

CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY, ISLAMABAD



**Calling leads to Professional  
Commitment: Examining the role  
of Meaningfulness at Work as  
Mediator and Organizational  
Instrumentality as Moderator**

by

**Hamza Bin Naeem**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the  
degree of Master of Science

in the

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*Dedicated to*  
*My wife,*  
*My adorable children*  
*and*  
*My late mother*



CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY  
ISLAMABAD

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

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## *List of Publications*

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1. Naeem, H., Naqvi, S. M. M. R., (2018). Calling leads to Professional Commitment: Examining the role of Meaningfulness at Work as Mediator and Organizational Instrumentality as Moderator. *International Journal of Science and Research*.

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## *Abstract*

*The present research study investigates the influence of calling on professional commitment. In particular, the study observes the mediation of meaningfulness at work between calling and professional commitment. The data for the research were gathered from the sample of 261 professionals working in the Information technology sector of Pakistan. Results of the research study showed that calling is positively associated to professional commitment. Professional commitment found to have a significant increase due to the presence of calling when the professionals started to have a feeling of meaningfulness at their work. This further elaborates that meaningfulness at work plays an important role of mediator between calling and professional commitment.*

*The research study also inspects Organizational Instrumentality serves as a moderating effect which was found to be positively related, denoting the fact that those organizations who serves as an Instrument and helps their employees in attaining their professional and personal goals would significantly strengthen the relationship between calling and meaningfulness at work.*

**Key words:** Calling, Professional Commitment, Organizational Instrumentality, Meaningfulness at work, Goal facilitation, Pakistan.

# Contents

<b>Author’s Declaration</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Plagiarism Undertaking</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Publications</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of Figures</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>List of Tables</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study . . . . .	1
1.2 Gap Analysis . . . . .	3
1.3 Problem Statement: . . . . .	4
1.4 Research Questions . . . . .	4
1.5 Research Objectives . . . . .	5
1.6 Significance of the study . . . . .	5
1.7 Supporting theory . . . . .	6
1.8 Goal Facilitation Theory . . . . .	7
<b>2 Literature Review</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Calling and Professional commitment . . . . .	9
2.2 Meaningfulness at work mediates the relationship between Calling and Professional co-mmitment . . . . .	16
2.3 Organizational Instrumentality moderates t-he relationship between Calling and Meaningfulness at Work. . . . .	24
2.4 Research Model . . . . .	29
2.5 Research Hypotheses . . . . .	29
<b>3 Research Methodology</b>	<b>30</b>
3.1 Research design . . . . .	30

3.2	Type of study . . . . .	30
3.3	Research philosophy and quantitative resear-ch . . . . .	31
3.4	Unit of analysis . . . . .	31
3.5	Population and sample . . . . .	32
	3.5.1 Population . . . . .	32
	3.5.2 Sample and sampling technique . . . . .	32
3.6	Sample Characteristics . . . . .	33
	3.6.1 Age . . . . .	33
	3.6.2 Experience . . . . .	34
	3.6.3 Gender . . . . .	35
	3.6.4 Qualification . . . . .	35
3.7	Instrumentation . . . . .	36
	3.7.1 Measures . . . . .	36
	3.7.2 Calling . . . . .	37
	3.7.3 Meaningfulness at work . . . . .	37
	3.7.4 Professional commitment . . . . .	38
	3.7.5 Organizational instrumentality . . . . .	38
3.8	Reliability analysis of scales used . . . . .	38
3.9	Statistical Tool and Data Analysis Technique . . . . .	39
<b>4</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>41</b>
4.1	Descriptive Statistics . . . . .	41
	4.1.1 Confirmatory factor analysis and competing models . . . . .	45
	4.1.2 Correlation analysis . . . . .	46
	4.1.3 4.4. Path Analysis . . . . .	46
	4.1.4 Structural Model Results Interpretation . . . . .	47
	4.1.5 Mod Graph . . . . .	49
	4.1.6 Summary of accepted hypothesis . . . . .	50
<b>5</b>	<b>Discussion, Conclusion, Practical and Theoretical Implication, Research Limitations &amp; Future Directions</b>	<b>52</b>
5.1	Discussion . . . . .	52
	5.1.1 Hypothesis H1: . . . . .	53
	5.1.2 Hypothesis H2: . . . . .	55
	5.1.3 Hypothesis H3: . . . . .	57
5.2	Practical and Theoretical Implications . . . . .	59
5.3	Limitations of Research . . . . .	60
5.4	Future Research Directions . . . . .	60
5.5	Conclusion . . . . .	61
	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>63</b>
	<b>Appendix</b>	<b>81</b>
5.6	Questionnaire . . . . .	81
5.7	Questionnaire . . . . .	83

# List of Figures

2.1	Research Model of Calling, its impact on Professional Commitment; with a mediating role of Meaningfulness at Work and Moderating role of Organizational Instrumentality . . . . .	29
4.1	Measurement Model . . . . .	44
4.2	Measurement Model . . . . .	50
4.3	Hypothesized path Model and Structural Equation Model (SEM) Results . . . . .	50

# List of Tables

3.1	Frequency by Age . . . . .	34
3.2	Frequency by Experience . . . . .	35
3.3	Frequency by Gender . . . . .	35
3.4	Frequency by Qualification . . . . .	36
3.5	Instruments . . . . .	38
3.6	Scale reliabilities . . . . .	39
4.1	Descriptive Statistics . . . . .	41
4.2	Competing different models with hypothesized 4 factor measurement model . . . . .	43
4.3	Means, Standard deviations and Correlations for main variables of interest in the study . . . . .	46
4.4	Standardized Direct path coefficients of the hypothesized model . . . . .	47
4.5	Standardized Indirect path coefficients mediation analysis . . . . .	47

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

In this challenging and rapidly changing era, people are in a continuous pursuit of a career which secures and strengthens them for the future (Dobrow Riza, & Heller, 2015). There has been thriving research on living a career out of calling (Allan, Tebbe, Duffy, & Autin (2015); Manuel, Borges, Adcock, & Smith (2017); Bott, & Duffy (2015) and meaningfulness at work (Aguinis, & Glavas, (2017); Allan, Dexter, Kinsey, & Parker (2018); Lee, Idris, & Delfabbro (2017) correspondingly. The first one referring to a force which is beyond a person's belief, religiously referring to God, which gives a purpose and meaning to an individual's life by benefiting both the individual as well as others in one or the other way (Duffy, & Sedlacek, 2010), while the meaningfulness at work refers to what value and significance that goal or purpose clamps for a person (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Amusingly, there has been quite an increase in examining these two constructs, scarce studies (Koh, & Joseph (2016); Hirschi (2012); Allen (2015) have linked calling to meaningfulness at work.

Given that people normally look for a career which gives them security as well as satisfaction for doing something which one loves doing (Dobrow Riza, & Heller, 2015) and employees often view their life as representatives of career calling (Douglas, Duffy, & Autin 2016), calling at work is considered as a major predictor in

individual's career development and progression (Hirschi & Herrmann, 2013). Previous studies have also concluded that large number of individuals from different working environment striving to satisfy the calling through their career (Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997). Considerable number of studies exhibiting that experiencing a calling not only benefits professional development and growth (Bott & Duffy, 2015; Hood & Creed, 2014) but also prove to be a positive outcome of employee's general life. Usually, professionals experiencing calling tends to have greater job success (Duffy, Autin, Allan, & Douglass, 2015; Greene & Robbins, 2015) and workplace affection (Cardador, Dane, & Pratt, 2011). Thus it is valuable to know whether calling is an antecedent of meaningfulness at work or not. The first purpose of this study is to imbue this abyss.

Essentially, we construct on the existing literature of goal facilitation theory that derives the process in which individuals with their clearly stated goals are found to be more actively seeking support and assistance from environment and establish the relationship between calling and meaningfulness at work. According goal facilitation theory, an individual with clearly stated goals experience high sense of engagement with their job and they are more critically analyzing the environment in which they are working. We propose that calling provides significance to the work an individual does. Thus calling should be positively related to meaningfulness at work. Another purpose of this study is to elaborate the relationships between calling, meaningfulness at work and professional commitment. Professional commitment is level of involvement towards one's career (Bogler, & Somech, 2004). Although previous studies have focused on many instrumental and non-instrumental factors related to professional commitment (Caricati et.al (2014; Osinsky, & Mueller (2004), a theoretical perspective establishing a relationship among these three constructs is yet to be established. Using goal facilitation theory, we take our investigation a step further to establish that meaningfulness at work mediates the relationship between calling and professional commitment.

Along with examining the discussed relationships, this study proposes organizational instrumentality as one of the peripheral condition of the linkage between

calling and meaningfulness at work. The term organizational instrumentality apprehend the view that an organization can be a contributor to achieve and goal and can support in pursuing your objectives, and is well-defined as the tendency to which an individual observe the organization as instrumental to goal fulfillment (Cardador et al., 2011). Goal facilitation theory states that an individual with focused orientation and clarity towards their targeted goal will be more likely to observe the instrumentality of their organization in achieving their goal (Labroo & Kim, 2009). This proposes that individuals having calling will be expected to consider the organization as an instrument as a valuable contributor appropriate mean for fulfilling their calling which may further lead to work-engagement.

## 1.2 Gap Analysis

Calling and its outcomes both in negative and positive is becoming a popular topic among researcher. So far, researchers have significantly provided their detailed analysis and research findings on the predictors or calling and outcomes of calling, there has been a considerable contributions done in the past on the Calling (Bott & Duffy, 2015; Douglass & Duffy, 2015) but there are limited studies conducted that have considered the outcome of calling at two different levels i.e., organizational level and at individual level. Lysova, Dik, Duffy, Khapova, & Arthur (2017) call for paper on more studies to explore calling in relationship with different individual and organizational level is the main motivating factor behind the preset study. Duffy, Douglass, Autin and Allan (2014) to study calling and its impact on career, there is a need to study individuals' lives and careers to unfold.

Another focus in this decade has been on meaningfulness at work. This is evident by Bailey et.al (2017) call for paper with the emphasis on addressing the interface between calling and meaningfulness at work as well as researching from an organizational perspective that engages organizational purpose and its relation to meaningfulness at work. Also, the study presume that it is necessary to see the positive outcome of calling along with the organizational instrumentality as a moderating variable in Pakistani organizational culture. This study will provide



valuable contributions in the industrial sector and can scale the employer's ability to start introducing practices that will make their organization instrumental and supportive in achieving individual's goals and targets.

### **1.3 Problem Statement:**

Scholars in management and social sciences have been trying to build on the literature of meaningfulness at work which remains fragmented and disintegrated so far. There have been several researches that have tried to study the different outcomes of calling and meaningfulness at work but so far professional commitment needs to be tested for its effects at organizational and individual level.

A significant gap can be filled by studying not only the professional commitment of employees not only when they get calling for that career but organizational instrumentality and meaningfulness at work can act as key moderator and mediators of this relationship.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

On the basis of the above stated problems, the present study stimulates the researcher in finding answers to few questions which are as follows:

#### ***Question 1***

Does calling lead to professional commitment?

#### ***Question 2***

Is there any relationship between calling and meaningfulness at work?

#### ***Question 3***

Does meaningfulness at work increase professional commitment?

#### ***Question 4***

Does meaningfulness at work mediates the relationship between calling and professional commitment?

### **Question 5**

Does organizational instrumentality play a role of moderator in the relationship of calling and meaningfulness at work?

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

The key objective of the study is to build and test hypothesized model to find out the relationship between calling, meaningfulness at work and professional commitment. Furthermore to find the relationship of organizational instrumentality as a moderator for the mentioned variables in the research model.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To explore the relationship between calling and professional commitment
2. To explore the relationship between calling and professional commitment through meaningfulness at work.
3. To examine the moderating effect of organizational instrumentality on the relationship of calling and meaningfulness at work.

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

In addition to theoretical contributions, this present research will also have practical implication for senior executives in shaping up their organizational structure. Initially, in the perspective of calling and related outcomes, such as professional commitment, work engagement and overall job satisfaction, specific interventions could be taken place in developing an organization structure which discovers and provokes calling for their professionals. The suggested approaches may comprise interventions targeted in the boosting up individuals' openness towards exploring new directions, to invoke individuals in exploring their interests, ethics, and expertise that could finally match them to possible jobs related outcomes or in

encouraging individuals to connect their work with a prosocial-defined meaningfulness (Duffy & Dik, 2013).

