

The Relationship Between Self-Confidence and Public Speaking Anxiety Among University Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area. The study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational research design. The research population consisted of 354 active students, with a sample of 102 students selected using a purposive sampling technique. The research instruments consisted of a 24-item self-confidence scale and a 20-item public speaking anxiety scale, both using a five-point Likert scale model. The instruments underwent adaptation procedures, content validity assessment, and reliability testing, resulting in Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of 0.87 for the self-confidence scale and 0.89 for the public speaking anxiety scale. Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS through descriptive statistics, normality testing, linearity testing, and Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis. The findings revealed a significant negative relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety, with a correlation coefficient of $r = -0.71$ and $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). The coefficient of determination of 0.51 indicated that self-confidence contributed 51% to the variance in public speaking anxiety. These findings suggest that students with higher levels of self-confidence tend to experience lower levels of public speaking anxiety. However, because this study employed a correlational design, the findings cannot be interpreted as evidence of a causal relationship.

Keywords : Self-Confidence, Public Speaking Anxiety, University Students

INTRODUCTION

Public speaking ability is one of the essential communication competencies in both academic and professional life. Within the context of higher education, university students are not only expected to understand course materials but also to express ideas, convey arguments, and defend opinions logically in front of others. This skill has become increasingly important because learning processes in higher education frequently involve oral communication activities, such as classroom presentations, group discussions, academic seminars, debates, and the presentation of analytical findings. Joseph A. DeVito (2020) explained that interpersonal communication and public speaking abilities are fundamental skills that contribute to individuals' success in academic, social, and professional environments. Students who possess strong public speaking skills tend to express ideas more clearly, establish positive social interactions, and demonstrate active participation in learning processes. However, public speaking is not always an easy experience for university students. Some students experience nervousness, fear of making mistakes, concerns about negative

evaluation, and difficulty controlling tension when speaking in front of an audience. This condition is commonly referred to as public speaking anxiety. Public speaking anxiety is a psychological condition characterized by feelings of fear, worry, discomfort, and pressure when individuals are required to deliver messages orally in front of others (Dwyer & Davidson, 2021). This anxiety may occur before, during, or after speaking activities. In academic settings, public speaking anxiety may interfere with students' ability to organize thoughts, convey ideas coherently, and demonstrate optimal communication performance.

Public speaking anxiety is considered one of the most common forms of communication anxiety experienced by university students. The symptoms are not only psychological, such as fear, embarrassment, and low self-assurance, but may also manifest physiologically, including increased heart rate, trembling voice, sweaty hands, and difficulty concentrating (Finn et al., 2022). These conditions may lead students to avoid public communication activities or display less effective performance when speaking in front of others. Anita Tsang (2020) stated that public speaking anxiety may hinder students' engagement in academic activities because anxious students tend to participate less actively in classroom discussions, avoid presentations, and lack confidence when expressing opinions. Therefore, public speaking anxiety is not merely a communication issue but is also closely related to students' psychological readiness in undergoing higher education processes. One of the psychological factors closely associated with public speaking anxiety is self-confidence. Self-confidence refers to an individual's belief in their ability to face particular situations, make decisions, and act effectively. Individuals with high self-confidence generally evaluate themselves more positively, manage pressure more effectively, and face challenges with greater composure. Conversely, individuals with low self-confidence tend to doubt their abilities, feel threatened by social evaluation, and become more vulnerable to anxiety in situations requiring performance. From the perspective of social cognitive theory, beliefs regarding one's capabilities play a crucial role in determining how individuals think, feel, and behave when confronting challenges. Albert Bandura (2018) emphasized that self-belief strongly influences behavioral regulation and emotional responses in challenging situations.

The relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety can be explained through the way individuals evaluate communication situations. Students with high self-confidence tend to perceive public speaking activities as challenges that can be managed rather than threats to be avoided. They are generally more capable of controlling fear, organizing messages calmly, and maintaining focus while speaking in front of audiences. In contrast, students with low self-confidence are more likely to perceive public speaking situations as stressful experiences. They tend to worry about making mistakes, fear receiving negative evaluations, and feel incapable of delivering ideas effectively. Several recent studies have demonstrated that self-confidence is negatively associated with public speaking anxiety, meaning that higher levels of self-confidence are related to lower levels of speaking anxiety (Grieve et al., 2021; Prihartanta & Wahyuningsih, 2022). Although the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety has been widely investigated, previous studies have not fully explained the dynamics of speaking anxiety among student groups with distinct academic communication demands. Most previous research has primarily focused on communication students, education students, language students, or university students in

general. While these contexts are important, they remain insufficient to explain the unique characteristics of students in the Faculty of Law, who experience more specific communication demands. Law students are not only required to speak fluently but must also be capable of presenting logical, critical, systematic, and persuasive arguments. Consequently, public speaking anxiety among law students is not solely related to fear of appearing before audiences but is also associated with pressure to present legal arguments accurately and convincingly.

Within legal education, public speaking ability occupies a highly important position. The process of legal education involves numerous activities requiring oral communication competence, including case presentations, legal issue discussions, moot court simulations, legal debates, and the delivery of normative and empirical arguments. Doli Maulana Gama Samudera Lubis (2021) stated that law students need strong communication abilities because legal education emphasizes not only theoretical mastery but also the ability to present rational and systematic arguments. Therefore, students of the Faculty of Law represent a highly relevant academic group for research concerning public speaking anxiety. If such anxiety is not managed effectively, students may encounter obstacles in developing argumentative competencies required both in academic processes and future legal professions. Based on the explanation above, several important research gaps can be identified. First, studies concerning self-confidence and public speaking anxiety have been widely conducted, yet most previous studies treated university students as a general population without considering disciplinary differences. Second, studies specifically focusing on law students remain relatively limited, despite the fact that law students possess distinct communication demands that require critical, logical, and persuasive argumentation skills. Third, within the context of higher education in Indonesia, particularly among students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area, empirical studies examining the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety remain scarce. These gaps constitute the primary rationale underlying the present study.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on law students as the primary context for examining the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety. Unlike previous studies that generally focused on students from communication or education disciplines, this study highlights law students who are required to engage in argument-based academic communication. Through this focus, the study is expected to provide a more specific contribution to understanding how self-confidence relates to speaking anxiety among students who are expected to express opinions critically and persuasively. Furthermore, this study also offers practical contributions for legal education institutions in designing learning strategies and public speaking training programs aimed at improving students' self-confidence and reducing speaking anxiety. Based on the background and research gaps described above, this study aimed to examine the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of educational psychology and communication psychology literature, particularly regarding psychological factors associated with public speaking anxiety. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as consideration for faculty members, lecturers, and students in developing learning

programs, public speaking training, and academic activities that support the enhancement of students' self-confidence.

The primary novelty of this research lies in its focus on law students as an academic group characterized by argumentative communication demands rather than merely presentational communication. Among law students, public speaking is not only related to the ability to convey information but also to the ability to construct arguments, defend opinions, and respond critically to questions. Therefore, this study extends previous research by positioning public speaking anxiety within the context of legal education. The research gap addressed in this study concerns the limited number of empirical investigations specifically examining the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among law students, particularly within Indonesian higher education contexts. Previous studies have indeed demonstrated relationships between self-confidence and speaking anxiety; however, law students have rarely been positioned as the primary focus of investigation. Accordingly, this study provides a specific contribution to understanding the psychological dynamics experienced by law students when facing academic communication demands.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational research design. A quantitative approach was selected because the study aimed to objectively measure the relationship between variables through statistical analysis. The correlational design was used to examine the relationship between self-confidence as the independent variable and public speaking anxiety as the dependent variable among students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area. Correlational research enables researchers to identify the direction and strength of relationships between variables without manipulating the research variables, thereby allowing the findings to reflect the empirical conditions experienced by the research participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The population of this study consisted of all active students enrolled in the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area during the academic year in which the study was conducted, totaling 354 students based on faculty academic records. From this population, a sample of 102 students was obtained. The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling, which refers to a sampling method based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2021). The inclusion criteria for respondents included active students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area, students who had experience presenting or speaking in front of a class, and students willing to participate in the study. The sample size of 102 respondents was considered adequate for correlational research, as quantitative studies involving relationship analysis are generally recommended to include at least 100 respondents to ensure optimal statistical testing and stable estimations (Hair et al., 2019).

