

Development Strategies of Adolescent Special Talents in Vocational High Schools (SMK): A Case Study at SMK Kartika XX-1 Makassar

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ABSTRACT

The development of special talents in adolescents at Vocational High Schools (SMK) is a crucial element in preparing human resources who are competent and ready to compete in the world of work. This research highlights the strategic role of extracurricular activities as an effective means of supporting students' talent development, both in terms of technical and non-technical aspects. This research uses a qualitative approach and literature review. The results found that: through activities such as vocational, entrepreneurship, arts, sports, technology, and leadership, students have the opportunity to deepen competencies according to their interests and areas of expertise. Support from the education sector, parents, and the surrounding environment, as well as the availability of adequate facilities, are determining factors for success in character building and student work readiness. Therefore, an integrated development strategy is needed to create a conducive learning ecosystem in facing the challenges of an increasingly dynamic industrial world

INTRODUCTION

Vocational High School (SMK) education is a secondary education level that focuses on mastering practical skills and technical knowledge in a particular field (Romadin, 2018; Romadin et al., 2022; Yoto et al., 2024). SMK aims to prepare students to become a ready-made workforce or to become entrepreneurs after graduation. Adolescents who are in Vocational High Schools (SMK) have a great opportunity to develop specialized talents that can be the foundation of their future careers (Zahrok, 2020). SMK is a level of education that focuses on mastering certain skills and competencies, which aims to prepare graduates who are ready to enter the world of work. However, in practice, the development of special talents in SMK youth is often not optimal, either due to limited resources, facilities, or support from the surrounding environment (Nurdina et al., 2019). The urgency of developing special talents for SMK youth is very high considering the increasingly fierce competition in the world of work. Special abilities and skills that are relevant to industry needs will give SMK graduates an advantage in facing the job market (Zamroni, 2016). In addition, the rapid development of technology also demands new skills that must be possessed by the younger generation. Therefore, it is important to pay more attention to developing the talents of SMK youth so that they have better competitive readiness (Passalowongi, 2020). In addition to external factors, students' internal motivation is also an important aspect in the development of special talents. Students who have strong motivation and interest in a particular field tend to be more successful in honing their skills. However, not all vocational students have an awareness of the importance of developing specialized talents (Ulfah & Arifudin, 2022).

In order to overcome these problems, several strategies can be implemented, such as increasing the synergy between schools and industries, providing training to teachers so that they are better able to detect and develop students' talents, and providing better facilities and resources in schools. Collaboration between schools and industry is also key. Then, developing students' special talents in extracurricular school programs, this approach is expected to be an effective step in optimizing the development of special talents in SMK students (Fatimah et al., 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

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METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this article is qualitative and literature study, which aims to examine the development of special talents of SMK adolescents, with the type of case study research at SMK Kartika XX-1 Makassar..

The type of case study in a qualitative approach is used to find problems based on real data, involving several research subjects. The case taken by the researcher is located at SMK Kartika XX-1 Makassar. The presence of researchers at the research location in the concept of qualitative research requires researchers to be present in the research field (Hollweck, 2016; Ulfatin, 2015). The data sources in this study consist of: Head of Curriculum, Head of Study Program, Teachers and Students.

The steps taken by researchers after data collection include: (1) data reduction; (2) research focus coding, and (3) data analysis. Analyzing and checking the validity of the data, researchers chose to use the degree of trust or credibility by triangulating data sources and methods. Data analysis begins with individual cases and continues with cross-case data (Figure 1).

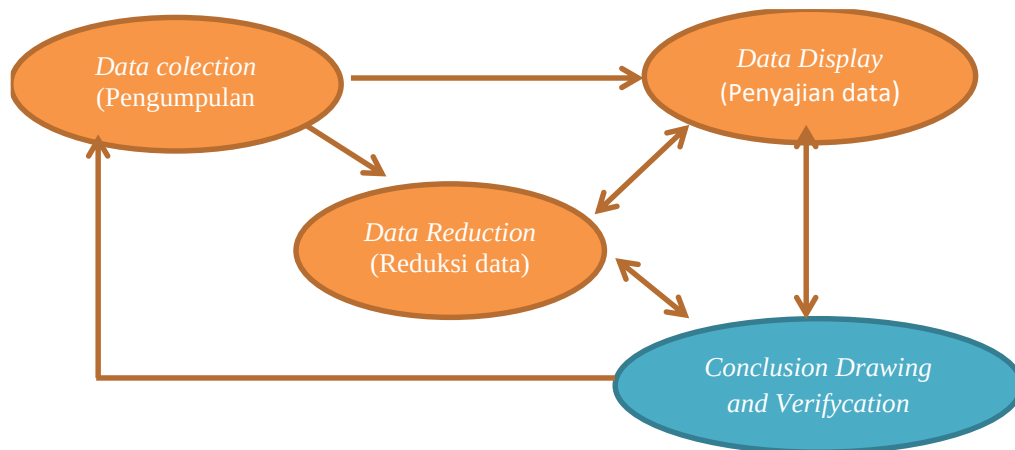


Figure 1. Interactive Cycle of Research Data Analysis Process

The literature study aims to analyze the results of related journals, articles, and reports published in the last four years, which cover various aspects such as talent development strategies through the role of teachers and extracurricular programs. The literature review implementation procedure is described in Figure 2.

