



## How does proactive personality promote calling at work? A dual-path mediation model

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### ABSTRAK

*Pada studi sebelumnya mekanisme calling sebagai adaptation result mampu dijelaskan menggunakan career construction theory (CCT) melalui adaptive readiness dan adapting response yang dimiliki dan dilakukan karyawan, namun perspektif tersebut diketahui belum memperhitungkan faktor eksternal yang mungkin dapat mempengaruhi adapting response sehingga dapat berdampak pada pembentukan calling mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengatasi kesenjangan tersebut dengan menggunakan tidak hanya perspektif CCT, melainkan perspektif social exchange theory (SET) untuk melihat hubungan proactive personality dengan calling individu melalui peranan dua mediator yaitu job crafting dan LMX. Data penelitian dikumpulkan menggunakan survei daring dengan melibatkan karyawan aktif (N=222) yang telah bekerja minimal satu tahun di berbagai industri perbankan. Data kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis model mediasi paralel dari Hayes (2017) dengan SPSS for Windows. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa proactive personality secara positif berkontribusi pada calling baik secara langsung maupun tidak langsung melalui kedua mediator (i.e job crafting dan LMX). Model mediasi jalur ganda ini memberikan perspektif baru dalam memahami bahwa job crafting dan LMX masing-masing memiliki peran tersendiri dalam menjelaskan mekanisme hubungan proactive personality dengan calling karyawan dalam pekerjaannya. Maka dari itu temuan ini dapat melengkapi literatur yang ada tentang implikasi teoritis dan praktis dari calling.*

### ABSTRACT

In previous studies, calling mechanism as an adaptation result can be explained using the career construction theory (CCT) through the adaptive readiness and adapting response that employees have and

do. However, this perspective has not accounted for external factors that might affect the adapting response impact on the formation of their calling. This study aimed at addressing this gap by using not only the CCT perspective but also the social exchange theory (SET) to see the relationship between proactive personality and individual calling through the roles of two mediators, namely job crafting and LMX. The research data were collected using an online survey involving active employees ( $N = 222$ ) who have worked for at least one year in various banking industries. The data were analysed using a parallel mediation model analysis from Hayes (2017) with SPSS for Windows. The results show that proactive personality positively contributes to calling either directly or indirectly through both mediators (i.e. job crafting and LMX). This dual path mediation model provides a new perspective in understanding that each job crafting and LMX has their role in explaining the mechanism of the relationship between proactive personality and the calling of the employees in their work. Therefore, this study has both theoretical and practical implications for the existing literature of calling.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Calling is often referred to as a person's orientation in perceiving their work as a central part of a wider identity, purpose, and meaning in life as well as a belief in doing their work to help others (Berg et al., 2010; Douglass & Duffy, 2015). Calling is generally an important key for a person to find meaning and happiness in his or her job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). When employees have not discerned their calling, they are likely to experience undesirable conditions. This is because they find that their work is lack meaning, and this will result in a lower job and life satisfaction than those who have experienced calling (Gazica & Spector, 2015). Calling may also motivate employees in learning to formulate the best way to do their job and to adapt to potential internal and situational conflicts that they might have to face during work (Schabram & Maitlis, 2017).

However, limitations in employment openings, as well as economic and educational factors, often lead individuals to experience difficulties in choosing the job that fits their calling (Dik & Duffy, 2015). In line with that argument, according to the survey done by JobsDB (2015), around 88 percent of workers in Indonesia claimed that they have tried to make changes by finding or changing new jobs because they feel dissatisfied and unhappy that they have not found meaning in their work. Considering that many workers in Indonesia are still struggling with low availability of employment openings (BPS, 2017), many are forced to stay and adapt to find their calling in their current job. Employees themselves have an important role in finding calling in their respective jobs through active adaptation such as aligning their desires with the work they are doing (Riasnugrahani et al., 2019). This adaptation process can help employees achieve positive work results such as job satisfaction, commitment, and career success in their work (Duffy et al., 2012). It is also important for managers

to be aware that their support is essential to their employees in finding the calling in their job (Esteves et al., 2018; Tian & Wu, 2015). Therefore, from a posteriori perspective, calling may emerge as a consequence of positive experiences at work (Rosa et al., 2019).

The mechanism for acquiring individual calling can be described through the Career Construction Theory Model (CCT). The CCT model may be able to provide sufficient explanation on the interpretative and interpersonal process by which individuals can build and direct themselves toward suitable behavior and attain meaningfulness in their career (Savickas, 2013). This means CCT can describe the individuals' process of meaning-making during the course of employees adapting to their job. This argument is relevant with the fact that during one's career, one has to continuously make meaning of various personal and interpersonal experiences. CCT itself consists of several processes such as *adaptive readiness*, including psychological traits that represent willingness, readiness and support for work-related changes; *adapting responses*, namely the behaviors that individuals engage to cope with changing career conditions and making job choices; and *adaptation results*, which refer to the conditions achieved through career process construction or career outcomes (Riasnugrahani et al., 2019; Šverko & Babarović, 2018). In this study, calling is understood as the result of individual adaptation (adaptation results) to their social environment in which those who successfully adapt can integrate their personal needs and social expectations as to such so that they can control their work (Riasnugrahani et al., 2019). Consequently, employees must be able to adapt to their working environment to find the calling in their job.

Personality in the CCT perspective is an important characteristic in individuals' adaptive readiness that promotes readiness and desire to have a suitable life and a clear understanding of what constitutes their calling (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Proactive adjustment in various situations is what individuals need to maintain their calling (Park et al., 2018; Schabram & Maitlis, 2017). One of the personality traits that are relevant to this proactive adjustment is proactive personality, which is the individual tendency to initiate environmental changes (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). It is said that proactive personality is an adaptive indicator and the antecedent of employees' adaptability in their careers (Rudolph et al., 2017).

