



# Career Exploration of Students with Disabilities for Readiness to Engage in the Workplace

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## Abstract

This study aims to explore the careers of students with disabilities for readiness to enter the world of work through the RIASEC model talent interest test measurement tool. The research method used in this research is quantitative research with a descriptive approach. The population in this study were 100 students with disabilities in Makassar City. This research sample technique uses purposive sampling. The sample of this study took 25 students who were classified into several types of students with physical and intellectual disabilities including blind, deaf, disabled and autism. The RIASEC questionnaire totals 90 statement items using 5 aspects, namely (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Entrepreneur, and Conventional). The scale used is a guttman scale which is used to obtain respondents' answers with two response intervals, namely appropriate-not appropriate. The results of research conducted on students with disabilities in Makassar City show that the Social (S) personality indicator is higher with a total percentage of 32% than other personality types. Then the Realistic (R) type is 28%, Conventional (C) is 3%, Artistic (A) is 3%, investigative is 3%, and Enterprising (E) personality type is 1%. The conclusion of this study is that it is important to understand the specific career preferences of students with different types of disabilities by tailoring career prospects accordingly and may require different approaches. This study highlights the need for tailored career guidance programs for students with disabilities to improve their workforce readiness.

**Keywords:** Career Exploration, Student With Disabilities, RIASEC

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Job participation opportunities are currently a challenge for everyone, including students with disabilities who must compete for jobs with their limitations. The number of people with disabilities in Indonesia according to the 2019 National Socio-Economic Survey amounted to more than 30 million people or around 11.5%. Among them 17.7 million are of working age and only 7.8 million are working. The Makassar City Manpower Office suggests that the number of disabilities in Makassar city is currently 1,055 people aged over 18 to 50 years and only 9% of the total people with disabilities are absorbed by the labor market even though individuals with disabilities have the same potential for success as other individuals, but not all employment service providers are aware and know the needs of health services, education and

ideal employment opportunities for each type of disability so that this is the cause of services for disabilities not being well accommodated [1], [2].

Students with disabilities face challenges not only due to work environments that are not fully supportive but also because they are often unaware of their potential aligned with their abilities and natural interests [3]. Despite there being suitable career types and classifications for each disability type, research by Erissa & Widinarsih in Ref. [4] suggests that in addition to job classifications for each disability type, career selection for people with disabilities should be based on self-assessment of potential. Disabled students may struggle to identify career opportunities post-graduation if they do not recognize their aptitudes through matching talents, skills, and interests [5].

Every potential, ability, and talent that students possess should be maximized to provide a clear career planning picture in their respective fields and accessible information. Research by Kundu et al. in Ref. [6] reveals that students who are unaware of their potential suffer in terms of their readiness for learning and work. It is evident that 87 students feel they have chosen the wrong major [7]. This sentiment is also surely felt by students with disabilities who find themselves in the wrong major and working in fields not aligned with their interests and educational backgrounds. According to career counselor Susan Isaacs, it is crucial to utilize interest and talent tests for individuals with disabilities to assist them in identifying their career decisions [8]. Through interest and talent tests, individuals with disabilities can confidently confront discrimination and negative environmental attitudes that may cause self-doubt and diminish self-esteem [6].

The interest and talent test serves as a measuring tool that aids disabled students in pursuing their careers. Disabled students can explore their career paths, build confidence, and find fulfilling and beneficial jobs. Supported by research findings from Saputra et al in Ref. [9], careers aligned with interests and skills significantly impact psychological well-being and even learning motivation [10]. One relevant measuring tool that addresses career opportunities for disabled students is the RIASEC inventory developed by [11], [12]. Holland's RIASEC Career Theory helps guide career choice based on an individual's personality traits and psychological characteristics [13]. The personality types in the RIASEC model include: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. The alignment between psychological models and interests forms the foundation for individuals to develop their careers [14]. Holland's career planning concept has been tested and applied across various fields and populations, making it adaptable for use with disabled students to aid them in career decision-making.

