

Research Paper

A Theoretical Model Linking Personality Traits with Multiple Intelligences, Vocational Interest, Abilities, Work Values, and Subject Knowledge for Career Development and Career Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a comprehensive theoretical model linking Holland's RIASEC personality types with multiple intelligences (MI), vocational interests, abilities, work values, and subject knowledge to enhance understanding of career satisfaction and personal fulfilment. While previous research often examines these factors in isolation, this model integrates them to provide a holistic view of career development. By aligning intrinsic personality traits with cognitive strengths, interests, and values, the framework offers insights into how these elements interact to shape career trajectories. The model builds on established theories such as Gardner's MI theory and Holland's RIASEC framework, identifying gaps in the literature where cross-disciplinary connections and longitudinal insights are scarce. It emphasizes the evolving nature of career preferences and the role of adaptability in sustaining satisfaction across life stages. Practical implications include its use in career counselling, where it can help align individual strengths with vocational paths; in human resource management, for enhancing employee-job fit and satisfaction; and in education, for designing programs that prepare students for fulfilling careers. The paper concludes with recommendations for future empirical research, including longitudinal and cross-cultural studies to validate the model's utility across diverse populations. This integrative approach underscores the importance of multidimensional career guidance frameworks in navigating the complexities of modern career landscapes, offering a foundation for improved alignment between individual potential and professional growth.

Keywords: *RIASEC, Personality, Multiple Intelligences (MI), Vocational Interests, Abilities, Work Values, Subject Knowledge, Career Development, Career Satisfaction*

The concept of a "career" has been defined and interpreted in numerous ways, reflecting its complexity and subjectivity. While some define a career as "the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time." (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989) or "the pattern of work-related experiences that span the course of a person's life" (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2010). Others view it as a "the sequence

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of an individual's different career experiences, reflected through a variety of patterns of continuity over time, crossing several social spaces, and characterized by individual agency, herewith providing meaning to the individual" (Van der Heijden & De Vos, 2015). Despite these various definitions, one fact can be universally agreed upon: the importance of choosing the right field to build a career (Bailey & Madden, 2016).

For some individuals, career aspirations and goals form earlier in life, however this is not the global norm, as shown by various researches conducted independently that depict the different rate of career indecision amounting to be in the ranges of 50% to 70% respectively across samples of adolescence and young adults while correlating the same with poor mental health (Parola & Marcionetti, 2024), (Al Ajmi, Al Kharusi, & Al Khamisi, 2024), (Priyashantha, Dahanayake, & Maduwanth, 2022), (Mansor & Rashid, 2013) & (Amaral, Krägeloh, Henning, & Moir, 2023). The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 finds that two in five students at 15 across OECD countries have no clear career plans. The proportion of students who can be described as career uncertain has grown by more than half since 2018 (OECD, 2024). Researches investigating the same in India also mirror the current global literature showing significant levels of career indecision, for example: (Das, Dangi, & Naik, 2020), (Kanjani, 2023) & (Sharma R. , 2019). Additionally, for some, career-related decisions have been found to stem from emotional and personality related facets (Gati, et al., 2011) are troubled with doubt.

This ambiguity often carries into adulthood, leading to dissatisfaction, underperformance, and the risk of stagnant professional growth (Hirschi, 2020) & (Volmer, 2012). Such outcomes highlight the critical need for early structured interventions, such as career counselling, that employ psychometric tools to identify strengths and weaknesses, and recommend fields aligned with an individual's profile to help clarify future pathways.

Recent advances in career counselling have shifted focus toward a more integrative approach, emphasizing the interplay of multiple dimensions influencing career decisions. While earlier models often concentrated on isolated factors – such as personality or skills – emerging researches underscores the need for a holistic lens. For instance, studies have explored the relationship between vocational personality traits and cognitive abilities (Hartung & Cadaret, 2017), as well as the alignment of multiple intelligences (MI) with career interests (Azmi, Johari, & Mahmud, 2019). And while other studies have explored specific elements of career personality—such as the link between work values and career adaptability (Sharma S. , 2017) – few have addressed how these elements dynamically interact. These approaches frequently examine select variables in isolation or address limited intersections between them, leaving a significant gap in understanding how diverse factors collectively shape career success. Systematic reviews such as (Gedam, Mehta, & Date, 2019) have explored a lot of the existing literature to highlight not only the most well explored domains and topics related to career, but also looked into the gaps in literature and research. Consequently, there is a clear need to adopt a multidimensional framework that considers for various factors contributing to career decision and career success to construct a comprehensive understanding and effective measure of career development.

