# How Background Influences School Counselors' Career Calling: A Preliminary Study

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**ABSTRACT:** A career calling is a professional attribute that teachers in Indonesia, including school counselors, are required to possess, as mandated by law. It has been proven to foster enthusiasm, vitality, and high dedication in the workplace. This study examines variations in career calling among school counselors based on ethno-socio-demographic factors such as educational attainment, ethnicity, religion, employment status, age, and gender. The study employs an 8-step comparative cross-sectional design to analyze how these factors influence the level of career calling among 93 school counselors. It utilizes the 42-item Career Calling Inventory (short-form), with each item showing a validity exceeding 0.5 and a reliability of 0.95. The findings indicate that although there are differences in career calling between groups, these differences are not statistically significant, with p-values ranging from 0.058 to 0.434, all greater than the 0.05 threshold. These results suggest that career calling develops through a complex interaction of intrinsic and extrinsic factors and is not solely dependent on formal variables such as education or employment. This research makes a significant contribution to the literature on career calling, particularly within the context of school counselor professionalism in Indonesia, and provides valuable insights for the development of more inclusive policies and intervention programs.

## INTRODUCTION

One significant challenge facing the existence of the school counselors is the advent of artificial intelligence (AI) technology (Fulmer, 2019). While AI has proven to be highly effective in streamlining administrative tasks and delivering essential information to students, it poses a potential risk if school counselors confine their professional identity to these functions alone. In such a scenario, their role might be deemed redundant. Consequently, school counselors must perceive their duties not merely as a job but as a calling dedicated to aiding others. The notion of a calling, deeply rooted in a tradition of service, has a longstanding history and is intricately linked to the teaching profession (Mattingly, 1975). Responding to a calling entails addressing a summons that can originate from either internal or external sources. Palmer (2017) articulates a calling as "the voice of the teacher within, the voice that invites me to honor the nature of my true self" (p. 29).

In Indonesia, school counselors are professional educators governed by the principles of professionalism as outlined in the law. At the policy level, Undang-Undang Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, in Article 7, stipulates that one of the principles of a professional teacher is to possess a career calling. However, this terminology of career calling is not adequately explained in either the appendices or in its derivative regulations, such as Government Regulation

(PP) Number 74 of 2008, PP Number 19 of 2017, or Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 111 of 2014. The absence of a clear and operational definition of career calling in these regulations creates a significant gap in the practice of teacher professional education. This becomes particularly problematic in the process of identifying and developing the career calling of prospective teachers in professional education. The government has not yet established clear guidelines on how a career calling is to be identified or measured during the recruitment process for teacher professional education, or in the professional development activities for teachers in Indonesia. Despite the lack of adequate conceptual and operational explanations, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology has developed a career calling test for prospective teachers in the Pre-service Teacher Professional Education Program since 2020 (Yunelia, 2019). This initial initiative certainly needs to be continuously refined through a series of comprehensive research on the career calling of teachers, in order to develop more accurate and applicable methodologies for measuring and developing career calling.

The importance of career calling as a professional identity for teachers is empirically proven, as evidenced by previous studies. Teachers with a calling orientation demonstrate enthusiasm, vitality, and high dedication in the workplace. They are motivated, optimistic, and feel the need to be fully engaged in their tasks (Rothmann & Hamukang'andu, 2013). In a study conducted by Pajak & Blase (1989) involving 200 teachers, it was found that the majority of teachers acknowledged that their spiritual beliefs had a positive impact on their professional lives. Other research also reports a positive correlation between calling and other psychological constructs, although not specifically within the teaching profession. For instance, the sense of having a calling positively affects quality of life indicators such as academic satisfaction among students (Duffy, Allan, et al., 2011), job well-being (Duffy et al., 2014), and career commitment (Duffy, Dik, et al., 2011). The strong sense of career calling reported by counseling students indicates that many of them enroll in counseling programs due to a strong sense of purpose and view their efforts as part of a larger pattern of meaning (Hall et al., 2014). As part of the helping profession, students who choose the counseling field feel called to engage in prosocial activities (Duffy et al., 2012).

