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THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY: HOW SELF-LEADERSHIP DRIVES ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN EFL LEARNERS

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Abstract: This study investigates the influence of self-leadership on academic performance, the mediating role of self-efficacy, and how these constructs interact in shaping student outcomes. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 72 English major students in one of the private university in East Jakarta through a structured questionnaire measuring self-leadership, self-efficacy, and academic performance. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Results show that self-leadership directly enhances academic performance, but its strongest impact occurs indirectly through self-efficacy. The findings suggest that students' ability to regulate their behaviors, maintain motivation, and engage in constructive self-dialogue builds confidence in their capacity to succeed, ultimately leading to better academic outcomes. This study concludes that fostering self-leadership and self-efficacy is essential for EFL learners to thrive academically. However, given the modest sample size (N = 72, the findings should be interpreted with caution as they may limit the generalizability of the results. Practical implications include integrating self-leadership training and efficacy-building interventions into English language curricula to strengthen learner autonomy, resilience, and long-term success, such as incorporating structured self-leadership modules, guided reflective exercises, and targeted efficacy-enhancement activities within classroom practice to support measurable improvements in students' academic outcomes.
Keywords: *self-leadership; self-efficacy; academic performance; English as a Foreign Language (EFL); higher education.*

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is positioned as a foreign language (EFL) and is primarily used in academic, professional, and limited international communication contexts rather than in daily interaction. Despite this status, English proficiency has become increasingly consequential for university students, particularly those enrolled in English language departments, as it directly shapes academic achievement, graduation outcomes, and employability in globally oriented sectors (Jon et al., 2021; Isma, et.al, 2025). National and institutional reports consistently indicate that many Indonesian university students encounter persistent difficulties in achieving advanced academic English proficiency, especially in productive skills such as academic writing, oral presentation, and critical discussion, which demand sustained practice beyond formal classroom instruction (Jon et al., 2021).

These challenges are especially pronounced in Jakarta, Indonesia's primary economic and educational hub. Universities in this metropolitan context operate within highly competitive academic ecosystems characterized by dense student populations, diverse sociocultural backgrounds, and strong expectations to meet global communication standards. At the same time, students in Jakarta benefit from extensive access to digital learning platforms, authentic English materials, and global communication channels, creating learning environments that are simultaneously rich in opportunity and demanding

in terms of self-regulation and psychological readiness (Jon, et.al, 2021; Dheasari & Ciptaningrum, 2024). Prior research suggests that such environments magnify individual differences among learners, as academic success increasingly depends not only on instructional quality but also on students' ability to manage their own learning processes and sustain motivation in less structured contexts (Tong & Shakibae, 2025; Kurniawan et.al.; 2023; Broadbent & Poon, 2015; Broadbent, 2017).

A growing body of literature in educational psychology and second language acquisition has consistently demonstrated that learner-internal psychological resources play a critical role in academic success. Among these resources, self-efficacy has emerged as one of the most robust and domain-specific predictors of academic performance. Empirical studies, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses show that students with stronger efficacy beliefs are more likely to engage actively in learning tasks, persist in the face of difficulty, employ effective learning strategies, and ultimately achieve higher academic outcomes (Zhao & Ma, 2025; Al-Abyadh & Azeem; 2022, Honicke & Broadbent, 2016; Talsma et al., 2018; Chemers et al., 2001). In EFL contexts specifically, self-efficacy has been linked to willingness to communicate, strategic language use, and resilience when learners encounter linguistic challenges or experience repeated failure (Bonyadi, et.al., 2025; Radjuni, et.al., 2024; Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; Plonsky & Kim, 2016).

As the predictive power of self-efficacy has become firmly established, recent research has shifted from simply confirming its direct effects to examining how efficacy beliefs are developed and sustained over time. Studies increasingly emphasize the role of self-regulated learning, autonomous practice, and digitally mediated learning environments in shaping students' confidence and engagement (Broadbent, 2017; Panadero, 2017; Sandayanti & Supriyanti, 2023; Ulya, et al., 2024). This shift aligns with broader developments in higher education, where learning success is no longer determined solely by teacher-led instruction but by students' capacity to take responsibility for their own learning trajectories (Pintrich, 2004; Šteh & Šarić, 2020, Sulis, 2022). In language education, this perspective is reinforced by research highlighting the importance of individual differences, motivation, and learner agency in second language development (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Hiver et al., 2021).

