

## Research Article

# Influence of Work Motivation, Interpersonal Skills, and Knowledge Construction on the Work Readiness of Vocational Students

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Vocational high schools play an important role in connecting graduates to industry to provide professional workforce input. However, modern times demand an increase in the quality of complex human resources to effectively prepare them to work in the industry. This study examined the relationship between the effects of interpersonal skills and constructive knowledge on work readiness through work motivation. A quantitatively inferential method with a population of vocational high school students was employed. Data were obtained using the structural equation model with the analysis of moment structure 2.4 version application. The research findings showed that interpersonal skills and constructive knowledge have a significant positive effect on work readiness and work motivation interferes with the influence of interpersonal skills and constructive knowledge on work readiness. The results suggest that vocational schools that focus on work readiness need to pay attention to interpersonal skills, constructive knowledge, and work motivation, since they are essential for students. Moreover, this study implies that if we want to improve students' work readiness, we must enhance their interpersonal skills and constructive knowledge of teaching and learning in vocational schools. Further research should empirically examine this issue to explore other factors that affect students' work readiness.

## 1. Introduction

Vocational education plays an important role in Indonesian education as it prepares human talents to enter the industrial world. Inderanata and Sukardi [1] pointed out that schools play an important role in generating creative, innovative, and productive people to support their abilities in real life, particularly in the industrial sector. Borg and Scott-Young [2] argued that students need to acquire desirable skills to survive in the job market. Indonesian vocational education is responsible for a large proportion of the unemployment rate, which can be attributed to several factors. First, the high unemployment rate among vocational school graduates indicates that the main influencing factor is that they are unskilled in their expertise. In addition, Widianingrum et al. [3] highlighted that some of the competencies learned in schools

have changed and thus no longer align with those required by industry. As explained by Hermanto et al. [4], schools cannot keep up with the changes that occur, especially in the use of technology in the industry, because the graduates generated do not possess the skill requirements of the industry. Therefore, according to Chavan and Carter [5], the unemployment rate is affected by the mismatch between their skills and the quality of work required by the industry.

According to Prikshat et al. [6], work readiness is a major issue affecting unemployed graduates in developing or developed economies. Boat et al. [7] argued that work readiness is directed at the abilities and skills of graduates who are continuously trained before entering the industrial world. Herbert et al. [8] explained that work readiness generally focuses on the skills required by companies. Therefore, work readiness should be fostered to solve problems faced

by vocational school graduates. To improve students' work readiness, we must notice that several variables can affect this variable, including qualified knowledge, interpersonal communication skills, and the ability to process one's personality and to make the right decisions [9–12]. This study focuses on interpersonal skills, constructive knowledge, and work motivation. Hu et al. [9] stated that interpersonal skills focus on students' abilities to increase their potential. This potential is trained and developed continuously; therefore, it becomes an ability that can be utilized in the workplace. Conversely, constructive knowledge, which is an external factor for students, is directed toward students' activities in teaching or learning. This variable becomes significant in shaping students' understanding of several subjects, implying an improvement in their abilities. In addition to these two variables, work readiness is also influenced by work motivation [2, 10, 11]. This study aimed to examine the effects of interpersonal skills and constructive knowledge on work readiness through work motivation.

In addition to improvements shared by students' perceptions of work preparedness, further improvements have been made to facilitate their comparability with academic and company data. However, very little detail is provided on work readiness from a work perspective. Job readiness is a concept that appears in the literature as a selection criterion for predictors of success potential. This is an agreed upon condition in which the party is ready and struggles to achieve a big goal and can be interpreted as quality graduates with flexible attitudes and characteristics in the work environment. Students who are ready to work in the industry as mentors desire to return to work and exhibit passion and potential for promotion and career improvement. Various phrases are used interchangeably in the literature as synonyms for work readiness, including general attributes, language work readiness, and job readiness [12].

The research novelty of this study is its investigation of the relationship between interpersonal skills, knowledge construction, work motivation, and work readiness in vocational students. It specifically focuses on vocational students as a unique group undergoing vocational education and training for employment preparation. By examining how these variables interact and influence work readiness, this study enhances the understanding of factors that contribute to vocational students' successful transition into the workforce. It also highlights the potential pathways through which interpersonal skills and knowledge construction impact work readiness, particularly through the mediating role of work motivation. Overall, the research contributes to the existing knowledge of vocational education and its implications for student preparation in the workforce.

