

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-56368

Title: The Impact of Career Calling on Innovative Behavior of Knowledge Workers: The Mediating Role of Career Identity.

Recommendation:

Accept after minor revision.

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity	✓			
Significance		✓		

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

(To be published with the manuscript in the journal)

The reviewer is requested to provide a brief comment (3-4 lines) highlighting the significance, strengths, or key insights of the manuscript. This comment will be Displayed in the journal publication alongside with the reviewers name.

1. **Significance:** The study is significant in connecting career calling with innovative behavior through identity mechanisms, contributing to motivation and innovation literature in organizational behavior. It highlights intrinsic career meaning as a strategic driver of innovation within knowledge economies. The Chinese context further enriches cross-cultural understanding of career psychology and innovation performance relationships.
2. **Strength:** The primary strength lies in its clear mediation framework grounded in three established theories. Statistical analyses are systematically presented with comprehensive regression and bootstrap testing. The study addresses a timely managerial issue—stimulating innovation among knowledge workers offering practical implications for human resource development and career management practices.
3. **Key Insight:** A key insight is that career identity partially translates intrinsic career calling into observable innovative behavior. This psychological mechanism underscores identity construction as a bridge between motivation and action. Innovation is therefore not solely skill-driven but meaning-driven, emphasizing the strategic importance of cultivating career purpose within organizational talent management systems.

Reviewer's Comment / Report

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The paper titled “*The Impact of Career Calling on Innovative Behavior of Knowledge Workers: The Mediating Role of Career Identity*” empirical study examines how career calling influences innovative behavior among knowledge workers, with career (professional) identity as a mediator. Using questionnaire data analyzed via SPSS, it confirms: (1) a significant positive direct effect of career calling on innovation; (2) career calling strongly enhances professional identity; (3) professional identity positively drives innovative behavior; and (4) professional identity partially mediates the calling–innovation relationship. Grounded in career calling theory, self-determination theory, and social identity theory, the findings are robust and offer practical implications for organizations to foster calling and identity to boost innovation. Clear, well-structured contribution to HR and organizational behavior literature, though limited by cross-sectional design and unspecified sample details.

Suggestions for Improvement:

1. Clearly articulate the unresolved theoretical controversy this study addresses.
2. Explicitly differentiate this study from prior Chinese empirical research to clarify incremental and novel contribution beyond replication.
3. Integrate global innovation literature to demonstrate international theoretical relevance rather than predominantly domestic contextual grounding.
4. Address extremely high correlation coefficients and potential multicollinearity concerns.
5. strengthen hypothesis development with mechanism-based arguments.
6. Discuss potential nonlinear or curvilinear effects of career calling on innovation to acknowledge emerging “double-edged sword” literature.
7. Report specific scale sources and item examples.
8. Justify Likert scale conversion from seven-point to five-point format.
9. Justify snowball sampling choice theoretically and practically.
10. Discuss potential non-response bias and self-selection bias.
11. Provide robustness checks using alternative model specifications, such as hierarchical regression or structural equation modeling, to validate mediation stability.

This manuscript presents a logically structured mediation model examining career calling, career identity, and innovative behavior among knowledge workers. Empirical results are statistically

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robust; however, theoretical integration, methodological rigor, and analytical depth require substantial strengthening. High correlations raise validity concerns, and theoretical contribution remains incremental. With minor revisions addressing conceptual clarity, common method bias, and broader theoretical positioning, the study could reach publishable standards. Addressing the identified weaknesses will make it suitable for publication in IJAR.

I recommend this paper for publication after minor revision.