

Soft Skills and Learning Facilities on Job Readiness Mediated by Learning Motivation of Vocational High School

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ABSTRACT

Dompu Regency vocational high school graduates are expected to be job-ready, yet many struggle to fulfill industry standards. Technical capabilities are generally stressed, but student drive, learning infrastructure, and soft skills are significant but understudied aspects affecting professional preparation. This study examines how Dompu Regency vocational high school students' learning motivation mediates the effect of soft skills and learning facilities on work preparedness. The study was quantitative and ex post facto. The sample included 211 grade XI students selected by cluster selection and proportional random sampling to represent regency schools. Structured equation modeling using partial least squares was used to examine data. The results show that soft skills have a significant effect on work readiness ($\beta = 0.395$; $p = 0.000$) and learning motivation ($\beta = 0.621$; $p = 0.000$). Learning facilities also significantly influence work readiness ($\beta = 0.139$; $p = 0.006$) and learning motivation ($\beta = 0.216$; $p = 0.000$). Furthermore, learning motivation significantly influences work readiness ($\beta = 0.413$; $p = 0.000$) and serves as a vital mediator for both soft skills and learning facilities. These findings underscore that work readiness is not merely a product of external resources but is heavily driven by the student's internal motivation developed during the learning process. The "mediation mechanism" of motivation is empirically supported in this vocational education study. It gives Dompu Regency schools and policymakers a framework to emphasize physical infrastructure, soft skill integration, and psychological motivational tactics to boost graduate employability.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The notion of job preparation includes both technical skill proficiency and comprehensive elements such as discipline, work ethic, and adaptability (Sony & Mekoth, 2022). Hard skills, encompassing the mastery of technical knowledge and abilities, substantially impact job readiness (Siburian et al., 2022). Preparing students for work involves both technical skills (hard skills) and social skills (soft skills) (Vieilandie et al., 2024). Educational institutions are tasked with cultivating both hard

and soft skills, which are essential for student employability in the industrial sector (Ajani et al., 2024). Work readiness itself is a fundamental element of its efficacy.

Despite vocational education serving as a fundamental component in equipping youth for workforce competition, it continues to encounter obstacles in maximizing human resource potential, especially with unemployment (Kovalchuk et al., 2022; Odilovna, 2025). The aspirational concept of vocational education frequently contrasts with the actual circumstances (Billett et al., 2022; Stalder et al., 2022). Despite a year-on-year increase in the number of vocational high school graduates, national data from the Central Statistics Agency indicates that they continue to experience the highest unemployment rate at 8.62 percent, in comparison to graduates from other secondary education levels. This matter prompts significant inquiries regarding the efficacy of the national vocational education system.

Krisnawati and Bagia (2021) assert that an individual is deemed competent if they exhibit advanced skills in their profession and can articulate the methods and knowledge pertinent to their employment. The government, through Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 50 of 2020 about Field Work Practice (PKL), emphasizes that Field Work Practice is a key part of vocational education, meant to evaluate how well students have developed their attitudes, knowledge, and skills (Nasrullah et al., 2024; Yuliyanto & Rahmanto, 2023). This regulation, as articulated in Article 12, mandates Field Work Practice guidance from the industry. This phenomenon underscores the critical importance of educators and industry in cultivating students' employability skills (Alam et al., 2022; Stephen & Fru, 2023).

Nonetheless, the execution of Field Work Practice in diverse locations, especially in distant locales, continues to encounter obstacles, including insufficient collaboration between educational institutions and businesses, as well as inadequate job matching for students. These factors indicate that the outcomes of Field Work Practice are suboptimal in enhancing students' work preparedness. In response, the government initiated the Vocational High School Revitalization program via Presidential Regulation Number 9 of 2016, primarily emphasizing partnerships between vocational schools (SMK) and the business and industrial sectors (DUDI), as well as enhancing the quality of internships.

