The Predictors of Calling and the Role of Career Satisfaction in Working Adults

Kari Ann Leavell

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The University of Southern Mississippi

THE PREDICTORS OF CALLING AND THE ROLE OF
CAREER SATISFACTION IN WORKING ADULTS

by

Kari Ann Leavell

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
ABSTRACT

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by Kari Ann Leavell

August 2013

A significant amount of time in adult life is spent working. Individuals enter into their world of work by many circumstances, including feeling called to a given career or viewing their work as a calling. The psychological construct of calling has been shown to have considerable implications for career-related outcomes, including career satisfaction. Further, satisfaction with work has demonstrated a considerable impact on more global areas such as satisfaction with and quality of life, meaning in life, and religiousness. Increased understanding of the construct of calling and its contribution to career development and career-related outcomes can clarify how individuals’ experiences with their careers can be improved through specific, calling-oriented interventions. In a sample of working adults from diverse career fields, calling was investigated as a predictor of career satisfaction along with religiousness, work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment. Hierarchical multiple regression revealed that calling was not the best predictor of career satisfaction in the current study. However, calling was found to explain a meaningful amount of variance in career satisfaction after examination of structure coefficients (Courville & Thompson, 2001). Alternative predictors of career satisfaction were identified, including career commitment and meaning in life, as well as demographic variables such as one’s age, household income, length of time invested in one’s job, and educational background. While additional exploration of calling is
needed, the present study lends unique and compelling evidence to support its utility in relation to career satisfaction in populations of working adults.
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by

Kari Ann Leavell

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The average person spends at least one-third of his or her life working. Therefore, the choice of where and how to engage the world of work is something that most people face at some point in their lives. Whether it is a goal from childhood, a decision made in college, or a mid-life career change, there are many people who choose a career based on an identifiable impetus such as a calling. Research suggests that 30 to 50% of people report viewing their career as a calling (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997). The literature implicates calling as a contributor to job and career satisfaction (e.g., Duffy, Bott, Allan, Torrey & Dik, 2012; Peterson, Park, Hall, & Seligman, 2009; Wrzesniewskiet al., 1997), and career satisfaction has demonstrated a considerable effect on individuals’ overall life satisfaction and well-being (e.g., Burke, 2001; Lounsbury, Park, Sundstrom, Williamson, & Pemberton, 2004; Robert, Young, & Kelly, 2006). Thus, calling offers a unique window through which job and career satisfaction can be influenced, thereby increasing broader and more global indicators of health and well-being.

Although the literature on calling is sparse, this area is becoming an increasingly popular area of research, especially within the field of Vocational Psychology. Researchers and practitioners are gaining more insight into the contribution that calling makes to career development and career-related outcomes. With this increased knowledge, career counselors can begin to develop and employ specific, calling-oriented interventions in order to improve individuals’ experiences with the world of work and the world in general.
The concept of calling has roots in Christianity (e.g., serving the will of God; Steger, Pickering, Shin, & Dik, 2010) but has evolved to include a broader, more secular definition that involves finding a sense of purpose or deriving meaning from work (e.g., Dik & Duffy, 2009). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine variables thought to be associated with calling and career satisfaction, including religiousness, meaning in life, work orientation, and career commitment. Given this history, calling is undoubtedly related to religion and spirituality (e.g., Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger, & Gorsuch, 2003; Weber 1958), which are constructs that have experienced ebb and flow in psychological research. Meaning in life is another construct that has a direct relationship to the more recent definitions of calling, which center on the meaning or purpose one finds in one’s work and life in general (e.g., Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dik, 2009; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Steger et al., 2010). When individuals are driven by the work itself (i.e., intrinsic work motivation), they often take an intrinsic approach to other areas of their life, which sheds additional light on how job, career, and overall life satisfaction can be increased (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). Individuals become committed to their careers early in their adult development and may even feel called to a career path since childhood; this career commitment can impact individuals’ jobs, careers, and overall life satisfaction (Dik, 2009). In order for career-related interventions to be developed, researchers must first increase their understanding of calling and its relatedness to career satisfaction, then further define the structure of calling by beginning to identify its predictors.

The initial focus of this project was to elucidate the composition of calling, and determine whether calling is a unique construct beyond the variables with which it is
closely related according to the literature (i.e., religiousness, meaning in life, work orientation, and career commitment). As the project evolved it acquired a dual focus in which calling was examined as a predictor of career satisfaction in order to establish calling as an important variable in impacting career satisfaction. However, due to the ways in which the analyses were developed a priori, the initial regression (calling as the dependent variable) was not completed since it was not identified as a statistically significant predictor according to the regression results.

Calling

Use of the term “calling” originated during the Protestant Reformation in which following one’s calling, or task assigned by God, was “under all circumstances the only way to live acceptably by God” (Weber, 1958, p. 32). More specifically, teachings of Calvinism stated that individuals have both a divine calling to serve God and a calling to engage a career through which salvation can be earned by glorifying God in work (Spilka et al., 2003). Further, this concept of “protestant ethic” proposed by Weber (1958) suggested that the harder one worked and the more one reinvested rather than squandered earnings, the more assured one was of a place in heaven. However, the meaning of calling has evolved significantly over time to include interpretations outside of a strictly Christian or religious context.

There are many definitions for calling in the literature, and they range in focus from more religiously- and God-oriented contexts to broader and more secular meanings that transcend any religious connotation. Table 1 illustrates a collection of definitions for calling that have been used in the psychological literature.
Table 1

*Definitions of Calling*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barnhart &amp; Barnhart (1994, p. 284)</td>
<td>A Spiritual or divine summons to a special service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davison &amp; Caddell (1994, p. 137)</td>
<td>The need to glorify God in all one does.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrzesniewski et al. (1997, p. 22)</td>
<td>[Work] for the fulfillment that doing the work brings to the individual…usually seen as socially valuable—an end in itself—involving activities that may, but need not be, pleasurable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colozzi &amp; Colozzi (2000, p. 84)</td>
<td>The spiritual, that transcendent whisper that somehow gently reminds us who we are and what we are called to do. … The rich, simple, and complex “stuff” that move people from places deep within to a state of <em>being</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalton (2001, p. 20)</td>
<td>A special summons by God to pursue a life role or task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall &amp; Chandler (2005, p. 160)</td>
<td>Work that a person perceives as his purpose in life; work one was meant to do.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Unfortunately, the absence of an agreed upon definition impedes the process of expanding the knowledge base on calling and how it relates to psychology. However, Dik and Duffy (2009) developed a comprehensive and culturally neutral operational definition of calling that is also relevant to counseling practice:

A calling is a transcendent summons, experienced as originating beyond the self, to approach a particular life role in a manner oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds other-oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation. (p. 427)

This definition is culturally broad in that it is not limited to any particular religious or spiritual belief system, which recognizes that any individual can feel called to their career. Further, Dik and Duffy’s (2009) definition outlines three components seen across the literature: 1) calling is an external phenomenon that can stem from a plethora of sources, 2) it serves to generate meaning and purpose for the individual, and 3) it positively impacts the broader community in some way.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Elangovan, Pinder, &amp; McLean (2010, p. 430)</td>
<td>A course of action in pursuit of pro-social intentions embodying the convergence of an individual’s sense of what he or she would like to do, should do, and actually does.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrzesniewski, Dekas, &amp; Rosso (2009, p. 115)</td>
<td>A meaningful beckoning toward activities that are morally, socially, and personally significant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hall and Chandler (2005) suggested that for an individual to recognize his or her calling, he or she must have a very clearly defined sense of personal identity and self-awareness, or self-knowledge. Thus, when individuals discover their calling through the evaluation of their self-knowledge, they are able to live authentically. Also, calling is not a static idea but is considered more of a process or standard by which individuals evaluate their current circumstances for purpose and meaning (Dik & Duffy, 2009).

Elangovan, Pinder, and McLean (2010) compared calling to Maslow’s construct of self-actualization, claiming that self-actualization refers to individuals’ fulfillment of their potential, while calling can serve as the motivation to strive toward their potential.

The constructs of calling and vocation are historically tied to one another in the literature. They have maintained similar definitions over the years and are even considered synonyms by Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Vocation is derived from the Latin word, vocatio, which means a call, summons, or invitation. Dik and Duffy explicate vocation as an internal approach to one’s life roles, which enables a sense of meaning and purpose to be obtained. Therefore, vocation appears to refer more to the inward qualities of an individual such as personality variables (e.g., optimism) or the ability or tendency to cognitively restructure (e.g., reframe), which may fundamentally differ from individuals endorsing a calling. Dik and Duffy’s (2009) definition of calling is gaining increasing usage in the vocational psychology literature; thus, the term calling and Dik and Duffy’s definition will exclusively be used for the current study.

The construct of calling has been theoretically and statistically linked to many constructs related to mental health, well-being, and career-related outcomes (e.g., Dik & Duffy, 2009; Lounsbury et al., 2004; Peterson et al., 2009; Robert et al., 2006;
Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Additionally, Dik and Duffy (2009) assert that individuals are not limited to religiously-oriented occupations or careers with more obvious prosocial characteristics, such as teaching or social services, in order to experience a calling. They maintain that calling may serve as the approach by which individuals engage the world of work, rather than the content of the work itself. Further, the societal contribution or meaning derived from a given career that one views as a calling may not be as readily apparent as others (e.g., garbage collector versus priest).

*Calling and Vocational Psychology*

Research has found relationships between calling and many career-related variables often studied in Vocational Psychology such as job performance and satisfaction (e.g., Dik, 2009; Peterson et al, 2009; Wrzesniewskiet al., 1997), work zest (Peterson et al., 2009), decision self-efficacy (Duffy & Blustein, 2005), career coherence (Lips-Wiersma, 2002), career commitment (Serow, Eaker, & Ciechalski, 1992), and overall life satisfaction (e.g., Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Serow et al., 1992; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). For example, teachers who viewed their work as a calling expressed a desire to teach longer and had a greater appreciation of the positive social components of their careers than those who did not feel a calling (Serow, 1994; Serow et al., 1992). Individuals who view their careers as a calling typically have more career-related metacompetencies, such as self-awareness and adaptability, which enable the individual to make career changes and improvements based on their perceived calling (Hall & Chandler, 2005). A sample of zookeepers showed that degree of occupational identification, meaning and purpose derived from work, and sense of moral duty varied based on the extent to which they felt called to their work (Bunderson & Thompson,
Thus, viewing one’s work or career as a calling is related to many positive career outcomes.

Calling is endorsed not only by working adults, but also by college student populations. Duffy and Sedlacek (2007) found that 35% of their undergraduate sample endorsed the presence of calling in their lives. Additional findings from this study demonstrated a positive relationship between life satisfaction and meaning in life. Further, Duffy and Sedlacek (2007) presented significant correlations between calling and career decidedness, choice comfort, self-clarity (self-knowledge), and choice-work salience (importance of future work/career at the time of study). Also, the presence of calling was inversely related to career indecisiveness and lack of educational information (e.g., options knowledge). In Duffy and Sedlacek’s 2010 study, 40% of college students endorsed being called to their career. Further, the more advanced the students in their education (i.e., post-bachelor’s degrees) the more likely they were to endorse a calling.

Despite the history and the recent surge of studies with calling as a primary variable of interest, no known research has addressed the structure of calling in attempts to determine its unique nature as a construct and its ability to predict outcomes such as career satisfaction beyond other related variables. In order to address the issue of whether calling is a unique construct or just another name for what has previously been called spirituality, work motivation, meaning in life, or career commitment, the current study is proposed. The present study will examine the relationships between calling and the variables described in detail below (i.e., religiousness, work motivation, meaning in life, career commitment, and career satisfaction), as these variables have been those previously identified as correlates or possible correlates of calling. The current study of
Calling is from a Vocational Psychology perspective within a sample of working adults from diverse career fields.

**Calling and Religion/Spirituality**

Religion, spirituality, and calling are clearly linked in the literature. Intrinsically religious individuals often translate everyday events into religious terms in order to incorporate their faith more holistically into all aspects of their lives (Emmons, 2000). Thus, one way of viewing calling in a religious context is through the sanctification of everyday events. For example, marriage may be seen as a covenant and a job translated as a calling, or what one was meant to do. In a qualitative study of African American undergraduates who endorsed using their belief system to cope with challenges related to academics and career development, many reported that they also believed that there was a career path planned for them by God (Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainor, & Lewis-Coles, 2006). Therefore, the construct of calling exists in the literature and relates to religion and spirituality without having been labeled as calling.

