



## VOCATIONAL SCHOOL: VALUABLE TYPE OF EDUCATION FOR COMPETENCE MANPOWER

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### Abstract

An investment of skilful labor that outfitted to world of work is what Indonesia needed as developing country. However, most of the general schools in Indonesia typically explore the student's academic competence with less skill training. As the result, most of graduates are not prepared to work. Yet the general schools provide more theories than skillful practices. Furthermore, those who are not able to afford universities remain unemployed. Thus, this issue calls for specialized and organized type of education. Vocational school has an offer to facilitate students to produce proficient and effective graduates and integrate academic insight as well as skillful competence. This type of education helps students to be capable working with experience without having higher education. In fact, vocational school owns the lack of public interest and the government unawareness. Through this article, the writer would like to expand the insight of Indonesian government, especially educational practitioners for qualified human resources through enhancing and innovating the program, curriculum and management of vocational school to attain more students and generate manpower that will meet the global needs. This article exposes the beneficial aspects, successful program, and the features of vocational school which needs to be improved. Hopefully this article will be considered as beneficial matter toward the investment of skilled labor by making the most of vocational school.

**Key Words:** Vocational school, Competent manpower, Education,

### INTRODUCTION

Education is a keyword of development. The accomplishment of educational development is a fundamental element of national development. Generating the qualified human resources is believed to assign a significant contribution of national development. However, the low quality of man power confers the negative effects in national development. Thus, improving the educational system, the development process will run well and able to attain the expected result.

To achieve the national advancement, Indonesia needs to renovate and repair the priorities, these are possibly required a renewal of curriculum, teaching methods, information access, management, and quality of education as well as the better trained teachers and highly developed facilities, especially technology.

The use of educational technology is supposed to accelerate and repair the educational process. Prensky (2008) says that Today's technology offers students all kinds of new, highly effective tools do self-studies. Internet provides almost all the information, to search and research tools to sort out what is true and relevant, and as an analysis tools to help make sense of it, to creation tools to present one's findings in a variety of media. The presence of technology in education is assumed to change the educational practices in numerous countries in the world. Therefore, Indonesia obliges to produce skillful and technological human resources that eligible to compete in global market.

In a developing country like Indonesia, the needs of productive and skillful labor are massive. In this situation education has an essential responsibilities to fabricate human resources who are able



to create a comprehensive initiatives and capable to participate in global market. Indonesia needs schools which encourage the students to build up their confidents in entrepreneurships and prepare the graduates with beneficial skills.

The public schools' graduates seem incapable in adapting to fulfill the needs of job requirement. This phenomenon triggers on the highly increasing of jobseekers. The data collected by the Ministry of Labor and Transmigration shows the significant raise of jobseekers from public school graduates every year since 2002. Certainly the data reveals the incapability of public schools in placing their graduates in job market and set their confidence up to start their career after completing their study at school. In addition, according to the Human Development Report (HDR) United Nations Development Programme (2011: 127-129), the Human Development Index (Human Development Index -HDI) Indonesia was ranked 124 of 184 countries in the world with an index of 0.617, far below the rank of Brunei Darussalam on 33 with index 0.839, Malaysia ranked 61 with an index of 0.761, Thailand ranked 103 with an index of 0.682, and the Philippines ranked 112 with an index of 0.644. Another indicator that shows the weakness of the human resource development is an increase in the amount of work that the unemployment rate continues to increase every year. Hence, Indonesia necessitates having a type of school which diverse from public school as an alternative education to overcome this issue.

Vocational school is a valuable education to train and prepare the students for specific jobs in community on the basis of man power (Calhaun & Finch, 2011). This type of education allows students to learn and develop the graduates to have suitable competencies in their occupational area. Moreover students are given a training that comes in after entry into working life and aims to help people to improve or update their knowledge and skills, acquire new skills for a career move or retraining and continue their personal or professional development (Cedefop, 2008). Some achievements in international competitions in the event the World Skills Competition (WSC), in Leipzig, Germany, the students of vocational school donated one gold medal by the field of Graphic Design Technology, one silver medal Modeling Prototype field, and eight medallion of excellence has been achieved. This achievement was carved by students Vocational School (SMK), (dikti.go.id, 2013). These are some of many attainments to witness the value vocational school, so that vocational school will no longer be the umpteenth alternative, but can become the first alternative for those who want to continue working without requisite to have degree.

As education budget raise, vocational school, a type of education will be a right solution for the students who have no intention of getting degree and have no fund to pay the university tuition. Each year, approximately 95 thousand high school graduates or equivalent achievement cannot continue to higher education due to economic problems. Although a variety of scholarships and educational programs have been rolled out by the government or private company (suaramerdeka.com, 2014). Vocational school assists the graduates to prepare themselves without necessity to receive higher education.

Through this article, the author provides the beneficial aspects, advantages and contributing factors of vocational schools as well as successful program, and the features of vocational school which needs to be improved. The reader is expected to have a better insight and a different perspective on vocational schools.



