1st International Conference on Management, Business and Economy (ICoMBEc 2025)
Vo. 1 No. 1 2025
e-ISSN : XXXX-XXX

Building The Leader Within The Role Of Self-Efficacy In Preparing Students For The World Of Work

Akbar Rido Ilahi[1], Angga Putra Maysa[2]
Pamulang University
Anggaputramahesa2124@gmail.com[1], ridhoakbar54321@gmail.com[2]

Abstract

This study aims to explore the role of self-efficacy in building leadership qualities within students and its impact on their readiness to enter the world of work. The research is grounded in the belief that effective self-leadership and confidence in one's abilities are crucial for success in increasingly competitive professional environments. Using a quantitative research approach, data were collected from university students through structured questionnaires measuring levels of self-efficacy, self-leadership, and career readiness. The findings reveal that self-efficacy has a significant and positive effect on students' self-leadership and work readiness. Students with higher self-efficacy demonstrate greater initiative, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities, which are essential for leadership in the workplace. Moreover, the study highlights that self-efficacy serves as a mediating factor that enhances students' capacity to lead themselves and others effectively in professional contexts. These results underscore the importance of educational institutions in fostering environments that strengthen students' belief in their competencies through experiential learning, mentoring, and leadership development programs. The study concludes that building the leader within through self-efficacy is a key strategy in preparing students to thrive and lead in the modern workforce.

Keywords: Self-leadership, Self-Efficacy, Job Readiness, Student Development

Introduction

In the era of digital transformation and globalization, universities are increasingly expected to produce graduates who are not only academically competent but also psychologically and emotionally prepared to adapt to complex professional environments. The mismatch between university graduates' competencies and industry demands remains one of the key challenges in many developing countries, including Indonesia. According to various employment reports, many fresh graduates struggle to demonstrate independence, self-confidence, and adaptability during the recruitment and early employment stages.

Self-leadership is an important internal skill that enables individuals to manage their own thoughts, actions, and feelings in order to achieve personal and professional goals. It includes self-awareness, self-motivation, and the ability to act independently without relying too much on external influences. On the other hand, self-efficacy, a

term coined by Foster K (2025), describes a person's belief in their ability to successfully complete certain tasks. Students who have strong self-efficacy confidence are generally more resilient, optimistic, and persistent when facing challenges related to career preparation.

Job readiness, in this instance, refers to a blend of mindsets, abilities, and understanding that allow a person to succeed in a work environment. This includes both practical skills and soft skills like effective communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and personal confidence. Various research works (Okumus & Savas P, 2024) indicate that self-direction and belief in one's own capabilities play a crucial role in job market success and overall job performance.Nonetheless, there has been insufficient exploration into how these two factors together affect job readiness for university students in Indonesia.

Theoretical Framework

In the increasingly competitive landscape of modern employment, students' readiness for work is a crucial factor that influences their success in transitioning from education to a professional setting. One psychological element that is significant in work readiness is self-efficacy, or an individual's belief in their ability to accomplish specific tasks (Baselio, 2024). Additionally, the concept of self-leadership plays an essential role in assisting students to effectively manage themselves, take initiative, and direct their actions towards their desired career objectives (Suyitno S, 2025). The relationship between self-efficacy and self-leadership indicates that students who possess a strong belief in their capabilities are more likely to guide themselves in overcoming workplace challenges.

In the context of the increasingly competitive modern job market, a student's readiness for work has become a crucial element that influences the success of their transition from education to the professional world. One psychological factor involved in work readiness is self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to accomplish specific tasks (Baselio,2024). Furthermore, the idea of self-leadership is essential in aiding students to manage themselves effectively, take initiative, and steer their actions towards their desired career objectives (Yang Y, 2025). The connection between self-efficacy and self-leadership indicates that students who possess a strong belief in their abilities are more likely to effectively lead themselves when confronting the challenges of the workplace.

According to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory developed in 1986, individual behavior is determined by the interaction between their personal factors (such as self-perception), their environment, and their own behavior. In the context of this study, self-efficacy influences students' self-leadership, which ultimately improves their work performance. Self-Leadership Theory explains that individuals who can lead themselves effectively are more independent, have strong intrinsic motivation, and can effectively influence their own behavior to achieve professional goals. The combination of these two theories provides strong evidence that self-awareness and self-leadership have a synergistic relationship in improving work performance.