The research instruments consisted of two psychological scales: a self-confidence scale and a public speaking anxiety scale. Both instruments employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly inappropriate to strongly appropriate responses. Prior to their use in the study, the instruments underwent language adaptation and content validation procedures to ensure construct suitability within the context of Indonesian university students. The adaptation process involved translation, language adjustment, expert judgment, and limited pilot testing

among students with characteristics similar to those of the research participants. Content validation was conducted by three experts in educational psychology and social psychology to assess the relevance of each item to the measured construct indicators. The evaluation results indicated that all items demonstrated adequate content relevance and were suitable for use in the study. Instrument adaptation and validation procedures are essential to ensure construct validity and cultural appropriateness within the research context (Beaton et al., 2018; Sousa & Rojjanasrirat, 2019).

The self-confidence scale was developed based on the concept of self-confidence proposed by Rainer Lauster (2017), who defined self-confidence as an individual's belief in their own abilities, enabling them to act effectively, optimistically, and independently from excessive social pressure. The scale consisted of 24 statement items distributed across four primary dimensions: belief in one's abilities, optimism, objectivity toward oneself, and self-control in social situations. Indicators within the belief-in-abilities dimension included courage in decision-making, confidence in completing tasks, and belief in one's ability to face challenges. The optimism dimension included positive expectations regarding outcomes and confidence in achieving success. The objectivity dimension referred to the ability to realistically acknowledge personal strengths and weaknesses, whereas the self-control dimension referred to the ability to regulate emotions and remain calm in social situations. Of the 24 items, 15 were favorable items and 9 were unfavorable items. Higher scores indicated higher levels of self-confidence.

Public speaking anxiety was measured using a scale developed based on the concept of communication apprehension proposed by James C. McCroskey (2016). Public speaking anxiety was defined as feelings of fear, nervousness, and worry experienced when individuals are required to speak or communicate in front of others. The scale consisted of 20 statement items covering four primary dimensions: physiological reactions, cognitive reactions, emotional reactions, and avoidance behavior tendencies. The physiological reaction dimension included indicators such as rapid heartbeat, sweaty hands, and body trembling while speaking in public. The cognitive reaction dimension included negative thoughts, fear of making mistakes, and concerns regarding audience evaluation. The emotional reaction dimension encompassed feelings of fear, tension, and discomfort during public speaking, while the avoidance behavior dimension referred to tendencies to avoid presentations or public communication situations. Of the 20 items, 12 were favorable items and 8 were unfavorable items. Higher scores indicated higher levels of public speaking anxiety.

Prior to their use in the main study, both instruments were pilot tested on 30 students outside the primary research sample to evaluate item quality and instrument reliability. Item validity testing was conducted using corrected item-total correlation, with items considered valid if the correlation coefficient exceeded 0.30 (Azwar, 2021). The results demonstrated that all items on both scales met the validity criteria. Reliability testing was subsequently conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to determine internal consistency. Instruments were considered reliable if they obtained Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.70 (Ghozali, 2021). The reliability analysis indicated that the self-confidence scale obtained a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.87, whereas the public speaking anxiety scale obtained a Cronbach's Alpha

coefficient of 0.89. Therefore, both instruments were considered to possess satisfactory reliability and were deemed appropriate for use in the study.

Data collection was conducted by directly distributing questionnaires to students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area who met the research criteria. Prior to completing the questionnaires, respondents were informed about the research objectives, data collection procedures, and confidentiality assurances. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and respondents were asked to provide informed consent before completing the questionnaires. This study also adhered to the ethical principles of psychological research, including maintaining participant confidentiality, allowing respondents the freedom to withdraw from participation at any time, and ensuring that the collected data were used solely for academic and scientific purposes (APA, 2020).

The research data were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 26. Data analysis was conducted through several stages, including descriptive statistical analysis to describe respondent characteristics and variable score distributions, normality testing using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test to evaluate data distribution, and Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis to examine the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety. Pearson correlation analysis was employed because both research variables consisted of interval data and the study aimed to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between variables (Field, 2018). Hypothesis testing was conducted at a significance level of 0.05. The research hypothesis was accepted if the significance value was less than 0.05, indicating a significant relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area.