Employees with high proactive personalities tend to engage in proactive behavior such that they recognize opportunities, take initiatives, and persist to bring about meaningful changes in their work environment (Vermooten et al., 2019). One form of proactive behaviors that employees can carry out in their work is job crafting (Tims et al., 2012). Job crafting is a form of physical, cognitive, and social adaptation that employees do to shape their work such that it suits their desires and preferences (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). From the CCT perspective, job crafting resembles an adaptive response that aid employees to understand or overcome obstacles when adapting to their jobs (Schabram & Maitlis, 2017). Several studies have demonstrated

a relationship between proactive personality and various positive work results through job crafting (Bakker et al., 2012; Vermooten et al., 2019). Therefore, job crafting behavior seems to be the right means for employees to bring out meaning and happiness in the process of discerning calling in their work (Berg et al., 2010).

Previous research has shown that the CCT perspective can explain the calling discovery mechanism through individual adaptability, namely adaptive readiness (i.e., cognitive flexibility, proactive personality) and adapting responses (i.e., job crafting) (Bakker et al., 2012; Riasnugrahani et al., 2019; Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Zhang et al., 2016). Nevertheless, this perspective has not considered external factors that might influence job crafting behavior. Studies on proactive personality have suggested that an individual's proactive behavior will not only depend heavily on internal factors but also on external factors that support him or her (Van Wingerden & Niks, 2017; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Proactive employees are less likely to engage in job crafting if they see no opportunities to do it (Van Wingerden & Poell, 2017). Meanwhile, failure to do job crafting will cause individuals to be unsuccessful in finding calling in their jobs. Therefore, to fully explain the mechanism of finding a calling, an alternative perspective other than CCT is required, one that incorporates external factors such as supports from leaders or management.

Various studies have revealed that proactive individuals will be more motivated to build and maintain relationships with their supervisors through the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000; Wijaya, 2019). LMX can be understood as a relational mechanism characterized by trust, mutual respect, and responsibility towards each other (Graen & Uhl-bien, 1995). Based on the perspective of Social-Exchange Theory (SET), high-quality LMX that is fostered by proactive employees will form a supportive work environment such that this environment will give them the freedom to make decisions and more opportunities to participate and develop the meaning of their work experience (Tummers & Knies, 2013). Through this perspective, the role that proactive personality has on calling can also be explained through social exchanges of resources that employees acquire from the organizations they work for (i.e., high LMX quality) (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Duffy et al., 2018; Yang & Chau, 2016).

Further researches are needed to examine the internal and external antecedents of calling together (Bott & Duffy, 2014). Therefore, it is important to simultaneously investigate the effect of both internal and external antecedents on calling because previously these variables were only studied in a separate model (Riasnugrahani et al., 2019; Vermooten et al., 2019; Wijaya, 2019). This study may provide more insight into the internal and external factors of calling through the offered research model by understanding the importance of the process of adaptation done by employees and the support offered by superiors for their subordinates to find the calling in their job. Overall, this study aimed to integrate the proactive personality, job crafting, LMX and calling to examine (1) Is the relationship between personality and calling mediated by

job crafting and LMX? (2) How the perspectives of CCT and SET may explain the emergence of calling?

This study not only seeks to examine the internal and external antecedents of calling but also aims to address the literature gap and complement the understanding of the mechanism of finding calling through other theoretical perspectives apart from the CCT (Riasnugrahani et al., 2019; Xie et al., 2016), namely through the SET (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Yang & Chau, 2016). The findings of this study shed light on whether LMX can provide unique explanations beyond job crafting as mediators on the relationship between proactive personality and calling. In addition, the research offers a new theoretical explanation of a dual pathway mediation model that underlies the mechanism within the relationship of proactive personality and calling.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES**

### **Calling**

Calling is defined as the transcendent summon towards a role within a job that directs individuals to a wider purpose and meaning of their job following the value that they believe to help others through their job (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Duffy & Dik, 2013). This definition holds three main components that form calling including (1) transcendent summons which is the external push not only related to one's religiosity but also another form of social supports; (2) purposeful work which is individuals' orientation towards the meaning of their job so that the achievements in their careers are not just seen as the purpose of working but also as a way of attaining meaning in their life; (3) prosocial orientation which emphasizes on achievement to help others.

### **Proactive personality**

Proactive personality is defined by Bateman and Crant (1993) as a personality disposition which is relatively stable and situationally less controllable so that it can influence changes in an individuals environment. Furthermore, individuals with proactive personality are described by Bateman and Crant as those who tend to have (1) the ability to identify opportunity, (2) shows initiative in improving situations, (3) take actions in actualizing ideas and (4) determined in maintaining their stance and ideas until they achieved significant change.

### **Job Crafting**

Job crafting is a proactive strategy which is done by individuals to change the limitations of the physical, social, and cognitive characteristics of their job following their preference so that they can attain a significant meaning of their job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). In line with this definition, the behavior of job crafting includes, task crafting which is the changes related to changing the time, energy, and the nature of their job; relational crafting which is the changes related to

the relationship quality with fellow workers or superiors; and cognitive crafting which is the changes related to positively shaping ones' perspectives on their tasks (Frederick & VanderWeele, 2020). Individuals may be more prominent in one of the job crafting forms or even be able to perform all three simultaneously according to the preference or the context of their job (Slemp & Vella-brodrick, 2013).

### **Leader-Member Exchange**

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) refers to the quality of reciprocal relationships between superiors and their subordinates (Graen & Uhl-bien, 1995). Moreover, Graen and Uhl-bien describe three main domains underlying the development of relationship or LMX quality which are based on respect, trust, and obligation. This indicates that the relationship between superior and subordinate are not possible to develop unless there is respect in the ability of one another, trust in one another, and the influence of task that is developed into working relationship between superiors and their subordinates.