Religious salience, or the importance that people attach to their belief-system, has been found to predict how individuals might view their work. In one of the first studies to examine calling, Davidson and Caddell (1994) found that religiousness (as measured by religious salience) was positively related to viewing work as a calling rather than as a career or job. These findings suggested that sense of faith affects how people view their occupations. Thus, deeper and more internalized religious or spiritual belief systems cause “some people who are already inclined to think of work as important to take the additional step of viewing it as a calling, not just a career” (Davidson & Caddell, 1994, p. 145). Further, Duffy and Sedlacek (2010) explicitly examined the relationship between
calling and intrinsic religiousness as defined by Gorsuch and McPherson (1989). Their findings, although weak (1% of the variance), established a positive relationship between the presence of calling and religiousness. Sense of calling correlated with interpersonal and intrapersonal religious commitment in a study examining career development strivings, or the activities in which one is engaging for his or her career development (Dik, Sargent, & Steger, 2008). Based on the research in this area, it is hypothesized that calling and intrinsic religiousness will be positively correlated.

However, despite calling’s historic association with religion, the literature has demonstrated that calling is not limited only to individuals with a religious or spiritual worldview. Steger et al. (2010) demonstrated that calling could be considered from a broader, more secular perspective, dependent less on individuals’ religiousness and more on their efforts to derive meaning and purpose from their work. Further, Hunter, Dik, and Banning (2010) asked college students to define and describe how they see calling. Themes from the qualitative analysis included “guiding force” and “altruism” (Hunter et al., 2010, p. 182), which are consistent with Dik and Duffy’s (2009) conceptualization of calling. The range of labels composing the guiding force theme (e.g., God’s will, destiny, feeling) elucidates the universality of calling and further supports both the sacred and secular applications of calling. Thus, calling is not a construct reduced to religious belief and practice. However, the extent to which religiosity or spirituality predicts or accounts for variance in calling is unknown, and one of the goals of the current study is to fill that gap. Therefore, based on the literature, it was hypothesized that calling will be positively correlated with intrinsic religiousness.
Calling and Work Motivation

Work motivation has been indirectly tied to calling in the literature. For example, college students who viewed their careers as a calling endorsed a greater desire for challenge and reported experiencing more enjoyment from their work (Steger et al., 2010). Challenge and enjoyment are the two primary components of the intrinsic work motivation scale (Amabile, Hill, Hennessey, & Tighe, 1994). This research is congruent with the idea that individuals who view their work as a calling more deeply engage in their work and also derive a sense of meaning, value, and worth from their work. Dik et al. (2008) found that a sense of calling was correlated with intrinsic work motivation in their effort to identify a model for assessing goals and motivations for individuals engaging the career development process. Also, intrinsic work motivation significantly predicted purpose in life over and above leisure-related intrinsic motivation; thus, work seems to be more important for determining one’s purpose than non-work activities (Byrd, Hageman, & Belle Isle, 2007). Since generating and identifying purpose are primary pieces of the definition of calling, and intrinsic work motivation is so closely tied to purpose in work, it would seem that an individual’s level of intrinsic work motivation would provide evidence for whether or not she views her career as a calling. Therefore, based on the limited research in this area, it was hypothesized that calling will positively correlate with intrinsic work motivation.

Calling and Meaning in Life

Research has identified direct and positive relationships between meaning in life and calling. In their attempts to identify a model for assessing goals and motivations for individuals engaging the career development process, Dik et al. (2008) found that calling
was correlated with both meaning in life and religious commitment. Steger and Dik’s (2009) study correlated calling and meaning in life in a sample of college students. Additionally, in a study examining group differences and correlations between calling and other variables in a sample of college students, calling and meaning in life were moderately correlated, and meaning in life accounted for 15% of the variance in presence of calling (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010). In a sample of zookeepers, viewing their work as a calling was a dominant way in which they assigned meaning to their work (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). Even in *dirty jobs* where individuals perform tasks that most people may find disgusting or degrading, workers have endorsed a calling to their careers, which enables them to derive and experience meaning from their work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Meaning in life has even been found to serve as a mediator between calling and psychological well-being, indicating that individuals who endorse a calling to their careers tend to experience greater psychological well-being as a result of a greater sense of meaning in life (Steger et al., 2010). Based on the research in this area, it was hypothesized that calling and meaning in life will be positively correlated.

*Calling and Career Commitment*

Research suggests a relationship between viewing one’s career as a calling and endorsing strong commitment to that career. For example, a study of teachers revealed that teachers with a sense of calling as their professional orientation toward their career tend to have greater commitment toward teaching (Serow et al., 1992). Similarly, another study of teachers indicated that those who felt called to their careers were more enthusiastic about the role, more willing to accept challenges and sacrifices associated
with the job, and endorsed more overall commitment to teaching as their career (Serow, 1994). Bunderson and Thompson’s (2009) study of zookeepers revealed that, as a group, they tend to endorse feeling called to their careers despite the high level of education and low pay associated with the job. Further, for those who viewed their career as a calling, their career commitment as conceptualized by occupational identification, moral duty, occupational importance, organizational duty, and willingness to sacrifice personal time for career, increased as sense of calling increased.

Duffy, Dik, and Steger (2011) examined career commitment as a potential mediator between calling and other known work-related outcomes, specifically job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and withdrawal intentions. They found career commitment to fully mediate, or explain the relationship between, calling and job satisfaction. Thus, career commitment is an important variable in understanding the relationship between calling and career and job-related outcomes. However, it is unknown if career commitment predicts or accounts for any of the variance in calling, or how it is related to a more general and broader measurement of contentment with one’s career choice (i.e., career satisfaction), rather than satisfaction with a current job.

Understanding the extent to which career commitment contributes to calling may further explicate the structure of calling, as well as the relationship between calling and career satisfaction.

**Calling and Career/Job Satisfaction**

Considering that 33 to 50% of individuals view their careers as a calling (Dik, 2009; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), calling has been linked to job and career satisfaction. One such study asked employed adults how they viewed their work: as a *job* to make
money, a moderately fulfilling career that involves constant efforts toward promotion, or a calling that serves a means to an end and that contributes to the greater good (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Results indicated that those who viewed their work as a calling endorsed greater job and life satisfaction, better overall health, and fewer days of work missed. In a similar study, Peterson et al. (2009) examined the relationships between calling, work satisfaction, and the construct of zest, the dispositional enthusiasm that accompanies one’s life experiences. The results from a diverse sample of adults in the U.S. demonstrated that individuals who endorsed viewing their work as a calling reported the most zest, as well as more work and life satisfaction. Additionally, Robert et al. (2006) showed that the aspects of religion and spirituality that have been related to calling (e.g., purpose, meaning, transcendence) are also significantly related to job satisfaction.

In contrast to the research showing the increased job satisfaction that often results from the presence of calling, Elangovan et al. (2010) suggest that calling can negatively impact individuals’ sense of achievement and purpose. The ongoing or unfinished aspects of a job or career field to which one feels called may incite a sense of dissatisfaction with the end result, or even one’s performance in meeting a goal or standard. For example, individuals feeling called to careers in social activism such as ending national or world hunger or expanding gay rights may feel less satisfied with their jobs or themselves despite actual efforts made toward a given cause.

Defining the Variables of Interest

Research has established identifiable relationships between calling and each of the following variables of interest in the current study: religiousness, work motivation,
meaning in life, career commitment, and career satisfaction. Each of these variables was examined as a potential correlate and predictor of both calling and career satisfaction based on the histories of these variables within the fields of Psychology, Vocational Psychology, and mental health. Thus, the nature of each of these variables is presented in more detail below.

Religion and Spirituality

The relationship between calling and religion and spirituality is empirically strong (e.g., Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Dik et al., 2008). Although calling is becoming a more secular construct that is no longer defined by religion and spirituality, it was originally derived from religious doctrine, as mentioned earlier. Since over 90% of Americans identify themselves as believers in God, and a majority of these individuals endorse that they engage in religious practice (e.g., prayer; Gallup & Lindsay, 1999), religiousness will be evaluated as a predictor of calling for the current study. Spilka et al. (2003) suggest that more books have been written regarding topics of religion and spirituality than any other topic in history. Religion can be universally characterized by specific behaviors, beliefs, and experiences, which vary as a function of many different demographic levels (Wax, 1984). Historically, the term “spirituality” has been considered a broader, more “fuzzy” alternative to the word religion (Spilka, 1993, p. 1). However, the terms have become better differentiated in recent literature, demonstrating important nuances. Hill and Pargament (2003) describe religion as institutional and traditional, which is often associated with organized worship and a structured belief system. Spirituality can be conceptualized as a more subjective and emotional sense of faith through which individuals search for and find meaning and purpose. Lips-Wiersma
(2002) summarized that spirituality is often regarded as a meaning-making construct. An institutional framework is not required; this existential journey may involve a specific God or may focus on the notion and significance of a more generally-defined higher power (Spilka et al., 2003). Although distinctly different, religion and spirituality are not polarized ideas, as spirituality may lead to the discovery of and adherence to a particular religion, and religion may be the means through which an individual experiences spirituality (Hill & Pargament, 2003).

In addition to defining the constructs, the measurement of religion and spirituality also poses psychometric obstacles. Due to the relatedness of the constructs, rarely do measures of religiosity or spirituality demonstrate evidence of discriminant validity required for clear differentiation of constructs. For example, the Spiritual Experience Index (Genia, 1997) correlated with Allport’s measure of intrinsic religiosity at .84 (Spilka et al., 2003), a correlation that suggests evidence for convergent validity of the constructs more than it serves to differentiate them. Additionally, measures of spirituality have also positively correlated with intrinsic religiousness, including the Spiritual Orientation Inventory (Scioli et al., 1997) and the Spiritual Transcendence Index (Seidlitz et al., 2002). Further, measures of extrinsic religiosity have poor psychometric properties and are rarely assessed. Thus, the current study will employ a measure of intrinsic religiousness that has established adequate psychometric properties and demonstrated significant usage across the literature.

Religion and spirituality in vocational psychology. Psychological research with religion and spirituality has traditionally been focused on physical and mental health. The influence of religion and spirituality on health is considered “largely beneficial”
(Seybold & Hill, 2001, p. 21), with identified health benefits such as lowered rates of heart disease, cirrhosis, cancer mortality, and increased overall longevity in religious and spiritual individuals (Larson, Swyers, & McCullough, 1998). Research has shown that individuals who engage in higher levels of religious practice endorsed greater sense of subjective health (Ferraro & Albrecht-Jensen, 1991) and live longer (McCullough, Hoyt, Larson, Koenig, & Thoresen, 2000). Research also identifies components of religion and spirituality, such as prayer, religious social support, and religious meaning-making, as protective factors against mental health issues (Larson, Sherrill, Lyons, & Craigie, 1992).

Research on religion and spirituality has branched out beyond health and has emerged as a popular topic in the vocational psychology literature. In the college student population, religion and spirituality play an especially important role in career decision-making and development (Colozzi & Colozzi, 2000). A qualitative study of undergraduates showed that students perceived their spiritual struggles and spiritual growth to directly affect their career development (Royce-Davis & Stewart, 2000). They also acknowledged that spirituality played a salient role at different points of the career decision-making process, especially during the identification and incorporation of their personal values in their professional development. Constantine et al. (2006) found similar results in a qualitative study of African American undergraduates, in which participants reported using religion and spirituality to cope with difficulties encountered in their academic and career development. Duffy and Blustein (2005) found that religion and spirituality each predicted career decision self-efficacy in a sample of college students. A qualitative study of working adults identified spirituality as an impetus for choosing careers focused toward social service and for looking to their careers to find
meaning and purpose (Lips-Wiersma, 2002). Robert et al. (2006) surveyed working adults and found religious and spiritual well-being to be positively correlated with job satisfaction. Thus, the study of religion and spirituality has demonstrated a significant impact on career development, career satisfaction, and vocational psychology overall.

Intrinsic religiousness. Much of the research on intrinsic religiousness can be traced back to Allport and his conceptualization of intrinsic and extrinsic religious sentiment. Intrinsically oriented individuals are thought to find motivation for life through their beliefs (Allport & Ross, 1967; Hill, 2005), which also provides the framework through which life is understood (Donahue, 1985). These beliefs are generalized to all areas of their experience and are prioritized above all other needs. Gorsuch (1997) clarifies that intrinsicness is not based on the beliefs or norms of any one religion, but is grounded in the motivation inspired by any given belief system. Thus, intrinsic religiousness can be found in people across religious denominations, religions, and cultures. For example, both English-speaking Christians and Asian non-Christians exemplified intrinsic religiousness for their respective religions (Gorsuch, 1994).

