LINK AND MATCH POLICY IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

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ABSTRACT

This research is based on the problem of unemployment of educated workers who are the focus of society. Policies are needed that can increase the relevance of Vocational High School to the needs of the world of work, the business world and the industrial world. This research uses qualitative research methods with a case study research approach that aims to study intensively about the background of the unemployment problem and how link and match policies can be the solution to the problem of unemployment. The results of this study will provide a broad and in-depth picture of link and match policy, namely with Link and Match vocational education can know what competencies (skills) the world needs and what competencies the world needs most.

Keywords: links and match, vocational education, policy, unemployment.

INTRODUCTION

Based on the results of the Central Bureau of Statistics survey over the past year, the open unemployment rate decreased from 5.01% in February 2019 to 4.99% this year. The decline also occurred in the open unemployment rate at all levels of education, the highest being vocational high schools. The open unemployment rate at Vocational High School as of February 2020 was 8.49%, down from 8.63% the previous year. High School followed with an open unemployment rate of 6.77%. The next open unemployment rate is Diploma I/II/III at 6.76%, University 5.73%, Junior High School at 5.02%, and elementary school down by 2.64%. For information, the number of unemployed increased from 6.82 million to 6.88 million. This is due to the number of workforces increasing from 136.18 million in February 2019 to 137.91 million in February 2020.

Students attend school education and choose a degree in hopes of succeeding in the world of work. But one aspect of the job market's success is the ability to take advantage of what schools earn in future jobs (Robst, 2017). The number of schools is only one way to consider the suitability between school and work. (Sloane, 2013) said that workers might not be suitable if the level of education is appropriate, but the type of school is not appropriate. Besides, most studies related to the phenomenon of educational work incompetence look at the level of education (Boudarbat & Chernoff, 2015).

When a person works in a position below his or her level of study, the skills learned informal education may not be fully utilized. Incorrect education occurs vertically between the level of education and work needs and occurs horizontally where there are inconsistencies in the field of study studied with the work. Paying attention to the field of study is essential because it is possible to analyze different types of skills; Education not only provides human resources in general, but certain
areas of study provide job-specific skills for the job market (Hersch, 2012; Walters, 2014; Dakhi, O., 2013, Azman, 2020).

Private sector business leaders believe that this discrepancy is primarily due to problems with the educational structure, quality and content of the education system, in particular, the university system has failed to provide the skills, talent, and job orientation required for the graduate workforce (Mf et al., 2014; Mallisza, 2019; Novalinda et al, 2020; Fajra et al., 2020). This clearly explains that educational inconsistency is a labour-side problem. In addition to identifying the causes of mismatch education, it is also necessary to identify the impact of graduates who are not in line with education, even the large number of educational discrepancies making unemployment increase (Badillo Amador, at al, 2013; Diem, 2014, Zagoto, 2018, Zagoto, 2019; Dakhi, O., 2020).

It is also a significant challenge that must be faced by the Indonesian government to create a skilled workforce by the competencies required by the world of work, in this case, the business world/industrial world whose relevance involves two dimensions namely school and the world of work or society. The problem of unemployment is either due to poor education management or incompetent graduates, which has the impact of a workforce shortage dominated in four areas of expertise, namely maritime, agriculture, tourism, and the creative economy (Mallisza, 2016; Sarumaha, 2018; Dakhi, 2020; Adri et al, 2020).

Link and Match are one of the policies of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia that has existed and developed to increase the relevance of Vocational High School to the needs of the world of work, business and industry in particular. However, there seems to be more effort from the Ministry of Education in improving the existence of Vocational Secondary Schools in the field of participation needed and adapted to the potential and needs of the workforce in the area.

The link and match policy is considered a dig at the competencies needed by the job market in the future which is expected to be a paradigm of educational orientation no longer supply minded but more demand minded (market needs). The link and match policy is divided into two objectives, namely at the high school level and at the college level. Especially at the secondary school level, the government program target (DEPDIKNAS) changes the proportion of high school students with Vocational High School from 70:30 to 40:60. While at the college level, it is expected that the role of the industry creates special training and even cooperates to establish institutions according to the type of industry developed.

