

## The Development of Life Skills Based Career Guidance Module to Improve the Working Interest of Mentally Retarded Students in SMALB

**Muh Maaris Mubar**

Specialty Guidance and Counseling (Special Need Education) Postgraduate Program of the State University of Makassar

Email: [maarismubar20@gmail.com](mailto:maarismubar20@gmail.com)

**Triyanto Pristiwaluyo**

Special Need Education, the State University of Makassar

Email: [triyanto.pristi@unm.ac.id](mailto:triyanto.pristi@unm.ac.id)

**Abdullah Sinring**

Guidance and Counseling, Postgraduate program of the State University of Makassar

Email: [abdullah.sinring@unm.ac.id](mailto:abdullah.sinring@unm.ac.id)

**Purwaka Hadi**

Special Need Education, the State University of Makassar

Email: [purwakahadi@gmail.com](mailto:purwakahadi@gmail.com)

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**Abstract.** *This study aims to develop a career guidance module based on life skills to increase work interest the mentally retarded students, and it is a Research and Development (R&D) with the Borg and Gall model, which has ten steps and was modified into eight steps. Data collection techniques used interviews and questionnaires. Data were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative descriptive methods. The results are: The level of the needs of module obtained from the initial data collection stage, the planning stage showed that teachers of skill subject needed teaching materials in the form of modules to provide life skills-based career guidance according to the conditions, potential and work interests of mentally retarded students; readability test of the initial design of the module was obtained from the development stage of the FGD activity with the results of the good category, and the initial product was continued to the validity test; Validity test conducted by two expert lecturers on materials and media using the Gregory formula showed the very valid validity results and limited trial stage using the content validity test of the Aiken V formula showed the very valid results. The final product is a life skills-based career guidance module to increase work interest in high school mentally retarded students.*

**Keyword :** *Module; Career Guidance; Mentally Retarded.*

**Abstrak.** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan modul bimbingan karier berbasis *life skill* untuk meningkatkan minat kerja siswa tunagrahita SMALB. Jenis penelitian *Research and Development* (R&D) dengan model *Borg and Gall* yang dimodifikasi menjadi 8 langkah. Teknik pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan teknik wawancara serta angket. Teknik analisis data adalah deskriptif kualitatif dan deskriptif kuantitatif. Hasil yang diperoleh dalam penelitian ini adalah; tingkat kebutuhan modul diperoleh dari tahapan pengumpulan data awal dan tahapan perencanaan dan guru ketrampilan membutuhkan bahan ajar berbentuk modul, potensi serta minat kerja siswa tunagrahita; Uji keterbacaan terhadap rancangan awal modul diperoleh dari tahapan pengembangan kegiatan FGD dengan hasil kategori baik dan produk awal menjadi revisi 1 yang akan dilanjutkan ke uji validitas; Uji validitas yang dilakukan oleh 2 orang dosen pakar terhadap materi dan media modul menggunakan formula Gregory dengan hasil validitas sangat valid dan dilanjutkan ke tahapan revisi produk; dan tahapan uji coba terbatas menggunakan uji validitas isi formula Aiken V dengan hasil validitas sangat valid dan produk akhir yaitu dihasilkannya modul bimbingan karier berbasis *life skill* untuk meningkatkan minat kerja siswa tunagrahita SMALB.

**Kata kunci:** Modul; Bimbingan Karier; Tunagrahita.

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## INTRODUCTION

Based on laws No. 20 of 2003, article 1, paragraph 1, and Laws of disability No. 8 of 2016, education service for all Indonesian citizens, including persons with disabilities, is protected and guaranteed. People with disabilities in Indonesia are protected by the Laws of Disability No. 8 of 2016 Article 3, stating that persons with disabilities must have equal rights and opportunities to live in prosperity, be independent and free from discrimination, including to develop their working skills.

Referring to the laws above, all people with disabilities in educational institutions are categorized as students with special needs. They need learning which emphasizes the skill aspects based on the curriculum applied in SMALB, which focuses on skills (60%), cognitive (20%), and affective (20%) aspects. It is also emphasized by (Pristiwaluyo, 2017) states that: *"At the early childhood level, students are explored through play, at the elementary level developed simple literacy skills, at the junior high level of vocational learning reaches 60% and at high school vocational learning achieves 70% more than academic learning."*

The argument above states that the learning process in SMALB has a priority scale on skill aspect, especially the working skill, so that they can be economically and socially independent. It also applies to mentally retarded students, one of the types of students with special needs (Mufidah & Susilawati, 2020).

