

Convergence and Challenges in the Management Policy of Vocational High School Education in Depok City, West Java, 2019–2023

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the convergence points and policy challenges in the management of Vocational High School (*SMK*) education in Depok City, West Java, during the 2019–2023 period. The research is motivated by the increasing demand for vocational education, which has not been adequately supported by school capacity, policy integration, and governance effectiveness. Using a qualitative descriptive approach and institutional analysis based on Rational Choice Institutionalism, this study analyzes the interactions among policy actors, including the central government, the West Java Provincial Government, the Depok City Government, vocational schools, and industry stakeholders. Data were collected through the analysis of laws, regulations, policy documents, and educational governance reports. The findings reveal several policy convergence points, including shared commitments to improving human resource quality, strengthening link-and-match programs with industry, curriculum development, teacher competency enhancement, educational quality assurance, and infrastructure improvement. However, significant policy challenges remain, including overlapping authority between provincial and municipal governments, limited school enrollment capacity, implementation issues related to Educational Operational Cost Assistance (BPOP), concerns regarding honorary teachers and PPPK recruitment, and weak industry partnerships. The study concludes that the effectiveness of vocational education management is strongly influenced by governance quality, particularly in terms of policy integration, inter-institutional coordination, accountability, stakeholder participation, and data-driven decision-making. An ideal governance model should emphasize policy integration, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and evidence-based educational planning to improve the quality and relevance of vocational education.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational High School (*SMK*) management policy remains a highly relevant issue, particularly regarding the extent of policy support provided by the Depok City Government. In addition to challenges associated with policy instruments aimed at strengthening the link and match between *SMK* graduates and the labor market, as well as improving educational quality assurance, there are also shortcomings in supporting policy instruments from local governments that affect the sustainability of vocational education. These limitations often result in slow, ineffective, and inefficient policy implementation. Consequently, there is a lack of certainty and consistency across educational inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes. Although numerous studies have produced recommendations concerning vocational education

policy instruments, these recommendations have not fully addressed or resolved the broader challenges of *SMK* management policies at the regional and municipal levels.

The initial idea of revitalizing vocational education development emerged from Indonesia's participation in the ASEAN Economic Community and the global economy. Through the Nawacita development agenda, the government issued Presidential Instruction (Inpres) No. 6 of 2016 on the Revitalization of Human Resources. However, even three years after its issuance, the alignment between educational inputs, processes, and outcomes had not shown significant improvement due to the limited effectiveness of supporting mechanisms, including educational quality assurance systems, partnerships with industry and employers, and the involvement of school committees and community organizations. Nevertheless, the Presidential Instruction strengthened the authority of provincial governments in managing vocational education, transferring responsibility from district and municipal governments to provincial administrations. In response, the Provincial Government of West Java established regional branch offices under the Provincial Education Office to coordinate and evaluate vocational schools. Depok City was placed under Regional Branch Office II of the West Java Provincial Education Office, together with Bogor City. Subsequently, in 2022, the government enacted Ministerial Regulation of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Permendikbudristek) No. 32 of 2022 concerning Minimum Service Standards in Education. The six-year gap between the Presidential Instruction and the Ministerial Regulation suggests the existence of substantial challenges in preparing derivative regulations and ensuring effective implementation (Febrianti & Ramli, 2023).

Article 17 of Permendikbudristek No. 32 of 2022 emphasizes that efforts to improve educational quality and equitable learning outcomes in vocational schools should include the establishment of learning communities, active involvement of principals, supervisors, and teachers, provision of graduate tracer study data to measure employment absorption, facilitation of partnerships with industries and employers, and mapping of certification institutions and industries with competency certification systems. These measures aim to strengthen vocational competency certification among students. In addition, Depok City Regional Regulation No. 7 of 2021 concerning Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility and Partnership and Community Development Programs was introduced to bridge vocational school graduates with the industrial and business sectors. This regulation was designed to mitigate unemployment in Depok, where vocational school graduates constitute one of the largest contributors to the city's unemployment rate (Media Indonesia, 2019; Ngadi, 2024).

