

# Job Placement Assessment–Based Profile and Trends of Vocational High School Students in an Industrial Urban Area: Evidence from Tangerang City (2022–2025)

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## Abstract

*The transition of Vocational High School (SMK) graduates into the labor market represents a critical issue at the intersection of workforce policy and career development, particularly in industrial urban regions. This study examines job placement matching patterns among SMK students in Tangerang City over the 2022–2025 period using secondary data derived from the Job Placement Assessment implemented as part of Indonesia's national labor policy. The assessment measures psychological readiness across seven dimensions—spirituality, social bonding, diversity orientation, communication style, skill type, global capacity, and business capacity—and generates recommendations for domestic employment, overseas employment, and entrepreneurship. Employing a quantitative descriptive design with a temporal trend perspective, this study analyzes aggregated assessment recommendation patterns to identify stability and change in job placement recommendations within an industrial urban labor market context. The findings reveal a high degree of stability across all seven psychological readiness dimensions throughout the observation period, indicating that vocational students' core psychological profiles are shaped by long-term cultural and educational processes and remain relatively constant over time. In contrast to this psychological stability, job placement recommendation patterns exhibit a consistent structural pattern rather than dynamic shifts. Recommendations for domestic employment remain dominant across all years, reflecting the strong absorption capacity of Tangerang City's industrial labor market. At the same time, entrepreneurship recommendations show a gradual increase, suggesting career diversification within a formal employment-oriented context, while overseas employment remains a marginal pathway. These findings indicate that job placement recommendation patterns in industrial urban areas are primarily shaped by regional labor market structures rather than by changes in individual psychological readiness. The study underscores the importance of region-specific interpretation of assessment results and highlights the value of integrating psychological assessment data with urban workforce planning and adaptive career counseling in vocational education settings.*

**Keywords:** Job placement assessment; vocational education; psychological readiness; industrial urban labor market and career development.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

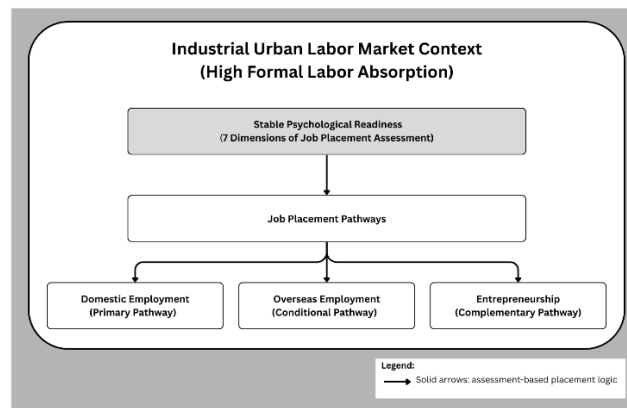
Indonesia is entering a critical phase of demographic transition marked by a growing proportion of productive-age population [1], [2]. This demographic bonus is projected to peak around 2030, creating both opportunities and pressures for the national labor market [3]. One of the key challenges arising from this transition is the effective absorption of young labor force entrants, particularly graduates of Vocational High Schools (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/SMK), which are institutionally designed to prepare students for direct entry into the world of work [4]. Despite this mandate, the transition from SMK to employment remains uneven. Many graduates encounter difficulties in securing employment that aligns with their competencies, career aspirations, and psychological readiness. This condition reflects a persistent issue of *person–job mismatch*, where employment outcomes are shaped not only by technical skills, but also by psychological, cultural, and contextual factors. Consequently, job placement should be understood not merely as an administrative process, but as a psychological matching process between individual readiness and labor market opportunities [5]. In response to this challenge, the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia introduced the Asesmen Penempatan Kerja (Job Placement Assessment) through Regulation of

the Minister of Manpower Number 18 of 2024 concerning the Placement of Domestic Workers, which repealed Regulation Number 39 of 2016 on work placement procedures [6]. The Job Placement Assessment functions as a national policy instrument designed to support career guidance and job placement decisions by systematically mapping job seekers' profiles using a standardized psychological framework.