### **Career Construction Theory and Social Exchange Theory**

Career Construction Theory (CCT) can be a crucial framework in understanding the emergence of calling because self-concept and meaning-making within the vocational context can be the essential components in understanding the dynamic process of calling (Zhang et al., 2016). This theory generally sees adaptation within its contextual perspective and career construction as a series to implement self-concept within a role of a job. (Savickas, 2013; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). According to the CCT conceptualization model, the generated outcome of adaptation result will be influenced by several processes or adaptation preparative components sequence, namely adaptive readiness, adaptability resources, and adapting responses (Šverko & Babarović, 2018). During the process, individuals' adaptation will promote the merging of internal and external factors and eventually will generate the adaptation result (Tokar et al., 2020). In this study, the adaptation processes to acquire calling (adaptation result) start with the individuals who possess the readiness and willingness to change (adaptive readiness) and involving internal factors such as a proactive personality which may motivate individuals to promote and initiate changes in their environment. Therefore, following the framework of CCT, the researcher came to an assumption that employees with proactive personality (adaptive readiness) and perform job crafting (adapting response) will be able to find their calling (adaptation result) in their job

The CCT model used to frame the mechanism of calling emergence in previous studies emphasized only on the individual process (Riasnugrahani et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2016) and it was unable to explain understanding the role of superior-subordinate interaction which may be influential in the emergence of calling. It is argued that the support from superiors proves to be important in influencing how employees can feel the calling in their job (Esteves et al., 2018). Hence, this might be one flaw of CCT in

explaining the mechanism of calling as the adaptation result which focuses on the individual process and overlooks the support that the individuals gain from their environment (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). In line with that, this research wanted to further elaborate the emergence of calling using Social Exchange Theory or SET. The perspective of SET describes the process of reciprocal exchange between two parties in which one of them gives what has been contributed by the other, for example in responding to positive action from superior, subordinate tends to respond with similar actions involving positive feedback (Cropanzano et al., 2017). This theory has widespread use and is beneficial to explain the relationship of organization members, to understand work behaviour and how superiors and subordinates interact with one another (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Hence, SET which is relevant in explaining the emergence of calling may also explain in regards to the dual pathway model of this research (Zhu et al., 2019). Even though the perspective of CCT and SET differs in theory, both can corroborate and complement one another in explaining the influence of support from superiors in the emergence of employees' calling.

### **Relationship between Proactive Personality and Calling**

Based on the CCT perspective, personality is one of the individual factors that influence a person's readiness in the adaptation process and in taking control of his or her job to find their calling (Savickas, 2005). Personality trait such as proactive personality serves as an ideal individual difference factor that describes how a person's personality can manifest itself as a behavior, even when there is no situational support for being proactive (Bateman & Crant, 1993; McCormick et al., 2019; Seibert et al., 2001). This suggests that proactive employees can keep looking for alternative job opportunities even though their work environments do not fit their expectations. In a meta-analysis on proactive personality, it is evident that proactive personalities are associated with various positive work outcomes such as career satisfaction and success, job satisfaction, autonomy, self-efficacy, knowledge and organizational commitment (Fuller & Marler, 2009). Positive attitudes resulting from proactive individuals will also promote discovery of calling in their work, given that they have strong initiatives to challenge the work environment, identify opportunities, and create a work environment that suits their needs (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Seibert et al., 1999). Thus, proactive employees tend to have personal initiative in making changes to discover their calling because that they perceive purpose and meaning from fulfilling their values as the main source of motivation for work (Bakker et al., 2012; Dik & Duffy, 2009). In line with the perspective of CCT, we assumed individuals with proactive personality will possess the readiness and the desire to change (adaptive readiness) so that they may be able to adapt to acquire calling (adaptation result). Based on the aforementioned argument, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

**H1:** Proactive personality is directly and positively related to calling.

### **Job crafting's role the mediator between proactive personality and calling**

Employees with high proactive personality are characterized as individuals who are capable to respond actively and adaptively towards changes, while employees with low proactive personality tend to adapt passively (Zhang et al., 2012). Proactive employees will actively engage in proactive behavior such as job crafting by changing their work according to their preferences which increase workplace fit, revise the meaning of their work, and change their job identity (Bakker et al., 2012; Niessen et al., 2016). Through job crafting, employees can be actively involved in designing their job and align it with their needs to reach the organizational goal (Geldenhuis et al., 2020). Based on the CCT perspective, job crafting is an adapting response in which employee is engaged to cope with and adapt to changing career conditions or choices regarding their work to attain meaningfulness in their job (Petrou et al., 2015; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). The changes through job crafting may aid individuals in acquiring meaning that fits their calling (Berg et al., 2010; Riasnugrahani et al., 2019; Rudolph et al., 2017).

Job crafting is defined as an employee's effort to take an active role in making physical, cognitive, and relational changes related to their duties so that it turns into meaningful and positive experiences (Slomp & Vella-brodrick, 2013; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Several studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between proactive personality and various work-related outcomes that can be strengthened through job crafting (Bakker et al., 2012; Vermooten et al., 2019). Employees job crafting has also been found to improve work performance (Lee & Lee, 2018). Even employees adaptation through job crafting has a positive impact on the discovery of substantial work meaning in which this behavior is understood as a problem-solving strategy that brings out employee happiness in discovery of calling (Berg et al., 2010; Riasnugrahani et al., 2019). Hence according to the perspective of CCT, we assumed that employees with proactive personality (adaptive readiness) who performs job crafting (adapting response) will be able to find the calling (adaptation result) in their job. Based on the above argument, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

**H2:** Job crafting mediates the relationship between proactive personality and calling.

### **LMX's role the mediator between proactive personality and calling**

Several studies have shown that proactive employees are more likely to facilitate the development of a high LMX which is developed through interactions between supervisors and their employees (Li et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2012). This is possible because employees with proactive personality tend to get involved in networking behaviour which helps them to successfully attain positive outcomes in their careers (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Gong et al., 2012). LMX is defined as a natural relationship between a member with his or her immediate supervisor which arises from



the process of forming roles and is characterized by mutual respect for knowledge and skills, loyalty, and liking for each other (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). In line with the SET perspective, in an existing LMX relationship, there is a process of reciprocal exchange between two parties in which one party (i.e., the supervisor) give back what the other (i.e., the employees) has contributed (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Ertürk & Albayrak, 2020). This illustrates that, in high LMX interactions, employees proactive behavior can be reciprocated positively by their supervisors, for example by providing emotional support for the employees in doing their job (Shi et al., 2013).

