

## Career adaptability and ambidextrous behavior among customer-service representatives: the role of perceived organizational support

Emmanuel Affum-Osei, Eric Adom Asante, Solomon Kwarteng Forkouh & Inusah Abdul-Nasiru

To cite this article: Emmanuel Affum-Osei, Eric Adom Asante, Solomon Kwarteng Forkouh & Inusah Abdul-Nasiru (2019): Career adaptability and ambidextrous behavior among customer-service representatives: the role of perceived organizational support, Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, DOI: [10.1080/08853134.2019.1594241](https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2019.1594241)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2019.1594241>



Published online: 01 May 2019.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 20



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



## Career adaptability and ambidextrous behavior among customer-service representatives: the role of perceived organizational support

Emmanuel Affum-Osei<sup>a</sup>, Eric Adom Asante<sup>b</sup>, Solomon Kwarteng Forkouh<sup>c</sup>, and Inusah Abdul-Nasiru<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Psychology, Chinese University of Hong Kong, New Territories, Hong Kong; <sup>b</sup>Department of Management, Lingnan University, Hong Kong; <sup>c</sup>Department of Entrepreneurship and Finance Management, Kumasi Technical University, Kumasi, Ghana; <sup>d</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana

### ABSTRACT

With the increasing need for dynamism in the world, organizations and researchers have been interested in how employees can easily cope with change and be flexible on the job by using their foreknowledge and still being open to new ideas to boost their work output. Consequently, there has been an increase in research on ambidexterity. However, much is still unknown regarding the determinants of individual-level ambidexterity. This article examines the importance of career adaptability resources in predicting employees' ambidextrous behavior and service performance. Our study also demonstrates the mediation role of ambidexterity in the career adaptability–service performance relationship as well as the moderating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in the ambidexterity–service performance relationship. Data were collected from 443 service representatives of telecommunication organizations in two timepoints. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the research hypotheses. SEM results show that career adaptability positively relates to ambidextrous behavior and service performance. While POS interacts with ambidexterity to positively predict service performance, ambidexterity serves as a mechanism through which career adaptability influences service performance. The study provides insight for practitioners to offer adequate guidance and a supportive working environment for both existing and prospective employees toward training and performance.

### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 3 September 2018;  
accepted 8 March 2019

### KEYWORDS

individual ambidexterity;  
career adaptability;  
perceived organizational  
support; service  
performance; career  
construction theory

In this era of rapid economic growth and technological advancements, organizations expect their service employees to be proficient in dealing with existing and future challenges on the job (Hunter and Perreault 2007). Competition among service providers requires quality service from service employees to meet increasing customer demands (Agnihotri et al. 2017). Since combining service quality with sales facilitates competitive advantage, the majority of organizations expect their employees to perform both simultaneously (Gabler et al. 2017). As a consequence, organizations have been encouraging ambidextrous behavior among customer service employees to be able to handle the complexity of the service systems (Kao and Chen 2016). Such behavior describes the extent to which individuals simultaneously combine both the exploration of new competencies and the exploitation of existing competencies in their work duties (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016; Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009). Some firms, for example, train customer service employees to simultaneously engage in cross-selling and up-selling (Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012; Johnson and Friend 2015). Earlier research indicated that employee performance and organizational performance are positively affected by ambidextrous behavior (Auh and Menguc 2005; Cao, Gedajlovic, and Zhang 2009; Kauppila 2010; Lin, Yang, and Demirkan 2007; Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009; Patel, Messersmith, and Lepak 2013).

More specifically, individual-level ambidexterity has been found to facilitate service performance among customer service representatives (Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012).

Although research shows that ambidexterity is beneficial to many organizations, the approach could also deplete employees' resources, leading to suboptimal performance (Gabler et al. 2017). For example, there may be service failures when employees are unable to effectively perform the conflicting duties in times of a challenging economic environment (Gabbott, Tsarenko, and Mok 2011). While some progress has been made in examining individual ambidexterity and its impact on service employees (e.g., Gabler et al. 2017; Kao and Chen 2016; Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016), there is more to explore regarding how self-regulation variables explain customer service employees' ambidextrous behavior (e.g., Gabbott, Tsarenko, and Mok 2011; Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016). Given that ambidexterity (e.g., generating sales while providing efficient service; Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012) may lead to a conflicting challenge (Gabler et al. 2017), we focus on how employees self-regulate to deal with these difficulties in the service industry.

In addition, it is likely that the stress levels of employees will worsen when the work environment is not conducive for them to engage in ambidextrous behavior (Evans, Arnold, and Grant 1999). Perceived organizational support

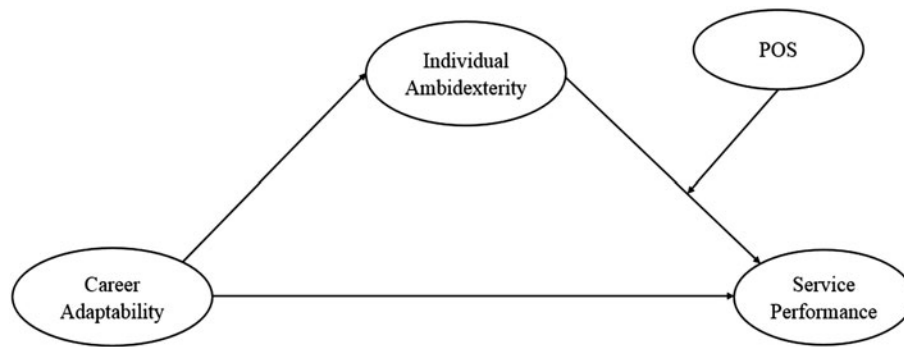


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

(POS) is critical in the relationship between ambidexterity and service performance since it obviously promotes innovation among employees, consequently leading to optimal organizational performance (Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990). This study, therefore, seeks to anew this line of research to shed more insights into the effects of self-regulation mechanisms on the twin roles of customer service representatives. Drawing from the career construction theory (Savickas 2002), we develop a conceptual model (see Figure 1) to examine three aims in this study: (a) testing the influence of career adaptability on employees' ambidextrous behavior and service performance; (b) testing whether ambidextrous behavior mediates the relationship between career adaptability and employees' service performance; and (c) testing the moderating effect of POS on the ambidextrous behavior–service performance relationship. In so doing, we extend the individual-level ambidexterity literature by examining the role of career adaptability (i.e., the four Cs: career concern, career control, career curiosity, and career confidence) in influencing customer service representatives' ambidextrous behavior and service performance.

Career adaptability has been shown to affect many work-related outcomes, including job satisfaction (Fiori, Bollmann, and Rossier 2015), employee performance (Ohme and Zacher 2015), fit perceptions (Jiang 2017), well-being (Maggiore et al. 2013), stress (Fiori, Bollmann, and Rossier 2015), and turnover intentions (Chan et al. 2016). Thus, career adaptability could help employees to sustain their effort to achieve high performance by engaging in several activities at the same time (Savickas 2002). Since engaging in ambidextrous behavior could have a significant toll on employees' resources and limit their performance (Gabler et al. 2017), career adaptability is critical to help employees in such challenging situations to persevere toward achieving their goals. Specifically, career adaptability sheds light on how individuals manage tension associated with their work roles (Hirschi 2009; Savickas et al. 2009), which scholars are yet to consider in the ambidexterity literature. Therefore, we seek to understand how the dimensions of career adaptability facilitate employees' ambidextrous behavior toward service performance. By making connections between career adaptability and ambidexterity, we extend the literature on self-regulation in the sales and services processes.

In addition, we incorporate POS (Eisenberger et al. 1986) as a moderator variable to help explore the extent to which a supportive working environment shapes the relationship

between ambidextrous behavior and employees' service performance. Although organizational policies and procedures emphasize service excellence (Gabbott, Tsarenko, and Mok 2011), ambidextrous behavior (Yu, Patterson, and de Ruyter 2013) may limit the available time leading to a greater focus on some performance objectives than others (Gabler et al. 2017). A supportive working climate (e.g., supportive leader) helps employees to effectively manage conflicting work roles to enhance performance (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Research evidence suggests that POS contributes to positive human resource practices, which facilitate a decrease in turnover intentions among salespeople (Allen, Shore, and Griffeth 2003). Moreover, research has reported that POS decreases failure-related mistrust (Neves and Eisenberger 2014) and has a positive impact on employees' commitment (Settoon, Bennett, and Liden 1996), affect (Yoon, Han, and Seo 1996), and reciprocity (Eisenberger et al. 2001). This study not only explores the relationship among career adaptability, ambidexterity, and service performance but also examines how POS could either enhance or buffer the effect of ambidexterity on service performance.

This study contributes to our understanding of ambidexterity research by delineating how career adaptability as a self-regulation mechanism affects ambidexterity and service performance. First, we answer the calls of previous researchers (Jasmand, Blazevec, and de Ruyter 2012; Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016) to examine self-regulation determinants of individual-level ambidexterity. Second, by exploring the mediation role of ambidexterity (Patel, Messersmith, and Lepak 2013), we highlight the underlying mechanism through which career adaptability affects employees' service performance. Third, we extend the literature by incorporating POS as a moderator, which provides more insights on how perceived supportive working environment could strengthen the relationship between ambidexterity and service performance. More practically, the results and recommendations from this study will assist in effective management training of sales and service representatives toward enhanced performance.

## Theoretical background

### Individual-level ambidexterity

Scholars have examined the relevance of ambidexterity in response to the turbulent conditions experienced by

organizations and employees (Raisch and Birkinshaw 2008; Tushman and O'Reilly 1996). Such working environments require continuous learning to align and adapt by balancing flexibility and efficiency toward the achievement of growth and development (Adler, Goldoftas, and Levine 1999; March 1991). Solely engaging in either exploration or exploitation may lead to suboptimal performance, which may impede full organizational and personal gains (March 1991). Therefore, the ability to maintain an effective balance between exploration- and exploitation-related activities is key to survival and performance (Andriopoulos and Lewis 2010; Cao, Gedajlovic, and Zhang 2009; March 1991). As a consequence, prior empirical studies have associated ambidexterity with organizational innovation, survival, growth, and performance (Adler, Goldoftas, and Levine 1999; Auh and Menguc 2005; Gibson, Birkinshaw, and Reilly 2004).

