

UNEMPLOYMENT OF VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES: THE EFFECT OF WORK SKILLS, FAMILY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDES ON WORK READINESS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to examine the impact of work skills and family socio-economic status on work readiness, with entrepreneurial attitude as an intervening variable for Vocational High School graduates. A total of 179 graduates of Bima State Vocational School were the research sample, using a non-probability sampling approach, specifically for graduates from 2015 to 2022 who had not worked in their field of expertise for more than one year. The questionnaire instrument was designed based on research variables to collect research data. Data analysis uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results indicate that both work skills and family socioeconomic status do not play a substantial role in determining work readiness. On the other hand, having an entrepreneurial mindset has a noteworthy and positive effect on work readiness. Furthermore, it was observed that job skills and family socioeconomic status indeed influence work readiness, with entrepreneurial attitude serving as a key factor. The entrepreneurial mindset heavily shapes the work readiness of vocational high school graduates. Hence, the vocational education curriculum must emphasize the development of entrepreneurial attitudes and work readiness.

Keywords: *Work Readiness, Work Skills, Socio-Economic Status, Entrepreneurship.*

INTRODUCTION

Vocational high school is a tier of secondary education that is specifically tailored to equip graduates with the necessary skills to enter the workforce within their area of specialization. According to Santika et al. (2023), the primary objective of vocational schools is to concentrate on a singular purpose, which is to prepare graduates for the workforce. As a result, vocational schools must consistently align themselves with the demands of the labor market.

Despite the fact that both entities may possess divergent interests and operate under incompatible systems, as well as maintain distinct cultures, they must strive to find a harmonious relationship (Wati & Murtadlo, 2021). Alongside this, Vocational High School offers a specialized program focusing on the development of human capital, particularly in equipping individuals with the necessary skills to transition into the workforce (Syamsuddin, 2019).

The era of Industrial 4.0 introduces a mix of challenges and opportunities for Vocational High Schools, which are specifically tailored to equip students with the vital skills required to excel in the competitive job market. Graduates of vocational schools are in high demand due to their expertise in digital technology and extensive networks, enabling them to start their own businesses or contribute to technology-driven innovations in the business world. The age of Industrial Revolution 4.0, marked by the integration of digital technology across various sectors, significantly impacts vocational school graduates by altering work dynamics and business practices through the adoption of digital tools like artificial intelligence (AI), internet of things (IoT), data analytics, and automation. It is evident that vocational high school graduates in Indonesia face the highest unemployment rate, as depicted in Figure 1 below.

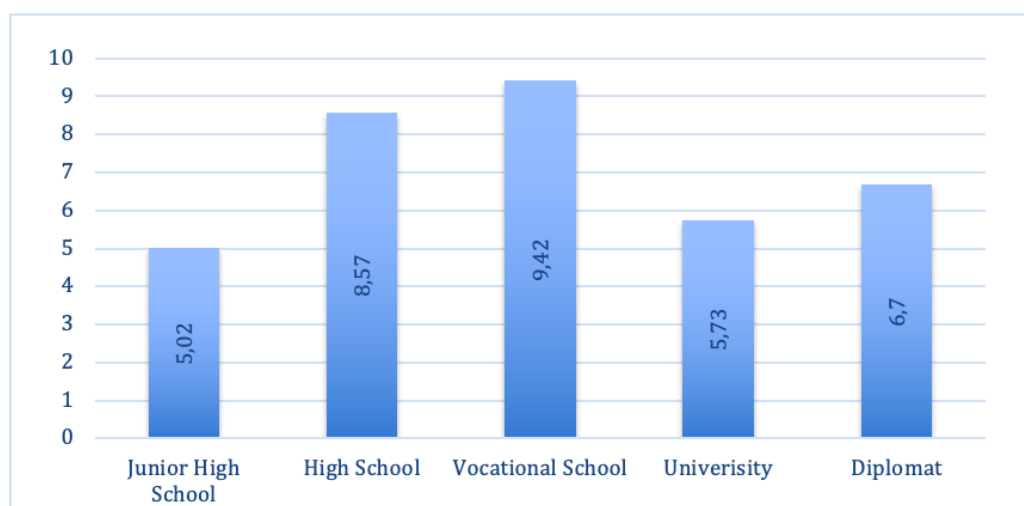


Figure 1. Open Unemployment Rate Based on Education Level

According to the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), the open unemployment rate was 5.86 percent. This ratio is equivalent to 8.42 million people from the more than 143 million Indonesian workforces in that period. From the level of education, the unemployed from school who from the start become graduates who are ready to work, actually contribute the most to the open unemployment rate of all types and levels of education in Indonesia, namely 9.42%, while general secondary school graduates are 8.57% (Tempo.com, 2023). Vocational high school graduates who are prepared to become candidates for the beginner workforce actually have the highest unemployment in Indonesia in terms of educational level.

