

Implementation of Vocational Life Skills Program to Strengthen Skills Education


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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Submission February 20, 2025 Revised February 28, 2025 Accepted April 4, 2025 Published April 21, 2025</p> <p>Keywords: <i>Vocational life skills</i> <i>Skills education</i> <i>Islamic School</i></p> 	<p>The Vocational Life Skills Program is an educational breakthrough designed to equip students with applied skills, respond to globalization, and strengthen skill-based education in the madrasah environment. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the vocational life skills program to enhance skills education at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas. The researcher used a descriptive qualitative method with a case study design. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and then analyzed interactively through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the Life Skills Program is intrakurricular and dialectical, allowing students to choose majors based on their interests. Learning comprises 70% practical experience through industrial visits, a 160-hour internship, and 30% theory. It involves eight majors emphasizing Islamic values, independence, and job readiness. This program develops technical and soft skills, fosters professional ethics, teamwork, and communication, preparing graduates to be highly competitive and accomplished. Challenges include a complex curriculum, limited time, inadequate facilities, and teacher competency. Solutions involve project-based learning, industry collaboration, digital simulations, and continuous teacher training to keep the program relevant and practical. Conclusion: Strengthening the vocational life skills program is a strategic effort to equip students with practical skills, develop holistic character, and respond effectively to the challenges of 21st-century life.</p>



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A. INTRODUCTION

Vocational life skills schools are crucial in producing work-ready graduates by aligning their curricula with industry demands and equipping students with relevant skills (Ismayati, 2018). These institutions focus on two main components: technical and soft skills. Technical

Training includes industry-specific fields such as mechatronics, robotics, and healthcare, emphasizing hands-on learning in real-world contexts (Thianthai & Sutamechai, 2022; Malaikosa et al., 2020). Soft skills like communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, and interpersonal abilities are developed through collaborative and project-based learning (Nubsan et al., 2025; Dogara et al., 2019; Jaedun et al., 2024). However, a persistent challenge is the gap in soft skills development within current vocational programs (Marliyah et al., 2018).

The era of globalization, marked by free trade, compels individuals to master practical and life skills to compete in a dynamic workforce that demands high readiness (Nurdiana, 2023; Agustian et al., 2024; Mahmud & Hanif, 2023). Vocational life skills are crucial as they help individuals develop motor and social abilities aligned with specific professions to effectively face future challenges (Dumiyati, 2022; Pahrijal et al., 2023). Vocational life skills are part of education, focusing on practical and professional work skills, including basic, advanced, personal, social, and academic skills (Amini et al., 2023).

The primary focus of this education is to develop students' potential with noble character and dignity through active, creative, and technical skill education while shaping intelligent and responsible digital citizens (Kusrini & Hanif, 2024; Nasihudin & Hariyadin, 2021; Muh. Hanif & Salsabillah, 2024). Skill education integrated with entrepreneurship fosters independent and innovative business abilities, creating a self-reliant generation contributing to economic and social development across vocational, functional, professional, and entrepreneurial categories (Kusrini et al., 2024; Taylor, 2020; Puspito et al., 2021; Nabilla et al., 2021; Dewi et al., 2025).

The skill mismatch between graduates' competencies and industry needs is a major challenge in today's labor market. Therefore, integrating vocational life skills in madrasahs is vital to prepare students for the real workforce and enhance competitiveness and economic independence (Hanif, Ukar, et al., 2024; Hanif, Asdlori, et al., 2024; Meldianto, 2023). Madrasahs, as integrated educational institutions, combine general and religious education, emphasizing Islamic character and morals while remaining relevant and responsive to changing times (Yahya, 2016; Mukminin, 2025; Zaid, 2024).

State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas, designated as MA Plus Keterampilan by SK Dirjen Pendis Number 2851 of 2020, runs vocational skill programs in fashion design, computer and network engineering, accounting, interior design, culinary arts, electrical installation engineering, and HVAC systems. State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas has excellent potential to be a model for developing vocational life skills programs based on madrasahs. The program's strengths include skill variety, government regulatory support, and industry involvement. Its success also depends on management, strategic partnerships, and active student participation, requiring well-planned implementation strategies to strengthen skill education and share best practices.