Rather than focusing exclusively on aptitude or vocational interests, the assessment integrates psychological readiness, cultural orientation, and business-related capabilities to generate recommendations across three main job placement pathways: domestic employment, overseas employment, and entrepreneurship [7]. The Job Placement Assessment is theoretically grounded in an integrative framework combining Indonesian Standard Culture, Global Readiness–Psychological Capital, and Business Management Capabilities [6], [8]. These foundations are operationalized into seven psychological dimensions: spirituality, social bonding, diversity orientation, communication style, skill type (generalist–specialist), global capacity, and business capacity. Collectively, these dimensions capture both internal psychological resources and contextual competencies that shape individuals' capacity to navigate different work environments [9]. From a psychological perspective, these dimensions represent relatively stable characteristics formed through long-term socialization, education, and cultural experience [10], [11]. Cultural values, communication styles, and core psychological resources tend to remain consistent over short to medium time spans [10]. However, while psychological readiness may remain relatively stable, job placement outcomes are highly sensitive to external labor market dynamics, including industrial structure, employment demand, wage competitiveness, and policy environments [12], [13].

This distinction between stable psychological readiness and variable job placement outcomes is particularly relevant in industrial urban contexts such as Tangerang City. As one of Indonesia's major industrial and manufacturing hubs, Tangerang City is characterized by a dense concentration of formal employment opportunities, high labor market competition, and strong demand for industry-ready workers. In such contexts, SMK graduates are generally oriented toward formal domestic employment, yet are also exposed to increasing pressures to diversify career pathways, including entrepreneurship, in response to industrial transformation and labor market saturation. Policy implementation data from 2022 to 2025 indicate that job placement recommendations for SMK students in Tangerang City exhibit a distinct pattern compared to non-urban regions. Recommendations for domestic employment consistently dominate, reflecting the strong formal labor absorption capacity of the industrial urban economy. At the same time, there is a gradual increase in recommendations related to entrepreneurship, suggesting a diversification of career orientations rather than a structural displacement from formal employment. These patterns emerge alongside relatively stable profiles across the seven psychological dimensions measured by the Job Placement Assessment. Most existing studies on vocational readiness and career development rely on cross-sectional designs that provide static snapshots of individual characteristics at a single point in time [13], [14].

While such approaches are valuable, they often overlook temporal patterns in job placement outcomes within specific labor market contexts. In industrial urban regions, understanding trends and stability in placement recommendations is particularly important for workforce planning and career guidance. Addressing this gap, the present study adopts a quantitative descriptive approach to examine profiles and trends in job placement recommendations among SMK students in Tangerang City over the 2022–2025 period, based on secondary data derived from national labor policy implementation. Rather than evaluating the psychometric properties of the Job Placement Assessment—which have been established through prior development and validation processes—this study focuses on interpreting assessment outcomes as indicators of labor market alignment in an industrial urban setting [15], [16], [17]. By analyzing patterns of stability and change in job placement recommendations, this research highlights how psychological readiness is translated into career pathways within a competitive urban labor market. The contribution of this study lies in providing an evidence-based profile of job placement orientations among vocational students in an industrial city. The findings are expected to support more contextualized career counseling strategies, inform urban workforce planning, and enhance the policy use of psychological assessments as tools for aligning vocational education outputs with regional labor market needs.



**Fig 1.** Conceptual Framework of Job Placement Matching Dynamics

Figure 1 illustrates a conceptual framework in which stable psychological readiness—measured through seven dimensions of the Job Placement Assessment—serves as the primary foundation for job placement pathways, while the labor market context functions as a structural condition that frames their orientation. Within an industrial urban labor market characterized by high formal labor absorption, job placement recommendations predominantly orient toward domestic employment, with overseas employment and entrepreneurship are positioned as conditional and complementary pathways. Variations in job placement recommendations thus reflect labor market dynamics rather than changes in individuals' underlying psychological readiness.

## II. METHODS

### A. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design with a temporal trend perspective [18], [19]. The design was selected to describe patterns and trends in job placement recommendations among vocational high school students based on assessment-based policy implementation data, without manipulating variables or intervening in the measurement process. Rather than testing causal relationships, the study aims to provide an empirical description of job placement orientations in an industrial urban labor market context. The temporal perspective relies on repeated observations of aggregated assessment outcomes across four consecutive years (2022–2025). Although the same individuals were not tracked longitudinally, this approach allows for the identification of year-to-year trends and stability patterns in job placement recommendations at the regional level. Such a design is appropriate for policy-oriented research that seeks to understand labor market alignment over time while maintaining a stable analytical focus on psychological readiness.

