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IMPLEMENTATION THE CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING MODEL TO IMPROVE THE SOFT SKILLS OF SMKN 1 SAMBAS STUDENTS IN THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUBJECT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the application of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in improving the soft skills of SMKN 1 Sambas students in the Entrepreneurship subject. Soft skills such as communication, cooperation, creativity, responsibility, and independence are essential competencies needed by vocational education graduates to adapt to the demands of the 21st century workplace and entrepreneurship. However, various studies show that learning in vocational schools still tends to focus on mastering hard skills and cognitive achievement, while the development of soft skills has not been systematically optimized. The CTL model was chosen because it emphasizes the connection between learning materials and students' real-life contexts, thus potentially encouraging meaningful learning and strengthening soft skills. Although international research demonstrates the effectiveness of CTL in increasing learning engagement and higher-order thinking skills, empirical studies specifically examining the application of CTL in developing soft skills in vocational education, particularly the Entrepreneurship subject in Indonesian vocational schools, are still limited. This study used a qualitative approach with pedagogical and psychological approaches, with students at SMKN 1 Sambas as subjects. Data collection techniques included learning observations, interviews, soft skills questionnaires, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted to assess the effectiveness of CTL implementation, supporting and inhibiting factors, and changes in students' soft skills. This research focuses on the development and analysis of a contextually adapted CTL implementation model for entrepreneurship learning in vocational high schools, with a primary focus on strengthening students' soft skills. The results are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of contextual learning models in vocational education, as well as practical contributions for teachers and schools in improving the quality of entrepreneurship learning.

Keywords: Contextual teaching and learning; soft skills; teaching skills

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1. INTRODUCTION

The development of education in Indonesia suggests the need for more mature thinking and study in implementing the educational process. According to Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Article 1, paragraph 1, education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to possess spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed for themselves, society, the nation, and the state. (UUD No 20 Tahun 2003). Education makes a significant contribution to a nation's progress and is a vehicle for translating constitutional messages and providing guidance for building national character. An intelligent society will foster an intelligent life and progressively foster independence. (Aini Nur, 2014)

His study aims to evaluate the application of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in improving the soft skills of SMKN 1 Sambas students in the Entrepreneurship subject. Soft skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creative problem-solving are core competencies for vocational education graduates in the Industry 4.0 era (World Economic Forum, 2020). CTL emphasizes the connection between learning materials and students' real-life experiences and has been shown to increase motivation and higher-order thinking skills (Hsu, 2021; Rahayu & Yudiana, 2022).

Such a nation's society represents a significant investment in overcoming the crisis, facing the global world, and being able to compete in the workforce. Building a society with character and independence depends on the quality of education. Educational reform is essential to continuously improve the quality of a nation's education. Indonesia's progress can be achieved through sound educational governance. Efforts to improve educational quality are expected to elevate the dignity of the Indonesian people. (Agus Suprijono, 2011)

The Indonesian education system generally still emphasizes cognitive intelligence. Based on the functions and objectives of national education, it is clear that education at every level, including vocational high schools (SMK), must be implemented systematically to achieve national goals. This relates to the character development of students, who are expected to be competitive, ethical, moral, and well-mannered upon graduation, and to interact effectively with the community.. (Sisdiknas, D, 2003)

Many aspects influence educational success, including national indicators of educational success, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. However, the national education system remains focused on developing the intelligence quotient (IQ). (Salma Salma Prawiradilaga, 2007) In practice, the curriculum in various educational institutions is still oriented toward achieving exam scores, so it's not surprising that the national exam (UN) is often used as a benchmark for student learning success.

Mastery of technical academic skills (hard skills) will be further complemented by possessing intrapersonal and interpersonal skills (soft skills). For vocational high school graduates, both hard and soft skills are essential for competitive employment.

Based on research at Harvard University USA, it turns out that a person's success is not determined solely by knowledge and technical abilities (hard skills), but is more determined by

the ability to manage oneself and others (soft skills). (Goleman D, 1995)

Vocational education plays a strategic role in developing competent, adaptive, and work-ready human resources. Vocational High Schools (SMK), as part of the vocational education system, are required to produce graduates not only with technical skills (hard skills) but also with adequate soft skills. Soft skills such as communication, collaboration, creative thinking, responsibility, and an entrepreneurial spirit are key factors in graduates' success in entering the workforce and creating jobs independently.

