

**ANALYSIS OF GRADUATE COMPETITIVENESS MANAGEMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF PUBLIC VOCATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOLS IN PALU CITY, CENTRAL SULAWESI
PROVINCE**

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to find out and analyze the Competitiveness of Graduates of Public Vocational High School (SMK) 2 of Palu in Central Sulawesi Province as well as the Development Strategy. This type of research is qualitative research with informants selected as many as three people. Data collection uses observation, interview and documentation techniques. Data analysis techniques used are (1) Data collection (2) Data Reduction (3) Presentation of Data (4) Verification (5) Conclusions. According to the findings of the researchers' investigation and analysis, it was concluded that the competitiveness of graduates of Palu Public Vocational High School (SMK) 2 needs to be improved. This is obvious from the information presented during the study's informant interviews. Then there are graduates who remain jobless. Meanwhile, one could argue that the development strategy is acceptable. The footsteps of Palu's Public Vocational High School (SMK) 2, which sends instructors to the Master of Education level, demonstrate it well. Then, Palu Public Vocational High School (SMK) 2 collaborated or signed MOUs with 110 businesses in Central Sulawesi and other provinces.

Keywords: *School Competitiveness, School Development Strategy, Graduates*

1. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of regional autonomy in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia currently refers to Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, which in article 1 paragraph 6 states: that the implementation of regional autonomy is the right, authority, and obligation of the autonomous region to regulate and manage its own government affair and the interests of the local community in the system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

The Republic of Indonesia in implementing decentralization gives local governments the authority to freely manage their regional resources more independently. Each region is given the authority and is required to increase regional independence so that the region is free to regulate the management of regional resources, including in the management of the education sector (Suryadi, 2012).

Education field is one of the most interesting issues to be studied as contained in the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education for 2014-2019 which requires efforts from the government to increase the number of vocational high schools (hereinafter referred to as SMK) proportionally, including efforts to organize areas of expertise, competitiveness

in every study program at SMK as well as internship facilities, so that it is relevant to the needs of the world of work both nationally and internationally.

This Vocational High School (SMK) arrangement is carried out so that vocational high school graduates have competency qualifications that are in accordance with the demands of the world of work. The Director General for Quality Improvement of Educators and Education Personnel at the Ministry of National Education explained that the ratio of Vocational High School (SMK) and Senior High school (SMA) comparisons is 70% to 30%. This change in government policy regarding the proportion of vocational and high school education from 30:70 to 70:30 indicates the government's desire to solve the problems of high school graduates, especially regarding absorption by the world of work.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

The development of the world of education is currently entering an era marked by incessant technological innovation, thus demanding an adjustment of the education system that is in line with the demands of the world of work (Wardiman, 1998). Education must reflect the process of humanizing humans in the sense of actualizing all their potential into abilities that can be utilized in everyday life in the wider community. Hence, Vocational High School aims to:

- a. Meeting the community's need for manpower;
- b. Increasing educational options for each individual;
- c. Encouraging motivation to continue learning.

Law No. 2 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (UU Sisdiknas), Vocational Secondary Education is education that prepares students to be able to work in certain fields. While in Government Regulation no. 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, Vocational Secondary Education is education at the secondary education level that prioritizes the development of students' abilities for certain types of work.

Vocational High School is an institution that organizes education and training. It is expected that from vocational school graduates in accordance with the target pattern of implementing life skills in terms of the success of graduates, namely:

- a. a Graduates work in accordance with their field of expertise.
- b. b The grace period for graduates to get work is a maximum of one year.
- b. Absorption of graduates within a period of two years after graduation is at least 75%.
- c. The number of graduates who are able to create jobs is 5%.

Synergy between the world of education and the world of industry as well as stakeholders in society is very much needed. The knowledge and skills developed in schools need to be adapted to the needs of the community (Sriastuti et al., 2018). With the hope that education can improve people's living standards, both in terms of knowledge and solving contextual problems faced daily. So far, learning has not been able to meet all the demands of society, especially in the field of life skills according to the local conditions of student life (Trisnawaty, 2017). Learning materials are often not in line with the development and needs of the community. As a consequence, after graduating from school, students cannot immediately apply the theory they get from school. It is well known that education is closely related to social transformation. Because education is also part of the social system.