Issues of teacher professionalism often overlook the ethical and aesthetic dimensions in the educational process. Ethics are not merely about adhering to technical guidelines and procedures; they are fundamentally connected to a career calling to uphold values of humanity, justice, and social altruism. The problem is that not all current teachers are genuinely motivated by a career calling to be educators; many are more oriented toward income (Warsono, 2017). If this is the case, various education and training programs conducted by various parties (both public and private institutions) are unlikely to significantly enhance teacher professionalism. Therefore, improving teacher professionalism in the educational field requires changing their perceptions about their status and role. Teachers must be made aware of what they should be doing as a consequence of their status as professional educators. For pre-service teachers, the selection process should prioritize the extent to which they have a career calling to become humanistic, critical, creative, and altruistic educators. At the very least, the minimal characteristic of such a career calling can be indicated by their initial motivation to become teachers when they first decided to pursue a degree in education at a university.

Another issue lies at the level of conceptualization. The difficulty in distinguishing career calling from other career-related psychological constructs such as vocation, passion, work engagement, and meaningful work has resulted in career calling being rarely studied. Historically, these psychological constructs have been closely linked to the concept of calling, although their differences have become more apparent over time (Schuurman, 2004; Serow, 1994). Unfortunately, an unstable understanding of these definitions leads to overlapping usage in the literature, which ultimately complicates the process of conceptualization and the development of effective policies. The overlap between calling and vocation, for example, lies in their etymological roots. Vocation comes from the

Latin word vocare, which means "to call." This context also applies to service careers (Elias, 2003). Meanwhile, calling and work engagement share similarities in terms of individuals' feelings of empowerment in their work (Kahn, 1990). Lastly, calling shares similar dimensions with passion and meaningful work, particularly in terms of deriving meaning from work with prosocial motivation (Rosso et al., 2010). This complexity demands terminological clarity to be applied consistently.

Recent studies indicate that various ethno-socio-demographic factors influence career calling. However, research on the impact of these factors on career calling in Indonesia, particularly among school counselors, has yet to be conducted. Such a study could serve as a crucial foundation for developing interventions aimed at enhancing the career calling of school counselors. Examining these factors could provide deeper insights into how different social and demographic backgrounds influence career calling. The following outlines previous research on the impact of ethnic background, age, and gender on career calling.

Ethnic background can influence career calling, as several studies have shown. For instance, Duffy & Klingaman (2009) found that ethnic identity is related to career development among first-year college students, with Black and Asian-American students who have a higher level of ethnic identity achievement exhibiting greater career certainty compared to White and Latina/o students. Similarly, Gushue (2006) discovered that ethnic identity positively correlates with career decision-making self-efficacy among Latino/a high school students, indicating that ethnic identity plays a crucial role in vocational guidance. However, some research, though less common, suggests that ethnic background does not significantly impact career calling. For example, a meta-analysis by Fouad & Byars-Winston (2005) found that racial/ethnic differences do not significantly affect career aspirations, despite differences in perceived opportunities and barriers among racial/ethnic groups. Additionally, Karunanayake & Nauta (2004)reported that students from various racial and ethnic backgrounds did not differ in the number of career role models identified or the perceived influence of those models, suggesting that race/ethnicity may not always be a primary factor in career development. These findings indicate that while ethnicity often impacts career calling, it may not be a determining factor in all career contexts.

Age can influence career calling, with several studies indicating that career calling often develops with age, particularly among young adults, where it is closely linked to career strategies and psychological well-being, such as life meaning and career adaptability(Praskova et al., 2014). However, some research suggests that age does not always have a significant impact. For example, a study by Greller & Richtermeyer (2006) found that social support for career development is not significantly influenced by age. These findings suggest that while age can affect certain aspects of career development, in specific contexts, the influence of age on career calling may be insignificant.

Gender influences career perceptions, where men and women may have differing views depending on social and structural contexts, such as gender bias within organizations (Sturges, 2020). Gender stereotypes and traditional roles also shape how individuals pursue and prioritize their careers; men are often influenced by international experiences and cultural beliefs, while women are more likely to align their career aspirations with family responsibilities and existing gender norms (Correll, 2004; Orser & Leck, 2010). However, some studies suggest that gender is not always a decisive factor in career calling. For instance, research by Moya et al. (2000) found that men and women in stable romantic relationships exhibited similar levels of career salience, with other factors such as gender ideology, education level, and the partner's employment situation having a more significant impact on women. Additionally, in certain contexts, the influence of gender on career aspirations may be negligible, particularly when other variables like academic achievement or socioeconomic status are more dominant (Kelly, 1993). Thus, while gender often plays a role in shaping career calling, its impact can be minimized or even insignificant in specific situations.