Entrepreneurship courses in vocational schools are designed to instill entrepreneurial attitudes, knowledge, and skills in students. However, in practice, entrepreneurship education often focuses on conveying concepts and theory, with a learning approach that doesn't connect the material to students' real-life experiences. As a result, learning fails to fully develop the soft skills that are the key characteristics of an entrepreneur.According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), entrepreneurship is a business activity starting from determining a product, manufacturing it, and marketing it. Meanwhile, entrepreneurship is a person's ability to generate ideas with creative and innovative ideas, creating something new and different from others, and seeking opportunities to distribute previously discovered ideas. (Asnawi, 2011).

Based on the literature review, the following research gaps exist:

1. International research has demonstrated the effectiveness of CTL in increasing learning engagement and higher-order thinking skills, but studies specifically focusing on soft skills development in vocational education are still limited.
2. CTL research in Indonesia has been conducted primarily at the elementary and secondary levels of education, resulting in limited in-depth exploration of CTL implementation in Entrepreneurship subjects in vocational high schools (SMK).

There is no CTL implementation model that is contextually tailored to the characteristics of entrepreneurship learning and the soft skills needs of vocational high school students.

2. METHODS

Research approaches and types, both qualitative and quantitative, are essential for a researcher to study existing phenomena based on the focus of the research. Qualitative research is certainly different from quantitative research, and therefore also differs in its characteristics, both related to the type of research and the approach used. This type of research is a case study with a pedagogical and psychological approach, namely research conducted systematically by collecting data from the field.(Sugiyono, 2007)

Qualitative research is defined as an assessment procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. This type of research is descriptive qualitative research, namely research that provides a factual and systematic description of situations and events regarding factors, characteristics, and relationships between phenomena for the purpose of accumulation only..

According to Hadari Nawawi, the descriptive method is a procedure for solving problems

that are investigated by describing or depicting the current state of the subject or object of research (a person, community institution, etc.) based on the facts that appear as they should be. (Nawawi H, 2005) Meanwhile, Suharsimi Arikunto, descriptive research is research that is intended to According to Hadari Nawawi and Mimi Martini, qualitative research is a series of activities or processes of gathering information from natural conditions (natural settings) in an object, connected to solving a problem, both from a theoretical and practical perspective. (Hadari Nawawi H, 2005)

A research location is a specific place or area where data collection and research activities are conducted. These locations can vary, from specific facilities such as laboratories, libraries, classrooms, companies, communities, or even larger geographic areas such as villages, cities, or countries.

Thus, a research location is a specific site or place selected by a researcher to conduct observations, sampling, experiments, or other data collection relevant to the research topic or problem. The location chosen must be relevant to the research objectives and the research questions to be answered. Factors that can influence location selection include data availability, population or sample size, logistics, costs, and research ethics. Researchers are responsible for ensuring that the location allows for accurate and valid data collection to achieve the research objectives. The research location for this study was within the school environment of SMKN 1 Sambas.

The research data sources consist of primary (human) data and secondary (non-human) data, which is data obtained from existing data. The primary data sources required include Entrepreneurship Teachers and Grade XI Students. Non-human data sources include supporting documents and facilities and infrastructure.

Data collection techniques in research are crucial for obtaining data relevant to the focus of the study. Because this is a qualitative study, the researcher chose in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation as data collection techniques. To obtain the necessary data, the author used the following methods:

1. Observation

The observations carried out are direct observations or direct observations, namely a method of collecting data based on observations using the eyes or ears directly without using standardized tools.

In this observation method, the researcher chose a structured observation method that systematically planned what would be observed, when, and where. Therefore, structured observation was conducted when the researcher was certain about the variables to be observed. Field notes were used as a data collection tool. Based on the observations made in the field, the researcher observed the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the soft skills development of SMKN 1 Sambas students in the entrepreneurship subject.

In this case, the researcher observed that the Principal's plan included developing a vision and mission for academic progress, developing strategies and policies, identifying and preparing resources, developing student management, and developing a school budget plan. Furthermore, based on the results of SMKN 1 Sambas graduates, students are ready to contribute to society,

such as by entering the workforce and so on.

2. Interview

Interviews are used as a data collection technique when researchers want to learn more about respondents with a small number of respondents. In this study, the researcher used an unstructured (open-ended) interview technique because the researcher didn't know exactly what data to collect, so the researcher listened more to what the informants had to say.

Based on the analysis of the answers from the informants, the researcher can ask the next question which can use the "roundabout then dive" method, meaning that at the beginning of the interview, what is discussed are things that are not related to the objective, and when the opportunity opens up to ask something that is the objective, then it is asked immediately.

