

e-ISSN: 2622-5441(Online) Journal homepage: https://ejournal.iainpalopo.ac.id/index.php/ITJ/index

Assessing Self-Confidence in Career Readiness Among Prospective English Education Study Program Graduates of University

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Abstract: This study addresses the issue of confidence among prospective graduates of the English Education Study Program at UKI Toraja as they prepare to enter the workforce. The research aims to find out the level of self-confidence in the career readiness of prospective English education study program graduates of UKI Toraja. The researcher employed a quantitative descriptive method in analyzing the data of this research. The subjects of this research were the seventh-semester students of the English education study program, UKI Toraja, who programmed the thesis. The data of this research was collected by questionnaire to gather data from 20 participants. The data obtained were analyzed using Likert scale techniques. The findings indicate that the overall level of self-confidence among these prospective graduates falls into the category of fair self-confidence, with an average score of 75.5% for the educator category, 68.8% for the entrepreneur category, and 68.1% for the tourism industry category. The implications of this study's results indicate that although students' self-confidence is in the fair category, there is still a need for improvement. Therefore, it is important for study programs to develop strategies that can increase student confidence so that they are better prepared for their readiness for a career.

Keywords: Assessing: Self-Confidence; Career; Readines.

INTRODUCTION

In today's comprehensive job market, career readiness is a crucial factor for prospective graduates. In higher education, career readiness is influenced not only by the academic knowledge gained but also by the development of interpersonal skills and self-confidence. Self-confidence plays a significant role in how individuals prepare to enter the workforce. Self-confidence refers to an individual's belief in their own abilities and judgment. Self-confidence is an attitude that allows someone to know what their capabilities and weaknesses of a person are (Jerald and Me 2020). Self-confidence is a person's belief and attitude towards their abilities by accepting what they are, both positive and negative, which are formed and learned through the learning process with the aim of their happiness. According to Shrauger and Schohn (1995), self-confidence is described as "people's sense of competence and skill, their perceived capability to deal effectively with various situations"

(Shrauger and Schohn 1995). Stajkovic (2006), further elaborates that self-confidence can be viewed as "certainty in being able to handle something" (Stajkovic 2006). Terms "self-confidence" refers to the belief in one's ability to succeed in a given activity, rather than a general attribute associated with performance optimism. Self-confidence is an essential factor for academic achievement but also a key determinant of success in their future careers. It influences their capacity to perform effectively in both educational and workforce settings. Self-confidence is an important factor in overall success, especially for university students. Moreover, there is self-efficacy, a concept closely related to self-confidence, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations. Research has shown that self-efficacy is positively correlated with academic achievement. According to Albert Bandura (1977), individuals with high self-efficacy are more motivated to achieve their academic goals.

Student' level of self-confidence is influenced by a complex of internal and external factors that shape their self-perception and willingness to engage in academic and social activities. Internal factors primarily stem from within the student, including self-esteem (Şar, Avcu, and Işiklar 2010), motivation, mindset, and past experiences. Self-esteem is one of the internal factors that influence self-confidence. stated self-esteem is "one's positive or negative toward oneself" (Petersen 1965). It refers to a person's evaluation of their value (Hepper 2023). Motivation also plays a critical role; (Maslow 1943) intrinsically motivated students tend to exhibit greater confidence as they pursue their interests and goals passionately. Additionally, a growth mindset where students view challenges as opportunities for learning rather than threats can significantly enhance their confidence levels. Past experiences, particularly those related to academic performance or social interactions, further shape self-confidence; positive experiences can bolster confidence, while negative ones may lead to self-doubt and anxiety.

On the other hand, external factors encompass influences from the surrounding environment, including social interactions, educators' attitudes, and cultural norms. The social environment is crucial; supportive relationships with peers and educators can foster a sense of belonging and validation (Meierdirk 2018), while negative interactions (Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom 2019), such as ridicule or harsh criticism, can undermine confidence. Educators also play a pivotal role in feedback style, whether constructive or overly critical, which can either encourage students to express themselves or instil fear of judgment. Furthermore, (Meruyert et al. 2022) cultural norms regarding communication and success can influence how students perceive their abilities. Media representation also contributes to shaping self-image, it is exposure to idealized portrayals of success that can lead students to develop unrealistic expectations of themselves, impacting their confidence when they fail to meet such standards.