The development of skill aspects of mentally retarded students is directed to career development based on the potential and interest to prepare the students with special needs, including the mentally retarded student, to have a better life in their future.

Lestari (2017) mentioned that the urgency to solve the career problems is based on some phenomena, including (a) the unemployment rate is still very high, especially the senior high school graduates, and (b) the negative perception attached to mentally retarded students is still preserved in societies, (c) if the mentally retarded students in SMALB are not prepared with job skills, they will always become the burden for the families and societies. It means that mentally retarded students should receive career guidance

to improve their life skills for their life in the future.

Riyani (2016) stated that the implementation of life skill-based career guidance is to provide career guidance services to students to have their life skills training so that they can face more complex problems of life in the future.

A preliminary study carried out in SLB Negeri I Makassar in December 2021 showed that the majority of students with special needs who had graduated from the school were not prepared with a special skill for their future life. Some alumnae usually went back to school because they did not know what to do next. Theoretically, mentally retarded students in SMALB can be taught some skills for their future life. It is emphasized by (Pristiwaluyo, 2017) states that: mentally retarded children at a mild level can work in a semi-skilled job, children with medium mental disabilities can work in a workshop under supervision, while children with serious mental disabilities will always depend on others' assistance. The condition implies their vocational education program.

The main problem with the implementation of skill training for mentally retarded students in SMALB is the absence of complete material, which can help teachers to guide students with the life skill for a career that can help them to improve their working interests after graduating from school.

Mentally retardation refers to the condition in which someone has their intellectual development disturbed. Edgar doll (Atmaja, 2018) argued that someone is considered to have their intellectually retarded if (1) they are not skillful in socializing; (2) they have an abnormal mental condition; (3) their cognitive does not develop well since born, or in the early age, and (4) their development was disturbed, while (Marlina, 2019) defined the mental retardation as an intellectual problem experienced by a child (also referred as mentally retarded, mentally deficiency, *terbelakang mental*, *tunagrahita*). Mental retardation is a condition signed by a mental ability far beyond the normal and having problem adapting socially.

Another definition from the American Association of Intellectual Developmental Disability (AAIDD) states that Intellectual

disability is a condition characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior that originates before the age of 22. Someone is considered to experience IDD if they fulfill two criteria: having low intellectual and adaptive skills, and it happens before they are aged 22.

Mumpuniarti (Purwandari & Chamidah, 2022) stated that light intellectual retardation allows the individual to live independently in society and they can be educated; someone with medium mental retardation still can assist themselves and need supervision during their lives, but they can be trained, while people with severe mental retardation will always be in the care agency and need to be supervised during their lives. Then, Effendi (Purwandari & Chamidah, 2022) explained that children with light mental retardation could not follow the normal school program, but they still have the ability to be developed through education, although the output will probably be less optimum.

However, someone with light mental retardation will still result in an outcome that can be optimized, as mentioned by Smith et al. in (Purwandari & Chamidah, 2022) that *"mild intellectual disabilities has learning difficulties, is able to work, can maintain good social relationships, contributes to society"*. Optimization can be done through a special guidance program based on the children's characteristics. This strategy will help children to be independent to engage with societies in the future.

Learning for mentally retarded students should be emphasized on the simple vocational skill based on their ability, skill, and working interest. Also, it should be based on the demanded life skill.

*Life Skill* is basically the education orientation that unites career guidance to be a life skill needed anywhere. Types of life skills trained for mentally retarded students should be based on their working interest, like a prevocational job that can be run simply.

Study of (Aryani & Rais, 2017) defined interest as a power directing someone to utilize their free time to do something they really enjoy, while Singh (Herudiati, 2013) defined the term 'working' as someone's effort to fulfill their

economic needs by doing activities in a working environment.

Working interest programs for mentally retarded students should be implemented frequently with specific subthemes or materials so that they can show good working ability and behavior. However, the output would probably be less optimum compared to normal adults. It is strengthened by (Adim, 2017) stating that there are some proof that children with mental retardation need more serious training to build a particular skill. Wagino (2012) recommended the development of a career guidance program in SMALB, including (1) the development of *the self-concept* and the improvement of positive self-assessment; (2) changes on societies' views about the potential of students with special needs; (3) DEveloping ecological approach in career guidance program in SMALB, and (4). Distributing the information about career or job. It shows that career guidance is important to be presented to students, especially the ones with mental retardation.