Despite these advances, much of the EFL literature continues to conceptualize the development of self-efficacy primarily through external antecedents, such as teacher support, peer interaction, instructional design, and institutional learning environments (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020; Jang et al., 2016; Zhao & Liu, 2025). While these factors are undeniably important, this dominant focus often positions learners as passive recipients of contextual influences and provides limited insight into how learners actively shape their own psychological resources. As a result, learner-internal regulatory capacities that may foster self-efficacy from within remain comparatively underexplored.

Within this emerging gap, self-leadership offers a theoretically compelling yet still underexamined framework for understanding learner agency in EFL contexts. Originating from organizational psychology, self-leadership emphasizes individuals' capacity to regulate their behavior, motivation, and cognition through strategies such as goal setting, self-observation, and constructive self-dialogue (Neck & Houghton, 2006; Pravine & Pouline, 2025). Contemporary developments in self-leadership theory further conceptualize it as a meta-skill that supports adaptability, persistence, and self-directed growth across complex and uncertain environments (Neck, et.al, 2024; Stewart, et.al, 2022). Empirical evidence from higher education indicates that students who demonstrate stronger self-leadership tend to show greater resilience, more effective learning strategies, and superior academic performance (Zakir et al., 2023).

Importantly, emerging studies suggest that self-leadership may exert its influence on academic outcomes indirectly by strengthening learners' beliefs in their own capabilities. Research in educational and organizational contexts has shown that self-leadership practices, such as setting proximal goals, monitoring progress, and reframing setbacks as learning opportunities, provide repeated mastery experiences that are central to the development of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Gomes, et.al, 2021). Recent empirical findings further support this mechanism, demonstrating that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between self-leadership and performance-related outcomes, including task commitment, engagement, and innovation (Agustina et al., 2025; Tari & Azizah, 2024).

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However, empirical investigations that explicitly examine self-leadership as an internal antecedent of self-efficacy in EFL learning remain limited. Studies focusing on English major students—whose academic success and emerging professional identities are closely tied to English proficiency—are particularly scarce. Moreover, evidence from urban Indonesian higher education contexts, especially private universities operating in digitally enriched learning environments, remains underrepresented. While recent research trends increasingly favor complex chain or serial mediation models, such complexity may obscure rather than clarify the specific psychological mechanisms through which learner-internal processes operate.

In response to these gaps, the present study examines the relationships among self-leadership, self-efficacy, and academic performance among English major students at a private university in Jakarta. By adopting a focused and parsimonious mediation framework, this study aims to isolate a clear internal psychological mechanism through which self-leadership contributes to academic performance via the development of self-efficacy. In doing so, the study seeks to advance a more agentic understanding of EFL learners and to provide theoretically grounded and empirically relevant insights for EFL pedagogy, higher education practice, and human resource development in the digital era.

Self-leadership is more than just a set of strategies; it refers to individuals' capacity to intentionally influence their own thinking, motivation, and behavior to achieve personal and professional goals. In higher education, particularly in demanding academic programs such as English Language Studies, self-leadership functions as an important internal psychological resource that supports sustained effort and goal-directed learning. As Agustina et al. (2025) demonstrated in their study of psychology students at Universitas Medan Area, self-leadership significantly influences students' task commitment, with this effect operating indirectly through self-efficacy. This finding suggests that when students are able to manage and motivate themselves effectively, they are also more likely to develop confidence in their ability to meet academic demands.

Recent studies in higher education have increasingly conceptualized self-leadership as a learner-centered capability that supports autonomy, adaptability, and self-regulated learning, particularly in contexts where students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning processes (Saad & Abdullah, 2025; Stewart, Chunmei, et.al., 2023).

The first dimension of self-leadership is behavior-focused strategies, which involve developing habits that encourage productive actions and reduce behaviors that interfere with learning. For English major students, this may include setting structured study schedules, minimizing distractions during online learning, and holding oneself accountable for completing assignments on time. Through strategies such as self-observation, self-goal setting, and self-reward or self-correction, learners can regulate their academic behavior more effectively (Neck & Houghton, 2006, Jamaluddin, et.al., 2025).

The second dimension, natural reward strategies, emphasizes finding intrinsic satisfaction in learning activities themselves. In language learning, this may involve engaging with personally meaningful topics, participating in enjoyable communicative activities, or transforming repetitive practice into more engaging tasks. When students experience enjoyment and personal relevance in learning, their intrinsic motivation increases, which supports persistence and resilience in the face of academic challenges (Agustina et al., 2025).

The third dimension, constructive thought pattern strategies, focuses on shaping adaptive cognitive processes that support persistence and growth. This includes replacing negative self-talk with more constructive internal dialogue, visualizing successful performance, and reframing mistakes as part of the learning process. In EFL contexts, where anxiety and fear of making errors are common, such cognitive strategies play a critical role in sustaining motivation and engagement.