This paper aims to address this gap by proposing an integrative theoretical model. The model examines the intersections of personality traits, multiple intelligences, interests, abilities, work values, and subject knowledge as critical components of career development and career satisfaction. By bridging fragmented research domains, this study seeks to

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contribute a cohesive framework that can guide career counselling practices, human resource strategies, and educational programs, ultimately promoting well-informed and fulfilling career paths.

Career Personality – RIASEC

Central to this discussion is the concept of *career personality*, which sums up the unique grouping of an individual's interests, values, aptitudes, and personal characteristics that influence career preferences and trajectories (Holland, 1997).

Personality plays a foundational role in shaping career preferences and choices. Various personality models have been applied in career development, with Holland's RIASEC model being particularly influential. This model categorizes personality types into six vocational groups—Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC)—each personality type is associated with specific work preferences and environments that foster individual growth and job satisfaction (Holland, 1997). These categories serve as a foundational model for understanding how personality traits influence career satisfaction and development. Career personality reflects the unique combination of traits and tendencies that drive individuals toward specific work environments and roles, playing a central role in career decision-making and long-term job satisfaction (Nauta, 2010).

Holland's model is already quite popular and widely used in career counselling and human resource management to align individuals with roles that fit their intrinsic vocational personalities. The RIASEC framework emphasizes the importance of congruence between an individual's career personality and their chosen work field. Studies suggest that individuals who work in environments matching their RIASEC type report higher job satisfaction, increased engagement, and better performance outcomes (Su, Murdock, & Rounds, 2015) & (Ghetta, Hirschi, Wang, Rossier, & Herrmann, 2020). This model of connecting personality to career has been extensively applied in career counselling to guide individuals toward fields that align with their intrinsic preferences, fostering both personal and professional growth.

Recent research has explored the practical applications of the RIASEC model in diverse cultural contexts and across occupational domains, however, there is much scope for exploring its applications in an Indian setting and adapt it specifically for the Indian youth – children, adolescence and young adults. For instance, studies, such as those by (Leuty & Hansen, 2013), emphasize how the model's dimensions predict job satisfaction across different life stages. However, while the RIASEC framework has been a cornerstone of vocational psychology, studies often treat it in isolation from other influential factors such as multiple intelligences (MI) and work values, limiting its applicability in holistic career development frameworks. This underscores a research gap in integrating RIASEC with multidimensional constructs to better understand career success and satisfaction (Leuty & Hansen, 2013).

Another limitation is, despite its broad applicability, cross-cultural studies reveal variability in the expression of RIASEC types across cultural and social contexts, suggesting that its applicability may be limited outside Western contexts (Bullock, Andrews, Braud, & Reardon, 2009). Furthermore, while the RIASEC model successfully links personality types to career preferences, it does not account for cognitive abilities or skills, such as those

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described by Gardner's MI theory. Integrating RIASEC with cognitive factors could yield a more nuanced model that reflects individual strengths alongside personality-driven preferences.

Career Personality and Vocational Interests

Vocational interests refer to an individual's preferences for specific types of work activities, environments, and roles, often assessed through interest inventories like the Strong Interest Inventory (Hansen & Dik, 2005). These interests shape career trajectories by influencing choices about education, training, and job roles.

Vocational interests align closely with career personality, as both reflect intrinsic inclinations toward specific career paths. And the accuracy of interest inventories in predicting educational choices, occupation memberships, and generally matching people to careers has been thoroughly investigated through studies like (Hanna & Rounds, 2020). While the linking of vocational interests to personality models such as RIASEC for better predictions on career counselling tests has also been popular a topic for research in recent years (Rounds, Putka, & Lewis, 2022). For example, Investigative personalities in the RIASEC model often show strong interests in scientific or analytical activities, while Artistic personalities gravitate toward creative pursuits. The alignment between vocational interests and personality traits enhances the likelihood of achieving career satisfaction and success (Rounds & Su, 2014).

Empirical research highlights the dynamic nature of vocational interests over time. Longitudinal studies by (Nye, Wille, Amory, & De Fruyt, 2021) reveal that interests evolve with life experiences and external influences, yet remain anchored in stable personality traits. Furthermore, studies emphasize the role of adolescent vocational interests in predicting the early career success has been studied (Hoff, et al., 2021). However, gaps exist in understanding how vocational interests interact with other dimensions, such as multiple intelligences and work values, to inform career decision-making. Addressing these gaps could provide a more comprehensive understanding of career development processes.