Sufficient educational facilities are essential in enhancing students' employability (Isbah et al., 2023; Nugraha et al., 2023). The relevant legal guideline is Regulation Number 22 of 2023 from the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, which outlines the basic requirements for facilities and infrastructure in secondary education, detailing what vocational schools need to provide in terms of workshops, laboratories, and practical equipment for their specific programs. Practical equipment that adheres to industry standards acts as a conduit between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation in the workplace (Ajgaonkar et al., 2022). Inadequate facilities or the utilization of obsolete equipment can impede students from acquiring essential technical skills (Raheef, 2024), whereas access to modern and well-maintained resources enables them to acclimate to contemporary technology, enhance self-confidence, and cultivate a work ethic that meets industry standards. Hong et al. (2022) assert that the accessibility of amenities significantly contributes to the cultivation of a

productive learning environment. Such an environment will ultimately enhance students' work readiness as they become familiar with equipment pertinent to industry demands.

Alongside soft skills and resources, the quality of education is profoundly affected by students' intrinsic variables, namely learning motivation, a psychological state essential for attaining academic achievement (Iqbal et al., 2023; Karimi & Sotoodeh, 2020). Husna and Supriyadi (2023) assert that motivation is a critical aspect for students in attaining their specified learning outcomes and objectives. Moreover, elevated motivation can enhance student academic performance. This finding corresponds with the findings of Azhar and Wahyudi (2024), which indicate that highly driven students exhibit greater proactivity in learning, skill acquisition, practical experience seeking, and self-development. An educational procedure lacking robust dedication will fail to yield graduates possessing the tenacity required in the workforce, irrespective of the instructors' proficiency (Frankham, 2017).

The Province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) possesses considerable potential in agriculture, cattle, fisheries, and tourism (Sari & Syaifullah, 2024). Vocational education in NTB, particularly vocational high schools (SMK), should serve as the primary source of skilled labor to enhance these industries. Data indicates significant obstacles confronting graduates of vocational high schools. As of the 2024 statistics from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) province has 341 vocational schools (SMK), exhibiting diverse accreditation levels and quality. As of August 2024, BPS data reveals that vocational schools in NTB remain the primary contributors to unemployment, with an Open Unemployment Rate of approximately 4.73 percent. This statistic illustrates a discrepancy between the skills of vocational school graduates and the demands of the expanding sector.

Dompu Regency, located in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), comprises 24 vocational institutions, including 9 public and 15 private schools. Governmental regulations concerning vocational education at the micro level, especially in Dompu, face obstacles that require additional investigation. Preliminary evidence indicates that the work readiness of vocational high school students in Dompu Regency is a multifaceted and intricate issue. Interviews with officials from the Dompu Regency Education and Culture Office indicated that inadequate facilities and practical training resources, along with insufficient coordination with industry, constitute significant barriers to student preparation. The findings are corroborated by statements from representatives of the Fisheries Service business, who indicated that students frequently require instruction from the beginning during their Field Work Practice (PKL) due to an absence of fundamental information and skills that should have been acquired in school. The industry highlighted that numerous pupils have not exhibited sufficient soft skills, including discipline, communication, teamwork, and initiative. This issue is further intensified by internal student variables, including inadequate learning initiative and motivation, resulting in students being less proactive and more passive in the learning process.

Previous studies have primarily focused on curriculum elements and partnerships with business and industry (Ahmad et al., 2024; Sandika et al., 2017; Yoto et al., 2024). Simultaneously, internal elements, including soft skills and learning motivation, have been examined incompletely, especially in Dompu Regency. Thus far, no research has explicitly examined the impact of soft skills and learning environments on work preparation, mediated by the learning motivation of vocational high school students in Dompu Regency. These three criteria significantly influence students' work preparation.

This study seeks to examine the impact of soft skills and learning resources on work preparedness, mediated by the learning motivation of vocational high school students in Dompu Regency. This study wants to provide useful ideas about what affects work readiness in vocational high school students and to help schools, teachers, and those involved in vocational education create better ways to improve the job readiness of their graduates.

2. METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with an ex post facto design and a causal relationship model to analyze the influence of soft skills (X_1) and learning facilities (X_2) on work readiness (Y), mediated by learning motivation (Z) among vocational high school students in Dompu Regency. The study was conducted in October 2025 at three state vocational high schools in Dompu Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province: Vocational High School 1 Dompu, Vocational High School 1 Woja, and Vocational High School 1 Kempo. These three schools were selected because they represent the characteristics of urban, suburban, and rural areas.