Research by Nailis Syafi'ah (2024) found that the vocational life skills program at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas significantly improves students' readiness to enter the workforce after graduation, positively impacting graduate competencies (Syafi'ah, 2024). Silvia Novi Amalia's (2024) research highlights that the success of vocational skill programs heavily depends on structured and effective curriculum management to ensure program goals are achieved (Amalia, 2024). Lastly, research by Achfan Aziz Zulfandika and Saiddaeni (2023) at State Islamic Senior High School 1 Sragen showed that integrating life skills learning into the intramural curriculum is effective but requires exceptional funding support for optimal curriculum

development and program implementation (Zulfandika & Saiddaeni, 2023).

Comprehensive research on implementing vocational life skills activities at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas is essential to analyze program execution in strengthening skill education. This study aims to develop more adaptive, responsive, and prepared programs to face future challenges. The vocational program significantly improves education quality at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas due to its design tailored to students' potential and characteristics, balanced theory and practice implementation, and the way challenges encourage innovation and collaboration among stakeholders. The research results are expected to provide insights into the program's effectiveness and impact on student skills.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of implementing the vocational life skills program at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas. Through this approach, the researcher seeks to directly and holistically explore the reality in the field from the perspectives of educators, students, and supporting documents to produce accurate and meaningful findings. The data collection techniques used in this study are described in the table below:

Table 1. Data Collection Techniques

Focus of Study	Data Collection Techniques	Explanation of Technique Use
Profile of the Vocational Life Skills Program	- Semi-Structured Interviews - Documentation	Interviews were conducted with the school principal and skills teachers to gather in-depth information regarding the program's background, objectives, and structure. Documents such as the official decree for the Skills MA Plus, curriculum, and learning modules were used to support and clarify the information obtained from the interviews.
Program Implementation at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas	- Non-Participatory Observation - Interviews - Documentation	Observation was used to objectively monitor the learning process and teacher-student interactions without researcher involvement. Interviews were conducted with teachers and students to explore the dynamics of program implementation. Documentation such as photos, activity videos, and learning modules was used to complement the observation and interview data.
Challenges and Solutions in Program Implementation	- Semi-Structured Interviews - Documentation	Interviews were used to explore teachers' and students' perceptions of encountered obstacles and the solutions applied. The researcher developed follow-up questions to gain a comprehensive understanding. Documentation such as evaluation notes, meeting minutes, and issue reports supported the interview data.
Impact of the Program on Skills Education Reinforcement	- Semi-Structured Interviews - Documentation	Interviews with students, alumni, and teachers were conducted to explore their views and experiences regarding the program's impact. Documentation such as graduation data, continuing education, participation in industrial visits, and alumni tracking was used to demonstrate the program's real impact on students' skills development.

Based on the data analysis stages, the process began with data reduction, which involved summarizing and sorting data according to the focus of the study. For the program profile focus, information from interviews and documents was summarized to highlight the background and structure of the program. Next, the filtered information was organized into narratives and thematic tables to facilitate pattern identification in the data presentation stage. Finally, in the conclusion drawing stage, the researcher concluded the implementation, challenges, solutions, and impacts of the skills program on enhancing student competencies in a comprehensive and field-based manner.

This study employed the techniques of triangulation, source triangulation, and confirmability to enhance data validity. Technique triangulation was conducted by combining interviews, observations, and documentation in each focus area, such as program implementation and its impact on students' skills. To obtain an objective picture, source triangulation was applied by comparing information from various parties, such as teachers, students, and the school principal. Meanwhile, confirmability was maintained by storing original documents, interview transcripts, and visual documentation so that findings could be verified and not influenced by researcher subjectivity.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

