

# Synchronization Of Vocational Education Through Improvement Of Industrial-Based Teacher Skills

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## Abstract

This research aims to determine the synchronization of vocational education through improvement of industrial-based teacher skills. The research is conducted by using qualitative method. This method can provide answers from broader and more detailed research problems. These research participants are principals, vice principals, heads of program and teachers. All of necessary information in this research are collected from a number of categories of data sources, namely humans, documents and actions through data collection which is obtained from interview, observation and documentation. Results of the research show that vocational schools have taken the synchronization of industrial-based teacher skill improvement by building partnership between school and industrial world as a provision for teachers to face current and future challenges by opening new, creative and innovative thinking framework so that they can create prospective medium and professional level labors and one having adaptation skill to various fields of skills by education process and industrial-based learning. It can be concluded that this program assists teachers to be able to take focus learning process to industrial needs which must be conducted in a sustainable manner since changes on each industry is not the same and is supported by visionary principal leadership.

**Keywords:** Partnership, Teacher Skill, Industrial-Based Learning.

## Introduction

Human Resources (HR) are seen as the main asset in building a nation. Provision of qualified HR having high level of competence and productivity is used to achieve a nation growth optimally and has competitiveness in this globalization era (Perdana, 2018). Thus, to obtain qualified and competitive HR, it is necessary to be supported by an education and training system which is developed based on the needs of work market and dynamic of change acceleration in industrial world (Roseno, 2019). Vocational education has orientation to the market and business so company culture can be integrated to any ideas in applying education at schools.

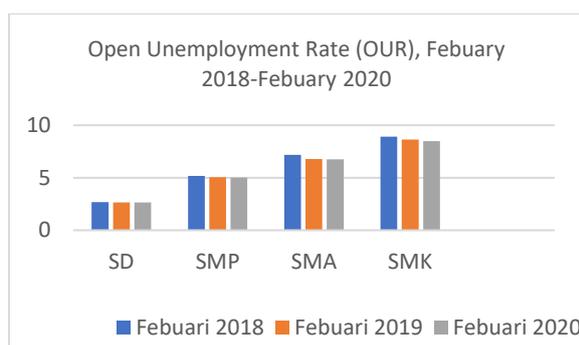
Vocational school is a senior high school institution level having a goal to create competent, having knowledge, soft skills and skilled graduates as job creators as well as workers who

are ready to enter the work market (Roseno, 2019; Soenarto, 2017; Darmawan, 2019; Perdana, 2018; Rochayanti, 2018). In line with this issue, Regulation of Government Number 29 of 1990 Article 3 Paragraph (2) confirms that vocational school prioritizes the preparation of students to enter the world of work as a productive labor and having self-development skill to create employment for himself by entrepreneurship.

In this policy explanation, it is necessary for vocational education at schools to take mapping in synchronize with industrial needs and conditions. So, it can create appropriate and competent as well as skilled outputs by cooperation with various parties such as industry, higher education and other community in order to improve quality of the school. Vocational school must be responsive to the increasing market demands related to labors which require

competent, professional, and employable graduates (Bouwman, 2017). There are some competence aspects required by industry namely honesty, work ethic, responsibility, discipline, applying work security and health principles, initiative and creative. It can clearly be seen from the aspects of required competence and skills, soft skills serve as a key role in determining necessary qualification by industry (Roseno, 2019; Perdana, 2018). It can be said that vocational school is a miniature of DUDI, so there is an appropriate achievement of skills and habits of thinking with the industrial world. Since in the learning process, students obtain skill training, then learning situation must be arranged in such a way to be a simulation of actual work and it is regulated in the curriculum (Wageyanto, 2013).

On that basis, vocational schools are expected to innovate so that they can maintain or improve quality of education program at the schools (Runhaar, Konermann, & Sanders, 2013). Also, so that it can be a bridge of link and match since it has dual system education and prioritizes on student readiness to enter the world of work by provision of skills obtained from the learning process. But in fact, it is not based on the expectation since there are still many graduates who are not absorbed yet to the world of work so there is an increasing number of unemployment.



**Figure 1 BPS Data of Open Unemployment Rate (OUR)**

Last year, there was an increasing rate of the unemployment by 60 thousand people. It is different to the OUR which decreased to 4.99 percent in February 2020. Referring to the level of education, the OUR for vocational schools is still

the highest among other education levels, namely by 8.49 percent.