In line with this, research suggests that ambidexterity can also manifest itself at the individual level of analysis (Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009; Raisch and Birkinshaw 2008). Individual-level ambidexterity means engaging in exploration and exploitation simultaneously (Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012; Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009). Exploration involves the creation of flexibility and variability via activities such as search, discovery, and risk-taking, while the objective of exploitation focuses on efficiency and the creation of reliability through activities such as refinement, implementation, and execution (Kao and Chen 2016; March 1991; Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009). For example, customer service employees could take personal initiative to learn new knowledge on the product (i.e., exploration) and use their present knowledge to promote the organization's products (i.e., exploitation) at the same time. Such behaviors have been shown to contribute more positively to sales and service performance (e.g., Evans, Arnold, and Grant 1999; Kao and Chen 2016; Yu, Patterson, and de Ruyter 2013).

On the contrary, exploration- and exploitation-related activities may prompt competition for limited resources (March 1991), which may lead to role conflicts (Agnihotri et al. 2017). For example, while some individuals may engage in efficiency by focusing on a given goal more effectively (i.e., single-loop learning), others may pursue flexibility by creating new task goals (i.e., double-loop learning) (Adler, Goldoftas, and Levine 1999). These tradeoffs could have a significant impact on employees in terms of resources allocation (Gabler et al. 2017). According to Agnihotri et al. (2017), ambidexterity is positively related to role conflict. Similarly, Gabler et al. (2017) reported negative effects of ambidexterity on the sales performance of customer service employees. It is, therefore, critical to consider employees' capabilities to respond to both predictable and unforeseen work roles prompted by changes in working conditions. In so doing, employees are required to manage the "paradoxical" nature of the demand associated with the characteristics of the service system to enhance organizational performance (Hunter and Perreault 2007). Therefore, career adaptability resources may provide a psychological mechanism to influence employees' ambidextrous behavior.

### **Career adaptability resources**

The major challenge of employees is the rapid dynamics in the nature of work (Arthur and Rousseau 1996; Savickas 2013; Savickas and Porfeli 2012), which requires them to develop and use effective cognitive resources to meet the increasing demands of customers. Career adaptability, a psychosocial construct embedded in the career construction theory (Savickas 1997, 2005) explains "the readiness to cope with the predictable tasks of preparing for and participating in the work role and with the unpredictable adjustments prompted by changes in work and working conditions" (Savickas 1997, 254). Global career adaptability (i.e., the four Cs: career concern, career control, career curiosity, and career confidence) comprises the psychological resources and strategies people use to construct their careers (Maggiore, Rossier, and Savickas 2017; Savickas 2013). Career adaptability resources include comprehensive and problem-solving capabilities (Savickas 2013), which influence myriad work-related behaviors (Guan et al. 2013; Maggiore, Rossier, and Savickas 2017; Ohme and Zacher 2015; Tolentino et al. 2014). Hence, we surmised that career adaptability will predispose employees to be ambidextrous toward service performance.

### **Hypotheses development**

#### **The role of career concern**

Career concern denotes the first dimension of career adaptability and describes an individual's future orientation (Savickas 2013). Individuals who are highly concerned about their careers are usually conscious of the changes that may occur in the near and far future and, therefore, make the necessary plans on how to achieve their career-related goals (Fiori, Bollmann, and Rossier 2015). Research indicates that a forecast to the future enhances peoples' ability to plan and explore (Hirschi, Herrmann, and Keller 2015). Such behaviors are inevitably linked to ambidexterity (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016). People with high levels of concern may be less likely to engage in tradeoffs (Kao and Chen 2016). Instead, they are motivated to perform ambidextrous behavior by exhibiting planfulness attitudes, which promote their ability to think ahead (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016).

Research evidence suggests that career concern is associated with a number of beneficial outcomes such as effective job search strategies (Koen et al. 2010) and work volition (Autin et al. 2017). Given that concern involves the transition through the past, present, and anticipated future career (Savickas 2005), it predisposes the individual to simultaneously exploit and explore toward the pursuit of career goals (Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012). Applying these findings to employees' ambidextrous behavior will suggest that people who score high on career concern will be more oriented to engage in ambidextrous behavior and high service performance.

*H1: Career concern will relate positively to employees' (a) ambidextrous behavior and (b) service performance.*

#### **The role of career control**

Career control reflects a self-regulatory component that "enables individuals to become responsible for shaping

themselves and their environments to meet what comes next by using self-discipline, effort, and persistence” (Savickas and Porfeli 2012, 663). Studies agree that control is the fundamental function of the self (Baumeister, Heatherton, and Tice 1994; De-Ridder, et al. 2011) that provides beneficial adaptations to the changing environment, contributing to life success (Tangney, Baumeister, and Boone 2004). The mantra of responsibility, autonomy, and assertiveness that depicts career control (Savickas 2005) reflects its importance for individuals with high levels of career control to engage in ambidextrous behavior in service provision (Savickas 2005).

Past research has demonstrated that individuals with high levels of career control exhibited strong subjective well-being (Konstam et al. 2015), which could contribute to their attempt to perform ambidextrous behavior in their work (Kao and Chen 2016). Those with lower levels of career control may be more likely to make tradeoffs with the limited resources available to them because they may have problems in adapting (Hirschi, Herrmann, and Keller 2015), which in turn may lead to a decrease in service performance (Gabler et al. 2017). It is, therefore, appropriate to speculate that employees who practice high career control have a greater ability to manage discrepancies that result from their work roles and are better able to achieve a higher service performance. Consequently, we offer the following proposition that:

*H2:* Career control will relate positively to employees’ (a) ambidextrous behavior and (b) service performance.

### **The role of career curiosity**

Career curiosity is the ability to seek self-knowledge and career-related information through exploration of various career opportunities (Savickas 2005, 2013). Career curiosity enhances self-learning, which facilitates the implementation of career goals (Savickas and Porfeli 2012). Career curiosity depicts the characteristics of exploration and exploitation since it influences people to learn about themselves and their current and anticipated careers (Turner, Swart, and Maylor 2013).

Exploitation is linked to curiosity toward self-knowledge with regard to one’s career goals, whereas exploration shares a common tenet with curiosity toward experimenting in gaining new knowledge (Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009) about one’s work through trying new things and engaging in adventurous related activities (Savickas 2005). For example, a highly curious individual will not only exploit self-knowledge to learn about the job (i.e., exploitation) but also explore the world beyond oneself and know the work world (i.e., exploration). Individuals who exhibit high levels of curiosity may not limit their exploration activities to only the known customers but also expand search activities to include different kinds of unfamiliar customers (i.e., exploration) (Hou et al. 2012; Savickas 2005). Therefore, we posit the following:

*H3:* Career curiosity will relate positively to employees’ (a) ambidextrous behavior and (b) service performance.

### **The role of career confidence**

Career confidence is the final dimension of career adaptability and refers to the individual’s belief in his or her ability to successfully perform the necessary actions in pursuit of career goals (Savickas 2005, 2013). A number of studies have examined the reason why high career confident individuals appear to demonstrate higher problem-solving capabilities (Fiori, Bollmann, and Rossier 2015; Xu and Tracey 2015). One explanation is that these individuals are highly self-efficacious (Rudolph, Lavigne, and Zacher 2017). This evinces that individuals with more career confidence will simultaneously engage in several routine and nonroutine behaviors leading to broader and complex work behaviors (Savickas 2002). Such behaviors include taking ownership of broader and challenging goals and acting to pursue both activities simultaneously (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016).

In addition, individuals with high career confidence are more likely to engage in self-monitoring, self-evaluation, constant planning, and self-learning (Zimmerman 2000), as well as increase task persistence to overcome the influence of negative feedback (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016). By contrast, those who lack career confidence are more likely to abandon their ambidextrous behavior (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016) in response to avoiding potential challenges and obstacles during achievement situations (Savickas 2013). When employees have confidence, they are more likely to navigate the complex service system by engaging in ambidextrous behaviors toward achieving high performance (Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012; Kao and Chen 2016). Therefore, we propose the following:

*H4:* Career confidence will relate positively to employees’ (a) ambidextrous behavior and (b) service performance.

Taken together, conceptually, the career adaptability resources could be used as an aggregate construct to form an indicator of global career adaptability (Savickas and Porfeli 2012). Since global career adaptability has been found to relate to work-related behaviors, including career engagement (Nilforooshan and Salimi 2016) and job satisfaction (Fiori, Bollmann, and Rossier 2015), we contend that it will enhance employees’ ambidextrous behavior and service performance. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

*H5:* Global career adaptability will relate positively to employees’ (a) ambidextrous behavior and (b) service performance.

### **Employees’ ambidextrous behavior and service performance**

The career construction literature has consistently revealed a positive relationship between career adaptability and myriad performance and behavioral outcomes (Autin et al. 2017; Rudolph, Lavigne, and Zacher 2017; Savickas 2005). In noting that career adaptability may not necessarily produce employee’s service performance single-handedly, there is the need to identify the mediating components, which link career adaptability to performance outcomes (Rudolph, Lavigne, and Zacher 2017; Šverko and Babarović 2016).

Specifically, we know less with regard to the mechanisms through which career adaptability affects employees' performance. For such a mediation process to occur, employees must have the ability to simultaneously exploit current capabilities and explore new possibilities (Parker 2014). More specifically, we posit that individual-level ambidexterity may be one possible mechanism through which career adaptability will influence employees' service performance (Rapp et al. 2017). For example, Patel, Messersmith, and Lepak (2013) found that ambidexterity mediated the relationship between a firm's human resource practices and growth.

In addition, organizations that engage in balancing exploration and exploitation activities have been found to experience effective and efficient performance (Auh and Menguc 2005). In particular, research findings show that ambidexterity increases firms' performance (Patel, Messersmith, and Lepak 2013), growth (Cao, Gedajlovic, and Zhang 2009; Lin, Yang, and Demirkan 2007), and innovation (Zacher, Robinson, and Rosing 2016) as well as employees' sales performance and customers' satisfaction (Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012; Rapp et al. 2017). The product of exploration and exploitation has also been found to influence sales growth (He and Wong 2004) and adaptive selling behavior among salespersons in business-to-business (B2B) companies (Agnihotri et al. 2017). Judging from the findings of prior studies, we expect ambidexterity to not only relate positively to service performance, but also mediate the relationship between career adaptability and employees' service performance.