When evaluating programs implemented by tertiary institutions, the aim is not only to increase the chances of students securing employment but also to remain employed. It is important to examine students' attitudes toward their work readiness as graduates with a high perception of their abilities and employability achieve better workplace results. Individuals may require a certain set of skills to advance and succeed in their careers. Some of these skills need to be

developed at the university and are important for students to effectively transition into the workforce. When students realize that they lack some of these skills, they naturally feel inferior and perceive their deficits as obstacles to obtaining a job. Lack of experience and quality; for example, are seen as some of the main barriers to employment. Studies have shown that soft skills, problem-solving skills, functional skills, college experience, and academic reputations influence student employability [7]. These three variables are interesting to study because they are considered to have direct or indirect effects on students' work readiness. This study aims to overcome the problems faced in preparing vocational school graduates to enter the industrial world. Investigating work motivation among vocational students in Indonesia is crucial because it significantly affects their readiness for employment. As these students will join the industrial sector after graduation, their level of motivation plays a pivotal role in determining how well they can handle job challenges and requirements [8]. Understanding their work motivation helps identify factors like career aspirations, job satisfaction, eagerness to learn and grow, and future expectations. This research provides a deeper understanding of how vocational students' work motivation can either enhance or hinder their readiness for the workforce. Additionally, exploring their work motivation helps recognize specific needs and challenges within the context of vocational education, guiding schools, teachers, and policymakers in designing effective programs for optimal work readiness [2].

Based on the identification of the problems above, we postulate that interpersonal skills and constructive knowledge affect work readiness and interpersonal skills and constructive knowledge affect work readiness through work motivation.

## 2. Literature Review

*2.1. Work Motivation.* Work motivation can be created under unimagined conditions and arises from both internal and external factors [13]. Internal factors lead to the ability and motivation to excel at work, which is related to doing things optimally to produce work that exceeds the standards of others [14]. Such internal motivation cannot be formed instantly but requires a process that overshadows the ongoing development of that person's skill [15, 16]. This is known as the construction of individuals' thinking processes. Regarding external factors, pressure from work leaders has the greatest impact on work motivation [17]. Another factor is meeting one's personal and family needs for survival. Work motivation is directly proportional to mental health and welfare; therefore, a well-maintained mental condition and an adequate salary are also important factors in forming high work motivation [18]. Another factor that cannot be ruled out is the individual's social conditions. The development of interpersonal skills involves interpersonal relationships and communication. One's environment is also a determining factor in the formation of work motivation [19]. Finally, work motivation demands a strong mentality and ultimately gives an individual the opportunity to be able to develop through work readiness [19, 20].

*2.2. Relation between Interpersonal Skills, Work Readiness, and Work Motivation.* Interpersonal skills have a significant impact on both work readiness and work motivation. These skills, which include effective communication, teamwork, empathy, and building positive relationships, enable individuals to interact harmoniously with others in the workplace [9]. Strong interpersonal skills enhance adaptability, conflict resolution, and preparedness to face job-related challenges. Additionally, positive interactions and a supportive work environment foster motivation, job satisfaction, and a sense of belonging, thus influencing work motivation. Overall, interpersonal skills play a crucial role in enhancing work readiness and work motivation through effective communication, collaboration, and positive relationships in the workplace [6].

*2.3. Work Readiness.* For schoolchildren, work readiness is a visionary self-concept for preparing qualified candidates for the workforce and requires individuals adapt in a short time. The current educational design is indeed aimed at developing the quality of human resources who are able to work as workers with certain skills. Therefore, it is not surprising that research on work readiness, which begins with its relationship to education, is rapidly spreading [7]. The results of relevant studies have shown that students experience significant changes in aspects of social and personality changes, as well as changes in their views concerning the outside world after completing their education. Such empirical studies prove that educational design is indeed directed at creating quality human resources who are ready to work [7]. Therefore, the educational process and self-maturation represent the variables of interpersonal skills and constructive knowledge gained during the learning process. However, it does not necessarily affect or create absolute work readiness. Work readiness is a personality process that can arise only through self-motivation to change and be improved through work readiness. Therefore, work motivation formed during the process becomes a crucial delivery factor such that the formation of work readiness can occur much more smoothly and achieve close to perfection [12, 21].

