

## Literature Review: Innovations in Business Learning to Enhance Competencies and Insights of Vocational Students

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**Abstract:** *This research focuses on improving the competencies and insights of students in business learning at Vocational High Schools (SMK). Lack of innovation in teaching methods often results in a disinterest and lack of understanding of business materials. The study aims to explore and implement innovative approaches, such as technology integration and project-based learning, to enhance students' learning experiences. The use of technology, project-based learning, and collaboration with local business practitioners have shown positive results in increasing students' interest and understanding of business materials. The study emphasizes the importance of adopting innovative teaching methods to improve the relevance and effectiveness of business education in Vocational high schools.*

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### Introduction

In the rapidly evolving era of globalization and digital transformation, the need for a workforce with strong business competencies is increasing (Low et al., 2020; Pan, 2020). A competitive job market requires vocational high school (SMK) graduates who have a deep understanding of the business world as well as skills that are relevant to the demands of the global market. Business education in SMK should be able to prepare students with skills that are not only locally appropriate but also globally relevant. At the local level, especially in Indonesia, there is a challenge in ensuring that the curriculum and learning methods in SMK can keep up with the latest developments in the business world. Sometimes, the lack of innovation in learning in vocational high schools results in a gap between the needs of local industries and the available SMK graduates (Almahry et al., 2019; Boldureanu et al., 2020; Prabhu, 2019).

Ideally, business learning in SMK should focus on innovation, technology integration, and skills development relevant to current and future industry needs (Maula et al., 2019, 2023; Wardana et al., 2023, 2024). The importance of business competencies and insights for

SMK students is significant in the context of preparing students to enter the increasingly complex and competitive world of work. First, having business competencies allows students to understand basic business principles such as management, marketing, finance, and human resources. These capabilities are important as they provide a solid foundation for students to understand how businesses operate, including decision-making processes, strategic planning, and risk management (Sang & Lin, 2019; Sriyakul & Jermsittiparsert, 2019).

In addition, by having strong business competencies, vocational students will be better prepared to enter the job market with the skills required by various industries (Boldureanu et al., 2020; Eniola & Entebang, 2015). Students can become more flexible and can adapt quickly to changes in the work environment as well as contribute effectively in a teamwork environment. This not only benefits the students individually but also provides benefits to the company or organization where the students work, as the students can be a valuable resource in increasing team productivity and creativity (Hidayat et al., 2020; Huda, 2020).

Competence, and having a broad business insight are also very important for vocational students. Business insight enables students to understand the macroeconomic context and external factors that affect business operations, such as government regulations, market trends, and industry competition. With a deep understanding of these aspects, students can make smarter and more strategic decisions in their role in the world of work (Indriyani & Subowo, 2019; Morris et al., 2005; Mukhtar et al., 2021). Having a broad business insight also opens up opportunities for students to become entrepreneurs or start their businesses in the future. By understanding basic aspects of business such as business planning, market analysis, and financial management, students can better design and manage their businesses (Almahry et al., 2019; Wardana et al., 2020).

Overall, the importance of business competencies and insights for SMK students cannot be doubted. It is not only about preparation to enter the job market but also about empowering students with knowledge and skills that enable them to succeed and thrive in various business and economic contexts. As such, business learning in SMKs is crucial in preparing future generations to become leaders and innovators in the ever-changing business world.

However, in reality, there are several barriers faced in implementing learning approaches that are innovative and relevant to business needs. Some of these include limited resources, teacher skills that may need to be upgraded, and lack of access to cutting-edge learning technologies and resources. To overcome these challenges, up-to-date learning approach strategies are needed, including the integration of technology in learning, curriculum development that is responsive to industry changes, and contextualized and continuous teacher training.

Curriculum development that is responsive to industry changes is an important priority in the context of vocational education. The first step is to conduct an in-depth analysis of current and future industry needs through consultations with local and regional industrial enterprises and analysis of data on labor market trends (Agarwal et al., 2020; Akhmetshin et al., 2019; Setyawati et al., 2022). By understanding the workforce needs and skills sought by

employers, curricula can be structured in a more relevant manner. Close partnerships with industry are also crucial, involving internships, industry visits, and collaborative projects to ensure students gain practical experience that matches the world of work. The use of technology is also a major focus in curriculum development, incorporating the latest technology and software applications relevant to specific industries. Flexibility and adaptability of the curriculum are important to respond to rapid changes in the industry. Project-based learning is also an effective strategy, allowing students to apply their knowledge and skills in a real work context (Sari & Fakhruddiana, 2019). Continuous evaluation of the curriculum and learning programs is also necessary to ensure that they remain relevant and effective in preparing students for the evolving industry. With this approach, SMK can ensure that its graduates are ready to face the challenges in the world of work and contribute to the progress of the industry in the future.

