

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM AND PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG STUDENTS OF RAJEKWESI HEALTH COLLEGE, BOJONEGORO

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Abstract

Public speaking anxiety is a common psychological problem experienced by students and can be influenced by an individual's level of self-esteem. This study aims to analyze the relationship between self-esteem and public speaking anxiety among students at Rajekwesi Health College, Bojonegoro. The study used a quantitative approach with a correlational design and cross-sectional method. The study population was 461 students with a sample of 70 respondents selected using quota sampling techniques. The research instruments used were the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS). Data analysis was performed using the Spearman Rho test with a significance level of 5%. The results showed that students with high self-esteem tended to have lower levels of public speaking anxiety. Statistical tests showed a significant relationship between self-esteem and public speaking anxiety in students. The conclusion of this study is that self-esteem plays an important role in influencing the level of public speaking anxiety, so that increasing self-esteem can help improve students' communication skills.

Keywords: Communication Anxiety, Public Speaking, Self Esteem, Social Anxiety, Students

INTRODUCTION

Developing interpersonal communication and public speaking skills is an essential competency for students to face academic and professional demands. However, many students experience anxiety when speaking in public, such as nervousness, fear of negative judgment, lack of self-confidence, and a tendency to avoid presentations in class. This condition causes students to become passive in the learning process, have difficulty conveying ideas, and experience obstacles in academic social interactions. This phenomenon was found among students at Rajekwesi Health College in Bojonegoro who still experience fear and anxiety during presentations and class discussions. Anxiety about public speaking is often associated with low self-esteem, which is how individuals assess and value themselves. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to have a negative perception of their abilities, making them more susceptible to social anxiety and fear of public speaking (Susanto, 2018; Arista, 2023; Apriyanti & Yuwono, 2023). Recent research also shows that self-esteem has a significant relationship with students' levels of social anxiety and communication skills in academic situations (Fitriani & Ramadhani, 2022; Nurhayati et al., 2024).

Public speaking anxiety is a common psychological problem among adolescents and young adults, including college students. Data from the Global Burden of Disease Study shows that anxiety disorders remain a global mental health problem, with a high prevalence among the 15–24 age group. In Indonesia, the increase in emotional mental disorders from 6% to 9.8% indicates that psychological problems in productive age groups require serious attention (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018). Furthermore, a Wallechinsky survey showed that public speaking is one of the greatest human fears, even surpassing the fear of death. This condition shows that public speaking anxiety is not only a problem of communication skills but is also related to individual psychological conditions such as self-concept, negative thought patterns, and low self-confidence (Anik, 2022; Bukhori, 2017). Recent research explains

that students with low self-esteem tend to have higher levels of glossophobia and social anxiety than students with positive self-esteem (Rahmawati & Hidayat, 2023; Sari et al., 2025).

The problem in this research stems from the tendency of students to experience communication barriers due to fear and anxiety when having to speak in public. Low self-esteem causes individuals to feel incompetent, afraid of making mistakes, and worried about being judged negatively by their social environment. This condition makes students less active in discussions, reluctant to ask questions of lecturers, and have difficulty expressing ideas verbally. Anxiety about public speaking can also affect students' concentration, academic performance, and social adaptation abilities in the campus environment (Ardina Maharani, 2022; Dewi, 2009). Other studies have shown that low self-esteem is associated with increased social anxiety, decreased presentation performance, and low academic participation (Putri & Kurniawan, 2022; Amelia et al., 2024).

Besides being influenced by internal psychological factors, public speaking anxiety is also related to a lack of communication experience, minimal social support, and an individual's dependence on the judgment of others. Students with a negative self-concept tend to be more sensitive to criticism and more easily experience psychological stress when in presentation or public communication situations. Conversely, individuals with high self-esteem are generally able to control their emotions, think more positively, and have the courage to express their opinions in front of an audience. Therefore, increasing self-esteem is an important strategy in reducing public speaking anxiety and improving students' communication skills (Apriyanti & Yuwono, 2023; Stuart, 2013). Recent research findings also show that strengthening self-esteem through communication training and psychosocial approaches is effective in reducing public speaking anxiety in students (Lestari et al., 2023; Fauziah & Mulyani, 2025).

