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Mediating role of psychological capital in the relationship of career calling, happiness, and engagement

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the current study was to examine the mediating role of psychological capital in the relationship of career calling with happiness and engagement. A purposive and judgmental sampling technique was utilised to collect data from a sample of 300 higher education teachers from different universities in India. Statistical package for social science (SPSS) was used to analyse the correlations among career calling, happiness, engagement, and psychological capital. Correlational results showed that study variables career calling, psychological capital, happiness, and engagement were positively correlated. Structure equation modelling (SEM) technique was used to investigate mediating role of psychological capital between the relationship of career calling with happiness, and engagement. The results of the SEM analysis showed that psychological capital fully mediated the relationship of career calling and happiness and partially mediated the relationship of career calling with engagement. The findings indicated that psychological capital significantly impacted the relationship among career calling, happiness, and engagement. This study contributes to the proposed mechanisms underlying the association between career calling, happiness, and engagement. The study concludes with implications, and future research in the domain of career calling.

Keywords: career calling, psychological capital, happiness, engagement

1. Introduction

The term career calling evolved into a more global concept of work that places a greater importance on personal satisfaction[1]. People with career calling realize their identities and careers are interlinked[2]. Career calling works for the personal fulfillment that comes from work, not only for money gain but also in career progress[2]. "Calling" word originated in a religious context, while people considered that they were being "called" by God to carry out important social and ethical tasks[3]. The concept of career calling is becoming less associated with religion and is currently applicable to careers beyond religious vocation[4]. Nowadays, several individuals perceive their career as a means to make a substantial impact on society or to pursue their particular passions and interests[5].

Empirical research on career calling has increased, with most of the research examining (a) the relationship between career calling and their outcomes, (b) construct's significance for specific populations, and (c) the connection between career calling and well-being outcomes, including life meaning and life satisfaction[7]. People who reported regarding their work as calling were found to have higher probability of experiencing life meaning and work[6,7,8]. Prior studies have established a relationship between calling and favourable career outcomes, including increased stronger occupational identification, job engagement, and a reduced tendency to leave the current occupation[9]. There is a paucity in the current research concentrated primarily on the positive aspects of career calling. A relationship has been observed between one's feeling of well-being and sense of career calling[9]. Those who have been selected for advanced careers are happier and more pleased with their lives and careers[9].

The present study refers to the implementation of the neoclassical perspective to the concept of career calling. Calling as 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"[10]. Researchers suggested that future research on career calling should investigate the potential moderators and mediator of the relationship between career calling and well-being[11]. Prior research was conducted in a western context; it is necessary to analyze it in the context of other cultures[12]. Research is needed to look into professions such as educator, doctor, and lawyer, which are commonly regarded as calling than other professions because these vocations provide a more significant opportunity to help others discover their life purpose[13]. Teachers' perceptions of their career calling are complex and offer new insights into educators and their educational practices[14].

Further investigation is needed to examine alternative dependent variables in the context of calling[15]. More research is required to determine the reliability of the concept of a career calling is significant in different cultural contexts[16,17]. The extant literature regarding the influence of psychological capital on happiness remains limited in scope[18]. Additional research is required in order to ascertain and examine the relationship between the career calling and engagement[19–24]. Career calling research have been done with subjective well-being and researchers have asked to enhance the understanding of well-being by exploring other dimensions of well-being such as social well-being, psychological well-being & occupational well-being or engagement[25]. The current body of literature provides comprehensive understanding on the correlation between psychological capital and engagement[26,27]. Individuals with high levels of career calling possess the ability to provide education and instruction[28].

Most of the calling scales have been emerged in the western context and as far as the researcher is aware that the already developed scales have not been widely used on Indian population[29]. Developing a new scale would contribute to the existing body of knowledge and expand the scope of research as new scale may have variables that may not have been captured in previous research. In this study, career calling scale has been developed with the intention of addressing gaps in research concerning the examining of calling impact on work attitudes[30]. Researchers suggested that more research should be attempted with a more extensive variety of participants, including individuals from non-western countries, varied socioeconomic backgrounds, and working-class populations[31]. Thus, to develop a new scale on calling, outlining the domain of calling was necessary. This was achieved through in-depth literature review followed by one-on-one discussions with experts.

Here, researcher provides a 12-item scale for evaluating career calling, which may be applied in various domains, encompassing both work and nonwork situations. To validate this new scale, we conducted a comprehensive set of tests as recommended by the scale development literature. The conducted tests comprised

the evaluation of scale reliability, as well as the evaluation of discriminant and convergent validity. The scale provides a valid, reliable, and flexible measure for empirical study, which enhances the study of calling and the broader concept of work's importance. We now focus on formulating hypotheses to understand career calling and their relationship with the study variables. This study aims to explore the correlation between career calling, psychological capital, and their impact on individuals' levels of happiness and engagement. The study objective is to determine how individuals' career calling, psychological capital, and ensuing levels of happiness and engagement in their careers are related.