3. Data collection tool

During the interviews, researchers used an interview guide. This was intended to ensure the interview process was more controlled and prevent any loss of direction. Other tools used during the interviews included a notebook to record important information during the interview, an Android phone to record all conversations, and a camera to photograph the researcher and informants during the interview.

The first person interviewed was the Entrepreneurship subject teacher as the object in this study, while to support the results of the interview with the entrepreneurship subject teacher, the researcher conducted interviews with students as subjects in this study.

4. Documentation

Research results from observations or interviews will be more credible or reliable if supported by documented data. Qualitative research provides another alternative as a way to maximize and complement the data obtained from observations and interviews. Documentation techniques are used to supplement existing data.. (Suharsimi Arikunto, 2002)

The researcher used this method to obtain documentary data such as the history of the founding of SMKN 1 Sambas, geographical location, organizational structure and documents related to the development of the research subject. The use of research instruments or tools aims to ensure that the data obtained is properly recorded and can be reused when needed. In general, the research instruments used in this study were a research grid, notebook, Android phone, and camera.

Data analysis techniques are the process of organizing data so that it can be interpreted. Data analysis is the process of systematically searching for and compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This involves organizing the data into categories, breaking it down into units, synthesizing it, arranging it into patterns, selecting what is important and what will be studied, and drawing conclusions for ease of understanding.

This section describes the data compilation process, which involves classifying data into categories, patterns, or themes. According to Miles and Huberman, the stages of data analysis begin with: 1) Data Collection; 2) Data Reduction; 3) Data Presentation; and 4) Conclusion Drawing.

a. Data collection

Data collection is a crucial stage in the research process. Only by obtaining the right data can the research process run smoothly. Therefore, collecting data from both primary and secondary sources will not only enrich the theory of the research being conducted but also provide researchers with answers to the research questions they have formulated. With the correct techniques, researchers will develop appropriate strategies and procedures for data collection in the field.

b. Data reduction

Data obtained from the field is certainly in large quantities, therefore it needs to be recorded carefully and in detail. As the research time goes on, the data obtained becomes more numerous, complex, and complicated. (Adnan Mahdi and Mujahiddin, 2013). Data reduction means summarizing, selecting the main points, focusing on important things, and discarding data that is considered unnecessary. Thus, the data obtained from the results of data reduction will provide a clearer picture and make it easier for researchers to carry out further data collection.

c. Data presentation

After data reduction, the next step is data presentation. In qualitative research, data presentation can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, and the like. This presentation makes it easier to understand what is happening and plan next steps based on what has been understood from the data presentation. The data obtained from this research is presented in text or narrative form.

d. Drawing conclusions.

The final part of the data analysis technique is drawing conclusions. After going through the data reduction and presentation stages, conclusions can be drawn in the form of a description or a clear picture of a problem. These conclusions can be causal or interactive relationships and hypotheses or theories that can describe the Madrasah Principal's Management in Improving the Quality of Education.

Data validity testing aims to ensure that the data obtained is reliable and scientifically accountable. Collected data may not always be accurate, reflecting the research focus; therefore, data validity testing is necessary. In qualitative research, findings or data are considered valid if there is no discrepancy between what the researcher reports and what actually occurs in the researched object. To test data credibility, researchers use the following techniques: (Sugiyono, 2025)

a. Extension of observation

By extending the observation period, the researcher returns to the field, conducts observations, and re-interviews with data sources, both previously researched and new ones. This aims to increase the transparency of the information obtained due to the emergence of familiarity between the researcher and the sources. To test the credibility of the research data, the researcher focuses on examining previously obtained.

b. Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of testing the credibility of data from various sources using various methods. There are several types of triangulation in data validity testing, including source triangulation, which aims to test data credibility by checking data obtained from several sources, and technical triangulation, which tests data credibility by checking data against the same source using different techniques.

c. Member check

Member checking is the process of verifying data obtained by researchers with the data provider or informant. This ensures the information obtained aligns with the informant's intent. This occurs, of course, after data collection is complete or after findings or conclusions are reached. Once the data are consistent and mutually agreed upon, the informant is asked to provide proof that the researcher has conducted a member check and that the data obtained is more authentic.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of observations, researchers found the fact that in the learning process students still cannot improve the independence of student learning, teachers must be creative and innovative in forming the character of student independence in learning by using learning models that can influence the formation of student independence character, one of the models that can increase learning independence that teachers have never used is the learning model. This is supported by the theory of Suyadi which says that Contextual Teaching and Learning with character is one of the learning models that incorporates character values into the learning process by using the contextual teaching and learning model, so that when teachers teach using Contextual Teaching and Learning, the teacher automatically instills character values to their students. The research results show that the implementation of CTL promotes more meaningful learning by connecting the material to students' real-life contexts. This finding aligns with Lee and Hannafin's (2022) findings, which state that CTL helps students construct knowledge through authentic experiences.