### **Vocational school**

Vocational school or SMK (sekolah menengah kejuruan) is defined according to some education experts such as Smith Sughes Act, giving the sense that vocational education is special education programs - programs chosen for anyone interested in prepare self employed or working as part of a group. Ralph C. Wenrich, distinguishing the term education vocational education is a form of preparation for work done in high school. Professional education is preparatory education college work done. Thomas H. Arcy, provide an understanding of vocational education as educational programs organized deal directly with individual preparation for work wages or working without pay or additional preparation a career. Additionally, Bradley. Curtis H. and Friendenberg, giving definition of vocational training or retraining is the preparation of students in the form of knowledge, skills and attitude needed to be able to work and renew skills and further development in the work before the baccalaureate level.

Based on the definition above can be argued that Secondary vocational schools (SMK) is a school that developing basic and continuing education and prepare learners to be able to work, either working alone or working as part of a group corresponding respective fields.

Vocational school has a primary mission to prepare students to enter the workforce. Thus, SMK presence is expected to produce middle level ready-made manpower, in other words, SMK is required to produce graduates who are ready to work. The success of vocational education graduates can be seen through the appearance of the world of work. Besides vocational training is expected to equip students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values so as to produce certain proficiency in other words make the students to be ready at work.

In short, Vocational School (SMK) is one of the vocational education institutions which has the task of preparing equip learners with the knowledge and skills to be able to work in accordance with the competencies and skills programs, have adapt ability and high competitiveness to enter employment. Vocational education not only prepares skills, but also prepares attitudes, habits and values that need to plunge into the world of work. The demand of the work place which basically requires a qualified man power that is not only prioritizing skills, but also paying attention to the attitudes such as responsibility, discipline, and honesty of the labor at work. This is also supported by Muniarti & Usman (2009), who states that vocational school is expected to produce a skillful manpower that is eligible with industrial needs, marketing, service and as well as being able to open entrepreneurship and increase the production and expand employment.

### **Vision, Mission and Purpose**

Vocational school is a formal education which also supported by the government. The ministry of education officially states the vision, mission and purpose of having vocational school as an alternative of secondary education.

#### ***Vision***

The realization of international vocational, produce graduates who have a national identity, able to develop local and competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

#### ***Mission***

- Improving Professionalism and Good Governance SMK (vocational school) as civilizing Competence Center
- Improve Quality of Education (8 SNP)
- Establish and empower vocational international standard so as to produce graduates who have

a national identity and competitive advantage in the national and global markets.

- Empower SMK to Develop Local Potential into Comparative Advantage
- Empower SMK to Develop Cooperation with Industry, PPPG, LPMP, and Various Related Institution.
- Improving and Expanding Equitable Access a Quality of Vocational Education

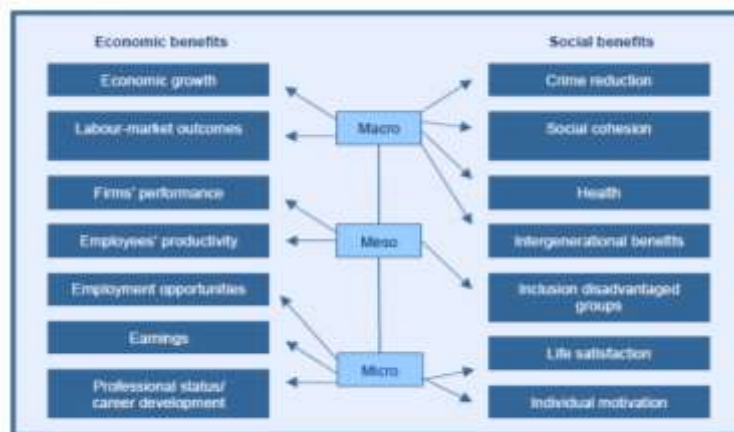
**Purpose**

- Achieve an accountable vocational institutions as a civilizing Navel National Standard of Competence
- Educate Human Resources who has the work ethic and competence of international standard
- Provide a range of services that are permeable and Vocational Education integrated and flexible manner between the lines and levels of education
- Expanding the service and quality of vocational education equity
- Lifting the local advantage as the capital of the nation's competitiveness

**The Beneficial Aspects Of Vocational School**

There are many benefits of vocational school. The graduates from vocational school are more skillful than those who graduate from public high school (SMA). Vocational school assists students to prepare their career without attaining further education.

Vocational education training benefits can be grouped using a classical typology based on the nature of results. Two main categories can be identified: economic benefits and social benefits. Both can be analyzed on three different levels: the micro level (the benefits for individuals); the meso level (benefits for enterprises/groups); and the macro level (benefits for society as a whole). Figure 1 gives examples of vocational school benefits according to the dimension (economic and social) and the level of analysis (micro, meso and macro).



Source: Cedefop

**Figure 1:** the classification benefits of vocational education.

In economic benefits, vocational school assists the economic growth inclusively at macro level. The other impact is on labor market. By having the certificate of vocational school graduates, the graduates are assured to work. This impact results on the reduction of unemployment and inequity. The influence of Vocational education on economic growth has been reported by few countries. These data should be one of the reasons for Indonesia to empower the existence of vocational school.