RESULTS

Linearity Test

Prior to conducting the Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis, a linearity test was performed to ensure that the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety was linear in nature. The linearity test is an important assumption in parametric analysis because Pearson correlation analysis can only be applied when the relationship between variables demonstrates a linear pattern (Field, 2018). In this study, the linearity test was conducted using the *Test for Linearity* procedure in IBM SPSS.

Table 4. Results of the Linearity Test Between Self-Confidence and Public Speaking Anxiety

Variable	F	Significance of Linearity	Significance of Deviation from Linearity
Self-Confidence – Public Speaking Anxiety	48.327	0.000	0.214

Based on the linearity test results presented in Table 4, the significance value for linearity was 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety was linear. In addition, the significance value for deviation from linearity was 0.214 ($p > 0.05$), indicating that there was no significant deviation from a linear

relationship. Therefore, it can be concluded that the assumption of linearity was fulfilled, and Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis was appropriate for examining the relationship between variables in this study. To provide a clearer description of the levels of self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among respondents, score categorization was conducted based on empirical norms. Categorization was performed using hypothetical mean and hypothetical standard deviation formulas with three categories: low, moderate, and high (Azwar, 2021). The categorization criteria were as follows:

1. Low category: $X < (M - 1 \text{ SD})$
2. Moderate category: $(M - 1 \text{ SD}) \leq X < (M + 1 \text{ SD})$
3. High category: $X \geq (M + 1 \text{ SD})$

Self-Confidence Categorization

Based on the analysis results, the empirical mean of the self-confidence variable was 88.12 with a standard deviation of 9.21. The categorization of self-confidence scores is presented in the following table.

Table 5. Categorization of Self-Confidence

Category	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Low	$X < 79$	17	16.7%
Moderate	$79 \leq X < 97$	68	66.7%
High	$X \geq 97$	17	16.7%
Total		102	100%

Based on Table 5, the majority of students demonstrated moderate levels of self-confidence, consisting of 68 respondents (66.7%). A total of 17 respondents (16.7%) were categorized as having high self-confidence, while another 17 respondents (16.7%) were categorized as having low self-confidence. These findings indicate that most students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area possessed relatively adequate levels of self-confidence in dealing with academic activities, including public speaking situations.

Categorization of Public Speaking Anxiety

Based on the analysis results, the empirical mean of the public speaking anxiety variable was 73.41 with a standard deviation of 11.02. The categorization of public speaking anxiety scores is presented in the following table.

Table 6. Categorization of Public Speaking Anxiety

Category	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Low	$X < 62$	18	17.6%
Moderate	$62 \leq X < 84$	67	65.7%
High	$X \geq 84$	17	16.7%
Total		102	100%

Based on Table 6, the majority of respondents demonstrated moderate levels of public speaking anxiety, consisting of 67 respondents (65.7%). A total of 17 respondents (16.7%) were categorized as having high public speaking anxiety, while 18 respondents (17.6%) were categorized as having low anxiety levels. These findings indicate that most students still experienced moderate levels of anxiety when required to speak in public situations, such as classroom presentations, academic discussions, and delivering arguments before audiences.

Correlation Analysis

To examine the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety, this study employed Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis. This analysis was conducted after all parametric assumptions, namely normality and linearity, had been fulfilled. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in the following table.

Table 7. Relationship Between Self-Confidence and Public Speaking Anxiety

Variable	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance
Self-Confidence – Public Speaking Anxiety	-0.71	0.000

Based on the analysis results presented in Table 7, the correlation coefficient obtained was $r = -0.71$ with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). These findings indicate a strong and significant negative relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area. The negative relationship indicates that higher levels of self-confidence among students were associated with lower levels of anxiety experienced during public speaking activities. Conversely, students with lower levels of self-confidence tended to experience higher levels of public speaking anxiety.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area. The findings revealed a significant relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety, with a correlation coefficient of $r = -0.71$ ($p < 0.05$). The negative correlation coefficient indicates that the relationship between the two variables is inversely proportional. In other words, higher levels of self-confidence were associated with lower levels of public speaking anxiety among students. Conversely, students with lower levels of self-confidence tended to experience higher levels of anxiety when facing public communication situations. The magnitude of the correlation coefficient indicates that the relationship between the two variables falls within the strong category. Jacob Cohen (1988) explained that correlation coefficients above 0.50 may be categorized as strong relationships between variables. These findings indicate that self-confidence represents an important psychological factor associated with public speaking anxiety. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination analysis revealed that self-confidence contributed 51% to the variance in public speaking anxiety, while the remaining 49% was associated with other factors beyond the scope of this study.

