

# An Interplay Between Reflective Thinking and Career Calling

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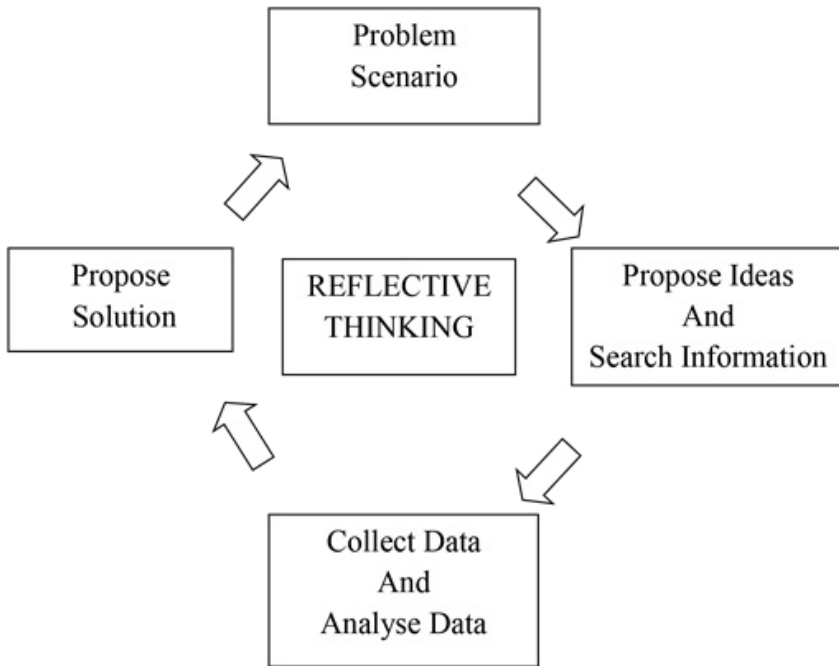
## Abstract

This paper is a theoretical review of the phenomenon of reflective thinking and its impact on an individual's calling in terms of career. Reflective thinking can be a strong motivator for exhibiting influence and positive reflection. The influence of reflective thinking on career calling can be seen due to peer support and personal support. Also, unique variance in task performance can be ascertained because of career calling. The existing research on reflective thinking is reviewed in the current paper, showing its significance for the adult population and emphasizing connections between reflective thinking and career calling. It can be concluded that reflective thinking helps an individual facilitate changes and to learn from experiences with deeper understanding, resulting in an exhilarating sense of achievement.

**Keywords:** Reflective thinking, self-monitoring, career calling, peer support, personal support.

## Introduction and background

According to Dewey (1933), Reflective thinking is an active, on-going, and deliberate assessment of credibility or insight on any specific topic and further conclusions to which the knowledge leads. Reflective Thinking is the process of analysing and processing what has happened. Individuals/learners participate in Reflective Thinking by assessing what they know, what they need to assess, and how to see through the gap while they are in learning stages or situations. KaAMS model of reflective thinking has been shown below.



KaAMS promoted Reflective Thinking by:-

- (1) Structuring lesson plan to support Reflective Thinking.
- (2) Providing lesson components that prompt inquiry and curiosity.
- (3) Providing resources and hand on activities to promote exploration
- (4) Providing Reflective Thinking activities that prompt individuals to think about what they have done and what they still do.
- (5) Providing reflective activity worksheets for each lesson plan to prompt individuals to think about what they know, what they learned and what they need to know as they progress through their exploration.

The phrase we use to describe work most frequently in the secular world is “career.” Its roots can be found in the Mediaeval Latin noun *carraria*, meaning “a road for vehicles.” A career calling occurs when you are

pulled to a particular line of work and feel emotionally invested in it. A person who views their job as a calling is more likely to feel a strong sense of congruence between their career and their personal identity. When a person has a sense of calling in their employment, or when they have a sense of purpose in the work they undertake it is understood as their calling in that certain line of work. One way to conceptualise a person's career is as a journey through education, work, and other aspects of life. A career calling is when you are emotionally committed to and feel called to a certain field of work. For someone who sees their work as a calling, there is a greater chance that they may have a deep sense of alignment between their career and their personal identity. When an individual feels that their work has meaning for them or when they have a sense of calling in it. There is no requirement for this sense of calling to be connected to a certain faith (Hall & Chandler, 2005). They have a feeling of purpose, are enthusiastic, and are willing to work harder and stay later to make a difference. Not surprisingly, this group often reports being the most satisfied with their workplace.

### **Purpose**

The present paper aims to explore the relationship between Reflective Thinking and Career Calling.

### **Method**

- (1) Theoretical approach was used to review the literature of Reflective Thinking and Career Calling for the conceptual understanding.
- (2) Almost 45 journals were reviewed along with 4 books and a few blog posts focusing on the researches happened after the year 2000.