At first glance, challenges in vocational school management may appear to stem solely from interactions between central and local governments. In practice, however, significant issues also arise within intergovernmental relations, particularly between provincial governments and district or municipal governments. Provincial governments are often perceived as superior authorities, although Law No. 22 of 1999 on Regional Government does not establish such a hierarchical relationship. While provincial governments are responsible for guiding local governance, district and municipal governments retain substantial autonomy to formulate policies that benefit their communities. As argued by M. Ryaas Rasyid (2009), local governments possess sufficient flexibility to develop policies tailored to local needs. This autonomy includes support for vocational education management. The challenges faced by vocational education in Depok extend beyond regulatory implementation and include the role of local governments in supporting provincial educational policies. Provincial and municipal governments act as holders of regional development potential. According to Muhammad and Gil (2016), regional competitive advantages have direct linkages with development outcomes, particularly educational development. Regional resources, including

natural resources, socio-cultural assets, and human capital, constitute significant strengths that can be developed to support vocational education.

Enrollment demand for vocational schools in Depok is relatively high, and the quality of vocational education in the city is widely regarded as superior compared to many other regions in West Java. According to Asep Sudarsono, Head of Regional Branch Office II of the West Java Provincial Education Office, the number of new student applicants exceeds the available classroom capacity. Consequently, he suggested that the Depok City Government should contribute by constructing additional classrooms in existing schools rather than building entirely new schools, as the latter would require more land, teachers, and educational personnel. Existing vocational schools in Depok still have the potential to increase classroom capacity from nine to twelve classes per grade level (Kompas.com, July 3, 2024). Another major challenge concerns the alignment between vocational education and the needs of businesses and industries. Depok, as part of the Jakarta metropolitan agglomeration, has experienced rapid development in sectors such as real estate, housing, infrastructure, trade, and services. The city's growth is closely associated with the expansion of Jakarta as a megacity. As noted by Heri Apriyanto (2015), megacities are dynamic and continuously evolving, requiring proactive strategies to anticipate future challenges and their impacts (Guntur Setyawan et al., 2024).

The challenges described above are not unique to Depok but are likely shared by many districts and municipalities, particularly those located within the Jakarta metropolitan area. Common issues include frequently changing regulations, discrepancies between educational quality standards and industry expectations, and insufficient local government support. Several vocational schools across Indonesia have successfully implemented specific educational policy instruments. Previous studies have explored various aspects, including cooperation between vocational schools and the world of work (2019), comparisons of graduate performance between vocational and general secondary schools (2019), the relevance of productive subject competencies to industrial internship placements (2015), synchronization between vocational specialization areas and regional economic priorities, and entrepreneurship learning models based on local potential (2017). While these studies have demonstrated positive outcomes in specific areas, challenges remain regarding other policy instruments, particularly those related to provincial and local government support for vocational education.

Such support may include the expansion and equalization of educational access through classroom rehabilitation and construction, operational assistance for students, curriculum development, life-skills enhancement, and professional capacity-building for educators (Arwildayanto, Suling, & Sumar, 2019). Therefore, the issue extends beyond policy governance structures involving institutions, processes, and decision-making mechanisms. As Bennett and Satterfield (2018) argue, governance encompasses determining who has authority, how decisions are made, for whom decisions are intended, and what actions should be taken. Equally important is the capacity of local governments to formulate innovative policies that address emerging challenges, establish effective governance mechanisms, and ensure that policy benefits reach intended stakeholders.

The novelty of this study is fivefold. First, it applies Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI) as the primary analytical framework to examine vocational education governance, revealing how policy actors pursue their interests within institutional constraints and how these interactions produce both convergence and contention. Second, it systematically maps six convergence points (human resource quality improvement, link-and-match strengthening, curriculum development, teacher competency enhancement, quality assurance, infrastructure improvement) and five challenge areas (authority misalignment, capacity limitations, BPOP implementation issues, honorary teacher concerns, weak industry partnerships). Third, it

analyzes two levels of government (provincial and municipal) and two types of schools (public and private) to provide a multi-level, multi-actor perspective. Fourth, it utilizes Bennett & Satterfield's (2018) governance framework (10 attributes including policy direction, coordination, resource capacity, accountability, participation) to assess governance quality systematically. Fifth, it develops an ideal governance model with three main components: policy integration, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and data-driven governance, providing practical recommendations for policymakers.

