THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MASTERY OF HARD SKILL AND JOB READINESS OF GRADE XI STUDENTS AT SMK ISLAM AL-FAJAR KEDAUNG PAMULANG SOUTH TANGGERANG

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to determine the significant relationship between hard skill mastery and job readiness among Grade XI students at SMK Islam Al-Fajar. This research employs a quantitative approach with an associative method, involving a population of 102 Grade XI students and a randomly selected sample of 81 individuals. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. The hypothesis test was conducted using a correlation test. The results of the study indicate that there is a relationship between hard skill mastery and job readiness. The significance value (Sig.) for variable X (hard skill mastery) is 0.000, as is the value for variable Y (job readiness), 0.000, indicating that these two variables are correlated. The nature of the relationship between the two variables is positive with a very strong correlation level, evidenced by a value of 0.754.

Keywords: Hard Skill Mastery, Job Readiness.

INTRODUCTION

In preparing the workforce, individuals are required to adapt to the ever-evolving market demands. Therefore, vocational high school students are expected to have broad and open-minded perspectives to explore and utilize available alternatives, which can also be described as being more creative. The existence of vocational schools is highly anticipated to contribute significantly to preparing skilled mid-level workers. However, in some cases, there are graduates who do not meet the job requirements relevant to their field of study. This occurs due to a discrepancy between the skills graduates possess and the qualifications demanded by the job market.

Vocational schools (SMK) must prioritize higher levels of skill development as these schools are designed to prepare students to be work-ready generations. To support this goal,

the focus must be on equipping students to master all competencies provided at school. However, not all SMK graduates can enter the workforce due to insufficient vocational potential, which contributes to increasing unemployment rates. It can be said that SMKs may become one of the contributors to unemployment due to a lack of readiness for entering the workforce. The unemployment of SMK graduates is caused by the lack of quality demanded by the job market. Therefore, schools must improve their programs to better prepare SMK graduates as prospective workers for the business and industrial sectors.

According to Anggia Susra Deloza (2021), hard skills refer to the expertise in knowledge, technology, and technical abilities specific to a particular field of study. This means that hard skills are the skills acquired by an individual after completing formal education or training relevant to their field. Having work readiness is a fundamental requirement for vocational high school students. If vocational students do not yet have the necessary skills and knowledge, they are not prepared to enter the workforce.

According to Riyanti & Kasyadi (2021), work readiness is an essential selection criterion in evaluating graduates, as it reflects their potential to demonstrate performance and achieve long-term career advancement. The readiness of students to enter the workforce is shaped by both internal and external factors. Internal factors encompass the knowledge, skills, and mental preparedness that students possess, which must align with their specific areas of expertise.

Thus, it is crucial to enhance the mastery of hard skills, as strengthening these skills can help students prepare for the workforce after graduation, enabling them to secure jobs that align with their field of study. This study aims to examine whether a significant relationship exists between the mastery of hard skills and the work readiness of Grade XI students at SMK Islam Al-Fajar Kedaung Pamulang.

METHODS

This research was carried out at SMK Islam Al-Fajar Kedaung Pamulang, employing a quantitative approach with an associative method. According to Sugiyono (2019), quantitative research is a process of gaining knowledge that uses numerical data as a tool to analyze information about the subject being studied. According to Ghony (2019), quantitative research is a widely developed discipline. This type of research relies on numerical data and uses statistical analysis as a tool to measure and obtain research results

based on questionnaires.

The method used in this research is the associative method, which aims to determine the influence or relationship between two or more variables. According to Repi (2021), associative research examines the causal relationships between two or more variables. This study involves Variable X, "Mastery of Hard Skills," and Variable Y, "Work Readiness," using a causal relationship approach. According to Sugiyono (2019), a causal relationship is a cause-and-effect relationship where there is an independent variable (the influencing factor) and a dependent variable (the influenced factor).