Career Personality and Ability

Abilities encompass the skills and capacities individuals develop over time, including cognitive, technical, and interpersonal abilities. They are critical determinants of job performance and career advancement (Tushar & Sooraksa, 2023) & (Ackerman & Kanfer, 2020).

The interaction between career personality and abilities shapes career trajectories by influencing the type and level of skills individuals are likely to develop. For instance, Realistic personalities may prioritize developing technical skills, while social personalities focus on interpersonal abilities. These connections underscore the need to align abilities with career environments to optimize performance and satisfaction (Fu, Bo, Lin, & Zhang, 2024).

Research shows that abilities are not static but evolve with experience and exposure. (Ackerman & Heggstad, Intelligence, personality, and interests: Evidence for overlapping traits, 1997) explored how personality traits influence the development of intellectual skills and specific abilities over time. Additionally, some studies have highlighted the role of general mental abilities and the big 5 personality traits in career success across the life span (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 2006). Despite these findings, limited research

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explores how abilities intersect with other factors, such as work values, subject knowledge, or multiple intelligences within the framework of career personality. This represents a critical gap for future investigation.

Career Personality and Work Values

Work values refer to the principles and beliefs individuals prioritize in their professional lives, such as autonomy, creativity, security, and teamwork (Ros, Schwartz, & Surkiss, 1999). These values influence career choices, work satisfaction, and organizational commitment, shaping long-term professional success.

Career personality, as conceptualized through frameworks like RIASEC, aligns with specific work values. For instance, Artistic personalities may prioritize creativity and autonomy, while Conventional personalities value structure and predictability. This interplay between personality and work values informs career satisfaction, as individuals tend to thrive in environments aligned with their intrinsic values (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

Recent studies have been able to link personality traits to work values as personality traits which is significant for career decision-making (Veres & Póka, 2024). While studies like (Salyer, 2007) examined the relationship between values and personality traits in predicting job and career satisfaction. However, existing research often isolates work values from other career development factors. Few studies explore how work values interact with constructs such as abilities or subject knowledge within a multidimensional career personality framework, signalling a critical gap in holistic career research.

Career Personality and Subject Knowledge

Subject knowledge refers to the depth of understanding and expertise individuals possess in specific domains, often acquired through formal education, training, or experience which leads to higher achievements in terms of a career (Schneider & Preckel, 2017). It plays a crucial role in determining career paths and professional success.

Career personality influences the types of knowledge individuals are drawn to and excel in. For example, Investigative personalities may gravitate toward scientific knowledge, while Enterprising personalities focus on leadership and business acumen. This alignment ensures individuals select and excel in fields that resonate with their intrinsic preferences, enhancing career satisfaction (Gottfredson, 2002).

Emerging research highlights the importance of subject knowledge in bridging the gap between education and career success. (Gill, 2016) is one such paper exploring the gap between the domain-specific knowledge between study and work. Certain recent studies have initiated exploring the interactions of subject knowledge acquisition through interest and cognitive ability (Hyland, Hoff, & Rounds, 2022). And another has explored the role of the 5 factor personality traits in knowledge sharing and knowledge acquisition behaviour (Gupta, 2008). Despite these developments, limited attention has been given to how subject knowledge intersects with other career development dimensions, and their combined interactions are yet to be explored.

Career Personality and Multiple Intelligence

Multiple intelligences (MI), introduced by (Gardner, 1983), describe a framework of diverse intellectual capacities, including linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial,

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interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. This theory challenges traditional views of intelligence, emphasizing that individuals excel in different domains of intellectual functioning.

MI theory aligns closely with career personality by providing a nuanced understanding of how individuals' intellectual strengths shape career preferences. For instance, Artistic personalities may exhibit strong spatial intelligence, while Enterprising personalities demonstrate interpersonal intelligence. Recognizing these alignments allows for tailored career guidance that fosters both satisfaction and professional growth (Gardner, 1993).

