

JAPANESE WORK CULTURE: IMPLEMENTING 5S AND HORENSEN FOR STUDENTS OF STATE VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL 1 BUAHDUA SUMEDANG

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Abstract

As the demand for professional workers of productive age increases due to Japan's declining population, the number of Indonesian workers sent there has also grown. This condition encourages many educational institutions to prepare their students to be ready to work in Japan after completing their studies. One effort is by providing Japanese language learning at the senior high school and vocational school levels. However, mastery of speaking, writing, listening, and reading alone is not sufficient to enter the Japanese workforce. Cultural and work ethic differences remain a major challenge, particularly the understanding of the 5S and HoRenSo principles, which are work principles implemented across almost all companies and industries in Japan. Proper application of these principles plays an important role in ensuring smoother workflows and improving work outcomes. Unfortunately, most Indonesian workers are still unfamiliar with them, so when they begin working in Japan, they require an adaptation period that can reduce efficiency. To address this issue, a cluster of lecturers from the Japanese Language Study Program at Widyatama University collaborated with SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua Sumedang to introduce and train students in 5S and HoRenSo principles for the students there.

Keywords: Work Culture, Work Ethics, Horenso, 5S

INTRODUCTION

Japan is a country well known for its discipline and meticulousness. Its work culture is considered quite unique. One of the most fundamental concepts forming the basis of Japanese culture is 5S and HoRenSo. The 5S concept consists of *Seiri* (Sort), *Seiton* (Set in Order), *Seiso* (Shine), *Seiketsu* (Standardize), and *Shitsuke* (Sustain). Another equally important aspect of Japanese corporate culture is *HoRenSo*, an acronym for three principles: *Houkoku* (Report), *Renraku* (Inform), and *Soudan* (Consult). Japanese people consistently apply the 5S and HoRenSo principles in their work, which is one of the reasons Japan is home to many highly advanced and renowned companies. The country's economic progress cannot be separated from the consistent implementation of these business values. The HoRenSo culture ensures smooth and effective communication and information flow within the workplace.

As students prepare to enter the workforce, particularly in Japanese companies operating in Indonesia or in Japan itself, several challenges must be addressed. One of these is the lack of understanding of Japan's highly disciplined and structured work culture. Japanese companies are known for their emphasis on punctuality, teamwork, and a strong sense of responsibility. Many vocational high school (SMK) students are not yet accustomed to such strict work ethics, which can pose challenges when they need to adapt to the highly systematic and disciplined nature of the industrial work environment. This aligns with Santoso's (2012) statement that discipline is a mental attitude that involves doing what should be done at the right time and appreciating the importance of time.

This Community Service Program (PkM) was conducted to provide training on the *5S* and *HoRenSo* concepts to students, with the goal of giving them insights into Japanese work culture. Through this training, students preparing to work in Japan will gain a better understanding of the work culture in Japanese companies, thereby improving their ability to interact effectively in professional settings.

The community service activity is scheduled to take place in the first week of February 2025, specifically on February 6, 2025, at SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua, located on Jl. Raya Buahdua Km. 3, Dusun Sumber, Bojongloa Village, Buahdua District, Sumedang, West Java. SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua is a public vocational high school located in the Buahdua District area. The school, established in 2007, occupies a land area of 15,484 square meters in Dusun Sumber, Bojongloa Village. Various facilities have been built on this site, including both main and supporting facilities. The main facilities at SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua include classrooms, a library, a computer laboratory, and a science laboratory.

As a vocational school, SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua offers four areas of expertise that students can choose from. These four study programs are Automotive Mechatronics Engineering, Light Vehicle Automotive Engineering (TKRO), Online Business and Marketing (BDPM), Computer and Network Engineering (TKJ), and Accounting and Institutional Finance (AKL). In addition to conducting academic learning during regular school hours, SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua also organizes extracurricular activities to develop students' interests and talents. These include organizational and extracurricular programs. The variety of study programs offered at SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua reflects significant potential for its graduates to work in various industrial sectors, such as automotive, office administration, computer technology, and finance.

SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua provides learning opportunities beyond the core curriculum through extracurricular programs, one of which is Japanese language instruction. The Japanese language course is offered because a considerable number of students participate in internship programs in Japan. Students are taught basic Japanese in the extracurricular employment program to provide them with fundamental knowledge of the language, at least for everyday communication, as good communication skills are expected to enhance workers' self-confidence (Rini & Rahmah, 2023).

As we know, Japan is a country rich in culture, where cultural aspects play an important role both in language use and behavior. Therefore, students who are preparing to participate in internship programs in Japan receive training based on their specific needs. They will be placed in various industrial sectors, such as agriculture, healthcare, hospitality, and others. The main challenge, however, lies in the fact that the competencies of graduates still often do not fully meet the standards and demands of the industries.

Japan is a country well-known for its culture of discipline and neatness. The Japanese work culture is considered quite unique. One of the fundamental concepts that underlies Japanese culture is 5S and HoRenSo. This uniqueness cannot be separated from the various characteristics and cultural values deeply ingrained in its society, which have become the identity of the Japanese nation and are widely recognized around the world (Mulyadi, 2014). The 5S concept consists of *Seiri* (Sort), *Seiton* (Set in order), *Seiso* (Shine), *Seiketsu* (Standardize), and *Shitsuke* (Sustain). In Indonesia, this concept is translated as 5R. This way of thinking aims to make workplace organization more effective by simplifying the environment while improving overall performance.

This Community Service Program (PkM) was carried out at SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua. We, from the Japanese Language Study Program PkM cluster, aim to provide training on the 5S and HoRenSo concepts to students at SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua in order to give them insight into Japanese work culture. Through this activity, students who will go to Japan are expected to gain at least a basic understanding of the work culture in Japanese companies, thereby broadening their knowledge and ability to interact effectively in the workplace. This activity was conducted because we realized that the students of SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua were still not familiar with the concepts of 5S and HoRenSo in the Japanese work environment.

The objective of this Community Service Program at SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua is to educate students about 5S and HoRenSo by providing an understanding of their implementation and explaining the benefits of applying these two concepts.

5S refers to a series of workplace activities involving sorting, organizing, cleaning, standardizing, and sustaining. In Indonesia, this concept is known as 5R (*Ringkas, Rapi, Resik, Rawat, Rajin*). The 5S stages include: *Seiri* (Sort), which means separating necessary and unnecessary items in the work area; *Seiton* (Set in order), which means organizing items neatly; *Seiso* (Shine), which means cleaning the environment; *Seiketsu* (Standardize), which means maintaining a tidy and clean workplace; and *Shitsuke* (Sustain), which means consistently applying 5S until it becomes a work habit (Andivas et al., 2023).

Another important aspect of Japanese corporate work culture is HoRenSo (*Houkoku, Renraku, and Soudan*). Japanese people always apply HoRenSo in their work routines, which helps explain why Japan has many successful and well-known companies. The country's economic progress is closely related to the application of this business culture. Hou-Ren-Sou, or HoRenSo, represents the Japanese communication and discussion culture in the workplace. The principle stands for *Houkoku* (to report), *Renraku* (to inform), and *Soudan* (to consult or discuss beforehand). Nearly all Japanese companies implement this work culture. The HoRenSo culture is practiced to ensure that communication and information flow effectively and smoothly (Kustandi, 2018).

Developing competencies in the industrial work environment should not only focus on hard skills but also soft skills. This aligns with the 21st-century vocational skill requirements for students. This understanding serves as the basis for our cluster to conduct the Community Service Program at SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

Collaboration and active participation from partner institutions are highly expected to ensure the success of this community service program. Based on the agreement with the partner institution, to address the identified issues, the project team will implement the program through a training-based approach as part of this Community Service activity. The training is supported by five lecturers from the Japanese Language Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Widyatama, who will deliver material on “Japanese Work Culture: 5S and HoRenSo,” assisted by three students from the same program. The training is intended for students of SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua, Sumedang.

The training program consists of three stages: the preparation stage, the implementation stage, and the reporting stage. The details of each stage are as follows:

1. Preparation Stage

Activities conducted by the partner institution:

- a. Coordinating with the implementation team and student of SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua;
- b. Preparing necessary facilities for the training, such as a room, projector, screen, tables, chairs, and other training equipment.

