



Strategy for Developing Discipline Character in Vocational High School

Nur Halimah*, Muhyidin, Atim Rinawati, Umi Arifah, Imam Subarkah, Siti Fatimah
Institut Agama Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Kebumen

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Correspondence:

Phone:

Abstract: The aim of this research is to analyze the implementation of discipline character development at vocational high school. This study employs a qualitative approach of the phenomenological type. The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Puring, Kebumen. The subjects of this study include the principal, teachers, staff, and students. Data collection techniques used are interviews, observations, and document studies. Triangulation techniques were applied to ensure data validity. Data analysis follows the Miles & Huberman & Saldana model. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of discipline character development at SMK Negeri 1 Puring involves systematic steps, including the formulation of school regulations, daily guidance, extracurricular activities, leadership and self-development programs, classroom learning, technology utilization, parental involvement, monitoring and evaluation, and fostering a school culture. Collaboration among all stakeholders, such as parents and the community, is crucial in instilling discipline character in students.

Keywords: strategy, discipline character, vocational high school

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Introduction

Education is one of the essential pillars in shaping high-quality human resources with global competitiveness (Fatimah & Mahmudah, 2017a, 2017b; Tyas et al., 2020). Education does not only focus on the transfer of knowledge but also on the transfer of values or attitudes. A balance between knowledge and character can produce individuals with good behavior (Susilo et al., 2022). Therefore, an important goal of education is the development of students' character.

The character that needs to be emphasized for students is the character of discipline (Rahayuningsih & Solikhan, 2016; Yanus et al., 2024). This is because discipline is a fundamental requirement for the development of a child's behavior and influences their moral development. Discipline plays an important role

in enhancing students' motivation to learn in the school environment (Herpratiwi & Tohir, 2022; Siregar et al., 2022). Following school rules, maintaining healthy habits, and increasing learning motivation can be implemented by adhering to established regulations. Discipline character refers to the traits or behaviors of an individual that demonstrate compliance with rules, orderliness, and responsibility. A person with a disciplined character typically exhibits good self-control, efficient time management, and commitment to achieving goals or tasks. Essentially, discipline is the ability to exercise self-control by refraining from actions that are inconsistent with or contrary to established standards (Adlya et al., 2020; Corry, 2022).

Discipline is a fundamental character trait that every individual must possess, alongside generosity

Email: nurh25840@gmail.com

and honesty (Rahayuningsih & Solikhan, 2016). Disciplined behavior enhances responsibility and self-control skills by fostering mental, emotional, and social growth (Eka et al., 2020). A disciplined attitude is crucial for students as discipline aims to establish order in religious and social life. Students who are disciplined are easier to guide in family, community, and school environments, enabling the educational goals of schools to be effectively achieved (Yuliantika, 2017). Through discipline, school learning becomes more focused and organized, making learning objectives easier to accomplish.

Based on the results of a preliminary study, the background of the character-building strategy aimed at developing students' discipline at SMK Negeri 1 Puring arises from various factors and considerations. The following are some factors underlying this initiative: 1) the demands of more complex education: Education in the modern era requires more than just academic knowledge. Discipline is one of the key aspects needed to achieve success in education and careers. Therefore, SMK Negeri 1 Puring recognizes the need to integrate discipline character-building into their curriculum; 2) demands from the workforce: Vocational schools typically serve as preparatory institutions for students entering the workforce. In the era of Industry 4.0, traits such as discipline are highly valued by companies. As such, the school aims to ensure its graduates possess these characteristics; 3) challenges of discipline among students: There may be specific challenges regarding discipline among the students at SMK Negeri 1 Puring. Addressing these challenges is one of the motivations for implementing discipline character-building strategies.

Many studies have examined the development of discipline character in schools. Research conducted by Aprilia et al. found the crucial role of teachers in shaping students' personalities (Aprilia et al., 2024). Another study by Andriana et al. showed that instilling discipline in students can be achieved through various school activities, such as task submission and adherence to school rules (Andriana et al., 2024). Research by Saputra et al. focused on the efforts schools undertake to instill discipline character, particularly through role modeling. With role modeling, students receive direct examples from teachers (Saputra et al., 2024). Previous research has clearly explained the implementation of discipline character building in schools. However, most of these studies focused on instilling discipline at the elementary school level. Research on the development of discipline character at the high school or vocational high school level remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to delve deeper into the implementation of discipline character building at vocational high school.

Discipline character in vocational high schools is particularly important because it is closely linked to the workforce students enter after graduation. Discipline is a key benchmark in performance evaluations by companies, making it essential for vocational high school to instill discipline as part of preparing students for the workforce.