This high unemployment rate illustrates the gap between demand in the world of work and supply of labor from educational institutions (Rochayanti, Ratna, 2018). There are many factors and reasons leading to unemployment with vocational school backgrounds which continues to increase. It may be caused by inappropriate skills possessed by vocational school graduates to industrial current needs. The competencies possessed during the learning process are insufficient to face actual jobs and graduates are considered to have lack adequate work readiness (Rochayanti, 2018; Perdana, 2018).

Due to this problem, it is expected that vocational schools will prepare their students to work by providing basic provisions in the form of thinking power, physical power, science, technology, art and strong character. Currently, students' working character conditions in most educational institutions are less related and less synchronized to the desired work characters by the world of work desires (Rochayanti, 2018). For this reason, it is necessary for cooperation between schools and the world of work, both in terms of planning, implementation and management of the education. The education process must be able to produce skilled workers who are ready to enter the world of work and capable develop their potentials (Hamidah, 2018; Rindiantika, 2017).

The learning process in vocational schools focuses on developing attribute-focused skills, learner-centered learning, and work-centered learning (Doll & Torkezadeh, 1994). The vocational education curriculum is not only measured by achievement in the form of value, but also by results of the achievement in the form of work in the world of work. The learning process has the goal of forming industrial culture characters and behavior. (Darmawan, 2019; Curtis, John, & Crunkilton, 1999; Roseno, 2019) Schools are expected to be able to develop an industry-appropriate curriculum leading to link and match, demand driven and dual based programs (Rafidiyah, Kailani, 2020; Hadam, Rahayu, & Ariyadi, 2017). Industry serves a big role in encouraging vocational school graduates to

be ready to work through planning, organizing and managing education at schools with shared-designs (Hadam, Rahayu, & Ariyadi, 2017; Rafidiyah, 2020; Rindiantika, 2017).

By such challenges, renewal is a challenge for vocational schools that must be faced to find solutions and enlighten with new and in-depth thinking, so that it can improve and enhance more productive educational aspects (Sutarman, 2019).

Talking about the quality of education in vocational schools, it will be directly related to the role of schools as educational institutions. Good directed and quality education is determined by involvement of all parties to prepare qualified and competitive human resources (Kurniady, Linda, Siti, 2017; Wayan, 2015; Aini, 2019). By good quality education, the country will have high level of human resources. In this case, there is a great contribution of the teaching and learning process (Jumriati, 2017).

Improving the quality of graduates through the learning process is closely related to teacher maturity, namely teachers with ability to anticipate any challenges of the world of education; since teachers have high responsibility in their work through educational activities and teaching and learning processes (Karyati, 2018; Honingh, 2016). Vocational school teachers must have excellence in guiding students, producing teaching materials, developing practices and building cooperation with the business world and the industrial world. (DUDI) (Soenarto, 2017).

By relevance of vocational education, teachers must change in terms of way of thinking and applying their works (Marshall, Kiffin, Soutar, 2012; Clive, 2001). To face widespread changes in the industry, it is necessary for any teachers to improve their abilities and manage their own behavior to work hard (Mulcahy, 2003 Handayani, 2012; Arifah, 2016; Butho, 2016; Sutarman, 2019).

In the learning process in vocational schools, teachers should use an integrated emotional, spiritual, and social intelligence approach to optimize acquisition of intellectual intelligence. So, teachers can be said to be an agent of learning as well as an agent of change and

also motivate students to become leaders of change (Sutarman 2019). This must be supported by increased competence and skills possessed by teachers to support this achievement.

It is also necessary for the improvement of teacher skills since it is seen as a potential strategy to improve teacher quality and prepare teachers in facing challenges in the future. In the future, there will be increased demands and hopes for teacher role and professionalism (Sutarman, 2019; Sampurno, Wibowo, 2015; Future Tracks, 2019).

Teacher skills can be managed well, if the principal as a leader is trustworthy and visionary, meaning that the principal is able to become a leader with integrity, focus on improving the quality of learning and having a vision for the future and having ability to realize it (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017; Khaswaneh, 2012).

Leadership is basically a process of influencing others with the ability to think realistically, communicate, make decisions and give rewards (Nasruji, 2017). Effective leadership is required at schools (Falk, 2003; Falk and Smith, 2003; Marshall, Kiffin, Soutar, 2012).

Leadership in vocational education is a culmination of all necessary complexities for good regulation and management in order to achieve optimal results (Sehfudin, 2011; Darmawan, 2019). The existence of leaders gives strength to schools, provides support, resolves problems in school and security (Grissom, Kalogrides & Loeb, 2015; Jacob; Goddard; Kim; Miller & Goddard, 2015). Principals must also be able to plan, have knowledge, skills, create trust and inspire (Munajat, 2019). Principals are responsible for the smooth running and success of all regulatory and management tasks at schools (Habibie, 2020; Susanto, 2016).

