium (n = 3724) and (3) high (n = 2452) SPe (see Online Appendix E for an illustrative example of sales jobs classified into the three categories).

Analysis of the textual data

To explore differences across the three sales job types, we compared the stress and emotional expression of salespeople across low-SPe, medium-SPe and high-SPe jobs. We focused on reviews across the three groups analysing linguistic markers for the expression of emotions and stress in natural language (Weintraub, 1981), an approach often used in previous research (Herhausen *et al.*, 2019; Valsesia, Proserpio and Nunes, 2020). More specifically, we used Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC-22) software to extract linguistic markers for the emotional expressions within the reviews. We also captured stress levels by using a validated dictionary developed by Wang *et al.* (2016) for the LIWC-22 software. Online Appendix F presents the descriptive statistics and a summary of the main linguistic indicators.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed significant differences between the three groups of sales jobs (low-SPe, medium-SPe and high-SPe) in terms of stress (F

= 40.667, p < 0.001) and emotional expression (F = 10.377, p < 0.001). Post-hoc testing using the Games–Howell test (Field, 2013) was used to identify points of difference (see Table 1). We find that salespeople on jobs that demand high-SPe exhibit significantly higher levels of stress compared to those in jobs with low-SPe (mean difference = 0.256, p = 0.039) and medium-SPe (mean difference = 0.554, p < 0.001). There is also a significant difference in stress between the low-SPe and medium-SPe groups (mean difference = 0.298, p = 0.004). Likewise, a significant mean difference is found in expressions of emotions between salespeople in jobs demanding low-SPe and medium-SPe (mean difference = 0.804, p = 0.002) and medium-SPe and high-SPe (mean difference = −0.515, p = 0.001).

Discussion of results

The results of Study 1 imply that sales job types can be grouped according to the SPe demanded in the job. Jobs demanding low-SPe, medium-SPe and high-SPe exhibit critical differences in terms of stress and emotional expression. Following these results, and in accordance with our research questions, we proceed to explore the role of servicing across these three types of sales jobs from customers' (Study 2) and salespeople's (Study 3) perspectives.

Study 2: Establishing relevance: Customer perspective on sales–service ambidexterity across sales job types

Conceptual background: Bringing JD-R to ambidextrous sales jobs

Salespeople nowadays balance revenue growth with exceptional service targets (Agnihotri *et al.*, 2017). This leads to a blurring of sales and service job de-

mands (Hughes and Ogilvie, 2020) – known in the literature as ambidexterity (Becker, Spann and Barrot, 2020; Lam, DeCarlo and Sharma, 2019; Yu, Patterson and de Ruyter, 2015). Such ambidexterity can take one of two forms: service–sales ambidexterity (a service employee takes on additional sales responsibilities) or sales–service ambidexterity (a salesperson takes on additional service responsibilities) (Hughes and Ogilvie, 2020). In the sales context, which is reflected under sales–service ambidexterity (DeCarlo and Lam, 2016; Sok, Sok and De Luca, 2016), demands for servicing are seen through an idea of helping and supporting the customer in fulfilling their needs during the encounter (Agnihotri *et al.*, 2017; Jasmand, Blazevic and de Ruyter, 2012).

This duality of job demands, which is deeply engrained in the idea of sales–service ambidexterity, can be best understood through the lens of job demands–resources theory (JD-R) (Demerouti *et al.*, 2000, 2001). According to JD-R, every job, regardless of its idiosyncrasies, is defined by its demands[2] and resources[3] (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). In the sales–service ambidextrous jobs, sales provision and servicing are seen as job demands, whose effectiveness is largely dependent on the job context (Bakker and Sanz-Vergel, 2013).

To date, the sales–service ambidexterity literature (see Online Appendix G) has treated the two job demands at an aggregate level and without considering the selling job context. As a result, we have no clear guidance as to whether servicing is equally effective across sales jobs demanding differing levels of SPe. For example, common knowledge indicates that, regardless of the sales job, customers expect to be serviced (Alavi *et al.*, 2022; Tuli, Kohli and Bharadwaj, 2007). Other literature (e.g. Frankwick, Porter and Crosby, 2001) hints towards variations in customer service expectations based on the nature of the interaction between the buyer and the seller (e.g. transactional vs relational interaction). To this end, we acknowledge that the effectiveness of servicing might be dependent on the type of sales job in which a salesperson is employed when interacting with the customer, and we explore whether customers' requirements for servicing do indeed differ across sales jobs with varying levels of SPe.