*H6a:* Employees' ambidextrous behavior will relate positively to employees' service performance.

*H6b:* Employees' ambidextrous behavior will partially mediate the relations between career adaptability and employees' service performance.

### **The moderation role of perceived organizational support**

Self-regulatory resources are critical mechanisms that influence individual-level ambidexterity (Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012) and employees' service performance (Gabbott, Tsarenko, and Mok 2011). However, the organizational context and actions taken by agents of the organization, in particular, might offer an important role in the achievement of ambidexterity (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016). Studies have established that leadership styles facilitate ambidextrous behavior among followers (Bledow et al. 2009; Turner, Swart, and Maylor 2013). Leadership styles including paradoxical leadership make employees more efficient in ambidextrous behavior toward service performance (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016). Research evidence suggests that leaders who foster a conducive environment for their followers provide avenues for team members' psychological safety, leading to trust, mastery, and performance (Basit 2017).

To reduce contradictions in dual roles, the work environment must support ambidextrous behavior among

employees (Evans, Arnold, and Grant 1999). In this study, we focus on POS, which reflects the tendency of employees to assign humanlike characteristics to the organization (Eisenberger et al. 1986). We argue that POS may help to explain employee's ambidextrous behavior toward service performance. According to POS theory, actions by agents of the organization are construed as indications of the organization's intent rather than solely the actions of the persons (Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001). Drawing on the norm of reciprocity, research on POS has theorized that employees' receipt of supervisors' favorable treatment should facilitate favorable behavior (e.g., ambidextrous behavior) from the employees (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). We contend that POS may produce a less stressful environment (Gibson, Birkinshaw, and Reilly 2004), which could facilitate employees' creativity (Antwi et al. 2018) to perform ambidextrous tasks (Zacher, Robinson, and Rosing 2016). Although the impact of POS on ambidexterity has not been widely explored, several studies have suggested the potential relevance of POS in ambidexterity (Eder and Eisenberger 2008; Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990; Eisenberger et al. 2014; Nijhof et al. 1999). For example, Lynch, Eisenberger, and Armeli (1999) found that reciprocity wariness influenced extra-role and in-role performance among retail employees with high levels of POS. Therefore, POS may be beneficial for employees to stay focused on ambidextrous behavior to achieve service performance.

We speculate that employees who perceive high organizational support may feel more encouraged to simultaneously combine exploration- and exploitation-related activities as a way of compensating for their favorable working conditions provided by their organizations (Eisenberger et al. 2014). Judging from the studies outlined, we predict that high POS will strengthen the positive relationship between ambidexterity and employees' service performance.

*H7:* POS will moderate the relationship between employees' ambidextrous behavior and service performance such that the relationship is stronger for employees with higher POS.

## **Method**

### **Procedures and participants**

We recruited participants at Tema within the Greater Accra Region of Ghana at two timepoints for the current study. Participants were service representatives of three major telecommunication organizations who provide several telecommunication services including airtime credit sales, internet bundle sales, mobile money transfer services, and promotion services. We are interested in service representatives in the telecommunications sector because the sector has contributed tremendously to the introduction of new technologies in Ghana. In the past decade, the sector has employed many young people, and it is emerging as one of the top contributors to Ghana's labor productivity (World Bank 2018). The introduction of modern technologies in the telecommunications sector such as mobile money services in most African countries makes it critical for employees to be ambidextrous

in their service provision. These service representatives provide services to a large number of clients, which requires them to perform several activities at the same time.

The research team, who were wearing identification tags, visited the offices and service outlets of the service providers. Initial permission was sought from their leaders and supervisors, and the employees were eventually invited to participate in the study. Those who were interested and willing to participate were given the booklets containing the survey to be completed immediately. However, those who were busy and could not complete the questionnaires immediately were allowed to respond later to the surveys, which were collected in the subsequent days. Participants were assured that participating in the survey was voluntary and their responses remained anonymous. All participants gave their consent to use the data for the purpose of this research. The survey was conducted in English.

Data were collected at two timepoints. This procedure helps to reduce incidences of common method bias. Time 1 included career adaptability and demographic measures, and Time 2 measured individual-level ambidexterity, POS, and service performance. A total of 718 employees were contacted and 638 returned their surveys in Time 1 (88.86% response rate). After one month (Time 2), the survey was sent to the 638 workers, and 507 returned their surveys (79.46% response rate). We used unique codes (i.e., the last four digits of respondents' mobile phone numbers) to match the two waves of data.

We received a final sample of 507 matched responses; 44 individuals did not complete more than half of their surveys and thus were excluded. Another 12 respondents completed the survey, but their responses were discarded because they were minors (less than 17 years). Eight individuals who completed both the Time 1 and Time 2 surveys were excluded from the final sample because they indicated in their Time 1 survey that they had worked less than two weeks with the organizations and could not respond to most of the items. The final sample used for the analysis was 443; 159 (35.9%) were males and 284 (64.1%) were females. The mean age was 29 years ( $SD = 3.85$ ). The majority of the respondents had completed a senior high school education 295 (66.6%); 139 (31.4%) held a bachelor's degree; 9 (2%) had completed their master's education. The average working experience was 3.88 years ( $SD = 1.27$ ).

## Measures

### Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS)

Participants responded to the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS) (Savickas and Porfeli 2012), which consists of four subscales (Concern, Control, Curiosity, and Confidence) with six items each. Participants responded to each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not strong) to 5 (strongest). Examples of the items are "realizing that today's choices shape my future" (for concern), "taking responsibility for my actions" (for control), "looking for opportunities to grow as a person" (for curiosity), and "performing tasks efficiently" (for confidence). Studies have found internal

consistency above .70 (Dries et al. 2012; Olugbade 2016; Tolentino et al. 2013). The reliabilities for the current study were .86 (concern), .76 (control), .94 (curiosity), .75 (confidence), and .92 (global career adaptability).

### Individual-level ambidexterity

*Individual ambidexterity* was defined as the ability to explore new opportunities while exploiting existing competencies simultaneously. Participants responded to the ambidexterity scale (Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009). Specifically, we adopted 10 items of the scale, which has been considered to be an appropriate measure for individual-level ambidextrous behavior (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016). Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they have engaged in the following activities during the past one month on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (to a very small extent) to 5 (to a very large extent). Examples of the items are "searched for new possibilities with respect to products/services" and "activities which you can properly conduct by using your present knowledge." Previous studies have obtained a Cronbach's coefficient alpha above .80 (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016; Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009). For this study, we obtained a coefficient alpha of .93.

### Perceived organizational support

POS was measured using the shortened version of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) (Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990; Eisenberger et al. 1986). The eight items required participants to indicate their disagreement or agreement on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Examples of the items are "the organization values my contribution to its well-being" and "the organization would ignore any complaint from me" (reverse coded). All the items used are the same as those frequently used for assessing POS (Allen, Shore, and Griffeth 2003; Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990). With eight items, we obtained a coefficient alpha value of .94 for the current study.

### Service performance

Service performance describes the actions undertaken by individuals (e.g., effective communication with customers) that have the potential of enhancing service quality and contributing to meeting sales targets. Due to the difficulty of obtaining objective performance information from the outlets involved in the current study, we used a self-report measure to assess service performance. The service performance among sales representatives has been assessed using a similar performance measure (Kao and Chen 2016; Mulki, Caemmerer, and Heggde 2015). We assessed service performance using six items (Jasmand, Blazevec, and de Ruyter 2012; Kao and Chen 2016), including "Compared to my colleagues, I am more efficient" and "I usually pay attention to the customers' questions about their products to answer

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Gender	1.36	.48	—												
2 Age	29.01	3.85	-.05	—											
3 Educational level	1.35	.52	.00	.09*	—										
4 Job tenure	3.86	1.21	-.08	.05	.05	—									
5 Type of organization	1.61	.73	.03	-.06	.04	-.01	—								
6 Adaptability	3.75	.73	-.03	.02	.00	.02	.02	.92 <sup>†</sup>							
7 Concern	3.88	.93	.00	.05	-.01	.00	-.01	.80**	.86 <sup>†</sup>						
8 Control	3.93	.82	.02	-.01	-.01	.00	.02	.79**	.63**	.76 <sup>†</sup>					
9 Curiosity	3.59	1.13	-.05	.02	.01	.02	.00	.79**	.45**	.45**	.94 <sup>†</sup>				
10 Confidence	3.58	.81	-.06	.00	.00	.05	.05	.75**	.46**	.47**	.50**	.75 <sup>†</sup>			
11 Individual ambidexterity	3.73	1.00	-.07	.03	-.10*	.05	-.11*	.42**	.32**	.38**	.30*	.35**	.93 <sup>†</sup>		
12 POS	2.30	1.25	.07	.104*	.35**	.03	-.03	.07	.06	.05	.06	.06	.00	.94 <sup>†</sup>	
13 Service performance	4.40	.69	.01	-.08	-.14**	.00	-.02	.55**	.46**	.42**	.45**	.41**	.40**	-.05	.81 <sup>†</sup>
CR	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	.87	.77	.94	.75	.94	.96	.82
AVE	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	.70	.53	.84	.50	.84	.89	.06
MSV	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	.60	.60	.37	.39	.21	.01	.28

Note: *N* = 443. POS = perceived organizational support; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance explained; MSV = maximum shared variance; NA = not applicable.

<sup>†</sup>Cronbach's alpha.

\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01.

them correctly” (strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 5). Previous studies have reported acceptable reliability coefficients above .90 (Kao and Chen 2016). The alpha reliability coefficient obtained for the current study was .81.

**Control variables**

Gender, age, education, work experience, and type of organization were used as control variables for the current study. This is because the variables have been found to relate to ambidextrous behavior (Turner, Swart, and Maylor 2013) and service performance (Kao and Chen 2016) and have been controlled in previous studies (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016; Zacher and Rosing 2015).

