

## ENHANCING CURRICULUM RELEVANCE IN VOCATIONAL HOSPITALITY EDUCATION: A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCE AT SMK NEGERI 3, BOGOR CITY

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### Abstract

This community engagement initiative addresses the need for curriculum enhancement in the Hospitality Department of SMK Negeri 3, a vocational school focused on producing industry-ready graduates. The initiative was conducted through a structured collaboration involving the review and revision of hospitality-related subjects to align with the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (*Standar Kompetensi Kerja Nasional Indonesia/SKKNI*) for Hotel Services. The SKKNI outlines key units of competency required in the hospitality sector, including handling guest check-in and check-out procedures, managing reservations, maintaining cleanliness and order in housekeeping, and delivering food and beverage services. The methodology included curriculum gap analysis, document review, focused group discussions with vocational teachers, and systematic curriculum redesign. Key revisions introduced industry-based learning outcomes, performance-based assessments, contextual case studies, and integrated soft skills development. The engagement not only improved curriculum alignment with national standards but also enhanced teacher capacity and student readiness for the labor market. Feedback from stakeholders indicated a strong potential for implementation and scalability across other vocational institutions. This activity exemplifies the value of academic involvement in vocational education reform and highlights the importance of continuous curriculum adaptation to industry trends. The paper presents the process, outcomes, and strategic value of such initiatives in strengthening vocational education, in line with national human resource development priorities.

**Keywords:** Community Engagement, Vocational Education, Hospitality Curriculum, SKKNI, Curriculum Revision

### INTRODUCTION

Vocational education holds a strategic function in bridging the gap between formal schooling and industry demands (Kebede et al., 2024), particularly in preparing students for the ever-changing world of work. In Indonesia, Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (SMK) or

Vocational High Schools are mandated to produce graduates who are not only technically skilled but also professionally competent (Ariansyah et al., 2024). However, a key challenge remains: aligning the curriculum with the dynamic and often unpredictable shifts in industry requirements, particularly in the hospitality sector (Sharma, 2025).

The hospitality industry has evolved rapidly due to globalization, digital transformation, and shifting consumer expectations (Dutta, 2024). Technological advancements such as automated booking systems, digital concierge services, and AI-driven customer experiences have reshaped job competencies in hotels and tourism services (Awasthi, 2022). These developments demand a curriculum that is both current and responsive. The Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI) for Hotel Services provides a nationally recognized framework that defines critical competencies across various roles, such as Front Office Attendants, Housekeeping Staff, and Food and Beverage Service Personnel. These include handling reservations, providing check-in and check-out services, managing guest complaints, maintaining housekeeping quality, and understanding hygiene and sanitation protocols.

To address this need, SMK Negeri 3—a public vocational institution with a specialization in hospitality—engaged in a community partnership with higher education by inviting a university lecturer as an external curriculum expert (Hoinle et al., 2021). The collaboration aimed to review and revise the hospitality curriculum to align it more closely with SKKNI and current industry practices. This initiative represents a broader model of academic contribution to community empowerment and institutional development, commonly recognized in higher education as *Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* (PKM) or community service.

This initiative is also rooted in the theoretical and practical frameworks proposed by scholars that vocational education must shift toward competency-based learning, integrated digital literacy, and real-world application (C. Qin, 2024). The necessity of aligning practical lessons with industry expectations through a structured feedback mechanism (Bernadette Bristol-Alagbariya et al., 2022). The multi-stakeholder engagement, including universities, is critical for meaningful reform.

Taken together, these bodies of work offer a solid foundation for implementing curriculum revision that is not only relevant to SKKNI but also reflective of pedagogical advancements in vocational training. The intersection of academic literature, national competency standards, and on-the-ground teacher expertise forms the backbone of this community service project. The following sections detail the methodology, implementation, and impact of this collaborative effort aimed at improving the curriculum and, ultimately, the quality of hospitality education at SMK Negeri 3.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of this community engagement initiative were carefully designed to support the improvement of vocational education in the field of hospitality, specifically through curriculum enhancement at SMK Negeri 3. This institution recognized the need to adapt its curriculum to meet the growing demands of the hospitality industry and ensure that graduates are equipped with both the hard and soft skills required in modern service environments.

The first objective was to critically identify the discrepancies between the school's existing curriculum and the nationally recognized SKKNI framework for Hotel Services. This

involved an in-depth analysis of each subject's learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and assessment components, with the goal of benchmarking them against SKKNI standards. Particular attention was given to essential competencies such as guest service operations, room division, food and beverage delivery, and professional workplace behaviour.