Conversely, extrinsically oriented individuals hold a more instrumental and practical view of religion in which adherence is meant to be self-serving (Allport & Ross, 1967). The application of one’s belief system to life experience is selective or compartmentalized and is meant only for personal gain (Allport, 1950), rather than serving as the guide for living life that characterizes the intrinsically oriented individual. In short, “the extrinsically motivated person uses his religion, whereas the intrinsically motivated lives his religion” (Allport & Ross, 1967, p. 434).
In a study that attempted to differentiate intrinsic religiousness from secular, more global measures of intrinsic motivations (i.e., intrinsic work motivation and intrinsic leisure motivation), intrinsic religiousness significantly predicted satisfaction with life, purpose in life, and self-efficacy (Byrd et al., 2007). The absence of correlation between intrinsic religiousness and intrinsic work and leisure motivation (secular measures) indicated intrinsic religiousness as a distinct construct. Additionally, intrinsic religiousness was the strongest predictor of purpose in life, which appears to have direct implications for the relationship between intrinsic religiousness and calling, based on calling as defined by Dik and Duffy (2009). Intrinsic religiosity is also directly related to attitudes toward seeking professional help and to gender, with women endorsing higher levels of intrinsic religiosity (Miller & Eells, 1998). Intrinsic religiosity has demonstrated buffering effects against existential thoughts and fears about death after a “naturally occurring reminder of mortality” in the context of terror management theory (Jonas & Fischer, 2006, p. 558). Therefore, intrinsic religiousness will serve as the primary variable for representing religion and spirituality in the examination of calling.

*Intrinsic Work Motivation*

The driving factors that motivate people for engaging certain tasks refer to the concept of motivation orientation. Behaviors driven by the absence of any reward from an activity except the activity itself is known as intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1971). This orientation is also known as “labor of love,” in which individuals engage activities for the sheer fact that they find them satisfying in their own right (Amabile et al., 1994, p. 950). On the contrary, extrinsic motivation refers to behavior driven by rewards external to the activity, but that will knowingly result from the behavior (Deci, 1971). The concept of
motivation orientation has been studied since the height of behaviorism and learning theories, which focused on how external rewards affected intrinsic motivation in animals (e.g., Harlow, Harlow, & Meyer, 1950). As research with motivation orientation expanded to human subjects, a continued emphasis was placed on intrinsic motivation and identifying the reinforcements that perpetuate intrinsic orientations. For example, Deci (1971) investigated the effect that external rewards had on individuals’ intrinsic motivation toward a puzzle activity and yielded results that varied as a function of the external reward: money decreased intrinsic motivation and verbal reinforcement increased motivation.

Early research on motivation orientation has been conducted with college students in regard to studying and the approaches they take toward their academics. For instance, Entwistle (1988) established that a deep approach to studying, in which a student’s intent for learning is due to interest and self-development, is associated with intrinsic motivation orientations. Conversely, a strategic approach to studying refers to study strategies that are meant to yield high performance, outperform others, and essentially complete a task, which is associated with extrinsic motivation. Thus, the self-motivating aspect of intrinsic work motivation is more closely tied to variables of work and life satisfaction (e.g., Byrd et al., 2007; Lawler & Hall, 1970; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

In the vocational psychology context, motivation orientations will inevitably be seen in the approach people take toward their work. Thus, the distinctions between more generally defined internal and external motivations apply to the motivations that drive work behavior. More specifically, Loo (2001) describes that intrinsic work motivation refers to the outcomes that individuals receive from their work itself (e.g., satisfaction,
enjoyment, challenge), whereas extrinsic work motivation indicates that an individual works toward external rewards that exist beyond those inherent in the work itself (e.g., salary, recognition from others, social contact).

In their development of the Work Preference Inventory, Amabile et al. (1994) discovered that intrinsically motivated individuals desire more challenging work tasks and find enjoyment in the work itself. Intrinsic motivation has been associated with creativity and innovation, need for cognition, higher SAT scores, and cognitive playfulness in both college students and adults, and negatively related to years in occupation for adults (Amabile et al., 1994). Further, intrinsic work motivation correlates with Investigative and Realistic personality types as identified by the Strong Interest Inventory (Amabile et al., 1994).

There is some discrepancy in the literature regarding the stability of motivation orientations, with some schools of thought suggesting that it is task or context specific, while others indicate that it is trait-like. In studies of college students, motivation orientation was dependent on appraisals of course material to be learned or studied (e.g., difficult, boring; Wolter, 1998). Harter (1981) developed a measure of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to assess the approach that school children took toward learning in the classroom. However, she viewed work motivation as only semi-stable and somewhat changeable given the nature of children. In the Work Preference Inventory, Amabile et al. (1994) conceptualized motivation orientation as a stable trait that can be seen across most situations with which one interacts. Long-term stability was established during scale development, with test-retest reliabilities above .70 after 54 months. Thus, work
motivation may be best measured as a stable trait when assessing more mature, adult populations with established job histories or career paths.

Researchers have proposed that characteristics such as intrinsic religious orientations or intrinsic work motivations may provide clues to more global traits toward intrinsic or extrinsic rewards in general (e.g., Byrd et al., 2007; Paloutzian, 1996), thus contributing to viewing one’s career as a calling. Therefore, examining intrinsic work motivation in the context of calling may further identify predictors of calling, as well as points of intervention for impacting career satisfaction.

**Meaning in Life**

Meaning in life has a long research history, and it appears to have a significant impact on mental health and well-being. Victor Frankl’s (1963) book, *Man’s Search for Meaning*, has been credited as the point at which the construct of meaning became salient in psychological research (Wong & Fry, 1998). Frankl claimed that humans have an innate need to derive meaning from their experiences, and the inability to do so negatively affects mental health. However, similar to the issues in defining calling in the literature, many definitions for meaning in life exist. Battista and Almond (1973) asserted that meaning in life is primarily subjective, with each individual holding the capacity to construct his or her own meaning from their life. Others have suggested that meaning in life is a product of goal pursuit (Klinger, 1977), the ability to make constructive decisions in everyday life (Maddi, 1970), or the transcendence through a hierarchy of needs such as purpose and self-worth (Baumeister, 1991). In their development of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ), Steger, Frazier, Oishi, and Kaler (2006) attempted to combine definitions of meaning in life, building largely on the
idea that meaning is individually constructed and experienced; they define meaning in 
life as “the sense made of, and significance felt regarding, the nature of one’s being and 
existence” (p. 81).

Research has established empirical connections between meaning in life and 
many psychological constructs such as well-being (Kiang & Fuligni, 2010; Steger et al., 
2006), life satisfaction (Halama & Dědová, 2007; Steger & Kashdan, 2007), self-esteem 
(Halama & Dědová, 2007; Kiang & Fuligni, 2010), posttraumatic growth (Linley & 
Joseph, 2011), and academic adjustment and ethnic belonging and exploration in 
adolescents (Kiang & Fuligni, 2010). Additionally, the presence of meaning in life is 
positively correlated with joy, happiness, love, and intrinsic religiosity (Steger et al., 
2006). A lack of meaning in life has also been linked to negative mental health outcomes 
such as greater need for therapy (Battista & Almond, 1973), depression and anxiety 
(Debats, van der Lubbe, & Wezeman, 1993), suicidal ideation (Heisel & Flett, 2008), and 
even boredom (Fahlman, Mercer, Gaskovski, Eastwood, & Eastwood, 2009). Further, 
meaning in life has been established as a relatively stable construct, only changing in 
response to significant life events rather than transient influences (Steger & Kashdan, 
2007).

*Meaning in life and career-related outcomes.* The literature on meaning in life 
extends to work and career-related phenomena such as job performance, lower levels of 
work-related stress, and more work commitment (Isaksen, 2000; Knoop, 1994a, 1994b; 
Mottaz, 1985), and less boredom (Isaksen, 2000). Steger and Dik (2009) found that 
meaning derived from individual domains (e.g., career) actually increased global 
meaning in life in undergraduates. Many studies show that when individuals employ
strategies to increase the meaning they derive from their work, their meaning in life also tends to increase. For example, cognitive strategies such as reframing help increase morale, work performance, meaningfulness of work, and overall meaning in stigmatized workers (e.g., janitors, funeral home directors; Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). Similarly, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) found that employees “craft,” or adapt their work-related boundaries, which impacts the meanings they derive from their work (p. 179).

The relationships between meaning in life and calling, and between other variables in the current study, suggest that meaning in life will play a significant role in the prediction of calling and career satisfaction.

Career Commitment

The construct of career commitment was introduced by Hall (1971), who observed different levels of commitment with which individuals approach their work. He defined career commitment as a commitment to “the entire career field or role” (as cited in Blau, 1985, p. 277). Hall differentiates career commitment from job commitment and organizational commitment, which refer to the degree of dedication to a specific job placement and the loyalty to a specific organization, respectively. Of the work-related commitments, organizational has received the most research attention (Lee, Carswell, & Allen, 2000). Previous measures conceptualized career commitment as a commitment to working in general, across the lifespan (Marshall & Wijting, 1982), rather than commitment to a specific career field or skill set. Blau (1985) expands on Hall’s definition by specifying that career commitment is “one’s attitude towards one’s profession or vocation” (p. 280). This definition also differentiates career commitment from concepts such as professional commitment, or the dedication to professional
development (Thornton, 1970), and career orientation, which emphasizes an interest in a career field beyond a specific job or set of tasks (Greenhaus, 1971; Jans, 1982). Despite its distinctness from other forms of work-related commitment, career commitment often has positive relationships with these variables (e.g., Blau, 1985; Lee et al., 2000).

Occupational commitment is a construct that is often used interchangeably with career commitment. Lee et al. (2000) assert that occupational and career commitment are mostly semantically different, thus, the most similar in constructs. Their definition of occupational commitment acknowledges that an individual’s occupation may change a number of times over an individual’s lifetime. In contrast, career commitment examines the commitment that one has to a field in which he or she may hold multiple occupations, rather than a commitment to the occupations themselves. Therefore, career commitment maintains a definition that is distinct from even the most similar of constructs.

Conceptualizations of work commitment (e.g., job involvement, organizational commitment) have been measured in part by withdrawal cognitions, or the thoughts that individuals have had about quitting their jobs, before actually resigning (Mobley, 1977). This research shows that individuals with lower work-related commitment have more withdrawal cognitions. Thus, Blau (1985) reasoned that withdrawal cognitions related to career commitment would be more centered on the profession, rather than a specific job, and higher levels of career commitment would indicate fewer occurrences of career-related withdrawal cognitions. In the development of Blau’s (1985) Career Commitment Scale, a negative relationship emerged between career commitment and career withdrawal cognitions as expected. Further, significant predictors of career commitment included being unmarried, having more work experience, and having low role ambiguity.
Much of the research on career commitment centers on understanding and predicting turnover; however, Vocational Psychology is increasingly examining the roles of different work commitments on career-related outcomes (e.g., Ballout, 2009; Earl & Bright, 2007).

As discussed above, calling and career commitment have a direct relationship. Examining a commitment construct (i.e., career commitment) as a predictor of calling will help to clarify whether calling is a construct beyond the commitment and investment one may have toward his or her career.

**Career and Job Satisfaction**

Satisfaction with work-life relationships is addressed in many fields; thus, research on job satisfaction is vast. For example, a simple PsycINFO search of *job satisfaction* yields over 28,000 results. Sub-fields of psychology such as Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology, have been studying career-related variables and outcomes for decades. Researchers in this area have worked to understand the predictors and facets of job satisfaction from the employer’s perspective, which can have a number of organizational implications such as preventing turnover (e.g., Hom & Griffeth, 1991; Swider, Boswell, & Zimmerman, 2011), and increasing performance and productivity (e.g., Cropanzano & Wright, 2001; Halkos & Bousinakis, 2010). Similarly, Vocational Psychology has taken an interest in job satisfaction, but from the employees’ perspective. Research in this area enables individuals and mental health providers to reduce work-related and general stress (e.g., Larrabee et al., 2010), improve subjective well-being (Robert et al., 2006), and increase overall life satisfaction (Burke, 2001; Lounsbury et al., 2004).
Job satisfaction. A pioneer in I/O Psychology, Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a “pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (p. 1300). Others have built on or broadened this definition to refer to the attitudes that one has toward one’s job (Brief, 1998; Miner, 1992). Weiss (2002) proposed that job satisfaction is an “evaluative judgment one makes about one’s job or job situation” (p. 175). Further, the resulting evaluation of one’s job may result in a relatively consistent attitude about that job, which then leads to some consistent affective response about one’s work. Thus, according to this definition, job satisfaction is comprised of both emotions and attitudes regarding one’s job or job tasks.