**Checks of common method variance**

We followed several procedures to minimize common method variance (CMV), as suggested by prior research (Podsakoff et al. 2003). First, the two-timepoints data collection approach could reduce the risk associated with CMV. Second, we followed Harman’s single-factor test, which is commonly implemented as an appropriate procedure for estimating the presence of CMV (Chang, Van Witteloostuijn, and Eden 2010). The result revealed that the unrotated factor explained less than 50% (i.e., 35%) of the variance in the variables of the current study. Third, we introduced a common latent factor (CLF), and both the unconstrained model and the constrained model were specified (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff 2012). The unconstrained model ( $\chi^2$  [147, *N* = 443] = 312.362, root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = .050, comparative fit index [CFI] = .976, Tucker-Lewis index [TLI] = .957) and the constrained model ( $\chi^2$  [168, *N* = 443] = 390.151, RMSEA = .055, CFI = .967, TLI = .959) showed acceptable fit to the data.

We then computed the chi-square difference test to evaluate the two models. The result revealed a significant  $\chi^2$  change test ( $\Delta \chi^2$  [21] = 78.151, *p* < .05). The significant  $\chi^2$  statistics may be due to the sensitivity to the large sample

size (Dimitrov 2010). Consequently, we use the approximate fit statistics ( $\Delta$ CFI and  $\Delta$  RMSEA), which adjust for sample size and model complexity (Cheung and Rensvold 2002; Sass 2011). The results revealed that  $\Delta$ CFI = .003 and  $\Delta$ RMSEA = .005 were all within the acceptable threshold (<.01). This evinces that common method bias is not a significant concern for this study.

**Analyses and results**

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, bivariate correlations, reliability coefficients, composite reliabilities (CR), average variance explained (AVE), and maximum shared variance (MSV). We employed Mathieu and Taylor’s (2006) two-step structural equation model (SEM) strategy to test the model using Mplus software 7.4 (Muthén and Muthén 2015). First, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to fit our measurement model. Second, our hypothesized relationships were tested by conducting a series of structural models. We used the combined cutoff fit indices (e.g., CFI, chi-square, RMSEA, TLI, and standardized root mean residual [SRMR]) commonly cited in the literature to evaluate the fit indices (Hu and Bentler 1999; Mathieu and Taylor 2006).

**Measurement model**

We conducted SEM to test the distinctiveness of the variables. We conducted CFA at the item level and parcel level. We parceled the items following the item-to-construct balance procedure (Little et al. 2002). The purpose was to assess which of the CFAs provides an optimal fit to the data. The parcel-level CFA provided an optimal fit to the data compared to the item-level CFA (see Table 2). Given that parceling guides against the violation of the assumption of normality (Hau and Marsh 2004), it is most preferred when indicators per a factor are high (Coffman and Maccallum 2005). It has also been found to provide the overall optimal fit for measurement models as well as

**Table 2.** Fit indices and model comparisons for the measurement models tested.

	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta df$
<b>Item-level CFA</b>									
Default model: 7-factor model	2,293.46	1,059	2.33	.05	.90	.90	.05		
Model 2: 6-factor model (concern and control combined)	2,435.10	1,065	2.29	.05	.89	.89	.05	141.64	6
Model 3: 5-factor model (concern, control, and curiosity combined)	3,588.73	1,070	3.35	.07	.80	.79	.07	1,295.27	11
Model 4: 4-factor model (concern, control, curiosity, and confidence combined)	3,779.94	1,074	3.52	.08	.79	.78	.07	1,486.48	15
Model 5: 3-factor model (concern, control, curiosity, confidence, and ambidexterity combined)	5,708.52	1,077	5.30	.10	.06	.62	.10	3,415.06	18
Model 6: Single-factor model	9,161.65	1,080	8.48	.13	.37	.34	.15	6,868.19	21
<b>Parcel-level CFA</b>									
Default model: 7-factor model	391.40	168	2.33	.06	.97	.96	.03		
Model 2: 6-factor model (concern and control combined)	501.52	174	2.88	.07	.95	.94	.04	110.12	6
Model 3: 5-factor model (concern, control, and curiosity combined)	1,336.03	179	7.46	.12	.83	.80	.10	944.63	11
Model 4: 4-factor model (concern, control, curiosity, and confidence combined)	1,500.03	183	8.20	.13	.81	.78	.10	1,108.63	15
Model 5: 3-factor model (concern, control, curiosity, confidence and ambidexterity combined)	2,532.71	186	13.62	.17	.66	.61	.10	2,141.31	18
Model 6: Single-factor model	4,326.80	189	22.89	.22	.39	.33	.14	3,935.40	21

Note: RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

providing easy interpretation and presentation (Little et al. 2002). Since our variables include high indicators per factor, we used three items with the highest loadings as anchors and then assigned the next-highest items to the anchors in an inverted order to form a composite for each indicator (Mathieu and Taylor 2006). In total, we had three indicators each, per a latent factor.

We tested the seven-factor model, which included all our variables in the study. To further test the discriminant validity of our variables, we fitted several alternative models and compared them to the seven-factor model. The proposed seven-factor model significantly fitted the data better when compared to the other alternative models. Table 2 presents the fit indices for the measurement models tested in this study.

### Model testing

We tested the hypothesized model using SEM. First, we tested a mediation model without the moderator. This model exhibited acceptable fit indices ( $\chi^2$  [200,  $N=443$ ] = 381.87,  $\chi^2/df=1.91$ , RMSEA = .05, CFI = .97, TLI = .96, SRMR = .03). Second, we conducted a nested model analysis with the mediation model to test whether alternative models were better (Little, Slegers, and Card 2006). We compared the proposed partial mediation model to a full mediation model and a direct effect model. The partial mediation model had a better fit than the full mediation model ( $\chi^2$  [204,  $N=443$ ] = 486.52,  $\chi^2/df=2.38$ , RMSEA = .06, CFI = .95, TLI = .94, SRMR = .08) and the direct effect model ( $\chi^2$  [205,  $N=443$ ] = 498.84,  $\chi^2/df=2.43$ , RMSEA = .06, CFI = .94, TLI = .93, SRMR = .11), suggesting that the proposed partial mediation model is preferred.

The results show that control ( $b = .43$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and confidence ( $b = .30$ ,  $p < .05$ ) were positively related to individual-level ambidexterity (Table 3). Hence,  $H2a$  and  $H4a$  were supported. Unexpectedly, concern ( $b = -.05$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and curiosity ( $b = .03$ ,  $p > .05$ ) were not related to individual-level ambidexterity. Thus,  $H1a$  and  $H3a$  were not supported. Consistent with  $H1b$ ,  $H3b$ , and  $H4b$ , concern ( $b = .17$ ,  $p < .05$ ), curiosity ( $b = .12$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and confidence ( $b = .11$ ,  $p < .05$ ) positively and significantly related to employees' service performance, respectively. Contrary to our expectation,

control was not significantly related to employees' service performance ( $b = .05$ ,  $p > .05$ ). In addition, global career adaptability related positively to individual-level ambidexterity ( $b = .38$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and employee's service performance ( $b = .48$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Consequently,  $H5a$  and  $H5b$  received support.  $H6a$  states that individual-level ambidexterity will be related to employees' service performance. The result was consistent, such that ambidexterity significantly and positively predicted employees' service performance ( $b = .15$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

In addition, we hypothesized that the influence of individual-level ambidexterity on employees' service performance would be moderated by perceived organizational support. Given that latent interaction models (Muthén and Muthén 2015) do not allow the common fit indices in the output, the log-likelihood statistic was used to compute a chi-square difference test for the model comparisons (Klein and Moosbrugger 2000; Pituch and Stevens 2016). We compared the log-likelihood statistic of the hypothesized model to a similar model that has its interaction terms constrained to zero. The model with constrained interactions had a log-likelihood statistic of  $-2LL=20,579.88$ , and the proposed model had a log-likelihood statistic of  $-2LL=2,056,047$ . The result shows that the hypothesized model with the interactions fits the data better than the one without the interactions ( $\Delta -2LL [1] = 19.41$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

To test the indirect mediation effects of career adaptability on employees' service performance via individual-level ambidexterity, we used the bias-corrected (BC) bootstrapping confidence interval (CI) procedure (Preacher and Hayes 2008). We requested to extract 2,000 bootstrapped samples from the data set based on random sampling (Preacher and Hayes 2008). The indirect effect from career control to service performance was statistically significant ( $b = .06$ , 95% BC bootstrap CI [.02, .12]) and the indirect effect from career confidence to service performance was also significant ( $b = .04$ , 95% BC bootstrap CI [.01, .08]). In addition, ambidexterity mediated the relationship between global career adaptability and service performance ( $b = .10$ , 95% BC bootstrap CI [.06, .14]). Taken together,  $H6b$  is partially supported. The results are presented in Table 3. Moreover, for the interest of parsimony, we ran the model without the nonsignificant paths and the results are presented in Figure 2.

**Table 3.** Mediation model of career adaptability, ambidexterity, and employees' service performance.

Relationship	Mediator	Unstandardized direct effect	Unstandardized indirect effect	95% boot CI
<b>Direct effects</b>				
Concern → Individual ambidexterity		-.05 (.12)	—	—
Control → Individual ambidexterity		.43** (.17)	—	—
Curiosity → Individual ambidexterity		.03 (.06)	—	—
Confidence → Individual ambidexterity		.30* (.12)	—	—
Concern → Service performance		.17* (.09)	—	—
Control → Service performance		.05 (.12)	—	—
Curiosity → Service performance		.12** (.04)	—	—
Confidence → Service performance		.11 (.09)	—	—
Individual ambidexterity → Service performance		.14** (.04)	—	—
<b>Indirect effects</b>				
Concern → Service performance	Ambidexterity	—	-.01 (.02)	[-.04, .02]
Control → Service performance	Ambidexterity	—	.06* (.03)	[.02, .12]
Curiosity → Service performance	Ambidexterity	—	.004 (.01)	[-.01, .02]
Confidence → Service performance	Ambidexterity	—	.04* (.02)	[.01, .08]

Note: *N* = 443. Bootstrap sample = 2,000. CI = confidence interval.  
 \**p* < .05; \*\**p* < .01.