### B. Data Source and Policy Context

The data used in this study consist of secondary data derived from public policy implementation, specifically the Job Placement Assessment (Asesmen Penempatan Kerja) administered by the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia. In the context of this research, the assessment was implemented through career guidance and job counseling activities conducted by the Manpower Office of Tangerang City (Dinas Ketenagakerjaan Kota Tangerang). Data collection was carried out continuously from 2022 to 2025 as part of routine employment counseling and workforce mapping programs targeting vocational high school students. The use of secondary policy data enables the analysis of real-world job placement outcomes within an authentic institutional setting, thereby strengthening the practical and policy relevance of the findings. The researchers did not alter assessment procedures, scoring mechanisms, or recommendation algorithms and functioned solely as analysts of existing data.

### C. Research Subjects

The research subjects comprised students enrolled in Vocational High Schools (SMK) in Tangerang City who participated in the Job Placement Assessment during the specified period. Tangerang City was selected as the research setting due to its characteristics as a major industrial urban area, marked by a high concentration of manufacturing and service industries, strong formal labor absorption capacity, and intense

labor market competition. The study focuses on aggregated assessment results at the city level, rather than individual-level longitudinal tracking. This analytical choice aligns with the study's objective of examining urban profiles and trends in job placement recommendations as indicators of labor market alignment, rather than individual psychological change over time.

#### **D. Instrument: Job Placement Assessment**

The primary instrument utilized in this study was the Job Placement Assessment (Asesmen Penempatan Kerja), a standardized psychological assessment developed under the initiative of the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia. The instrument is designed to support career guidance and job placement decisions by mapping individuals' readiness across multiple psychological and capability-based dimensions. The assessment framework integrates three main theoretical foundations: Indonesian Standard Culture, Global Readiness–Psychological Capital, and Business Management Capabilities. These foundations are operationalized into seven psychological dimensions: spirituality, social bonding, diversity orientation, communication style, skill type (generalis–specialist), global capacity, and business capacity [6], [8].

Based on the combined profile of these dimensions, the assessment generates job placement recommendations across three categories: domestic employment, overseas employment, and entrepreneurship. Recommendations may be provided as single or combined categories, reflecting the multidimensional nature of job placement readiness. In this study, the Job Placement Assessment is treated strictly as a measurement and policy implementation tool, not as an object of psychometric evaluation. Instrument development, validation, and reliability testing were conducted prior to the period of analysis and are documented in separate technical and policy reports. Accordingly, this research does not assess validity or reliability, but focuses on interpreting assessment outcomes as indicators of job placement alignment in an industrial urban labor market.

#### **E. Data Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistical techniques to examine prevalence, trends, and patterns in job placement recommendations over the 2022–2025 period [20], [21], [22]. The primary analytical procedures included frequency analysis, percentage-based prevalence analysis, and comparative trend analysis across years. The analysis focused on identifying the relative dominance, stability, and change of job placement recommendations for domestic employment, overseas employment, and entrepreneurship. In addition, the stability of the seven psychological readiness dimensions was examined descriptively to assess whether observed trends in job placement recommendations were accompanied by changes in underlying readiness profiles. The results of the analysis are presented in the form of tables and figures to facilitate systematic interpretation. Specifically, the prevalence of job placement recommendations is presented using frequency and percentage tables, trend patterns across years are summarized in comparative tables, and the stability of psychological readiness dimensions is described through descriptive profiling tables. These presentations are provided in the Results and Discussion section.

#### **F. Ethical Considerations and Researcher Position**

Ethical considerations were addressed through the use of anonymized secondary data obtained with institutional permission. No personally identifiable information was accessed or analyzed. The researchers did not participate in assessment administration or scoring and had no influence over participants' responses or job placement recommendations. The role of the researchers was limited to data interpretation and academic analysis, ensuring objectivity and compliance with ethical standards for secondary data research. The study therefore adheres to principles of responsible data use in applied psychological and labor policy research.

