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# Konferensi Internasional Pendidikan Global III

*International Conference  
on Global Education III*

*Tematik Tema:*

**Pembangunan Sumber Daya Manusia  
Ke Arah Ekonomi Global**

*Human Resource Development  
Towards Global Economy*

**25 - 26 Mei 2015**

**Rumahnya Mahasiswa Bangsa di - All  
TIDUNG - INDONESIA**

# ROLE OF SCHOOL CULTURE IN IMPROVING QUALITY LEARNING IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

*The Government has conducted various efforts to improve the quality of education in vocational schools, such as: (1) improving educational facilities, additional buildings, laboratories / workshops and practical tools; (2) the 1994 edition developing vocational curriculum dual system education, the 2004 edition of competency-based curriculum, the 2006 edition curriculum education unit (KTSP) and will be implemented curriculum 2013 edition; (3) improving the ability and qualifications of teachers techniques through courses and continuing education to postgraduate (S2/S3), but the reality proves that the strategy is still not encouraging. It is therefore necessary to find an effective way to improve the quality of education through strategies that focus on the development of the school culture. Improvement and development of quality vocational school culture approach looks more promising than the structural approach. Approach to school culture more bottom-up, so residents do not feel ruled school or are forced to make improvements, but on awareness, confidence, and the will together make improvements and change for the better.*

**Keywords:** School, culture, improving, quality, learning, vocational, education

## INTRODUCTION

Efforts to improve the quality of education in vocational schools, have been carried out by the government in various ways. Among these are (1) improving educational facilities, such as the addition of buildings, laboratories / workshops and practical tools; (2) developing the 1994 edition of the vocational curriculum that emphasizes on professional skills training and more oriented to the industry and the world of work through a dual system of education (dual system) to the 2004 edition of the Competency Based Curriculum (competency based curriculum) to the 2006 edition of the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) and now want to proceed to the issue of Curriculum 2013, which emphasizes the attitudes and values; and (3) improving the skills and qualifications of teachers techniques through courses in Teacher Development Project Improvement

Techniques (P3GT), industry training and further education, Diploma program (DIII) to Bachelor level (S1) or S1 to postgraduate (S2 / S3 ).

Improved facilities and infrastructures, as well as the improvement of vocational teachers' ability, through training and further education, would have been very encouraging. Nevertheless, the addition of facilities and infrastructures as well as continuing education for teachers will be implemented not guarantee good learning process, because there are many other factors that influence the implementation of the learning process in schools. One important factor that presumably affects the learning process is a culture in vocational schools (school culture). Various studies in education and business giving a signal that the school culture to be one of the best predictor of success in educational innovation. Ramli in his research found that the effect of school culture by 12.7% against the productive competence of vocational students of West Sumatra (Ramli, 2012; 201). Improvement and development of quality vocational school culture approach looks more promising than a structural approach such as the issuance of various regulations, engineering learning systems and other structural interventions. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the quality of vocational innovation through the development of a good school culture.

## **B. NATURE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

Various diversity and understanding among the public about the terms of technology and vocational education in Indonesia, emerged as a product of historical development. In the early 1950s until the late 1980s, there was a sense that the definition of technology education and vocational associated with schools that produce graduates to fill the needs of semi-trained workforce (semi-skilled) secondary levels are expected to reach qualified interpreters (craftsman), and the technological and vocational high school graduates needed to produce technicians medium. The term vocational education are widely used in a variety of textbooks known as "vocational education", while the level of education that produces graduates technicians, akin to "technical education". In this connection less precise if "technical education" is translated into technology education, because

"technical education" refers to the level of qualification of graduates as technicians, while the technology education refers to areas of specialization such as mechanical engineering, electrical, building and agriculture. Perhaps the term which though not popular but the right to give a synonym for "Vocational and technical education" is a vocational education (Sukamto, 1988: 20).

Furthermore Sukamto states vocational education includes all education programs at various levels aimed at helping students develop their potential towards a job or career. United States Congress defined vocational education as "organized educational program which are directly related to the preparation of individuals for paid or unpaid employment, or for additional preparation for a career requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree (Calhoun & Finch (1982:2), and Vocational and technical education is a program of specialized studies designed to prepare the learner for employment in a particular occupation or family of occupation Wenrich (1988:20). According to Law No.20 of 2003 on National Education System (article 15) explained that vocational education is secondary education that prepares students primarily for work in a particular field. Thus, vocational education is education in secondary education are vocational schools in formal education that prepares students as secondary technical personnel, mainly to work in a particular field.