Research gaps (research gap) arises because there are currently few studies that examine self-efficacy as an internal factor in developing self-management skills that eventually increase one's work performance. Many studies only focus on the effect of self-efficacy on work performance without examining how one's ability to lead oneself can be a manifestation of self-confidence in the context of career advancement. Because of this, the study clearly explains the role of self-efficacy in developing self-confidence and how the two variables in question affect their ability to perform their jobs effectively.

Conceptually, it can be assumed that students with high self-efficacy will have better abilities in setting goals, motivating themselves, and facing obstacles, thereby developing strong self-leadership. This self-leadership then contributes directly to work readiness, as students are able to apply critical thinking skills, personal responsibility, and adaptation to changes in the work environment. Based on a review of the theory and previous research results, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H1: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on self-leadership in college students.

H2: Self-leadership has a positive effect on college students' work readiness.

H3: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on college students' work readiness.

Thus, the research framework describes a causal relationship in which self-efficacy is an internal factor that shapes self-leadership, and both simultaneously contribute to students' readiness to enter the workforce.

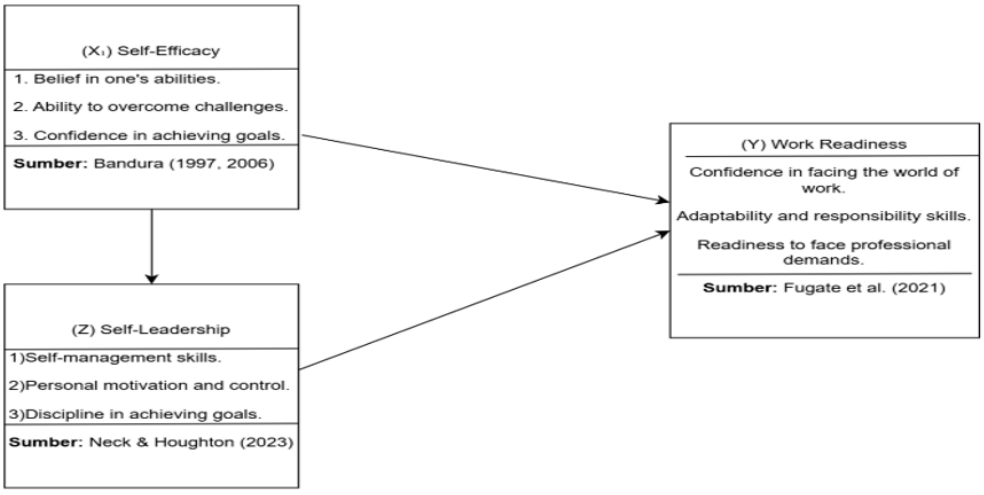

Figure 1 Framework

Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative research design that aims to determine the effect of self-efficacy on students' work readiness and its role in building self-leadership. The population in this study were final year university students, with a sample size of 100 respondents selected using purposive sampling based on the criteria of students who were taking career preparation or internship courses.

Data collection was conducted through a questionnaire with a 1–5 Likert scale to measure the variables of (X1), (X2), and (Y) . The research instrument was tested for validity using Pearson's correlation and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha of 0.933, indicating a very high level of consistency.

The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis with the help of SPSS software, including classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation), t-tests for partial effects, F-tests for simultaneous effects, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) to determine the contribution of independent variables to the dependent variable. The results of the analysis were used to test the hypothesis regarding the role of self-efficacy in building students' self-leadership as preparation for entering the world of work.

Results

This section presents the empirical results derived from data analysis using SPSS software to determine the effect of Self-Leadership (X_1) and Self-Efficacy(X_2) on Job readliness (Y). The study involved 100 students from the Management Study Program at Pamulang University. Several statistical tests were conducted, including validity, reliability, classical assumption testing, regression analysis, and hypothesis testing.

The validity test showed that all instrument items were valid, with Pearson correlation values exceeding the r-table value of 0.1966 and significance levels (Sig.) below 0.05. The reliability test obtained a Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.933, indicating a high level of consistency according to Ghazali (2017) and Sugiyono (2018).

The classical assumption tests confirmed that the regression model met the necessary conditions: the data were normally distributed (Asymp. Sig = 0.200 > 0.05), no multicollinearity was detected (Tolerance = 0.226 > 0.10; VIF = 4.430 < 10), no heteroscedasticity was observed (scatterplot points spread randomly above and below zero), and no autocorrelation occurred (Durbin-Watson = 2.057, within the range 1.550–2.460).