*2.4. Relation between Constructive Knowledge, Work Readiness, and Work Motivation.* The relationship between knowledge and work readiness is mediated by work motivation. Knowledge positively affects work readiness by fostering motivation. Having a solid knowledge base improves an individuals' comprehension of job requirements, industry trends, and best practices [22]. This knowledge empowers them to perform their tasks effectively, make informed decisions, and adapt to changing work environments. However, the impact of knowledge on work readiness is further mediated by work motivation. Motivation plays a crucial role in translating knowledge into action. When individuals are motivated, they are inspired to apply their knowledge, continuously improve, and strive for excellence in their work. Motivation can be influenced by various factors, including intrinsic interest in the job, recognition and rewards, a sense of purpose, and a supportive work environment. Motivated individuals exhibit higher levels of engagement, initiative,

and proactivity, which contribute to their overall work readiness [23]. In summary, the constructive effect of knowledge on work readiness occurs through the mediating factor of work motivation. Knowledge equips individuals with the necessary tools and understanding, while work motivation channels that knowledge into action, ultimately enhancing their readiness for the workplace.

*2.5. Interpersonal Skills.* Interpersonal skills follow the direction and goals of each generation. The development of millennials' interpersonal skills differs from that of Generations Y and Z [24]. In fact, it is very different from previous generations. Personal skills cover many aspects of measurement. Improving interpersonal skills requires the interaction of one person to another during communication [25]. First, communication is an important aspect that can build interpersonal relationships, which can ultimately impact the interpersonal skills of the people involved. Second, teamwork is necessary for building interpersonal skills as it is a part of the effort to foster an attitude of collaboration between one another. Teamwork can provide a broad visionary view of common goals [26]. A good team also positively shapes the personalities of its members. Indeed, one's surrounding environment can affect an individual's interpersonal skills. An individual's position in the team also plays an important role in shaping their attitude [27]. An absolute leadership attitude can be achieved when someone is in a team. In addition, teamwork can spark a sense of competition, referring to a healthy feeling of rivalry and an attitude of not wanting to perform poorly compared to others [9, 28]. Competition can help individuals develop strong and tough personalities, which, in turn, can impact the development of interpersonal skills [24].

*2.6. Relation between Interpersonal Skill to Work Readiness.* Strong interpersonal skills contribute to enhancing work readiness as they enable effective communication, teamwork, empathy, and building positive relationships. Good interpersonal skills facilitate interaction and collaboration with colleagues, supervisors, and customers, fostering professional relationships, conflict resolution, and a positive work environment [29]. Additionally, they support the development of a broad professional network, gaining support, and increasing employment and career opportunities. Interpersonal skills are crucial for achieving optimal work readiness, which entails comprehensive preparation in knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for workplace success. In conclusion, there is a positive relationship between interpersonal skills and work readiness, where having strong interpersonal skills enhances readiness for dynamic and competitive work environments [30].

*2.7. Constructive Knowledge.* The design of science and art of thinking has been used for innovation and value creation in a wide range of fields, including business, law, schools, science, and medicine [31]. Design thinking is important for building a framework of mind to solve problems or topics and can alter an individual's view of methods and shortcuts when dealing with problems. Design thinking for schoolchildren

TABLE 1: Indicators of interpersonal skills.

Indicators	Sources
Interpersonal skills (IS)	
IS1: Social sensitivity	[9]
IS2: Relationship building	
IS3: Teamwork skills	
IS4: Listening skills	
IS5: Communication skills	

or those taking education concerns how education can fulfill its goals [32]. In addition to constructing thinking in education, it is necessary to construct thinking in educational management and pedagogical skills [33]. In other words, the use of constructive knowledge reflects the perception of students or college students toward learning [34]. Moreover, a deeper study of perceptions in the construction of this thought focuses on how students' thinking frameworks can be formed through systematic education and curricula that can provide opportunities for them to improve their thinking skills [35].