According to LMX theory, supervisors develop different relationships with each of their employees (Graen & Uhl-bien, 1995). When employees have a low LMX, they may find it difficult to share bonds with their leaders such that they perceive less support from their supervisor. In contrast, high LMX quality will encourage employees to try new things in their work (Yizhong et al., 2019). Through this high LMX, the individual will show more desirable behavior. Meta-analysis studies have suggested that LMX quality can mediate the various relationships between antecedent factors and consequences that are related to work (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Erdogan & Bauer, 2015). As a relationship-based leadership approach (Graen & Uhl-bien, 1995), high LMX is expected to promote resources in the form of autonomy or social support from the supervisor that will help employees to construct meaning and find calling in their work (Breevaart et al., 2015). Moreover, the high quality of LMX developed by employees can result in a positive response from their superior such as mentoring, and two-way communication (Liao & Hui, 2019); all of which is beneficial and promotes the employees in finding their calling in work. This is in line with studies that have supported the importance of leadership style in influencing employees' discovery of calling at work (Esteves et al., 2018). According to the perspective of SET, employees with a proactive personality can develop positive relationships through a high-quality LMX, consequentially promoting positive feedbacks such as support and resource availability from their superior to generate meaning (Fuller & Marler, 2009), in giving positive work outcome that is calling. Therefore, we assumed that employees with proactive personality will be able to attain their calling through the relationship of LMX between superior and subordinate. Based on the above argument, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

**H3:** LMX mediates the relationship between proactive personality and calling.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Design

This research employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design, which is a research design that collects data at a one-time (T1) (Creswell, 2012). The

data was collected in numerical form using an online questionnaire that was addressed to each subject who met our research criteria through the surveymonkey.com platform.

### **Sample and Procedure.**

The population in this study are employees who work in the financial service, specifically in banking industry, across various regions in Indonesia. We chose this population because there are continuous changes within the banking industry due to recent development, which will affect how employees behave to adapt to those changes. Among others it would affect how employees proactively engage in job crafting to subsequently find meaning in their job (Vermooten et al., 2019). The research sample criteria include employees who actively worked in the banking industry with a minimum educational background of high school and who have worked for one year.

The sampling process was carried out using the snowball sampling method by providing participants with a link to the questionnaire. Said participants would then lead the researcher to other subjects (Chan, 2020). Before the data collection process, we utilized the G\*Power program (Verma & Verma, 2020) to determine the minimum sample size required to detect a medium effect size in this study, which is 115 respondents. It is also known that the minimum sample for a mediation model with two or more mediators is 100-200 samples (MacKinnon et al., 2007; O'Rourke & MacKinnon, 2015). Based on the criteria of the minimum sample size, this research will use 222 respondents as representatives. Respondents that participated in this research will have to fill in informed consent to the online questionnaire during the data collection.

### **Measurement**

The data collection process in quantitative research involves scales that help measure study variables (Creswell, 2012). In this study, we use four scales that have been adapted through a process of face validity assessment, expert judgment, and back-to-back translation from English into Indonesian. All scales were rated on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree).

**Calling.** Calling was measured with the Calling and Vocation Questionnaire-Presence Scale developed by Dik et al. (2012). This scale measures dimensions of calling, namely transcendent summons, purposeful work, and prosocial orientation. The scale consists of 12 items, and the overall reliability of this scale in this study was  $\alpha = .84$ . An item example of this scale is "I believe that I have been called to my current line of work".

**Proactive Personality.** Proactive personality was measured using a shortened version of the Proactive Personality Scale (PPS; Seibert et al., 1999) which was adapted from Bateman and Crant's (1993) scale that measures individual disposition in making constructive changes. The scale consisted of 9 items, and the scale's

reliability coefficient in this study was  $\alpha = .87$ . One example of the scale items is “I am always looking for better ways to do things”.

**Job Crafting.** Job crafting was measured using the Job Crafting Questionnaire developed by Slemp and Vella-brodrick (2013), which incorporates Wrzesniewski and Dutton's (2001) theory of job crafting. The scale includes three dimensions of job crafting, namely task, cognitive, and relational crafting. The scale consists of 15 items with an overall reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = .88$ . A sample item is “I give preference to work tasks that suit your skills or interests”.

**Leader-Member Exchange (LMX).** LMX was measured using a modified LMX-7 Scale which was based on Liden et al. (1993) conceptualization of the LMX construct. The LMX-7 was modified by Bauer and Green (1996) by splitting one item into two separate items. Consequently, in this study, the resulting 8-item LMX scale was further utilized. The scale's reliability coefficient was  $\alpha = 0.88$ . An example item is “My supervisor understands my needs and problems at work”

### **Control Variables**

Demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, gender, education, occupation level, number of employees, and employee tenure were considered as control variables in this study because they might influence the study variables (Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016). Moreover, previous studies on calling have studied these variables as control variables (Li & Yang, 2018; Park et al., 2019; Riasnugrahani et al., 2019). Additionally, power distance orientation (PDO) was also controlled in this study because studies have demonstrated that PDO might hinder employee's proactive behavior in finding calling and affect the relationship quality between employees and their supervisors (Daniels & Greguras, 2014; Riasnugrahani et al., 2019). PDO was measured with a six-item power distance orientation scale developed by Dorfman and Howell (1988). The scale's reliability coefficient was .82.

The Work from Home (WFH) work system was also considered to be a control variable since our study was conducted amid the Covid-19 pandemic situation, where various companies are now starting to introduce changes to the WFH work system (Kramer & Kramer, 2020). Consequently, the Covid-19 pandemic crisis can affect how employees adapt to new ways of working and interaction that have changed drastically (Bailey & Breslin, 2021), which may influence employee's proactive behavior as adaptation responses in their job.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis was performed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) program version 22.0 with the addition of PROCESS macro by Hayes (2013). We tested our hypotheses using Model 4 of Hayes's PROCESS (2013) which can examine a mediation model with multiple parallel mediation. The model analysis was performed to investigate the mediating role of job crafting and LMX on the

relationship between proactive personality and calling simultaneously. Moreover, the analysis results of the mediation model estimate both the direct and indirect effects. Additionally, we used the bootstrapping method with 5000 resamples and a 95 percent bias-corrected confidence interval to test the significance of the mediation model because it was considered more appropriate to investigate the mediation effect of the study variables (Koopman et al., 2015).