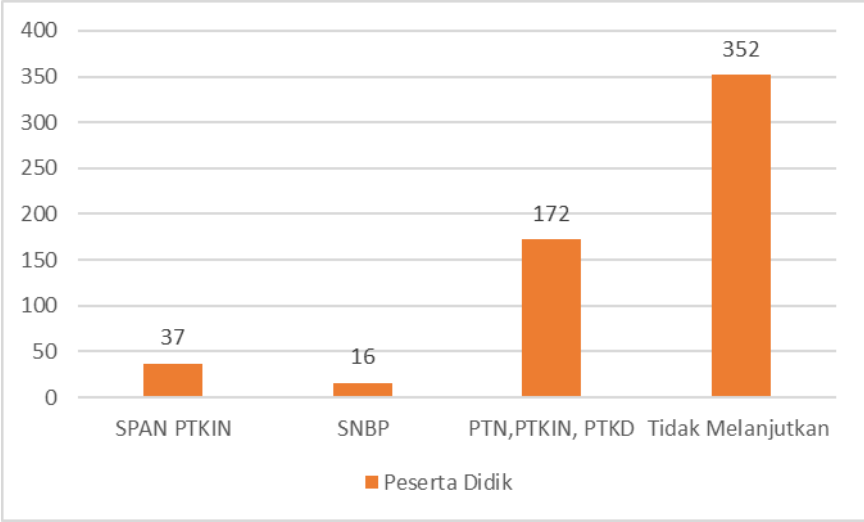
1. Description of Vocational Life Skills Program at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas

The Vocational Life Skills Program at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas began as an extracurricular activity in the 1998/1999 academic year. Initially, the skills offered included furniture making, woodcraft, and fashion design. In the following academic year, 1999/2000, refrigerator and air conditioning maintenance training was added. Between the 2000 and 2003 academic years, the school introduced computer operator training. By the 2003/2004 academic year, this program transitioned into an intracurricular subject, indicating its growing importance in the school's curriculum. From 2004/2005 to 2017/2018, four more skill areas were incorporated into the program: electrical installation, accounting, computer technology, architectural design, and culinary arts. The school's role as a center for vocational education was officially recognized through the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Number 4924 of 2016, which designated State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas as one of the Madrasah Aliyah Plus Skills in Central Java Province. Later, during the 2018 Vocational Subject Teachers' Working Group forum in Bukittinggi, it was agreed to update the naming of the vocational majors based on the Director General's Decree Number 28/5 of 2020.

The role of the madrasah head as an edupreneur is seen as essential in this program. The head is expected to open up new opportunities, build collaborative partnerships with the industrial sector, and manage the school's potential in innovative ways. These efforts aim to produce graduates who are ready to enter the workforce and adaptable to the changing demands of the modern era (Azzahra, A.T., & Hanif, M., 2024). Currently, the vocational program encompasses eight areas of specialization: fashion design, refrigeration and air conditioning systems, electrical installation, computer networking and technology, interior design and furniture production, financial management and institutional accounting, culinary arts, and skin and hair beauty care. This program is dialectically designed, enabling students to select a major that matches their interests and results from the school's entrance selection process. New State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas students may choose between the vocational, academic, or excellence tracks. The vocational program is capped at 200 students across eight majors, each primary accommodating 25 students due to equipment limitations.

The learning structure comprises 30% theoretical instruction and 70% practical training, which includes industry visits and Field Work Practice (FWP). Data from the 2023/2024 academic year reflect the number of students who continue to higher education and those who

enter the workforce directly. The program is seen as an effort toward the de-Westernization of education, not merely copying Western models of vocational education, but embedding Islamic epistemology and practice. Islamic values such as amanah (trustworthiness), ihsan (excellence), and tawakal (reliance on God) are internalized throughout the skills training process. This turns the program into a tool for vocational education and a means of shaping students with Islamic character who are ready to embrace the challenges of the Society 5.0 era. Thus, the madrasah serves not only to produce skilled workers but also to raise individuals who are khalifah fil ardh (vicegerents on Earth) (Hanif & Fian, 2023; Hanif & Prasetianingtiyas, 2023). Implementing vocational life skills is a holistic effort to enhance student competencies (Amalia, 2024; Muzayanah, 2021; Rokhmat 2024).



