



Calling and career adaptability among undergraduate students



Richard P. Douglass*, Ryan D. Duffy

University of Florida, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 1 October 2014

Available online 13 November 2014

Keywords:

Calling
Career decision self-efficacy
Career adaptability
Strengths

ABSTRACT

The present study examined the relation of calling and career adaptability with a sample of 330 undergraduate students. The presence of a calling weakly to moderately correlated with the four components of adaptability – concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. A moderated, multiple mediation model was used to test the potential mediating effects of the four components of career adaptability on career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) and how these relations differed according to strengths use. Using bootstrapping techniques, concern and confidence were found to be significant mediators in the calling–CDSE relation. Additionally, strengths use was found to moderate the relation between curiosity and CDSE, with curiosity being a significant mediator at high levels of strengths use. After including the mediators in the model, the relation of calling to CDSE was weakened, but still significant, indicating partial mediation. These results suggest that calling relates to greater levels of CDSE in part because of increased concern, curiosity (when strengths use is high), and confidence. Directions for future research are discussed.

© 2014 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Research on work as a calling has garnered much attention over the past decade. Dozens of empirical studies have demonstrated that among college students, feeling a calling is linked to a host of positive career variables like vocational self-clarity, career maturity, and career decision self-efficacy (CDSE; Duffy & Dik, 2013). However, the relation of calling and career adaptability has received limited attention. Career adaptability is a critical variable for college student career development and is defined as “a psychological construct that denotes an individual’s readiness and resources for coping with current and anticipated tasks of vocational development” (Savickas, 2002, p. 156). Only two known studies have examined the relation of calling and career adaptability (Guo et al., 2014; Praskova, Hood, & Creed, 2014), finding the two variables to be significantly correlated and, using longitudinal data (Praskova et al., 2014), finding calling to be best positioned as a predictor of adaptability. Given the importance of career adaptability for college student career development, it is likely that this variable may be linked to feeling a calling and in turn may help to explain how calling relates to key career development outcomes.

Building from these studies – as well as dozens of others that have linked calling and adaptability to healthy career development among college students (e.g., Duffy & Dik, 2013; Guan et al., 2013; Tolentino et al., 2014) – in the current study we examine: a) how perceiving a calling links to the four aspects of career adaptability and b) the degree to which each component of adaptability mediates the link of calling and CDSE. Additionally, given the theoretically implied connection between adaptability and using one’s strengths (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012), we will examine c) the degree to which strengths use moderates the relations of the four adaptability components to CDSE. It is hoped that these results will provide added clarity for how these two important career variables relate among undergraduate students.

* Corresponding author at: University of Florida, Department of Psychology, Gainesville, FL 32601, USA. Fax: +1 352 392 7985.
E-mail address: rdouglass@ufl.edu (R.P. Douglass).

1.1. Conceptualization of calling

A myriad conceptualizations of calling have been proposed (c.f., Duffy, Autin, Allan, & Douglass, *in press*, for a review) some of which have been unidimensional (e.g., Dobrow, 2013) and others multidimensional (e.g., Dik & Duffy, 2009). Duffy and Dik (2013) asserted that calling is best understood as a multidimensional construct; thus, in the present study, we define calling as “the belief that one’s career is a central part of a broader sense of purpose and meaning in life and is used to help others or advance the greater good in some fashion” (Duffy & Dik, 2013, p. 429).

Recent longitudinal studies with college students have framed calling’s link to career outcomes using Hall and Chandler’s (2005) calling theory of psychological success (Duffy, Douglass, Autin, & Allan, 2014; Praskova et al., 2014). Hall and Chandler (2005) asserted that having a calling can lead to developing “metacompetencies” such as adaptability; the metacompetency of adaptability as framed by Hall and Chandler (2005) is akin to the idea of career adaptability in Career Construction Theory (CCT; Savickas, 1997, 2002, 2005). Like Hall and Chandler (2005), and matching findings from Praskova et al.’s longitudinal study, we conceptualize calling as a predictor of adaptability – the more a student feels a calling the more likely they will feel adaptable in their career. This conceptualization fits well with the core principles of CCT.