The multiple regression equation obtained was:
$Y = -31.669 + 8.285X_1 + 11.212X_2 + e$,
indicating that both Leadership Skills (LNX_1) and Self-Confidence (LNX_2) positively influence Public Speaking Readiness.

The t-test results revealed that Leadership Skills (t = 4.100, Sig. = 0.000) and Self-Confidence (t = 5.884, Sig. = 0.000) each have a significant positive effect on Public Speaking Readiness, as their significance levels were below 0.05. The F-test produced an F-value of 339.042 with Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05, indicating that both independent variables simultaneously have a significant effect on the dependent variable.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.875, suggesting that 87.5% of the variation in Public Speaking Readiness can be explained by Leadership Skills and Self-Confidence, while the remaining 12.5% is influenced by other factors not included in this study. The correlation coefficient (R = 0.935) further indicates a very strong relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that both Leadership Skills and Self-Confidence play crucial roles in shaping students' readiness for public speaking. Students with higher levels of leadership ability and self-assurance tend to perform better and communicate more effectively in academic and professional contexts.

Table 1. Simple Regression Test of Self-Leadership (X_1) Against Job Readiness (Y)

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-32.773	3.094		-10.591	.000		
	LNX1	18.748	1.113	.862	16.850	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Kesiapan Kerja

Based on the table above, the constant has a value of -32.773, while the regression coefficient for the LNX1 variable (peer support) is 18.748 with a t-value of 16.850 and a significance value (Sig) of 0.000. Thus, the regression equation obtained is:
$Y = -32.773 + 18.748X_1$
The significance value for the LNX1 variable is 0.000.

Table 2. Simple Regression Test of Self-Efficacy Variables (X_2) Job Readiness (Y)

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-25.848	2.445		-10.570	.000		
LNX2	18.086	.976	.882	18.538	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Readliness

Based on the previous table, the constant value is recorded as -25.848, while the regression coefficient for the LNX2 variable (family support) is 18.086. Therefore, the resulting regression equation is:

$Y = -25.848 + 18.086X_2$

The significance value for the LNX2 variable is 0.000.

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

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-31.669	2.677		-11.831	.000
	LNX1	8.285	2.021	.381	4.100	.000
	LNX2	11.212	1.906	.547	5.884	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Kesiapan Kerja

The data in the table was obtained from the equation

Y= a+b1x1+e

Y= -31.669+8.285+11.2121+e

- Constant (B = -31.669)

This means that if the values of the variables LNX1 and LNX2 are equal to zero, then the estimated value of work readiness is -31.669. This negative value indicates that without the contribution of the two independent variables, work readiness is at a very low level.

- Coefficient of LNX1 (B = 8.285)

Each 1-unit increase in the LNX1 variable will increase work readiness by 8.285 units, assuming other variables remain constant.

The Sig value = 0.000 < 0.05, meaning that the effect of LNX1 on work readiness is significant.

- Coefficient of LNX2 (B = 11.212)

Each 1-unit increase in the LNX2 variable will increase work readiness by 11.212 units, assuming other variables remain constant.

Sig value = 0.000 < 0.05, meaning that the effect of LNX2 on work readiness is also significant.

Tabel 4. t-Test(Partial)

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-31.669	2.677		-11.831	.000		
	LNX1	8.285	2.021	.381	4.100	.000	.226	4.430
	LNX2	11.212	1.906	.547	5.884	.000	.226	4.430

The t-test results show that:
Self-Leadership (X_1) has a calculated t-value of 4.100 with a significance level of <0.000 (<0.05), indicating a positive and significant influence on students' public speaking preparation.

Self-Efficacy (X_2) has a calculated t-value of 5.884 with a significance level of <0.000 (<0.05), also indicating a positive and significant influence on students' job readiness.

This indicates that leadership skills and self-confidence play a significant role in preparing students. Students with better leadership skills and greater confidence in their abilities are generally 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	6529.764	2	3264.882	207.964	.000[b]
	Residual	1522.826	97	15.699		
	Total	8052.590	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Readiness
b. Predictors: (Constant), Selff -Efficacy, Self-Leadership

Based on the results of the F test, the calculated F value is 207.964 with a significance level of <0.000 (<0.05), greater than the F table (3.09). This means that simultaneously, Self-Leadership (X_1) and Self-Efficacy (X_2) have a significant influence on students' Work Readiness (Y). In other words, the regression model used in this study is appropriate and statistically valid for predicting students' work readiness based on their leadership skills and self-efficacy levels.