Innovation-focused business learning in vocational schools is an essential approach to dealing with the changing and evolving demands of the business world (Sang & Lin, 2019; Sriyakul & Jermsittiparsert, 2019). By adopting innovation in learning methods, vocational schools can ensure that their students not only have a strong understanding of business concepts but also have skills that are relevant to current and future industry needs. One of the key aspects of innovative business learning is the use of technology in the learning process. By utilizing information and communication technologies, such as apps, software, and online platforms, teachers can create a more engaging and interactive learning experience for students (Huda, 2020; Karlidag-Dennis et al., 2020).

In addition, collaborative and project-based learning is also an integral part of this innovative approach. Through projects that involve problem-solving and analyzing business cases, students can develop interpersonal, leadership, and collaboration skills that are essential in a working environment. In addition, the use of business case studies and simulations assists students in applying business concepts in the context of real situations, thus enhancing their understanding of the business world (Agusmiati & Wahyudin, 2019; Anshika et al., 2021). It is also important to provide training and support to teachers so that they can adopt new technologies and learning methods more effectively. Thus, innovation-focused business learning not only prepares students to enter the competitive job market but also helps them become change agents that drive innovation in the industry in the future.

Business learning that is oriented toward developing skills relevant to current and future industry needs is a very important approach to preparing SMK students to become a ready and competitive workforce (Hadyastiti et al., 2020; Listiningrum et al., 2020). One of the key aspects is the development of technical skills required in specific industries. This includes teaching practical skills such as financial management, digital marketing, supply chain management, and the use of up-to-date business software. By adopting a learning approach that focuses on developing industry-relevant skills, SMKs can ensure that their graduates are prepared to face the challenges and opportunities in the ever-evolving world of work, as well as contribute positively to advancing the industry in the future.

Based on the description above, the research gap this study can focus on is the lack of research that specifically explores the implementation of innovation in business learning in Vocational High Schools (SMK). Although the importance of innovation has been recognized, not many studies have reviewed concrete strategies, challenges, and best approaches to adopt innovation in business learning curricula and methods in SMK. An in-depth study on how innovation can be effectively integrated into SMK learning environments can provide new insights and practical guidance for educational stakeholders.

Research novelty can arise by exploring one or more of the research gaps mentioned above. For example, research focusing on the development and implementation of specific innovative strategies in business learning in SMK, emphasizes technology integration, technology skills development, and industry-specific skills development in detail. In addition, research could explore the effectiveness of project-based and collaborative learning methods in the SMK context, as well as identify factors that influence the successful implementation of these methods. As such, the research will provide new insights and significant contributions to the understanding of business learning in SMKs in the face of the demands of globalization and digital transformation.

The results of this study are expected to provide practical guidance for schools, teachers, and other stakeholders to improve the effectiveness of business learning in SMK, as well as contribute new thoughts in the business education literature. Thus, this research can make a positive contribution to improving the quality of education and preparing students for a better future.

Business Learning, which refers to the process of delivering and receiving knowledge, skills, and understanding of basic business concepts and their application in a real-world context, is carried out through various learning methods and strategies in a Vocational High School (SMK) environment. Business learning indicators include the use of curriculum materials, technology in learning, collaborative learning methods, practical skills development, and effectiveness of learning evaluation.

Learning innovation is the process of developing and applying new ideas or methods in education to improve the quality of learning. Concretely, it covers various aspects, such as the development of more effective teaching methods, for example, the flipped classroom method that allows students to learn subject matter at home through videos, while class time is used for more in-depth discussion and application. The integration of technologies such as e-learning, online learning platforms, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR) is also an important part of this innovation, making learning more interactive, flexible, and engaging (FKIP, 2015; Ningrum, 2016). In addition, learning innovations involve project- and problem-based learning approaches, which emphasize active learning through working on real projects or solving complex problems, thus enhancing students' critical thinking and collaboration skills. The personalized adaptive curriculum is also part of the innovation, allowing learning to be tailored to students' individual needs, interests, and learning styles through the use of algorithms and data analytics to assess student progress in real-time.

