
Collaborative Governance and Effectiveness of Vocational Training and Graduate Job Placement: An Ansell and Gash Perspective

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Abstract

Vocational training in Indonesia, specifically at the Vocational Training and Productivity Center (VPTC) in Samarinda and Makassar, continues to struggle with suboptimal graduate employability. This research identifies a critical disconnect between institutional training and industrial demand, rooted in fragmented multi-stakeholder collaboration. Using the Ansell and Gash (2008) Collaborative Governance framework, this study analyzes the governance dynamics hindering effective job placement. Employing a qualitative multi-site case study approach-comprising document analysis, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and field observations-the findings reveal a "cycle of collaborative dysfunction." The starting conditions are characterized by structural power imbalances, while the collaborative process remains largely ceremonial, failing to foster the strategic trust and shared understanding necessary for curriculum co-creation. Consequently, intermediate outcomes, such as synchronized industry-needs assessment and robust placement networks, remain unachieved. This study underscores the urgent need for institutional reform, including the formalization of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for industry partnerships and the professionalization of Public Employment Services (PES). These measures are vital to transitioning from administrative compliance to a demand-driven vocational ecosystem.

Keywords: collaborative governance, vocational training, employability, multi-stakeholder collaboration, job placement.

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1. Introduction

The digital era has significantly transformed the global employment landscape through automation. The most noticeable impact is the emergence of a skills gap (Suryadi & Nasution, 2023). In Indonesia, the horizontal mismatch rate among higher education graduates reaches 33.50%. (Yonanda & Usman, 2023). Interventions in the form of vocational training can

serve as a bridge to align the competencies of workers or prospective workers with Industry Partners, including the development of essential employability skills.

Although various supporting regulations have been established, such as Presidential Regulation Number 68 of 2022 concerning the Revitalization of Vocational Education and Training, the implementation of these policies continues to face numerous obstacles. Data from the Ministry of Manpower (Kemnaker, 2024) indicates that the employment absorption rate for graduates of the Vocational Training and Productivity Center reached only 0.70 percent in 2024, which is significantly lower than the achievements of countries with more advanced vocational training systems, such as Singapore, which attains a job placement rate of approximately 90 percent among its training participants (Teo Chee Hean, 2022; Ministry of Education Singapore, 2021) and China, which achieves 75 percent engagement through *VR/AR Training* (Neust Journal, 2023). This discrepancy is exacerbated by ineffective collaborative governance, specifically the absence of formalized institutional SOPs and the suboptimal role of FKLPI, which prevents the synchronization of training programs with dynamic industrial demands.

Table 1. Number of Vocational Training Participants and Number of Graduates Placed in Employment in the Formal and Informal Sectors, 2020–2024

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Vocational Training Participants (persons)	116.260	122.119	136.524	119.785	127.781
Vocational Training Graduates Placed in Employment (persons)	33.408	35.999	81.231	64.417	52.036
Percentage	28,7	29,5	59,5	53,8	40,7

Source: Ministry of Manpower, processed by the authors, 2025

Various internal and external factors are suspected to contribute to the low employment absorption rate of vocational training graduates under the Ministry of Manpower. From an internal perspective, the governance of training implementation, from preparation to execution, remains a primary constraint. Additionally, weaknesses in the labor market information system and tracer studies hinder efforts to connect graduates with relevant employment opportunities. From an external perspective, collaboration between VPTC and Industry Partners remains largely “on paper”, lacking strategic involvement in curriculum development or program evaluation. ILO (2022) emphasizes the importance of industry involvement in vocational training and serves as a foundation for analyzing training governance at the Ministry of Manpower to address skills gaps.

While scholars such as Smith et al. (2024) and Kim & Lee (2024) emphasize that strategic partnerships are vital for industry relevance, the reality at the research locus reflects a 'training-minded' silos approach that focuses strictly on training implementation rather than comprehensive job matching.