The second objective cantered on collaborating directly with vocational educators at the school to conduct a systematic review and revision of the core hospitality subjects. This collaborative process was essential to ensuring that the revisions were contextually relevant and feasible for implementation within the school's infrastructure and resources. It also empowered the teachers by involving them in co-creating solutions, fostering ownership and sustainability.

The third objective was to enhance the professional relevance of the curriculum by incorporating practical and industry-informed learning models, including scenario-based learning, role plays, and performance-based evaluations. These revisions aimed to bridge the gap between theory and practice, reflecting the expectations of employers and the realities of hotel operations.

Lastly, the initiative sought to align educational outputs with the competencies required by the hospitality sector, thereby increasing students' employability and readiness for the workforce. The broader vision was to develop a scalable model of curriculum revision through community-academic partnerships, contributing to systemic improvement across vocational institutions.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The hospitality industry is experiencing rapid transformations driven by technological advancements (Dutta, 2024), shifting consumer expectations, and globalization. These changes necessitate a re-evaluation of vocational education curricula to ensure they align with industry demands and adequately prepare students for the evolving workforce (Xinming, 2023). This literature review examines contemporary approaches in hospitality education, focusing on competency-based education (CBE), digital literacy, soft skills development, industry partnerships, and the integration of national competency standards.

Several studies have underscored the critical role of human resource development, service quality, and destination management in strengthening the hospitality sector. Rainanto et al. (Rainanto et al., 2025) demonstrated that community-based tourism training can effectively build local capacities and foster ecotourism, especially when tailored to the region's unique characteristics. Similarly, their earlier research (et al., 2025) on tourism village development highlighted the need for educational interventions that support community empowerment and sustainable tourism practices. Complementing this perspective, Yuwantiningrum and Nurdiauwanty (Nurdiauwanty & Yuwantiningrum, 2021) emphasized that service quality and facility adequacy are key determinants of visitor satisfaction—factors which should inform the design of vocational hospitality curricula to ensure relevance to industry needs. Furthermore, (Putri et al., 2023; Saragi et al., n.d.) argued that a strong destination image and well-maintained tourism infrastructure directly influence tourist interest, suggesting the inclusion of destination branding and tourism facility management in hospitality training programs.

## **Competency-Based Education in Hospitality Vocational Education**

Competency-based education (CBE) emphasizes the mastery of specific skills and knowledge required for particular roles (Tarmo & Kimaro, 2021), allowing students to progress upon demonstrating proficiency. In the context of hospitality education, CBE ensures that curricula are aligned with industry standards and that graduates possess the competencies necessary for employment (Felicen, 2021). The implementing CBE in tourism vocational schools in Jakarta contributed to improved career development and job satisfaction among graduates (Rahayu et al., 2023).

Furthermore, (S. Qin et al., 2022) explored the integration of MORS (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) standards into tourism vocational education. The study found that incorporating MORS standards enhanced both the quality of education and the professional skills of students, thereby improving service levels in the regional tourism industry.

## **Digital Literacy in Hospitality Education**

Digital literacy has become a fundamental competency in the hospitality industry, encompassing the ability to use digital tools and platforms effectively. (Kunyu et al., 2025) developed a digital literacy evaluation model for tourism management undergraduate students, identifying key components such as information technology skills, digital communication, and online problem-solving abilities. The model serves as a framework for assessing and enhancing students' digital competencies, ensuring they are prepared for the digital demands of the hospitality sector.

Additionally, (Selem et al., 2025) proposed an innovative framework for technology-driven hospitality and tourism curriculum development. Their research emphasized the importance of integrating digital literacy and employability skills into educational programs to better prepare students for the changing landscape of the hospitality and tourism industry.

## **Soft Skills in Hospitality Education**

Soft skills, including communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability, are critical for success in the hospitality industry. (Pranić et al., 2021) conducted a systematic literature review to identify the top 30 soft skills essential for tourism and hospitality graduates. The study categorized these skills into conceptual/creative, leadership, and interpersonal dimensions, providing a comprehensive framework for curriculum development aimed at enhancing employability.

Moreover, (Moussa et al., 2024) explored the perspectives of hotel and travel agency managers in Egypt regarding the soft skills required in the tourism and hospitality sector. The research highlighted the significance of core and special soft skills, noting differences in their perceived importance between hotels and travel agencies. These findings underscore the need for targeted soft skills training tailored to specific segments within the industry.