This study therefore examines not only educational policies within vocational schools but also the policies of provincial and municipal governments, particularly in situations where both levels of government often fail to reach consensus in addressing educational challenges. Research focusing on government policy through an institutional approach remains limited. By adopting such an approach, this study seeks to reveal how provincial and municipal governments formulate and implement policies related to vocational education management and how these policy processes influence the effectiveness of vocational education governance in Depok City.

Vocational High School (*SMK*) management policies in Depok City continue to require substantial attention from local government authorities. One of the most pressing issues concerns the increasing number of applicants seeking admission to vocational schools, which has exceeded the available classroom capacity and student quotas. Meanwhile, the number of vocational schools and classrooms in Depok remains limited. Vocational schools in Depok are highly sought after due to their perceived educational quality, which is often considered superior to that of vocational schools in several larger cities within West Java Province. This situation has generated policy debates among stakeholders involved in vocational education. The Depok City Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) has urged the Provincial Government to establish additional vocational schools in Depok. In contrast, the West Java Provincial Education Office has encouraged the Depok City Government to increase classroom capacity in existing schools from nine to twelve classes per grade level. These differing policy perspectives represent both points of contention and potential convergence regarding authority, responsibility, and support between provincial and municipal governments. Furthermore, unresolved policy differences may contribute to increasing numbers of out-of-school youth, higher unemployment rates, and a decline in the Human Development Index (HDI) in Depok City and West Java more broadly.

Another challenge stems from regulatory policies, particularly Governor Regulation (Pergub) No. 165 of 2021 concerning Regional Educational Operational Assistance (BPOP). Although this policy has helped reduce the financial burden on students and parents, implementation issues remain evident. In several cases, discrepancies have been observed between the benefits stipulated in the regulation and those actually received by students. Additionally, the growing recruitment of teachers under the Government Employee with Work Agreement (PPPK) scheme has reduced teaching opportunities for honorary teachers. While schools continue to accommodate honorary teachers, there is currently no comprehensive policy framework addressing their long-term employment status. According to Simon, as cited in Alex (2010), decisions made at higher levels of an organizational hierarchy will have little effect unless they are effectively communicated and implemented at lower levels, resulting in observable changes in behavior. However, vocational education management policies often appear disconnected from the practical challenges faced by schools and stakeholders. To examine these dynamics, this study adopts the Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI) framework. RCI views public policy as a process of interaction between actors pursuing their interests and institutions that regulate and constrain their behavior. This approach enables researchers to understand the internal processes and

motivations of policy actors operating within specific institutional settings (Peters, 2012; Shepsle, 2010; Silva et al., 2024).

Effective vocational education governance requires institutional arrangements and organizational structures capable of fostering policy synergy among provincial governments, municipal governments, and educational institutions. Bennett and Satterfield (2018) identify several attributes of effective and equitable governance, including policy direction, inter-agency coordination, resource capacity, evidence-based planning, accountability, efficiency, recognition of vulnerable groups, public participation, equitable distribution of benefits and risks, and protection of legal rights. Furthermore, Todaro (2011) emphasizes that education is a fundamental objective of development because it enhances human capabilities and strengthens a society's capacity to absorb technological innovation and sustain economic growth. Consequently, education constitutes a vital component of regional development and economic productivity (Ariansyah et al., 2024; Fatimah & Mudzakkir, 2024).

The issues described above indicate that vocational education policies in Depok City are strongly influenced by institutional arrangements and policy inconsistencies that often fail to produce mutually supportive outcomes. Rather than promoting coherence, existing governance structures may generate conflicting policies that hinder educational development. Such policy misalignment can reduce the effectiveness of government interventions and limit the benefits delivered to society and educational institutions. As a result, this study seeks to explore how institutional arrangements and policy inconsistencies shape the formulation and implementation of vocational education management policies in Depok City and how governance structures can be improved to support more effective educational management.

