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## Career potential assessment for elementary students: Exploring intelligence, interests, and personality traits

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# Career potential assessment for elementary students: Exploring intelligence, interests, and personality traits

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## ABSTRACT

Improving the quality of education in Indonesia requires paying early attention to students' potential, particularly recognizing their talents, interests, and personality traits. The Community Service Team aimed to provide sixth-grade students at Students of SDN X in West Java with psychological assessments to gain a comprehensive understanding of their intelligence, interests, and personalities. The activity was conducted in collaboration with the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Tarumanagara and the community service team. This research using three methods such as: (1) Socialization and coordination; (2) Assessment; and (3) Collected data and analyzed quantitatively. Fifty students participated in the assessment, which used the CPM, SDS Holland, and ENS\_48 measurement tools. The results indicated that 76 percent of the students had a high level of intelligence. The most dominant interest areas were artistic (21 percent), enterprising (21 percent), investigative (20 percent), and social (17 percent). The most prominent personality traits were agreeableness (34 percent), extraversion (24 percent), and conscientiousness (20 percent). These results offer valuable insights to teachers and parents for designing learning strategies that cater to students' potential.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is not merely a medium for transferring knowledge, but fundamentally serves as a space for children to discover themselves, build self-confidence, and identify the direction of their personal potential (Rais & Al Haddar, 2024). At the elementary school level, children are in a critical stage of development, during which they begin to explore their surroundings, develop cognitive and emotional maturity, and form patterns of behavior and thinking that will shape their future. Therefore, education at this stage should not solely focus on academic achievements, but also address the psychological and social dimensions that contribute to identity formation and personal growth (Hasibuan et al., 2024).

According to Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, children aged 6 to 12 are situated in the *industry versus inferiority* stage, where their sense of competence is built through successful engagement with academic and social tasks (Herdiansyah et al., 2024). Supportive environments during this period foster a sense of capability and confidence, while inadequate support can result in feelings of inferiority and self-doubt (Julieta, 2022). Furthermore, children in the upper grades of elementary school,

typically around age 12, begin transitioning into the *identity versus role confusion* stage, a critical period for forming a personal identity that continues into adolescence (Mascia et al., 2023).

In the context of potential development, two key aspects that must be addressed are interest and aptitude. Interest often emerges through exposure to enriching experiences, while aptitude is an innate capacity that requires identification and cultivation to fully develop (Arulmani, 2024; Sari et al., 2023). Effective identification and nurturing of these aspects require responsive educational practices and close collaboration among teachers, parents, and mental health professionals (Frazier & Doyle Fosco, 2024). However, many primary schools, especially those in underserved regions, face significant barriers in conducting psychological assessments, which are essential for understanding each student's individual profile. The lack of access to such tools hinders the formulation of tailored educational strategies (Hidayah et al., 2022).

Previous studies have demonstrated the significant role of early psychological assessments in supporting student development. For example, Fahlevi et al. (2025) and Lena et al. (2020) found that systematic use of interest and personality assessments in primary schools improved the quality of individual learning interventions and guided students in selecting extracurricular activities aligned with their personal tendencies. Similarly, Firmansyah et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of training teachers to interpret assessment results to enable differentiated instruction. These findings suggest that psychological assessments are not only diagnostic tools but also strategic instruments that enhance the overall quality of education.

This issue is evident in SDN X in West Java. School observations reveal that many students struggle to recognize their own interests and potentials. Limited access to psychological assessment tools and insufficient support from both teachers and parents have been identified as major contributing factors. Consequently, students often engage in learning without a clear understanding of their strengths and preferences, which may negatively impact their confidence and motivation.

In response to these challenges, the Faculty of Psychology at Tarumanagara University initiated a community engagement program in collaboration with SDN X. This initiative focuses on implementing psychological assessments for elementary school students, including evaluations of intelligence, interests, and personality traits. The goal is to provide a comprehensive profile of each student to inform the design of more personalized and inclusive educational strategies. Additionally, the program serves as a model for how collaboration between higher education institutions and primary schools can directly contribute to improving educational equity, particularly in areas with limited access to psychological services.

