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The Marching Band's Musical Activities as a Learning Space for Soft Skills among Vocational Engineering Students at PEM Akamigas Cepu

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Marching bands as community musical activities have pedagogical potential in the development of soft skills, but studies on this topic are still relatively limited in the context of engineering vocational education. This study aims to understand and identify musical activities in marching band activities as a learning space for soft skills for engineering vocational students at the Politeknik Energi dan Mineral (PEM) Akamigas. The focus of the study is directed at the forms of musical activities that take place in marching bands and their role in facilitating the development of soft skills through collective, structured, and sustainable musical practices. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design that has ethnographic tendencies. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with marching band members, coaches, and advisors, as well as document studies. Data analysis was conducted thematically by linking field findings to Robles' soft skills framework and Temmerman's theory of community musical activities. The results of the study indicate that marching band musical activities, such as routine practice, playing instruments, marching, and group coordination, serve as an effective non-formal learning space for developing students' soft skills, including discipline, teamwork, communication, leadership, and responsibility. These findings confirm that community musical activities have pedagogical relevance as a medium for contextual soft skills learning in engineering vocational education.

Keywords: musical activities; marching band; vocational education; soft skills; arts education.

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INTRODUCTION

Vocational higher education plays a strategic role in preparing human resources who are ready to enter the workforce in line with industry needs. The main feature of vocational education lies in the mastery of engineering competencies that are applicable, procedural, and practice based. However, developments in the contemporary world of work show that the success of vocational graduates is no longer determined solely by their mastery of hard skills, but also by soft skills that support professional performance, such as discipline, teamwork, communication, leadership, adaptability, and mental resilience (Robles, 2012).

The Future of Jobs report released by the World Economic Forum (2020) emphasizes that non-engineering skills are key competencies amid changes in the job landscape influenced by automation, digitization, and increasing organizational complexity. In high-risk industries, including energy and minerals, soft skills play a crucial role as they are directly related to workplace safety, multidisciplinary team coordination, compliance with procedures, and the ability to make decisions in high-pressure situations. These findings indicate that vocational education needs to develop a learning approach that not only produces engineering ly skilled workers, but also individuals who are able to work collaboratively, adaptively, and responsibly.

Although the urgency of developing soft skills has been widely highlighted, vocational education practices in Indonesia still face limitations in systematically integrating soft skills learning. Learning tends to place soft skills as an indirect result of the engineering learning process or leave it entirely to student activities without clear pedagogical design. As a result, there is a gap between the demands of the world of work and the learning experiences of vocational students, which are still predominantly oriented towards cognitive and engineering aspects. This condition emphasizes the need to explore alternative learning spaces that can facilitate the development of soft skills in a contextual, sustainable, and experience-based manner.

A number of previous studies have shown that artistic activities, especially music, have significant pedagogical potential in the development of soft skills. A systematic review conducted by Diz-Otero et al. (2023) shows that music-based education contributes to improving teamwork, interpersonal communication, leadership, and emotional regulation among students. Music in this context is not only understood as an aesthetic product, but also as a social process that involves coordination, discipline, and interaction between participants. The experiential nature of music learning allows students to build social and personal values through collective practice and direct experience.

These findings are reinforced by research focusing on musical ensemble activities. Altaftazani, Rahayu, and Kelana (2020) show that marching band activities contribute to the development of communication skills, teamwork, discipline, and problem solving. Other research in the field of community music also confirms that involvement in community music groups encourages commitment, social solidarity, and lifelong learning (Mantie, 2012; Higgins, 2012). Overall, these findings indicate that group musical activities are an effective medium for social learning to support the development of soft skills.

However, most previous studies have been conducted in the context of general education, arts education, or non-vocational music communities. Studies that specifically place musical activities in the context of engineering vocational education are still relatively limited. In fact, engineering vocational education has distinctive characteristics, such as a work culture that emphasizes procedural accuracy, high discipline, compliance with safety standards,

and the demands of teamwork under pressure. These characteristics require a deeper understanding of how structured musical activities can function pedagogically in the context of engineering vocational education.

Politeknik Energi dan Mineral (PEM) Akamigas Cepu is a vocational higher education institution in the field of energy and minerals with an academic culture based on engineering and industry. The learning process at this institution is characterized by strict work discipline, a focus on field practice, and an emphasis on operational standards. Initial findings of the study show that PEM Akamigas Cepu has an institutional policy that mandates student activity units (UKM) as part of the student development system. One of these mandatory UKMs is the marching band, which is participated in by students from various engineering study programs.