Activities conducted by the implementation team:

- a. Preparing the Community Service Activity proposal;
- b. Coordinating with SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua;
- c. Conducting internal coordination within the team, including determining the materials to be presented, dividing presentation tasks, deciding on teaching methods, and preparing questionnaires;
- d. Developing a teaching module in the form of a soft file.

2. Implementation Stage

The implementation team provides basic Japanese language training to students of SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua. The students are gathered in the school hall with the implementation team for material presentation. The implementation method used are lecture-based seminar approach, as the lecture method is highly effective when applied to a large number of participants (Shidiq & El-Yunusi, 2024). The training is divided into three sessions with the following material outline:

- a. Session One includes two topics:
 - 1) An overview of Japan in general;
 - 2) An overview of Japanese work culture.
- b. Session Two includes two topics:
 - 1) The 5S work culture (*seiri, seiton, seiso, seiketsu, shitsuke*)
 - 2) The HoRenSo work culture (*houkoku, renraku, soudan*)

3. Reporting Stage

In this stage, the implementation team prepares a final report and analyzes the collected questionnaires. The results of the questionnaires will be reviewed to assess the sustainability of this program and determine whether it can be implemented regularly in future periods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the activity schedule outlined in the proposal titled “Training in Japanese Work Culture: 5S and HoRenSo for Students of SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua Sumedang,” the achievements obtained thus far by the Japanese Language Study Program lectures who conducted this Community Service (PkM) Program include the publication of an article in an online media outlet and the development of a basic Japanese language training module. The link to the published article can be found in Chapter 2 under “Targets and Outputs,” while the training module is attached in the appendix.

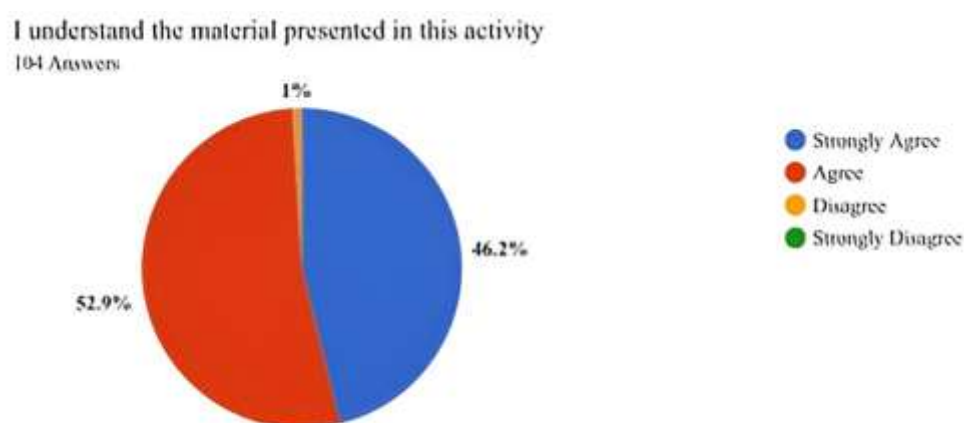


Diagram 1. Results of the Questionnaire on Material Comprehension

Table 1. Results of the Questionnaire on Material Comprehension

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	48	46,2%
Agree	55	52,9%
Disagree	1	1%
Strongly Disagree	0	0

The information presented was interesting and systematic
104 Answers

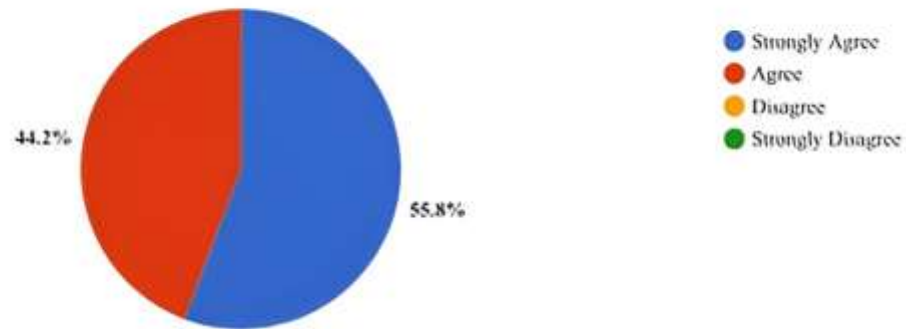


Diagram 2. Interesting and Systematic Information

Table 2. Interesting and Systematic Information

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	58	55,8%
Agree	46	44,2%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0