Additionally, this research explores how the self-confidence of prospective graduates impacts their career readiness. Career readiness refers to an individual's ability to transition from education to the workforce. It is an essential quality that prospective graduates should possess. According to Savickas (2005), career readiness involves mastering skills and knowledge relevant to one's desired field of

work (Savickas et al. 2009). Career readiness also involves a clear understanding of one's interests, talents, values, and career goals. Lent (2005) stated that individuals with high self-awareness are more likely to make career decisions that are appropriate and satisfying (Lent 2005). Furthermore, career readiness also encompasses an individual's interpersonal and communication skills, which are essential for effective collaboration in the workplace. Skills such as teamwork, leadership, and adaptability play a crucial role in achieving career readiness (Rojewski 2002).

As prospective graduates approach the end of their studies, their ability to confidently apply their language skills in real-world situations. High self-confidence is often associated with stronger communication skills, leadership abilities, and a proactive and positive attitude. If students do not feel confident in their abilities, however, they may struggle to present themselves effectively in job interviews or pursue opportunities for career advancement (Edwards and Quinter 2011). Therefore, this research examines the direct relationship between self-confidence and career readiness, providing insight into how students can better prepare for the transition from university to the workforce.

The English Education study program annually produces new graduates, and each of the graduates is ideally expected to enter the world of work immediately after graduation. The English study program has three profiles of graduates, including educators, tourism business people, and entrepreneurs. Each prospective graduate is expected to be able to enter one of the three mentioned fields of work. These profiles reflect the diverse career opportunities available to graduates, ensuring they pursue paths that align with their interests, strengths, and professional goals. There are always new graduates each year. This growth indicates a rising competition among graduates for the same job positions in the field. Consequently, many of these prospective graduates are often labelled as "prospective unemployed." This phenomenon remains a significant concern that needs to be addressed. Every English graduate is expected to effectively apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired during their studies. Universities expect these graduates to prepare themselves thoroughly to enter the workforce and to utilize their English knowledge and competencies effectively. Therefore, the research aims to measure the level of self-confidence in career readiness among prospective English Education Study Program graduates of UKI Toraja.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-confidence is a crucial factor in career readiness, particularly for graduates entering competitive job markets. Studies indicate that self-confidence influences not only job-seeking behaviors but also the ability to perform effectively in professional environments. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy—the belief in one's capabilities—plays a significant role in how individuals approach challenges and tasks. This concept is particularly relevant for prospective English education graduates, who must navigate various teaching methodologies and classroom dynamics.

Research has shown that educational experiences significantly impact students' self-confidence. Programs that incorporate practical teaching XAI; experiences, such as internships and teaching practicums, help to enhance students' self-efficacy (Lent et al., 2003). These experiences allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, fostering a sense of competence and assurance in their abilities. For English education majors, this is especially pertinent as they prepare to engage with diverse learners and adapt to various educational contexts.

Moreover, the relationship between self-confidence and career readiness has been widely explored. Studies suggest that high self-confidence correlates with better job performance and satisfaction (Saks, 2006). Graduates who feel confident in their skills are more likely to pursue job opportunities actively and engage in continuous professional development. This is vital for English education graduates, as they must not only possess language proficiency but also demonstrate effective communication and teaching skills.

Lastly, the impact of institutional support on self-confidence cannot be overlooked. Research indicates that mentorship and guidance from faculty can enhance students' self-belief and readiness for their careers (Schunk et al., 2008). In the context of UKI Toraja, understanding how the institution fosters self-confidence among English education students can provide insights into improving their career readiness. This literature review highlights the importance of self-confidence as a determinant of career readiness, emphasizing the need for targeted educational strategies that bolster students' belief in their capabilities.