Further, individuals who feel calling for their professions are interestingly motivated and are in continuous pursuit of finding an environment which strengthen their work-related outcomes, as this will lead them to achieve their goals through calling (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dobrow & Heller, 2015). The present research study and the evaluated outcomes denotes that calling is found to be enhancing if the organization is instrumental and assisiting individuals in meeting their goals. This proposes that to attract and to engage employees who possess calling can produce remarkable work-related outcomes if their organization is instrumental. Thus, organizations should focus on adapting certain measures that gives an individuals an instrument through which they feel more engaged with their work that certainly leads towards their goal attainment (Cardador et al., 2011).

The present study can be helpful to managers in promoting organizational structures in such a manner that gives an individual's a feeling of security and helping them in meeting their goals. This study will also help organizations in Pakistan in knowing the fact that if they provide a work-place which is instrumental for their employees in attaining their goal will have a strategic benefit that those organization can enjoy in terms of loyalty and positive work-related outcomes.

## 1.7 Supporting theory

There are several theoretical viewpoints presented by scholars which were served as an overarching theory of studying and examining the impacts of calling and meaningfulness at work like job characteristic model, broaden and build theory and self-concordance theory, but goal facilitation theory is used as an overarching framework in the present study.

## 1.8 Goal Facilitation Theory

The goal facilitation theory proposes that individuals are in continuous chase of their goals attainment, and that further draws their behavioral attitudes which are expressively formed by personal goals (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008). Moreover, goal facilitation theory defines that individuals are found to be in pursuit of seeking assistance from environment such as job and workplace environment, organizational setup, which enhances and aid them in achieving their objectives and goals. Therefore, social environmental factors are considered instrumental for goal achievement. When an individual sets meaningful goals, they are likely to generate and feel positive behaviors which are linked in their goal attainment. The hypotheses of goal facilitation theory are being supported by empirical studies. For example, studies by Labroo and Kim (2009) proved that those individuals who have active goals were found to have an instrumental approach and were enthusiastic towards their achievement. Another research study by Fitzsimons and Shah (2008) showed that individuals while progressing towards their goals, they evaluate and analyze instrumental environments with more positivity.

Another research by Doest, Maes, Gebhardt, and Koelewijn (2006) showed that individuals who are in pursuit of their goals have substantial percentage of subjective well-being and satisfaction in their job. Moreover, it was also studied and proved that individuals who have a feel of calling at their work were found to have clearly stated goals.

An individual with a calling has a clear goal (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Elangovan, Pinder, & McLean, 2010). Which further explains the phenomenon that when individuals states their goals clearly and have specific intention and call for their work, they are more readily adaptable towards seeking facilitation from environment and engages with their work to gain commitment and satisfaction both at individual and at professional level.

While considering this above mentioned theorizing, we speculate that individuals who feels calling for their work are more specifically focused towards their clearly stated goals, and they actively seek the assistance from social environment that

could play an important supporting role in fulfilling their call for their profession, those individuals are found to be expressively engaged with their job (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Elangovan, Pinder, & McLean, 2010). Hence, goal facilitation theory can be served as an overarching theory in explaining the phenomenon of calling and how does this sense of calling will have work-related outcomes.

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review

### 2.1 Calling and Professional commitment

Studies have shown an increase in empirical research regarding work as calling in the recent years, however the expansion of knowledge about calling has been impeded by different working definitions of calling. Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton (1985) highlighted the significance of emerging calling and vocation, theorizing three potential perceptions on one's work: a career, a job or a calling. Individuals who honor their work as a job attitude their work mainly as a means to an end, and put emphasis on the job's value in fulfilling needs outside of work.

Individuals who deliberate their work to be a profession place significance on measures of work success, such as promotion, and exhibit more personal involvement in their work than people who regard their work as a job. With respect to calling, Bellah et al. identified people with callings as also toughly emphasizing their work; moreover, their motivation to engage in their work relates to the social contribution that they perceive their work as making and to the fulfillment that work brings. For people with a calling, less emphasis is placed on work a means to acquiring material goods or professional advancement (Bellah et al., 1985).

The idea of calling initially emerged in a religious context, denoting that people were called by God to engage in particular religiously affiliated occupations. Advanced, the concept of calling was extended to include any "honest" line of

work, as long as its pursuit was motivated by God's summons with the intention of serving a greater purpose and the common good (Dik, & Duffy, 2009; Hardy, 1990). The reliable unique feature of this religious perspective on calling was the sense that the "call" came from a supreme source, exactly the voice of God, or the practice of a Higher Power or Spirituality. In this ritual, some spiritual or religious object was the basis of the calling; and people served a purpose and the greater good by heeding the call. Sense calling could be the likely the positive reception of religious understanding which is somehow pertinent to work. Previous research on calling has revealed the fact that it has religious inheritance (Dik, & Duffy, 2009), Within procession with the ideas of calling like a heavenly encouragement to contribute in specific work , However Individuals divine views which are religious and spiritual , shape their thought behind viewing their working lives or jobs. It is suggested in the recent study (Duffy & Blustein, 2005) that inherit religiosity and spiritual consciousness is also linked with career choice and self-efficacy in respondents. Individuals who are more spiritual and inclined towards religiosity have also high wish for serving others in any way possible e.g. work (Lips-Wiersma, 2002). Moreover respondents who sanctioned that spirituality and religiosity as a factor for calling, they also endorsed that it helped them in coping with career related effort and in enterprising their working morals and standards (Constantine et al., 2006; Royce-Davis & Stewart, 2000).

Lately the concept of Calling which is an ancient concept, is now under limelight for research and practitioners as well (Duffy & Dik, 2013; Elangovan, Pinder, & McLean, 2010). Due to its growing importance and awareness of spirituality and religiosity at work, different empirical studies have done recently to prove the relationship between calling and healthy career choice and development (e.g., Dik, Sargent, & Steger, 2008; Domene, 2012; Douglass & Duffy, 2015; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Guo et al., 2014; Hirschi & Herrmann, 2013; Kaminsky & Behrend, 2015; Steger, Pickering, Shin, & Dik, 2010).

Concept of perceiving job as a Calling has also been highlighted by administrative practitioners. To make it more stressed in practitioners we can take example of job web site monster.com which says in punch line (find your calling). Even though

this ancient concept which holds fruitful and inspiring learning for understanding occupational and organizational occurrence, still lacks major studies as there have been only handful studies on calling and work related outcome among employees. In the interim, all the existing work done on Calling is inductive in nature, with no proper theoretical support which is a huge gap as previous studies have only stressed on defining the relationships pattern without a clear theoretical overarching support (apart from, Cardador, Dane, & Pratt, 2011; Conway, Clinton, Sturges, & Budjanovcanin, 2015; Dik et al., 2008; Guo et al., 2014; Kaminsky & Behrend, 2015).

Research has revealed that when individuals want to signify as well as apparently increase the social benefit they perceive from the work that they are engrossed in, they tend to shape their work dynamically (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Affirmation by these authors stated that people like hospital cleaners who have a low stature job can accost and accelerate meaningfulness in their work. There has been disparity in accepting a clear definition of calling, Dik and Duffy (2009) shaped the definition of calling encompassing the prior conceptualizations. According to them, individuals are constantly gauging what are the aims of their job activities and how significant these activities are regarding that job as well the role that job plays in benefiting the society and other people as a whole (Dik & Duffy, 2009). Moreover, as proclaimed by them, these constructs transmit work perspectives and individual's approach to them instead of the sort of work that the individual does.

By definition, calling is a divine call for a specific task in life which is far beyond one's control and creation, giving a sense of perseverance which comes as a motivational source for other goals. There are three elements of this definition: (1) a divine call, (2) purposefulness and meaningfulness coming from that work, and (3) kind and helpful behavior or values for a desire to do something as motivation. On the other hand vocation was defined by these authors as a specific role that gives an individual meaning to life and purposefulness that brings related values as motivational sources. For some researchers the concepts of calling and vocation coincide however the difference is well defined as calling is a divine call that one



senses to do that work whereas vocation does not involve such insights of summon and divine call. According to Dik and Duffy (2009) calling and vocation can be part of any role in life not only specifically related to a job related role for example parenting.

There has been numerous efforts in defining calling by renowned scholars and researchers (Berg, Grant, & Johnson, 2010; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dik & Duffy, 2009; Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011; Elangovan, Pinder, & McLean 2010; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997). The triad viewpoints on the definition have evolved over time (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011; Ponton et al., 2014). These triads are the traditional, contemporary and neoclassical view.

Calling according to the traditional view buds from the religious customs and tradition which entails that an individual is called by God to redeem salvation for mutual benefit (Ponton et al., 2014). The second aspect of this view, the contemporary perception of this construct focuses on the level of joy and delight one gets from doing that work or opting for that career. Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas (2011) gave a contemporary definition for calling explaining that it is the thirst individuals experience which gives meaning to what they are doing.

According to the neoclassical view calling stems from the captivating calls which give sagacity to destiny and an individual's pro social responsibility. According to Duffy and Dik (2013); Ponton et al. (2014) and Duffy, Autin, Allan, and Douglass (2015) the neoclassical view of calling gives a more elaborate explanation of this construct which is being followed for the present study as well. A qualitative study on Chinese students by Zhang, Dik, Wei, & Zhang (2015) and a measurement study by Zhang, Herrmann, Hirschi, Wei, & Zhang (2015) also used the neoclassical view of calling. The three elements of the definition of calling proposed by Dik and Duffy (2009) explain that (a) the divine call one senses is beyond the control of an individual which (b) adds a motivational meaning and purposefulness in the individual's life where the individual (c) looks at it as a motivation which works for the welfare of others as well.

There is an overlap in the broader perspective of meaning in life which entails calling. Frankl (1963) while setting a norm which was followed by several scholars had distinguished a fact that in order to live a good life, it is necessary that life should be given a meaning, where the experiences faced in one's life sheds light over the logical sense of performing the acts. According to Steger (2009), the understanding and perseverance in life becomes the source from which meaning of life is extracted, which has also been developed into a model of meaningful work, this model has a close relation to calling (Steger & Dik, 2010). Those individuals who experience meaning in their personal lives will enjoy a wide spread benefits like contentment and job satisfaction, personal well-being, gratification, and mental health (Emmons, 1999; Steger, Mann, Michels, & Cooper, 2009). In spite of having such regular relationship between life meaningfulness and their associated benefits, antecedents of meaning are hardly studied. Life meaningfulness is most likely to be extracted from practicing wide array of roles in life, still job profession has been recognized as the most suitable cause of inducing importance and persistence in one's life (Ryff & Singer, 1998).

There are limited studies being done on considering job profession as a measuring scale for calling, but with the growing trend, calling and its role has been observed by different researcher among adult professionals in their workplace. There are couple of recent studies conducted in surveying working professional adults related to different occupation, they were specifically asked to share their views related to their job profession and working role, it was concluded in the study that those professionals who were experiencing being called upon for this profession found to be more satisfied in their work and in personal lives as well (Davidson, & Caddell, 1994; Wrzesniewski et al. 1997).

Another research study while using the similar research methods as Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) concluded that calling is found to be correlating moderately with satisfaction in life and job commitment (Peterson, & Park, 2009). Other studies on employees related to different occupations concluded that the employees who endorses themselves with a sense of calling at their work correlate with their job identification, meaningfulness at work and perceived job responsibility (Bunderson

& Thompson, 2009). Another study focusing on the musicians concluded that individuals experiencing calling were more indulged in their musical performance, strong engagement and self-satisfaction (Dobrow, 2007). Together with the studies mentioned, results suggested and concluded that individuals who perceive calling in their profession found to be experiencing job satisfaction, subjective well-being, enjoying their work and professional commitment.

The results showing in these studies confirms with the theoretical models presented by Elangovan et al. (2010) and Hall and Chandler (2005) representing the contextual predictions of defined relationships. A similar research study conducted on calling identified to have a strong connection with the career commitment, career choice, and self-efficacy (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007).

There has been a growing interest in the potentially competing loyalties that professionals may hold toward their profession and the employing organization as professionals are increasingly working in large organizations. A positive psychological state of the individual that supports meaningful work and enables individuals to demonstrate their ability and get satisfaction from work. Professional commitments reflect employees' commitment to career. Professional commitment also related to career output (Ballout, 2009). Individuals with a high degree of professional commitment and high career expectation will have a significant investment in occupations (Aryee & Tan, 1992). Therefore, they will be willing to pay the effort needed to achieve their career goals.

Meyer & Allen (1991) defined the commitment showing at three different levels as a model, these are affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment, which they further enhanced the meaning and put it under the umbrella of professional commitment.