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The research respondents' demographics are presented in Table 1. More than half of the respondents were male (51.80 percent) and were dominated by the age group between 20 and 29 years old (55.41 percent). Furthermore, most of the respondents have a bachelor's degree (80.63 percent). As for marital status, more respondents were married (59.91 percent). Moreover, most of the respondents had a job level of level one, below the superior (29.28 percent). Additionally, more than half of employees had been working in their respective company for 1 to 5 years (54.05 percent). Likewise, most employees had worked for 1 to 5 years (77.93 percent) under their direct supervisor. Meanwhile, based on the work system, it was found that most respondents engage in a work from home (WFH) work system (51.80 percent). Lastly, most respondents worked in companies with  $\leq 100$  employees (77.9 percent).

**Table 1**  
*Demographic Characteristics*

Demographic Characteristics	n	%
Gender		
Female	107	48.20
Male	115	51.80
Age		
$\leq 19$	1	0.45
20 – 29	123	55.41
30 – 39	64	28.83
40 – 49	31	13.96
$\geq 50$	3	1.35
Education		
Senior High School	8	3.60
Diploma	11	4.95
Bachelor's Degree	179	80.63
Master's Degree	22	9.91
Doctorate or PhD	2	0.90
Marital Status		
Single	89	40.09
Married	133	59.91
Tenure		
1 – 5	120	54.05
6 – 10	57	25.68
11 – 15	20	9.01

Demographic Characteristics	n	%
16 – 20	17	7.66
≥ 21	8	3.60
Job Level		
Level 1	65	29.28
Level 2	39	17.57
Level 3	29	13.06
Level 4	14	6.31
Level 5	16	7.21
None	59	26.58
Tenure under supervisor		
< 1	22	9.91
1 – 5	173	77.93
6 – 10	19	8.56
≥ 11	8	3.60
Work System		
Working from Home	115	51.80
Not Working from Home	107	48.20
Number of employees within the company		
≤ 100 employees	173	77.9
101-200 employees	29	13.1
201-300 employees	7	3.2
301-400 employees	4	1.8
401-500 employees	1	0.5
601-700 employees	0	0
701-800 employees	5	2.3
801-900 employees	1	0.5
901-1000 employees	2	0.9

Note. *N* = 222. Age, tenure, and tenure under supervisor are presented in years.

Before conducting the hypothesis testing, we performed an assumption test including the normality of residuals and multicollinearity test to examine the quality and suitability of the research model for testing our hypotheses. The results of the normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov showed a nonsignificant result, ( $D = 0.113$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), meaning that the residuals in our study are normally distributed. Furthermore, the multicollinearity test results showed no signs of multicollinearity since all the independent variables have a tolerance value above 0.1 and VIF shows a score  $< 10$  (Hair et al., 2018), including: proactive personality (tolerance  $0.45 > 0.10$ ; VIF  $2.23 < 10$ ), job crafting (tolerance  $.44 > 0.10$ ; VIF  $2.30 < 10$ ), LMX (tolerance  $0.63 > 0.10$ ; VIF  $1.58 < 10$ ).

Table 2 shows the mean, the variable standard deviation, and the participant score dispersion. According to Table 2, it can be seen that proactive personality has the highest mean value of 4.52 (SD=0.69). Followed by calling with the mean value of 4.50 (SD=0.64) and job crafting with the mean value of 4.49 (SD=0.67). While LMX shows a lower mean value, that is 4.31 (SD=0.78). Even so, the results revealed that proactive personality, job crafting, LMX, and calling have a mean value of more than four. This means that the respondents of this study have quite high levels of

proactive personality (142 respondents), job crafting (149 respondents), LMX (128 respondents) and calling (157 respondents).

**Table 2**  
*Research Variables Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max	Frequency		
					Low	Moderate	High
PP	4.52	0.69	1.3	6	1	79	142
LMX	4.31	0.78	1.4	6	8	86	128
JC	4.49	0.67	1	6	4	69	149
CL	4.50	0.64	1.83	6	3	62	157

Note.  $N = 222$ . Range : 1-6, PP= Proactive Personality, LMX = Leader-Member Exchange, PDO = Power Distance Orientation, JC = Job Crafting, CL = Calling.

Meanwhile, Table 3 shows the mean, standard deviation and the intercorrelation of all study variables. A significant correlation was found on proactive personality ( $r = 0.56$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), LMX ( $r = 0.51$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and job crafting ( $r = 0.64$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) with calling. Demographic data such as age ( $r = 0.18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and gender ( $r = 0.15$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) also had a significant correlation with calling. Additionally, several other demographic data were correlated with other variables in the study. Therefore, demographic data such as gender, age, marital status, education level, tenure, and power distance orientation were included in the main analysis as covariates.

**Table 3**  
*Mean, Standard Deviation, and Intercorrelation of Study Variables*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1 Gender	-	-	1													
2 Age	30.76	7.14	0.19**	1												
3 Marital Status	1.60	0.50	0.15*	0.56**	1											
4 Education	3.00	0.57	0.02	0.29**	0.15*	1										
5 Tenure	6.74	6.06	0.14*	0.91**	0.50**	0.21**	1									
6 Number of Employees	1.54	1.52	-0.07	0.03	-0.10	0.09	0.004	1								
7 Occupational Level	3.24	2.01	0.05	-0.04	0.01	-0.14*	-0.04	0.10	1							
8 Tenure under supervisor	2.73	3.51	0.06	0.40**	0.26**	0.11	0.40**	-0.09	-0.002	1						
9 WFH	1.48	0.50	-0.04	0.04	0.05	-0.06	0.004	-0.01	0.02	0.02	1					
10 PP	4.52	0.69	0.16*	0.10	0.12	0.18**	0.10	-0.02	-0.02	0.06	-0.2	1				
11 LMX	4.31	0.78	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.11	0.15*	-0.06	0.04	0.12	-0.04	0.56**	1			
12 PDO	2.95	0.94	0.03	-0.10	0.01	-0.08	-0.09	-0.08	-0.08	0.07	-0.06	0.08	0.15*	1		
13 JC	4.49	0.67	0.13*	0.16*	0.22**	0.17*	0.13	-0.04	0.01	0.08	-0.10	0.72**	0.57**	0.07	1	
14 CL	4.50	0.64	0.18**	0.15*	0.13	0.09	0.12	-0.01	0.01	0.06	-0.09	0.56**	0.51**	0.08	0.64**	1

Note.  $N = 222$ . Age, tenure, and tenure under supervisor are presented in years. WFH = Work from Home, PP = Proactive Personality, LMX = Leader-Member Exchange, PDO = Power Distance Orientation, JC = Job Crafting, CL = Calling. \* $p < 0.05$ . \*\* $p < 0.01$ , (2-tailed).