Theoretically, this research bridges the gap between **Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP)** and the **Collaborative Governance framework by Ansell and Gash (2008)**. Although the Ministry of Manpower has implemented Public Employment Services (PES) through the SIAPkerja Kiosk, its effectiveness in facilitating job matching remains suboptimal. By adopting the Ansell and Gash model, this study argues that strengthening training governance requires shifting from administrative formalities to a collaborative ecosystem. This transition necessitates inclusive participation, sustained face-to-face dialogue, and shared commitment to ensure that vocational outputs are genuinely aligned with regional labor market dynamics."

This study is further strengthened by incorporating the welfare-to-work framework, which emphasizes the transition from passive social protection to active labor market participation. Within this perspective, vocational training and job placement services function as critical instruments to accelerate labor market reintegration. The role of FKLPI, therefore, is not merely administrative but strategic, acting as an institutional bridge to ensure that training outcomes translate into sustainable employment pathways.

In strengthening training governance, policy formulation must align with the reinforcement of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) to enhance employability within public employment services. The theoretical mechanism underpinning ALMP, based on Nuun (2024), is fundamentally directed toward strengthening employment opportunities and ensuring the sustainability of workforce placement. Koeltz and Torres (2016) explain that Public Employment Services (PES) are government institutions responsible for formulating and implementing labor market policies. They play a critical role in supporting workforce access, facilitating adjustments to employment dynamics, and mitigating the impacts of economic transitions. Fundamentally, there are five main functions in Public Employment Services (PES) as outlined in ILO Convention No. 88 of 1948 concerning Employment Service Agencies, namely: (1) Labor Market Information, (2) Job Search Assistance and Workforce Placement, (3) Labor Market Programs, (4) Administration of Unemployment Benefits, and (5) Regulatory Services. The primary mandate of PES is to facilitate job matching between job seekers who are looking for employment and companies that need workers to fill their vacancies, through these five core functions. In Indonesia, the role of PES is carried out by the Ministry of Manpower through labor market information services at the Labor Market Center and various programs under the SIAPkerja Kiosk at Vocational Training Centers. However, the governance development pattern of these training centers remains limited to a training-minded approach, focusing solely on training implementation. As a result, it has not been comprehensive enough to enhance trainee motivation and job search intensity, improve the effectiveness of the job application process, or ensure the quality of matching between job seekers' skills and employers' needs.

The research to be conducted will adopt the collaborative governance framework developed by Ansell and Gash (2008). Collaborative governance refers to a decision-making process that involves public institutions and non-state actors in a deliberative and consensus-oriented manner within formal forums, with the aim of formulating and implementing public policies (Ansell &

Gash, 2008). In this research, this theory is used to understand and strengthen between Vocational Training Center and Industry Partners. Collaborative Governance theory, operationalized through the Ansell and Gash (2008) model, is essential for creating a collaborative ecosystem that enables Industry Partners to play an active role in every stage of training implementation. This process must encompass inclusive participation, face-to-face dialogue, shared commitment, as well as continuous monitoring and evaluation. Through this approach, training governance is not limited to administrative formalities but is genuinely aligned with regional needs and local labor market demands.

1.1. Performance Profile of VPTC Samarinda and Makassar

Table 2. Performance Profile of VPTC Samarinda and Makassar

Indicator	VPTC Samarinda	VPTC Makassar
Number of Graduates in 2023	6.964 persons	10.718 persons
Number of Graduates in 2024	2.681 persons	3.963 persons
Number of Graduates in 2025(*)	1.232 persons	1.784 persons
% Job Placement Rate 2023	25,80%	18,68%
% Job Placement Rate 2024	43,79%	39,84%
Number of Instructors	36 persons	61 persons
Coverage Area	3 provinces (East Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, North Kalimantan)	Parts of South Sulawesi

Source: satudata ketenagakerjaan dan dokumen balai, processed by the authors, 2025.

The data presented in Table 1.1 highlights several critical operational patterns. First, a significant downward trend in the number of graduates is observed at both centers from 2023 to 2025, suggesting a potential program reorientation or, more likely, systemic operational constraints in training package execution. Second, job placement rates exhibit high volatility and inconsistency. While Samarinda peaked at 43.79% in 2024, it experienced a precipitous decline to 12.18% in 2025. Similarly, Makassar's initial success in increasing placement from 18.68% (2023) to 39.84% (2024) has proven unsustainable. Third, the stagnation in instructor recruitment since 2022 at both centers reflects a capacity gap in teaching staff, which hinders the institutions' ability to adapt to the rapidly evolving demands of the industrial sector. Collectively, these fluctuations underscore a lack of collaborative resilience and institutional stability.