Recent empirical research suggests that these self-leadership dimensions are particularly relevant in digitally mediated learning environments, where students must independently manage learning goals, monitor progress, and cope with cognitive and emotional challenges (Lee & Chang, 2024).

Altogether, these three dimensions provide students with a personal toolkit for managing their learning journey. In an era where digital platforms and language-learning applications provide abundant resources, the primary challenge is no longer access to materials but the ability to regulate learning effectively through self-leadership.

Self-efficacy, first introduced by Bandura (1997), refers to individuals' beliefs in their capability to organize and execute the actions required to achieve desired outcomes. In EFL learning contexts, self-efficacy is not merely a form of confidence; it plays a central role in shaping goal setting, effort investment, persistence, and responses to academic difficulties (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).

In Jakarta's English learning environment, where students have access to a wide range of digital resources, self-efficacy often determines whether learners engage deeply with learning tools or disengage when facing complex linguistic challenges. Learners with high self-efficacy are more likely to interpret difficulties as challenges to be overcome rather than as threats to be avoided.

Bandura (1997) conceptualized self-efficacy across three dimensions: level, generality, and strength. The level dimension refers to the range of task difficulties individuals believe they can manage. In EFL learning, this may be reflected in whether students feel capable of handling only basic language tasks or are confident in engaging with advanced academic writing and presentations. Higher levels of self-efficacy are associated with a greater willingness to attempt challenging tasks (Çelik, 2022).

Generality reflects the extent to which efficacy beliefs transfer across different tasks or contexts. For instance, confidence in conversational English may extend to reading comprehension or listening tasks that rely on similar linguistic competencies. In higher education, generality also determines whether students can apply classroom-based language skills to real-world contexts such as academic discussions or professional communication (Zimmerman, 2000; Radjuni, et.al., 2024, Noviana, et.al., 2025).

Strength refers to the degree to which efficacy beliefs are resilient when individuals encounter setbacks. In EFL learning, strong self-efficacy enables students to persist despite failures, such as poor test performance or communication breakdowns, thereby sustaining long-term engagement (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020; Qamar & Akhter, 2020, Cassidy, 2015).

Recent meta-analytic and review studies confirm that self-efficacy is one of the most consistent psychological predictors of academic performance across educational contexts, including second and foreign language learning (Honicke et.al, 2023; Wang et al., 2025).

Research consistently shows that self-efficacy positively influences academic performance (Agustina et al., 2025; Çelik, 2022). In language faculties, self-efficacy not only affects grades but also determines learners' engagement in autonomous learning, which is essential for mastering a foreign language in digitally enriched environments. Moreover, when self-efficacy interacts with self-leadership, it creates a reinforcing process in which proactive self-regulation strengthens confidence, which in turn supports sustained academic performance.

Academic performance refers to the extent to which students achieve predetermined learning objectives within formal educational settings. In higher education, academic performance is increasingly viewed as a multidimensional construct that extends beyond grades to include behavioral, cognitive, and social indicators of learning success (York et al., 2015, Guttermen, 2022; Hadi, et.al, 2022).

In English language departments, academic performance reflects not only linguistic competence but also students' ability to manage learning tasks, meet deadlines, work independently, and engage constructively with peers and instructors. This broader perspective aligns with contemporary educational performance frameworks that emphasize both outcomes and learning processes (Kpolovie et al., 2014; Budiman, et.al, 2023; Skolastika, 2025).

Drawing on established performance measurement models, academic performance in this study is conceptualized across six dimensions: quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, independence, and interpersonal impact.

Recent studies in higher education highlight that multidimensional measures of academic performance provide a more accurate representation of students' learning outcomes, particularly in skills-based disciplines such as language education (García-Ros et al., 2022; Alyami et al., 2021).

In sum, academic performance represents a holistic construct that integrates academic outputs, self-regulated behavior, and social engagement. These dimensions are interrelated; for example, independence may enhance timeliness and quality of work, while positive interpersonal impact can facilitate collaborative learning outcomes. Such a multidimensional understanding of performance is particularly relevant in EFL contexts, where successful learning requires sustained effort, autonomy, and effective interaction.

