THE EFFECTS OF CALLING AND VOCATIONAL PRESENCE AND SEARCH ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

April M. O'Neal

A Dissertation

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Committee:

Rachel Vannatta Reinhart, Advisor

Margaret Brooks
Graduate Faculty Representative

Dale Dwyer

Judith Jackson May

Patrick Pauken
This study was a quantitative exploration of 13 calling and vocational constructs related to calling presence, search and actualization to determine which best predicted psychological well-being. For this study, calling was defined using the definition established by Dik and Duffy (2009) and its three component parts: (1) an external summons, (2) viewing one’s work as a source of purpose or meaning, and (3) having a prosocial orientation or using one’s work to help others. Forward multiple regression analyses revealed that Search for Calling and Presence of Prosocial Orientation were the best predictors of well-being. Further, group differences were explored using the calling categories: calling diffusion, calling foreclosure, calling moratorium, and calling achievement (see Table 1). Results revealed that individuals who were high in searching for a calling had significantly lower levels of psychological well-being if they also had low levels of calling presence (Calling Moratorium Category). The hope of the researcher is that these as well as previous research findings lead to the future study of additional aspects of calling and psychological well-being.
This is dedicated to all the men and women who inspire us every day to live our calling by showing us that it is possible.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Completion of this dissertation was only possible due to the support that I received from many individuals. In particular, I am indebted to my academic advisor, Dr. Rachel Vannatta Reinhart who supported me through each step of this process. Also, I would like to thank the members of my dissertation committee, Dr. Margaret Brooks, Dr. Dale Dwyer, Dr. Judith Jackson May, and Dr. Patrick Pauken who challenged me to pursue a topic that I was passionate about and to produce a dissertation that I could be proud to share with the world. I have also been blessed with an amazing group of family and friends who have provided consistent love and support during this process. A special thanks to those friends who have gone through this dissertation process before me and those who were going through it alongside of me and helped cheer me toward my goal. Most importantly, my heartfelt thanks goes out to my wife, Juli, who was my sounding board, proofreader, and constant champion through this process. Thanks for helping me through the rough spots and standing by me to celebrate the success.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical and Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions of Key Terms</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delimitations and Limitations</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Study</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling, Meaning, and Life Purpose</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptualization of Calling and Vocation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling and Well-Being-Related Outcomes</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling and Work-Related Outcomes</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaning and Life Purpose</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-Being, Life Satisfaction, &amp; Happiness</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief Calling Scale (BCS)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling and Vocational Questionnaire (CVQ)</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Calling Scale (LCS)</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief Inventory of Thriving (BIT)</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Items</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Procedures</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis Procedures</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER IV. RESULTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Results</th>
<th>71</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief Calling Scale Items</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling and Vocation Questionnaire Items</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Calling Scale Questionnaire Items</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief Inventory of Thriving Questionnaire Items</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inferential Results</th>
<th>79</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION**

| Status of Calling: Presence and Search | 86 |
Search for Calling and Calling Moratorium .................................................. 88
Presence of Prosocial Orientation ................................................................. 89
Presence of and Search for External Summons ........................................... 90
Conclusions .................................................................................................. 91
Recommendations for Practice ..................................................................... 93
Educational Setting ...................................................................................... 93
Operational Setting ..................................................................................... 96
Leadership ................................................................................................... 98
Future Research .......................................................................................... 101
Final Thoughts ............................................................................................ 103
REFERENCES ............................................................................................. 104
APPENDIX A. VOCATIONAL CALLING AND WELL-BEING INDEX .............. 117
APPENDIX B. REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION ........................................... 120
APPENDIX C. HSRB ................................................................................... 122
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15 Regression Analysis of Calling Presence and Search Interaction ....................... 83
16 Regression Coefficients of Final Model ............................................................ 84
17 Summary of Results by Research Question ....................................................... 85
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Conceptual Framework: Effects of Calling and Vocational Presence and Search on Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Scatterplots of Calling Presence and Calling Search Relationships to Well-Being</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

For centuries humans have been in pursuit of the key to meaningful and happy lives. Aristotle, 384-322 BCE (2000), believed that true happiness came from identifying and living in accordance with one’s virtues. Rogers’ (1961) fully functioning person theory posits that “the good life” is achieved when an individual aims to fulfill his potential. Similarly, Maslow (1970) spoke of the self-actualized person who has reached harmony because he or she is engaged in the pursuit of achieving his or her potential. Erikson’s (1959) generativity stage stressed the importance of doing work that would contribute to society, which in turn would enable the individual to derive a sense of life purpose. Despite this ongoing, centuries-old search, many today are still bereft of meaning and life satisfaction. Recent research suggests that 50, 70, or as many as 93 percent of the population feel that they are not living the life that they were called to live (Berg, Grant, & Johnson, 2010; Cady, 2010; Duffy & Seldlce, 2010; Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozen, & Schwartz, 1997). Historical, religious, and philosophical traditions have suggested that finding and pursuing a vocational calling can increase satisfaction and well-being in one’s life.

The study of calling and its influence on well-being has seen a reemergence of interest since Frankl (1959) stressed the importance of having vocational purpose and meaning in one’s life for psychological health and well-being. Frankl (1959) said that humans do not need a tensionless state, but rather need to strive and struggle to carry out their unique vocation or mission. In the past decade, there has been a growing interest in studying both calling and well-being within the fields of positive psychology, industrial/organizational psychology, vocational psychology, organizational behavior, and management (along with related concepts such as...
purpose, meaning, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction) (Dik, Eldridge, Steger, & Duffy, 2012). Due to its scientific focus on elements that make life worth living (Park, Park, & Peterson, 2010), the field of positive psychology is driven “to make people happier by understanding and building positive emotion, gratification and meaning” (Seligman, Parks, & Steen, 2004, p. 1379). According to Peterson, Park, and Seligman (2005), having a strong sense of meaning is a strong predictor of happiness and life satisfaction, which are components of well-being. They even suggest that interventions or tools be developed that target helping individuals find greater meaning or purpose in their lives. When individuals find their calling or life purpose and live it, they permit their families, workplaces, communities, and the world to fully benefit from their gifts and talents, leading to greater personal fulfillment and well-being.

**Rationale**

Despite centuries of interest from theologians and philosophers, only a handful of empirical studies related to calling exist prior to 2007. However, since that time, research on the concept has burgeoned across many disciplines, resulting in approximately 40 studies that examine how presence of calling is related to work and general well-being outcomes (Duffy & Dik, 2013). The extant body of literature consistently links the presence of calling with greater levels of psychological well-being (Hirschi & Hermann, 2012; Peterson, Park, Hall, & Seligman, 2009; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), life meaning (Duffy, Allan, & Bott, 2012; Duffy, Allan, & Dik, 2011; Duffy, Manuel, Borges, & Bott, 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Steger, Pickering, Shin, & Dik 2010), life satisfaction (Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Duffy, Allan, Autin, & Bott, 2013; Duffy, Allen, et al., 2012; Duffy, Allen et al., 2011; Duffy, Bott, Allan, Torrey, & Dik, 2012; Duffy, Manuel, et al., 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Hirschi & Hermann, 2012; Peterson, et al., 2009; Steger et al., 2010; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), self-concept clarity (Treadgold,
1999), pro-social activities (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dik & Duffy, 2009; Duffy, Bott et al., 2012; Hunter, Dik & Banning, 2010), and positive work and organizational outcomes including career decidedness (Hirschi & Hermann, 2013; Steger et al., 2010), career maturity (Hirschi & Hermann, 2013; Steger et al., 2010), career self-efficacy (Dik, Sargent, & Steger, 2008; Domene, 2012; Hirschi, 2012), work meaning (Baumeister, 1991; Duffy, Allan, Bott, & Dik, 2014; Duffy et al., 2013; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Hirschi, 2012), career commitment (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Duffy, Allan, et al., 2011; Duffy, Bott et al., 2012; Duffy et al., 2013; Duffy et al., 2014), organizational commitment (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Cardador, Dane, & Pratt, 2011), work engagement (Hirschi, 2012), work hope (Duffy, Allan et al., 2011), and job/career satisfaction (Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Duffy et al., 2011; Duffy et al., 2013; Duffy et al., 2014; Hagmaier & Abele, 2012; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Peterson et al., 2009; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). The relationship between these variables is particularly pronounced when individuals feel that they are living out the career to which they were called (Berg, Grant & Johnson, 2010; Duffy, Autin, Allan & Douglas, 2014; Duffy, Bott et al., 2012).

Although well-being and life satisfaction scales have been used and improved by researchers for decades (Su, Tay, & Diener, 2014), they are receiving increased interest for their potential use in improving peoples’ lives within their workplaces and communities. In 2010, Prime Minister David Cameron announced well-being as a governmental concern for citizens of the United Kingdom and said that they would initiate a survey to better understand well-being and life satisfaction (Diener, Inglehart, & Tay, 2013). Similarly, officials in countries such as Japan, Chile, Germany, Australia, and the U.S. have expressed interest in better understanding the drivers of psychological well-being and satisfaction so that they can use this knowledge to inform policies that impact their citizens (Diener et al., 2013). If achieving a meaningful and
satisfying life is a fundamental human goal, as one would infer from the centuries of pursuit, and is shown to produce positive personal and professional outcomes (Baumeister, 1991; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Cardador et al., 2011; Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Dik et al., 2008; Duffy, Allen et al., 2013; Duffy, Allen et al., 2012; Duffy, Allen et al., 2014; Duffy, Allen, et al., 2011; Duffy, Autin et al., 2014; Duffy, Bott et al., 2012; Duffy & Dik, 2013; Duffy, Dik, & Steger, 2011; Duffy, Manuel et al., 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Hagmaier & Abele, 2012; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Hirschi & Hermann, 2012; Park et al., 2010; Peterson et al., 2009; Peterson et al., 2005; Steger, Frazier, Oishi, & Kaler, 2006; Steger & Kashdan, 2007; Steger, Kawabata, Shimai, & Otake, 2008; Steger, Oishi, & Kashdan, 2009; Steger, Oishi, & Kesebir, 2011; Steger et al., 2010; Treadgold, 1999; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), the connection between psychological well-being and an individual’s connection to a higher purpose or calling warrants further study.

Work life is an important domain for research since average working adults spend approximately half or more of their waking hours engaged in their profession. Usually this represents more time engaging in work than any other activity. Although pursuing a vocation or calling, rather than simply having a job or career, is important to many (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), a review of the current body of literature shows that the research conducted in the area of calling and vocation is still relatively sparse.

One obstacle that has impeded theory, research, and practice is that the field has not had a consensus definition of the term “calling.” Extant definitions have varied considerably over time and in current literature. Beginning at least in the early centuries C.E., a calling was seen, within Christian faiths, as a divine or spiritual summons from God to join the monastic order (Hardy, 1990). Similar concepts of calling were found in many early non-Christian faiths as well (Eliade, 1958; Treadgold, 1999). The definition of calling was expanded by Martin Luther and John
Calvin during the Reformation to include glorifying God in everyday professions (Serow, 1994). Buechner (1973, p. 95) described a calling as “the place where your deep gladness…and the world’s hunger meet”. Some modern conceptualizations of the concept still retain a religious or divine connotation (Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Dik & Duffy, 2009; Hall & Chandler, 2005); however, more recently, definitions of calling have expanded to encompass a broader, more secularized meaning (Baumeister, 1991; Baumeister, & Vohs, 2002; Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1986; Bogart, 1994; Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Dik & Duffy, 2009; Elangovan, Pinder, & McLean, 2010; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Hunter, Dik, & Banning, 2010; Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010; Treadgold, 1999; Wrzesniewski, 2003; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997).

Dik and Duffy (2009) have tried to create a unifying definition for the concept of calling, which was used in this research study (see pages 24-26 for definitions of key terms). Their definition of 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 has three component parts: (1) an external summons, (2) viewing one’s work as a source of purpose or meaning, and (3) having a prosocial orientation or using one’s work to help others (Duffy et al, 2014). The first component is an external summons, which they explain could come from God, a higher power, the needs of society, a family legacy, a sense of duty to one’s community or society at large, or even fate (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Hall & Chandler, 2005). Although most definitions of calling agree that it provides purpose or meaning and serves others, there is more controversy regarding its origin or source. Some believe that the summons must come from some external source (Dik & Duffy, 2009), while others believe that
it could come from an internal feeling of destiny or as what one is “meant to do” (Bogart, 1994; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Elangovan et al., 2010; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Hirschi, 2011; Hunter et al., 2010; Weiss, Skelley, Haughey, & Hall, 2004). Still others suggest that a calling involves finding an ideal match or perfect fit between your interests, values, and skills (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dik & Duffy, 2014; Dobrow & Totsi-Kharas, 2011; Dobrow & Totsi-Kharas, 2012; Elangovan et al., 2010; Hunter et al., 2010). In their 2014 study, Duffy et al. found that among a group of 200 employed adults, a perfect fit was endorsed most frequently as the calling source with over half of the participants selecting this option. The remainder were split almost evenly between an external summons and a destiny orientation.

In Dik and Duffy’s (2009) pivotal article, they suggest that individuals endorse a calling along a spectrum versus simply having or not having a calling. They also describe a calling as an ongoing unfolding rather than a one-time acquisition process. Further, they introduced the distinction of experiencing a calling from seeking a calling. This conceptual distinction is similar to the presence of and search for distinction that Steger et al. (2006) made in their study of meaning, and which was later incorporated into the psychometrically sound, multidimensional assessment tools that Dik et al. (2012) developed.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship of calling presence and search, vocational presence and search, and calling actualization with psychological well-being. Using the Brief Calling Scale (BCS) (Dik, Eldridge, Steger & Duffy, 2012), the Calling and Vocation Questionnaire (CVQ) (Dik, Eldridge, Steger & Duffy, 2012), the Living Calling Scale (LCS) (Duffy, Bott, Allan, Torrey, & Dik 2012), and the Brief Inventory of Thriving (BIT) assessment (Su, Tay & Diener, 2014), this study examined which calling presence and search variables best
predicted psychological well-being. This study attempted to assist in identifying which critical components contribute to the definition of calling and examined whether these differ conceptually from the definition of vocation. Dik and Duffy (2009) postulated that a calling is made up of a transcendent summons, purposeful work, and a prosocial orientation and that only the latter two elements are required for a vocation. Additionally, the present study explored whether individuals with differing levels of calling presence and search differed in regards to levels of psychological well-being using the combined calling presence and search categories based on Marcia’s (1966) identity development theory (see Table 1). The search construct has received less study in the literature and limited information was available as to whether presence and search are two ends of the calling continuum or whether the constructs overlap and/or interact. Additionally, there was some evidence that suggests that the search process may negatively impact an individual’s overall well-being (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007).

Table 1

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<th>Category Title</th>
<th>Level of Calling Presence</th>
<th>Level of Calling Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calling Diffusion</td>
<td>Low Presence</td>
<td>Low Search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Foreclosure</td>
<td>High Presence</td>
<td>Low Search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Moratorium</td>
<td>Low Presence</td>
<td>High Search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Achievement</td>
<td>High Presence</td>
<td>High Search</td>
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(Adapted from Marcia, 1966 and Steger et al., 2006)

This study utilized the transcendent summons subscale of the Calling and Vocation Questionnaire (CVQ) (Dik et al., 2012) to examine whether an external summons appeared to be endorsed by those who manifested a presence of calling. Additionally, since there has also been some disagreement on whether prosocial or other-oriented behaviors are critical to a calling (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Elangovan et al., 2010; Hirschi, 2011; Hunter et al., 2010), this study explored
whether participants who endorsed a calling also showed high scores on the presence of prosocial orientation subscale. Further, the study examined whether participants who met the definition of presence of calling or vocation on the CVQ distinguished themselves differently on the BCS. This helped explore whether the concepts of calling and vocation are distinct utilizing current instruments and definitions or whether they can be used interchangeably as in the past.

This study addressed some of the limitations found in prior research by utilizing different instruments to look at the calling, vocation, and well-being variables. A number of studies have utilized the BCS (Dik et al., 2012), but few have used the longer CVQ (Dik et al., 2012) version, which has not allowed for a more thorough examination of Dik and Duffy’s (2009) three posited components of calling. The Brief Inventory of Thriving (BIT) provided a broader, more holistic view of positive functioning and well-being than many of the previously used measures (Su, Tay, & Diener, 2014). Additionally, these assessments allowed for a more thorough study of the search for calling variable and its impact on an individual’s well-being.

Participants (n = 179) for this research study were drawn from a pool of alumni who earned undergraduate or graduate degrees from Bowling Green State University within the past 20 years (1995-2015). Alumni, selected from all programs and majors, held positions within public and private business, social service, government, and education. All participants were currently employed adults (18 years of age or older) and residents of the United States of America. Participants completed the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index, a 44-item online instrument, from November 2015 – January 2016.

**Research Questions**

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. Which calling presence and search variables best predict psychological well-being?
2. Do individuals with differing levels of calling presence and search (using the calling categories from Table 1) differ in regards to levels of psychological well-being?

**Significance of the Study**

Despite renewed interest in the study of how one acquires or perceives a strong sense of calling, what is known about the concept is still in its relative infancy. Prior to the development of the CVQ and BCS (2012), the presence and search constructs could not be assessed separately. This study assessed those distinct concepts as well as the presence and search for vocation variables suggested in Dik and Duffy’s (2009) definition. Each of the thirteen (13) quantitative variables examined in the first research question were studied using forward multiple regression analyses. Categorical variables were studied in the second research question using calling categories (Calling Diffusion, Calling Foreclosure, Calling Moratorium, and Calling Achievement) adapted from Steger et al. (2006) and Marcia (1966). To date, although suggested by Steger et al. (2006) when studying the construct of meaning, calling presence and search variables have not been operationalized in this manner.

This study explored the search for calling variable, which had not received much attention in the calling literature. The hypothesis of this study was that calling would act similarly to the concept of meaning as it relates to psychological well-being. Although the constructs are related, they are also distinct. Results from this study allowed the researcher to determine that the search for calling process leads to diminished levels of well-being as the search for meaning process did in a number of studies (Baumeister & Vohs, 2002; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Frankl, 1965; Maddi, 1970; Steger et al., 2006; Steger et al., 2009). However, those studies found that participants who had an established presence of meaning who continued to search for even greater levels of meaning or purpose were not negatively impacted by the
search process (Park et al., 2010; Steger et al., 2011). The calling construct was similarly measured and showed similar results.

Each of this study’s variables were measured utilizing structurally sound assessment tools. The BCS, due to its desirable length of only four questions, has been utilized in most calling research. This study combined the power of the BCS with the CVQ. The CVQ not only examines an individual’s overall presence and search for calling, but also has transcendent summons, purposeful work, and prosocial orientation presence and search subscales. By utilizing the comprehensive measure, this study was able to probe some of the dissenting definitions of calling and better assess essential components that make up a calling. By including the Living Calling Scale (Duffy, et al., 2012), this study examined and expanded the limited research (Duffy & Autin, 2013; Duffy et al., 2012) that currently exists on the link between living out one’s calling versus merely having a presence of calling. To date, this link has been preliminarily examined along with its connection to life satisfaction, life meaning, and work-related variables. This study examined living a calling (Calling Actualization) and presence of calling as they relate to psychological well-being. The Brief Inventory of Thriving (BIT) (Su et al., 2014) was utilized rather than the research standard well-being measure, the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985), because the BIT is a more comprehensive measure of well-being. Other researchers have developed multifaceted well-being assessments, but the BIT, along with the Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving (CIT), are the most comprehensive to date. The BIT measures subjective well-being (including life satisfaction and positive emotions), supportive and enriching relationships and belonging, interest and engagement in daily activities, meaning and purpose in life, sense of mastery/accomplishment (including self-worth and self-efficacy), and optimism.
Another significance of this study is that “the majority of research on calling has focused on how calling links to work outcomes” for students or adults; however, “the literature that links calling to well-being outcomes is less robust” (Duffy et al., 2013, p. 42). Further, only a handful of quantitative (Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Peterson et al., 2009; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997) and qualitative (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Duffy, Foley et al., 2012; Hernandez, Foley & Beitin, 2011) studies have utilized employed adult populations. This study focused on the links of calling to well-being outcomes within working adult populations. Understanding how presence and search for calling impact well-being, may be used by researchers, educators, counselors, human resource practitioners, leaders, employers, and parents to explore avenues to assist both youth and adults in the search and pursuit of their calling and in obtaining jobs that are aligned with their calling.

**Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

The design of this study was guided by a conceptual framework that outlines the effects of calling presence, search, and living out one’s calling on psychological well-being (see Figure 1). The theoretical basis for this conceptualization was Marcia’s (1966) identity development theory, which distinguished exploration (search) and commitment (presence) concepts in the stages to identity achievement. The present study explored the four stages - calling diffusion, calling foreclosure, calling moratorium, and calling achievement - and their impact on psychological well-being. Steger et al. (2006) and Hirschi (2011) suggested this parallel between identity development and calling development. The BCS and CVQ assessment tools measured calling presence and search as distinct concepts (Dik, et al., 2012). The variable of living out a calling was measured through the LCS (Duffy et al., 2012). Additionally, for the purposes of this
study, the terms calling presence, vocation presence, calling search, and vocation search were conceptualized using a framework adapted from Dik and Duffy (2009).

![Conceptual Framework: Effects of Calling and Vocational Presence and Search on Psychological Well-Being](image)

In the present study, calling was “conceptualized as a meaningful and prosocial career prompted by an external force” (Duffy et al., 2012, p. 470). It represents a “sort of mini-theory that has not been folded into more established theories of vocational behavior or well-being” (Duffy et al., 2012, p. 470) due to a lack of research on the construct as well as a lack of agreement on what constitutes a calling. Duffy et al. (2012) believe that the relation between calling and well-being may best be explained using Ryff and Singer’s (1998) theoretical model of positive human health, of which living a life of meaning and purpose is a key component.

From the concepts of presence and search for calling/vocation, four categories emerged: calling diffusion, calling foreclosure, calling moratorium, and calling achievement, which were
adapted from Marcia’s (1966) identity development theory and Steger’s et al. (2006) research on meaning. An individual in the calling diffusion category would not feel a strong presence of calling and would not be actively searching for it, either. Those in the calling foreclosure stage indicated a strong connection to a calling and are no longer actively searching for additional meaning. Individuals in the meaning moratorium category did not have a strongly established sense of calling but were actively searching for it. Meaning achievement was marked by high presence of calling as well as high search. These individuals felt a strong sense of calling, yet continued to actively search for a deeper or more gratifying understanding of their calling or additional ways in which they could live out that calling. Erikson (1959) and Super (1980) both posited that in times of transitions or crises, an individual may need to re-experience earlier stages to move toward future stages of growth.

In the book *Authentic Happiness* (2002), Martin Seligman suggested that viewing one’s career as a calling can lead to greater personal and professional fulfillment and to an ultimately happier life. Research has shown that having a presence of calling and/or viewing one’s work as a calling has been positively associated with a number of work and personal outcome variables including psychological well-being (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Duffy et al., 2012; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Steger et al., 2010). The impact of living one’s calling on well-being has received very limited research to date (Duffy et al., 2013; Duffy et al., 2012) and the results have been mixed and warrant further study.

Although calling has been positively associated with psychological well-being and is thought to be beneficial and essential to living a satisfying life, the relationship between searching for one’s calling and well-being is less clear. Historically, searching for meaning, purpose, or a calling, although regarded by some as a natural process (Frankl, 1959), has also
been shown to negatively impact life satisfaction and well-being (Baumeister, 1991). Recent research, primarily in the concept of meaning, has shown mixed results (Park et al., 2010; Steger et al., 2006; Steger et al., 2008; Steger et al., 2011), which is why the search process was analyzed in this study.

**Definitions of Key Terms**

In order to provide context and common understanding of terminology and concepts related to this study, important terms are defined below. An understanding of how these concepts relate to the study’s research questions is important. Important terms and operational definitions found in this study included:

**Calling** – “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” (Dik & Duffy, 2009, p. 427). For purposes of this study, calling was “conceptualized as a meaningful and prosocial career prompted by an external force” (Duffy et al., 2012, p. 470).

**Calling Achievement** – A state in which an individual feels that he or she has a calling and is still actively searching for a deeper or more gratifying understanding of that calling or additional ways in which to live out that calling (high presence, high search) (adapted from Marcia, 1966 and Steger et al., 2006).

**Calling Diffusion** – A state in which an individual does not feel that he or she has a calling and is not actively searching for a calling (low presence, low search) (adapted from Marcia, 1966 and Steger et al., 2006).
**Calling Foreclosure** – A state in which an individual feels that he or she has a calling and is no longer searching for a deeper understanding of that calling or additional ways in which to live out that calling (high presence, low search) (adapted from Marcia, 1966 and Steger et al., 2006).

**Calling Moratorium** – A state in which an individual does not feel that he or she has a calling but is actively searching for a calling (low presence, high search) (adapted from Marcia, 1966 and Steger et al., 2006).

**Living Out a Calling / Calling Actualization** – The subjective sense that one’s career choice allows for the fulfillment of his/her calling in their work (adapted from Duffy et al., 2013; Duffy et al., 2012).

**Meaningfulness** – “The sense made of, and significance felt regarding, the nature of one’s being and existence” (Steger et al., 2006, p. 81). The subjective sense that one’s life has significance and purpose.

**Presence of Calling/Vocation** – The subjective sense that one has a calling/vocation in one’s life (adapted from Steger et al., 2006, p. 85).

**Purpose** – “A stable and generalized intention to accomplish something that is at once meaningful to the self and of consequence to the world beyond the self” (Damon, Menon, & Bronk, 2003, p. 121). For purposes of this study, an individual’s purpose is the reason they exist.

**Search for Calling/Vocation** – The drive and orientation toward finding a calling/vocation in one’s life (adapted from Steger et al., 2006, p. 85).

**Vocation** – “A vocation is an approach to a particular life role that is oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds other-oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation” (Dik & Duffy, 2009, p. 428). For purposes of
this study, a vocation is an orientation to work that gives one a sense of purpose as well as a means to make a difference for others.

Well-being – A state of happiness, contentment, satisfaction, flourishing, and thriving that is made up of seven core multifaceted theoretical dimensions: (1) subjective well-being in the form of high life satisfaction and positive feelings, (2) supportive and enriching relationships, (3) interest and engagement in daily activities, (4) meaning and purpose in life, (5) a sense of mastery and accomplishment, (6) feelings of control and autonomy, and (7) optimism (adapted from Seligman, 2011 and Su et al., 2014, p. 2).

Delimitations and Limitations

To keep the participant survey to a reasonable length as to encourage completion, many aspects of calling and well-being were not explored. This study did not explore the acquisition process of calling or the reasons why some individuals have a strong presence of calling while others do not. These questions may be best explored in a future qualitative study. Further, a longitudinal study would assist in exploring possible developmental aspects of the concepts of calling presence and search which could not be reviewed in this study. Additionally, the cultural formation of calling and how it relates to acquisition, search, occupational selection, and work-related outcomes was not explored.

Although the Brief Inventory of Thriving (BIT) is a fairly robust measure of psychological health and well-being, the authors do not claim that it is final or definitive. Additionally, the researcher did not have a means to understand what participants were considering when they were judging whether their lives were meaningful. Further, this study does not assess the impact of personality features, significant transitions, or physical health, all of which may influence well-being.
This study utilized a sample of participants who were alumni from undergraduate and graduate programs at Bowling Green State University. Although all are U.S.-based adults who are presently employed, this group of individuals may not be representative of the larger U.S. adult population and may limit the study’s generalizability. Additionally, the nature of self-report surveys can lend itself to potential validity issues. Although similar limitations are common in research, they are nonetheless important to keep in mind when considering generalizability to groups outside of this study.

**Organization of the Study**

Following the introduction to the research study of the effects of calling and vocational presence and search on psychological well-being, definitions of key terms, a statement of the research questions, and rationale for the study were provided. Chapter 2 will provide a review of the current body of literature on calling and psychological well-being pertinent to this study. Chapter 3 will outline the methodology of the study, including the research design, participants, instrumentation, procedures, and data analysis. Chapter 4 will present a narrative of the study’s results through descriptive and inferential data analysis. Finally, Chapter 5 will summarize the study’s findings and include recommended areas for further research and leadership implications.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study sought to determine whether significant effects exist between an individual’s calling presence and search categorization and his or her psychological well-being. The study examined the similarities and differences in how calling and vocational presence constructs impact well-being. Finally, the study explored how being able to live out one’s calling impacts well-being.

Although a significant body of literature now exists examining life satisfaction, happiness, and well-being (Diener & Diener, 1995; Diener et al., 2013; Diener & Seligman, 2002; Diener et al., 2010; Fajita & Diener, 2005; Linley et al., 2007; Maslow, 1970; Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004; Peterson et al., 2005; Peterson et al., 2009; Peterson, Ruch, Beerman, Park, & Seligman, 2007; Rogers, 1961; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Essex, 1992; Ryff & Singer, 1998; Seligman, 2002, Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2011; Seligman et al., 2004; Steger & Kashdan, 2007; Steger et al., 2010; Steger et al., 2011), very little has been written on how having, searching for, or actualizing a calling impacts these variables. Existing empirical studies related to calling have examined how presence of calling is related to work and general well-being outcomes (Duffy & Dik, 2013). Although the body of literature is growing on the importance of having a calling in one’s life (Baumeister, 1991; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Cardador et al., 2011; Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Dik et al., 2008; Duffy, Allen et al., 2013; Duffy, Allen et al., 2012; Duffy, Allen et al., 2014; Duffy, Allen, et al., 2011; Duffy, Autin et al., 2014; Duffy, Bott et al., 2012; Duffy & Dik, 2013; Duffy, Dik, & Steger, 2011; Duffy, Manuel et al., 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Hagmaier & Abele, 2012; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Hirschi & Hermann, 2012; Park et al., 2010; Peterson et al., 2009; Steger et al., 2010; Treadgold, 1999; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), most of this research has focused on work-related outcomes such as
career commitment, job satisfaction, and work meaning and only a few studies have focused on well-being related outcomes such as life satisfaction, fulfillment, and happiness (Allan & Duffy, 2014; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Duffy, Allan et al., 2013; Duffy, Allan et al., 2012; Duffy, Allan et al., 2014; Duffy, Foley et al., 2012; Duffy, Manuel et al., 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Hernandez et al., 2011; Hirschi & Hermann, 2012; Peterson et al., 2009; Steger et al., 2010; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Even though there are some recently-developed psychometric tools that assess the search for calling construct, empirical literature is virtually non-existent in studying its relationship to well-being (Domene, 2012; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010). Although one may intuit that individuals who feel that they are able to actualize their calling through their career or occupation would have higher levels of well-being, there is little evidence in the literature to support this assumption (Duffy, Allan et al., 2013; Duffy, Allan et al., 2014; Duffy, Allan et al., 2012).

This chapter presents a summary of the literature related to calling and well-being including related concepts and explores the ways in which the variables of this study have been addressed in previous research. This literature review will further substantiate the need for additional research in the areas of calling and well-being. The literature review will first explore the research on calling including perceiving, searching for, and living a calling and the related concepts of meaning and life purpose. Then relevant literature on psychological well-being will be reviewed, which will include the concepts of life satisfaction and happiness. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the literature.

**Calling, Meaning, and Life Purpose**

Finding one’s calling provides meaningfulness and purpose to one’s life as well as a way to give back to others (Dik & Duffy, 2009). The concepts of meaning and life purpose are
closely related to calling. Similar to calling, both meaningfulness and life purpose include the subjective sense that one’s life has significance for the self and is consequential to the world beyond the self (Damon et al., 2003; Steger et al., 2006). Therefore, the literature herein presents an overview of current available research on calling, meaning, and life purpose. First, a review of the literature that has helped solidify working definitions for the concepts of calling and vocation will be presented. Then, existing literature that has investigated calling-, well-being- and work-related outcomes will be examined. Lastly, the related concepts of meaning and life purpose will be explored.

Conceptualization of Calling and Vocation

Although the receipt of a calling was originally viewed as a divine summons from God to join a monastic order (Hardy, 1990), during the Reformation the definition was expanded to include glorifying God through everyday occupations (Serow, 1994). Modern conceptualizations of calling retain both religious and secular definitions of calling. In their pivotal article, Religion and the Meaning of Work, Davidson and Caddell (1994) established a three-type classification of work orientations based on the publication Habits of the Heart (Bellah et al., 1985): work as a job, work as a career, and work as a calling. These orientations became the foundation for others who sought to study calling. In their study, Davidson and Caddell (1994) wanted to explore how religion influenced the way that people thought about their work or their work orientation. Participants for this study were members of 31 church congregations representing 12 Christian denominations. The authors defined the “work as a calling” orientation as: “My work has special meaning because I have been called to do what I’m doing regardless of how much time it takes or how little money I earn; I was put on this earth to do what I am doing” (p. 138). Results of the study found that both religious and secular factors influenced participants’ selection of the
calling work orientation. Although secular factors were more influential, internalized religiosity provided some participants, particularly those with higher socioeconomic status, job security, and strong beliefs about social justice, with a context to view their job not only in secular, but also sacred, terms.

Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) were also inspired by the calling orientation that Bellah et al. (1985) described as one in which the individual with a calling works not for financial gain or career advancement, but rather for the fulfillment that doing the work brings them. For people with a calling, work becomes inseparable from life. Wrzesniewski and her team developed the University of Pennsylvania Work-Life Questionnaire which expanded the job, career, and calling definitions used by Davidson and Caddell (1994) into three paragraphs that described in greater detail how each of those orientations would express themselves and asked participants to choose how closely each resembled their experience (very much, somewhat, very little, not at all like me). Participants were then asked a series of true-false questions related to their behaviors and feelings about work. Individuals with a calling orientation typically find that their work is one of the most important parts of their life. These individuals love what they do and usually see it as a way to help make the world a better place. They often take work home with them and do not mind doing so. Interestingly, almost equal percentages of participants chose each of the three orientations. The results showed that respondents who espoused a calling orientation also had higher levels of job, health, and life satisfaction. Additionally, they found that people who endorse a calling orientation also miss fewer days of work. The researchers also found that those with a calling had higher incomes, education, and self-perceived and objectively-perceived occupational scores. In a later article, Wrzesniewski, Dekas, and Rosso (2009) describe a calling
as “a meaningful beckoning toward activities that are morally, socially, and personally significant” (p. 115).

In an article on transcendent vocations, Treadgold (1999) defined vocation as “being engaged in work as an inner calling and is linked to healthy personality development” (p. 83). He espoused the belief that being engaged in meaningful work as a calling was integral to the individuation and self-actualization processes. Jung (1983) said “[a]nyone with a vocation hears the voice of the inner man. He is called” (Vol 17, p. 176). Jung and Treadgold believed that being called to meaningful work is part of reaching one’s full potential and wholeness and that work becomes a calling when it enables self-integration and individuation. Similarly, Maslow (1971) described self-actualizers as those who have a calling. He said that self-actualizing individuals “are dedicated people, devoted to some task ‘outside themselves’…Generally the devotion and dedication is so marked that one can fairly use the old words vocation, calling, or mission to describe their passionate, selfless, and profound feeling for their ‘work’…something that is right for him, even something that he was born for” (p. 291). Treadgold (1999) found that being engaged in meaningful work as part of a “transcendent vocation” resulted in lower levels of stress and depression and higher levels of clarity of self-concept and problem-focused coping. His study also found that most individuals desire to find meaningful work that affects others positively. Treadgold (1999) even suggested that organizational development specialists develop strategies to assist employees in the process of discovering their inner calling because it will increase intrinsic motivation because they will see their work as part of a transcendent vocation.

Hall and Chandler (2005) defined a calling as work that a person perceives is his or her purpose in life. They describe a calling as coming from an internal motivation that reflects a psychological engagement with the meaning of one’s work. Hall and Chandler (2005) propose a
definition of calling that can be secular or religious in nature but in which religious beliefs are not a necessary condition. In this study, the authors take on Dobrow’s (2004) perspective that work engagement (Kahn, 1990) and flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) may be related to discovery of one’s calling. Hall and Chandler (2005) suggest that a calling would entail having both a protean career orientation and possessing a strong sense of purpose. Hall (2002) describes a protean career orientation as one that is self-directed and driven by an alignment to one’s values. Hall and Chandler’s (2005) study proposed that individuals who view their work as a calling are benefited by metacompetencies which propel their careers forward, such as self-awareness, self-confidence, and adaptability. The authors put forth a model, supported by their research, in which they provide evidence that having a calling will lead to greater goal effort and ultimately to psychological success, which in turn leads to identity change that supports one’s sense of calling and self-confidence. They suggest that viewing work as a calling may be the deepest form of meaningful work (Hall & Chandler, 2005).

A mixed-methods study of zookeepers, revealed that participants held a more classical view of vocational calling (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). They felt that their occupation was one for which they were created or destined based on the God-given talents which had been bestowed upon them. They also felt that pursuing their calling was the ordained manifestation of how they were to positively contribute to the world. Bunderson and Thompson (2009) chose to study zookeepers because as a group they appeared to be working in their field not primarily for economic reasons, but more due to an ideology or cause. Zookeepers are highly educated but were found to be in the lowest quartile of hourly pay rates. Additionally, most zoos offer few opportunities for occupational advancement and many work for months or years before securing a permanent position, which led the researchers to want to understand what attracted participants
to the field and motivated them to stay. Interviews with the zookeepers were analyzed using a grounded theory approach and though the authors were not initially focused on work as a calling it became the most frequently-coded theme. The second most frequently-coded category was that the zookeepers were not motivated by money but by a strong feeling of commitment to the animals. This calling toward working with animals was described by participants as something hardwired or part of their basic nature (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). They also felt that they were born with gifts or talents that predisposed them to their occupation. The zookeepers endorsed a definition of calling that was an alignment of their gifts and talents with the needs of society and which brought them greater levels of meaning and satisfaction. Perhaps due to the sense of a destined occupation, the participants’ calling had far-reaching impacts on the zookeepers’ lives and their sense of identity. Despite the positive benefits of having a sense of calling, they also observed that these came with a cost. Since many associated their occupation with transcendent meaning, the authors found that the calling could also have negative consequences or a “dark-side” which led to an unbending duty, sacrifice, and vigilance that resulted in sacrifices of money, time, physical comfort, and well-being.

A three-part definition of calling which was based on extricating common features of calling in existing literature was proposed by Elangovan et al. (2009). The multidimensional definition includes: (1) an orientation toward action, (2) a sense of clarity of purpose and personal mission, and (3) pro-social intentions to make the world a better place (Elangovan et al., 2010). A calling, although oriented in values, beliefs, and attitudes, is focused on the actions that these elicit. The authors liken the actualization of a calling to following one’s authentic path or living an authentic life. Although not all definitions include an others-focused element, Elangovan et al. (2010) believe that an associated altruistic serving of others is an essential
component of a calling. The authors definition of calling which is “a course of action in pursuit of prosocial intentions embodying a convergence of the individual’s sense of what he or she would like to do, should do, and actually does” (p. 430) is similar to Maslow’s concept of self-actualization. They explain that these are different concepts since self-actualization focuses on optimization of one’s potential and a calling “implies only a convergence of the actual, ideal, and ought to selves but not the ‘could’ self” (p. 430). The concepts are complementary since the self-actualizing process could provide motivation to pursue one’s calling (Elangovan et al., 2010). These authors propose a definition in which a calling need not be tied to a religious belief or occupation. They provide examples of individuals who have an occupation that allows them to earn a living which is distinct from the calling that they also pursue.