Job satisfaction is linked to many work- and non-work related constructs. For example, work satisfaction is significantly related to life satisfaction and overall well-being (Bonebright, Clay, & Ankenmann, 2000). Perrone, Webb, and Jackson (2007) found work satisfaction to account for significant variance in life satisfaction as part of a longitudinal study examining career development after high school.

Career satisfaction. Although the literature on job satisfaction is vast, the research on career satisfaction is much more limited. For example, a simple PsycINFO search of career satisfaction yielded less than 20 articles that specifically pertained to overall career satisfaction in some way, many of which were studies conducted prior to 1990. Career satisfaction is typically considered a more theoretical concept in the literature (e.g., Hall, 1971; Lips-Wiersma, 2002), while job satisfaction is more easily conceptualized in terms of individuals’ immediate affective responses to jobs in which they are currently working. In applying Weiss’s definition of job satisfaction, career satisfaction can be understood as an evaluation of one’s overall career. Hall (1971)
defined career as an aggregation of work experiences that build over the life span, for which career satisfaction provides a summary of feelings about that lifetime of work rather than current satisfaction with one’s current job (Lonsbury, Moffitt, Gibson, Drost, & Stevens, 2007). Further, career encompasses not only a particular field of work, but also includes transitions that will likely occur within that field (Lips-Wiersma, 2002). Despite the limited research on career satisfaction, job and career satisfaction are very closely related, as research suggests that job satisfaction predicts career satisfaction (Murawski, Payakachat, & Koh-Knox, 2008). Additionally, job and career satisfaction each significantly contribute to satisfaction with life (Burke, 2001; Lounsbury et al., 2004). Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990) state that career satisfaction is an internally defined career outcome comprised of extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of one’s career, whereas other career-related outcomes (e.g., performance and success) can be considered externally defined. Therefore, in the current study, career satisfaction will involve the subjective appraisal of both the extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of one’s overall career, as well as one’s current job to make for a more comprehensive measurement of career satisfaction (e.g., Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995). The direct relationships that job and career satisfaction have with life satisfaction and overall well-being, as well as calling, implicate the relationship between calling and career satisfaction as a place for intervention, and ultimately, improvement in individuals’ overall lives.

There are several predictor variables that have been linked with increased career or job satisfaction. Feelings and beliefs related to one’s work may impact work-related performance, which can affect job and career satisfaction positively or negatively (Weiss, 2002). A study examining the predictors of career satisfaction in school counselors
indicated that the amount of time spent engaging in job-related tasks, self-efficacy in their competency to recognize inappropriate job-related tasks, and availability of supervision, all predicted job satisfaction (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006). In a sample of Canadian psychiatrists, predictors of career satisfaction included perceiving one’s career in psychiatry as intrinsically valuable, feeling less burdened by patients, achieving financial success, and experiencing satisfaction directly related to results of therapeutic work (Garfinkel, Bagby, Schuller, Dickens, & Schulte, 2005). As more predictors of career satisfaction are identified, there will be further opportunities through which one’s greater life satisfaction and well-being can be increased.

The Present Study

The present study aimed to expand the literature on calling, a widely endorsed, yet empirically vague construct that has many implications for psychological and career-related outcomes. In the literature, calling has established a relationship with job and career satisfaction (e.g., Peterson et al., 2009; Robert et al., 2006; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), constructs which are known to predict health, well-being, and quality of life (e.g., Burke, 2001; Larrabee et al., 2010; Lounsbury et al., 2004; Robert et al., 2006). Calling also has connections to intrinsic religiousness (e.g., Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010), intrinsic work motivation (Dik et al., 2008), meaning in life (e.g., Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dik et al., 2008; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), and career commitment (e.g., Duffy et al., 2011; Serow et al., 1992; Serow, 1994), each of which are also known to positively impact job and career satisfaction (e.g., Amabile, 1996; Byrd et al., 2007; Isaksen, 2000; Lee et al., 2000). Thus, increasing career satisfaction could have significant implications for improving more global variables.
related to life satisfaction. Calling appears to provide a window for better understanding career satisfaction, and more clarity regarding its predictors may offer additional means by which it can be impacted.

The initial focus of the project emphasized the exploration of calling as a unique construct and involved identifying the predictors of calling as suggested by the literature. As the methodology developed, a second focus emerged which involved the exploration of the predictors of career satisfaction. Examining calling as a predictor of career satisfaction would establish it as a significant predictor and meaningful variable in impacting one’s career satisfaction. This analysis was prioritized in order to validate calling as an important variable in the prediction of career satisfaction, and then the exploration of the predictors of calling was planned to follow. In the present study, calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment were examined in relation to career satisfaction, which highlighted the most significant predictors of career satisfaction among these variable (i.e., career commitment and meaning in life). Analyses to examine intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment as predictors of calling were contingent on calling’s prediction of career satisfaction. According to hierarchical multiple regression analysis and evaluation of beta weights, calling did not demonstrate significant prediction of career satisfaction as hypothesized, thus these exploratory analyses were aborted.

Research Questions and Statistical Hypotheses

1. What are the relationships among calling, religiosity, work motivation, meaning in life, career commitment, and career satisfaction?
a. There will be a positive relationship between calling and each of the following: intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment.

b. There will be a positive relationship between career satisfaction and each of the following: calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment.

2. Will calling, religiosity, meaning in life, work motivation, and career commitment predict career satisfaction?

   a. Calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment will each account for significant variance in career satisfaction.

   b. Calling will account for significant variance in career satisfaction beyond the individual contributions of intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment.

   c. Calling will not mediate the relationship between religiosity, work motivation, presence of meaning in life, career commitment, and career satisfaction.

3. Will religiosity, meaning in life, work motivation, and career commitment predict calling?
a. Intrinsic religiosity, meaning in life, intrinsic work motivation, and career commitment will simultaneously account for significant variance in calling.
CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Dik and Duffy (2009) assert that a person can feel called to any job or area of work. Thus, this study recruited participants from a broad range of work areas. Inclusion criteria for the study required that participants were at least 18 years of age at the time of survey completion, were currently employed in a position within their desired career field, and have worked within that career for at least one year. A total of 662 surveys were downloaded from the survey software. After review of the data, 388 surveys were omitted due to incomplete data files (e.g., prospective participant exiting the survey prior to completion). Of the remaining surveys, 27 participants endorsed “No” to the question inquiring whether they considered their current job as part of their long-term career path, and 10 participants answered “No” to the item assessing whether they had been employed in the same or similar job setting for at least one year. Schumacker and Lomax (2004), recommend that researchers recruit 10 to 20 participants per each variable used in a study. Further, research has indicated that the minimum number of participants for studies employing complex statistical analyses is between 100 and 500 (e.g., Ding, Velicer, & Harlow, 1995; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). The current study aimed to recruit 200 participants in order to ensure acceptable power and interpretability of the regression models that were tested; 237 participants’ surveys were included in the analyses of this study.

Demographic data indicated that participants were predominately female (72.6%) with a mean age of 40.67 years (SD = 12.4), who worked full-time (94.5%) with an
average of 8.4 years (SD = 8.11) in their current job. The vast majority of the sample identified themselves as Caucasian (93.7%) with the remainder reporting the following racial/ethnic backgrounds: African American (2.5%), Hispanic (2.1%), Asian/Pacific Islander (1.3%), and American Indian/Alaskan Native (0.4%). Most participants indicated that they were married (64.1%), with others indicating their marital status as single (22.8%), divorced (9.3%), or other (3.8%). Regarding the educational background of study participants, a majority reported post-secondary education: 40.1% reported having a graduate degree, 24.1% have a four-year college degree, 19.4% indicated having a post-graduate degree, and 4.2% have a degree from a community college or technical school; only 6.8% of the population reported having less than a college education; 1.7% reported having a high school diploma. Most of the participants identified themselves as Christian (74.6%), and the remainder reported their religious affiliation as None (8.4%), Agnostic (4.6%), Atheist, (4.6%), Unitarian/Universalist (2.5%), Jewish (1.7%), Other (1.7%), Buddhist (1.3%), and Pagan/Wiccan (0.4%). Participants’ career fields spanned all 17 of the career clusters as sponsored by the United States Department of Labor (O*NET Online). On a one to nine scale of career prestige (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), the mean was 6.28 (SD = 1.5) with 50.2% of participants endorsing their career as a seven or higher in career prestige. Yearly household income varied among participants: 14.4% of participants reported a household income of $40,000 or less; 40.9% reported household incomes of $41,000 to $80,000; 16.5% reported $81,000 to $100,000; and 28.3% reported household incomes of $101,000 and greater. The majority of participants answered “No” in regards to ever experiencing career counseling (69.6%). In sum, participants were largely middle-aged, Caucasian, Christian women who were college-
educated with careers perceived to be of high prestige (see Table 2 for a full review of the demographic variables).

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Sample (N = 237)

<table>
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<th>Demographic Variables</th>
<th>N = 237</th>
<th>% of Sample</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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Instruments

Demographics Questionnaire

A demographics questionnaire (see Appendix A) was used in the current study and administered to all participants. The questionnaire obtained information about participants’ age, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, career field, years of education, current job title, whether they see their current job as part of their larger career, perceived job status, annual income, time spent in their current occupation, time spent pursuing their career field, employment status (i.e., full- or part-time), and receipt of career counseling at any point in their career development or career in general. Participants indicated their career field by choosing from a list of career clusters provided by O*NET Online, which is an online occupational database sponsored by the United States Department of Labor (O*NET Online).

Presence of Calling (POC). The degree to which an individual feels “called,” or drawn to his or her career by a “force beyond the self” (Duffý et al., 2011, p. 210), was
assessed with the 12-item Presence of Calling subscale from the Calling and Vocation Questionnaire (Dik, Eldridge & Steger, 2008). Items were rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “Not at all true of me” to 4 = “Absolutely true of me.” Example items include, “My work helps me live out my life’s purpose,” and “I was drawn by something beyond myself to pursue my current line of work.” The POC scores range from 12 to 48, with higher scores indicating a greater sense of calling to one’s career. The POC has been reported to have good test-retest reliability ($r = .75$; one-month interval) and internal consistency ($\alpha=.89-.92$) across the literature (Dik, Eldridge, & Steger, 2008; Duffy et al., 2011). The POC demonstrated convergent validity with similar constructs such as meaning in life ($r = .50$) and general prosocial attitudes ($r = .54$; Dik, Eldridge et al., 2008), and discriminant validity with concepts such as materialism ($r = -.05$; Dik, Sargent et al., 2008). In the current sample, the POC demonstrated an internal consistency of $\alpha = .93$.

**Intrinsic Religiosity Subscale, Revised (I-R).** Participants’ degree of intrinsic religiousness, or extent to which religion is a motive for living, was measured by using the eight-item Intrinsic Religiosity Subscale (I-R) from the Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religiosity Scale, Revised (I/E-R; Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989). Items were rated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “Strongly Agree” to 5 = “Strongly Disagree” regarding the degree to which an item applies to an individual. Items are reverse scored and high scores indicate higher endorsement of intrinsic religiosity. For example, one item reads, “I enjoy reading about my religion” (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989, p. 353). Gorsuch and Venable (1983) revised Allport and Ross’s (1967) original Religious Orientation scale to create the Age Universal Religious Orientation Scale (AURO) in order to increase
readability and comprehension of items, thereby broadening the population for which the scale would be appropriate (i.e., high and low levels of reading comprehension).

Gorsuch and McPherson (1989) further revised the resulting AURO in order to identify subcategories of each subscale of religiosity, which yielded the current revision, I/E-R. Only the intrinsic religiosity subscale (I-R) was used in the current study.

Reliability estimates (i.e., alphas) for the I-R have been estimated at $\alpha = .83$ (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989). Evidence of construct validity has been established across cultures (as cited in Gorsuch, 1994) and intrinsic religiousness has consistently demonstrated predictive validity with subjective well-being (Batson, Schoenrade, & Ventis, 1993), which often includes constructs such as life satisfaction and purpose in life (e.g., $r = .22, r = .26$; Byrd, Lear, & Schwenka, 2000; $r = .17, r = .27$, Chamberlain & Zika, 1988; $r = .25$ with a measure of existential well-being that represents one’s sense of life satisfaction and purpose; Genia, 1996), and self-efficacy (Watson, Hood, & Morris, 1988). Intrinsic religiosity has also been negatively correlated with negative affect, including depression and anxiety (e.g., $r = -.33/- .05$, Maltby & Day, 2000). The item content of the I/E-R omits vocabulary that may prompt a Christian bias, such as “church;” researchers have deemed the I/E-R as the preferred measure of religiosity due to these efforts at reducing bias and increasing the instrument’s sound psychometric properties (e.g., Hill, 2005; Van Wicklin, 1990). The I-R demonstrated an internal consistency of $\alpha = .86$ for the current study.