Although RIASEC theory is highly popular and has been used extensively to measure career interests and development, particularly among individuals with disabilities, research on the validity of the inventory for disabled students, especially in Indonesia, remains limited. Studies on the application of the RIASEC inventory to address the career needs of disabled students, as developed by Holland, are still scarce [15]. Some previous studies have been conducted in special schools (SLBs) to explore the career readiness of deaf students using career guidance and counseling based on the RIASEC personality type model [16]. The results indicate that the personality

types and disabilities of deaf students tend to lean towards the Realistic (R) type, which influences their career exploration in the workplace (factory/workshop), enabling students to learn and implement their career visions effectively. Nursyamsi Fajri et al in Ref. [17] emphasize the importance of developing disability-friendly concepts in career guidance and planning for disabled students [18]. Therefore, career planning for disabled students using the RIASEC model serves as an effective reference to enhance their career readiness and support their professional growth in the future.

Given the need to identify career planning for disabled students, especially in Makassar city, using the RIASEC inventory developed by Holland is indeed a concrete step toward enhancing career confidence by measuring the interests, potentials, and psychological traits of disabled students. Therefore, this research aims to explore the careers of disabled students in preparation for entering the workforce through the RIASEC interest and talent test model.

## 2. METHODS

The research design used in this study is quantitative with a descriptive approach. The population consists of 100 disabled students in Makassar City, South Sulawesi Province. The sampling technique employed is purposive sampling, allowing researchers to select samples based on specific criteria that align with the research objectives. Using this technique, the researcher aims to obtain the most relevant and representative sample for the research topic under investigation. Following inclusive determination, the sample for this study comprises 25 students classified into various types of physical and intellectual disabilities, including visually impaired, hearing impaired, physically disabled, and autism spectrum disorder.

**Table 1.** Demographics of Research Respondents

| University                          | n         | %           |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Makassar State University           | 7         | 28%         |
| Hasanuddin University               | 7         | 28%         |
| Muslim University of Indonesia      | 7         | 28%         |
| Muhammadiyah University of Makassar | 4         | 16%         |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>25</b> | <b>100%</b> |

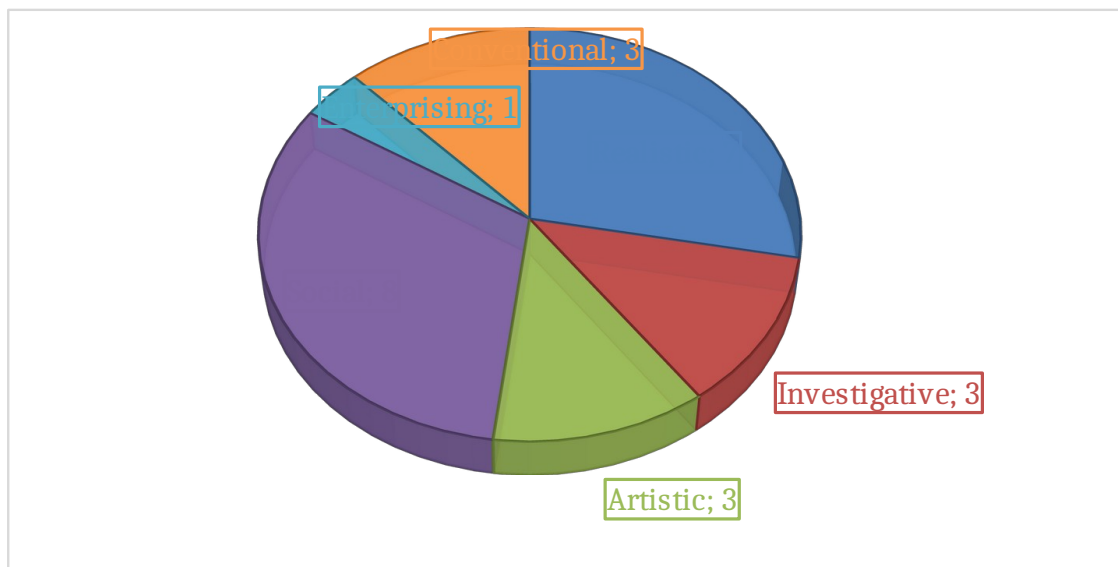
The data collection technique employed in this study utilizes a questionnaire. The questionnaire used is the RIASEC developed by Holland in Ref. [19]. The RIASEC questionnaire is an inventory designed to identify career potentials through the types, characteristics, and psychological traits (personality) of individuals. The RIASEC questionnaire consists of 90 statement items across 5 aspects: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Entrepreneurial, and Conventional. The scale employed

