

# The Management of Work Practice to Improve the Competitiveness of Graduates in the Business and Working World Industries at SMKN 1 Gerung West Lombok, Indonesia

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**Abstract.** This research aims to understand the planning and organisation of work placement practices to enhance the competitiveness of graduates in the Business and Working World Industries (IDUKA) at SMKN 1 Gerung West Lombok. The approach used in this research is qualitative. The qualitative approach is employed as the study aims to obtain knowledge about the phenomena that occur and is conducted by involving various methods available. The sources of research data are primary data and secondary data. Primary data sources include the school principal, vice principals of curriculum, vice principals of public relations, program heads, internship supervisors, and IDUKA. Secondary data sources consist of documents owned by the school being studied. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation, while data analysis techniques involve four stages: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion/verification. The research findings in the planning phase are as follows: 1) Curriculum alignment; 2) Human resource planning, including establishing PKL committees, appointment of PKL supervisors, and notification to parents of students; 3) Mapping of IDUKA; 4) Preparation and implementation schedule for PKL; 5) Financing. The Organisational stage is carried out by forming PKL committees. In conclusion, the planning and organisation of work placement practices at SMKN 1 Gerung West Lombok have enhanced graduates' competitiveness in the Business and Working World Industries (IDUKA).

**Keywords:** Management; Work Placement Practices; Competitiveness.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the orientations of national education development policy in the strategic plan of the Ministry of National Education is to align education with the demands of the business and industrial world. In this context, educational achievements are expected to meet the needs of Industry and the Business World (IDUKA). These IDUKA needs involve several parameters that need to be well-adjusted, including the quantity and competence of graduates. Therefore, the Ministry of National Education needs to create and maintain a standard system in education implementation. This is reflected in the development and establishment of the National Education Standards (SNP) based on Government Regulation No 19 of 2005. SNP serves as a guideline for improving the quality

and relevance of education, elaborated in eight standards.

Law No 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, article 15 emphasises that vocational education is a form of secondary education that prepares learners, especially for careers in specific fields. This vocational secondary education refers to Vocational High Schools (SMK). SMK is a form of formal education designed to produce students or graduates at the secondary education level. The focus of this education is to provide knowledge and skills to students so that they are ready to work according to the job market's needs.

Authors [1] stated that employees need competencies to achieve a successful career in the business and industrial world, where 80% are soft

skills and 20% are hard skills. Faced with these demands, education has a responsibility to produce graduates who have eight core competencies, namely: 1) communication skills; 2) critical and creative thinking; 3) investigative/deductive skills; 4) interpersonal skills; 5) multicultural/multilingual literacy; 6) problem-solving skills; 7) information/digital literacy; and (8) technology skills [2].

Based on the eight competencies mentioned above, the visible reality is that secondary education graduates in Indonesia can only produce 10% soft skills and 90% hard skills, which is in line with [1]. Considering this objective, it is clear that Vocational High Schools (SMK) are responsible for preparing graduates who meet the standards to enter the workforce. Graduates needed by the workforce are individuals with competencies relevant to their desired field of expertise and high adaptability and competitiveness. Therefore, the role of SMK is crucial in developing both aspects of these skills, especially soft skills, so their graduates can succeed and contribute in a dynamic job market.

We often face several challenges when preparing Vocational High School students as middle-level workers. One of the issues that arises is the competency gap between SMK graduates and the actual needs of the industry and the job market (IDUKA). This finding indicates that SMK graduates still have weaknesses, especially in soft skills [3].

The results of the 2019 National Labor Force Survey processed by Puslitjak in 2020 show that the three fields of expertise with the highest unemployment rates are Automotive Engineering, Computer and Informatics Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering. The high unemployment rate in these three fields is due to the many graduates, which is not balanced with the industry's needs. This indicates that the relevance between education and job market needs has not been optimally achieved. The low level of significance of education to the needs of the job market also emerges as a significant problem. There is a substantial difference between the outcomes of education and the demands of the job market, which is influenced by job market limitations and the lack of alignment between the competencies possessed by graduates and industry demands [4].

SMKN 1 Gerung is one of the public vocational high schools in West Lombok Regency that focuses on tourism, located on Penas Dasan Geres

Street, Gerung Subdistrict, West Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province, situated in the heart of Gerung town, making it easily accessible to its students, under the leadership of Hj. Erni Zuhara, SMKN 1 Gerung, has made progress in its graduates' achievements and competencies. As a vocational school, it has three objectives: 1) its graduates must be absorbed into the workforce, 2) able to carry out entrepreneurship programs to enhance self-reliance, and 3) capable of continuing their education to a higher level.