**Table 4.** Full moderation model of career adaptability, ambidexterity, and employees' sales-service performance.

Relationship	Mediator	Unstandardized direct effect	Unstandardized indirect effect	95% boot CI
<b>Direct effects</b>				
Concern → Individual-level ambidexterity		-.06 (.11)	—	—
Control → Individual-level ambidexterity		.44** (.15)	—	—
Curiosity → Individual-level ambidexterity		.03 (.05)	—	—
Confidence → Individual-level ambidexterity		.30* (.11)	—	—
Concern → Service performance		.13* (.07)	—	—
Control → Service performance		.08 (.09)	—	—
Curiosity → Service performance		.10** (.03)	—	—
Confidence → Service performance		.14* (.07)	—	—
Individual ambidexterity → Service performance		.15** (.03)	—	—
<b>Indirect effects</b>				
Concern → Service performance	Ambidexterity	—	-.01 (.02)	[-.04, .02]
Control → Service performance	Ambidexterity	—	.06* (.03)	[.02, .11]
Curiosity → Service performance	Ambidexterity	—	.004 (.01)	[-.01, .02]
Confidence → Service performance	Ambidexterity	—	.04* (.02)	[.01, .07]
<b>Moderator</b>				
POS		.02 (.04)		
Ambidexterity *POS → Service performance		.10** (.02)		

Note: *N* = 443. Bootstrap sample = 2,000. CI = confidence interval; POS = perceived organizational support.  
 \**p* < .05; \*\**p* < .01.

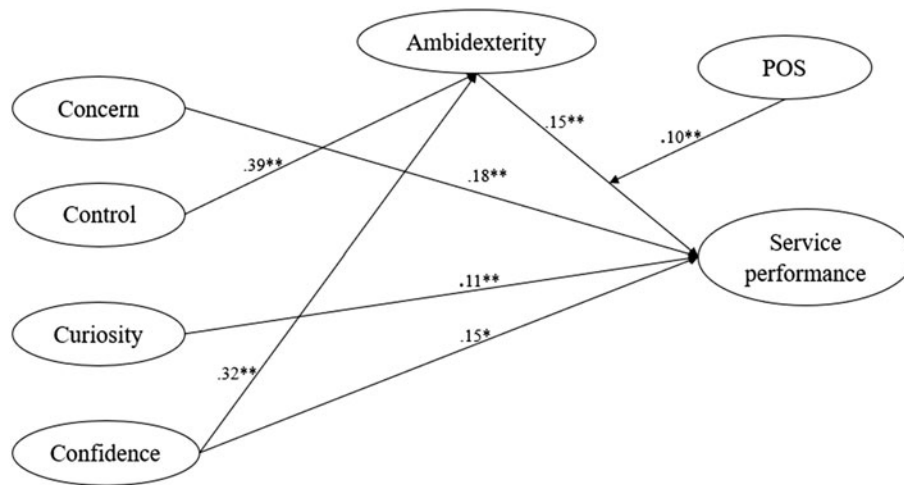
With *H7*, we were interested in examining whether POS will moderate the relationship between individual-level ambidexterity and employees' service performance. Results showed that the interaction between POS and individual-level ambidexterity significantly related to employees' service performance ( $b = .10, p < .01$ ; see [Table 4](#)). Thus, POS strengthens the positive relationship between ambidexterity and service performance such that the positive relationship is stronger when POS is high. To ascertain the direction of the interaction effect, we plotted the relationship between ambidexterity and service performance at high and low values of POS, defined as one standard deviation above and below the mean value, respectively (Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken 2003). The simple slope tests showed that the effect of ambidexterity on service performance was not significant for employees who reported low POS ( $b = .02, p > .10$ ) but was positive and significant for employees who reported high POS ( $b = .27, p < .01$ ). This interaction is depicted in [Figure 3](#).

### Discussion

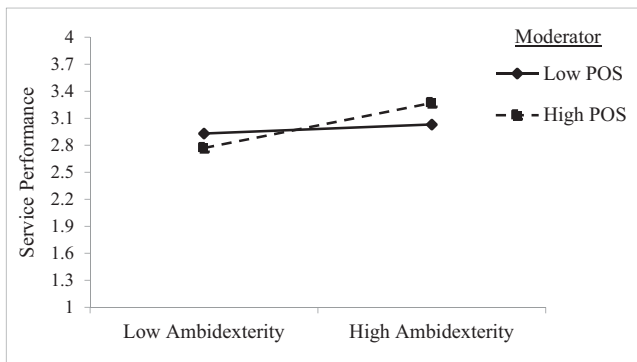
In this study, we examined social-cognitive antecedents of individual-level ambidextrous behavior. Inspired by the

career construction theory (Savickas 2005), we focused on career adaptability resources: career concern, career control, career curiosity, and career confidence. We explored the relationships between the four adaptability resources and ambidextrous behavior. As career adaptability is seen as relevant in coping with existing and future challenges in one's work (Hirschi, Herrmann, and Keller 2015), we expected all the four Cs to have a pronounced impact on employees' ambidextrous behavior. Our results suggest that career-adaptable employees appear to engage in ambidextrous behavior in their service delivery. More specifically, having strong control (i.e., responsible, self-disciplined, and persistent in one's job roles) and confidence (i.e., having self-efficacy to undertake beneficial actions) were associated with more ambidextrous behavior providing support for our expectations.

Unexpectedly, concern (i.e., looking ahead and planning for the future) and curiosity (i.e., being more involved in exploration about one's career) were not related to ambidextrous behavior. One reason for the unexpected findings may be that highly concerned individuals may be overconfident and may set unrealistic goals (Savickas 2005), which could generate negative effects such as making tradeoffs. It appears



**Figure 2.** Results of the structural path analyses excluding nonsignificant paths. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. For all items constructed, the latent variables were significant at  $p < .05$ . POS = perceived organizational support.  $N = 443$ . \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .



**Figure 3.** Interaction effects of perceived organizational support and individual-level ambidexterity.

that focusing on the future may be particularly important for highly concerned service representatives, which could impact negatively on their ambidextrous behavior. In addition, we speculated that career adaptability resources could drive employees' service performance. All the career adaptability dimensions, except control, were significantly and positively related to employees' service performance. As expected, employees' ambidextrous behavior was positively and more strongly related to employees' service performance.

Next, our results provided evidence of the mediation role of ambidextrous behavior between career adaptability and employees' service performance. Inspection of the indirect effects revealed that ambidextrous behavior mediated the relationships between career adaptability and employees' service performance. This result suggests that service employees' ambidextrous behavior may serve as a critical mechanism that facilitates career adaptability toward effective service delivery. The results corroborate previous findings, which have reported a positive relationship between ambidextrous behavior and employees' service performance (e.g., Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012; Kao and Chen 2016).

Moreover, we investigated whether high or low POS might strengthen or weaken the relationship between employees' ambidextrous behavior and employees' service performance. Our results show that the relationship between ambidexterity and employee's service performance was

stronger for employees with higher POS than for those with lower POS. This result suggests that employees who perceive more organizational support are more likely to engage in ambidextrous behavior toward effective service performance. The results are consistent with previous findings of promoting a conducive working environment for employees to simultaneously combine both exploratory- and exploitation-related behaviors (e.g., quality service and high sales) (Evans, Arnold, and Grant 1999; Kauppila 2010).

### Implication for theory

The current study provides an increased understanding of ambidexterity literature. Although earlier studies that have examined ambidexterity at the organizational level of analysis have provided important proximal and distal determinants of ambidexterity (Adler, Goldoftas, and Levine 1999; Raisch and Birkinshaw 2008; Reilly and Tushman 2008), a broader approach could be adopted toward the study of ambidextrous behavior at the individual level (Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009). Consequently, in this study, we focused on career adaptability resources to answer the calls for a look into ambidexterity at the individual level of analysis (Agnihotri et al. 2017; Gabler et al. 2017; Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016).

In this study, we demonstrated that it is useful to understand the psychological factors that underpin individuals' ambidextrous behavior. We introduced career adaptability as an important psychological resource that influences an individual's ambidextrous behavior. In the notion of boundary-less careers, current employees are deemed to become lifelong learners and acquire skills to adapt to changing career contexts, which are characterized by foreseen and unforeseen challenges associated with work roles (Maree 2012). In this light, ambidexterity is believed to be a suitable behavior as it may enable employees to be abreast of modern technological changes in the workplace. Our study also offers an important contribution to the literature by examining POS. Earlier research suggests that ambidexterity is particularly challenging to achieve at the individual level of

analysis (Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009); organizations could encourage employees to increase ambidextrous behavior by providing supportive working conditions (Evans, Arnold, and Grant 1999). Therefore, we used POS as a moderator in our model on the relationship between ambidextrous behavior and service performance. The results support our propositions and consequently provide a significant contribution to the ambidexterity literature.

### **Implications for policy and practice**

Several job insecurity issues have emerged due to the recent common practice of organization downsizing (Cheng and Chan 2008) and disparities in remuneration (Lefkowitz 2010). Thus, organizational leadership takes a positive stance toward employees' capabilities and how it will implicitly lead to increased performance in their jobs. Ambidextrous behavior has emerged as an important behavioral pattern for employees to manage the increasingly broad goals and complex task demands in the workplace (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016; Parker 2014). We demonstrated that there are also psychological resources that may influence employees' ambidextrous behavior.

The results of this study provide a reference particularly for human resource practitioners and career counselors for helping employees to simultaneously engage in both exploration and exploitation in executing their job roles. Employers may prefer applicants who can combine several work responsibilities at the same time. In this respect, it is essential for career development practitioners to offer adequate guidance for both existing and prospective employees to convince employers of their willingness and capability to perform ambidextrous behavior. From a policy perspective, our results provide important information to practitioners during the selection process. For example, it will be worthwhile to shortlist potential employees who have the self-regulation resources to engage in ambidextrous behavior. In addition, our findings that employees who have high POS exhibited strong ambidextrous behavior toward service performance suggest that organizations and their leaders need to be more aware of how the creation of a supportive working environment may shape employees' ambidextrous behavior. Such an enabling environment from organizations' agents has been found to influence the strategic direction of companies toward innovation and performance (Jansen, Vera, and Crossan 2009). Specifically, management training could be geared toward equipping leaders and followers to be more supportive of each other within the organizational context.

### **Limitations and directions for future research**

Although our findings are consistent with previous research and provide an additional contribution to the ambidexterity literature, we do not believe that our results are impervious to possible limitations. First, all variables in the study were assessed using self-report measures, suggesting a potential social desirability challenge in the study. Although several

studies have used this procedure of self-report, such research may be affected by possible common method and response biases (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016). We minimized such biases by using widely validated self-report scales. We also assured participants that their responses are confidential and anonymous and will be used only for research purposes. In addition, the result of the CMV revealed that common method bias was not a significant concern in this study.