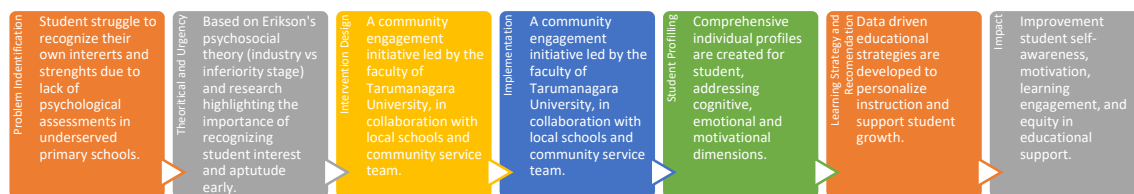


Figure 1. Problem solving solution framework

Through this initiative, the article aims not only to describe the implementation and outcomes of the community engagement activity but also to offer conceptual and practical contributions to potential-based education. It is hoped that this model can be replicated in other regions as part of a broader effort to realize equitable, inclusive, and learner-centered education. Based on Figure 1

illustrates the flow of the psychological intervention program, starting from problem identification and theoretical foundation to its implementation in primary schools. The process emphasizes the importance of mapping students' interests and aptitudes through psychological assessments, which are then used to develop comprehensive individual profiles. These profiles serve as the basis for designing data-driven and personalized learning strategies, ultimately leading to improved self-awareness, motivation, learning engagement, and greater equity in educational support.

## **2. METHODS**

### **Activity Design**

This community service activity was conducted in the form of a psychological assessment involving two schools in SDN X. The initiative was carried out in response to a request from students participating in the Community Service Team, who were stationed in the area. These students identified a need within the schools to better understand their students' potential, interests, and psychological characteristics.

Following the request, the implementation team organized a face-to-face meeting with the Community Service Team to assess the specific needs of the schools and determine the technical requirements of the activity. During this coordination meeting, discussions were held regarding the student profiles, school facilities, preferred dates, and the types of assessments to be conducted. Based on this meeting, a concrete plan was established, including the selection of psychological tools, determination of assessment flow, and division of responsibilities.

### **Participants and Setting**

The assessment was carried out in a classical group-testing format using two classrooms, each with a seating capacity of 25 to 30 students. A total of 57 students were scheduled to participate, though only 50 were ultimately present due to seven being absent for health-related reasons. The activity took a total duration of two hours and thirty minutes.

The participants were junior and senior high school students who had been pre-selected by the schools based on availability and relevance to the goals of the assessment. The school administration fully supported the initiative by facilitating the space and ensuring student participation.

### **Instruments Used**

To assess three primary psychological aspects, cognitive ability, vocational interest, and personality traits, three standardized instruments were utilized in this study. The first instrument was the Colored Progressive Matrices (CPM) by [Raven \(2008\)](#) a non-verbal reasoning test designed to evaluate students' general cognitive abilities, particularly their logical reasoning and abstract thinking skills. This test is widely used due to its cultural fairness and suitability for diverse populations, providing a reliable estimate of intellectual functioning in a relatively short time.

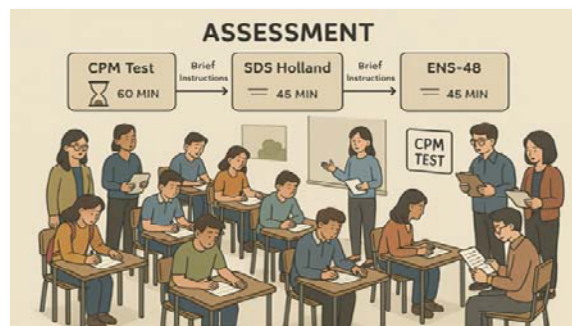
The second instrument was the Self-Directed Search (SDS) Holland Inventory. This instrument grounded in John Holland's theory of vocational personality and work environments for career choice ([Adlya & Zola, 2022](#)). This inventory measures vocational interests by categorizing individuals into six personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. The SDS helps align students' personal interests with potential educational or career paths, thereby supporting more informed decision-making about their futures.