The significance of this research can be felt in both theoretical and policy aspects. The theoretical significance lies in its scholarly contribution, where the findings complement the literature

and provide empirical support for studies on: (a) career calling as a professional quality of school counselors, (b) the measurement of career calling in counselors, and (c) the theoretical justification of ethno-socio-demographic variables as predictors of career calling for school counselors. This study also has the potential to pave the way for developing effective interventions to support the development of career calling. The research can provide a foundation for updating regulations and policies to be clearer and more comprehensive regarding career calling in the context of teacher professionalism. This ensures that the principle is effectively applied in the recruitment and professional development processes for school counselors.

### Study Aim and Hypothesis

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the variations in career calling among school counselors, focusing on distinct demographic and professional backgrounds. Specifically, this research aims to assess how factors such as bachelor's degree (Guidance and Counseling degree vs non-Guidance and Counselling degree), ethnic background (Javanese vs. non-Javanese), religion (Islam vs. non-Islam), employment status (civil servant vs. non-civil servant), age ($<40$ years vs. $>40$ years), and gender (male vs. female) impact the career calling of school counselors. To systematically explore these differences, the study formulates specific hypotheses that consider the potential effects of these variables, $H_1$: School counselors with a degree in guidance and counseling will exhibit different levels of career calling compared to those without a guidance and counseling degree, $H_2$: There are significant differences in career calling between Javanese and non-Javanese school counsellors, $H_3$: School counselors who adhere to Islam will exhibit different levels of career calling compared to those of other religious affiliations, $H_4$: Civil servant school counselors (PNS) will display distinct career calling levels compared to their non-civil servant counterparts, $H_5$: School counselors younger than 40 years will demonstrate different career calling levels compared to those older than 40 years, and $H_6$: There are significant differences in career calling between male and female school counselors.

### METHODS
### Design

This study employs a comparative cross-sectional design to explore variations in career calling among school counselors based on factors such as educational attainment, ethnic background, religion, employment status, gender, and age. The primary objective is to assess and compare the current levels of career calling across different demographic and professional groups at a specific point in time. Cross-sectional studies are instrumental in creating a detailed profile of diverse populations within the same temporal context (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2002). The research is conducted through eight sequential steps: (1) defining the study's focus, (2) formulating the hypothesis, (3) identifying the population and sample, (4) selecting the type of survey, (5) choosing the appropriate instrument, (6) administering the instrument, (7) processing and analyzing the data, and (8) writing the research article (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

### Participants

Table 1 provides an overview of the respondents' backgrounds in this study. The majority of respondents hold a Bachelor's degree in Guidance and Counseling (GC), with 75 individuals (80.6%), while the remaining 18 individuals (19.4%) have a Bachelor's degree in fields outside of GC. In terms of ethnicity, 46.2% (n=43) of the participants are Javanese, while 53.8% (n=50) are non-Javanese. The religious composition indicates that 88.2% (n=82) of the counselors are adherents of Islam, with the remaining 11.8% (n=11) following other religions. In terms of employment status, 65.6% (n=61) are civil servants (PNS), contrasted with 34.4% (n=32) who are non-civil servants (non-PNS). The gender distribution shows a predominance of female participants at 67.8% (n=63), compared to 32.2%

(n=30) male participants. Age distribution reveals that 36.5% (n=34) of the counselors are below 40 years, while 63.5% (n=59) are above 40 years. This diverse and well-distributed sample facilitates a robust and comprehensive analysis of career calling across different demographic and professional contexts.

Table 1. Respondent background

| Background | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bachelor's Degree | GC Bachelor | 75 | 80,6% |
| | Non-GC Bachelor | 18 | 19,4% |
| Ethnic | Java | 43 | 46,2% |
| | Non-Java | 50 | 53,8% |
| Religion | Islam | 82 | 88,2% |
| | Non-Islam | 11 | 11,8% |
| Employment Status | PNS | 61 | 65,6% |
| | Non-PNS | 32 | 34,4% |
| Gender | Male | 30 | 32,2% |
| | Female | 63 | 67,8% |
| Age | <40 years | 34 | 36,5% |
| | >40 years | 59 | 63,5% |