This study aims to analyze the formal and informal institutional contexts that influence vocational education management policies in Depok City. Specifically, it seeks to examine the institutional processes underlying policy formulation and implementation, investigate the capacity and roles of governmental and non-governmental institutions in shaping policy instruments and implementation strategies, and describe the characteristics and evolution of vocational education policies implemented by central, provincial, and municipal governments over the past five years. Furthermore, the study aims to develop a governance model for vocational education management that supports effective policy formulation and implementation. Such a model is expected to serve as a guideline for designing institutional arrangements that facilitate policy coherence, prevent policy fragmentation, and enhance the responsiveness of government agencies in supporting sustainable vocational education development.

This study contributes theoretically by expanding existing frameworks of educational governance. In addition to the governance attributes proposed by Bennett and Satterfield (2018), Brodizio and Le Tourneau (2016) emphasize the importance of community participation and the alignment of international commitments and national objectives with local needs and cultural contexts. Likewise, the Global Education Policy Dashboard (GEPD, 2021) proposes a policy framework intended to simplify educational policy processes involving schools, public officials, and educational stakeholders. Building upon these perspectives, this study broadens the concept of educational governance by incorporating principles of social justice, institutional interaction, and multilevel governance. Practically, the findings are expected to provide recommendations for an ideal governance and institutional framework that supports effective and equitable vocational education policymaking and implementation. The proposed framework may assist policymakers in improving coordination among governmental levels and educational stakeholders while enhancing policy effectiveness and educational outcomes (Cai, 2024; Dobbins et al., 2011).

Previous studies on educational management policies have predominantly focused on policy instruments, interactions among policy instruments, implementation strategies, and

policy characteristics (Muhammad & Gil, 2016; Akaev et al., 2022). However, relatively little attention has been given to the formal and informal institutional contexts that shape these policies. The novelty of this study lies in its institutional analysis of vocational education management policies. By examining the institutional arrangements that influence policy formulation and implementation, this research seeks to identify governance structures capable of producing effective and equitable educational policies. Furthermore, the study specifically focuses on local government governance, recognizing that institutional arrangements are shaped not only by local initiatives but also by directives originating from higher levels of government. Consequently, the research investigates how interactions among institutions across different levels of government influence vocational education policies at the school level.

Vocational education management encompasses numerous dimensions relevant to regional development. From a top-down perspective, this study examines how central and local governments formulate regulatory frameworks and implement educational policies. From a bottom-up perspective, it explores how vocational education responds to labor market and industrial needs in order to improve social welfare and economic development. The study assumes that the effectiveness and sustainability of educational policies are significantly influenced by formal and informal institutional arrangements that serve as the foundation for policy development and implementation. Institutions are viewed as dynamic entities that may be influenced by actors possessing various interests and levels of authority. These actors may evaluate, modify, or maintain institutional arrangements depending on whether such arrangements support or hinder effective educational governance. However, actors may also refrain from evaluating institutional structures altogether, resulting in policy processes that are not oriented toward problem-solving. Therefore, the scope of this research is limited to the analysis of vocational education management policies from an institutional perspective and does not comprehensively examine all socioeconomic, political, or cultural factors affecting educational outcomes.

METHOD

This study was conducted in two vocational high schools with different institutional characteristics, namely a public vocational high school and a private vocational high school. The research will also involve two levels of government administration, namely the provincial government and the municipal government, both of which play significant roles in educational development. The study aims to identify and examine policy instruments that either complement or conflict with one another in relation to the management of vocational education within these two schools. Furthermore, the research will analyze the governance arrangements that shape these policy instruments and the relationships among them. This governance analysis will consider several key attributes, including (1) policy direction, (2) inter-agency coordination, (3) resource capacity, (4) planning and actions supported by high-quality data, (5) accountability, (6) efficiency, (7) recognition of diversity, marginalized groups, and vulnerable communities, (8) public participation, (9) equitable distribution of benefits and risks, and (10) protection of local community rights and legal justice (Bennett & Satterfield, 2018).

Data collection was carried out using several descriptive and analytical techniques. The required documents include laws and regulations, government regulations, the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), governor regulations, regional and municipal regulations, school regulations, and other documents related to vocational education management policies in Depok City. These documentary sources will provide a comprehensive understanding of the policy framework governing vocational education.

