



## THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' SELF-ESTEEM AND THEIR ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST RESULT

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### Abstract

Nowadays, a wide range of professions around the world employs English as an International Language. Many people learn English to keep up with the worldwide advances in areas like education, technology, tourism, health, and economics. English is widely utilized in many facets of human life. English is additionally necessary for graduation. Students must pass the English proficiency test to graduate from university (EPT). Self-esteem, an essential component of personality, affects people's attitudes and behaviors. Self-esteem is frequently associated with good mental health, effective living, successful learning, and even a good quality of life. How people view themselves, whether favorably or unfavorably, is a measure of their self-esteem. Since self-esteem and academic performance are intertwined, the researchers want to know whether or not students' self-esteem correlates with their level of English proficiency. This study, which involved 38 participants from Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia, used the quantitative method. This study's conclusions showed a connection between students' self-esteem and their EPT score. The researchers conclude that students' self-esteem did have an impact on their EPT score, i.e., the greater their self-esteem, the higher their EPT score.

**Keywords:** *English proficiency, correlation, students' self-esteem*

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## INTRODUCTION

Currently, the use of English as an International Language has increased significantly in many occupations around the world. English is a worldwide language in which everyone interacts and communicates (Mandasari & Wahyudin, 2021). Therefore, English is becoming increasingly important in today's globalized world, so mastery of the English language is essential (Gustanti & Ayu, 2021). English is widely utilized in many parts of human life, and many people acquire it to keep up with worldwide improvements in areas such as education, technology, tourism, health, and economics (Simanjuntak, 2019; Septiyana, Safitri, Aminatun, & Mulyah, 2021; Pustika, 2021). English discourses are frequently seen or heard in our society. It signifies that English is somehow closely linked to people's lives. Someone who speaks English fluently may find it easier to communicate with foreigners. As English is considered a worldwide communication and information bridge (Novanti & Suprayogi, 2021; Amelia, Abidin, Permata, & Aguss, 2022). They may even land a high position in a substantial corporation (Sari & Aminatun, 2021).

In this era, English is the main language not only in countries that are actively touched by England only those who use it but also in many areas of business and culture which are dominated by countries that use the English language which is very useful and even necessary to know. Learning English is important and people all over the world decided to learn it as a second language. Many countries include English as a second language in their school syllabus and children start learning English at a young age. English is the language of science, aviation, computers, diplomacy, and tourism. Knowing English increases the chances of getting a good job in a multinational company.

Furthermore, English is also a requirement to graduate or find a job because English is used in almost every part of life, from daily activities to professional industries, many national companies need applicants to have it as one of their qualifications (Nuryasin, 2018; Damayanti & Gafur, 2020). At the university level, students cannot graduate unless they pass the English proficiency test (EPT). The significance of academic

English knowledge at the university level is becoming clearer than ever (Wahyudin & Sari, 2018). According to (Sinaga & Pustika, 2021), English is an important topic in our educational system. The Indonesian government's concrete decisions show that English is being introduced in the curriculum. As an outcome, everyone in the globe learns English, from young children to college or university students (Noviana & Oktaviani, 2022). Ariastuti and Wahyudin (2022), define Language proficiency (EPT) as a person's ability to use the English language. In addition, one of the reasons that contributed to the spread of the English language was the modern language. People use it in different ways areas of life such as; the economy, e-commerce, medicine, air travel, etc. In addition, language is also used in tourism. These reasons motivate people to learn English.

Nowadays, the upgrade quality of human resources (HR) is highly developed and is the focus of Indonesia, among others, especially in education. Quality human resources in the field of education are indispensable in nation-building, especially in the field of development education. Quality Human Resources will be the foundation in this era of globalization, the priority of a nation to compete in the world of work in the globalization era. Many educational institutions, particularly in Indonesia, have implemented the EPT (English Proficiency Test) to assess English language skills in students who do not speak English as their first language and intend to study in college as undergraduate or graduate students (Phillips, 2003). There are three sections in the English proficiency test: listening, reading, and grammar. Students must be fluent in English to receive the highest possible score.