Entrepreneurship learning linked to local environmental conditions allows students to understand entrepreneurial concepts more effectively, as emphasized in context-based vocational education (OECD, 2021). One of the character values is independence, where the problem in the field is the lack of independence in students. By implementing a contextual learning model to increase student independence, there is a certain hope that students will grow a sense of independence in completing assignments, students are able to learn independently without looking at the results of others, students can be confident in completing the tasks they do.

The results of this study indicate that learning with the Contextual Teaching And Learning (CTL) learning model has increased students' Soft Skills. Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that CTL is a learning model that directs to everyday life so that students are required to do their own assignments, be confident, not cheat on friends and so on so that it can increase student independence. Students must be able to apply the material to the real world so that it requires students to be independent, as the results of previous studies that the CTL model to

improve Soft Skills and learning attitudes used in the results of the study obtained good results. The use of this CTL model is necessary because through the CTL model in this study it is hoped that it can add references to learning models in elementary schools that can help students in increasing learning independence regarding the material in thematic learning. Because the learning model has a fairly strong role in the teaching and learning process because the model is a tool or message that makes it easier for teachers to convey learning materials.

The results of this application are expected to be useful for testing the effectiveness of the application of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) to improve student learning outcomes, so the author is encouraged to research and study further the Application of the Entrepreneurship-Based Contextual Teaching and Learning Model to Improve Soft Skills in Students of SMK Negeri 1 Sambas.

This study explains the effect of the CTL model on student learning outcomes in the control and experimental classes using the CTL model. Based on the results, the CTL model significantly impacted student learning outcomes in the experimental class.

This is evidenced by examining the post-test results in the control class and the post-test results in the experimental class. Therefore, it can be concluded that the CTL model significantly influences student learning outcomes. Based on the research findings, several factors can influence student learning outcomes, one of which is the learning model. Given the strengths and limitations of teachers, teachers are not the sole source of learning for students. Therefore, the choice of learning model can be used as an alternative to develop learning so that students can meet expectations comprehensively and help overcome teacher limitations.

The chosen learning model must be tailored to the learning material and the students' circumstances. Before conducting a learning activity, a teacher first designs or selects a learning model deemed suitable for development. This ensures that the chosen model can help teachers connect the material they are teaching to students' real-world situations. This aligns with one of the goals of CTL: helping teachers connect the material they are teaching to students' real-world situations.

The contextual teaching and learning model (Contextual Teaching and Learning) is a learning model that connects the material being studied to the students' daily lives, whether within their environment, family, school, community, or as citizens, with the aim of discovering the meaning of the material in their lives. The use of the contextual learning model is designed as an alternative solution in learning. This model is considered effective in finding correlations or meaningful relationships between abstract thinking and its application in real-world contexts.

Therefore, in learning activities, students are guided to apply their prior knowledge in real-life situations so that it can be useful in their lives. This fact indicates that student activity and learning outcomes are still less than optimal. This is likely due to the learning methods used not being engaging enough and not encouraging enough students to learn. The teacher is a facilitator and motivator in the learning process. If the teacher still predominantly teaches, students will become passive, leading to boredom and discomfort.

Therefore, teachers must be able to encourage students to be more active in the classroom. Efforts to increase activity and learning outcomes require the use of contextual

learning (CTL) methods. This method is expected to help teachers connect learning materials and foster collaboration at home and at school. Through this method, students will discover the material they are learning for themselves and automatically become familiar with the concepts being studied.

Contextual Teaching and Learning is a learning concept that helps teachers connect the material being taught to students' real-world situations and encourages students to make connections between their knowledge and its application in their lives as family and community members. The contextual learning model is not exclusive but can be combined with other learning models, for example: discovery, process skills, experiments, demonstrations, discussions, and others.

For a contextual approach to be implemented effectively, it requires teachers to be innovative, creative, dynamic, effective, and efficient in order to create a conducive learning environment. Teachers are no longer the sole resource in learning, and activities have shifted to students as the center of learning, with the teacher's role being merely a motivator and facilitator. Therefore, student enthusiasm can be increased by using a variety of methods, materials, and media.