There are certain professions, in which professional commitment considered to be the important element in overall job success and satisfaction (Jourdain & Chen-evert, 2010). Professional commitment was declared as connection between an individual's sets of belief and goal that he is attaining through his profession, stronger the connection is, the more efforts an individual will be willing to invest on the profession (Teng, Shyu, & Chang, 2007). Also, professionals who give equal

importance to their personal beliefs and to their professions have more tendency and likelihood care and affection towards the upcoming of profession, and they keep intact with it till they finally achieve it. There are studies that indicate a linkage between the professional commitment and associated satisfaction from the job, which further enhances the intention to retain the career (Lynn & Redman, 2005).

Another research study on the types of commitment derived three different forms of commitment that an individual will have with the profession, affective commitment is the emotional attachment that individuals feel with their profession, continuance commitment is what an individual is perceiving benefits from the profession and what makes them keep intact with the profession, and the last normative commitment is what an individual feels as an obligation to keep themselves a part of this profession (Gambino, 2010). Therefore, affective commitment defines the implicit motivation for an individuals to keep practicing this profession, whereas normative commitment defines how external factors are motivating the individual to practice the similar profession, the continuance commitment describes the economic incentives that keeps the individual motivated with the profession. All the three types of commitment are unique and carries distinguished importance.

Professionals who are committed to their work are more likely to show more devotion towards their career path, and they feel themselves as closely related with their profession (May, Korczynski, & Frenkel, 2002). Further, research study also reported that employees who have a strong affiliation with their profession tends to have weak intention in quitting the profession, and they are more highly intended to remain in the profession till their retirement (Meyer et al., 1993).

Professionally committed workers experience higher level of job satisfaction, lesser work-related stress (Lu, Chang, & Wu, 2007), and low intentions to leave this profession (Jourdain & Chenevert, 2010). Thus, employees who experience greater level of commitment with their profession feels intrinsic sense of calling at work that keeps the bond strong. Their intentions to leave this profession also weakens as their career progress as they are committed with their jobs. In other words, calling can be termed as an important intrinsic force that relates positively with the

professional commitment. Based on the mentioned theorizing and argumentation, it is hypothesized:

***H1: Calling is positively related to Professional commitment.***

## **2.2 Meaningfulness at work mediates the relationship between Calling and Professional commitment**

Individuals play a vibrant role in shaping an organization and growing the organization both profitably and environmentally. The success of the business is subject to the involvement of the employees and the amount of effort that they put in to perform the task assigned to them. The effort that the individual puts in is subject to how meaningful that work is for him/her (Frankl, 1959). Having meaningfulness at work is preferred by all individuals (Yeoman, 2014) and is of essential importance and is desirable for every individual. This area is being studied by many researchers but it still remains disintegrated (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010) but the instruments developed so far are said to be ill defined and vague whether it be human resource development literature or (Lips-Wiersma, & Wright, 2012; Thory, 2016) and there has been a varied difference in defining meaningfulness at work in all these decades (Weeks, & Schaffert, 2017). Researchers in psychology, sociology and other fields have tried to define this construct to the best of the understanding of their field. As an emerging construct in the field of social sciences, the construct has been repeatedly used and attempts to define this construct in the field of social sciences has increased in the previous decade.

To define meaningfulness at work, it is necessary to look at the theoretical aspects of how this construct has been defined in different fields. Job characteristic model, social cognitive theory and political theory are amongst the few theories that have attempted to explain the underlying mechanism of meaningfulness at work. The liberal political theory perceives meaningfulness at work as a predilection and not as repugnance (Yeoman, 2014). For the liberal theorists, meaningfulness at

work is derived if the individual likes the work assigned. If the work is disliked by the individual, he or she will not be willing to give hundred percent input in accomplishing that task. The reason behind not putting in all the effort is that as the work is disliked by the individual, it holds less meaning or no meaning at all in his professional and personal life.

The social cognitive career theory too believes that careers should give meaning to the broader world (Dik, Shimizu, & O'Connor, 2016). Thus highlighting that meaningfulness at work increases the likelihood that a person will be more involved in performing the given task in a better manner than any other individual if that task has high level of meaning associated for the individual. The focus of increasing meaningfulness at work is not only the organizational culture but also the leaders of the organization. It is essential for all leaders to map meaningfulness to work of every individual which brings more of the individual's positive performance and refrains from moving away from the leader (Lips-Wiersma, & Morris, 2013). The role of the leader is seen as a major source for the individuals in associating meaningfulness at work. There are leaders who can forgo this necessary focus and let the individual decide if the work is meaningful or not but for the leaders who help associate meaningfulness to the work of the individuals, actually help the individuals in retaining them and also decrease turnover intentions.

The extent to which the work is meaningful to an individual also depends on the type of occupation (Lips-Wiersma, Wright, & Dik, 2016). The culture of that occupation also plays a vital role in giving a meaning to what the individual is doing (Grama, & Todericiu, 2017). This can in turn benefit the organization because when the work is meaningful for the individual, it is most likely to increase organizational performance as well as productivity (Bailey, Madden, Alfes, Shantz, & Soane, 2017). The aspect that meaningfulness at work can increase productivity is comparably overlooked and there is much room to explore how meaningfulness at work can increase productivity and benefit the organization on the whole. Meaningfulness at work also increases employee engagement (May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004). It is not only the work done at macro level that brings meaningfulness at work, studies have proved that microworkers too demonstrate meaningfulness

at work and that has shown to enhance organizational performance whether or not they are supported by the organizational structure or not (Kost, Fieseler, & Wong, 2018). Meaningfulness at work not only benefits an individual but has an impact on the stakeholders of the organization as well (Steger, 2017).

Meaningfulness at work is a quest for individuals as getting a meaning out of their work gives them a path to move forward (Frankl, 1959). If this quest is not achieved, the work becomes meaningless. This meaningless leads to work alienation and powerlessness (Nair, & Vohra, 2009; Schmidt, 2016). Meaninglessness at work also has been reported to develop a mismanaged soul (Bailey, Madden, Alfes, Shantz, & Soane, 2017) where the individual find nothing enriching in work. With the changing trends and work environment, the occupations and employment are becoming more and more perilous. There has been a shift is the trend of being self- employed. Individuals focus on short term contracts rather than long term contracts. Thus the organizations feel a dire need to give meaning to the individual's work as a source of motivation (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 2011). Meaningfulness at work has been reported to increase performance as well as satisfaction. It Top of Form has been associated with different condition in which individuals respond to the work they do (Oldham, Hackman, & Pearce, 1976). In the previous studies meaningfulness at work was linked to deteriorating outcomes of environmental challenges. Castillo, (1997) reported that new forms of employment were due to the lack of meaningfulness in the individual's work. Along with individual issues, economic restrictions too result in diverging from meaningfulness at work as the economies are struggling and competing to increase human booming (Arneson, 1987; Keat, 2009).

As the researchers are continuously studying human behavior, the recent shift in analyzing the factors that increase meaningfulness at work (Michaelson, Pratt, Grant, & Dunn, 2014). In order to cover the theoretical shortfall in the approaches that analyze meaningfulness at work, the researchers are trying to highlight the significance of meaningfulness at organizational level (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010). Meaningfulness has been reported to increase when person-job fit perspective is adapted (Scroggins, 2008).

Meaningfulness at work is seen to mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and well being (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007), leader member exchange and organizational commitment (Tummers, & Knies, 2013). In the recent times, leaders are trying to motivate and increase meaningfulness at work by elaborating the significance of the work they are performing (Cardador, & Rupp, 2011; Nemanich, & Keller, 2007). Leader's behavior has been reported to influence factors affecting meaningfulness at work (Peng, Lin, Schaubroeck, McDonough III, Hu, & Zhang, 2016). Whereas negative outcomes have been reported when the individuals lack meaningfulness at work (Bacharach, & Aiken, 1979). As opposed to studies that support leaders role in increasing meaningfulness at work, there are studies that did not report any increase in meaningfulness at work. These leaders were reported to decrease the motivational effect, kill meaningfulness at work (Amabile, & Kramer, 2012; Pattakos, & Dundon, 2017). According to Kahn (1990) the lack of meaningfulness at work is also due to absence of significance in the work for the individual. This absence is further ignored if the leader's vision significantly affects the behavior and attitudes of employees by halting their performance (Kirkpatrick, & Locke, 1996).

Most of the prior focus was given to job characteristics model (Hackman, & Oldham, 1976) in association to meaningfulness at work. In this model it meaningfulness was what the individual experienced and considered as valuable. As opposed to the definition by Lips-Wiersma, & Wright, (2012) which defined meaningfulness as a subjective outcome that an individual finds purposeful and significant to do. Meaningfulness was reported to be a psychological state that was experienced by employees moderately (May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004). But most of the researchers agree to the fact that meaningfulness ultimately has a positive impact on the individual's life as well as on the lives of others around him or her which is a contribution of social circumstances and environment (Pratt, & Ashforth, 2003). As the individual interacts with its society, the people around him help shape his purpose in life and thus the individual receives hints about what to value and what not to value at work or in life (Leufstadius, Eklund, & Erlandsson, 2009).

Meaningfulness at work has always decreased stress (Knoop, 1994) and develops an



environment which enhances performance (Jaramillo, Mulki, & Boles, 2013) which results in commitment at work (Geldenhuis, Laba, & Venter, 2014; Fairlie, 2011). The reason why an individual has low levels of stress is because the work that he or she is doing is of value and significance to the person. When the task holds importance in the eyes of the doer, it decreases the stress that is building up and when one is motivated to perform the work he or she is given, his performance automatically improves. Thus, benefiting the organization with the increasing performance. It is helpful for individuals to have work engagement which can be helpful in giving meaning to the work and also decrease the stress that might arise due to the lack of meaningfulness at work (Britt, Adler, & Bartone, 2001).

Another aspect where meaningfulness at work is training and development in the field of human resource and development. Meaningfulness at work is an important consideration for the organization when looking for employee engagement. In previous studies meaningfulness at work has been reported to have strong positive correlations with work engagement and a strong negative correlation with disengagement (Fairlie, 2011). Among the many definitions of meaningfulness at work Fairlie's (2011) definition is a combination of many aspects that different scholars have described. According to Fairlie (2011), meaningfulness at work are those characteristics or features of the work that help an individual in achieving the meaning he wants. There can be several meanings to the work one is doing and it varies from individual to individual. It can be getting autonomy in the job design (Johns, Xie, & Fang, 1992; Gagné, Senecal, & Koestner, 1997), control in one's life (Lewis, 1982), addressing a calling that increases understanding of religion (Wright, Frost, & Wisecarver, 1993) and achieving work and life balance through this meaningfulness at work (Duckworth, & Buzzanell, 2009). Analyzing how important it is to help an individual aim for meaningfulness at work, it is of high concern to individuals that he or she himself involves in meaningfulness at work (Fineman, 1983).

Vuori, San, & Kira, (2012) have highlighted the tactics that can give positive outcomes at work by adding meaning to the work individuals do. To have meaningfulness at work it is necessary for individuals to understand the nature of work

and the individual should be clear of what it is that the individual wants to achieve by focusing on the purpose of the goal. The clearer a goal is, the more calculative will be the value that an employee derives from it (Ghadi, Fernando, & Caputi, 2015) and then it will be easier to identify if the work being performed has a value or significance for the individual or not. This can be helpful with the help of proper guidance, counseling and training that can be given to the individuals at work.

Another approach to look at meaningfulness at work is through the work of Bowie (1998), who defines meaningfulness at work with the help of Philosophy of Immanuel Kant or what we can Kantian Theory. According to Bowie (1998), meaningfulness at work is only possible if individual is free to do that work, which means there is some sort of autonomy given to the employee to perform that task (Ramlall, 2004). The leverage to be free at what one wants to do increases the sense of enjoyment in performing that task. This increase in enjoyment too can increase meaningfulness of the work (Munn, 2013). The second characteristic to have meaningfulness at work is when the work triggers the individual to develop his or her logical and rational competencies (Rychlak, Carlsen, & Dunning, 1974). What it means by developing the competencies of an individual rationally are that the work should satisfy the cognitive aspects of an individual. If the work is not challenging cognitively, it will have lesser meaning and significance for the individual. The next characteristic is probably one of the most important aspect to increase meaningfulness at work. To have meaningfulness at work the wage or salary associated with that task should be sufficient enough to satisfy the individual's physical needs (Leufstadius, Eklund, & Erlandsson, 2009). The last characteristic that increases meaningfulness at work is that the work should give happiness and moral development as well as satisfaction to the individual. If the work one does, fails to give happiness or develop a person morally, that work will have lesser meaning for the individual. Work done willingly and happily results in better outcomes and improved performance (Van Zyl, Deacon, & Rothmann, 2010). The meaningfulness that an individual associate with the work he or she performs, all effect his personal and social well-being (Cheney, Zorn Jr, Planalp,

& Lair, 2008).

