



The influence of verbal ability and social intelligence on students' self-efficacy (a quantitative study at SMP Metta Maitreya Pekanbaru)

Billy Chandra¹, Situ Asih², Isomudin³

Institut Nalanda

beerus280597@gmail.com, situasih10@gmail.com, isomudinshmpd@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the influence of verbal ability and social intelligence on the self-efficacy of students at SMP Metta Maitreya Pekanbaru. The research employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. The sample consisted of 183 students selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. Data were analyzed using simple and multiple linear regression. The results showed that verbal ability had a significant influence on students' self-efficacy with a coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.402$ and a t -value of 11.031. Social intelligence also had a significant effect on self-efficacy with $R^2 = 0.693$ and $t = 20.206$. Simultaneously, verbal ability and social intelligence had a meaningful effect on self-efficacy with $R^2 = 0.711$ and an F -value of 221.009. These findings indicate that social intelligence is the dominant factor in enhancing students' self-efficacy.

Keywords: *verbal ability, social intelligence, self-efficacy*

INTRODUCTION

The development of students' potential in schools is not only reflected in academic achievement, but also in their confidence in carrying out learning tasks. Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura (1997), refers to a person's belief in their own ability to achieve desired goals. High self-efficacy can foster persistence, motivation, and better academic performance. A learner with strong self-efficacy tends to be more enthusiastic in pursuing goals, more resilient in facing obstacles, and more likely to take initiative in learning.

In the context of secondary education, particularly at the junior high school level, students begin to face more complex academic and social demands. At this stage, it is important for educators to understand what factors influence students' belief in their own abilities. One of the preliminary findings at SMP Metta Maitreya Pekanbaru showed

that the students' average level of self-efficacy was only 54.89%, which is considered relatively low. This condition may affect students' willingness to engage actively in class and take academic risks.

Two psychological constructs that are suspected to influence students' self-efficacy are verbal ability and social intelligence. Verbal ability refers to the capacity to use language effectively in listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Santrock, 2011). These abilities are essential for understanding learning materials, expressing ideas, and participating in classroom discussions. Deficits in verbal skills can hinder a student's ability to engage meaningfully with academic content and peers.

Social intelligence, on the other hand, is the ability to navigate social environments, understand others, and manage interpersonal relationships (Goleman, 2007). In school settings, students with higher social intelligence are better at working in groups, handling peer pressure, and resolving conflicts. These experiences contribute to a stronger sense of self-efficacy, particularly in social and academic contexts.

Several previous studies have supported the influence of verbal ability and social intelligence on student outcomes. Yuliana (2021) found that verbal-based cooperative learning can improve students' confidence and independence in learning. Rahmawati (2020) demonstrated that social intelligence correlates positively with students' perseverance and motivation. However, most of these studies analyze the variables separately and do not explore their combined effects on self-efficacy.

Based on this background, the current study seeks to determine the extent to which verbal ability and social intelligence, both partially and simultaneously, influence students' self-efficacy. The study focuses on junior high school students, who are in a critical developmental stage, both cognitively and socially. The results of this research are expected to provide empirical support for designing learning strategies that improve student confidence through communication and social development.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The correlational method was selected to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between verbal ability, social intelligence, and self-efficacy among students. This approach allows researchers to statistically analyze whether an increase or decrease in one variable is associated with changes in another, without manipulating the variables.

The population of the study consisted of all students of SMP Metta Maitreya Pekanbaru in the 2024/2025 academic year, totaling 336 students. Using the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 5%, the sample size was determined to be 183 students. The sampling

technique used was simple random sampling, providing equal opportunity for each student in the population to be selected as a sample.

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire developed based on the operational definitions and indicators derived from relevant theories. For the verbal ability variable, the indicators included listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Santrock, 2011). For social intelligence, the indicators consisted of social awareness, empathy, communication, and conflict resolution (Goleman, 2007). Self-efficacy was measured using indicators such as self-confidence, persistence, goal orientation, and self-control (Bandura, 1997).

Each indicator was represented by multiple statement items measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire consisted of 10 items per variable, totaling 30 items. The items were reviewed and validated through expert judgment before distribution to ensure the alignment with the theoretical constructs.

The validity of the instrument was tested using Pearson product-moment correlation. Items with a correlation coefficient (r -count) greater than the critical value (r -table) were considered valid. The results of the validity test indicated that all items met the required criteria and were deemed valid for measuring the intended variables. The reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, and each variable obtained a coefficient greater than 0.90, indicating a high level of internal consistency.