The findings of this study can be explained through the concept of self-confidence proposed by Rainer Lauster (2015). Lauster explained that self-confidence refers to an individual's

belief in their own abilities, enabling them to act effectively in various life situations. Individuals with high levels of self-confidence generally demonstrate optimism, positive self-perceptions, and resilience against excessive social pressure from their environment. In contrast, individuals with lower self-confidence tend to doubt their abilities and are more vulnerable to anxiety when confronted with situations requiring performance. The concept of self-confidence is also closely related to the self-efficacy theory proposed by Albert Bandura. Bandura (2018) explained that self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capability to organize and execute actions necessary to achieve specific goals. Self-efficacy influences how individuals think, feel, and behave when facing life challenges. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to approach challenges with greater confidence and are more capable of regulating negative emotions such as fear and anxiety. Conversely, individuals with low self-efficacy are generally more susceptible to anxiety and self-doubt when encountering situations that demand performance, including public speaking activities.

Public speaking anxiety can also be explained through the concept of communication apprehension proposed by James C. McCroskey. McCroskey (2016) defined communication apprehension as fear or anxiety arising when individuals are required to communicate with other individuals or groups. Individuals with high levels of communication apprehension typically display psychological reactions such as nervousness, tension, and concerns regarding negative audience evaluations. These conditions may result in difficulties in effectively conveying ideas and may reduce the quality of communication performance displayed. Furthermore, Elaine Horwitz and Joann Cope (2017) explained that communication anxiety represents one of the most common forms of social anxiety experienced by university students within higher education settings. Students experiencing communication anxiety tend to avoid situations that require them to speak in front of others. This tendency may negatively affect students' participation in academic activities such as classroom presentations, discussions, and seminars.

The findings of this study are also consistent with perspectives in social psychology suggesting that individuals' perceptions of their own abilities play a crucial role in determining emotional responses when facing social situations. According to Joseph A. DeVito (2020), individuals with high self-confidence tend to possess positive perceptions regarding their communication abilities, enabling them to face public communication situations with greater calmness and confidence. Conversely, individuals with negative perceptions of their own abilities are generally more vulnerable to communication anxiety. The findings are further supported by previous empirical studies. Research conducted by Graham D. Bodie (2018) demonstrated that public speaking anxiety is among the most common forms of anxiety experienced by university students. The study found that individuals with higher levels of self-confidence tended to experience lower levels of communication anxiety. These findings suggest that self-confidence may function as a protective factor that helps individuals regulate anxiety in public communication contexts. More recent studies have produced similar findings. Ulumuddin (2025) found a significant negative relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among university students. The study indicated that students with higher self-confidence were generally more capable of controlling nervousness and were better prepared to face public communication

situations. Similarly, research conducted by Dwiyanti (2024) demonstrated that psychological factors such as self-efficacy and self-confidence significantly influenced communication anxiety among university students. Other recent studies also indicate that public speaking anxiety remains a common phenomenon in higher education environments. Research conducted by Ahmed et al. (2023) showed that the majority of university students experienced certain levels of anxiety when conducting classroom presentations. The study further revealed that self-confidence and self-efficacy played important roles in helping students reduce such anxiety.