Link and match policies are expected to reduce the increasing number of college and secondary school graduates. Soemarso as Chairman of the Polytechnic Board of Executives as well as a lecturer in UI said that the concept of Link and Match between educational institutions and the world of work is considered ideal, where this concept will create a connection between labour suppliers and their users. Soemarso further suggested that the reciprocal relationship made the college able to develop the curriculum according to the needs of the work. The real implementation of the Link and Match policy is the apprenticeship program. The improvement of the internship program, intended for the industry to also benefit, because it has so far impressed that those who benefit from internships are colleges and students, while the industry is busy.

Based on these circumstances, a conceptual explanation of the problem of unemployment of the educated workforce is expected to answer the problem proportionally, especially about the functioning and position of the education system with employment issues (Robts, 2013; Masril et al, 2020; Azman, 2016; Ferdiansyah et al, 2020; Zagoto, 2019). Starting from the assumption of rising unemployment caused by the failure of the education system, then an individual approach is needed in the world of education. It needs to be revived the concept of Link and Match in the education system, to integrate synergistic relationships between the worlds of education. In Indonesia, it can improve the quality of industries and industries that participate in the development of competency-based vocational and educational education, which will ultimately benefit the industry through the availability of a competent and work-ready workforce, thereby reducing production costs and risks, increasing the competitiveness of the industry.
METHODS

This research uses qualitative research methods with a case study research approach. Case studies are included in descriptive analysis studies where research focuses on specific cases that are carefully observed and analyzed. This analysis was conducted on various factors related to the cases studied, in this study, the cases examined regarding link and match policy to prevent unemployment of educated workers. The study intensively focused on Link and match policy and studied it as a case. The data taken in this study comes from a variety of sources and research results related to the cases investigated.

DISCUSSIONS

Concept and Realization of Link and Match Policy between The World of Education and The World of Industry

The Link and match program has been announced since 1989 but based on statistical data showing high unemployment, high unfilled vacancies, and low labour quality, as well as analysis of previous Sakernas data, shows a discrepancy between education and labour needs. High labour market membership, especially for the highly educated workforce. The discrepancy between education and employment results in lower-income levels, lower job satisfaction, and higher employee in-and-out rates, ultimately affecting worker productivity (Holzer, 2013).

Megowan & Andrews (2015) shows some research has been done on education-job mismatch which shows that education has a relevant influence on the efficiency of education investment both public and private, as job mismatch education affects wages as well as other labour output and output, job satisfaction (Faberman & Mazumder, 2012; Davos & Klosters, 2014), on the job training (Handel, 2014), geographical mobility (Sahin et al., 2015; Zega, 2020), and employee turn over (Ferreira et al., 2017; Zagoto, 2018; Dakhi, 2013).

For example, Soesilowati research (2009) is known for the obstacles faced in implementing link and match program in two regions, namely Batam and Banten. The Link and match program does not seem optimal in Batam because there are some obstacles. First, the problem of teaching infrastructure is limited. Infrastructure development is not enough due to the constraints of available funds; this is due to changes and the development of a much faster and growing industry whereas education is not easy to make adjustments in a short time. Second, the curriculum problem is not by the condition of the region/region. Third, a lack of coordination between relevant stakeholders. Fourth, there is no clear and definitive mapping yet of how much and what kind of human resources the industrial world needs. Fifth, the lack of jobs for high school graduates, so many professions as operators in the industry, but do not have the skills that suit the educational background. Seventh, many vocational high school graduates are still working outside their fields (as much as 50 per cent) because of the limited workspace in their field, and their refusal to be given the same job as high school graduates who work as operators.

From the results of the above research, it appears that there are still many aspects that need to be improved from the government. From the first aspect, it is significantly related to other aspects. If so, can the government's link and match policy be applied? The answer is undoubtedly no. The government should at least focus on two aspects, namely its social and resources. Formal and nonformal education indeed aims to create the best and produce an outsider that can have a positive impact on the interests of education and organization. One of the objectives of vocational education is to provide a skilled, skilled, and skilled workforce (Gaeta, at al, 2017). The obligation of stakeholders is how to manage the
education system according to the needs of the industry and the needs of the community to suppress the unemployment rate of vocational education graduates that have been displayed before (Russo, 2017)—at a time when the Business World and Industrial World are overgrowing at all times, always encouraged to be able to meet the needs of the community, so that among the vocational education that produces competent graduates have a connection to the industrial world that needs reliable human resources to meet the needs of the community. So this link and match policy is much needed.