Based on the need analysis carried out on January 2022, they need learning material that boosts the working interest of students in SMALB. It should be systematically organized to ease teachers conducting assessments independently; and the teaching materials should show the characteristic of PLB. However, it is framed with career guidance because teachers teaching career guidance in SLB are the ones with PLB backgrounds.

In SLB, career guidance is carried out by PLB teachers because of the absence of teachers for guidance and counseling programs. The involvement of SLB teachers with PLB backgrounds in career guidance is the integration and continuation of service programs in the special need education curriculum, especially in SMALB. Some teachers expect the availability of reading material to carry out career guidance systematically and used to guide students with special needs, especially mental retardation. For a special educational institution, counseling service focuses on the improvement of life skills based on the needs and abilities of students with mental retardation.

Learning material in the form of the module is a life skill-based career education module presented for mentally retarded students

to improve their working interests. Darmiyatun (Nurbaiti, 2019) stated that: a module is a printed learning material planned systematically based on the particular program and grouped into a small learning unit and possibly to be learned individually within a particular range of time so that students can understand and preserve the skill they have learned (Suralaga, 2021).

In general, (Aryani & Rais, 2017) stated that future career guidance is an aid service for students so that they can get information to understand the education and working world about their future and career plan (Bensu, 2015)

The specification of life skill based career guidance modul on improving the work interest *that would be* made was the life skill-based career guidance module to improve the working interest completed with active activities about a work profile based on the potential and ability of students with mental retardation in SMALB, which was designed to imprive the working interest completed with activites and task flows.

## METHOD

The study employed the *Development Research* method based on the Borg et al., (1993) model which stated that Research and Development for education is a process implemented to develop and validate an education product. The process is commonly referred as R & D cycles which include a review of the research product. The product is tested and modified to improve the quality based on the weaknesses recorded during the field trial. It will show if the product fulfills the determined goals.

The research developed Borg and Gall's model, which includes ten general stages modified to be eight only, including the collection of initial data, planning, development, initial product, verification by experts, product evaluation, limited trial, and final product which refers to the product resulted in this study. This research was carried out from February to June 2022.

The research subjects were all respondents who wanted to assess the life skill-based career guidance modul to improve the working interest of students with mental retardation in SMALB consisting of experts of the module (six teachers of Skill Subject and teachers of students with mental retardation graduated from the bachelor

degree of Special Education Program), experts of material and media validation including two experts of inclusive education program: a special education lecturer with a doctoral degree and expert of module trial consisting of three teachers of skill subject for students with mental retardation in SMALB graduated from bachelor and master degrees of Special Education Program.

Data were collected througih interveiws, FGD/*Focus Group Disscussion* and questionnaires. Data from interviews were collected in the initial stage to analyze the need to develop a module, followed by planning the first module.

The FGD was carried out to collect data about the development of the module based on the revision of the first module and was followed by validation by experts of the module.

Based on the revision, the product was brought to the limited trial stage to see the use of the module produced in the study. The last stage was the production of a life skill-based career guidance module to improve the working interest of students with mental retardation in SMALB.

Data were analyzed qaulitatively and quantitatively. The qualitative analysis technique proceeded with the data from interviews carried out to two informants in the initial data collection to analyze the needs of the development of Life skill based career guidance module, and FGD

Quantitative analysis was to analyze data from validation tests and limited trials.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research findings are based on the interviews carried out with two informants from SLB Negeri 1 Makassar who worked as teachers of Skills Subject for students with special needs in, including students with mental retardation in SMALB. Data obtained from the interview show that they needed a learning material that could help them to provide career guidance based on the daily life skills based on the skill and interests of students with mental retardation. We decided to make teaching material as a module based on data from the interview. The planning stage was to make the first draft of the module consisting of the cover page, introduction, content containing four activities and seven worksheets.