Self-esteem is an important aspect of personality that influences individual attitudes and behavior. According to Murk (2006), self-esteem is frequently associated with mental health, successful learning, effective living, and even the good life. The phrase "self-esteem" comes from some of the outcomes of having positive or negative feelings about ourselves, as well as how we judge ourselves favorably or unfavorably for the future of our own lives. The process of self-esteem is related to the forms of behavior a person shows when confronted with a challenge (Mustantifa & Nurmaily, 2018). Myres (2012), states that self-esteem is an individual's way of fully evaluating themselves. Self-esteem is one of the well-researched affective factors in language learning with anxiety, extroversion-introversion, inhibition, motivation, and learning styles. The results of this evaluation can be high or low. Individuals who have high self-esteem are individuals who like themselves. This preferred thing can be in the form of appearance, intelligence, or others. But if a person doesn't like him/herself, then he/she will have low self-esteem. To conclude, Self-esteem is how individuals assess themselves, either positively or negatively. As previously stated, self-esteem is associated with successful learning; therefore, the researchers wishes to evaluate whether or not students' self-esteem is connected to their English proficiency score.

The relationship between students' self-esteem and their English abilities had been studied by several earlier studies. Kalanzadeh, et al. (2013) looked at the connection between intermediate EFL students' oral (speaking) abilities and sense of self-worth. For this goal, two groups of intermediate Persian EFL students were chosen as study participants. Twenty kids were in the group with low self-esteem, whereas only 18 were in the group with strong self-esteem. Based on their answers to a self-esteem scale questionnaire, their degree of self-esteem was assessed. It was shown that there was a significant correlation between the participants' self-esteem and their oral performance based on their responses to a self-esteem questionnaire and their performance on a traditional oral examination. The outcomes of the study were not, however, deemed definitive by the researchers. To put it another way, many other aspects, such as motivation, attitudes toward the language they are going to learn, and the situation in which they are going to master the new language, are quite crucial in this respect when people come to learn a new language in a foreign context.

Satriani (2014) conducted another study to look into the relationship between English language proficiency and self-esteem in Indonesian EFL students. The questionnaire was employed as a research tool in her study to measure students' levels of self-esteem. Additionally, information on English proficiency was gathered from standardized TOEFL results. Two sessions, separated by one week, were used to administer those instruments. The association between two variables was then determined using Pearson product-moment correlation analysis on the already-existing data. Her study revealed a significant positive relationship between pupils' self-esteem and linguistic proficiency. Self-esteem was found to be a key factor affecting pupils' performance or capacity to master a language, she continued. In line with this study, Gustaman (2015) looked at the connection between Cimahi Senior High School students' self-esteem and English language proficiency. The results showed a strong correlation between students' self-esteem and their moderate level of English-speaking proficiency. This study concluded that students' success in speaking English is affected by their self-esteem.

Additionally, Marpaung (2018) examined the relationship between students' self-confidence and English proficiency, with slightly different findings than the earlier study. The participants in this study were tertiary students in the English Language Education study program at Universitas Advent Indonesia. According to the findings, there is no connection between pupils' English proficiency and self-confidence. Although it is stated from other academic research that self-confidence has a beneficial impact on pupils' English achievement.

The variables that push the researchers to look into the correlation or connection between student self-esteem and their English proficiency skills are the findings of earlier studies. In this study, the researchers

associated student self-esteem with their EPT (English Proficiency Test) results. The investigation of the connection between student self-esteem and EPT results is the major goal of the study project. With the help of this study, we hope to establish whether or not there is a connection between students' EPT self-esteem and their EPT results.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employs quantitative research as the method. A quantitative approach is a research method that builds the analysis of an idea by setting narrow assumptions and using data collection to support controversial assumptions (Creswell, 2014). To achieve the objectives of this study, the researchers distributed a questionnaire through Google. This study's sample consisted of English Education students who took quantitative courses. There were 38 people who participated in this research. A Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect data. The Likert scale is a psychometric response scale primarily used in questionnaires to obtain participant preferences or approval levels with a statement or set of statements. Likert scale is non-comparative scaling and dimensionless technique (measures only one trait) in experience. The questionnaire used in this research was adopted from Kalanzadeh, Mahnegar, Hassannejad, & Bakhtiarvand (2013). There were 20 statements with a negative and positive statements. The positive statements gain a score of 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree while for the negative statements 5 means Strongly disagree and 1 as strongly agree. SPSS was used to analyze the data after it was collected.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The objective of this study was to investigate the correlation between students' self-esteem and their EPT score at the undergraduate level. The overall outcome is shown in the data and table below. This report includes the characteristics of respondents based on their gender, as demonstrated in Table 1.