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Based on the elaborate explanation above, here is the reseach framework:

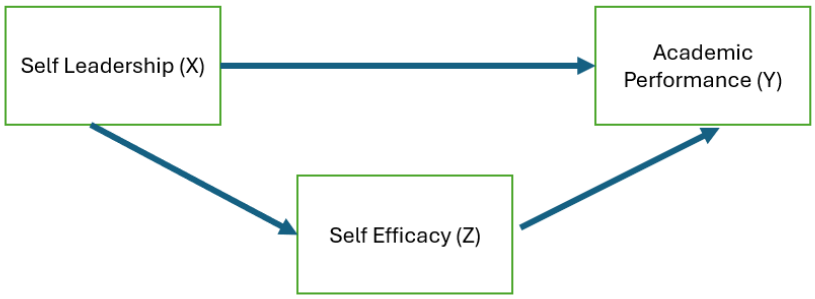


Figure 1. *Research framework*

METHOD

The respondents of this research were university students from the English Department in one private university in East Jakarta, encompassing both diploma and bachelor's degree programs across first- to fourth-year levels. The determination of the sample size in this study refers to Hair et al. (2021), who state that an adequate sample size for multivariate analysis is a minimum of 5 to 10 respondents for each indicator used. This study employed 14 indicators; therefore, the recommended sample size ranges from 70 to 140 respondents. With an actual sample size of 72 respondents, this study meets the minimum requirement for PLS-SEM analysis. However, the relatively small sample size may limit the stability of parameter estimates and the generalizability of the findings. Accordingly, results should be interpreted with caution, and future studies are encouraged to include larger and more diverse samples to strengthen the robustness of the conclusions.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of items measuring self-leadership, self-efficacy, and academic performance. Self-leadership was measured using the dimensions of behavior-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies, adapted from Agustina et al. (2025) and Neck, et.al (2025). Self-efficacy was assessed based on the dimensions of level, generality, and strength, adapted from Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy framework and operational indicators commonly used in educational settings (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Academic performance was evaluated using dimensions of quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, independence, and interpersonal impact, adapted from York et al. (2015) and related educational performance indicators.

The adaptation process involved translating and contextualizing all items to ensure alignment with the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning environment in Indonesia. To establish content validity and clarity, the instrument underwent expert review by two experienced EFL lecturers. Their feedback was used to refine item wording, enhance contextual relevance, and confirm alignment between the indicators and the intended constructs. No pilot test was conducted; therefore, reliability and validity were assessed directly through the measurement model evaluation using PLS-SEM, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability.

In line with psychological and educational research traditions, academic performance in this study was measured through self-reported perceptions. In EFL contexts, perceived academic performance is considered a meaningful indicator of learners' self-evaluated achievement, as it captures not only task completion but also learners' confidence, engagement, and perceived goal attainment in language-intensive learning environments. Given that the present study focuses on internal psychological processes, the use of self-reported academic performance was deemed appropriate for reflecting how students perceive their academic success within an EFL higher education context.

All questionnaire items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Table 1. *Operational variable*

No	Variable	Dimension	Indicator (adapted to EFL Program)
1	Self-Leadership	Behavior-Focused	Improves ability and motivation to work toward

	(X) (Bandura, 1997)	Strategies	personal academic progress, such as practicing English daily and setting personal language learning goals.
		Natural Reward Strategies	Feels that their contributions in learning (e.g., group discussions, presentations) are valuable for their academic achievement in English.
		Constructive Thought Pattern Strategies	Has constructive and strategic thinking patterns, such as using positive self-talk before English oral exams or preparing effective study plans for language skills improvement.
2	Self-Efficacy (Z) (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020)	Level	Level of task completion, for example, successfully completing English essays or translation tasks.
			Level of task difficulty, such as the ability to handle advanced grammar exercises or academic writing tasks.
		Generality	Mastery of assigned tasks, e.g., delivering a presentation in English or writing a research report.
			Ability to manage time, for example, balancing English coursework with other academic responsibilities.
		Strength	Persistence and consistency, such as continuing to practice speaking despite making mistakes.
3	Academic Performance (Y) York et al., 2015 and Kpolovie et al., 2014	Quality	The quality of student work in English, measured by individual perceptions of final outputs and abilities, such as producing essays with accurate grammar and well-structured arguments.
		Quantity	The total output of learning activities, for example, the number of English assignments, presentations, and reading tasks completed within a semester.
		Timeliness	The degree to which activities are completed within the set time frame, such as submitting English assignments before the deadline or preparing for speaking tests on time.
		Effectiveness	The improvement in the use of resources to maximize final results in English learning, for example, using online English learning platforms effectively to enhance listening skills.
		Independence	The level of self-reliance in completing tasks, such as preparing a research project in English without excessive guidance from lecturers.
		Interpersonal Impact	The extent to which a student feels confident, shows positive initiative, and collaborates effectively with peers in English learning activities, such as group discussions or peer feedback sessions.