Based on these phenomena and problems, this study aims to analyze the relationship between self-esteem and public speaking anxiety among students of STIKes Rajekwesi Bojonegoro. This research is important because public speaking anxiety can affect the quality of communication, academic achievement, and social skills of students in higher education environments. The urgency of this research lies in the need to identify psychological factors that contribute to speaking anxiety so that it can become the basis for developing intervention programs, communication training, and psychosocial adaptation-based mental health nursing approaches. The novelty of this study lies in the assessment of the relationship between self-esteem and public speaking anxiety using the Calista Roy adaptation model approach in the context of health students, which has been relatively limited in previous research in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a correlational design to analyze the relationship between self-esteem and public speaking anxiety among students at STIKes Rajekwesi Bojonegoro. The quantitative approach was used because the study focused on objectively measuring variables through numerical data and statistical analysis. The correlational design was chosen to determine the relationship between the independent variable, self-esteem, and the dependent variable, public speaking anxiety. This study employed a cross-sectional approach, meaning data collection was conducted at a single point in time without follow-up with respondents (Nursalam, 2017; Sugiyono, 2022). This approach is considered effective in psychology and nursing research for identifying relationships between variables in students' academic and social contexts (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Sudaryono, 2022).

The research instrument used a closed-ended questionnaire consisting of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) to measure self-esteem and the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS) to measure public speaking anxiety. The RSES instrument consists of 10 statements regarding self-acceptance and self-respect, while the HARS is used to measure anxiety levels based on psychological and physiological aspects. Both instruments have good validity and reliability, making them suitable for use in research (Saryono, 2008; Nursalam, 2017). Data analysis was carried out using univariate and bivariate analysis with the help of SPSS version 25.0. The statistical test used was the Spearman Rho correlation test because the data was ordinal scale with a significance level of 5% or $p \leq 0.05$ (Sugiyono, 2022; Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

The population of this study was all 461 students of STIKes Rajekwesi Bojonegoro from various study programs and classes. The sample size of 70 students was selected using quota sampling. This technique was used to ensure that the number of respondents from each student group was representative of the characteristics of the study population. The use of quota sampling is considered appropriate for social and health research because it facilitates efficient respondent selection without reducing data representativeness (Sudaryono, 2022; Sugiyono, 2022). Research on self-esteem and anxiety in students also frequently uses non-probability sampling techniques to facilitate access to research respondents (Fitriani & Ramadhani, 2022; Nurhayati et al., 2024).

The research procedure began with a request for research permission from the Rajekwesi Bojonegoro Health College and the selection of respondents according to the inclusion criteria. After obtaining informed consent, the researcher distributed self-esteem and public speaking anxiety questionnaires to be completed independently. The collected data were then checked for completeness through editing, coding, scoring, tabulating, and data entry before being analyzed using SPSS version 25.0 (Notoatmodjo, 2018; Sugiyono, 2022). This study also obtained an ethical clearance letter from the Rajekwesi Bojonegoro Health College Research Ethics Commission, ensuring that the research was conducted in accordance with the principles of beneficence, confidentiality, and anonymity in research ethics (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Emzir, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Data

1. Respondent characteristics

Table 1. Characteristics of Student Respondents at Rajekwesi Health College, Bojonegoro

No	Characteristics	Criteria	N	%
1.	Force	A21	11	15.7%
		A22	16	22.9%
		A23	17	24.3%
		A24	26	37.1%
		Total	70	100%
2.	Study program	Bachelor of Nursing	21	30.0%
		Bachelor of Midwifery	15	21.4%
		Bachelor of Pharmacy	15	21.4%
		D3 Nursing	13	18.6%
		D3 TBD	6	8.6%
		Total	70	100%
4.	Age	18-20 Years	41	58.6%
		21-25 Years	29	41.4%
		Total	70	100%

In the cohort category, respondents were divided into four groups: A21, A22, A23, and A24. The A21 cohort had 11 respondents, representing 15.7% of the total participants. The A22 cohort had 16 respondents (22.9%), while the A23 cohort had 17 respondents (24.3%). The A24 cohort had the largest number of respondents, representing 26 people, representing 37.1%. Overall, the number of respondents in the cohort category reached 70 people, divided into the four groups, with a total percentage of 100%.

Based on study program, respondents in this study also showed variation. The Bachelor of Nursing study program was the most dominant with a total of 21 respondents (30.0%). The Bachelor of Midwifery and Bachelor of Pharmacy study programs each had 15 respondents (21.4%). Next, the Diploma 3 Nursing program had 13 respondents (18.6%), while the Diploma 3 Banking and Blood Technology (TBD) group had the fewest number of respondents, namely 6 respondents (8.6%). Similar to the cohort category, the total number of respondents by study program was 70 people, with an overall percentage of 100%.

