

The Effect of Career Calling on Learning Engagement Mediated by Career Adaptability on Final Students of the Faculty of Business Economics at State University of Padang

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Abstract: The development of higher education requires students to have career readiness and active involvement in the learning process in order to achieve academic and professional success. One important factor that influences learning engagement is career calling, which can increase students' intrinsic motivation in attending lectures. This study aims to analyze the effect of career calling on learning engagement mediated by career adaptability in final year students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University. This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research method. Data were collected through a Google Form questionnaire distributed to 280 students and analyzed using the SmartPLS v.4.0.9.9 application. The results of the study indicate that: (1) Career Calling has a positive and significant effect on Learning Engagement; (2) Career Calling has a positive and significant effect on Career Adaptability; (3) Career Adaptability has a positive and significant effect on Learning Engagement; and (4) Career Adaptability is able to positively and significantly mediate the effect of Career Calling on Learning Engagement. These findings reinforce the importance of developing career calling and career adaptability as strategies to increase student learning engagement before the transition to the world of work.

Keywords: Career Adaptability; Career Calling; Learning Engagement

1. Introduction

Students are in an essential phase of transition from education to the world of work, where academic success is crucial in shaping career readiness. Academic success is not only seen from the achievement of grades, but also from the active involvement of students in the learning process (learning engagement). This engagement includes behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects that indicate the extent to which students are focused, enthusiastic, and dedicated to their learning (Chen & Zhang, 2023; Reeve & Tseng, 2011). Learning engagement is one of the strongest predictors in supporting meaningful learning, preventing dropout rates, and encouraging student well-being and career readiness (Jian et al., 2023). However, pre-survey data conducted on final year students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University, showed that only 46.7% of students had a high level of learning engagement, with 66.7% stating that they were not always enthusiastic about participating in the learning process.

Table 1. Results of the Pre-Survey of Learning Engagement of Final Year Students of FEB UNP (n=30)

No	Question	Agree (Σ)	Agree (%)	Disagree (Σ)	Disagree (%)
1	I focus optimally on every learning process	21	70%	9	30%

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2	I always show high dedication in the learning process	11	36,7%	19	63,3%
3	I am always enthusiastic in following the learning process	10	33,3%	20	66,7%
	Average		46,7%		53,3%

This low learning engagement raises questions about the factors that influence it. One factor that stands out in the current literature is career calling, an individual's feeling or belief in their career goals as a meaningful life calling. Students with a strong career calling tend to be more enthusiastic and involved in learning because they see the learning process as part of realizing their ideal career (Shang et al., 2022; Dik & Duffy, 2009).

However, career calling alone is not enough. The ability to adapt to changes and challenges in the world of work, known as career adaptability, also plays an important role. Career adaptability includes concerns for the future, self-control, curiosity, and confidence in a career (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). A pre-survey showed that only 54.4% of final year students had good career adaptability.

Table 2. Results of the Pre-Survey of Career Adaptability of Final Year Students of FEB UNP (n=30)

No	Question	Agree (Σ)	Agree (%)	Disagree (Σ)	Disagree (%)
1	I think about my future	21	70%	9	30%
2	I am responsible for my actions	13	43,3%	17	56,7%
3	I can overcome obstacles	15	50%	15	50%
	Average		54,4%		45,6%

In addition, career calling also shows a positive relationship with career adaptability. Students with a strong career calling usually have more flexibility when facing challenges and are more ready to adapt to changes in the work environment (J. Chen & Zhang, 2023). The pre-survey results on career calling support this, where only about 54.5% of students showed a good level of career calling.

Table 3. Results of the Pre-Career Calling Survey of Final Year FEB UNP Students (n=30)

No	Question	Agree (Σ)	Setuju (%)	Disagree (Σ)	Disagree (%)
1	I have a deep interest in a particular type of work.	17	56,7%	13	43,3%
2	I have a clear understanding of my life's calling in my career.	15	50%	15	50%
3	I am trying to understand and find the most suitable career calling.	17	56,7%	13	43,3%
	Average		54,5%		45,5%

Previous studies have shown that career adaptability can mediate the relationship between career calling and learning engagement (Shang et al., 2022). This means that students with high career calling and flexibility are more likely to be actively involved in the learning process.