In conducting research, it can be found that there is an application of activities to construct or build students' own knowledge, making students trained to reason and think critically through inquiry activities or finding problems themselves, freedom to ask questions (questioning), the application of a learning community, namely training students to work together, share ideas, share experiences, knowledge, communicate with each other so that positive interactions occur between students and ultimately students are actively involved in learning together. Based on direct observations of the Entrepreneurship learning process at SMKN 1 Sambas, the following findings were obtained:

In the initial stages of learning, teachers consistently linked the material to real-life business examples in the students' local environment, such as home-based culinary businesses, small workshops, and grocery stores.

1. Most students were able to identify simple business problems, such as limited capital, marketing, and time management.
2. During group discussions, more than half of the students actively expressed their opinions, both in the form of business ideas and solutions to problems.
3. There was increased interaction between students, marked by two-way discussions and the division of tasks within groups.
4. Students appeared more confident in asking questions and providing feedback during group presentations compared to before the implementation of CTL.

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model has proven quite effective in improving vocational high school students' soft skills, particularly in entrepreneurship, because it emphasizes learning that is relevant to the real world and students' needs. CTL is a learning model that connects course material to students' real-life contexts, enabling them to understand and apply knowledge to solve everyday problems.

In vocational high school entrepreneurship, the implementation of CTL aims to ensure students not only master business theory but also develop soft skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, problem-solving, and responsibility.

Steps for Implementing CTL in the Classroom

1) (*Constructivism*)
   a. The teacher begins by relating the material to the students' real experiences.
   b. Example: before discussing marketing strategies, the teacher asks students to tell about their shopping experiences at markets or online stores.
2) (*Inquiry*)
   a. Students are invited to search for and discover concepts through observation, small research, or projects.
   b. Example: students are asked to conduct a simple survey about MSME products around Sambas.
3) (*Questioning*)
   a. The teacher asks provocative questions to foster curiosity..
   b. Example: "Why does product A sell better than product B even though it is more expensive?"
4) (*Learning Community*)
   a. Students work in groups to discuss, share ideas, or create small business projects.
   b. Example: creating a mini business group that produces simple products.
5) (*Modeling*)
   a. Teachers or practitioners provide real examples.
   b. Example: bringing in local entrepreneurs to share experiences.
6) (*Reflection*)
   a. Students reflect on their learning experiences.
   b. Example: writing down what they learned after making a mini business product.
7) (*Authentic Assessment*)

   Teachers assess processes and outcomes through observations, projects, presentations, and portfolios. The assessment focuses not only on the product but also on attitude, collaboration, and creativity.

Therefore, the implementation of CTL emphasizes learning from real-world experiences, hands-on practice, and collaboration, rather than simply memorizing theory.

4. CONCLUSION

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model has a significant positive influence in improving the Soft Skills of SMKN 1 Sambas class students in the Entrepreneurship subject. CTL allows students to learn in a way that is relevant and meaningful to their daily lives, which helps them develop Soft Skill skills such as communication, cooperation, problem solving, and creativity by implementing the CTL model in the Entrepreneurship subject, SMKN 1 Sambas can help students develop Soft Skill skills that are important for their success in the world of work and in everyday life. CTL creates a learning environment that is relevant, meaningful, and actively engages students, so they can learn better and develop their potential as entrepreneurs.

By implementing the CTL model, students of SMKN 1 Sambas can develop soft skills relevant to the world of entrepreneurship, so they are better prepared for careers and building their own businesses in the future. The use of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in the Entrepreneurship subject at SMKN 1 Sambas provides positive learning outcomes in improving students' soft skills. Students become more active in the learning process, are able to connect knowledge with the real world, and develop better social skills and ways of thinking. This research provides theoretical contributions to the development of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and vocational education studies through the following aspects:

Expanding the scope of CTL theory,

1. This research strengthens the argument that CTL is not only effective in improving cognitive achievement but also plays a significant role in developing students' soft skills, particularly in the context of vocational education and entrepreneurship learning.
2. Strengthening the relationship between CTL and 21st-century soft skills. The findings of this research demonstrate a direct link between CTL components (constructivism, inquiry, learning communities, reflection, and authentic assessment) and the strengthening of soft skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, and responsibility. This enriches the literature, which has previously emphasized academic learning outcomes.
3. Contribution to the study of vocational entrepreneurship education. This research positions Entrepreneurship as a strategic pedagogical space for soft skills development, thus adding a theoretical perspective that entrepreneurship education is oriented not only toward business knowledge but also toward the development of students' personal and social competencies. Implications for Learning Practice.
4. Entrepreneurship teachers are advised to integrate local context and students' real-life experiences into every lesson plan. Project-based learning and group discussions should be the primary strategies for developing soft skills. Learning assessment should not only focus on cognitive aspects but also include systematic and ongoing assessment of soft skills.

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