1.2. Problem Identification

Based on the aforementioned gaps, this research is driven by the urgent need to enhance training governance through the following problem statements: (1) How does the collaborative process between VPTC Samarinda and Makassar and their Industry Partners influence the

effectiveness of vocational training and graduate job placement? (2) What are the systemic and institutional constraints that hinder the realization of effective and sustainable collaboration? And (3) What strategic recommendations, based on the Ansell and Gash (2008) framework, can be proposed to optimize the governance of vocational training and strengthen the synergy between training centers and industry?"

1.3. Research Objectives and Contributions

The objectives of this research are threefold: (1) to evaluate the effectiveness of the collaborative governance process between VPTC Samarinda and Makassar and their respective industry partners concerning vocational training outcomes and graduate employability; (2) to identify the structural and institutional impediments that constrain effective multi-stakeholder collaboration; and (3) to formulate a strategic framework for optimizing vocational governance rooted in the principles of collaborative governance. This study offers a significant theoretical contribution by synthesizing the Ansell and Gash (2008) framework with the dynamics of public employment services, thereby providing a more cohesive model for vocational training governance. Practically, the findings serve as an empirical basis for the Ministry of Manpower to recalibrate vocational training policies, ensuring they are more agile and responsive to the evolving demands of the contemporary labor market.

2. Research method

2.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach with a multi-site case study design, focusing on the VPTC in Samarinda and Makassar. These locations were purposively selected as strategic vocational hubs representing the Kalimantan and Eastern Indonesia regions. The case study design allows for an in-depth exploration of the complex socio-technical dynamics within collaborative governance processes.

2.2. Data Collection Techniques

Data were gathered through a triangulation of methods to ensure empirical robustness:

- a. Participatory Observation: Conducted during training cycles to assess the real-time interaction between institutions and stakeholders.
- b. Focus Group Discussions (FGD): Conducted with a purposive sample of instructors, alumni, job placement officers, industry representatives, and center management to capture diverse perspectives on governance barriers.
- c. Document Analysis: A systematic review of institutional artifacts, including Tracer Study reports, alumni databases, internal policy frameworks, and Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with industry partners.

2.3. Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using a thematic approach, beginning with transcription of FGD results, manual coding to identify key themes, triangulation by comparing data from multiple informants, and synthesizing analytical findings that demonstrate the relationship between field observations and the theoretical framework.

2.4. Conceptual Framework Flow

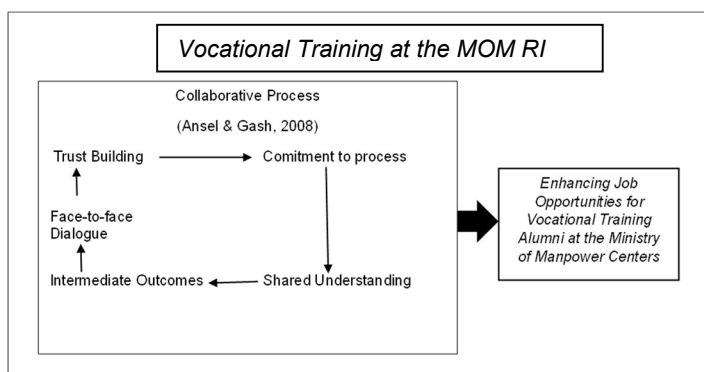


Figure 1. Research Thinking Flow

Source: Processed by the authors, 2025.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Conditions of Vocational Training Implementation at VPTC Samarinda and BVPTC Makassar