2. Hypotheses development

H1. Career calling is positively related to happiness and engagement.

The term "calling" indicates a career that provides happiness and is derived from an external source and serves for the betterment of a greater good[32]. Happiness is the measure of an individual's satisfaction with all aspects of their daily life circumstances[33]. Happiness is commonly conceptualised as a state of well-being, that is recognised as the fundamental aspect of positive organisational behaviour[34]. Participating in the act of calling provides on individuals an immense feeling of purpose and significance within their career endeavours, which allows them to have a beneficial impact on society. This leads to increased levels of happiness and life satisfaction[16,35]. When employees experience a deep sense of calling, they develop a deeper connection to their work and have a natural desire to perform well, leading in improved happiness[24]. Individuals who are referred to as "called" are more likely to identify themselves with their work, show enhanced confidence in the positive impact of their work, which results in happiness[36,37]. The level of wok and life satisfaction realised by an individual and happiness tends to increase directly with their career calling[9]. Some researchers argued that career calling enhances the happiness of employees by allowing more effective responses to organisational challenges[38,39]. People who work enthusiastically carry out their everyday responsibilities and make valuable contributions to society, in this circumstance, work becomes calling, and people find happiness in their work[40]. A higher level of well-being is often observed in individuals who see their careers as calling[41]. Calling is associated with an extensive range of fields of study, encompassing academic satisfaction[41], life satisfaction[42] and job satisfaction[43].

Engagement is characterised as a distinct feeling of vigor and dedication that is linked with the ability to experience enthusiasm, excitement, or passion in the workplace[44]. "Engagement is a persistent, positive, affective-motivational state characterized by energy, dedication, and absorption"[45]. Individuals having high career calling entails an innate sense of significance, personal association and dedication in their work[46]. Calling enables individuals to perceive what they do as a purposeful means of obtaining resources, resulting in increasing motivation for engagement[23,47]. Consistent with prior research that supports positive effects of calling, such as strong work-related energy and a profound sense of identity with work the findings suggest that individual who have calling show high engagement in their work[23,47,48]. Calling may improve personal and workplace outcomes such as engagement at work. Individuals that exhibit a profound sense of career calling have a deep significance, commitment, and dedication to their work which is strongly connected to workplace engagement[49]. Calling bring about societal effects and positive personal, such as increased workplace engagement, as they improve work meaning. Therefore, we hypothesize that there is a positive relationship of career calling with happiness and engagement.

H2. Career calling is positively related to psychological capital.

Psychological capital refers to an aspect of the individual's positive psychological development, which is characterised by four distinct that is self- efficiency, optimism, hope, and resilience[50]. Self-efficacy relates to an individual's sense of confidence or faith in their capacity to successfully organise and perform the actions

needed to attain the desired outcomes[51]. Research indicates that self-efficacy is strongly associated with calling[52] that calling help people make decisions regarding their careers[53], and that calling may predict career self-efficacy among individuals[49]. Employees who have career calling in their work, view themselves as a valuable contributor to society, so boosting their self-efficacy and resulting in increased levels of confidence which leads to psychological capital[24]. Hope encompasses the proactive determination and strategic preparation for creating solutions for problems[54].

The concept of calling is closely linked to hope, as those who have found their calling are driven to pursue their career goals with a greater emphasis on long-term perspectives[55]. Resilience is the ability to persevere or overcome from challenges in order to maintain development[54]. One who have a strong sense of purpose are more inclined to remain strong in challenging circumstances and have a lower perception of risk, indicating a potential link between having a calling and resilience[56,57]. Optimism refers to the favourable perspective or anticipation towards outcomes[54]. Calling helps people to be more conscientious and optimistic about their careers due to the additional effort they put forth to achieve their goals[58]. Hence, there exists a positive relationship between career calling and psychological capital.

H3. Psychological capital is positively related to happiness and engagement.

Psychological capital, which encompasses characteristics related to resources, is associated with happiness[59]. Psychological capital significantly affects the accomplishment of goals and is strongly associated with happiness[60]. Psychological capital are positively correlated with high dedication and improved performance outcomes that will lead to happiness[61]. Prior research has also indicated, from the perspective of psychological capital, that career calling enhances one's confidence, resiliency, self-esteem, and sense of value, all of which ultimately contribute to happiness[62,63]. In today's workplace, psychological capital may help balance and optimize positivity and negativity[64], which may result in increased employee satisfaction and enhanced happiness. Individuals with strong levels of resilience, self-efficacy, optimism, and hope are prone to remain to use these resources to overcome or mitigate the negative impact of the internal constraints in their role which may lead to happiness in the work place[60].