Based on the background explained above, the objective of this study is to analyze the implementation of discipline character building at SMK Negeri 1 Puring, Kebumen

Method

This research employs a qualitative approach of the phenomenological type. The study was conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Puring, Kebumen. The research subjects included the principal, teachers, staff, and students. Data collection techniques used were interviews, observations, and document studies. The validity of the data in this research was ensured through source triangulation and technique triangulation. Triangulation is a method of checking data validity used to enhance the reliability and accuracy of the data. Data analysis employed the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model, which consists of three stages: data condensation, data presentation, and data verification (Miles et al., 2014). Data condensation: This is the process of summarizing, simplifying, and focusing the raw data obtained from qualitative research. The goal is to derive more relevant and easily understood data. Data presentation: This involves visualizing the condensed data to facilitate understanding and the identification of patterns or relationships between data points. Data verification: This is the process of drawing conclusions and verifying the accuracy of the research findings.

Result and Discussion

Implementation refers to a series of planned activities aimed at achieving specific objectives. Extracurricular activities play a role in enhancing non-academic skills among students. By analyzing the various aspects mentioned above, SMK Negeri 1 Puring can formulate strategic steps to improve the quality of education and the relevance of its graduates to the workforce. Identification of challenges and opportunities: Identifying obstacles and supporting factors in the formation of student discipline, as previously discussed. Goal setting: Establishing specific and measurable objectives related to student discipline, such as high attendance rates, low violation rates, or increased participation in school activities. Engaging stakeholders: Involving various parties, including the principal, teachers, school staff, students, and parents, to

establish mutually agreed-upon goals and ensure consistent implementation.

Strategy Development: Developing discipline policies by creating or updating clear, transparent, and consistent guidelines. These policies should include rules that are accepted by all relevant parties. **Formulation of Discipline Development Programs:** Designing discipline development programs, such as workshops, training sessions, or extracurricular activities, that can positively shape students' disciplined attitudes.

Strengthening the Role of Teachers and Staff: Providing training for teachers and school staff on how they can serve as role models for discipline and effectively address violations. In addition to role modeling, habituation is emphasized as part of the guidance given to teachers and staff in fostering student discipline. The methods of habituation and role modeling are effective approaches for shaping students' attitudes both at school and at home (Fatimah et al., 2022; Salwiah & Asmuddin, 2022). Some school activities aimed at instilling a disciplined attitude include the following:

1. Spiritual Activities

These activities are generally conducted during the month of Ramadan or temporarily based on the schedule or student activity program. Activities include: reciting and reflecting on the Asmaul Husna (the 99 names of Allah), practicing da'wah (Islamic preaching) by representatives from each class, and collectively reading surahs and verses of the Holy Qur'an in the school's main plaza.

2. Marching Regulations (PBB)
3. Flag Ceremony Protocol (TUB)
4. Cadet Discipline Training

Cadet discipline includes attitudes that reflect the Pancasila Student Profile, such as being devout and obedient to God Almighty, applying social hierarchy (with noble character), using uniforms and attributes appropriately (work culture), and more.

5. 1000 - 1500 Meter Run
6. Push-Ups
7. Split Jump
8. Squat Jump
9. Pull-Ups
10. Dumbbell Exercises

These exercises are performed to prepare students' physical abilities according to the requirements of IDUKA (Japanese companies) which require the ability to perform 40 dumbbell movements in one minute.

11. Barbell Exercises

Barbell exercises are conducted to prepare students according to the requirements of IDUKA (Japanese fisheries companies), which require the ability to perform barbell lifts as many times as possible with a 32 kg weight. The assessment of students' barbell lifting ability is fully under the authority of the company.

12. Healthy Gymnastics

Some of the strategies implemented by the school in instilling discipline character education are:

1. Formulation of School Rules

Formulating school rules is an important step in creating a safe, organized, and conducive learning environment for all students and staff. **Code of Ethics and Regulations:** Developing and disseminating a clear and easily understandable code of ethics and school regulations for all students. **Reward and punishment:** Establishing firm sanctions for violations and providing rewards for students who demonstrate high discipline. The implementation of a reward and punishment system is a strategy that positively impacts the instillation of students' discipline character. The reward and punishment method motivates students to comply with and respect all school regulations. This finding aligns with research conducted by several researchers, showing that the presence of reward and punishment has a positive effect on students' disciplinary attitudes (Anggraini et al., 2019; Irwan et al., 2021).

2. Daily Guidance

Conducting morning assemblies regularly to encourage students to arrive on time and listen to guidance from the principal or teachers. **Attendance Monitoring:** Strictly monitoring attendance and imposing sanctions on students who are frequently late or skip classes.