Research has increasingly applied MI theory to career counselling and education. (Green, 2010) demonstrated how MI-based assessments improve career alignment, while (Shearer & Luzzo, 2009) explored the application of multiple intelligences in career counselling. However, despite its potential, limited research has investigated the interaction of MI with personality traits and other career development factors like work values or abilities.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The proposed theoretical model integrates six core components—RIASEC personality traits, vocational interests, abilities, work values, subject knowledge, and multiple intelligences—to offer a holistic perspective on career development and satisfaction. Each component interacts dynamically, contributing to the overall structure of career personality and influencing career trajectories.

Linking Personality Traits to Career Components

RIASEC personality traits serve as the foundation of the model, categorizing individuals based on their inherent vocational predispositions. These traits influence and are influenced by other career-relevant constructs. For instance, vocational interests are seen as an outward expression of personality, shaping career aspirations and professional engagement. Similarly, abilities—both innate and acquired—are influenced by personality types, which determine the environments conducive to skill development.

Work values, encompassing preferences for autonomy, creativity, and structure, serve as guiding principles that align career personality with professional satisfaction. Subject knowledge, as an outcome of targeted learning and expertise, complements personality-driven career pathways by identifying fields where individuals can excel. Finally, multiple intelligences provide a nuanced lens for understanding the diverse intellectual capacities that contribute to career decisions. Together, these components create a comprehensive framework for understanding career personality.

Interactions and Multidimensional Relationships

The framework posits that these components are not isolated but interact in complex ways. For instance, a realistic personality may influence the development of logical-mathematical intelligence and technical abilities, which in turn align with specific vocational interests like engineering or architecture. Similarly, an artistic personality may prioritize creativity as a work value while excelling in spatial intelligence, guiding career preferences toward fields like design or performing arts.

This multidimensional approach underscores the necessity of integrating these factors to provide tailored career guidance. By exploring the intersections among these components,

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the model highlights how diverse traits and preferences coalesce into a cohesive career personality, paving the way for sustained career satisfaction and personal growth.

Integrative Model for Future Research

The proposed model offers a rich foundation for exploring career development through a multidimensional lens, yet it also highlights areas requiring empirical validation and further inquiry:

- 1. Longitudinal Studies:** Research should focus on longitudinal designs to investigate how the interplay between personality traits, vocational interests, abilities, work values, subject knowledge, and intelligences evolves over time. This would clarify the dynamic nature of career satisfaction and adaptability across life stages.
- 2. Cross-Cultural Validation:** Cultural factors play a critical role in shaping career trajectories. Future studies must examine how the model operates in diverse sociocultural contexts, addressing differences in work values, education systems, and societal expectations to enhance its generalizability and global applicability.
- 3. Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Integrating perspectives from psychology, education, and organizational behaviour could refine the model. For instance, studying how educational curricula informed by multiple intelligences interact with personality traits could improve career readiness among students.
- 4. Technology and AI Integration:** With the rise of AI-driven career counselling tools, there is an opportunity to leverage big data and machine learning to refine and validate the model. These technologies could identify patterns in how the proposed factors interact, offering personalized career recommendations.
- 5. Iterative Model Development:** Theoretical refinements should be guided by empirical evidence. Future studies should employ advanced statistical techniques like structural equation modelling to test the model's components and their relationships, ensuring its robustness and practical utility in career counselling.

By addressing these areas, the model can serve as a dynamic framework for advancing theoretical understanding and practical applications in career development.

DISCUSSION

The proposed integrative model offers a comprehensive framework to improve understanding of career development and career satisfaction by connecting RIASEC personality types to multiple intelligences, vocational interests, abilities, work values, and subject knowledge. This framework has significant implications for education, human resource management, and career advising. The model offers practical applications across these fields, by encouraging a more thorough investigation of personality-driven preferences and strengths, which may result in more individualised career counselling, enhanced employee fit and satisfaction, and educational initiatives that are more in line with each individual's personal strengths. Additionally, by bridging gaps between current theories and creating an integrated approach of career counselling and career decision making, this model supports a holistic approach to career development which ultimately leads to greater career satisfaction.

Implications for Career Counselling

The application of this model in career counselling can provide a more personalized approach to career guidance, helping counsellors align individuals' unique personality-driven preferences with suitable career options. RIASEC personality types, when paired

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with assessments of multiple intelligences and work values, offer insights into the kinds of work environments and roles that may align best with an individual's strengths and values. For example, individuals with the investigative personality type and logical-mathematical intelligence would be best suited in analytical roles within scientific research or technology related roles. While, individuals with the artistic personality type, having strong spatial intelligence could be matched for a potential career in the creative design or artistic fields.