VPTC Samarinda and Makassar serve as pivotal vocational hubs under the Ministry of Manpower, with Samarinda catering to the extractive-based industries in Kalimantan and Makassar spearheading industrial and technological sectors in Eastern Indonesia. Despite their strategic positioning, both centers exhibit a disturbing downward trend in participant graduation and job placement rates between 2023 and 2025. For instance, Samarinda's placement rate suffered a precipitous decline from 43.79% in 2024 to a mere 12.18% in 2025. Similarly, Makassar's inability to sustain its 2024 peak (39.84%) underscores a systemic volatility in graduate absorption. This performance instability is exacerbated by a stagnation in instructional capacity. Empirical data from 2022 to 2025 reveals that the number of instructors remained unchanged constant at 36 in Samarinda and 61 in Makassar. This pedagogical standstill represents a significant capacity gap, as the fixed number of teaching staff is increasingly insufficient to meet the rapidly evolving and sophisticated demands of the modern industrial sector.

Furthermore, a profound misalignment exists between the training curricula and industry requirements. Feedback from Industry Partners during Focus Group Discussions (FGD) indicates a persistent lack of Training Needs Analysis (TNA), resulting in a competence mismatch. A critical example is the maritime sector in Makassar, which remains underserved due to a glaring

lack of specialized training facilities, highlighting a disconnect between regional economic potential and vocational infrastructure.

Most critically, collaboration with Industry Partners through the FKLPI remains symbolic rather than substantive. The partnership is not yet systematically integrated into the training cycle, functioning merely as a ceremonial platform rather than an active dialogue space. This collaborative inertia is compounded by fragmented alumni databases and restricted access to real-time labor market information. Consequently, job placement officers are rendered ineffective in facilitating job matching, leading to a widened gap between vocational outputs and workforce requirements. Collectively, these findings underscore the urgent necessity for a governance overhaul rooted in collaborative principles to bridge the rift between institutional supply and industrial demand."

3.2. Existing Conditions of Collaborative Governance in Vocational Training Implementation at VPTC Samarinda and Makassar

This research underscores that the suboptimal employment outcomes at VPTC Samarinda and Makassar are fundamentally rooted in a dysfunctional collaborative architecture with Industry Partners. While formal platforms like the Forum for Partnership between Training Institutions and Industry (FKLPI) are established, the resulting cooperation remains predominantly ceremonial and lacks structural coherence. Empirical evidence suggests that 'Face-to-Face Dialogue'-a core pillar of the Ansell and Gash (2008) framework—is treated as a mere administrative formality. These interactions lack the substantive depth required to synchronize vocational curricula with the rapidly shifting competency demands of the industrial sector.

The lack of high-quality dialogue has led to a diminished involvement of industry stakeholders in curriculum co-creation, perpetuating a significant mismatch between vocational supply and labor market demand. This study further identifies a critical deficit in 'Trust Building' and 'Shared Commitment', which, according to Ansell and Gash, are essential precursors for responsive public program management. Without these elements, the partnership fails to transition from a symbolic agreement to a functional synergy.

Furthermore, the institutional networking system remains fragmented. Job placement officers, intended to function as strategic 'connectors,' are hindered by a data asymmetry; they lack integrated access to comprehensive alumni profiles and real-time industrial vacancy data. In the perspective of Collaborative Governance, these findings represent a failure in deliberative and consensus-oriented management, where the exclusion of non-state actors from the core decision-making process prevents the vocational centers from managing their human capital assets effectively."

In the implementation of vocational training at VPTC Samarinda and Makassar, this research identifies significant structural gaps across the four dimensions of the Ansell and Gash (2008) framework, which explain the suboptimal employability outcomes as follows:

a. Starting Conditions Stage : Power Imbalance and Passive Participation

Ansell and Gash (2008) identify starting conditions including the history of interaction and power balance as critical prerequisites. At the research loci, the relationship with industry partners is characterized by a structural asymmetry. While VPTC Samarinda focuses on extractive industries (mining and heavy equipment), many potential partners remain unaware of collaborative opportunities. Despite the mandate of the FKLPI, the mechanism where industry provides job orders in exchange for alumni data remains dysfunctional. FGD results reveal a one-way dependency, with management noting that *"Industry participates only when in immediate need of labor, yet remains absent in curriculum planning"* (Informant, Center Management). This confirms that training centers function as passive labor suppliers rather than strategic partners in competency co-design.

