

FOSTERING WORK READINESS THROUGH PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE VALUES AT SMK RYO YUWARAJA

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Abstract

The work readiness of Vocational High School (SMK) students is determined not only by the mastery of technical skills but also by an understanding of the professionalism values required in the professional world. One of the competencies that needs to be developed is an understanding of professional public service, which encompasses service ethics, communication, responsibility, and an orientation toward user satisfaction. This community service activity aims to enhance the understanding and work readiness of students at SMK Ryo Yuwaraja through the provision of professional public service values. The implementation method was conducted in four stages: preparation, execution, evaluation, as well as reporting and follow-up. The training sessions were delivered utilizing interactive lectures, discussions, case studies, and public service simulations that engaged active student participation. The results of the activity indicated an increase in students' understanding of professional public service concepts. Students no longer perceived public service merely as an administrative activity, but rather as a process that demands professional attitudes, ethics, effective communication, and accountability in service delivery. Public service simulations proved to be the most effective method in helping students internalize the values of workplace professionalism. In addition to enhancing knowledge, this activity also fostered the development of discipline, responsiveness, and a service-oriented mindset. Consequently, the provision of professional public service values is proven to contribute positively to enhancing the work readiness of vocational school students and strengthening the synergy between higher education institutions and vocational education facilities.

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INTRODUCTION

The increasingly competitive development of the professional world demands that Vocational High School (SMK) graduates possess not only technical skills tailored to their fields of expertise, but also professional workplace attitudes and behavioral competencies. One crucial aspect that SMK graduates need to acquire is an understanding of professional public service values, particularly for students with the potential to work in the service sector, administration, or both government and private institutions that are oriented toward community service.

Public service refers to activities related to fulfilling community needs for goods, services, and administrative support provided by state apparatuses or designated institutions. In practice, public service demands professionalism, which is reflected through discipline, responsibility, work ethics, effective communication, and an orientation toward user satisfaction. These values constitute a significant component of Public Administration studies and are highly relevant to be introduced early to SMK students as a foundation for entering the professional world.

As a vocational education institution, SMK Ryo Yuwaraja holds a strategic role in preparing a professional world that is job-ready and competitive. However, based on preliminary observations and communication with the school administration, limitations remain regarding students' understanding of professional public service concepts, specifically concerning service ethics, the conduct of officials, and the application of professionalism values within the workplace. This condition could potentially affect students' work readiness upon graduation, particularly when they enter a professional environment that demands direct interaction with the public or service users.

As an implementation of the Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi (the Three Pillars of Higher Education), specifically community service, Public Administration lecturers bear the responsibility to contribute to enhancing human resource capacity and quality within vocational secondary education environments. This community service initiative is realized through the provision of professional public service values to the students of SMK Ryo Yuwaraja, aiming to improve their work readiness across knowledge, attitude, and comprehension of professional work culture.

Through this training activity, it is expected that the students of SMK Ryo Yuwaraja will be able to comprehend the importance of public service oriented toward satisfaction, ethics, and responsibility, as well as internalize these values as part of their professional character. Consequently, this community service is anticipated to offer a tangible contribution to supporting students' work readiness and strengthening the role of higher education institutions in addressing the needs of society and the educational sector.

METHOD

This community service initiative was conducted at SMK Ryo Yuwaraja, targeting its vocational students. The implementation method was structured to provide a comprehensive understanding of professional public service values to enhance students' work readiness through several distinct stages:

1. Preparation Stage

This phase involved coordination with the school administration to determine the schedule, the number of participants, and logistical requirements. During this stage, the service team identified the partner's specific challenges and developed the training materials, which encompassed the fundamental concepts of public service, values of professionalism, service ethics, and their relevance to the professional world.

2. Execution Stage

This stage was carried out through training and dissemination sessions using interactive lectures, discussions, and case studies. The material was delivered communicatively to ensure easy comprehension by the students and was directly linked to real-world workplace scenarios. Additionally, simple public service simulations were conducted to train students in behavioral skills, communication, and service ethics, serving as a practical tool to internalize professionalism values.

3. Evaluation Stage

This phase was conducted to gauge the level of students' comprehension regarding the delivered material. The evaluation was carried out by observing participant engagement, conducting question-and-answer sessions, and performing brief reflections following the activity. The evaluation results were utilized to assess the effectiveness of the community service in enhancing students' understanding and work readiness.

4. Reporting and Follow-Up Stage

This final stage comprised the compilation of the community service report and manuscript, alongside providing formal recommendations to the school administration regarding the sustainable reinforcement of professional public service values.

DISCUSSION

1. The Urgency of Providing Public Service Values to Vocational High School Students

Vocational High School (SMK) students are prepared to enter the professional world within a relatively short period upon completing their education. Consequently, students' work readiness is determined not only by the mastery of technical skills but also by the professional attitudes, behaviors, and values embedded within them. In this context, providing professional public

service values becomes highly critical, particularly for students who will eventually work in the service sector, administration, or organizations oriented toward user satisfaction.