### **III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the results of the Job Placement Assessment analysis for vocational high school (SMK) students in Tangerang City over the 2022–2025 period. The findings are organized to (1) establish the stability of psychological readiness, (2) describe the prevalence and patterns of job placement recommendations, (3) synthesize temporal trend patterns within an industrial urban context, and (4) provide

comparative policy interpretation. The section concludes with a synthesis highlighting the interaction between psychological stability and labor market structure.

#### A. Stability of Psychological Readiness Dimensions

The descriptive analysis indicates a high degree of stability across all seven psychological readiness dimensions measured by the Job Placement Assessment. Aggregated profiles of spirituality, social bonding, diversity orientation, communication style, skill type, global capacity, and business capacity show no substantive variation across the four-year observation period. From a psychological standpoint, this stability is theoretically expected. Core dimensions such as spirituality and social bonding are rooted in long-term cultural values and socialization processes, while communication style and skill orientation are shaped through sustained educational and institutional experiences. Dimensions associated with psychological capital, such as global capacity, are cumulative and typically evolve gradually rather than fluctuate in response to short-term labor market changes. The persistence of these profiles suggests that vocational students in Tangerang City maintain a consistent structure of psychological readiness across cohorts, providing a stable baseline for interpreting job placement outcomes.

**Table 1.** Stability of Psychological Readiness Dimensions among SMK Students in Tangerang City (2022–2025)

| Psychological Dimension | 2022   | 2023   | 2024   | 2025   | Trend Pattern |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|
| Spirituality            | Stable | Stable | Stable | Stable | No change     |
| Social Bonding          | Stable | Stable | Stable | Stable | No change     |
| Diversity Orientation   | Stable | Stable | Stable | Stable | No change     |
| Communication Style     | Stable | Stable | Stable | Stable | No change     |
| Skill Type              | Stable | Stable | Stable | Stable | No change     |
| Global Capacity         | Stable | Stable | Stable | Stable | No change     |
| Business Capacity       | Stable | Stable | Stable | Stable | No change     |

Overall, these results confirm that psychological readiness functions as a structural constant rather than a fluctuating variable in an industrial urban context.

#### B. Prevalence of Job Placement Recommendations

In contrast to psychological stability, the prevalence of job placement recommendations reveals patterns characteristic of an industrial urban labor market. Across 2022–2025, domestic employment consistently dominates as the primary placement pathway for SMK students in Tangerang City. This dominance indicates strong alignment between vocational education outputs and the city's formal employment structure, supported by dense manufacturing and service-sector opportunities. Alongside this stability, the data show a gradual increase in entrepreneurship recommendations, suggesting diversification rather than displacement from formal employment. Recommendations for overseas employment remain low and stable.

**Table 2.** Prevalence of Job Placement Recommendations among SMK Students in Tangerang City (2022–2025)

| Year | Domestic Employment | Overseas Employment | Entrepreneurship |
|------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 2022 | High                | Low                 | Low              |
| 2023 | High                | Low                 | Moderate         |
| 2024 | High                | Low                 | Moderate         |
| 2025 | High                | Low                 | Increasing       |

These findings indicate that job placement recommendation outcomes in Tangerang City reflect urban labor market absorption capacity, with incremental diversification toward entrepreneurship.

#### C. Trend Pattern of Job Placement Orientation

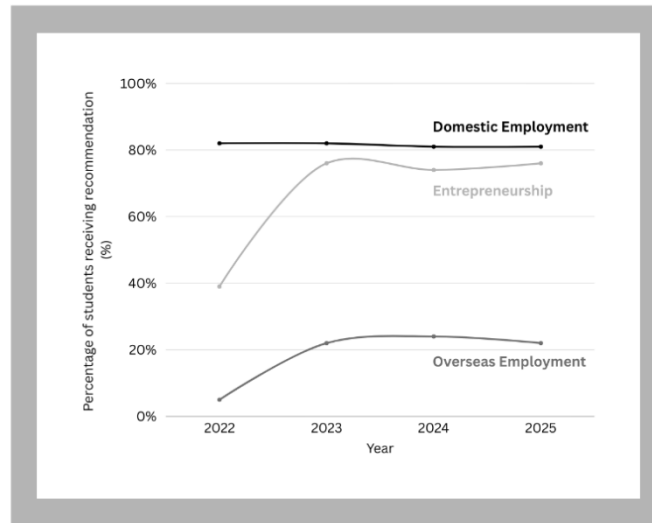
To synthesize temporal dynamics beyond year-by-year recommendation patterns, an interpretative summary of trend patterns is presented.