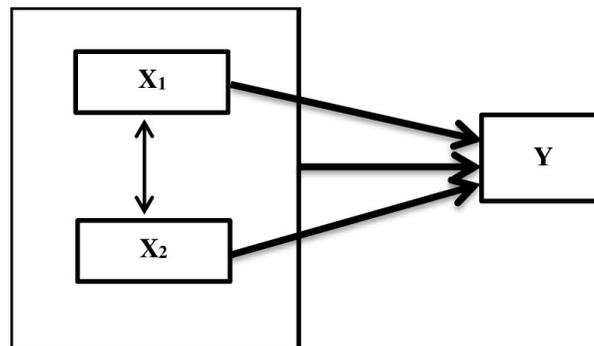


Figure 1. Ex Post Facto Design

The study population was 448 11th-grade vocational high school students in Dompu Regency. Cluster sampling was used to determine population units based on sub-districts. The sample was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% error rate, resulting in 211 respondents. The sample distribution used proportional random sampling: 106 students from Vocational High School 1 Dompu, 49 students from Vocational High School 1 Woja, and 56 students from Vocational High School 1 Kempo.

The research variables consisted of soft skills (X_1), measured through indicators of communication, cooperation, leadership, adaptability, and work ethic; learning facilities

(X2), measured through indicators of study space, study furniture, aids/practice tools, learning resources, and the learning environment; learning motivation (Z), as an intervening variable, measured through indicators of perseverance, independence, interest, achievement orientation, long-term goal orientation, creativity in problem-solving, and relationships with the environment; and work readiness (Y), as the dependent variable, measured through indicators of skills, knowledge, understanding and application, personality attributes and soft skills, and social support.

Data collection used a questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale distributed through Google Forms. The research instrument consisted of 19 items for soft skills, 17 items for learning facilities, 16 items for learning motivation, and 17 items for work readiness. Documentation techniques were used to support data in the form of photographs throughout the study. Validity and reliability tests were conducted using SmartPLS 4. These tests included convergent validity (outer loading ≥ 0.70 and AVE ≥ 0.50), discriminant validity (HTMT < 0.90), and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.70 and Composite Reliability ≥ 0.70). The test results showed all variables were valid and reliable, with outer loading values ranging from 0.700 to 0.814, AVE ranging from 0.533 to 0.564, HTMT ranging from 0.480 to 0.808, Cronbach's Alpha ranging from 0.941 to 0.955, and Composite Reliability ranging from 0.948 to 0.960.

Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4 in three stages. First, descriptive statistical analysis to describe data trends using categorization with the calculation of the ideal mean (Mi) and ideal standard deviation (SDi). Second, structural model analysis (inner model) to evaluate the strength of the model through the R-Square (R^2) and Q-Square (Q^2) values. Third, hypothesis testing using the bootstrapping technique with the criteria of hypothesis acceptance if the T-statistic ≥ 1.96 or P-value ≤ 0.05 . This method allows testing the direct and indirect (mediation) effects between variables in the research model.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis of research data on soft skills and learning facilities on work readiness mediated by learning motivation of vocational high school students in Dompu Regency. This research was conducted at three vocational high schools in Dompu Regency, namely Vocational High School 1 Dompu, Vocational High School 1 Woja, and Vocational High School 1 Kempo.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Mode	SD
Soft Skills	211	29	75	58.46	62.00	12.53
Learning Facilities	211	19	68	47.74	49.00	11.12
Learning Motivation	211	25	63	54.35	58.00	8.95
Employment Readiness	211	25	67	54.17	58.00	10.91

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the Soft Skills variable, which includes 211 respondents. The minimum value is 29, the highest is 75, the mean is 58.46, the mode is 62.00, and the standard deviation is 12.53. The Learning Facilities variable, comprising 211 respondents, exhibits a minimum value of 19, a maximum of 68, a mean of 47.74, a mode of 49.00, and a standard deviation of 11.12. The Learning Motivation variable has a minimum value of 25, a maximum of 63, a mean of 54.35, a mode of 58.00, and a standard deviation of 8.95. The Work Readiness variable, comprising 211 respondents, exhibits a minimum value of 25, a maximum of 67, a mean of 54.17, a mode of 58.00, and a standard deviation of 10.91.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Students' Soft Skills