The status of the marching band as a student activity unit (UKM) indicates that this activity is not merely positioned as an interest and talent activity, but rather as part of an institutional strategy in shaping the character, discipline, and work readiness of vocational students. The involvement of students from various engineering study programs makes the marching band a collective, structured, and performance-oriented musical practice space. This condition makes the marching band a relevant learning phenomenon to be studied in the context of engineering vocational education, particularly in relation to the development of soft skills.

In this study, marching band activities are understood as a form of community musical activity. Temmerman (1995) defines community musical activities as participatory social practices that contribute to holistic education, community development, self-development, and social connectedness. Within this framework, music is not positioned as an object of learning alone, but as a medium for social interaction that enables cross-domain learning, covering cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and social aspects. This perspective is relevant for analyzing how marching band activities can function as a space for learning soft skills in a engineering vocational education environment.

Although the pedagogical potential of musical activities has been widely revealed, there is still little research that deeply examines concrete musical activities in marching bands and systematically links them to the development of soft skills in engineering vocational students. Some studies tend to highlight the final achievement in the form of soft skills, without analyzing the musical activity process that mediates this achievement. Therefore, research is needed that examines marching band activities as a community musical practice as well as a space for learning soft skills in the context of engineering vocational education.

Based on this discussion, this study aims to analyze marching band activities as a learning space for soft skills for vocational engineering students at PEM Akamigas Cepu. This study uses Robles' soft skills framework and Temmerman's community musical activity theory to examine the forms of musical activities that take place and the mechanisms of soft skills learning that are formed through marching band practices. Thus, this study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of musical activity studies in the context of non-arts vocational education, as well as practically to the management of student activities that support the development of vocational graduates who are ready to work and have good character.

METHODS

This study aims to understand and identify musical activities in marching band activities as a learning space for soft skills for vocational engineering students at PEM Akamigas Cepu. The focus of the study is directed at the forms of musical activities that take place in marching bands and how these activities facilitate the development of students' soft skills through collective, structured, and sustainable musical practices.

This study uses a qualitative approach, as it does not attempt to measure variables statistically, but rather to understand the meaning, experiences, and learning processes experienced by students in marching band activities. This approach allows researchers to interpret musical practices and the dynamics of soft skill learning from the perspective of those directly involved. In line with Creswell (2009), qualitative research emphasizes inductive analysis to build a deep understanding based on field data.

The method used is a qualitative case study with ethnographic tendencies, as this study places marching band as a social and musical practice that lives in the context of everyday engineering vocational education. This approach allows researchers to observe, record, and interpret musical activities and the dynamics of soft skill learning that take place naturally within the institutional environment.

The research subjects consisted of active members of the Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band who were students from various engineering study programs at PEM Akamigas Cepu. The main informants included five students who had been actively participating in marching band activities for at least one semester. Additional informants consisted of one marching band coach and one student advisor who were directly involved in the coaching and management of activities. The number of informants was considered sufficient to achieve depth rather than breadth of data, as this study emphasized in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, in line with qualitative case study principles (Yin, 2018). Informants were selected purposively, taking into account their level of involvement and intensity of participation in marching band activities.

The research was conducted on the campus of the Cepu Energy and Mineral Polytechnic, specifically in the marching band practice area and performance location. The research process lasted three months, covering the stages of data collection, analysis, and verification of findings. This time frame allowed the researcher to make repeated observations of marching band activities.

Data collection was conducted through participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and document studies. Participatory observation was carried out by participating in routine training activities, sectional instrument practice, and the preparation and performance of the marching band. The observation focused on musical activities, training patterns, interactions between members, and situations that facilitated soft skill learning. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the experiences, views, and perceptions of students, coaches, and mentors regarding marching band activities and the soft skills learning process. Document studies included activity archives, practice schedules, coaching notes, photo and video documentation, and marching band social media posts to enrich and verify field data.