Considering the gap in student study completion, the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Padang, is a relevant location for this study. Out of 1,332 students in the 2021 intake, only 912 graduated on time (Data TU FEB UNP, 2024). This phenomenon shows the importance of understanding psychosocial factors such as career calling and adaptability, contributing to student academic engagement.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of career calling on learning engagement mediated by career adaptability in final-year students. The results are expected to be the basis for formulating learning strategies and career development for students in higher education.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard Ryan (1985), explains that human motivation is influenced by fulfilling three basic psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. When these three needs are met, the individual will experience autonomous motivation, namely motivation that comes from oneself (intrinsic) or that is driven by personal values from external results (extrinsic) (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Gagne et al., 2014). Intrinsic motivation drives individuals to carry out an activity voluntarily and enjoyably, while extrinsic motivation is more instrumental and directed towards obtaining specific results (Ryan & Deci, 2019). In education and career, this theory explains that individuals will actively choose behaviors that support their development, such as making career decisions and showing learning engagement (Rothes et al., 2022; J. Chen & Zhang, 2023). SDT is also closely related to career calling and career adaptability, because the fulfillment of competence and autonomy will strengthen self-confidence in achieving career calling and the ability to adapt to the dynamics of the world of work (Chang et al., 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Thus, SDT becomes an important framework in understanding career motivation and student learning engagement.

2.2 Learning Engagement

Learning engagement refers to students' active involvement in the learning process, both affectively and cognitively. This concept is adapted from work engagement and is defined as a long-term positive condition characterized by enthusiasm, dedication, and deep interest in learning activities (Shang et al., 2022; Ying et al., 2023). Students with high learning engagement show enthusiasm, full concentration, and mental resilience in facing academic challenges (J. Chen & Zhang, 2023). This engagement also reflects the allocation of time and

energy for educational activities, both in and out of class (Liu et al., 2023). It is an important indicator of academic achievement and the quality of university education (Fredricks et al., 2004).

Factors that influence learning engagement include individual aspects such as motivation and mental resilience, family factors such as education and parental expectations, and school factors such as teacher support and academic climate (X. Chen & Wang, 2023). In addition, career calling and career adaptability also have a significant effect on student learning engagement (J. Chen & Zhang, 2023).

According to J. According to Chen & Zhang (2023), the three leading indicators of learning engagement are vigor (high enthusiasm and mental resilience in learning), dedication (emotional involvement and commitment to learning), and absorption (full concentration to the point of immersion in learning activities). Thus, learning engagement is important in encouraging academic success and preventing learning fatigue.

2.3 Career Calling

Career calling is a deep belief and passion for a meaningful job or career that aligns with one's life goals. Dik et al. (2012) define calling as a search and experience that provides meaning and alignment with overall life goals. In a professional context, career calling refers to a sustained passion for a particular job, which provides a broader purpose and direction in life (Dobrow et al., 2011). Individuals with a career calling often feel that their work has a prosocial purpose, namely benefiting others, and not only focusing on material rewards (Zhang et al., 2020). Career calling is also closely related to academic satisfaction and career decision-making, especially in students, where those with a high career calling tend to be more active in developing themselves and achieving academic satisfaction (Duffy et al., 2011). Career calling is important in forming a more meaningful and impactful career. There are two leading indicators of career calling according to Dik et al. (2012):

- a. Presence: Refers to individuals who feel a calling in their career, which drives them to make positive contributions and undergo self-development (Elangovan et al., 2010).
- b. Search: Individuals who do not feel a calling but actively seek meaning in their work or career, driving self-expression and happiness in life (Li et al., 2021).

Thus, career calling helps individuals find deeper meaning in their work.

