

LOCAL CULTURE-BASED VOCATIONAL SCHOOL IN PALEMBANG POST COVID 19: LEARNING MANAGEMENT, CHALLENGES AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

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ABSTRACT

This study wants to highlight the learning of post-Covid-19 vocational schools in Palembang, especially how to re-accommodate local culture as an integrated part of learning in schools. The significant impact of the pandemic on vocational education over the past two years has hampered various courses of learning in schools. Here, there are three aspects that will be explored, namely in terms of education management, future challenges and potential for curriculum development after Covid 19. This study is a qualitative research, research data collected from the results of the literature, interviews and documentation. Then the data is interpreted through descriptive analysis. The results of the study indicate that vocational schools face the uncertainty of the situation as a challenge in making changes to adaptive learning formats. Such conditions open up opportunities for the development of a responsive and more flexible curriculum to accommodate local culture as part of learning in vocational schools.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The challenges of education during the Covid-19 period were accompanied by wider shocks in society, including in learning in schools (Kuhfeld et al., 2020). This has resulted in concerns over school closures (Chaabane, Doraiswamy, Chaabna, Mamtani, & Cheema, 2021), learning losses (González & Bonal, 2021) and educational imbalances that have occurred around the world (Blaskó, da Costa, & Schnepf, 2021), over the past two years. In Indonesia, vocational education also experiences the same obstacles, because learning is dominated by online classes and the lack of practice and projects are carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic. Including the difficulty in integrating local cultural values in learning during the pandemic, even though vocational education does not only emphasize the mastery of knowledge but also student skills (Megayanti, Busono, & Makhnun, 2020). Other research on learning based on local wisdom actually increases students' competence. For example, in the field of entrepreneurship, it is stated by Tahir and Hasan (2019) that students who receive local wisdom values learning have higher entrepreneurial competencies than students who do not receive local wisdom values-based learning. To see how the values of local wisdom have so far been combined in learning after Covid-19, in this study we focus on vocational culinary arts at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Palembang. This school is trying to respond back to local local culture through culinary lessons with a variety of Indonesian and traditional food menus, or even a combination of local and continental (European). The importance of local culture being part of education, in addition to preserving it also to stimulate sensitivity to the values that grow near schools and interact with most students (Pornpimon, Wallapha, & Prayuth, 2014).

2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach, research data collected from interviews, documentation, and observations, which are supported by library data as the analysis knife of this study. After the research data has been collected, data reduction and verification are carried out to see how far these data can be projected to become an important part of this research. Furthermore, the research data was interpreted using descriptive analysis to be presented as a report on the results of this study.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Strengthening Local Wisdom Through Vocational Education as Local Identity

The culinary arts department in vocational education plays an important role in introducing local identity, for example, various types of cuisine that are closely related to cultural elements, local wisdom and historical value. This is where the culinary arts vocational school sees an opportunity to introduce local wisdom through the learning process. If traced, historically the city of Palembang was the center of the Sriwijaya territory which in the center of the city stretched the Musi river along 750 meters which divided the city into two parts, namely the upstream and downstream areas (Yuliana, Amri, & Hidayat, 2021). This geographical condition has made the city of Palembang since the past as a busy city with large ports and a maritime center in the archipelago. Indirectly there is an interaction of various foreign cultures with the life of the local community because of the openness of the city of Palembang through its port gates. This allows the richness of local wisdom in the culinary menu in this area as part of the assimilation of various ethnic and cultural elements, both local and mixed, such as kuelupis, wajik, nasi lemak, ashuro porridge (Syarifuddin, Asmi, Safitri, & Abidin, 2021), and one of the best known is pempek made from processed fish (Titing & Harahap, 2019).

Talking again about local wisdom and how vocational education bridges it, we will always be presented with the globalization thesis that brings development missions to have an impact on the fading of local wisdom. Whereas on the one hand the strengthening of local wisdom is also balanced with the strengthening of knowledge due to the ease of accessing knowledge from various sources in the current era (Mungmachon, 2012). Vocational High Schools use the current of globalization as a bridge to explore local wisdom as a way to strengthen regional identity. As well as being a liaison for how students are given the knowledge and abilities needed according to the characteristics of each region. The culinary arts department at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Palembang presents learning materials that are directed at a variety of traditional cuisine menus, continental dishes, and mixed (hybrid) menus. The three types of menu groups basically emphasize the basic competencies of knowledge and skills, especially in the process of making and serving them. The following explanation from the principal serves as an illustration of how students have the opportunity to recognize local wisdom in the culinary arts department.

