



The Meaning Of School Vision And Mission In Building Vocational School Students' Learning Motivation

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze students' understanding of the school's vision and mission and its implications for the learning motivation of students in the Software Engineering (RPL) Department at SMK Negeri 1 Cipeundeuy. The study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies involving 12 students as the primary informants, along with supporting informants from the leadership and teaching staff. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification. The results of the study show that students' understanding of the school's vision and mission shapes a sense of belonging, sense of purpose, and sense of direction, which significantly strengthen both intrinsic and extrinsic learning motivation. These findings confirm that the school's vision and mission not only function as normative documents but also as strategic instruments in reinforcement student learning motivation.

Keywords: *school vision and mission, learning motivation, organizational identity, vocational high school*

INTRODUCTION

Vocational education plays a strategic role in preparing competent human resources ready to compete in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. Vocational High Schools (SMK), as vocational educational institutions, are required not only to transfer technical knowledge but also to shape the character and future orientation of students. In this context, the school's vision and mission are fundamental elements that provide direction and purpose for all educational stakeholders.

A school's vision and mission are essentially philosophical statements about ideals and strategic steps to achieve them. Akdon (2011) defines a vision as a challenging picture of a future state containing the ideals and image the organization aspires to realize. Meanwhile, the mission is the strategic actions or efforts to realize that vision. Both are not merely administrative documents displayed on school walls, but must become the spirit that animates all educational activities.

However, on the ground, the socialization of the school's vision and mission is often formal and one-way, thus failing to foster a deep understanding and internalization of values in students. This condition tends to lead students to view the vision and mission as abstract and irrelevant to their daily learning activities. In fact, a clear understanding of goals and direction can be a powerful source of motivation for students in the learning process.

Motivation to learn is a crucial factor determining the success of the learning process. Sardiman (2016) explains that motivation to learn is the overall psychological driving force within students that initiates, directs, and sustains learning activities to achieve goals. Students with high motivation tend to be more active, diligent, and achieve better academic performance. Theoretically, a clear understanding of the school's vision and mission can provide a sense of purpose that strengthens students' motivation to learn.

SMK Negeri 1 Cipeundeuy is a vocational education institution with a vision of becoming a leading school in producing competent, character-based graduates ready to compete in the global era. The Software Engineering (RPL) major is one of the most popular programs with promising career prospects in the digital age. Initial observations indicate variations in students' understanding of the school's vision and mission. Some students can recite the vision and mission by heart but have difficulty explaining their meaning and relevance. On the other hand, some students have a good understanding and are able to link the vision and mission to their learning motivation.

Research on vision and mission in the educational context has been conducted previously, but specific studies exploring students' interpretations of vision and mission and their relationship to learning motivation in specific majors, particularly Software Engineering, are still limited. This study attempts to fill this

gap with a qualitative phenomenological approach that allows for in-depth exploration of students' experiences and constructed meanings. Thus, this study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions in understanding the relationship between understanding vision and mission and learning motivation in vocational high school students.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative approach with phenomenological methods to explore students' experiences and interpretations of the school's vision and mission. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for understanding the subjective meanings individuals construct regarding specific phenomena. The study was conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Cipeundeuy in December 2025, with 12th-grade Software Engineering students as subjects.

The sampling technique used purposive sampling, with the criteria being active students who had completed at least one semester of education and were willing to provide information openly. A total of 12 students participated in the study, with varying characteristics of grade level, gender, and academic achievement, to obtain rich and comprehensive data. Furthermore, the study also involved supporting informants including the principal, vice principal of curriculum, department heads, and guidance and counseling teachers.

Data collection was conducted through three main techniques. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews to explore students' experiences, understandings, and meanings constructed regarding the school's vision and mission. Second, passive participant observation to observe student learning behavior and the implementation of the vision and mission within the school environment. Third, a documentation study to examine the vision and mission documents, curriculum, work programs, and other supporting data. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes three stages. Data reduction was conducted through verbatim transcription, coding, categorization, and memoing. Data presentation utilized matrices, descriptive narratives with direct quotations, and network diagrams to display relationships between categories. Conclusions were drawn by identifying key themes and verifying them through triangulation and member checking.

Data validity was tested using trustworthiness criteria, including credibility through triangulation of sources, methods, and time, as well as member checking and peer debriefing. Transferability was ensured through thick descriptions that provided detailed descriptions of the research context and findings. Dependability was ensured through an audit trail that systematically documented the entire research process. Confirmability was maintained through researcher reflexivity regarding biases and assumptions that might influence data interpretation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Students' Understanding of the School's Vision and Mission

Research findings indicate that Software Engineering students' understanding of the vision and mission of SMK Negeri 1 Cipeundeuy varies across three levels. A high level of understanding was demonstrated by four informants who could fully articulate the vision and mission and explain the meaning of each element. A moderate level of understanding was demonstrated by five informants who knew the vision and mission in broad terms but not in detail. Meanwhile, a low level of understanding was experienced by three informants who had minimal knowledge despite being aware of the vision and mission.

This variation in understanding is influenced by several factors. First, the intensity and quality of the vision and mission socialization received by students. Students who actively participate in school activities such as ceremonies and orientation tend to have a better understanding. Second, individual student characteristics such as interest, attention, and cognitive abilities. Students with high academic achievement demonstrated a more comprehensive understanding. Third, student involvement in school programs that integrate the vision and mission into their implementation.

These findings align with the Organizational Identity theory developed by Albert and Whetten (1985), which states that organizational identity will be understood differently by each member depending on their level of involvement and interaction with the organization. In the context of education, the vision and mission, as representations of a school's identity, require a socialization process that is not only informative but also transformative so that students can understand and internalize them.