The collected data will be used to construct several analytical narratives. The first narrative will describe the conditions of both public and private vocational education institutions. The second narrative will examine the policy instruments that influence the management of vocational education. The third narrative will analyze the governance structures and institutional arrangements that shape these policy instruments, as well as the relationships and interactions among them. Through these narratives, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how governance and institutional factors influence the formulation and implementation of vocational education management policies in Depok City.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Vocational High School (*SMK*) Education Management Policy in Depok City (2019–2023)

Vocational High School (*SMK*) education in Depok City experienced significant growth during the 2019–2023 period. The high public interest in vocational education was reflected in the increasing number of applicants each year. As a satellite city of Jakarta, Depok faces a growing demand for skilled labor. However, the rising demand for *SMK* education has not been matched by adequate school enrollment capacity.

Institutionally, the management of secondary education, including *SMKs*, falls under the authority of the West Java Provincial Government as stipulated in Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government. Meanwhile, the Depok City Government does not have direct authority over the management of public vocational schools but remains highly concerned with the quality of human resources and unemployment levels within its jurisdiction.

This situation creates a complex policy relationship among the Central Government, the West Java Provincial Government, the Depok City Government, the business and industrial sectors (DUDI), and vocational education institutions themselves.

Policy Convergence in *SMK* Education Management

a. Shared Objective of Improving Human Resource Quality

The research findings indicate that all policy actors share a relatively similar objective: improving the quality of human resources through vocational education (Yasdin & Muksins, 2024).

Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2016 concerning the Revitalization of Vocational Schools, Ministerial Regulation of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 32 of 2022, and policies of the West Java Provincial Government all demonstrate a common orientation toward enhancing the quality of *SMK* graduates to meet labor market demands.

From the perspective of Rational Choice Institutionalism, this shared objective serves as a collective incentive that encourages actors to collaborate in producing more effective educational policies (Peters, 2019).

b. Strengthening the Link and Match Program

Another point of convergence is reflected in efforts to strengthen the relationship between vocational schools and the business and industrial sectors.

Programs such as Industrial Work Practice (PKL), Teaching Factory initiatives, competency certification, and industrial partnerships are instruments accepted by all stakeholders (Pradipta et al., 2021).

The West Java Provincial Government, schools, and industry share a common interest in producing job-ready graduates, making the link and match program a relatively strong area of collaboration (Setyawan et al., 2024).

c. Support for Improving Educational Quality

Improving educational quality is one of the primary goals of national education policy, including vocational education management. In the context of Depok City, support for educational quality improvement is evident through the alignment of policy orientations among the central government, provincial government, and municipal government. Although each level of government possesses different authorities, they share the same objective: producing graduates who are qualified, competitive, and aligned with the needs of the business and industrial sectors (DUDI) (Putranoto et al., 2024).

d. Curriculum Development

Curriculum development is a crucial instrument for improving the quality of vocational education. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology continuously refines the curriculum to make it more adaptive to technological advancements, labor market demands, and global challenges. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum (*Kurikulum Merdeka*), for example, provides schools with flexibility to adapt learning to student characteristics and workplace requirements.

For vocational schools, curriculum development is not only focused on theoretical mastery but also on strengthening vocational competencies, project-based learning, and integration with industrial needs through the link and match approach. Consequently, the curriculum becomes a strategic instrument for enhancing the relevance of graduates to labor market demands (Hunaepi & Suharta, 2024).

e. Enhancing Teacher Competence

Teachers are a key determinant of educational quality. Therefore, various policies have been directed toward improving teacher competence through training programs, certification, teacher professional education (*PPG*), the Teacher Mobilization Program (*Guru Penggerak*), and continuous professional development activities.