In the article Callings and Organizational Behavior, Elangovan et al. (2009) also explored the concept of searching for a calling. They proposed that there are four necessary antecedent conditions to discovering one’s calling. First is the urge to find meaning in one’s life. Recent empirical studies have established this link between the search for and acquisition of meaning to the presence or search for calling (Duffy, Allan et al., 2013). The second antecedent is an attentiveness and readiness to recognize the cues that may constitute a call (Elangovan et al., 2010). The third factor to discovering a calling is a willingness to experiment with new paths. Several researchers have provided tools and suggestions for assisting individuals in this search and experimentation process (Dik, Duffy & Eldridge, 2009; Dik et al., 2008; Duffy, Allan et al., 2012). The final antecedent to finding one’s calling is a growing understanding of the self (Elangovan et al., 2010). This process is facilitated by a sense of meaningfulness that is acquired through an inner journey to identity acquisition.
A qualitative study of college students was conducted by Hunter, Dik and Banning (2010) to understand how they conceptualized the construct of calling, how having a calling influenced their career development, and if and how their calling applied to other areas of their lives. In this study, the researchers found that 40% of the students indicated that they had a calling toward a particular occupation and 68% said that having an occupational calling was relevant to their career decision-making process. The study’s “results indicated that students perceived a calling as originating from guiding forces, co-occurring with unique fit and well-being, having altruistic features, and extending to multiple life roles” (Hunter et al., 2010, p. 178). Under the theme of a calling originating from a guiding force, the authors found that participants pointed to both secular and sacred origins as the source of the calling. Participants also described a calling as something that provided a sense of personal fit or well-being. They described their calling as emerging from their strengths and interests and as something that provided them with a sense of meaningfulness and well-being. Some described an optimal person/career-fit. The third theme that defined calling was an altruistic and “non-self-centered agenda” (Hunter et al., 2010, p. 184). Some indicated that their calling provided them with an increased sense of dedication and effort in their work. Similar to Elangovan et al. (2010), Hunter and his associates found that one’s calling could extend beyond their occupational role.

Hirschi (2011) conducted a study of the essential and optional components that make up a career calling. He used a cluster analysis approach to analyze data that was collected from responses of over 400 German undergraduate students. According to Marcia’s (1966) identity status model, each of his three calling clusters had attained identity achievement. Commitment to their chosen occupation was reached through self-exploration and resolution of an identity crisis. Each of the three calling groups had (1) vocational identity achievement, (2) high career
confidence and (3) high career engagement (Hirschi, 2011). The three distinct calling clusters were labeled: negative career self-centered, pro-social religious, and positive varied work orientation. The negative career self-centered group was driven by an extreme sense of the importance of work and getting ahead in their careers. They showed only moderate levels of self-reflection and overall negative self-views. The pro-social religious group was motivated by a strong desire to work in an occupation that could provide them an opportunity to make the world a better place. Along with pro-social intentions, these individuals also attributed religious connotations to their calling. Although several viewed pro-social or other-oriented values as a requirement for a calling, Hirschi (2011) found only one cluster who defined this as an essential component. The positive varied work orientation group was characterized by a more robust pattern of decidedness, self-exploration, confidence, and engagement.

The conceptualization of calling and vocation presented by Dik and Duffy (2009) is the one that will be utilized in this study. These authors, like Elangovan et al. (2010), used existing theoretical, philosophical, and scientific literature to establish foundational definitions that could be used to conduct future empirical research on the concepts of calling and vocation. They define a 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” (Dik & Duffy, 2009, p. 427). Vocation is defined as “an approach to a particular life role that is oriented toward demonstrating and deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds other-oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation” (Dik & Duffy, 2009, p. 428). Although similar, the authors distinguish a calling and vocation by only a calling requiring a sense of transcendent summons. The Brief Calling Scale (Dik et al., 2012) and the Calling and
Vocation Questionnaire (Dik et al., 2012) which will be utilized in this study, were developed utilizing Dik & Duffy’s (2009) conceptualization of calling and vocation.

**Calling and Well-Being-Related Outcomes**

Several significant research studies have been conducted in the last 20 years on the relationship between calling/vocation and psychological well-being. As previously discussed above, Bunderson and Thompson (2009), Davidson and Caddell (1994), and Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) all studied calling in relation to well-being related outcomes. Bunderson and Thompson (2009) found that the zookeepers they were studying experienced higher levels of calling and meaningfulness. Davidson and Caddell (1994) found that individuals who had the economic freedom to choose work that they found particularly meaningful were more likely to view their work as a calling. These individuals tended to also have higher levels of education, were more likely female, and worked in people-related occupations. Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) found that individuals who indicated a calling orientation had significantly higher levels of life and work satisfaction even after income, education, and occupation were controlled.

Calling was found to positively relate to having self-transcendent goals and was negatively correlated to physical goals in Allan and Duffy’s (2014) study of 230 adult participants. These results support previous research on the relationship between calling and spiritual or community goals and well-being (Dik et al., 2008; Emmons et al., 1998; Park et al., 2010). The connection between calling and higher levels of life satisfaction was partially mediated by career goal self-efficacy when the individuals had high levels of self-transcendent goals and low physical goals. The authors (Allan & Duffy, 2014) suggest that callings and high levels of life satisfaction may be related because having a calling increases career goal self-efficacy, which may lead to success and in turn, greater well-being. People with callings may
have increased confidence, which assists in accomplishing their career goals and leads to increased well-being.

Duffy, Allan, Autin, and Bott (2013) examined the relationship between calling and life satisfaction, distinguishing calling presence and calling actualization. This distinction is important because one may have a strong presence of calling but due to various societal, workplace, or individual barriers, may not be able to live out that calling (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Duffy et al., 2013). In their study of 553 adults, they found that the link between calling presence and life satisfaction was fully mediated by calling actualization. Calling actualization, or living a calling, had an even stronger relationship to well-being and work-related outcomes than presence of calling alone. Additionally, they found that an individual’s ability to live out a calling was significantly related to socioeconomic class and level of educational attainment.

In their study of undergraduate students, Duffy, Allan, and Bott (2012), found a weak link between calling presence and feelings of happiness and a moderate link between calling presence and feeling that one’s life is meaningful. The authors noted that their study did not support religiousness or living a calling as a moderator of the presence of calling and well-being relationship. They suggested that living a calling may be a moderator in an adult population, even though it was not supported in a student participant pool, due to many adults working in occupations that they do not feel align with their calling. Additional results regarding the relationship between academic satisfaction, life meaning, calling, and well-being supported Steger et al.’s (2010) findings that life meaning mediated the calling and well-being relationship. They proposed that having a calling may facilitate a greater sense of purpose which may lead to greater life satisfaction.
In a 2014 study by Duffy, Allan, Bott, and Dik, the researchers examined how endorsing an external summons, destiny, or perfect fit as the source of calling related to levels of living one’s calling, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction. The authors defined an external summons as one that is derived from an external source such as God, a higher power, family legacy, or needs of society. Individuals who endorse a destiny belief of calling often feel that there is one occupation that they are meant to do. Unlike a transcendent summons, a destiny calling may stem from an inner voice or internal motivation. The third source of calling, known as a perfect fit, comes from an alignment of one’s skills, values, passions, interests, and occupation. It is often found after a period of self-exploration.

Results of the study (Duffy, Allan et al., 2014) showed that living a calling was strongly correlated with job satisfaction and moderately with life satisfaction but no significant differences across the various sources of calling were found. Of the study’s 200 participants, 111 endorsed a perfect fit belief of calling and the remaining participants were evenly split between an external summons and destiny belief. The authors noted this unique finding and suggest that it may point to a more secularized approach to calling, overtaking the classical or neoclassical definitions. Rather than feeling that a calling is derived from an external source or sense of destiny, more individuals feel that they are being guided by an inner drive. Although all participants who felt they were able to live their calling experienced high levels of life and job satisfaction, those who endorsed a destiny source of calling who felt unable to live out their calling experienced substantially lower life satisfaction scores. This may be due to a sense of powerlessness in fulfilling the calling that the individual feels they are “supposed” to be engaged in (Duffy, Allan et al., 2014).
In Duffy, Foley’s et al. (2012) qualitative study of psychologists, the participants said that they felt their calling was something they were meant to do and was synonymous with their life purpose. Most also felt that their calling developed or unfolded over time and was supported through a self-reflective process as well as through involved mentors. It was typical for participants to indicate that the discernment of their calling came after a period of struggle. Participants said their calling was related to supporting, helping, or nurturing others and brought them personal and professional satisfaction. Most indicated that living their calling provided them with greater energy, passion, and productivity. Additionally, participants indicated that their calling had a positive impact on their interpersonal relationships. Lastly, the study’s participants said that it was easier to maintain their calling in a supportive work environment and/or with the support of role models.

A 2011 study by Duffy, Manuel et al. investigated the relationship between calling, vocational development and well-being, which included life meaning and life satisfaction, in medical students. They surveyed the students at the beginning of their first and third years of medical school. At both time periods, calling was moderately correlated with positive vocational development and life meaning (Duffy, Manuel et al., 2011). They found that vocational development increased at the second survey period; however, overall scores for calling and life satisfaction were lower, which may indicate that a calling is tied to career and psychological health. The decline in life satisfaction and calling may reflect the general disenchantment occurring within the medical education process. The authors suggested that students “who were able to view their lives as more meaningful and advanced in their vocational development over time also endorsed higher levels of a career calling” (Duffy, Manuel et al., 2011, p. 361). This study is important because it is generally thought that one’s calling is first discerned and then it
provides positive work and personal well-being benefits. However, this study suggests that those students who first had positive feelings about their personal and professional lives were in a better position to understand and live out their career callings.

A study of over 5,500 college students found that 44% felt that they had a calling and 28% indicated that they were seeking a calling (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010). The authors examined how calling presence and calling search levels differed across demographic variables (gender, race, and education aspiration), religiousness, life satisfaction, and life meaning. The results did not find any significant gender differences in having or searching for a calling. The authors noted only very small racial differences and suggest that the results show the manner in which a career calling is experienced is more similar than different across all races (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010). Similarly, only minor differences were found in religiousness suggesting that most young adults associate their calling with something they are “meant” to do but not as a religious summons to a particular profession. However, significant differences were found in the educational aspiration groupings. Individuals who indicated that they were planning to obtain an advanced degree were more likely to already endorse a calling to a particular profession. Presence of calling was found to weakly correlate with life satisfaction and moderately with life meaning (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010).

Hirschi and Hermann (2012) conducted a short-term, longitudinal study of 269 German college students to better understand the link between calling presence and life satisfaction. The study showed that vocational identity achievement was an important mediator to the relationship between calling presence and life satisfaction. The authors also considered the effects of the participants’ personalities (through core self-evaluations) and found that positive core self-evaluations were necessary and could even support the emergence of a sense of calling. Further,
the results showed that presence of calling also predicted greater vocational identity achievement (Hirschi & Hermann, 2012). These results are similar to previous research that showed presence of calling was related to career decidedness, goal-clarity, and self-awareness (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Steger et al., 2010). A profound finding in the study, contrary to previous studies (Duffy, Allen et al., 2012; Duffy, Manuel et al., 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Steger et al., 2010), was the lack of relationship between calling presence and life satisfaction (Hirschi & Hermann, 2012). The authors suggested possible explanations such as cultural differences between the U.S. and Germany, the fact that the participants were students and not working adults, or that vocational interests or work values acted as moderators to the link between calling and life satisfaction. Additionally, the study found that individuals who identify as having a calling but are not very advanced in vocational identity development actually showed lower life satisfaction scores (Hirschi & Hermann, 2012). Although the students endorsed having a sense of calling, they may be lacking a clear sense of clarity and alignment of personal values and goals, which may promote feelings of lower satisfaction with life. These results are similar to previous results which showed lower well-being scores in individuals who were searching for meaning or a calling in their lives (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Steger et al., 2006).

In a 2009 study, the authors explored how dispositional zest was related to one’s endorsement of a calling as well as satisfaction with life and work (Peterson et al., 2009). Zest “is a positive trait reflecting a person’s approach to life with anticipation, energy, and excitement” (Peterson et al., 2009, p. 161). Zest as a variable was studied because prior research (Peterson et al., 2007) showed that people who are more zestful pursue flow or engagement in their daily lives and experience greater levels of meaningfulness. The authors conjectured that work that was perceived as more meaningful would more frequently be viewed as a calling. The
study had nearly 10,000 participants, all of whom were currently employed adults. The results found that zest predicted life satisfaction, work satisfaction, and an individual’s occupational endorsement of a calling. The results are important to the study of calling because of the large number and diverse occupational nature of the participants. In general, this study supports the notion that those who identify as having a calling also show higher levels of work satisfaction and psychological well-being (Peterson et al., 2009). The authors suggest that organizations work to promote worker zest as well as supportive relationships inside and outside of the workplace.

To expand on the understanding of why people who view their work as a calling also show increased life and work satisfaction, Steger et al. (2010) conducted a study to examine whether calling was related to psychological adjustment and positive work attitudes in the highly religious and less religious. The study was conducted utilizing 295 undergraduate students enrolled in an introduction to psychology course. The study’s authors investigated whether the positive relationships between calling and work satisfaction and calling and life satisfaction were mediated by whether the participant had a religious or secularized view of calling. Results “supported views of calling centering on people’s experience of meaning in their work rather than more constrained religious views” (Steger et al., 2010, p. 82). The results of this study show the important relationship of meaning as a core component and experience to having a calling at work. “One of the central pillars of modern calling theory is that work can provide people with both meaningful work experiences and also with a route to discovering and experiencing greater purpose and meaning in their lives as a whole” (Steger et al., 2010, p. 91).
**Calling and Work-Related Outcomes**

The literature below presents a summary of additional research on the relationship between calling/vocation and work-related outcomes. As outlined above, Allan and Duffy (2014); Bunderson and Thompson (2009), Davidson and Caddell, 1994; Duffy, Allan et al. (2013), Duffy, Allan et al. (2014), Duffy, Dik et al. (2011) Peterson et al. (2009), Steger et al. (2010), and Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) have all studied the relationship of calling and various work and well-being related variables. Bunderson and Thompson (2009) found that individuals who endorsed a calling also had higher levels of occupational importance. The other studies found that greater levels of work or job satisfaction, occupational identification, career commitment, work meaningfulness, perceived organizational duty, and work zest were achieved by those who had a strong presence or actualization of their calling.

Cardador et al. (2011) examined the relationship of having a calling orientation to an employee’s attachment to his or her organization. Although some theories suggest that “callings may be negatively associated with organizational attachment” (Cardador et al., 2011, p. 367), the authors proposed a theory using role investment and identification convergence to predict positive organizational attachment and reduced turnover intention in those with a calling orientation. Additionally, using goal facilitation theory, they suggested that organizational instrumentality, or the notion that the organization is crucial to goal fulfillment, would mediate the relationship between calling orientation and organizational attachment. Lastly, the authors predicted that a security-oriented organizational culture would increase organizational attachment and reduce turnover among those with low levels of calling orientation.

The authors defined a calling orientation as an orientation “toward work in which one expects work to be both purposeful and inherently meaningful” (Cardador et al., 2011, p. 367).
Since callings are generally associated with one’s occupation or career and not attached to a particular organization, some have suggested that individuals with a calling may be more willing to change organizations (Hall & Chandler, 2005). The results of the study show that calling is positively associated with organizational attachment and negatively with intention to leave (Cardador et al., 2011). Further, calling orientation was positively correlated with organizational-instrumentality and security-oriented organizational culture. Those with a strong presence of calling also had higher levels of job satisfaction and professional identification. The Sobel test also confirmed that organizational instrumentality significantly mediated the relationship between calling and organizational identification and turnover intention. The results also showed that a security-oriented culture attenuated the effects of calling and intention to turnover which is consistent with person-organization fit theories. Although most research has focused on the relationship between calling and one’s career, this study shows that a calling can positively affect one’s relationship with his or her organization if the organization is viewed as instrumental to fulfilling that individual’s calling. The authors suggest using a path-goal leadership approach to manage those with callings while specifically increasing perceptions of how the organization can help fulfill one’s calling. This type of a leadership approach should increase the employee’s level of organizational attachment.

Although the fundamental purpose of Dik et al. (2012) was to validate the Calling and Vocational Questionnaire (CVQ) and Brief Calling Scale (BCS), the authors did find positive relationships between calling and personal and professional outcomes. In the authors’ second study, which included 134 college students and 365 informants who could reasonably evaluate the study’s main participants, they found that calling was moderately to significantly positively-related to life satisfaction and life meaning. Additionally, they found that calling was positively
correlated with work hope and prosocial work motivation. Due to the greater correlation between the search and presence sub-scale scores in the CVQ, the authors suggest that calling is an ongoing rather than one-time process. Instead of ceasing the pursuit of a calling once one is identified, they suggest that individuals are “continually and dynamically trying to evaluate their career and approach their work in a way that maintains or increases the experiential properties that reflect a calling” (Dik et al., 2012, p. 258).

Dik and Steger (2008) conducted a randomized trial study that included a calling-infused workshop to evaluate the effects of calling and counselor disclosure on career decision self-efficacy. Career decision-making workshops typically include goal setting, skills practice, support, feedback and accountability. The authors conducted the study because most of the studies done on career workshops were done with adult subjects rather than young adults, who were the subjects of this study. Dik and Steger (2008) wanted to study emerging adults who are currently trying to establish their career choice, which is critical to their identity formation. In this study, the authors used vocational interventions which included: traditional approaches, those that included counselor self-disclosure, others that included content promoting work as a calling, and workshops that included self-disclosure and calling content. The authors predicted that those engaged in the workshops would have higher levels of career decision self-efficacy and meaning in life than those on the waitlist. Additionally, they hypothesized that those in self-disclosure workshops would have significantly better results, and that those in calling-infused workshops would have higher levels of life meaning.

The results of Dik and Steger’s (2008) study showed that even a brief, two-session workshop had a significant impact on the college students’ confidence in navigating the career decision-making process. In the self-disclosure workshops, counselors and/or past participants
shared their own experiences in navigating the career decision-making process including obstacles they faced and strategies they utilized to overcome them. Self-disclosure was significant in both traditional and calling-infused workshops showing the importance of vicarious learning on self-efficacy (Dik & Steger, 2008). Although the study’s results, surprisingly, did not show a significant impact of adding calling content, the effect of self-disclosure on career decision-making self-efficacy was enhanced in those in a calling-content workshop versus those in a traditional workshop with self-disclosure. The authors suggested further study into calling-related interventions as well as an understanding of calling presence and search to support positive work-related outcomes.

To better understand the distinction between perceiving and living a calling, Duffy and Autin (2013), studied 542 working adults. They proposed a model that evaluated calling presence and calling actualization along with the variables of work volition and organizational support. They defined work volition as “the perceived capacity to make occupational decisions despite constraints” (Duffy & Autin, 2013, p. 221). Organizational support was characterized by the degree to which individuals felt supported in their work environment (Duffy & Autin, 2013). The authors note that organizational support has been shown to have a positive correlation with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and positive mood at work. The results found that work volition partially mediated the relation between perceiving and living a calling. The findings showed that individuals high in work volition were less likely to experience work barriers and were more likely to live out their callings through their work. Those with lower levels of work volition felt more impeded by barriers to actualizing their callings. Organizational support as a mediator between the relationship of perceiving and living a calling was not supported. The study did support earlier research (Duffy, Allan et al., 2013) that individuals with
higher incomes and graduate/professional degrees were significantly more likely to endorse living a calling.

In Duffy et al. (2011), the authors hypothesized that experiencing a calling to a particular career would relate positively to work-related outcomes and that these relations would be mediated by career commitment. Dik & Duffy’s (2009) definition conceptualizes calling as an ongoing process rather than a one-time event; as a continuous variable rather than as a binary concept that one either experiences entirely or not at all; and as something people may currently experience (presence) or may be seeking (search). For their study (Duffy et al., 2011), 370 employees were enlisted from a university based in Western, United States. Although all were from one university, their backgrounds and careers were varied. The authors noted that their study had a low participation rate (10%) and that the university would not allow for follow-up reminders. In this study, the authors administered the Calling and Vocation Questionnaire (CVQ) (Dik, Eldridge, & Steger, 2008) as well as scales to measure withdrawal intentions, career commitment, organization commitment, and job satisfaction.