To complete the investigation in accordance with the foundational principles of JD-R (Peasley *et al.*, 2020), we acknowledge what in the sales literature

has been known as the most critical personal resource – regulation of emotions (Demerouti *et al.*, 2000; Rangarajan *et al.*, 2022), defined as the ability to control one's emotions (Wong and Law, 2002). We do so for several reasons. First, Study 1 already points to the differences in the importance of emotional expression across sales job types. Second, sales involves 'people work', which is more emotionally taxing than other kinds of work (Maslach and Jackson, 1982; Morris and Feldman, 1997), and as such it brings emotions to work on a daily basis. These emotions are not passively expressed but rather regulated by salespeople themselves (Hülsheger and Schewe, 2011) and are actively perceived by customers. In essence, customers' perceptions of salespeople's ability to regulate their emotions may shape the outcomes of servicing in a sales context (Lenaghan, Buda and Eisner, 2007). Indeed, the ability to regulate one's own emotions (Wong and Law, 2002) has been linked to more satisfied customers (Mesquita and Albert, 2007; Neck and Houghton, 2006) and salespeople's goal achievement (Holman, Martinez-Inigo and Totterdell, 2008).

Design and measures

We conducted a series of interviews to ensure the appropriateness of the research context for Study 2 (as per Online Appendix H), that is, the exploration of customers' perspectives on ambidextrous sales job demands and resources. The context of the pharmaceutical industry (Katsikeas *et al.*, 2018) seemed appropriate for this study, as pharma companies resort to all three job types to connect with their B2B customers: (1) physicians, who have the authority and expertise to prescribe a drug and (2) hospitals and pharmacies (Bonoma, 2006). In such a system, medical science liaisons educate physicians to prescribe their company's products to their patients. They are not responsible for closing the sales (low-SPe job). In conjunction with these, telesales operators support pharmacies by processing their orders (medium-SPe job). Finally, account managers keep close contact with pharmacies, helping them make high-value orders (e.g. cross-selling and up-selling), and thus work in high-SPe jobs. In addition, focusing on a single industry allows for homogeneity of the sample and ensures internal validity.

To collect the data, we collaborated with a national agency for healthcare quality in one European country. The agency sent an email with a survey link to all registered pharmacists and general practitioners. After two reminders, 254 usable responses were received. To distinguish between interactions with salespeople on medium-SPe and high-SPe jobs, we randomly assigned respondents (i.e. pharmacists) to two groups. In one of the groups, customers (i.e. pharmacists) were asked to focus on the salesperson they were in contact with

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[2]Job demands refer to 'physical, social, or organisational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and mental effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs of employees' (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001, p. 501) – such as stress.

[3]Job resources refer to those aspects of the job that facilitate goal achievement, assist employees in coping with job demands and stimulate learning and personal growth (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014).

(over the last month) when placing orders (i.e. jobs with medium-SPe demand). In the second group, pharmacists were asked to think of a salesperson who visits their pharmacy, offers them products, negotiates discount margins with them and is altogether responsible for their account (i.e. jobs with high-SPe demand). Respondents were instructed to answer the survey questions with the chosen salesperson in mind.

On average, respondents in the first group had 12.41 years of full-time sales job experience, a mean age of 39.5 years and were mostly females (69.7%). The chosen salespeople were also mainly females (77.3%). Respondents in the second group had 13.28 years of full-time job experience and a mean age of 40.39 years. They consisted of slightly more males (56.8%), while the chosen salespeople were mostly females (63.5%).

For questions related to salespeople in low-SPe jobs, medical doctors in general practice were contacted, as they are often visited by medical science liaisons (i.e. salespeople), as is common practice in the healthcare system in the selected country. Respondents were asked to think of a person they met a few times (to assure knowledgeability) within the last quarter when answering the questions. On average, respondents in this group had 12–13 years of full-time job experience, a mean age of 40.84 years and were mostly males (80.7%). The chosen medical advisors were also mostly males (57.9%).

All constructs were measured using well-established scales (Online Appendix I). Following conceptualization of the servicing, seen as supporting and helping the customer (Agnihotri *et al.*, 2017; Jasmand, Blazevic and de Ruyter, 2012), we use perception of helpfulness as a proxy to measure servicing (Dabholkar, Thorpe and Rentz, 1996). We also focus on helpfulness here as it is defined as an organizationally mandated behaviour for establishing high-quality interactions with customers (Liu et al., 2016). Perception of regulation of emotions is measured by observer rating items, as per Elfenbein, Barsade and Eisenkraft (2015) based on Wong and Law (2002). Satisfaction is measured with a single-item measure and viewed as the customer's overall evaluation of their interaction with the salesperson (Seiders *et al.*, 2005). We approached loyalty in terms of behavioural intentions, particularly the intention to maintain a relationship with the company (Patterson and Smith, 2003), and measured it with a single-item measure.

Measurement properties are assessed with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) performed in SmartPLS4 (5000 bootstraps) to account for acceptable deviations from multicollinearity assumptions (Barroso and Picón, 2012). The measurement model is first examined in the full sample and then in subsamples representing sales jobs with a different SPe. All constructs show positive psychometric quality indices that exceed benchmark values (AVE = 0.5, CR = 0.6), both in a full model and in all the subsamples (Online Appendix I). In ad-dition, AVE for each latent construct exceeds the inter-construct correlations. Finally, all scales exhibited good reliability ($\alpha > 0.70$). The measurement models thus demonstrate evidence of internal consistency, reliability and convergent and discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; see Online Appendix J).