Besides, the implementation of President Joko Widodo's direction at the meeting was limited to education and vocational training. Facing an industrial era 4.0 that involves digital elements in each value chain of the manufacturing process, prospective graduates will be guided to be able to adapt to technological developments. Therefore, according to Airlangga the Minister of Industry also expected his role to provide input into the education curriculum by the development of technology as well as provide practical facilities and internships for students and teachers or lecturers to benefit educators and learners. However, the government-issued MoU only covers vocational education in cooperation with the manufacturing industry, excluding tourism, arts, health and natural resources industries. Therefore, the government is preparing vocational education and vocational as a solution to improve the competence of Indonesia's human resources to be able to compete globally.

**The Urgency of Link and Match Policy in Vocational Education**

Link and match is the policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia which was developed to increase the relevance of Vocational High School with the needs of the world of work, business and industry in particular. The concept of link and match policy between the world of education and the world of work is expected to reduce the unemployment of vocational education graduates that is increasing today.

Therefore, the challenge faced by the government and of course, the People of Indonesia is MEA which allows for free labour competition between ASEAN members. To answer the challenge of MEA in creating skilled workers in the industrialized world starting with the development of vocational education strategically is Link and match policy, so how the industry in Indonesia at least recruits human resources in the country that are certainly skilled and skilled formed from vocational education programs that have been implemented to meet the needs of the world of work.
Ideally, three components must move simultaneously to make the Link and Match program a thing: Vocational and College Education, the world of work (company) and government. If the Link and Match policy go well, then the government also benefits by reducing the burden of unemployment (educated). Therefore, the government must seriously maintain the climate of connectivity and mechanisms of the application of science from universities to the world of work so that it is expected that this Link and Match program runs better and can bring benefits to all parties.

The benefits that can be learned from the implementation of Link and Match are huge. Therefore, it is expected that all stakeholders in the education world will open their eyes and themselves and start to take it seriously. Vocational education should be open to accepting the areas of expertise (competency) that the world needs as learning materials. The company should also open the door as complete as possible for vocational education graduates who want to intern (work) at the company. At the same time, the Government should be serious and not just view the Link and Match program (connectivity and compatibility) as a mere project.

**Strategies for Realizing Link and Match Policies**

In carrying out a policy, it is necessary first to analyze the underlying things of the policy, some approaches in realizing the Link and Match policy include:

**a. Social Approach**

A social approach is an approach based on the needs of today’s society. This approach emphasizes the objectives of education and equalization of opportunities in obtaining an education (Usman, 2012: 56). According to A.W., The social approach of teachers is a traditional approach to educational development by providing institutions and facilities to meet the pressures of school admission and enabling the provision of opportunities to students and parents independently (Indar, 2014: 30). An example of implementing this approach is the implementation of dual systems through the Link and Match policy.

However, in this approach there are some weaknesses in this approach, among which is 1) This approach ignores the issue of allocation on a national scale, and vaguely does not question the number of educational resources needed because it assumes that the best use of educational resources is for the whole of Indonesian society; 2) This approach ignores the need for human resources planning that people need so that they can produce graduates who are less needed by the community; 3) This approach tends to answer only the equalization of education so that quantity takes precedence over quality (Indar, 2014: 236).

**b. Employment Approach**

In this labour approach, education activities are directed towards fulfilling the needs of the national workforce in the early stages of development, certainly requiring a large workforce of all levels and in various types of skills. In this situation, most countries expect education to prepare and produce skilled workers for development, both in agriculture, trade, industry and so on (Jusuf Enoch, 1992: 90). Therefore, education planners should strive to estimate the number and quality of the workforce required by each national development activity. In theory, this approach prioritizes the relevance of education system graduates with the demands of labour needs, in this approach, there are also weaknesses, where there are three main drawbacks namely 1) Having a limited role in education planning, because this approach ignores the existence of public schools. Because it will only result in unemployment, this approach prioritizes
vocational high schools to meet the needs of the job; 2) Use the classification of demand and supply ratios; 3) The purpose of this approach is to meet the needs of the workforce, on the other hand, the demands of the world of work change by the rapid changing times (Usman, 2012: 59).

