



## Career Adaptability of Female High School Students in Islamic Boarding Schools in Yogyakarta: An Empirical Analysis and Career Development Challenges

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**Abstract.** The career adaptability of female high school students in Islamic boarding schools represents a critical factor in cultivating their readiness to navigate complex workforce dynamics. However, empirical studies focusing specifically on this demographic remain remarkably scarce. This study addresses this gap in the literature by quantitatively assessing career adaptability levels to understand their unique developmental needs. Employing a descriptive quantitative design, data were collected from 175 female senior high school students across four Islamic boarding schools in Yogyakarta. The assessment utilized the Indonesian Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (ID-CAAS). Descriptive statistical analysis revealed that the overall career adaptability of these students predominantly falls within the moderate category (42.3%). Notably, while the students exhibited robust capacities in the concern and confidence dimensions, indicating a positive future orientation and strong self-belief, significant vulnerabilities emerged regarding their autonomy and exploration. Specifically, 38.3% of the participants scored in the low to very low categories for the control dimension, and 30.2% scored similarly for the curiosity dimension. These empirical findings expose a critical readiness gap; despite possessing a foundational awareness of their future, the students exhibit a marked lack of independent decision-making skills and exploratory initiative necessary for optimal career development. This limitation is heavily influenced by the restrictive environment and hierarchical culture inherent to boarding schools. Consequently, this study concludes that conventional career guidance methods are insufficient, underscoring an urgent need for structured, context-sensitive interventions, such as independent career exploration media and community-facilitated guidance to optimally strengthen the career autonomy and adaptive readiness of female high school students in Islamic boarding schools.

**Keywords:** Career Adaptability, ID-CAAS, Female Islamic Boarding School Students, Senior High School.

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## **Introduction**

Career development in the modern era requires individuals to possess career adaptability in order to proactively navigate transitions and challenges in the workplace. These psychosocial competencies encompass four dimensions: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence (Asok Kumar et al., 2024; Fu et al., 2023; Savickas, 2013). This need becomes particularly crucial during adolescence, a critical period for solidifying career preferences before entering the workforce (Harahap et al., 2023; Rahayu, 2022; Super, 1980). However, these adaptation demands become far more complex within the educational environment of Islamic boarding schools. Female students face a curriculum that filters career exploration through moral and religious demands. They are also required to master modern literacy without abandoning traditional values (Hasibuan et al., 2024; Husna et al., 2020; Johan et al., 2024; Shodiq, 2023). Therefore, it can be concluded that career adaptability is an essential foundation within the Islamic boarding school environment, a strategic competency absolutely necessary to equip students to navigate the uncertainties of the transition period with resilience and thorough preparedness.

The dynamics of career readiness present unique complexities for female students at Islamic boarding schools. They consistently find themselves caught between their personal professional aspirations and deeply rooted sociocultural expectations (Rahmawati & Anam, 2021). On one hand, female students are encouraged to achieve high academic performance. On the other hand, societal demands to prioritize family and marriage often hinder women's opportunities to explore their careers (Azizah & Rahman, 2022; Kumara et al., 2024). This cultural dilemma is further exacerbated by digital isolation policies in Islamic boarding schools, such as strict bans on the use of mobile devices and restrictions on internet access (Darip, 2024; Mahfudhoh & Fatimah, 2019). This lack of access to information directly reduces female students' curiosity and narrows their understanding of labor market dynamics (Husniah & Taufiq, 2023; Mustofa et al., 2023; Akbar, 2023). Consequently, their career planning process becomes non-autonomous and heavily reliant on the approval of authority figures or limited internal sources (Fitriani, 2022; Subekti & Fauzi, 2018; Zona & Zulvia, 2022). Thus, it can be concluded that the accumulation of these dual-role expectations and information barriers systematically restricts the female students' scope of action, while simultaneously reducing their career adaptability in independently shaping their future.

Various empirical trends reveal a striking gap between adolescent girls' high career aspirations and their actual level of readiness. Empirical data from Subhan (2024) confirms that the skills of female Islamic boarding school students in responding to career uncertainty are mostly only in the moderate category, consistent with their low career self-efficacy compared to students in public schools (Afifudin & Yoto, 2024; Fakhriyani & Sa'idah, 2023; Sugiharto et al., 2019). This issue is exacerbated by the suboptimal support provided by Guidance and Counseling services in Islamic boarding schools due to limited facilities, high counselor workload, and service methods that are not yet proactive (Anggi et al., 2023; Khusumadewi, 2021; Utama et al., 2021). This situation demonstrates that the traditional career guidance paradigm, which assumes students have full freedom of exploration, is no longer relevant within the Islamic boarding school ecosystem (Aminah et al., 2024; Porfeli & Savickas, 2012).