**2.8. Relation between Constructive Knowledge and Work Readiness.** Constructive knowledge enhances work readiness by equipping individuals with the necessary expertise, skills, and adaptability for their job roles. It involves actively acquiring, analyzing, and synthesizing information to deepen understanding [36]. Staying updated with industry trends and best practices enables individuals to adapt to changes, make informed decisions, and perform effectively. Additionally, knowledge construction fosters problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity, essential for workplace success [37]. Overall, there is a strong correlation between knowledge construction and work readiness, as it empowers individuals to meet job market demands and excel professionally.

### 3. Methodology

A quantitative approach was employed to empirically measure and test the effects of the variables. An online questionnaire comprising 50 statements identified through a literature review on interpersonal skills, constructive knowledge, learning motivation, and work readiness was used, and the research population consisted of 1,327 students. Cluster sampling was used to obtain 307 respondents at vocational high schools in Surakarta City, Central Java, Indonesia. The respondents were 12 vocational school students majoring in Business and Management. The following are the research procedures in this study:

The following tables list the indicators studied in detail for each variable. Table 1 presents a list of construct indicators that are the building aspects of the interpersonal skills variables. These indicators consist of several aspects, namely social sensitivity, relationship building, teamwork, listening, and communication skills. Social sensitivity is an interpersonal skill related to social media. Relationship building is the ability to relate to colleagues and other people. Teamwork skills refer to the ability of a team to achieve common goals. Listening skills are defined as the ability to observe

TABLE 2: Indicators of constructing knowledge.

Indicators	Sources
Constructing knowledge (CK)	
CK1: Curiosity	[10]
CK2: Knowledge of productive subject	
CK3: Teacher intervention	

TABLE 3: Indicators of work motivation.

Indicators	Sources
Work motivation (WM)	
WM1: Entering the industry	[38]
WM2: Task values	
WM3: Self-respect	
WM4: Achievement goal	
WM5: Encouragement	

TABLE 4: Indicators of work readiness.

Indicators	Sources
Work readiness (WR)	
WR1: Personal characteristics	[21]
WR2: Organizational acumen	
WR3: Work competence	
WR4: Social intelligence	

situations and determine roles in a group, and communication skills is the ability to relate verbally or in action to other people in the team.

Table 2 presents the construct indicators of the knowledge-constructing variables, namely, curiosity, knowledge-productive subject, and teacher intervention. Curiosity is an attitude of interest that arises from motivation for something related to work. Knowledge of productive subject is respondents' knowledge with respect to understanding various matters related to relevant work. Teacher intervention is the teacher's role in building knowledge about the world of work.

Table 3 shows the construct indicators of the work motivation variables, which are entering the industry, task value, self-respect, achievement goals, and encouragement. Entering the industry means that students have the desire to enter the industrial world. Task value is being able to identify the value and the urgency of each task. Self-respect means having concern for yourself. Encouragement means that students have a strong desire in certain aspects and fields in the industry.

Table 4 presents the construct indicators for the work readiness variables, which comprise personal characteristics, organizational acumen, work competence, and social intelligence. Personal characteristics indicate the level of self-worth, which can be used as a personal advantage. Organizational acumen means that students have a good understanding of how to work in organizations or groups. Work competence refers to the competencies that must be



TABLE 5: Reliability test.

Item	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Interpersonal skills	0.789
Constructing knowledge	0.820
Work motivation	0.764
Work readiness	0.770

possessed in the work world. Finally, social intelligence refers to the ability to place oneself within a social structure.

**3.1. Hypotheses.** This study tested four variables: interpersonal skills ( $x_1$ ), knowledge construction ( $x_2$ ), work motivation ( $m$ ), and work readiness ( $Y$ ). Using these four variables, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- (H1) *Interpersonal skills directly affects work readiness.*
- (H2) *Constructing knowledge directly affects work readiness.*
- (H3) *Interpersonal skills affects work readiness through work motivation.*
- (H4) *Constructing knowledge affects work readiness through work motivation.*

**3.2. Data Analysis.** This study used the structural equation model (SEM) analysis method for two reasons: (1) the assumptions can be measured flexibly as long as the model is appropriate and (2) this model can accommodate the measurement of variables with many indicators, as in this study. The SEM modeling approach was used to test the above model. The obtained data met the test requirements using SEM with analysis of moment structure 2.4. Thereafter, the data were analyzed using an adapted model. An online questionnaire was used to ensure the confidentiality, convenience, and effectiveness of the sample. To test the validity and reliability of the instrument, we used SPSS16. The findings of the reliability analysis obtained a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value higher than 0.70 for all constructs. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was used to measure the reliability of the measurement scale. In addition, the validity analysis obtained a factor loading higher than 0.50. The results are summarized in Table 6.