An individual's mind is always filled with questions regarding the extent of value he gives to the work he performs. This is a subjective sense that varies in different contexts (Schnell, Höge, & Pollet, 2013) and develops a sense of belongingness in the individual. To accomplish this subjective context, meaningful work inventory was devised (Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012). It helped measure work characteristics that are associated with increasing meaningfulness at work. This measured both the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards associated with that work, the organizational factors that affect the meaningfulness at work, peer and supervisor's role in increasing or affecting the meaningfulness at work and maintaining a balance between the work needs, demands and life needs and demands.

The meaningfulness at work is also affect at domestic level due to international perspectives. The rapid change in employment characteristics, layoff and the swift increase in poverty around the world has changed the individual's meaningfulness at work (Ardichvili, & Kuchinke, 2009). The meaningfulness at work is significant for both individual as well as organizational gains. Meaningfulness at work plays a mediating role in strengthening many relationships for example transformational leadership and work engagement (Yasin Ghadi, Fernando, & Caputi, 2013), transformational leadership and psychological well-being (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007). Taking interest in what work one is assigned is more related to the meaning that work has for an individual (Ichniowski, Kochan, Levine, Olson, & Strauss, 1996).

Occupational members play a significant role in increasing the meaningfulness of the work for an individual. When one works with others, the meaningfulness is either increased or decreased. The group identification increases meaningfulness at work as the values are shared among the groups and the roles members play as a team affect the meaning of work (Ashforth, & Kreiner, 1999). Lips-Wiersma, & Morris, (2011) explain this dyadic relationship with the help of a framework that describes spirituality as one of the frames through which meaningfulness at work is increased. If something is spiritual it will magically increase the meaningfulness at work. Doing something meaningless might not satisfy the spiritual thirst of

an individual. Spiritual satisfaction is also achieved if someone can help others in all possible ways, pay back what others have given, benefit others with his own acts. This spiritual satisfaction of helping and supporting others increase the meaningfulness of the work a person is doing (Lips-Wiersma, & Morris, 2011).

Analyzing the need of the time, several researchers have tried to dig deep into the relationship between calling and meaningfulness at work (Dik, Duffy, & Eldridge, 2009; Rothmann, & Hamukang'andu, 2013; Hirschi, 2012). To find a meaning in the work, it is to be considered that what are the associated emotions with the work, and what are the factors that connects the working attitudes with the emotions (Kraus, 1997). Having meaning in something denotes that the outcomes will have specific importance in the life, which inspires the individual and keep the connection strong (Gray, Bougon, & Donnellon, 1985). Meaningfulness reflects the intensity or significance an individual feels (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Further studies also claims that an employees who are bonded with their designated tasks and duties are more likely to shine in their career (Rodell, 2013). Thus with the sense of absolute connection with the work, an individual possess an intrinsic and emotional attachment with the work which buffers the effect of quitting the profession. Work becomes valuable and have a significant effect on career success (Wrzesniewski, Dutton, & Debebe, 2003).

Mentioning the literature studied and explored previously, we hypothesize that employees with a sense of calling are found to be well engaged with the work, they find meaning in their occupation that further leads to commitment with their profession.

Hence my second hypothesis would be:

***H2: Meaningfulness at work plays a mediating role between Calling and Professional commitment.***

### **2.3 Organizational Instrumentality moderates the relationship between Calling and Meaningfulness at Work.**

Organizational instrumentality has been defined by different scholars in the past, the structural meaning for organizational instrumentality is what an employee is expecting from the organization in terms of their confidence and belief in the organization, and the role an organization is playing in achieving their personal goals while working in the organization (Singer, & Tang, 1996). Organizational instrumentality is contrary of union instrumentality. It is considered that salary packages and benefits are instrumental for the employees but as soon as the importance of these benefits are ionized, employee starting to believe in non-economic aspects of the organization (Klein, 1973).

In other words, there are two aspects of the same point, the ideology behind organizational instrumentality goes deep back into the union instrumentality (Singer, & Tang, 1996). Whereas union instrumentality has been discovered as a single largest correlate to both vote intention and the vote that has been casted actually (DeCotiis, & LeLouarn, 1981). Organizational instrumentality also refers to employee's perceived effectiveness and vibrant outcomes related with their job (Summers, Betton, & Decotiis, 1986). An organization must put their efforts in creating an environment where their employee believe that the organization will be instrumental in getting valuable outcomes from their work, also the outcomes and benefits are independent of union (Heneman III, & Sandver, 1983). Another research by Rosenstein, & French (1985), suggested that if employees perceive organizational identification, they would not support unionization.

Moreover, if employees receives strong sense of organizational instrumentality, they are more likely to avoid the odds coming from unionization (Summers, Betton, & Decotiis, 1986). Therefore, there is a significant importance of organizational instrumentality. Another interesting research study suggested that organization instrumentality may have different perception for men and women, women are

likely to get more satisfaction from fulfilling their social needs and consider them as an instrument, whereas for man, the salary figures are more important and instrumental Lawler (1971).

There are research studies that also indicate knowledge sharing as a major component of organizational instrumentality, knowledge sharing is considered as an exchange between other societal benefits one can enjoy, but preference were given to knowledge sharing (Kankanhalli, & Tan, 2005). Thus, we can witness that organizations are sometimes critically enforcing knowledge sharing strategies to enhance employee's knowledge sharing behaviors. Kankanhalli, & Tan, (2005)'s study shows evident positive outcomes of knowledge sharing as an organization instrumentality whereas organizational instrumentality has been reported to increase the capability of firm innovation with the increase in knowledge sharing. (Lin, 2007). In contrary, there are studies that have also reported none or negative effect on organizational instrumentality with knowledge sharing (Moon, & Park, 2002; Bock, & Kim, 2002; Bock, et al. 2005). Afterwards, to investigate these three level of findings, scholars explored more viable components and variables that moderate the organizational instrumentality.

There have been several discussions which relate organizational instrumentality with how employees behave and bring meaningfulness in work. Among these theories, they also suggests that the relationship between employee and organization is largely effected with the inclusion of employee's exchange ideology, by providing means to voice up with their ideas and exchange within their organization (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Exchange ideology of employees found to be moderating the relationship between knowledge sharing and organizational instrumentality (Redman, & Snape, 2005). Another study concluded that employees in their organization intent to repay to the organization by intentionally creating a knowledge sharing environment (Redman, & Snape, 2005; Grunig, Grunig, & Ehling, 1992). This is also considered to be a contextual variable and depends largely on the context of organizational structure.

In previous studies, another important contextual variable leading to organizational instrumentality studies and concluded to be a task visibility, knowledge

sharing with co-workers proved to be a strong predictor of enhanced organizational instrumentality (George, 1992; Tsoukas, & Vladimirou, 2001). Another study examined that instrumentality is positively related to organization citizenship behavior, the higher the level of instrumentality an employee is perceiving, and the more likely that employee will be showing OCB (Hui, Lam, & Law, 2000; Hui, Lee, & Rousseau, 2004).

The goal facilitation theory also suggest that while an individual is in the process of approaching goals, they seek actively towards social environment like job and work-place environment and other similar factors that enables them to meet their goal (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008). Hence, social environment such as work-place, job characteristics are conducive in overall goal attainment. Also, research studies shows empirical evidence that individuals having active goals are comparatively more enthusiastic and active in seeking instrumental environment (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008). Therefore, goal facilitation theory defines that social environment play an important role in overall goal achievement. When an individual's goal is set as a meaningful achievement, individuals will start to seek assistance from social environments, afterwards, they are likely to produce positive attitudes pertaining to their goals fulfillment.

Calling on the sidewise produce a purposiveness and generate meaning to work (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Elangovan, Pinder, & McLean, 2010). Individuals as start getting motivated for those clearly identified goals, they start possessing an urge to achieve those goals and they start experiencing calling with their profession. Goal facilitation theory also claims that employees with assertiveness and accessibility in their defined goals are passionate and enthusiasts in perceiving the society as an instrument in achieving their goals (Labroo & Kim, 2009). Therefore, individuals who experience calling associated with their jobs are highly considering the organization as a trusted contributor in fulfilling their calling.

Organizational instrumentality apprehend the conception of an organization to be instrumental in pursuing goals, and is described as a contender that guides you to your goal fulfillment (Cardador, Dane, & Pratt, 2011). While considering the goal facilitation theory, extracted apprehension is that individuals who have calling

with their professions are more readily adapting the organization as an instrument. Finally, they are like to get engaged in OCBO and other organizations tasks which are unpaid, this contribution can further go along with having a strong sense of satisfaction associated with their jobs. Organ (1988) perceives that organizational instrumentality is part of the organizational citizenship behavior which helps improve organizational functioning. According to Vroom 1964's expectancy theory, it is this organizational instrumentality that helps achieve personal outcomes as per individual desires along with organizational outcomes. Organizational instrumentality aims at achieving collective benefits rather than only focusing on personal gains (Grant, 2007; Dachler, & Mobley, 1973) which in turn will increase associated personal benefits for the individual as well as the organization on the whole (Hui, Lee, & Rousseau, 2004).

In the early stages of 21<sup>st</sup> century, it has been widely researched that organizational support is an important element in an individual's goal fulfillment, which further laid down a stone for career success and job satisfaction (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). Employees show more commitment and have meaningfulness at work if they believe that the organization cares for them and that the organization significantly notices their contribution (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Riggle, Edmondson, & Hansen, 2009). Recently, research study concluded that calling is predicting organizational instrumentality (Cardador, Dane, & Pratt, 2011), while focusing on the goal facilitation theory, we visualize that this theory provides a mechanism for individuals who feel calling with their work are strong motivated and attached to their organizations. Based on these research evidence, we can build an argument that calling orientation is strongly attached with the organization and organizational instrumentality can further nourishes and speculate meaningfulness and emotional attachment with the work.

As studied and researched previously, organizations are considered to be a legitimate facilitator in the achievement of one's goal (Kennedy, Loughry, Klammer, & Beyerlein, 2009). Similarly, individuals with calling orientation will be more likely to evaluate their association with the organization and draws conclusion either



they are sufficient or not in their goal fulfillment (Ashforth, & Vaidyanath, 2002; Rothbard, & Edwards, 2003).

Recent research study contribute that individuals who are found to have a feeling of calling at their work possess a greater sense of meaningfulness at work (Hirschi, 2012; Duffy, & Autin, 2013), which further leads towards greater sense of job engagement. Moreover, another research study proposed that employees to whom calling is of importance have the tendency to find meaningfulness in their work, through serving in the greater good and the greater the calling more the increased meaningfulness at work (Berkelaar, & Buzzanell, 2015). Thus, meaningfulness at work arrived from dual facets the intrinsic motivation that is calling and extrinsic motivation that is social environment assistance, which can be best practiced as an organization which is highly instrumental. Meaningfulness at work and OCB has a direct positive relationship, the higher the tendency of meaningfulness at work by the employee, the higher and greater level of OCBO an individual is delivering (Grant 2007).

Multi-facet predictors are widely in research for the reason and outcomes of meaningfulness at work. Individuals may find their jobs meaningful only if they are directed with the correct sense of motivation both implicit and explicit (Haworth, & Levy, 2001; McAllister, Kamdar, Morrison, & Turban, 2007). Employees who are found to be engaged with their work and finding the meaning out of it are likely to play expressively in the OCBO and OCBI both and increase commitment to work (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; Feather, & Rauter, 2004) that further devise the mechanism of understanding and evaluating organization's instrumentality. It has also widely studied that employees who are more engaged in OCB have the tendency to evaluate the values and rewards as an output in terms of not only gaining economic benefits but the societal and emotional gains (Haworth, & Levy, 2001).