For age categories, respondents were divided into two groups: 18–20 years old and 21–25 years

old. The 18–20 age group was the largest, with 41 respondents (58.6%). Meanwhile, the 21–25 age group comprised 29 respondents (41.4%). The total number of respondents in this age category was also 70, representing a total percentage of 100%.

Overall, this table provides a clear picture of the distribution of respondents by year, study program, and age. It can be concluded that the majority of respondents were from the A24 class, dominated by the 18–20 age group, and the most popular study program was Bachelor of Nursing.

Special Data

1. Self-Esteem Variable

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Self-Esteem

No	Variables	Amount	
		(N)	(%)
1.	Low	1	2%
2.	Currently	24	34%
3.	Tall	45	64%
	Total	70	100%

Source: Research Data 2025

Based on table 2, it is known that the respondents who have high self-esteem are 45 students (64%).

2. Anxiety Variable

Table 3. Frequency Distribution

No	Variables	Amount	
		(N)	(%)
1.	Very heavy	0	0%
2.	Heavy	17	24%
3.	Currently	21	30%
4.	Light	30	43%
5.	No worries	2	3%
	Total	70	100%

Source: 2025 research data

Based on table 3, it is known that 30 students (43%) had mild anxiety.

3. The Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Public Speaking Anxiety in Students of Rajekwesi Health College, Bojonegoro

Table 4. Cross Tabulation Between Self-Esteem and Public Speaking Anxiety in Rajekwesi Bojonegoro Health College Students

Pride	Anxiety											
	Very Heavy		Heavy		Currently		Light		There isn't any Anxiety		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Low	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	1%
Currently	0	0%	1	1%	20	29%	4	6%	0	0%	25	36%
Tall	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	40	57%	4	6%	44	63%
Total	0	0%	2	3%	20	29%	44	63%	4	6%	70	100%

Spearman's Rho statistical test value p (a=0.05) (p=0.00) and (r=0.850)

The results of the table research show that:

In the group of respondents with low self-esteem, no particularly severe anxiety was found. Only one respondent (1%) experienced severe anxiety, while no respondents reported moderate or mild anxiety. Furthermore, one respondent (1%) reported no anxiety at all.

In the group with moderate self-esteem, there was considerable variation in anxiety levels. One respondent (1%) experienced severe anxiety, while 20 respondents (29%) reported moderate anxiety. Furthermore, four respondents (6%) experienced mild anxiety, and none in this group experienced any anxiety at all.

Meanwhile, in the high-self-esteem group, no respondents experienced severe or very severe anxiety. The majority of respondents in this group, 40 (57%), experienced mild anxiety. Furthermore, four respondents (6%) experienced no anxiety at all.

Overall, these results indicate that the majority of respondents (63%) had high self-esteem and tended to experience no anxiety (6%) or only mild anxiety (57%). The group with moderate self-esteem had more varied levels of anxiety, with most respondents experiencing moderate (29%) or mild (6%) anxiety. Meanwhile, low self-esteem was very rare, with only 1% of respondents reporting severe anxiety.

To test the relationship between self-esteem and anxiety, the Spearman Rho Correlation statistical test was used and the results are presented in the following table:

Table 5. Spearman Rho Test Results

Correlations			Interpretation of Anxiety	Interpretation of Self-Esteem
Spearman's rho	Interpretation of Anxiety	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,850**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,000
		N	70	70
	Interpretation of Self-Esteem	Correlation Coefficient	,850**	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	.
		N	70	70

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Spearman's Rho test shows a very strong positive relationship (correlation coefficient = 0.850) and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) between the interpretation of anxiety and the interpretation of self-esteem in 70 respondents. This means that the higher the interpretation of anxiety, the higher the interpretation of self-esteem, and this relationship is very unlikely to occur by chance.