Vocational education development programs and activities are oriented towards the strategic goal of vocational secondary education development which refers to the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education and Culture, namely "the availability and affordability of vocational secondary education services that are quality, relevant, and fair throughout the provinces, districts, and cities". The measurement of the strategic achievement of vocational secondary education development is carried out with the achievement of several strategic objectives that illustrate the conditions that must be achieved in 2014. The strategic objectives above are as follows:

1). National APKs exceed national targets (85%).
2). At least 66% of vocational schools have been accredited.
3). At least 60% of districts/cities have Vocational Archery School and SBI Vocational Archery School.
5). At least 90% of Vocational Schools apply e-learning.
6). 70% of graduates of Vocational School work in the Year of Graduation.
7). 85% of vocational schools provide entrepreneurship coaching services.
8). Decreased gender disparity showed with gender equality ratio to 95%.
9). All Vocational Schools apply character-building learning.

In the scope of the previous link and match has localized some of the main issues that spawned various other issues namely the problem of lack/lack of practical cooperation between the world of higher education, government, and industry on aspects, mostly curriculum preparation including apprenticeships, empowerment of the world of higher education. (infrastructure, human resources, and research), the absence of road map information on industrial employment maps (allocation of needs and plans of a particular type and quality of competencies), and increased investment in the industrial world. The above issues relate to the ambiguity of the legal umbrella as well as the regulatory details of implementation related to the handling of links and matches as well as the assertive and empowerment of institutional authorities (adequate authorities and resources) that can guarantee/require/compel the above third party cooperation to run effectively, measurably, and sustainably. Based on the primary classification of link and match problems, the simple strategies considered significant if implemented according to Soesiloawati (2009) include:

1) It needs to be reviewed and rearranged various legal products such as Laws, Government Regulations, Presidential Decrees/ Regulations, Ministerial Decrees/Regulations, to regulations governing/overshadowing aspects of the link and match between the world of higher education and industry. In this case, the most important is the umbrella of law and SOP on the obligations of cooperation and sanctions between the world of universities, the industrial world (and associations), and governments (local and central).

2) It is necessary to determine the link and match authority institutions (which have been appointed such as the Director-General of the Directorate General or Kadin or newly formed representing the above three parties) such as the existing CO-OP program with its partners in the region expressly in the legal umbrella above accompanied by an adequate power supply of resources (especially financial resources and human resources).
3) The main tasks and functions of Tupoksi) need to be done as well as a more measurable mechanism of action. In this case including the breakdown of the substance of cooperation, it is practical, measurable, and sustainable, especially concerning the preparation of curriculum, internship programs, research, the preparation of regional and sectoral job allocation road maps as well as plans/forecasts. Due to the oversupply of the workforce, it is also necessary to apply the additional curriculum to type of competency about entrepreneurship, so that college graduates who remain absorbed can create their jobs.

4) Another strategy is law enforcement so that all legal link and match repair activities can run smoothly.

5) To reduce the oversupply of highly educated workers, government policies are needed that encourage the expansion of investment in new industries.

CONCLUSION

In policy-making is seen as several processes of all parts and relates to the social system in creating the target system. The decision-making process takes into account external environmental factors, inputs, processes, outputs, and environmental feedback to policymakers. Link and Match as a result of a policy, which is the concept of the relationship between the institution and the world of work, or in other words Link and Match is the relationship between the supplier of labour and its users. With this connection, education as a supplier of labour can establish relationships with the business world or industry. With this link and Match, an institution, especially Vocational Education, can cooperate with other parties, especially with companies or industries so that students can intern at the company. With Link and Match, Vocational Education can know what competencies the world of work needs most and what competencies the world needs most. The approach used to realize Link and Match is a social approach and a labour approach. A social approach is an approach based on the needs of the community where it emphasizes the objectives of education and equalization of opportunities in obtaining an education. While the employment approach is an approach that prioritizes the association of graduates of the education system with the demands of the workforce in various development sectors with the goal that wants to be achieved is education needed to help graduates get better job opportunities so that their living standards can be improved.

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