Criteria	Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	$X \geq 57$	148	70
Medium	$38 \leq X < 57$	40	19
Low	$X < 38$	23	11
Total		211	100%

Table 2 displays the frequency distribution of students' soft skills. Out of the total of 211 students, 148 students (70%) are classified as high, with a value of $X \geq 57$, 40 students (19%) are classified as medium, with a value of $38 \leq X < 57$, and 23 students (11%) are classified as low, with a value of $X < 38$.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Learning Facilities

Criteria	Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	$X \geq 51$	90	43
Medium	$34 \leq X < 51$	92	43
Low	$X < 34$	29	14
Total		211	100%

Table 3 illustrates the frequency distribution of learning facilities. Out of the 211 respondents, 90 (43%) are classified as high learning facilities with a value of $X \geq 51$, 92 (43%) as medium learning facilities with a value of $34 \leq X < 51$, and 29 (14%) as low learning facilities with a value of $X < 34$.

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Learning Motivation

Criteria	Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	$X \geq 48$	170	80
Medium	$32 \leq X < 48$	33	16
Low	$X < 32$	8	4
Total		211	100%

Table 4 Frequency Distribution of Learning Motivation, of the total of 211 respondents, there were 170 respondents (80%) who were in the high learning motivation category with a value of $X \geq 48$, 33 respondents (16%) were in the medium category with an interval of $32 \leq X < 48$, and 8 respondents (4%) were in the low category with a value of $X < 32$.

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Students' Work Readiness

Criteria	Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	$X \geq 51$	159	75
Medium	$34 \leq X < 51$	32	15
Low	$X < 34$	20	10
Total		211	100%

Table 5 Frequency Distribution of Students' Work Readiness, of the total of 211 students, there are 159 students (75%) who are in the high work readiness category with a value of $X \geq 51$, 32 students (15%) are in the medium category with an interval of $34 \leq X < 51$, and 20 students (10%) are in the low category with a value of $X < 34$.

Table 6. R-Square Results

Endogenous Variables	R-square	Percentage (%)	Predictive Power
Work Readiness	0,691	69,1%	Moderate to Strong
Learning Motivation	0,557	55,7%	Moderate

Table 6 R-Square Results, the Work Readiness variable has an R-square value of 0.691 or 69.1% with moderate to strong predictive power, while the Learning Motivation variable has an R-square value of 0.557 or 55.7% with moderate predictive power.

Table 7. Q-Square Results

Endogenous Variables	$Q^2_{predict}$	Criteria (>0)
Work Readiness	0,602	Fulfilled
Learning Motivation	0,540	Fulfilled

Table 7 Q-Square Results, the Work Readiness variable has a $Q^2_{predict}$ value of 0.602 and the Learning Motivation variable of 0.540, which shows that all endogenous variables meet the $Q^2 > 0$ criteria.

Table 8. Hypothesis Test Results (Path Coefficient)

Relationship between variables	Original sample (O)	T statistics	P values
Soft Skills -> Job Readiness	0,395	5,267	0,000
Learning Facilities -> Job Readiness	0,139	2,764	0,006
Soft Skills -> Learning Motivation	0,621	12,000	0,000
Learning Facilities -> Learning Motivation	0,216	3,607	0,000
Learning Motivation -> Job Readiness	0,413	4,854	0,000

The results of the hypothesis test shown in Table 8 with path coefficients, the following criteria are used to decide whether to accept or reject the hypothesis:

1. Testing the First Hypothesis (H1) (Soft Skills → Job Readiness)

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that soft skills have a positive influence on job readiness, with a path coefficient of 0.395, a t-value of 5.267, and a p-value

of 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05, so the effect is significant, and the hypothesis is accepted.

2. Testing the Second Hypothesis (H2) (Learning Facilities → Job Readiness)

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that learning facilities have a positive influence on job readiness, with a path coefficient of 0.139, a t-value of 2.764, and a p-value of 0.006. The p-value is less than 0.05, so the effect is significant, and the hypothesis is accepted.