Table 6. Correlation strength criteria

Coefficient	The Power of Relationships
0.00 – 0.25	Very Weak Relationship
0.26 – 0.50	Enough Relationship
0.51 – 0.75	Strong Relationship
0.76 – 0.1.00	Very Strong Relationship

Based on the results of the Spearman's Rho test, a correlation coefficient of 0.850 was obtained with a significance value of $p = 0.000$, which indicates a very strong and statistically significant relationship ($p < 0.01$) between the interpretation of anxiety and the interpretation of self-esteem, according to the category of relationship strength where the coefficient value between 0.76–1.00 is included in the very strong relationship category.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to determine the relationship between self-esteem and public speaking anxiety levels among students of STIKES Rajekwesi Bojonegoro. In this context, self-esteem is defined as an individual's view and assessment of themselves, while public speaking anxiety refers to the feeling of fear or worry a person feels when asked to speak in front of a large audience. Based on the objectives of this study, we will discuss in depth how these two factors are interrelated and influence each other among

students of STIKES Rajekwesi Bojonegoro as follows:

Self-Esteem Level of Students at Rajekwesi Health College, Bojonegoro

Self-esteem can play a significant role in influencing a person's anxiety levels. In this context, we will discuss the distribution of self-esteem based on the data provided. Based on this data, there are three categories of self-esteem: low, medium, and high, with the following distribution:

Low Self-Esteem (2%): Only 1 person out of the total sample of 70 had low self-esteem, indicating that most of the respondents in this study had higher self-esteem. Individuals with low self-esteem often experience greater anxiety due to feelings of insecurity and lack of self-confidence (Rosenberg, 1965). They may feel inadequate or incapable of coping with life's challenges, potentially increasing their anxiety levels. **Moderate Self-Esteem (34%):** A total of 24 individuals had moderate self-esteem. This group can be considered the middle ground, where individuals feel quite competent and worthy, but may still experience some self-doubt that can contribute to anxiety. According to some studies, people with moderate self-esteem may experience anxiety in stressful situations, but they tend to be better able to manage these feelings than those with low self-esteem (Neff, 2003). **High Self-Esteem (64%):** The majority of the sample (45 individuals) had high self-esteem, indicating greater self-confidence and better self-acceptance. Individuals with high self-esteem tend to be more resilient to stress and anxiety because they feel more capable of coping (Cohen & Wills, 1985). However, they may also be prone to anxiety when they face failures that damage their self-image.

Overall, these self-esteem data indicate that most individuals in the sample had high self-esteem, which is often associated with lower levels of anxiety. However, individuals with low and moderate self-esteem may be more susceptible to feelings of anxiety, as low self-esteem is often associated with increased anxiety and an inability to cope with stressful situations.

It's important to understand the complex psychological relationship between these two factors. Healthy self-esteem, whether low, moderate, or high, plays a significant role in managing anxiety, although each level of self-esteem brings its own challenges. Therefore, it's important to understand that improving self-esteem can be an effective way to help individuals reduce anxiety.

Public Speaking Anxiety Levels of Rajekwesi Health College Students in Bojonegoro

Severe Anxiety: Seventeen respondents (24%) reported experiencing severe levels of anxiety. Severe anxiety can impact a person's daily functioning, disrupt sleep, and significantly reduce quality of life. According to some studies, severe anxiety can be associated with anxiety disorders such as generalized anxiety disorder or panic disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The majority, 30 people (43%), reported experiencing mild anxiety. Mild anxiety is generally temporary and often related to stress in daily life, such as work or social relationships. According to Nelson and Campbell (2016), mild anxiety usually does not require medical treatment, although it can disrupt an individual's well-being if not managed properly. Twenty-one respondents (30%) reported moderate anxiety. This anxiety can manifest as more obvious discomfort, such as recurring worries, anxiety about upcoming tasks or events, but it can still be managed well. In research by Hofmann et al. (2012), moderate anxiety can often be treated with effective psychological interventions, such as cognitive behavioral therapy. Two individuals (3%) reported no anxiety at all. This absence of anxiety may indicate a higher level of psychological well-being, although it could also be related to a lack of awareness of anxious feelings. According to research by (Kessler et al. 2005), individuals who do not experience anxiety may have a better level of emotional control, or they may not feel the need to express their anxious feelings. **Very severe and severe anxiety (0%)** No respondents reported very severe or severe anxiety in this study. The absence of this category may indicate that the population in this study did not experience extreme anxiety disorders, or that the measure used may not have captured the full spectrum of anxiety. more severe anxiety intensity. However, very severe anxiety often requires in-depth medical and psychological attention, as discussed in research by (Shafran et al. 2009).

The majority of respondents in this study experienced mild anxiety (43%), with a smaller

proportion experiencing severe (24%) and moderate (30%) anxiety. A smaller proportion experienced no anxiety at all (3%). These results reflect anxiety that is generally at a manageable level, but it is important to continue monitoring and supporting those experiencing moderate to severe anxiety, as untreated anxiety can develop into a more serious disorder.