To minimize common method variance (CMV), we followed the research design recommendations of Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Podsakoff (2012). We also performed a partial correlation analysis among the items measuring our constructs and assessed whether the significance of the zero-order correlations changed when the marker variable was partialled out (Lindell and Whitney, 2001). For the marker variable, we used the unrelated item 'salesperson's dress code is important to me'. In none of the three datasets did the significance of the resulting coefficients change, suggesting that CMV does not pose a problem in our analysis.

Analysis and findings

To compare the structural model across different sales job groups with varying SPe, we utilized PLS-based multi-group analyses (PLS-MGA, 5000 bootstraps). PLS is widely regarded as the optimal choice for exploratory studies, thanks to its ability to handle complex models with limited sample size (Hair, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2011). While the total sample size would allow us to use covariance-based structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) (Hair, Babin and Krey, 2017), we opted for PLS-MGA due to the smaller sample sizes for each group of sales jobs (Sarstedt, Henseler and Ringle, 2011).

We first tested the overall model (n = 254; see Table 2). This indicated that the salesperson's servicing affects customers' satisfaction ($\beta = 0.41$, t-value = 7.184) and loyalty ($\beta = 0.21$, t-value = 4.074). We also found a significant negative moderating effect of regulation of emotions on the relationship between servicing and satisfaction with the salesperson ($\beta = -0.16$, t-value = 2.862), and hence we proceeded with testing the relationships across job type groups PLS-MGA in SmartPLS4 (5000 bootstraps). We specified the same model along with the same control variables for each of the three sales job types.

Our results indicate that, for salespeople in jobs demanding high-SPe, servicing positively affects customers' satisfaction ($\beta = 0.34$, t-value = 4.167) but not their loyalty to the focal firm ($\beta = 0.12$, n.s.). The same holds true for servicing of salespeople in jobs demanding medium-SPe (satisfaction: $\beta = 0.43$, t-value = 3.361; loyalty: $\beta = 0.12$, n.s.). The direct effect of satisfaction on loyalty is both positive and strong in both sales contexts (high: $\beta = 0.82$, t-value = 9.692; medium: $\beta = 0.81$, t-value = 8.066). For salespeople in jobs demanding low-SPe, servicing positively affects both customers'

Table 2. Structural model: Study 2

	Full sample (n = 254)		Low-SPe (n = 114)		Medium-SPe (n = 66)		High-SPe (n = 74)	
	β	t-value	β	t-value	β	t-value	β	t-value
Controls								
Experience → Satisfaction	−0.05	0.884	−0.02	0.185	0.72	1.070	**−0.16***	**1.745**
Gender/customer → Satisfaction	−0.07	0.734	−0.06	0.249	−0.02	0.126	−0.16	1.271
Experience → Loyalty	−0.04	1.061	0.02	0.332	−0.12	1.395	−0.06	1.059
Gender/customer → Loyalty	0.06	0.088	−0.199	1.316	0.06	0.574	**0.25****	**2.217**
Direct effects								
Servicing → Satisfaction	**0.41****	**7.184**	**0.42****	**4.174**	**0.43****	**3.361**	**0.34****	**4.167**
Servicing → Loyalty	**0.21****	**4.074**	**0.21****	**2.515**	0.12	1.262	0.12	1.534
Satisfaction → Loyalty	**0.69****	**11.363**	**0.59****	**5.830**	**0.81****	**8.066**	**0.82****	**9.692**
Regulation of emotions → Satisfaction	**0.20****	**3.100**	0.05	0.496	0.17	1.518	**0.24****	**2.297**
Moderating effects								
Servicing × Regulation of emotions → Satisfaction	**−0.16****	**2.862**	0.12	1.163	**−0.17***	**2.135**	**−0.27****	**4.167**
R-square								
Satisfaction	44.5%		17.4%		64.9%		69.5%	
Loyalty	69.8%		49.8%		81.8%		83.3%	

**p-value < 0.01; *p-value < 0.05.

Table 3. Multi-group comparisons: Study 2

Relationships	High vs medium SPe p-value (difference)	High vs low SPe p-value (difference)	Medium vs low SPe p-value (difference)
Servicing → Satisfaction	0.391	**0.015****	**0.050***
Servicing → Loyalty	0.405	0.154	0.274
Satisfaction → Loyalty	0.442	0.154	0.133
Regulation of emotions → Satisfaction	0.221	**0.005****	**0.049***
Servicing × Regulation of emotions → Satisfaction	0.238	**0.007****	0.055
R-square: Satisfaction	0.361	**0.003****	**0.002****
R-square: Loyalty	0.426	**0.013****	**0.011***

**p-value < 0.01; *p-value < 0.05.

satisfaction ($\beta = 0.42$, t-value = 4.174) and loyalty ($\beta = 0.21$, t-value = 2.515). The direct effect of satisfaction on loyalty is also positive and strong ($\beta = 0.59$, t-value = 5.830). In the case of salespeople providing medium-SPe and high-SPe, regulation of emotions is a significant negative moderator of the relationship between servicing and customer satisfaction.