The questionnaires were distributed online. Due to the dispersed nature of the respondents, data collection was conducted digitally over a period of approximately three weeks. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, assured that their participation was voluntary, and guaranteed anonymity in the reporting of results. This study did not employ a formal written informed consent form; however, informed consent was implied through participants' voluntary completion of the questionnaire after being provided with sufficient information about the study's objectives and their rights as participants. At the time of data collection, the participating institution did not require researchers to obtain approval from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Ethics Committee for minimal-risk survey research involving adult students. Nevertheless, all procedures adhered to general ethical standards for human subject research, including respect for privacy, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. Following Hair et al. (2021), PLS-SEM was employed due to its suitability for exploratory and prediction-oriented

research models and its robustness in handling complex relationships among latent variables. The analysis proceeded in two stages. First, the measurement model was evaluated to establish construct reliability as well as convergent and discriminant validity. After satisfactory measurement properties were confirmed, the structural model was assessed to examine the hypothesized relationships among the variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristic respondents

The respondents in this study comprised students from the English Department enrolled in both diploma and bachelor's degree programs. Of the total sample, 65% were bachelor's degree students, while 35% were diploma students. This distribution indicates that a majority of participants were engaged in longer-term, more academically intensive programs, which typically involve greater exposure to academic English, advanced writing, and research requirements—factors that may influence both self-leadership and self-efficacy in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context (Richards & Renandya, 2002). In terms of gender, the sample consisted of 67% female and 33% male students. This pattern aligns with previous findings that language-related academic programs often have higher female participation rates, possibly due to gender-based differences in communication preferences, motivation, and language learning attitudes (Pawlak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2015).

Regarding year of study, 24% of respondents were in their first year, 3% in their second year, 29% in their third year, 8% in their fourth year, and 36% had been studying for more than four years. The high proportion of students in the "more than four years" category likely reflects extended study durations, which can be influenced by academic challenges, research project delays, or other personal factors. This prolonged exposure to EFL coursework may have both positive and negative effects: while extended engagement can enhance language proficiency, it may also lead to reduced academic motivation if students face repeated setbacks (Schunk&DiBenedetto, 2020). Such variations in academic status, gender distribution, and program level provide important context for interpreting differences in self-leadership, self-efficacy, and academic performance among EFL learners.

Table 1. *AVE score*

	Cronbach 's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Performance	0.883	0.883	0.927	0.810
Self Efficacy	0.904	0.907	0.933	0.776
Self Leadership	0.904	0.907	0.929	0.725

In table 1, the evaluation of the measurement model indicated that all indicators for self-leadership, self-efficacy, and academic performance had outer loadings above 0.70, confirming convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021). The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs exceeded 0.50, meeting the recommended threshold (Bagozzi&Fornell, 1982), and thereby supporting the constructs' discriminant validity as can be seen in table 2. HTMT Ratio is also meeting the recommended threshold because all construct is ≥ 0.90 as can be seen in table 3.

Tabel 2. *Fornell-Larcker criterion*

	Performance	Self Efficacy	Self Leadership
Performance	0.900		
Self Efficacy	0.753	0.881	
Self Leadership	0.709	0.779	0.852

Tabel 3. *HTMT ratio*

	Heterotait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
Self Leadership ←→Self Efficacy	0.856
Self Efficacy ←→ performance	овдо
Self Leadship ←→ performance	0.793

Table 2 displays the Fornell-Larcker criterion results for assessing discriminant validity. The diagonal values represent the square root of the AVE for each construct, while the off-diagonal values show the correlations between constructs. Each diagonal value is higher than the

correlations with other constructs, indicating that each construct is distinct from the others.

Reliability testing further confirmed the robustness of the constructs, with all variables achieving Cronbach's Alpha and rho_A values above 0.70, and composite reliability values exceeding 0.60. These results indicate strong internal consistency among the indicators (Vinzi et al., 2010).

Table 4. *Structural model*

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Performance	0.606	0.594
Self Efficacy	0.607	0.602

The structural model as in table 3 was evaluated using R-Square (R^2) and F-Square (f^2) values. R^2 indicates the proportion of variance in the endogenous construct that can be explained by its exogenous constructs. According to Hair et al. (2021), an R^2 value of 0.75 is considered substantial, 0.50 moderate, and 0.25 weak. In this study, the R^2 for Model I (student performance) is 0.606, meaning that self-leadership and self-efficacy together explain 60.6% of the variance in student performance, which is categorized as moderate. Meanwhile, the R^2 for Model II (self-efficacy) is 0.607, showing that self-leadership explains 60.7% of the variance in self-efficacy, also categorized as moderate. These results suggest that both self-leadership and self-efficacy play important roles in predicting academic outcomes.