In vocational education, enhancing teacher competence is particularly important due to the rapid pace of technological and industrial development. Vocational school teachers are expected not only to master pedagogical competencies but also professional competencies relevant to current workplace developments. Therefore, the government promotes industrial internships for teachers, competency-based training, and partnerships with businesses and industries as part of its strategy to improve educator quality (Wahyudin et al., 2025).

f. Strengthening Educational Facilities and Infrastructure

The quality of vocational education is highly influenced by the availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure. Unlike general education, vocational schools require laboratories, workshops, technological equipment, and learning facilities that comply with industrial standards.

The central and provincial governments have gradually revitalized vocational school facilities through various physical and non-physical assistance programs. In Depok City, the need for additional classrooms, practical laboratories, and learning equipment has become a critical issue due to the growing public demand for vocational education. Strengthening facilities and infrastructure is expected to improve the quality of learning processes while enhancing graduates' readiness to enter the workforce (Pranita et al., 2025).

g. Educational Quality Assurance System

Quality assurance is implemented through school self-evaluation, accreditation, monitoring and evaluation of learning processes, quality culture development, and the application of graduate competency standards. In the context of vocational schools, the quality assurance system also includes measuring graduate employability, competency certification, and partnerships with industry as mandated by the vocational school revitalization policy.

The existence of a quality assurance system enables schools to undertake continuous improvement, thereby enhancing educational quality systematically and measurably (UNESCO, 2016).

The alignment of policy orientations among the central government, provincial government, and municipal government in curriculum development, teacher competency enhancement, facility improvement, and quality assurance systems demonstrates policy coherence at the objective level. All governmental actors share the same vision of improving educational quality and enhancing the competitiveness of vocational school graduates.

However, several challenges remain at the implementation level, including budget limitations, differences in authority among governmental levels, unequal educational infrastructure quality, and weak coordination with industry. These conditions indicate that alignment in policy objectives has not been fully accompanied by alignment in implementation mechanisms. Therefore, a more collaborative and integrated governance approach is needed to achieve educational quality improvement objectives optimally.

Policy Challenges in *SMK* Education Management

The challenges in vocational education management policy in Depok City encompass several aspects:

a. Misalignment of Authority Between Provincial and Municipal Governments

- 1) The primary issue lies in the division of authority between the West Java Provincial Government and the Depok City Government.
- 2) The Depok City Government has a strong interest in addressing educational and unemployment issues but lacks direct authority to establish and manage public vocational schools.
- 3) Conversely, the Provincial Government possesses formal authority but must distribute resources equitably across all regions of West Java.
- 4) This situation has resulted in differing policy perspectives:
 - a) The Depok City Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) advocates for the construction of new vocational schools.
 - b) The Provincial Government prioritizes optimizing existing classroom capacity.
- 5) This difference reflects institutional misalignment that contributes to the slow resolution of school capacity issues.

b. Limited Enrollment Capacity

1. The high number of applicants is disproportionate to the available school capacity.
2. This condition results in:
 - a) Many junior high school graduates being unable to enroll;
 - b) Increased risk of school dropout;
 - c) Growth in the number of productive-age individuals without access to further education.
3. From a governance perspective, this problem reflects weak inter-agency coordination and inadequate data-driven educational planning.

c. Issues in BPOP Implementation

The Educational Operational Cost Assistance (BPOP) policy under West Java Governor Regulation Number 165 of 2021 has benefited students, but its implementation has revealed several issues.

Research findings indicate:

- 1) Differences in interpretation between regulatory provisions and field implementation;
- 2) Inconsistencies in information received by schools and communities;
- 3) The absence of effective evaluation mechanisms.

These findings suggest that accountability and transparency aspects still require strengthening.

d. Issues Concerning Honorary Teachers and PPPK Recruitment

- 1) The transformation of employment policy through the Government Employee with Work Agreement (PPPK) scheme has implications for honorary teachers.
- 2) Some honorary teachers have experienced reduced teaching hours due to the placement of PPPK teachers in the same subject areas.
- 3) This condition creates employment uncertainty and indicates that educational policies have not fully considered the social impacts on long-serving educators.

e. Gap in Link and Match with Industry

Although Depok City has substantial economic potential, the relationship between vocational schools and industry has not yet been fully optimized.

Several challenges identified include:

- 1) A limited number of industrial partners;
- 2) Mismatch between graduate competencies and industry requirements;
- 3) Unequal access to competency certification;
- 4) Weak graduate tracer study systems.