Based on these theories can be concluded that vocational education is education that is geared to prepare students entering mid-level jobs in accordance with their fields and cater for all Indonesian people who need them and earn a decent living. Restrictions on vocational education shows that vocational education is synonymous with education into the world of work, therefore, vocational education has a fundamental characteristic of which is the vocational education based on the needs of business and industry, the success of vocational training seen from the success of their students enter the workforce and can adapt to the job and work environment.

### **C. SCHOOL CULTURE**

Culture is a system of sharing of values and beliefs that interacting with people in an organization, organizational structure and control systems that generate behavioral norms (Tika, 2006; 4). Culture as a number of values, beliefs, habits that are used to demonstrate the behavior and / or groups (Amirullah, 2003; 24). without culture is not possible birth of a personality (Tilaar, 2004; 190). School culture as beliefs and values that belong together into a strong binder together as citizens of a society (Deal and Kent, 1999).

The quality of school life, whether manifested in work habits and leadership in these relationships grow and develop based on the spirit and the specific beliefs espoused school. Culture is the basis of the formation of human personality, of culture can form a person's identity, the identity of a society and a nation's identity. Education is a process of acculturation, that is to instill the values and norms in the order of life of the nation, made man into a creature that is virtuous, noble and cultured. Vocational schools have a number of cultures with one dominant culture and a number of other cultures as subordination.

The organizational culture of school can be described as a pattern of values, norms, attitudes, perceptions, thoughts, ideas, or behaviors that are formed in the long journey of the school and are believed by the school community and serves as a guidance in solving problems at school (Zamroni, 2003; 149). Organizational culture can also be seen as a behavior, values, attitudes, and how to make adjustments to the environment and at the same way of looking at problems and solving strategies. Therefore, naturally the culture will be inherited by one generation to the next. While the school is the main institution that is designed to facilitate the process of intergenerational transmission. Because the culture of the school should be able to be a reference to the school community (principals, teachers, students) in the face of the challenge to become a modern school, as stated by Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994: 373) as follows: "The organizational culture of school challenges the basic views of the 'modern' structural and systems schools about for example, how Organizations of make decisions, and how and why people in Organizations behave as they do". Organizational culture of the school should be able to build a system that enables organizations to make

decisions, and members of the organization to act in accordance with the expectations that are believed together.

School culture atmosphere of the school is a school where students joined with his friend, a teacher with a teacher, counselor neighbor, fellow educators, and school community group again. Internal interactions of groups and between groups are bound by various rules, norms, morals and ethics along with the prevailing sector in schools. Leadership, exemplary, friendliness, tolerance, hard work, discipline, social awareness, environmental awareness, a sense of pride and responsibility are values that are developed in the school culture

School culture plays a role in determining the success of improving the quality of teaching in vocational schools. The quality of learning is dynamic developing appropriate indicators demands of society and the development of science and technology. This requires the development of vocational schools to always change. Therefore, efforts to improve the quality of learning requires all citizens of the school should have a desire to always change for the better. Vocational schools who wish to improve their performance should take into account the school culture by identifying a variety of cultural and school positions in relation to the learning activities. Based on the existing school cultural understanding, whether positive culture that supports or inhibits negative culture can be used as a starting point in the effort to develop a school culture that supports learning activities.

Thus the school culture is the values, beliefs, assumptions, expectations and norms, thoughts or ideas that are formed in the long journey of the school and is believed to act as a guide for people in schools, especially in solving internal and external problems of the school. School culture that is developed should be adapted to the local culture, so as to avoid a conflict of values, norms, and rules that have been believed to be a school.

In the book Based Quality Improvement Management School at 4 book that discusses the guidelines manners and Social Life School Rules 2001 explained that, "As a baseline, manners and social life of the school discipline should be

rooted in religious values (noble character), local social and cultural values, but remain within the framework of the development of national culture ". Further described in the book referred to, that given the nature that reflects the needs of each school in the context of the local communities, the manners and social life of the school system is an integral part of the management program based quality improvement school (school-based quality improvement) as one the management of education.