**Table 1. Characteristics of respondents based on gender**

Gander	N	%
Male	12	31,60%
Female	26	68,40 %
Total	38	100 %

As shown in the table, the participants of this research consist of 38 students with 12 male and 26 female.

**Table 2. Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,827	20

The value of Cronbach's Alpha 0,827 for the questionnaire used signifies extremely trustworthy, and indicates the reliability of the questionnaire, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-esteem	38	55.00	84.00	65.6842	7.02930
EPT Score	38	48.00	553.00	441.1579	82.26770
Valid N (listwise)	38				

This report provides an assessment of the student's self-esteem and proficiency. The English Proficiency Test (EPT) score was used to assess students' language skills, while a questionnaire was used to assess their self-esteem. Based on the result the minimum score of students' EPT score was 48 with 553 as the highest score. The highest score for students' self-esteem was 84 with 55 as the lowest score.

Table 4. Students' Self-esteem

No	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
S1	I can follow the lessons easily.	38	3,55	.82846
S2	I daydream a lot in class.	38	2,95	.86828
S3	I am able to help my classmates with their assignments.	38	3,58	.75808
S4	I often do my assignment without thinking.	38	2,84	.94515
S5	If I work hard, I think I can go to the Polytechnic or University.	38	3,61	.75479
S6	I pay attention to the lecturer during lessons.	38	3,74	.68514
S7	Most of my classmates are smarter than I am.	38	2,61	.82329
S8	I study hard for my tests.	38	3,66	.93798
S9	My lecturer feels that I am poor in my work.	38	3,08	.91183
S10	I am usually interested in my assignment.	38	3,45	.89132
S11	I often forget what I have learned.	38	2,84	.97333
S12	I am willing to do my best to pass all the subjects.	38	3,68	.90360
S13	I get frightened when I am asked a question by the lecturers.	38	2,89	.86335
S14	I often feel like quitting college.	38	3,29	1.06309
S15	I am good at most of my subjects.	38	3,45	.72400
S16	I am always waiting for the lessons to end.	38	2,66	.84714
S17	I always do poorly on tests.	38	3,53	.82975
S18	I do not give up easily when I am faced with a difficult question in my assignment.	38	3,45	.95003
S19	I am able to do better than my friends in most subjects	38	3,37	.71361
S20	I am not willing to put more effort into my assignment.	38	3,47	.97916

The questionnaire includes both negative and positive statements. The highest mean was obtained by statement number 6 with the statement, "*I pay attention to the lecturer during lessons.*" This indicates that most students pay attention during their class, showing their positive attitude towards learning. Statement number 7, which was "*Most of my classmates are smarter than I am.*" had the lowest mean, which was 2,61. As this was a negative statement, 2,61 indicates that more than half of the participants chose moderate to disagree, indicating that they did not believe their classmates were smarter than them. They did not feel insecure or not confident with their skill. The students' disagreement toward this statement could be seen as their self-esteem, this showed that most students believe in their abilities.

Based on the results, we could see that statement 5 "*If I work hard, I think I can go to the Polytechnic or University*" received a mean score of 3,61 that, showed that the students believe in their ability, if they work hard they will get the result that they wanted, they believe working harder would help them to be accepted in the university they wanted. It also showed that the students felt guilty if they did not work hard as they could. Furthermore, statement number 6 "*I pay attention to the lecturer during lessons*" gained a pretty high score, which was 3,74, indicating that the students showed their efforts in learning and were eager to learn. Another statement that showed their hard work in learning was statement number 8 "*I study hard for my tests.*" Which gained 3,66. The statement "*I am willing to do my best to pass all the subjects.*" Also, receive means above 3 which means the students were willing to work hard not only in specific subjects but all subjects they have. In addition, statement 18 "*I do not give up easily when I am faced with a difficult question in my assignment*" had a fairly high score, which corresponds to students' eagerness and efforts in learning. This result strengthens the previous statements, they were willing to work hard even though they were faced with a difficult question they will try to solve the problem. It showed that most students would make an effort to finish and complete their tasks in all subjects. This demonstrates that the majority of students worked hard throughout their studies.