This situation can be caused by various factors, such as work readiness. Work readiness focuses on an individual's personal characteristics, such as the work attitudes needed to obtain and maintain the job they have received. Work

readiness is not only related to work skills and tenacity, but also mental readiness to always be disciplined at work. (Nurlaela et al., 2021; Sabilah et al., 2021)

Work readiness can be influenced by work skills, family circumstances or support such as family socioeconomic status and entrepreneurial mentality. Learning for vocational high school students prioritizes work skills rather than the formation of attitudes and knowledge. The focus should not only be on developing hard skills, such as work skills but also soft skills such as entrepreneurial attitudes and students' work readiness (Nurlaela et al., 2021). Work skills are special abilities or skills needed to executing certain tasks or work effectively and efficiently (Bandaranaike, 2018; Wade & Parent, 2014). Wardani et al., (2017) posited that work skills serve as a critical yardstick for individuals exhibiting mental work preparedness. The findings of their study diverge from those of Rahman (2018), who observed that work skills exhibit no substantial impact on work preparedness.

According to Nursyirwan et al., (2022) honing students' entrepreneurial attitudes and work readiness is important and is even the first requirement for entering the world of work. The attitude towards becoming an entrepreneur is very important for students to be equipped with so that graduates are mentally ready to work. This entrepreneurial attitude is self-confident, oriented towards future results, ready to accept risks and at the same time good at minimizing risks, enjoying every business challenge, strong leadership spirit. Students' entrepreneurial skills and attitudes are mandatory requirements that prospective workforce must have when entering the world of work. Graduates cannot rely solely on work skills to ensure their readiness to compete in the job market; they must also possess job readiness. Therefore, learning orientation does not only focus on work skills but needs to be supported by a work readiness mentality and the formation of an entrepreneurial mentality (Ahmid et al., 2023). The research results (Isma et al., 2023) Studies demonstrate that the level of entrepreneurial preparedness exhibits no noteworthy impact on an individual's self-assurance when initiating a business.

Research Marvin et al., (2020) shows that entrepreneurial attitudes, entrepreneurial activities, and work skills and social functions are determining factors in determining work readiness. Participation in entrepreneurial activities will greatly influence the desire to become an entrepreneur. The results show that entrepreneurial attitudes and work skills influence work readiness. Research (Fan et al., 2020) assumes that family support and economic status significantly contribute to work success. This relationship is mediated by how family orientation influences a person's decisions. Arwani (2017) the evaluation indicates that the socioeconomic status of students' households plays a crucial role in determining students' level of preparedness for the workforce. Research William & Rodhiah (2022) shows that entrepreneurial abilities and attitudes influence work readiness. Parents' socio-economic conditions have an inverse influence on work readiness, which means that if the parents' socio-economic conditions are good, in other words, the parents are capable or earn above average, families prefer to give their children the option to continue their studies (Huda et al., 2019). In contrast to

research results (Dian et al., 2023), soft skills (including attitude, mentality, and environment) have no effect on work readiness.

The State Vocational High School in Bima City has several expertise programs, namely Design and Production, Clothing, Visual Communication Design, Tourism Service Business, Hotels, and Culinary and Beauty and Spa. This major is a major that focuses more on modern services. Meanwhile, school facilities such as laboratories and places to be active in developing skills according to their field of expertise still need to be designed so that they can have an impact on the quality of graduates. Qualifications and professionalism need to be further improved (Jainuddin, 2022). The problem is that vocational school graduates have a low entrepreneurial mentality and work readiness. When observations were carried out on 81 vocational high school graduates who were recorded as unemployed in the 2018-2021 period, it was found that on average, they had high work skills according to their field of expertise, but their entrepreneurial mentality and work readiness were low, effect on graduates. Indonesia's open unemployment rate is getting higher. Figure 2 below shows that there is a gap in the hard skills and soft skills of vocational school graduates. Figure 2. Soft Skills and Hard Skills of Vocational School Graduates.