Psychological Capital may significantly impact individuals' ability to handle challenging situations, hence increasing their level of engagement. Moreover, psychological capital could influence individual's evaluations of the needs of their circumstances. When teachers with strong psychological capital evaluate challenges in a positive manner, they may perceive these circumstances as less demanding in comparison to their personal abilities. The perception of balance between both needs and resources is essential for promoting engagement[65]. Hope's purposeful resolve to accomplish objectives may be associated with vigour and dedication. Resilience may act as a useful personal resource for individuals, enabling them to sustain their engagement in the face of setbacks or challenges by effectively handling the demands of their responsibilities. Additionally, it has the potential to enhance engagement by fostering enhanced vigour and dedication. An optimistic perspective may improve the availability of cognitive and affective skills needed for engagement[65]. Psychological capital is a fundamental concept in personal resources that facilitates individuals in achieving their objectives[51].

This helps individuals perform better with extra effort, eventually improving their engagement. Research indicate a positive correlation between psychological capital and engagement[66–68]. This study makes a valuable contribution to the existing body of knowledge on calling by examining the role of psychological capital as the fundamental mechanism using which career calling is linked with increased levels of happiness[69]. The relationship between psychological capital and engagement is substantiated by empirical studies[70]. Hence, psychological capital has a positive association with happiness and engagement.

H4. Psychological capital mediates the relationship of career calling with happiness and engagement.

Individuals who see their career as a calling often show feelings of happiness due to enhanced feeling of purpose or fulfilment in specific domains of life[11,25]. Research based on empirical evidence has established a strong connection between self-efficacy and career calling, as affirmed by[52]. There is a significant association between calling and feeling hopeful because individuals who have a sense of calling are more likely to pursue career objectives with an emphasis on long-term outcomes[55]. People who have career calling are more inclined to demonstrate optimism about their career challenging circumstances and have a reduced perception of risk. This implies a potential correlation between career calling and resilience[56].

People with career calling are more prone to be optimistic about their occupation because they put great efforts to reach their goals. Being optimistic about ones career keeps anyone working hard and may lead to greater engagement[58]. Individuals who view their work as a calling exhibit an intense sense of personal meaning, dedication and commitment to their work which is closely associated with work engagement[49]. High levels of hope, self-efficacy, optimism and resilience are associated with strong work-related frames of mind characterized by dedication, vigor, and absorption[66]. Psychological capital tends to have a motivational component to achieve goals[71], it may be argued that employees' higher psychological capital will help them perform better with extra effort, eventually leading to their engagement at work. As career calling is related to psychological capital and psychological capital is related to engagement, therefore, it may be argued that calling has the potential to enhance engagement via increasing psychological capital. Thus, psychological capital, may serve as a mediating factor in the relationship between career calling and happiness.

Psychological capital, which encompasses characteristics related to resources, is associated with happiness[59]. Prior research has supported relationship between psychological capital with happiness[72]. Researchers have found that well-being is impacted by self-efficacy[73], hope[74], resiliency[72], and optimism[58]. Therefore, it may be argued that calling has the potential to enhance happiness via increasing psychological capital. This, in turn, may serve as a mediating factor in the relationship between career calling and happiness. Thus, considering the robust relationship between career calling and happiness[25], and the important role of career calling in psychological capital[56], we hypothesize that the relationship of career calling with happiness is mediated by psychological capital. Based on the above hypotheses, a conceptual framework of the study is shown in **Figure1**.
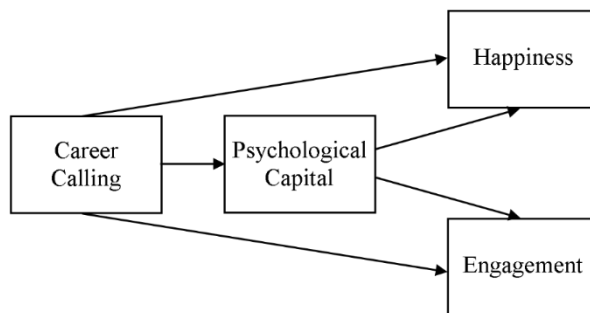
Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study.

3. Methods

The study used a cross-sectional research design for analysis. Purposive and judgmental sampling techniques were used by the researchers to collect data from higher education teachers. The data analysis was primarily descriptive in nature.

3.1. Participants and procedure

The study sample consisted of 300 higher education teachers from the National Capital Region in India, including 156 (52%) male and 144 (48%) female. The participants had an average age of 38.93 years. The survey was continuous research. A concise overview of the study's objective was given to all participants. The data was obtained by distributing questionnaires to the participants using paper and pen method. The questionnaire was utilised to collect the responses of participants, taking into consideration different variables and their demographic profile. The participants have given prior consent to ensure the confidentiality of the data and its only utilization for research purposes.