b. Collaborative Process Stage : Ceremonial Dialogue and Trust Deficit

This stage requires regular face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, and process commitment (Ansell and Gash, 2008). In this context, the frequency of communication in the form of coordination meetings with Industry Partners is only twice per year for VPTC Samarinda and three times per year for VPTC Makassar through the FKLPI forum, which is far below the monthly threshold observed in successful collaboration models. This finding aligns with complaints from Industry Partners informants who stated that *"invitations are for ceremonial events, not for discussions on actual skills needs"* (Informants of Industry Partners Representative). This condition has led to a phenomenon of declining trust, where dialogue is limited to program launches and there is no annual Training Needs Analysis (TNA). The subsequent impact is that Industry Partners satisfaction ratings regarding graduates are not measured systematically. Furthermore, there are differing interpretations of *"job-ready competencies"*: training centers focus on Indonesian National Work Competency Standards while Industry Partners prioritizes skills aligned with current operational needs.

c. Institutional Design & Facilitative Leadership Stage : The Regulatory Void

Institutional design according to Ansell and Gash requires inclusive forums with clear rules of engagement and facilitative leadership. The FKLPI exists at both centers. Currently, the centers only have a Director General's Decree that outlines the duties and functions of the FKLPI, without supporting implementing regulations such as Standard Operating Procedures specific to the centers. Center leadership remains oriented toward internal compliance (meeting participant targets), rather than external alignment with Industry Partners needs. During FGDs, academic informants highlighted that: *"The FKLPI needs to be transformed into a strategic partnership board with veto power over curriculum matters"* (Academic Informant).

d. Collaborative Outcomes : The Failure of Intermediate Gains

The Ansell and Gash model emphasizes intermediate outcomes (small wins and joint action plans) as catalysts for long-term success. The findings indicate a failure to achieve

these intermediate milestones. The lack of synchronized action plans has resulted in stagnant job placement rates and a widening skills gap, rendering the collaborative outcomes ineffective in addressing the local labor market's dynamic requirements. The stages described above are illustrated in Figure 1.1 below:

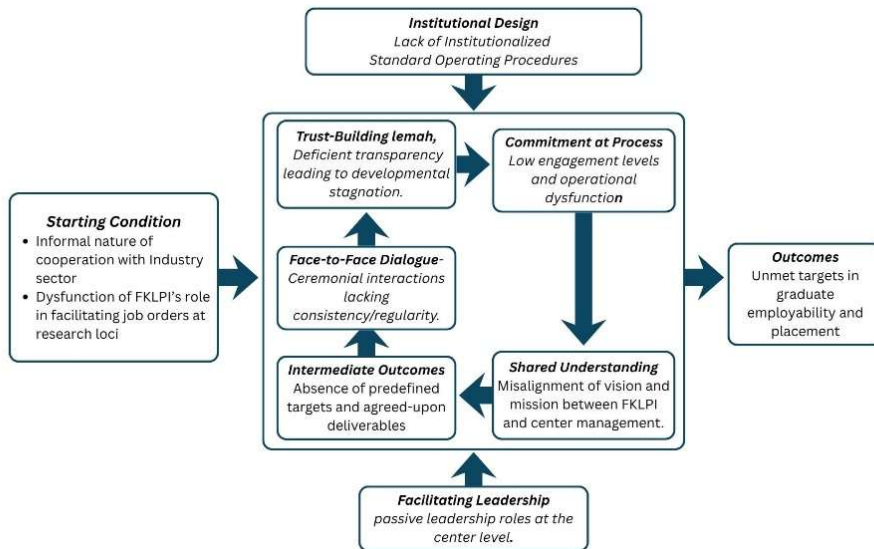


Figure 2. Collaborative Governance: Existing Conditions of Vocational Training Implementation