Results of a multi-group comparison of relationships across three different groups of sales jobs demanding low-SPe, medium-SPe and high-SPe (see Table 3) indicate that servicing contributes significantly more to customer satisfaction in medium-SPe and high-SPe sales encounters than in low-SPe encounters. Interestingly, regulation of emotions shows the same results. Additionally, the model explained a higher proportion of the variance in satisfaction and loyalty for high-SPe versus low-SPe jobs, and for medium-SPe versus low-SPe jobs.

To further investigate the nature of the significant moderation, we plotted the moderating effects for the medium-SPe and high-SPe jobs (see Figures 3a and 3b). There seems to be a trade-off between regulation of emotions and servicing. While high levels of servicing produce the best results when coupled with low levels of regulation of emotions in both jobs demanding medium and high SPe, higher levels of regulation of emotions compensate for low levels of servicing.

Finally, we used the instrumental variable (IV) technique (Bollen, 2012; Stock and Watson, 2015) to test for endogeneity problems with our model. Based on the results of tests described in Online Appendix K, we show that simultaneity and omitted variables will not affect the resulting coefficients in our analysis.

Discussion of results

The Study 2 results shed light on the importance of servicing across the three types of sales jobs, showing that sales job type matters. In fact, servicing (together with regulation of emotions) explains the least of the contribution to satisfaction and loyalty in sales jobs that demand low-SPe. In addition, our results point not only to a trade-off between the two job demands but also
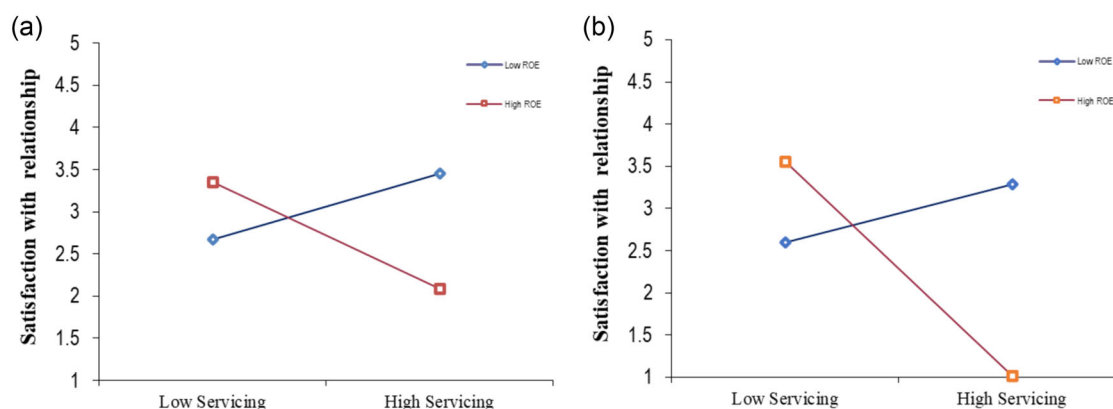
Figure 3. Moderating effect of regulation of emotions for (a) medium-SPe jobs and (b) high-SPe jobs

to the role of personal resources in ensuring the effectiveness of ambidexterity (Figure 3). It seems that customers who are interacting with salespeople working in jobs that demand medium-SPe and high-SPe prefer one of the two – either high levels of servicing or salespeople who are proficient in regulating their emotions – but not both.

Study 3: Understanding consequences: Salespeople's perspective on ambidextrous job demands

Conceptual background: Stimulating and hindering job demands

Study 2 focused on customers' perspectives of servicing in fulfilling dual demands. In Study 3, we further investigate the effects of dual demands within sales job types – particularly in the context of servicing – on salespeople. More specifically, we explore whether, depending on the sales job type, servicing represents an impediment or a stimulating demand for salespeople (e.g. LePine, Podsakoff and LePine, 2005).[4] Again, this is aligned with JD-R, which states that occupational circumstances play a role in determining whether a job demand is challenging or hindering (Bakker and Sanz-Vergel, 2013). For example, work pressure is interpreted as a hindering demand and has negative effects on the well-being of nurses – but, at the same time, it represents a challenging and motivating job demand for journalists (Bakker and Sanz-Vergel, 2013). What we

know from the sales–service ambidexterity literature is that the two main demands for selling and servicing are two opposing job demands, each competing for salespeople's scarce resources (Sok, Sok and De Luca, 2016; Zheng *et al.*, 2022). Yet, this literature (see Online Appendix G) again overlooks the heterogeneity across sales jobs by aggregating responses from salespeople working in different types of sales jobs (Jasmand, Blazevic and De Ruyter, 2012). This omission might be the reason why current empirical evidence suffers from contradictory results. For example, sales–service ambidexterity has been shown to increase salespeople's role conflict and sales growth, but it reduces their efficiency and performance (Gabler *et al.*, 2017; Jasmand, Blazevic and de Ruyter, 2012; Vieira *et al.*, 2020; Zheng *et al.*, 2022). In other studies, it failed to produce any significant effects on sales performance (Junni *et al.*, 2013).