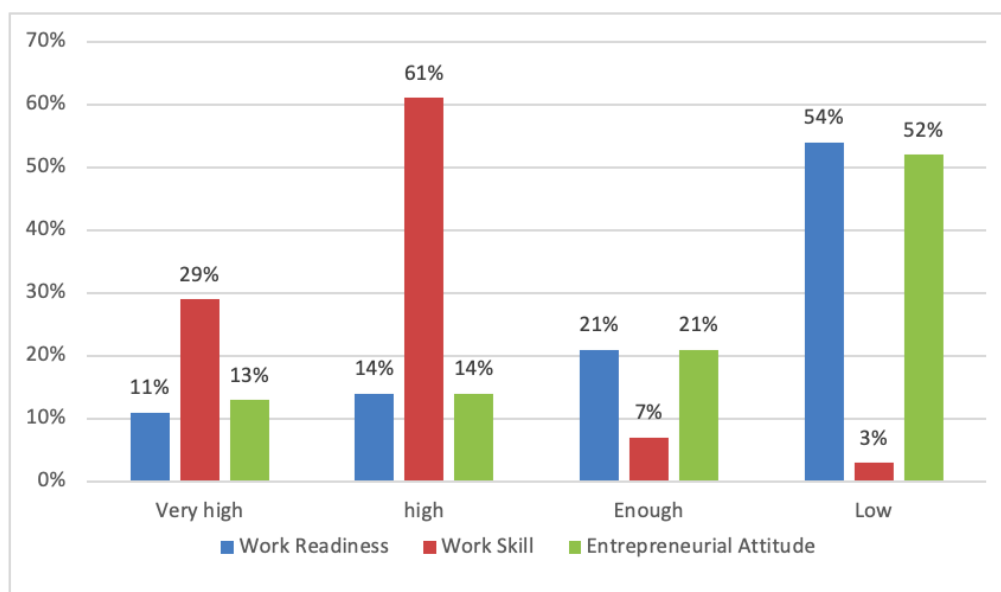


Figure 2. Soft Skills and Hard Skills of Vocational School Graduates

This situation cannot be separated from the varied job readiness of graduating from vocational high schools. Graduates who have the work skills to enter the world of work are more likely to choose not to utilize their work skills for reasons of lack of confidence and not being ready to work, some even say they are "embarrassed". This scenario is prone to be observed more frequently among individuals who have graduated from high socioeconomic backgrounds. Some of those who work in fields such as automotive and electronics workshops are relatively graduates from less well-off family members. Meanwhile, graduates with high socio-economic status tend to study further. The results of research show that efforts to eradicate unemployment

must involve improving work skills through education and training to develop mental work readiness and entrepreneurial attitudes as part of soft skills. Every potential graduate of a vocational high school needs to possess this attribute (Fadhil et al., 2021; Seneviratne, 2021; Stijepic, 2021; Tziora et al., 2016).

RESEARCH METHOD

The present study employs a quantitative approach focused on examining the associations between latent variables (exogenous and endogenous). The research sampling approach uses a non-probability approach, that is, not all vocational high school graduates have the right to be research samples, because the focus of this research is graduates from 2015-2022 and do not yet have a permanent job (length of work > 1 year) according to their field of expertise. The sampling technique uses random sampling technique. The participants or sample in this investigation consisted of 179 individuals who had graduated from State Vocational High Schools in Bima City. The demographic characteristics of the research sample are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Categories	Frequencies	Percent
Gender	Male	88	47%
	Female	94	53%
	Amount	179	100%
Department	Design and Production of Works Visual Communication	41	23%
	Design	22	12%
	Tourism, Hospitality and Culinary Services		
	Business	26	15%
	Excitement and SPA	28	16%
	Automotive	24	13%
	Electronic	17	9%
	Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	13	7%
	Accountancy	8	4%
	Amount	179	100%

Source: Processed by Researchers, 2023

The research instrument is a questionnaire constructed from each latent variable as in Table 1.