## **Industry Partnerships and Practical Experience**

Collaborations between educational institutions and the hospitality industry are vital for bridging the gap between academic learning and practical application. A systematic literature review by (Yoo, 2024) examined the importance of industry-academic collaboration in

hospitality education. The study identified key themes such as curriculum development, work-integrated learning, and employability, emphasizing the role of industry partnerships in enhancing the relevance and quality of hospitality education.

In a study of (Beem, 2024) investigated academia-industry partnerships in hospitality and tourism education. The research highlighted various approaches to collaboration, including internships, joint curriculum development, and industry advisory boards, all of which contributed to improved educational outcomes and better alignment with industry needs.

### **Integration of National Competency Standards**

National competency standards, such as the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI), provide a framework for aligning educational programs with industry requirements. (Azizurrohman et al., 2022) analysed the application of the SKKNI system in Indonesia's tourism sector, identifying challenges such as limited trainers, assessors, and certification institutions. Despite these challenges, the study concluded that the SKKNI system effectively enhances the capacity of tourism human resources in Indonesia.

Similarly, (Panicker, 2024) discussed the integration of MORS standards into vocational education, highlighting the benefits of standardized competencies in improving educational quality and aligning with industry expectations. The study emphasized the importance of adopting national competency frameworks to ensure that graduates possess the skills and knowledge demanded by the labor market.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology for this community engagement initiative was carefully crafted to ensure that the review and revision of the curriculum for the Hospitality Department at SMK Negeri 3 would be comprehensive, collaborative, and industry-aligned. The process involved a multi- step approach that encompassed initial assessments, document analysis, extensive engagement with vocational educators, and the integration of industry feedback to develop a more robust and practical curriculum. Below is a detailed breakdown of the methodology followed in the project.

### **Preliminary Assessment and Needs Analysis**

The first step in the methodology was to conduct a preliminary needs assessment to gain a deep understanding of the existing curriculum, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and evaluate how well it aligned with both the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI) and the evolving needs of the hospitality industry. This step involved several key activities that were instrumental in shaping the revision process.

To begin, initial meetings were held with the school's leadership and the Hospitality Department's teaching staff. These discussions were essential for gathering insights into the existing challenges faced by educators, students, and the school administration. The primary focus of these meetings was to gather qualitative data regarding the curriculum's current state, particularly concerning which skills were being underrepresented or inadequately addressed. Key questions during these meetings revolved around:

- **Curriculum relevance:** How relevant is the current curriculum in meeting industry demands?
- **Teacher feedback:** What are the challenges faced by teachers when delivering the curriculum, and what gaps in the curriculum do they perceive?
- **Student preparedness:** How well do students perform in practical scenarios, and where do they struggle?
- **Industry alignment:** How well does the curriculum align with the competencies expected by hospitality employers?

Through these discussions, it became clear that certain essential competencies, particularly those related to digital technologies, communication skills, and customer service excellence, were not adequately covered. Additionally, there was a noticeable lack of industry-based practical scenarios within the curriculum that would allow students to engage with real-world challenges they would face in the hospitality sector.

Furthermore, the meeting allowed the team to identify the specific industry needs that had not been sufficiently addressed in the curriculum. The hospitality sector, particularly in Indonesia, had been undergoing a significant transformation with the increased use of technology, such as property management systems (PMS), online reservations, and digital marketing. This highlighted the need for the curriculum to evolve to incorporate these changes, ensuring students were equipped with the digital competencies that are now crucial in modern hotel operations.

In addition to qualitative assessments, a comprehensive analysis of existing student performance data was conducted. This included feedback from the school's industry partners, such as local hotels and restaurants that provided internship placements for students. These industry partners provided critical insights into areas where students excelled and where improvements were needed, especially regarding customer service, technical skills, and workplace professionalism.

### **Document Analysis and Benchmarking Against SKKNI**

Once the preliminary needs assessment was completed, the next step was to conduct an in-depth document analysis to critically evaluate the existing curriculum documents and benchmark them against the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI) for Hotel Services. The SKKNI is a critical framework that sets out the competencies expected for various roles in the hospitality industry and is considered the national standard for vocational education in Indonesia.