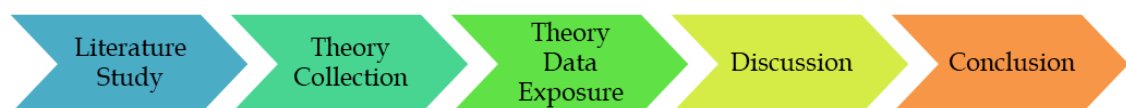
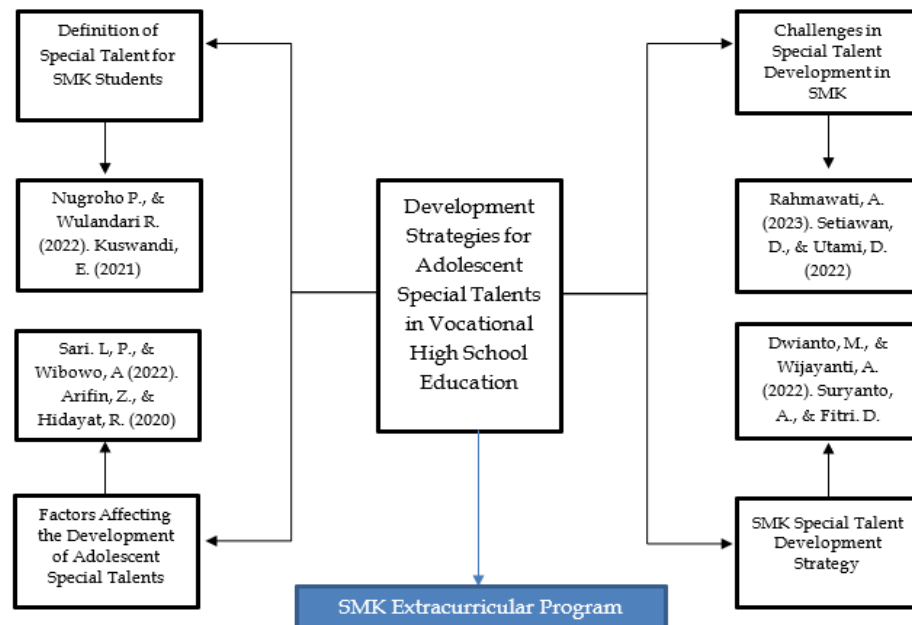


Figure 2. Literature Review Procedure



Picture 3. Mind Map of the Parts of a Strategy for the Development of Special Talents of Vocational Students

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Special Talent of SMK Students

Special talents in SMK adolescents refer to the potential or ability possessed by individuals in certain fields that can be maximally developed with proper learning. In the context of SMK (Vocational High School), this talent is often related to technical abilities or practical skills that are in accordance with the chosen major, such as computer engineering, automotive, graphic design, or culinary. This talent is different from general intelligence, as it is more specific and focused on a particular field (Hakim & Iskandar, 2023).

According to (Suryani, 2024) special talent in SMK adolescents is a potential that needs to be recognized and developed, because it can be the key to success in the world of work. In SMK, these talents are not only academic in nature, but also include practical skills that are highly needed in industry. Therefore, the development of special talents in SMK adolescents requires a holistic approach, including support from teachers, families, and the surrounding community (Muslich, 2022).

The characteristics and types of special talents of SMK adolescents can be seen from the interests and tendencies of adolescents towards a particular field. Some types of talent that are often found in SMK are: (1) Technology and Engineering Talent: This talent is often found in students who choose computer, automotive, or electronics engineering majors (Murniarti, 2020). They tend to have an interest and ability in design, drafting, and hardware repair; (2) Artistic Talent and Creativity: Adolescents who have an aptitude for graphic design, multimedia, or fine arts show a tendency to have excellent visual skills and high imagination; (3) Entrepreneurial Aptitude: This talent is seen in teenagers who choose majors that are oriented towards independent businesses, such as business, management, and marketing. They have the ability to design and manage businesses independently; (4) Social Talent: This talent is found in students who are more

inclined to social interaction, such as in nursing, tourism, and hospitality majors. They tend to have high empathy and good communication skills (Murniarti, 2020).