The timing of the activity was adequate
104 Answers

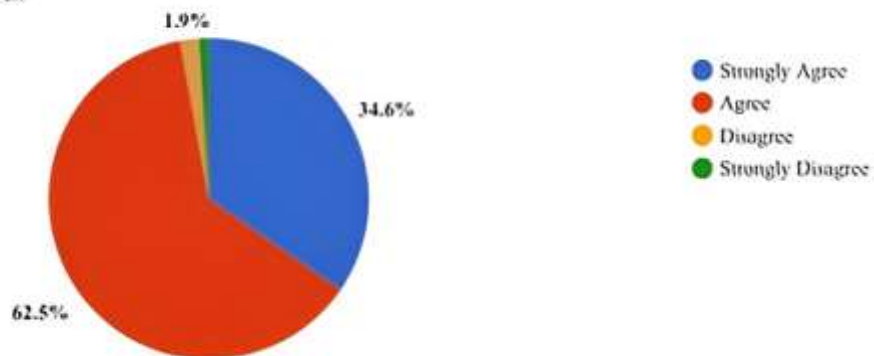


Diagram 3. Activity Schedule Suitability

Table 3. Activity Schedule Suitability

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	36	34,6%
Agree	65	62,5%
Disagree	2	1,9%
Strongly Disagree	1	1%

I liked the presentation skills demonstrated by the speaker
104 Answers

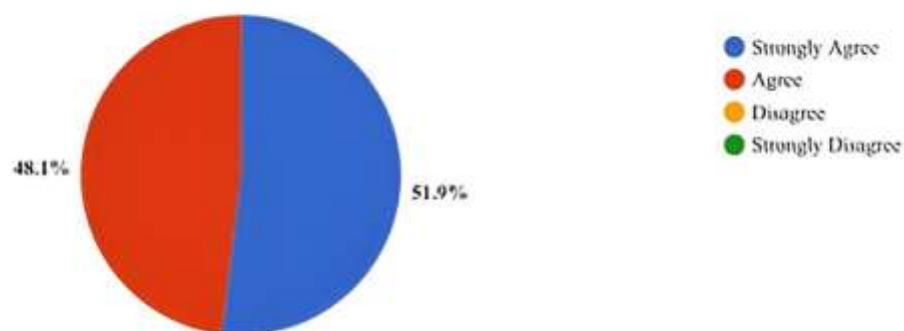


Diagram 4. Presenter's Presentation Skills

Table 4. Presenter's Presentation Skills

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	54	51,9%
Agree	50	48,1%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0

I Liked the Interaction Between the Speaker and the Participants
104 Answers

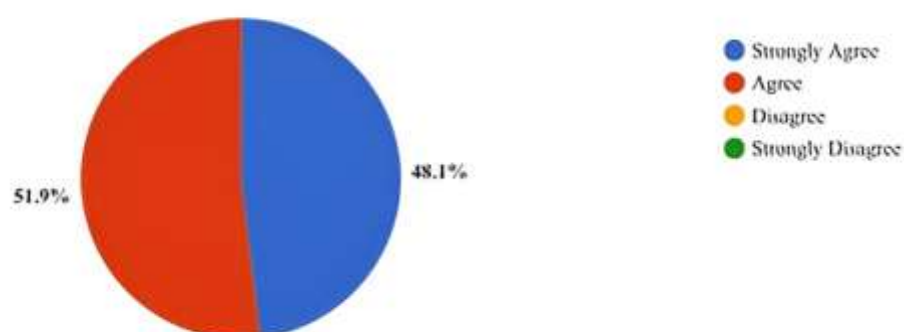


Diagram 5. Interaction Between Presenters and Participants

Table 5. Interaction Between Presenters and Participants

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	50	48,1%
Agree	54	51,9%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0