2.4 Career Adaptability

Career adaptability is the ability of individuals to adapt to changes in career conditions and plan their future career development. According to Savickas & Porfeli (2012), this includes readiness to face predictable tasks and adjustments to unpredictable situations due to changes in work conditions. Career adaptability reflects attitudes, competencies, and

behaviors that help individuals manage current and future career challenges (Savickas, 1997). There are four leading indicators of career adaptability:

- a. Concern: Concern for the future and readiness to plan and prepare for a career (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).
- b. Control: Individuals' ability to manage themselves, regulate career development, and recognize personal responsibility in shaping their career paths (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).
- c. Curiosity: Ability to explore various career options and opportunities in the professional environment (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).
- d. 4. Confidence: Individuals' belief in their ability to overcome obstacles and realize their career goals (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Factors that influence career adaptability include age, gender, work experience, family, educational institutions, and socioeconomic status. Individuals with relevant work experience and family support tend to be more prepared for change and plan their careers more maturely.

2.5 Previous Research

A study by Chen and Zhang (2023) entitled 'The Impact of Career Calling on Higher Vocational Nursing Students' Learning Engagement: The Mediating Roles of Career Adaptability and Career Commitment' was conducted on 388 nursing students at two vocational colleges in China. The results showed that career calling had a positive effect on learning engagement, and this relationship was significantly mediated by career adaptability. This study also showed a positive relationship between career calling and career adaptability.

Shang et al. (2022) in their study involving 1,029 prospective teachers at Chinese universities, showed that career calling had a significant and positive effect on learning engagement, with occupational self-efficacy and vocational outcome expectations as mediators in a multiple mediation model.

Research by Liu et al. (2023) involved 300 engineering students from various universities in Indonesia. Using the stratified random sampling method, this study found that professional identity had a positive effect on career adaptability, and learning engagement acted as a mediator in the relationship.

Meanwhile, Oliveira and Marques' (2024) research on 201 college students showed that career adaptability has a positive relationship with engagement and life satisfaction. Douglas and Duffy (2015) studied 330 undergraduate students from various academic backgrounds. The results showed that calling has a positive relationship with career adaptability, especially in the aspects of concern and confidence.

3. Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research type, which aims to test the causal relationship between the independent variable career calling, the mediating variable career adaptability, and the dependent variable learning engagement. The analysis technique used is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Square (PLS-SEM) approach, using SmartPLS 4 software.

The population in this study were all final year students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University, totaling 937 people. The sample determination used the probability sampling technique with a cluster random sampling approach. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with an error rate of 10%, resulting in a sample of 280 respondents.

Table 4. Number of Population and Research Sample

No	Study Program	Number of Students	Sample
1	Accounting	252	75
2	Economic Education	239	71
3	Management	253	76
4	Development Economics	193	58
	Total	937	280

- Learning Engagement (Chen & Zhang, 2023)
- Measured through indicators of vigor, dedication, and absorption.
- Career Calling (Dik et al., 2012)
- Measured through presence and search.
- Career Adaptability (Carson & Bedeian, 1994)
- Measured through career identity, career planning, and career resilience.

Primary data were obtained through an online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. Secondary data were obtained from official documents of universities and related agencies.

Table 5. Likert Scale Used

Score	Information
1	Strongly Agree
2	Agree
3	Neutral
4	Disagree
5	Strongly Disagree

Analysis is carried out in two stages:

a. Descriptive Analysis

Calculating frequency, percentage, and average to describe demographic data and respondent responses.

b. Inferential Analysis (PLS-SEM)

- Outer Model: Test validity (convergent and discriminant) and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability).
- Inner Model: Test the relationship between variables using path coefficient, R^2 , and t-statistics.

Table 6. Measurement Model Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Minimum Value	Information
Loading Factor	> 0,70	Indicator validity
AVE	> 0,50	Convergent validity
Composite Reliability	> 0,70	Construct reliability
Cronbach's Alpha	> 0,60	Internal consistency

4. Results and Discussion

This study involved 280 active undergraduate students of the 2021 intake from the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University, spread across four departments: Accounting, Management, Economic Education, and Development Economics. The sampling technique used was cluster random sampling.