Note: GC=Guidance and Counseling

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis

| Group | N | Mean | Max | Min | Stdev | Normality Test (sig) | Homogeneity Test (sig) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC Bachelor | 75 | 132.2 | 160 | 104 | 11.4 | .200 | .405 |
| Non-GC Bachelor | 18 | 134.7 | 162 | 109 | 15.3 | .200 | |
| Java | 43 | 134.4 | 160 | 113 | 11.8 | .200 | .947 |
| Non-Java | 50 | 131.1 | 162 | 104 | 12.3 | .200 | |
| Islam | 82 | 133.1 | 162 | 104 | 11.8 | .200 | .208 |
| Non-Islam | 11 | 129.0 | 154 | 111 | 14.6 | .153 | |
| PNS | 61 | 129.9 | 154 | 104 | 13.5 | .083 | .122 |
| Non-PNS | 32 | 134.1 | 162 | 114 | 11.3 | .200 | |
| Male | 30 | 132.7 | 162 | 109 | 13.2 | .193 | .749 |
| Female | 63 | 132.2 | 160 | 104 | 11.8 | .200 | |
| <40 years | 34 | 129.5 | 154 | 111 | 11.4 | .200 | .756 |
| >40 years | 59 | 134.5 | 162 | 104 | 12.3 | .200 | |

## Instruments
### Career Calling Inventory (short-form)

This inventory was developed based on the Work as Calling Theory (Duffy et al., 2018), and a synthesis of studies by Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas (2011) and Praskova et al. (2015). In this research, career calling refers to the internal drive of school counselor to serve in their professional activities, encompassing six behavioral indicators: (1) believing in a transcendent summon; (2) serving a meaningful purpose; (3) demonstrating deep passion; (4) showing sacrifice; (5) being oriented towards helping others; and (6) integrating sustainability; all aimed at achieving happiness. The inventory consists of 42 statements, with each indicator represented by 7 items. The validity of each item is greater than 0.5, and the reliability is 0.95. Respondents rate each statement using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4.

### Demographic Questionnaires

A self-report survey that collects information on participants' bachelor's degree, ethnic background, religion, employment status, and age. This questionnaire helps in categorizing the participants into the relevant groups for comparative analysis. Respondents completed these

instruments via a Google Form application during the period of April 23-30, 2024, and participation was entirely voluntary.

## Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study employs a variety of statistical techniques to examine the variations in career calling among school counselors across different demographic and professional backgrounds. Descriptive statistics will summarize the participants' demographic characteristics, including ethnic background, religion, employment status, gender, and age. To test the hypotheses regarding differences in career calling, inferential statistical methods such as t-tests will be used. Post-hoc analyses will explore significant findings and interactions between variables. Effect sizes will be calculated and reported alongside p-values to address potential biases due to unequal sample sizes. SPSS statistical software will be used to ensure accurate computation and interpretation of the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
## Results

Table 2 presents the results of a descriptive analysis comparing the means across different groups. For instance, the Non-GC Bachelor group has the highest mean score (134.7) with the largest standard deviation (15.3), indicating that this group exhibits a relatively high degree of variability compared to others. In contrast, the GC Bachelor group shows a lower standard deviation (11.4) with a slightly lower mean score (132.2). This suggests that the GC Bachelor group may have a more consistent data distribution compared to the Non-GC Bachelor group.

The Non-Java group has a lower mean score (131.1) compared to the Java group (134.4), although the standard deviations for both groups are relatively similar, at 12.3 and 11.8, respectively. This may indicate a small yet significant difference in data variability between these two groups, possibly reflecting cultural background differences or other factors influencing the results.

Furthermore, an age-based analysis reveals that the group aged over 40 years has the highest mean score (134.5) with a standard deviation of 12.3, while the younger group (<40 years) has a lower mean score (129.5) with a standard deviation of 11.4. This suggests that experience or age-related factors may play a role in the observed differences in scores, with older individuals tending to have higher average scores. These findings could serve as a basis for further analysis on how age influences outcomes in various aspects under investigation.

The normality test results, where the Kolmogorov-Smirnov p-values (Sig) for all groups exceed 0.05, indicate that their data distributions follow a normal distribution. Finally, homogeneity of variance is confirmed through Levene's test, where all groups show p-values (Sig) greater than 0.05, suggesting that the variances across the groups are similar or homogeneous. With all assumptions of normality and homogeneity satisfied, the analysis can proceed to an independent t-test.