In conclusion, the high potential and motivation of female boarding school students will not be effectively channeled amid limited information and stagnant career guidance services. This situation demands a paradigm shift in career assessment and intervention, which must be based on

comprehensive evaluation using standardized psychological instruments to ensure greater precision.

## Method

### Research Design

This study employs a quantitative approach with a descriptive design aimed at capturing and describing the level of career adaptability among female high school students. This quantitative descriptive approach was specifically chosen to obtain a measurable empirical picture of the actual state of female Islamic boarding school students' career readiness and adaptability, which was evaluated based on measurement results using standardized psychological instruments.

### Participants

The study's respondents consisted of female students from four Islamic boarding schools in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. Sampling employed a purposive sampling technique with the following inclusion criteria: (1) currently enrolled high school students, and (2) residing full-time in the boarding school dormitory. These criteria were selected to ensure that the collected data accurately captures the dynamics of career adaptability within the unique ecosystem of Islamic boarding schools, with their specific rules and constraints.

### Participants Recruitment Procedure

Data collection was conducted using purposive sampling directly at the target Islamic boarding school, after obtaining official permission from the foundation's management. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents received a comprehensive explanation regarding the research objectives along with ethical assurances regarding the confidentiality of personal data (informed consent). The research subjects consisted of 175 female high school students (SMA) aged 15 to 17 years. Subsequently, the ID-CAAS questionnaire was distributed for participants to complete independently within a specified timeframe. Details of the demographic characteristics of the study respondents are presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Ages

		Age (Years)			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15.00	7	4.0	4.0	4.0
	16.00	133	76.0	76.0	80.0
	17.00	35	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total		175	100.0	100.0	

### Research Instruments

Data collection in this study utilized the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale Indonesian Version (ID-CAAS). This standardized instrument is the result of the adaptation and validation of the original scale developed by Savickas & Porfeli (2012), which has been specifically tailored to the cultural and linguistic context of Indonesian youth by Aminah et al. (2024). The ID-CAAS is designed to measure four dimensions of career psychosocial resources through 24 evenly distributed items (6 items each), namely:

1. Concern: Assessing future orientation and career readiness (items 1–6).
2. Control: Measures independence and responsibility in decision-making (items 7–12).
3. Curiosity: Assessing motivation for exploring career opportunities and the environment (items 13–18).
4. Confidence: Measures self-efficacy in solving career problems (items 19–24).

The instrument was assessed using a 5-point Likert scale that asked respondents to rate how strongly they had developed each of these competencies. The response options were as follows: (5) Strongest, (4) Very Strong, (3) Strong, (2) Fairly Strong, and (1) Not Strong.

### Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected was then analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques with the aid of SPSS to provide a comprehensive picture of the female students’ levels of career adaptability. The statistical analysis involved calculating the mean, frequency distribution, and the percentage of scores grouped into specific achievement categories ranging from very low, low, moderate, high, to very high. The results of this statistical analysis were then interpreted in depth to identify general trends in the female students’ adaptability levels and to dissect specific vulnerabilities in each of their career indicators. This empirical mapping was subsequently used as a strong basis for formulating theoretical and practical implications for optimizing career guidance and counseling services within the *pesantren* environment.

### Results

This study describes the level of career adaptability among 175 female high school students from four Islamic boarding schools in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. Measurements were taken using the ID-CAAS instrument, which covers four main dimensions: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. The quantitative data collected were analyzed descriptively to map the students’ career adaptability levels.

Before classifying these results into ranking categories, a descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to examine the general distribution of data across each dimension as well as the total career adaptability score. The results of the descriptive statistical analysis are presented in table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Results of the Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mean_Concern	175	1.50	5.00	3.7314	.77121
Mean_Control	175	1.33	5.00	3.5057	.78314
Mean_Curiosity	175	1.33	5.00	3.6152	.75380
Mean_Confidence	175	1.50	5.00	3.6638	.75757
Mean_Total	175	1.83	4.96	3.6290	.62831
Valid N (listwise)	175				

Based on the table above, the results of the career adaptability assessment for 175 respondents show an overall average score of 3.63 with a standard deviation of 0.63. The majority of respondents 74 people (42.3%) fall into the moderate category of career adaptability. The remaining

respondents were distributed across the high (26.3%), low (24.6%), very low (4.0%), and very high (2.9%) categories.