Information: (1) SPAN PTKIN: National Academic Achievement Selection for State Islamic Higher Education Institutions. (2) SNBP: National Selection Based on Achievement (3) PTN: State University. (4) PTKIN: State Islamic Higher Education Institution. (5) PTKD: State Official (Government) College / Institute. (6) Tidak Melanjutkan: Did not continue to higher education. (7) Peserta Didik: Student

Figure 1 Guidance and Counseling Teacher Document

Based on Figure 1, 352 students (61%) of *State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas* did not continue higher education, while 255 students (39%) pursued further studies. This highlights the crucial role of the vocational life skills program, which is designed to equip students with practical knowledge and skills that meet the demands of the workforce. The program aims to improve graduates' competencies, foster a strong work ethic, a passion for learning, a productive character, and an entrepreneurial mindset, particularly for students who do not pursue higher education, so they are well-prepared to compete in the job market. In addition, each major within the vocational life skills program has specific learning objectives tailored to the characteristics and demands of each field of expertise, as detailed in the following table:

Table 1. Types of skills programs and their objectives

No	Skills Program	Objectives
1	The Fashion Design	aims to hone students' abilities in designing and making clothes that follow current fashion trends
2	The Culinary Design	Focuses on developing technical skills in the culinary field and professional food management
3	The Skin and Hair Beauty	directed so that students have competence in the fields of skin aesthetics

		and hair styling
4	The Institutional Financial Accounting	Focuses on the ability to prepare institutional financial reports in a structured and accurate manner
5	The Computer and Networking Engineering	designed to equip students with expertise in operating hardware and managing computer network systems
6	The Electrical Power Installation Engineering	aims to enable students to design and install electrical systems independently and efficiently
7	The Interior Design and Furniture Product	Focuses on fostering students' abilities in creating interior designs and furniture that have economic value as business capital
8	The Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineering	designed so students can master the professional assembly and installation techniques of air conditioning systems.

2. Implementation of Vocational Life Skills Program at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas

Skills learning at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas implements a moving class system, allowing students to transition from theory-based classrooms to practical workshops based on their vocational majors. This approach enhances students' hands-on experience and aligns with national vocational curriculum standards to support effective skill development (Husna et al., 2024). The vocational skills program combines theory and practice, emphasizing practical learning. It runs 6 hours weekly, 4 hours for practice, and 2 hours for theory or reflection. Challenges include delays as students move from distant classrooms and limited practice tools, requiring group work of 2-4 students. Despite these obstacles, the program continues to function, with each field of expertise implementing the vocational life skills curriculum. Here are some of the vocational programs available at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas:

a. Fashion Design Department

The fashion design program is chosen by 71 students from grades X, XI, and XII and is supported by two vocational teachers. The instructional materials are tailored to the developmental level of students at each grade, beginning with the introduction of sewing tools, knowledge of textile materials, pattern making, garment decoration techniques, and clothing production for children, women, and men. Students are also equipped with entrepreneurial skills that can be applied after graduation. The development of independence and creativity is fostered through various practical activities. This is evident in the final practical examination for grade XII students, where they create garments based on their interests to be showcased in a fashion show. The learning facilities and infrastructure are considered adequate. They are provided by the school, except in cases where students wish to create garments according to their personal preferences, in which case they supply their materials.

b. Culinary Arts Department

71 individuals are enrolled in the culinary arts department, guided by a vocational teacher. The competencies developed in this program include the management of food ingredients, preparation of cakes and bread, dish presentation, garnish creation, and the production of food items aligned with current culinary trends. Evaluation of students' cooking products is conducted by vocational instructors and by teachers from other subject areas. Students independently prepare dishes based on their preferences during the final practical examination in grade XII. The school generally determines the location

for the industrial work practice for grade XII students to facilitate effective supervision by the teaching staff.

c. Department of Skin and Hair Beauty

The program attracts 68 students and is supervised by a vocational teacher. The curriculum covers hygiene and sanitation in beauty care, basic beauty treatments, hair cutting, coloring, curling, traditional and creative bun styling, hand and foot care, traditional and creative makeup, and facial and body treatments. For the industrial work practice, students are given the autonomy to select a beauty salon where they will complete their practical training.