They found that calling moderately correlated with career commitment, job satisfaction, organization commitment, and job satisfaction (Duffy et al., 2011). Calling also weakly correlated with withdrawal intentions. These results suggest that career commitment may be a critical component and moderator with calling and work outcomes. People who viewed their careers as callings were more satisfied and less likely to withdraw. They found that the relationship of calling and organization commitment was partly explained by career commitment, and the relationship between calling and satisfaction was fully explained by career commitment. The full path analysis showed a positive relationship to calling and withdrawal once the person’s career commitment was taken into consideration, suggesting that people with a
strong sense of calling who are not committed to their current career choices are more willing to leave. The authors also suggest that those with a strong sense of calling may have very high standards for their employers and this “dark side” of calling may lead to lower levels of workplace well-being for individuals who have a high sense of calling but are not presently satisfied with their current career choice.

In Duffy, Bott et al. (2012), the authors hypothesized that links between perceiving a calling and career commitment and work meaning would be moderated by living a calling. Additionally, the authors hypothesized that the association between calling presence and job satisfaction via career commitment and work meaning would be stronger for individuals who are able to actualize their callings. The results of the study showed that those who endorse a calling were more satisfied with their jobs and had higher levels of career commitment and work meaning. Additionally, living a calling had stronger relations to these variables than merely perceiving a calling. The results emphasize the importance of actually being able to live one’s calling in work. Further, the study found that the correlation between perceiving a calling and job satisfaction, which was mediated by career commitment and work meaning, was only significant for those high in living a calling. This outcome further emphasized the importance of living one’s calling on work-related outcomes such as job satisfaction.

Amid a body of research that is comprised almost entirely by quantitative studies, Hall and Chandler (2005) present a qualitative study that looks at the interdependence between subjective and objective careers. Elements of the subjective career were job satisfaction, self-awareness, adaptability, and learning. The objective career was composed of income, promotions, hierarchical job level, and job mobility. Additionally, they wanted to understand under what conditions the subjective career takes on particular salience and drives objective
work outcomes. Their research found that when a person feels a sense of calling in his or her career, a strong sense of purpose, or the feeling that they are doing the work that they are meant to do, the subjective career drives objective outcomes. Further, they found that one of the deepest forms of satisfaction or psychological success came when people felt that their work was aligned with their calling and provided purpose to their life. In their study, Hall and Chandler (2005), describe a calling orientation as those who work for the fulfillment and belief that their work impacts society in a positive manner. Individuals who attain alignment between their calling and occupation generally participate first in an exploratory or discovery period as part of their developmental process. This process is deeply personal, reflective, and relational and can lead to high levels of engagement and flow which are linked with well-being.

When individuals see their career as a calling, they are able to maintain a strong focus on their goals and put in extra effort to succeed because they believe that achieving these goals will help them carry out their calling. The authors (Hall & Chandler, 2005) found that socio-economic background can either facilitate or obstruct the pursuit of a calling. Lastly, the study found that when people evolve to higher levels of identity growth, they experience a stronger connection between their calling and job satisfaction.

**Meaning and Life Purpose**

Meaning in life has been defined as “the sense made of, and significance felt regarding, the nature of one’s being and existence” (Steger et al., 2006, p. 81). This definition attempts to encompass all major definitions of meaning while still allowing for each individual to construct his or her own criteria for it, which is consistent with Frankl (1963), who said that each individual uniquely constructs his or her own life’s meaning. The concepts of calling, life purpose, and meaning are related. Those with a calling understand their purpose for being, and
those whose life is meaningful feel a strong sense of significance and purpose. Steger et al. (2006) have also defined the search for meaning or purpose as “the drive and orientation toward finding meaning in one’s life” (p. 85). The literature below presents a brief summary of some of the research on the relationships between meaning and life purpose on well-being and/or work-related outcomes.

Since most theorists (e.g., Frankl, 1959; Maddi, 1970) regard meaning as crucial to human well-being, and because eudaimonistic theories (Aristotelian ethical concept for highest human good) of well-being which focus on personal growth, psychological strengths, and pleasant affect have shown meaning to be particularly important, Steger et al. (2006) conducted four studies with the aim to develop a measurement tool that could be used in counseling psychology to increase well-being in clients. Further, since meaning in life has been related to life satisfaction, happiness, and work enjoyment, they sought to create an improved meaning assessment tool to help increase their clients’ overall happiness and life satisfaction and decrease distress related to the failure to achieve meaning in one’s life.

In studies one and two, the authors recruited 151 and 154 participants from undergraduate introductory psychology courses which were predominantly female and Caucasian. To gain convergent and discriminant validit, the authors tested their 88 items against measures correlated to life satisfaction (Satisfaction with Life Scale, SWLS) (Diener et al., 1985), positive affect (Long-Term Affect Scale) (Diener, Smith, & Fujita, 1995), intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity (Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religiosity Scale) (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989), social desirability (Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale) (Crowne, & Marlowe, 1960), and values (10 Value Types) (Schwartz, & Sagiv, 1995). They also hypothesized negative correlations with neuroticism and depression (Brief Symptom Inventory) (Derogatis & Spencer,
1992) and utilized existing measures to test these variables. After the statistical analyses and refinements in these studies, the authors were able to refine their measurement tool, known as the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ), to its current 10 items. The tool includes two independent subscales, known as presence and search, which enabled researchers for the first time to study those two concepts separately. Study three included 400 undergraduate psychology students with the purpose to replicate the prior two studies and provide additional validity for the MLQ subscales as the authors had intended. Study four’s purpose was to provide further support of the convergent and discriminant validity of the MLQ and each of its subscales. In this study the authors recruited 252 participants from a local university and community college and administered two assessments, each a month apart. Additionally, they had each of the participants enlist three or four individuals who knew them well to complete the informant packet. All of these measures were quantitative in nature. Results showed that university and college students did not differ across the measures. Further, no differences relating to gender, race, or year in school were found. Presence scores did differ across religious affiliations with people checking “other” scoring higher than Catholics, Protestants, atheists, or agnostics. Presence was also shown to be related to age.

The four studies show evidence for internal consistency, temporal stability, and factor structure for the 10-item measure. The studies also show convergent and discriminant validity of the two subscales across time and informants. In addition, they show that feeling that one’s life is meaningful is important to human functioning and that these individuals were less depressed and had greater life satisfaction, self-esteem, optimism, and positive affect. The authors note that further research needs to be done to determine whether or not the search subscale adds to well-being or causes distress. Since the subscales are independent, it is now possible to find
individuals whose lives are full of meaning and yet continue to seek to deepen their understanding of what gives them purpose (Park et al., 2010; Steger et al., 2011). The authors suggest further research into the development of meaning and its parallel to other stage theories like Erikson’s epigenesis (Erikson, Erikson, & Kivnick, 1986). Since the intention was to create a tool for counseling psychologists, the authors suggest the MLQ as a brief measure of psychological health and as a tool to test clients’ increased well-being.

In Steger et al. (2011), the authors wanted to explicate how the presence and search dimensions of meaning interact to predict life satisfaction and life satisfaction judgments. Each of the studies utilized undergraduate college students who were enrolled in psychology courses and most participants were female and Caucasian. Like the Steger et al. 2006 study, these demographics and participant pool may not be representative of the entire adult population and caution would need to be used before applying to unrelated populations. In the first two studies, 273 students completed the MLQ (Steger et al., 2006) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener et al., 1985). Multiple regression approaches were utilized to analyze the data and multicollinearity was tested. In both studies, presence of meaning was positively correlated with life satisfaction. Additionally, presence was most strongly correlated to life satisfaction for those who indicated that they were also actively searching for meaning in their lives, which was consistent with the findings in Park et al. (2010). Both studies showed a negative correlation between search for meaning and life satisfaction; however, further statistical analysis revealed that this was only the case for individuals who did not already have a high presence of meaning or purpose in their life. The authors suggest that search for meaning moderated the association of presence and life satisfaction.
Since the first two studies supported the hypothesis that individuals who are searching for meaning base their life satisfaction on the presence or absence of meaning and those low in search do not, the third study sought to replicate the others as well as add the dimension of judgments of the well-being of others. The 151 undergraduate psychology students who participated were given the MLQ and SWLS to complete along with four fictitious vignettes to assess life satisfaction and meaning of the character Mr. B. Participants in this study were randomly assigned to each of the four meaning/calling groups (low presence/low search; low presence/high search; high presence/low search; high presence/high search). Results from this study replicated the two previous in that those highest in life satisfaction were those with high presence and high search for meaning. The results from both studies revealed that the relationship between meaning in life and life satisfaction was moderated by the extent to which the individual was searching for meaning in his or her life. The authors suggest that the search for meaning behaves like a schema increasing the salience of meaning and provides new ways of understanding peoples’ efforts to establish meaningful lives. Since searching for meaning did have a negative correlation to life satisfaction in those without presence of purpose, additional research is recommended to determine whether it should be regarded as natural or as a warning sign that the individual has lost meaning. The studies’ findings appear to support the opinion that meaning in life is important to well-being and having a satisfying life, but the level of importance appears to vary from being important for some to not being important for others.

A 2007 study by Steger and Kashdan, tested the stability of life satisfaction, presence of meaning, and search for meaning. The results showed moderate stability for these constructs. They found that individuals who felt that their lives were meaningful were more optimistic, self-actualized (Maslow, 1970), and showed higher levels of psychological well-being. They also
found that meaning in life and life satisfaction are highly correlated (Steger & Kashdan, 2007). Additionally, the study found that searching for meaning can be characterized by greater open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, and reflective thinking; however, the ambiguity that it produces may negatively influence life satisfaction ratings. Additionally, the study reinforced that presence and search are largely independent constructs and that an individual can feel that his or her life is meaningful and still also be searching to deepen that meaning. Since search appeared to be remarkably stable over a one-year period, the authors suggested that short-term, more momentary searching could differ from a more trait-like, longer-term search for meaning with the former enhancing well-being and the latter negatively impacting it.

Since much of the extant body of research on meaning and life purpose has been conducted utilizing undergraduate psychology students, it is important that the constructs also be viewed across the life span to understand how they develop and whether or not there are significant age-related differences relating to meaning presence and search and well-being. Participants’ age as it relates to the search and acquisition of purpose has been postulated to be developmental in nature (Steger et al., 2006; Steger & Kashdan, 2007; Steger et al., 2008; Steger et al., 2011; Steger et al., 2010). Additionally, there have been suggestions in the literature that the search for meaning may be negatively associated with well-being in older adults, but this needs to be further replicated in future studies (Steger et al., 2009).

Steger et al. (2009) investigated the structure, levels, and correlates of the presence and search of meaning in life across the life span. The authors divided the 8,756 participants into four age-group categories that they defined as Emerging Adults (18-24 years), Young Adults (25-44 years), Middle-Age Adults (45-64 years), and Older Adults (over 65 years). They hypothesized that they would find evidence of structural validity and factorial invariance of the MLQ measure
across age groups. Additionally, they expected that presence of meaning would be highest in the young and middle-age adult groups based on prior studies that found diminishing purpose and meaning scores in the oldest groups (Lawton, Moss, Winter, & Hoffman, 2002; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Essex, 1992). Lastly, they expected that the highest search for meaning group would be the emerging adults and that search would have a positive relationship to younger adults but would have negative relations for older adults who indicate that they are searching for purpose. The authors utilized the MLQ (Steger et al., 2006), SWLS (Diener et al., 1985), General Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977), and the Orientations to Happiness Scale (Peterson et al., 2005).

Results revealed that the more meaning or presence of meaning in life that was reported, the greater the well-being at all life stages (Steger et al., 2009). Generally, presence increased with age except in the young adult group. As predicted, search for meaning scores were lower in later life stages; however, the search for meaning was more strongly associated with distress and less well-being, particularly at later stages of adulthood. Finally, the authors noted a surprising result in the search subscale results which had mean scores for each group above the mid-point, even among older adults. They suggested that this may be due to later life being a more dynamic developmental stage than previously thought. Suggesting that older adults may desire to look for meaning in new roles or possibly because the sample group which accessed the “authentic happiness” website may not represent the typical older adult.

The purpose of Park et al. (2010) was to examine the relationship between presence and search for life meaning in relation to well-being outcomes in a large sample of adults. The authors hypothesized that searching for meaning or life purpose would have an overall negative
relationship with well-being, with the exception of those who already had a substantial foundation of meaning in their lives. Consistent with past research, the presence of meaning was positively associated with life satisfaction, happiness, and positive affect and negatively associated with depression and negative affect, whereas the search for meaning overall had the opposite pattern of correlates (Steger et al., 2006; Steger et al., 2009). However, the search for meaning was positively associated with well-being, life satisfaction, happiness, and less depression among those who already had substantial meaning in their lives (Park et al., 2010). The study found no gender-related differences. Older respondents reported more presence of meaning, greater happiness, and more positive affect than younger respondents.

Cultural variations of the presence of and search for meaning were examined in the Steger et al (2008) study. The authors enlisted nearly 2,000 young adults in the U.S. and Japan to increase the understanding of whether the search for meaning construct is harmonious or incongruent with calling presence. In addition to the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) (Steger et al., 2006), the authors further assessed the relationship between meaning and well-being utilizing the Purpose in Life Test (Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964) and Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubominsky & Lepper, 1999).

Results of the study showed that participants from both cultures who had higher levels of meaning presence also had higher levels of happiness and life purpose. The study showed that the levels of presence of meaning differed across the two cultures. However, the construct appears to be important to human functioning in both. Americans, in an independent culture, endorse higher levels of meaning presence than their Japanese counterparts who live in an interdependent culture. The presence of meaning results were consistent with the idea that “presence of meaning is related to positive self-concept, which is generally higher in independent
cultures” (Steger et al., 2008, p. 674). The Japanese participants showed greater levels of meaning search than the American participants. Whereas the search for meaning was negatively associated with presence of meaning with American participants, it was positively associated with meaning presence in Japanese participants. The authors credit this finding to the more holistic or dialectical mode of thinking that individuals in interdependent cultures tend to have. This dialectical approach to viewing life appears to also facilitate a heightened comfort with contradiction versus the more analytical approach of those in independent cultures (Steger et al., 2008). Overall, the presence and search for meaning appears to be important to one’s well-being across cultures.

**Well-being, Life Satisfaction, and Happiness**

The literature below presents an overview of current available research on psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness as it relates to calling, vocation, and life meaning research. In the literature, there are various definitions of well-being. Martin Seligman (2011) suggests that well-being is a state of happiness, contentment, satisfaction and flourishing that is made up of positive emotion, engagement, positive relationship, meaning, and accomplishment. Su et al. (2014, p. 2) utilize a definition of well-being that is made up of seven core multifaceted theoretical dimensions: (1) subjective well-being in the form of high life satisfaction and positive feelings, (2) supportive and enriching relationships, (3) interest and engagement in daily activities, (4) meaning and purpose in life, (5) a sense of mastery and accomplishment, (6) feelings of control and autonomy, and (7) optimism. This latter definition is the foundation for the Brief Inventory of Thriving (Su et al., 2014) that was utilized in this research study.

Peterson et al. (2005) investigated whether the three orientations to happiness (pleasure, engagement, and meaning) individually add to life satisfaction. These three orientations have
been the subject of discussion by philosophers and psychologists for centuries (Guignon, 1999; Maslow, 1970; Rogers, 1951). Additionally, this study’s authors sought to develop a valid and reliable assessment tool to measure these three orientations to happiness. For this study, 180 participants were utilized for the initial instrument development and 845 subjects participated in the main study. Subjects were solicited using the online website www.positivepsychology.org. The initial Orientations to Happiness assessment was validated using University of Pennsylvania students who were enrolled in a positive psychology course. During phase one of the study, the authors were able to hone their 36-item assessment down to an 18-item tool which contains six items for each of their three subscales. To assess life satisfaction, the 5-item Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener et al., 1985) was utilized. After conducting principal components analysis and hierarchal multiple regression testing, some normalization, and checking for acceptable multicollinearity, the authors determined that the main effects for each of the three orientations were significant to life satisfaction, as was the three-way interaction of the happiness orientations combined.

The authors found that each of the three orientations to happiness predicted life satisfaction (Peterson et al., 2005). Pleasure predicted in a small way, and engagement and meaning were moderate predictors. No significant demographic variations were found in life satisfaction other than being married. Those who were younger, less educated, and unmarried were somewhat higher in their endorsement of the pleasure orientation as Aristotle would have predicted. African Americans and Asian Americans scored somewhat higher than whites on their orientation to meaning. The study found that each orientation was distinguishable but able to be pursued simultaneously. Although pleasure was a small predictor, it is not irrelevant and can add to life satisfaction. Since prior research suggests that pleasure can only increase satisfaction
temporarily, the authors suggest that researchers and psychologists create interventions focused on targeting engagement and meaning.

In a study by Diener and Seligman (2002), the authors investigated factors that they felt were likely to influence happiness. In their study, they enrolled participants that measured very happy, very unhappy, and those with a more moderate or normal level of happiness. They conducted a correlational study which looked at social relationships, personality, psychopathology, and other variables related to subjective well-being (life satisfaction and emotional affect). Findings from their study found that very happy people were highly social and had stronger romantic and other social relationships. Significant to this study were the findings that showed that the happiest respondents did not participate in more religious activities or experience more objectively-defined good events.

Linley et al. (2007) explored whether or not there are mean level changes across gender and age groups in character strengths which signify a well life. Given that character strengths represent the kind of traits that may be expected to change as a result of the self-actualization process described by Erikson (1959) and Maslow (1970), the authors hypothesized an age-related change. Additionally, they hypothesized that there may be gender-related differences due to women generally scoring higher in nurturing strengths and males in hunter-gather-type strengths. For this study, 17,056 participants were enlisted using the University of Pennsylvania’s online website associated with Martin Seligman’s Authentic Happiness (2002) publication. Each participant completed the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS) during the period of September 2002 to March 2005. For this study, only participants who indicated that they were residents of the United Kingdom (UK) were used. Peterson and Seligman (2004; Peterson & Park, 2009) have developed the Values in Action Inventory of
Strengths (VIA) assessment along with the *Character Strengths and Virtues Handbook* (CSV) which classifies human strengths and focuses on helping people lead more fulfilling lives. These preeminent authors in the field of positive psychology have used the VIA and other happiness assessment tools to establish relationships between psychological well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction.

To analyze the survey data, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to explore gender differences and Pearson’s correlation analyses were used to assess strengths and age. Overall, the study revealed small gender and age differences across the VIA Inventory of Strengths. Women scored higher overall on character strengths, which are measures of psychological wellness. Additionally, women also scored higher on nurturing strengths such as kindness, love, and social intelligence. Similarly, they scored higher on appreciation of beauty and gratitude. Men, however, scored higher on creativity. Overall, there was considerable consistency across genders and strengths, and four of the top five strengths for men and women were the same: open-mindedness, fairness, curiosity, and love of learning. The results revealed that overall scores increased with age, although humor decreased with age. The strongest correlations with age were curiosity, love of learning, forgiveness, self-regulation, and fairness. The results of this study were consistent with previous US studies (Park et al., 2004; Peterson et al., 2005). Finally, the results of this study showed that there were more similarities than differences across the genders. In regards to age, although the effect sizes are small, they were consistent and may indicate a trend for character development over the lifespan.

In Park et al. (2004), the authors assessed which of the 24 character strengths correlated the most with measures of life satisfaction. Over 5,000 participants completed the VIA and SWLS. Results of the study show character strengths, on a whole, are associated with life
satisfaction but that some strengths appear to impact satisfaction to a greater degree than others. Zest and work hope were the strongest predictors of life satisfaction. Gratitude, love, and curiosity also impacted life satisfaction substantially. The authors also noted that there did not appear to be a point of having “too much” of a strength, as the results did not show any amount was associated with a lower level of life satisfaction. The authors indicated that these results were consistent with similar studies that looked at the relationship between personality traits and well-being (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The character strengths least likely to promote life satisfaction were modesty and intellectual strengths; therefore, the authors recommend creating interventions that target character strengths that most robustly target well-being and life satisfaction, including zest (Park et al., 2004; Peterson et al., 2009).