Based on the characteristics of the respondents, the majority were female (74.3%). Distribution by department showed that the largest number of respondents came from the Management Department (27.1%), followed by Accounting (26.8%), Economic Education (25.4%), and Development Economics (20.7%).

a. Description of Learning Engagement Variable (Y)

The learning engagement variable is measured through three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. The results of data processing show that all dimensions are in the sufficient category. The average overall score of the variable is 3.63 with a respondent achievement level (TCR) of 72%. This shows that students' learning engagement is quite sufficient and still needs strengthening to improve the quality of their learning.

b. Description of Career Calling Variable (X)

The career calling variable consists of two dimensions: presence and search. Both dimensions are also in the sufficient category, with an average overall score of 3.70 and a TCR of 73.89%. This indicates that students have sufficient awareness of the meaning and purpose of their careers, but this needs to be strengthened through a more systematic career development strategy.

c. Description of Career Adaptability Variable (Z)

The career adaptability variable includes four dimensions: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. The concern dimension shows the highest results and is included in the high category (TCR 81.20%), while the other three dimensions are in the sufficient category. The overall mean for this variable is 3.98 with a TCR of 79.26%.

This indicates that students have good adaptive readiness for careers, but there is still room for improvement, especially in terms of self-control, career exploration, and self-confidence.

The three research variables, namely career calling, learning engagement, and career adaptability, show the level of achievement of respondents in the sufficient category, which emphasizes the importance of strengthening academic and career interventions to encourage learning engagement and adaptive readiness of students in facing the world of work.

This study examines the effect of career calling on learning engagement with career adaptability as a mediating variable in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University. The theoretical framework of this study uses the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) from Deci and Ryan (1985), which emphasizes that psychological needs such as competence, autonomy, and attachment are drivers of individual motivation. SDT is relevant to the three variables in this study and is related to positive educational outcomes, including learning engagement (Rothes et al., 2022). This theory also shows that fulfilling psychological needs encourages the integration of motivation and personality (Ryan & Deci, 2000), so that career calling can increase adaptability and involvement in career development (Chang et al., 2020).

4.1 . The Influence of Career Calling on Learning Engagement

This study shows that career calling has a significant and positive effect on learning engagement in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University. The average score of the career calling variable is 3.6975 (TCR 73.89%) and learning engagement is 3.63 (TCR 72%) indicating that both are in the sufficient category, which means that they still need to be improved. Regression analysis shows a path coefficient value of 0.825 with a t count of 35.467, which is greater than the t table (1.96), indicating a significant influence between the two variables.

Career calling is understood as an internal drive or spiritual motivation that makes students more focused and active in preparing for their future careers. Students with a high level of career calling tend to have greater learning involvement, are future-oriented, and active in career planning and development. This is reinforced by research by Chen & Zhang (2023) and Shang et al. (2022), which found a positive and significant relationship between career calling and learning engagement.

According to Strauss et al. (2012), career calling can encourage positive career behavior. Students who have it will be more adaptable, actively involved in career activities, and have broader experiences and knowledge (Hirschi, 2011; Hirschi & Herrmann, 2013). Logically, a strong career calling provides a clear foundation in achieving career success, through increased learning engagement as a form of learning adaptation and self-development. Active

involvement in learning allows students to acquire relevant skills and knowledge, expand their professional network, and increase readiness to face future challenges.

4.2 The Influence of Career Calling on Career Adaptability

This study shows that career calling has a significant and positive effect on career adaptability in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University. The average career calling score of 3.6975 (TCR 73.89%) and career adaptability of 3.9765 (TCR 79.26%) indicate that both are still in the sufficient category and need to be improved. The results of the regression analysis show a path coefficient value of 0.240 with a calculated t of 3.729 which is greater than the t table (1.96), which means that there is a significant influence between career calling and career adaptability.