d. Financial Institution Accounting Department

A total of 71 students enrolled in this department, supervised by a vocational teacher. The curriculum includes compiling the accounting cycle for service and trading companies using Microsoft Excel and MYOB application programs, advanced accounting, and designing new accounting systems for service and trading businesses utilizing these software tools. Grade XII students complete their industrial work practice at locations designated by the school.

e. Computer Network Engineering Department

Curriculum data indicates that 116 students from grades X, XI, and XII participated in this program, which two vocational teachers supervise. The instructional materials include introducing basic computer concepts, assembling personal computers, implementing occupational safety, health, and environmental standards, software installation, and designing, building, and analyzing Wide Area Networks. A grade XII student expressed interest in the program due to its relevance in the digital era and a desire to pursue higher education in information technology.

f. Electrical Power Installation Engineering Department

The expertise program is attended by 58 students and is supervised by a vocational teacher. The curriculum includes basic electricity for grade X, lighting installation for grade XI, and electronic circuit control for grade XII. One of the challenges faced is limited equipment, which necessitates a group-based learning approach. Industrial visits for grade XI students are typically conducted at factories designated by the school. For internships in grade XII, students receive information from the vocational teacher regarding available internship locations and select sites based on proximity to their homes.

g. Department of Interior Design and Furniture Products

The program attracts 86 students and is supervised by a vocational teacher. Practical skills are conducted in a workshop or skills room equipped with computers for house design. The curriculum includes supporting software applications for design and construction, projection techniques, building materials science, building construction, two-dimensional house drawing, calculation of budget plans, schedule analysis, S-curve and network planning, and entrepreneurship. This program is designed to equip students with the necessary skills for pursuing a career in architecture, whether continuing their education at the university level or working in the property sector.

h. Department of Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineering

The program is attended by 51 students and supervised by a vocational teacher. The skills taught include basic electronics, electro aircraft fabrication, electronic circuits, refrigerator and air conditioning techniques, occupational safety and health, and business management. Practical learning takes place in workshops or skills rooms equipped with modern equipment. Additionally, students participate in industrial visits and internships to gain hands-on experience directly from industry settings. Industrial visits are implemented for grade XI students. This activity is an important part of the implementation of vocational programs, because it functions as a link between theoretical learning in schools and its application in the real world of work (Suud et al., 2024). Through industrial visits, students gain direct insight into industrial operations and skills that are relevant to job market needs (Sembiring et al., 2024). Field or industrial internships are carried out for grade XII students, with practice locations adjusted to each student's skill field. This activity is carried out as a strategic effort to optimize the use of existing resources, both in the school environment and in the business and manufacturing ecosystem (Nurdiana et al., 2024).

Industrial Visit and Field Work Practice activities have been implemented since the 2003/2024 academic year by the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Guidance Number E/248.A/1997, which mandates that Industrial Visit and Field Work Practice be conducted during the third-year holiday period. Grade XII students complete 160 hours (approximately three weeks) of Industrial Visit and Field Work Practice without reducing their regular program hours. According to documentation from the school website, the main objectives of industrial visits for grade XI students include improving the quality and relevance of vocational education, preparing graduates with competencies and work readiness aligned to professional demands, providing direct observation opportunities of relevant work activities, motivating students through experiential learning, and fostering not only technical skills but also positive attitudes, discipline, and good work habits.

State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas conducts industrial visits to several prominent companies located outside the Banyumas area, including PT Victoria Care Indonesia, Hotel IBIS, PT Marimas Putra Kencana, Batik Gimawang, PT Karyadeka Alam Lestari, the Stock Exchange, and PT Kereta Api Indonesia. At the same time, Field Work Practice activities are primarily carried out within the Banyumas region. According to an interview with a vocational teacher, the Field Work Practice implementation assessment focuses on key aspects such as teamwork, work performance, initiative, perseverance, attitude, and student responsibility. It is conducted directly by the agencies or institutions hosting the students. To support the smooth execution of these programs, State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas has established official partnerships through memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with various institutions and companies, ensuring the effective development of student competencies in vocational life skills.