**Intrinsic Work Orientation Subscale (IWO).** Motivation for the sheer desire and enjoyment of work itself was assessed by the 15-item IWO from the Work Preference Inventory (Amabile et al., 1994). Individuals indicated the extent to which each item
relates to their current approach to work on a four-point Likert scale where 1 = “never to almost never true of me” to 4 = “always or almost always true of me” (Amabile et al., 1994, p. 953). For example, one item states, “Curiosity is the driving force behind much of what I do” (Amabile et al., 1994, p. 956). Test-retest reliability (six-month interval) was established at .89; internal consistency was established in a student sample at $\alpha = .75$ and in an additional analysis of an adult sample of 500 at $\alpha = .82$ (Amabile et al., 1994). Further, evidence of construct validity was found in correlations between the WPI (student form) with the Causality Orientations Scale (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and the Student Interest and Experience Questionnaire (SIEQ; Amabile, 1989b). In the current sample, the IWO demonstrated an internal consistency of $\alpha = .77$.

**Presence of Meaning in Life (MLQ-P).** Although the construct of “meaning in life” has a varied definition in the literature, the Meaning in Life Questionnaire assesses the “sense made of, and significance felt” in one’s life (Steger et al., 2006, p. 81). For the current study, meaning in life was assessed through the five-item Presence of Meaning in Life (MLQ-P) subscale from the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Steger et al. (2006). Item responses indicated the degree to which each statement is self-representative on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “absolutely untrue” to 7 = “absolutely true.” Example items for the MLQ-P include “I have discovered a satisfying life purpose,” and “I understand my life’s meaning.” Scores can range from seven to 35, with higher scores indicating a greater sense of meaning in life and lower scores representing the absence of meaning in life (Steger & Frazier, 2005). Test-retest reliability for the MLQ-P was established at .70 after a one-month interval. The MLQ-P also demonstrated adequate internal consistency ranging from $\alpha = .81$ to $\alpha = .86$, and
evidence of convergent validity was documented based on participant self-reports and significant correlations with other measures such as the Purpose in Life Test and Life Regard Index (Steger et al., 2006). Further, when compared to other meaning in life scales, the MLQ subscales offer both brevity and psychometric properties that are equal to or better than longer measures; thus, Steger et al. (2006) denoted the MLQ and its subscales as the “superior” measure for meaning in life (p. 89). The MLQ-P demonstrated an internal consistency of $\alpha = .94$ in the current sample.

*Career Commitment Scale (CCS).* There are many constructs in the literature that are related to career commitment; however, recent studies on calling (e.g., Duffy et al., 2011) have used Blau’s (1985) CCS. Thus, the current study examined level of commitment to one’s career with Blau’s (1985) seven-item scale of career commitment. The degree to which items applied to an individual were rated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “Strongly Disagree” to 5 = “Strongly Agree.” Example items for the CCS include, “If I could go into a different industry other than the ________ industry which paid the same, I would probably do so,” and “If I had all the money I needed without working, I would probably still continue to work in this field” (Blau, 1989, p. 92, 97). Test-retest reliability is demonstrated through reliability coefficients of .67 (seven-month interval; Blau, 1985) and .83 to .84 in later samples (Blau, 1988). Adequate internal consistency was established at .85 to .87 during test construction (Blau, 1985, 1988) and at .90 in a later sample of university employees (Duffy et al., 2011). Discriminant validity was demonstrated through the negative correlations with career withdrawal cognitions ($r = -.38$ and $r = -.41$) and the insignificant correlation with job withdrawal cognitions ($r = -.07$ and $r = -.08$), which illustrates an inverse relationship
compared to the significant correlations between job involvement and organizational commitment and the withdrawal cognition variables (Blau, 1985). In the current sample, the CCS demonstrated an internal consistency of $\alpha = .88$.

*Career satisfaction.* Much of the literature examining career- or job-related satisfaction is limited to measures of job satisfaction. Unfortunately, the measures that examine the construct of job satisfaction are limited to assessing the extent to which an individual is satisfied with his or her current position, not his or her career as a whole. Therefore, measures of job satisfaction may not entirely capture one’s degree of satisfaction with his or her chosen career; for example, an individual may dislike his or her current job but still endorse satisfaction with his or her career.

For the purposes of this study, the construct of career satisfaction, or one’s overall level of satisfaction with his or her vocational choice, was based on a composite score comprised of multiple measures of career and job satisfaction (described in detail below), a method consistent with the comprehensive assessment of career success employed by Judge et al. (1995). In the current study, the widely used Career Satisfaction Questionnaire (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990) was paired with the two-item General Career Satisfaction Measure employed by other researchers (e.g., Becker, Milad, & Klock, 2006) to assess career satisfaction in the present study. Additionally, Judge et al. (1995) included a measure of job satisfaction in their study, which added element of reliability to their comprehensive measure of career success. Thus, the current study included Fields’ (2002) Overall Job Satisfaction Scale. This combined variable is referred to as career satisfaction, and the composite score demonstrated an internal consistency of $\alpha = .90$ for the current sample. These variables are discussed below.
The five-item Career Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) developed by Greenhaus et al. (1990) measured career satisfaction in the context of career success, career goals, income goals, advancement, and development of new skills. Individuals rated the personal relevance for each statement on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “strongly agree” to 5 = “strongly disagree.” The measure includes items such as, “I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career,” and “I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income” (Greenhaus et al., 1990, p. 86). Although this career satisfaction scale was “developed expressly” for their study (Greenhaus et al., 1990, p. 73) and little psychometric information is available, it has been widely used to measure career satisfaction (Hofmans, Dries, & Pepermans, 2008) and is considered the best measure of career satisfaction available (Oberfield, 1993). Internal consistencies have been adequate, ranging from .74 to .91 in samples of managers and supervisors, executives, and upper-level undergraduate students (e.g., $\alpha = .88/.90, .89/.91$, Cunningham, Sagas, Dixon, Kent, & Turner, 2005; $\alpha = .88$, Greenhaus et al., 1990; $\alpha = .74$, Hofmans et al., 2008; and $\alpha = .87$, Judge et al., 1995). The CSQ demonstrated an internal consistency of $\alpha = .88$ for the current sample.

The current study also included a two-item measure of career satisfaction adapted from Becker et al. (2006), which examined general satisfaction in one’s chosen career field, then in his or her career title: 1) “Thinking very generally about your satisfaction with your overall career field, would you say you were…,” and 2) “Thinking very generally about your satisfaction with your career choice within your chosen field, would you say you were…” (p. 1445). Responses are indicated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “very dissatisfied” to 5 = “very satisfied.” In the current sample, the
General Career Satisfaction Measure (GCSM) demonstrated an internal consistency of $\alpha = .81$.

Similar to the way in which Judge et al. (1995) included a measure of current job satisfaction to comprehensively measure career success in their study, the current study used the Overall Measure of Job Satisfaction (OMJS; Fields, 2002). This six-item scale is an adaptation from Brayfield and Rothe’s (1951) original 18-item Index of Job Satisfaction. Item responses were reported on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree,” with higher scores indicating higher levels of job satisfaction. Items include “I like my job better than the average person,” and “I am seldom bored with my job” (Agho, Price, & Mueller, 1992, p. 195). Internal consistency estimates range from .83 to .90, and the construct of overall job satisfaction positively correlated with career variables such as employee perceptions of performance and job involvement and negatively correlated with constructs such as role ambiguity and conflict (Fields, 2002). Further, concurrent validity was established by correlating employees’ scores with their spouses’ perceptions of their job satisfaction ($r = .68$; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998). In the current sample, the OJSS demonstrated an internal consistency of $\alpha = .86$.

Procedure

Recruitment to participate in an online survey through PsychSurveys was solicited through word of mouth, email, and social media (e.g., Facebook), and no one career field was targeted over another. An electronic cover letter briefly describing the study was used in recruitment (see Appendix B). When participants clicked the link to the survey webpage, an electronic informed consent page (see Appendix C) required electronic
signature to proceed, which involved the clicking of a box to indicate acknowledgment of the informed consent. The consent form explained that participants were being asked to participate in a research project investigating the variables of calling and career satisfaction, and it outlined any risks and benefits that may result from participation in the study. Participants were advised that the study would take approximately 15 to 30 minutes to complete and that they would have the option to enter into a drawing for one of two $50 VISA gift cards at the end of the survey. Additionally, the consent form advised potential participants that participation in the study is voluntary and that the participant may withdraw at any time without penalty or prejudice. After the informed consent page, participants were first prompted to complete a brief demographic questionnaire (see Appendix A) before beginning the investigative measures of the survey. Measures were administered in a random order for each participant, which was facilitated by settings in the PsychSurveys software. The computer software allowed participants to take the survey anonymously online and have their responses uploaded into an online database.

Analysis

The literature explicates that calling and career satisfaction are both significantly related to religiousness, work orientation, meaning in life, and career commitment. However, these variables have only been examined as independent relationships, rather than analyzed together in a more complex way. Thus, hierarchical multiple regression was used to examine the extent to which calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment predicted career satisfaction as suggested by the literature. Also, variables have been tested as mediators between calling
and other job-related constructs (e.g., Duffy et al., 2011), yet no prior research to date has examined calling for its potential mediating properties between hypothesized predictor variables and career satisfaction. In practice, the relationships between calling, positive work outcomes, and life satisfaction suggest that calling offers a unique window through which job and career satisfaction can be influenced, thereby increasing broader and more global indicators of health and well-being. Thus, the researcher examined calling as a mediator in the relationship between predictor variables (intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning of life, and career commitment) and career satisfaction (Hypothesis 2c) by using the criteria outlined in Baron and Kenney (1986) and examining the results of the hierarchical multiple regressions as modeled by Turnley and Feldman (2000).

Additionally, structure coefficients were examined in the regression model in order to improve interpretive and predictive validity of the data. Courville and Thompson (2001) assert that a predictor variable with a strong relationship to the dependent variable, as well as correlations with other predictors, may receive a disproportionate amount of variance in a regression model (e.g., near-zero beta weights) despite actually being a good predictor. These coefficients offer additional information regarding lower-than-expected or nonsignificant beta weights for variables with an otherwise large correlation with the criterion and were, thus, examined in addition to the regression beta weights in the current study.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

See Table 3 for alpha coefficients, correlations, means, standard deviations, ranges, and measures of normality for all study variables. Item-level and scale-level frequency distributions were examined to ensure that all data fell within appropriate ranges of minimum and maximum scale scores. Each variable was checked for any violations of the assumptions of normality. The skewness and kurtosis for each variable was examined and most values did not exceed an absolute value of one, suggesting reasonably normal distributions. The skewness values for MLQ-P and GCSM indicate that these variables are negatively skewed. Additionally, the kurtosis values for these variables indicate a peaked distribution, which is likely a result of the homogeneity of the sample demographics in relation to these specific variables (see Chapter IV). Specifically for CCS, the distribution was relatively flat, which suggests a lack of range in participant responses on this variable. Despite varied kurtosis values and instances of negative skew, the sample size of the current study protects against any “substantive differences in analysis” or underestimation of variance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p. 80). Thus, no manipulations were made to the data and no cases were excluded. Additionally, the assumptions of multicollinearity were met by checking for any bivariate correlations above .7. All correlations were positive, with a range in magnitude from small to moderate.