Table 2. Description of Research Variable Constructs

No	Latent Variable	Indicator	Item
1	Work S (Bloom & Kitagawa, 2021)	Skills Speed Accuracy	5

No	Latent Variable	Indicator	Item
2	Family Socio-Economic Status (Ariyanti & Bowo, 2018; Ramadhanti et al., 2017; Tomul & Polat, 2013)	Self-confidence Commitment Education level Income level, Job level Family welfare Housing	5
3	Entrepreneurial Attitudes (Rahayu, 2019; Safitri et al., 2023)	Confident and Optimistic Oriented to tasks and results, Dare to take risks Likes challenges Creative and innovative Future oriented	6
4	Work Readiness (Erfelina, 2019; Sabilah et al., 2021)	Responsibility, Flexibility, Communicative, self view, Physical and mental health	5

Source: Processed by Researchers, 2023

Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis with the Partial Least Square (PLS) for windows. The research paradigm model is as follows.

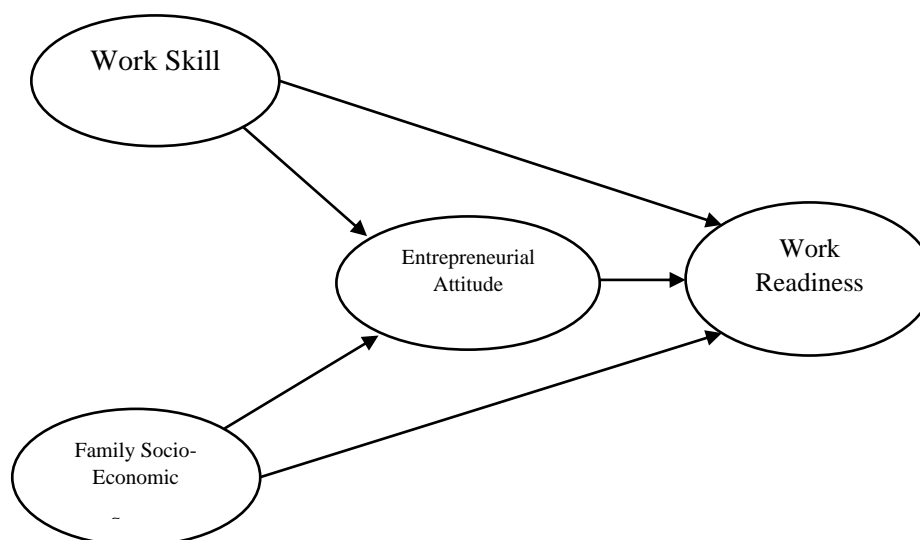


Figure 3. Research Paradigm Model

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Utilizing SEM in conjunction with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) software, the researchers aimed to analyze and forecast the predictive

relationships between each exogenous variable and the endogenous variable within a comprehensive equation model (Ghozali, 2018). Test the hypothesis by conducting an external model analysis of each validity indicator: convergent validity, discriminant validity, and combined reliability (Hair, 2016). accordance with standards so that all research instruments meet valid figures and are suitable to be used as tools to measure latent variables as in Table 3.

Table 3. Convergent Validity (Loading Factor)

No	Latent Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Conclusion
1	Work Skill (X1)	X1.1 Skills	0.802	Valid
		X1.2 Speed	0.759	Valid
		X1.3 Accuracy	0.843	Valid
		X1.4 Self-confidence	0.709	Valid
		X1.5 Commitment	0.608	Valid
2	Family Socio-Economic Status (X2)	X2.1 Education level	0.766	Valid
		X2.2 Income level,	0.718	Valid
		X2.3 Job level	0.875	Valid
		X2.4 Family welfare	0.691	Valid
		X2.5 Expectation level	0.668	
3	Entrepreneurial Attitudes (X3)	X3.1 Confident and	.693	Valid
		X3.2 Optimistic	0.741	Valid
		Oriented to tasks	0.738	Valid
		X3.3 and results,	0.799	Valid
		X3.4 Dare to take risks	0.609	Valid
		X3.5 Likes challenges	0.799	
4	Work Readiness (Y)	X3.6 Creative and Innovative Future oriented		
		X4.1 Responsibility,	0.695	Valid
		X4.2 Flexibility,	0.753	Valid
		X4.3 Communicative,	0.813	Valid
		X4.4 Self view,	0.893	Valid
X4.5 Physical and mental health	0.901	Valid		

Source: SmartPLS4 Output, 2023

Notes:

X = Exogenous variables

Y = Endogenous variables

Table 4. Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha

Latent Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Conclusion
Work Skill (X1)	0.799	0.803	Reliable
Family Socio-Economic Status (X2)	0.783	0.787	Reliable
Entrepreneurial Attitudes	0.839	0.843	Reliable

Latent Variable	Cronbach`s alpha	Composite Reliability	Conclusion
(X3) Work Readiness (Y)	0.853	0.867	Reliable

Source: SmartPLS4 Output, 2023

Structural Models

Goodness of fit is an important step to be taken in order to measure the extent of the influence of each variable under study, and the goodness of fit analysis technique measures R-Square (R2).