The values of the average and construct reliability were higher than 0.4–0.5 and 0.7 indicating that both exceeded the specified value.

Table 7 lists the goodness of fit indices of the structural model. Values above this category meet the test criteria [39].

## 4. Results and Discussion

The analysis used a path model that described an appropriate structural model developed using the SEM. Hypothesis testing was conducted with a comparison of  $p$ -values that are less than 0.05. All hypotheses were considered significant when the values were less than 0.05.

Figure 1 shows the path analysis used in this study. This picture shows that interpersonal skills, constructing knowledge,

TABLE 6: Validity test.

Constructs	Indicators	LF	CR	AVE
Interpersonal skills (IS)	IS1	0.727	0.808	0.998
	IS2	0.665		
	IS3	0.748		
	IS4	0.650		
	IS5	0.786		
Constructing knowledge (CK)	CK1	0.735	0.878	0.984
	CK2	0.658		
	CK3	0.667		
Work motivation (WM)	WM1	0.715	0.793	0.885
	WM2	0.736		
	WM3	0.722		
	WM4	0.715		
	WM5	0.733		
Work readiness (WR)	WR1	0.725	0.845	0.952
	WR2	0.676		
	WR3	0.694		
	WR4	0.715		

Note. AVE, average; CR, construct reliability; LF, loading factor.

TABLE 7: Structural model of GoF indices.

Fit index	Value	Critical of acceptable value	Acceptability
$\chi^2/Df$	0.345	0.002–4.80	Fit
Probability	0.253	$\geq 0.05$	Fit
CFI	0.955	$\geq 0.90$	Fit
IFI	0.957	$\geq 0.90$	Fit
RMSEA	0.067	$\leq 0.08$	Fit

Note. CFI, comparative fit index; GoF, goodness of fit; IFI, incremental fit index; RMSEA, root mean square error of approximation.

and work motivation have pathways that can affect work readiness. The nature of the path indicates that the role of work motivation is a mediating variable in linking interpersonal skills and constructing knowledge to work readiness.

**4.1. Interpersonal Skills Affect Work Readiness.** As shown in Table 8 and Figure 2, interpersonal skills directly and positively affected work readiness. In addition, the resulting effect on this variable has a coefficient value of 0.197; if students' interpersonal skills are high, their work readiness is also higher for the resulting coefficient of influence. Interpersonal skills, which include skills in the form of social sensitivity, relationship building, working with others, listening, and communication, affect work readiness [12, 26, 36]. Sulistyobudi and Kadiyono [25] added that, in addition to interpersonal skills, vocational schools aim to equip vocational school students with sufficient knowledge, skills, and attitudes before they enter the industrial world. The relationship between these two variables empirically proves that interpersonal skills have a positive and significant effect on work readiness [35, 36]. The first aspect of social skills discussed and measured is social sensitivity. High social sensitivity significantly affects students' work readiness [37]. The

