

Motivational Dynamics in English Writing Mastery: An Expectancy-Value Approach to Second Language Learning

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ABSTRACT

Writing, commonly, comes with writing skills and also grammar and syntax knowledge on top of a writer's natural talent. However, many are in need of extra support such as motivation to enable them stay strong and continue writing, as well as to help them believe that they can manage the task and to know that the task carried out is beneficial. Those who are struggling with writing tasks seem to limit their own potential academically and professionally. Hence, this study is to investigate how beliefs and the task values about writing ability shape students' motivation to write, and what perceived cost-related factors negatively influence students' motivation to enhance their writing skills. This study employed a survey-based approach using a questionnaire to seek students' perceptions of their writing ability, the importance they attach to writing tasks, and the challenges that hinder their motivation. 224 bachelor degree students from one public university in Selangor, Malaysia, undergoing the English for Professional Communication program involved in this study. Data revealed that while practice strengthens students' belief in writing and builds their confidence, challenges in grammar, higher order assessments, and complex tasks still hinder motivation. For the task value, students' writing motivation is shaped more by the usefulness and importance of tasks than by personal enjoyment. Cost-related factors, especially psychological cost, proved the strongest barrier, while effort was moderate and opportunity and general costs lower, indicating that anxiety hinders engagement but students still hold a positive view of English learning. The findings suggest that reducing psychological barriers and emphasizing task value can enhance students' confidence and sustain motivation in writing. These results could impact classroom practices by encouraging teachers to prioritize reducing psychological barriers and designing tasks that emphasize value and confidence-building.

Keywords: Expectancy-Value Theory, writing ability, writing motivation, cost-related challenges

INTRODUCTION

Some individuals demonstrate an inherent ability to write effectively. The talent to write without difficulty is an advantage, and it can become a unique ability for certain people. A good writer feels no pressure for tackling any kind of writing task; however, not all gifted writers like this have the interests for all writing genres (Pezé, Janssen, Rijlaarsdam & Weijen, 2021). Some writers may be interested in creative forms like storytelling, drama scripts, or artistic poetry, while others prefer academic-based writing that reflects their professional expertise—such as authoring educational books or conducting research (Pezé et al., 2021; Randolph, 2023). Writing, commonly, comes with skills, on top of just natural talent (Nejad et al., 2022). Hence, every writer needs strong language skills—including grammatical accuracy and syntactic competence, and the ability to express ideas logically and clearly—as well as critical thinking skills, such as the ability to construct arguments and to anticipate counterpoints (Nejad et al., 2022).

While some writers may have innate passion, ability, and skills for writing, many are still uncertain about working on a given writing task (Anaktototy et al., 2023). Naturally, this group of people may seek ways to improve their writing to fulfill their responsibilities; however, others may see the task as burdening and difficult (Smedt et al., 2018; Alsariera & Alsarairah, 2024). Individuals who have issues with writing may see the writing task with a number of challenges that may hinder their initial effort (Anaktototy et al., 2023). Hence, these individuals should require some form of motivation to initiate writing and stay connected to the task without

encountering more issues (Alves-Wold et al., 2024). This is fairly a common practice, but to some individuals, the motivation that they possess may quickly fade away when they encounter interference, disappointment, or cognitive blocks (Anaktototy et al., 2023). Motivation regularly worsens when people feel puzzled (Smedt et al., 2018). Moreover, Smedt et al. (2018) also mentioned that the initial drives may be hindered when these individuals fail to recognize the relevance of a given task or doubt their ability to perform it effectively. This situation demonstrates that these individuals do not see the purpose and the value of the given writing tasks. It is basically the psychological effect which stops a person from understanding their own potential. This scenario can become a serious issue because it may lead to frustration or dissatisfaction throughout their life journey. To remedy such issues, individuals need a clear vision of their chosen path and need to know how to completely commit to the task given (Abdolrezapour et al., 2023). The next stage, which is also highlighted by Abdolrezapour et al. (2023), involves nurturing the belief that they are able to fulfill the task successfully. The self-assurance that they develop can strengthen their confidence naturally (Sabti et al., 2019).

This motivational paradigm is observed to relate to one of the educational psychology and motivation theories—the ‘expectancy-value approach’ theory. It is about how individuals’ motivation to engage in a task is shaped by two key components: (1) expectancy and (2) value. Expectancy is related to one’s belief about his or her ability to succeed in a task, and value is related to the understanding of the importance or usefulness of the task carried out (Shang, Moss & Chen, 2022). Cost-related factors on the other hand are the factors that influence learners’ motivation that can affect their performance positively or negatively (Wu & Corpus, 2023).