3.2. Measures

3.2.1. Career calling

Researchers developed a career calling scale to assess the career calling in higher education teachers. The scale has three dimensions: purposeful work, other-oriented meaning, and value-driven behavior. The scale consists of twelve statements such as, "My profession helps me to pursue my life's purpose," "I do believe that a force beyond myself has helped me to guide my career," and "My job helps to make the world a better place." Six-point Likert scale was utilized to collect responses ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "6 = strongly agree".

3.2.2. Psychological capital

To assess psychological capital, the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ-12)[75] was administered. The scale has four dimensions: self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism. The scale consists of twelve items, such as, "I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management," "I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals," "I usually take stressful things at work in stride," and "I am optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work." The respondents' ratings on a six-point Likert scale ranged from "1= strongly disagree" to "6 = strongly agree".

3.2.3. Happiness

To measure happiness in this study, the 4-item Subjective Happiness Scale was administered[76]. The scale includes four items, such as "In general, I consider myself," "Compared with most of my peers, I consider myself." Likert scale with seven points was utilized to collect responses that ranged from "1= Not a very happy person" to "7 = A very happy person".

3.2.4. Engagement

To assess the engagement levels, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale questionnaire (UWES-9)[45], was used, which consists of three dimensions: vigor, dedication and absorption. The scale consists of nine items such as "At my job, I feel strong and vigorous," "I am enthusiastic about my job," "I am immersed in my job." The responses were obtained using a seven-point Likert scale that ranged from "0 = never" to "6 = always".

3.3. Content development and validity of career calling scale

On basis of extensive literature review, the study identified the dimensions of calling. A comprehensive list of 26 items was identified through a literature review to develop the construct. The checklist was prepared based on the similarity of themes. The list of items was rated on relevance, and was presented to the expert panel for verification. The expert panel comprised of five academicians and five industry professionals. The dimensions were evaluated using a four-point scale, where 1 = "Not relevant" and 4 = "Very relevant". The expert panel based on the set criteria verified the checklist.

Validity determines how well the items of a measure are appropriate and represent the construct under study[77]. The determination of an instrument's content validity is accomplished by the calculation of the content validity index (CVI)[78] which involves experts judging the importance of each item. I-CVI values (Item content validity index) of 0.78 or greater, as determined by three or more experts, are indicative of appropriate content validity[78]. Statements with a rating below 78% were dropped from the study, resulting in the removal of five items. After the content validity assessment, 21 items were retained for subsequent analysis.

3.3.1. Exploratory factor analysis

The objective of this study was to collect preliminary evidence regarding the scale's factor validity and reliability. In this analysis, our objective was to assess the scale's factor structure through administering its items to a sample of the higher education teachers. The survey was circulated among the participants, and the total number of respondents was 260. The response is based on a Likert scale that ranges from "1=strongly disagree," to "6=strongly agree".

To analysis of the data, the IBM SPSS-21 tool was utilized. We evaluated sample adequacy by using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO =.884), which symbolizes that the sample was suitable for factor analysis. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted using the principal component analysis approach. The result given in **Table 1** revealed the extraction of a factor that explained 63.72% of the variance. Under the process of exploratory factor analysis (EFA), we identified three distinct factors, as indicated in **Table 2**. To explain the idea behind the Career Calling Scale, which is comprised up of three elements: purposeful work, other-oriented meaning, and value-driven behavior.

Table 1. Total variance explained by the factors of career calling scale.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.218	43.481	43.481	5.218	43.481	43.481	2.646	22.052	22.052
2	1.260	10.496	53.977	1.260	10.496	53.977	2.546	21.217	43.270
3	1.169	9.744	63.720	1.169	9.744	63.720	2.454	20.451	63.720
4	.687	5.726	69.447						
5	.646	5.385	74.832						
6	.569	4.738	79.569						
7	.534	4.448	84.017						
8	.479	3.992	88.009						
9	.419	3.492	91.502						
10	.382	3.181	94.683						
11	.351	2.922	97.604						
12	.287	2.396	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 2. Rotated component matrix of dimensions.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	**2**	**3**
"I see my career as a path to attain the purpose in my life."	.788		
"An inner voice is guiding me in doing my job."	.785		
"My profession helps me to pursue my life's purpose."	.716		
"I follow an inner call that guides me on my career path."	.684		
"The most important aspect of my career is to help others when they are in need."		.807	
"Making a positive change in others' life is the primary motivation of my current job."		.731	
"I do believe that a force beyond myself has helped me to guide my career."		.704	
"I evaluate how beneficial my work is to others."		.698	
"I appreciate that my career is recognized as important in the society."			.851
"I believe that my chosen career contributes to the society."			.742
"My job helps to make the world a better place."			.718
"I have chosen a career path which is personally meaningful."			.586

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.^a

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Reliability is the ability of a tool for measurement to consistently give the same results when used multiple times[79]. In the present study, reliability of scale was assessed using internal consistency method by estimating Cronbach's alpha values. To analyse the internal consistency, we estimated Cronbach's alpha (α), considering values as adequate if they were equal to or greater than 0.70. Career calling scales' reliability was assessed with Cronbach's alpha that was 0.881.

