Sosioedukasi
JURNAL ILMIAH ILMU PENDIDIKAN DAN SOSIAL
ISSN: 2086-6135 E-ISSN: 2541-612x
Volume 14 No. 1. Mei 2025 https://ejournal.unibabwi.ac.id/index.php/sosioedukasi/index

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING MODEL IN IMPROVING SELF-ESTEEM IN VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ARTICLE HISTORY
Received : 23-2-2022
Revised : 18-3-2022
Accepted : 17-4-2022

KEYWORDS
Learning Model Experiential
Improving Self-Esteem
Vocational High School Students

ABSTRACT
Self-esteem is one of the psychological aspects that plays an important role in the development of students, especially in Vocational High Schools (SMK), which require their readiness to face the world of work. However, many students in SMK experience low levels of self-esteem, which has an impact on self-confidence, learning motivation, and the ability to adapt to social and academic environments. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the Experiential Learning model in improving self-esteem of students in SMK. This study uses an experimental method with a pretest-posttest control group design. The research sample consisted of SMK students who were divided into an experimental group that received learning with the Experiential Learning model and a control group that used conventional learning methods. The data analysis technique was carried out using statistical tests to see the difference in self-esteem before and after the intervention. Based on the data analysis carried out, the results showed that the Experiential Learning model had a positive effect on improving self-esteem of students in SMK. This is evidenced by the average obtained that the mean pretest score of the experimental group was 8.95 and the control group was 90.70. Furthermore, the posttest results of the experimental group were 103.20 and the control group was 90.50. Based on the average pretest and posttest results, it can be concluded that the experimental group given the Experiential Learning model treatment had an increase in scores, while the control group that was not given treatment did not experience a significant increase.

INTRODUCTIONS

Education in Indonesia continues to evolve through various efforts aimed at improving the quality of learning. The national education system emphasizes the importance of character development, competence, and student preparedness in facing the workforce and social life. One of the main challenges in Indonesian education is the low level of self-esteem among students, particularly at the vocational high school (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan or SMK) level.

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Vocational high schools play a strategic role in preparing students to directly enter the industrial world and entrepreneurship. However, in practice, many SMK students face difficulties in developing strong self-esteem. Factors such as conventional teaching methods, limited student involvement in hands-on experiences, and high academic and social pressures often contribute to low self-esteem. This, in turn, leads to a lack of confidence in facing academic challenges, industrial work practices, and social interactions in professional settings.

Self-esteem is a crucial aspect of student development that influences self-belief, decision-making confidence, and motivation to learn. In vocational high schools, students often encounter various challenges, such as demands for practical skills, academic pressure, and preparation for the workforce, all of which can affect their level of self-esteem. Low self-esteem can have a negative impact on academic achievement, participation in school activities, and readiness to face the working world.

One approach that can be used to enhance students' self-esteem is the Experiential Learning model. This model, developed by David Kolb, emphasizes learning through direct experience, where students engage in a cycle of concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation. By providing real-life experiences relevant to students' lives, this model can help them build confidence, develop social skills, and increase self-appreciation.

Several studies have shown that more interactive and experience-based learning approaches have a positive impact on improving students' self-esteem. However, within the context of vocational education, the application of the Experiential Learning model has not been extensively explored. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the Experiential Learning model in enhancing students' self-esteem in vocational high schools.

The Experiential Learning model offers an alternative approach to address this issue. Developed by David Kolb, the model highlights the importance of direct experience in the learning process. Through a learning cycle consisting of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation, students can better understand and internalize the material in a more meaningful way. This approach enables students to boost their confidence through active engagement in learning, real-world problem solving, and more dynamic social interactions.

In Indonesia, experiential learning methods have not been widely implemented, particularly in vocational schools. In fact, several studies suggest that experiential learning can enhance student engagement, motivation, and self-esteem. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of the Experiential Learning model in improving self-esteem among vocational high school students.

Through this research, it is expected that deeper insights can be gained into how the Experiential Learning model can serve as a solution to enhance students' self-esteem. In addition, the findings of this study may provide recommendations for educators and policymakers in designing more innovative and relevant learning strategies to meet the needs of students in the modern era.

RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research used is an experimental research design. An experimental research design is used to determine causal relationships through controlled experimentation. According to Sugiyono (2013:109), "Experimental research can be defined as a research design used to examine the effect of a specific treatment on another variable under controlled conditions." Therefore, experimental research aims to test a hypothesis in order to identify changes between an experimental group and a control group.

The experimental research design used in this study is a quasi-experimental design. Nursalam (as cited in Kuntjojo, 2009:48) explains, "A quasi-experimental design seeks to reveal causal relationships by involving both an experimental group and a control group, although the selection of these groups is not done randomly."