Next, hypothesis testing was performed to investigate mediating role of job crafting and LMX in the relationship between proactive personality and calling. The hypothesis testing was carried out using mediation model analysis by Hayes (2013),

specifically using model 4. H1 was tested by analyzing the direct effect of proactive personality on calling. After controlling for the covariates as previously mentioned, a significant direct effect was found of proactive personality on calling ( $\beta = 0.14, t = 2.03, p < 0.05$ ) (path c'), H1 is supported.

**Table 4**  
*Summary of Mediation Model Statistics (PROCESS Model 4)*

Antecedent	M1 (JC)			M2(LMX)			Y (CL)		
	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p
Control Variables									
Gender	-0.01	0.07	-0.92	0.00	0.09	0.99	0.08	0.07	0.21
Age	0.01	0.01	0.41	-0.03	0.02	0.07	0.02	0.01	0.14
Marital Status	0.16	0.08	0.04	0.00	0.11	1.00	-0.07	0.08	0.41
Education Level	0.01	0.06	0.81	0.04	0.08	0.60	-0.06	0.06	0.30
Tenure	-0.01	0.01	0.43	0.04	0.02	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.33
PDO	0.01	0.03	0.73	0.10	0.05	0.04	0.01	0.04	0.77
Independent Variables									
X (PP)	(a1) 0.68	0.05	0.000	(a2) 0.61	0.07	0.000	(c) 0.50	0.54	0.000
							(c') 0.14	0.07	0.044
M1(JC)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(b1) 0.39	0.07	0.000
M2 (LMX)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(b2) 0.16	0.05	0.004
Constant	0.87	0.34	0.01	1.74	0.47	0.000	1.11	0.36	0.002
	$R^2 = 0.54$ $F(7,214) = 35.47,$ $p < 0.01$			$R^2 = .35$ $F(7,214) = 16.10,$ $p < 0.01$			$R^2 = 0.46$ $F(9,212) = 20.12,$ $p < 0.001$		

*Note.* The presented coefficient is the standardized regression coefficient. Results were obtained after controlling for gender, age, marital status, education level, tenure, and power distance orientation. SE = Standard Error. M1 = First Mediator. M2 = Second Mediator.

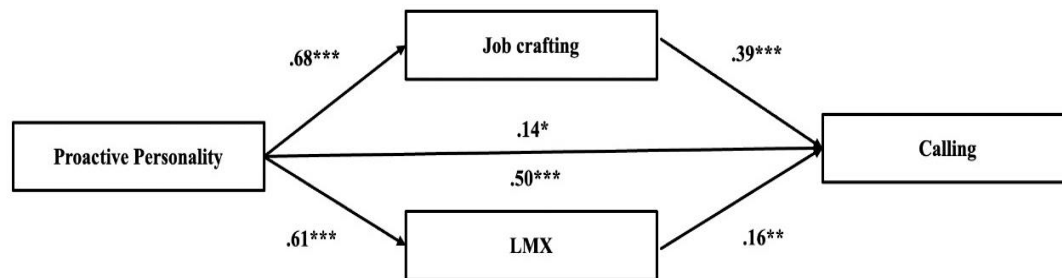
In addition, the mediation analysis revealed that proactive personality significantly predicts the two mediators, namely job crafting ( $\beta = 0.68, t = 14.48, p < 0.001$ ) (path a1) and LMX ( $\beta = 0.61, t = 9.36, p < 0.001$ ) (path a2). Proactive personality explained 54 percent and 35 percent of variance in job crafting and LMX, respectively. Furthermore, the results showed that employee calling was significantly predicted by the two mediators, namely job crafting ( $\beta = 0.39, t = 5.31, p < 0.001$ ) (path b1) and LMX ( $\beta = 0.16, t = 2.90, p < 0.01$ ) (path b2), which explained 46 percent of the variance in employee calling.

**Table 5**  
*Indirect Effect of each Mediator (PROCESS Model 4)*

Indirect Path	Standardized Indirect Effect		Bootstrap Bias-Corrected 95% Confidence Interval	
	$\beta$	SE	LLCI	ULCI
PP-JC-CL	0.29	0.08	0.14	0.44
PP-LMX-CL	0.10	0.05	0.01	0.20
Total	0.39	0.08	0.24	0.54

Note. PP = Proactive personality, JC = Job Crafting, LMX = Leader-Member Exchange, SE = Standard error, LLCI = Lower Limit Confidence Interval, ULCI = Upper Limit Confidence Interval

Table 5 reveals that there is a significant total indirect effect of the total proactive personality on calling ( $\beta = 0.39$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ , 95 percent confidence interval [CI] [0.24, 0.54]). Table 4 also demonstrates that both job crafting and LMX mediates the relationship between proactive personality and calling, hence both H2 and H3 are supported. Furthermore, the value of proactive personality indirect effect to calling is greater through job crafting ( $\beta = 0.29$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ , 95 percent confidence interval [CI] [0.14, 0.44]) compared through LMX ( $\beta = 0.10$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ , 95 percent confidence interval [CI] [0.01, 0.20]) (excluding zero). Compared with results in Table 4, we found that the two parallel mediations (i.e., job crafting and LMX) reduce the smaller yet significant direct effect of proactive personality and calling. Therefore, both job crafting and LMX can be concluded as partially mediated the relationship between proactive personality and calling. Figure 1 shows the mediation model and path coefficients.



