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Describing Work Readiness in Psychology Students: Insights from an Indonesia University

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ABSTRACT: In today's competitive labor market, universities must prepare students to meet evolving workplace demands. Work readiness is a multidimensional construct involving personal characteristics, organisational acumen, work competencies, and social intelligence, which differ among individuals. This study aims to describe the level of work readiness of students at the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI. This study used quantitative and descriptive approaches. Data were collected in May 2025 through an online questionnaire distributed to all students of the Faculty of Psychology from the Class of 2021-2024, ensuring equal opportunity to participate. The study subjects were 115 students from the class of 2021-2024, selected using stratified random sampling. The instrument used was the Work Readiness Scale (WRS) by Caballero, which has been adapted into Indonesian by Rahmawati (2021). The instrument's validity was examined using corrected item–total correlation. Reliability analysis with Cronbach's Alpha yielded 0.924, indicating high internal consistency. Data were analyzed descriptively. Score categories (very low to very high) were determined using predefined cut-off score intervals based on the total score range. The results showed that students' work readiness was in the moderate category (41,7%). Organisational acumen is dimension with the highest score, while the social intelligence dimension is the lowest. These findings indicate that students have adequate job readiness, particularly in their understanding and attitudes toward organizations, but still need strengthening in social and interpersonal skills. Therefore, curriculum development should emphasize practical learning experiences to enhance students' applied competencies and interpersonal readiness for the workplace.

Keywords: Work Readiness, College, Psychology, University.

INTRODUCTION

In the world of work, numerous skills and demands required universities to produce graduates with the high level of work readiness. This aims is to ensure that graduates can successfully adapt when they starting work. These capabilities include skills and knowledge relevant to the field of work (Yang, 2023). Students are also required to begin developing their competencies and attitudes

to determine future jobs and careers (Pratiwi & Fatwa, 2024). This implies that universities should play a strategic role. Not only prepare students for academic target (Abdillah, 2024), but also in preparing them to have a high work readiness level before entering a job (Azizah et al., 2025).

However, there is often a gap between university competencies and the demands of the workplace (Ardhana et al., 2025). This will make the transition from college to the workforce more difficult for university graduates. One indicator that can measure their ability to adapt in workforce is the work readiness. The term "work readiness" refers to the extent to which graduates possess the attributes and attitudes that will enable them to succeed in the workforce (C. L. Caballero et al., 2011; C. Caballero & Walker, 2010; Orr et al., 2023).

Work readiness is influenced by various factors (Aulia & Miftahunnajah, 2025). It also involves cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects, so a comprehensive approach is needed to describe and understand work readiness in detail. Peersia et al. (2024) state that work readiness is formed through a long process experienced by students in higher education and other factors. Which is mean that educational process in a college directly impacts the quality of its graduates, ensuring strong competitiveness in the workforce (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021).

It can be applied to psychology students. They need to possess field-specific competencies as well as relevant workplace skills and behaviors (Biggs, 2023). The goal is to prepare them to apply their knowledge in real-world setting. Currently, in the Faculty of Psychology at UNIBI (Universitas Informatika dan Bisnis Indonesia) still lacks descriptive data of student's work readiness, although this is necessary to support graduates' to have a successful adaptation in the workforce (Handayani & Wibowo, 2021). Interviews conducted by Dwiratnasari et al., (2025) revealed that many Psychology students feel not ready to entering the workforce due to perceived limited skills. However, according to Dewi et al., (2021), students should have strong self-confidence to achieve good work readiness. This perceived lack of prepare can impact their adaptation to the workforce. Essentially, if this can be precisely identified, appropriate intervention steps can be determined as the basis for curriculum development and career services.

Although previous studies have examined work readiness among university students, limited research has specifically profiled work readiness among psychology students within private universities in Bandung, West Java. Therefore, this study provides contextual novelty by mapping the work readiness profile of psychology students at UNIBI using the four-dimensional framework of the Work Readiness Scale (WRS). By identifying dimensional strengths and weaknesses, particularly the lowest leverage dimension, this research offers a more specific institutional perspective that can guide targeted academic improvement.