The implementation of 5S should be applied in daily life
104 Answers

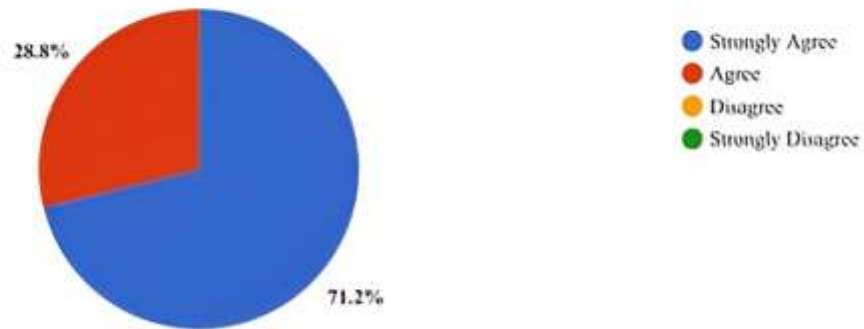


Diagram 6. Implementation of 5S in Daily Life

Table 6. Implementation of 5S in Daily Life

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	74	71,2%
Agree	30	28,8%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0

The implementation of HoRenSo should be applied in daily life
104 Answers

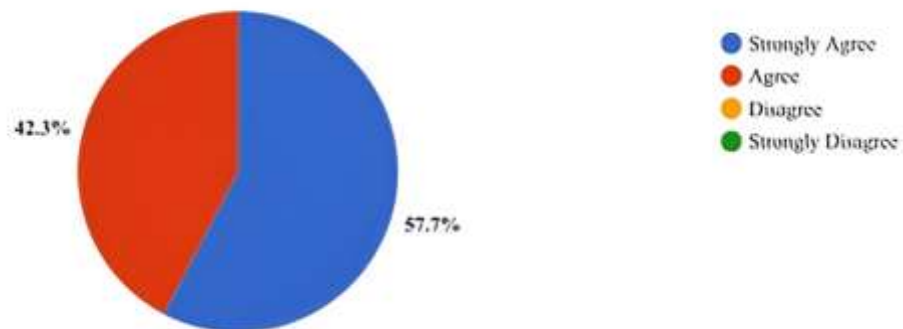


Diagram 7. Implementation of HoRenSo in Daily Life

Table 7. Implementation of HoRenSo in Daily Life

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	60	57,7%
Agree	44	42,3%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0

I feel that I have already practiced 5S and HoRenSo before
104 Answers

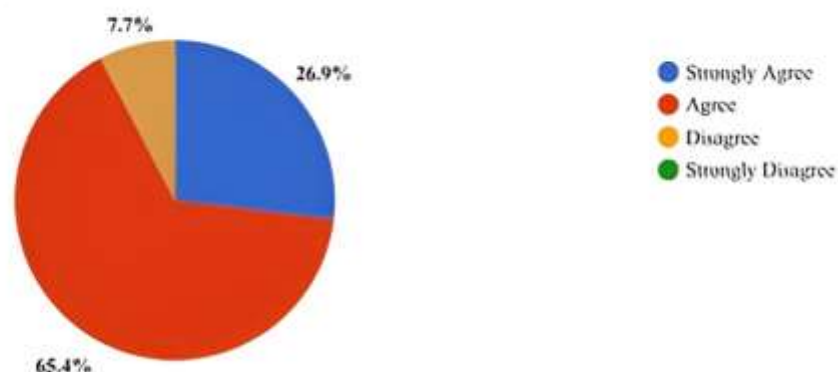


Diagram 8. Previous Implementation of 5S and HoRenSo

Tabel 8. Previous Implementation of 5S and HoRenSo

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	28	26,9%
Agree	68	65,4%
Disagree	8	7,7%
Strongly Disagree	0	0