Table 3. Hypothetical testing

| Groups | p-value for difference | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | t-test | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference |
| Bachelor's Degree | -.785 | .434 | -2.52222 |
| Ethnic | 1.324 | .189 | 3.34837 |
| Religion | 1.067 | .289 | 4.18293 |
| Employment Status | -1.586 | .116 | -4.19365 |
| Gender | -.024 | .981 | -.06667 |
| Age | -1.921 | .058 | -4.97906 |

## Hypothetical testing

This section presents the analysis and discussion related to the six hypotheses proposed in this study, as outlined in Table 3. Each hypothesis will be evaluated based on the observed mean differences between various groups, taking into account both statistical significance and theoretical relevance.

To begin with, Hypothesis 1 explores the difference in career calling based on educational attainment, specifically focusing on whether having a Bachelor's degree influences career calling. The results show a mean difference of -2.52222, indicating that the Non-GC Bachelor group reports a higher level of career calling compared to the GC Bachelor group. However, this difference is not statistically significant, as evidenced by a p-value of 0.434, which exceeds the accepted threshold of 0.05. Similarly, Hypothesis 2 investigates the impact of ethnic background on career calling. Here, the mean difference of 3.34837 suggests that the Non-Java group has a higher mean career calling than the Java group, though this result is also statistically insignificant with a p-value of 0.189.

Furthermore, Hypotheses 3 and 4 examine the influence of religion and employment status on career calling, respectively. For religion, the mean difference of 4.18293 implies that the Non-Islam group shows a higher career calling than the Islam group, but this difference is not statistically significant with a p-value of 0.289. In terms of employment status, the analysis reveals a mean difference of -4.19365, indicating that individuals in the Non-PNS group exhibit higher career calling compared to their PNS counterparts. Nonetheless, this difference remains statistically insignificant, with a p-value of 0.116.

Finally, Hypotheses 5 and 6 address the potential influence of gender and age on career calling. The mean difference for gender is a mere -0.06667, showing no substantial variation between male and female groups, with a statistically insignificant p-value of 0.981. Age also presents a similar scenario, where the mean difference of -4.97906 suggests that younger individuals (below 40 years) have a higher career calling compared to older individuals (over 40 years). However, this difference is not statistically significant, as the p-value stands at 0.058, slightly above the 0.05 threshold. These findings collectively highlight that while there are observable differences in career calling among various groups, none of these differences reach statistical significance.

## Discussion

The results reveal differences in mean career calling between Guidance and Counseling (GC) graduates and their non-GC counterparts; however, this difference is not statistically significant (p = 0.434). Non-GC graduates show a slightly higher mean, but the difference remains minor. One explanation might be that GC programs emphasize interpersonal skills and self-awareness, which could align career goals without necessarily altering career calling. Supporting research suggests that career calling is influenced by various factors beyond educational background, such as work experience and job-person fit (Duffy & Dik, 2013) This finding aligns with previous studies, highlighting that factors beyond formal education may play a more crucial role in shaping career calling.

The analysis also identifies a difference in mean career calling between Javanese and Non-Javanese ethnic groups, with Non-Javanese showing a higher mean. However, this difference is not statistically significant (p = 0.189). The broader variation within the Non-Javanese group may reflect diverse life experiences and cultural values that shape their perception of career calling. Previous studies indicate that ethnic differences in career perceptions are often overshadowed by other factors like intrinsic motivation and professional experiences. For instance, research by Dik & Duffy (2009) emphasizes that personal and social environments, rather than ethnicity alone, significantly influence career calling. This study reinforces the notion that ethnicity may not be the primary factor influencing career calling.

Similarly, a comparison of career calling between Islamic and Non-Islamic groups reveals a higher mean in the Non-Islamic group, yet this difference is not statistically significant (p = 0.289). The variation within the Non-Islamic group suggests diverse beliefs and life perspectives that may influence career calling. Prior research shows that while religion can affect career calling, it is often mediated by broader cultural and social contexts. Studies by Hardy (2006) and Duffy & Sedlacek (2010) suggest that religion's influence on career calling varies depending on other social and personal factors. Thus, while there is a mean difference, the findings emphasize that religion's impact on career calling is context-dependent and not always statistically significant.