"Even though the continental menu is actually loved by students, because of the influence of social media, especially during Covid-19. However, we need to formulate lessons that open their insight that opportunities from the traditional menu cooking business sector are very wide open in Palembang. Occasionally from traditional food entrepreneurs we present to strengthen local wisdom values through learning at school." (A.B. Ariansyah, Principal of SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Palembang)

Based on the principal's statement, getting an overview of vocational education plays a role in bringing awareness back to the importance of local wisdom to strengthen local identity and identity. Educational instruments do not exist in a vacuum, but there are social, cultural, and historical emotional ties that should connect educational institutions with local cultural strengths.

3.2. Challenges of Learning Management in Vocational Schools Post Covid 19

SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Palembang faces three crucial issues as vocational education challenges, especially when it is in the transition phase after Covid-19 took place. In this case, the culinary department reviews and reconsiders the challenges in learning management and opportunities for curriculum development in the future.

3.2.1. Adaptive learning organizational change

Project-based online learning is one of the solutions carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic (Leksono Edy, Widiyanti, & Basuki, 2020). The support of flexible use of technology has stimulated the development of more dynamic learning. The change in the face-to-face learning system towards online which is almost completely dependent on the skills to process learning through technology which in reality is not easy for teachers to do (Azhari & Fajri, 2021). At the beginning of this transition, some of the teachers were not used to it, because there was still a lack of ability in the use of learning technology. Especially for example in catering materials that require a combination of learning between knowledge, practice, and projects which must then be fully transferred using online learning mechanisms. This condition actually occurs in almost every school, however, one thing that can actually be highlighted is the "adaptive" ability of learning organizations. One of the characteristics of adaptive is that it tends to be responsive to current conditions and possibilities that will occur. Goss (2017) assessed that an adaptive learning pattern would balance local decision-making with top-down guidance and the allocation of existing resources. This means learning by doing, with an explicit focus on inputs (what is done), outcomes (what is measured), and a learning process that provides feedback. Next, doing it right will require changes in all systems of a learning organization, including governance capabilities that are responsive to surrounding cultural values, opportunities for industry partner support, and teaching reform.

3.2.2. Uncertainty in changing social, economic and cultural situations

Various predictions about the future of education since the Covid-19 outbreak are difficult to determine (Afrouz, 2021). This is because the uncertainty of the situation and conditions is not only in the world of education, but also affects socio-political (Apostolakis, Floros, Gkillas, & Wohar, 2021) and the global economy (Al-Thaqeb, Algharabali, & Alabdulghafour, 2020). The experience of the impact of Covid-19 on the education crisis, (Khan & Ahmed, 2021) (Edeh Michael et al., 2020) is an unprecedented phenomenon. Therefore, it is important for vocational schools to provide a place of uncertainty in curriculum development and a multidisciplinary approach to education. Efforts to articulate the learning process in situations of uncertainty require joint integration that cannot be done alone. The various adaptive capacities of schools and external support need to be collaborated in developing knowledge to face the next uncertainty after Covid-19. Currently, the learning conditions at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Palembang have improved again, since schools have started to reopen and students have started doing practicums even with looser restrictions. Changes in the rules of learning in schools are carried out in varying durations of time, following various government policies that allow restrictions on community activities. Schools are starting to need to get used to adapting patterns of policy changes that are translated into their education system so they don't always have to wait. Interestingly, even though Covid-19 has had an impact on educational restrictions, some students of the culinary arts vocational school at this school actually have the opportunity to become entrepreneurs during the Covid-19 period. 14 of the 22 students in the culinary arts vocational class managed to practice entrepreneurship by selling various types of food and traditional dishes sold online. If it wasn't for the compelling circumstances, perhaps the standard of student entrepreneurship would still be based on the old and simple pattern.