We focus on the potential of servicing – as one of the two ambidextrous job demands – to induce stress in salespeople (Roy and Jain, 2020). There are two key reasons why we focus on stress. First, as the selling profession is becoming more service-oriented, with a heightened focus on helping and supporting the customer (Hughes and Ogilvie, 2020), the literature still does not provide a clear understanding of the effects of these escalating demands on salespeople's work- and health-related outcomes. Second, the JD-R literature typically investigates the relationship between job demands and strain, and we follow this path (Lesener, Guys and Wolter, 2019).

Considering no prior research in the sales literature has defined servicing as either a challenging or a hindering job demand, we also make no such a priori assumptions. If regarded as a hindering job demand, servicing might cause conflicting thoughts and confusion in salespeople, who are unsure whether and to what extent servicing helps them in achieving their job goals or simply distracts them from hitting their sales targets. If, on the other hand, servicing is regarded as a challenging job demand, then outcome stress should decline. This is

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[4]The JD-R literature distinguishes between stimulating/challenging and hindering job demands. Challenging job demands represent stimulating obstacles that evoke employees' inquisitiveness and increase their competency and persistence and are associated with positive work outcomes (Tadić, Bakker and Oerlemans, 2015). Hindering job demands are associated with increased strain and negative work attitudes (Bakker and Sanz-Vergel, 2013; Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2010).

because servicing directs salespeople's attention towards fulfilling the customer's needs and instils in them a sense of purpose (Good, Hughes and Wang, 2022).

Given our lack of knowledge on the nature of associations between servicing and outcome stress across sales job types, it is also plausible that this relationship may take on a curvilinear form (Gerich and Weber, 2020). We work under the assumption that servicing can act as a challenging job demand, depending on its extent. For example, the literature finds that certain job demands are perceived as hindering at low and high levels, as they are linked to monotony at lower levels and overload at higher levels (Warr *et al.*, 2014), whereas the same job demands are turned into a challenge for employees at moderate levels. Following previous research, we explore which of these characteristics servicing might take on across different types of sales jobs.

Finally, drawing from JD-R and the results of Studies 1 and 2, we include regulation of emotions as a valuable personal job resource. The management of emotions has become part of occupational norms because it is established that the expression – as well as the suppression – of certain emotions helps in influencing customers to meet higher-order performance goals (Holman, Martinez-Inigo and Totterdell, 2008; Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987). Regulation of emotions, as a trainable ability (Rubino, Wilkin and Malka, 2013), has also been related to reduction in job-related stress (Buruck *et al.*, 2016).

Design and measures

We used a data panel (Prolific) to survey B2B salespeople. We collected a total of 330 complete questionnaires from respondents who identified themselves as working in sales with B2B customers and living in the United States. On average, the age of our respondents is 38.21 years: 29.7% female, 69.1% male and 1.2% other. To differentiate between levels of SPe, we measured the extent to which salespeople invest effort in selling to a customer (Boichuk *et al.*, 2014; Fu, Bolander and Jones, 2009; Jaramillo and Mulki, 2008). To differentiate between the three levels of SPe, we grouped the data based on the median split. More precisely, salespeople working in jobs that demand low-SPe were defined as those who scored below the median. Jobs demanding medium-SPe were those scoring on the median, and jobs demanding high-SPe were those scoring higher than the median. Finally, our sample consisted of 130 salespeople in the low-SPe group, 76 in the medium-SPe group and 124 in the high-SPe group. All constructs were measured using well-established scales and are listed in Online Appendix L (servicing: Jasmand, Blazevic and de Ruyter, 2012; regulation of emotions: Wong and Law, 2002; outcome stress: Roy and Jain, 2020). Finally, the subjective job performance measure is inspired by Oliver and

Anderson (1994) (i.e. how would your supervisor grade you based on your achievements in the last 12 months?).

All scales exhibited good reliability ($\alpha > 0.70$). Measurement properties are again assessed with CFA performed in SmartPLS4 (5000 bootstraps). The measurement model demonstrates evidence of internal consistency, reliability and convergent and discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Appendices L and M). As in Study 2, we performed a marker variable test (Lindell and Whitney, 2001) to assess CMV. For the marker variable, we used the unrelated item 'How often do you play sports?'. Results suggest that CMV does not pose a problem in Study 3.

Analysis and findings

To test our theorizing, we followed the same procedure as in Study 2 and used PLS-MGA. We first tested for the overall model in SmartPLS (n = 330; see Table 4) and then specified the same model for each type of sales job using multi-group analysis.