In examining career calling between civil servants (PNS) and non-civil servants (Non-PNS), the Non-PNS group shows a higher mean, but the difference is not statistically significant (p = 0.116). The Non-PNS group's flexibility in work environments may allow for greater alignment with career calling, while the PNS group's rigid job structure might limit this expression. Research by Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) suggests that work environment factors like autonomy can influence career calling perception. However, other studies, such as those by Duffy, Manuel, et al. (2011), highlight that career calling is more closely associated with intrinsic motivation rather than employment status. This study's findings support the idea that intrinsic factors play a more dominant role in shaping career calling than employment status.

Regarding gender differences, men show a slightly higher mean in career calling than women, but this difference is not statistically significant (p = 0.981). The minor variation aligns with existing research, indicating that gender differences in career calling are generally insignificant. For instance, Hirschi & Herrmann (2013) found that while men and women might define their calling differently, these differences do not substantially impact outcomes. The study suggests that gender is not a primary determinant of career calling, with other factors such as personality and social context playing a more significant role.

Lastly, age differences reveal that individuals under 40 years have a higher mean in career calling than those over 40, though this difference is also not statistically significant (p = 0.058). Younger individuals may experience a stronger sense of career calling due to their life stage, where career direction is a priority. Older individuals may have greater career stability, reducing the need for a strong sense of calling. This finding aligns with research by Duffy & Sedlacek (2007), which shows that younger people are more likely to actively seek their calling. However, as people age, they may feel more connected to their calling through increased experience (Hirschi, 2012). These findings suggest that while age influences career calling, its impact varies depending on individual context and work environment.

## Implications

The theoretical implications of this study's findings reaffirm that career calling is a multidimensional concept influenced by a range of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, such as personal values, life experiences, work context, and cultural background. These findings support the view that career calling cannot be fully predicted solely based on formal variables like education or job status, but is also shaped by the interaction between individual and social factors. Thus, this research enriches the literature on career calling by showing that factors such as ethnicity, religion, and age, while not always statistically significant, can add nuance to our understanding of how career calling develops in diverse contexts. It also highlights the need for a more holistic approach in exploring career calling, one that encompasses various dimensions of an individual's life.

Empirically, the results of this study provide important insights for practitioners and policymakers, particularly in the fields of career counseling and education. For instance, the finding that career calling can evolve over time and is influenced by practical experiences suggests that career counseling programs should be designed to support ongoing career development, rather than focusing solely on initial educational choices. In terms of regulation, these findings can inform more

inclusive policies that not only emphasize the importance of formal education but also support the development of meaningful work experiences and social support for individuals from various backgrounds. Therefore, this research has the potential to influence how we understand and regulate career development across different social and professional contexts.

## Limitations and Further Research

The first limitation of this study is the relatively small sample size, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. With a limited number of respondents, the results obtained may not fully represent the broader population, and therefore, these findings should be interpreted with caution. A larger sample size could potentially yield more robust results and allow for a more in-depth analysis of specific subgroups, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the study's outcomes.

The second limitation is the absence of path analysis methods, which could have provided more detailed insights into the differences between the indicators of career calling. Path analysis allows researchers to explore causal relationships between different variables and to examine how certain factors directly or indirectly influence career calling. Without this method, the study offers only a general overview without delving deeper into the interrelationships among variables, which could have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics involved in the formation of career calling.

The third limitation pertains to the measurement of differences used in this study, which did not account for the intensity of internalization related to background factors such as levels of spirituality or understanding of cultural values. The differences measured in this study were limited to external categories such as religion or ethnicity, without considering the extent to which individuals internalize the values associated with these backgrounds. A more nuanced measurement of this internalization could offer a richer understanding of how an individual's background influences their sense of career calling, thereby providing a more complete context for interpreting the study's findings.

## CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the career calling as a professional identity for school counselors is influenced by various ethno-socio-demographic factors, although the results do not show statistically significant differences. These findings suggest that career calling cannot be fully predicted by formal variables such as educational level, employment status, or religious background. Instead, career calling develops through a complex interaction between personal values, life experiences, and social context. While factors such as ethnic and religious backgrounds may influence an individual's perception of career calling, these influences are more strongly affected by intrinsic factors such as personal motivation and social support. The results emphasize the need for a holistic approach in developing career calling, both within the context of formal education and in the ongoing professional development of school counselors. The theoretical and practical implications of this study can assist in designing more effective interventions to enhance the career calling of school counselors.

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