The specific type of quasi-experimental design employed in this study is the Non-Equivalent Control Group Design. This design was chosen because it allows the researcher to compare the results between a treatment group (experimental group) and a group that does not receive the treatment (control group). Johnson & Christensen (2017:358) state, "A non-equivalent control group design consists of an experimental group and a non-equivalent untreated comparison group, both of which are administered pretest and posttest measures." This means that the non-

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equivalent control group design includes both an experimental group and a comparison group that are not randomly assigned, and both groups receive pretest and posttest assessments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study collects data on the application of the Experiential Learning Model to improve the self-esteem of vocational high school (SMK) students during the 2024/2025 academic year. Pretest data refers to the initial data collected before the treatment was administered, while posttest data represents the final data collected after the treatment had been implemented.

The treatment provided was the Experiential Learning Model, aimed at improving the self-esteem of vocational high school students in the 2024/2025 academic year. The treatment was conducted over four sessions, each lasting 45 minutes.

The research results include self-esteem scale pretest scores for both the experimental and control groups, as well as posttest questionnaire scores for both groups. The descriptive statistics of the pretest results are presented in the following table:

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
pretest_eks	10	23	82	105	88,80	6,529	42,622
pretest_con	10	23	83	106	90,60	9,082	82,489
Valid (listwise) N	10						

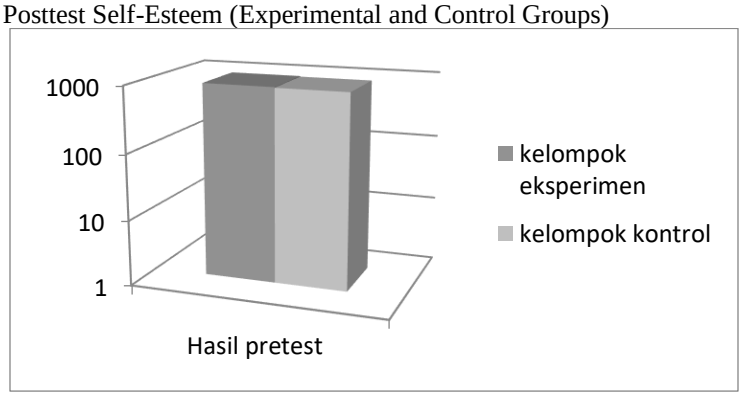
Pretest Self-Esteem Descriptive Statistics for Experimental and Control Groups

Based on the analysis, the total pretest score of the experimental group was 906, while the control group scored 888. The pretest self-esteem scores are also illustrated in the following graph:

Graph: Pretest Scores

Next is the descriptive statistics table for the posttest self-esteem results:

Descriptive Statistics – Posttest Self-Esteem (Experimental and Control Groups)



Based on the analysis, the total posttest score for the experimental group was 1,024, and for the control group was 904. The posttest self-esteem scores are also visualized in the following graph:

Graph: Posttest Scores

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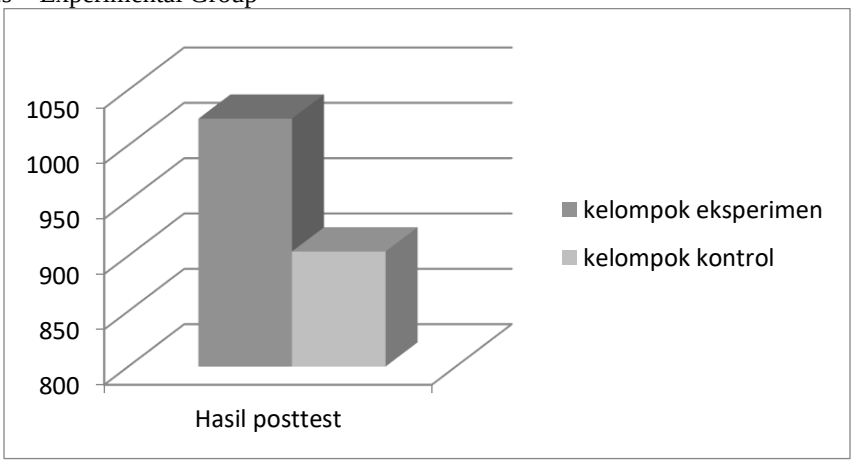
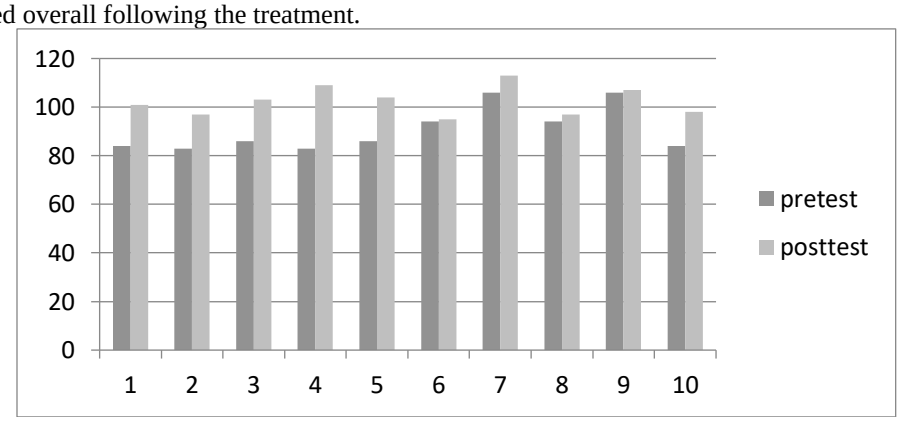
A recap of the pretest and posttest self-esteem results for the experimental group is presented below:
Self-Esteem Scores – Experimental Group



Based on the table above, it can be seen that students' self-esteem scores increased after receiving the treatment. The lowest pretest score was 83, while the lowest posttest score was 95. These findings indicate that the students' self-esteem improved overall following the treatment.