Source: Processed by the authors, 2025

The Cycle of Collaborative Dysfunction, based on the synthesis of the Ansell and Gash (2008) framework and the empirical findings at the two vocational centers, this study identifies a systemic failure across all stages of the collaborative process. The dysfunction is not isolated but rather functions as a self-reinforcing cycle of ceremonial interactions and unmet outcomes, as detailed belows:

a. Face to Face Dialogue : From Substance to Ceremony

Ansell and Gash (2008) emphasize that face-to-face dialogue is the essential foundation for cultivating mutual respect and exploring shared gains. However, field evidence suggests that dialogue at the training centers has been reduced to a quantitative administrative target. These interactions are predominantly ceremonial, failing to address actual industrial skill gaps. As confirmed by informants: *“Invitations are for ceremonial events, not for substantive discussions on skill needs.”* When dialogue loses its essence, it fails to serve as a crucible for trust, initiating a broader collapse of the collaborative infrastructure.

b. Building Trust : The Transactional Trap

Building trust is an incremental process formed through repeated positive interactions and transparent communication. Weak trust can lead parties to behave manipulatively or withdraw from collaboration. At the research loci, the relationship with Industry Partners remains

transactional rather than strategic. These partnerships prioritize short-term interests without long-term relational investment. The infrequent communication frequency acts as a primary barrier, preventing the transition from superficial acquaintance to strategic trust. Without this foundation, industry partners lack the incentive to contribute to high-stakes activities like curriculum co-design.

c. Commitment to Process : Institutional Fragility

In Ansell and Gash's (2008) theory, commitment demands more than mere formality. Strong commitment between parties is reflected in a sense of ownership toward the collaborative process, where each party feels jointly responsible for the outcomes achieved. If the opposite occurs, it will reduce the effectiveness of the collaborative forum. Findings indicate that the FKLPI suffers from institutional dysfunction due to a lack of genuine commitment. The forum has devolved into a mere institutional formality, rendering the collaborative infrastructure fragile and unproductive. This lack of "buy-in" creates a vacuum where shared goals cannot be formulated, further eroding the credibility of the training centers in the eyes of the industry.

d. Shared Understanding : The Divergence of Vision

Ansell and Gash (2008) emphasize that shared understanding refers to a common definition of problems, vision, goals, and policy directions among stakeholders. This understanding must be built through continuous dialogue, inclusive negotiation, and joint fact-finding. The minimal involvement of Industry Partners in curriculum development signifies a failure to align the training centers' vision with industrial reality. This disconnect results in vocational outputs that do not reflect actual labor market competencies. Without a shared mission, collaboration remains superficial, preventing any transformative impact on graduate employability.

e. Intermediate Outcomes

Ansell and Gash (2008) emphasize that intermediate outcomes are crucial for sustaining collaboration. Concrete small wins function as momentum builders, as well as mechanisms to strengthen trust and commitment. The absence of intermediate outcomes breeds distrust and encourages stakeholders to disengage from collaboration. At both centers, the failure to formulate short-term targets has resulted in a lack of concrete achievements. Without these milestones, stakeholders particularly from the industrial sector lack the positive reinforcement necessary to deepen their engagement. This absence of momentum creates a recurring cycle of disengagement, making the organic recovery of the partnership increasingly difficult.

More specifically, in terms of the collaborative process, the researcher describes the conditions of the collaborative process in vocational training implementation at the two centers as follows:

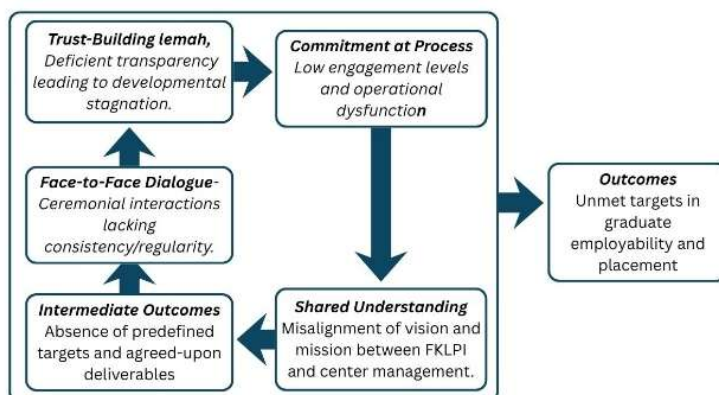


Figure 3. Collaborative Process in Vocational Training Implementation at the Research Locus (Existing Conditions)

Source: Processed by the authors, 2025

In summary, the analysis across these five indicators reveals a mutually reinforcing pattern of systemic dysfunction. The failure is sequential: it originates from ceremonial face-to-face dialogue, which fails to generate the strategic trust essential for fostering institutional commitment. In the absence of genuine commitment, the FKLPI forum is stripped of its catalytic function, effectively stagnating the development of shared understanding.