3. Testing the Third Hypothesis (H3) (Soft Skills → Learning Motivation)

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that soft skills have a positive influence on learning motivation, with a path coefficient of 0.621, a t-value of 12.000, and a p-value of 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05, so the effect is significant, and the hypothesis is accepted.

4. Testing the Fourth Hypothesis (H4) (Learning Facilities → Learning Motivation)

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that learning facilities have a positive influence on learning motivation, with a path coefficient of 0.216, a t-value of 3.607, and a p-value of 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05, so the effect is significant, and the hypothesis is accepted.

5. Testing the Fifth Hypothesis (H5) (Learning Motivation → Work Readiness)

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that learning motivation has a positive influence on work readiness, with a path coefficient of 0.413, a t-value of 4.854, and a p-value of 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05, so the influence is significant, and the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 9. Indirect Effect Results

Variables	Original sample (O)	T statistics	P values
Soft Skills -> Learning Motivation - > Work Readiness	0,257	4,437	0,000
Learning Facilities -> Learning Motivation -> Work Readiness	0,089	2,755	0,006

The results in Table 9, two mediation pathways were tested to answer the sixth and seventh hypotheses:

1. Testing the Sixth Hypothesis (H6)

The results indicate a significant indirect effect of soft skills on work readiness through learning motivation. The indirect path coefficient is positive (0.257) and is supported by a P-value of 0.000 ($P < 0.05$). This indicates that soft skills not only directly contribute to work readiness but also substantially increases learning motivation. Therefore, strong soft skills are an important foundation for fostering learning motivation, and learning motivation effectively enhances student work readiness. Hypothesis (H6), which states that learning motivation mediates the effect of soft skills on work readiness, is accepted.

2. Testing the Seventh Hypothesis (H7)

The results indicate that learning motivation functions as a significant mediator in the relationship between learning facilities and work readiness. The indirect path coefficient is positive (0.089) and is supported by a P-value of 0.006, which is also

within the 0.05 significance level. These results confirm that the influence of Learning Facilities on Work Readiness is enhanced through the role of Learning Motivation. Therefore, Hypothesis (H7), which states that learning motivation mediates the relationship between Learning Facilities and Work Readiness, is accepted.

Discussion

The Influence of Soft Skills on Vocational High School Students' Job Readiness

The SEM-Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis shows that soft skills (X1) affect work readiness (Y) with a path coefficient of 0.395, a t-value of 5.267, and a p-value of 0.000. If the p-value is less than 0.05, the effect is statistically significant, supporting the research hypothesis. These findings show that Dompu Regency vocational high school pupils with greater soft skills are more ready. The path coefficient of 0.395 shows that soft skills positively affect work preparedness. Soft skill modifications or enhancements can boost students' workforce preparation. This coefficient value shows that students need soft skills to compete in the labor market, especially in the modern industrial age, which requires non-technical talents as well as vocational skills. This study confirms [Labzina et al. \(2019\)](#) findings that soft skills assist students in acquiring and optimizing interpersonal and intrapersonal qualities like self-confidence, adaptability, honesty, and integrity. All these factors help them choose a career and feel confident in it. A previous study reveals that vocational high school graduates' job preparation is closely linked to their ability to adjust to industrial changes ([McGrath & Yamada, 2023](#)). Graduates' jobs depend on adaptability to technical and industrial changes ([Hlad'o et al., 2019](#); [Julianto et al., 2025](#)).

In vocational high school, especially for eleventh-graders, soft skills are developed through field practice, classroom activities, group work, learning exchanges, and project-based tasks. [Zamora and Arwizet \(2024\)](#) found that vocational high school students need school-learned soft skills for work preparedness. Soft skills developed in school are a powerful predictor of work preparation even though pupils have not yet entered industrial practice.

The Influence of Learning Facilities on Vocational High School Students' Work Readiness

Hypothesis test results show that learning facilities significantly impact student work preparedness (path coefficient = 0.139, t-statistic = 2.764, p-value = 0.006 (<0.05)). These results indicate that students at Dompu Regency vocational high school are better prepared for work when the school's facilities are in good condition. This supports the premise that learning facilities help students become competent, especially in vocational education, which requires real-world and contextual learning ([Fitrihana & Nurdiyanto, 2024](#)). Students receive greater real-world work experience, improving procedural knowledge, technical abilities, and self-confidence, when resources like industrial equipment are available.