Table 5. The Goodness of Fit Model

Endogenous	R-Square
Entrepreneurial Attitudes	0.287
Work Readiness	0.576

Source: SmartPLS4 Output, 2023

R-square value (R2) on the latent variable "entrepreneurial attitude" = 0.287 (28.7%). The entrepreneurial attitude variable can be "explained" by the work skills and family socio-economic status variables of 28.7%, or in other words the contribution of the work skills and family socio-economic status variables to entrepreneurial attitudes is 28.7%. While the other variables are subject to the influence of unexamined external factors which was not examined in this study. Meanwhile, the R-square (R2) of 0.576 or 57.6% shows the influence of work skills variables, family socio-economic status, and entrepreneurial attitudes on work readiness after graduating from vocational high school, while the rest are other factors not discussed in this research.

Hypothesis Testing

The testing criteria are assessed by the P value; namely, if the P-value is > 0.05, then the research hypothesis is rejected. Based on the results of the analysis with SmarPLS4, it is known that Hypothesis 1 (H1) and Hypothesis 2 (H2) are rejected, while H3, H4, and H5 are accepted, as in Figure 4.

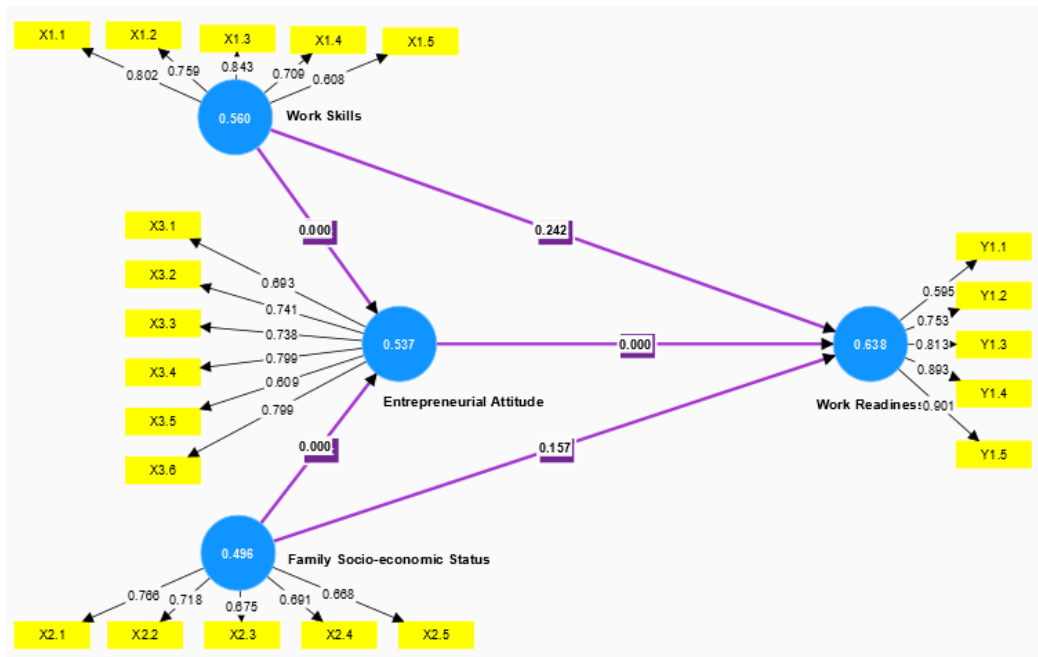


Figure 4. “Results of Structural Model in SmartPLS”

For more details, it can be made in the form of a research hypothesis testing table, as in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Variable Latent	Path	P-value	Conclusion
H1	X1-Y	0.014	0.242	Not sig.
H2	X2-Y	0.272	0.157	Not sig.
H3	X3-Y	0.602	0.000	Sig.
H4	X1-X3-Y	0.401	0.000	Sig.
H5	X2-X3-Y	0.260	0.000	Sig.