### **Review of Literature**

Fwu, Chen, Wei & Wang (2018), examined the significance of critical reflection on effort-making in academic failure. Examining the effortful behaviour, negative feelings, effort beliefs, and academic failure attributing behaviours of samples of 281 Taiwanese 10th graders. To analyse the data, structural equation modelling was employed. The findings revealed that

participants' feelings of debt to their parents and to themselves continued to motivate them even after scholastic failure. Additionally, two avenues were opened up by obligation-oriented ideas, one by directly influencing effortful behaviours without any sense of indebtedness and the other via an indebtedness-driven sense of subsequent effort making. This study has, in essence, shown the psychological underpinnings of reflective thinking.

Baron (1981), highlighted that reflective thinking ought to be encouraged by education. He stated that Reflective Thinking considers options and reasons before choosing a path or considering a belief. A general normative model of reflective thinking was put forth by Baron (1981) and included the steps of reasoning, revision, enumeration of possibilities, and evaluation. Each of the phases previously stated has at least one parameter guiding it and at least one rule for determining the ideal value. Therefore, rather than under ideal settings, average conditions were preferable for measuring individual differences. The findings demonstrated that values, beliefs, emotions, habits, and education may all have an impact on how a parameter was established, and that reflective thinking may need to deal with all of these.

Phan (2007), analysed the causal and mediating relations between different learning approaches used by students. The approaches in this study were self-efficacy beliefs, academic performance and stages of reflective thinking. A sample of 241 second year graduates were taken and Biggs Study Process Questionnaire, The Reflective Thinking Questionnaire and Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire was used for the study. The results demonstrated that self-efficacy directly predicted the stages of reflective thinking, and reflective thinking negatively influenced academic performance. The stages of reflective thinking in this case were discovered to link casually and superficially.

Brown and Gillis (1999) in this study had emphasized on using Reflective Thinking to develop personal professional philosophies. Here, they discussed about reflective thinking as a learning process for students in developing and helping them develop professional and personal philosophies. Opportunities where Reflective Thinking could be used by nurses, teachers, and educators involved student's own experiences, media presentations and actual case studies. The conclusion of this study was that Reflective Thinking helped students develop and encourage in viewing themselves been involved in the profession of their choice in the future.

Phan (2010), studied the three theoretical framework i.e., epistemologi-

cal beliefs, reflective thinking and learning styles in their totality. It was a longitudinal study done with a sample of 616 participants both male and female who were arts student and 581 participants from Mathematics background. The results show that Reflective Thinking has lesser effect on epistemological beliefs involving arts student and in the case of mathematics students both learning approaches and epistemological beliefs predicted academic performances and reflective thinking. Within this investigation, the three theoretical frameworks were combined.

Duffy, Douglass, Autin & Alan (2014), examined career calling among undergraduate students: indicators and results over a 3 month period with 292 participants and over two time period. Through the use of structural equation modelling, it was determined to what extent professional calling, life meaning, occupational clarity, the search for meaning in life, and personal growth would predict the same variable in Time 2. The results showed that the search for meaning in life and personal growth were significantly predicted by work calling. Additionally, the presence of a calling was highly predicted by vocational self-clarity.

Smith & Long (2019), explored about the power of reflecting on Purpose and Career involving 10 women leaders perspectives. The participants were first asked to write and then they did a semi-structured interview. The findings created a three sub themes from the narratives collected by the participants. Firstly, Reflection helped women in knowing when their actions and decisions were useful and powerful even though it was not clear to them at that point of time. Secondly, a clearer identification and articulation of leadership philosophy was seen by the participants while reflecting on purpose. Thirdly, as the participants mentioned that sharing their narratives encouraged them and helped them in identifying times of leadership, they mentioned about the intent to use it to make future decisions as well.

Dix (2020), studied about late-career authors' critical self-reflection on vocational calling to career construction. The author has discussed about the issues and its potential which can be enhanced by Career Construction Theory (CCT). The author concluded by saying that CCT presents Career Construction as a framework to what is specific to late-career works. Also, certain light was thrown into the writers later stage of the career where different forms of self-reflection was seen and different assessment of individual vision with collective aspirations and social themes was likely to be found in the future.

Duffy & Sedlacek (2007), examined the existence of a calling and the pursuit of one in relation to career growth. A total of 3091 college students from 1<sup>st</sup> year participated in this study. A calling was positively connected with self-clarity, comfort, and decidedness, and negatively correlated with lack of education and indecision. The Search for a Calling was negatively connected with decidedness, comfort, and self-clarity and positively correlated with indecision and a lack of educational knowledge. This study found that the calling variables added 5% and 8% of variance for choosing comfort and career decidedness, respectively.