3.3.2. Confirmatory factor analysis

The researchers conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) 21.0. The study of the model's fit was conducted by applying the four goodness-of-fit indices[80]. The result of CFA reveals CMIN/DF = 2.477, CFI = .941, RMSEA = .086, and SRMR = 0.0603 that each of the items loaded with suitable threshold value.

3.3.3. Convergent-discriminant validity

We examined scale's convergent and discriminant validity. The construct validity of the instrument was tested and was found acceptable by its statistical norms which is given in **Table 3**. Results of analysis provide support to the convergent and discriminant validity of three factor scale of career calling through both exploratory as well as confirmatory factor analysis.

Table 3. Construct validity.

Factors Name	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	VDB	PW	OOM
Value Driven Behaviour	0.862	0.610	0.555	0.867	0.781		
Purposeful Work	0.861	0.609	0.392	0.865	0.626	0.780	
Other Oriented Meaning	0.843	0.574	0.555	0.849	0.745	0.547	0.758

Note: *VDB (Value Driven Behaviour), PW (Purposeful Work), OOM (Other Oriented Meaning), AVE (Average Variance Extracted), CR (Composite Reliability), MSV (Maximum Shared Squared Variance)

4. Results

4.1. Common method variance

Common method variance (CMV) may occur when self-report questionnaires are being used to gather data simultaneously from the same participants. The utilisation of self-report measures from a single respondent in the commonly used cross-sectional design increases the probability of shared method bias[81]. Common method variance indicates that a significant proportion of the overall variance may be explained by a single factor[82]. The study used Harman's single factor test to measure the presence of CMV in model. We attempted to consolidate all the factors that constitute into a single factor by the application of Exploratory Factor Analysis[83].

In our study, we commenced by incorporating all 37 elements from the four variables into one cohesive factor for the purpose of assessing the CMV. After some iterations, all the variables were loaded into a single factor. However, this factor only explained 35.84% of the total variation, indicating that our data set is free from common method bias, since the percentage is below 50% [24,84].

4.2. Preliminary analysis

The hypotheses were tested using SPSS. Several analyses were conducted to evaluate the given hypotheses. Means, standard deviation, inter-correlations among the variables and reliabilities are given in **Table 4**. It was found that there was a substantial correlation among all the study constructs.

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviation (SD), reliabilities (α), and inter-correlations among study variables.

Measure	Mean	SD	α	1	2	3	4
Career Calling	60.35	10.31	0.967	1			
Psychological Capital	51.67	9.60	0.896	.476**			
Happiness	17.63	3.99	0.837	.239**	.332**		
Engagement	41.06	9.53	0.952	.343**	.290**	.251**	1

4.3. Measurement model

The study used SEM to investigate the mediating role of psychological capital in the relationship between career calling, happiness, and engagement. We used the following goodness-of-fit criteria, value of the CMIN/df is <5, a Root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) of < 0.09, a comparative fit index (CFI) is > 0.90, and a standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) of < 0.05[80]. The measurement model comprises four variables used in the analysis: career calling, psychological capital, happiness, and engagement. A test for measurement model generated a satisfactory fit to the data: CMIN/df = 1.549; p = .01; RMSEA = .043; SRMR = .0413; and CFI =.985.
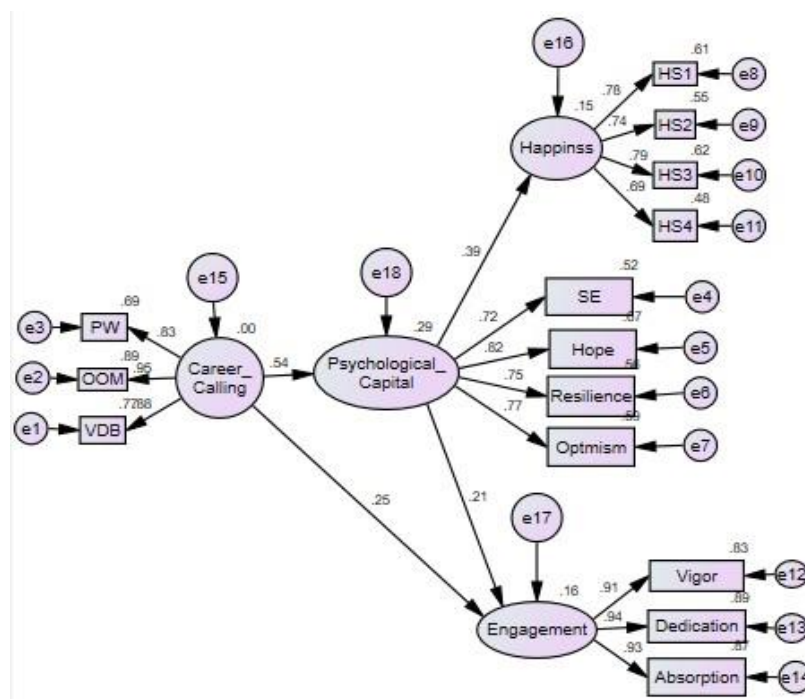
4.4. Structural model