Factors Affecting the Development of Adolescent Special Talents

In the development of special talents, SMK adolescents certainly have factors that can influence the development of their talents such as: (1) Family Environment: A family that supports the development of a child's talent will provide the moral and material encouragement needed to hone that talent; (2) The Role of Teachers and Schools: Teachers in SMK play an important role in recognizing and developing students' talents (Ramadhan, 2024). With the right approach, they can provide guidance that matches students' interests, as well as facilitate relevant learning; (3) Peer Influence: Peers also play a role in motivating or directing students to further explore their talents. Often, students share experiences and learn from each other within a community; (4) Access to Facilities and Resources: Adequate facilities, such as practice rooms, technological tools, and support from industry, greatly influence the development of students' talents. With access to appropriate tools and resources, students can more easily develop their skills (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

According to Setiawan (2022), talent development in vocational schools helps students to optimize their potential so that they can be better prepared to compete in the increasingly competitive world of work. Therefore, teaching in accordance with students' interests and talents is a major factor in the success of vocational education.

Challenges in the Development of Special Talents of SMK Students

Despite the importance of developing specialized talents, there are various challenges faced by SMK adolescents. Some of the main challenges include: (1) Infrastructure Limitations: Some SMKs, especially in remote areas, may experience limitations in facilities and technology that can be used to develop students' talents; (2) Lack of Career Development Programs: Although SMKs provide vocational education, there are often not enough programs to guide students in planning their careers in the industrial world; (3) Lack of Continuing Education: After graduation, many SMK students find it difficult to continue developing their talents due to lack of coaching or opportunities to practice in the professional world (Hendrik Dewantara, 2024).

Special Talent Development Strategies of SMK Students

Strategies for developing the special talents of SMK adolescents focus on developing skills and interests in accordance with their chosen vocational fields. Here are some effective strategies in developing the special talents of SMK youth: (1) Soft Skills and Character Development: Soft skills such as communication, cooperation, problem solving, and time management are essential for the world of work. For this reason, soft skills training can be provided through activities such as job interview simulations, forming working groups to complete projects together, or seminars with industry speakers (Noni et al., 2024). Developing characters such as discipline, responsibility, and self-confidence are also important for students' future success; (2) Field Work Practices (PKL) training: Practical Field Work is one of the main ways to help vocational students develop their talents in a real working environment. Rofiatur Rahmah (2023) with PKL, students can learn directly from professionals, understand work processes, work culture, and

industry standards. This PKL experience not only strengthens their technical skills but also builds a professional work ethic; and (3) Awards and Recognition: recognition of the achievements of students who successfully demonstrate expertise and skills can be a motivation for other students. Schools can provide awards, either in the form of certificates, scholarships, or exclusive internship opportunities for students who perform well in certain fields.

Extracurricular Activities in SMK

Extracurricular activities at Vocational High Schools (SMK) play an important role in developing students' special talents. This program is a place for students to deepen their skills outside of formal learning, while building their readiness for the world of work. According to Santrock (2019), extracurricular activities can improve cognitive, social, and specific skills relevant to students' fields of expertise.

To support the development of students' talents, SMK provides various extracurricular activities based on vocational, entrepreneurship, arts, sports, technology, and leadership. Vocational-based extracurriculars such as automotive, robotics, graphic design and programming clubs provide opportunities for students to deepen their technical skills. Through these activities, students can hone their creativity and innovation, which are essential elements in the industrialized world. A study by Rahman & Suyitno (2021) showed that participation in vocational-based extracurriculars can increase students' work readiness by up to 30%.

In addition, entrepreneurial extracurricular activities such as young entrepreneurs, student cooperatives, and business clubs help develop students' entrepreneurial spirit. According to research by Winarno (2020), involvement in entrepreneurial activities at school contributes to the improvement of managerial skills and business innovation, which are crucial in today's digital era. Extracurricular arts activities such as theater, music and fine arts also encourage students' self-expression and creativity. According to Rahayu (2021), students who are active in extracurricular arts tend to have better critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities.

On the other hand, extracurricular sports such as futsal, pencak silat, and karate not only help in maintaining physical fitness but also build discipline and teamwork. As stated by Sugiyanto (2022), involvement in extracurricular sports can increase physical endurance and build positive character in students. In the digital era, technology-based extracurricular activities such as coding clubs, IoT, and cyber security are becoming increasingly relevant to the needs of industry 4.0. According to Hidayat, A., & Prasetyo (2023), students who engage in technology-based activities tend to have better digital skills, which are highly needed in the modern world of work.

In addition, extracurricular scouting also has a strategic role in developing the character of vocational students. Scouting activities shape the spirit of leadership, responsibility, independence, and the ability to work together in teams. According to research by Arifin (2021), involvement in scouting can improve students' soft skills, such as communication and problem-solving skills, which are needed in the world of work. Through various survival skills exercises, social

activities, and leadership, scouts not only instill disciplinary values, but also equip students with practical skills that are useful in various aspects of professional and social life.