Data analysis was conducted thematically by organizing the data from observations, interviews, and documentation into main themes. The analysis focused on identifying patterns of musical activities and the forms of soft skills that developed. Field findings were then interpreted with reference to Robles' (2012) soft skills framework and Temmerman's (1995) theory of community musical activities. Robles' framework was used to map the types of soft skills that emerged, while Temmerman's theory was used to understand musical activities as participatory social practices that facilitate soft skills learning.

Data validity was ensured through triangulation of sources and techniques by comparing data from observations, interviews, and document studies. All data were transcribed and critically analyzed to ensure consistency and depth of interpretation. This study also adheres to research ethics principles by explaining the research objectives to participants, maintaining the confidentiality of informants' identities, and ensuring that participation is voluntary.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gema Bahana Vyatra as a Vocational Musical Community

Figure 1. Gema Bahana Vyatra Marching Band activity

The Gema Bahana Vyatra Marching Band is a student activity unit that holds a strategic position in the dynamics of student life at the Politeknik Energi dan Mineral (PEM) Akamigas. The existence of this musical community cannot be separated from the historical and institutional context of the engineering vocational campus, as well as the musical background of the students involved in it. Based on interviews with advisors and a review of organizational documents, Gema Bahana Vyatra was not born as a program that was systematically designed from the outset, but rather as an institutional response to the musical potential of students who entered PEM Akamigas Cepu in 2012.

The initial formation of Gema Bahana Vyatra can be traced to the acceptance of a batch of scholarship students, most of whom came from SMK Taruna Nusantara, a vocational high school known for its strong tradition and achievements in marching bands. That year, almost all members of one marching band team from their school were accepted as engineering vocational students at PEM Akamigas Cepu, with only a small number of students failing the selection process. This situation created a relatively unique environment in a vocational campus that previously did not have a marching band unit with an established organizational structure and musical quality.

The musical potential of these students then received serious attention from the institution's leadership. According to the advisor, during the early stages of the marching band's formation, the campus leadership received encouragement from various parties, including stakeholders in the energy industry, who viewed the marching band as a means of character building as well as a medium for representing the institution in the public sphere. This encouragement was realized through a policy to significantly procure marching band equipment in 2012, which was adjusted to the number of personnel and musical competence of the existing students. This policy marked the official establishment of the Gema Bahana Vyatra Marching Band at PEM Akamigas Cepu.

To date, some of the equipment purchased during the initial phase of establishment is still in use and recorded as marching band inventory. This fact shows that Gema Bahana Vyatra was not built symbolically or temporarily, but through serious and sustainable institutional investment in student musical activities. This institutional support has become an important foundation for the sustainability and consistency of this musical community.

In its early stages of development, the musical structure of Gema Bahana Vyatra was greatly influenced by the skills of the pioneering generation of students who already had sufficient marching band experience. This allowed the group to perform relatively complex formations and repertoires. However, as the student generation changed, not all of the original instruments and formations could be played optimally. The different musical backgrounds of the next generation of students required adjustments in practice, instrument management, and repertoire selection. This dynamic shows that Gema Bahana Vyatra is an adaptive musical community that continues to

adjust its practices to the capacities and characters of its members over time.

In its development, Gema Bahana Vyatra has functioned not only as an internal student activity unit, but also as part of the institution's public representation. According to supervisors, the name Gema Bahana Vyatra has become widely recognised within Cepu Regency and its surrounding areas. Its musical reputation and performance quality have led to frequent invitations to perform at official regional events. This level of trust reflects both social and institutional legitimacy, affirming the existence of Gema Bahana Vyatra as a representative musical community.

The name "Vyatra" has a symbolic meaning that is closely related to the institutional identity of PEM Akamigas Cepu. This term refers to the name of the student dormitory and has an etymological connection with the word patra, which means oil, in line with the field of energy and mineral science that is the main focus of the institution. Thus, Gema Bahana Vyatra not only represents student musical activities, but also symbolically reflects the vocational and historical character of the institution.

The existence of Gema Bahana Vyatra is also inseparable from the student policy at PEM Akamigas Cepu, which requires students to participate in student activity units (UKM). There are six mandatory UKMs that students must join, one of which is the marching band. This policy places non-academic activities as an integral part of the vocational education process, not merely a supplement to formal learning. In this context, the marching band becomes one of the main spaces for students to develop social competence, leadership, discipline, and teamwork outside the classroom.