Vocational school principals in their leadership must be skilled at building cooperation and partnerships with any business / industry and interested parties in order to make breakthroughs in ideas, programs, problem solving, and individual consideration of members in motivating achievement of work-oriented vision and mission (Mulianti, 2018; Hidayat, 2019).

Principals must understand flexibility as an important factor to meet industry needs and provide training in a more responsive manner to industry needs (Foley, 2011). In addition, vocational leadership is required (1) as an agent of change, (2) to be courageous and consistent, (3) to have trust in others, (4) to be able to act as a value driven (5) to have a learner attitude, (6) to have ability to face any challenges of change and (7) to be visionary (Hartinah, 2011).

### Method

This research method uses a qualitative approach. Qualitative research can help researchers to explore clearer and more comprehensive information related to the obtained information. Therefore, the instruments used primarily by the researchers are by utilizing data sources in the forms of informants from VS consisting of principals, vice principals and teachers.

The overall necessary information in this study was collected from several categories of data sources, namely humans, documents and actions through data collection obtained from interviews, observation and documentation. As a means of gathering information, there was structured interview in this study. This allowed researchers and participants to engage in dialogues in which any original questions are modified based on participant responses (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). The interviews include open-ended questions related to synchronization of business world and industrial world at schools and strengthening teachers taken by school leaders or principals.

For each interview, it is required approximately 30 minutes, depending on the responses and the willingness of the principals, vice principals and teachers to provide more research-related information.

The technical analysis of qualitative research data is carried out through several stages, namely 1) collecting data, the researchers collect necessary data through observation, interviews and documentation, 2) data reduction, all of the collected data is selected and chosen between relevant and irrelevant research, 3) display data, the researchers present in the form of a report in a

systematic, readable and understandable manner, 4) conclusion, the relevant data is collected and displayed, then a conclusion is drawn to obtain final results of the research (Minus and Hubberman in Satori & Komariah, 2017).

### Result

Results of the research taken by the researchers in secondary level vocational education in Indonesia as called as Vocational School related to synchronization of vocational education through improvement of industrial-based teacher skills will be presented from various research findings at the field which are obtained from results of the interviews and documentation to the research subjects.

Based on the interview results with VS principals, it shows that the principals have ability in managing school to better direction. This is in line with VC principal efforts to look for any chances and develop any cooperation chances with industry as one of the efforts to improve graduate competences so that it can be relevant with any necessary competences by the industry.

Furthermore, vice principals in the division of industrial and public relation stated that industrial is one of the important elements in the world of work since industry is quite dominant labor absorption. So, it is necessary for synchronization of industry and the world of education as a source of labor producers. Therefore, schools conduct various forms of partnership with some industries. By this partnership with industry, it is expected that students will be able to enter employment, compete, and develop themselves successfully in the workforce. Any changes and developments in the world of work require any SMK graduates to have hard skills and soft skills to meet any job demands.

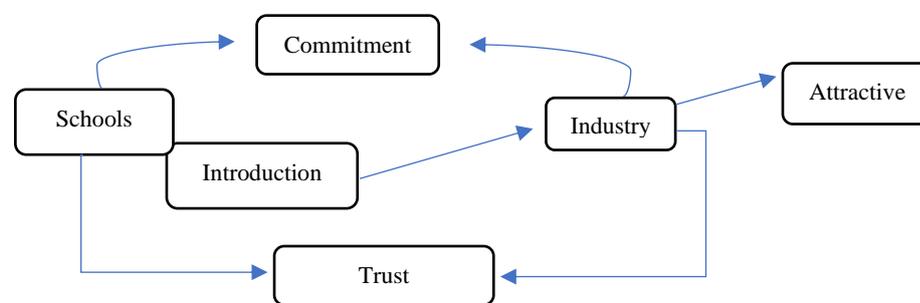
The management of activity programs taken by SMK and industry is well-adjusted to any existing regulations and refers to applicable government regulations. In making an industry-based school program, principals takes several things to identify and accommodate industrial needs, namely; (1) the principals analyze the environment, conditions and industrial needs, (2)

determine school vision, mission and goals, 3) develop strategies, 4) the principals conduct industrial mapping, 5) analyze jobs, 6) map any required competencies, 7) determine industries and 7) conduct joint evaluations.