1.2. Career Construction Theory

1.2.1. Theoretical framework

Savickas’s (1997, 2002, 2005) Career Construction Theory (CCT) was developed in order to shift from an organismic worldview of vocational development to a contextualistic worldview. Savickas (2002) asserted that in regard to vocational development, an approach focused on adaptation to an environment rather than the maturation of inner structures is more aligned with the views of mainstream psychology. CCT is comprised of 16 propositions (c.f., Savickas, 2002 for a detailed review) one of which incorporates the concept of career adaptability and measures a person’s preparation and resources for coping with anticipated vocational development tasks in the present and the future (Savickas, 2002). Also, career adaptability resources can be considered self-regulatory strengths that have the ability to change over time in response to the person, environment, and the interaction between the two (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Given these definitions, CCT (Savickas, 2002) represents career adaptability as an aggregate higher-order construct comprised of four, first-order level indicators of adaptability: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Concern is the aspect of career adaptability that prepares people for the vocational future. Control is what empowers people to feel responsible for self-governing and shaping their career. Curiosity relates to one’s exploration of possible selves and vocational opportunities. Lastly, confidence is the degree to which people feel efficacious in overcoming potential career barriers (Savickas, 2002). These four components of career adaptability appear to be parallel to the metacompetency of adaptability proposed by Hall and Chandler (2005) and may be key outcomes of a calling. Through concern, people can prepare to attain their calling in the vocational future, and control is the resource that allows them to feel that they can maintain their calling. Curiosity allows people to explore vocational opportunities they feel called to, and confidence provides people with the efficacy needed to eventually live out their calling. Taken together, we propose that a sense of calling is a predictor of the development of the metacompetency of adaptability, and by cultivating concern, control, curiosity, and confidence, people likely feel efficacious in their career decision-making.

1.3. Research on calling and career decision self-efficacy

Calling has frequently been studied in relation to CDSE, with calling being temporally positioned as preceding CDSE. In a longitudinal study with 846 German undergraduates, Hirschi and Herrmann (2013) found that calling predicted career self-efficacy over time with correlations ranging from ($r = .31$ to $r = .41$). Many studies have found positive correlations between calling and CDSE or constructs like CDSE (e.g., Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Hirschi, 2012). Among a sample of 255 American college students and a sample of 855 Canadian college students, calling and CDSE were found to have weak to moderate correlations of ($r = .21$) and ($r = .31$) (Dik, Sargent, & Steger, 2008; Domene, 2012). Additionally, with a diverse sample of 312 undergraduate students, Duffy, Allan, and Dik (2011) found calling and CDSE to moderately correlate ($r = .45$) and demonstrated that CDSE was one mediator of the relation between calling and academic satisfaction.

Although the above studies have begun to examine the relation between calling and CDSE there is still the question of why this relation exists. Many of the mentioned studies have only looked at the correlations between calling and CDSE with a few examining CDSE as a mediator of calling and other outcomes (e.g., Duffy et al., 2011). Among undergraduates, however, it is likely that CDSE is an outcome that arises from developing a sense of calling. Undergraduates who develop a calling are likely to feel more able to make career related decisions as they are being guided by their callings. Drawing from the consistent positive links between calling and CDSE (e.g., Dik et al., 2008; Domene, 2012), and Hirschi and Herrmann’s (2013) findings that demonstrated calling is best positioned as a predictor of career self-efficacy, we hypothesize that calling (*Hypothesis 1*) will significantly predict CDSE. Specifically, students with a sense of calling are more likely to feel efficacious in their career decision-making.

1.4. Career adaptability as a mediator

Highlighted above, career adaptability as defined in CCT (Savickas, 2002) suggests that the cultivation of the four career adaptability components – concern, control, curiosity, and confidence – allows people to adapt to career challenges. We propose that feeling a

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/886830>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/886830>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)