Graduates from Vocational Schools are expected to be able and ready to work as experts in their fields, and can open up job opportunities, but in reality, the rate of absorption of graduates in the world of work and industry is still far from the expected number, in addition to the factor of job availability which is still not in accordance with the number of graduates, the quality factor of graduates is still the cause of many graduates who have not worked.

2.1. Competitiveness of Vocational High School Graduates in Industry

High school education, which so far has received priority attention, does not implement a curriculum that directs graduates to work, but to continue their education to a higher level. In fact, most high school graduates do not continue their education to a higher level, instead looking for work. As a result, there is an increase in the number of educated unemployment, because high school graduates who are looking for work are not equipped with the special skills needed by the world of work. Education graduates who should be the capital and driving force for development, have turned out to be a burden for development.

The development of SMK is not only about increasing the number of SMK units and the number of students, but how the existence of SMK is related to the potential of the region. It has become a classic problem for the world of vocational education in Indonesia in general, that the link and match between the output of vocational education and the business world/industrial world (DU/DI) as users of vocational education output has not been achieved. Among these needs, the needs or demands of the world of work / business / industry, are felt to be very urgent, so the priority of "link and match" is given to meeting the needs of the world of work ((Wardiman J., 1994:15-1) in (Suwandi & Chandra, n.d.)). One of the problems lies in the quality of SMK graduates who are not in accordance with the competency standards required by the labor market.

2.2. Development Strategy Through Vocational High School

The success rate of Indonesia's national development in all fields will greatly depend on human resources as the nation's assets in optimizing and maximizing the development of all human resources owned. These efforts can be carried out and pursued through education, both through formal education and non-formal education. One of the institutions in the formal education line that prepares its graduates to have excellence in the world of work, including through vocational education.

Vocational education developed in Indonesia includes the Vocational High School (SMK), designed to prepare students or graduates who are ready to enter the world of work and are able to develop professional attitudes in the vocational field. Vocational education graduates are expected to become productive individuals who are able to work as middle-class workers and have readiness to face job competition. The presence of SMK is now increasingly coveted by the community; especially people who are directly involved in the world of work. With a note, that vocational education graduates do have qualifications as (prospective) workers who have certain vocational skills according to their field of expertise.

The quality of vocational education applies a double measure, namely quality according to school size or in-school success standards and quality according to community size or out-of school success standards" (Mukhidin & Marlina, 2012). The first criterion covers aspects of the success of students in meeting curricular demands that have been oriented to the demands of the world of work, while the second criterion includes the success of students

who are displayed in their performance abilities in accordance with national or international competency standards after they are in the actual work field (Mukhidin & Marlina, 2012).

Curriculum development is a process that starts from thinking about curriculum ideas to how they are implemented in schools. Hasan (1988) in (Kamarga, n.d.) revealed that, aspects of curriculum development procedures are aspects of curriculum activities which consist of four dimensions that are interconnected with one another, namely: (1) Curriculum as an idea or conception, (2) Curriculum as a written plan, (3) the curriculum as an activity (process) and (4) the curriculum as a learning outcome.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This type of research is descriptive and qualitative research, namely research that describes in detail the competitiveness of graduates of Vocational High Schools and Development Strategies of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 in Central Sulawesi Province. In this study, concepts were developed and facts were gathered using a descriptive approach, and therefore hypotheses were not tested (Arikunto, 2001).

3.1. Research Informants

The technique of determining the informants in this study used purposive sampling. The criteria selected in this study are as follows:

1. Teachers at Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 in Central Sulawesi Province.
2. Have competence in the field of education, especially the competitiveness of SMK graduates
3. Has worked in SMK for more than three years.

From the criteria above, there were 4 people that met criteria, namely a Principal of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2, and 3 certified teachers.

3.2. Concept Definition

To facilitate the analysis in this study, the authors describe the definition of the concept as follows:

1. Vocational High School (SMK) is a formal education institution at the high school level. This Vocational High School (SMK) organizes vocational education at the secondary level as a continuation of junior high school or its equivalent that prioritizes the development of students' abilities for certain types of work.
2. Graduate competitiveness is the ability of vocational high school graduates to work in certain fields according to their expertise. The indicators of graduate competitiveness are:

- a. Educational Resources owned

These educational resources consist of resources that can be seen consist of: teachers, employees, infrastructure facilities, namely laboratories, school buildings, meeting rooms, classes, computers and funds. Then the intangible resources consist of: educational system/curriculum, organization, leadership and ability to work together.