The rapid advancement of mobile technology offers unprecedented opportunities for educational innovation that in line with Chen and Mei (2024) who stated that Mobile device-based learning models are highly attractive due to their convenience and widespread use. Advancements in real-time speech processing technologies provide new tools and methods for intercultural communication education, enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of language learning through interactive and personalized experiences.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a quantitative descriptive method to measure the level of self-confidence in career readiness among prospective graduates. The type of data in this research is primary data obtained through the distribution of questionnaires. This research was conducted at the Christian University of Indonesia Toraja (UKIT), located at Jl. Jendral Sudirman No. 9, Bombongan, Makale, Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi. The study focuses on the prospective English Education Study Program graduates, specifically seventh-semester students at UKI Toraja for the academic year 2024/2025. A random sampling method was used to select the sample of the is research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Finding

The purpose of the research is to describe the data that was taken from 20 students using a questionnaire. Then, the data that has been generated is defined into a table consisting of absolutely agree, agree, sometimes disagree, and absolutely disagree about the level of self-confidence of prospective graduates in career readiness. The data obtained is shown in the following table.

Table 1. Response of Items (Tenaga Pendidik)

Frequency										
Items						Total				
	AA	Α	S	D	AD					
Positive Statement										
1	4	6	8	2		20				
2	3	6	9	2		20				
3	4	6	8	2		20				
4	12	6	10	2		20				
5	6	9	5			20				
6	10	10				20				
7	3	14	3			20				
8	4	14	1	1		20				
9	6	9	5			20				
10	5	10	5			20				

 Table 2. Response of Items (Entrepreneur)

	Frequency											
Items						Total						
	AA	Α	S	D	AD							
Positive Statement												
1	1	4	12	3		20						
2	1	2	11	6		20						
3	3	5	9	3		20						
4	3	7	5	4	1	20						
5	3	7	8	2		20						
6	2	7	7	4		20						
7	2	6	11	1		20						
8	3	9	4	3	1	20						
9	4	10	5	1		20						
10	5	11	2	2		20						

 Table 3. Response of Items (Pelaku Dunia Industri Pariwisata)

Frequency										
Items						Total				
	AA	Α	S	D	AD					
Positive Statement										
1	1	6	12	1		20				
2	1	5	13	1		20				
3	2	9	6	3		20				
4	2	6	11	1		20				

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5	2	8	10			20
6	1	5	8	4	2	20
7	1	4	10	4	1	20
8	4	11	3	2		20
9	2	6	8	3	1	20
10	5	9	3	3		20

The data above provides details on the number of respondents who chose one of the provided answer options. The questionnaire that has been filled in consists of 30 statements. The data above is then processed using the formula described in Chapter 3, namely T x Pn, where "T" is the total number of respondents who chose and "Pn" is the choice of Likert score.

Table 4. Response and Index Score (Tenaga Pendidik)

							Score	Index	
Items	Scor	e of Ite	em (T x	Pn)		Total	Maxi	Percent	Category
							mum	age	
Positive	5	4	3	2	1				
1	20	24	24	4		72	100	72%	Agree
2	15	24	27	4		70	100	70%	Agree
3	20	24	24	4		72	100	72%	Agree
4	10	24	30	4		68	100	68%	Agree
5	30	36	15			81	100	81%	Absolutely
									Agree
6	50	40				90	100	90%	Absolutely Agree
									Agree
7	15	56	9			60	100	60%	Agree

24 | Nadia kondo, Victor Siumarlata, Matius Tandikombong

8	20	56	3	2	81	100	81%	Absolutely
								Agree
9	30	36	15		81	100	81%	Absolutely Agree
10	25	40	15		80	100	80%	Absolutely Agree
		Total			755			

Score Maximum × Total Item	100 × 10 = 1000	
Total Score × Score Maximum	755 × 100 = 75,59	%
1000	1000	, 0

Table 4.5 Response and Index Score (Entrepreneur)

							Score	Index	
Items	Scor	e of Ite	em (T x	Pn)		Total	Maxi	Percent	Category
							mum	age	
Positive	5	4	3	2	1				
1	5	16	36	6		63	100	63%	Agree
2	4	8	33	12		57	100	57%	Sometimes
3	15	20	27	6		68	100	68%	Agree
4	15	28	15	8	1	67	100	67%	Agree
5	15	28	24	4		71	100	71%	Agree
6	10	28	21	8		67	100	67%	Agree

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7	10	24	33	2		69	100	69%	Agree
8	15	36	12	6	1	70	100	70%	Agree
9	20	40	15	2		77	100	77%	Agree
10	25	44	6	4		79	100	79%	Agree
	Total								

Score Maximum \times Total Item $100 \times 10 = 1000$

Total Score \times Score Maximum 688×100 = 68,8% 1000 1000

Table 4.6 Response and Index Score (Pelaku Dunia Industri Pariwisata)