Within the framework of Public Administration studies, public service is understood not merely as a bureaucratic activity, but rather as an interactive process between service providers and recipients that demands professionalism, ethics, and accountability. Instilling these values in the students of SMK Ryo Yuwaraja serves as a strategic measure to cultivate an early understanding of the importance of professional attitudes in the workplace. This aligns with the objectives of vocational education, which emphasize a balance between hard skills and soft skills as the primary foundation for entering the professional world.

2. The Role of Community Service in Enhancing Work Readiness

Community service, as an integral part of the *Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi* (the Three Pillars of Higher Education), plays a vital role in bridging the gap between the academic world and the real-world needs of society. In this initiative, Public Administration lecturers serve as agents of change who transfer academic knowledge and values into the vocational secondary education environment.



The training provided through this service activity demonstrates that non-formal approaches, such as dissemination and short-term training, are capable of exerting a positive impact on enhancing students' work readiness. This activity not only enriches students' insights but also fosters an awareness of the critical importance of professional attitudes in the professional world. Consequently, community service functions as a strategic instrument in supporting the quality improvement of human resources starting from the secondary education level.

3. Students' Understanding of Professional Public Service Concepts

The results of the activity indicated a shift in students' understanding of public service concepts. Prior to the training sessions, the majority of students

perceived public service merely as formal and rigid administrative activities. However, after receiving the material and case studies, students began to comprehend that public service encompasses aspects of attitude, ethics, communication, and an orientation toward user satisfaction.



This conceptual shift is crucial as it reflects the process of internalizing professional public service values. A comprehensive understanding of public service will shape students' perspectives on the professional world, particularly in navigating situations that demand interaction with the public or customers. Consequently, this training contributes to building a professional mindset that is highly relevant to the demands of today's professional world.

4. The Effectiveness of Interactive Lectures, Discussions, and Simulations

The implementation methods utilized in this activity—namely interactive lectures, discussions, and simulations—proved to be effective in enhancing student understanding. Interactive lectures allowed for the systematic delivery of foundational concepts, while discussions provided a space for students to express their opinions and experiences. The public service simulation emerged as the most engaging method for the students, as it provided firsthand experience in applying professional service values.

This participatory approach aligns with the principles of adult learning, which emphasize the active involvement of participants. Through simulations, students not only understood the concepts theoretically but also learned to apply them in situations that closely resemble real-world workplace conditions. This demonstrates that experiential learning methods are highly effective in instilling the values of workplace professionalism.



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5. Internalization of Professionalism Values in Work Readiness

Professionalism values—such as discipline, responsibility, ethics, and effective communication—constitute critical aspects of work readiness. Through this training activity, students at SMK Ryo Yuwaraja began to realize that professional attitudes are decisive factors for success in the professional world, alongside the technical skills they possess.

The internalization of these values was evident in the shift in students' attitudes throughout the activity, such as an increased awareness to act politely, accountably, and responsively during the service simulations. This demonstrates that providing professional public service values is capable of shaping students' professional character, making them better prepared to meet the demands of the modern professional world.

6. Implications of the Activity for Vocational Education

This community service initiative holds significant implications for the development of vocational education. Providing professional public service values can serve as a valuable complement to the vocational high school (SMK) curriculum, which has traditionally placed greater emphasis on technical aspects. Integrating public service materials and workplace professionalism into the learning process can assist students in achieving a more comprehensive state of work readiness.

Furthermore, this activity demonstrates that collaboration between higher education institutions and vocational secondary schools is an effective strategy for enhancing graduate quality. With support from academia, schools can reinforce the development of students' professional character to better align with the demands of the professional world and society.

7. Sustainability and Program Development

To ensure the long-term sustainability of this community service initiative's impact, follow-up measures are required to integrate the reinforcement of professional public service values within school activities. The school could adopt these training materials as part of its regular learning process, job training programs, or extracurricular activities..



Furthermore, the development of similar community service programs with a broader scope of material and a longer duration could be pursued in the future. Consequently, the provision of professional public service values would not merely serve as a temporary initiative, but rather evolve into a sustainable process in cultivating the work readiness of vocational school students.

CONCLUSION

The community service initiative—focused on providing professional public service values to the students of SMK Ryo Yuwaraja—was successfully executed and exerted a positive impact on enhancing students' work readiness. Through this activity, students acquired a more comprehensive understanding of public service concepts, the significance of workplace professionalism, and the roles of ethics, attitude, and communication within the professional world.

The implementation methods—incorporating interactive lectures, discussions, and simulations—proved highly effective in assisting students to internalize professional public service values in a practical manner. Students not only grasped

the material theoretically but were also capable of applying it in scenarios that closely resemble real-world workplace conditions.

Overall, this initiative demonstrates that providing professional public service values serves as a relevant and effective strategy to support vocational education. Furthermore, this community service activity underscores the critical role of Public Administration lecturers in supporting the character development and work readiness of vocational school students through the implementation of the Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi (the Three Pillars of Higher Education).

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