**Table 3.** Categorization of ID-CAAS Female Students

		Categorization			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Low	7	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Low	43	24.6	24.6	28.6
	Moderate	74	42.3	42.3	70.9
	Low	46	26.3	26.3	97.1
	Very Low	5	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

To obtain a more detailed empirical picture, the measurement results were then analyzed based on the percentage distribution across the four indicators of career adaptability, as follows:

**Achievement Level for the Concern Dimension**

The concern indicator represents the extent to which female students are aware of and consider their future careers. Based on the data distribution, the concern dimension had the highest average score compared to the other dimensions, at 3.73 with a standard deviation of 0.77. The data distribution shows that the majority of respondents fell into the moderate category, accounting for 37.1% (65 people). The remaining proportions include 26.9% in the high category, 18.3% in the low category, 10.3% in the very high category, and 7.4% in the very low category. This indicates that the majority of respondents have a sufficiently adequate level of concern and orientation toward planning their future careers.

**Table 4.** Achievements in the Concern Dimension

		Concern_Categorization			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Low	13	7.4	7.4	7.4
	Low	32	18.3	18.3	25.7
	Moderate	65	37.1	37.1	62.9
	High	47	26.9	26.9	89.7
	Very High	18	10.3	10.3	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

**Achievement Level for the Control Dimension**

For the control indicator, which specifically measures an individual’s capacity for independence and sense of responsibility in making career choices, the distribution of scores is shown in the following table.

**Table 5.** Achievements in the Control Dimension

		<b>Control_Categorization</b>			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Low	24	13.7	13.7	13.7
	Low	43	24.6	24.6	38.3
	Moderate	59	33.7	33.7	72.0
	High	40	22.9	22.9	94.9
	Very High	9	5.1	5.1	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

The average score was recorded at 3.51 with a standard deviation of 0.78, which was the lowest score among all dimensions. Although the moderate category remained dominant at 33.7% (59 people), this dimension had the highest combined percentage in the low (24.6%) and very low (13.7%) categories compared to the other three dimensions. The remainder fell into the high (22.9%) and very high (5.1%) categories. These figures indicate that self-control and independence in making career decisions are the aspects that are relatively least developed among the respondents.

**Achievement Level for the Curiosity Dimension**

The results of the curiosity dimension analysis showed an average score of 3.62 with a standard deviation of 0.75. The distribution of respondents was dominated by the moderate category, comprising 76 people (43.4%). The remaining respondents were distributed across the low (21.1%), high (19.4%), very low (9.1%), and very high (6.9%) categories. These results indicate that the respondents' levels of initiative and exploration regarding various information, career choices, and work environments tend to be at a moderate level.

**Table 6.** Achievements in the Curiosity Dimension

		<b>Curiosity_Categorization</b>			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Low	16	9.1	9.1	9.1
	Low	37	21.1	21.1	30.3
	Moderate	76	43.4	43.4	73.7
	High	34	19.4	19.4	93.1
	Very High	12	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

**Achievement Level for the Confidence Dimension**

The confidence dimension is used to assess the female students' level of self-efficacy and their belief in their own ability to face and resolve career-related issues.

**Table 7.** Achievements in the Confidence Dimension

		<b>Confidence_Categorization</b>			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Low	15	8.6	8.6	8.6
	Low	37	21.1	21.1	29.7
	Moderate	70	40.0	40.0	69.7
	High	39	22.3	22.3	92.0
	Very High	14	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	175	100.0	100.0	

The confidence dimension received an average score of 3.66 with a standard deviation of 0.76. Similar to the patterns observed in other dimensions, the highest concentration of data was in the moderate category, accounting for 40.0% (70 people). The remaining respondents were distributed

across the high category (22.3%), followed by the low category (21.1%), very low (8.6%), and very high (8.0%). These results indicate that, in general, respondents' self-confidence in overcoming obstacles and achieving career goals is at a sufficient level.

Overall, the respondents' career adaptability profiles, as measured using the ID-CAAS instrument, showed a consistent trend in the moderate category, both cumulatively and across the four dimensions. The concern dimension emerged as the most developed aspect ( $M = 3.73$ ), while the control dimension was the aspect with the lowest score ( $M = 3.51$ ) and also had the largest proportion of low and very low categories (38.3%). These descriptive findings confirm that although respondents already possess a foundation of concern for their future careers, decision-making ability and the autonomy to take control of those career choices are crucial areas that still require further intervention and development.

## **Discussion**

This study provides a descriptive overview of the level of career adaptability among 175 female high school students using the ID-CAAS instrument. Referring to the Career Construction theoretical framework by Savickas & Porfeli (2012), the analysis results indicate that the majority of female students fall into the moderate (42.3%) and high (26.3%) career adaptability categories. Specifically, scores on the dimensions of concern and confidence were the most positive. Conversely, vulnerabilities were evident in the dimensions of control (38.3%) and curiosity (30.2%). These findings confirm uneven development in career adaptability. While the majority of female students possess strong internal motivation, critical gaps remain in decision-making autonomy and exploratory initiative.