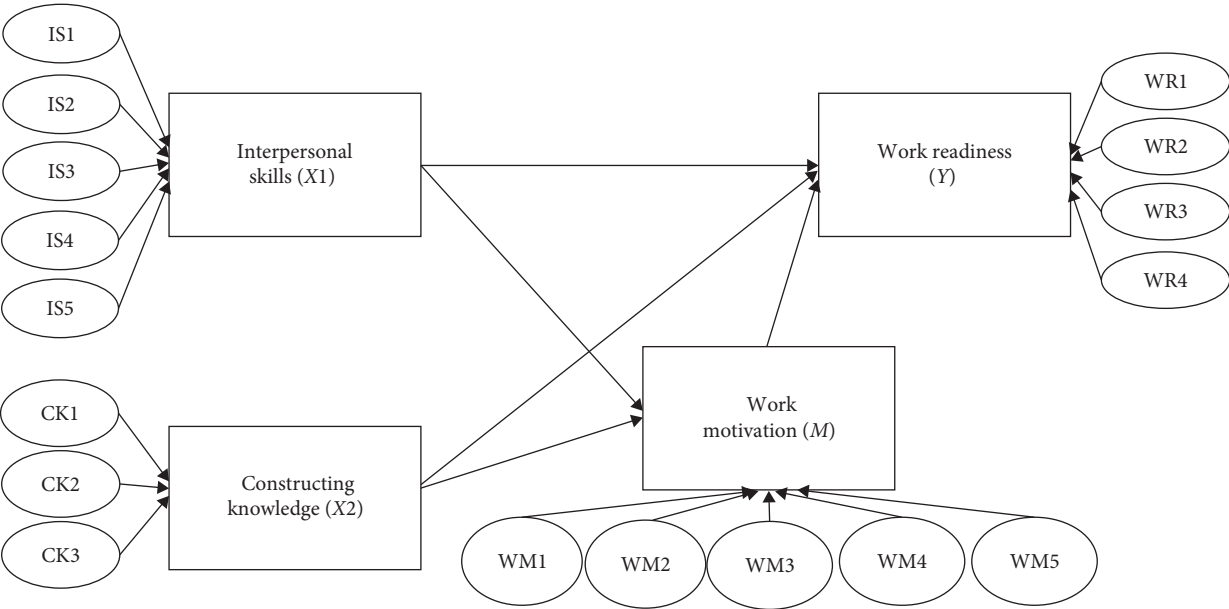


FIGURE 1: Path analysis.

TABLE 8: Hypothesis test.

	Estimate	CR	<i>p</i> -Value	Decision
H1	0.197	2.472	0.021	Supported
H2	0.232	2.903	0.019	Supported
H3	0.145	2.179	0.028	Supported
H4	0.382	3,662	0.039	Supported

Note. CR, construct reliability.

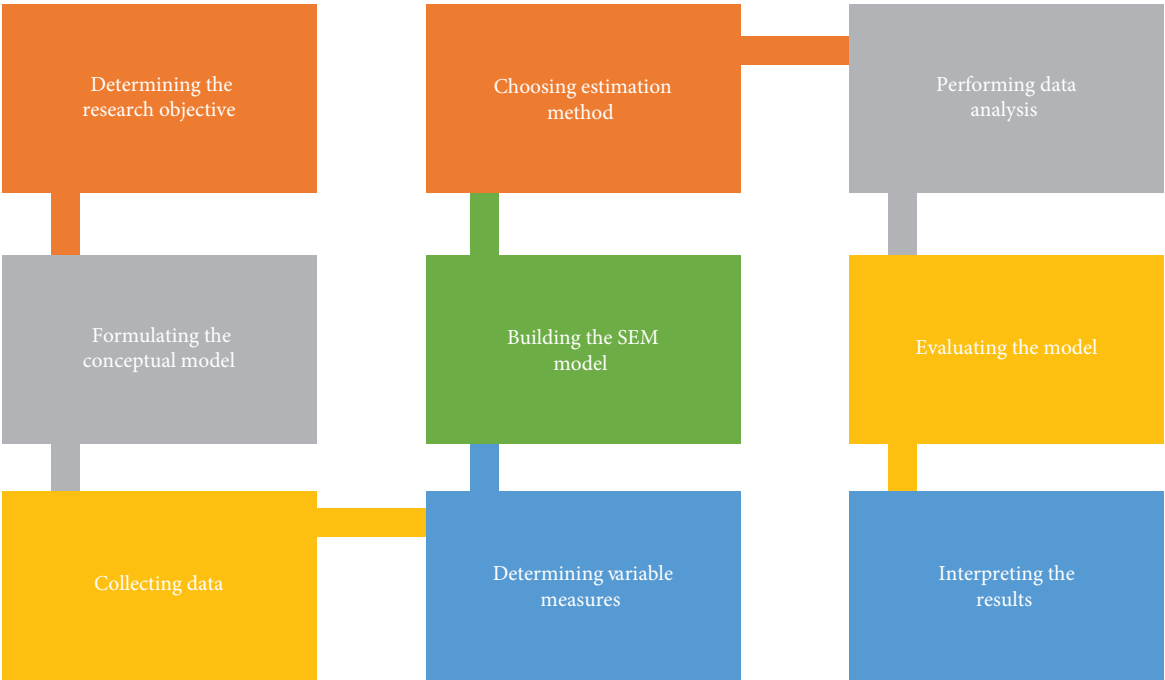


FIGURE 2: Research procedures.

second is relationship building. Good relationships between individuals provide a sense of interdependence and mutual support, which is useful for developing work readiness attitudes given that students inevitably encounter relationships or interactions with other people [3, 32]. The third aspect involves working with others. Students' future workplaces cannot be separated from team cooperation to achieve the company's vision and goals. Thus, the development of such collaboration has been empirically proven to increase work readiness. The fourth is listening and communication skills. Work cannot be separated from problems and conflicts between individuals and departments. These problems can be solved through communication and listening to others' opinions, which can also empirically affect work readiness [8].