Continuous and authentic evaluations, such as digital portfolios and project-based assessments, help to measure student understanding more comprehensively and continuously. Collaborative and social learning facilitated through social media, discussion forums, and collaborative projects allows students to work together and learn from each other. In addition, a holistic approach that pays attention to students' emotional and social well-being is important, with programs such as mindfulness and counseling to support students' mental health (Ningrum, 2016). Scientifically, learning innovations are based on educational research and theory, including learning psychology, cognitive theory, and educational technology. The implementation of these innovations requires continuous evaluation to ensure their effectiveness and make improvements based on data and feedback from field practice. Thus, learning innovation is not just about using new technologies, but also about developing more effective and relevant approaches to support students' academic and personal development in an evolving educational environment.

The purpose of learning innovation is to improve the quality and effectiveness of education through new methods, technologies, and strategies. It aims to improve student learning outcomes by making learning more interactive and personalized, tailored to individual needs. In addition, it encourages creativity and problem-solving skills through project-based approaches. Technology integration makes learning more engaging and prepares students for the digital world. It also aims to increase student's engagement and motivation with relevant activities and prepare them for the future with 21st-century skills such as collaboration and digital literacy (Firdaus & Prayudi, 2024; Lutfiani et al., 2020). In addition to academic aspects, innovations support the development of students' social and emotional skills. In terms of evaluation, innovation creates more authentic and sustainable assessment methods. Finally, innovation encourages students to become lifelong learners, developing self-learning skills and continuous curiosity.

To improve a business through innovation, first, identify needs and opportunities in the market. Then, invest in research and development to create new solutions. Encourage creativity across the organization through brainstorming and idea competitions. Evaluate and validate ideas based on feasibility and market potential, then create a strategic plan that includes goals, resources, and timeline. Develop a prototype and test the new product or service, gathering feedback from early customers for improvement. After that, we should launch the product with an effective marketing strategy. Monitor performance using metrics such as sales and customer satisfaction, and make continuous improvements based on evaluations. Finally, build a culture of innovation with training and incentives to encourage new ideas. These steps help businesses create sustainable innovation, increase competitiveness, and better meet customer needs.

Research conducted by Suryadharmas et al. (2023) with the title "Lean Startup Approach to Innovation in Green Business Models and Digital Entrepreneurship" revealed that innovation plays an important role in improving the value chain and generating new business concepts through the digitization process. In addition, research conducted by Aprillia et al. (2023) with the title "Collaborative Strategies in Encouraging Business Innovation in the

Creative Industry: Qualitative Study on Graphic Design Company" also revealed that business innovation is needed to enrich the creative process of a growing business.

Business Insights and Competencies that include Business Insights and Business Competencies. Business Insight refers to students' understanding of business concepts and contexts, including knowledge of basic business principles, understanding of external factors that affect business operations, and understanding of market trends and industry competition (Almahry et al., 2019).

In business learning to improve students' innovation competencies and insights, several important steps need to be taken both in practice and knowledge. First, the curriculum should be designed to include innovative elements that trigger students' creativity, such as problem-based projects that challenge them to develop new solutions. Furthermore, the use of project-based learning can provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge in real business contexts, enriching their practical and creative skills. Through case studies and business trend analysis, students can learn best practices from innovative companies and understand the dynamics of a changing market (Lynch et al., 2021). Collaboration with industry gives students first-hand insight into how innovation is applied in everyday business practices. Training in innovation skills such as design thinking and creativity helps students hone their innovative abilities. Support for entrepreneurship, whether through business incubator programs or guidance from entrepreneurial mentors, also stimulates students' spirit of innovation. The use of technology in learning, such as e-learning platforms and business simulations, allows students to experience learning that is interactive and relevant to current business trends. Finally, formative assessment and in-depth feedback help students understand their innovative capabilities and provide direction for further improvement (Hasan et al., 2020): With these steps, business learning can become more effective in preparing students to engage in the ever-evolving and innovating business world.

According to research conducted by Legi, (2023) entitled "Entrepreneurship Learning Innovation in Higher Education: Application of Contextual Design as a Solution" states that entrepreneurship learning innovation can be a solution to motivate students to become reliable entrepreneurs through the right learning approach and effective use of communication technology. Research conducted by Oktavianto, (2021) states that FOUR-E learning innovations in Creative Product and Entrepreneurship subjects at SMKs that combine elements of education, entrepreneurship, ethics, and environment in one learning context can improve business in the digital era and can minimize business crimes committed via the internet.