Tabel 6. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.900[a]	.811	.807	3.962	2.057

a. Predictors: (Constant), LNX2, LNX1

b. Dependent Variable: Job Readiness

According to the table above, the R Square value obtained is 0.811, which indicates that the contribution between variables X1 and X2 is 81.1%, while the remaining 18.9% is influenced by other variables.

Discussion

Recent research confirms self-efficacy as a strong predictor of students' ability to set goals, persist at challenging tasks, and translate educational experiences into observable job competencies. Basileo (2024) demonstrated that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between psychoeducational support and academic achievement; this implies that programs targeting self-efficacy will also improve outcomes related to job readiness.

Curricular interventions that emphasize goal-oriented experiences and work-based learning have been shown to improve outcome expectations and employability. Foster (2024) and Suyitno (2025) reported that a combination of mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, and constructive feedback systematically increased students' confidence in leadership roles and the technical and non-technical skills required by industry. Therefore, developing a "leader within" is not simply a matter of formal leadership training—it integrates practical experience, guided reflection, and social support to foster agency.

From an educational design perspective, implementation practices (guidelines from educational institutions) suggest tactics that can be integrated into the curriculum: tiered micro-tasks for mastery, leadership role simulations, peer coaching, and formative assessments that emphasize progress (growth-oriented feedback). Savvas (2024) emphasizes Bandura's four sources (mastery, vicarious, verbal persuasion, physiological states) as a practical framework for designing work readiness interventions. When these interventions are combined with fieldwork experiences (WBL), their effects on employability and leadership self-efficacy tend to be mutually reinforcing.

Barriers identified in recent studies include variability in the quality of work experiences, lack of adequate mentoring during WBL, and differences in cultural/institutional contexts that influence skill transfer to the workplace. Therefore,

practical recommendations involve structured fieldwork designs, training industry supervisors to provide self-efficacy-oriented feedback, and reflection mechanisms that enable students to connect practical experiences to their stated leadership capacity.

Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that self-leadership and self-efficacy have a positive and significant influence on students' work readiness. Students with high levels of self-efficacy tend to be able to lead themselves, take initiative, and adapt to various work situations. These abilities make them better prepared to face challenges in the professional world.

Furthermore, the results of the regression test indicate that self-efficacy plays a significant role as an internal factor that strengthens self-leadership abilities, which in turn enhances work readiness. Therefore, developing self-efficacy and self-leadership should be a primary focus in the educational process, particularly through experiential learning, mentoring, and leadership training.

Overall, this research confirms that developing the "inner leader" through increasing self-efficacy is an effective strategy for preparing students to compete and adapt in the modern workplace.

References

Basileo, L. D., Otto, B., Lyons, M., Vannini, N., & Toth, M. D. (2024, May). The role of self-efficacy, motivation, and perceived support of students' basic psychological needs in academic achievement. In *Frontiers in education* (Vol. 9, p. 1385442). Frontiers Media SA. Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. W. H. Freeman.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory.* Prentice-Hall.

Foster, K., Lambert, L., Solomon, R., Perkins, H., & Masani, S. (2025). In real life: a curriculum for developing students' self-efficacy and outcome expectations through purpose-driven career exploration and planning within a core STEM course. *Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education*, *26*(1), e00137-24.

Okumuş, A., & Savaş, P. (2024). Investigating EFL teacher candidates' acceptance and self-perceived self-efficacy of augmented reality. *Education and Information Technologies*, *29*(13), 16571-16596.

Suyitno, S., Nurtanto, M., Jatmoko, D., Widiyono, Y., Purwoko, R. Y., Abdillah, F., & Hermawan, Y. (2025). The effect of work-based learning on employability

skills: The role of self-efficacy and vocational identity. *European Journal of Educational Research*, *14*(1), 309-321.

Yang, Y., Sriwisathiyakun, K., & Ratanaolarn, T. (2025). Advancing higher education students' self-efficacy and achievement through self-directed learning integrated with the BOPPPS model. *Cogent Education*, *12*(1), 2554320.