The third instrument employed was the Eysenck Personality Inventory Short Form (ENS-48), a psychological questionnaire used to assess key personality dimensions. This tool includes four core scales: extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, and a lie or social desirability scale. By analyzing these dimensions, the ENS-48 provides insight into students' emotional and behavioral tendencies, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of their personality profiles. Together, these instruments enabled a multifaceted assessment of the participants, addressing cognitive, affective, and motivational domains essential for personal and academic development.

### Assessment Procedure

The assessment was divided into three sessions conducted in sequence. The CPM test was administered first with a 60-minute time allocation. This was followed by the SDS Holland inventory for 45 minutes and then the ENS-48 for another 45 minutes. Each session was introduced with brief instructions to ensure students understood how to respond properly.

Based on Figure 2, The entire activity was supervised by a team consisting of 2 professional testers, 3 observers, and 7 community service team. The testers were responsible for delivering the assessments, while observers monitored the environment and took notes on participant behavior. The community service team assisted with the distribution of materials and checked answer sheets for completeness and legibility before submission.



**Figure 2.** Illustration of the assesment procedure

### Data Management and Quality Control

Before data compilation, each answer sheet was carefully reviewed by the assisting community service team under the supervision of the testers. This preliminary quality check ensured that all responses were clearly marked, all pages were completed, and no double answers were given. The cleaned data was then compiled by the main testing team for analysis.

These procedures helped ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected, while also providing an opportunity for community service team to learn basic research and data handling techniques through hands-on experience.

### Ethical Considerations and School Support

The entire process was conducted with ethical sensitivity. Participants were informed of the purpose of the activity and were given the chance to ask questions beforehand. The schools involved

gave full support to the initiative, both logistically and administratively, which contributed to the smooth and timely execution of the assessment. All personal data collected was handled confidentially and used strictly for the purposes of the program.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Participants Overview**

This community service activity was conducted at SDN X in West Java response to a request from community service team who aimed to carry out psychological assessments measuring students' cognitive abilities, interests, and personality traits. The school welcomed the initiative, considering such assessments are rarely conducted in the region. This activity thus provided students with a new learning experience and self-awareness opportunity.

Out of 57 sixth-grade students scheduled to participate, 50 students completed the assessment. The age distribution of the participants is shown in Table 1.

**Tabel 1.** Participants overview based on age

<b>Age</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
12 years	37	74
13 years	13	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 shows the age distribution of the 50 students who completed the assessment. The majority of participants were 12 years old, totaling 37 students or 74 percent of the sample. Meanwhile, 13 students (26 percent) were 13 years old. This indicates that most students who took part in the assessment were within the typical age range for sixth-grade elementary school students, with only a small proportion being slightly older.

#### **Cognitive Assessment Results**

One of the core objectives of this community engagement activity was to provide an overview of the cognitive abilities of sixth-grade students at SDN X. This assessment was conducted in response to observed challenges among students, particularly in terms of understanding lessons and responding to questions related to their learning experiences. Based on preliminary observations by the community service team, several students appeared to struggle with certain academic tasks, which raised questions about their underlying cognitive capacity.

To address this, the Color Progressive Matrices (CPM) was administered as the primary tool for assessing general intelligence. The CPM is widely recognized as a non-verbal test of fluid intelligence, suitable for children and designed to measure reasoning and problem-solving abilities independent of language or cultural background. It serves as an effective instrument for evaluating students' capacity to process information, identify patterns, and make logical decisions, skills that are essential in the classroom learning environment.

The administration of the CPM was carefully timed and standardized across all participants, with a total time allocation of 60 minutes. Students were provided with clear instructions before the test began, and the entire session was supervised by trained assessors to ensure the reliability of the data collected. As shown in Table 2, 94 percent of students fall into the "Good" and "Very Good" categories.