is a Guttman scale, which is utilized to elicit responses from respondents with two response intervals: Agree-Disagree.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings obtained from the questionnaire completed by each respondent, disabled students in Makassar City totaling 25 individuals, revealed several insights. The data collection was conducted using the RIASEC questionnaire with a Likert scale comprising 90 items from July 4th to 5th, 2024, with the assistance of the research team and a Sign Language Interpreter. Each set of 15 statement items consists of 6 indicators based on the RIASEC model.

The research results, processed through the RIASEC model as a personality test for disabled students in Makassar City, indicated that the Social (S) personality type predominated, constituting 32% of the total percentage compared to other personality types. Additionally, the Realistic (R) type accounted for 28%, Conventional (C) 3%, Artistic (A) 3%, Investigative (I) 3%, and Enterprising (E) 1%. The percentage breakdown of each model based on talent and interest test results can be observed in the following graph.



**Figure 1.** PRISMA diagram of article screening

Determining the personality types of disabled students can be observed through the highest scores obtained from each indicator in the questionnaire. The data results from each personality type score for each respondent to obtain 3 recommendations can be viewed in Table 2.

**Table 2.** RIASEC questionnaire processing score results

| Respondents | Recommendation 1 | Recommendation 2 | Recommendation 3 | Conclusion |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|
| Respondent  | 1                | 4                | 3                | Realistic  |

|                    |   |   |   |                   |
|--------------------|---|---|---|-------------------|
| s 1                |   |   |   |                   |
| Respondent<br>s 2  | 6 | 1 | 4 | Conventio<br>nal  |
| Respondent<br>s 3  | 4 | 5 | 2 | Social            |
| Respondent<br>s 4  | 1 | 5 | 4 | Realistic         |
| Respondent<br>s 5  | 1 | 4 | 6 | Realistic         |
| Respondent<br>s 6  | 4 | 6 | 1 | Social            |
| Respondent<br>s 7  | 4 | 5 | 1 | Social            |
| Respondent<br>s 8  | 2 | 4 | 5 | Investigativ<br>e |
| Respondent<br>s 9  | 4 | 1 | 5 | Social            |
| Respondent<br>s 10 | 4 | 5 | 1 | Social            |
| Respondent<br>s 11 | 5 | 4 | 6 | Enterprisin<br>g  |
| Respondent<br>s 12 | 4 | 2 | 2 | Social            |
| Respon<br>dents 13 | 6 | 4 | 3 | Conventio<br>nal  |
| Respondent<br>s 14 | 1 | 3 | 4 | Realistic         |
| Respondent<br>s 15 | 4 | 3 | 5 | Social            |
| Respondent<br>s 16 | 1 | 2 | 6 | Realistic         |
| Respondent<br>s 17 | 4 | 6 | 1 | Sosial            |
| Respondent<br>s 18 | 1 | 4 | 6 | Realistic         |
| Respondent<br>s 19 | 2 | 6 | 4 | Investigativ<br>e |
| Respondent<br>s 20 | 3 | 1 | 2 | Artistic          |
| Respondent<br>s 21 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Realistic         |
| Respondent<br>s 22 | 3 | 3 | 1 | Artistic          |
| Respondent<br>s 23 | 2 | 4 | 3 | Investigativ<br>e |
| Respondent<br>s 24 | 3 | 1 | 6 | Artistic          |
| Respondent<br>s 25 | 6 | 3 | 4 | Conventio<br>nal  |

*\*Note : 1 = Realistic; 2 = Investigative; 3 = Artistic; 4 = Social; 5 = Enterprising; 6 = Conventional*

This study explores the variation in career personality types based on RIASEC (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional) among individuals with various types of disabilities. Through testing based on personality types among 30 students, it was found that overall, they exhibit diverse personality types. However, these types are categorized into 3 recommendations regarding personality models, considering the specific needs related to their disabilities.