Conceptually, psychology students may demonstrate distinctive dimensional patterns of work readiness. Their academic training emphasizes theoretical understanding of human behavior and organizational systems; however, opportunities for structured interpersonal practice and direct client interaction may vary across academic levels. As a result, differences may emerge between cognitive-organizational understanding and applied social-interpersonal readiness. Examining dimensional variation is therefore essential rather than relying solely on an overall readiness score.

In addition, this study contributes analytically by comparing work readiness patterns across entry cohorts (class of 2021–2024), allowing interpretation of potential seniority and exposure effects during higher education. From an applied perspective, the dimensional findings are expected to inform actionable curriculum strategies, particularly in strengthening structured field-based practice, supervised practicum experiences, and simulation-based interpersonal skill training relevant to psychological professional settings. Based on this background, the research questions of this study are:

(1) What is the overall level of work readiness among students of the Faculty of Psychology at UNIBI, both overall and by dimension? ; (2) How does work readiness vary across entry cohorts (class of 2021–2024)?

Using a quantitative approach, this study will be conducted to obtain an empirical data of the work readiness of students at the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI. The results of this study are expected to contribute to research on work readiness in Indonesia and, in particular, serve as a basis for evaluating and developing the curriculum and other programs related to career development at the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI.

METHOD

Research Type

The method used in this research is a quantitative approach. Quantitative research refers to an organized methodological approach that incorporates specific concepts, categories, processes, and advantages, employing numerical data to systematically respond to research inquiries (Waruwu et al., 2025). This approach is used to obtain objective and measurable data by distributing questionnaires to respondents. The final result, the data will be statistically processed and then analyzed to obtain an overview of the work readiness of students in the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI.

Population and Sample/Informants

The population in this study were students of the Faculty of Psychology from the class of 2021-2024. The sampling technique used was stratified random sampling, which involves dividing the population into subgroups or strata based on certain characteristics (Makwana et al., 2023). The total population consisted of 387 students (Class of 2021 = 66; Class of 2022 = 76; Class of 2023 = 150; Class of 2024 = 95). A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across classes. The questionnaire was distributed to all eligible students across the four classes, ensuring that each member of the population had an equal opportunity to participate. The final sample included 115 respondents (Class of 2021 = 20; Class of 2022 = 23; Class of 2023 = 44; Class of 2024 = 28), and the distribution closely reflected the population proportions within each stratum. Participation in this study was strictly voluntary using informed

consent and data is kept confidential. All students were provided with an informed consent form outlining the purpose of the study, confidentiality assurances, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences. In line with ethical standards in psychological research, only students who provided informed consent were included in the study. Although all eligible students had the opportunity to participate, a total of 115 students agreed to complete the questionnaire. Although the final sample size represents 29.7% of the total population, it remains adequate for statistical analysis in quantitative research. The proportional distribution across classes supports the representativeness of the sample within the study context. Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted within the scope of the obtained sample.

Research Location

This research was conducted at the Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Informatika dan Bisnis Indonesia (UNIBI), located in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. This institution has diverse student characteristics, and it can strengthen the research context in assessing work readiness.

Instrumentation or Tools

The instrument used in this study was the Work Readiness Scale (WRS) originally developed by Caballero et al. (2011). This study employed the Indonesian-adapted version developed by Rahmawati, (2021). This questionnaire consists of 46 items measuring four dimensions of work readiness: personal characteristics, organisational acumen, work competence, and social intelligence. Respondents' responses were measured using a scale ranging from 1 to 4, with 1 being strongly disagree, 2 being disagree, 3 being agree, and 4 being strongly agree. The items had two response types: favorable and unfavorable.

Data Collection Procedures

Quantitative data were obtained through the distribution of online questionnaires via the Google Form in May 2025. Respondents who were students of the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI, from the class of 2021-2024 were provided with an informed consent form and also an instructions how to fill out the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire used was then tested using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26. Its validity was tested using corrected item-total correlation. The validity test results stated that 1 item (item number 13 is included in the personal characteristics dimension) was invalid and it was removed, resulting in 45 valid items and can be used as a basis for calculating the reliability and the results.