Therefore, each region has a characteristic of the culture which is believed as a guideline for behavior, especially in solving the problems in school, there are many possible variations of school culture in accordance with cultural diversity. Nevertheless, it should be studied major cultural aspects (core culture) that can be developed in vocational schools so that graduates become citizens who are able to enter the workforce is cultured.

#### **D. ROLE OF SCHOOL CULTURE IN DEVELOPING QUALITY EDUCATION.**

In building the quality of education, vocational life should reflect cultural values in building their competencies. For example: (1) The same school discipline similar to the discipline of work in the industry, the students always come to and from school on schedule that has been set; (2) Working hours are similar schools together with the working hours in the industry, students were less hours of study must be met at other times; (3) Workshop / laboratory school resemblance to the workshop in industry, always clean, the machines are always ready to be operated and maintained properly, tools and equipment well organized; (4) Clothing practicum resemblance to the work clothes in the industry, every teaching practice, students are always dressing up and pay attention to work safety practices, students are proud of the uniform practice. For example, machining engineering skills students take pride in uniforms bearing the practice gear.

The main goal of cultural development is the creation of a community learning school. There are five things that must be considered in the development of learning communities in schools, namely: personal mastery, shared vision, mental models, team learning and systems thinking (Wallace and Engel, 1997; 98). Personal mastery means that all school members (principals, teachers, students, administrative staff) are always trying to increase knowledge and skills in carrying out their official duties at the school. Therefore, the ability of each school community must always increase. Efforts to increase the ability of self-conscious will help improve the quality of schools included in the formation of superior character of their students. Shared vision means that the school's vision is understood and agreed by all citizens of the school. All school members have a shared vision in managing the schools, so that all the activities in each unit will be carried out simultaneously to improve the quality of schools and the superior character of their students. Mental model is an assumption that does not seem that affect school operations. The assumptions do not seem related to the norms, values, and beliefs of school members in performing their duties. Team learning means every school community must realize that he is a member of the team that has the duties and functions of each. Build schools that citizens always learn to improve its ability to do as a team. System thinking means that the school community as part of a learning community should have a mindset in which each individual is part of the overall school system, because the activities of each unit will affect the other unit.

Culture can establish a person's identity, the identity of a society and a nation's identity. Education is a civilizing process, namely developing, instilling values and norms in the order of life of the nation. Education makes people become civilized beings, virtuous and noble. The development of productive educational values in school culture include activities undertaken principals, teachers, counselors, and staff, when communicating with students and using school facilities. This means that covers all aspects of the school culture and activities that took place during the student is in school, such as curricular activities, extra-curricular activities, spiritual activities, policies and social interaction between the components of the school.



As a value system, school culture is not only an identity but at the same time describe the characteristics of the students in the organization, through the school culture awakened the moral values of togetherness and bridge the communication patterns internalized as patterns of thinking and behaving, not only the inherent value but also as the basic characteristics of the school organization. School culture of readiness and resilience describes the students in reacting, shared experience in the organization of the school and evoke an emotional group, causing confidence to be successful in order to self-actualization of students in a group of school organization.

As a norm, school culture is the ethical individuals in the school in improving discipline and responsibility, so the implication is experienced either in the form of reward and punishment is to increase the productive competence mengGambar.kan behave oriented to the future. The better the school culture as a system of values, norms and beliefs of individuals that developed in the organization of the school, then the higher the productive competence of students associated with vocational education. Conversely the lower the school culture will also lower the productive competence of students.

Head master and teachers responsible for the creation of a pleasant school culture, accept diversity and respect individual differences in the ability of learners it is necessary to keep together the various parties in preparation, as well as in the learning process. To improve this togetherness can be done through the interaction between students and teachers and educational staff, parents and the community through various activities. The meeting between teachers, parents and the public can provide meaningful information about the importance of cooperation with various parties in order to enhance students' understanding of the importance of togetherness coaching students as part of the school culture.