Source: SmartPLS4 output, 2023

Notes:

X1 = Work skills,

X2 = Family socio-economic status

X3 = Entrepreneurial attitude

Y = Working readiness

The Effect of Work Skill on Jobs Readiness of Vocational High School Graduates

Vocational high school curriculum as a solution to reduce unemployment. So that, learning activities are dominated by practicum activities so that graduates can enter the competitive world of work. Work skills characterize proficiency, speed and accuracy in completing work, as well as self-confidence and commitment to work. With work skills, it is hoped that graduates will be

ready to work and can even independently create business opportunities independently (Lestari & Mahbubah, 2019).

Work skills are crucial for all graduates of vocational schools. It has been observed that some graduates with high work skills still end up unemployed due to a lack of stable work readiness. Contrary to expectations, possessing work skills does not automatically translate to being prepared for the professional world. Recent research indicates that work skills do not play a significant role in determining graduates' readiness for work. This phenomenon can be attributed to the prevalent practice-based curriculum in vocational high schools, ensuring that all graduates acquire relevant work skills in their respective fields. As part of their graduation requirements, vocational students undergo competency and skills assessments that evaluate their work skills. Nevertheless, data from the 2022 BPS reveals that the unemployment rate among vocational school graduates in Indonesia is alarmingly high. This highlights that having work skills does not guarantee one's readiness for the workforce. In essence, a combination of attitude and mindset is essential to truly prepare individuals for the demands of the working world.

In terms of the results of the analysis, it is known that the work skills of vocational high school graduates in Bima City are relatively high but they are still unemployed, while job and business opportunities according to their field of expertise are very open, such as design and fashion, beauty and spa, hospitality, workshops and others. Research (Rahman, 2018) after conducting an in-depth investigation, it was discovered that the reasons for unemployment were due to low levels of responsibility, commitment, flexibility, communicativeness, mental health and self-confidence in the skills they had.

Research Muliasa & Wrahatnolo (2023) shows that work skills do not have a significant effect on a person's work readiness. Intellectual ability (hard skills) does not guarantee that someone will be successful in life. The intellectual level only supports 20 percent of a person's achievement and success. Meanwhile, 80 percent comes from personality abilities (soft skills) (Hariyanto, 2009). In other words, work skills are not a guarantee for someone to be successful at work, but rather work mentality and attitude. This research contradicts previous research that industrial work practices equip students not only with skills but also soft skills that shape students' mental work readiness. Soft skills include work readiness, so that work skills have a positive relationship with students' work readiness (Fitri et al., 2023; Lestari & Mahbubah, 2019).

The Effect of Family Socio-Economic Status on Work Readiness of Vocational High School Graduates

The family socio-economic background including parental education, parental employment, parental income, and living conditions theoretically play

an important role in a child's future development. A high family educational background also has a high position in society. The level of education that parents have received will influence a person's job expectations. Likewise, parents' work is certainly related to education. Parents who have higher education make it possible to have a permanent or stable job so they have a high income too. Ownership of property will certainly have an impact on children's patterns and behavior, and the condition of the residence and seen from the status of the house occupied, the physical condition of the building or the size of the house occupied, manifesting a socio-economic level of the family that occupies it will have an impact on the formation of children's behavior and mentality (Saputri et al., 2023).

Vocational high school graduates who have high family backgrounds of course have different views from those from disadvantaged or poor family backgrounds. Graduates with respectable family backgrounds tend to choose this type of work, because basically, it is not focused on wages or salaries, nor the consideration of socio-economic status in society. Graduates who are children of rich people tend to be less prepared to be ordered by other people, including superiors, and this reflects low work readiness. Apart from that, graduates from rich family backgrounds tend to open their own business opportunities because they are supported by sufficient business capital. In conclusion, socio-economic status does not necessarily mean readiness to work or unemployment.

The research results found that family socio-economic status did not have a significant effect on work readiness. In contrast to research results, family socio-economic status influences work readiness. It was also found that on average vocational high school students come from lower middle class economic families (Ariyanti & Bowo, 2018).