The reliability test used was the Cronbach Alpha test, and produced a reliability coefficient of 0.924, which means this instrument is reliable. After that, the questionnaire results were tested using descriptive statistical methods to obtain an overview of the results. The score categories were determined using a mean and standard deviation–based classification approach, dividing the total scores into five levels (very low to very high) based on empirical distribution.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Tabel 1. Demographic Data

Category		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	89	77.4%
	Male	26	22.6%
Class of	2021	20	17.4%
	2022	23	20.0%
	2023	44	38.3%
	2024	28	24.3%
	Total	**115**	**100%**

Based on Table 1, data shows that the majority of respondents were female, at 89 (77.4%). Meanwhile, there were 26 male respondents, representing 22.6%. The largest number of respondents came from the class of 2023 (44), followed by the class of 2024 (28), the class of 2022 (23), and finally, the class of 2021 (20).

Table 2. Description Statistic

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Work Readiness		89	171	129.88	14.364
Personal Characteristics		1.9	3.8	2.701	0.3426
Organisational Acumen	115	2.5	4	3.168	0.3189
Work Competence		1.6	4	2.889	0.4551
Social Intelligence		1.2	3.8	2.642	0.5034
Valid N (listwise)	115				

The data in table 2, both the total score and the dimension score, uses the average score. Based on the data in table 2, it can be interpreted that the lowest score obtained was 89 and the maximum score obtained was 171. The average value was 129.88 with a standard deviation of 14.364, which can be interpreted that there was a variation in work readiness scores among all respondents. The highest average value obtained by respondents was in the Organizational Acumen dimension, which was 3.168, and the lowest was Social Intelligence dimension, which was 2.642.

Table 3. Category

	Range	Frequency	Percentage
Very low	X ≤ 108	6	5.2%
Low	108 < X ≤ 123	32	27.8%
Moderate	123 < X ≤ 137	48	41.7%
High	137 < X ≤ 151	19	16.5%
Very high	X > 151	10	8.7%
Total		115	100%

Score categorization was determined using the empirical mean and standard deviation approach as commonly applied in psychological measurement (Azwar, 2012). This method classifies total scores into five levels based on the formula M ± 0.5 SD and M ± 1.5 SD, allowing interpretation relative to the empirical score distribution.

Based on the data in Table 3, the distribution of respondents across score categories indicates that the majority fell within the moderate range (41.7%). A smaller proportion of respondents were classified as very low (5.2%), this was followed by 27.8% of participants in the low category. 16.5% respondents are in the high category and very high (8.7%). Overall, these findings suggest that most participants demonstrated a moderate level of the measured variable, with relatively fewer individuals at the extreme ends of the distribution. Overall, 33.0% were categorized as low/very low and 25.2% as high/very high, based on the cut-offs described in Table 3.

Table 4. Comparison of Scores

Angkatan	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2021	112	156	133.55	12.530
2022	104	171	133.17	15.072
2023	101	161	127.73	14.174
2024	89	167	127.93	14.999

Based on Table 4, the descriptive analysis indicates that each class demonstrates a different average level of job readiness. Among them, the class of 2021 shows the highest mean score compared to the other classes. These findings are derived from the comparison of mean scores across groups and reflect variations in job readiness levels at a descriptive level. Given the descriptive design of this study, the magnitude of differences across class was interpreted using direct comparison of mean scores relative to the overall standard deviation. The largest observed difference (between the class of 2021 and class of 2023) was 5.82 points, which represents less than half of the overall standard deviation (SD = 14.364). This indicates that the variation across class is relatively modest in practical terms. Overall, although slight differences in average scores were observed, the dispersion suggests that work readiness levels are broadly comparable across entry years, and no substantial practical gap is evident between class.

