LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND SELF-EFFICACY: TWO IMPORTANT PILLARS IN STUDENT PUBLIC SPEAKING READINESS

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of leadership skills and self-efficacy on students' readiness for public speaking. Adopting a quantitative research design, information was collected from 100 undergraduate participants from University of Pamulang, using a structured questionnaire instrument that applied a five-point Likert scale. The analysis of the data obtained was carried out using multiple linear regression, including a partial significance test using the t-test, a simultaneous significance test using the F-test, and a measurement of the proportion of variability explained by the model using the coefficient of determination (R^2). The findings from the research show that both the expression of leadership skills and self-assurance significantly and positively affect students' preparedness to address a public audience, whether viewed individually or together .

Keywords: Leadership Skills, Self-Efficacy, Public Speaking Readiness, Students, Social Cognitive Theory, Transformational Leadership.

Introduction

Public speaking has long been considered one of the most important skills for college students, especially in preparing them for academic, professional, and social challenges. The ability to convey ideas clearly and confidently in front of others not only improves academic performance but also contributes to leadership potential and future career success. However, despite its significant role, many students still feel anxious and unprepared when speaking in public. This problem highlights the need to explore the underlying factors that influence students' readiness to speak in public. Among various psychological and interpersonal elements, leadership skills and self-confidence emerge as two key pillars that influence capacity and self-esteem. Students speak in public. Leadership skills enable students to manage the context of communication, create convincing arguments, and demonstrate presence and impact throughout the presentation.

However, self-confidence, that is, a person's belief in their ability to complete a specific task directly influences their motivation, effort, and resilience in overcoming difficulties when speaking in public. Understanding the relationship between these

two elements can help one fully understand what makes some students more prepared and confident as speakers than others. This research aims to examine how self-confidence, leadership abilities, and students' preparedness to speak publicly interact. Knowing how these factors interact, this study hopes to aid in the design of educational approaches that foster both leadership ability and psychological self-confidence among pupils. Given that this stresses the need of including leadership development and confidence building into communication courses, the findings of this study will be quite helpful to curriculum. Student program developers, educators, and designers. Understanding these components will eventually allow us to create trustworthy communicators as well as confident leaders prepared to confront actual problems.

Theoretical Framework

Public speaking readiness among students is influenced by a combination of psychological, social, and cognitive factors. Leadership abilities and self-efficacy are two of the most well-known variables that have gotten academic interest. Leadership skills encompass the ability to guide, influence, and communicate effectively within a group or public context (Northouse, 2021). These abilities not only improve a person's ability to handle encounters but also help them to confidently express their ideas before an audience. Meanwhile, self-efficacy, as conceptualized by Bandura (1997), refers to one's belief in their capability to perform a particular task successfully. In the context of public speaking, self-efficacy shapes students' confidence, motivation, and persistence when facing communicative challenges.

Previous studies have revealed the importance of the relationship between self-confidence and performance in communication. For example, Allen (2020) observed that students with high levels of self-confidence tend to experience reduced anxiety when speaking and are more active in public speaking activities. In line with this, research by Ayres et al. (2018) shows that self-confidence acts as an intermediary factor that influences the relationship between preparation efforts and results in communication performance. On the other hand, leadership skills have been linked to effective communication and the ability to attract the audience's attention. Yukl (2013) argues that people with good leadership skills usually demonstrate better verbal skills, better emotional control, and more effective persuasive communication skills, all of which are very important in the context of public speaking.

Despite the results of this study, there are still few studies that examine the combined influence of leadership skills and self-confidence on students' readiness to speak in public. Most existing studies tend to discuss these two things separately either focusing on psychological aspects such as self-confidence or on social competencies such as leadership. This gap highlights the need for an approach that combines both elements, considering how personal confidence and interpersonal skills interact to improve public speaking readiness. Such integration can provide a more comprehensive understanding of student readiness, emphasizing the importance of internal confidence and external communication skills as complementary dimensions.

Theoretically, this study is based on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1997), which states that human behavior is the result of a dynamic interaction between personal factors, actions, and the environment. Self-efficacy is central to this model, influencing how individuals face challenges and persevere in achieving goals. In addition, Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass and Riggio, 2006) supports the idea that leadership involves inspiring and motivating others through effective communication, emotional intelligence, and confidence—traits that are consistent with those needed in public speaking. Combining these two frameworks shows that leadership skills can strengthen self-efficacy by providing practical experience and positive feedback, which in turn increases a person's readiness to communicate publicly.