Table 5. *The F square*

	Performance	Self Efficacy	Self Leadership
Performance			
Self Efficacy	0.260		
Self Leadership	0.096	1.547	

The effect size (f^2) was then examined to assess the relative contribution of each exogenous variable to the endogenous constructs. Following Cohen's (1988) criteria, an effect size of 0.02 is small, 0.15 is medium, and 0.35 is large. The analysis shows that the effect of self-efficacy on student performance is $f^2 = 0.260$, indicating a medium to large effect. The effect of self-leadership on student performance is $f^2 = 0.096$, which falls in the small to medium range, suggesting that its impact is weaker compared to self-efficacy. However, self-leadership has a very strong effect on self-efficacy ($f^2 = 1.547$), far exceeding the large threshold. This indicates that self-leadership is the dominant predictor of self-efficacy, which in turn strongly drives academic performance.

Findings

The direct effect analysis is used to test hypotheses concerning the immediate influence of an exogenous variable on an endogenous variable within the structural model. This analysis is based on two main criteria: the path coefficient and the significance value (p-value). The path coefficient indicates the direction of the relationship; if the coefficient is positive, it means that an increase in the exogenous variable will lead to an increase in the endogenous variable, showing a unidirectional effect. Conversely, if the coefficient is negative, it indicates an opposite relationship, meaning that as the exogenous variable increases, the endogenous variable decreases. Meanwhile, the p-value determines whether the relationship is statistically significant. A p-value less than 0.05 indicates that the direct effect is significant and the hypothesis is supported, whereas a p-value greater than 0.05 shows that the effect is not statistically significant.

Table 6. *Direct effect*

	Original sample (O)	SampIe Meaп (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (P/STDEVI)	P values
Self Efficacy -> Performance	0.511	0.520	0.151	3.386	0.001
Self Leadership -> performance	0.311	0.304	0.130	2.398	0.017
Self Leadership -> Self Efficacy	0.779	0.783	0.038	20.559	0.000

Table 7. *Indirect effect*

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	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (IO/STDEVI)	P values
Self Leadership--> Self Efficacy--> Performance	0.398	0.407	0.121	3.285	0.001

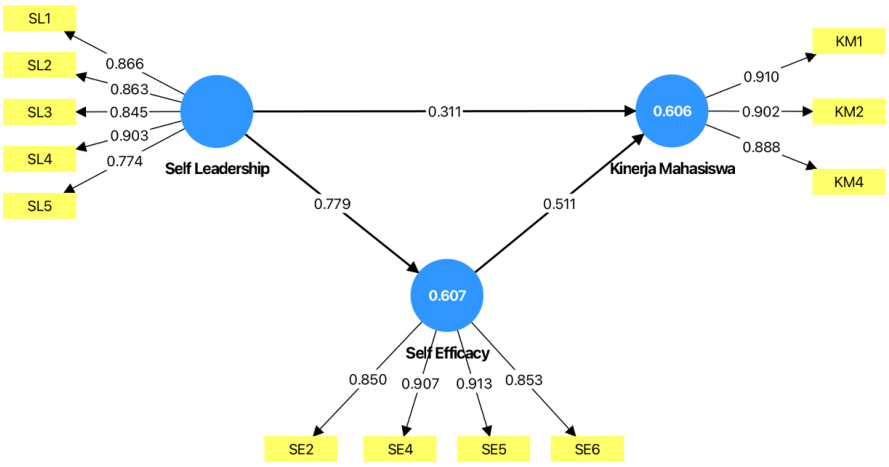


Figure 2. *Outer model*

How does self-leadership influence the academic performance of English major students in a language department in Jakarta?

The SEM results indicate that self-leadership has a direct positive effect on academic performance. This suggests that students who demonstrate stronger self-leadership tend to achieve higher academic performance. Although the effect size is moderate, it confirms that self-leadership independently contributes to students' academic outcomes.

How does self-leadership influence the self-efficacy of English major students in a language department in Jakarta?

Self-leadership shows a strong positive effect on self-efficacy, meaning that students who actively manage and lead themselves are more likely to develop a strong belief in their ability to succeed academically. This relationship highlights the foundational role of self-leadership in building confidence and resilience among English major students, which is crucial in overcoming challenges in language learning and academic tasks.

How does self-efficacy influence the academic performance of English major students in a language department in Jakarta?

The path coefficient from self-efficacy to academic performance is showing a significant and relatively strong effect. This means that students with higher levels of self-efficacy are more confident in completing academic tasks, which directly enhances their academic achievement. In this model, self-efficacy is a stronger predictor of academic performance compared to the direct influence of self-leadership.