In a similar, but cross-cultural study, Peterson et al. (2007) examined which character strengths were most associated with life satisfaction in U.S. and Swiss adults. The study’s results showed that the strengths most linked to life satisfaction for both groups were zest, hope, love, and curiosity. For the U.S. sample, gratitude was the highest predictor of life satisfaction and for the Swiss, the most robust character strength link to life satisfaction was perseverance. The authors noted that what they learned most from this cross-cultural study of character strengths and life satisfaction is that life satisfaction is associated with all three orientations to happiness (pleasure, engagement, and meaning; Seligman, 2002). Additionally, the happiest people were those with the fullest lives, and that the most satisfying character strengths seemed to make a full life possible. Lastly, the authors point to the importance of satisfying relationships to one’s overall well-being as suggested by love and gratitude being endorsed as very satisfying character strengths.
In 2005, Fujita and Diener examined whether there is a life satisfaction stability set point across time. The authors utilized data from a seventeen-year, national longitudinal study (1984-2000) that included a question on life satisfaction. In this study, 3,608 German participants annually answered a question regarding their current life satisfaction level. The authors conjectured that if a stable life satisfaction set point exists, you would only expect 5% of the participants to change significantly during the course of the study. Initial analysis showed that individuals varied from year to year with the average within-person standard deviation of 1.28 on an 11-point scale. The between-person standard deviation was 1.78. Due to major life event impacts that may affect the individual from year to year, the authors decided to analyze the baseline data utilizing a five-year average. For comparison, the authors analyzed the average life satisfaction score during the first five years of study and compared that to the average in the last five years of the study. The resulting analysis found that 24% of the participants significantly changed from the first five years to the last five years of the study. This was more than four times what would be expected if life satisfaction hovered around a set point. Additionally, the results showed that those who experienced the largest changes in scores were also the least satisfied. The authors compared their results to changes in participant height, weight, body mass index, blood pressure, and personality traits, all of which had greater stability than life satisfaction. Since over 75% of the participants did not experience significant changes in their level of life satisfaction, the overall analysis indicates that over long periods of time, there appears to be a modest stability in life satisfaction; however, some individuals do change significantly.

A cross-cultural study of the correlates of life satisfaction and self-esteem was conducted by Ed and Marissa Diener (1995). They enrolled over 13,000 college-aged participants in 31 countries. Each participant completed assessments of life satisfaction, self-esteem, and
satisfaction with specific domains (family, friends, and finances). The authors assessed “whether cross-cultural variations in the strength of associations were related to societal dimensions including income and individualism” (Diener & Diener, 1995, p. 653). The study’s results, at the individual level, showed that life satisfaction and self-esteem were correlated across cultures; however, it was moderated by the level of individualism in the culture. In each nation, satisfaction with self, family, friends, and finances was correlated with life satisfaction. Financial satisfaction was a stronger correlate of life satisfaction in poorer nations. Of the four types of satisfaction, self-esteem was the strongest predictor of life satisfaction. Family correlations did not differ based on individualism of the nation; however, there was a positive correlation between individualism and friend satisfaction. In the study, 70% of female respondents and 63% of male respondents indicated a positive life satisfaction rating. Overall, individuals in individualistic cultures espoused higher life satisfaction scores than those in collectivist cultures. Additionally, and not surprisingly, an individual’s self-esteem was strongly correlated to his or her satisfaction with life.

In her 1989 article, Happiness Is Everything or Is It? Explorations on the Meaning of Psychological Well-being, Carol Ryff challenged the field of positive psychology to create a more universal definition and assessment tool to support the concept of well-being. Up to that time, most measures of well-being focused on one or only a few components of well-being but were not fully encompassing of the dimensions that make up well-being. Even to date, the most widely utilized empirical measure of well-being the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985) only assesses life satisfaction, leaving out many other important aspects of well-being. In her study, which included 321 adult participants, Ryff investigated how well six areas of well-being were being assessed utilizing existing measurement tools. The six aspects of well-being
that make up her model, extracted from a review of existing theories and empirical research, include: (1) self-acceptance, (2) positive relations with others, (3) autonomy, (4) environmental mastery, (5) purpose in life and (6) personal growth. Results of the study showed self-acceptance and environmental mastery were strongly associated with existing measures of life satisfaction, self-esteem, morale, and affect balance; however, positive relations with others, autonomy, purpose in life, and personal growth were not adequately captured in assessment indexes. Although Ryff did not create a validated, empirical measurement tool to encompass the full range of well-being, her work spurred others to do so.

Su et al. (2014) introduced two new comprehensive, validated well-being assessment tools, the *Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving* and the *Brief Inventory of Thriving*. Similar to the concerns raised by Ryff, the study’s authors saw a gap and wanted to create a measure that included the broad range of psychological well-being constructs and “represent a holistic view of positive functioning” (Su et al., 2014, p. 251). The authors enlisted over 3,000 participants to validate the CIT and BIT instruments. Both demonstrate excellent psychometric properties including convergent validity with other measures of psychological well-being and discriminate validity with measures of ill-being. Both assessments contributed above existing measures in predicting health and well-being outcomes. Additionally, the CIT and BIT are currently the most comprehensive tools for assessing psychological well-being with the CIT including seven dimensions of well-being including: subjective well-being, supportive relationships and belonging, meaningfulness, engagement, personal mastery, optimism, and autonomy. The BIT includes all of these dimensions except autonomy, and due to its efficient and multi-dimensional nature, was utilized in this study to assess well-being. In the study, Su et al. (2014) suggest using the CIT and BIT within organizations to explore the link between well-being and organizational
outcomes. They suggest that the concept of thriving may be incorporated into training and development work, which may improve employee psychological well-being, work performance, and other work-related outcomes, while at the same time reducing turnover intentions. Seligman (2004; 2011) supports the suggestion that thriving, happiness, and even resilience can and should be taught. Additionally, the authors developed this measure to be utilized in global policy development (Diener et al., 2013).

Summary

This chapter has provided a review of the existing body of literature related to calling, meaning, life purpose, well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness and how these variables have been addressed in previous research. The existing body of literature related to these constructs, although growing, presents several gaps suggested for additional research. Although Steger and Shin (2010) note several studies that have explored the link between calling and well-being and the use of the search subscale, current research in both areas is limited. Additionally, several of the studies presented in this literature review noted clear conflicts in the existing research that demand further study (Baumeister, 1991; Domene, 2012; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Park et al., 2010; Steger et al., 2006; Steger & Kashdan, 2007; Steger, Kashdan, et al., 2008; Steger et al., 2009; Steger et al., 2011). Moreover, the importance of research in the areas of calling and well-being has strong research support as being linked to happiness, fulfillment, life meaning and life satisfaction (Allan & Duffy, 2014; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Duffy, Allan et al., 2013; Duffy, Allan et al., 2012; Duffy, Allan et al., 2014; Duffy, Foley et al., 2012; Duffy, Manuel et al., 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Hernandez et al., 2011; Hirschi & Hermann, 2012; Peterson et al., 2009; Steger et al., 2010; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Lastly, very few studies have delved into these constructs as they relate to not only acquiring a calling,
but also living it (Berg et al., 2010; Duffy, Allan et al., 2013; Duffy, Allan et al., 2014; Duffy, Allan et al., 2012; Duffy, Autin et al., 2014; Duffy, Bott et al., 2012).

Additionally, a number of the previous studies have had methodological limitations. Firstly, participant pools were not diverse (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Davidson & Caddell, 1994), particularly in the area of age (Diener & Diener, 1995; Dik et al., 2012; Dik & Steger, 2008; Duffy, Allen et al., 2012; Duffy, Manuel et al., 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Hirschi, 2011; Hirschi & Hermann, 2012; Hunter et al., 2010; Steger et al., 2006; Steger et al., 2011). Further, a majority of the studies used the same life satisfaction instrument to assess well-being, which may assist in comparing studies; however, this instrument may not effectively capture all areas of well-being. Other studies were plagued with low response rates or sample sizes (Duffy et al., 2011). Most of the studies utilized cross-sectional and correlational designs and were therefore not able to prove causation.

The present study’s methodology sought to address some of these gaps. Both correlational and causal-comparative designs were utilized and a more age diverse respondent pool was selected for participation. As suggested in the literature (Steger et al., 2011), a new instrument will be utilized to assess the well-being construct. Lastly, the construct of calling actualization will be studied in relation to well-being.
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

This study explored how calling and vocational constructs such as presence, search and actualization predict well-being. Forward multiple regression analyses were used to determine which calling presence and search variables best predict psychological well-being. Additionally, group differences were examined, using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), to determine whether individuals with differing levels of presence and search, using the four calling categories outlined in Table 1, differed in levels of psychological well-being.

This chapter presents the study’s research design. Participants, instruments, data collection procedures, research questions, variable operationalization, and data analysis procedures are also presented. The chapter concludes with a summary of the study’s methodology.

Research Design

A correlational research design was the primary design as it explored which of the independent variables best predict psychological well-being. All of the independent variables (Presence of Calling, Search for Calling, Presence of Transcendent Summons, Search for Transcendent Summons, Presence of Purposeful Work, Search for Purposeful Work, Presence of Prosocial Orientation, Search for Prosocial Orientation, Calling Presence, Calling Search, Vocation Presence, Vocation Search, and Calling Actualization), along with the dependent variable (Psychological Well-Being), were quantitative, which is why the mutual relationship was examined. In addition, this study explored the group differences in psychological well-being among the four calling categories.

Although experimental investigations that manipulate the independent variable and randomly assign participants to treatment and control groups can claim the strongest warrants for
a causal link, in many studies this type of manipulation and randomization is not possible or desirable (often for practical or ethical reasons) (Schenker & Rumrill, 2004). The present research study examined differences in psychological well-being among groups of people with respect to levels of calling presence and search (Dik et al., 2012). Since these groups already exist, manipulation of these variables was unnecessary. Further, manipulation of these variables was also undesirable and may have raised ethical concerns if an experimental approach had been pursued. Since subjects are not randomly assigned or variables manipulated, caution must be used when interpreting results since causation cannot be fully established.

**Participants**

Participants for this research study included a cross-section of adults who earned undergraduate or graduate degrees from Bowling Green State University between 1995 and 2015. Alumni of these degree programs have diverse educational and occupational backgrounds. Many hold positions in public and private for-profit and not-for-profit businesses. Others are employed in governmental or educational roles. Four thousand (4,000) alumni, provided by the alumni office, were invited to participate. All participants were currently employed adults (18 years of age or older) and were residents of the United States of America (U.S.A.). Those presently unemployed or retired were not included in this survey. All participants were asked to identify their age, occupation, and work status (currently employed, unemployed, or retired) and any who indicated that they were not currently employed or United States residents were not included in the data analysis. Selection of participants was based on feasibility of access to a group of working adults in which the concepts of calling and well-being could be studied. Although this study utilized a convenience sample, and is subject to the drawbacks known in this type of sampling, it was impossible to study the entire population of working adults.
Among the 4,000 invited to participate (reduced to 3,770 after bad email addresses were removed), 179 participated (4.7%) but only 127 completed the survey in its entirety generating a 3.4% response rate. The 127 respondents were predominantly white (94%) and female (71%). Most were married or in a domestic partnership (71%). The average age of participants was 37.28 years ($SD = 7.32$). Since this survey targeted graduates of Bowling Green State University, participants were highly educated with 49% having earned a bachelor’s degree, 42% a master’s degree, and 9% a doctoral degree. Most participants identified themselves as religious, Catholic (37%), Protestant (27%), Other Religious (14%), Buddhist (2%), and Pagan (1%); however, 20% identified themselves as Agnostic or Atheist. Although 80% considered themselves religious or spiritual, 54% rated their religious/spirituality participation level as little or infrequent, 46% chose moderately regular and none rated their participation level as regular or frequent. Survey participants were generally in professional (65%) or executive/managerial occupations (22%) and lived in suburban (41%), small cities (18%) or rural areas (14%). Average participant household income was well over the national median of $55,775 (Census ACS) and exceeded $100,000 annually. This was likely due to the sample being married and highly educated. Interestingly, most participants grew up in middle (49%) or lower-middle (25%) income families of less educated parents.

**Instrumentation**

**Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index**

The Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index (see Appendix A) combined and utilized four existing validated instruments: Brief Calling Scale (BCS) (Dik et al., 2012), Calling and Vocation Questionnaire (CVQ) (Dik et al., 2012), Living Calling Scale (LCS) (Duffy et al., 2012), and the Brief Inventory of Thriving (BIT) (Su et al., 2014). The Vocational Calling and
Well-Being Index consists of 44 items that measure calling presence, search, actualization and psychological well-being. In addition, 15 items gathered demographic and background information. Existing measures were selected after an extensive review of the literature and existing instrumentation for feasibility, validity, and reliability. All four of these instruments are quantitative assessments and are described in the following sections.

**Brief Calling Scale (BCS)**

To distinguish the participants’ realized calling group affiliation (e.g., (1) calling diffusion, (2) calling foreclosure, (3) calling moratorium, and (4) calling achievement), the author utilized the BCS (Dik et al., 2012). The BCS is a 4-item assessment that measures the presence of and search for calling. Both the BCS and CVQ instruments conceptualized calling using Dik and Duffy’s (2009) three-part definition which includes a transcendent summons, purposeful work, and a prosocial or others-oriented orientation. Questions in this assessment are based on a 5-point scale (1=not at all true of me, 5=totally true of me) and showed whether the participant had a very clear and established calling, whether they were searching for a calling, or if they do not have a clear calling and were not looking. Participants with mean scores of 3.50 or higher on the presence or search subscales were categorized as high and those with scores of 2.50 or lower were categorized as low. Items one (1) through four (4) of the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index were derived from the BCS and contributed to the subscales of Presence of Calling ($M = 3.66, SD = 1.10$), Search for Calling ($M = 2.26, SD = 1.19$), and the Calling Categories: Calling Diffusion ($M = 4.07, SD = .50$), Calling Foreclosure ($M = 4.26, SD = .43$), Calling Moratorium ($M = 3.40, SD = .61$), and Calling Achievement ($M = 4.00, SD = .67$). The Brief Calling Scale has shown evidence of internal consistency reliability, moderate test-retest
reliability, criterion-related and construct validity, and convergent and discriminate validity over
time and informants (Dik et al., 2012).

**Calling and Vocation Questionnaire (CVQ)**

The CVQ (Dik et al., 2012), was utilized to understand the concepts of calling presence
and search as well as to distinguish any existing differences in well-being between individuals
who endorse a vocation versus a calling. This instrument conceptualizes calling using the three
components of Dik and Duffy’s (2009) definition of calling described 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 of meaningfulness and that
holds other-oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation” (p. 210). The instrument
measures the respondent’s presence of and search for (1) transcendent summons, (2) purposeful
work, and (3) prosocial orientation yielding six unique subscales. The CVQ also assisted in the
assessment of which components of calling are essential.

The CVQ is a 24-item assessment that uses a 4-point scale to identify the participant’s
presence and search for calling in each of the subscale constructs. For purposes of this study,
questions were converted to a 5-point scale to align with the other survey questions (1=not at all
true of me, 5=totally true of me). The 24 items of the CVQ are represented in the Vocational
Calling and Well-Being Index as items 5-28 and contributed to the subscales of Presence of
Transcendent Summons ($M = 3.25, SD = 1.14$), Search for Transcendent Summons ($M = 2.34,
$SD = 1.09$), Presence of Purposeful Work ($M = 3.34, SD = .97$), Search for Purposeful Work ($M = 3.12, SD = .95$), Presence of Prosocial Orientation ($M = 3.54, SD = .98$), Search for Prosocial
Orientation ($M = 3.36, SD = 1.06$), Calling Presence ($M = 3.37, SD = .88$), Calling Search ($M = 2.94, SD = .82$), Vocation Presence ($M = 3.44, SD = .90$), and Vocation Search ($M = 3.24, SD =
The instrument’s authors (Dik et al., 2012) tested it using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis in a cross-validated split sample approach which supported construct validity, strong evidence of internal consistency reliability, and moderately stable test-retest reliability. CVQ reliability coefficients calculated within the present study ranged between 0.669 and 0.893 (see Table 2, p. 68). Evidence was also found to support convergent and discriminant validity of the scale scores.

**Living Calling Scale (LCS)**

Items 29-34 utilized the six item Living Calling Scale (LCS) (Duffy, Bott et al., 2012); which was developed to measure the degree to which participants felt they were able to currently live out their calling. The LCS originally applied a 7-point scale. Similar to the CVQ, the LCS questions were converted to a 5-point scale for consistent measurement (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). Additionally, an option of “not applicable – I don’t have a calling” was provided. The authors express the importance of not only distinguishing the presence of or search for a calling but also the sense of living out or actualizing one’s calling. It is common for individuals to feel called to a particular occupation or career path and yet currently be working in a position that does not support their calling. This is particularly true during a downturned economy when more individuals are facing unemployment or during major life changes. The authors also found that living a calling moderated the relations of career commitment, work meaning, and perceiving a calling such as the relations were more robust for those who endorsed a stronger sense of living a calling. The six items contributed to the Calling Actualization subscale ($M = 3.54, SD = 1.24$). Duffy, Allan et al. (2012) and Duffy, Bott et al. (2012) found strong internal consistency reliability in the LCS.
Brief Inventory of Thriving (BIT)

The BIT (Su et al., 2014) is a shorter version of the Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving (CIT) (Su et al., 2014). The authors developed the BIT, which is a 10-item assessment with a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree), to provide a well-being instrument that measures “a broad range of psychological well-being constructs and represent(s) a holistic view of positive functioning”. The BIT is a multi-faceted assessment with strong psychometric properties. It provides a positive contribution to the understanding of psychological well-being because of its focus on what contributes to well living. The BIT endorses a holistic perspective of positive functioning or thriving which includes: subjective well-being (including life satisfaction and positive emotions), supportive relationships and belonging, meaningfulness, engagement, personal mastery (including self-worth, self-efficacy, and accomplishment), and optimism. The authors recommend use of the BIT by researchers, health practitioners, and organizations who are interested in enhancing employee psychological well-being as well as related work outcomes. Items 35 through 44 of the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index were derived from the BIT and contributed to the Well-Being subscale ($M = 4.08$, $SD = .54$). The scale shows internal consistency reliability as well as convergent and discriminant validity. The BIT also shows good concurrent and predictive validity for physical health, health behaviors, and health-related quality of life.

Background Items

Demographic and background information was collected on the 127 participants who completed the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index. All background items collected were categorical except for the participant’s age which was left open-ended. In addition to age, the participant’s gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, education, current socio-economic status,
childhood socio-economic status, occupation, residence, religion and religiosity/spirituality participation level was collected. Lastly, the education of the participant’s mother and father, if known, was solicited and collected.

Data Collection Procedures

In order to solicit participation for this study, the researcher contacted the BGSU alumni office and requested 4,000 randomly selected graduates from their undergraduate and graduate programs over the past 20 years. Each participant was sent an email with an attached link asking them to participate in the research study. The link directed participants to complete the online survey, which was preceded by survey instructions and a consent form. The survey was developed using the online survey tool Qualtrics. The Qualtrics academic research suite was used to facilitate data collection as well as the initial data analysis.

In the initial email (see Appendix B), all 4,000 alumni provided by the BGSU Alumni Association, were invited to participate in this study. Initially the request was sent out in a mass blind copy email; however, the author then had her BGSU email account temporarily shut down due to it being flagged for possible distribution of spam materials. Once this situation was rectified, the initial email, which had been previous blocked, was resent using an individual or small group blind copy approach. Initial distribution of the survey resulted in the discovery that 6% of the email addresses were no longer working addresses or were not associated with alumni of the university. At the end of the second week, a follow-up reminder was sent to all participants who received the survey thanking those who had completed it and asking those who had not to do so by the end of the following week. At the conclusion of the third week, another reminder was sent. Due to the extremely low participation rate at the conclusion of the fourth week, and a concern that participants’ own email accounts may have blocked the survey request
or relegated it to a spam folder, a decision was made to wait until a week or two after the holidays and to send one final request for participation. Final survey participation was nearly 5% with less than 4% completing the entire survey.

**Research Questions**

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. Which calling presence and search variables best predict psychological well-being?
2. Do individuals with differing levels of calling presence and search (using the calling categories from Table 1) differ in regards to levels of psychological well-being?