Based on initial observations from August 2-10, 2023, it was found that the tracker study results from 2021-2022 showed that out of the target of 100% set by SMKN 1 Gerung, only 22.67% of its graduates were accepted to work in the industry and job market (IDUKA). Meanwhile, 21.46% started their businesses or entrepreneurship, 45.35% went on to higher education, and the remaining 10.53% neither worked nor continued their education out of 247 students. The low absorption rate of graduates in the industry and IDUKA is due to the school's ineffective strategies in building trust from the industry and IDUKA toward the school. Additionally, there are still many challenges, including the lack of industry trust in the competencies of SMK graduates, the low soft skills of students, and the changing industry needs every year. With the strategies implemented by the school still being perceived as inadequate, the school needs to identify and find another more appropriate approach to address this situation.

In addressing the low absorption of graduates from SMK Negeri 1 Gerung West Lombok, the management of the SMK needs to make various efforts to increase the absorption of SMK graduates to 100%. This is intended so that SMK graduates can be absorbed into and compete with graduates from other SMKs and graduates from senior high schools (SMA), whose numbers are increasing and whose quality is improving. This condition is one of the factors causing the mismatch between the knowledge students learn at school and the technological advancements used in the industry. Efforts continue to be made by the school to address this disparity, such as increasing the number of practical equipment, conducting industrial visits, improving the vocational teacher competencies through training and internships in the industry, guest teacher programs, improving the Management of Internship (PKL) implementation, and various other strategic programs.

Internship (PKL) is identified as an effective program in reducing the knowledge gap between schools and industries. This program allows students to learn equipment and vocational competencies not taught in school. PKL aims not only to prepare SMK graduates for employment but also to equip them with entrepreneurial skills. Thus, the improvement of SMK graduate competencies not only emphasises readiness for employment but also for becoming independent workers (entrepreneurs) and creating new job opportunities.

Although SMK Negeri 1 Gerung West Lombok has taken appropriate steps in preparing students for careers in the industry, previous data shows that the absorption of graduates into the sector is still low. Therefore, questions arise regarding the causes of the suboptimal implementation of PKL in enhancing the competitiveness of graduates in the industry. Research on PKL management at SMKN 1 Gerung is expected to provide deeper insights into the constraints and opportunities in improving the quality of PKL and its relevance to industry needs.

## METHOD

This research utilises a qualitative approach. This approach is chosen because it aims to reveal specific social situations by accurately describing reality, formed by words, based on relevant data collection and analysis techniques obtained from natural conditions. By using a qualitative approach, researchers can study, understand, and examine the planning and organisation of internships to enhance the competitiveness of graduates in the Business and Job Market industry at SMKN 1 Gerung West Lombok, thus expecting to uncover facts in the implementation of Internship management to improve the competitiveness of graduates in IDUKA at SMKN 1 Gerung.

This research uses primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained from verbal or word forms and the behaviour of subjects or informants regarding the management of Internships to enhance the competitiveness of graduates in the Business and Job Market industry at SMKN 1 Gerung West Lombok. Meanwhile, secondary data includes documents, photos, and other supporting data. There are six primary data sources: the school principal, curriculum vice principal, public relations vice principal, head of each competency program, teachers who have been Internship supervisors, and IDUKA parties who

have served as student Internship placements. Data analysis is conducted through data collection, reduction, presentation, and verification stages. Triangulation techniques, reference materials, and objectivity are used to check the validity of the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Planning of Internship to Enhance the Competitiveness of Graduates in the Business and Job Market at SMKN 1 Gerung.* According to management functions, planning is the initial step in program implementation. Well-structured planning can lead to achievements in line with set targets. Therefore, the management of internships must be carefully planned to ensure that this program can enhance graduates' competitiveness. Competitiveness in the educational world is not isolated but interconnected, and the improvement of graduates' competitiveness in the industry depends heavily on the quality and relevance of the work experience students gain during internships. Today's Industries require graduates with theoretical and practical skills and a strong understanding of the industry. Therefore, internships must have mature and strategic planning so that students acquire sufficient skills and knowledge to compete in the job market.