This indicates that most students at SDN Caringin Nunggal and SDN Maleber Garut have adequate intellectual capacity to process and understand information presented during school lessons.

**Tabel 2.** Cognitive ability of students

Category	Frequency	Percentage ( percent)
Very good	38	76
Good	9	18
Average	3	6
Below average	0	0
Low	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>

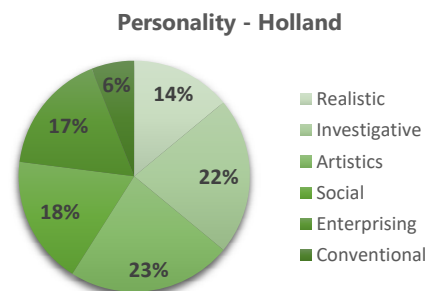
### Interest Assessment Results

Assessing cognitive ability, this program also sought to explore students' individual interests, with the goal of uncovering potential areas of strength and preference that could inform educational planning and future career orientation. Understanding students' interests is crucial at this developmental stage, as early interest alignment can enhance motivation, engagement, and self-awareness in learning.

This component of the psychological assessment was particularly relevant given initial findings by the community service team, who observed that many students appeared uncertain when asked about what subjects or activities they enjoyed or what aspirations they had for the future. This lack of clarity is not uncommon in elementary-aged students, particularly in rural or underserved regions where exposure to diverse fields of interest may be limited. Hence, the interest assessment aimed to not only capture preferences but also spark curiosity and open discussions among students about their personal inclinations.

To measure vocational interests, the Self-Directed Search (SDS) Holland inventory was utilized. This tool, grounded in John Holland's theory of vocational personalities, categorizes interests into six types: (1) Realistic (practical, hands-on tasks); (2) Investigative (scientific or analytical pursuits); (3) Artistic (creative expression); (4) Social (interpersonal and helping roles); (5) Enterprising (leadership and persuasive roles); and (6) Conventional (structured, detail-oriented tasks).

Students were guided through this inventory with age-appropriate language and examples to ensure comprehension. The session lasted approximately 45 minutes, with support from facilitators and community service team to help clarify instructions when needed. The results of the SDS Holland assessment revealed clear trends in the dominant interest types among students at SDN X and these are presented in Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** Diagram of the SDS Holland assessment result

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Students were guided through this inventory with age-appropriate language and examples to ensure comprehension. The session lasted approximately 45 minutes, with support from facilitators and community service team to help clarify instructions when needed (shown at Figure 4).



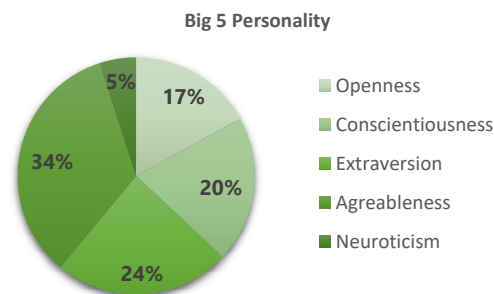
**Figure 4.** Administering the SDS Holland assessment

### Interest Assessment Results

Cognitive ability and interest exploration, this assessment also sought to understand the personality characteristics of students at SDN X. Personality plays a crucial role in shaping students' behavior, social interactions, motivation, and overall learning experience. Identifying dominant personality traits at an early stage can help educators tailor learning environments and strategies that align with students' emotional and interpersonal tendencies.

To assess personality, the ENS-48 instrument was employed. ENS-48 is a standardized psychological tool designed to evaluate individuals across five core dimensions based on the Five Factor Model (FFM) or Big Five personality traits. These dimensions include: (1) Openness – creativity, intellectual curiosity, and willingness to experience new things; (2) Conscientiousness – responsibility, organization, and goal-directed behaviors; (3) Extraversion – sociability, assertiveness, and energy; (4) Agreeableness – kindness, empathy, and cooperativeness; and (5) Neuroticism – emotional stability, anxiety, and moodiness.