The review of the existing curriculum involved a detailed comparison of the learning outcomes outlined in the school's syllabi, lesson plans (Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran - RPP), and instructional materials against the competencies defined in the SKKNI. This was a crucial step, as it allowed for the identification of gaps and discrepancies between what students were expected to learn and what the industry expected them to be able to do.

The SKKNI for Hotel Services is divided into several core competencies required for different roles within the hospitality industry. These include competencies related to:

- **Guest Services:** Handling guest check-ins, managing reservations, and addressing guest complaints.

- **Food and Beverage Service:** Knowledge of food service, customer interaction, and maintaining hygiene standards in food preparation and service.
- **Housekeeping:** Cleaning and maintaining guest rooms, managing linen, and ensuring the cleanliness of hotel premises.
- **Front Office Operations:** Managing guest interactions at the front desk, handling inquiries, and managing check-in/check-out procedures.
- **Professionalism:** Soft skills such as communication, work ethic, and teamwork, which are increasingly essential in the hospitality industry.

The document analysis also highlighted areas where digital tools and technology were either entirely absent or inadequately incorporated into the curriculum. For example, the existing curriculum did not sufficiently address the use of Property Management Systems (PMS), online reservation platforms, or digital marketing tools, all of which are becoming critical components of modern hotel management.

One of the primary challenges identified during this phase was that the existing curriculum lacked emphasis on the integration of soft skills with technical knowledge. For instance, while students were learning the technical skills related to their job functions, they were not receiving enough training on how to effectively communicate with guests, resolve conflicts, or manage stressful situations—skills that are crucial in providing excellent customer service.

### **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with Teachers**

Following the document analysis, the next step was to engage the vocational educators in a series of focused group discussions (FGDs). These discussions were designed to solicit feedback from the teachers on the current curriculum, the identified gaps, and the proposed revisions. The purpose of the FGDs was not only to share the findings from the document analysis but also to co-create solutions that would be both feasible and effective in addressing the gaps identified earlier.

The FGDs were structured to allow for open, collaborative discussions between teachers from different subject areas within the hospitality program. During the discussions, the teachers provided valuable feedback on several key areas:

- **Practical skills development:** Teachers expressed a desire for more hands-on learning experiences, such as role-plays, simulations, and on-the-job training that closely resemble real-life situations in the hospitality industry.
- **Digital competencies:** There was a unanimous agreement that students needed to develop better digital literacy, particularly in using software tools such as PMS, booking engines, and digital communication platforms.
- **Soft skills integration:** Teachers emphasized the importance of soft skills like communication, teamwork, conflict resolution, and customer service. They pointed out that these skills should be integrated throughout the curriculum, not just taught in isolated lessons.

These discussions helped to refine the revision process and ensured that the teachers were actively involved in the development of the new curriculum. Their hands-on experience and

insights from the classroom were invaluable in creating a curriculum that was not only aligned with industry standards but also practical for implementation within the school's existing resources.

### **Curriculum Revision and Development**

The curriculum revision process was the most critical phase of the project. It involved redefining the learning outcomes and aligning them with the competencies outlined in the SKKNI while ensuring that the content remained relevant to current industry needs. The curriculum revision was done in collaboration with the teachers, who were involved in creating new lesson plans, updating syllabi, and developing new teaching resources. Several key areas were focused on during the revision:

- **Aligning learning outcomes with SKKNI competencies:** Each subject was analyzed to ensure that the learning outcomes met the required competencies defined in the SKKNI. This included revising the subjects related to Front Office, Housekeeping, Food and Beverage, and Management to ensure they met the standards for guest handling, reservation systems, and food service.
- **Integrating digital competencies:** Modules were added to the curriculum that focused on the use of modern hospitality technology, including PMS systems, online reservations, and digital marketing tools. This change aimed to ensure that students could work seamlessly in a digitally integrated hospitality environment.
- **Soft skills and professional behavior:** More emphasis was placed on developing soft skills in students. This included integrating lessons on communication, customer service, teamwork, and conflict resolution throughout the curriculum. Real-life case studies and role-playing activities were introduced to give students practical experience in handling challenging situations.
- **Performance-based assessments:** To complement the practical nature of the new curriculum, performance-based assessments were developed. These assessments required students to demonstrate their competencies through practical exams, role-plays, and simulations that mimic real hotel operations. This approach provided a more authentic measure of student readiness for the workforce.