This situation has resulted in the employment absorption rate of vocational high school (SMK) graduates not yet reaching its optimal level.

Governance Analysis of Vocational High School (SMK) Education Management

Based on the governance framework proposed by Bennett and Satterfield (2018), the governance of vocational education management in Depok City demonstrates the following conditions:

Table 1 Governance Analysis of Vocational High School (SMK) Education Management in Depok City

Governance	Descriptions
Policy Direction	The policy direction is relatively clear through the vocational school revitalization program, but it has not been fully integrated between the central, provincial, and city governments.
Inter-Agency Coordination	Coordination between agencies is still a major challenge due to differences in authority and interests.
Resource Capacity	Limited budgets, educational facilities, and human resources are obstacles to policy implementation.
Data-Driven Planning	The use of data on labor needs and graduate data is still not optimal as a basis for decision-making. Accountability and Efficiency BPOP's policy shows that there are efforts to improve efficiency, but the monitoring and evaluation mechanism still needs to be strengthened.
Community and Industrial Participation	Community and industrial participation have begun to develop but has not yet become a strong and sustainable partnership system.

Governance Model for Vocational High School (SMK) Education Management Policy

Based on the analysis results, the ideal governance model consists of three main components:

Table 2 Governance Model for Vocational High School (SMK) Education Management Policy

Pertama, Integrasi Kebijakan	Sinkronisasi kebijakan antara pemerintah pusat, pemerintah provinsi, dan pemerintah kota.
Kedua, Kolaborasi Multipihak	Kedua, Kolaborasi Multipihak

	Melibatkan sekolah, dunia usaha, dunia industri, masyarakat, dan pemerintah dalam proses pengambilan keputusan.
Ketiga, Tata Kelola Berbasis Data	Menggunakan data kebutuhan tenaga kerja, tracer study lulusan, dan proyeksi pembangunan daerah sebagai dasar penyusunan kebijakan.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study on the management policies of Vocational High School (*SMK*) education in Depok City during the period 2019–2023, it can be concluded that both areas of convergence and areas of contention exist within the governance of vocational education policies. The point of convergence lies in the shared commitment among policy actors to improve the quality of human resources, strengthen the link-and-match program between vocational education and industry, and enhance the overall quality of vocational education. This common objective serves as an important foundation for collaboration among stakeholders. However, points of contention emerge due to the misalignment of authority and coordination between the West Java Provincial Government and the Depok City Government, limited school capacity, suboptimal implementation of the Regional Educational Operational Assistance Program (*BPOP*), unresolved issues concerning honorary and *PPPK* teachers, and the still inadequate collaboration between vocational schools and the business and industrial sectors. From the perspective of Rational Choice Institutionalism, the dynamics of vocational education management policies reflect interactions among actors with diverse interests operating within a particular institutional framework. When institutional arrangements fail to accommodate the interests of all actors in a balanced manner, policy inconsistencies arise, reducing the effectiveness of policy implementation. Furthermore, this study finds that the effectiveness of vocational education management policies is strongly influenced by the quality of governance, including inter-agency coordination, resource capacity, accountability, public participation, and the integration of policies across sectors.

The West Java Provincial Government and the Depok City Government should establish a more formal and sustainable coordination mechanism in the planning and management of vocational education. The government should also expand the capacity of vocational schools by constructing new school units and adding classrooms in accordance with regional needs and student demand. Regular evaluations of the implementation of the Regional Educational Operational Assistance Program (*BPOP*) should be conducted to improve transparency, accountability, and the effectiveness of the program. Furthermore, the government should formulate a more equitable transition policy for honorary teachers during the implementation of the Government Employees with Work Agreements (*PPPK*) system to ensure fairness and employment security. Vocational schools should strengthen strategic partnerships with businesses and industries to improve the relevance of educational programs to labor market needs. Graduate tracer studies should be developed and implemented systematically as an evidence-based foundation for educational planning and policymaking. In addition, school committees and local communities should be actively involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational policies to enhance stakeholder participation and support more responsive and inclusive educational governance.

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