Alpha coefficients were examined to determine whether scales demonstrated appropriate internal consistency and were, thus, appropriate for subsequent analyses. All
scales demonstrated adequate reliabilities, with no scale reliability below .77 (see Table 3). Scale means derived in the current study were comparable to the means established in the literature. Specifically for presence of calling, the mean in the current study was 33.39 (SD = 9.24), which is slightly higher than the mean in the validation study (M = 27.93, SD = 8.23; Dik, Eldridge, Steger, & Duffy, 2012) while comparable to subsequent research using this subscale (e.g., M = 30.2, SD = 9.4; Duffy, Dik, & Steger, 2011). The mean for the intrinsic religiosity subscale in the current study was 27.10 (SD = 7.27), which appears to be slightly lower than the mean established in the validation study (37.2, SD = 5.8; Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989) while consistent with subsequent and more recent research (25.4, SD = 7.3; Byrd et al., 2000). This lower mean is somewhat inconsistent considering the high identification with a faith-based system among the sample participants. The mean for intrinsic work motivation in the current study was 3.21 (SD = 0.30), which is comparable to the validation study of the IWO (M = 2.99, SD = 0.37; Amabile et al., 1994), as well as more recent research (e.g., M = 2.95, SD = 0.33, Conti, 2001; M = 2.87, SD = 0.38, Moneta, 2012). The mean for presence of meaning in life in the current study was 28.30 (SD = 5.64), which is slightly higher than the means established in the trials of the validation study: 24.0 (SD = 5.6) and 23.5 (SD = 6.6; Steger et al., 2006), as well as other findings (M = 24.8, SD = 5.6; Reker & Fry, 2003). However, this difference is likely due to the homogeneity of the current sample. The mean for career commitment in the current study (27.1, SD = 5.5) was commensurate with the means from the validation study (M = 24.2, SD = 7.1; Blau, 1985, 1988) and subsequent studies (e.g., M = 24.2, SD = 7.05; Duffy et al., 2011). The means for the career satisfaction measures were also commensurate with the means established in the
literature. Specifically, the mean in the current study for the Career Satisfaction Questionnaire was 19.1 (SD = 4.24) and other studies yielded a mean of 23.7 (SD = 6.0; Judge et al., 1995). The mean for the Overall Job Satisfaction Scale was 23.4 (SD = 4.2) in the current study, which is comparable with the validation study (M = 20.89, SD = 4.9; Agho et al., 1992), as well as subsequent studies (e.g., M = 21.1, SD = 5.5; Pseekos, Bullock-Yowell, & Dahlen, 2011).

Pearson r correlations were examined for appropriate intercorrelations required for subsequent analyses (e.g., composite score for career satisfaction, mediation) and to examine Research Question 1, which inquired about relationships among calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment, and career satisfaction (see Table 3). The three career satisfaction measures (i.e., CSQ, GCSM, OMJS) were examined for significant positive intercorrelations, and each of these variables demonstrated statistically significant relationships of large strength. The three variables were then combined to form a summed score variable titled “career satisfaction” for subsequent analyses, a procedure consistent with Capaldi, Stoolmiller, Clark, and Owen’s (2002) method for using composite scores in regression analyses.

Additionally, research indicates that differences in calling may occur as a result of gender and social class (Davidson & Caddell, 1994), age, education level, and time in one’s occupation (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), race (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010), and income (Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Thus, these demographic variables were examined in subsequent analyses in terms of the baseline amount of variance they account for in Career Satisfaction.
Table 3

*Means, Standard Deviations, Range, Correlations, and Reliability of Measures of Interest*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>POC Total</th>
<th>I-R Total</th>
<th>IWO Total</th>
<th>MLQ-P Total</th>
<th>CCS Total</th>
<th>CSQ Total</th>
<th>GCSM Total</th>
<th>OMJ Total</th>
<th>Total CS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POC Total</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I-R Total</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWO Total</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MLQ-P</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
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<td>CCS Total</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-.04</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GCSM Total</td>
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<td>.15*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.63**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>OJSS Total</td>
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<td>.47**</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total CS</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>.83**</td>
<td>.78**</td>
<td>.86**</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>33.39</td>
<td>27.10</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>28.30</td>
<td>27.06</td>
<td>19.08</td>
<td>8.64</td>
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<td>7.27</td>
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<td>1-5</td>
<td>11-29</td>
<td>19-23</td>
<td>5-25</td>
<td>2-10</td>
<td>6-30</td>
<td>13-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.88</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.90</td>
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<td>-.868</td>
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<td>-.704</td>
<td>-.715</td>
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<td>.023</td>
<td>.643</td>
<td>2.343</td>
<td>.558</td>
<td>.579</td>
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</table>

*Note.* POC = Calling and Vocation Questionnaire – Presence of Calling Subscale; I-R = Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religiosity Scale, Revised – Intrinsic Religiosity Subscale; IWO = Work Preference Inventory – Intrinsic Work Orientation Subscale; MLQ-P = Meaning in Life Questionnaire – Presence of Meaning in Life; CCS = Career Commitment Scale; CSQ = Career Satisfaction Questionnaire; GCSM = General Career Satisfaction Measure; OJSS = Overall Job Satisfaction Scale; Total CS = summed score for career satisfaction (CSQ, GCSM, OJSS). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

**Primary Analyses**

Pearson r correlations were used to examine the relationships in question according to Research Question 1, which inquired about relationships among calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, career commitment, and
career satisfaction. Each of these relationships demonstrated a significant positive correlation, consistent with Hypothesis 1a, which stated that there will be a positive relationship between calling and each of the following: intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment. Hypothesis 1b stated that there would be a positive relationship between career satisfaction and each of the following: calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment. However, only calling, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment were significantly correlated with Career Satisfaction. The relationships between career satisfaction and intrinsic religiosity, and career satisfaction and intrinsic work motivation, yielded statistically insignificant relationships of very small strength in the current sample, $r = .07$ and $.06$, respectively. However, the literature suggests that these relationships exist in the population as a whole; thus, intrinsic religiosity and intrinsic work motivation will be included in subsequent analyses based on previous theoretical and research support.

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to examine Research Question 2, which asked whether calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment would predict career satisfaction. First, assumptions of linearity were confirmed by examining the Normal Probability Plot of the regression model, and homoscedasticity was examined via scatterplots, which indicated reasonable consistency of spread through the distributions. Appropriate multicollinearity was established by examining the Tolerance and VIF values of the Coefficients table from the regression output. Additionally, outliers were managed by inspecting the Mahalanobis distances generated by the regression model (df = 11, critical value = 31.26, $p < .001$) and the
MAH-1 variable created in the data file by the regression analysis. Four cases yielded a Mahalanobis distance that exceeded the critical value, which were removed to examine the impact of omission. Subsequent regression analyses were conducted with both data sets (original 237 and omitted 233), and the removal of these cases made no significant differences to the overall amount of variance explained or to the individual regression coefficients. Thus, for simplicity, the full data set (n = 237) was used in the interpretation for the current study. Additionally, the Casewise Diagnostics table was evaluated for any extreme cases, in which two cases were listed. Although these cases were considered outliers based on their standardized residuals, the maximum value of Cook’s distance for these cases did not justify removing them from the analysis.

The composite score variable of career satisfaction was the dependent variable in the regression model. The demographic variables (age, gender, race, education, time in one’s occupation, and income) were entered to get a baseline measure of explained variance in the first block of the regression, explaining 10.4% of the variance in Career Satisfaction. Hypothesis 2a indicated that calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment would each account for significant variance in career satisfaction. After entry of intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment in the second block (Hypothesis 2a), the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 56.3% ($F$ [10, 224] = 28.83, $p < .001$). These variables explained an additional 46% of the variance in career satisfaction ($R^2$ Change = .46, $F$ Change [4, 224] = 58.81, $p < .001$). Values from the hierarchical multiple regression for the prediction of career satisfaction are presented in Table 4.
Hypothesis 2b stated that calling would account for significant variance in career satisfaction beyond the individual contributions of intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment. Calling was entered in the third block; the total variance explained by the model after the entry of calling was 56.4% \((F [11, 223] = 26.22, p > .05)\). Calling did not explain any practical amount of individual differences in career satisfaction according to the regression model \((R^2 \text{ Change} = .001, F \text{ Change} [1, 223] = .60, p = .44)\).

Because the final omnibus regression model was both statistically significant and explained a sizable amount of individual differences in career satisfaction \((R^2 = .564)\), each of the independent variables were then examined to determine which ones contributed most to model prediction. Examination of the beta weights indicated career commitment \((\beta = .57, p < .001)\) received the most weight or credit in the model. Presence of meaning in life \((\beta = .24, p < .001)\), household income \((\beta = .16, p < .05)\), age \((\beta = .14, p < .05)\), and educational background \((\beta = .11, p < .05)\) were also statistically significant but did not receive as much weight relative to career commitment. Structure coefficients were examined to aid in the interpretation of these weights. These coefficients confirmed career commitment as the best predictor, explaining 78% of the total effect size by itself \((r_s^2 = .78)\). Presence of meaning in life was able to explain 43% \((r_s^2 = .43)\), calling 27% \((r_s^2 = .27)\), age 13% \((r_s^2 = .13)\), household income 9% \((r_s^2 = .09)\), length of time in job 4% \((r_s^2 = .04)\), and educational background 2% \((r_s^2 = .02)\). Although beta weights did not suggest calling as a statistically significant predictor, the squared structure coefficient of calling indicated that 27% of the total effect in career satisfaction (56.4%) could be explained by this variable \((r_s^2 = .27)\), making it the third best predictor of career.
satisfaction in the current study. The practical significance of these values is reviewed in the discussion.

In addition to examining the regression model’s ability to predict career satisfaction, calling was also tested as a mediator (Hypothesis 2c). This was first tested by examining the statistical significance of the individual correlations between career satisfaction, calling, intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment (religiosity and intrinsic work motivation were included despite insignificant correlations with career satisfaction given the significant relationships indicated by theory and previous research). Consistent with subsequent steps in examining mediation, block two in the regression (controls and predictor variables) indicated a significant relationship with career satisfaction (R Square = .56, \( p < .001 \)). However, the addition of calling into the regression model (block three) did not result in a statistically significant relationship with career satisfaction or any changes to the beta weights of other predictor variables. This result suggested that calling does not mediate the relationship between blocks one and two (control variables and predictor variables, respectively) and career satisfaction.

Research Question 3 inquired whether intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment would predict calling. Hypothesis 3a stated that intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment would simultaneously account for significant variance in calling. A priori assumptions of Hypothesis 3a were contingent on the establishment of calling as an important predictor of career satisfaction and/or a mediator between other predictor variables (i.e., religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of
meaning in life, and career commitment) and career satisfaction through hierarchical multiple regression as hypothesized in Research Questions 2. The current study’s hypotheses were strategically planned in order to establish calling as an important and meaningful variable within a career development context (i.e., predictive of career satisfaction). First, appropriate correlations among the variables were established, and then calling was examined as a predictor of career satisfaction. Once calling demonstrated its ability to predict career satisfaction, establishing itself as an important construct in regards to vocational psychology, it would have been explored as the dependent variable in a regression analysis with religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment entered as potential predictors. Given that calling failed to uniquely account for statistically significant variance in career satisfaction and that it has no mediating effect on the relationships between predictor variables (i.e., religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, presence of meaning in life, and career commitment) and career satisfaction, the analyses for examining the predictors of calling were aborted.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Block 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Block 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Block 3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SEB$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SEB$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.183</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.273*</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.146*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>0.871</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/Ethnic Background</td>
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<td>-0.029</td>
<td>-0.297</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>-0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>0.365</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>-0.557</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.101*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time in Job</td>
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<td>0.088</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
<td>-0.049</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>-0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Income</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>0.154*</td>
<td>0.921</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>0.162*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2$                      | .104** |

$\Delta R^2$                |        |

Block 2

| I-R                      | -0.076 | 0.063   | -0.066   | -0.093 | 0.063   | -0.082   | 0.01   |
| IWO                      | -0.154 | 0.085   | -0.084   | -0.161 | 0.085   | -0.087   | 0.01   |
| MLQ-P                    | 0.377  | 0.083   | 0.256**  | 0.358  | 0.083   | 0.243**  | 0.43** |
| CCS                      | 0.874  | 0.077   | 0.580**  | 0.855  | 0.077   | 0.568**  | 0.78** |
Table 4 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Block 1</th>
<th>Block 2</th>
<th>Block 3</th>
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<tr>
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<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SEB$</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>.563**</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
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<td>.459**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Block 3

POC

| $R^2$ | 0.043 | 0.055 | 0.047 | 0.27** |
| $\Delta R^2$ | 0.564 |       |       |        |
|         | 0.001 |       |       |        |

Note. MLQ-P = Meaning in Life Questionnaire – Presence of Meaning in Life; CCS = Career Commitment Scale; POC = Calling and Vocation Questionnaire – Presence of Calling Subscale

*p < .05, **p < .01.
CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to expand the body of research on the up-and-coming construct of calling and explore its relationship with career satisfaction. The study developed a dual focus, which expanded from exploring the construct of calling to examining the predictors of career satisfaction, specifically the impact of calling. It was hypothesized that the following variables of interest in the current study would be positively correlated, consistent with previous literature: calling, religiosity, work motivation, meaning in life, career commitment, and career satisfaction. Additionally, it was expected that religiosity, work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment would predict career satisfaction, with calling accounting for significant variance in career satisfaction beyond the individual contributions of religiosity, work motivation, meaning in life, and career commitment. The majority of the bivariate correlations were supported, including calling’s significant relationships with intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, meaning in life, career commitment, and career satisfaction. However, intrinsic religiosity and intrinsic work orientation were not significantly related to career satisfaction in the current study as hypothesized. Calling was not found to predict career satisfaction through hierarchical multiple regression or to mediate the relationship between the other predictors of career satisfaction used in the current study. However, examination of structure coefficients suggested that calling is an important contributor to career satisfaction. Structure coefficients \( r_s^2 \) are the bivariate correlations between the independent variables and the predicted dependent variable (Courville & Thompson, 2001). These coefficients offer additional information regarding lower-than-expected or
nonsignificant beta weights for variables with an otherwise large correlation with the criterion. Structure coefficients enable a deeper interpretation of regression variables and they identify the predictors of the total effect of a given regression model; however, structure coefficients are not interpreted as generalizable predictors. Since calling was not predictive of career satisfaction or found to be a mediator as indicated by the regression model, the researcher discontinued further exploration of the unique nature of calling (i.e., Research Question 3), criteria which was established prior to data analysis.