In this current study proposed the mediating effect of psychological capital in the relationship among career calling, happiness, and engagement. A comprehensive mediation model was developed, which included direct paths from career calling to psychological capital, happiness, and engagement, and from psychological capital to happiness and engagement. A mediated model (Model 1) was analyzed in which career calling impacted happiness and engagement by psychological capital as a mediator. We tested Model 1 that indicates direct path from career calling to happiness and engagement, which disclosed a good fit to the data: CMIN/df = 1.618, CFI = .983, RMSEA = .045, and SRMR=.0530. The path coefficients from career calling to happiness (.06, p < .001) and engagement (.25, p < .001) were computed. Path from career calling to happiness was not

significant, therefore, we tested Model 2 after removing the path from career calling to happiness. The results of Model 2 also showed that it fit the data very well: CMIN/df = 1.604, RMSEA=0.045; SRMR=0.0553; and CFI=0.984. The model fit indices are shown in **Table 5**. Among the two models that were examined, Model 2 demonstrated a more parsimonious model and therefore better model than model 1. As per model 2, the relation between career calling and happiness was fully mediated by psychological capital, while the relationship between career calling and engagement was partially mediated by psychological capital. **Figure 2** shows how the structural equation model of psychological capital mediates career calling, happiness, and engagement.

Table 5. Competing Model Fit Indices.

	χ2	df	χ2/df	RMSEA	SRMR	CF1	AIC	ECVI
Model 1	116.527	72	1.618	.045	.0530	.983	182.527	0.610
Model 2	117.068	73	1.604	.045	.0553	.984	181.068	0.606

Note: N = 300, SRMR = Standardized Root-Mean-Square Residual; AIC = Akaike Information Criterion; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; and ECVI = Expected Cross-Validation Index.

Figure 2. The Structural Equation Model of psychological capital mediates career calling, happiness, and engagement.

Note: Standardized factor loadings. PW–VDB = Three parcels of career calling; SE = Self-efficacy; HS1– HS4 = Four items of happiness; Vigor-Absorption = Three parcels of engagement.

The bias-corrected bootstrapping method was used to examine the importance of the mediation effects of psychological capital. Subsequently[85], the collection of data (N=300) was used to generate 10,000 bootstrapping samples by random sampling. **Table 6** displays the 95% confidence ranges for the estimates of the mediation effect, which are statistically significant and do not include zero. All the path coefficients in the specified directions showed statistical significance. The model effectively explain how career calling influences happiness and engagement, with empirical evidence supports the respectively full and partial mediating role of the psychological capital. Thus, the relationship between career calling, engagement, and happiness is mediated by psychological capital. The findings of this study demonstrate that all the hypotheses were supported, as shown in the data presented in **Table 7.**

Table 6: Assessing the indirect effect and calculating 95% confidence intervals (CI) using bootstrapping for the mediational model.

Model Pathways	Point Estimates	95% CI	
		Lower	Upper
Career Calling → Psychological Capital → Happiness	0.211	0.134	0.301
Career Calling → Psychological Capital → Engagement	0.112	0.029	0.210

Table 7. Hypotheses result.

	Hypotheses	Result
H1.	Career calling is positively related to happiness and engagement.	Accepted
H2.	Career calling is positively related to psychological capital.	Accepted
H3.	Psychological capital is positively related to happiness and engagement.	Accepted
H4.	Psychological capital mediates the relationship of career calling with happiness and engagement.	Accepted

5. Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to examine the impact of career calling on happiness and engagement. Additionally, the study was to expand existing research by exploring the potential role of psychological capital in mediating the effects of career calling on happiness and engagement. Few studies have investigated the relationship between career calling and different dimensions of well-being. Thus, considering the relationship between career calling and happiness[86], and between career calling and engagement[49], and the important role of career calling in psychological capital[52,55,56], it is hypothesized that psychological capital mediates the relation of happiness and engagement. The relation between psychological capital with happiness[72,87] and psychological capital with engagement[88].