- b. Quality of Graduates of Educational Institutions

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Educational units are often in great demand by students because these SMKs have high competitiveness and are difficult to compete with other SMKs. The quality of graduates consists of:

- (1) Graduates that cannot be produced by other institutions such as exclusive licenses.
 - (2) Graduates who are difficult to compete with by other institutions such as: (a) education units already have many successful alumni, and a lot of experience. (b) Schools have unique resources from others. (c) schools have adequate technology and (d) schools have adequate facilities.
3. Vocational High School Development Strategy is an effort to achieve the quality of vocational education graduates in accordance with the demands of the world of work, need to be based on a curriculum that is designed and developed with the principle of conformity to the needs of stakeholders. Vocational education curriculum specifically has a character that leads to the formation of graduate skills related to the implementation of certain job tasks (Lastariwati, 2012).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The competitiveness of graduates is the ability of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 students to work in certain fields according to their expertise. The indicators of graduate competitiveness in this study are as follows:

4.1. Educational Resources owned by Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2

These educational resources consist of resources that can be seen (tangible), namely: teachers, employees, infrastructure facilities, namely laboratories, school buildings, meeting rooms, classes, computers and funds. Meanwhile, the intangible resources consist of: educational system/curriculum, organization, leadership and ability to work together.

In relation to educational resources, the following are the results of an interview with Dra. Zulfina Podungge as Deputy Principal for General Affairs on Thursday, March 8 2018, 12.40 – 13.25 WITA, as follows:

“The number of educational resources in schools at Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2, such as teachers with Masters in Education, needs to be increased. This is because if the number of teachers with Master of Education (MP) education increases and has good performance in school, the competitiveness of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 graduates can be realized. Furthermore, regarding resources in the form of school facilities such as laboratories, school buildings, meeting rooms, classes, computers and funds still need to be improved, because educational facilities also affect the competitiveness of graduates in vocational schools”

(Interview in the room of the Deputy Principal for the General Affairs of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2).

The opinion of the informant above in the context of educational resources has been running according to procedural standards and targets, this is in accordance with the opinion of the expert, that every curriculum implementation needs to be set standards as guidelines, instructions, demands, and references for students, educators or teachers so that they know

what to prepare and do, who the targets are and what results they want to achieve from the implementation of the teaching-learning process (Widodo, 2007). Therefore, educational resources are part of the mechanism that must be carried out in schools, which in fact represent the state in the intellectual life of the nation.

4.2. Graduates Quality of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2

Educational units are in great demand by students because these SMKs have high competitiveness and are difficult to compete with other SMKs. The quality of graduates consists of: (a) graduates who cannot be produced by other institutions (b) already have many successful alumni, (c) schools have unique resources from others. (d) schools have adequate technology and (e) schools have adequate facilities.

Regarding the quality of graduates of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2, it can be said that this is adequate, this is recognized by Dra. Zulfina Podungge as the Deputy Principal for General Affairs who was interviewed on Thursday, March 8 2018, 12.40 – 13.25 WITA, as follows:

“Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 graduates already have high competitiveness. This can be seen from the many successful alumni. Besides, Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 already has adequate facilities such as computers and already has an adequate laboratory. Another indicator that proves Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 has competitiveness is that Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 as a reference school for other SMKs throughout Central Sulawesi Province.” (Interview in the Deputy Principal's room for General Affairs).

The opinion of the informant above is in line with the opinion of the expert, Siagian (2009), a job is said to have competitiveness if the completion of the work is on time and has high competitiveness. This means that the implementation of a task is judged to be good or not, depending on when the task is completed, and does not answer the question of how to carry it out and the costs incurred for it. Thus, it can be said that the success of the Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 in increasing competitiveness is seen in quality school graduates.