In that case, it is certainly supported by VS principals with strong characters so that it can bring excellence benefits to the schools. According to the Vice Principals of Curriculum, the principals are able to serve as (1) a motivator, giving teachers opportunities to learn, have opinions, pay attention, care for all and does not differentiate from one another, (2) a innovator, it can be seen how VS principals continue to try to make updates, make the latest programs in schools

according to any arising changes in the society, (3) a supervisor in every implementation of learning or activities at school

Industrial partnerships with schools as an effort to synchronize vocational education according to industrial conditions and needs have benefits for students, including it can create attitudes, time discipline, work-based learning, knowledge of the world of work and work ethics for prospective workers. Thus, it is expected that VS graduates will be more qualified, competitive and equipped to face the world of work in the future. The principals' strategies to build partnerships can be described as follows;



**Figure 1. Principal Strategies in Building Partnership**

From this figure, it can be seen that it is greatly necessary for the first introduction to the industry, so that the industry can determine what competencies the school has and any achievements that have been achieved. This achievement gives great effects on industry interests in making partnerships, the industry will have no doubt on school achievements as tangible evidences for producing quality workforce. After the industry is interested in making partnerships that will grow mutual trust, certainly it is necessary to maintain this trust by good communication and relationships.

The partnership built by VS with industry includes several things including: (1) purposes of implementing industry-based learning, (2) education programs in industry-based schools, (3) responsibility for mutual duties, (4) available services by industry to schools (students and

teachers) and (5) supporting documents for the partnership agreement.

There are several industrial partnership programs that have been made by VS principals, namely, 1) curriculum alignment, 2) guest teachers (industry), 3) teacher apprenticeship, 4) student apprenticeship, 5) graduate recruitment, 6) scholarships, 7) competency certification, 8) Special Job Fair, 9) industrial class, and 10) teaching factory. It is necessary for the principals to have certain strategy to build partnerships with industry through these various programs.

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the principals have created and implemented a learning program to prepare their graduates to be ready to enter the world of work in accordance with their respective competencies and skills namely by providing knowledge both theoretically and practically with focus on building student characters. Even though in

reality, VS graduates still have to compete with college graduates to obtain any jobs. These conditions create big challenges for students.

By clear program objectives made by the principals, students will be easier to have competence as a basis for employment in accordance with industrial needs and conditions which are supported by qualified teachers with strong characters, namely characters that have religious values, are honest, disciplined, and responsible.

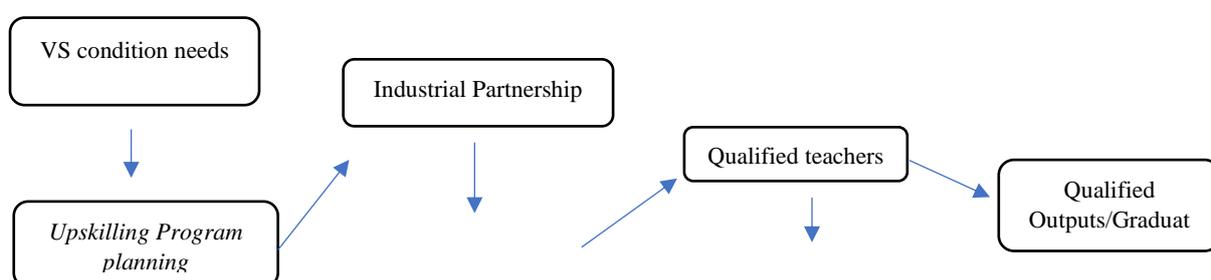
Vocational schools educate and train students to have superior characters, have skills in working according to the needs of the world of work and the industrial world through a planned, effective and efficient learning process. This is certainly supported by qualified teachers.

Based on the research findings, in improving teacher skills as an effort to create innovation and development of appropriate school programs with the industry, the principals have applied several programs, namely 1) teaching clearing house which is conducted by teachers with other schools, as a form of collaboration between subject teachers to improve teacher quality and learning process which is carried out by telephone and internet communication media, 2) teacher apprenticeship, to increase teacher competency and skill relevance with the development of science and technology in the industrial world. This can improve knowledge and skills that support teachers to be more actual when teaching and obtain an overview of work procedures in the industry, 3) continuous professional development (PKB) through in-house training (IHT) activity in order to deepen and strengthen knowledge, 4) implementation industrial coaching and mentoring systems, 4) training conducted at the Education and Training Center based on new needs and developments in

the industrial world, 5) training, to improve teacher competence, 6) coaching, carried out by principals, 7) teachers are provided by developing and up-to-date skills by inviting trainers / instructors from the industry according to their fields to provide teacher additional experience and knowledge, and 8) Certification of Professional Certification Institutions (LSP) certificates. On this basis, VS teachers will be encouraged to leave comfortable zone, to be flexible, and open minded. This is used so that teachers are able to continuously update their knowledge and knowledge, so that they are able to produce competitive and skilled prospective workforce as priority outputs by an industry-based learning process.