Consistent with prior studies[24,89],career calling was found to correlate positively with happiness and engagement. The current study found that career calling has a direct and significant effect on happiness and engagement. Researchers have asked to enhance the understanding of well-being by exploring different dimensions of well-being such as social well-being, psychological well-being, happiness, and engagement[86]. According to some researchers, psychological capital has a good and significant impact on happiness and engagement. The study reasserts previous findings that psychological capital may increase the well-being in individuals[90]. The empirical data on the impact of psychological capital on the link between calling and well-being is limited[91]. However, the researchers requested that well-being explorations be conducted. Thus, the current study is the first to quantitatively find a positive effect of career calling across different dimensions of well-being.

The indirect effects of career calling on different dimensions of well-being through psychological capital are significant. The finding says that psychological capital has full mediation effect on the relationship between career calling with happiness and partial mediation effect on the relationship between career calling with engagement. This implies that career calling will likely enhance well-being via psychological capital. As expected, the current study examined the correlation between career calling and happiness and engagement, revealing a favourable association. The result of the present study correspond with previously established associations between career calling with happiness and engagement[92]. Furthermore, we showed a positive association between psychological capital, happiness, and engagement. These study findings align with previous research on the correlation between psychological capital with happiness[93] and psychological capital with engagement[94–96].

The most important observation is that career calling is linked to both happiness and engagement, mediated by the influence of psychological capital. The results suggest that individual who possess calling are more inclined to have elevated levels of psychological capital, which subsequently leads to greater happiness and engagement. Psychological capital mediation the relationship of career calling to happiness and engagement. Despite this, the connection between happiness and engagement was partly influenced by psychological capital. The study shows the significant effect of psychological capital on the connection between career calling, happiness, and engagement.

The study provides a few insights to the literature as it examines psychological capital as a mediator in the interaction of career calling to happiness and engagement. This study highlights the significance of psychological capital in shaping the relationship between career calling, happiness, and engagement. This research provides an essential contribution to the current body of literature by examining the role of psychological capital as a mediator in the relationship between career calling and well-being, providing it as the initial study to delve into this aspect. Expanding on research concerning higher education teachers, the study sheds light on the influence of calling and psychological capital on happiness and engagement. These findings contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field of career calling, emphasizing the integral role of calling and psychological capital in the makeup of higher education teachers. The insights gained from this study offer valuable guidance for fostering calling by enhancing levels of happiness and engagement. The study found that psychological capital may be promoted by using career calling[97].

6. Theoretical and practical implications

The current study is a valuable contribution to the field of vocational behaviour. The study showed empirical evidence supporting the concept of calling that developing a proactive career path and that it is linked to a variety of favourable well-being determinants[91]. Importantly, the research identifies the mechanisms that mediate psychological capital, which contributes to the extension of the research on career calling. This is significant because there has been a scarcity of studies that the role of psychological capital in career calling and different dimensions of well-being. This study has empirically supported research on happiness, and researchers have asked to enhance the understanding of well-being by exploring other dimensions of well-being, such as social well-being, psychological well-being, happiness, and engagement[25]. This study contributes to research that indicates career calling among high education teachers[14]. The current study posits that psychological capital is an essential resource for teachers, as it promotes their engagement in their field of study[98]. The significance of comprehensively understanding the long-term effects of career calling, especially in relation to practical uses such as career counselling[42].

Given the study's findings, enhancing career calling would be instrumental in promoting the well-being of employees. The concepts of calling offer an attractive framework which provide career guidance and vocational training to individuals who are looking to find meaning and direction in their lives. Organizations should encourage calling to develop and nurture a relationship with the organization to ensure high engagement and well-being among higher education teachers. Psychological capital aspects may significantly assist practitioners in ensuring individuals' calling. This factor may be incorporated into achieving their organisational goals. It may create and execute workplace intervention programs in workplace settings that focus on enhancing psychological capital, and assess their effectiveness in improving employees' career calling, happiness, and engagement. It may investigate the manifestation of psychological capital in diverse cultures and examine how cultural implications may influence its impact on career calling, happiness, and engagement.

The study variables may examine the role of technology in nurturing psychological capital, developing and evaluating digital tools or apps designed to boost hope, self-efficacy, optimism, and resilience, and their

impact on career calling, happiness, and engagement. This may involve implementing leadership training programs, mentorship initiatives, and fostering a positive work environment to the development of positive psychological resources. It may develop educational programs that incorporate the principles of psychological capital into academic curricula, vocational training, or career counseling services, and evaluate their effects on students' career calling, happiness, and engagement. The Work as Calling Theory (WCT) aims to enhance research literature and provide practical guidance for counsellors and managers dealing with individuals who are focused on fulfilling their potential to their career calling[17]. It is advisable for counsellors or managers to promote the development of calling connections among colleagues by organising specialised seminars, teambuilding exercises so that employees feel more encouraged by a wider range of individuals in the workplace by which they actively promote and enforce policies that enhances well-being in individual[17].