The internship planning at SMKN 1 Gerung aligns with the theory proposed by Aderson [5], which states that planning is preparing a set of decisions for future actions. This emphasises that implementing a program requires planning involving specific activities to achieve objectives. The strategies or methods implemented by SMKN 1 Gerung to enhance the competitiveness of its graduates during the planning phase include:

- 1. Curriculum alignment.* Curriculum alignment is intended to ensure that SMK graduates are ready to compete with graduates of SMA, graduates of higher education institutions, and foreign workers. Competitiveness is based on the ability of human resources to compete in national and international competitions. SMK graduates need to be prepared to compete amid increasingly fierce competition. The job market requires certainty that the workforce they recruit possesses employability skills. Curriculum alignment at SMKN 1 Gerung is conducted by analysing Basic Competencies (KD) and mapping topics that align with industry needs and IDUKA.

Curriculum and industry synchronisation embody the Dual System Education (PSG) program, which implements link and match. This aligns with the opinion [6] that Dual System Education (PSG) is implementing the link and match concept, where curriculum design, learning processes, and evaluation implementation are designed and carried out together with schools and industries. Competency sorting through the analysis of Basic Competencies (KD) and learning topics or tasks in the syllabus is done by considering the support capacity of resources owned by both schools and industries based on data on resources owned by each partnering institution to obtain information on which students can learn KD and learning topics/tasks through internship activities in industries.

*2. Human Resource Planning.* In the framework of internship management, human resource management is crucial in implementing the internship program because placing resources according to their competencies will enable them to perform their functions well. An organisation's survival ability is determined by its human resources. Organisations are created, operated, and oriented to achieve human goals. Humans are the most fundamental element in an organisation. In management, the human factor is the most decisive. Competent individuals lead organisations to a sustainable and developing condition.

In mapping human resources at SMKN 1 Gerung, the principal holds internal meetings with the school management team. These meetings are held to determine the resources used during the internship. Research [7] states that if an institution or organisation has clear goals and objectives for all involved in organisational activities, steps are taken to achieve these goals by utilising all resources (human, financial, facilities, natural resources, etc.) optimally, effectively, and efficiently. This statement points out the importance of human resource planning in internship management in implementing the internship program according to the established goals.

Human resource planning at SMKN 1 Gerung in preparing graduates ready to compete in the business and job world (IDUKA) through internship programs includes the formation of PKL committees, appointing PKL supervisors, and informing parents. Firstly, the formation of PKL committees. The PKL committee consists of all school management team members, including the principal as the person responsible, the vice

principal of public relations as the chairperson, Secretary 1 and Secretary 2, and members. Secondly, the appointment of PKL supervisors. The appointment of PKL supervisors is based on the fact that the internship program is one of the media for students to pursue their careers as preparation for their future. Therefore, a supervisor is needed to guide them towards their desired career peak. Thirdly, informing parents of students. The urgency of education is not solely the school's responsibility, but it requires the support and involvement of families and the community.

*3. Mapping the Business and Job World (IDUKA).* IDUKA mapping is identifying and analysing industries relevant to students' expertise. With effective industry mapping, schools can design internship programs that meet the needs of the industry, and schools can determine which IDUKA is suitable or unsuitable as a place for internships. This will ultimately enhance graduates' competitiveness in the job market. To produce professional graduates according to their chosen expertise, SMKN 1 Gerung selects competent IDUKA as student internship sites in the internship program planning stage. Competent IDUKA will provide broader job opportunities for students and involve them in every aspect of their work. Competent industries usually have well-organised work systems. For example, in the hospitality department, hotels chosen as student internship sites must be 3-star hotels or above. By selecting 3-star hotels or above, students will gain broader work experience and have the opportunity to learn from more experienced professionals.

Additionally, choosing 3-star hotels as internship sites is important because the curriculum standards at the school align with those of 3-star hotels or above. The process of IDUKA mapping is in line with Isnu's opinion, stating that mapping the job world is crucial before designing internship programs. This is intended to ensure that student internships genuinely align with the needs of IDUKA.

*4. Scheduling Preparation and Implementation of Internship Programs.* To organise effective and beneficial internships for students according to their goals, SMKN 1 Gerung takes initial steps in internship management planning by scheduling its implementation. Scheduling internship programs involves more than just determining the timing and duration; it also considers other es-

sential aspects. First and foremost, the school must ensure that the internship schedule does not clash with the academic schedule. This aims to help students focus more on the internship program. Additionally, the internship schedule must be integrated with the curriculum. This means that internships must collaborate with the learning materials previously taught to students so that they can apply the knowledge acquired in real-world contexts. There are several reasons why scheduling internships is considered necessary. Firstly, scheduling helps to utilise time efficiently. With a structured schedule, we can determine the appropriate time for conducting internships and their duration, allowing the internship committee to avoid confusion and panic when implementing them. Secondly, internship schedules assist in prioritising tasks. With a schedule, we can identify which tasks are more critical and must be done first. Thirdly, internship schedules help ensure that all functions are carried out correctly. With a schedule, we can track the progress of tasks that have been completed.