3. Extracurricular Activities

Scouting: Organizing scouting activities that emphasize discipline, cooperation, and responsibility. For example, implementing scouting activities at SMK Negeri 1 Puring, with identified objectives such as enhancing students' leadership and teamwork skills through scouting activities, building character and discipline by following the principles of scouting, increasing student participation in school extracurricular activities, providing a platform for students' personal development and talents in scouting, and achieving at least 70% student participation in scouting activities during the first academic year. Scouting activities play an essential role in shaping students' discipline. This finding is consistent with research conducted by several researchers, indicating that scouting activities positively impact students'

discipline character and are recommended for instilling discipline (Khalil et al., 2024; Pratiwi, 2020; Purba et al., 2025).

Student Council: Involving students in the student organization to develop leadership skills and discipline.

4. Leadership and Personal Development Programs

Leadership Training: Organizing leadership training for students involved in student council, scouting, and other organizations. **Social Service Activities:** Organizing social service activities that involve students to develop a sense of responsibility and care for the surrounding environment.

5. Classroom Learning

Integration of Discipline Values: Integrating discipline values into each subject. **Project-Based Learning:** Involving students in projects that require teamwork and discipline in task execution and completion. This finding aligns with research conducted by Sulfiati, which states that the process of integrating character education is facilitated by teachers through models and materials that students can understand and apply in everyday life, so that the process of developing discipline character can be achieved, and teachers understand the character of each student during the learning process (Sulfiati, 2023).

6. Utilization of Technology

School Information System: Utilizing the school information system to monitor student discipline, such as attendance and involvement in extracurricular activities. **Monitoring Applications:** Using applications to monitor and report student disciplinary behavior in real-time to parents.

7. Parental Involvement

Routine Communication: Conducting regular communication with parents about students' progress and discipline. **Parent Meetings:** Organizing meetings with parents to discuss their role in supporting children's discipline at home. These findings align with previous research that highlights the significant role parents play in shaping children's character, particularly discipline. Therefore, synergy between schools and families can foster strong character development in children (Oktaviani et al., 2023; Setyoningsih et al., 2023). Education within the family serves as the primary foundation for a child's education (Fatimah, 2019; Rizqina et al., 2024). Families play a crucial role in educating and setting a good example for children, particularly in religious education, cultural values, and moral conduct within society. A child tends to imitate the behavior of their parents or family members at home because they are the closest to them (Loka & Sari, 2024; Sarwiati et al., 2022). Therefore,

establishing a strong family education system will shape a child's good character as well.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Periodic Assessment: Conduct regular assessments of students' discipline levels through observation and collected data. **Feedback and Reflection:** Gather feedback from students, teachers, and parents to evaluate and improve existing programs.

9. School Culture

Role Models: Teachers and school staff must set an example by demonstrating disciplined behavior. **Positive Environment:** Create a conducive school environment for fostering disciplined character through recognition of positive attitudes and supportive interactions. By implementing these measures consistently and continuously, SMK Negeri 1 Puring can develop a strong sense of discipline in students, positively impacting their academic performance and social life. **Cadet Culture:** Cadets refer to young individuals who are always ready, alert to situations, and full of enthusiasm.

The cadet program is an educational approach that integrates the school curriculum with a tailored military training curriculum appropriate for vocational high school students. This approach is consistently applied throughout the students' time at school, both inside and outside the classroom, becoming a deeply rooted and sustained culture at SMK Negeri 1 Puring. This culture is shaped by the maritime department's specific demands, which require physical endurance and capability to perform effectively in the challenging conditions of the marine environment. The cadet culture, with its emphasis on high discipline, ensures that maritime operations can be conducted safely and successfully. Cadet activities have been shown to significantly contribute to developing students' discipline. These findings align with previous studies demonstrating that cadet programs instill discipline and responsibility in students. Moreover, they positively impact the formation of stronger mental resilience in students (Arya Raka Kusuma, 2024; Eneng Martini et al., 2022).



Figure 1. Cadet Training Activities

The objectives of the cadet culture are as follows:

- a. To develop strong and resilient physical and mental attributes aligned with the demands of the maritime, fisheries processing, aquatic industries, and the modern workforce in general.
- b. To shape disciplined character and superior personality traits in students, which are essential prerequisites for employment by industry, business, and the working world (IDUKA) and serve as valuable assets for self-development and community service.
- c. To foster outstanding and modern character and integrity in students, preparing them to become future leaders and valuable resources for national development.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, the implementation of character-building for student discipline at SMK Negeri 1 Puring involves systematic steps, including the establishment of school rules, daily guidance, extracurricular activities, leadership and self-development programs, classroom learning, utilization of technology, parental involvement, monitoring and evaluation, and fostering a school culture. The recommendation from this study emphasizes the importance of collaboration among all stakeholders, including parents and the community, in instilling student discipline. A shared commitment among the three centers of education (school, family, and community) will positively impact students' success in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

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