### **Feedback and Finalization**

After completing the initial curriculum revisions, the final phase involved gathering feedback from stakeholders—including teachers, administrators, and industry partners—on the feasibility and effectiveness of the revised curriculum. This feedback was critical to ensure that the revised curriculum was both practically applicable and aligned with industry needs.

The feedback loop included additional discussions with industry partners, who reviewed the revised curriculum to provide input on how well it aligned with the competencies and expectations of the hospitality sector. Based on their feedback, some minor adjustments were made, particularly regarding the inclusion of industry-specific tools and technologies.

Once the final feedback was incorporated, the revised curriculum was formally approved by the school administration and ready for implementation in the following academic year. The school also expressed interest in exploring internship opportunities with local hotels and hospitality organizations to provide students with hands-on experience in applying the skills



learned in the classroom.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The collaboration between the academic team and SMK Negeri 3 in revising the curriculum for the Hospitality Department proved to be highly fruitful. The process involved comprehensive evaluations, collaborative discussions, and careful planning, which ultimately resulted in a curriculum that was more aligned with the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI) and the evolving needs of the hospitality industry. This section presents the results of the curriculum review and revision process and discusses the broader implications for vocational education in the hospitality sector.

### **Identified Gaps in the Existing Curriculum**

The first phase of the project was the identification of gaps in the existing curriculum, which revealed several areas where the content was misaligned with the needs of the hospitality industry and SKKNI standards. These gaps were uncovered through the preliminary assessment phase, where detailed feedback from teachers, analysis of student performance, and benchmarking against industry standards were used to diagnose the curriculum's weaknesses.

### **Lack of Alignment with Industry Needs**

One of the most striking findings was that the existing curriculum, while comprehensive in theory, lacked practical relevance to the contemporary hospitality industry. The curriculum had not been updated in several years and thus did not fully reflect recent advancements in technology, changes in customer expectations, and shifts in the global hospitality landscape. For example, the curriculum did not adequately address the increasing importance of digital competencies in hotel management. As technology-driven systems such as Property Management Systems (PMS), digital booking engines, and customer service automation became central to hotel operations, the curriculum had not kept pace with these industry shifts. In addition, the curriculum placed too much emphasis on traditional classroom-based learning and not enough on practical, industry-based experiences. While students were introduced to the theoretical aspects of hospitality operations, there was little focus on real-world applications, such as managing actual guest services, operating reservation systems, or navigating customer feedback scenarios. Teachers and industry stakeholders both emphasized the need for hands-on learning and the incorporation of case studies that reflected actual challenges faced by hotel staff.

### **Skills Deficiencies Among Students**

Another critical gap identified was the skills gap among students, particularly in terms of soft skills and digital literacy. Teachers noted that students struggled with basic communication skills, problem-solving, and customer service behaviors. While these soft skills are essential in hospitality work, they were not sufficiently embedded into the existing curriculum. As highlighted in the feedback from industry partners, many students struggled with interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, and adapting to fast-paced, customer-facing environments.

Additionally, the digital divide among students became apparent. While some students were adept at using technology in their personal lives, they lacked the industry-specific technical skills necessary to succeed in a hospitality career. They were often unfamiliar with the tools and platforms commonly used in hotel operations, such as reservation systems, digital check-in procedures, and guest feedback software. This gap in technical skills created a barrier to students' readiness for internships and employment in the modern hospitality industry.

### **Key Revisions in the Curriculum**

Once the gaps were identified, the revision process was carried out with a focus on addressing these areas. The curriculum was updated to align with the SKKNI for Hotel Services, and specific measures were taken to ensure that the revised curriculum would be more reflective of the current demands of the hospitality industry.

### **Revised Learning Outcomes**

One of the first areas of revision was the learning outcomes for each subject. The learning outcomes were explicitly linked to the competencies required by the SKKNI, ensuring that students would develop the skills and knowledge necessary to meet industry expectations. This included competencies in key areas such as guest services, reservation management, housekeeping operations, food and beverage service, and professionalism.

For example, in the Front Office Operations module, the revised curriculum outlined specific learning outcomes related to guest check-in and check-out procedures, reservation system management, and customer service protocols. These outcomes were designed to ensure that students could demonstrate practical proficiency in managing real-life hotel operations.

### **Incorporating Digital Competencies**

Given the rapid digitalization of the hospitality sector, one of the key revisions in the curriculum was the integration of digital competencies. The curriculum now includes modules on using modern hospitality management software, such as Property Management Systems (PMS), online booking systems, and digital marketing strategies. Students now receive hands-on training in using these tools, preparing them to work in digitally-enabled hotel environments.