**4.2. Constructive Knowledge Affects Work Readiness.** Knowledge directly affects work readiness. This effect is positive, with a coefficient value of 0.232; therefore, we can conclude that the higher the students' constructive knowledge, the higher their work readiness for the resulting coefficient of influence. Furthermore, constructive knowledge is the main factor that makes students skilled. Therefore, if we want to improve students' work readiness, we must increase students' curiosity, knowledge of productive subjects, and teachers' intervention in the learning and teaching processes of vocational school students [2, 23, 33]. The knowledge mentioned is the knowledge of the business world, which can include academic attitudes and work experience. Teachers provide students with academic knowledge, and the subjects taught are adapted to the needs of the business world, especially in vocational schools designed to generate students ready to work [5, 22, 40]. This finding indicates that knowledge empirically contributes to the skills required for work readiness. Attitude knowledge is knowledge of the attitude of a worker in the business world. This concerns work ethics, which must be developed by students to prepare them for work [40–42]. The last knowledge type is knowledge of work experience. Many educational designs require students to conduct fieldwork to obtain an overview and experience with the business world [43, 44].

**4.3. Interpersonal Skills Affect Work Readiness through Work Motivation.** Third, interpersonal skills affected work readiness through motivation. The effect caused by the existence of the work motivation variable was 0.145, which implies that work motivation moderates the resulting relationship between interpersonal skills and work readiness. This finding is strengthened by Suck [33], Ichsan et al. [45], and van Laar et al. [46], who found that work motivation directly and significantly affects work readiness. Interpersonal skills can also improve other variables before finally increasing work readiness. One such variable is work motivation. An empirical study stated that interpersonal skills, which consist of these four elements, provide a special stimulus for an individual's work motivation, especially students who will certainly face the business world after school life [11]. Finally, interpersonal skills help formulate attitudes to be applied at work; thus, work motivation is formed at a certain level. All

things considered, it can be seen that work motivation has a tremendous effect on students' work readiness [17, 46].

**4.4. Constructive Knowledge Affects Work Readiness through Work Motivation.** Finally, constructive knowledge affects work readiness through motivation. Thus, learning motivation moderated the relationship between interpersonal skills and work readiness, with a value of 0.382. Work motivation directly affects readiness to work. No similar study has proven that constructive knowledge affects work readiness through work motivation [2, 11, 33]. Similar to interpersonal skills that affect work motivation, constructive knowledge can also have a positive and significant effect on the formation of work motivation at a certain level [16]. Through education that continues to be implanted in the minds and attitudes of students every day, the desire and encouragement to engage in work that arises from students' attitudes will increase. Constructive knowledge is also based on a change in attitude and self-awareness toward work after completing education [11, 33, 47]. Constructing knowledge is a person's initial ability and graduates to prepare themselves for the world of work [48, 49]. Then, through readiness for work students need motivation, which is a driving factor [50, 51].

**4.5. Theoretical Contributions.** This study makes some important contributions to education to support an increase vocational students' work readiness. In addition, the novelty of this study is that the work motivation variable moderates the correlation between interpersonal skills and work readiness, which can be continuously provided to vocational students. Specifically, this study identifies variables that affect work readiness when preparing vocational students to join the industry. However, further investigation through an empirical perspective needs to be conducted to explore other factors that affect students' work readiness so that the research can also contribute to the theoretical contributions of vocational education.