Although we collected data in two timepoints, the participants from our sample were employees in Ghana. Therefore, caution must be taken when interpreting and generalizing the findings to other contexts. For these reasons, future studies must use more objective measures to complement self-report measures. In addition, there was only a month interval between when we measured the antecedents and when we measured the outcomes. Further, the participants were from a call center, and while their sales activities were assessed in the context of ambidexterity, they are not representative of a typical B2B sales organization. Future research could employ longitudinal and experimental research designs to examine the relations of career adaptability and career outcomes, including ambidexterity, organizational support, and service performance, among a sample of traditional B2B sales organizations.

Moreover, we focused on career adaptability resources as individual differences in explaining ambidextrous behavior in the telecommunications industry. It appears that there are some additional individual difference factors that could predict ambidextrous behavior. Future research could go deeper to identify extra variables (e.g., goal orientation) that could potentially play a role in this issue. Similarly, future research is required to extend our findings to include participants in other sectors such as banking, education, hybrid entrepreneurship, and security as their work requires self-regulation to manage both exploratory- and exploitation-related activities. Future research should interrogate how career adaptability affects employees' ambidextrous behavior and subsequent performance outcomes in different organizational contexts. For example, given that young adults increasingly seek entrepreneurship opportunities in Ghana (Asante and Affum-Osei 2019), further studies are required to explore ambidextrous behavior in entrepreneurship (e.g., hybrid entrepreneurship).

### **Declaration of interest**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

### **References**

- Adler, P. S., B. Goldoftas, and D. I. Levine. 1999. "Flexibility versus Efficiency? A Case Study of Model Changeovers in the Toyota Production System." *Organization Science* 10 (1):43–68. doi: [10.1287/orsc.10.1.43](https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.10.1.43).
- Agnihotri, R., C. B. Gabler, O. S. Itani, F. Jaramillo, and M. T. Krush. 2017. "Salesperson Ambidexterity and Customer Satisfaction: Examining the Role of Customer Demandingness, Adaptive Selling, and Role Conflict." *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management* 37 (1):27–41. doi: [10.1080/08853134.2016.1272053](https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2016.1272053).

- Allen, D. G., L. M. Shore, and R. W. Griffeth. 2003. "The Role of Perceived Organizational Support and Supportive Human Resource Practices in the Turnover Process." *Journal of Management* 29 (1): 99–118. doi: [10.1177/014920630302900107](https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630302900107).
- Andriopoulos, C., and M. W. Lewis. 2010. "Managing Innovation Paradoxes: Ambidexterity Lessons from Leading Product Design Companies." *Long Range Planning* 43 (1):104–22. doi: [10.1016/j.lrp.2009.08.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2009.08.003).
- Antwi, C. O., C. Fan, M. O. Aboagye, P. Brobbey, Y. Jababu, E. Affum-Osei, and P. Avornyo. 2018. "Job Demand Stressors and Employees' Creativity: A Within-Person Approach to Dealing with Hindrance and Challenge Stressors at the Airport Environment." *The Service Industries Journal* 39 (3–4):1–29. doi: [10.1080/02642069.2018.1520220](https://doi.org/10.1080/02642069.2018.1520220).
- Arthur, M. B., and D. M. D. Rousseau. 1996. "A Career Lexicon for the 21st Century." *Academy of Management Perspectives* 10 (4): 28–39. doi: [10.5465/ame.1996.3145317](https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.1996.3145317).
- Asante, A. E., and E. Affum-Osei. 2019. "Entrepreneurship as a Career Choice: The Impact of Locus of Control on Aspiring Entrepreneurs' Opportunity Recognition." *Journal of Business Research* 98:227–35. doi: [10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.02.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.02.006).
- Auh, S., and B. Menguc. 2005. "Balancing Exploration and Exploitation: The Moderating Role of Competitive Intensity." *Journal of Business Research* 58 (12):1652–61. doi: [10.1016/j.jbusres.2004.11.007](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2004.11.007).
- Autin, K. L., R. P. Douglass, R. D. Duffy, J. W. England, and B. A. Allan. 2017. "Subjective Social Status, Work Volition, and Career Adaptability: A Longitudinal Study." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 99:1–10. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2016.11.007](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2016.11.007).
- Basit, A. A. 2017. "Trust in Supervisor and Job Engagement: Mediating Effects of Psychological Safety and Felt Obligation." *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied* 151 (8):701–21. doi: [10.1080/00223980.2017.1372350](https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2017.1372350).
- Baumeister, R. F., T. F. Heatherton, and D. M. Tice. 1994. *Losing Control: How and Why People Fail at Self-Regulation*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Bledow, R., M. Frese, N. Anderson, M. Erez, and J. Farr. 2009. "A Dialectic Perspective on Innovation: Conflicting Demands, Multiple Pathways, and Ambidexterity." *Industrial and Organizational Psychology* 2 (03):305–37. doi: [10.1111/j.1754-9434.2009.01154.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-9434.2009.01154.x).
- Cao, Q., E. Gedajlovic, and H. Zhang. 2009. "Unpacking Organizational Ambidexterity: Dimensions, Contingencies, and Synergistic Effects." *Organization Science* 20 (4):781–96. doi: [10.1287/orsc.1090.0426](https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1090.0426).
- Chan, S. H. J., X. Mai, O. M. K. Kuok, and S. H. Kong. 2016. "The Influence of Satisfaction and Promotability on the Relation between Career Adaptability and Turnover Intentions." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 92:167–75. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2015.12.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2015.12.003).
- Chang, S. J., A. Van Witteloostuijn, and L. Eden. 2010. "From the Editors: Common Method Variance in International Business Research." *Journal of International Business Studies* 41 (2):178–84. doi: [10.1057/jibs.2009.88](https://doi.org/10.1057/jibs.2009.88).
- Cheng, G. H. L., and D. K. S. Chan. 2008. "Who Suffers More from Job Insecurity? A Meta-Analytic Review." *Applied Psychology* 57 (2): 272–303. doi: [10.1111/j.1464-0597.2007.00312.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2007.00312.x).
- Cheung, G. W., and R. B. Rensvold. 2002. "Evaluating Goodness-of-Fit Indexes for Testing Measurement Invariance." *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 9 (2):233–55. doi: [10.1207/S15328007SEM0902](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15328007SEM0902).
- Coffman, D. L., and R. C. MacCallum. 2005. "Using Parcels to Convert Path Analysis Models into Latent Variable Models." *Multivariate Behavioral Research* 40 (2):235–59. doi: [10.1207/s15327906mbr4002\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327906mbr4002_4).
- Cohen, J., P. Cohen, S. G. West, and L. S. Aiken. 2003. *Applied Multiple Regression/ Correlation Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*. 3rd Ed. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- De-Ridder, D. T. D., G. Lensvelt-Mulders, C. Finkenauer, F. M. Stok, and R. F. Baumeister. 2011. "Taking Stock of Self-Control: A Meta-Analysis of How Trait Self-Control Relates to a Wide Range of Behaviors." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 16 (1):76–99. doi: [10.1177/1088868311418749](https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868311418749).
- Dimitrov, D. M. 2010. "Testing for Factorial Invariance in the Context of Construct Validation." *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development* 43 (2):121–49. doi: [10.1177/0748175610373459](https://doi.org/10.1177/0748175610373459).
- Dries, N., R. Van Esbroeck, A. E. M. van Vianen, R. De Cooman, and R. Pepermans. 2012. "Career Adapt-Abilities Scale-Belgium Form: Psychometric Characteristics and Construct Validity." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 80 (3):674–9. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.012](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.012).
- Eder, P., and R. Eisenberger. 2008. "Perceived Organizational Support: Reducing the Negative Influence of Coworker Withdrawal Behavior." *Journal of Management* 34 (1):55–68. doi: [10.1177/0149206307309259](https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206307309259).
- Eisenberger, R., S. Armeli, B. Rexwinkel, P. D. Lynch, and L. Rhoades. 2001. "Reciprocation of Perceived Organizational Support." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 86 (1):42–51. doi: [10.1037/0021-9010.86.1.42](https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.1.42).
- Eisenberger, R., P. Fasolo, and V. Davis-LaMastro. 1990. "Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Diligence, Commitment, and Innovation." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 75 (1):51–9. doi: [10.1037/0021-9010.75.1.51](https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.75.1.51).
- Eisenberger, R., R. Huntington, S. Hutchison, and D. Sowa. 1986. "Perceived Organizational Support." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 71 (3):500–7. doi: [10.4135/9781412956246.n419](https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412956246.n419).
- Eisenberger, R., S. Mindy Krischer, G. Karagonlar, M. G. Gonzalez-Morales, R. E. Wickham, and C., B. Louis. 2014. "The Supervisor POS-LMX-Subordinate POS Chain: Moderation by Reciprocation Wariness and Supervisor's Organisational Embodiment." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 35 (5):635–56. doi: [10.1002/job.1877](https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1877).
- Evans, K. R., T. J. Arnold, and J. A. Grant. 1999. "Combining Service and Sales at the Point of Customer Contact." *Journal of Service Research* 2 (1):34–49. doi: [10.1177/109467059921004](https://doi.org/10.1177/109467059921004).
- Fiori, M., G. Bollmann, and J. Rossier. 2015. "Exploring the Path through Which Career Adaptability Increases Job Satisfaction and Lowers Job Stress: The Role of Affect." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 91 (51):113–21. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2015.08.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2015.08.010).
- Gabbott, M., Y. Tsarenko, and W. H. Mok. 2011. "Emotional Intelligence as a Moderator of Coping Strategies and Service Outcomes in Circumstances of Service Failure." *Journal of Service Research* 14 (2):234–48. doi: [10.1177/1094670510391078](https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670510391078).
- Gabler, C. B., J. L. Ogilvie, A. Rapp, and D. G. Bachrach. 2017. "Is There a Dark Side of Ambidexterity? Implications of Dueling Sales and Service Orientations." *Journal of Service Research* 20 (4):379–92. doi: [10.1177/1094670517712019](https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670517712019).
- Gibson, C. B., J. Birkinshaw, and O. Reilly. 2004. "The Antecedents, Consequences, and Mediating Role of Organizational Ambidexterity." *Academy of Management Journal* 47 (2):209–26. doi: [10.2307/20159573](https://doi.org/10.2307/20159573).
- Guan, Yanjun, Hong Deng, Jiaqing Sun, Yanan Wang, Zijun Cai, Lihui Ye, Ruchunyi Fu, Yang Wang, Shu Zhang, and Yuhui Li. 2013. "Career Adaptability, Job Search Self-Efficacy and Outcomes: A Three-Wave Investigation among Chinese University Graduates." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 83 (3):561–70. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2013.09.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2013.09.003).
- Hau, K. T., and H. Marsh. 2004. "The Use of Item Parcels in Structural Equation Modeling: Non-Normal Data and Small Sample Sizes." *British Journal of Mathematical and Statistical Psychology* 57 (2):327–51. doi: [10.1111/j.2044-8317.2004.tb00142.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8317.2004.tb00142.x).
- He, Z.-L., and P.-K. Wong. 2004. "Exploration vs. Exploitation: An Empirical Test of the Ambidexterity Hypothesis." *Organization Science* 15 (4):481–94. doi: [10.1287/orsc.1040.0078](https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1040.0078).
- Hirschi, A. 2009. "Career Adaptability Development in Adolescence: Multiple Predictors and Effect on Sense of Power and Life Satisfaction." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 74 (2):145–55. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2009.01.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2009.01.002).
- Hirschi, A., A. Herrmann, and A. C. Keller. 2015. "Career Adaptivity, Adaptability, and Adapting: A Conceptual and Empirical Investigation." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 87:1–10. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2014.11.008](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2014.11.008).