Interpretation of Key Findings

The results of this study indicate that, the level of work readiness among students in the Faculty of Psychology at UNIBI is in the moderate category, at 129.88. This indicates that students have a sufficient foundation of work readiness, which can serve as a valuable resource for entering the workforceHowever, the score has not yet reached an optimal level, indicating the need for both internal and external strengthening. The diverse distribution of categorizations, with 41.7% in the moderate category, 33% in the low and very low categories, and 25.2% in the high and very high categories, indicates differences in work readiness among students. The class of 2021, the top class in the Faculty of Psychology at UNIBI, had a higher average work readiness score compared to other classes. This descriptive pattern is consistent with previous studies (Putri et al., 2025), which report higher readiness levels among students with greater academic and organizational exposure. However, beyond that, individual characteristics, career maturity, and student involvement in academic and non-academic activities can be several influencing factors.

When viewed from the perspective of work readiness dimensions, all four have different average scores. The organizational acumen dimension has the highest average score, at 3.168. This suggests that students tend to have greater maturity, awareness, and knowledge of organizations, self-direction, and a positive attitude toward work (Caballero et al., 2011). The work competence and personal characteristics dimensions scored lower than the organizational acumen dimension, at 2.889 and 2.701. This suggests that students possess sufficient adaptability, resilience, and a willingness to pursue personal development. Furthermore, students possess sufficient work competencies appropriate and relevant to their future careers. They also possess the ability to measure their focus on technical matters and possess problem-solving skills relevant to their field of work. However, the results show that the social intelligence dimension had the lowest average score compared to the other dimensions, at 2,642. This suggests that students still need to improve their ability to adapt and build interpersonal relationships with people in work settings. In psychology, this is crucial, especially in the workplace. In psychology, professionals interact directly with clients, colleagues, and multidisciplinary teams, making interpersonal competence a central professional requirement (Andini et al., 2025). Social intelligence is essential not only for effective communication but also for building therapeutic alliances, understanding clients' emotional cues, collaborating within teams, and conveying sensitive information ethically. Low levels of social intelligence may therefore limit a graduate's ability to establish trust, manage interpersonal dynamics, and respond appropriately in complex professional situations. Consequently, strengthening this dimension is particularly critical for psychology students preparing to enter client-centered and ethically sensitive work environments. Increasingly competitive professional demands require students to possess comprehensive work readiness across all aspects.

The findings of this study indicate that work readiness is a comprehensive and multidimensional variable (Azhar et al., 2025). Although students generally possess a good cognitive understanding of organizational acumen, this is not the primary determinant of high work readiness. This also needs to be supported by affective and interpersonal skills, which can be examined from the social intelligence dimension. Direct experience can be used to train students to develop strong interpersonal skills for entering the workforce. Coursework, which integrates theory and real-world experience (experiential learning), can influence student job readiness (Diana et al., 2025). These findings demonstrate an inequity in average scores across dimensions, suggesting that the

educational process currently underway tends to focus more on conceptual understanding than on strengthening more practical social skills.

Therefore, the results of this study indicate that the job readiness of students at the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI, are in the moderate category, with significant variation in each dimension. This demonstrates that student job readiness has been established but still requires strengthening, both internally and externally. Higher education institutions are required to facilitate optimal student job readiness to support their success in the workforce (Pham, 2024).

Comparison with Previous Studies

The results of the study indicate that the work readiness of students at the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI is generally in the moderate category, with variations in each dimension. Several other studies are in line with the results of this study, but some are inconsistent and tend to be contradictory, showing conflicting results. Based on the results of this study, the social intelligence dimension is the dimension with the lowest score among the other dimensions. This shows contradictory results when compared to the results of research by Tasuib et al., (2024), which stated that the social intelligence dimension is the dimension with the highest score. This difference in results may be influenced by different respondents, where in that study the respondents were final-year students. Meanwhile, in this study, respondents were representatives of all students at the Faculty of Psychology from the class of 2021 to 2024, so the results do not only represent one specific category of respondents. This can strengthen the assumption that the higher the level of students, the better their social intelligence skills will be. Social intelligence can be described as the ability to adapt and establish interpersonal relationships with people in work settings (Caballero, et al., 2011). In the context of the development of psychology, this is closely related to interpersonal skills, where individuals establish relationships with others outside themselves. Lu et al., (2024) stated that as students advance in their academic level, they demonstrate increasingly better interpersonal skills, indicating that these abilities develop over time. Furthermore, practical learning, which is increasingly experienced by upper-level students, influences their interpersonal skills.