Based on the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework, this study proposes that leadership skills and self-efficacy are positively related to students' readiness to speak in public. More specifically, it is hypothesized that students with higher leadership skills will demonstrate greater self-efficacy, which in turn will increase their readiness to speak in public. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: Leadership skills have a positive and significant effect on students' self-efficacy.
H2: Self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on students' public speaking readiness.
H3: Leadership skills have a positive and significant effect on students' public speaking readiness, both directly and indirectly through self-efficacy.

Through these hypotheses, this study aims to fill the existing gap by presenting empirical data on the interrelationship between leadership skills, self-confidence, and readiness to speak in public, thereby providing practical suggestions for educational programs that aim to produce students who become effective, confident, and communicative leaders.
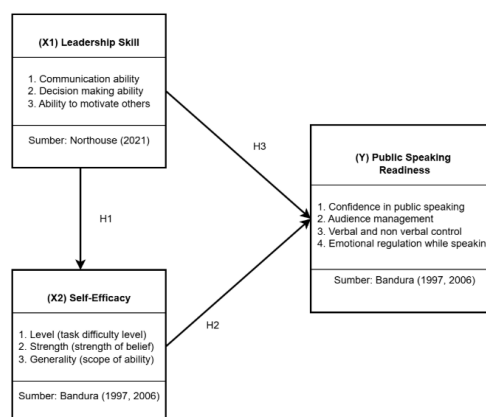
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Method

This study adopts a quantitative method with the aim of examining the impact of leadership skills and self-confidence on students' public speaking abilities. The target of this study is students who are currently enrolled in higher education. The sample used in this study was taken using purposive sampling, involving 100 respondents who met the research criteria.

Data were collected through a closed questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale that measured three main variables: leadership skills (X_1), self-efficacy (X_2), and public speaking readiness (Y). Before use, the instruments were tested for validity and reliability to ensure measurement accuracy.

Data analysis was performed using multiple linear regression to test the simultaneous and individual effects of independent variables on the dependent variable. Before performing regression analysis, all basic assumption tests were carried out, including normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation tests. The results of the normality test showed that the residuals were not normally distributed. To address this issue and stabilize the data variance, logarithmic (log) transformations were performed on the independent variables. After the transformation process, the data showed a normal distribution pattern, which allowed regression analysis to be performed using variables that had undergone logarithmic transformation (LNX1, LNX2). The results of the t-test were used to examine the effect of each independent variable separately, while the F-test was used to assess the overall effect. The coefficient of determination (R^2) value indicates the contribution of leadership skills and self-confidence to students' readiness to speak in public.

Results

This section of the research presents the findings in a clear and structured manner in accordance with the predetermined objectives. Data processing was carried out using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software to assess the impact of Leadership Skills (X_1) and Self-Confidence (X_2) on Public Speaking Readiness (Y) involving 100 students from the Management Study Program at University of Pamulang. The use of SPSS provided researchers with the opportunity to obtain more accurate and objective results during data analysis. Data analysis included various stages of statistical testing, including regression test, multiple regression test, t-test, F-test, and coefficient of determination (R^2), all of which began with testing classical assumptions such as normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation. The regression analysis was conducted using log-transformed variables (LNX1 for Leadership Skills and LNX2 for Self-Efficacy) to ensure data normality and meet the assumptions of the classical linear regression model. Overall, these results confirm that Leadership Skills and Self-Confidence are two psychological and behavioral aspects that are very important in preparing students to engage in public speaking activities. Strengthening these two elements can support students in

becoming more confident, calm, and effective communicators in academic and professional environments.

Table 1. Simple Regression Test of Leadership Skill(X_1) Against Public Speaking Readiness (Y)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Correlations Zero-order	Correlations Partial	Correlations Part	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance	Collinearity Statistics VIF
1	(Constant)	-58.172	6.674		-8.716	<.001					
	LNX1	24.519	1.797	.809	13.643	<.001	.809	.809	.809	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Kesiapan public speaking

Based on the table above, the constant value is -58.172 and the regression coefficient for the personality variable (LNX1) is 24.519, so the regression equation is:

Y= −58.172+24.519(LNX1)

The significance value (Sig.) of < 0.001 less than the significance level (α) of 0.05. This proves that Leadership Skills have a positive and statistically significant effect on Public Speaking Readiness.