- Hou, Z. J., S. A. Leung, X. Li, X. Li, and H. Xu. 2012. "Career Adapt-Abilities Scale-China Form: Construction and Initial Validation." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 80 (3):686–91. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.006).
- Hu, L., and P. M. Bentler. 1999. "Cutoff Criteria for Fit Indexes in Covariance Structure Analysis: Conventional Criteria versus New Alternatives." *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 6 (1):1–55. doi: [10.1080/10705519909540118](https://doi.org/10.1080/10705519909540118).
- Hunter, G. K., and W. D. Perreault. 2007. "Making Sales Technology Effective." *Journal of Marketing* 71 (1):16–34. doi: [10.1509/jmkg.71.1.16](https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.71.1.16).
- Jansen, J. J. P., D. Vera, and M. Crossan. 2009. "Strategic Leadership for Exploration and Exploitation: The Moderating Role of Environmental Dynamism." *Leadership Quarterly* 20 (1):5–18. doi: [10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.11.008](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.11.008).
- Jasmand, C., V. Blazevic, and K. de Ruyter. 2012. "Generating Sales While Providing Service: A Study of Customer Service Representatives' Ambidextrous Behavior." *Journal of Marketing* 76 (1):20–37. doi: [10.1509/jm.10.0448](https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.10.0448).
- Jiang, Z. 2017. "Proactive Personality and Career Adaptability: The Role of Thriving at Work." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 98:85–97. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2016.10.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2016.10.003).
- Johnson, J. S., and S. B. Friend. 2015. "Contingent Cross-Selling and Up-Selling Relationships with Performance and Job Satisfaction: An MOA-Theoretic Examination." *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management* 35 (1):51–71. doi: [10.1080/08853134.2014.940962](https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2014.940962).
- Kao, Y.-L., and C.-F. Chen. 2016. "Antecedents, Consequences and Moderators of Ambidextrous Behaviours among Frontline Employees." *Management Decision* 54 (8):1846–60. doi: [10.1108/MD-05-2015-0187](https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-05-2015-0187).
- Kauppila, O.-P. 2010. "Creating Ambidexterity by Integrating and Balancing Structurally Separate Interorganizational Partnerships." *Strategic Organization* 8 (4):283–312. doi: [10.1177/1476127010387409](https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127010387409).
- Kauppila, O. P., and M. P. Tempelaar. 2016. "The Social-Cognitive Underpinnings of Employees' Ambidextrous Behaviour and the Supportive Role of Group Managers' Leadership." *Journal of Management Studies* 53 (6):1019–44. doi: [10.1111/joms.12192](https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12192).
- Klein, A., and H. Moosbrugger. 2000. "Maximum Likelihood Estimation of Latent Interaction Effects with the LMS Method." *Psychometrika* 65 (4):457–74. doi: [10.1007/BF02296338](https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02296338).
- Koen, J., U. C. Klehe, A. E. M. Van Vianen, J. Zikic, and A. Nauta. 2010. "Job-Search Strategies and Reemployment Quality. The Impact of Career Adaptability." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 77 (1):126–39. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2010.02.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.02.004).
- Konstam, V., S. Celen-Demirtas, S. Tomek, and K. Sweeney. 2015. "Career Adaptability and Subjective Well-Being in Unemployed Emerging Adults: A Promising and Cautionary Tale." *Journal of Career Development* 42 (6):463–77. doi: [10.1177/0894845315575151](https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845315575151).
- Lefkowitz, J. 2010. "Can Professions Contribute to the Reduction of World-Wide Poverty? A Case in Point: Organizational Psychology and Pay Diversity." *International Journal of Psychology* 45 (5):371–5. doi: [10.1080/00207594.2010.492260](https://doi.org/10.1080/00207594.2010.492260).
- Lin, Z. (John), H. Yang, and I. Demirkan. 2007. "The Performance Consequences of Ambidexterity in Strategic Alliance Formations: Empirical Investigation and Computational Theorizing." *Management Science* 53 (10):1645–58. doi: [10.1287/mnsc.1070.0712](https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.1070.0712).
- Little, T. D., W. A. Cunningham, G. Shahar, and K. F. Widaman. 2002. "To Parcel or Not to Parcel: Exploring the Question, Weighting the Merits." *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 9 (2):151–73. doi: [10.1207/S15328007SEM0902](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15328007SEM0902).
- Little, T. D., D. W. Slegers, and N. A. Card. 2006. "A Non-Arbitrary Method of Identifying and Scaling Latent Variables in SEM and MACS Models." *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 13 (1):59–72. doi: [10.1207/s15328007sem1301\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15328007sem1301_3).
- Lynch, P. D., R. Eisenberger, and S. Armeli. 1999. "Perceived Organizational Support: Inferior versus Superior Performance by Wary Employees." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 84 (4):467–483. doi: [10.1037/0021-9010.84.4.467](https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.84.4.467).
- Maggiore, C., C. S. Johnston, F. Krings, K. Massoudi, and J. Rossier. 2013. "The Role of Career Adaptability and Work Conditions on General and Professional Well-Being." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 83 (3):437–49. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2013.07.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2013.07.001).
- Maggiore, C., J. Rossier, and M. L. Savickas. 2017. "Career Adapt-Abilities Scale–Short Form (CAAS-SF): Construction and Validation." *Journal of Career Assessment* 25 (2):312–25. doi: [10.1177/1069072714565856](https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072714565856).
- March, J. G. 1991. "Exploration and Exploitation in Organizational Learning." *Organization Science* 2 (1):71–87. doi: [10.1287/orsc.2.1.71](https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2.1.71).
- Maree, J. G. 2012. "Career Adapt-Abilities Scale-South African Form: Psychometric Properties and Construct Validity." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 80 (3):730–3. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.005).
- Mathieu, J. E., and S. R. Taylor. 2006. "Clarifying Conditions and Decision Points for Mediation Type Inferences in Organizational Behavior." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 27 (8):1031–56. doi: [10.1002/job.406](https://doi.org/10.1002/job.406).
- Mom, T. J. M., F. A. J. van den Bosch, and H. W. Volberda. 2009. "Understanding Variation in Managers' Ambidexterity: Investigating Direct and Interaction Effects of Formal Structural and Personal Coordination Mechanisms." *Organization Science* 20 (4):812–28. doi: [10.1287/orsc.1090.0427](https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1090.0427).
- Mulki, J. P., B. Caemmerer, and G. S. Heggde. 2015. "Leadership Style, Salesperson's Work Effort and Job Performance: The Influence of Power Distance." *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management* 35 (1):3–22. doi: [10.1080/08853134.2014.958157](https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2014.958157).
- Muthén, L. K., and B. O. Muthén. 2015. *Mplus User's Guide*. Los Angeles, CA: Muthén & Muthén.
- Neves, P., and R. Eisenberger. 2014. "Perceived Organizational Support and Risk Taking." *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 29 (2):187–205. doi: [10.1108/JMP-07-2011-0021](https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-07-2011-0021).
- Nijhof, W. J., D. G. Allen, L. M. Shore, R. W. Griffith, P. Amason, M. W. Allen, ... G. L. Blakely. 1999. "Perceived Organizational Support." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 71 (1):500–7. doi: [10.1037/0021-9010.75.1.51](https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.75.1.51).
- Nilforooshan, P., and S. Salimi. 2016. "Career Adaptability as a Mediator between Personality and Career Engagement." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 94:1–10. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2016.02.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2016.02.010).
- Ohme, M., and H. Zacher. 2015. "Job Performance Ratings: The Relative Importance of Mental Ability, Conscientiousness, and Career Adaptability." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 87:161–70. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2015.01.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2015.01.003).
- Olugbade, O. A. 2016. "The Career Adapt-Abilities Scale-Nigeria Form: Psychometric Properties and Construct Validity." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 95–96:111–4. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2016.08.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2016.08.006).
- Parker, S. K. 2014. "Beyond Motivation: Job and Work Design for Development, Health, Ambidexterity, and More." *Annual Review of Psychology* 65 (1):661–91. doi: [10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115208](https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115208).
- Patel, P. C., J. G. Messersmith, and D. P. Lepak. 2013. "Walking the Tightrope: An Assessment of the Relationship Between High-Performance Work Systems and Organizational Ambidexterity." *Academy of Management Journal* 56 (5):1420–42. doi: [10.5465/amj.2011.0255](https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.0255).
- Pituch, K. A., and J. P. Stevens. 2016. *Applied Multivariate Statistics for the Social Sciences*. 6th ed. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Podsakoff, P. M., S. B. MacKenzie, J.-Y. Lee, and N. P. Podsakoff. 2003. "Common Method Biases in Behavioral Research: A Critical Review of the Literature and Recommended Remedies." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 88 (5):879–903. doi: [10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879](https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879).
- Podsakoff, P. M., S. B. MacKenzie, and N. P. Podsakoff. 2012. "Sources of Method Bias in Social Science Research and Recommendations on How to Control It." *Annual Review of Psychology* 63 (1):539–69. doi: [10.1146/annurev-psych-120710-100452](https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-120710-100452).
- Preacher, K. J., and A. F. Hayes. 2008. "Asymptotic and Resampling Strategies for Assessing and Comparing Indirect Effects in Multiple Mediator Models." *Behavior Research Methods* 40 (3):879–91. doi: [10.3758/BRM.40.3.879](https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.40.3.879).