Therefore, with the research being done on individual professional behavior and organizational set up, we theorize that this relationship is interlinked and provides valuable outcomes when they are equally proportionate. While considering and

referring the above mentioned studies and researches, the third hypothesis is as follows:

**H3:** *Organizational instrumentality moderates the relationship between Calling and meaningfulness at work; such that if Organizational instrumentality is high then the relationship between Calling and meaningfulness at work would be stronger.*

## 2.4 Research Model

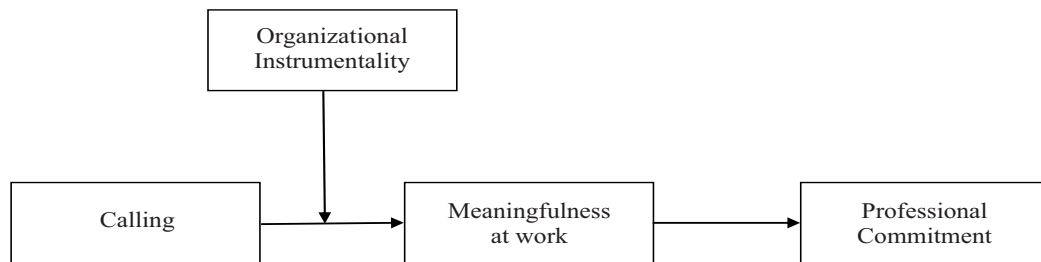


FIGURE 2.1: Research Model of Calling, its impact on Professional Commitment; with a mediating role of Meaningfulness at Work and Moderating role of Organizational Instrumentality

## 2.5 Research Hypotheses

**H1** Calling is positively related to Professional Commitment.

**H2** Meaningfulness at work mediates the relationship between Calling and Professional Commitment.

**H3** Organizational Instrumentality moderates the relationship between Calling and Meaningfulness at Work; such that if Organizational Instrumentality is high then the relationship between Calling and Meaningfulness at Work would be stronger.

# Chapter 3

## Research Methodology

### 3.1 Research design

### 3.2 Type of study

This is a contributing study organized to study the cause and effect of calling on professional commitment of the employees. In addition it explores some of the underlying structures i.e. meaningfulness at work through which calling increases professional commitment. Furthermore, the study aims to examine one of the possible moderators i.e. organizational instrumentality which moderates the relationship of calling and meaningfulness at work. For data collection, software firms of Pakistan have been contacted. Initially 517 questionnaires were distributed out of which 261 were returned, resulting in a 50.4 % response rate. In order to maintain the generalizability, this sample is assumed to be a representative of the population of Pakistan. The managers of various software firms were contacted by the researcher for data collection purpose and after providing the details of the study and getting access to the employees of the organization, questionnaires were handed over to the employees. To keep track of the employees during the time lag study, customized employee IDs were allotted to each employee. As it is a time lag study, the responses were taken at two different points in time, with a gap of four weeks in between the lags. In the first time lag data about calling

and organizational instrumentality were collected through questionnaire. Out of 517 questionnaires 303 responses were collected back from the employees. In the second time lag questionnaires were distributed among the same 303 employees who responded completely to the survey instrument of first lag. They were traced through the previously assigned customized ID and were asked about meaningfulness at work and professional commitment. Out of 303 responses 261 completely filled responses were collected back which resulted in a response rate of 50.4 %.

### **3.3 Research philosophy and quantitative research**

The present study followed the method of articulating a hypothesis based on existing theory which can be questioned and falsified by the observable data. Thus this study supports hypothetico deductive reasoning and method,

Adopting a quantitative method, the entire focus of this research was to observe and assess the relationship between the stated variables. Statistically analyzing and observing a data increases the generalizability of the findings and can give a concrete data that helps in examining the behavior of individuals.

### **3.4 Unit of analysis**

In the present research, the individuals are the units being analyzed. The endeavor of the study is to analyze the behavior of individuals and the role organizational environment in shaping this behavior. As the study assesses professional commitment due to calling in employees, the study focused on IT sector where career calling increases the purpose and meaning of what individuals do in their life.

## **3.5 Population and sample**

### **3.5.1 Population**

The population focused in the present research comprises of personnel working in different software firms of Pakistan. As there is a growing and increasing potential of I.T industry in Pakistan, today I.T industry is becoming the fastest growing export sector of Pakistan. Pakistan's annual IT exports have crossed the \$2 billion threshold with an annual growth rate between 30 and 40 percent. Strategically-located in South Asia, Pakistan is at the crossroads between East and West Asia. With this enormous increase in the industry, there is a prominent room for studying the human behavior of professionals working in this industry. Professionals working in the I.T sector is found to be working extra hours and the major reason is time lapse, most of the clients are located in USA and Canada and other European countries.

Team leads and project managers are therefore bridging the gap between their local officially hired staff and their clients located globally. There seems to be a substantial research work required that study the behavior of these project managers and team leads. How they cope with their work-schedules, what makes them sit more than regular 8 hours job and how they find themselves engaged with their work are the obvious questions that a researcher can find answer in a comprehensive research study. Pakistan's IT exports have increased 70% since 2013, and there is a massive increase in IT companies in twin cities. Their operations and environment also plays a vital role in shaping their employees' well-being both at their professional as well as their personal life. Organizations if structured in a manner that provides an assistance to their employees in meeting their targets can also enjoy strategic benefits.

### **3.5.2 Sample and sampling technique**

According to the PSEB report in 2017, there are total 12 Software technology parks inaugurated and went into operations, each park has around 80 public and

private IT / ITeS companies. As collecting the data from all the STP's (Software technology parks) member of population is practically not possible because of time and resource constraints, sampling technique is used as a representative of the population. Professionals from Software Technology Park 1, 2, & 3 were contacted, as they are expected to be as dynamic entities of Information technology management and social interactions. Broadly, due to the time and resource constraints, non-probability sampling was done in which convenience sampling technique was used by the researcher due to the ease of access. Respondents who were involved actively, displayed social interactions in day to day activities and played their part in the career calling, work engagement and showing professional commitment with the organization in order to be true representative of the whole population.

Consequently, this research study is focused on knowing the factor of calling of individuals who were found more engaged with their assigned work and producing positive outcomes, the primary focus remains with the IT sector of Pakistan. The sample consists of both managerial and front line employees (team leads) of IT companies and the data was collected through self-reported questionnaires. 517 questionnaires were distributed in the companies and confidentiality of the data was assured.

## **3.6 Sample Characteristics**

Employee's age, gender, qualification and experience are the demographics that have been recorded for this study. The details of which are as follows:

### **3.6.1 Age**

Age was the first demographic that was recorded in this study. The respondents were providing with a range for different age brackets to choose from which gave ease in answering what was required for this study without being specific about the required details.

TABLE 3.1: Frequency by Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-25	44	16.9
26-30	113	43.3
31-35	76	29.1
36 -40	20	7.6
41 and above	8	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.1** shows that majority of the respondents had age range 26-30. 43.3 % of the respondent from 261 respondents were having age extending from 26 - 30, 29.1% of respondents were having age extending from 31-35. The youth which ranged from 20-25 years of age composed 16.9% of the sample. 7.6% respondents were 36 - 4 years of age and only 3.1 % of the employees were having 41 years and above.

### 3.6.2 Experience

The second demographic for this study was experience. The study collected information regarding the respondent's working experience similarly like age. The study gave an experience range bracket to choose from, just to provide ease to the respondents and avoid being too specific about the respondent's details. The working experience accounted for the time each respondent had spent working in that specific field.

**Table 3.2** gives a frequency and percentage wise detail of the employee's working experience as provided by the respondents. Majority of the respondents were having an experience extending from 0-5 years, which is 49% of the total sample. 37.6% respondents were having work experience extending from 6-11 years, 10.3% respondents out of the 261 sample respondents were having experience extending from 12-17 years and merely 3.1% respondents from the sample were having experience going from 18 years and above.

TABLE 3.2: Frequency by Experience

Experience	Frequency	Percent
0-5	128	49.0
6-11	98	37.6
12-17	27	10.3
18 and above	8	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 3.6.3 Gender

This study aimed on continuing a gender balance among the respondents but as the study focused primarily on one sector for the data collection, the proportion of male than female was examined to be more.

TABLE 3.3: Frequency by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	166	63.6
Female	95	36.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.3** illustrates the proportion of male to female respondents. It is clearly seen in the table that majority of the respondents were male, which shows that 63.6% males out of the respondents whereas females accounted for 36.4% of the sample.

### 3.6.4 Qualification

This study chose IT industry for the data collection. The IT industry has a mix of qualifications just like other industries. But as this industry requires experience more than qualification to excel in the field, the study reported a minor difference in the qualification of the respondents.



TABLE 3.4: Frequency by Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor	112	42.9
Master	149	57.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.4** illustrates that the majority of the respondents were Masters, which covered 57.1% of the total sample whereas only 42.9% respondents were bachelor degree holders.

## 3.7 Instrumentation

### 3.7.1 Measures

The data were collected through the adopted questionnaires created by prominent scholars. The questionnaires initially were developed in English and this study too sourced English as the language for data collection. Approximately 20-40 questionnaires were distributed in each software firm. Questionnaires were collected through the traditional pen and paper method as the focus was to collect data one on one within the working hours of the respondents.

Calling, Organizational Instrumentality, meaningfulness at work and professional commitment, all the items had to be filled in by the employee as they were self-rated. These items were measured with 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1= Strongly Disagree/Not at all true of me to 5= Strongly Agree/ Totally true of me. 1 represented that the employee strongly disagreed to the query in question or where the scale asked whether it was true for the individual or not 1 represented not at all true of me/ never which represented that they never did the act in question, 2 represented that the employee disagreed/mildly true of me which meant to say that it was somewhat true about the person / seldom which represented that the individuals were involved in that act rarely, 3 represented that the employee was neutral about the question and neither agreed nor disagreed to it/ moderately true

me which represented that it was moderately true about the person/ sometimes which represented that the individual was doing that act sometimes, 4 represented that he/she agreed or mostly true of me which meant that it depicted truly about the individual/ often which represented that the individual was involved in that act frequently whereas 5 represented the employee strongly agreed or totally true of me which meant that it was completely true about the individual/ very often represented that he/she was repeatedly and regularly did that act. A reliability test was run in order to confirm the internal consistency of all the items.

The questionnaire for the employees included five sections in total which were divided in two time lag. Four sections were the scales of the items and one section was for the demographics. Demographic information included the variables of gender, Age, Qualification and Experience.

517 questionnaires were distributed in total but only 261 were used to run the analysis as many questionnaires had to be discarded due to missing information by the employees or if the employee was not in the organization anymore for the second time lag. Thus the study resulted in 50.4% response rate that was complete and useable for this study.

### **3.7.2 Calling**

The 4 item scale developed by Dik, Eldridge, Steger, & Duffy, (2014) was used to gauge calling in individuals. The participants gave answers on a 5 point likert-scale from 1= Not at all true of me to 5= totally true of me. The value for Cronbachs Alpha is 0.7.

### **3.7.3 Meaningfulness at work**

To gauge meaningfulness at work a 5 item scale from Bunderson, & Thompson, (2009) was adopted. The responses were obtained through 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1= Strongly Disagree to 5= Strongly Agree. Reported value for Cronbachs Alpha is 0.74.

### 3.7.4 Professional commitment

A 10 item scale was used to gauge employee's professional commitment, developed by Lu, While, & Barriball (2007). The responses were obtained through 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1= Never to 5= Very often. Cronbachs Alpha was 0.81.

### 3.7.5 Organizational instrumentality

A 4 item scale developed by Cardador, Dane, & Pratt (2011) was adopted to gauge organizational instrumentality. The responses were obtained through 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1= Strongly disagree 5= Strongly Agree. Cronbachs Alpha reported is 0.81.

TABLE 3.5: Instruments

Variables	Source	Items
Calling (IV)	Dik, Eldridge, Steger, & Duffy - 2014	4
Meaningfulness at work (Med)	Bunderson, & Thompson - 2009	5
Professional commitment (DV)	Lu, While, & Barriball - 2007	10
Organizational instrumentality (Mod)	Cardador, Dane, & Pratt - 2011	4

## 3.8 Reliability analysis of scales used

In the present study reliability of the scales were tested through Cronbach alphas and all the scales were found reliable. Higher the Cronbach alpha on the scale of 0 to 1, more reliable the scale will be and all the items were above 0.7 which showed reliability. The Cronbach for professional commitment was inconsistent and thus one item was dropped that was effecting the reliability after confirmatory analysis.

The reliability of our variables of interest were reported well above .7 and reported in Table 3.6.

TABLE 3.6: Scale reliabilities

Variables	Cronbachs Alpha	Items
Calling	<b>0.7</b>	<b>4</b>
Meaningfulness at work	<b>0.74</b>	<b>5</b>
Organizational Instrumentality	<b>0.81</b>	<b>4</b>
Professional commitment	<b>0.81</b>	<b>10</b>

**Table 3.6**, lists the Cronbach alpha of all the scales that were used in this study. All the values of Cronbach alpha for the items used under the study are above 0.7 that confirms the internal consistency of the items.

### 3.9 Statistical Tool and Data Analysis Technique

The data was collected from 261 employees and different tests were performed to analyze the data. The data was checked for model fitness, reliability, regression and the correlation of the variables under study. The purpose to run regression was to see what the impact was of one variable on the other variable. To run the above mentioned tests on the data collected, SPSS 21 and AMOS 21 versions were used. Following is the procedure of how these tests were run for the data collected.