Problem Statement

In most cases, writing requires some skills and training (Nückles, Roelle, Glogger-Frey, Waldeyer & Renkl, 2020). Jiang (2025) agrees that the ability to write and be skillful is influenced by one’s perseverance and determination. This writing proficiency can develop a person in many ways. For example, it improves one’s critical thinking, which helps people to organize complex ideas when delivering messages (Murtadho, 2021); it enhances communication skills by clearly expressing the ideas through written forms (Nückles et al., 2020); and Nückles et al. (2020) also mentioned that writing boosts self-confidence as individuals can plan their thoughts (on paper) beforehand and learn to share their perspectives with precision. It is indeed an effort and a good start for people, especially learners, to become familiar with syntactic structure rules, and later, to master writing skills (Larsson & Kaatari, 2020). Murtadho (2021) hence highlighted that writing not only helps in completing college assignments, but also it prepares everyone to communicate successfully—professionally or socially.

However, the struggle to improve and to master writing skills may affect some writers emotionally (Nurkamto, Prihandoko, Putro & Purwati, 2024; Sun, Motevalli & Chan, 2024). This is because, Nurkamto et al., (2024) mentioned that writers may have the fear of producing the writing piece with errors—without appropriate linguistics skills—because errors made in the sentence structures can often lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation amongst readers. It can become one of the main concerns because it undermines the major outcomes the writers aim to achieve (Nurkamto et al., 2024). Hence, it is important to instill the understanding of how to value writing skills and why it is essential to develop the skills (Wilby, 2020). With this clear view, Wilby (2020) added that it is also significant to guide the learners to have the belief that they can master the skills through effort put forth and with instructor’s guidance. Without adequate motivation to improve themselves and a clear understanding about their belief and ability, learners might lose interest in writing (Wilby, 2020). Sabti et al. (2019) added that these unmotivated learners will perceive most writing tasks as very difficult and do not view writing as a skill that they can learn and manage. Learners who are not motivated may reduce the pace of their learning which can affect their study. These learners may hardly express their ideas or share their thoughts through writing without hesitation. If such issues remain unresolved, this problem may continue to hinder learners’ academic development. It also may limit learners’ potential and competence academically and professionally. To support academic development, motivation plays a crucial role in ensuring academic success (Sabti et al., 2019). It must be effectively promoted among learners to help them fully understand the purpose and value of engaging in such activities, for example, to master writing skills. This is because a student who believes in their ability to succeed (high expectancy) but perceives the task as irrelevant or unimportant (low value) is unlikely to feel motivated (Wang & Xue, 2022). Likewise, Wilby (2020) supported this statement by mentioning that even if a student recognizes the value of a task, a lack of confidence in their ability to perform it effectively can also diminish motivation.

Although previous studies have explored writing self-efficacy and anxiety in second language (L2) learning widely, over time, there is still a need to investigate the motivational dynamics that shape students' engagement with writing tasks and to relate to the negative perceptions towards writing tasks (Nagle, 2021). Specifically, this study aims to examine how students' beliefs about their writing ability and the perceived value of writing tasks influence their motivation to write (RO1 and RO2). In addition, it seeks to identify cost-related challenges—such as emotional strain, time constraints, and effort demands—that negatively affect students' motivation to enhance their writing skills (RO3).

The following research questions are to explore these issues in greater depth:

RQ1: How do beliefs about writing ability shape students' motivation to write?

RQ2: How does task value about writing shape students' motivation to write?

RQ3: What perceived cost-related factors negatively influence students' motivation to enhance their writing skills?

RQ4: Is there a relationship between students' MUET scores and their beliefs about writing ability?

RQ5: Is there a relationship between students' perception of their writing ability and students' perceived cost-related factors that influence writing motivation?

RQ6: Is there a relationship between students' beliefs about their writing ability and students' task value that influence writing motivation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) in Second Language Writing

Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) explains the motivational drive that learners experience when they are able to value certain tasks and to have confidence that they can manage to perform the task (Doménech-Betoret et al., 2017; Bergann et al., 2025). For instance, “expectancy” is the belief that they can perform the task successfully (Doménech-Betoret et al., 2017). It is significant to have such belief because Tang et al. (2023) also mentioned that learners are prone to be excited about completing the task, and to improve their performance and continue the task without pressure when they believe that the task given is manageable. Moreover, learners may be influenced to stay confident based on their previous learning experience (Bergann et al., 2025). For instance, when they used to receive positive feedback from their instructors or receive appropriate assistance and support from peers and family members, they would be motivated to perform the writing task more effectively (Wang & Xue, 2022). In contrast, if the task is overwhelming and burdening, learners are prone to withdraw from completing the task (Harshalatha & Sreenivasulu, 2024). In the L2 classroom instructions, L2 learners may face obstacles in their writing activities because they have to meet the demands of higher-level academic writing tasks (Harshalatha & Sreenivasulu, 2024). In particular, skills in report writing, critical response essays, or literature reviews can be particularly challenging to understand, and all these tasks require learners' passion and competence—as well as motivation to engage successfully with the given tasks (Li et al., 2024). Complementing this, learners should be exposed to the task value such as their future requirements and advantages so that they can foresee the relevance of carrying out certain tasks. Hence, fostering learners' belief and also by showing them the value and relevance of writing tasks are essential measures to help them engage with the writing tasks more meaningfully and productively, hence, can reduce the stress over the writing tasks.