The first draft was brought to the development process by carrying out FGD/*focus group discussion* involving nine teachers of skill subjects and teachers of students with mental retardation. Qualitatively, some data obtained from this stage should be changed, and others needed to be replaced because it did not match the condition or potential of students with mental retardation. Aspects do not suit or are difficult to

**Table 1.** Responses of Teachers of Skill Subject on the FGD Forum about the Life Skill-based Career Guidance Module.

No	Components/Aspects	Results	Notes
1	Beginning part	$\bar{x} = \frac{11,6}{3} = 3,86$	Very Good category
2	Introduction	$\bar{x} = \frac{14,7}{4} = 3,7$	Very Good category
3	Content	$\bar{x} = \frac{28,8}{8} = 3,6$	Good category
4	Worksheets	$\bar{x} = \frac{24,7}{7} = 3,52$	Good category
The total average score was 3,67 (Good category)			

In general, responses of four teachers of skill subjects in FGD forum on the life skill-based career guidance module gave a score of 3.67 or were in the Good Category.

It means that based on the overall assessment, the module can be understood and implemented well by teachers of Skill subject in SMALB, and it could be continued to the stage of content validation by experts.

The feasibility of the life skill-based career guidance module to improve the working interest of students with mental retardation in SMALB was determined by the expert validation after finishing prototype 1 based on the readability level of the module based on the FGD forum. The validation instrument was a questionnaire measured using the Gregory formula. Assessment and test on the suitability between indicators and instrument questions were performed by two examiners.

The Gregory formula used in this stage was as below:

$$\text{Content Validity Coefficient} = \frac{D}{A+B+C+D}$$

(Retnawati, 2016)

be understood by students with mental retardation are presented in worksheets 4 and 6. Worksheet 4 was simplified, while the worksheet 6 was removed.

Quantitative analysis was performed on data obtained from a questionnaire about the readability of the module produced in the study. Table 1 presents results of the analysis on data collected from the questionnaire

- A. :Number of items less relevant according to two validators.
- B. : Number of items less relevant according to validator I but relevant according to validator II
- C. : Number of items less relevant according to validator II but relevant according to validator I
- D : Number of items relevant based on both validators.

Data that had been obtained were validated using Gregory's agreement index (Retnawati, 2016). If the agreement index is under 0.4, it will be considered to have very low validity; if it is between 0,4 – 0,8, the validity will be considered medium (*mediocre*). And if it is higher than 0.8, it is considered very high. The scores should be based on both validators.

To ease the calculation, we made cross-tabulation 2 x 2 as below:

Based on data on cross-tabulation 2 x 2 above, the content validity coefficient was calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{23}{2+0+2+23} = 0,851$$

Cross Tabulation 2 x 2			
		Validator 1	
		Less Relevant Scores of 1-2	Very Relevant Scores of 3-4
Validator 2	Less Relevant Scores of 1-2	2	0
	Very Relevant Scores of 3-4	2	23

According to the Gregory validity criteria, the validity coefficient of 0.851 was put in the very high category.

Then, we calculated the validation of media based on inputs from two expert validators using the Crossing tabulation 2 x 2 Gregory calculation.

Cross Tabulation 2 x 2			
		Validator 1	
		Less Relevant Scores of 1-2	Very Relevant Scores of 3-4
Validator 2	Less Relevant Scores of 1-2	0	0
	Very Relevant Scores of 3-4	0	21

$$\text{Content Validity Coefficient} = \frac{0 + 0 + 0 + 21}{21} = 1.0$$

The content validity coefficient of 1.0 was in the very high category. It indicates that the life skill-based career guidance module to improve the working interest of students with mental retardation in SMALB based on the material tests performed by two experts was feasible to continue to the limited trial by teachers of SKill subject to measure its effectiveness and applicability.

The validity test in the trial stage used Aiken's V to see the validity of the module after revision. According to (Retnawati, 2016) items with high validity have the V coefficient higher than 0.8.

**Table 2.** Results of Calculation Using Aiken V Formula

Items number	Validator 1	Validator 2	Validator 3	s1	s2	s3	$\sum s$	V	Note
no 1- 25	98	94	94	75	70	69	214	0.95	Very High Validity

The content validity coefficient of Aiken's V can be obtained using the Aiken's V formula as below:

$$V = \frac{\sum s}{[n(c-1)]}$$

Note:

V = Aiken's V content validity coefficient

s = r - lo

r = scores given by an assessor

lo = the lowest validity assessment score (= 1)

N = The number of experts doing the assessment

C = the higher scores of Validity assessment (= 5)

Results of the calculation using Aiken's V formula can be seen in Table 2 below:

The results of the validity test using the Aiken formula show a score of 0.951111 or 0,95. It means that the life skill-based career guidance module to improve the work interests after being assessed by three validators (teachers of SKill SUBject and teachers of students with mental retardation in SLB Negeri 1 Kabupaten Gowa) had a validity value of 0.95 based on the calculation using Aiken V formula. The calculation indicated that the module was very valid. It proved that the life skill-based career guidance module to improve the working interest of students with mental retardation in SMALB designed in this study was feasible.