1. In the first step, the focus was on sorting the completely filled useable questionnaires from time lag one and time lag two from the unusable questionnaires.
2. The next step was calculation of frequency tables on SPSS to check for missing values and incorrect entries. The frequencies of demographics were given in a tabular format for the ease of the readers.
3. The third step which was to be done carefully was to transform the reverse coded the items in order to measure the responses of the individuals.

4. In the next step, reliability analysis was performed in order to check the reliabilities of the various scales that were used in this study. After performing CFA, the items that loaded low on the variables were deleted to increase the reliability.
5. In the fifth step confirmatory factor analysis was done through AMOS and the results of the models were reported in a tabular form.
6. The next step was to test the four factor hypothesized model against competing three factor, two factor and one factor models. These too were reported in a table format.
7. Then composite variables were calculated of the variables of the model.
8. Once the data deemed fit and reliable, the demographics were tested for their impact on the variables under study through one way ANOVA test. The demographics variable Age was controlled during the analysis.
9. Then Correlation analysis was executed to draft the relationship among the stated variables.
10. Tenth and most critical step was to do Path Analysis which was done in AMOS. The reason to run this test is to see the impact of calling (I.V) on professional commitment (D.V.), Meaningfulness at work (Mediator)'s impact on professional commitment and indirect effects of calling on professional commitment and moderating effect of organizational instrumentality (Moderator) on the relationship of calling and meaningfulness at work were tested and reported through a diagram and also through a tabulated detail.
11. The final step in the analysis was performed by calculating and developing a mod graph in order to analyze the direct effect of moderator on the relationship of calling and meaningfulness at work.

# Chapter 4

## Results

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics gives outlines about the specimen estimate and the perceptions that have been made about the information. It reveals to us the essential points of interest of the information that has been gathered, for example, test estimate, least esteem, greatest esteem, mean esteem and standard deviation of the information. Engaging measurements likewise introduce expansive entirety of information into organized and outlined shape. The points of interest of information gathered under this exploration examination are displayed in the table as underneath.

TABLE 4.1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Sample Size	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Gender	261	1.00	2.00		
Age	261	1.00	5.00		
Education	261	1.00	2.00		
Experience	261	1.00	4.00		
Organizational Instrumentality	261	1.00	5.00	3.26	.92
Professional Commitment	261	1.00	5.00	3.59	.60
Calling	261	1.00	5.00	3.48	.68
Meaningfulness at work	261	1.00	5.00	3.39	.78

---

This table gives the evident measurements of the variables under investigation. The table explains the information identified with minimum, maximum, and normal values for each of the factors. Additionally, the table shows the means and standard deviations of each variable as well. The main focus of the table is the detailing of factors, the next section show the sample size, the sections ahead show the means and standard deviations. The independent variable i.e. calling has a mean of 3.48 and a standard deviation of 0.68. The dependent variable which is Professional Commitment's mean and standard deviation is 3.59 and .60 respectively. The mediator under study, Meaningfulness at work showed a mean of 3.39 and a standard deviation of .78 while the moderator under study, Organizational Instrumentality had 3.26 mean and .92 standard deviation respectively.

TABLE 4.2: Competing different models with hypothesized 4 factor measurement model

Model	$\chi^2$	Df	$\chi^2 / \text{Df}$	$\Delta \chi^2$	$\Delta \text{Df}$	CFI	IFI	TLI	RMSEA
<b>Hypothesized Measurement Model (4 Factor Model)</b>	<b>300.35</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>1.48</b>			<b>.932</b>	<b>.933</b>	<b>.922</b>	<b>.043</b>
Alternate Model 1: Combined "Calling and Meaningfulness at work" (3 Factor Model)	414.04	206	2.01	113.69	3	.854	.857	.837	.062
Alternate Model 2: Combined "Calling and Organizational Instrumentality" (3 Factor Model)	515.30	206	2.50	214.95	3	.783	.787	.757	.076
Alternate Model 3: Combined "Calling and Meaningfulness at work" and then combination of "Professional Commitment and Organizational Instrumentality" (2 Factor Model)	748.52	208	3.59	448.17	5	.621	.627	.579	.100
Alternate Model 4: "All items Combined" (1 Factor Model)	901.95	209	4.31	301.6	6	.514	.522	.463	.113

Note:  $n=261$ ; Values are different of each of the alternative measurement models with the hypothesized model.

\*\*\* $p < .001$



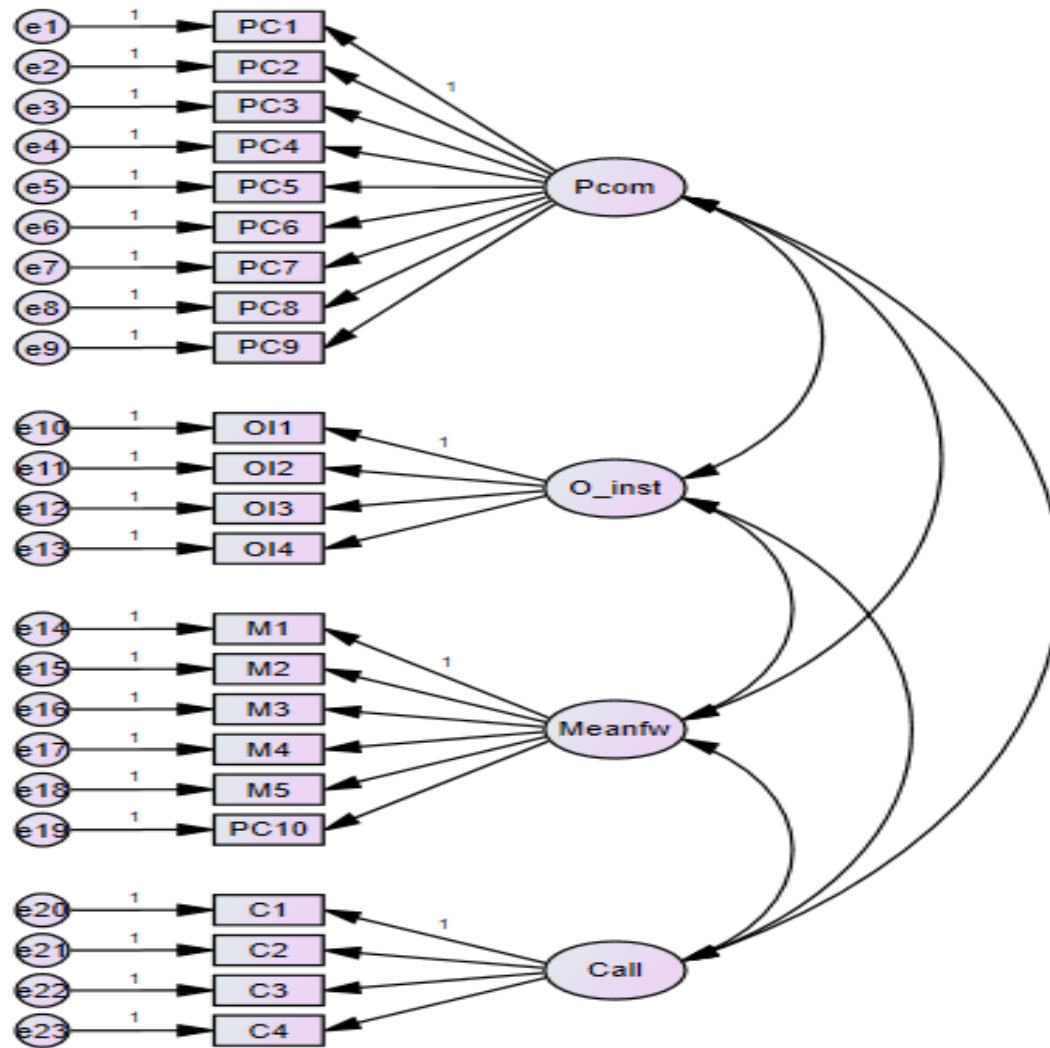


FIGURE 4.1: Measurement Model

### 4.1.1 Confirmatory factor analysis and competing models

Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFA) of all four constructs including Calling, Meaningfulness at work, Professional Commitment and Organizational Instrumentality was examined to investigate the model fitness of 4 factor Hypothesized model before testing direct and mediating relation. According to Table 4.2 representation, 4 factor model was best fit with ( $\chi^2 = 300.35$ ,  $df = 203$ ,  $\chi^2 / Df = 1.48$ ,  $p < .000$ ; CFI = .932, IFI = .933, TLI = .922, RMSEA = .043) after performing error terms correlation.

Alternately, 3 factor model by combining Calling and Meaningfulness at work was less fit ( $\chi^2 = 414.04$ ,  $df = 206$ ,  $\chi^2 / Df = 2.01$   $p < .000$ ; CFI = .854, IFI = .857, TLI = .837, RMSEA = .062) with respect to 4 factor model. Change in chi-square was 113.69. Change in degree of freedom was recorded 3.

Table 4.2 show another 3 factor alternate model, combining Calling and Organizational Instrumentality comparison with four factor model also found less fit with values ( $\chi^2 = 515.30$ ,  $df = 206$ ,  $\chi^2 / Df = 2.50$   $p < .000$ ; CFI = .783, IFI = .787, TLI = .757, RMSEA = .076) and the change in chi-square and degree of freedom were 214.95 and 3 respectively.

Model three represents the comparison of 4 factor model with 2 factor model by combining calling and meaningfulness at work and then combining organizational instrumentality with professional commitment shows the less fit of 2 factor model with values ( $\chi^2 = 748.52$ ,  $df = 208$ ,  $\chi^2 / Df = 3.59$   $p < .000$ ; CFI = .621, IFI = .628, TLI = .579, RMSEA = .100). The change in chi-square value and degree of freedom were 448.17 and 5.

The fourth model was the one factor model which was compared with the 4 factor model. By combining all items with one variable and creating 1 factor model and then comparing the values show less fit of 1 factor model. Fourth model showed the worse fit ( $\chi^2 = 901.95$ ,  $df = 209$ ,  $\chi^2 / Df = 4.31$   $p < .000$ ; CFI = .51, IFI = .52, TLI = .46, RMSEA = .11). The change in chi-square value and degree of freedom were 301.6 and 6.

To improve the reliability of results, there was one item (item 10) of professional commitment was dropped because it loaded below .04.

### 4.1.2 Correlation analysis

Table 4.3 shows the correlations of the main variables as well as their mean and standard deviations which further confirms that there is no issue of linearity of model.

TABLE 4.3: Means, Standard deviations and Correlations for main variables of interest in the study

#	Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1	Organizational Instrumentality	3.26	.92	1		
2	Professional Commitment	3.59	.60	.124*	1	
3	Calling	3.48	.68	.127*	.411**	1
4	Meaningfulness at work	3.39	.78	.303**	.266**	.351**

Note.  $N=261$ ; Alpha reliabilities presented in parenthesis

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

Calling (C) was found not correlated with Organizational Instrumentality (OI) ( $r=.127^*$ ,  $p=.041$ ) whereas it was found significantly correlated with Meaningfulness at work (M) and Professional Commitment (PC) ( $r=.351^{**}$ ,  $p=.000$ ), ( $r=.411^{**}$ ,  $p=.000$ ) respectively. Results shows significant positive correlation exist between Organizational Instrumentality (OI) and Meaningfulness at work (M) ( $r = .303^{**}$ ,  $p=.000$ ). According to correlation results between Organizational Instrumentality (OI) and Professional Commitment (PC) ( $r = .124^*$ ,  $p=.046$ ), both variables were not found to be correlated. The correlation of Meaningfulness at work (M) was found significant with Professional Commitment (PC) ( $r=.266^{**}$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

### 4.1.3 4.4. Path Analysis

Results of correlation are inconclusive in causal linkages. Correlation analysis provides initial indicator about the relationship among variables of the study. The present study test the impact of calling at on professional commitment through

mediating mechanism of employee mindfulness. Organizational instrumentality moderating effect was also tested on the relationship of calling at work and employee mindfulness. The results of direct, indirect and moderating effect are sated in table below.