**Table 3.** Trend Pattern of Job Placement Orientation in an Industrial Urban Context (2022–2025)

| Job Placement Pathway | 2022–2025 Trend  | Interpretation               |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Domestic Employment   | Stable–Dominant  | Strong industrial absorption |
| Overseas Employment   | Stable–Low       | Limited mobility orientation |
| Entrepreneurship      | Gradual Increase | Career diversification       |



Table 3 highlights that Tangerang City exhibits stability rather than structural shift in job placement orientation. Entrepreneurship emerges as an opportunity-based diversification pathway, while overseas employment remains marginal. To visually reinforce these patterns, a trend-based bar chart is presented below.



**Fig 2.** Trends in Job Placement Recommendations among SMK Students in Tangerang City (2022–2025)

Figure 2 illustrates trends in the prevalence of job placement recommendations among SMK students in Tangerang City from 2022 to 2025. The figure shows the consistent dominance of domestic employment recommendations across the four-year period, alongside a gradual increase in entrepreneurship recommendations. Overseas employment remains a minor and relatively stable pathway throughout, underscoring the localized integration of vocational graduates into the urban labor market. It should be noted that the percentages represent the proportion of students receiving each recommendation independently, as individual students may receive multiple job placement recommendations.

#### D. Comparative Policy Interpretation

For broader policy insight, the job placement logic observed in Tangerang City is contrasted with patterns commonly reported in heterogeneous regional contexts.

**Table 4.** Comparison of Job Placement Logic between Industrial Urban and Heterogeneous Regional Contexts

| Aspect              | Tangerang City      | Kabupaten Bogor           |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Regional Character  | Industrial Urban    | Heterogeneous             |
| Dominant Placement  | Domestic Employment | Mixed / Shifting          |
| Entrepreneurship    | Diversification     | Adaptive / Necessity      |
| Overseas Employment | Low                 | Increasing                |
| Policy Implication  | Workforce planning  | Labor mobility management |

This comparison demonstrates that identical assessment instruments can yield different policy meanings depending on local labor market structure, reinforcing the importance of region-specific interpretation.

#### E. Career Psychology Interpretation of Urban Job Placement Patterns

To deepen the understanding of the empirical patterns observed, this subsection interprets the patterns and trends of job placement recommendations through the lens of career psychology. Rather than viewing job placement outcomes solely as labor market results, the following analysis examines how stable psychological readiness interacts with urban labor market structures to shape career aspirations, mobility orientations, and diversification strategies among vocational students.

##### 1) Career Aspirations in a Competitive Urban Labor Market

In an industrial urban setting, career aspirations are shaped by strong institutional linkages between vocational education and formal employment sectors. The dominance of domestic employment

recommendations reflects aspirational alignment with stable wage employment, reinforced by proximity to industrial workplaces and established recruitment channels.

## **2) Limited Role of Labor Mobility**

The marginal role of overseas employment suggests that geographic mobility functions as a secondary rather than primary career strategy. Unlike non-urban regions where mobility may serve as an adaptive response to limited local opportunities, vocational students in Tangerang City can pursue career continuity within the domestic labor market.

## **3) Functional Role of Psychological Readiness**

Stable psychological readiness dimensions support consistent job placement orientations. Rather than driving change, psychological readiness enables vocational graduates to navigate existing labor market structures effectively, particularly within formal industrial environments.

## **4) Entrepreneurship as Career Diversification**

Entrepreneurship in Tangerang City reflects opportunity-based career construction rather than necessity-driven self-employment. Stable business capacity allows vocational graduates to explore entrepreneurial activities as complementary pathways, especially within urban ecosystems that support small-scale enterprise development. Taken together, these interpretations demonstrate that the quantitative patterns observed in job placement recommendations are not merely descriptive labor market outcomes, but reflections of underlying career development processes. Within the framework of career psychology, stable psychological readiness provides the foundational resources through which vocational students construct, maintain, and diversify their career pathways. In an industrial urban context such as Tangerang City, the dominance of domestic employment, the limited role of mobility, and the gradual emergence of entrepreneurship can be understood as adaptive career responses shaped by opportunity structures rather than by changes in individual motivation or capability. This integration of quantitative assessment results with career psychology theory underscores the value of interpreting job placement data as indicators of career construction within specific socio-economic contexts, rather than as isolated employment statistics.