These findings support [Fathoni and Sobandi \(2020\)](#), who found that vocational high school students' employment preparation, particularly in practical abilities, is strongly influenced by learning facility completion. [Jia \(2025\)](#) found that practical facilities help vocational high school students build industry-relevant skills for the workforce. [Cayubit \(2022\)](#) also noted that helpful learning environments and standardized amenities boost student motivation. These data demonstrate that learning facilities externally improve vocational high school students' employment preparation.

The Influence of Soft Skills on Vocational High School Students' Learning Motivation

Hypothesis testing shows a strong impact of soft skills on student learning motivation, with a path coefficient of 0.621, a t-value of 12.000, and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This suggests that students' learning motivation increases with their soft skills. Soft skills boost vocational high school pupils' learning motivation with a big coefficient.

Soft skills are essential to students' psychological preparation for study and jobs, according to [Rofudin et al. \(2024\)](#). Communication skills encourage students to ask questions and talk during studying, enhancing enthusiasm. Collaborative and leadership abilities help students to participate in group activities, take responsibility for learning, and attain academic goals. Adaptability and work ethics foster persistence and a desire to learn despite obstacles.

These findings support [Gustatalantu and Rusmawati \(2022\)](#), who discovered that soft skills, notably cooperation and interpersonal communication, motivate student learning. [Feraco et al. \(2022\)](#) found that soft skills boost intrinsic motivation by making pupils more confident, emotionally stable, and academically ready. Soft skills training improves academic performance and gives pupils life skills. Teachers and the school environment help develop these soft skills, which boosts learning motivation.

This study shows that soft skills improvement boosts student learning motivation. It is believed that improving soft skills in vocational high school learning, such as through group work, talks, project-based assignments, or classroom activities that emphasize communication and collaboration, can motivate students.

The Influence of Learning Facilities on Vocational High School Students' Learning Motivation

The hypothesis testing shows that learning facilities strongly impact student motivation, with a path coefficient of 0.216, a t-statistic of 3.607, and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). These data show that Dompu Regency vocational high school pupils are more motivated to learn when school amenities are better. Learning facilities affect student comfort, engagement, and excitement, according to theory. Adequate learning areas, standardized furniture, effective practice tools, conveniently accessible learning resources, and a friendly environment improve learning. In vocational schools that stress practical work, these environments inspire students to be more active, focused, and eager to learn.

Suseno and Efendi (2024) found that practical facility fullness and quality strongly affect learning motivation. Adequate facilities encourage students to participate in practical activities. Additionally, clean, well-structured classrooms boost student participation and motivation. These findings show that learning facilities are essential for vocational high school students' motivation, especially in skill-oriented schools with practical activities. Building learning spaces, practical tools, and learning resources can boost students' preparedness and excitement for learning.

The Influence of Learning Motivation on Vocational High School Students' Work Readiness

The study found that learning motivation strongly impacts job preparedness in vocational high school students in Dompu Regency, with a path coefficient of 0.413, a t-statistic of 4.854, and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). These studies show that students' work preparedness increases with learning motivation. This coefficient shows that learning motivation affects work preparedness in both mental and technical abilities, like industrial ones.

This motivational learning factor is important for work readiness. Persistent and independent learners learn more. Achievement-oriented and long-term goal-oriented students are better prepared to learn and implement vocational competencies because they want to meet work standards (Lin et al., 2025). Creativity in problem-solving and a happy learning environment help improve personality, communication, and soft skills, which are crucial to work preparedness. Strong motivation can help students receive social support from teachers, peers, and the environment by making them engaged and cooperative learners (Song, 2024).

These findings in Dompu Regency show that high learning motivation in 11th-graders correlates with improved workplace preparedness, even if they have not yet engaged in field work practice. Students with high learning motivation are more engaged in classroom practice, learn basic work methods faster, and master practical tools. This research matches earlier studies. According to Rahmadhani and Suryati (2022), vocational high school students with higher learning motivation are more prepared for work.