The skills learning process at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas emphasizes a student-centered approach, where students actively engage in every learning activity while teachers serve as facilitators. Focusing the learning process on students fosters their active participation in developing knowledge, attitudes, and skills (Sandria et al., 2022). Additionally, this method enhances students' self-confidence and ensures equal learning opportunities and access for all (Nirwana et al., 2024).

Implementing the vocational life skills program at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas follows a complementary pattern, wherein the skills program is not integrated into specific subjects but is added to the existing curriculum structure and educational programs. This is realized by incorporating life skills subjects into the school curriculum or through a dedicated life skills program integrated into the academic calendar.

3. The Influence of Vocational Life Skills Programs on Strengthening Vocational Education at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas

Vocational programs have rapidly developed to enhance skill quality across various educational levels, particularly in secondary education. Their primary objective is to equip students with relevant technical skills and strong character traits, preparing them to enter the workforce confidently. Implementing vocational programs has significantly strengthened skills education by improving technical competencies and soft skills. One notable positive impact is enhancing students' expertise in specific fields. For instance, graduates from the fashion design vocational program at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas have successfully become garment entrepreneurs. Additionally, students participating in this program have demonstrated the ability to create clothing based on current fashion trends and showcase their work in fashion shows. Beyond fashion design, vocational students have also achieved notable successes, as evidenced by documented accomplishments in Robotics competitions.

Vocational education is crucial in producing graduates with strong professional work ethics by teaching teamwork, practical problem-solving, and effective communication. This approach not only strengthens students' character and mental readiness to face real-world work challenges but also equips them with qualified technical skills that facilitate adaptation to industry demands and contribute to sector development (Sari, 2024). Additionally, vocational education fosters essential non-technical (soft) skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and self-awareness, which are vital for students to compete and succeed in an increasingly competitive workforce, as supported by research findings from Wardoyo et al. (2024).

4. Challenges and Solutions for Implementing the Vocational Life Skills Program at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas

The implementation of the vocational life skills program carried out at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas is not free from the challenges faced, including:

a. Complex curriculum planning

Designing a curriculum that can bridge industry needs with students' capacity is a real challenge faced by the State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas. Educators at this madrasah are required not only to master vocational materials that are in line with the dynamics of professional work needs but also to have the ability to develop learning strategies based on real studies adjusted to the level of student learning capacity. A comprehensive understanding of the curriculum structure, learning outcomes, and the combination of technical and life skills is needed to produce quality teaching modules.

A strategic step that can be implemented is to form a professional community of vocational teachers, such as the Subject Teachers' Working Group, whose primary focus is to design project-based teaching modules that align with the needs of the industrial

world. In addition, building strong collaboration with the business and industrial sectors will broaden the insights of educators regarding the competencies needed in the field, so that the learning materials prepared become more applicable and relevant. Furthermore, applying the "link and match" concept between madrasahs and the industrial sector is vital. The goal is to overcome the mismatch between vocational learning and the real demands of the world of work. Collaboration between educational institutions and industry is essential so that the curriculum truly reflects the labor market's needs. Thus, graduates are expected to have the appropriate competencies and be ready to immediately enter the world of work professionally (Angriani et al., 2025).

b. Lack of learning time

One of the main challenges in implementing the vocational skills program at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas is the limited instructional time available, which often restricts students' opportunities for sufficient and in-depth practice. The need to divide available hours between vocational subjects and general education limits the chances for consistent, intensive skill development. This issue was highlighted by a vocational teacher who noted that reduced weekly learning hours from eight hours under the 2013 curriculum to six hours in the current independence curriculum require teachers to be more efficient and effective. To address this challenge, a project-based learning approach outside formal class hours can be employed, allowing students to engage in practical, real-world tasks independently or collaboratively. This strategy enhances technical skills and fosters essential non-technical skills such as collaboration, effective communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