TABLE 4.4: Standardized Direct path coefficients of the hypothesized model

Direct Paths	Estimate	SE	CR	P
Calling at work → Professional commitment	.352	.052	5.89	.000
Calling at work → Meaningfulness at Work	.358	.065	6.18	.000
Meaningfulness at Work → Professional commitment	.165	.046	2.77	.006
Organizational Instrumentality → Meaningfulness at Work	.279	.046	5.00	.001
Calling at work *Organizational Instrumentality → Meaningfulness at work	1.501	.064	4.296	.000

TABLE 4.5: Standardized Indirect path coefficients mediation analysis

Indirect Paths	BC 95% CI			P
	Indirect Effect	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
Calling at work → Meaningfulness at Work → Professional commitment	0.059	0.018	0.126	0.004

Note:  $n=246$ ; Bootstrap sample size=2000, BC 95% CI= Bootstrap confidence Intervals  
 $*p<.05$ ,  $**p<.01$ ,  $***p<.00$

#### 4.1.4 Structural Model Results Interpretation

Path analysis was used to test the hypothesis of the study. Hypothesis 1<sup>st</sup> of the present study was that calling at work of employees is positively associated with their professional commitment. In order to check the impact of calling on professional commitment, professional commitment of employees was regressed by calling at work. Results proved that calling at work of employee significantly predicts professional commitment of employees. Standardized regression weight which is alternate of Beta of SPSS was reported .352 with p value .000. Therefore hypothesis 1 of the study was accepted and it was proved that those employees

who feel that their work is called from the God will be more committed to their professions.

Hypothesis 2<sup>nd</sup> of the study was that employee mindfulness mediates the relationship between calling at work and professional commitment. For testing the mediating effect path analysis was performed to test path “a” and path “b” as basic assumptions of mediation. For testing path “a” employee mindfulness was regressed by calling at work. Results of the present study provides solid evidence for proving path “a” significant that calling at work is significantly predicting employee mindfulness with standardized regression weight .358 and  $p=.000$ . the acceptance of Path “a” postulates that those employees who feel their jobs as calling from the God are more mindful. After proving the 1<sup>st</sup> assumption of mediation in case of Path “a”, Path “b” was tested by regressing professional commitment by employee mindfulness. Path “b” was also proved that employee mindfulness significantly predicts professional commitment with standardized regression weight .165 and p value .006. After fulfilling the basic assumptions of mediation in form Path “a” and “b” acceptance, indirect effect of calling at work on professional commitment through employee mindfulness was tested. For indirect effect bootstrap 2000 with 95% Bias confidence interval was performed. Results of the collected data proves that calling at work have a significant indirect effect on professional commitment through employee mindfulness. Indirect effect was reported with estimate value .059, upper limit confidence interval .126 and lower limit confidence interval .018, there is no zero between upper and lower limits so Hypothesis 2<sup>nd</sup> of the study which was mediating role of employee mindfulness between calling at work and professional commitment was accepted.

Hypothesis 3<sup>rd</sup> of the present study was that organizational instrumentality moderates the relationship between calling at work and employee mindfulness such that the relationship between calling at work and employee mindfulness will be strong when organizational instrumentality is high than low organizational instrumentality. For testing the moderating effect interaction term was calculated by multiplying calling at work independent variable of the study with organizational

instrumentality moderator of the study. After calculating interaction term, employee mindfulness was regressed through interaction term. In order to control the individual effect of calling at work and organizational instrumentality, both variables were co-varied with one another and also with interaction term. Results of the interactive effect of calling at work and organizational instrumentality were found significant with standardized regression weight 1.50 and p value .000. Interaction term was found significant through indicator of p value but the direction of the effect of moderator was still not clear. In order to check the direction of moderating effect mod graph was calculated.

#### 4.1.5 Mod Graph

Mod graph articulates the moderating effect of organizational instrumentality both at low and high values on the relationship of calling at work and employee mindfulness. Graph represents that at low values of organizational instrumentality the relationship between calling at work and employee mindfulness is positive but at high value of organizational instrumentality the linear relationship between calling at work and organizational instrumentality becomes stronger. The steepness of the line at high moderation value represents the enhancing effect of moderator. Hence hypothesis 3<sup>rd</sup> of the study was fully accepted. Therefore, those employees who feels calling at their job will be more mindful when their organization is more instrumental in achievement of their goals.

Dependent Variable: Employee mindfulness

Independent variable: Calling at Work

Moderating variable: Organizational Instrumentality

Dependent variable: Professional Commitment (PC\_MEAN)

Independent Variable: Calling at work (C\_MEAN)

Mediating Variable: Employees Mindfulness (M\_MEAN)

Moderating variable: Organizational Instrumentality (OL\_MEAN)

Interaction term: Calling at work  $\times$  Organizational Instrumentality (Int)

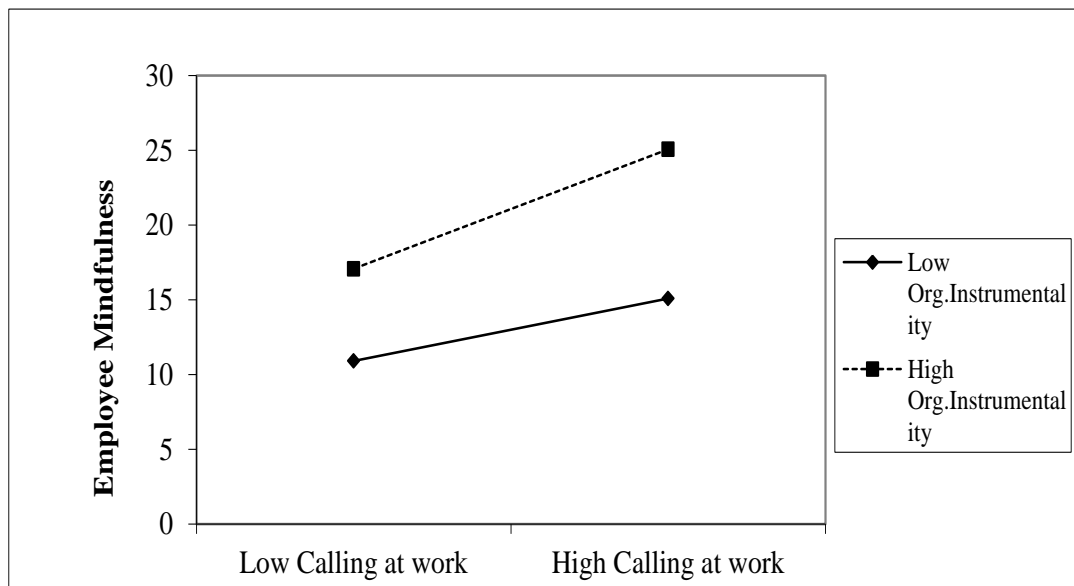


FIGURE 4.2: Measurement Model

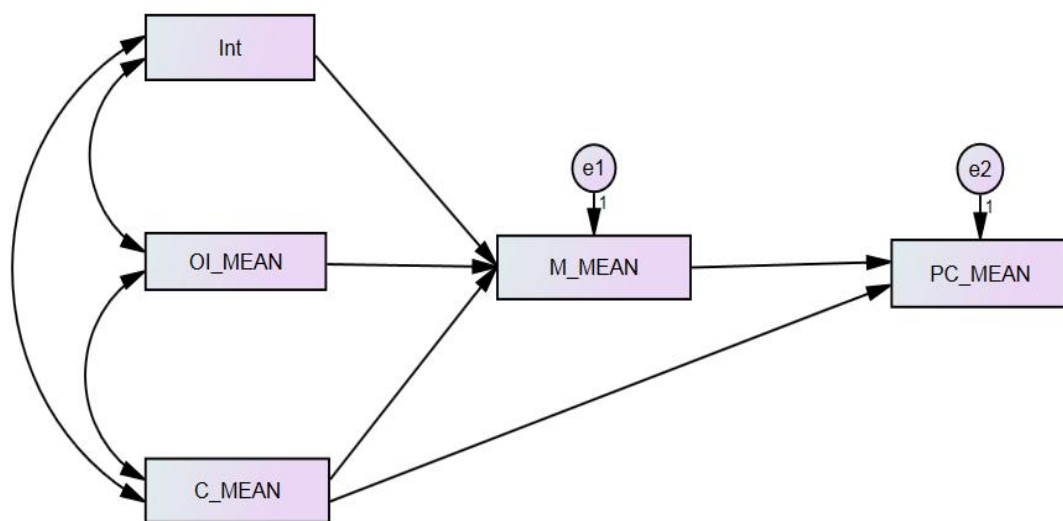


FIGURE 4.3: Hypothesized path Model and Structural Equation Model (SEM) Results

### 4.1.6 Summary of accepted hypothesis

Hypotheses	Statement	Result
H1	There is a positive association between Calling and Professional Commitment.	Accepted
H2	Meaningfulness at work mediates the relationship between Calling and Professional Commitment.	Accepted

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**H3** Organizational Instrumentality moderates the relationship between Calling and Meaningfulness at work such that if Organizational instrumentality is high then the relationship between Calling and meaningfulness at work would be stronger. **Accepted**

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# Chapter 5

## Discussion, Conclusion, Practical and Theoretical Implication, Research Limitations & Future Directions

### 5.1 Discussion

The present study intends to evaluate the positive intrinsic and extrinsic factor and the relative outcome in individual's professional life. Previous studies examined the multi-dimensional measures related to occupation and the derived meaningfulness, which was further enhanced and studied under multivariate analysis technique (Lips-Wiersma & Wright, 2012; Steger et al., 2012). The present study extended the examination of possible antecedents of professional commitment which enhances individual's satisfaction towards their job. We have also examined and confirmed that individuals who feels calling have higher tendency of their commitment with their assigned jobs. Another research done on calling claimed to have visible positive outcomes related to the job (Blanco-Donoso, Garrosa, Moreno-Jiménez, de Almeida, & Villela-Bueno, 2017).

An individual's attitude and behaviors are the major determinant of knowing the existence of underlying orientations with a specific sense of calling (Serow, Eaker, & Ciechalski, 1992), which further proclaims the motives, ethics, and approaches an individual show at their workplace. Higher the sense of calling an individual will experience, higher the tendency of having more engagement with their work, means an individual feels meaningfulness at work. Calling is subjective to one's call for a certain occupation, they feel intrinsically motivated while performing their duties. With a sense of calling, an individual feels at ease when he is delivering the job. They claim to be meant for doing such jobs and relates it with the spirituality and something they think they have been chosen for this specific occupation.

The detailed discussion on each hypothesis is as following:

### 5.1.1 Hypothesis H1:

**There is a positive association between Calling and Professional Commitment.**

This study resulted in knowing a fact that individuals who claim to have a calling with their professions are found to more indulge with the organization, they perform OCBI and OCBO both at the same level, because the inner satisfaction is driving their motivation and commanding the positive act performance. The individuals who found meaning with their work are profoundly focusing on enhanced professional commitment (Chalofsky, & Krishna, 2009).

Calling is termed as a stable construct, unchangeable and unstoppable, which isn't dependent on the consequences (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). Likewise when an individual is experiencing calling at their work, they show greater commitment with their assigned jobs. Professional commitment derives from several facets and there are different levels of professionalism being tested as a possible antecedents, out of which calling is found to be an intrinsic motivational factor that compels an individuals to get more involved with the job, further showing commitment to their career.

We have tested the similar relationship and our study supports the facts that employees with a sense of calling tends to show commitment with their professions. They have a strong inner belief that only performing such job and keeping indulge with this profession will satisfy them and in pursuit of this satisfaction, they are actively participating in various on the job and off the job responsibilities. In the current study, specific behavior of I.T professionals are examined underlying the feel of calling that they feel with their profession. It has been observed that despite the odd timings in the jobs, they have a great sense of attachment with their profession. An obvious reason highlighted during the study was the fact that they had a cognitive ability to accept trending changes in the IT sector, they are in continuum of changing and adapting new technologies and excelling in the field. It was also confirmed with the statistical figures stated on PSEB website. There was a 70% increase in IT export since 2013.

Calling has been researched with different professions previously, especially with the teaching and nursing profession. But, fewer studies has been done on investigating the calling and meaningfulness of IT employees. Calling has been described as a major source of an individual retaining their jobs. Specifically, calling has been found as a significant contributor and enhancer in IT professionals experiencing meaning in their life which resulted in their intention to keep intact with this profession (Koh, & Joseph, 2016, June). The present research study describes and confirms the similar phenomenon in which calling has been studied as a predictor for nurturing the feeling of having a meaning in the work that finally results in positive outcomes. Thus, we investigated how their sense of calling leads to professional commitment.

Despite knowing the fact that professional commitment arises due to several intrinsic and extrinsic factors, little attention has been given on studying the intrinsic factor that leads an individual to excel rather in the professional life. Besides understanding and considering the possible antecedents of work engagement and commitment, there were contextual as well as personal factors were explored,

among the discussed factors which are the known possible enhancer of interpersonal working skills, getting meaning to one's work is considerable approach towards accessing and evaluating one's commitment with their job.