At meso level, the economic benefits are exposed by the productivity performance of both the employees and the firm. The performance is getting better in producing better products as the employees are prolific and trained well to work.

Furthermore, at Micro level, the vocational school helps the graduates to be able to earn money and find job easier with reduction of skill mismatch. Since vocational school train their graduates to be competence in their working area. Those skills will be integrated into the labour market with adequate income, complete with further career development opportunities and professional grade.

In short, vocational school contributes to reducing unemployment and may protect people from becoming unemployed. In terms of benefits for enterprises, the evidence points towards positive impacts on productivity, innovation, and employment growth and organization culture. Vocational school can also play an important role in improving economic conditions in disadvantaged regions and by reducing the skill mismatch between workers and enterprises. Vocational school appears to be most effective when it accompanies changes in the workplace. Economic Vocational school benefits at the individual(micro) and enterprise (meso) level interact and are, at the same time, the basis for favorable outcomes at macro economic level.

Despite of economic benefits, vocational school also benefits socially to the graduates. Social returns for individuals are mostly psychological benefits, with vocational school contributing to self-esteem, self-value and self-confidence and supporting personal activation. Some countries report that vocational school has positive effects on the psychological state of disabled people, proving that disability is not the main obstacle to employment. Other individual effects reported included increased quality of leisure time.

### **Vocational schools in Indonesia**

In Indonesia, Development of Vocational School (SMK) in each district or city will be carried out until the end to achieve the comparison between the vocational high school into 70:30. The efforts to continue in expanding vocational education is that vocational graduates more easily get into labor market compared to high school graduates because generally vocational subjects are accompanied with practical skills.

In the analysis of projected development of vocational school there are three possibilities that could occur in the program has developed expertise rapid, program expertise undergo normal development (stable), expertise and program experience boredom. The program is projected to expertise rapid growth is group programs Agriculture, Tourism, Fisheries, Marine, and Information Technology. It is estimated that by 2020 the number of vocational which will open the program group reached 6,151. Program group is quite stable and is projected to experience grow this reasonable Technology program group and Industry and the Arts and Crafts Group, which is expected to reach 3,178 SMK such a plan. While the group Business and Management, is a program that is projected experiencing saturation in the job market and numbers tend to decreased and projected by 2020 only 923 SMK.

Enactment of the Director's decision Basic Education and General Management Secondary spectrum of expertise on vocational education, vocational is made based on 121 competency skills. The purpose of the decision issue is that Vocational skills in developing programs not arbitrarily make its own name against the program and adapted to labor market needs.





Some problems occur in vocational school implementation in Indonesia. Those problems obstruct the performance of the school and the graduates. The problems are included in management system, facility, curriculum, and the teacher.

The Results of the study by MS Djohar shows that approximately 100 teachers, 25 percent of which have not demonstrated professional behavior (Sovereignty of the People, 2009). One form of government recognition of the teaching profession through teacher certification has been conducted and the results of the study implementation and certification through portfolio assessment PLPG 2008 as presented Baedhowi (2009), that in general, the competence of teachers who passed the certification through portfolio assessment is not much improved, and there is even a tendency to decline. This picture shows the weakness in the professional development of teachers (professional development) in order to carry out the duties and functions.

According to Moh .Uzer Usman (2008:3) teacher professional development is basically the personal demands of teachers, the responsibility of maintaining and developing the profession that cannot be done by anyone else but themselves. Professional development of teachers of vocational high school (SMK) requires different management, because vocational school has special characteristics. According to AkhmadSonhaji (2002) there are three main characteristics of technical education (vocational) that need to be considered in its implementation, they are: (1) an emphasis on the psychomotor domain, (2) in accordance with technological developments, and (3) the orientation of the field work. One of the teachers' efforts to improve vocational competence can be done by paying attention to the teacher professional development planning in accordance with the characteristics of vocational schools. This means that the professional development of teachers for vocational study is an attempt to improve teacher competence and teacher performance in order to continue growing and adaptive to changes in science and technology that impact on school quality improvement and learning in the classroom.

In short, there are many issues and difficulty in making the betterment of vocational school. These impediments are considered to be the reason for students to choose public high school than vocational school. Therefore, the government and the school management are supposed to improve the standard of ideal vocational school, so that the students who intent to work after school preserve vocational school as their preference. Thus, the more students select vocational school, the better competence of manpower we retain.

## **CONCLUSION**

To produce a competent labor in Indonesia, we need a better type of education which not only educate but train and prepare the graduates to be ready to work. Vocational school offers the value of generating the graduates to be skillful, knowledgeable, and well-behave at work. The betterment of the manpower at work is believed to have better impact economically and socially. Some countries also support this program to solve the employment issue, as vocational school prepare their graduates to perform professional work better than the graduates from public high school. It also benefits students who have no intention to have higher degree.

In fact, vocational school owns the lack of public interest and the government unawareness. Therefore, the existence of vocational school needs to be developed, such as the curriculum, the educationalist, the facility and the school management. Here is Indeed, having enhancement in vocational school will be a key of promoting vocational school not only to be a unfavorable choice, but the main alternatives.



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