In general, basic knowledge of entrepreneurship has been traditionally taught in vocational schools, furthermore, teaching entrepreneurship is now more likely to require a new and non-traditional approach to online education (Liguori & Winkler, 2020). This does not mean that online education completely replaces traditional methods, but requires readiness and new mechanisms for the learning process with changing situations that are uncertain. This mechanism is actually part of how to support continuing education, and students can still develop entrepreneurial character from the lessons they receive both offline and online.

3.2.3. Reinforcement of local wisdom through school entrepreneurship programs

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One of the flagship programs in maintaining local wisdom at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Palembang is through the entrepreneurship program. It was mentioned earlier, that during the Covid-19 period, some students became aware of seeing entrepreneurial opportunities. Basically, this cannot be separated from the entrepreneurship program that has been carried out to date. As a flagship program in schools, there are two aspects that are emphasized in this program, namely: 1) Partnership with Local MSMEs, 2) digitizing student entrepreneurship products. The operation of the child entrepreneurship system will always be associated with partnerships. As part of learning, the presence of partners is very important both in knowledge development and in the practice of student project tasks in learning. So schools need to ensure that partnerships must be maintained, developed, and realize the goals set by the school (Trim, 2003). So far, entrepreneurship at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 has made many partnerships with various local industries such as typical Palembang cuisine entrepreneurs, packaging industries, and expedition service partners. This partnership program provides an important experience for students to see the potential of local wisdom being converted into entrepreneurship. Partnerships at the local level always prioritize elements of locality with cultural peculiarities, so that the development of a curriculum that is open to the partnership system should get a decent portion going forward.

Entrepreneurship programs also should not be left behind with the development of digital innovation. Although currently at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Palembang it is still relatively simple in determining an innovative platform for entrepreneurship, but this digitalization ecosystem has initiated the encouragement of students to choose various non-traditional media alternatives. The importance of innovation in entrepreneurship (Hsieh & Wu, 2019), allows digitalization opportunities to become a must. During social restrictions during Covid-19, in fact micro-entrepreneurs using digital platforms have become very popular. There is a tendency for MSME actors in the food sector to find it easy and increase their turnover through assistance such as food delivery service applications (Mubarok, Indriasari, Jumarni, & Satriawan, 2022), or other developer applications that make it easier to find culinary places in the city of Palembang (Sanjaya, Kurniawan, & Saputra, 2020). Not a few business trends that exist on social media are adopted by students to be applied to their businesses. The emergence of entrepreneurial desires and opportunities is a positive side of being adaptive to various conditions.

Table 1.1. Vocational School Learning Management Challenges after Covid-19

Aspect Crucial	Challenge	Learning Management Overview
Learning Organization Change	Switching learning models with online, blended mechanisms	Planning an “adaptive” learning organization restructuring to various transitions
Uncertainty of situations and conditions	Changes in the situation are fast and difficult to predict, such as the direct impact of Covid-19 on all levels of education	Ensuring the quality review process of learning continues well
Strengthening Local Wisdoml	The Importance of Awareness of Local Wisdom, a supporting instrument through digital innovationl	Emphasizing the implementation of integrated learning with local wisdom, through entrepreneurship programs

Currently, the post-demite learning conditions have improved significantly, although some difficulties still occur. This condition has led to increased expectations for teachers, students, parents and schools (Dorn, Hancock, Sarakatsannis, & Viruleg, 2020). At the same time, the opportunity to develop a vocational school curriculum that looks at local culture should not be ignored. Although gradually, the

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offer of developing a vocational school curriculum that emphasizes post-pandemic culture and local wisdom can consider three crucial aspects in table 1.1. This limited study also wants to open up new alternatives related to vocational schools, local wisdom and entrepreneurship after Covid-19. Especially proposing a curriculum that is more responsive to all situations without compromising the objectives of vocational education that shape the independent character of students.

4. CONCLUSION

Post-Covid-19 vocational education seems to have experienced a significant stretch, especially in responding to local culture in learning activities. Regarding this, the picture at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Palembang shows that the challenge of local culture-based vocational education today is no longer in the technical instrumental aspect, but the extent to which the ability to be adaptive and at the same time respond to the uncertainty of the situation. This capability places an emphasis on opening up opportunities for the development of a responsive and flexible educational curriculum. At the same time, this brief description may show a bidding process on a newer concept of integrated local cultural values in post-Covid-19 vocational schools.

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