In correspondence with students' willingness to learn, several statements demonstrate that the students have quite high self-esteem. As shown, item 1 with the statement "*I can follow the lessons easily*" mean greater than 3, indicating that the students believe they could follow and understand the lesson inside the class easily. To add in statement number 3 with the statement "*I am able to help my classmates in their assignment*" also received a score greater than 3, this showed how students believe in their ability that they were able to help their classmates in learning. They also believe that they did a good job in the most subject, this showed in their answer for statement number 15 "*I am good in most of my subjects*" which also received a mean greater than 3, and the result of statement number 19 "*I am able to do better than my friends in most subjects*" strengthens the previous statement, thus indicating that the students have pretty high self-esteem since they believe that they could do better than their friend not only in the specific subject but in the most subject. To conclude statements number 1,3,15, and 19 demonstrate students' self-esteem, reflecting that they believed in their abilities. These demonstrated that students have a high level of confidence in their abilities in the classroom. Negative statements in statements 14 "*I often feel like quitting college.*" and 20 "*I am not willing to put in more effort in my assignment.*" This suggests students' unwillingness learn receives a mean over 3, indicating disagreement. This means that students were unwilling to give up easily, even in difficult situations, and they were eager to accomplish more in their assignments, even if they were difficult. Overall, the majority of students generally behave positively toward learning.

**Table 5. Correlations between Students' Self-esteem and EPT Score**

		self-esteem	EPTScore
Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation	1	.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.933
	N	38	38
EPTScore	Pearson Correlation	.014	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.933	
	N	38	38

The Pearson Product Moment method was used to calculate the correlation since the purpose of this research was to evaluate the relationship between students' self-esteem and their English competence. The data demonstrates that the correlation coefficient between students' self-esteem and English Proficiency is 0.014. It signifies a positive relationship between two variables. This means students' self-esteem affected their EPT score. However, the correlation score was quite low, as 0.014 is near 0.

Therefore, the researchers could conclude that students' self-esteem affected their EPT score; the higher their self-esteem is, the higher their EPT score is. Self-esteem is impactful in students' competency tests, as Satriani (2014) mentions, it plays a role in students' competency tests. It showed that self-esteem had a strong impact on the English skill of the students. Self-esteem was discovered to be a significant aspect that determines students' performance or aptitude in studying a language. Aside from the integration of self-esteem into numerous language abilities, such as reading, speaking, and writing, it also significantly impacted overall English language ability. This means that increasing students' level of confidence in their learning can indeed assist them in improving their English abilities.

In addition, Gustaman (2015) determined that students with high self-esteem and confidence in their talents perform well in English lessons. As self-esteem is how students perceive themselves, we can say that when students have a high belief in themselves, they could also do well in their subject, especially in English. However, it should be noted that the correlation results found in the study on the correlation between students' self-esteem and English Proficiency Ability (EPT scores) were weak (or low degree). As a result, students with high self-esteem score perform well on the EPT; nevertheless, this cannot rule out the potential that students with low self-esteem score well on the EPT. Students with higher self-esteem, on the other hand, have a better probability of receiving a high EPT than those with low self-esteem. Overall, students' self-esteem has a positive link with their EPT scores.

## CONCLUSION

This correlation analysis concludes that there is a relationship between students' self-esteem and English proficiency ability (EPT scores). According to this study, students with good or high self-esteem have higher EPT results than students with poor self-esteem. The result of the study indicated that the association between these two variables, however, is weak. Because the Pearson Correlation measurements are close to zero, as previously stated, the correlation can be deemed to be closely related if the Pearson Correlation findings are close to one and not close to zero. Therefore, students' self-esteem indeed affected their EPT score, but this does not rule out the potential that students with low self-esteem could also achieve good scores in their EPT.

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