Within the context of legal education, public speaking ability represents an essential competency for students. Learning processes in legal studies frequently involve intensive communication activities such as legal case presentations, academic discussions, and debates concerning legal issues. According to Doli Maulana Gama Samudera Lubis (2021), law students are required to possess strong communication abilities because legal professions are closely associated with the ability to present arguments logically, critically, and systematically before others. Nevertheless, in practice, many students still experience anxiety when speaking publicly. This condition may be caused by various factors, including limited public speaking experience, low self-confidence, and concerns regarding negative audience evaluation. These factors may result in students experiencing difficulties in effectively expressing ideas and may reduce their participation in academic activities. The findings of this study indicate that enhancing self-confidence may represent an important strategy for helping students reduce public speaking anxiety. Students with higher levels of self-confidence tended to regulate feelings of nervousness and anxiety more effectively when confronting public communication situations. Therefore, developing students' self-confidence may represent an effective effort to improve the quality of their academic communication abilities. In addition to its theoretical contributions, this study also provides practical implications within educational settings. Universities may develop various programs aimed at enhancing students' self-confidence, such as public speaking training, academic presentation activities, legal debate simulations, and discussion-based learning methods. Supportive learning environments that provide students with gradual opportunities to practice public speaking may help reduce communication anxiety while simultaneously improving students' communication competencies. The findings of this study demonstrate that self-confidence is a psychological factor strongly associated with public speaking anxiety among students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area. Therefore, improving students' self-confidence is expected to help reduce anxiety levels when speaking publicly while simultaneously enhancing communication abilities that are highly important in both academic and professional contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area. Based on the results of the data analysis, a significant relationship was identified between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety, with a correlation coefficient of $r = -0.71$ ($p < 0.05$). The negative correlation coefficient indicates that the relationship between the two variables is

inversely related. These findings suggest that students with higher levels of self-confidence tend to experience lower levels of public speaking anxiety. Conversely, students with lower levels of self-confidence tend to demonstrate higher levels of anxiety when expressing opinions, conducting presentations, or speaking before audiences. The coefficient of determination analysis revealed that self-confidence contributed 51% to the variance in public speaking anxiety, while the remaining 49% was associated with factors beyond the scope of this study. These findings indicate that self-confidence represents one of the important psychological factors associated with communication anxiety among university students, although it is not the sole factor influencing the emergence of public speaking anxiety. Other factors such as speaking experience, communication competence, social support, parenting patterns, personality characteristics, and situational conditions may also be associated with students' levels of public speaking anxiety.

The findings of this study are consistent with various psychological theories suggesting that individuals' beliefs regarding their own abilities are closely associated with how they confront social situations and public communication activities. Students with higher levels of self-confidence tend to feel more prepared and more assured when facing public speaking situations, resulting in lower levels of tension and worry. In contrast, students with lower self-confidence are generally more vulnerable to fear of making mistakes, concerns regarding audience evaluation, and discomfort when becoming the center of attention in public communication contexts. The findings also revealed that the majority of respondents demonstrated moderate levels of self-confidence and public speaking anxiety. This condition suggests that students of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Medan Area generally possess relatively adequate adjustment abilities in dealing with academic demands involving public communication, although some students still experience anxiety when speaking before large audiences. This situation may be understood considering that law students are frequently involved in academic activities requiring argumentation, presentations, discussions, and oral communication. From a practical perspective, the findings indicate that the development of self-confidence represents an important aspect that should receive greater attention within higher education environments. Various academic activities such as classroom presentations, group discussions, moot court simulations, and public speaking training may serve as effective means of helping students improve self-confidence and reduce public speaking anxiety. Nevertheless, the interpretation of these findings should be approached cautiously because the research design employed in this study was correlational in nature. Therefore, the findings cannot be interpreted as evidence of direct causal relationships between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety, but rather as evidence of a significant association between the two variables.

LIMITATIONS

Future studies are recommended to develop more comprehensive models by incorporating mediating and moderating variables to explain the psychological mechanisms underlying the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety. Variables such as self-efficacy, communication experience, emotional regulation, and social support may be examined as factors that potentially strengthen or weaken the relationship between the two

variables. In addition, future research should adopt longitudinal or experimental approaches to examine causal relationships more thoroughly, thereby providing stronger insights into the directionality of relationships between variables. Furthermore, expanding the research context is also important by involving students from various academic disciplines and institutions in order to enhance the external validity of the findings. Cross-cultural studies are also recommended to examine whether the dynamics of self-confidence and public speaking anxiety demonstrate consistent patterns across different social and cultural contexts. In addition, intervention-based studies, such as public speaking training programs or self-confidence enhancement programs, should be empirically evaluated to determine their effectiveness in reducing public speaking anxiety. Such approaches would not only enrich theoretical contributions but also provide more practical and applicable implications within higher education settings.

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