**5. Financing.** Financial management is the management of economic functions. Finance is a primary activity that must be undertaken by those responsible in a particular field. The function of financial management is to use funds and obtain funds, meaning that an organisation must be able to use funds according to their intended purposes and acquire funds, whether through school committees or school-developed efforts. This money is likened to a horse and education as the cart to meet the school's funding sources. Education will not progress without the horse pulling it. This means that education will not progress without financing. Thus, financial roles significantly determine the course of an organisation.

Financial management in the implementation of internships at SMKN 1 Gerung is carried out by formulating a Budget Plan (RAB) by each head of the implemented skill program during the planning stage. It is then conveyed to the vice principal in charge of public relations. The vice principal will communicate with the school treasurer regarding the budget for implementing internships. The legal basis for internship financing is the BOS program, one of the central government's programs in developing education, such as facilities, educational costs for financially disadvantaged students, and others. The central government authorises the Ministry of Education and Culture to manage the structural implemen-

tation of the BOS program. The Ministry of Education and Culture assigns school principals in Indonesia to carefully and responsibly manage BOS funds.

*Organising Internship Programs to Enhance Graduates' Competitiveness in the Global Industry and Job Market (IDUKA) at SMKN 1 Gerung.* Organising is the second step after planning to classify and arrange various programs according to the available human resources. In organising, tasks are divided so that the formulated plans can be executed collaboratively. Organising the internship program requires careful planning and cooperation among various parties. Organising internship management is crucial in enhancing graduates' competitiveness in the global industry and job market (IDUKA) because organising bridges the gap between planning and implementation (execution). Planning is merely an activity limited to the framework of activities without precise subjects and authorities. Therefore, good planning without supported organising cannot lead to successful implementation.

In the organising process, each team is assigned tasks and responsibilities according to their respective roles and functions. To produce a quality program, it is essential to develop thorough planning and organise, group, and classify tasks from each human resource involved. Organising internship management to enhance graduates' competitiveness in the global industry and job market (IDUKA) at SMKN 1 Gerung is carried out by forming a working group or internship committee.

The committee's formation involves all school management teams, consisting of the principal as the responsible party vice principals, with the public relations department head serving as the chairperson, along with secretaries 1 and 2 and additional members. The research [8] found that establishing special teams in school management enhances students' competencies. The school principal officially appoints the internship committee to ensure that all human resources responsibilities, functions, and tasks are directed and aligned with the goals set during the planning stage.

The steps taken by the school principal in forming the internship committee indicate a decentralised working pattern. Job distribution is an essential step in management. In the context of internship management, the school principal, as the responsible party for all existing programs,

distributes tasks to each team to ensure that the internship program is directed according to the formulated goals. This research is supported by the theory presented by the Faculty of Education Administration at UI (2009), which states that organising means 1) determining the resources and activities needed to achieve organisational goals, 2) designing and developing work groups consisting of individuals capable of achieving goals, 3) assigning individuals or groups with specific responsibilities and functions, 4) delegating authority to individuals related to the discretion to perform tasks.

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that organising is fundamentally based on careful planning of what needs to be done, who will do it, who will supervise it, and how it will be done. Furthermore, organising also involves arranging authority, tasks, and responsibilities for each individual in the internship program. Organisations aim to ensure that human and physical resources are used appropriately and efficiently to achieve organisational program goals. Good organising can contribute to enhancing graduates' competitiveness. In the organising process, all teams

work according to their respective competencies, thus producing good quality student services.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the research analysed using observation, interviews, and documentation methods, conclusions can be drawn as follows:

1. Internship Planning to Enhance Graduates' Competitiveness in the Global Industry and Job Market (IDUKA) at SMKN 1 Gerung has been implemented well, where this stage involves curriculum alignment, human resource management, including the formation of the internship committee, appointment of supervisors, and parental notification. It is then followed by mapping the Business and Industrial World (IDUKA) and financing.
2. Organising internship programs to enhance graduates' competitiveness in the global industry and job market (IDUKA) at SMKN 1 Gerung is carried out by identifying human resources responsible during the internship implementation by forming the internship committee.

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