Career adaptability is an individual's ability to face transitions, challenges, or obstacles in the process of achieving career goals, as well as the ability to carry out tasks related to the chosen field of study or major (Fu & Chen, 2015; Kim et al., 2020). Students who have a strong career calling tend to have an understanding and clarity of direction towards the career they want to achieve, so they are better able to adapt to career demands and environmental changes.

This study is supported by the results of the studies of Chen & Zhang (2023), Ke et al. (2020), and Zhang & Chen (2019) which show that career calling has a positive relationship with career adaptability. Afsar et al. (2019) also found that individuals with high career calling tend to show greater adaptability. Thus, it can be concluded that the stronger the career calling that students have, the higher their ability to adapt to developments and demands of the world of work. This will increase students' confidence in planning, managing, and maintaining their career goals in the future more effectively and steadily.

4.3 The Influence of Career Adaptability on Learning Engagement

This study shows that career adaptability has a negative and insignificant effect on learning engagement in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University. The results of the analysis show a path coefficient value of -0.020 with a t count of 0.542, smaller than the t table of 1.96. This means that, although career adaptability is in the fairly high category (average score of 3.9765 and TCR of 79.26%), it does not directly encourage increased learning engagement, which is also still in the sufficient category (average score of 3.63 and TCR of 72%).

Theoretically, career adaptability is expected to encourage learning engagement because individuals with high adaptability are better prepared to face career challenges. However, the results of this study deviate from these expectations. One explanation is that students with high career adaptability tend to focus more on activities outside the classroom such as internships, training, or organizations, which they consider more relevant to career development than formal learning in the classroom.

The mismatch between lecture material and students' career expectations also contributes to low learning engagement, even though their adaptability is high. In addition, students with high career adaptability can experience psychological stress due to high expectations of themselves, which if not balanced with strong mental resilience, can reduce enthusiasm and participation in learning. Thus, increasing career adaptability does not guarantee high learning engagement if the learning context is considered less relevant. Therefore, it is important for educational institutions to ensure that classroom learning is integrated with students' career needs, while strengthening their psychological resilience in facing academic and career challenges.

4.4 The Influence of Career Calling on Learning Engagement Through Career Adaptability as a Mediating Variable

This study shows that career calling does not significantly affect learning engagement through career adaptability as a mediating variable in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University. The results of the statistical test showed a t value of 0.501, smaller than the t table value of 1.96, and the original sample value of -0.005. This indicates that the indirect effect of career calling on learning engagement through career adaptability is negative and insignificant.

This finding contradicts the initial assumption that career calling should encourage learning engagement by increasing career adaptability. One logical explanation for this result is that students who have high career calling tend to set very idealistic and specific career expectations. When these expectations do not match the reality of learning on campus, they can experience disappointment, which causes a decrease in motivation to be actively involved in learning.

In addition, internal or external pressure to fulfill this career calling can cause anxiety that interferes with learning focus. Students with high career calling may feel that the educational process they are undergoing is not relevant to their career goals, so that learning engagement decreases.

Therefore, in order for career calling to truly support learning engagement, it needs to be balanced with an adequate level of career adaptability. This emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach such as realistic career guidance and social support from family and friends. The combination of a strong career understanding and adaptability will help students stay motivated and actively involved in the learning process despite facing challenges.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that career calling has a positive and significant influence on learning engagement and career adaptability in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Padang State University. This means that the higher the students' perception of

their career calling, the higher their involvement in the learning process and their ability to adapt to changes and challenges in career planning. However, career adaptability does not have a significant effect on learning engagement, and is unable to mediate the relationship between career calling and learning engagement. This finding indicates that developing career adaptability alone is not enough to increase learning engagement if it is not accompanied by the relevance of lecture materials to students' career goals. Therefore, educational interventions are needed that support the alignment between career goals, curriculum, and realistic career mentoring in order to increase students' motivation and involvement in the learning process.

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