Students were guided through the ENS-48 with simplified instructions and contextual examples to ensure understanding. The session lasted approximately 45 minutes and was conducted with the support of observers and community service team who helped clarify questions and ensured that the responses were completed accurately. The results of the assessment revealed clear trends among the personality traits of the students.



**Figure 5.** Diagram of the ENS-48 Assessment result

The distribution is illustrated in Figure 5, This personality profile suggests that students at SDN X are generally friendly, cooperative, energetic, and organized. The high level of agreeableness indicates

that many students are empathetic, sensitive to others' needs, and likely to engage in prosocial behavior. This is highly beneficial in classroom settings that require collaboration, mutual respect, and emotional regulation. The strong presence of extraversion shows that many students are outgoing, talkative, and enthusiastic about group activities, an asset in environments that emphasize participation and group learning. Conscientiousness, although slightly less dominant, reflects a portion of students who show discipline, responsibility, and a desire to achieve academic goals through structure and planning. Meanwhile, traits like openness and neuroticism were found to be less prominent in this sample, indicating that while students may show creativity and emotional sensitivity in some cases, these characteristics are not the primary defining features of the group as a whole.



**Figure 6.** Administering ENS-48 assessment

### **Assessment Activity Evaluation**

The implementation of this community service activity, which focused on administering psychological assessments at SDN X, was carried out smoothly and systematically. Overall, the activity proceeded successfully without any major obstacles. This positive outcome was made possible through the active cooperation and strong collaboration between all parties involved.

The school administration was highly supportive from the early planning stages through to field implementation. They facilitated access to the necessary facilities, helped coordinate the students' participation, and ensured that the school environment remained conducive throughout the assessment sessions. Their openness and enthusiasm toward introducing psychological assessment tools to their students played a critical role in the success of this initiative.



**Figure 7.** Assesment activity

In addition, the community service team team also demonstrated a high level of commitment and responsibility. They actively assisted in maintaining order during the assessment process, helping guide students, organizing materials, and supporting assessors in ensuring the procedures were followed

correctly. Their ability to create a calm and structured environment significantly enhanced the quality of the testing sessions and allowed the assessors to focus on data collection without unnecessary disruption.

This collaborative synergy among the assessment team, community service team, and school stakeholders contributed to an efficient and meaningful experience for the students. As a result, the activity provided not only valuable insights into the students' cognitive abilities, interests, and personality traits but also served as an enriching educational experience for the school community.

## **Discussion**

Psychological assessments conducted during the community service activities at SDN X have provided valuable insights into the psychological potential and characteristics of elementary school students in non-urban areas. These assessments encompassed three interrelated dimensions—cognitive ability, vocational interests, and personality, each of which contributes to a more holistic understanding of student development.

Results from the Colored Progressive Matrices (CPM) test revealed that most students demonstrated fair to excellent reasoning and problem-solving abilities. Despite coming from schools with limited resources, these students possess cognitive potential that can be developed optimally. This finding is consistent with [Supriatna et al. \(2024\)](#), who emphasized that psychological assessment in elementary schools can strengthen student-potential-based learning strategies.

According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, most upper-grade elementary school students are at the concrete operational stage, where logical concepts are best understood through hands-on experiences ([Susanto et al., 2024](#)). Therefore, their cognitive development is most effectively supported through contextual learning approaches such as learning by doing and project-based learning ([Faslia et al., 2023](#)). These methods not only foster higher student engagement but also strengthen reasoning structures through real-world applications.

Findings from the Self-Directed Search (SDS) indicated that most students showed social, conventional, and artistic vocational interests. This suggests that students have the potential to help others, enjoy structure and order, and engage in creative expression. These findings align with [Lestari & Sa'adah \(2021\)](#), who highlighted that recognizing career interests early contributes to more focused self-development during adolescence. For schools, this underscores the importance of providing spaces for interest-based growth, such as extracurricular activities, talent mapping, or career exploration discussions. In addition, fostering artistic interests may enrich students' creativity and expressiveness, aspects often overlooked in rural elementary curricula.