The high scores on the dimensions of concern and confidence demonstrate that female boarding school students possess a future-oriented mindset and strong self-confidence. This outcome is a logical result of the boarding school ecosystem, which consistently instills discipline and mental resilience (Halim, 2019; Nopianti, 2018; Takdir et al., 2025). These empirical findings also refute the stigma that female boarding school students are apathetic toward their career paths. On the contrary, the data reinforces evidence that adolescent girls exhibit high enthusiasm for their future (Fakhriyani & Sa'idah, 2023). Islamic character education in boarding school effectively serves as a pillar of resilience (Suraji & Sastrodiharjo, 2021), which ultimately fosters the cognitive resilience of female students in planning their careers.

However, the vulnerabilities identified in the dimensions of control and curiosity require a more objective explanation. Limitations in the area of exploration (curiosity) are strongly suspected to overlap with regulations restricting technology in many Islamic boarding schools. Limited internet access has the potential to restrict female students' opportunities to independently explore the job market (Darip, 2024; Mahfudhoh & Fatimah, 2019). Additionally, low levels of control may be linked to hierarchical structures and societal gender role expectations. Female students' career decisions are often constrained by a high degree of dependence on the approval of authority figures (Azizah & Rahman, 2022; Kumara et al., 2024). This indicates that institutional norms and cultural values also influence the level of independence among female students.

These findings highlight an empirical gap compared to previous literature reviews. Several studies confirm that the career readiness of female boarding school students tends to stagnate at an intermediate level (Subhan & Wangid, 2025; Sugiharto et al., 2019). Without structured intervention, these adaptive skills are highly vulnerable to decline during the transition to the

workforce. The high proportion of female students in the vulnerable category underscores that conventional guidance approaches are no longer relevant. Approaches assuming absolute freedom in career choice are not fully applicable to female students bound by environmental restrictions (Anggi et al., 2023). Therefore, Guidance and Counseling services in Islamic boarding schools need to transform. Guidance and Counseling teachers are urged to reposition their roles as community facilitators based on andragogical principles (Latipun, 2021; Zali & Hiryanto, 2023). Practically, Islamic boarding schools need to develop more innovative self-guided counseling resources to facilitate optimal career exploration.

### **Novelty of the Research**

The novelty of this research lies in the use of empirical ID-CAAS data focused on the career vulnerabilities of female students in Islamic boarding schools. While previous quantitative studies tended to stop at measuring general adaptability levels in regular school populations, this study specifically examines the weaknesses in female students' profiles regarding the dimensions of control and curiosity. Precise mapping of this marginalized demographic directly bridges the gap between passive descriptive evaluation and the design of adaptive, targeted career interventions.

### **Implications and Contributions**

This study has important implications for the theory and practice of guidance and counseling. Theoretically, this study demonstrates that the linear career guidance paradigm is no longer adequate for populations facing barriers to accessing information. The Career Construction approach has proven to be far more relevant and flexible. Practically, these findings urge Islamic boarding schools to optimize their guidance and counseling services beyond addressing disciplinary issues. In response to the low levels of curiosity and control among female students, Islamic boarding schools are required to immediately innovate by creating self-instructional and self-contained service media. The development of career guidance modules that integrate the local wisdom of Islamic boarding schools is a strategic step to prepare female students to compete in the modern, competitive job market.

### **Research Limitations**

There are several limitations to this study, including the descriptive quantitative design, which is unable to establish causality; the susceptibility of self-report instruments to bias; and the limited generalizability of the sample, which consisted of 175 female students in Yogyakarta. To address these limitations, future research is recommended to focus on research and development (R&D) studies to formulate and validate the effectiveness of innovative, targeted career guidance interventions for the female boarding school student population.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, this study concludes that the career adaptability of female boarding school students falls within the moderate range. Although these students demonstrate adequate concern and self-confidence, their adaptive capacity remains constrained in terms of independence and curiosity due

to structural and cultural challenges within the boarding school environment. These findings demonstrate that traditional career guidance approaches need to be adapted. The main practical contribution of this research is the call to develop career guidance services specific to the Islamic boarding school environment, particularly the creation of self-directed intervention tools to holistically facilitate female students' independence and career readiness.

### Author Contribution

S.S. conceived the main research idea, designed the methodology, collected data in the field, and performed statistical data analysis. A.H. contributed to the drafting of the article. A.T.L. supervised the research, reviewed the methodological design, provided critical feedback on the discussion, and revised the manuscript. All authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final version of this manuscript.

### Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declare that there are no potential conflicts of interest related to the research, writing, and/or publication of this article.

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