Table 2. Simple Regression Test of Self-Efficacy Variable (X_2) Public Speaking Readiness (Y)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Correlations Zero-order	Correlations Partial	Correlations Part	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance	Collinearity Statistics VIF
1	(Constant)	-35.949	4.905		-7.328	<.001					
	LNX2	21.531	1.534	.817	14.038	<.001	.817	.817	.817	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Kesiapan public speaking

Based on the table above, the constant value is -35.949 and the regression coefficient for the self-efficacy variable (LNX2) is 21.531, resulting in the following regression equation:

Y = -35.949 + 21.531 (LNX2)

The significance value (Sig.) of < 0.001 less than the significance level (α) of 0.05. These results emphasize the importance of self-efficacy as a psychological factor that determines students' readiness to speak in public.

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Test of X1 and X2 Against Y

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-54.687	5.982		-9.142	<.001					
	LNX1	12.937	2.758	.427	4.690	<.001	.809	.430	.248	.337	2.971
	LNX2	12.367	2.399	.469	5.155	<.001	.817	.464	.272	.337	2.971

a. Dependent Variable: Kesiapan public speaking

Based on the table above, the constant value is -54.687, the regression coefficient for personality (LNX1) is 12.937, and self-efficacy (LNX2) is 12.367. Therefore, the regression equation is:

Y = -54.687 + 12.937 LNX1 + 12.367 LNX2

The significance value for leadership skills (LNX1) is <0.001 (< 0.05), indicating that leadership skills exert a positive and substantial impact on public speaking readiness. Correspondingly, the significance value for self-confidence (LNX2) is also <0.001 (< 0.05), signifying that self-confidence contributes positively and significantly to public speaking preparedness.

Tabel 4. t-Test (Partial)

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-54.687	5.982		-9.142	<.001		
	LNX1	12.937	2.758	.427	4.690	<.001	.337	2.971
	LNX2	12.367	2.399	.469	5.155	<.001	.337	2.971

a. Dependent Variable: Kesiapan public speaking

Source: Output SPSS (2025)

The t-test results show that:

Leadership skill (LNX1) has a calculated t-value of 4.690 with a significance of <0.001 (< 0.05), shows a positive and meaningful impact on students' preparation for public speaking.

Self-efficacy (LNX2) has a calculated t-value of 5.155 with a significance of <0.001 (< 0.05), also indicating a positive and significant influence on students' public speaking readiness.

This shows that leadership skills and self-confidence play an important role in preparing students to speak in front of large audiences. Students who have better

leadership skills and high self-confidence in their abilities are usually better prepared and more effective when participating in public speaking activities.

Tabel 5. F Test (Simultaneous)

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1871.734	2	935.867	130.644	<.001^b
	Residual	694.856	97	7.163		
	Total	2566.590	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Kesiapan public speaking

b. Predictors: (Constant), LNX2, LNX1

Source: Output SPSS (2025)

Based on the F test results, the calculated F value was 130.644 with a significance level of <0.001 (< 0.05), greater than the F table (3.09). This means that simultaneously, leadership skills (LNX1) and self-efficacy (LNX2) have a significant influence on students' public speaking readiness (Y). In other words, the regression model used in this study is appropriate and statistically valid for predicting students' public speaking readiness based on their leadership skills and self-efficacy levels.

Tabel 6. Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.854^a	.729	.724	2.676	1.956

a. Predictors: (Constant), LNX2, LNX1

b. Dependent Variable: Kesiapan public speaking

Source: Output SPSS (2025)

Based on the table above, the R Square value is 0.729, where the contribution of variables LNX1 and LNX2 is 72.9% and the remaining 27.1% is influenced by other variables.

This shows that the regression model applied in this study is very effective in explaining that leadership skills and self-confidence together explain most of the differences in readiness to speak in public. Therefore, students who have better leadership skills and higher levels of self-confidence tend to be more prepared when speaking in public.