This lack of cognitive and normative alignment prevents the realization of intermediate outcomes, thereby stifling the momentum required to build sustainable vocational networks. These findings empirically validate the caution of Ansell and Gash (2008), demonstrating how a deficit in one collaborative element can trigger a cascading weakening effect across the entire process. Consequently, any intervention to improve graduate employability must transcend superficial fixes; it demands a comprehensive structural and cultural reform to transition from administrative formality to a functional, high-trust collaborative ecosystem."

3.3. Recommendations for the Collaboration Process in Vocational Training Implementation

To revitalize the collaborative ecosystem, this study proposes a structural transformation focused on shifting communication from ceremonial interactions to measurable, substantive engagements. The primary reform involves the institutionalization of Standard Operating Procedures for the FKLPI, establishing clear protocols for industry engagement, regularized meeting schedules, and the formation of a dedicated secretariat with a permanent Liaison Officer.

a. Strengthening the Role of FKLPI in the Collaborative Process

The following table delineates the strategic realignment of FKLPI functions mapped against the Ansell and Gash framework:

Table 3. Strategic Framework for FKLPI Revitalization

Stage	Role	Output
Face-to-Face Dialogue	Facilitate demand-driven technical forums between institutions and industry.	Identification of specific industry competency gaps and emerging skill demands.
Building Trust	Ensure transparent reporting of graduate competencies and performance monitoring.	Increased industrial confidence in vocational training quality and institutional reliability.
Commitment to Process	Institutionalize "Link and Match" mechanisms, including joint curriculum co-creation and practitioner-led instruction.	Formalized long-term partnerships and industry-led human resource development.
Shared Understanding	Align vocational curricula with real-time labor market needs and global competency standards.	A unified vision between government and the private sector regarding graduate employability.

Source: Processed by the authors, 2025.

b. Empowering PES as Strategic Connectors

Internal reform must focus on the professionalization of Job Placement Officers (JPO) by fully implementing the three pillars of Public Employment Services (PES). This study identifies JPOs as critical "knowledge brokers" who bridge the gap between training and placement. To optimize this role, the Ministry of Manpower must reduce administrative workloads and establish competency-based standards for JPOs, focusing on: active job canvassing, verified candidate profiling and inclusive recruitment.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research demonstrates that the effectiveness of vocational training at VPTC Samarinda and Makassar is fundamentally hindered by a dysfunctional collaborative architecture. Current partnerships are characterized by ceremonialism and a lack of structural coherence, leading to a persistent mismatch between vocational supply and industrial demand. By applying the Ansell and Gash (2008) perspective, this study reveals a self-reinforcing cycle of collaborative failure, rooted in a deficit of strategic trust and the absence of intermediate outcomes.

The policy recommendations below:

- (1) **Regulatory Formalization** : The Ministry of Manpower should mandate the creation of Context-Specific SOPs at the center level to operationalize high-level decrees.

- (2) Structural Reform : Transform FKLPI from a consultative forum into a Strategic Partnership Board with substantive influence over training design.
- (3) Data Integration Develop an integrated, real-time Tracer Study and Labor Market Information System to eliminate data asymmetry.

Furthermore, these findings lay the groundwork for future research. Further longitudinal studies are necessitated to quantify the causal impact of these structural reforms on long-term employment sustainability. Additionally, there is a significant opportunity to explore the integration of **AI-driven job matching** and **predictive analytics** within the FKLPI framework to minimize the current efficiency gap and enhance the real-time responsiveness of vocational training to industrial shifts.

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