Using the model, career counsellors can consider the various factors: including but not limited to the individual's personality, cognitive strengths, intelligence type, prior knowledge, interests and innate abilities. Thus, offering advice, and better guide individuals towards careers that best suited for the individual's unique profile. Adopting this multidimensional approach to career counselling considers for an individuals' unique strengths potentially increasing the likelihood of job satisfaction and long-term fulfilment for the individuals, while reducing the likelihood of career dissatisfaction. Moreover, the model suggests that career satisfaction is dynamic and may evolve with individuals' shifting interests and life circumstances. Longitudinal assessments of personality-driven interests and abilities could allow counsellors to offer continued support as clients progress in their careers, encouraging adaptive career decisions.

Implications for Human Resource Management

The proposed model also has applications for human resource management, particularly in enhancing employee selection, fit, and job satisfaction. Understanding an employee's RIASEC personality type and aligning it with specific roles could improve organizational fit and reduce turnover. For example, social personality types may be better suited for roles that involve collaboration and customer engagement, whereas realistic types may excel in positions that require technical skills and hands-on work. By incorporating assessments of personality, intelligences, and work values into recruitment processes, HR managers can improve employee selection and placement, ultimately fostering a more engaged and productive workforce.

Additionally, the model's emphasis on multiple intelligences and work values supports HR practices that recognize individual differences and tailor professional development opportunities to each employee's strengths. Employees who feel that their skills and values align with their roles are more likely to experience job satisfaction and personal fulfilment, contributing to organizational success. Furthermore, the model can guide performance evaluations and training programs by helping HR managers identify employees' strengths and areas for growth, ultimately supporting their career development within the organization.

The framework also highlights the importance of considering work values in employee retention strategies. By aligning employees' work values with organizational goals, HR departments can foster a workplace culture that resonates with employees' priorities and encourages loyalty. For instance, organizations that emphasize creativity and innovation may appeal to artistic personalities, while those prioritizing order and structure may attract Conventional personalities. This alignment may lead to a more harmonious work environment, where employees feel valued and aligned with the company's mission and values.

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Educational Implications

In educational settings, the model can inform the design of academic programs that align with students' RIASEC personality types and intelligence strengths. By tailoring programs and syllabi to accommodate different personality types and intelligences, educational institutions can enhance student engagement and satisfaction. For instance, programs designed for investigative personalities may focus on research-oriented coursework, while those catering to enterprising personalities could emphasize leadership development and entrepreneurial skills.

Moreover, understanding students' personality types, intelligences, and interests can help educators guide students toward academic and career paths that are more likely to result in long-term satisfaction. Integrating personality assessments into academic advising may allow counsellors to recommend courses and extracurricular activities that align with students' strengths and aspirations. For example, students with artistic personalities and musical intelligence might be encouraged to explore programs in the arts or music, while those with conventional personalities and logical-mathematical intelligence might be guided toward accounting, finance, or data analytics.

By recognizing the evolving nature of vocational interests and abilities, educational institutions can also design flexible programs that support students' exploration of different fields and skill sets. This flexibility may be particularly beneficial for students who are uncertain about their career goals, allowing them to develop a diverse set of skills that can be applied across various fields. Additionally, by aligning students' educational experiences with their personality-driven preferences, educational institutions can promote a more positive and engaging learning environment, ultimately supporting students' career readiness and personal development.

CONCLUSION

The theoretical model proposed in this paper aims to link RIASEC personality traits with multiple intelligences, vocational interests, abilities, work values, and subject knowledge. This multidimensional approach offers a fresh framework for considering for and understanding the complex dynamics of the various factors leading career satisfaction and development.

This model aims to explore the various existing models and identify gaps in existing research that can be addressed to work on a cohesive structure. The consequent model can provide as a foundation for enhancing career counselling practices, educational strategies, and human resource management. Furthermore, it can help address the needs of the evolving demands of diverse, globalized career landscapes by incorporating personality-driven factors and cognitive strengths into the career decision-making processes.

The implications of this model are significant, yet it remains a starting point. Future studies are essential to validate and refine the proposed relationships, ensuring the model's applicability across various cultural and professional contexts. By fostering deeper theoretical and practical insights, this framework holds promise for reshaping how individuals, educators, and organizations approach career development, aiming ultimately to enhance both personal fulfilment and societal advancement.

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Conflict of Interest

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