From the supervisors' perspective, Gema Bahana Vyatra is understood not only as a forum for artistic expression, but also as a means of character building for vocational students. Regular training demands for discipline, and collective work in the marching band are seen as being in line with the values needed in the world of technical work, such as compliance with procedures, collective responsibility, and resilience in the face of pressure. Therefore, this musical community functions as a non-formal learning space that complements the engineering learning that students acquire in classrooms and laboratories.

Overall, Gema Bahana Vyatra can be understood as a vocational musical community formed through the convergence of students' individual potential, institutional policies, and the context of engineering vocational education. Its history and developmental dynamics show that marching band activities have pedagogical relevance in supporting the development of vocational students' soft skills. In this study, Gema Bahana Vyatra serves as an important empirical context for understanding how musical activities function as a space for learning soft skills in the engineering vocational education environment at PEM Akamigas Cepu.

The Marching Band as a Space for Soft Skill Learning from Robles' (2012) Perspective

The activities of the Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band at the Politeknik Energi dan Mineral (PEM) show that the development of soft skills among engineering vocational students takes place contextually through collective and continuous musical practice. Field data shows that soft skills are not taught through formal training or written modules, but are constructed through direct experience, intense social interaction, and consistently implemented organizational mechanisms. This learning pattern is in line with Robles' (2012) view that soft skills are non-engineering competencies that develop through social practices and real work experience.

Robles identified ten key soft skills needed in the workplace, namely communication, teamwork, flexibility or adaptability, integrity, work ethic, interpersonal skills, positive attitude, professionalism, responsibility, and the ability to work under pressure. Based on observation

and interview data, these ten soft skills were found to have developed significantly in the activities of the Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band.

Communication is the most dominant soft skill that emerges in marching band activities. The training process requires students to understand the coach's instructions, coordinate with section leaders, and convey evaluations openly and accurately. Communication does not only take place verbally, but also through musical and visual cues that require high concentration and sensitivity. This skill is directly relevant to the world of engineering vocational work, which requires cross-functional and cross-professional coordination.

Teamwork lies at the core of marching band practice. Each member has an interdependent role, so the success of a performance is determined by collective cohesion, not individual excellence. Observation data shows that students realize that one member's mistake will affect the overall performance. This awareness fosters a sense of shared responsibility and team solidarity, which is in line with the nature of project work in the world of engineering vocations.

Flexibility and adaptability are reflected in students' ability to adjust to changes in practice schedules, formations, and performance demands, which are often sudden. Students learn to respond to change quickly and effectively without compromising performance quality. These soft skills are essential in the dynamic and uncertain world of modern work.

Integrity is evident in the students' consistency in complying with training rules, carrying out their assigned roles, and accepting the consequences of any violations. Interview data shows that the sanctions imposed serve as a mechanism for ethical learning, not merely a form of punishment. Through this process, students develop moral and professional awareness relevant to the vocational world, particularly in the context of work safety and reliability.

Work ethic develops through the demands of routine practice, perseverance in mastering musical material, and a willingness to sacrifice personal time for the sake of the team. Students demonstrate high levels of dedication and consistency, even in less than ideal physical and weather conditions. This work ethic is an important asset for students entering the vocational world of work, which demands resilience and long-term commitment.

Interpersonal skills are formed through intensive interaction between members from various study programs and social backgrounds. Students learn to build relationships, resolve minor conflicts, and appreciate differences in character and abilities. These skills support the ability to work in multidisciplinary teams, which is a key feature of the engineering vocational work environment.

A positive attitude is reflected in the students' ability to maintain motivation and a conducive training atmosphere despite facing pressure and fatigue. Mutual encouragement and collective optimism help maintain the sustainability of marching band activities. These findings are in line with Robles' view that attitude disposition influences individual performance and productivity in the work environment.

Professionalism is evident in the way students prepare themselves before practice and performances, maintain their appearance and instruments, and represent their institution in public spaces. Students learn to distinguish between formal and informal contexts and maintain ethics in every situation. These professional values are highly relevant to the demands of the vocational world, which emphasizes standards, image, and responsibility.

Student responsibility is reflected in their care for the instruments they play, their individual readiness for practice, and their awareness that personal negligence will impact the group's performance. In addition, the ability to work under pressure develops through

intensive practice and public performance experiences. Students learn to manage nervousness, fatigue, and the pressure of expectations, thereby building the mental resilience needed in a vocational work environment that is risky and demands high precision.