							Score	Index	
Items	Scor	e of Ite	em (T x	Pn)		Total	Maxi	Percent	Category
							mum	age	
Positive	5	4	3	2	1				
1	5	24	36	2		67	100	67%	Agroo
1	3	24	30	2		07	100	07/0	Agree
2	5	20	39	2		66	100	66%	Agree
3	10	36	18	6		70	100	70%	Agree
4	10	24	22	2		60	100	C00/	A = 110 o
4	10	24	33	2		69	100	69%	Agree
5	10	32	30			72	100	72%	Agree
									-
6	5	20	24	8	2	59	100	59%	Sometimes

7	5	16	30	8	1	60	100	60%	Agree
8	20	44	9	4		77	100	77%	Agree
9	10	24	24	6	1	65	100	65%	Agree
10	25	36	9	6		76	100	76%	Agree
	Total					681			

Score Maximum \times Total Item $100 \times 10 = 1000$ Total Score \times Score Maximum 681×100 = 68,1% 1000

In this research, the researcher gathered data through a questionnaire to assess the level of self-confidence of prospective graduates of English Department UKI Toraja in career readiness. This assessment was based on The Lauster Self-Confidence Scale, which was developed by Dr. Jürgen Lauster in 1992. The scale categorizes self-confidence into three levels: low self-confidence, fair self-confidence, and high self-confidence (Bandura 2010).

The findings of this research indicate that the level of self-confidence among prospective graduates of the English Education Study Program at UKI Toraja regarding their career readiness is categorized as fair. This conclusion is supported by the average scores obtained from questionnaire responses, which revealed an average score of 75.5% for the educator category, 68.8% for the entrepreneur category, and 68.1% for the tourism industry category. These results align with Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy, which posits that an individual's belief in their ability to perform specific tasks significantly influences their motivation and persistence in achieving goals (Bandura 1977). The fair self-confidence observed in the study suggests that while students have a reasonable belief in their capabilities, there remains room for improvement in their self-perception and readiness to face the challenges of the job market.

The findings also resonate with previous studies that have explored the relationship between self-confidence and career readiness. For instance, Ristiani and Farah Putri Wenang Lusianingrum (2022) found a positive correlation between self-confidence and job readiness among undergraduate students. This indicates that higher self-confidence is associated with greater job readiness (Page, Putri, and Lusianingrum 2022). Similarly, the current study's results suggest that while students feel moderately prepared for their future careers, enhancing their self-

confidence could lead to improved job readiness. This is particularly relevant in the context of the English Education Study Program, where graduates are expected to effectively apply their language skills in various professional settings, including education, tourism, and entrepreneurship.

Moreover, the research highlights the importance of internal and external factors influencing self-confidence, as discussed in the literature review. Internal factors, such as self-esteem, motivation, and past experiences, play a crucial role in shaping students' self-confidence levels. The findings indicate that students' self-perception is influenced by their academic experiences and interactions with peers and educators. This aligns with the work of Şar et al. (2010), who emphasized that self-esteem and motivation are critical components of self-confidence (Şar et al. 2010). Supportive relationships with peers and constructive feedback from educators can foster a sense of belonging and validation, which are essential for enhancing self-confidence. Conversely, negative experiences or critical feedback can undermine students' confidence, leading to self-doubt and anxiety.

Additionally, the study's findings underscore the significance of developing effective teaching strategies that cater to the diverse needs of students. Educators can play a pivotal role in enhancing students' self-confidence by creating a supportive learning environment that encourages risk-taking and resilience. This is consistent with the recommendations from Edwards and Quinter (2011), who emphasized the need for educators to understand the factors influencing self-confidence to refine their teaching approaches (Edwards and Quinter 2011). By identifying specific barriers to self-confidence, such as anxiety or the fear of making mistakes, educators can tailor their methods to foster a more encouraging atmosphere for students.

The study's findings underscore the self-confidence levels of prospective English Education graduates at UKI Toraja and their implications for career readiness. While the current level of self-confidence is categorized as fair, there is a clear need for continued support and development in this area. By addressing the factors that influence self-confidence and relating them to established theories, educational institutions can better prepare students for successful career transitions.