**Data Analysis Procedures**

Participant responses to the survey were downloaded from Qualtrics and imported into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for analysis. The data was screened for accuracy, missing data, and outliers (Mertler & Vannatta, 2013). Subscale scores were calculated (see Table 2). In addition, categorical variables were created using the Presence of Calling and Search for Calling means from items 1-4 of the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index. Next, frequency polygons were generated and reviewed to determine which measure of central tendency was appropriate to calculate (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2012). Testing of normality (skewness, kurtosis, Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic), linearity (residual and scatterplots), and homoscedasticity (Levene’s test) were conducted. Descriptive statistics included measures of central tendency and variability. Inferential statistics were then generated utilizing the statistical approach most appropriate for the dependent and independent variables in each of the research questions.
Table 2

Variable Operationalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale (Assessment Utilized)</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
<th>Interval-Ratio / Categorical Calculation of Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Presence of Calling (BCS)</td>
<td>0.889</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio (R1) Mean of items: 1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Search for Calling (BCS)</td>
<td>0.881</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio (R1) Mean of items: 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Calling Categories (BCS)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Categorical (R2) Mean of: Presence of Calling, Search for Calling, Items 1 - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Presence of Transcendent Summons (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio Mean of items: 5, 12, 15, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Presence of Purposeful Work (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.807</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio Mean of items: 7, 19, 24, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Presence of Prosocial Orientation (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio Mean of items: 13, 16, 21, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Search for Transcendent Summons (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.873</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio Mean of items: 6, 17, 22, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Search for Purposeful Work (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.669</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio Mean of items: 8, 10, 18, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Search for Prosocial Orientation (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.814</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio Mean of items: 9, 11, 14, 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Calling Presence (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.893</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio (R1) Mean of items: 5, 7, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21, 24, 26, 27, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Vocation Presence (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio (R1) Mean of items: 7, 13, 16, 19, 21, 24, 26, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Calling Search (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio (R1) Mean of items: 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Vocation Search (CVQ)</td>
<td>0.826</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio (R1) Mean of items: 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 18, 20, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Calling Actualization (LCS)</td>
<td>0.961</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio Mean of items: 29 - 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Well-Being (BIT)</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>Interval-Ratio Mean of items: 35 - 44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 3, for research question one, forward multiple regression analyses were utilized to determine which of the 13 independent variables best predicted psychological well-being. A second regression was performed to determine if any of the six subscales from the CVQ were better predictors of psychological well-being. For the second research question,
A univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to evaluate group differences of participants using the four calling categories adapted from Marcia (1966) and Steger et al. (2006) that are derived from the presence and search subscales in the BCS and CVQ.

Table 3

**Research Questions, Variables, and Statistical Analysis Methods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Independent Variables (IVs)</th>
<th>Dependent Variables (DVs)</th>
<th>Statistical Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1a. Which calling presence and search variables best predict psychological well-being? | - Presence of Calling  
- Search for Calling  
- Presence of Transcendent Summons  
- Presence of Purposeful Work  
- Presence of Prosocial Orientation  
- Search for Transcendent Summons  
- Search for Purposeful Work  
- Search for Prosocial Orientation  
- Calling Presence  
- Vocation Presence  
- Calling Search  
- Vocation Search  
- Calling Actualization | Psychological Well-Being | Forward Multiple Regression |
| 1b. Which calling presence and search variables best predict psychological well-being? | - Presence of Calling  
- Search for Calling  
- Presence of Transcendent Summons  
- Presence of Purposeful Work  
- Presence of Prosocial Orientation  
- Search for Transcendent Summons  
- Search for Purposeful Work  
- Search for Prosocial Orientation  
- Calling Actualization | Psychological Well-Being | Forward Multiple Regression |
| 2. Do individuals with differing levels of calling presence and search differ in regards to levels of psychological well-being? | Based Upon Table 1 Calling Categories  
- Calling Diffusion  
- Calling Foreclosure  
- Calling Moratorium  
- Calling Achievement | Psychological Well-Being | ANOVA |
Assumptions

In conducting this research, the author assumed that all participants had a reading literacy level equivalent or above what was necessary to understand and respond to each survey item. Additionally, it was also assumed that each participant had responded truthfully to each survey question. Lastly, the author assumed that each participant had met the research criteria of being a U.S. resident, aged 18 years or older, and presently employed as answered on the survey.
CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

This study explored several variables that may predict one’s psychological well-being such as calling presence, vocational presence, calling search, vocational search, and calling actualization. In addition, group differences based upon calling category and age were examined since it has been postulated that the search and acquisition process of calling may be developmental (Steger et al., 2006; Steger & Kashdan, 2007; Steger et al., 2008; Steger et al., 2011; Steger et al., 2010). This chapter presents the descriptive statistics for all survey items and subscales. Inferential results by research question are then presented.

Descriptive Results

Brief Calling Scale Items

The first four items of the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index measured the concepts of Presence of Calling and Search for Calling and were taken from the Brief Calling Scale (BCS) developed by Dik et al. (2012). Items applied a 5-point scale. Items one (1) and two (2) assess whether the participant expresses having a calling to his or her work. Items three (3) and four (4) assess whether the participant indicates that he or she is actively searching for a calling. Two subscales were created based on these items. The subscale of Presence of Calling is the average of items one and two, while Search for Calling averages items three and four.

Participants reported fairly high Presence of Calling ($M = 3.66$) and relatively low Search for Calling ($M = 2.26$) (see Table 4). This indicates that most participants feel that their calling and career align and bring them a sense of fulfillment, meaning, and a way to give back to society. However, their low Search for Calling indicates that most participants, while expressing a Presence of Calling, are not continuing to search for a calling or greater ways to use that calling in service of others. An analysis of age indicates that older participants generally score higher on
having a Presence of Calling; whereas, younger participants often score higher on Search for Calling.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Items and Subscales Using the Brief Calling Scale (n = 179)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item / Variable</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Calling</td>
<td>3.66 (1.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I have a calling to a particular kind of work.</td>
<td>3.68 (1.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have a good understanding of my calling as it applies to my career.</td>
<td>3.64 (1.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Calling</td>
<td>2.26 (1.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am trying to figure out my calling in my career.</td>
<td>2.38 (1.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am searching for my calling as it applies to my career.</td>
<td>2.14 (1.27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calling and Vocation Questionnaire Items

Items five (5) through twenty-eight (28) of the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index assess the concepts of Calling Presence, Vocation Presence, Calling Search, and Vocation Search using the Calling and Vocation Questionnaire (CVQ) developed by Dik, Eldridge et al. (2012). This assessment tool explores Calling Presence and Search using Dik and Duffy’s (2009) three component parts: (1) an external summons (Transcendent Summons), (2) viewing one’s work as a source of purpose or meaning (Purposeful Work), and (3) having a prosocial orientation (Prosocial Orientation) or using one’s work to help others. Each of these three components is measured to determine if the participant already possesses that component or is actively searching for it.

The Presence of Transcendent Summons subscale measures the presence of an external, transcendent summons or being called by something outside of oneself to one’s particular career (see Table 5). This subscale is the mean of questions 5, 12, 15, and 27. Item 12 had the highest
mean score (3.64), and item 15 had the lowest (2.93). Both questions indicate that participants did not necessarily feel that their calling came from a transcendent or external source.

The Search for Transcendent Summons subscale measures how actively the participant is searching for an external source to guide him/her to a fulfilling calling (see Table 5). The Search for Transcendent Summons subscale is the mean of questions 6, 17, 22, and 23. The mean scores for all items were less than three on a 5-point scale showing evidence that most participants were not actively seeking out a source to help find their calling.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Presence and Search for Transcendent Summons Items and Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item / Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Transcendent Summons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I believe that I have been called to my current line of work.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.25 (1.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I do not believe that a force beyond myself has helped guide me to my career.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.36 (1.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I was drawn by something beyond myself to pursue my current line of work.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.64 (1.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I am pursuing my current line of work because I believe I have been called to do so.</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2.93 (1.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Transcendent Summons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I’m searching for my calling in my career.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.34 (1.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I yearn for a sense of calling in my career.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.18 (1.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I am trying to figure out what my calling is in the context of my career.</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2.63 (1.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I’m trying to identify the area of work I was meant to pursue.</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2.28 (1.26)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Presence of Purposeful Work subscale is comprised of questions 7, 19, 24, and 28 and measures whether or not participants feel that their work helps fulfill their life purpose and brings them meaning (see Table 6). Most participants indicated that their career was an important part of their life’s meaning ($M = 3.53$) and that they try to live out their life purpose at work ($M = 3.38$). Slightly less felt their career was a path to purpose in life ($M = 3.19$), which could indicate
that they believe that their career can provide them avenues of living out their purpose but that their purpose does not necessarily come from their chosen career.

Search for Purposeful Work measures how much the participant is still searching for a career that will provide meaning and purpose to his/her life (see Table 6). This variable is the mean score of questions 8, 10, 18, and 25. Under the Purposeful Work subscale, item 8 had the lowest mean score ($M = 2.53$) indicating that many participants are not looking for a career that will help them live out their life purpose.

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics of Presence and Search for Purposeful Work Items and Subscales*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item / Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$M$ (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Purposeful Work</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.34 (0.97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My work helps me live out my life’s purpose.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.26 (1.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I see my career as a path to purpose in life.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.19 (1.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. My career is an important part of my life’s meaning.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>3.53 (1.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I try to live out my life purpose when I am at work.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.38 (1.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Purposeful Work</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.12 (0.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I am looking for work that will help me live out my life’s purpose.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>2.53 (1.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I intend to construct a career that will give my life meaning.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.44 (1.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Eventually, I hope my career will align with my purpose in life.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.22 (1.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I want to pursue a career that is a good fit with the reason for my existence.</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>3.29 (1.37)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Presence of Prosocial Orientation subscale is the mean of questions 13, 16, 21 and 26 and measures how much the participants feel that they are able to contribute to society and meet the needs of others through their work (see Table 7). This subscale had the highest mean score ($M = 3.54$) of the six CVQ-based subscales and indicates that participants value having a career that allows them to positively contribute to others through their work. Survey question 21 (My
work contributes to the common good) had the highest mean score \((M = 3.89)\) with over 100 participants giving the question a response of four or five on a five-point scale.

The Search for Prosocial Orientation subscale measures the participants search for a career that will allow them to contribute to the common good and meet society’s needs. This variable is made up of questions 9, 11, 14, and 20 (see Table 7). The Search for Prosocial Orientation subscale was the highest scoring search subscale and second highest scoring CVQ-based subscale after the Presence of Prosocial Orientation subscale. Questions 11 and 14 showed moderately high mean scores \((M = 3.46\) and \(M = 3.48)\) and indicate that participants want to have a career that benefit’s society.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item / Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Prosocial Orientation</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.54 (0.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The most important aspect of my career is its role in helping to meet the needs of others.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.62 (1.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Making a difference for others is the primary motivation in my career.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.42 (1.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. My work contributes to the common good.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.89 (1.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I am always trying to evaluate how beneficial my work is to others.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>3.20 (1.30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Search for Prosocial Orientation                                                                 |
9. I am trying to find a career that ultimately makes the world a better place. | 138 | 3.30 (1.42) |
11. I want to find a job that meets some of society’s needs.                    | 138 | 3.46 (1.24) |
14. I am trying to build a career that benefits society.                        | 139 | 3.48 (1.28) |
20. I am looking to find a job where my career clearly benefits others.        | 138 | 3.15 (1.33) |

Four additional variables were analyzed, Calling Presence, Calling Search, Vocation Presence, and Vocation Search. Calling Presence measures the combined mean score for the three presence subscales in the CVQ, which are Presence of Transcendent Summons, Presence of
Purposeful Work, and Presence of Prosocial Orientation (see Table 8). Calling Search measures the search for each of these three components that make up Dik and Duffy’s (2009) definition of calling. The variables Vocation Presence and Vocation Search measure only the presence and search of purposeful work and prosocial orientation. According to Dik and Duffy (2009), a vocation differs from a career calling because it does not include the transcendent summons. Other authors have not distinguished vocation and calling or believe that an external summons is a necessary component of a career calling (Bogart, 1994; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Elangovan et al., 2010; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Hirschi, 2011; Hunter et al., 2010; Weiss, Skelley, Haughey, & Hall, 2004).

Similar to the first four questions of the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index, questions 5 through 28 show higher scores for the presence subscales and lower scores for the search ones (see Table 8). The highest scoring subscales derived from the CVQ were Presence of Prosocial Orientation ($M = 3.54$), Vocation Presence ($M = 3.44$), and Calling Presence ($M = 3.37$) followed closely by Search for Prosocial Orientation ($M = 3.36$).

Interestingly, using the same 5-point scale, the Presence of Calling mean was higher using the questions derived from the shorter BCS tool ($M = 3.66$) rather than the Vocation Presence ($M = 3.44$), and Calling Presence ($M = 3.37$) means derived from the longer CVQ assessment (see Table 4). However, the Calling Search ($M = 2.94$) and Vocation Search ($M = 3.24$) means were higher using the longer CVQ assessment rather than the BCS ($M = 2.26$).
Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for the Calling and Vocational Questionnaire Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item / Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Transcendent Summons</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Transcendent Summons</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Purposeful Work</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Purposeful Work</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Prosocial Orientation</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Prosocial Orientation</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Presence (Mean of Presence of Transcendent Summons,</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposeful Work &amp; Prosocial Orientation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Search (Mean of Search for Transcendent Summons,</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposeful Work &amp; Prosocial Orientation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocation Presence (Mean of Presence of Purposeful Work &amp;</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosocial Orientation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocation Search (Mean of Search for Purposeful Work &amp; Prosocial</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Living Calling Scale Questionnaire Items

Questions 29 through 34 of the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index were taken from the Living Calling Scale by Duffy, Bott et al. (2012). This tool differentiates not only individuals who have expressed having a calling but those who are able to live out that calling through their occupations. These survey items, also based on a five-point scale, only included participants who expressed having a calling. The results show that a moderately high level of individuals who have a calling felt that they were able to fulfill that calling through their chosen occupation (see Table 9). Survey questions 29 (M = 3.65) and 32 (M = 3.72) had the highest scoring means and indicate that participants regularly engage in activities that align with their calling.
Table 9

*Descriptive Statistics of Items and Subscales Using the Living Calling Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item / Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calling Actualization</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3.54 (1.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I have regular opportunities to live out my calling.</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3.65 (1.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I am currently working in a job that closely aligns with my calling.</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3.57 (1.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. I am consistently living out my calling.</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3.41 (1.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. I am currently engaging in activities that align with my calling.</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3.72 (1.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I am living out my calling right now in my job.</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3.42 (1.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. I am working in the job to which I feel called.</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>3.47 (1.43)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Brief Inventory of Thriving Questionnaire Items**

Well-being is measured in questions 35 through 44. These questions were taken from the Brief Inventory of Thriving (BIT) (Su et al., 2014). This tool was included because it takes a broad and holistic view of well-being and is one of the most comprehensive available. The BIT measures subjective well-being (including life satisfaction and positive emotions), supportive and enriching relationships and belonging, interest and engagement in daily activities, meaning and purpose in life, sense of mastery/accomplishment (including self-worth and self-efficacy), and optimism. The mean average of the participant responses was a 4.08 on a five-point scale. This indicates that most of our participants express having a calling and have fairly high levels of well-being.
Table 10

Descriptive Statistics of Items and Subscales Using the Brief Inventory of Thriving (n = 127)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item / Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well-Being</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.08 (0.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. My life has a clear sense of purpose.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>3.64 (1.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. I am optimistic about my future.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.12 (0.80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. My life is going well.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.12 (0.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. I feel good most of the time</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>3.96 (0.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. What I do in life is valuable and worthwhile.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.17 (0.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. I can succeed if I put my mind to it.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.48 (0.64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. I am achieving most of my goals.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.10 (0.82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. In most activities I do, I feel energized.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>3.90 (0.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. There are people who appreciate me as a person.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.47 (0.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. I feel a sense of belonging in my community.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>3.88 (0.81)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inferential Results

The following section presents the inferential analysis that was utilized to analyze the two research questions.

1. Which calling presence and search variables best predict psychological well-being?

   Forward multiple regression analyses were used to examine which calling presence and search variables best predict psychological well-being. Data were screened and examined for fulfillment of test assumptions. Pearson Correlation was used to calculate the degree of relationship between the dependent variable and the thirteen independent variables (see Table 11).

   Of the 13 independent variables examined, four variables were not significantly related to psychological well-being: Search for Purposeful Work, Search for Prosocial Orientation, Calling Search, and Vocation Search. Nine were significantly related to the dependent variable, well-being, at the 0.01 level. Of the nine significant independent variables, the Search for Calling,
Calling Presence, and Vocation Presence subscales showed moderate ($r > .4$) relationships, with Search for Calling negatively correlating with psychological well-being.

Table 11

*Correlation Coefficients of Psychological Well-Being with Presence and Search Subscales (n=127)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Calling</td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Calling</td>
<td>-.469</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Transcendent Summons</td>
<td>.302</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Purposeful Work</td>
<td>.356</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Prosocial Orientation</td>
<td>.388</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Transcendent Summons</td>
<td>-.372</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Purposeful Work</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>.643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Prosocial Orientation</td>
<td>.147</td>
<td>.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Presence</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocation Presence</td>
<td>.405</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Search</td>
<td>-.115</td>
<td>.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocation Search</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Actualization</td>
<td>.373</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To assess which of the 13 independent variables best predict psychological well-being, in the first analysis, all presence and search variables in the Vocational Calling and Well-Being Index (derived from the BCS, CVQ, and LCS) were used. Results indicate that Search for Calling and Calling Presence were the best predictors of well-being; $F(2, 124) = 26.65$, $p < .0001$, $R^2 = .301$, $R^2_{adj} = .289$ (see Table 12). This model accounts for 30% of variance in well-being.

Search for Calling (taken from the Brief Calling Scale, Dik et al. (2012)) measures individuals who are still searching for a calling. These individuals are still searching for an occupation that will provide them with meaning and purpose as well as a means to give back to society. This is the strongest predictor but has an inverse relationship with well-being. Those low in search are more likely to be high in well-being. Those scoring high on Calling Presence using the Calling
and Vocational Questionnaire (CVQ) (Dik, Eldridge et al., 2012) showed higher levels of well-being.

Table 12

Model 1: Regression Coefficients Table of Variables Predicting Psychological Well-Being (n=127)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Bivariate r</th>
<th>Partial r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search for Calling</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>-4.94</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Presence</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second forward multiple regression analysis was performed to determine if any of the individual subscales derived from the Calling and Vocational Questionnaire’s three-part definition (Presence of Transcendent Summons, Search for Transcendent Summons, Presence of Purposeful Work, Search for Purposeful Work, Presence of Prosocial Orientation, and Search for Prosocial Orientation) were better predictors of overall well-being. Since there is dissention on which components make up a calling, this analysis was completed to determine if any of the definition component parts predicted psychological well-being more successfully. In this regression analysis nine subscales were analyzed including: Presence of Calling, Search for Calling, Calling Actualization, Presence of Transcendent Summons, Search for Transcendent Summons, Presence of Purposeful Work, Search for Purposeful Work, Presence of Prosocial Orientation, and Search for Prosocial Orientation. The regression analysis generated a two-factor model, indicating that Search for Calling and Presence of Prosocial Orientation were the best predictors of psychological well-being; $F(2, 124) = 30.83$, $p<0.0001$, $R^2=.332$, $R^2_{adj}=.321$ (see Table 13). Again, Search for Calling, which measures individuals still searching for their calling, has an inverse relationship with well-being showing that those low in search are more likely to have high well-being scores. Presence of Prosocial Orientation is a measure of how much an individual feels that his or her work helps society. This second regression model accounts for
33% of the variance in psychological well-being indicating that this model is a slightly better predictor of psychological well-being.

Table 13

*Model 2: Regression Coefficients Table of Variables Predicting Psychological Well-Being (n=127)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Bivariate r</th>
<th>Partial r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search for Calling</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
<td>-5.81</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Prosocial Orientation</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Do individuals with differing levels of calling presence and search (using the calling categories from Table 1) differ in regards to levels of psychological well-being?

Univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized along with the Bonferroni post-hoc test to analyze whether any of the four calling categories - Calling Diffusion, Calling Foreclosure, Calling Moratorium, or Calling Achievement (adapted from Steger et al., 2006) - significantly differ. Participants categorized as having high presence or search had mean scores of 3.50 or higher, and those categorized as having low presence or search had mean scores of 2.50 or lower. Results indicate that individuals in the Calling Moratorium category are significantly lower in psychological well-being from participants in the other three calling categories; $F(3, 92) = 9.66, p<.0001, \eta^2 = .2396$ (see Table 14). Individuals in the Calling Moratorium category have a low presence of calling but are actively searching for a calling.

Table 14

*Psychological Well-Being Statistics by Calling Category*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Calling Diffusion – (Low Presence, Low Search)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.07 (0.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Calling Foreclosure – (High Presence, Low Search)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4.26 (0.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Calling Moratorium – (Low Presence, High Search)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.40 (0.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Calling Achievement – (High Presence, High Search)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.00 (0.67)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Due to inadequate calling category group sizes and to further explore calling presence and calling search interaction, additional analyses were completed to explore the interaction of calling presence and search. First, an interaction variable was calculated as the product of calling presence and calling search. A two-step multiple regression was then utilized to examine the degree to which each variable (calling presence and calling search) and the interaction of these variables explain psychological well-being. In step one, calling presence and calling search were entered, which generated a significant two-factor model accounting for 25.3% of the variance in psychological well-being; $F(2, 124) = 20.95, p < .0001, R^2 = .253, R^2_{adj} = .241$ (see Table 15). In step two, the interaction was entered. Although the overall model was still significant; $F(3, 123) = 13.99, p < .0001, R^2 = .254, R^2_{adj} = .236$, the addition of the interaction term created insignificant change in $R^2(.002)$ and $F(.298)$. Therefore, results indicate that calling presence and calling search do not significantly interact on psychological well-being.

Table 15

Regression Analysis of Calling Presence and Search Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$R$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$R^2_{adj}$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
<th>$F_{chg}$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>$df_1$</th>
<th>$df_2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.503</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>20.953</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.504</td>
<td>0.254</td>
<td>0.236</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.298</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bivariate and partial correlation coefficients between each predictor and the dependent variable are presented in Table 16. Additionally, results indicate that calling search is a better predictor of well-being, in that an individual with high calling search will have lower psychological well-being. Scatter plots were created to depict these relationships (see Figure 2).
Table 16

Regression Coefficients of Final Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Bivariate r</th>
<th>Partial r</th>
<th>Tolerance</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calling Presence</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>0.832</td>
<td>0.407</td>
<td>0.344</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>3.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling Search</td>
<td>-0.222</td>
<td>-0.497</td>
<td>-2.429</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>-0.469</td>
<td>-0.214</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>6.912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.545</td>
<td>0.586</td>
<td>-0.207</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>6.423</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Scatterplots of Calling Presence and Calling Search Relationships to Well-Being

Summary

The analysis of 13 independent calling presence and search variables revealed that Search for Calling and Presence of Prosocial Orientation were the best predictors of well-being, accounting for 33% of the variance. Search for Calling was negatively correlated with well-being. Although all who were high in searching for calling were lower in psychological well-being, those who were low in calling presence and were actively seeking a calling showed the lowest well-being scores. Presence of Prosocial Orientation and Search for Prosocial Orientation were the two CVQ-based component subscales with the highest scoring means reinforcing the importance of having a career that allows one the sense of being able to use his or her occupation
to positively impact society. Additionally, participant responses in the Presence of Transcendent Summons questions, indicate that most, although having a calling, did not feel that they were led to their career by a higher power or external source. Lastly, the results did not support Calling Actualization as a better predictor of psychological well-being than Calling Presence. This may indicate that participants with a strong presence of calling find avenues to live out that calling.

Table 17

Summary of Results by Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Which calling presence and search variables best predict psychological well-being? | • Model 1 - Used 13 independent variables  
  o Generated a two-factor model: Search for Calling and Calling Presence  
  o Model accounts for 30% of the variance in Psychological Well-Being  
  • Model 2 – Used 9 independent variables  
  o Generated a two-factor model: Search for Calling and Presence of Prosocial Orientation  
  o Model accounts for 33% of the variance in Psychological Well-Being |
| 2. Do individuals with differing levels of calling presence and search (using the calling categories from Table 1) differ in regards to levels of psychological well-being? | • ANOVA results indicate participants in the Calling Moratorium calling category showed significantly lower levels of well-being.  
  • Calling presence and search do no significantly interact on well-being. |
CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION

This study examined which calling and vocational constructs such as presence, search, and actualization best predicted psychological well-being. Forward multiple regression analyses of 13 independent calling presence, search, and actualization variables revealed that Search for Calling and Presence of Prosocial Orientation were the best predictors of well-being, accounting for 33% of the variance. Additionally, group differences were explored to determine whether varying levels of calling presence and search using the categories: calling diffusion, calling foreclosure, calling moratorium, and calling achievement (see Table 1) revealed differing levels of psychological well-being. Results revealed that individuals who were high in searching for a calling had significantly lower levels of psychological well-being if they also had low levels of calling presence (Calling Moratorium Calling Category). These results are consistent with Elangovan et al. (2010) and Marcia’s (1966) suggestion that the moratorium state is filled with anxiety, disequilibrium, and struggle, which negatively impact the individual’s psychological well-being. However, working through this state and reaching identity achievement leads to an internal locus of self-definition and connection to one’s calling.

Status of Calling: Presence and Search

Although career callings and psychological well-being were linked by theologians and philosophers centuries ago, most empirical research into their connection has been in the past seven to eight years. Several early calling researchers used the Work-Life Questionnaire which distinguished participants’ work orientation into either a calling, career, or job orientation (Peterson et al., 2009; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Those who expressed a calling work orientation were found to exhibit significantly higher levels of well-being as measured through life satisfaction (Peterson et al., 2009; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Unlike those with a job or
career orientation, who work for monetary gains or social achievements, individuals with a calling orientation exhibit higher levels of well-being because they find their work personally fulfilling and inseparable from their life. The positive correlation between calling and life satisfaction ($r = .32$) found by Peterson et al. (2009) is similar to this study’s BCS correlation of calling and psychological well-being ($r = .34$). Steger et al. (2010), utilizing the BCS, found positive correlations between calling and life satisfaction ($r = .23$) and life meaning ($r = .42$). Although the instrumentation for assessing the variables differed, the results across these studies showed a similar level of correlation between calling and well-being, since greater life meaning and satisfaction are components of psychological well-being.

The studies by Duffy, Manuel et al. (2011) and Duffy and Sedlacek (2010) both utilized the BCS to assess calling, the Meaning in Life Questionnaire to assess life meaning, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale to assess life satisfaction. Duffy, Manuel et al. (2011) found that calling moderately correlated to well-being (life meaning, $r = .45$). In Duffy and Sedlacek’s (2010) study, presence of calling positively correlated to well-being (life meaning, $r = .39$ and life satisfaction, $r = .16$), and the search for calling was negatively correlated with well-being (life meaning, $r = -.18$ and life satisfaction, $r = -.12$). Although the present study utilized both the BCS and the CVQ to assess calling presence and search along with the more robust BIT well-being tool, the results show similar moderately positive correlations between presence of calling and psychological well-being (BCS, $r = .34$ and CVQ, $r = .40$) as the earlier studies’ life meaning results. The repeatability of these results confirm a clear correlation between having a calling and one’s psychological well-being.
Search for Calling and Calling Moratorium

In this study, Search for Calling was negatively correlated \((r = -0.47)\) to psychological well-being, indicating that the search process is strongly associated with psychological distress which reduces one’s overall well-being. The negative correlation between search for calling and psychological well-being \((r = -0.47)\) of this study was more pronounced than Duffy and Sedlacek’s (2010) examination of search for calling and the well-being constructs of life meaning \((r = -0.18)\) and life satisfaction \((r = -0.12)\). Further, it was slightly greater than Steger, Oishi and Kashdan’s (2008) search for meaning results at various life stages \((r = -0.26, r = -0.31, r = -0.29, r = -0.46)\). Although searching for a career that will provide meaning and purpose to one’s life as well as an opportunity to give back to others is a normal human pursuit, previous research suggests that searching while still a youth may positively or only slightly negatively contribute to psychological well-being, whereas in adulthood, particularly older adulthood, the search can significantly reduce both well-being and life satisfaction (Steger & Dik, 2009; Steger, Oishi et al., 2008). Duffy and Sedlacek’s (2010) participants were college students in early adulthood whose search process was more natural and less psychologically stressful, which is why the decrease to psychological well-being was smaller. The present study’s participants were generally in middle to late adulthood, which may explain the greater impact of calling search on psychological well-being similar to the results found in the Steger et al. (2008) study.

Examining group differences in participants with high versus low presence of and search for calling revealed that those who are low in calling presence but actively seeking (high search) a calling (Calling Moratorium) had the lowest psychological well-being scores. As the researcher suspected, search for life meaning and search for calling had a similar influence on psychological well-being. Similar to prior research conducted on the variable life meaning (Park et al, 2010;
Steger & Dik, 2009; Steger et al., 2006; Steger et al., 2011), having high levels of calling presence partially moderates high levels of search. Research from this study similarly show participants in the Calling Achievement category who exhibit high presence of calling and high search for calling did not have significantly lower levels of psychological well-being. Therefore, searching for a calling is only significantly detrimental for those who do not already have an established high presence of calling.

**Presence of Prosocial Orientation**

The forward multiple regression analyses in this study revealed that Search for Calling and Presence of Prosocial Orientation, as a two-factor model, were the best predictors of Psychological Well-Being. Although Presence of Transcendent Summons ($r = .302$) and Purposeful Work ($r = .356$) were significantly related to Psychological Well-being, Presence of Prosocial Orientation ($r = .388$) had the strongest positive relationship. Since Search for Calling has an inverse relationship to Psychological Well-Being and Presence of Prosocial Orientation has a positive relationship, an individual with low Search for Calling and high Presence of Prosocial Orientation will have a higher level of Psychological Well-Being. Additionally, the mean score of the Presence of Prosocial Orientation was the highest CVQ scoring subscale ($M = 3.54$). These results align with Elangovan et al. (2010), whose research identifies the prosocial or others-focused component of a calling as the most essential.

The study of zookeepers by Bunderson and Thompson (2009) showed a very strong correlation between those who viewed their work as a calling and work meaning ($r = .88$) and occupational importance ($r = .83$). When interviewed on why they entered the field and stayed in it despite its historically low pay, the zookeepers pointed to its prosocial orientation. In the Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) study, participants who identified as having a calling orientation also
reported that they felt that their work significantly contributed to the betterment of the world \((r = .28)\), whereas those with a job orientation, who work solely for the monetary contributions of their work, had a negative prosocial correlation \((r = -.45)\). Similarly, in the qualitative study by Hunter et al. (2010), a required component of a calling was an altruistic nature that leads to societal benefits.

Further, the definition of calling postulated by Elangovan et al. (2010) is “a course of action in pursuit of prosocial intentions embodying the convergence of an individual’s sense of what he or she would like to do, should do, or actually does” (p. 430). This definition is similar to the “perfect fit” concept described by Duffy, Allan et al. (2014), which endorses calling as coming from an alignment of one’s skills, values, passions, interests, and occupation, not an external source. A “perfect fit” calling is often found after a period of self-exploration (Duffy, Allan et al., 2014). The sense of alignment is important because, “When people have a calling, their sense of purpose and meaning in work aligns with their broader sense of purpose and meaning in life as a whole. As you can imagine, such alignment gives a person a sense of stability and coherence in life” (Dik & Duffy, 2012, p. 13). The results found in this study reinforce the importance of having a career that allows one the sense of being able to use one’s occupation to positively impact society (prosocial intentions). Further, due to the strong negative correlation that Search for Calling has on Psychological Well-Being, the two-factor model of Presence of Prosocial Orientation and Search for Calling are powerful predictors of Psychological Well-Being.

**Presence of and Search for External Summons**

Virtually all researchers and theorists who have attempted to define what it means to have a calling agree that a calling provides a sense of purpose and meaning as well as a way to serve
others or contribute to the common good (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dik & Duffy, 2009; Duffy, Allan et al., 2014; Hunter et al., 2010). The most controversial issue in the calling literature is how one finds a calling (Duffy, Allan et al., 2014). The three most prominent sources, referenced in the literature, are that a calling arises from: (1) something or someone external, (2) destiny, or finding a career that one was meant to do, or (3) finding an ideal match or “perfect fit” of one’s skills, interests and values (Duffy, Allan et al., 2014). In the present study, the author used Dik and Duffy’s (2009) definition which included the outside-in approach of a calling arising from an external source such as God, a higher power, family legacy, or the needs of society. Participants in this present study, as evidenced by responses to items 12 and 15, did not endorse feeling that their calling came from a transcendent or external source. Although not examined in this study, participants may have aligned more with a destiny or perfect fit definition as their source of calling. Further, the Presence of Transcendent Summons subscale ($r = .302$) had a smaller correlation to psychological well-being than Presence of Purposeful Work ($r = .356$) and Presence of Prosocial Orientation ($r = .388$). On the other hand, Search for Transcendent Summons ($r = -.372$), or seeking guidance to his or her calling from an external source such as God or a higher power, had a more significant, yet inverse, relationship to well-being than Search for Purposeful Work ($r = -.042$) or Search for Prosocial Orientation ($r = .147$). The external summons subscales lack study, therefore, it is impossible to say if these results are representative of other populations.

**Conclusions**

Based on these results the researcher is recommending the following conclusions:

1. **Presence of Prosocial Orientation is an essential feature of calling.** Debate and research continue into the working definition of calling, but virtually all definitions agree that having
a prosocial or others-focused orientation is essential. Through the use of the CVQ and its subscales, this study was able to reinforce the important role that having a career calling, which allows one to contribute to others and/or society, has on one’s psychological well-being.

2. **Search for Calling when combined with low Presence of Calling negatively correlates to Psychological Well-Being.** Results from this study show that high levels of calling search and low presence negatively impact psychological well-being. However, interestingly, high levels of search combined with high levels of presence do not appear to negatively impact well-being. As suggested by Steger et al. (2006), there are a group of individuals who feel that their lives are filled with purpose and meaning and “do not foreclose on the active and open pursuit for greater understanding of their meaning and purpose in the world” (p. 89).

3. **Search for Calling with Presence of Prosocial Orientation were the best predictors of Psychological Well-Being.** Combined Search for Calling as a moderately negative predictor and Presence of Prosocial Orientation as a moderately positive predictor of psychological well-being were the strongest predictors of psychological well-being. Therefore, an individual with low Search for Calling and high Presence of Prosocial Orientation will have higher levels of Psychological Well-Being. Unlike prior research, Calling Actualization was not a better predictor of psychological well-being in this study. Prior research (Duffy, Allan et al., 2013; Duffy, Bott et al., 2012) suggested that calling actualization is a stronger predictor of work-related and well-being variables; however, those results differed from those found in the present study. This may suggest that the participants in this study who identify with having a calling also felt that they were able to live out that calling in their life and that their callings were not going unanswered.
4. **Participants did not endorse being led to their calling by a higher power or external source.** Many participants in this study who did identify with having a calling did not feel that their calling came from God or a higher power. As Duffy, Allan et al. (2014) suggested, a majority of individuals with a calling are more likely to select a “perfect fit” as their calling source rather than a higher power or destiny. These results suggest that the external source component of Dik and Duffy’s (2009) calling definition is not required and that the definition should be more aligned with its ability to provide meaningfulness and a way to give back to society as other definitions have suggested (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011; Duffy, Allan et al., 2014; Elangovan, et al., 2010; Hagmaier & Abele, 2012; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Palmer, 2007).

**Recommendations for Practice**

**Educational Setting**

As previously stated, when individuals find their calling and actualize it in their lives, they are able to utilize their gifts, talents, and increased level of fulfillment and well-being to benefit their families, communities, and workplaces. However, recent research shows that the majority of adults still feel that they are not living the life they were called to live (Berg et al., 2010; Cady, 2010; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Since having a career to which one feels called significantly impacts psychological well-being, assisting both youth and adults in identifying and living their calling is critical.

1. **Educational training: Self-awareness of aptitudes and interests.**

   Educators, parents, counselors, and leaders all play a role in assisting individuals in finding their calling by focusing educational training programs not only on acquiring knowledge and life skills, but also on becoming more self-aware. Duffy and Sedlacek (2007) found that
presence of calling is strongly correlated with self-clarity, which is acquired through growing one’s self-awareness. Novak (1996) noted that discovering one’s calling takes much reflection, trial activities, and dialogue because they serve to clarify one’s identity and self-concept. Aristotle’s concept of self-truth also highlights the need for understanding one’s self as the preliminary step (Elangovan, et al., 2010). Similarly, Bolman and Deal (2001) emphasized the importance of discovering the “true self” as a way to connect one’s life and work-life and infuse both with meaning.

Self-awareness is a prerequisite to identifying one’s calling because it helps the individual develop a deep understanding of one’s interests and aptitudes (Dik & Duffy, 2012; Elangovan et al., 2010). Callings are usually more general and can be actualized in several occupational domains rather than a single vocation or specialization, but an understanding of one’s interests and aptitudes can ensure appropriate career alignment (Dik & Duffy, 2012). Careers that are also a calling acknowledge the person’s unique set of interests, abilities, values, needs, and personality.

In 1909, Frank Parson established the “Person-Environment Fit” (P-E Fit) model for selecting a career. This is a good model for assisting an individual in his or her search for a calling. The P-E Fit model outlines “three factors in wisely choosing a vocation: (1) a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, limitations and their causes, (2) a knowledge of the requirements, conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work, and (3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts (Dik & Duffy, 2012, p.112). This model has continued to have great appeal because it is systematic, intuitive, and empirically tested. To assist individuals in finding their calling, it is imperative that educators, parents, and other
leaders ensure educational training programs are helping students develop self-awareness of their aptitudes and interests.

2. **Educational training: Encourage career exploration and the prosocial orientation of career options.**

In addition to developing an understanding of one’s aptitudes and interests, exploration of employment options is important. There are a multitude of careers, and young people need assistance and encouragement to broadly review options that are fitting for them. Additionally, Dik and Duffy (2012) recommend assisting youth (and adults) to foster a sense of calling in their work by: (1) helping them develop their own inherited gifts, (2) helping them expand those gifts and explore the world around them, (3) helping them develop a concern for others in their community and world, and lastly (4) modeling what it means to live a calling. Each of these recommendations can be facilitated by parents, educators, and other community and organizational leaders.

High school and college-level occupational training should focus not only on teaching young people the skills required for careers they are considering, but also how their unique gifts can be used to help the world around them, thus developing a critical component of a calling. As this research study has shown, one of the most important components of a calling is its prosocial orientation. An individual’s well-being is positively influenced by a career that produces outcomes that matter to others around him/her or society at-large. Additionally, when people feel that their jobs are meaningful, they are able to mold their occupations into a means for living out their callings.
Occupational Setting

Research shows that individuals with a calling work orientation exhibit many personal and occupational benefits such as greater job, health, and life satisfaction; more commitment to their jobs and organizations; increased confidence in their ability to make good decisions about their careers; more intrinsic motivation; reduced absenteeism and turnover; greater organizational and community attachment; increased ability to effectively cope with challenges; reduced stress and depression; a stronger sense of meaningfulness in their lives; and an overall greater sense of well-being and psychological adjustment (Bellah et al., 1985; Cardador et al., 2011; Davidson & Caddell, 1994; Dik & Duffy, 2012; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Such employees report often not being conscious of what day of the workweek it is, less apt to anticipate the weekend, and proclaim that they would continue to do this type of work even if they financially did not need to (Dik & Duffy, 2012). Actualizing a calling in one’s work provides more happiness, zest (the habitual life approach of energy, excitement and anticipation), and life satisfaction (Dik & Duffy, 2012). Additionally, Bellah et al. (1985) found that a calling orientation also promoted discipline and wise judgment as well as a strong link between the meaningfulness of one’s work and its inseparability from one’s life. Therefore, since meaningfulness significantly impacts one’s psychological well-being and work satisfaction, developing a calling orientation toward one’s work should be pursued. Equally important is understanding what may impede the search for a calling.