- Raisch, S., and J. Birkinshaw. 2008. "Organizational Ambidexterity: Antecedents, Outcomes, and Moderators." *Journal of Management* 34 (3):375–409. doi: [10.1177/0149206308316058](https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308316058).
- Rapp, A. A., D. G. Bachrach, K. E. Flaherty, D. E. Hughes, A. Sharma, and C. M. Voorhees. 2017. "The Role of the Sales-Service Interface and Ambidexterity in the Evolving Organization." *Journal of Service Research* 20 (1):59–75. doi: [10.1177/1094670516679274](https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670516679274).
- Reilly, C. A. O., and M. L. Tushman. 2008. "Ambidexterity as a Dynamic Capability: Resolving the Innovator's Dilemma." *Research in Organizational Behavior* 28:185–206. doi: [10.1016/j.riob.2008.06.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2008.06.002).
- Rhoades, L., and R. Eisenberger. 2002. "Perceived Organizational Support: A Review of the Literature." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87 (4):698–714. doi: [10.1037//0021-9010.87.4.698](https://doi.org/10.1037//0021-9010.87.4.698).
- Rhoades, L., R. Eisenberger, and S. Armeli. 2001. "Affective Commitment to the Organization: The Contribution of Perceived Organizational Support." *The Journal of Applied Psychology* 86 (5): 825–36. doi: [10.1037/0021-9010.86.5.825](https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.5.825).
- Rudolph, C. W., K. N. Lavigne, and H. Zacher. 2017. "Career Adaptability: A Meta-Analysis of Relationships with Measures of Adaptivity, Adapting Responses, and Adaptation Results." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 98:17–34. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2016.09.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2016.09.002).
- Sass, D. A. 2011. "Testing Measurement Invariance and Comparing Latent Factor Means within a Confirmatory Factor Analysis Framework." *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment* 29 (4):347–63. doi: [10.1177/0734282911406661](https://doi.org/10.1177/0734282911406661).
- Savickas, M. L. 1997. "Career Adaptability: An Integrative Construct for Life-Span, Life-Space Theory." *The Career Development Quarterly* 45 (3):247–59. doi: [10.1002/j.2161-0045.1997.tb00469.x](https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-0045.1997.tb00469.x).
- Savickas, M. L. 2002. "Career Construction: A Developmental Theory of Vocational Behavior." In *Career Choice and Development*, edited by D. Brown and Associates, vol. 4. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Savickas, M. L. 2005. "The Theory and Practice of Career Construction." In *Career Development and Counseling: Putting Theory and Research to Work*, edited by S. D. Brown and R. W. Lent, 1st ed. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Savickas, M. L. 2013. "Career Construction Theory and Practice." In *Career Development and Counseling: Putting Theory and Research to Work*, S. D. Brown and R. W. Lent, 2nd ed. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Savickas, Mark L., Laura Nota, Jerome Rossier, Jean-Pierre Dauwalder, Maria Eduarda Duarte, Jean Guichard, Salvatore Soresi, Raoul Van Esbroeck, and Annelies E. M. van Vianen. 2009. "Life Designing: A Paradigm for Career Construction in the 21st Century." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 75 (3):239–50. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2009.04.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2009.04.004).
- Savickas, M. L., and E. J. Porfeli. 2012. "Career Adapt-Abilities Scale: Construction, Reliability, and Measurement Equivalence across 13 Countries." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 80 (3):661–73. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.011](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.011).
- Settoon, R. P., N. Bennett, and R. C. Liden. 1996. "Social Exchange in Organizations: Perceived Organizational Support, Leader-Member Exchange, and Employee Reciprocity." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 81 (3):219–27. doi: [10.1037/0021-9010.81.3.219](https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.81.3.219).
- Šverko, I., and T. Babarović. 2016. "Integrating Personality and Career Adaptability into Vocational Interest Space." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 94 (1229):89–103. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2016.02.017](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2016.02.017).
- Tangney, J. P., R. F. Baumeister, and A. L. Boone. 2004. "High Self-Control Predicts Good Adjustment, Less Pathology, Better Grades, and Interpersonal Success." *Journal of Personality* 72 (2):271–324. doi: [10.1111/j.0022-3506.2004.00263.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-3506.2004.00263.x).
- Tolentino, L. R., P. R. J. M. Garcia, S. L. D. Restubog, P. Bordia, and R. L. Tang. 2013. "Validation of the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale and an Examination of a Model of Career Adaptation in the Philippine Context." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 83 (3):410–8. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2013.06.013](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2013.06.013).
- Tolentino, L. R., V. Sedoglavich, V. N. Lu, P. R. J. M. Garcia, and S. L. D. Restubog. 2014. "The Role of Career Adaptability in Predicting Entrepreneurial Intentions: A Moderated Mediation Model." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 85 (3):403–12. doi: [10.1016/j.jvb.2014.09.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2014.09.002).
- Turner, N., J. Swart, and H. Maylor. 2013. "Mechanisms for Managing Ambidexterity: A Review and Research Agenda." *International Journal of Management Reviews* 15 (3):317–32. doi: [10.1111/j.1468-2370.2012.00343.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2012.00343.x).
- Tushman, Michael L., and Charles A. O'Reilly. 1996. "Ambidextrous Organizations: Managing Evolutionary and Revolutionary Change." *California Management Review* 38 (4):8–30. doi: [10.1080/09652540903536982](https://doi.org/10.1080/09652540903536982).
- World Bank. 2018. *Third Ghana Economic Update: Agriculture as an Engine of Growth and Jobs Creation*. Washington, DC: doi: [10.1093/nar/gkr1098](https://doi.org/10.1093/nar/gkr1098).
- Xu, H., and T. J. G. Tracey. 2015. "Ambiguity Tolerance with Career Indecision: An Examination of the Mediation Effect of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy." *Journal of Career Assessment* 23 (4): 519–32. doi: [10.1177/1069072714553073](https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072714553073).
- Yoon, J., N.-C. Han, and Y.-J. Seo. 1996. "Sense of Control among Hospital Employees: An Assessment of Choice Process, Empowerment, and Buffering Hypotheses." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 26 (8):686–716. doi: [10.1111/j.1559-1816.1996.tb02739.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.1996.tb02739.x).
- Yu, T., P. G. Patterson, and K. de Ruyter. 2013. "Achieving Service-Sales Ambidexterity." *Journal of Service Research* 16 (1):52–66. doi: [10.1177/1094670512453878](https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670512453878).
- Zacher, H., A. J. Robinson, and K. Rosing. 2016. "Ambidextrous Leadership and Employees' Self-Reported Innovative Performance: The Role of Exploration and Exploitation Behaviors." *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 50 (1):24–46. doi: [10.1002/jocb.66](https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.66).
- Zacher, H., and K. Rosing. 2015. "Ambidextrous Leadership and Team Innovation." *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 36 (1): 54–68. doi: [10.1108/LODJ-11-2012-0141](https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-11-2012-0141).
- Zimmerman, B. J. 2000. "Self-Efficacy: An Essential Motive to Learn." *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 25 (1):82–91. doi: [10.1006/ceps.1999.1016](https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1016).

## Appendix: Measures

### Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS) (Savickas and Porfeli 2012).

#### Career concern

1. Thinking about what my future will be like.
2. Realizing that today's choices shape my future.
3. Preparing for the future.
4. Becoming aware of the educational and vocational choices that I must make.
5. Planning how to achieve my goals.
6. Concerned about my career.

#### Career control

1. Keeping upbeat.
2. Making decisions by myself.
3. Taking responsibility for my actions.
4. Sticking up for my beliefs.
5. Counting on myself.
6. Doing what's right for me.

#### Career curiosity

1. Exploring my surroundings.
2. Looking for opportunities to grow as a person.
3. Investigating options before making a choice.
4. Observing different ways of doing things.
5. Probing deeply into questions I have.
6. Becoming curious about new opportunities.

#### Career confidence

1. Performing tasks efficiently.

2. Taking care to do things well.
3. Learning new skills.
4. Working up to my ability.
5. Overcoming obstacles.
6. Solving problems.

**Individual-level ambidexterity** (Kauppila and Tempelaar 2016; Mom, van den Bosch, and Volberda 2009).

1. Searching for new possibilities with respect to products/services or markets.
2. Evaluating diverse options with respect to products/services, processes, or markets.
3. Focusing on strong renewal of products/services or processes.
4. Activities requiring some adaptability by you.
5. Activities requiring you to learn new skills or knowledge.
6. Activities of which you have accumulated a lot of experience.
7. Activities that you carry out as if they were routine.
8. Activities of which it is clear to you how to conduct them.
9. Activities primarily focused on achieving short-term goals.
10. Activities that you can properly conduct by using your present knowledge.

**Survey of perceived organizational support (SPOS)** (Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990; Eisenberger et al. 1986).

1. The organization values my contribution to its well-being.
2. The organization fails to appreciate any extra effort from me. (R)
3. The organization would ignore any complaint from me. (R)
4. The organization really cares about my well-being.
5. Even if I did the best job possible, the organization would fail to notice.
6. The organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.
7. The organization shows very little concern for me. (R)
8. The organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work.
9. R = reverse-coded items.

**Service performance** (Jasmand, Blazevic, and de Ruyter 2012; Kao and Chen 2016).

1. Compared to my colleagues, I am more efficient.
2. Compared to my colleagues, I deliver better service quality.
3. Having identified the customer's exact problem with a product, I solve it in a reliable way.
4. I usually listen attentively to customers in order to take appropriate action to handle their concerns regarding their products.
5. I usually pay attention to the customers' questions about their products to answer them correctly.
6. Making sure that I fully understand the reason why the customers contact me allows me to better help them with their questions and concerns regarding their products.