Results from the ENS-48 personality inventory showed agreeableness (34 percent), extroversion (24 percent), and conscientiousness (20 percent) as dominant traits. This profile indicates that students tend to be friendly, cooperative, socially enthusiastic, and relatively orderly. Such traits are well-suited for group-based learning and collaborative school environments. They also reflect students' readiness for classrooms that prioritize cooperation, empathy, and discipline ([Desi et al., 2025](#)). In the long term, these characteristics may help shape inclusive and supportive school communities. However, the lower scores on openness and neuroticism highlight the need for approaches that foster flexible thinking and enhance emotional recognition and regulation.

Overall, the psychological assessments provided substantial benefits for students, schools, and higher education institutions. For students, the assessments offered an initial understanding of their potentials and interests. For schools, the results serve as a foundation for designing counseling programs, differentiated learning models, and character education. For universities, this initiative exemplifies a

direct contribution to extending psychological services into underserved regions. As [Febriani \(2025\)](#) note, the integration of psychological assessment into elementary education represents a multifaceted approach that offers immediate educational benefits and long-term investment in human resource development. This program also lays the groundwork for sustainable collaboration between universities and schools through teacher training, advanced assessments, and talent identification.

Therefore, the results of these assessments not only provide a comprehensive psychological profile of the students but also directly support the program's goals of designing more personalized and inclusive educational strategies. Furthermore, they illustrate how collaboration between higher education institutions and primary schools can effectively contribute to improving educational equity, particularly in resource-limited contexts. All activities were carried out with the program's goals in mind, ensuring that the assessments go beyond data collection to serve as the foundation for adaptive, collaborative, and equity-driven educational practices.

#### **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The conclusion that can be drawn from the community service program activities held at SDN X is that the overall implementation proceeded smoothly and effectively. During the assessment sessions, both teachers and community service team contributed significantly in maintaining a conducive environment, ensuring that the process ran in an orderly manner. The activity was well-received not only by the school community but also by the students' families and parents, who showed strong support and appreciation. The school administration played an essential role in supporting both the planning and execution stages, which contributed greatly to the success and smooth running of the program. Furthermore, the psychological assessments were regarded as highly beneficial and necessary, especially considering that such services are still unevenly distributed in rural areas in West Java. For the development of students' cognitive capacities, it is recommended that the school adopts more varied teaching methods, such as incorporating techniques like learning by doing or project-based learning into their curriculum. Additionally, to support students' personal development, the school could organize self-reflection or group discussion activities that allow students to explore and understand themselves better.

To ensure a more sustainable impact for these psychological assessments, community service team are advised to develop a more structured follow-up program that can be directly implemented by schools. For instance, assessment results can be followed up by developing a rudimentary guidance and counseling module based on the collected student data. This module can then be submitted to guidance counselors or homeroom teachers for incorporation into routine training activities. Community service team can also offer short workshops for teachers, introducing them to the interpretation of assessment results and their integration into learning strategies that align with students' cognitive needs and interests. To cultivate interests, educational institutions may be encouraged to establish interest clubs (e.g., art clubs, social clubs, or science clubs) based on students' SDS X profiles. In order to fortify personality aspects, community service providers may also propose the implementation of regular group discussions in class that encourage students to learn about themselves, express their feelings, and develop social skills. Moreover, in order to achieve broader and more efficient coverage, community service providers have the capacity to begin documenting the entire assessment process and results in a digital format for reuse in similar activities or as a basis for developing technology-based psychological learning systems. Finally, Tarumanagara University is advised to establish an integrated community service program across faculties, for example between psychology, education, and information technology, so that assessment activities do not only stop at identification, but also create an innovative, practical, and data-based follow-up system.

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