The population is the entire set of values obtained from calculations involving various research objects. A population is a general group of individuals with similar characteristics. The population in this study consists of 102 Grade XI students from SMK Islam Al-Fajar Kedaung. According to Sugiyono (2019), a sample is part of a population with specific characteristics. The sample size refers to the determination of how many individuals are selected for the study. This research uses the Slovin formula with a 5% significance level to determine the sample size. Sampling was done using random sampling. According to Sugiyono (2019), random sampling is a technique for selecting sample members randomly without considering strata within the population. The study selected students from all classes: XI MPLB (21 students), XI MPLB (24 students), PMS (19 students), and DKV (17 students), for a total of 81 respondents.

The data collection techniques used in this study include:

1. Observation: According to Sugiyono (2019:297), observation involves visiting the research location to observe objects directly. In this study, observations were conducted at SMK Islam Al-Fajar Kedaung Pamulang to gather information related to the research objects.

2. Interviews: This is a two-way communication method for data collection. Interviews were conducted with the principal, administrative staff, subject teachers, and students at SMK Islam Al-Fajar Kedaung Pamulang.

3. Questionnaires: A data collection technique where respondents are given a set of written questions or statements to answer. Questionnaires were used for both variables: mastery of hard skills (X) and work readiness (Y), consisting of 50 items.

4. Documentation: According to Kartika (2017:74), documentation involves collecting necessary documents as sources of information during the research process, such as statistical data, graphs, images, letters, etc...

The data collection instrument in this study was a questionnaire. A questionnaire is a data collection technique conducted by providing a set of written questions or statements to respondents to be answered. The study employed instrument tests, including validity testing, aimed at examining the validity of each item through item analysis, which correlates the score of each item with the total score obtained by summing all item scores. Additionally, reliability testing was conducted. According to Sugiyono (2019:121), reliability testing is used to demonstrate the dependability, accuracy, precision, and consistency of the indicators included in the questionnaire.

The prerequisite tests applied in this study included normality and linearity tests. According to Sugiyono (2019), the normality test examines whether the residuals obtained follow a normal distribution. Meanwhile, Ghozali (2018) stated that the linearity test is conducted to verify the correctness of the information being utilized and to ensure that the relationship between variables is linear.

For hypothesis testing, correlation tests were used. Correlation is a statistical technique for measuring the strength of the relationship or correlation between two variables. There can be either a positive or negative relationship between the variables. Correlation tests are useful for assessing the strength of the relationship between variables, sometimes involving more than two variables, within a specific scale. Additionally, T-tests were employed, which are statistical tests used to verify the validity of a hypothesis by determining whether there is a significant difference between the means of two samples randomly selected from the population.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. **Results**

    a. Prerequisite Test

       1) Normality test

Table.1 Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		81
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	6.73203087
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.044
	Positive	.044
	Negative	-.044
Test Statistic		.044
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)[c]		.200[d]
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)[e]	Sig.	.967
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.963
		Upper Bound	.972

Based on Table 1, the results of the Test of Normality between Hard Skill Mastery and Job Readiness using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed a significance value of 0.972 > 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data are normally distributed.

2) Linearity test

Table.2 Linearity Test Results

ANOVA Table			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Job readiness* Mastery of hard skills	Between Groups	(Combined)	7518.343	31	242.527	5.289	.000
		Linearity	5554.360	1	5554.360	121.130	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	1963.983	30	65.466	1.428	.132
	Within Groups		2246.867	49	45.854		
	Total		9765.210	80			

In the table above, the significance (Sig) value for linearity is 0.132 > 0.05. Since the Sig value for deviation from linearity is greater than 0.05, it indicates

that there is a linear relationship between the variable of hard skill mastery and the variable of job readiness among the 11th-grade students of SMK Islam Al-Fajar Kedaung Pamulang.

b. Hypothesis Testing

1) Correlation test

Table.3 Correlation Test Results

Correlations		Mastery of hard skills	Job readiness
Mastery of hard skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.754**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	81	81
Job readiness	Pearson Correlation	.754**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	81	81

Based on the correlation test results above, it can be observed that the significance (Sig) value for variable X (Hard Skill Mastery) is 0.000, as is the case for variable Y (Job Readiness), which is also 0.000. This indicates that the two variables are related or correlated. The nature of the relationship between these two variables is positive, with a very strong correlation level, as shown by a value of 0.754. It can be concluded that the higher the mastery of hard skills, the higher the level of job readiness.