Discussion

This research indicates that both leadership competencies and self-assurance positively and significantly correlate with students' readiness for public speaking engagement. These findings align with the study's primary objective, which was to investigate the collective influence of psychological and interpersonal elements on students' preparedness and confidence when addressing an audience. The regression analysis revealed that leadership skills and self-confidence collectively account for 72.9% of the variance in public speaking readiness, suggesting these two factors are robust predictors of confidence and communicative performance among students.

These results theoretically support Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1997), which states that self-confidence determines how a person faces difficulties, makes efforts, and persists in achieving their goals. Confident students view public speaking as an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities, which increases motivation and reduces anxiety. Furthermore, these findings are consistent with the Transformational Leadership Theory proposed by Bass and Riggio (2006). This theory states that people with strong leadership abilities tend to inspire and influence others through effective communication, emotional regulation, and self-confidence, which are important attributes for public speaking readiness.

Empirically, this study supports Allen (2020) and Ayres et al. (2018), who state that confidence increases participation and reduces speaking anxiety. Thus, it encourages better communication. Yukl (2013) also emphasizes the importance of audience participation, persuasion, and leadership skills for effective public communication. According to the research, there is a strong relationship between leaders and prepared public speaking. This also confirms that interpersonal influence and self-confidence shape communication skills.

From a scientific perspective, this investigation enhances existing literature by incorporating two principal elements: leadership and self-efficacy within a unified framework for public speaking readiness. In contrast to prior research that examined these factors in isolation, this study illustrates their interdependent functions: leadership augments behavioral competence, while self-efficacy reinforces psychological confidence. This dual viewpoint enriches theoretical discourse on communication proficiency by conceptualizing readiness not merely as a skill-based outcome but as a composite of cognitive and behavioral capabilities.

In practical terms, these results emphasize the importance of higher education institutions establishing educational settings that foster the concurrent development of leadership capabilities and psychological preparedness. Educational programs focused on communication and management ought to incorporate experiential learning opportunities. These may encompass activities such as structured debates, joint presentations, and student-facilitated skill-building exercises. Such methods are designed to bolster students' self-assurance and their practical leadership competencies. Successful implementation of these approaches can cultivate graduates equipped with strong communication skills, confidence, flexibility, and the persuasive

abilities requisite for effective professional engagement.

However, this study is subject to certain limitations. The research sample only included students from one institution, which limits the ability to generalize the findings. In addition, the use of questionnaires that rely on self-reports may cause bias in responses due to subjective views. Future research should involve a broader and more varied sample, perhaps from several universities, and consider the use of mixed methods to capture qualitative views on students' public presentation experiences.

Overall, research shows that leadership competence and self-efficacy are two interrelated foundations of public speaking readiness. Enhancing these two dimensions is essential for developing students who have the ability to articulate their thoughts with confidence, influence others with persuasive arguments, and convey information skillfully in various academic and professional settings.

Conclusion

This research finds that leadership capabilities and self-efficacy represent two essential and interconnected elements that substantially improve students' preparedness for public speaking. The statistical analysis validates that both aspects exert a positive and significant influence, whether considered independently or together, on students' capacity for confident and effective audience communication. The coefficient of determination (R^2) statistic of 0.729 signifies that these two components account for 72.9% of the variance in students' public speaking readiness, establishing leadership skills and self-efficacy as primary indicators of communicative proficiency.

From a theoretical standpoint, these results corroborate Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1997). This theory posits that an individual's level of self-efficacy significantly influences their motivation and perseverance when confronted with difficulties. Furthermore, the findings are consistent with Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This theory identifies communication, self-assurance, and emotional competence as critical elements for effective leadership and public engagement. Collectively, these theoretical models indicate that robust leadership cultivates elevated self-efficacy, which consequently enhances one's preparedness for public speaking.

Research findings highlight the practical value of active learning methods. To empower students, educational programs must be designed to build leadership capacity and self-efficacy simultaneously through activities such as debates and leadership projects. In this way, students will have both the communication skills and the mental confidence to engage in the public sphere.

Subsequent investigations are recommended to expand the participant pool by incorporating students from various academic establishments and to utilize comprehensive methodologies for a more profound understanding of the psychological elements influencing preparedness for public speaking. In essence, the enhancement of leadership capabilities and personal confidence offers a deliberate strategy for higher education institutions to graduate individuals who can express

themselves effectively, possess self-assurance, and demonstrate leadership through their communication proficiency.

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