Our results show that servicing can be regarded as either a challenging or a hindering job demand, depending on the type of sales job a salesperson performs. As indicated by the significant effects of the squared servicing, a curvilinear relationship between servicing and outcome stress is confirmed for low-SPe and medium-SPe sales jobs ($\beta = -0.224$, t-value = 2.217 for low-SPe; $\beta = -0.293$, t-value = 1.715 for medium-SPe; see Table 4 and Figure 4). Considering the negative sign of the quadratic term, a significant decrease in outcome stress is associated with regions of low and high servicing. Outcome stress is intensified for medium levels of servicing. That is, at low and high levels, servicing is appraised as a challenging job demand, while at medium levels (i.e. sub-optimal level), it acts as a hindering job demand. The tests for the interaction effects of personal resources show a significant interaction effect between the squared servicing and outcome stress in sales jobs demanding low-SPe, albeit at 10%. This effect, although small (probably due to limited sample size), indicates that the medium detrimental value of servicing changes in magnitude as regulation of emotions changes. Specifically, the detrimental peak of servicing (the medium level) decreases in value as regulation of emotions increases. This indicates that, as regulation of emotions increases, the contribution of servicing to outcome stress decreases at medium levels. For sales jobs demanding high-SPe, servicing is regarded as a challenging job demand only, which results in a decrease in outcome stress ($\beta = -0.558$, t-value = 3.629) (see Table 4). The results are plotted in Figures 4 and 5.

We also performed a multi-group comparison to test for variations in the effects of servicing and outcome stress across three sales job types (see Table 5). The difference in the effects of servicing squared on outcome

Table 4. Structural model: Study 3

	Full sample (n = 330)		Low SPe (n = 130)		Medium SPe (n = 76)		High SPe (n = 124)	
	β	t-value	β	t-value	β	t-value	β	t-value
Controls								
Number of customers → Sales performance	**0.247****	4.740	**0.222****	2.758	**0.186***	1.750	**0.299****	3.232
Sales tenure → Sales performance	0.054	1.193	0.019	0.233	0.129	0.985	0.049	0.512
Company size → Sales performance	**0.164****	3.210	**0.299****	3.499	0.116	1.234	0.029	0.323
Servicing → Sales performance	**0.167****	3.140	0.116	1.173	**0.269***	2.064	**0.169***	1.876
Direct effects								
Servicing → Outcome stress	**−0.277****	3.724	**−0.343****	3.170	0.036	0.220	**−0.558****	3.629
Servicing squared → Outcome stress	**−0.200****	2.898	**−0.244***	2.217	**−0.293***	1.715	0.065	0.548
Regulation of emotions → Outcome stress	**−0.290****	5.835	**−0.295****	3.732	**−0.383****	4.288	**−0.228****	2.761
Outcome stress → Sales performance	**−0.217****	4.317	**−0.178****	2.454	**−0.194***	1.780	**−0.185***	2.209
Moderating effects								
Servicing × Regulation of emotions	**0.098***	1.683	0.133	1.378	0.228	1.440	−0.287	1.197
Servicing squared × Regulation of emotions	0.055	1.158	0.130	1.369	−0.005	0.034	0.103	0.505
R-square: Outcome stress	0.274		0.228		0.249		0.315	
R-square: Sales performance	0.234		0.221		0.216		0.233	

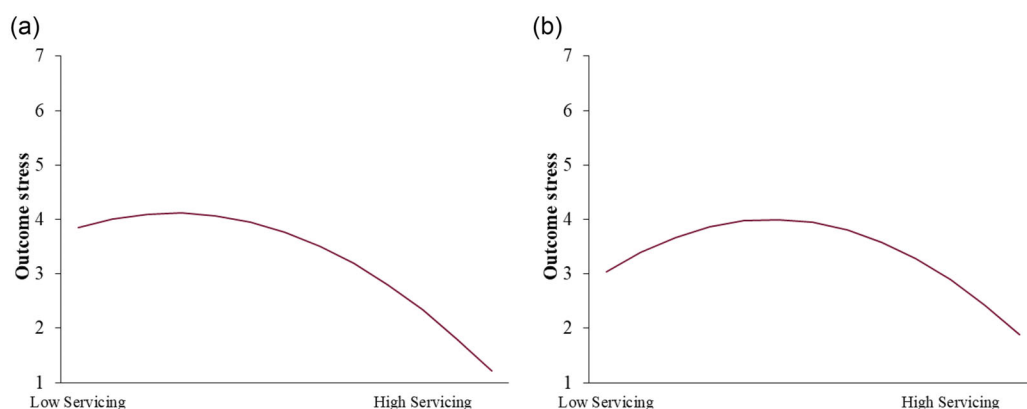**p-value < 0.01; *p-value < 0.05.