The Influence of Soft Skills on Students' Work Readiness Mediated by Vocational High School Students' Learning Motivation

The results of the mediation analysis indicate that learning motivation acts as a significant mediator in the relationship between soft skills and work readiness of vocational high school students in Dompu Regency. The indirect effect value was 0.257, with a t-statistic of 4.437 and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a significant indirect effect. Improving students' soft skills can significantly improve work readiness if accompanied by increased learning motivation.

This finding aligns with research by Indrawati et al. (2023), which found that learning motivation is a strong link between soft skills and work readiness. This study suggests that students with strong soft skills are motivated to work and have the potential to play

a role in the workforce. Furthermore, research by [Fransiska and Aida \(2022\)](#) found that soft skills significantly influence work readiness through work motivation. This means that the better a student's soft skills, the higher their work motivation, which ultimately improves work readiness.

Thus, it is concluded that learning motivation significantly mediates the relationship between soft skills and work readiness, so that efforts to improve soft skills in vocational schools in Dompu Regency need to be balanced with strategies to strengthen learning motivation so that its impact on work readiness is maximized.

The Influence of Learning Facilities on Students' Work Readiness Mediated by Vocational High School Students' Learning Motivation

The mediation analysis shows that learning motivation mediates the association between learning facilities and vocational high school students' employment preparation in Dompu Regency. The indirect impact value of 0.089, t-statistic of 2.755, and p-value of 0.006 ($p < 0.05$) support the hypothesis that the indirect effect is significant. These findings show that learning facilities would have a greater impact on work preparedness if they motivated students.

The evidence shows that motivated students get more out of learning facilities and are more prepared for jobs. Thus, learning facilities are both physical and psychological stimuli that might boost students' motivation, persistence, interest, and long-term learning. When students have the right practice space, resources, media, and a supportive school environment, they are more motivated, focused, and ready to learn. [Abbas et al. \(2024\)](#) found that industrial facilities and technical guidance boost graduate competency and quality. The quality of graduates in this study signifies work preparedness. Thus, these data support the idea that sufficient facilities in schools and industry internships might enhance learning. This experience boosts learning motivation, which is essential to students' work preparation.

Programs and vocational high schools (SMK) in Dompu Regency have different learning facilities. Students' opinions of the facilities they utilize differ. Eleventh graders are more motivated to learn in excellent, practical facilities. They practice more, build confidence in completing assignments, and perceive the connection between classroom learning and employment expectations. Internal learning motivation translates learning experiences into work-ready competencies. Motivated students work harder to improve their abilities, comprehend work procedures, follow instructions, be creative, and have a positive work attitude, all of which indicate work readiness. These results show that learning motivation-driven facilities improves work readiness. This study demonstrates that vocational high school pupils need physical facilities and a positive psychological learning environment to build work preparedness. Developing learning facilities and learning practices that motivate students will improve work preparedness.

4. CONCLUSION

Soft skills and learning facilities have a positive and significant influence on the work readiness of vocational high school students in Dompu Regency. This indicates that the

better the soft skills and the more complete the learning facilities, the higher the students' work readiness. Learning motivation has been shown to have a significant influence on work readiness. Furthermore, learning motivation acts as a mediating variable linking soft skills and learning facilities to work readiness. Soft skills have a higher coefficient of influence on learning motivation ($\beta = 0.621$) and work readiness ($\beta = 0.395$) compared to learning facilities. This indicates that internal factors (personality and behavioral aspects) play a key role in preparing students to enter the workforce. Furthermore, vocational high school students' work readiness is not solely determined by physical facilities or technical abilities but is highly dependent on the motivational drive that arises during the learning process.

As a recommendation, teachers are expected to focus not only on transferring material but also on using learning methods that can motivate students, as motivation is a crucial bridge to work readiness. Schools need to integrate soft skills training (such as communication, teamwork, and work ethic) more intensively into intracurricular and extracurricular activities. Given that other factors may influence job readiness, future researchers could add variables such as the role of industrial work experience (prakerin), career guidance, or the influence of the family environment. Furthermore, it is recommended to use qualitative methods (case studies) to further explore why soft skills have such a dominant influence over other external factors.

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