The Meaning of the Vision and Mission for Students

In-depth analysis of interview data revealed that students interpret the school's vision and mission in three main dimensions. The first dimension is as a guide for learning. Students understand that the vision and mission provide an overview of the competencies to be mastered and the character to be developed during their education at vocational high school. The vision of competent and globally competitive graduates provides clear targets for students in developing both technical and soft skills.

The second dimension is as a sense of identity and pride for the school. Students who understand the vision and mission well demonstrate a strong sense of belonging to the school. They view themselves as part of a community with a noble goal of excellence. This pride drives them to behave and perform according to the standards set forth in the vision and mission. This finding confirms the concept of sense of belonging described in organizational identity theory, where individuals who identify with an organization will have a stronger commitment.

The third dimension is as a motivator for achievement. An ambitious yet realistic school vision creates constructive challenges for students. They are motivated to achieve the standards of excellence outlined in the vision, both in academics, technical competency, and character development. The mission, which outlines concrete steps, provides practical guidance on how to achieve this vision.

The interpretation of this vision and mission is inseparable from the context of vocational education, which focuses on job readiness and linkages with the industrial world. RPL students interpret the vision of global competency and competitiveness as preparation for facing career challenges in information technology. They recognize that mastering the programming, database, and software development skills learned in school is a manifestation of their efforts to realize this vision.

The Relationship Between Understanding the Vision and Mission and Learning Motivation

Research findings indicate a significant positive relationship between understanding the vision and mission and student learning motivation. This relationship is manifested in two types of motivation: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Regarding intrinsic motivation, students who understand the vision and mission well demonstrate a drive to learn that stems from within themselves. They learn not simply to earn grades but because they recognize the importance of developing competencies for the future.

Understanding the vision and mission provides a strong sense of purpose. Students have clarity about why they are learning and how the knowledge they acquire will be used. This clarity of purpose reduces uncertainty and increases focus on learning. These findings support Locke's (1968) Goal Setting theory, which states that specific and challenging goals enhance individual motivation and performance.

Regarding extrinsic motivation, the vision and mission serve as external standards that encourage students to achieve. Students are motivated to meet the expectations of the school, teachers, and the educational environment reflected in the vision and mission. They recognize that their academic achievements and competencies contribute to the school's reputation and the achievement of its vision.

Furthermore, this study found that understanding the vision and mission creates three psychological conditions that support learning motivation. First, a sense of belonging makes students feel like an important part of the school community. Second, a sense of purpose gives meaning to learning activities. Third, a sense of direction provides clear guidance regarding the competencies and character traits to be developed. These three conditions collectively strengthen students' learning motivation.

The results also show that students with a good understanding of the vision and mission have more positive learning motivation characteristics. They demonstrate greater perseverance, greater resilience in the face of adversity, and a more focused future orientation. They are also more active in seeking information

and opportunities to develop competencies, and are more selective in choosing activities that support the achievement of the vision and mission.

These findings align with research by Bart et al. (2001), which found that a mission statement well-understood by organizational members is positively correlated with motivation and commitment. In the educational context, research by Sumarsono (2018) also found that schools that successfully socialize their vision and mission effectively have students with higher learning motivation.

However, this study also identified several factors that moderate the relationship between understanding the vision and mission and learning motivation. The first factor is the quality of the school's socialization and internalization of the vision and mission. Socialization that is merely informative is less effective than an approach that actively involves students in interpreting and implementing the vision and mission. The second factor is the consistency between the vision and mission and daily educational practices. When the vision and mission are not reflected in policies, programs, and teacher behavior, student understanding becomes meaningless.

The third factor is a supportive learning environment. A school culture that supports the achievement of the vision and mission, adequate learning facilities, and innovative learning methods will strengthen the relationship between understanding the vision and learning motivation. The fourth factor is individual student characteristics such as educational background, family support, and career aspirations, which can influence how they interpret the vision and mission and its impact on learning motivation.

Implications for Educational Practice

The findings of this study have important implications for educational management practices in vocational high schools. First, schools need to develop a more interactive and sustainable strategy for disseminating the vision and mission. This dissemination is not sufficient through visual media or formal presentations during ceremonies; it must involve dialogue, discussion, and reflection, enabling students to understand and internalize the meaning.

Second, the vision and mission need to be integrated into all aspects of school life, from the curriculum and learning, extracurricular activities, to the evaluation system. Teachers need to explicitly link learning objectives to the school's vision and mission so that students understand the relevance of what they learn and the goals they want to achieve. This integration will make the vision and mission a living document that informs all educational activities.

Third, schools need to actively involve students in the evaluation and development of the vision and mission. Student participation in formulating programs that support the achievement of the vision and mission will enhance their sense of ownership and commitment. Programs such as student leadership, project-based learning based on the vision and mission, or innovation competitions can provide a

vehicle for students to actively contribute.

Fourth, consistency is needed between the vision and mission and leadership practices and learning in schools. Principals and teachers must be role models who implement the values of the vision and mission in their daily behavior. Inconsistencies between what is said and what is done will weaken the credibility of the vision and mission in the eyes of students.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that students' understanding of the school's vision and mission ranges from normative knowledge to reflective understanding, linking it to learning goals and future orientation. Students interpret the vision and mission not only as formal statements of the institution, but also as guidelines for learning, a sense of school identity and pride, and a motivator for achievement. Understanding and interpreting the vision and mission are significantly linked to student learning motivation by fostering a sense of belonging, purpose, and direction, which strengthen both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Overall, this study confirms that the school's vision and mission are strategic instruments in strengthening vocational high school students' learning motivation. Effective internalization of the vision and mission can be a powerful source of motivation for students to optimize their potential and achieve. Therefore, schools need to develop more contextual and sustainable socialization strategies, integrate the vision and mission into learning, actively involve students, and maintain consistency between the vision and mission and educational practices.

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