The module produced in this developmental study addressed teachers of skill subjects from students with mental retardation at the SMALB level. Mental retardation refers to someone experiencing a problem in their intelligence development that is much lower than normal people. Although experiencing an intelligence barrier, all students with special needs, including students with mental retardation, have equal rights. They deserve affection, feasible education, and fulfillment of their needs.

Limitations and barriers experienced by students with mental retardation should not prohibit them from training particular abilities or skills based on their potential, skill, and interest. Besides that, they need to be prepared with a skill for their future life.

Novitarani & Wahyuno (2018) stated that the working interest of students in higher educational levels (SMALB) should be emphasized on functional ability like Cleaning service, cleark, sandal makers, pencil case makers, knitting, and other crafts. Stressed by (Pristiwaluyo, 2017) that students with mental retardation face various problems when entering the work world. Besides that, the physical, mental, emotional and social limitations also lead to the limitation of the working skill needed in the working industry. Therefore, students with special needs in SLB and the ones inclusively learning in regular school should be prepared with vocational skills early, systematically, and well-planned. The vocational learning program was carried out through some stages and continuously.

Teachers of Skill Subject for students with mental retardation in SLB Negeri 1 Kabupaten Gowa stated that the module produced

in this study could help them to understand the concept of career guidance based on life skills, and the worksheets developed in the study could help them to improve their working interest.

The point discussed above is in line with (Aulia, 2017), that principally the career guidance for students with mental retardation is similar to the career guidance for students in regular schools but has few differences in the implementation. It is because mentally retarded students have problems with their intelligence. Thus, career guidance should be designed based on the skill needed by the students with mental retardation considering their potential, skill, and working interest (Hermawati, n.d.).

Mental retarded students have limited ability to learn a skill for entering the working world. Some types of jobs suitable for them are at the prevocational level. Those jobs will be effective if they are based on the skill and working interest. It confirms (Pristiwaluyo, 2017) that mild mentally retarded children still have the chance to get wider types of jobs because they can get vocational training in some skills like home cleaning, carpentry, agriculture and farm, automatization, office culture, marketing, entrepreneurship, and other semi-skilled jobs.

Besides that, (Ratnengsih, 2017) stated that programs planned and arranged for them should be based on their learning ability.

Learning to do a job based on their working interest will be effective and useful for mentally retarded students when they go back to the societies to live independently. Working interest programs for students with mental retardation will help them to choose a skill based on what they have mastered and what they want to do in the future.

Thus, students with special needs, including mentally retarded students, before selecting a skill, should understand their skill and working interests. It should be obtained from the career guidance at school. Therefore, the life skill-based career guidance module to improve the working skills of mentally retarded students in SMALB would be finished so that it could be used in skill class in any SLB because the module has been completed with the user guide and it can be adapted based on the needs of the local environment of the SLB.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings and discussion of this study, we concluded that the level of need of the module was obtained from the initial data collection and planning stages and teachers of Skill Subject for students with mental retardation in SMALB needed learning material in the form of the module to provide life skill based career guidance based on the students' condition, potential, and working interest.

The readability test of the initial planning of the module was obtained from the developmental stage through FGD and showed if it was in a Good category and the initial product became the revision one that would be brought to the validity test; the Validity test on the material and media of the module used Gregory formula, and it showed the very high validity level. Thus the product was brought to the revision stage.

The applicability test of the module was performed through a limited trial using the content validity formula of Aiken V and showed a very high validity level. It was then considered the final product of the life skill-based career guidance module, which aims to improve the working interest of mentally retarded students in SMALB.

The module developed in this study focused on career guidance based on life skills to improve the working interest of mentally retarded students in SMALB. Thus, the next researchers should develop the module by experimenting with it or carrying out a field trial to measure the effectiveness of the contribution of the product.

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