## **F. Synthesis and Closing Paragraph**

Overall, the results demonstrate that job placement outcomes among vocational high school students in Tangerang City are characterized by psychological stability and structural consistency. Stable profiles across seven psychological readiness dimensions indicate that individual readiness functions as a persistent foundation shaped by long-term cultural and educational processes. Within this stable psychological framework, job placement recommendations consistently orient toward domestic employment, reflecting the strong absorption capacity of the industrial urban labor market. At the same time, the gradual increase in entrepreneurship recommendations signals career diversification rather than displacement, while overseas employment remains a marginal pathway. These findings confirm that, in an industrial urban context, variations in job placement outcomes are primarily shaped by labor market structure and opportunity configuration rather than by changes in individual psychological readiness.

## **IV. CONCLUSION**

This study examined job placement matching patterns among Vocational High School (SMK) students in Tangerang City over the 2022–2025 period using secondary data derived from the Job Placement Assessment implemented as part of national labor policy. The findings demonstrate a clear interaction between stable psychological readiness and the structural characteristics of an industrial urban labor market. Across the four-year observation period, the seven psychological readiness dimensions—spirituality, social bonding, diversity orientation, communication style, skill type, global capacity, and business capacity—remained consistently stable. This stability indicates that the core psychological profiles of SMK students in Tangerang City are shaped by long-term cultural, educational, and developmental processes and do not fluctuate substantially in the short to medium term.

Psychological readiness therefore functions as a persistent foundation for career orientation rather than a variable source of change. In contrast to this psychological stability, job placement recommendation outcomes exhibit structural consistency rather than dynamic shift. Recommendations for domestic

employment consistently dominate, reflecting the strong absorption capacity of the industrial urban labor market in Tangerang City. At the same time, a gradual increase in entrepreneurship recommendations signals career diversification within formal employment-oriented contexts, while overseas employment remains a marginal pathway. These patterns suggest that job placement outcomes in Tangerang City are primarily shaped by urban labor market opportunity structures, rather than by changes in individual readiness. Taken together, the findings confirm the central argument of this study: career outcomes emerge from the interaction between enduring psychological capacities and region-specific labor market structures. In an industrial urban context, stable psychological readiness supports employment continuity and diversification rather than mobility-driven adaptation.

#### **A. Implications for Career Counseling in SMK**

For career guidance practices in SMK, the results highlight the importance of interpreting assessment outcomes within an urban industrial context. Counselors should recognize that stable psychological readiness among vocational students supports strong orientation toward formal employment, while also enabling selective diversification into entrepreneurship. Career counseling programs should therefore emphasize informed career planning that integrates assessment results with current urban labor market information, without framing diversification pathways as indicators of inadequate readiness.

#### **B. Implications for Regional Labor Policy**

From a policy perspective, the findings underscore the importance of region-specific workforce planning. In industrial urban areas such as Tangerang City, policy efforts should focus on strengthening linkages between vocational education and formal employment sectors, supporting workforce planning for industry, and facilitating entrepreneurship as a complementary pathway rather than a substitute for wage employment. Unlike heterogeneous or semi-rural regions, labor mobility policies play a secondary role in this context.

#### **C. Implications for Assessment Development and Use**

This study also contributes to the applied use of psychological assessments in labor policy by demonstrating the importance of contextualized interpretation. While the Job Placement Assessment provides a standardized measure of psychological readiness, its policy relevance is enhanced when outcomes are analyzed longitudinally and interpreted in relation to specific regional labor market structures. Future assessment-based policies should therefore integrate spatial and temporal perspectives to support evidence-based workforce planning and career guidance. In conclusion, this study affirms that effective job placement policy in vocational education requires both robust psychological measurement and nuanced contextual interpretation. By highlighting the coexistence of psychological stability and structural consistency within an industrial urban labor market, the research provides a practical framework for strengthening career counseling practices, informing urban labor policy, and optimizing the use of assessment-based evidence in vocational education systems.

### **V. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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