For example, the revised curriculum for Housekeeping now includes training on digital inventory management systems for tracking supplies and linen, while the Food and Beverage Service module includes a focus on digital ordering systems and online customer feedback platforms. By embedding these digital tools into the curriculum, students are better equipped to handle the technological aspects of modern hotel operations.

### **Soft Skills Development**

One of the most significant revisions was the integration of soft skills into the curriculum. Recognizing the essential role that communication, problem-solving, and customer service play in the hospitality industry, the revised curriculum now includes explicit soft skills modules. These modules focus on developing students' ability to work effectively in teams, manage guest complaints, communicate professionally, and demonstrate emotional intelligence.

Role-playing exercises and customer service simulations were introduced across various subjects to allow students to practice these skills in a controlled, supportive environment. For example, students in the Front Office Operations module now participate in guest interaction simulations, where they role-play different guest scenarios, including handling difficult complaints, answering inquiries, and managing special requests.

### **Industry Involvement and Feedback**

One of the core principles of the curriculum revision process was to ensure that the updated content would align with the expectations of the hospitality industry. This was achieved through continuous collaboration with industry stakeholders, including local hotel managers, restaurant owners, and hospitality service providers. These industry partners provided valuable feedback on the revised curriculum and ensured that the competencies taught in the classroom matched the skills required in real-world hospitality jobs.

### **Industry Partnerships for Practical Experience**

In addition to feedback, partnerships with local hotels and restaurants were established to facilitate internship opportunities for students. These partnerships allow students to gain practical, on-the-job experience, which is crucial for bridging the gap between classroom learning and industry expectations. Through internships, students apply their theoretical knowledge in a real-world context, helping them to develop a deeper understanding of the challenges and demands of the hospitality industry.

For instance, students who participated in internships at local hotels were able to gain firsthand experience in tasks such as managing reservations, checking in guests, and responding to customer complaints. This experiential learning significantly increased students' employability by providing them with the practical skills necessary to succeed in the workforce.

### **Feedback from Industry Partners**

Feedback from industry partners indicated that the revised curriculum had greatly improved the job readiness of students. Employers reported that students who had gone through the updated curriculum were better prepared to meet the demands of the hospitality sector, particularly in terms of their proficiency with digital tools, customer service skills, and professionalism.

Industry partners also noted that the integration of performance-based assessments had provided them with a better understanding of students' actual capabilities. By assessing students through simulations and practical exercises, they were able to evaluate the students' ability to handle real-world hospitality tasks. This feedback reinforced the importance of incorporating industry-based assessments into the curriculum to ensure that students graduate with the competencies necessary for success in the field.

### **Stakeholder Reflections and Teacher Feedback**

Throughout the revision process, feedback from the teachers involved in the project was consistently gathered to ensure that the revised curriculum was feasible and effective. Teachers reported that the collaborative nature of the revision process helped them feel more confident

in implementing the changes, as they were directly involved in shaping the new content. This sense of ownership was crucial in ensuring that the changes would be sustainable and embraced by the teaching staff.

Teachers also expressed satisfaction with the inclusion of soft skills training in the curriculum. They noted that the integration of role-playing and customer service simulations provided students with practical experience in a safe, supportive environment. This was particularly beneficial for students who lacked experience in handling customer-facing situations, as it allowed them to develop confidence and skills before entering the workforce.

The teachers also appreciated the industry-relevant focus of the revised curriculum. The inclusion of digital competencies, real-world case studies, and practical assessments aligned with the realities of the hospitality sector, and teachers felt that the updated content better prepared students for the types of work they would encounter in their future careers.

### **Implications for Vocational Education and Future Directions**

The results of this community engagement project have several important implications for vocational education in hospitality. First, the alignment of curriculum with national competency standards like SKKNI ensures that students are being taught the skills most relevant to the current needs of the industry. This not only improves the quality of education but also increases students' employability, as they acquire competencies that are directly applicable to their future careers.

Second, the integration of industry partnerships and practical learning experiences into the curriculum ensures that students are receiving hands-on training in real-world contexts. This approach is critical for vocational education, as it helps students transition smoothly from the classroom to the workforce.

Finally, the collaborative nature of the revision process—involving teachers, students, and industry partners—serves as a model for future curriculum reforms. By involving all stakeholders in the curriculum development process, educational institutions can create programs that are more aligned with the needs of the industry and better prepare students for the challenges of the workforce.