Furthermore, the quality of graduates of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 can be said to be adequate, this is acknowledged by Dra. Nur Hawaiiya as the Deputy Principal for Curriculum who was interviewed on Friday 09 March 2018, 09.17 – 10.25 WITA, as follows:

“The quality of graduates at Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 already has high competitiveness. This can be seen from the number of prospective students who are interested in registering at Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 every year. Furthermore, other evidence shows that quality school graduates are almost all graduates have worked in various companies both in Central Sulawesi Province and other provinces in Indonesia. (Interview in the Vice Principal's Room for Curriculum).

The opinion of the informant above can be said that one of the factors that affect the quality of graduates is the presence of adequate teachers and complete school facilities,

which these factors have high competitiveness. In addition, support from the government is very needed in achieving program targets. In this regard, Islamy (2007:112) in (Hildawaty, n.d.) says that the role of government agencies/institutions is very large in being able to persuasively provide encouragement to members of the school community so that they comply and implement every statutory regulation.

4.3. School Development Strategy

Efforts to achieve the educational competitiveness of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 in accordance with the demands of the world of work, need to be based on a curriculum that is designed and developed with the principle of conformity to the needs of stakeholders. The vocational education curriculum specifically has a character that leads to the formation of graduate skills related to the implementation of certain job tasks (Lastariwati, 2012).

Regarding the development strategy of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2, it can be said that this is adequate, this is acknowledged by Dra. Zulfina Podungge as the Deputy Principal for General Affairs who was interviewed on Thursday, March 8 2018, 12.40 – 13.25 WITA, as follows:

“The strategy for developing Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 in order to have high competitiveness can be said to be adequate. This can be seen from the steps taken, such as sending 5 teachers to the level of educators and Masters of Education. Then teacher training to improve competence. Furthermore, Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 entered into a collaboration or MOU with 110 companies. This is done in order to adapt the curriculum to the world of work.” (Interview in the Deputy Principal's room for General Affairs).

The opinion of the informant is in line with the opinion of (Thoha, 2010) which says that if teachers have adequate skills and knowledge, it will be easier to carry out teaching tasks. The quality of employees and teachers in conducting socialization is relatively easy to form and develop by teachers and employees who always study and attend adequate training to increase teacher competence so that Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 has high competitiveness and has an adequate school development strategy.

In implementing the school development strategy at Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2, there are inhibiting factors and supporting factors in implementing the strategy which described as follows:

1) Inhibiting Factor

Based on the results of the study, it shows that the inhibiting factors in implementing the school development strategy of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 are as follows:

- a. There are still limited teachers with a bachelor's degree or master's degree in education
- b. There is a regulation that requires that the acceptance of the State Civil Apparatus must have a bachelor's, master's and doctoral education, so that SMK graduates cannot take the State Civil Apparatus test.

- c. Electricity facilities are inadequate (often outages) so that it interferes with work at Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 both work in the office and in the teaching and learning process in school classrooms.
- d. The school curriculum made by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia often changes so that Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 must adjust the curriculum.

2) *Supporting factors*

The implementation of the school development strategy of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 also received supporting factors, namely:

- a. The existence of adequate school facilities such as the availability of a complete computer laboratory.
- b. Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 is used as a reference school for other vocational schools throughout Central Sulawesi Province
- c. Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 has signed an MOU with 110 companies in order to recruit graduates of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2.
- d. The number of prospective students who register at Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and analysis conducted by researchers, it can be concluded as follows:

1. The competitiveness of graduates of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 in Central Sulawesi Province needs to be improved. This can be seen from the information provided by the informants who were interviewed during the research. Then there are still graduates of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 who remain jobless.
2. The development strategy of Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 can be said to be adequate. The evidence can be seen from the steps taken by Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 to send teachers to the Masters of Education level. Moreover, Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 has collaborated or MOU with 110 companies both in Central Sulawesi Province and in other provinces.

Suggestion

Based on the conclusions in this study, the suggestions in this study are as follows:

1. To the decision makers at the Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 to adapt the school curriculum to the world of work.
2. To the decision makers at the Palu Public Vocational High Schools (SMK) 2 to collaborate with other SMKs in the State Capital (Jakarta) which have high competitiveness so that the competitiveness of schools can be improved in a better direction.
3. For further researchers, they can develop this research by examining the competitiveness of SMKs in Eastern Indonesia.

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