Dik and Duffy (2012) found that having greater access to resources, because they reduce motivation for self-exploration of different kinds of work, can be a barrier to discovering a calling. Further, having a need to achieve or to gain approval, wealth, or power can also get in
the way of discerning one’s calling. London and Mone (1988) warned against incomplete exploration (due to complacency, hopelessness, or fear), coerced exploration, random/diffuse exploration, and defensive exploration because they interfere with real learning. As Marcia’s (1966) identity development theory suggests, to reach calling achievement, an individual must move past the calling diffusion stage where he or she does not possess and is not even searching for a calling. Further, he or she must not remain in the calling foreclosure stage where he or she may have chosen a career based on convenience or pressure from parents or others. Self-exploration facilitated by trial activities and reflection, including internal and external listening and dialogue with others, is key to discovering one’s career calling.


As Martin Luther, John Calvin, and more neoclassical thinkers have suggested, if you want to know your calling, you must understand your gifts and talents and how these can be used in service of the common good (Dik & Duffy, 2012). Wrzesniewski, Dekas, and Rosso (2009) describe a calling as “a meaningful beckoning toward activities that are morally, socially, and personally significant” (p. 115). Therefore, understanding one’s gifts and talents and putting them to use in a personally significant way will enhance one’s sense of work meaningfulness and assist in identifying a calling.

Further, approaching one’s work as a calling starts by choosing a lifestyle of continuous career path reflection and active job shaping. These approaches will help one align work activities with those that are personally meaningful and fulfill one’s desire to make a difference for others (Dik & Duffy, 2012; Dik et al., 2009; Duffy, Bott et al., 2012). Once an individual has identified his or her calling, even if not currently in an ideal career, he or she can craft activities within this career that allow for the reframing of work into a vehicle for living out his/her calling.
(Duffy, Allan, et al., 2013; Duffy, Bott et al., 2012). Once one understands his or her talents and desires to use them in a meaningful way to benefit others, he or she will find ways to do so. In fact, the present study found that those with a presence of calling were able to find ways to actualize that calling within their career, which in turn provided them with a greater sense of psychological well-being because their work and lives were meaningful. Therefore, it is important that occupational preparation and training assist individuals in aligning their talents with activities they find personally meaningful to themselves and others.

**Leadership**

5. **Creating a meaning-inducing work environment.**

Leaders have an important role in helping employees actualize their calling and nurture a sense of meaning and purpose in their work. Leaders can help employees develop a sense of calling in a number of ways, including making the work environment one that is meaning-inducing. For example, employees want to understand how their efforts and activities contribute visibly and tangibly to the organization’s mission as well as ways that they personally impact others in a positive manner through their work. Leaders should create the vision but encourage their employees to find new ideas or solutions to existing challenges. Additionally, leaders can create meaningful workplaces by encouraging behavioral demonstrations of gratitude to clients and coworkers.

To effectively create a meaningful work environment, leaders need to understand what their employees value and then align those individual values with the organization’s values and mission as well as their employees’ day-to-day job duties. Additionally, leaders can help employees link their work to outcomes that impact the well-being of others, society at-large, or other prosocial motives (Dik & Duffy, 2012; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Evidence also suggests
that in addition to increasing the likelihood of the employee developing a calling orientation to his or her work, it will also increase creativity in problem-solving because the employee is better able to understand the perspective of others (Dik & Duffy, 2012).

Further, research shows that jobs that allow an employee to use a variety of skills and provide a sense of autonomy also furnish a sense of meaningfulness (Dik & Duffy, 2012). To provide a greater sense of purpose and meaning, it is important that leaders provide employees with opportunities to use their strengths and participate in the strategic decision making process (Dik & Duffy, 2012). Further, during performance and coaching conversations, leaders should also encourage their employees to take calculated risks, to broaden their goals and aspirations, and to help instill confidence that will propel them to perform at higher levels (Dik & Duffy, 2012).

6. **Providing job enrichment, job crafting, growth, and empowerment.**

Meaningfulness and serving others are crucial components of an employee’s calling; therefore, it is important that leaders provide a line of sight to how their employees impact those inside and outside of the workplace by performing their job responsibilities. Justin Berg found that job crafting, even if the employee is not in an ideal job, can provide a stronger sense of purpose, meaning, engagement, resilience, and thriving that normally accompany living out a calling (Dik & Duffy, 2012). Berg, Grant, and Johnson (2010) suggest five crafting techniques that will benefit employees in pursuing their callings: (1) task emphasizing, (2) job expanding, (3) role reframing, (4) leisure crafting, and (5) hobby participating. Their study’s results showed that both the organization and employees benefited when the leader provided autonomy and support to employees to engage in job and leisure crafting activities (Berg et al., 2010). Their research even suggests that managers assist in facilitating leisure crafting activities such as
volunteer work that enable their employees to give back to the community and provide beneficial ways to actualize their callings (Berg et al., 2010). Additionally, if your employee seems to be unchallenged or bored, Jerome Bruner’s educational concept of scaffolding may be appropriate. This will allow your employee to build off of his or her foundation to learn new skills or acquire additional knowledge that can be used to serve others more effectively (Dik & Duffy, 2012).

For leaders to successfully provide a meaningful work environment that allows their employees to live out their calling, they need to employ a servant leadership philosophy. Not only do servant leaders provide a vision, motivate, manage, communicate, and make decisions, but they also teach, mentor, and coach because they are motivated to identify and meet the needs of their employees (Hughey et al., 2009). Robert Greenleaf said that a true servant-leader responds first by listening (Hughey et al., 2009). This means that leaders need to meet regularly, formally and informally, one-on-one with their employees to discuss how their skills, interests, passions, and values can be better utilized within the workplace (London & Mone, 1988). Servant leaders are also committed to the growth and empowerment of their employees and continually seek ways to do this. Hughey et al (2009) said that servant-leaders are deeply committed to the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of their employees because they believe in the intrinsic value of their employees.

Leaders who are struggling to build a meaning-rich work environment that matches their employees’ strengths with organizational needs should seek out assistance from a trained human resource (HR) professional. An HR professional should be able to help the leader understand his/her employees’ strengths and passions and determine ways that they can craft the employees’ jobs to bring them in closer alignment with the employees’ values and goals (Dik & Duffy, 2012). An HR partner can also help a leader to understand how his/her employees are really
feeling about their work and whether they find it satisfying and meaningful. Once a clear understanding of the employee’s values, goals, and current state are determined, the leader and HR partner can develop a plan to shape the employee’s job in ways that will promote the building of meaningfulness and actualization of their calling.

**Future Research**

Since calling research in general, and calling’s relationship to psychological well-being specifically, are still in their relative infancy, it is important that future research continues to expand the current body of knowledge. Although this research study reinforced some existing knowledge and expanded other knowledge, the size and makeup of the participant pool should be considered when conducting future research. Most calling studies, including this one, have had limited age, gender, and/or ethnic diversity. Further, with a sufficient sample size one could further explore demographic differences (such as: age, gender, education, socio-economic status, religiosity) that may influence calling and well-being.

Additionally, since almost all of the current studies-to-date used a quantitative, correlational methodological approach the field would benefit from research that uses other quantitative or qualitative approaches. Further study using a causal-comparative methodological approach utilizing the calling presence and search categories (calling diffusion, calling foreclosure, calling moratorium, and calling achievement) would allow further exploration of the various combinations of high and low calling search and presence and other variables. Qualitative approaches, such as case study/life history or phenomenology, may add a more detailed understanding of the nature and acquisition of calling presence, calling search, calling actualization, and their relationship to psychological well-being. Little is currently known about the antecedents of callings or why they occur for some individuals and not for others. Additional
qualitative or mixed methods research could explore these antecedents and conditions as well as whether callings are actually discovered or created as Debrow (2006) suggested.

An important aspect of calling that has had little exploration is how it unfolds across the life span. A longitudinal study would lead to an increased understanding of how a calling is developed, how it changes over time, and whether it is influenced by life events. Additionally, a more in-depth, qualitative study may also shed light on what processes, personality features, and precursors support the development of a calling. The field would be assisted by finding an approach to amplify or attenuate the presence of calling by making it temporarily accessible or inaccessible.

Further research should continue to articulate the definition of calling and its essential component parts. Studies, including this one, have suggested that having a prosocial orientation is the most significant component of a career calling (Elangovan et al., 2010). Therefore, the transcendent summons component warrants additional research to determine if it is necessary to achieving a presence of calling. Several authors have suggested that a more secular “perfect fit” definition may more accurately reflect how individuals describe a presence of calling (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dik & Duffy, 2014; Dobrow & Totsi-Kharas, 2011; Dobrow & Totsi-Kharas, 2012; Duffy et al., 2014; Elangovan et al., 2010; Hunter et al., 2010). Additional articulation of the definition of calling would assist in understanding whether vocation and calling are the same or two distinct concepts.

Calling actualization has received even less study than calling presence and search and requires additional attention. With the recent release of the Living Calling Scale by Duffy, Bott et al. (2012), there is a mechanism to differentiate calling presence from calling actualization. Additional focus in this area would lead to an increased understanding of whether most
individuals who possess a calling are able to live it out in their lives or whether they are seeking ways to do so. Further, additional study of the search component of calling is recommended to increase understanding of the potentially mediating role of calling presence and high search on psychological well-being. Finally, since the researcher utilized the Brief Inventory of Thriving rather than the more Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving (CIT) (Su et al., 2014), additional research using the CIT could reveal which components of well-being are most influenced by a career calling.

**Final Thoughts**

For centuries humans have sought meaningful and happy lives, and philosophers, religious leaders, and others have postulated on the key. This research study was embarked upon because so many adults do not feel that they are living the life they were called to live. The study of calling, although researched by Frankl (1959) decades ago, is still in its relative infancy with much yet to learn about the importance of having a vocational calling and its impact on one’s psychological well-being. The hope of the researcher is that this study as well as previous research findings lead to the future study of additional aspects of calling and psychological well-being.
REFERENCES


Derogatis, L. R., & Spencer, M. S. (1992). *The brief symptom inventory (BSI) administration, scoring, and procedures manual – I*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Clinical Psychometrics Unit.


APPENDIX A. VOCATIONAL CALLING AND WELL-BEING INDEX

Instructions: Please indicate the degree to which you believe the following statements describe you. For questions related to calling or vocation, please respond with your career as a whole in mind. For example, if you are currently working part time in a job that you do not consider part of your career, focus on your career as a whole and not your current job. Broadly speaking, a “calling” in the context of work refers to a person’s belief that he or she is called upon (by the needs of society, by a person’s own inner potential, by God, by a Higher Power, etc.) to do a particular kind of work. Although at one time most people thought of calling as relevant for overtly religious careers, the concept is frequently understood today to apply to virtually any area of work. Please respond honestly, not according to what is socially desirable or what you feel you “ought” to think. Please indicate the extent to which each of the following statements currently describe you.

1 = Not at all true of me
2 = Mildly true of me
3 = Moderately true of me
4 = Mostly true of me
5 = Totally true of me

1. I have a calling to a particular kind of work.
2. I have a good understanding of my calling as it applies to my career.
3. I am trying to figure out my calling in my career.
4. I am searching for my calling as it applies to my career.
5. I believe that I have been called to my current line of work.
6. I’m searching for my calling in my career.
7. My work helps me live out my life’s purpose.
8. I am looking for work that will help me live out my life’s purpose.
9. I am trying to find a career that ultimately makes the world a better place.
10. I intend to construct a career that will give my life meaning.
11. I want to find a job that meets some of society’s needs.
12. I do not believe that a force beyond myself has helped guide me to my career.
13. The most important aspect of my career is its role in helping to meet the needs of others.
14. I am trying to build a career that benefits society.
15. I was drawn by something beyond myself to pursue my current line of work.
16. Making a difference for others is the primary motivation in my career.
17. I yearn for a sense of calling in my career.
18. Eventually, I hope my career will align with my purpose in life.
19. I see my career as a path to purpose in life.
20. I am looking to find a job where my career clearly benefits others.
21. My work contributes to the common good.
22. I am trying to figure out what my calling is in the context of my career.
23. I’m trying to identify the area of work I was meant to pursue.
24. My career is an important part of my life’s meaning.
25. I want to pursue a career that is a good fit with the reason for my existence.
26. I am always trying to evaluate how beneficial my work is to others.
27. I am pursuing my current line of work because I believe I have been called to do so.
28. I try to live out my life purpose when I am at work.

   1 = Strongly disagree
   2 = Disagree
   3 = Neither agree nor disagree
   4 = Agree
   5 = Strongly Agree
   6 = Not applicable – I don’t have a calling

29. I have regular opportunities to live out my calling.
30. I am currently working in a job that closely aligns with my calling.
31. I am consistently living out my calling.
32. I am currently engaging in activities that align with my calling.
33. I am living out my calling right now in my job.
34. I am working in the job to which I feel called.

   1 = Strongly disagree
   2 = Disagree
   3 = Neither agree nor disagree
   4 = Agree
   5 = Strongly agree

35. My life has a clear sense of purpose.
36. I am optimistic about my future.
37. My life is going well.
38. I feel good most of the time.
39. What I do in life is valuable and worthwhile.
40. I can succeed if I put my mind to it.
41. I am achieving most of my goals.
42. In most activities I do, I feel energized.
43. There are people who appreciate me as a person.
44. I feel a sense of belonging in my community.

Demographic Questions:
45. Resident of United States – Yes, No
46. Work status – Currently Employed, Currently Unemployed, Retired
47. Gender – Male, Female
48. Age – Open (18-100)
49. Race/Ethnicity – White, Black/African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latin American, American Indian/Native American, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, Two or more Races
50. Marital Status – Single, Domestic Partner, Married, Divorced, Widowed
51. Education (highest level completed) – Less than High School Graduate, High School Graduate, Some College, Associates Degree, Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree, Doctoral Degree (MD, PhD, EdD, etc.)
52. Mother’s Education - Less than High School Graduate, High School Graduate/GED, Some College, Associates Degree, Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree, Doctoral Degree (MD, PhD, EdD, etc.), Unknown
53. Father’s Education - Less than High School Graduate, High School Graduate, Vocational or Trade School Degree, Some College, Associates Degree, Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree, Doctoral Degree (MD, PhD, EdD, etc.), Unknown
54. Current Household Income – Less than $24,999, $25,000-$49,999, $50,000-$74,999, $75,000-$99,999, $100,000-$124,999, $125,000-$149,999, $150,000-$174,999, $175,000-$199,999, or greater than $200,000
55. Current Residence: Country/Rural, Suburban, Small City (50,000-99,999 residents), Medium-sized City (100,000-250,000 residents), Large City (250,000-500,000 residents), Very Large City (>500,000)
56. Primary Income/Socioeconomic Status Growing Up – Low, Lower/Middle, Middle, Upper/Middle, High
57. Occupation – (1) Executive or Manager, (2) Professional (usually requiring a degree or certification, Engineers, Teachers, Business Specialist, Scientist, Psychologist, Physician, Clergy, etc.), (3) Technicians (Engineering Technician, Science Technician, Dental Hygienist, Medical Technician, etc.), (4) Sales Worker (Retail salesworker, Telemarketer, Cashier, Travel Agent, etc.), (5) Administrative and Support Workers (Administrative Assistants, Library Assistant, Legal Assistant, Bookkeeper, Clerks, Tellers, etc.) (6) Craft Workers (Carpenter, Electrician, Mechanic, etc.), (7) Machine Operators/Fabricators/Assemblers, (8) General Labors and Helpers, (9) Service Workers (Nursing Assistant, Dental Assistant, Firefighter, Police Officer, Cook, Bartender, Hairdresser, etc.)
58. Religion – Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Other Religion, Agnostic, Atheist
59. Religious/Spirituality Participation Level – Low (Little or Infrequent Participation), Medium (Moderately Regular Participation), High (Regular or Frequent Participation)

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Would you be open to participating in a future follow-up study? The follow-up study will consist of a 20-30 minute, audio-recorded, phone interview on the nature and development of a calling orientation. (Yes, No)
(If yes is selected) Please provide your full name, phone number, and email address.
APPENDIX B. REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION

Dear BGSU alumni,

My name is April O’Neal, and I am a doctoral student at Bowling Green State University. I am working on my doctoral dissertation “The Effects of Calling and Vocational Presence and Search on Psychological Well-being”. I would like to invite you to participate in this study if you are a currently employed adult (18 years of age or older) and resident of the United States of America.

Introduction:
You are being invited to participate in a research study being conducted to examine how an individual’s orientation to work can impact his or her well-being. You have been selected as a potential participant since you are a graduate of Bowling Green State University. This study is being conducted by April O’Neal, graduate student and Dr. Rachel Vannatta Reinhart, faculty member within the Leadership Studies doctoral program at Bowling Green State University.

Purpose:
The purpose of this study is to better understand how one’s orientation to work can impact his or her well-being. Of particular interest to this study’s researchers is the work orientation labelled calling and how having a calling, searching for a calling, and feeling that one is able to live out his or her calling through work impacts one’s well-being. Although there are no direct benefits to you as a participant, we hope that this study is able to expand the knowledge of the calling orientation and its impacts to well-being. This research has the potential to assist educators, practitioners, and others in helping youth and adults to find careers that are truly fulfilling.

Voluntary nature:
Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time. You may decide to skip questions or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Deciding to participate or not participate will not affect your standing or relationship with Bowling Green State University.

Confidentiality Protection:
This study’s researchers will keep all records and data collected private. Data will be stored electronically in a password protected computer. Only the two researchers indicated below will have access to this data to maintain confidentiality. At the end of the survey you will be asked to consent to allow the researchers to keep your contact information. If you consent to this, your contact information will be kept confidential. Any future publication of this research will not include any names or personally identifying information. Since this is an electronic survey, please be aware that some employers may use tracking software so you may want to complete your survey on your personal computer. Do not leave the survey open if you are using a public computer or a computer that others may have access to. Finally, please clear your browser cache and page history after completing the survey.
**Risks:**
Participation in this survey poses no greater risk than that experienced in daily life. The study’s researchers have taken precautions to safeguard against any potential risk. Please see previous section regarding data safeguards.

**Procedure:**
The survey contains 44 questions, which are followed by some brief participant background questions. Survey completion should take approximately 10 minutes. If you agree to participate in this study, click the link below to begin the survey. By doing so, you indicate your consent to participate and understanding of the study’s purposes, procedures, risks and benefits. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact one of the researchers using the contact information below. At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you would like to consent to having your contact information kept by the researchers so they may contact you for a future follow-up study. The follow-up study will consist of a 20-30 minute, audio-recorded, phone interview on the nature and development of a calling orientation.

**Contact information:**
The researchers conducting this study are April O’Neal, graduate student and Dr. Rachel Vannatta Reinhart, Professor. If you have any questions about this research or your participation in this research, you may contact April O’Neal at: oneala@bgsu.edu or 419-283-0769 or Dr. Rachel Vannatta Reinhart at rvanna@bgsu.edu or 419-372-0451. You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Review Board at 419-372-7716 or hsrb@bgsu.edu, if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research.

Thank you for your time.

**Please follow the link below to participate in this research study.**
https://bgsu.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_aavZsInRXCoFTQV
APPENDIX C. HSRB

DATE: September 14, 2016
TO: April O’Neal
FROM: Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board
PROJECT TITLE: [756601-4] The Effects of Calling and Vocational Presence and Search on Psychological Well-being
SUBMISSION TYPE: Continuing Review/Progress Report
ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: October 7, 2016
EXPIRATION DATE: October 6, 2017
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review
REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # 7

Thank you for your submission of Continuing Review/Progress Report materials for this project. The Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

Please note that you are responsible to conduct the study as approved by the HSRB. If you seek to make any changes in your project activities or procedures, those modifications must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the modification request form for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must also be reported promptly to this office.

This approval expires on October 6, 2017. You will receive a continuing review notice before your project expires. If you wish to continue your work after the expiration date, your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date.

Good luck with your work. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at 419-372-7716 or hsrb@bgsu.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence regarding this project.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board’s records.