## Research Method

This research uses a systematic literature review (SLR) method that addresses issues in Business Learning, Learning Innovation, Business Insights, and Competencies in Vocational Students. Literature study research is a process or activity of collecting data from various works of literature such as books and journals to compare the results of one research with another (Nowell et.al, 2014). The purpose of this literature study research is to obtain a



theoretical basis that can support the solution of the problem being studied and reveal various theories that are relevant to the case, more specifically in this study researchers examine problems in Business Learning, Learning Innovation, Business Insights and Competencies in Vocational Students. This literature study is a comprehensive summary of several research studies determined based on a particular theme. The data used in this research is secondary data obtained not from direct observation, but obtained from research results that have been conducted by previous researchers.

Secondary data sources were obtained in the form of articles from reputable journals with predetermined themes. The literature search in this literature study uses the Sagepub, Elsevier, MDPI, and Emerald Insight databases. Searching for publication articles on the search engine (Search Engine) above using keywords namely: "Business Learning, Learning Innovation, Business Insights, and Competencies". The search process is used to obtain relevant sources to answer the formulation of the problem / Research Question (RQ) and other related references using Search Engine Dimensions (<https://www.emerald.com/insight/>).

In this study, the researcher determined the aspects to be observed, then the researcher conducted a review of relevant literature separately on the aspects to be observed or analyzed in the study. The relevant literature was collected from the most reputable and comprehensive databases, such as Scopus, Emerald Publishing, and Sage Journal. The following relevant literature was collected from comprehensive databases, namely "business learning," "learning innovation," "insight" and "business competence." Relevant literature collected in English in the field of economics and business,

Tabel 1. Search strings in Scopus, Emerald Publishing, and Sage Journal

Databases	Keywords
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY "Business Learning" OR "Learning Innovation" OR Business Insight and Competencies"
Emerald Publishing	"Business Learning" OR "Learning Innovation" OR Business Insight and Competencies"))
Sage Journal	"Business Learning" OR "Learning Innovation" OR Business Insight an Competencies"))"

Source: researcher processed, 2024

The researcher used inclusion and exclusion criteria in selecting the literature to be used as sources. The literature that met the inclusion criteria were as follows, (1) literature related to business learning, (2) literature related to students' competencies and insights, and (4) literature written in English. While the literature meets the exclusion criteria, such as (1) literature from books, (2) literature that is not written in English, (3) literature that cannot be accessed, and (4), literature that is not part of the research topic. All literature will be reviewed by the researcher starting from the title, abstract, content, and conclusion.

**Result and Discussion**

From the identification results, more than 2007 articles were obtained. Furthermore, the articles were filtered according to the criteria of access, year, type of content, and abstraction analysis. As a result, 631 article titles were obtained. From the article titles, further filtered based on the feasibility of the topic of Business Learning, Learning Innovation, Business Insights and Competencies for Vocational Students through abstraction analysis, the results were obtained as many as 6 articles. Details, as shown in the following figure:

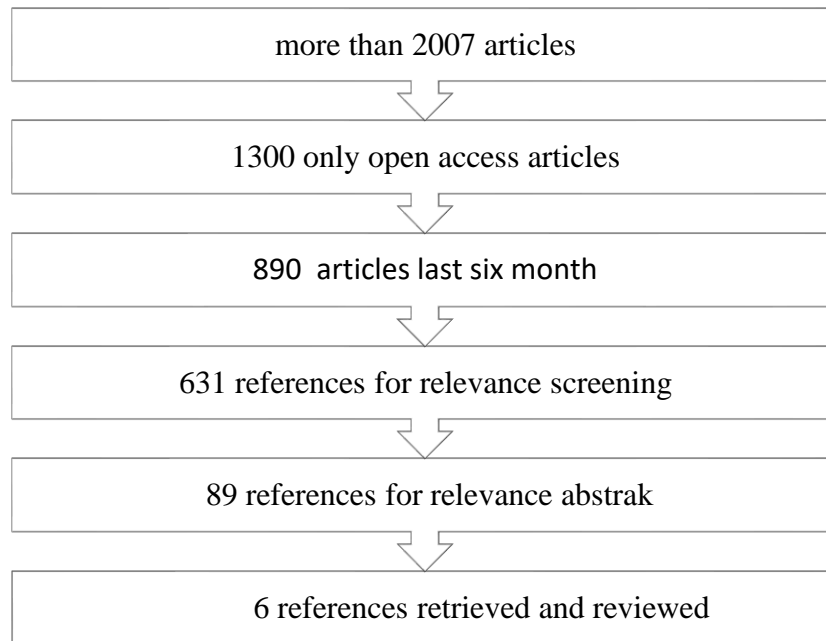


Figure 1. Flowchart of Article Screening  
Source: researcher processed, 2024

The results of the review of selected articles answer the problem formulation regarding the distribution of journals that discuss Business Learning, Learning Innovation, Business Insights, and Competencies as follows:

Table 2. Distribution of Journals related to inclusive business learning, Business Innovation, Business Insights, and Competencies:

No	Journal Name	Journal Link	Indexation	Total
1	Entrepreneurship theory and practice	Entrepreneurship theory and practice   Sage Publish	Sage Publish	2
2	Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity	Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity   MDPI	MDPI	2
3	Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship	Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship	Taylor and Francis Ltd	3
4	International Journal of Educational Development	International Journal of Educational Development   Elsevier	Elsevier	4
5	Journal of Business Venturing	Journal of Business Venturing   ScienceDirect	ScienceDirect	3



No	Journal Name	Journal Link	Indexation	Total
6	Frontiers in psychology	Frontiers in Psychology   Frontiers Media S.A.	Frontiers Media S.A.	2

Source: processed by researchers, 2024

Based on the results of the table, some journals discuss entrepreneurial readiness, entrepreneurial attitudes, entrepreneurial mindset, and entrepreneurial interest. Among these journals, some of them are relevant references in the context of current trends in business and management education. For example, the journal "Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice" (Sage Publishing) was referenced in 5 journals. This shows that the journal has a significant contribution to the understanding of entrepreneurship theory and practice. In addition, the journal "Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity" (MDPI) was taken as a reference for 4 journals, showing the importance of aspects of innovation, technology, market, and complexity in the context of entrepreneurship. In discussing the references, it was found that the current trend in business and management education shows a shift toward a more practical and integrated approach to the real world. Curricula are increasingly integrating technology, data analytics, and digital skills as an important part of learning. Collaboration between educational institutions and industry is getting closer, with an emphasis on developing soft skills and creativity. Meanwhile, the journal "Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship" (Taylor & Francis Ltd) was taken as 3 journals, and "Journal of Business Venturing" (ScienceDirect) was taken as 2 journals. These journals discuss innovation in the development of business and management education. In this context, innovation is key in facing the challenges and opportunities that continue to grow in the digital era. Innovative curricula integrate the latest technologies such as data analytics, artificial intelligence, and online learning platforms to create learning experiences that are more interactive and relevant to today's business world.

Table 3. Resume of related articles on business learning, and business innovation.

No	Years	Author (s)	Objective
1	2020	Aisyah, et.al	Providing business learning to students is considered quite effective increasing students' interest in entrepreneurship.
2	2022	Ayu, et.al	Business learning equips students to be independent and not orientated to be job seekers but job openers.
3	2020	Noorjaya & Vivy	Business learning has a significant effect on helping students open a business.
4	2023	Mochammad, et.al	Innovation in business learning plays an important role in improving global business literacy
5	2023	Arief, et.al	Innovation in business learning plays an important role in improving students' competence and insight in entrepreneurship.

Source: processed by the researcher, 2024

Based on the given article resume table, it can be seen that business learning has become an important topic in entrepreneurship and education literature. The journals show that business learning has a significant role in fostering entrepreneurial interest, competence,

and independence among students. Aisyah et al. (2020) found that providing business learning to students is considered quite effective in increasing interest in entrepreneurship. This finding is in line with previous research showing that entrepreneurship education can increase a person's intention and desire to start a business (Linan, 2020; Rauch & Hulsink, 2019). This indicates that the integration of business learning in the curriculum can contribute to the formation of an entrepreneurial spirit among the younger generation. Furthermore, Ayu et al. (2022) emphasized that business learning can equip students with the ability to be independent and not only oriented to become job seekers but also able to open jobs. This finding is in line with previous research which shows that entrepreneurship education can increase a person's self-efficacy and confidence in starting and developing a business (Chen et al., 1998; Zhao et al., 2005). Noorjaya & Vivy (2020) also found that business learning has a significant effect in helping students to open a business. This suggests that business learning not only increases entrepreneurial intention but also encourages realization in the form of business establishment. Previous research has also confirmed that entrepreneurship education can increase one's chances of starting and running a business (Walter & Block, 2016; Rauch & Hulsink, 2015).