Graph: Pretest and Posttest Scores – Experimental Group

The data above represent the experimental group. Below is the data for the control group, which did not receive any treatment.

Self-Esteem Scores – Control Group

NO	SUBJEK	PRETEST	POSTTEST	GAIN SCORE
1	1	85	102	17
2	2	82	96	14
3	3	85	102	17
4	4	84	110	26
5	5	87	105	18
6	6	93	94	1

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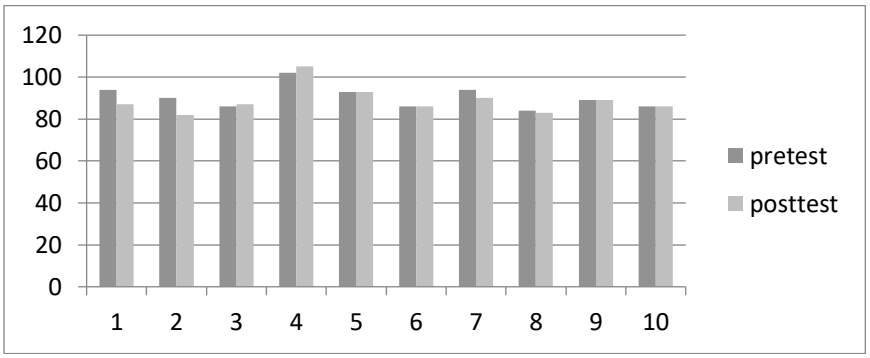
7	7	105	112	7
8	8	93	96	3
9	9	107	108	1
10	10	85	99	14

In the control group, which served as the untreated comparison group, the lowest pretest score was 82, and the lowest posttest score was 84. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that there was no significant improvement in the students' self-esteem scores. In fact, some students experienced a decline in scores.

Graph: Pretest and Posttest Scores – Control Group



Mann-Whitney Test Results

This study employed the Mann-Whitney test to determine whether there was a significant difference in pretest and posttest self-esteem scores between the experimental and control groups. The test results are as follows:

Mann-Whitney Test – Pretest

Test Statistics[a]

	skor
Mann-Whitney U	49,000
Wilcoxon W	104,000
Z	-,076
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,939
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	,971[b]

a. Grouping Variable: kelompok
b. Not corrected for ties.

Based on the results, the significance value (2-tailed) is 0.939 > 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups before the treatment was given.

Mann-Whitney Test – Posttest

Test Statistics[a]

	skor
Mann-Whitney U	5,000
Wilcoxon W	60,000
Z	-3,409

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Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,001
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	,000[b]

a. Grouping Variable: kelompok
b. Not corrected for ties.

The significance value (2-tailed) is 0.001 < 0.05, indicating a statistically significant difference between the two groups after the treatment. This difference is attributed to the application of the Experiential Learning Model in the experimental group.

The average pretest score of the experimental group was 88.95, while the control group had a mean score of 90.70. After the treatment, the experimental group's mean posttest score increased to 103.20, whereas the control group's mean score decreased to 90.50. Based on the pretest and posttest averages, it can be concluded that the experimental group, which received the Experiential Learning treatment, showed improvement, while the control group, which did not receive any treatment, experienced a slight decline.

The use of the Experiential Learning Model proved effective in enhancing students' self-esteem, as the procedures and media involved stimulated students to suppress negative feelings and develop the capacity to improve their self-esteem.

CONCLUSION

The research subjects consisted of 20 students who were divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. Each group comprised 10 students. Based on the results of statistical analysis, it was found that the Experiential Learning Model was effective in improving students' self-esteem. Low self-esteem among students was characterized by frequent feelings of inadequacy, fear of failure, and difficulty accepting praise. As a result, the presence of other groups was often perceived as competition, which led to difficulties in collaboration and a tendency toward negative rivalry. This indicates that the students still lacked self-esteem. These symptoms were evidenced by low scores on the self-esteem pretest scale. However, when the treatment in the form of the Experiential Learning Model was applied, students experienced an increase in self-esteem, as indicated by improved evaluation results in each session and higher posttest self-esteem scores. The use of the Experiential Learning Model proved effective in enhancing students' self-esteem, as it provided stimulation that helped them suppress negative emotions and develop their capacity to improve their own self-esteem.

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