**Figure 1**  
**Mediation Model between Proactive Personality and Calling**

Note. The direct and total effect coefficients between proactive personality and calling are presented respectively above and below the middle line that represent the path between the two variables. All coefficients presented are standardized coefficients. \* $p < 0.05$ . \*\* $p < 0.01$ . \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

## Discussion

This study was aimed to analyse the direct and indirect effects of proactive personality on employee calling through two mediators, including job crafting and the quality of leader-member exchange (LMX). The parallel multiple mediators' model was constructed based on the perspective of career construction theory (CCT) and social exchange theory (SET). This study not only contributes to explaining the mechanism of finding calling as an adaptation result from a CCT perspective (Riasnugrahani et al., 2019; Šverko & Babarović, 2018) but also depicts a more



comprehensive model that explains the importance of interactions between superiors and subordinates (i.e. LMX) as another mechanism in shaping and promoting positive work attitudes (Duarsa & Riantoputra, 2017), to the formation of employee calling in their work.

As a theoretical contribution of this study, a direct relationship between personality (i.e., proactive personality) and calling was proposed and validated. The findings of this study are in line with the perspective of CCT which emphasizes personality as an important characteristic in individuals adaptive readiness that encourage readiness to find calling (Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Previous studies have mostly demonstrated the relationship between individual personality (i.e., the Big Five) and calling (Duffy et al., 2018; Kovalčikienė & Daukilas, 2018; Qi et al., 2017), but have not focused on the role of specific personalities such as proactive personality that promotes individual readiness to discern their calling. According to Bakker et al. (2012) over the last 20 years, different studies have emphasized proactive personality as a trait that explains unique variations in predicting individual behaviour that is beyond the Big Five personality.

Employees with a high proactive personality will be able to build a good work environment by recognizing opportunities, taking personal initiatives, and until they can bring meaningful changes to their work environment (Bakker et al., 2012; Crant, 2000). Proactive employees bring these changes by adjusting their job needs and preferences to find meaning in their job (Berg et al., 2010; Duffy et al., 2012; Vermooten et al., 2019). Proactive employees can bring about these changes considering that they can create their opportunities to achieve effectiveness even when there is no situational support to be proactive (McCormick et al., 2019; Seibert et al., 2001). Moreover, proactive individuals are not only more successful, but they also respond more adaptively to their environment (Spurk et al., 2013). Proactive employees will possess good self-regulation in responding and adapting to their lives and working situation (Tolentino et al., 2014), so they may improve the situation to fit better with their needs and preferences to attain their desired meaning and calling. These findings provide a new understanding of the importance of a proactive personality as an employee's readiness to change their work environment so that they can bring positive adaptation results in the form of calling.

Another contribution from this study is that there is an indirect relationship between proactive personality and calling through job crafting as an adaptation response by employees. This is in line with the CCT perspective in which individuals with adaptive readiness will exhibit adaptive behavior as a form of adapting response such as job crafting which is performed to initiate change in accordance with their preference so that the individuals might attain meaningfulness leading to the finding of calling as the wanted result of adaptation. Individuals with a high proactive personality are characterized as someone who responds actively and adaptively, in addition to being more motivated and capable to change behavior for promoting

positive changes at work (Glaser et al., 2016; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Zhang et al., 2012). Consequently, proactive employees will be more likely to display proactive behavior in the form of job crafting. For example, proactive employees may change their job characteristics according to their initiatives and interests (Petrou et al., 2015; Vermooten et al., 2019) through physical and cognitive adjustments to the task or relational scope of their work (Slemp & Vella-brodrick, 2013; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). These results support previous findings that individuals with high proactive personalities are more likely to engage in proactive behaviors such as job crafting to bring about meaningful changes in their work (Bakker et al., 2012; Teng & Chen, 2019; Vermooten et al., 2019).

This study also demonstrates the role of job crafting as a mediator in the relationship between proactive personality and calling. This result is supported by several studies which have shown that employees will be more likely to discern their calling if they do job crafting work (Berg et al., 2010; Esteves & Lopes, 2016; Riasnugrahani et al., 2019). Furthermore, the results reveal that the value of proactive personality indirect effect via job crafting to calling is greater than the value of proactive personality direct effect to calling. One possible explanation of these findings is that proactive employees who change their environment through job crafting are more capable to align the demands and work resources they have with their abilities and needs to achieve conformity with their preferences in work (Bakker et al., 2012). Thus, proactive employees who engage in proactive behavior in the form of job crafting will certainly know more about problem-solving strategies in their work such that they can bring out the meaning of work and happiness in their process of finding calling (Berg et al., 2010; Vermooten et al., 2019). In conclusion, this study specifically provides new insights by demonstrating that employees with a high proactive personality will be more likely to discern their calling when they do job crafting in their work.

In contrast to previous studies, this study reveals that calling can be discerned not only when employees do job crafting, but also when employees incorporate external support through social interactions such as leader-member exchange (LMX). Proactive employees are capable of building high quality LMX relationships with their supervisors (Wijaya, 2019; Zhang et al., 2012). Proactive employees have a better understanding of the importance to build strong connections with their supervisors and have a higher level of adaptability which facilitate positive relationships with their supervisors (Gong et al., 2012; Sun & Van Emmerik, 2015). Proactive employees can foster positive relationship by utilizing the political skills that are often used to interact with supervisors (Seibert et al., 2001). Consequently, a strong relationship between supervisors and proactive employees are more likely to occur because supervisors tend to appreciate and frequently provide emotional support to proactive employees who respond positively (Li et al., 2010; Shi et al., 2013).

The findings are also in line with several studies suggesting that a high-quality LMX that is built through networking behavior can reciprocate positive attitudes or work results (Wijaya, 2019; Yang & Chau, 2016) such that it brings benefits, especially in providing social networks, access to information and job resources (Gupta & Chadha, 2017; Thompson, 2005). Moreover, supervisors can promote work meaning by providing broader as well as meaningful goals and missions as a role model for employees to find calling (Xie et al., 2019). This study further corroborates that support and resources from superior acquired through quality LMX will be beneficial in increasing the employees' significance and sense of meaningfulness in attaining positive outcomes in their work (Lan et al., 2017). The availability of job resources which is acquired through interactions between supervisors and employees can facilitate the process of finding of calling among employees. This research is in line with the perspective of SET which emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between superiors and their subordinates (Cropanzano et al., 2017). When proactive employees build a good relationship with their superiors through their skills and capabilities in developing quality LMX, they get positive response from their superiors by being given support and opportunity through resources, leading the employees to feel motivated to find the calling in their job.