With a variety of extracurricular options available, SMK students have the opportunity to develop special talents according to their interests and competencies. The right extracurricular program can shape technical, entrepreneurial, artistic, sports, leadership and technological skills that are relevant to industry needs. Therefore, schools need to continue to encourage students' involvement in various extracurricular activities that are in line with their areas of expertise.

The research results indicate that SMK Kartika XX-1 Makassar develops students' special talents through various extracurricular activities designed according to the interests and potential of each student. Vocational-based extracurricular activities are directed towards practical activities, industrial internships, and skills training to strengthen students' competencies in their areas of expertise. Meanwhile, entrepreneurship extracurriculars involve students in product exhibitions, entrepreneurship training, and digital marketing as an effort to form an entrepreneurial spirit early on. In the arts, the school organizes art performances, creativity competitions, as well as music, dance and theater activities to channel students' artistic talents. Extracurricular sports are conducted through inter-school competitions and state championships to nurture students' sporting talents and competitive spirit. In addition, students' leadership skills are honed through involvement in student organizations such as OSIS, Scouts, and MPK, as well as relevant trainings. All these activities synergistically aim to develop students' special talents so that they can grow into skilled, creative, independent and highly competitive individuals.

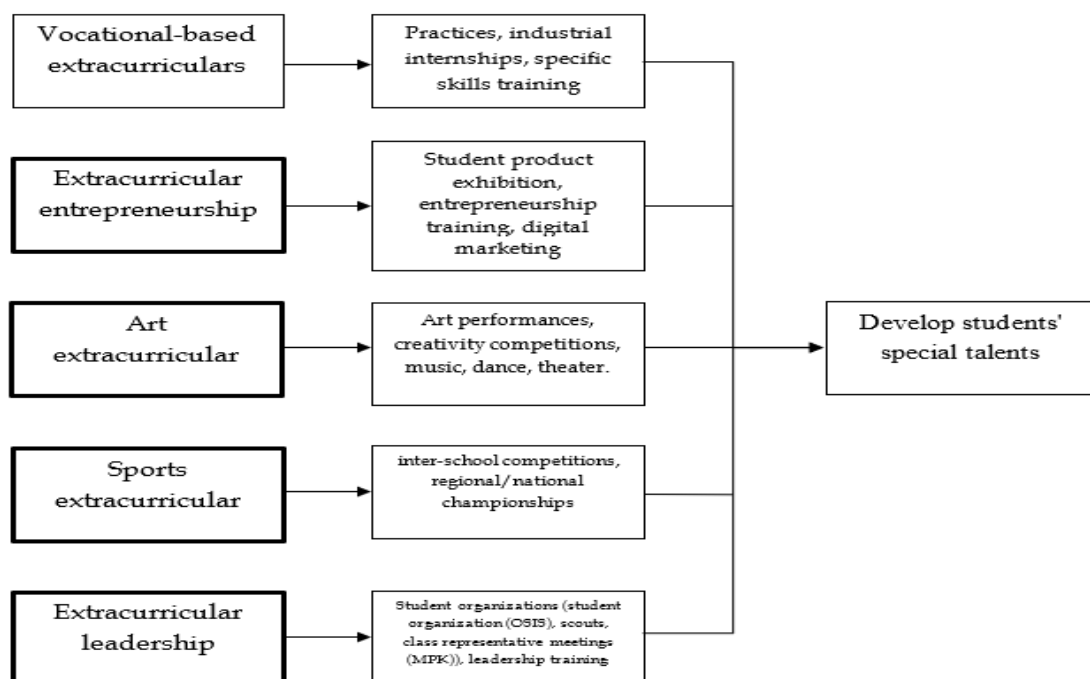


Figure 4. Diagram of Special Talent Development Results at SMK Kartika XX-1 Makassar Vocational School

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The development of special talents in SMK adolescents is a very important aspect in producing a competent and ready-to-use workforce in the industrial world. With the right support from various parties, as well as adequate facilities, SMK students can develop their talents to the fullest. Facing the challenges, it is important to involve the education sector, parents and the environment and create effective strategies that can create solutions that support the development of students' talents so that they can be better prepared for the demands of an increasingly dynamic world of work. Extracurricular activities in SMK play an important role in developing students' talents and skills, both technically and non-technically. Through various activities such as vocational, entrepreneurship, arts, sports, technology, and leadership, students can deepen competencies according to their interests and build readiness for the world of work.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations so that further research is needed on the topic of Development Strategies of Adolescent Special Talents in Vocational High Schools (SMK): A Case Study at Smk Kartika XX-1 Makassar in order to perfect this research and increase insight for readers.

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