The research on calling to date is based largely on samples of college students. Studies targeting non-convenience populations such as working adults provide data from which direct interpretations can be made about calling and career satisfaction; however, they are often more difficult and costly to reach. The current study recruited working adults who reported currently working in their desired career field (not necessarily their desired job), which offered a more pertinent population in which calling could be explored. Additionally, the study supported the strength of the relationship between calling and career satisfaction as suggested by previous research and indicated that further research to clarify this relationship is warranted. Additional areas of exploration regarding calling and career satisfaction were identified, such as exploring calling as a form of work-related meaning. This chapter includes a summary of the findings as they relate to the primary hypotheses examined in the present research. It also includes a discussion of the results, limitations of the present research, implications for counseling and therapy, and recommendations for future research.
Discussion of the Variables of Interest

*Calling and Associated Correlations*

The correlations between calling and career satisfaction in the current study were consistent with those reported in prior research (e.g., Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Peterson et al. 2009; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). The more strongly participants identified their careers as a calling, the greater their experience of satisfaction with their careers. Additionally, participants also exhibited positive correlations between calling and other variables consistent with the literature, including intrinsic religiosity (e.g., Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Dik et al., 2008; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010), intrinsic work motivation (e.g., Dik et al., 2008; Steger et al., 2010), meaning in life, (e.g., Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dik et al., 2008; Steger &Dik, 2009), and career commitment (e.g., Duffy et al., 2011; Serow et al., 1992). These variables are also related to career satisfaction: intrinsic religiosity (e.g., Robert et al., 2006), intrinsic work motivation (e.g., Elias, Smith, & Barney, 2012), meaning in life (e.g., Bonebright et al., 2000), and career commitment (e.g., Blau, 1985). Thus, calling’s inability to predict career satisfaction in the current study was unexpected.

*Noteworthy Demographic Findings*

Previous research indicates that individuals who endorse viewing their occupation as a calling report higher levels of income, education, and perceived career prestige (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Additionally, women tend to endorse calling more than men (Davidson &Caddell, 1994). In the current study, 72.6% of participants were female, which may in part explain the slightly higher average of calling in the current study when compared to the mean of the validation study. Further, almost two-thirds of the sample
endorsed an annual income of more than $60,000, and 89.1% of the sample endorsed a college education, which may also contribute to a higher endorsement and average of calling in the current study.

In the current study, there was no significant relationship between intrinsic work motivation and household income, which is consistent with the literature on internal versus external work motivation and values (e.g., Amabile et al., 1994; Knoop, 1994b); however, a statistically meaningful relationship existed between income and presence of meaning in life. Because income is considered an external reward, a lacking relationship with intrinsic work motivation is sensible. Meaning in life is often seen as an internally motivated experience of well-being (e.g., Steger et al., 2006) and is demonstrated as such through a significant correlation with intrinsic work motivation in the current study. Thus, the correlation in the current study between income and meaning in life is unexpected. The body of research does not provide supporting evidence that these two outcomes would be related. The relationship between meaning in life and the extrinsic reward of income might be explained in the current study as a means to enable individuals’ involvement with events that facilitate a purposeful or intrinsic experience of well-being, such as financial donations to a charitable organization or engaging in volunteer work.

Consistent with previous research findings, career commitment was not related to the following demographics variables: gender, marital status, and income (Lee et al., 2000). However, data showed a significant correlation between career commitment and participants’ perceived career prestige. Thus, it appears that the more prestige perceived in one’s career, the greater the commitment to that career. Further, there were significant
correlations between career prestige and household income and between household income and career satisfaction, which suggests that as one’s income increases, the perception of career prestige and career satisfaction increases. Thus, career commitment is indirectly related to household income in the current study. Overall, it appears that calling has little effect on how income and career prestige impact career satisfaction.

*Calling and Meaning in Life*

In the previous literature and current study, the relationships between calling and meaning in life (e.g., Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dik et al., 2008; Steger & Dik, 2009) and between meaning in life and positive career-related outcomes are strong (e.g., career commitment; Isaksen, 2000; Knoop, 1994a, 1994b; Mottaz, 1985; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). In the current study only the predictors of meaning in life and career commitment significantly predicted career satisfaction. Given the strong relationships between meaning in life and the other variables of interest in the current study (i.e., intrinsic-religiosity and intrinsic work motivation), especially calling (r = .54), it is possible that meaning in life acted as a “suppressor variable” by absorbing or sharing the variance in career satisfaction that these other variables may have accounted for in the absence of such strong relationships among the variables with meaning in life (Courville & Thompson, 2001, p. 232). Additionally, other studies have even conceptualized calling as a representation of work-related meaning and contributor to overall meaning in life (e.g., Baumeister, 1991; Steger & Dik, 2009), thereby supporting the strong, and potentially overlapping, relationship between calling and meaning in life. Further, career commitment has been identified as a mediator in the calling-work satisfaction relation (Duffy et al., 2011), and the relationship between calling and career commitment in the
current study was strong. Career commitment may, thus, have also acted as a suppressor variable, or absorbed the variance accounted for by calling. Although calling explains a valuable portion of the effect in career satisfaction through examination of the structure coefficients, it appears that it explains little more than meaning in life and career commitment. The structure of calling as a unique construct is still in question. Perhaps calling’s uniqueness is in what Baumeister (1991) and Steger and Dik (2009) theorized it to be, work-related meaning. If this explains calling’s uniqueness, calling may have been subsumed by this study’s inclusion of the more general construct, meaning in life.

*Calling and Intrinsic Religiosity*

Given the historical relationship between calling and intrinsic religiosity and the relationships in the literature with religiosity and career satisfaction (e.g., Robert et al., 2006), it was unexpected that intrinsic religiosity was not significantly correlated with career satisfaction. Almost 75% of the sample identified with a Christian religious affiliation and religious affiliation was moderately correlated with intrinsic religiousness, which might suggest that intrinsic religiosity would have been more present in the regression model. Also, Duffy and Dik (2009) assert that the stronger an individual’s religious or spiritual beliefs, the more likely they will be to identify their career as a calling. However, this absence of intrinsic religiosity as a predictor of career satisfaction or as a correlate with intrinsic work motivation might be explained as supporting the more secular definition of calling as offered by Dik and Duffy (2009). More specifically, individuals may have endorsed a calling without necessarily identifying strongly with a religious or spiritual belief system. This idea supports the evolution of calling from historical religious roots to more personal and internal systems of career development and...
appraisal. Additionally, the relationship between meaning in life and intrinsic religiosity is supported in the literature (e.g., Dik & Duffy, 2009) and a moderate relationship was demonstrated in the current study. Similar to the suppression that may have occurred between meaning in life and calling, a related effect may have also occurred between meaning in life and intrinsic religiosity, thereby reducing the presence of religiosity in the regression model.

**Calling and Intrinsic Work Motivation**

Consistent with the findings of Dik et al. (2008), calling was significantly correlated with intrinsic work motivation in the current study. Dik and Duffy (2009) reasoned that because individuals who endorse calling may sacrifice extrinsic aspects of job satisfaction such as pay or better work conditions for more intrinsic rewards such as helping others, they seem more likely to also endorse an intrinsic work motivation. Equally, individuals indicating a higher sense of intrinsic motivation may also be more likely to feel called to their careers. Further, researchers have proposed that individual aspects such as intrinsic work motivation or intrinsic religious orientations may suggest more global traits toward intrinsic (or extrinsic) rewards in general (e.g., Byrd et al., 2007; Paloutzian, 1996), thus contributing to viewing one’s career as a calling. In this case, it is likely that an individual scoring high on intrinsic work motivation will score high on intrinsic religious motivation; however, participants’ scores for intrinsic religiosity and intrinsic work motivation yielded a near-zero correlation in the current study. Additionally, intrinsic work motivation also had a near-zero correlation with career satisfaction in the current study, which is inconsistent with previous research suggesting that intrinsic work motivation is associated with more work-related
satisfaction (e.g., Knoop, 19994b; Mottaz, 1985). Thus, the tendency toward intrinsic rewards or evidence of an overall intrinsic motivation orientation/intrinsic approach to life cannot be deduced for the participants surveyed in the current study.

Calling and Career Commitment

The relationships among career commitment, calling and career satisfaction in the current study suggest a complex connection, which supports recent research. Career commitment has been found to be a mediator between calling and workplace outcomes in recent research (Duffy et al., 2011). While career commitment was not explored as a mediator in the current study, the relationships between career commitment and calling and between career commitment and career satisfaction are each strong, \( r = .41 \) and \( r = .66 \), respectively. Career commitment was also significantly related to educational background, which might suggest that one’s commitment to a career begins with his or her educational investment. However, educational background did not have a significant relationship with career satisfaction. Calling and educational background were also significantly related, consistent with research that supports that the identification of calling occurs in young adulthood (e.g., first year of college; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007, 2010; Steger & Dik, 2009). This finding suggests that calling might be identified and pursued early in post-secondary education, and the commitment to pursuing that calling may then result in greater future career satisfaction. Lee et al. (2000) assert, “a person with a strong occupational commitment will more strongly identify with, and experience more positive feelings about, the occupation” (p. 800). Additionally, Cunningham et al. (2005) found that one’s career commitment, as based on an internship after four-years of course study, impacted upper-level college students’ perceptions of their future career
satisfaction. Thus, career commitment as explored in the current study supports recent research, which identifies it is an important variable in understanding career satisfaction and calling (e.g., Duffy et al., 2011).

Limitations

The most significant limitation of the current study may be the homogeneity of the sample. The sample is primarily comprised of married, college educated, Caucasian women with annual incomes greater than $60,000 and high perceived career prestige. The generalizability of these findings is limited, and the utility of calling in men, ethnically diverse groups, and less educated populations is questionable. Additionally, since recruitment strategies depended on electronic means of data collection such as email and social networking Internet sites, individuals who do not rely on computers in their occupations or daily personal routines may have unintentionally been omitted, such as older working adults or individuals working in less technologically-focused careers (e.g., carpenter). Geographical limitations may have been imposed by the researcher’s reliance on email as a recruitment tool given that most initial emails were sent to individuals in the southern region of the United States (e.g., Mississippi, Texas). However, the extent to which these results can be applied to populations across the U.S. is limited by the absence of a demographic question regarding participants’ geographical region in the Demographic Questionnaire.

A selection bias could have occurred to facilitate a homogenous sample. The recruitment letter indicated that the researcher was conducting a study to examine career satisfaction among adults in a variety of career fields. Individuals who experience more career satisfaction may have been more likely to complete the survey than those who feel
less satisfied by their careers. Additionally, people who feel more pride or satisfaction in the perceived prestige of their careers may have been drawn to complete the survey over those perceiving their careers to have less prestige.

Some of the variables of interest lacked variability in the range of scores endorsed by participants, namely meaning in life and career commitment. Participants generally endorsed high levels of meaning in life and the distribution was negative skewed with few low scores. The distribution of scores for career commitment was relatively flat, which indicates that most participants endorsed similar degrees of career commitment. Although the sample size of the current study protected against any statistical concerns related to the limited variability of these two measures, the generalizability of the study is limited to individuals with high-average levels of meaning in life and career commitment. Further, meaning and life and career commitment were the strongest predictors of career satisfaction in the current study; thus, participants’ high endorsement of these variables likely contributed to their strong presence in the regression model. This limited range is most likely due to the homogeneity of the sample.

The measurement of career satisfaction was also limited in the current study. Because no career satisfaction measures exist which have been appropriately validated for widespread use, the goal for the current study was to create a comprehensive, composite score of career satisfaction (e.g., multiple scales that included one’s current level of job satisfaction), consistent with strategies used in the literature. However, the psychometric data for such a strategy was lacking, and it is unknown if the present method was stronger than any individual measure of career satisfaction used in the composite procedure of the current study. Additional statistical evaluation is important
for validating the current study’s measurement of career satisfaction (e.g., factor analysis).

Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

The relationship between calling, meaning in life, and career satisfaction as demonstrated both in the literature and the current study is profound. The current study provided corroborating evidence for the existence of calling, not only within college student populations, but within a sample of working adults who identified as actively working within their desired career fields. Also, calling demonstrated considerable relationship to variables that predicted career satisfaction (i.e., meaning in life). Meaning in work has implications for the experience of greater meaning in life, along with other positive consequences of global well-being. Continuing to help individuals identify what gives them meaning in life may help them to identify a calling or what might bring them meaning in work. Additionally, career counselors can help clients explore how their jobs or greater careers contribute to their world in a meaningful way in the absence of direct, observable values such as with those associated with being a teacher or member of the clergy. Additionally, Loo (2001) suggests that clarifying individuals’ work motivation and values, intrinsic or extrinsic, is important for helping them to make more informed decisions regarding education and training, jobs, and overall career choices, thereby ensuring long-term career fit and increased career satisfaction. Thus, including measures of work preference and values can help people narrow down options toward their calling. While calling did not predict career satisfaction in the current study in the way it was expected (i.e., through beta weights in hierarchical multiple regression), the results suggest that calling accounts for a considerable portion of the effect explained in career
satisfaction in the current study (i.e., 27%). Thus, continuing to incorporate discussions of calling and work-related meaning may prove helpful for clients who struggle with work-related satisfaction.

In the current study, career satisfaction was measured by forming a composite score from three measures of career and job satisfaction. Currently, there is no widely endorsed, psychometrically validated, comprehensive measure of career satisfaction. Although the composite score methodology was based on previous research using multiple measures to define a single construct (e.g., Judge et al., 1995), this is both inefficient and statistically questionable. While the current study demonstrated adequate validity and reliability, the field of Vocational Psychology and career-related research can benefit from improvements in the measurement of career satisfaction.

Higher income has been found to increase organizational commitment by increasing self-esteem (e.g., Lee et al., 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), which suggests that an external work value (e.g., money or work hours; Knoop, 1994b) might impact more internal aspects of work motivation (e.g., enjoyment or interest; Amabile et al., 1994). Unfortunately, these conclusions cannot be substantiated by the current study, as the extrinsic work motivation was not of immediate interest in the current study and the extrinsic subscale of the Work Preference Inventory (Amabile et al., 1994) was not included in the survey. However, Prat-Sala and Redford (2010) also beg the question regarding where self-esteem fits in with intrinsic work motivations. Thus, examining the impact that internal and external work motivations can have on each other and on career-related outcomes may highlight additional ways in which career satisfaction can be affected.
Verbruggen and Sels (2010) assert that personality traits can have an impact on career and life satisfaction. Additionally, Steger and Dik (2009) purport that people who tend to experience global meaning in life, satisfaction with life, and other general indicators of well-being are likely to experience them in their work as well, which suggests that a more trait-like aspect of one’s personality might impact one’s endorsement of career- or life satisfaction or calling. Career satisfaction has been studied in relation to the Big Five factors of personality (Lounsbury, Sundstrom, Loveland, & Gibson, 2003); however, calling has not been studied in relation to personality models. Examining how personality traits impact individuals’ endorsement or identification of a career calling could help to clarify whether calling occurs across populations, or if the construct is limited to specific traits. This may also help to establish whether studies of calling have a sampling bias (i.e., individuals who endorse a calling may be more likely to complete calling-related surveys).

The current study offers multiple directions from which calling research could continue to expand. Considering the statistical complexities between calling and meaning in life exhibited in the current study and the notion that calling can be interpreted as work-related meaning (e.g., Baumeister, 1991; Steger & Dik, 2009), the body of calling research could benefit from further study to discriminate between the constructs of meaning in work and the “transcendent summons” that calling is currently conceptualized to be (i.e., Dik & Duffy, 2009, p. 427). Currently, the Calling and Vocation Questionnaire (Dik et al., 2008) breaks into two subscales: Presence of Calling and Search for Calling. However, these two subscales do not seem to differentiate the spiritual experience of calling from the experience of more general meaning and purpose.
Additional research to distinguish these constructs may provide a purer measurement of calling. Further, while career commitment has been found to be a mediator between calling and career satisfaction, meaning in life has not been examined as a mediator. Considering the relationship between meaning and life and calling in the current study, exploring this potential relationship could also help to explicate instances of variable suppression within regression models and contribute to the conceptual differentiation between calling and meaning in life.

Additionally, because the study became one of dual focus between the prediction of calling and career satisfaction and a priori methodology made the exploration of calling contingent on calling’s prediction of career satisfaction, the current study’s goal of clarifying the nature of calling was not accomplished since calling was not a significant predictor of career satisfaction as hypothesized. Once a measure is developed that differentiates calling from meaning in life, research explicitly seeking to explain the construct of calling would help to determine the extent to which it is, indeed, a unique construct or whether it is a more general term that includes many other related variables. For example, structural equation modeling could be used to assess the strongest paths to calling. Potential exogenous variables could include variables from the current study (i.e., intrinsic religiosity, intrinsic work motivation, career commitment), demographic variables as informed by the literature, personality traits, self-esteem, and even career or job satisfaction.

Conclusion

Hierarchical multiple regression revealed that calling was not a statistically significant predictor of career satisfaction as hypothesized in a sample of adults working
in their desired career fields. However, the present findings did support that calling can explain a meaningful amount of variance in career satisfaction, as indicated through the examination of structure coefficients in the current study. Alternative predictors of career satisfaction were identified, including career commitment and meaning in life, as well as one’s age, household income, length of time invested in one’s job, and educational background. While additional exploration of calling is needed, the present study lends unique and compelling evidence to support its utility in relation to career satisfaction in populations of working adults.

Overall, the current study had a dual focus that limited exploration of one of the research goals: explore calling’s prediction of career satisfaction and based on those results, pursue analysis to clarify the construct of calling, all within a sample of working adults. Although the results showed that calling was not as strong a predictor as career commitment and meaning in life, data showed that calling is a present and widely correlated construct among working adults. Continued research on the nature of calling and how it can impact career counseling and the experience of career satisfaction in working adults is warranted.
APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Please fill in the blank or check the response that best applies to you.

1. Age: _____ (You must be 18 years or older to continue)

2. Gender:
   □ Male
   □ Female

3. Racial/Ethnic Background:
   □ American Indian/Alaskan Native
   □ Asian/Pacific Islander
   □ Black (Non-Hispanic)
   □ Hispanic
   □ White (Non-Hispanic)
   □ Other: (please specify) ____________________

4. Marital Status
   □ Single
   □ Married
   □ Divorced
   □ Widowed/Widower
   □ Other: (please specify) ____________________

5. Educational Background (please specify your highest level completed):
   □ Grade School (8th grade)
   □ High School
   □ Some College
   □ Community/Technical College
   □ 4-year College/University
   □ Some Graduate School
   □ Graduate Degree
   □ Post Graduate Degree

6. Religious affiliation:
   □ Buddhist
   □ Christian – Catholic
   □ Christian – Lutheran
   □ Christian – Methodist
   □ Christian – Baptist
   □ Christian – Other Protestant
   □ Christian – LDS (Mormon)
☐ Christian – Other Denomination
☐ Hindu
☐ Muslim/Islam
☐ Jewish
☐ Atheist
☐ Agnostic
☐ Taoist
☐ Pagan/Wiccan
☐ Unitarian – Universalist
☐ Other: ________________________________
☐ None

7. Career Field: Please check the box below that best describes your current career field.

☐ Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources
☐ Architecture & Construction
☐ Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications
☐ Business, Management, & Administration

☐ Education & Training
☐ Finance
☐ Government & Public Administration
☐ Health Science

☐ Hospitality & Tourism
☐ Human Services
☐ Information Technology
☐ Law, Public Safety, Correction, & Security

☐ Manufacturing
☐ Marketing, Sales, & Service
☐ Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics
☐ Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics

☐ Other: ________________________________

8. Current Occupational Title (e.g., nurse, teacher, cashier, accountant, therapist, scientist, etc.):

*Please be as specific as possible on this question. It is very important for this research.
9. Have you been working in the same/similar job setting for at least one year?
   □ Yes, number of years: _______
   □ No

10. Are you currently:
   □ Full-time
   □ Part-time, Hours per week: _____

11. Do you see your current job as part of your long-term career path?
   □ Yes
   □ No

12. On a scale of 1 to 9, with 1 indicating low prestige and 9 indicating the highest level of prestige, how would you rate the prestige of your career?
   □ 1 = Low Prestige
   □ 2
   □ 3
   □ 4
   □ 5
   □ 6
   □ 7
   □ 8
   □ 9 = Highest Prestige

13. Yearly Household Income:
   □ $0-$20,000
   □ $21,000-$40,000
   □ $41,000-$60,000
   □ $61,000-$80,000
   □ $81,000-$100,000
   □ $101,000+

14. Have you ever received career counseling?
   □ Yes
   □ No
APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT COVER LETTER

Dear Colleague,

My name is Kari Leavell, and I am a doctoral student in the Counseling Psychology PhD Program at The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi. I am conducting a study to examine career satisfaction among adults in a variety of career fields. I hope to collect information that will help to improve counseling and career interventions aimed at increasing career satisfaction.

I could really use your help to complete the research required for my Ph.D. I need participants that are: a) at least 18 years of age or older, b) currently working in their chosen career field, and c) have at least 1 year of experience working in this career field (not necessarily working your current job). Responses will be anonymous, and you have the option to exit the online survey at any time. The survey should take you less than 15 minutes to complete. By clicking on the link, you may also access an information page, which more fully explains the project.

Please click the following link (or cut and paste into your web browser) to complete my survey: xxxxxxxx.com

If you have any questions concerning your participation in this study now or in the future, you can contact the principal investigator, Kari Leavell, M.A. at (601) 266-4601 or via email at kari.leavell@eagles.usm.edu or my research supervisor, Dr. Emily Bullock Yowell, at (601) 266-6603 or via email at Emily.Yowell@usm.edu.

Thank you very much for your interest and participation in this research.

Kindly,

Kari Leavell, M.A.
Counseling Psychology Doctoral Student
Department of Psychology
The University of Southern Mississippi
kari.leavell@eagles.usm.edu
APPENDIX C
INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

The University of Southern Mississippi
Authorization to Participate in Research Project

Consent is hereby given to participate in the study titled: The Predictors of Calling and their Relationship to Career Satisfaction.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to explore the variables related to calling and career satisfaction.

Description of Study: Participant in this study will be asked to complete several questionnaires that assess the variables listed above. All questionnaires completed will be done so anonymously, and all responses will be kept confidential. All data will be entered into a computer database program and appropriately analyzed. This process does not incorporate any invasive procedures.

Benefits: Potential benefits of this research include a better understanding of the relationship between calling and career satisfaction. Also, if you choose to be entered in a drawing for one of two $50 gift cards, you have a chance of being drawn at the conclusion of the study.

Risks: This is a minimal risk study that does not ask significantly personal questions, and as a result, there do not appear to be any major risks related to completing the questionnaire. Participants can discontinue from further participation in the study at any time without consequence. Further, participants can contact the principal investigator of this study, Kari Leavell, M.A., at any time throughout the study.

Confidentiality: This is an anonymous online survey, and only researchers will have access to the information provided. Information related to the questionnaires will be stored in a locked room located in the Department of Psychology at The University of Southern Mississippi. Information from these questionnaires will be entered into a computer database, and will not be connected to any specific participant.

Alternative procedures: Any participant may discontinue participation in this study at any time without consequence.

Participant’s assurance: Assurances cannot be made concerning results that may be obtained (since results from investigational studies cannot be predicted). Yet, the researcher will take every precaution consistent with the best scientific practice. Participation in this project is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. Questions concerning the research should be directed to the lead investigator, Kari Leavell, M.A. at kari.leavell@eagles.usm.edu, or the research supervisor, Emily Bullock Yowell, Ph.D. at (601) 266-6603 or Emily.Yowell@usm.edu. This project and this consent form have been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.
Proceeding to the next page of this online survey indicates you have read the above information and you are providing consent to participate in this research project.
NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the “Adverse Effect Report Form”.
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 11102602
PROJECT TITLE: The Predictors of Calling and the Role of Career Satisfaction in Working Adults
PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation
RESEARCHER/S: Kari A. Leavell
COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education & Psychology
DEPARTMENT: Psychology
FUNDING AGENCY: N/A
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Expedited Review Approval
PERIOD OF PROJECT APPROVAL: 11/07/2011 to 11/06/2012

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board Chair
REFERENCES


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