Numerous studies have demonstrated that organisations characterised by employee happiness exhibit higher levels of achievement and profitability. The advantages of employment happiness are seen in individuals who show better results and experience personal success across all levels[99]. This study provide evidence for researchers and practitioners who recognise that engaged employees are an essential resource for organisations and serve as a competitive advantage in modern time[100]. Various empirical studies have demonstrated that happiness provides significant consequences for both individuals and organisations[101]. At the organisational level, it is likely to view the attributes of an organization's culture and human resources practices as potential factors contributing to the happiness. These approaches frequently enhance employee motivation, reduce employee's turnover, and positively impact both short and long-term financial outcomes[101]. The study say that engaged people working in organisations have greater satisfaction with their work and are less inclined to turnover. Engaged employees are more inclined to participate in positive word-of-mouth communication regarding the organisation they are associated with[102].

7. Limitations and future research directions

We recognize several constraints inherent in the present research. Initially, we gathered data exclusively from self-reports, which has been shown to introduce common method variances[103]. In addition, the cross-sectional design of the present study limited its ability to determine causal relationships. To support the career calling-well-being model, it is important to do longitudinal or experimental research in the future. Further empirical and longitudinal assessments are required in order to advance knowledge of calling by revealing the reasons and mechanisms through which they impact our careers[24]. Longitudinal studies should be done to investigate how psychological capital affects career calling, happiness, and engagement over time. This may provide valuable insights into the enduring impact of positive psychological factors. The present research does investigate the quantitative study; further, there should be scope for the qualitative study.

In the present research, more robust findings may be obtained if the data for exogenous, mediators, and endogenous variables are collected from multiple sources at different points in time. To better understand the role of society and organizations in career calling, future research may explore some other moderating variables that accentuate or mitigate the strength of the relationships hypothesized in the present study. This study is limited to the academic, which may limit the scope of its findings. More research is needed to investigate the possible mediators for well-being that may help strengthen value in the organization. This research focused on career calling, but we would also be analysing the dark side of career calling and its effect on well-being.

In the same way, future research on work engagement should investigate chronological effects on the sub components of energy, attention, and absorption. Furthermore, research into the determinants and outcomes of work engagement at the group and organisational levels is required[24]. In addition, future research may

consider moderators including supervisor behaviours and organisational support. To broaden the scope of the theory, subsequent research may consider numerous sectors, including education, healthcare, and defence services[24]. However, it is possible that more mediators could be studies may examine unique methods of transmission through a combination of diverse theoretical frameworks[9].

8. Conclusion

This study aims to expand on existing research by examining the relationship between career calling, happiness, and engagement in the context of psychological capital. The findings support the importance of calling and highlight their potential utility in psychology research and practice. Previous studies have highlighted the significance of fulfilling employees' career calling in the workplace, which may have positive effects on both employees and organisations[104–106]. The literature highlights the significance of both psychological capital and work engagement as essential positive psychological resources[51]. The research has established a relationship between the achievement of a career calling and happiness and well-being of employees[39,108,109]. This study makes a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge on happiness and engagement among higher education teachers. Counseling psychologists are well-positioned to contribute significantly to the comprehension of how individuals perceive their life responsibilities as a calling. By actively contributing and extending research in these areas, we might advance our understanding of psychological capital and its practical applications for career calling, happiness, and engagement.

This research has delved into the relationship between career calling, happiness, engagement, and psychological capital, shedding light on their interconnected dynamics. The results emphasize the significance of fostering psychological resources such as resilience optimism, self-efficacy, and hope in the workplace. Through the development and implementation of targeted actions, our study has demonstrated the potential to enhance career calling, happiness, and engagement among employees. The journey towards a fulfilling and engaging career, marked by happiness and engagement, benefits not only individuals but also contributes to the flourishing of workplaces and societies at large. This study serves as a foundation for continued exploration, innovation, and application in the pursuit of fostering positive outcomes in the context of career calling, happiness, engagement, and psychological capital. A path towards a fulfilling and engaging career, distinguished by happiness and engagement, helps not only individuals but also contributes to the organisation and societies at large.

Author contributions

DS; Conceptualization, BB and DS; Methodology, DS; Formal analysis, BB and DS; Validation, BB; Data collection, DS; Writing - Original draft preparation, DS; Writing—review and editing, BB; Supervision, BB; All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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