The data collection process was carried out over two days during the second semester of the academic year, with the cooperation of homeroom teachers to ensure smooth administration. The data were then processed and analyzed using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of the data, while inferential analysis using simple and multiple linear regression was used to test the research hypotheses. The significance level used was 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Influence of Verbal Ability on Self-Efficacy

The simple linear regression analysis between verbal ability (X_1) and self-efficacy (Y) showed a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.634 and a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.402. The regression coefficient (B) was 0.639, with a significance value (p) of 0.000 (< 0.05). This indicates that verbal ability has a significant and positive effect on self-efficacy. In practical terms, every 1-unit increase in students' verbal ability contributes to an increase of 0.639 units in self-efficacy, assuming other variables remain constant.

This finding is consistent with Santrock (2011), who stated that verbal ability plays an important role in academic success because students with high verbal competence are

more capable of understanding instructions, expressing ideas clearly, and participating actively in learning. Moreover, Yuliana (2021) found that cooperative learning models that rely on verbal interaction can enhance student confidence and self-efficacy.

2. Influence of Social Intelligence on Self-Efficacy

The regression analysis between social intelligence (X_2) and self-efficacy (Y) produced a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.832 and R^2 of 0.693. The regression coefficient (B) was 0.792 with $p = 0.000$. These values indicate a strong, significant positive effect of social intelligence on self-efficacy. This means that students with higher social intelligence tend to have higher levels of self-confidence and motivation.

This result supports the theory proposed by Goleman (2007), who explained that individuals with good social intelligence are able to build constructive relationships, empathize with others, and manage social dynamics—all of which contribute to a stronger belief in one's ability to succeed. Rahmawati (2020) also demonstrated that social intelligence positively correlates with resilience and adaptability in academic settings.

3. Simultaneous Influence of Verbal Ability and Social Intelligence on Self-Efficacy

Multiple linear regression analysis revealed a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.843 and R^2 of 0.711, with an F -value of 221.009 and significance level $p = 0.000$. This shows that verbal ability and social intelligence together contribute 71.1% to the variance in self-efficacy. Among the two, social intelligence had a higher standardized coefficient, indicating that it is the more dominant predictor.

These findings reinforce Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, which emphasizes the role of environmental and social factors in shaping self-efficacy. Students' ability to communicate effectively and engage positively with others provides reinforcement that strengthens their belief in their academic capability.

Discussion Summary

Overall, this study confirms that both verbal ability and social intelligence play a crucial role in shaping students' self-efficacy. These results suggest that fostering communication skills and social competence in schools can directly influence students' motivation, participation, and learning outcomes. This is aligned with the school's role in not only delivering cognitive content but also in building students' character and self-belief.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis, this study concludes that:

1. Verbal ability has a significant influence on students' self-efficacy. This means that students who possess strong skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing tend to have a better sense of confidence in completing learning tasks. This aligns with the

theory that language plays a fundamental role in constructing self-perception and academic engagement.

2. Social intelligence significantly affects students' self-efficacy. Students who demonstrate social awareness, empathy, effective communication, and conflict resolution skills tend to feel more capable of achieving their academic goals. Social relationships serve as a medium of reinforcement, as proposed by Bandura (1997), where verbal persuasion and social modeling strengthen one's belief in their competence.
3. Verbal ability and social intelligence simultaneously influence self-efficacy, with social intelligence being the dominant factor. Together, these two variables account for 71.1% of the variation in students' self-efficacy, indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, interventions aimed at enhancing self-efficacy should include strategies for developing both verbal and social skills in students.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, the following suggestions are proposed:

1. For teachers and schools: It is essential to design learning activities that develop students' verbal expression and social competence. Approaches such as group discussions, peer collaboration, debate sessions, and reflective writing can be integrated to stimulate both verbal and social aspects.
2. For curriculum developers and education policymakers: Programs focused on character education should include explicit elements that foster communication and social intelligence. These elements can be embedded into various subjects through interdisciplinary collaboration.
3. For future researchers: It is recommended to explore other psychological and environmental variables that may influence self-efficacy, such as parental support, emotional intelligence, and digital literacy. Further research can also use qualitative methods to gain a deeper understanding of students' self-perception dynamics.

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