## 5. Conclusions, Implications, and Limitations of the Study

This study demonstrated that interpersonal skills and constructive knowledge directly affect vocational school students' work readiness and that work motivation positively moderates these variables. Thus, all hypotheses were accepted, meaning that if we want to improve students' work readiness, we must improve their interpersonal skills and construct knowledge. The study results further indicate that the constructive model of interpersonal skills, knowledge construction, and work motivation variables is useful for determining the aspects of work readiness. To be considered ready to work, students must have personal characteristics, organizational acumen, work competence, and social intelligence, which are continuously trained by teachers or through fieldwork practices in the industrial sector.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that must be noted. First, each variable indicator is limited to various indicators, as shown in Tables 1–4. Therefore, the indicators in this study are defined in general definitive terms to cover broad factors through a comprehensive

literature review. However, this study needs to employ other approaches so that the variables can be explored simultaneously to provide several results that support this study. Second, the study results can be interpreted from two perspectives: academic and industrial. Based on academic results, these results can be used as a reference in the development of further research in the field of work motivation, which is influenced by work readiness, knowledge construction, and interpersonal skills. Based on the industry, the results of this study can be considered for the development of human resources in companies to increase work motivation based on aspects of work readiness, knowledge construction, and interpersonal skills.

This research has the potential to impact the curriculum in vocational schools in Indonesia in several ways. First, it can deepen our understanding of the factors that contribute to the work readiness of vocational students, such as interpersonal skills, knowledge construction, and work motivation. This understanding can guide curriculum developers in effectively preparing students for the workforce by integrating these aspects into the curriculum. Second, the research outcomes can promote the integration of interpersonal skills and knowledge construction into the vocational curriculum, emphasizing their importance in the professional realm. Third, it can inspire the development of a more comprehensive educational program that focuses not only on technical knowledge but also on cultivating students' work motivation. This can be achieved through activities like practical projects, teamwork, and real-world experiences. Finally, the research can help align the vocational curriculum with the needs of the labor market, ensuring that students acquire skills and knowledge that are relevant to industry requirements and improving their employment opportunities. In conclusion, this research significantly contributes to advancing the vocational curriculum in Indonesia by highlighting the importance of interpersonal skills, knowledge construction, and work motivation in preparing students for the challenges of the professional world.

## 6. Recommendations

Several recommendations can be made based on the conclusions that have been successfully described from the research results. First, there is a need for monitoring by schools and students' parents to determine students' interpersonal development. Additionally, habituation needs to be disciplined in the school environment in the form of habituation to cooperate, organize, develop a sense of empathy, and form relationships with other people. Schools must isolate or otherwise prevent antisocial students from cooperating with others. Teachers can also provide learning designs that accommodate interpersonal skills without compromising academic knowledge. Second, through schools, it is necessary to create a special curriculum for students to prepare themselves for work. The curriculum must accommodate qualified academic skills, positive attitudes, and rigorous work experience. This can be emphasized in structured fieldwork. Moreover, when students attempt to practice their acquired skills in the industrial world, schools must routinely monitor and evaluate the

implementation of their practice. Third, work motivation can be realized through the provision of intense and comprehensive understanding to students. Through counseling and career guidance sections, schools must be able to determine students' interests and talents of when they first enter school. Then, through the search for these interests and talents, psychological treatment should be provided to build perceptions, construct knowledge, and motivate students to view work after school as a result of their achievements.

Educational institutions can consider the following recommendations to enhance vocational students' skills, knowledge, and work readiness: (1) integrate collaborative projects, practical assignments, and real-world simulations to develop their interpersonal skills and knowledge construction. (2) Foster a supportive learning environment that encourages collaboration, communication, and idea exchange through interactive teaching methods, group discussions, and mentoring programs. (3) Provide career guidance, workshops, and assessments to help students explore career aspirations, set goals, and align motivations with their chosen paths. (4) Create opportunities for practical experience through internships, apprenticeships, and industry collaborations, allowing students to apply their skills and knowledge in real-world settings. (5) Organize professional development programs like workshops and seminars to develop interpersonal skills, expand vocational knowledge, and improve overall work readiness. (6) Regularly assess and update the curriculum to align with workforce needs, integrating new technologies, industry advancements, and employer feedback. Implementing these recommendations supports vocational students in enhancing their skills, knowledge, and work readiness through motivation.

## Data Availability

Data were obtained from questionnaires filled out by respondents who were included in the sample category in this study.

## Disclosure

This research is an independent research project organized by a research group in the field of office administration education affiliated with the Sebelas Maret University, in collaboration with partner researchers from the State University of Malang.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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