School culture is the prevailing values that have become habitual residents of the school. For that one of the ways that can be done is the development of a school culture through religious moral approach. All values are based both good moral values always aiming to glorify man. While the religion professed moral values have also grown in family life and society of Indonesia. Planting cultural

values of society based on religious moral values that have been enacted to strengthen the boarding school culture through lightning, achievement motivation messages can be done through the messages, and humanitarian activities involving the school community.

School community needs to have a high motivation in learning success through high creativity, so as to bridge the gap between students' difference. Culture of prudence in treating the students, should be able to optimize the potential of all students who are referred to independent learning. To that end, on productive learning, potential students must be developed, both in curricular and extra-curricular activities. For the activities of teachers and the school community with the students who developed not only in learning activities alone, but teachers and students are also involved in extra-curricular activities, so that mutual trust among all members of the school nurtured in an atmosphere that is more natural.

Improvement of the quality of education, can only happen if the culture of the school is committed to the broad school community, such as school principals, teachers, learners, educators and parents of learners and be personable school, and supported by the stakeholders of the school. With a healthy school culture, family atmosphere, collaboration, passion to move forward, the drive to work hard and the quality of teaching and learning culture can be created. Students and teachers will work together for good behavior, work optimally, putting the highest target and be aware of the negative culture that deviates from the norms, values, and beliefs into a common commitment.

Improvement of vocational school education system in essence is to build schools to improve school culture is the main role. Therefore, improvement of the quality of schools need to understand the culture of the school as its capital. Through an understanding of school culture, then a variety of school issues can be identified and experiences can be reflected. Each school has a unique vocational school component based on patterns of interaction both internally and externally, by understanding the cultural traits of the school will be able endeavored real action to improve the quality of education. Values, beliefs and assumptions of life was so strong and not easily observed and very difficult to change. If the

attainment of quality requires effort to change the conditions and the behavior of schools and school communities, the role of culture conditions become very central. Only a change of values that are believed to school alone can drive the quality improvement efforts of the school in the long term.

## **E. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Conclusion**

First, principals with the teachers, and school committees forming forum improvement of school culture. The Forum is expected to implement regulations, order and discipline that promotes competency in learning. Through this forum, students are directed: (1) wearing a school uniform, (2) use of tools and materials in accordance with its function, (3) cleaning machines and tools after a practicum, (4) storing tools, equipment and dispose of waste / shavings in place , (5) coming to and from school on schedule. Vocational schools are expected to resemble the same culture with the culture industry. Second, the teacher is expected to form a group supervisor productive. Through these activities, teachers are expected to actively improve guidance to students about the importance of mastering productive competence. Furthermore, students will be guided: (1) turn the machine according to the procedures and steps of work, (2) accomplishing the work sheet (job sheet) according to the size, and (3) pay attention to signs of workmanship and level of detail are recommended. This guidance will lead students to the formation of productive competencies developed in the industry. Third, principals with the teachers are expected to form study groups productive. Through these students are expected to increase the values of togetherness and help each other in solving the learning task. Teachers are encouraged to design independent and group assignments. By accomplishing work sheet (job sheet) which is the task of the group (team), then students will cultivate cooperation helping each other. Besides, it can also be done to form sports clubs and arts, Scout groups and the Indonesian Red Cross (PMI), a group of young Muslims, commemorating the Islamic and national holidays.

## 2. Recommendations.

First, the development of culture in vocational schools is highly dependent on the role of the school principal. Principals must be able to be a change-maker to develop a culture of social, cultural, academic and cultural quality expected. Therefore, it is suggested that the principal shall understand the culture that developed in the school as the basic capital for positive cultural engineering in order to improve the performance of schools and students. Second, the principal harmonious cooperation with all teachers and school members give emphasis on cultural development: (1) The same school discipline similar to the discipline of work in the industry; (2) Working hours are similar schools together with the working hours in the industry, students were less hours of study must be met at other times; (3) Workshop / laboratory similar to the same school with workshops in the industry, always clean, the machines are always ready to use and well maintained, tools and equipment well organized; (4) Clothing practicum students resemblance to the work clothes in the industry, every teaching practice, students are always dressing up and pay attention to work safety practices, students are proud of the uniform practice. For example, machining engineering skills students take pride in uniforms bearing the practice gear.

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ISBN 9786027052512



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