c. Limited facilities and infrastructure

Facilities and infrastructure can be a medium to support the learning process that can help the success of teaching and learning activities in schools. (Muslikhudin & Hanif, M.,2024). One of the significant challenges in implementing vocational skills programs at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas is the insufficient availability of adequate practice tools and facilities. Existing equipment is often outdated and does not meet current industry standards, while the quantity of tools is inadequate for simultaneous use by all students during practice sessions. This shortage directly impacts the quality of skills learning, as students must share equipment, limiting their ability to explore and refine their technical abilities independently. Consequently, the learning process becomes inefficient and suboptimal, with extended practice times constrained by limited overall instructional hours. This issue was highlighted by a vocational teacher who noted that the lack of sufficient tools leads to inefficiencies, as students borrow equipment from each other and requests for additional resources are sometimes unfulfilled. This situation is also supported by the results of a study which revealed that a significant factor that contributed to the low competence of vocational education graduates was the lack of proper practice facilities and still did not meet the criteria required by the job market (Andhika & Hamdi, 2024). As a solution, schools can establish strategic cooperation with industry through tool lending schemes, on-the-job training (internships), or collaborative teaching factory programs. In addition, the development of blended learning programs based on digital simulations can also be an alternative to overcome the physical limitations of practice tools. Thus, even though the available tools are limited, students

can still gain realistic and contextual practical experience.

d. Improving teacher competency through industrial training

Ideally, vocational education teachers should master industry-standard skills to equip students with relevant expertise. However, many teachers lack direct industrial experience, resulting in learning materials that often do not align with current workforce demands, despite ongoing efforts to improve teacher skills through training programs. Inequality in teacher readiness impacts the low preparedness of graduates to enter the rapidly evolving professional world. Although some vocational life skills teachers have obtained professional certifications, these alone are insufficient to ensure alignment with industry needs without continuous training and practical experience. Certification recognizes basic competencies, but the greater challenge lies in maintaining the relevance of these skills in response to technological advancements and industry dynamics. Therefore, periodic training involving direct collaboration with the industrial sector, such as workplace internships for teachers, technical training with professionals, and updates to practical equipment, is essential. Such initiatives enhance teacher capacity and strengthen institutional partnerships between educational institutions and the business and industrial sectors, facilitating the development of curricula that are contextual and responsive to field demands. These partnerships help create a learning ecosystem aligned with workplace realities, ensuring graduates are professionally competitive. Ongoing training and professional development significantly influence teacher motivation and job satisfaction, highlighting that certification alone is insufficient; practical experience and industry understanding are critical for effective vocational education (Pramesti et al., 2023; Prawira & Nugraha, 2021; Dewi & Hanif, 2024).

D. CONCLUSION

State Islamic Senior High School 2 Banyumas has developed its Vocational Life Skills Program into eight departments, including fashion design, culinary arts, computer engineering, and electrical installation. Since becoming part of the intramural curriculum, the program has adopted a dialectical approach, allowing students to choose their major based on interests and selection results. Learning emphasizes practice through workshops, industry visits, and fieldwork. The moving class system optimally supports the transition between theory and practice. Beyond technical skills, the program instills Islamic values to shape strong character and readiness to face modern challenges. The program faces several challenges, such as complex curriculum planning, limited instructional time, inadequate facilities, and gaps in teacher competency. Solutions include the development of project-based learning outside regular hours, strategic partnerships with industry, and teacher training or internships in professional sectors. Collaboration with industry partners strengthens contextual learning aligned with workforce demands. As a result, graduates have shown improvement in both technical and soft skills such as work ethic, communication, and teamwork. Some students have successfully become entrepreneurs and achieved recognition in technology-related fields. This program prepares students for the job market and nurtures independent, skilled, and productive individuals who can contribute positively to society. It equips students with practical skills and Islamic character for real-world readiness.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

- Author 1 : Designing and developing the research framework and methodology, and collecting data through interviews, observations, and field studies at the research site.
- Author 2 : Analyzing the collected data using qualitative and quantitative techniques, and preparing the research report while presenting the findings systematically and comprehensively.

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