2) T-test

Table.4 Coefficient t Value

Coefficients^a		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	14.402	7.110		2.026	.046
	penguasaan hard skill	.824	.080	.757	10.297	.001

Based on the formula calculation, it can be seen that:

N = 81

K = 2 a=5%(0,05)

t = [5% ; (df = 81-2)

t = (0,05 ; 79)

t table results = 1,664

So, the t-table value at n = 81 and k = 2 with Sig remaining. 0.5% is 1.664. These calculations can be seen in table T which is presented as follows:

Table.5 T-table 75-81

Df.	Taraf signifikasi						
Dua sisi	20%	10%	5%	2%	1%	0,2%	0,1%
Satu sisi	10%	5%	2,5%	1%	0,5%	0,1%	0,05%
75	1,293	1,665	1,992	2,377	2,643	3,202	3,425
76	1,293	1,665	1,992	2,376	2,642	3,201	3,423
77	1,293	1,665	1,991	2,376	2,641	3,199	3,421
78	1,292	1,665	1,991	2,375	2,640	3,198	3,420
79	1,292	1,664	1,990	2,374	2,640	3,197	3,418
80	1,292	1,664	1,990	2,374	2,639	3,195	3,416
81	1,292	1,664	1,990	2,373	2,638	3,194	3,415

Based on the calculation results, it is known that the hypothesis testing using the t-test yielded a t-value of 10.297, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.664, with a significance value of $0.001 < 0.05$. Thus, H_0 is rejected, and H_a is accepted. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between the variable of hard skill mastery (X) and job readiness (Y).

2. Discussion

The results of the study on the variable of Hard Skill Mastery in relation to Job Readiness among 11th-grade students of SMK Islam Al-Fajar show a relationship between variable X and variable Y. To reinforce this explanation, it can be proven based on the results of the prerequisite tests. The normality test, using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, showed a significance value of $0.972 > 0.05$, indicating that the data is normally distributed. Furthermore, the linearity test results revealed a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ for linearity, and the deviation from linearity was $0.132 > 0.05$. This

means that there is a relationship between the variable of Hard Skill Mastery and the variable of Job Readiness among the 11th-grade students of SMK Islam Al-Fajar Kedaung Pamulang.

Furthermore, it can also be proven based on the statistical results above that there is a positive relationship between the variable of Hard Skill Mastery and Job Readiness. This is evident from the hypothesis test for correlation, which showed a significance value of 0.000 and a very strong correlation coefficient of 0.754. Therefore, the researcher concludes that when the variable of hard skill mastery increases, job readiness also improves. As hard skill mastery increases, job readiness will also rise. This means that to enhance job readiness among students, it is necessary to improve their mastery of hard skills in schools as a foundational preparation for students to be more ready for the workforce. In relation to this study, hard skills are the competencies or abilities that need to be possessed for job readiness. Thus, based on the hypothesis testing calculations above, hard skills have a positive relationship with job readiness.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the variables related to efforts in preparing graduates of SMK Islam Al-Fajar to be ready to enter the workforce, supported by the mastery of hard skills during the learning process. Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that:

1. There is a relationship between hard skill mastery and job readiness. The significance value of variable X (hard skill mastery) is 0.000, and similarly, for variable Y (job readiness), it is also 0.000. This indicates that the two variables are related or correlated. This means that hard skill mastery significantly influences job readiness. The relationship between these two variables is positive, with a strong correlation coefficient of 0.754.

2. Relevant hard skills related to the job positions sought will increase the likelihood of students succeeding in job searches. Therefore, hard skill mastery has a very strong relationship with job readiness among the XI-grade students of SMK Islam Al-Fajar Kedaung Pamulang.

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