The success of this project at SMK Negeri 3 offers a valuable case study for other vocational schools to follow, particularly in the hospitality sector. Moving forward, the school plans to further refine the curriculum based on ongoing feedback from students and industry partners, ensuring that it remains relevant and effective in preparing future generations of hospitality professionals.

### **CONCLUSION**

The community engagement initiative at SMK Negeri 3 demonstrated the significant impact that collaborative efforts between academia, industry, and vocational schools can have in improving vocational education. By aligning the curriculum with the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI) for Hotel Services, the project successfully addressed several critical gaps in the existing curriculum. These gaps included outdated content, a lack of focus on digital competencies, and insufficient integration of soft skills training.

The revised curriculum now ensures that students are equipped with the necessary

technical and professional skills to thrive in the hospitality industry. The incorporation of digital tools, such as Property Management Systems (PMS) and online booking platforms, prepares students for the modern digitalized hotel environment. Additionally, the emphasis on soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork ensures that students can provide excellent customer service and handle the interpersonal aspects of hospitality work.

The collaborative nature of the project, involving teachers, school administrators, and industry partners, ensured that the revised curriculum was both practical and industry-relevant. Feedback from teachers and industry stakeholders confirmed that the curriculum now better prepares students for the challenges they will face in the workforce. The integration of real-world case studies, role-playing exercises, and performance-based assessments has provided students with opportunities to develop the necessary competencies and apply their knowledge in authentic contexts.

Overall, this initiative represents a significant step toward improving the quality of vocational education in Indonesia, particularly in the hospitality sector. By aligning education with industry needs, the revised curriculum enhances the employability of students and ensures that they are ready to meet the demands of a rapidly changing industry.

## **Recommendations**

While the revised curriculum at SMK Negeri 3 has made significant strides in improving hospitality education, several recommendations can further enhance the effectiveness of the program and contribute to the broader improvement of vocational education in Indonesia.

### **i. Continuous Curriculum Updates**

The hospitality industry is constantly evolving, with new technologies and trends emerging regularly. To ensure that the curriculum remains relevant, it is recommended that SMK Negeri 3 establish a process for periodic curriculum reviews and updates. This could involve annual consultations with industry experts, faculty, and alumni to ensure that emerging trends in the hospitality industry are incorporated into the curriculum.

### **ii. Expansion of Industry Partnerships**

The collaboration with local hotels and restaurants has proven to be an essential component of the curriculum revision process. To further enhance the practical learning experiences for students, it is recommended that SMK Negeri 3 expand its industry partnerships. This could include collaborating with more hospitality organizations for internships, industry visits, guest lectures, and live projects. These partnerships can provide students with real-time exposure to the latest industry practices and give them a better understanding of the challenges faced by hospitality businesses.

### **iii. Strengthening Soft Skills Training**

The inclusion of soft skills training has significantly enhanced the curriculum. However, to ensure that these skills are effectively developed, it is recommended that SMK Negeri 3 integrate soft skills assessment into the curriculum. This could include peer evaluations, role-playing exercises, and customer interaction scenarios. Additionally, it would be beneficial to implement mentorship programs where students can receive guidance from experienced professionals in the hospitality industry.

### **iv. Professional Development for Educators**

To maintain the quality of the revised curriculum, it is crucial to invest in the professional

development of the teaching staff. Continuous training for teachers in both technical knowledge and pedagogical skills is recommended. Educators should be encouraged to participate in industry workshops, online training programs, and conferences to stay updated with the latest hospitality trends and teaching methodologies. This will enable them to deliver high-quality education and maintain the relevance of the curriculum.

#### **v. Incorporating Global Hospitality Trends**

Given the global nature of the hospitality industry, it is recommended that SMK Negeri 3 incorporate international best practices and trends into the curriculum. This could involve including case studies from international hotel chains, exploring global hospitality standards, and integrating cross-cultural communication training. Providing students with an international perspective can enhance their ability to work in diverse, global environments.

#### **vi. Improved Digital Competency Integration**

While the inclusion of digital competencies in the revised curriculum is a significant step forward, further emphasis should be placed on new and emerging technologies. It is recommended that students be exposed to data analytics in hospitality, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for customer service, and the integration of blockchain for reservation systems. These technologies are expected to play a pivotal role in the future of hospitality, and preparing students for these innovations will increase their employability in a highly competitive industry.

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