Responses to statements regarding educators were generally fair, with some receiving positive feedback. Most prospective English graduates indicate that they agree to become educators. According to Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, individuals who believe in their capabilities are more likely to engage effectively in specific tasks. Many prospective English graduates have confidence in their abilities to become educators. However, several statements indicate a lack of confidence among these graduates. For instance, the first statement, "I am confident that I can use English fluently and accurately in a teaching context," followed by "I am confident that I have a deep understanding of English grammar," and "I am confident in teaching English reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills," reveal gaps in their self-assurance. These three statements suggest that prospective English graduates may be lacking in their language proficiency and English skills. While these competencies form the foundation of English competence, they align with Bandura's theory, which highlights the importance of mastery experiences in

building self-efficacy. Therefore, the study program should enhance courses that promote language proficiency and core English skills. Additionally, lecturers need to adopt more effective teaching methods and create learning environments that encourage practical application and equip students with the competencies required as educators in the future.

Most responses to the statement indicate a moderate level of confidence among participants in the tourism sector. This suggests that many are hesitant to engage fully with tourism practices. For instance, the second statement, "I can use English in the tourism sector," followed by "I am able to communicate in English with tourists" and "I am able to explain tourism-related topics, especially in Toraja, using English." These three statements indicate that the student may not feel confident and competent with their English in tourism sectors. According to a study by Ristiani and Lusianingrum (2022), "Effective communication skills are essential for professionals in the tourism sector to convey information accurately and engage with clients." To improve this confidence, lecturers should assess and adapt their teaching methods and the course may focus on tourism-related vocabulary, phrases, and cultural nuances so the student can be familiar with tourism things and consider it as their job prospect. It is also essential for the study program to review and enhance the curriculum to better support the tourism course.

Responses to statements regarding entrepreneurs were generally fair, the result indicates that the prospective English graduates have confidence in their abilities to dive into the entrepreneur sector. However, several statements indicate a lack of confidence among these graduates. For instance, the first statement, "I am able to use English in the business world," followed by "I am able to explain my products and services in English," and "I believe I have the necessary skills to start and run my own business," reveal gaps in their self-confidence. These three statements suggest that prospective English graduates may be lacking in their language proficiency, English skills and entrepreneurial skills. A person is ready to enter the business world if their competencies and skills are adequate (Galamiton and Morre 2024).

This aligns with the theory of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which posits that confidence in one's ability to perform entrepreneurial tasks is crucial for success. Also, Gysbers and Henderson (2006) note that "entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a key predictor of entrepreneurial intentions and actions." Therefore, English education study programs should offer workshops focused on English. Additionally, lecturers need to adopt more effective teaching methods and focus on providing opportunities for practice and constructive feedback for students and equip students with the competencies required as entrepreneurs in the future. Also, lecturers can facilitate workshops focused on English business, etc.

CONCLUSION

This study explored lecturers' perspectives on implementing ICT-based instruction in speaking for intercultural communication within higher education, revealing critical insights into pedagogical strategies, challenges, and outcomes. The findings underscore the transformative potential of ICT tool, such as video conferencing, multimedia simulations, and gamified platforms, in fostering

intercultural competencies like empathy, adaptability, and critical reflection. Lecturers emphasized structured activities (e.g., impromptu debates, role-plays) and ICT-mediated assessments (e.g., Flipgrid video submissions, Zoom simulations) to bridge theoretical knowledge with real-world application. Personal intercultural experiences enriched pedagogy, as lecturers integrated anecdotes and digital storytelling to contextualize cultural nuances, aligning with student-centered approaches that prioritize students' participation.

However, the study's limitations necessitate cautious interpretation. First, the reliance on self-reported interview data from a small sample of higher education lecturers may introduce response bias and limit generalizability to other educational contexts. Second, the focus on lecturers' perspectives excludes student voices, potentially overlooking disparities in ICT accessibility or engagement. Third, the study's scope was confined to specific ICT tools and institutional settings, warranting further exploration of socio-technical factors (e.g., digital infrastructure, training) that influence implementation. Future research should address these gaps.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With gratitude, the researcher would like to thank: The Supervisor for valuable guidance, direction, and support during the research process. The students who have been willing to participate and give their time and opinions, so that this research can be carried out well. Colleagues who always provide encouragement and constructive input in completing this research.

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|31

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