The Effect of Entrepreneurial Attitude on Work Readiness of Vocational High School Graduates

The vocational high school education system does not only focus on developing hard skills but also soft skills such as entrepreneurial attitudes and work readiness. Developing an entrepreneurial mindset is crucial and serves as the initial step in joining the workforce. This mindset mirrors an individual's approach to work, even when seeking employment. Studies indicate that having an entrepreneurial mindset greatly impacts one's mental preparedness for work. Graduates from vocational high schools who possess a strong entrepreneurial attitude exhibit traits of assertiveness and confidence in decision-making, ensuring thorough consideration of each decision. Confidence and self-confidence are based on knowledge and previous experience, so people who have self-confidence tend to be people who are results and future oriented, like

challenges, leadership and are creative and innovative (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2005; Klaten et al., 2019; Magallanes, 2022).

Relevant research results show that socio-economic status does not significantly influence a child's success but rather depends on the child's internal motivation and parental concern or control over the child's future (Fahmi et al., 2020). Family socio-economic status is not a guarantee for someone to have high mental work readiness. Rich people with a high level of parental education can actually form a mental level of work readiness that is less high, plus a high level of family knowledge of this type of work towards children can be the cause of children not being ready to work, especially the type of work that is considered low by family members.

This research supports previous research which concluded that someone who has an entrepreneurial attitude tends to be a graduate who is more independent and ready to work. Unemployment is not only caused by employment, and work skills are also caused by a person's entrepreneurial attitude and work readiness (Rahayu, 2019; Safitri et al., 2023).

The Effect of Work Skills on Work Readiness Through Entrepreneurial Attitudes of Vocational High School Graduates

Entrepreneurial skills and attitudes are two things that complement each other. Vocational high schools must jointly hone work skills (hard skills) and entrepreneurial attitudes and mental work readiness are also equally important to develop. Work skills do not guarantee that graduates are ready to enter a new world of work, but they need to be equipped with an entrepreneurial attitude so that graduates have work readiness.

Learning orientation does not only focus on work skills but needs to be supported by an entrepreneurial attitude to ensure work readiness and the formation of an entrepreneurial mentality so that graduates become better prepared and independent in working (Ahmid et al., 2023). This research shows that the work skills of vocational school graduates are relatively high, but in reality work readiness is low, resulting in open unemployment. (Nursyirwan et al., 2022; Solfema et al., 2019) that the challenges of future education include providing work skills and entrepreneurial attitudes so that graduates are mentally and physically ready to work, characterizing graduates who are ready to obey all regulations, regulations that apply in the work environment, and challenges in the business and industrial world.

The Effect of Family Socio-Economic Status on Work Readiness Through Entrepreneurial Attitudes

The socio-economic status of the family is often a particular concern for various psychological groups. Students from families who are classified as rich or economically capable tend to have low mental and work readiness in low-

level jobs. Therefore, socio-economic status has a negative relationship and influence on work readiness (Ariyanti & Bowo, 2018). This means that the higher the socio-economic status of a student's family, the lower their readiness to enter the world of work, such as not being ready to obey the rules of the work environment, including not being ready to be ordered by superiors. Another fact is that the children of rich people do have a tendency to have low work readiness, but with the support of capital and family facilities, some of the children of rich people tend to be independent in working, such as opening their own business according to their field of expertise.

This demonstrates that there is no assurance that vocational high school graduates with a high family socioeconomic status will not be prepared for work, or vice versa. However, according to the findings of this study, family socio-economic status has a positive and significant impact on work readiness through entrepreneurial attitudes. This implies that vocational school graduates from affluent families will be prepared for work and able to establish their own businesses in line with their expertise, given a strong entrepreneurial mindset. The study affirms the findings of previous research. (Ramadhanti et al., 2017) that an individual's readiness for work is closely linked to their entrepreneurial mindset. Support from financial resources, social connections, and work-related skills alone do not guarantee readiness for the workforce; it must be accompanied by an entrepreneurial mindset.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the research shows that both work skills and family socio-economic status play a crucial role in determining work readiness. Moreover, the entrepreneurial attitude factor significantly impacts work readiness. The combination of work skills and family socio-economic status has a notable effect on work readiness, which is mediated by the entrepreneurial attitude factor. The results of this study highlight that entrepreneurial attitude emerges as the most influential variable affecting the work readiness of vocational school graduates. This means that it is a challenge and demands that the curriculum not only be skilled at working, but the mental attitude towards working must also be improved.

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