Duffy, Alan, Bott & Dik (2013), looked at the external summons, destiny, and perfect match as the sources of calling. The relationship between three different sources of calling and levels of living a calling, career satisfaction, and life fulfilment was examined in this study. 200 working adults in total took part in this study. The source group that best reflected each participant's calling was asked to be chosen by the participants. The findings revealed no discernible variations in terms of following one's calling, work satisfaction, or overall happiness amongst the three primary source groups. But group participation ought to play a strong moderating role in the relationship between following one's calling and finding happiness in life. Participants who supported a destiny concept reported higher levels of life satisfaction than those who supported alternative sources. According to the findings, a person's source of calling doesn't really matter in terms of their level of life satisfaction as long as they feel as though they are following their calling.

## **Discussion**

The present paper is a theoretical review of the relationship between reflective thinking and career calling. As understood from the reviewed studies, reflective thinking and career calling have adverse effect on each other. Fwu, Chen, Wei & Wang (2018), discovered that reflective thinking was crucial to the actions taken from failure to retrieval: Reflective Thinking was characterized as cognitive endeavour in this study. Baron (1981) studied about Dewey's (1933) theory; he listed five phases of thinking: Problem Recognition, Information Search, Alternative Evaluation, Choice and Outcomes. The main goal here was to list all potential outcomes and determine whether more consideration is necessary. After carefully re-viewing Dewey's theory, he provided a list of five phases of thought.

Self-efficacy acted as a predictor and a mediator of reflective thinking and academic performance in educational psychology. The mediating roles

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of self-efficacy in this study strengthened Bandura's (1986) theory that self-efficacy beliefs play an influential role in human agency.

Dix (2020), through his research highlighted that people achieve satisfaction in their professional/working life by generating meaning for themselves through their work and by fundamental sources of value. The study also highlighted that reflective thinking not only entails looking back at the work done, but also to imagine collective actions, to express social solidarity and to heighten collective and political consciousness.

Duffy and associates (2014) focused on predictors and outcomes of career calling. A two wave approach was used to understand and assess the relation of different variables at Time 1 (Calling) and Time 2 (Life meaning). The results from this study contradicted Bott and Duffy's (2014) result as it concluded that calling predicted personal growth.

Duffy and Sedlacek (2007), researched on the presence and search for a calling, where presence of calling strongly related with choice comfort, self-clarity and career decidedness and moderate co-relation with choice-work was ascertained. Also, strong relationship between calling and self-clarity may also explain the effects on career behaviour because of calling. The fact that people who claim to be living a calling report having high levels of job and life satisfaction, regardless of the source of their perceived calling, is crucial for the study of calling (Duffy, Alan, Bott & Dik, 2013). It was acknowledged that failure could serve as a powerful motivator or a chance to develop their character in the pursuit of future academic success. There was not many direct literature concerning Reflective Thinking and Career Calling but in context to different perspectives there were indirect connection between the two.

In the larger model, Career Calling and Reflective Thinking were found to mediate the relation between future perspectives on career; and structural model of thinking and reflecting on the decisions made. Therefore, through the variables discussed above, People who feel connected to and strongly bonded to their jobs have a career calling, which may in turn encourage a calling in life. This is consistent with earlier research that offers proof among the relations between calling and reflective thinking in working adults (Duffy, Alan, Bott & Dik, 2013) and the finding that Reflective Thinking and Career Calling mediate the link between academic failures and reflective thinking for college students (Fwu, Chen, Wei & Wang, 2018). This would suggest that there are other factors involved in the connection between Reflective Thinking and Career Calling above

and beyond goal of education, developing professional philosophies, effort-making, learning approaches, presence and search for calling, outcomes and predictors of career calling, work meaning and life meaning. In conclusion, these findings add to previous research that has tried to explain the connection between Career Calling and Reflective Thinking (Dix, 2020), demonstrate that these studies are empirically relevant to working adults, and provide a framework and future study directions.

## **Conclusion**

By defining the positions of reflective thinking and career calling, the study's findings add to the body of existing literature. A theoretical contribution to the literature about causal links between stages of reflective thinking and learning methodologies has been presented, building on the findings from the earlier investigations.

The results focus to shed light on the connection between Reflective Thinking and Career Calling across different fields which offers an exhaustive model on Reflective Thinking and Career Calling that can be tested with other population and may serve to be of importance in organizational settings, counselling and to future researchers. This study gives insights on career-related issues, and it further adds to direct relation between Reflective Thinking and Career Calling.

## **Limitations and future directions**

Future researchers should strengthen their conceptual learning and knowledge, gather more longitudinal data, look into the negative aspects of callings, and investigate more varied groups in order to better grasp what it means to have a calling. It's crucial to investigate the significance of reflective thinking in different cultures. To investigate the stages of reflective thinking in sociocultural contexts, qualitative methodologies must be applied. Additionally, sophisticated research is needed to understand the relation between career calling and Reflective Thinking.

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