Does self-efficacy mediate the relationship between self-leadership and the academic performance of English major students in a language department in Jakarta?

The analysis confirms the mediating role of self-efficacy. While self-leadership directly affects academic performance, its influence is substantially amplified when mediated through self-efficacy. The indirect pathway is stronger than the direct pathway, indicating that self-leadership contributes to academic performance primarily by enhancing students' belief in their own abilities.

The findings of this study demonstrate that self-leadership significantly influences both self-efficacy and academic performance among English major students in a language department in Jakarta. Consistent with Manz's (1986) theory of self-leadership and subsequent empirical work (Neck & Houghton, 2006; Tari & Azizah, 2024), students who develop self-leadership strategies—such as goal setting, self-motivation, and constructive self-dialogue—tend to achieve stronger academic outcomes. Recent studies

similarly indicate that self-leadership enhances students' capacity to adapt, persist, and succeed in academic contexts that require sustained self-regulation (Zakir et al., 2023). However, although the direct effect of self-leadership on academic performance was statistically significant, the moderate effect size ($f^2 = 0.096$) suggests that self-leadership alone does not directly translate into higher performance outcomes without the involvement of additional psychological mechanisms.

A closer examination of the results helps explain this pattern. Self-leadership primarily operates through internal self-regulatory processes, such as monitoring one's learning behavior, reframing academic challenges, and sustaining intrinsic motivation. These processes do not immediately manifest as observable academic outputs; rather, they first shape students' beliefs about their own competence. This is reflected in the substantially stronger path from self-leadership to self-efficacy ($f^2 = 1.547$). Through effective self-leadership, students develop a greater sense of control over their learning, increased confidence in handling difficult English tasks, and greater persistence when facing setbacks. This mechanism aligns closely with Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, which emphasizes perceived personal agency and self-regulation as central foundations of efficacy beliefs. In line with this view, students who exhibit strong self-leadership are more likely to internalize a sense of competence that subsequently supports sustained academic engagement and achievement (Zimmerman, 2000, 2002; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).

The results further indicate that self-efficacy is a strong predictor of academic performance ($f^2 = 0.260$), confirming its central mediating role between self-leadership and academic success. This finding is consistent with a substantial body of literature demonstrating that students with higher self-efficacy engage more actively in academic tasks, employ learning strategies more effectively, and persist longer when encountering challenges (Honicke & Broadbent, 2016; Çelik, 2022). In EFL learning, self-efficacy is particularly critical because language development requires repeated practice, tolerance for error, and sustained motivation over time (Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; Wu, 2023; Guan, 2025). When students believe they are capable of performing tasks such as delivering oral presentations, interpreting academic texts, or producing written assignments in English, they are more willing to invest effort and are more likely to achieve higher levels of performance.

Taken together, these findings suggest that self-leadership contributes to academic performance primarily by strengthening students' confidence rather than by exerting a strong direct behavioral effect. This insight has important implications for the design of educational interventions. Efforts to improve academic outcomes should not focus solely on teaching behavioral self-management strategies but should also deliberately foster efficacy-building experiences. Such interventions may include scaffolded mastery experiences, reflective learning activities, guided self-reflection, and structured opportunities for positive feedback. By targeting both self-leadership and self-efficacy simultaneously, educators may create a synergistic effect that more effectively enhances students' academic performance.

Conceptually, the findings support the view of self-leadership as a foundational capacity and a meta-skill in EFL learning. Rather than functioning as a single technique or isolated skill, self-leadership operates as an underlying psychological resource that enables learners to regulate their motivation, cognition, and behavior across diverse language-learning tasks. This conceptualization is consistent with contemporary self-leadership scholarship, which positions self-leadership as a higher-order capability that supports self-regulation and adaptive functioning across domains (Stewart, et.al., 2022; Neck, et.al, 2024). As a meta-skill, self-leadership facilitates the development of other critical learner attributes, most notably self-efficacy, which then directly supports academic performance, in line with social cognitive perspectives emphasizing the role of self-regulatory agency in efficacy development (Bandura, 1997; Zimmerman, 2000). This perspective positions self-leadership not merely as an outcome of effective learning but as a core capability that underpins learners' ability to adapt and thrive in complex EFL environments.

