

From Insecurity to Leadership: A Self-Esteem Enhancement Training for Nursing Students to Improve Job Readiness

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Abstract

Nursing students often face psychological challenges before graduation, including low self-esteem, which may hinder their readiness to enter the workforce. This community service aimed to improve the self-esteem of eighth-semester nursing students through a structured training program to better prepare them for professional life. The training was conducted at the ITS KES ICME Jombang Hall in February 2025 and involved 82 students selected using total sampling. The one-day session included materials on self-concept reinforcement, motivational techniques, and job interview simulations. Evaluation was carried out using pre- and post-tests based on the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale. The pre-test results showed that 34.1% of respondents had low self-esteem, 52.4% moderate, and 13.5% high. After the training, there was a significant increase: only 3.7% remained in the low category, 40.2% were moderate, and 56.1% had reached a high self-esteem level. The self-esteem enhancement training proved effective in increasing the confidence of nursing students and is recommended as a strategy to strengthen soft skills in preparation for entering the workforce.

Keywords: Job Readiness, Nursing Students, Self Esteem

A. INTRODUCTION

Nursing students face various significant challenges as they transition from academic life to the professional workforce. In addition to clinical and academic competency demands, mental preparedness and self-confidence (self-esteem) are critical factors that determine their success in entering the professional environment (Negm et al., 2024). Low self-esteem among nursing students may negatively impact the learning process, job readiness, and even increase the risk of academic dropout (Wynne et al., 2024).

A study by Dancot et al., (2021) involving 464 first-year nursing students found that the average self-esteem score was 50.8 (on a scale of 16 to 80). The distribution of self-esteem profiles was as follows: 49% had high self-esteem, 20.1% had a 'defensive acceptance-based' profile, 11.2% were 'defensive achievement-based,' and 19.6% had low self-esteem. The study also revealed a dropout rate of 21.5%, with low self-esteem ($p = 0.039$) and academic performance ($p < 0.0001$) being significantly associated with this outcome.

Additionally, research by Batmaz et al., (2022) showed a significant increase in both self-esteem and emotional intelligence among nursing students over the four years of their education. However, this improvement was not evenly distributed,

indicating that some individuals may require additional interventions to enhance their self-esteem.

Another study by Neupane et al., (2022) involving 238 nursing students in Nepal, found that 79.4% of respondents had high self-esteem, while 21.6% had low self-esteem. This study highlighted the importance of factors such as age, current nursing program, and education level in influencing students' perceptions of their self-esteem.

These findings emphasize the need for targeted interventions designed to improve the self-esteem of nursing students, ensuring they are mentally and emotionally prepared to enter the workforce. Ramezanzade Tabriz et al., (2024) stated that training programs focused on strengthening self-esteem can help students recognize their potential, build self-confidence, and develop effective strategies for facing professional challenges.

B. METHODS

This community service activity was conducted on February 20, 2025, in the auditorium of ITS KES ICME Jombang. The training was attended by 82 participants, consisting of all eighth-semester students of the Bachelor of Nursing Program. Participants were selected using a total sampling technique, as the activity was specifically intended for prospective graduates. All participants attended the session together in one auditorium, which had sufficient capacity to accommodate the entire group at once.

The training was held over the course of a full day, starting at 08:00 AM and ending at 03:00 PM (WIB), with the following schedule of activities:

Table 1 : Training Event Rundown

No.	Time	Activity
1	08.00–08.30 WIB	Registration and Pre-Test Completion (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Job Readiness Questionnaire)
2	08.30–09.30 WIB	Session 1 – Self-Esteem Education and Psychological Challenges Before Entering the Workforce
3	09.30–10.30 WIB	Session 2 – Self-Reflection: Recognizing Personal Strengths and Potential
4	10.30–12.00 WIB	Session 3 – Interview Simulation and Professional Communication (Role Play)
5	12.00–13.00 WIB	Break and Lunch
6	13.00–14.00 WIB	Session 4 – Personal Branding and Strategies to Enhance Mental Readiness for Employment
7	14.00–15.00 WIB	Post-Test Completion, Group Discussion, and Closing

The training was conducted using a participatory approach, incorporating interactive lectures, written reflection, simulation (role play), and small group discussions. Evaluation was carried out using both pre-test and post-test instruments, which included:

1. The Indonesian version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) to assess the level of self-esteem.
2. A job readiness perception questionnaire covering aspects such as mental preparedness, professional communication, and confidence in facing the recruitment process.

The data were analyzed descriptively and presented in the form of frequency and percentage distribution tables.

C. RESULTS

All students participated fully in the training and completed both the pre-test and post-test. The evaluation results indicated a significant improvement in self-esteem and readiness to enter the workforce following the training.

Table 2. Distribution of Students' Self-Esteem Scores Before and After the Training (n = 82)

Self-Esteem Category	Before Training		After Training	
	f	%	f	%
Low	21	25	3	3.7
Moderate	50	61	28	34.1
High	11	14	51	62.2
Total	82	100	82	100

Table 3. Perception of Job Readiness Before and After the Training (n = 82)

Job Readiness Level	Before Training		After Training	
	f	%	f	%
Not Ready	8	10	1	1.2
Less Ready	37	45	13	15.8
Ready	25	30	42	51.3
Very Ready	12	15	26	31.7
Total	82	100	82	100

A significant increase in self-esteem was observed, with the proportion of participants in the “high” category rising from 14% to 62.2%. This indicates that the training successfully encouraged students to value themselves more, recognize their personal strengths, and develop a more stable sense of self-confidence. These findings are consistent with Rosenberg’s theory (1965), as cited in Zhao et al., (2021), which suggests that self-esteem is influenced by positive internal experiences and self-recognition.

Improvement in job readiness was also reflected in the shift in student perceptions. The number of participants categorized as “not ready” and “less ready” decreased significantly, while those who felt “ready” and “very ready” increased markedly. These results are supported by David A. Kolb’s experiential learning approach (1984), as referenced in Wijnen-Meijer et al., (2022), which emphasizes the importance of direct experience in the learning process through a cycle of experience, reflection, conceptualization, and application.

Most participants in the final evaluation reported feeling more prepared to face the recruitment process, particularly after engaging in interview simulations and reflective activities. The students expressed increased confidence in answering personal questions during interviews and greater awareness of their strengths and

accomplishments.



Photo 1 : Registration Process



Photo 2: Training Session Begins

D. CONCLUSION

The self-esteem enhancement training conducted for 82 eighth-semester undergraduate nursing students at ITS KES ICME Jombang in February 2025 successfully improved participants' confidence in preparing to enter the workforce. Pre-test and post-test results showed a positive shift in self-esteem categories, indicating that a brief yet focused training session can serve as an effective intervention to strengthen the mental and emotional readiness of nursing students. This activity is recommended to be integrated into soft skills development programs within higher nursing education.

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