Figure 4. Curvilinear associations between servicing and outcome stress for (a) low-SPe jobs and (b) medium-SPe jobs

Table 5. Multi-group comparisons: Study 3

Relationships	High vs medium SPe p-value (difference)	High vs low SPe p-value (difference)	Medium vs low SPe p-value (difference)
Servicing → Performance	0.483	**0.039***	0.067
Servicing → Outcome stress	0.115	0.110	0.157
Servicing squared → Outcome stress	0.231	**0.019***	0.313
Regulation of emotions → Outcome stress	0.065	0.06	0.064
Outcome stress → Performance	0.387	0.211	0.382
Servicing × Regulation of emotions → Outcome stress	0.076	0.074	0.116
Servicing squared × Regulation of emotions → Outcome stress	0.332	**0.047***	0.276
R-square: Outcome stress	0.173	0.229	0.396
R-square: Performance	0.450	0.141	0.201

stress is not significant between the low- and medium-SPe groups (difference = −0.049, p = 0.313). In addition, no significant difference was observed between the three groups in terms of the direct effects of outcome stress on performance and servicing on performance.

Ultimately, we employed the IV approach to examine the endogeneity issue. Through the tests described in Online Appendix I, we are assured that the coefficients in our analysis are not impacted by omitted variables or simultaneity.

Discussion of results

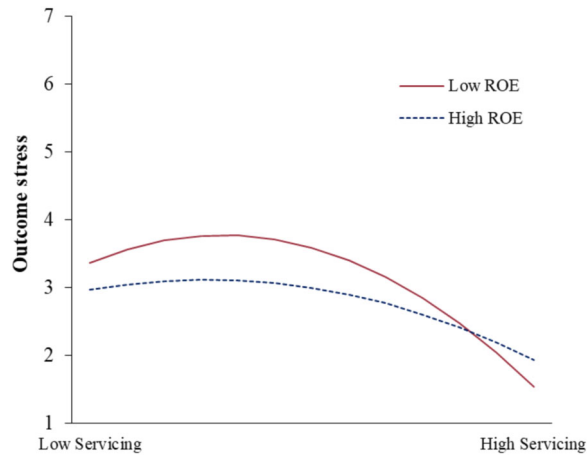Salespeople across the three sales job groups regard higher requirements for servicing as a challenge that

Figure 5. Moderating effect of regulation of emotions on the curvilinear associations between servicing and outcome stress for low-SPe jobs

successfully diminishes outcome stress. However, results also point to the dual nature of servicing. In jobs demanding low-SPe and medium-SPe, servicing can act as a challenging or hindering job demand, depending on the effort a salesperson invests in servicing. Salespeople are best off when there is clarity regarding the servicing expectations within a job. In jobs where servicing expectations are either minimal or extensive, salespeople are better able to align their efforts to achieve their targets. In these situations, servicing may be directing salespeople's attention towards fulfilling the customer's needs and instilling them with a sense of purpose (Good, Hughes and Wang, 2022). Interestingly, this happens only in jobs with low and medium demands for SPe. It might be that this is because, in these sales jobs, salespeople do not have strict sales targets compared to jobs that demand high-SPe. Thus, salespeople may find it easier to follow clear guidance on how to delineate their job roles.

General discussion, implications and future research

Our research makes at least three critical theoretical contributions. First, we add to the sales literature by showing that SPe (low, medium and high) can be used as a criterion for distinguishing between sales jobs. As such, we provide sales theory with a more generalizable approach for further exploration of nuances across sales job types.

Second, much of the existing literature on sales–service ambidexterity approaches it from the angle of a joint occurrence of selling and servicing, assuming that the co-occurrence of the two demands is unidirectional. Our work reveals that the nature of the impact of sales–service ambidexterity on customers and salespeople largely depends on the selling effort in each

sales job type. Our results add to the discussion on the importance of delineating between sales job types when exploring a salesperson's ambidextrous behaviour. Moreover, ignoring the nuances associated with different sales job types might lead to cancelling out or even under- or over-estimating the effects of the ambidexterity constituents. Especially interesting is our contribution to the sales–service ambidexterity literature regarding the intricacies of servicing's effect on customer satisfaction. While we corroborate previous research and point to the overarching importance of servicing for customer satisfaction and loyalty (Alavi *et al.*, 2022), we also find that servicing plays a more critical role in ensuring satisfaction of customers in sales jobs demanding medium-SPe and high-SPe. In jobs demanding low SPe (e.g. inside sales manager), customers experience minimal uncertainty as the decision-making process is delayed, and their primary focus is on understanding product benefits and usage. In these instances, although servicing is beneficial, it is less of a determinant of satisfaction than in those situations where customers are active decision-makers and where greater insecurity exists (i.e. in jobs demanding medium-SPe and high-SPe) (Singh and Crisafulli, 2015).

Third, our findings also contribute to the JD-R literature. In contrast to JD-R theory, which posits that a medium level of job demands yields the best results in terms of decreased strain (Janssen, 2001), our results show that certain job demands (i.e. servicing), when done halfway, introduce more confusion and interference with goal achievement than completely engaging in fulfilling such a job demand (in the context of low-SPe and medium-SPe jobs). This confirms that job demands should not be a priori classified as hindering or challenging (Searle and Auton, 2015; Webster, Beehr and Love, 2011). Furthermore, our findings are also in contrast to the JD-R literature, which largely asserts that challenging job demands, while associated with positive work outcomes, are individually straining (Boswell, Olson-Buchanan and LePine, 2004; Pink, 2011). It could be that sales is one of those occupations, like journalism and nursing, that sees increased job demands as an opportunity to learn and apply new skills, thereby satisfying personal job growth goals. This further points to the importance of considering the occupational context when investigating job demands (Bowen *et al.*, 2014).