### 5.1.2 Hypothesis H2:

#### **Meaningfulness at work plays a mediating role between Calling and Professional commitment.**

The H2 hypothesis was accepted. The research study showed a visible and significant relationship of meaningfulness at work functioning as mediator between calling and professional commitment. Further, the results of this existing study confirms the findings of previous studies wherein meaningfulness at work has been studied with a multi-dimensional measures that includes gender and adult career stage, the study concluded as a significant contribution of measuring meaningfulness at work (Blanco-Donoso, Garrosa, Moreno-Jiménez, de Almeida, & Villela-Bueno, 2017). Also, meaningfulness has been studied and investigated as a major enhancer of employee well-being and motivation (Nilsson, & Loughran, 2012).

Results from previous studies also concluded that meaningfulness at work lowers the level of emotional exhaustion and strengthen the vigor and commitment associated with the tasks (Levett-Jones, Pitt, Courtney-Pratt, Harbrow, & Rossiter, 2015). The existing study results also contributed in research objectives of evaluating and analyzing the relationship of how calling affects the individual's capabilities of exploring meaning in their work, and to further investigate the impact of meaningfulness at work on professional commitment. The research study's objective of critically evaluating the mediating role of meaningfulness at work in the relationship of calling and professional commitment was also achieved.

Job commitment and finding a purposiveness in doing their work is considered to be the building block of any organization's strategies objectives completion. Without having a meaning in the work, employees may probably be found indulged in impression management which in-turn becomes a black spot on company's growth.

Hence, make people work can be easily stated but practical implication is quite a difficult job.

This difference holds enormous insight into wherever we spend and focus our liveliness, especially in the work. Having an increased sense of meaningfulness at work is one of the most potent and underutilized ways to increase productivity, engagement, and performance. Meaning with the work matters, but there is a significant room for extending knowledge of evaluating means of finding more meaning at work. It's critically important to know why and what makes us feel happy, this may bring more meaning, and vice versa. Infusion of meaning in one's work is always considered to be an important element of forecasting positive and useable outcomes.

The concept of finding meaning in the work and then gaining the outcomes in both professional and individual levels have not gained much attention to researcher, regardless of the prime importance of getting miraculous outcomes through excelling and promoting in one's career. On the contrary, the feeling of stress and emotional exhaustion is having an indirect connection with the occupation. Though, contextual elements can never be ignored, but there are room for considering the direct factors which are connected with the meaningfulness at work.

Meaningfulness at work contains a meaning which is contrary to getting a job which you do just for economic purposes. With the sense of pressure and stress from your leader for doing such jobs harms the intellect ability and sheds barrier to growth, this can cause an intention to leave for this specific occupation. Therefore, to enhance the meaning in one's work, there is a need to have a dial up for tendency of giving up. A continuum of dedication and motivation establishes a meaning in the work, though there are contextual factors which can't be ignored during this process. This study enhances the understanding that in finding a meaning for oneself in their work, it is facet of getting and feeling a calling at work. Further, our study also supports that with having a meaningfulness at work, there is a considerable advancements in one commitment with their profession.

### 5.1.3 Hypothesis H3:

**Organizational Instrumentality moderates the relationship between calling and meaningfulness at work; such that if organizational instrumentality is high than the relationship between calling and professional commitment would be stronger.**

The moderating role of organization instrumentality have received a considerable support from the research study. Mod graph has also confirmed the findings that with the high organization instrumentality, the relationship between calling and meaningfulness at work is up-right. Organizational instrumentality enhances the meaningfulness at work when an individual is have a specific call for their occupation. The results from the present study confirms and reflect the similar, which also confirms the findings from a research study which concluded that individual with the sense of calling are actively seeking assistance from social environment which in our case has been termed as organizational structure, values and shared norm (Cardador, Dane, & Pratt, 2011). The research question designed and investigated starting that does organization instrumentality moderates the relationship between calling and meaningfulness at work was appropriately evaluated and answered with accomplishment of the desired objectives in the shape of knowing the significant moderating effect of organization instrumentality.

It has been studied and concluded that when an individual has a perceived organization as an instrument in their goal attainment, they have the profound tendency of showing OCBO and significant increase in job satisfaction (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Riggle, Edmondson, & Hansen, 2009). This present study confirms the inclusion of organizational instrumentality as a major predictor and enhancer of an individual's affliction with the work-place and designated job, they have a significant proportion of pressing down the intention to quit the profession, hence they are found more engaged with the job and performing additional duties both at individual and on organizational level.

The purposes of evaluating the organizational structure to provide a mean to attain goals is to encourage the individuals to perform well at their job, reduce stress levels and get satisfaction in life. Perceived organizational instrumentality signifies that an individual is investing his time and efforts in the right direction with having strategic benefits, these benefits could be economical or in the shape of social interactions and bonding. It is observed that an employee loyal to the organization has a specific value for the management, but the coin is two-faced, not only a sense of calling and meaningfulness can help the individual meet and attain his goals, whereas a specific infusion from organization in the form of helping and assisting their employees in meeting their desired goals can establish a long-lasting relationship.

Those work-place which have a structure with sustaining and enabling employees in attaining their goals surpass their competitors in the form of performance, research and development creativeness and employee loyalty. Designing a structural capability of an organization which provides equal opportunity for growth and enabling a cushion facility for employees where they can rest and excel with the goals may results in higher job and personal life satisfaction of employees.

The more efforts an organization will put up in bringing an organization which is instrumental will have greater chances of gaining social respect, goodwill and credibility. Several researchers in the past have explored behaviors and attitudes of individuals that are perished and drained down due to a poor organization structure with self-centered approach for meeting their own goals and targets.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended and concluded from the current research study that organizational instrumentality strengthen the relationship of calling and meaningfulness at work. When an organization has an environment which assist their employees in attaining their goals, than the organization will have strategic benefits in the form of employee engagement with the job and nurturing his career while staying with the similar profession.

## **5.2 Practical and Theoretical Implications**

The existing research study has numerous theoretical as well as contextual implication. There are very few studies who predicts outcomes of calling at professional level in the form of finding meaning in the work and thus relating with the professional commitment, also the inclusion and investigation on organizational instrumentality provides a new and unique avenue where an organization can build their set-up while focusing on enhancing their employee's job commitment which further reduces the turn over and stress in their employees.

The present study can be utilized in identifying various sources of meaningfulness at work in specific context and also in determining their relationships with each other. This research study also contributes in developing a framework for understanding individual's calling and how it can be utilized in enhancing their professional commitment. Practical implication of this present study will be the provision of laying foundation that has a primary focus and objective of providing a work-place that is convenient and helpful for individuals in meeting their goals. It has been observed during the study that employees who have a sense of calling with the profession and are provided with the organization which is instrumental in nature, will result in getting higher level of commitment with the job, lesser or fewer intentions of quitting the job and representing organization's good will.

This research study will also help managers and executives in determining and scanning their employees and sub-ordinates that if they have the sense of calling with their profession, they should be provided with the required facilities and trust so that they feel secure and prove dedication to their assigned jobs. Beyond all of the stated above implication, the present research study will assist HR practitioners to promote a work-place which is conducive to provide an instrument for goal attainment, and in underlying the steps and process measures that can be utilized to explore the sense of calling for their employees.



### **5.3 Limitations of Research**

This current research study incorporates several limitations. To start off with, the present research was designed for a two time lag, there can be intrusion of adapting enhanced methods and design structure for conducting this research in future. Further, the current study proclaims in investigating the research consisted of two lags through self-reported system, still there is a chance of having method bias. However, previous studies incorporated and suggested that this doesn't have any invalidation concerns on the research finding through common method variance (Doty, & Glick, 1998). Lastly, although we theorize the relationship between calling and professional commitment based on meaningfulness at work as specified within the boundaries addressed by goal facilitation theory, the existing study doesn't empirically test those underlying mechanisms for this study.

### **5.4 Future Research Directions**

In the current research study, the research model is tested to see the impact of calling on professional commitment. In future, researchers might go for further investigating the source of calling to further examine the direct causality. Future research can also investigate the empirical evidence of mentioned mechanisms and their different mediating roles to know the possible causes of meaningfulness at work. Different contextual variable can also be tested as moderators to examine the mechanism such as knowledge management and social aspects. Lastly, generalizability of the research findings are limited, as the sample for this research study has been taken from Information technology sector, future research should also explore the similar mechanism of calling and professional commitment in different other industries as well as in cross culture environment.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The present study focused on evaluating the impact of calling on professional commitment, which is considered to be the emerging trend in the field of organization behavior. The key aspect of this study is to investigate the intrinsic and extrinsic factors which are associated and labeled as a building block of professional commitment and career enhancement. The study examined the mediating effect of meaningfulness at work between the calling and professional commitment. Besides examining the mediating role of meaningfulness at work, the present study also examines the role of organizational instrumentality as a moderating variable between calling and meaningfulness at work.

The study uses the adopted questionnaires in order to collect data. The questionnaires were distributed to professionals of Information technology sector of Pakistan. From the theoretical background, goal facilitation theory has been used to support the hypothetical section. In total, 517 questionnaires were distributed whereas only 261 were used for data analysis.

The present study contributes in the existing literature of meaningfulness at work and calling at work for employees. Further, organizational instrumentality was investigated as a moderating variable. In this current research study, there were 3 hypotheses to analyze and were being tested. The data gathered and analyzed while keeping the context according to Pakistan. Going further, all three hypothesis i.e., H1, H2 and H3 are accepted in the research study.

Finally, it is being stated and confirmed that this existing research study enhances the overall understanding in terms of literature of calling. Previously, there is limited literature that has been focusing on the construct of calling, with this rare exploration of calling, the outcome of employees with regard to their association with the profession has not been paid required attention. The present study claims to provide guide steps and processes that are considerably important for an organization in setting up their environment for their employees.

Combining the aspect of contextual support in the form of organizational instrumentality with the intrinsic motivational aspect that is calling, an employee can

feel more engaged and emotionally attached with the organization. Which, in return further enhances the skill sets and capabilities of employees. Thus, the study claims that employee commitment with their profession has a dual-facet effect that arises from their individual sense of calling nourished under the contribution of organizational instrumentality.

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# Appendix



CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ISLAMABAD

Department of Management Sciences

Time lag 1 Employee ID: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5.6 Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

I am a students of MS Management Sciences at Capital University of Science and Technology Islamabad. This questionnaire intends to gather data for our research paper: **Calling leads to Professional Commitment: Examining the role of Meaningfulness at Work as Mediator and Organizational Instrumentality as Moderator.** Responses to this questionnaire will be used to develop general findings and conclusions without specific reference to institutions or clients. I appreciate your participation in my study and I assure that *your responses will be kept confidential* and will only be used for academic purposes.

Sincerely,

**Hamza Bin Naeem**

Please tick the relevant choices:

**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**

Calling						
1	I have a calling to a particular kind of work.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I have a good understanding of my calling as it applies to my career.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am trying to figure it out calling in my career.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am searching for my calling as it applies to my career.	1	2	3	4	5

Please provide following information.

	1	2			1	2
<b>Gender</b>	Male	Female		<b>Qualification</b>	Bachelor	Master

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Age</b>	20- 25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41 and above

	1	2	3	4
<b>Experience</b>	0-5	11-Jun	17-Dec	18 and above



**CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**  
**ISLAMABAD**  
**Department of Management Sciences**

Time lag 2 Employee ID: \_\_\_\_\_

## **5.7 Questionnaire**

Dear Participant,

I am a students of MS Management Sciences at Capital University of Science and Technology Islamabad. This questionnaire intends to gather data for our research paper: **Calling leads to Professional Commitment: Examining the role of Meaningfulness at Work as Mediator and Organizational Instrumentality as Moderator.** Responses to this questionnaire will be used to develop general findings and conclusions without specific reference to institutions or clients. I appreciate your participation in my study and I assure that *your responses will be kept confidential* and will only be used for academic purposes.

Sincerely,

**Hamza Bin Naeem**



Please tick the relevant choices:

**1=Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree**

Meaningfulness at Work						
1	The work that I do is important.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I have a meaningful job.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The work that I do makes the world a better place.	1	2	3	4	5
4	What I do at work makes a difference in the world.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The work that I do is meaningful.	1	2	3	4	5

Please tick the relevant choices:

**1=Never, 2= Seldom, 3= Sometimes, 4= Often, 5= Very often**

Professional Commitment						
1	I am a person who identifies strongly with my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am a person who makes excuses for belonging to my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am a person who feels held back by my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am a person who considers my profession to be important.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am a person who criticizes my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I am a person who is glad to belong to my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am a person who sees myself as belonging to my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I am a person who is annoyed to say that I am a member of this profession.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I am a person who tries to hide belonging to my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I am a person who feels strong ties with other members of my profession.	1	2	3	4	5