The results also demonstrate that the value of proactive personality indirect effect to calling via LMX is weaker than the value of proactive personality direct effect to calling. These results suggest the impact of a crisis such as the current COVID-19 situation. The COVID-19 pandemic may affect the quality of interactions between leaders and their employees because it introduces a communication barrier, for example, due to poor communication style of the leaders (Talu & Nazarov, 2020). Moreover, the isolation and decrease of face-to-face communication caused by COVID-19 pandemic may affect the quality of LMX between leaders and employees, since its quality depends on how frequently they both interact. Kacmar et al., (2003) demonstrated that LMX has substantially less effect when an interaction is infrequent. In addition, the added challenges faced by proactive employees during this pandemic may also pose more difficult for them to identify opportunities to improve relationships with their leaders who are less proactive during a crisis. When these differences in personal characteristics and personality traits exist between leaders and employees, it can lead to low-quality LMX (Zhang et al., 2012), which the proactive employees might end up accept and adapt to this relationship. However, the LMX still has a positive mediating role in the relationship between proactive personality and employee calling. This is because the quality of the LMX that has been established could still promote job resources in the form of autonomy, positive feedback, and social support (Breevaart et al., 2015) such that it provides employees with the flexibility and motivation to proactively adapt and shape various experiences to find calling in their work. These explanations are similar to that found in Prasetyaningtyas et al., (2020) which emphasizes the importance of leaders as a role model for employees in encouraging the acquisition of knowledge resources and various experiences, as well

as in providing support to help employees find calling in the work (Esteves et al., 2018). These findings answer the call of previous studies to investigate the role of supervisor interactions that affect various work outcomes or employee adaptations such as calling (Duarsa & Riantoputra, 2017; Riasnugrahani et al., 2019).

## **CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND SUGGESTION**

This study provides preliminary empirical evidence that supports the theoretical conceptualization of a dual path in explaining the effect of proactive personality on calling which is based on the perspective of career construction theory (CCT) and social exchange theory (SET). The research models explain 46 percent of variance in calling which both mediators mediate the relationship between proactive personality and calling. From the perspective of CCT, it can be inferred that calling (as an adaptation result) can be found in employees with proactive personality (as adaptive readiness) and perform job crafting (as adapting response). While SET perspective suggests that calling may also be found in employees with proactive personality in the form of LMX through having a positive interaction with their superiors.

This research also provides practical implications for the development of human resource (HR) practices. The results of this study indicate that proactive personality, job crafting, and LMX have a significant effect on employees' journey of discerning calling. By looking at the importance of these factors, practical implications can be made for company managers to develop, improve, and provide relevant practices in promoting the discernment of calling. Managers can support their employees in finding calling by ensuring and establishing organizational climate and HR practices that facilitate meaningful work. The managers or HR practitioners can facilitate a supportive climate by opening up a discussion about their employees or clients' understanding of their calling and the factors that might influence the emergence of their calling. HR practitioners might employ an assessment using Meaning of Life Questionnaire (MLQ) to facilitate discussion and to determine if the clients have formulated or have been seeking meaning which is an integral component of calling, later the practitioners can aid their clients in guiding them to find their calling in their job (Adams, 2012; Lau et al., 2020). Our findings show the importance of proactivity for employees and organizations. Thus, managers should consider proactive personality in talent acquisition and recruitment to acquire change-oriented employees to increase the effectiveness of both the organization and the individuals within (Vermooten et al., 2019). Furthermore, job crafting can be encouraged by providing resources through autonomy support which provide opportunities for employees to arrange tasks or change work boundaries according to their skills and preferences (Geldenhuis et al., 2020). The findings also indicate that employers have a crucial role in employees' calling emergence through having quality superior-

subordinate relationships. Thus, it is also important for managers to learn ways to facilitate employee initiatives of building and maintaining good relationships with their employees. One of the ways it can be done is by providing leadership training program which may improve the quality of LMX between managers and employees (Schermyly et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2012).

This study also found few limitations that are expected to be addressed in future studies. First, the cross-sectional design of this study prevents drawing any causal relationship between variables. Additionally, the cross-sectional design of this study poses a risk of common method bias (CMB). Nevertheless, Herman single-factor test revealed that there was no evidence of CMB (the first factor accounted for less than 50 percent of the variance). Further studies are needed to anticipate and reduce the risk of CMB by introducing time differences in data collection, including the use of time-lagged or longitudinal research, to examine the relationship of variables in this study and test their dynamics over time. Second, this study involves the quality of the relationship between leaders and employees, but the data is only acquired from one data source, namely the employees, which poses another risk of CMB. Thus, future studies should also incorporate other data sources, such as the supervisors' assessment, to get an objective response and reduce (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Lastly, this research was unable to distinguish between private and public owned banks while the difference in HR practices and the policies in between those institutions might influence the employees' perception of LMX quality which may be affecting the employees' calling emergence in this study. This might be possible considering that previous study indicates that public sector bank employees have a better perception of the HR practices and policies compared to their private-sector counterparts, even the leader in public sector has a more influential role in enforcing procedural justice, which predicts a better relationship between superior and subordinate (Sahni & Sinha, 2020). Therefore, future studies should put the distinction in classifying the public and private-owned banks.

Although the results of this study demonstrate the mediating role of job crafting in the relationship between proactive personality and calling, more research is still needed to empirically test the mechanisms underlying these effects. For example, researchers have proposed job crafting as a construct that provides opportunities for proactive employees to increase challenges and resources, and reduce job demands that hinder their process in finding calling (Bakker et al., 2012; Riasnugrahani et al., 2019; Tims et al., 2013). In addition, a study by Wibawa et al. (2021) found that highly educated young employees tend to respond differently to job demands and resources in which they perceive emotional demands, not as challenges or opportunities, but as a trigger of stress such that it will affect their work behavior. Therefore, future research needs to investigate and re-examine the mechanism of finding calling through job crafting among groups of young and highly educated employees.

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