Finally, we provide an additional contribution to the application of JD-R in sales (e.g. Pekaar *et al.*, 2018) by showing that regulation of emotions is a valuable individual resource that shapes the outcomes of salespeople's efforts. Our results indicate that regulation of emotions goes hand in hand with both sales and servicing demands in ensuring customer satisfaction and performance of salespeople. However, we also show that the contribution of regulation of emotions to positive outcomes is not always as straightfor-

ward as previously assumed (Mulki *et al.*, 2015). While it is an important predictor of customer satisfaction in high-SPe encounters, it also has the potential to diminish the positive effects of servicing. Customers seem to be particularly sceptical when interacting with salespeople who engage in high servicing, medium to high SPe and high regulation of emotions. As per our results, such selling situations represent a good breeding ground for increased suspicion towards the true intentions of salespeople (DeCarlo and Lam, 2016), as low regulation of emotions seems to be the preferred option in such encounters. These findings additionally contradict the traditional view of JD-R (Bakker, Demerouti and Euwema, 2005), which argues against the combination of high job demands and low job resources (low emotional regulation).

Managerial implications

Anecdotal evidence recognizes that 93% of customers are more inclined to make repeat purchases from companies that excel in delivering exceptional customer service (Redbord, 2023). However, our study shows that this may not always be the case, and therefore sales managers should be aware of the different effects servicing can have depending on the SPe demanded in a sales job. By understanding how customers perceive servicing across different levels of SPe encounters, managers are given the opportunity to revise and optimize job demands, allocate sales resources and improve customer satisfaction and loyalty. This ensures that salespeople are not overwhelmed with job demands that are not critical to customers.

With this in mind, sales managers should demand servicing in medium-SPe and high-SPe jobs, as these are the encounters where servicing is highly valued by customers. For example, sales development representatives (i.e. those who have a sales job demanding high-SPe) could also focus on supporting customer onboarding if there is an issue coming from the customer side. Salespeople in inside sales support, as a sales job demanding medium-SPe, could engage in servicing when there is a need for a quick servicing of existing accounts (Johnston and Marshall, 2021). In such circumstances, inside sales support provides an added value based on product knowledge. In contrast, for sales jobs demanding low-SPe, sales managers may motivate salespeople to engage in other activities because servicing may not be as beneficial to customer satisfaction and loyalty. To this end, medical science liaisons, as a sales job demanding low-SPe, could rather invest more time in zeroing in on building constructive insights and a strong rapport with customers, as ultimately the responsibility for selling does not lie with them.

Thus, salespeople should be provided with customized training based on the SPe demand of their job because salespeople, when clearly instructed, can easily provide the appropriate servicing to their customers. Managers are advised to be aware of the signs of their salesforce slipping into mediocrity. Providing just enough or mediocre levels of service will ultimately create confusion and negatively affect goal achievement, that is, job performance.

Managers should also be aware of the benefits of emotional regulation for both customers and salespeople. However, the extent to which salespeople exhibit and engage in emotional regulation does not always provide positive outcomes (Kadić-Maglajić and Espinosa, 2015) – or at least, it is not equally beneficial to all sales jobs. Therefore, depending on the nature of their job, salespeople need individual coaching (Chen and Jaramillo, 2014) to learn not only how to regulate their emotions, but also how to assess situations in which regulating emotions is counterproductive. They need to understand how to do so in a way that does not engender distrust from customers. This type of training is especially warranted for salespeople who operate in jobs that have high demands in terms of servicing.

Research limitations

No research work is without limitations. We have focused on sales provision and servicing as two ambidextrous job demands in sales. However, other job demands, such as emotional job demands, are also recognized in the literature (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002). Future research could expand job demands beyond sales provision and servicing.

We did not consider the type of offering with which salespeople are entrusted (existing vs new products) (Van der Borgh, de Jong and Nijssen, 2017), nor other possible marketing dualities (Kim *et al.*, 2022). Future research could examine other marketing dualities, such as how the type of product innovation affects job demands and resources. In terms of methodology, future research could use other methods to examine dual job demands in a sales environment. Such methods could include ethnography and diaries. On the other hand, if scholars decide to utilize quantitative data in further studies, testing endogeneity with non-binary variables would be advisable, despite it being acknowledged that binary variables can also be used in endogeneity assessment (e.g. Gunsilius, 2023; Swanson *et al.*, 2018). Finally, individuals in sales jobs with different SPe levels all contribute to the firm's sales growth. They may collaborate on the same account at different pipeline stages, interacting and providing support to each other. Further research could examine factors for the successful orchestration of salespeople working in low-, medium- and high-SPe jobs.

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Supporting Information

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