Overall, the activities of the Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band serve as a comprehensive and contextual learning space for soft skills, as formulated by Robles. However, these findings can also be understood more broadly within the framework of art education theory. In Herbert Read's view, art functions as a medium for personality education that emphasizes the formation of inner discipline, social sensitivity, emotional balance, and individual responsibility in a collective context (education through art).

In this context, marching band activities can be understood as educational practices through art, where students' soft skills develop as a consequence of their involvement in structured and meaningful musical experiences. The ten Robles soft skill indicators identified in this study represent the concrete results of the arts education process as described by Herbert Read. Thus, marching bands not only function as student activities, but also as non-formal educational spaces that contribute to the personality development and work readiness of engineering vocational students.

To clarify the relationship between empirical data and Robles' soft skill framework, Table 2 presents a mapping of the results of observations and interviews on the ten soft skill indicators.

Table 2. Mapping of Observational and Interview Data to Robles' (2012) Soft Skill Framework

N	Soft Skill (Robles)	Indicators in Marching Band Activities	Data Source
1	Communication	Rehearsal coordination, feedback, musical instructions	Interviews & observations
2	Teamwork	Ensemble cohesion, collective responsibility	Observations
3	Flexibility	Adaptation to schedule and formation changes	Interviews
4	Integrity	Rule compliance, acceptance of sanctions	Interviews
5	Work ethic	Consistency in rehearsals,	Observations

			dedication	
6	Interpersonal skills	Cross-programme interaction, conflict resolution		Interviews
7	Positive attitude	Mutual encouragement, team optimism		Observations
8	Professionalism	Performance ethics, instrument care, institutional image		Interviews
9	Responsibility	Instrument maintenance, individual preparedness		Observations
1	Working under pressure	Public performances, intensive rehearsals		Interviews & observations

Musical Activities in the PEM Akamigas Cepu Marching Band from Temmerman's Perspective

From Temmerman's perspective, musical activity is understood as a social-participatory practice realised through a range of musical actions, such as singing, listening, moving, reading notation, playing instruments, and integrating musical activities within broader learning contexts. These activities do not function in isolation; rather, they are interconnected and collectively form a holistic musical learning experience. Within vocational education contexts, this framework allows music to be understood not merely as aesthetic expression, but as a learning process that simultaneously engages cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and social dimensions.

The findings of this study indicate that the marching band activities of Gema Bahana Vyatra at Politeknik Energi dan Mineral (PEM) Akamigas Cepu demonstrate a concrete implementation of Temmerman's musical activity framework. Students' musical practices take place through a series of structured and sustained activities, both in formal rehearsals and independent practice. The following sections describe the forms of musical activities identified in this study.

1. Singing Activities

Singing Singing activities are one of the important musical practices for students who are members of the Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band. Singing is not only intended as vocal training, but also as a means to understand and internalize the musical notation that will be played on their respective instruments. In practice, singing is carried out consciously and systematically as part of both individual and group training.

Muhdita, a bell player, explains the use of a learning approach commonly applied during rehearsals, in which musical notation is verbally articulated or chanted before and while practicing the instrument. Each melodic pattern is sung first to strengthen mastery of notation, familiarize the ear with the intended pitches, and establish a direct connection between

theoretical understanding and instrumental execution. In this context, singing functions as an active and reflective musical learning strategy.

In addition, singing activities are used to internalize the rhythm and structural form of songs prior to ensemble practice. Rifki, a snare drum player, stated that this approach helped him better understand rhythmic patterns and improve concentration while playing. M. Fadli added that singing enhances musical sensitivity, enabling students to adjust tempo and dynamics more accurately during ensemble performance. Thus, singing serves as a foundational component of musical learning that supports collective music-making practices.

2. Listening Activities

Listening to music is an important part of the daily lives of students who are members of the Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band. This activity does not only take place in the context of formal rehearsals, but is also done independently between classes and in the dormitory environment. Students use their free time to listen to marching band music material as a form of individual responsibility for mastering songs according to the instruments they play.

Muhdita said that the habit of listening to song material repeatedly helps her understand the melody, dynamics, and character of the music, making it easier to adjust her playing during ensemble practice. The continuation of listening activities in the dormitory reflects the students' personal commitment to the musical learning process. In line with Temmerman's view, listening activities serve as the foundation for music learning because they develop aural sensitivity and musical readiness before collective practice takes place.