The importance of understanding anxiety at various levels of intensity. Severe anxiety, experienced by 24% of respondents, indicates a disorder that can significantly impact quality of life and even potentially lead to more severe anxiety disorders if not properly managed.

The Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Public Speaking Anxiety in Students of Rajekwesi Health College, Bojonegoro

The results of the Spearman Rho correlation test showed a significance value of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$), so it can be concluded that there is a relationship between self-esteem and public speaking anxiety in STIKes Rajekwesi Bojonegoro students. Based on the coefficient value

correlation ($r = 0.850$), shows a very strong relationship with a positive correlation direction which means the higher the self-esteem, the lighter the anxiety of public speaking in STIKes Rajekwesi Bojonegoro students. From the results of the study, a significant relationship was found between self-esteem and anxiety of public speaking in STIKes Rajekwesi Bojonegoro students with a value of 0.850 which means the level of relationship is very strong.

There is a potential relationship between anxiety and self-esteem, which can affect an individual's psychological well-being. Based on the available data, the majority of respondents reported mild (43%) and moderate (30%) anxiety, with only a small number reporting no anxiety (3%) or severe anxiety (0%). Meanwhile, regarding self-esteem, the majority of respondents reported high self-esteem (64%), while a small proportion reported low (2%) or moderate (34%) self-esteem.

Anxiety and self-esteem often interact, with high levels of anxiety often associated with low self-esteem. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to be more prone to feelings of anxiety and insecurity when facing challenging situations (Zeigler-Hill, 2006). Conversely, individuals with high self-esteem are often better able to cope with stress and face life's challenges, which can reduce their anxiety. In this regard, self-esteem serves as a protective factor against excessive anxiety, as explained in research by Taylor and Brown (1988), who found that individuals with higher self-esteem tend to have better adaptation to stress and feelings of anxiety.

Some research also supports a link between anxiety and self-esteem. For example, research by Kernis et al. (1993) showed that individuals with more stable and positive self-esteem tend to be more resilient in facing threatening situations, which can reduce the level of anxiety they experience. In addition, Rosenberg (1965) in his theory of self-esteem stated that high self-esteem is often associated with more positive feelings and better emotional management, including dealing with anxiety.

Further research by Sowislo and Orth (2013) confirmed that low self-esteem can be a risk factor for the development of anxiety disorders. Conversely, individuals with higher self-esteem tend to be more confident in facing life's challenges, which in turn can reduce their levels of anxiety. Baumeister et al. (2003) also stated that high self-esteem is associated with increased psychological well-being, as individuals are better able to respond to stressful situations in a more adaptive manner and are less anxious.

However, while a general relationship between self-esteem and anxiety can be identified in the literature, a more in-depth analysis of the interaction between these two variables requires further data, such as measuring self-esteem in a more detailed context or other variables that may influence anxiety. In the context of the existing data, it appears that most respondents have high self-esteem, which may be associated with lower overall anxiety levels.

Therefore, it's important to pay attention to and improve self-esteem as a strategy for overcoming public speaking anxiety. Of course, self-esteem isn't just about positive feelings about oneself; it also encompasses self-confidence and belief in one's abilities. Therefore, it's important to continue exploring how healthy self-esteem can contribute to anxiety management and improve an individual's mental well-

being.

CONCLUSION

This study shows a relationship between self-esteem and public speaking anxiety among students at Rajekwesi Health College, Bojonegoro. Students with high self-esteem tend to have lower levels of public speaking anxiety, while students with low self-esteem are more prone to fear, nervousness, and lack of confidence when speaking in public. The results of the study indicate that psychological factors play an important role in shaping students' communication skills, especially in academic activities such as presentations, discussions, and expressing opinions. These findings also suggest that increasing self-esteem can be one way to help students reduce public speaking anxiety and improve their social and academic adaptation in the university environment.

This study has limitations due to its cross-sectional design, which means that the relationships between variables were only observed at a single point in time and cannot fully explain causal relationships. Furthermore, the limited sample size at one educational institution means the results cannot be broadly generalized. Therefore, further research is recommended to use a longitudinal design, a larger sample size, and the addition of other variables such as social support, organizational experience, and interpersonal communication skills. The practical implications of this study can serve as a basis for educational institutions to develop public speaking training programs, psychological counseling, and self-esteem enhancement programs to improve students' self-confidence and communication skills.

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