Vocational school teachers have a duty not only to teach in order to deliver materials in the classroom, but also to be able to act as mentors, facilitators, motivators and guides who are able to transform students into qualified human resources. Teachers must be able to create students to be more competent after graduation, both in terms of achievement, leadership, ability, attitude and communication skills. This is in line with obtaining scholarships for VS graduates from industry. According to the vice principal of public relation, it is certainly seen as a source of pride for the school and a motivation for all that a company appreciates the principals to be CRS and expects that in the future, such cooperation will be better and improved in order to provide broader chances for any students and recruit students as parts of their industry.

Based on the aforementioned explanation, the researchers try to illustrate it as the following:





**Figure 2. Process of Producing Qualified Outputs**

From the findings, it can be seen that VS teachers show their achievement by going through world achievement, by chances of teacher potential improvement activity in France. This activity certainly can improve their knowledge, explore experiences which will be returned back to students and support learning effectiveness in classrooms, as well as improve acquisition of teacher materials, structure, concepts and thinking framework.

### **Discussion- focus to will-be-achieved goals**

VS as one of the HR prospective suppliers needs to prepare itself, curriculum, learning facility and infrastructure, educators and learning strategies in VS so that it can adjust itself to developing industrial needs. Self-adjustment to industrial needs gives chances for the schools to improve chances for VS graduates to be immediately recruited and work based on their fields. Industrial-based learning applied by project by learning puts forward practices and is based on real conditions in the industry.

Education in VS has three bases namely meeting public desire to works, giving broader choices in education world, and serving as an effort to give high motivation to improve various forms of learning (Darmawan, 2019). Education in VS concerns on adjustment of education curriculum in the world of work in the effort of optimal development of Human Resources so that it can create competitive and success graduates at works in the world of work (Rahman, 2018; Fajriah, 2017; Khaswaneh, 2012; Kurniasari, 2015).

Students are trained since early age to observe any arising problems in the community, and then given stimulations by teachers to find out solutions by providing various knowledge and skills based on needs of the world of work. Therefore, principals have created education patterns at school by referring to (1) learning

environment similar to industrial situations, (2) forming work attitude based on industrial demands, and (3) improving industrial-based knowledge and skills.

One of the efforts to improve education quality in VS to realize synchronization of industrial conditions and needs is by qualified and relevant learning to the industrial world which is supported by teacher quality. Teachers are obliged to have qualification and competence including academic qualification and competence of the students and agents of learning through improving teacher skills by considering aspects of teacher competence development needs. This activity is greatly required to support the synchronization between industrial conditions and needs.

It is necessary to provide teachers by skill improvement to improve competence skills so that they can develop themselves to be more creative, inspirative, confidence and create students to be more critic, analytic and reflective ((Damayanti, 2020; Malik, 2018; Purnami, 2018). This activity assists to grow working spirit, opens to anything which it is expected to be able to assist students to be characterized humans (Kristiantari, R. 2018; Sanjaya, 2006).

Skills improvement is a necessary response to changes in technology and information to have ability to learn new skills (Commonwealth of Australia, 2017). Skills improvement (upskilling) can be associated with career development in an organization (Barnes, Jenny, Alan, 2006; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009; Hardy, 2010; Loughran, 2014). For organizations (schools), HR skill improvement is directed to build a well-prepared workforce to face the future and competitiveness (Deloitte, 2020).

Based on the research results, the effort to synchronize industrial-based VS education through improvement of teacher skills is conducted appropriately. The partnership between

school and industry is built based on awareness that teachers have an important role and tasks not only to teach and deliver materials, but also to be able to serve as a facilitator and motivator in order to create qualified, skilled, competent and well-prepared graduates to enter the world of work by any possessed provisions (OECD, 2014; Yelda, 2019).

### Conclusion

The improvement program of teacher skills serves as a form of realization of principal goals, vision and mission through industrial partnerships which is built as an effort to synchronize vocational education in order to produce professional middle-level prospective workforce who have strong character, determination and ability to adapt to various fields of expertise.

This study implies that every SMK teacher should obtain the same opportunity to improve skills as an effort for self-development, renewing skills and opening a mindset not only for teaching. However, teacher existence also acts as a facilitator, as well as a guide for students' activities as a whole at school. Because changes in each industry are not the same, it is necessary for any schools to continue to make continuous improvements as a preparation for quality graduates and it is necessary to strengthen the quality of schools through a learning process in the classroom which gives effects on VS graduates so that they can answer any challenges of the world of work.

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