**Table 3.** RIASEC Per-Indicator Frequency

| <b>No.</b>   | <b>Indicator</b> | <b>N</b>  | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------|------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 1            | Realistic        | 7         | 28%               |
| 2            | Investigative    | 3         | 12%               |
| 3            | Artistic         | 3         | 12%               |
| 4            | Social           | 8         | 32%               |
| 5            | Enterprising     | 1         | 4%                |
| 6            | Conventional     | 3         | 12%               |
| <b>Total</b> |                  | <b>25</b> | <b>100%</b>       |

The research findings indicate significant variation in career preferences among the respondents. Specifically, the highest scores were found in the Social indicator, suggesting a tendency towards seeking jobs that involve social interaction and service to others. On the other hand, the lowest scores were recorded in the Entrepreneurial indicator, indicating variability in lower scores, suggesting less interest in entrepreneurship or innovation.

The second highest indicator is Realistic, indicating a tendency towards interests in jobs that require technical and practical skills. The Investigative, Artistic, and Conventional indicators show fairly balanced scores, indicating interests in jobs involving research, data analysis, creativity and expression, and adherence to strict rules and procedures.

This study discusses the exploration of career readiness among disabled students through valid interest and talent tests aimed at identifying suitable personality models. The goal is to provide them with insights into prospective careers they can pursue after completing their studies. Through three recommended personality models, disabled students will undergo assessments measuring their personality traits, potential, and interests using the RIASEC Scale [5], [19].

The research findings indicate that interest and talent tests aim to identify individuals' potential and abilities in self-exploration and career planning. According to Fatimah [20], individuals without a clear career plan may experience impacts on their self-confidence, belief in themselves, and other psychological aspects [21]. Confusion and stress stemming from not recognizing one's potential can lead some students to believe that their chosen field of study does not align with their personality type and interests.

Choosing the wrong major can occur due to inadequate assessment, such as lack of parental guidance or peer influence, where skills and interests are rarely considered in preparing for future careers [22], [23]. This situation also affects disabled students

who may struggle to determine suitable career paths after completing their studies. In some cases, many disabled students choose to study in special education departments because the academic environment there predominantly consists of disabled individuals, without fully considering their potential and interests [24].

Luzzo et al in Ref. [25] emphasizes that preparing disabled students for careers requires a tool that can specifically identify talents, potentials, and personality types suitable for job requirements and their limitations [26]. This assertion is supported by Lindsay et al in Ref. [27], who state that disabled students often lack self-confidence because available job types must accommodate their abilities, especially when considering their potentials, interests, and talents [28]. Therefore, one of the inventories developed by Holland in the RIASEC model aims to provide career decision insights aligned with personality types, interests, and talents. This allows disabled students to match their appropriate personality types with various professions currently available for individuals with disabilities through three recommended personality model sequences.

Other studies on the current use of the RIASEC inventory among disabled students are limited, thus necessitating valid measurements to ensure that the range of personality types possessed by each individual aligns with their envisioned careers [5]. Therefore, this research emphasizes the importance of assessing the longitudinal effectiveness of the RIASEC model in making effective career decisions for students with disabilities. Research by Bricout in Ref. [29] indicates that career guidance for individuals with disabilities is crucial to support inclusivity and enhance accessibility in identifying career opportunities. This guidance ensures that recommendations can be made to institutions/companies that match their needs and interests [30].

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

This research highlights the importance of understanding the specific career preferences of students with various types of disabilities. The study, which gathered data from 25 respondents, revealed a diversity of personality types among disabled students, emphasizing the need to tailor career prospects according to their individual needs. It recognizes that each individual has unique requirements and may require different approaches to building a satisfying and fulfilling career.

The implications of this research point toward the necessity of career counseling services in schools and career development for students in higher education. Acknowledging the varied needs and personality types has a direct impact on their career well-being. Therefore, educators, parents, counselors, and students must collaborate to provide comprehensive and inclusive support. This collaboration should prioritize career counseling services that focus on each disabled student individually.

This study recommends the importance of developing career guidance programs tailored to the specific career preferences of students with disabilities, particularly those emphasizing social skills, to facilitate their readiness to enter the workforce. By

understanding and adapting educational and career training approaches, institutions and universities can offer more effective support for students with disabilities in optimizing their potential in the job market.

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