Training like this should be held again in the future
104 Answers

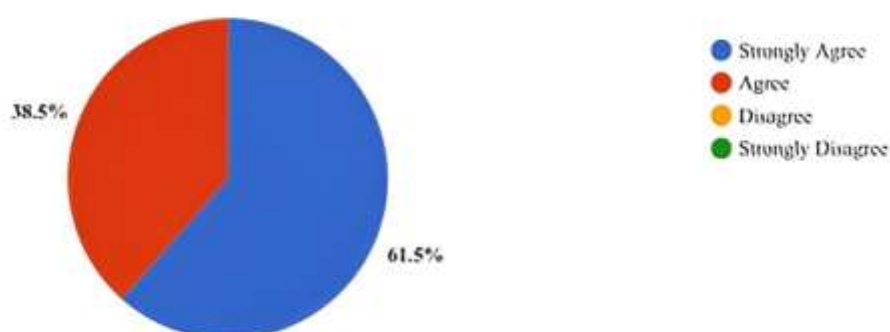


Diagram 9. Future Training Needs

Table 9. Future Training Needs

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	64	61,5%
Agree	40	38,5%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0

After this training, I feel that I have gained knowledge about 5S and HoRenSo as part of Japanese corporate work culture

104 Answers

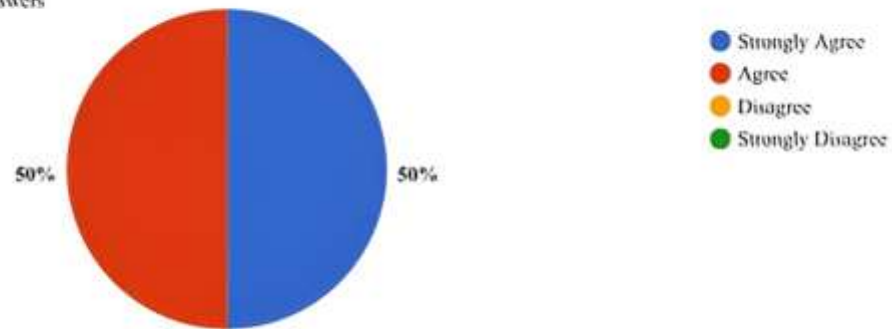


Diagram 10. Knowledge of 5S and HoRenSo

Tabel 10. Knowledge of 5S and HoRenSo

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	52	50%
Agree	52	50%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0

Overall, I am satisfied with this activity

104 Answers

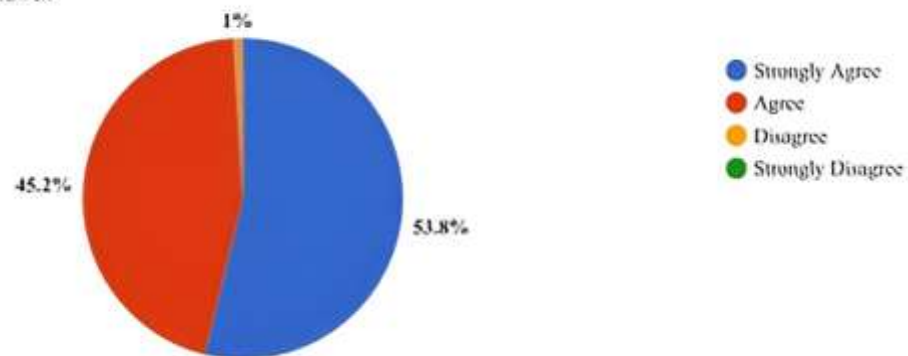


Diagram 11. Satisfaction with the Program

Tabel 11. Satisfaction with the Program

Answer Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	56	53,8%
Agree	47	45,2%
Disagree	1	1%
Strongly Disagree	0	0

CONCLUSION

The Community Service Program (PkM) organized by the lecturers of the Japanese Language Study Program at Widyatama University received an excellent response, as reflected in the positive reception from the partner institution, SMK Negeri 1 Buahdua Sumedang. The students showed high enthusiasm, resulting in an active and engaging training session. In addition, the PkM team distributed questionnaires as an evaluation tool to assess the team's performance and to identify students' interests for future activities. The questionnaire results are attached.

The recommendation for this program is to continue it by conducting monitoring and evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the implemented activities, namely the introduction of Japanese work culture encompassing the concepts of 5S and HoRenSo. This program has the potential to be sustained, given the growing interest among young Indonesians in pursuing work opportunities in Japan.

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