Furthermore, Mochammad et al. (2023) and Arief et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of innovation in business learning to improve students' business literacy, competencies, and insights into entrepreneurship. This finding is in line with previous research showing that innovative and up-to-date learning methods can improve entrepreneurial readiness and success (Mwasalwiba, 2010; Bae et al., 2014). Overall, this table shows that effective and innovative business learning can foster entrepreneurial growth among students. These findings reinforce the importance of integrating entrepreneurship education into the curriculum to prepare the younger generation to become independent and competitive entrepreneurs.

Systematic studies through literature reviews highlight the evolutionary journey of innovations in business learning in Vocational High Schools (SMK), displaying a complex and dynamic landscape involving various aspects, ranging from conventional approaches to the application of advanced technologies. The research asserts that this transition is a reflection of systematic efforts to improve the quality of business education and prepare students with skills relevant to the evolving demands of the industry (Almahry et al., 2019; Karlidag-Dennis et al., 2020; Yusuf & Mujahidin, 2022).

The use of technology has been a key driver in the transformation of business learning in SMKs. Teachers are diligently integrating information and communication technology (ICT) into the curriculum, using a wide array of learning applications, online platforms, and specialized software to enrich students' learning experiences. In this context, business simulations and online educational games bring a new dimension to the conceptual understanding of business, providing an immersive and practical experience for students. Project-based learning also shows a significant trend in learning approaches in vocational schools (Ellis et al., 2019; Lynch et al., 2021; Wardana et al., 2024). Students are not only exposed to theory but they are also engaged in challenging real business projects, allowing

them to apply their business knowledge and skills in a real-world context. Close collaboration with industry through internship programs, industry visits, and project partnerships has been an integral part of this strategy, providing students with a deeper understanding of actual business operations.

However, to realize these learning innovations, various challenges arise. One of them is limited resources, both in terms of technological infrastructure and teacher skills (Anggadwita et al., 2021; Thomas & Okunbanjo, 2021). Lack of training in the use of technology and innovative learning methods creates a gap between the desired innovative potential and the reality of implementation. In addition, rigid policies and curricula sometimes limit teachers' freedom to adopt and implement new and innovative learning approaches.

The diverse level of student engagement is also a challenge. In SMK, where students have diverse backgrounds and interests, finding a suitable learning approach for all students can be a challenging task for teachers (Abbasiachavari & Moritz, 2021; Hasan et al., 2020). Moreover, limited learning time is often an obstacle in implementing learning innovations, given the tight curriculum and other demands. In the face of these challenges, a holistic and integrated approach is key. This includes efforts to provide ongoing training for teachers, support from schools and management, and policy-making that supports learning innovations. Innovative learning strategies such as project-based learning, industry collaboration, the use of technology, and the development of soft skills have been proven effective in improving the competencies and business insights of SMK students. Thus, SMKs can produce graduates who are ready to compete in a competitive and dynamic labor market.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the systematic literature review and discussion above, it can be concluded that innovation in business learning in Vocational High Schools (SMK) plays an important role in increasing students' interest and understanding of business materials. The use of technology, project-based learning, and the involvement of local business practitioners are factors that contribute to the research results. Strong business competencies and broad business insights are essential for SMK students to be ready for the complex and competitive world of work. Based on the conclusions obtained, several suggestions emerge as strategies to improve business learning in Vocational High Schools (SMK). Firstly, is the adoption of innovative approaches in the learning process. Teachers and education organizers need to actively integrate technology, implement project-based learning, and apply learning strategies that are interesting and relevant to students. Thus, students' potential to develop business competencies can be maximized. Furthermore, collaboration with local business practitioners is an important step. Cooperation between vocational schools and business practitioners can provide more authentic learning experiences for students. Through this collaboration, students can gain a deeper understanding of the business world and develop skills that are relevant to current industry needs. Increasing the relevance of the curriculum is also a major concern. In the face of the latest developments in the business world, it is important to ensure that the curriculum and learning methods in SMK remain relevant.

Education organizers need to continuously update the curriculum to match industry demands and the latest technological developments. Lastly, is the development of students' management skills and business insight. Teachers in SMK need to pay special attention to the development of students' management skills and business insight. This can be done through the introduction of basic business principles such as management, marketing, finance, and human resources, as well as an understanding of external factors that affect business operations. With the implementation of this strategy, it is expected that business learning in SMK can become more effective and relevant to the needs of the growing world of work.

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