The findings also carry practical significance in the context of digitally mediated and autonomous language learning. Prior research indicates that technology-rich learning environments place increased demands on learners' self-regulatory capacities, as access to abundant resources alone does not guarantee effective learning outcomes (Broadbent & Poon, 2015; Wu, 2023). In such contexts, self-leadership functions as a gatekeeping capacity that determines whether learners can strategically

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select resources, regulate learning routines, and persist in sustained language practice. Self-efficacy further shapes learners' willingness to apply newly acquired skills in authentic communicative situations, a relationship consistently documented in EFL and online learning research (Huang & Wang, 2023; Honicke & Broadbent, 2016). Together, these constructs support sustained engagement and performance in language-intensive and digitally mediated educational settings.

From a contextual perspective, the focus on English major students in an urban private university in Jakarta provides additional insight into the observed relationships. Previous studies suggest that students whose academic identity and future career trajectories are closely tied to language proficiency experience higher motivational pressure and performance demands, particularly in EFL settings (Teimouri, et.al., 2019). Moreover, urban private universities often combine relatively rich learning resources with competitive academic expectations, which may intensify the need for effective self-regulation and confidence (Jon, Lee, & Byun, 2021). Within such environments, self-leadership and self-efficacy appear especially salient as psychological resources that help students manage academic pressure, sustain engagement, and maintain consistent performance.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the scope and boundaries of the present study. The findings are most directly applicable to English major students studying in urban, resource-rich higher education contexts and may not fully generalize to learners from other disciplines or institutional settings. In addition, the study deliberately employed a parsimonious mediation model to isolate a specific internal psychological mechanism linking self-leadership, self-efficacy, and academic performance. Such an approach is consistent with calls for theory-driven, mechanism-focused modeling in educational psychology, particularly when examining learner-internal processes (Hair et al., 2021). While this design enhances conceptual clarity, future research may extend the model by incorporating additional contextual, motivational, or instructional variables to capture more complex learning dynamics.

Overall, the findings reinforce the view that self-leadership and self-efficacy function as complementary psychological resources that jointly shape academic performance in EFL higher education. Self-leadership equips students with self-regulatory strategies, while self-efficacy provides the confidence needed to enact those strategies effectively in demanding academic contexts. For English language departments in Indonesia, integrating self-leadership development with efficacy-building interventions may foster not only improved academic achievement but also greater learner autonomy and resilience—capabilities that are essential for long-term success in language learning (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that self-leadership and self-efficacy play vital and interconnected roles in shaping the academic performance of English major students in an English language department in Jakarta. The findings indicate that self-leadership directly contributes to academic performance; however, its effect is moderate compared to its indirect influence through self-efficacy. More importantly, self-leadership strongly predicts self-efficacy, suggesting that students who are able to regulate, motivate, and guide themselves effectively are more likely to develop strong beliefs in their academic capabilities. Self-efficacy, in turn, emerges as a powerful determinant of academic performance, functioning as a key mediating mechanism that amplifies the impact of self-leadership on students' academic outcomes.

Overall, these results highlight that while self-leadership equips learners with behavioral and cognitive strategies for self-regulation, self-efficacy determines the confidence with which those strategies are enacted in demanding academic tasks. Academic success among English major students is therefore best understood as the product of these two constructs working in synergy. Beyond confirming existing relationships**,** this study advances the field of EFL and educational psychology by empirically identifying self-leadership as a trainable, learner-internal antecedent of self-efficacy, rather than treating self-efficacy solely as a product of external instructional or environmental factors. In doing so, the study shifts the focus of EFL learner psychology toward internal self-regulatory capacities that actively shape academic engagement and performance.

Conceptually, the findings extend EFL research by positioning self-leadership as a foundational capacity and meta-skill that supports the development of self-efficacy and sustained academic performance in language-intensive

higher education contexts. Pedagogically, the study provides an actionable framework for EFL programs by demonstrating that interventions targeting self-leadership can indirectly enhance academic performance through efficacy-building processes. In an era where EFL instruction increasingly emphasizes learner autonomy, digital engagement, and resilience, these findings underscore the importance of integrating self-leadership development and efficacy-enhancing practices into curriculum design and instructional strategies.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The relatively small sample size (N = 72) and the focus on a single private university in East Jakarta limit the generalizability of the findings to broader EFL student populations in Indonesia. In addition, the cross-sectional design and reliance on self-report measures may introduce response bias and constrain causal inference. Future research may address these limitations by employing larger and more diverse samples, adopting longitudinal or experimental designs, and incorporating multi-method approaches to capture the dynamic interplay between self-leadership, self-efficacy, and academic performance over time. Nevertheless, the present study provides a theoretically grounded and empirically supported contribution that enriches current understanding of learner psychology in EFL contexts and offers a foundation for developing more psychologically informed approaches to language education in Indonesia.

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