3. Marching and Drill Activities

Marching activities are an integral part of the Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band practice. These activities not only serve as physical discipline training, but also as a means of integrating body movements and musical rhythms. Marching exercises are carried out in a structured manner with the involvement of trainers from the Military Academy (Akmil).

Muhdita emphasized that the presence of Akmil trainers aims to build discipline, unity, and precision in the students' movements. Rifki explained that marching practice uses tempo and a metronome as a reference, so that steps, changes in direction, and floor patterns can be in sync with the rhythm of the music. The use of a metronome indicates that marching is not merely a physical exercise, but is integrated with musical activities that require rhythmic awareness and synchronization between movement and sound.

4. Instrumental Performance Activities

Instrumental performance lies at the core of the musical practices of Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band members. These activities take place during both formal rehearsals and independent practice sessions within the dormitory environment. The marching band supervisor, Mr Andi Yuliastanto, explained that students bring their respective instruments to practise independently, demonstrating individual responsibility for instrumental mastery.

M. Fadli highlighted that independent practice is conducted with attention to social etiquette, such as avoiding late-night rehearsals that might disturb others. In addition to individual practice, students participate in sectional rehearsals guided by peer tutors or instructors. This rehearsal structure enables the development of engineering proficiency, coordination, and musical structure comprehension in a more focused and systematic manner.

5. Movement in Response to Music

Movement in response to music is a defining characteristic of Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band practice. This activity involves the integration of rhythmic perception, motor coordination, and musical understanding. Movement is not intended merely to create orderly formations, but also to express music kinaesthetically.

Mr Andi Yuliastanto explained that movement evaluation is conducted collaboratively by instructors and supervisors to ensure accuracy and formation coherence. Dita added that students strive to feel the musical flow and express rhythm through movement. M. Fadli further emphasised that movements are synchronised with musical beats and percussion sounds, resulting in an integrated and cohesive musical expression in which sound and movement operate as a unified whole.

6. Integration of Musical Activities with the Curriculum

The findings indicate that the musical activities of the Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band extend beyond extracurricular engagement and are integrated with the objectives of vocational higher education. Activities such as singing, listening, marching, instrumental performance, and movement in response to music support the development of students' competencies, both engineering and non-engineering.

Muhdita noted that sectional rehearsals and peer-tutoring methods reflect competency-based and independent learning principles. Marching drills and movement activities foster discipline, coordination, and teamwork. M. Fadli added that independent practice within the dormitory environment cultivates time management skills, personal responsibility, and social sensitivity. Accordingly, marching band musical activities can be understood as cross-dimensional learning practices that align closely with Temmerman's theory of musical activities.

CONCLUSION

The series of activities carried out by the Gema Bahana Vyatra marching band at the Politeknik Energi dan Mineral (PEM) shows that collective musical practice can serve as a space for vocational engineering students to learn soft skills. Through a series of musical activities that include singing, listening, marching, playing musical instruments, and moving to msic, students are not only involved in the process of making music, but also experience social learning that requires communication, teamwork, discipline, responsibility, adaptability, and mental resilience. The development of these soft skills takes place contextually through direct experience and collective interaction, rather than through formal training separate from practice. Thus, the marching band is not merely a student activity, but serves as a non-formal learning vehicle that complements engineering learning in a vocational education environment.

These findings are in line with the soft skills framework formulated by Robles, in which non-engineering competencies are developed through social practices and real work experience. Furthermore, from an arts education perspective, marching band activities can be understood as education through art, as proposed by Herbert Read, who views art as a medium for character building, inner discipline, and social sensitivity. Social-participatory musical practices allow soft skill values to be internalized naturally because they are experienced directly in a collective context. Therefore, community musical activities such as marching bands at PEM Akamigas Cepu show that arts education has a strategic role in supporting a more holistic vocational education by simultaneously integrating the mastery of engineering competencies and the development of students' soft skills.

This study contributes to arts education research by expanding the context of applying community musical activity theory to non-arts vocational education. Practically, these findings can form the basis for developing UKM policies as a vehicle for soft skill learning in vocational colleges. This study is limited to one vocational education institution; therefore, further research can examine similar contexts in other vocational fields to broaden the generalization of the findings.

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