Furthermore, the results of this study align with those of Caballero et al., (2011), who stated that students tend to have maturity, awareness, and knowledge of organizations, self-direction, and a positive attitude toward work, but lack direct training to apply these skills in real-world settings. Therefore, they lack social and personal experience and require extensive training and hands-on practice (Magfiroh & Jaro'ah, 2023). This is consistent with the results of this study, which show that respondents tend to score high on the organizational acumen dimension but low on the social intelligence dimension. Thus, theoretically, they will be able to understand how organizations work, but they still need practice to adapt and build interpersonal relationships with people in work settings. This also aligns with research conducted by Azizah et al. (2025), which stated that students are generally quite work-ready but still need to strengthen their soft skills, especially in communication and collaboration.

Furthermore, this study also demonstrates continuity with the results of research conducted by Dwiratnasari (2025), which stated that students at the Faculty of Psychology UNIBI, generally

have a subjective perception of themselves as not yet ready to enter the workforce. This subjective perception of their readiness to enter the workforce is quantitatively demonstrated in this study. Essentially, work readiness is a multidimensional construct and develops gradually through the integration of academic learning and fieldwork (Peersia et al., 2024). Work readiness cannot stand alone and be based on a single factor; it can be influenced by various factors. Internal factors themselves can include career planning, self-efficacy (Rumengan & Tengker, 2025), field experience, organizational experience (Aminulloh & Sudiro, 2024), soft skills, etc., while external factors include support from the social environment (Azky & Mulyana, 2024).

Limitations and Cautions

This study has several limitations that should be considered. One of them is that the researcher focused only on one primary variable: work readiness. Therefore, it was not possible to examine the influence of other factors that contribute to the development of students' work readiness. Therefore, this study cannot explain the causal relationship or contribution of other factors to work readiness. Furthermore, the scope of this study is relatively limited, particularly in terms of the number of respondents. This limited scope means that the results cannot be broadly generalized to other students from different majors.

Several alternative explanations and potential biases should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the use of a self-report instrument may introduce response bias, including social desirability or self-perception bias, which could influence dimensional scores. Second, data were collected online, limiting the researcher's ability to monitor response conditions and clarify items, which may affect response accuracy. Third, the sample was predominantly female (77.4%), and this gender imbalance may have shaped the overall dimension patterns, particularly in constructs related to interpersonal competencies. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on these limitations, further research is recommended to use a correlational research design to test the relationship and influence between work readiness and other variables. This further research is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of work readiness in college students.

Furthermore, further research can be conducted by expanding the scope of the study, both in terms of the number of respondents and the diversity of majors at universities. If this is done, the generalizability of the research results can also be more widely applied in the context of higher education

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the job readiness of students from the Faculty of Psychology at the Universitas Informatika dan Bisnis Indonesia (UNIBI) is in the moderate category. This indicates that students have sufficient initial preparation to enter the workforce, but this level of readiness is not yet fully optimal. Variations in job readiness were found both by year and by dimensions of job readiness.

The organizational acumen dimension showed the highest average score, indicating that students have a good understanding and awareness of the organizational environment and a positive work attitude. Meanwhile, the social intelligence dimension had the lowest average score, indicating that students' interpersonal skills and social adaptation still need improvement. This finding is important considering that psychology graduates are required to interact and work effectively with individuals and groups in various work contexts.

The results of this study confirm that job readiness is a multidimensional construct that develops gradually throughout higher education. Therefore, higher education institutions should prioritize strengthening social intelligence through structured interpersonal skill laboratories, expanded supervised practicum placements with direct client interaction, and simulation-based communication training integrated into the curriculum. In addition, targeted career development workshops focusing on professional communication, teamwork, and ethical case handling should be systematically implemented to better prepare psychology students for client-centered work environments. With these efforts, it is hoped that graduates of the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI, will have optimal work readiness and be able to compete in the world of work.

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