L2 Writing and Motivation: Beliefs, Value, and Challenges

BELIEF: Although some individuals require some kind of drive to proceed with writing tasks and to remain active, some may not need it (Wilby, 2020). For the L2 users or learners, to write professionally (for work or for education purposes) and to cultivate passion for writing, motivation can be the pillar to this process (Alzubi & Nazim, 2024; Maung, Györi & Kálmán, 2025). Van Blankenstein, Saab, Van Der Rijst, Danel, Berg and Van Den Broek (2019) mentioned that having a strong belief about the ability to write well and effectively can build

confidence amongst people. This belief could possibly encourage most individuals to face challenges, and they will be determined to keep on writing (Teng, 2021). In addition, Teng (2021) adds that people are to cultivate their intrinsic motivation to write when they believe that the writing skills they possess are rewarding. This statement is supported by Maung et al. (2025) who also mentioned students can foresee the skills as beneficial not only for professional communication but also for their social interactions. Such conditions can help individuals remain motivated and manage the tasks effectively for longer periods of time (Teng, 2021). Believing that writing tasks are both manageable and part of one's academic responsibility can foster self-driven motivation, which in turn leads to more effective and professional task performance (Wilby, 2020).

VALUE: In addition, individuals are potentially more motivated when they understand that acquiring the writing skills can be meaningful for their academic goals, career attainment, or professional communication (Rahimi, 2024). Rahimi added that these individuals are motivated to continue mastering writing skills and completing the tasks given when they see the relevancy of performing them. Learners will try their best to improve themselves when they perceive the writing task as meaningful and beneficial (Eodice, Geller, & Lerner, 2017). In fact, intrinsic value is one important aspect in preparing learners to engage with the writing activities (Li, 2024). Li (2024) mentioned that learners are expected to feel and think that this writing task is an enjoyable activity. At the same time, they are aware that the task somehow will benefit them in the future (Eodice et al., 2017; Rahimi, 2024). In such a situation, it helps motivate the learners to proceed with the task willingly (Sabti et al., 2019; Li, 2024). Naturally, according to Sabti et al. (2019), learners will be energized to develop their confidence, and boost their motivation to continue writing without fear of failure. In addition, with the intrinsic value that the learners possess, writing activity becomes more exciting when learners can develop the idea that they can become skillful in that area. They foresee that with continued effort, they can become experts one day. This strong value influences learners' motivation to view writing activities as rewarding and fulfilling (Eodice et al., 2017).

CHALLENGES: Nevertheless, although learners are motivated to continue with the writing task and view it as rewarding, they may still face challenges during the process—it could be the emotional or environmental challenges (Sabti et al., 2019; Wu & Halim, 2024). Tabari and Goetze (2024) reported that learners may still have the potential to feel that their writing ability and skill are insufficient when given higher-order tasks. If learners find themselves lacking in writing skills, Tsao (2021) mentioned that their confidence level may decrease, and they will hardly achieve success. The next challenge is due to emotional obstacles when the individuals have negative experiences in the past (Sabti et al., 2019). For instance, learners might have failed to receive constructive feedback, received unclear instruction, or failed to receive proper guides on English grammar (Tsao, 2021). This situation may lead to a deterioration of self-efficacy (Tsao, 2021; Sabti et al., 2019). Another challenge is about how much time and effort are required to complete the writing tasks. Due to this, according to Li, Wei and Lu (2024), it becomes emotionally exhausting as learners hardly view the task as manageable and meaningful. To these learners, it is a pointless journey when the time spent is not worth it. Instead of worrying about the time and the completion of the task, learners may also come across the thought that the writing tasks are not important as they are not exposed to the relevancy of the tasks. Hence, learners will ignore the task completely (Li et al., 2024). Finally, learners may be reluctant to participate in writing tasks when the activities are inadequately planned and poorly designed (Li et al., 2024). Li et al., (2024) added that this situation can decrease their motivation and prevent them from recognizing the future benefits.

Past studies

Learners' Writing Motivation through the Lens of EVT

Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) serves as a robust theoretical framework for understanding the dynamics of learner motivation in various educational contexts, including second language (L2) writing. EVT posits that motivation is a function of two primary components: the expectations learners have regarding their success in a task and the value they attach to that task. This framework has been applied to elucidate writing motivation, revealing how both expectancies and values influence L2 learners' engagement and performance.

Rosenzweig et al. (2019) provide a comprehensive overview of how expectancy-value constructs inform student motivation and learning outcomes. They argue that learners who possess positive expectations about their writing

capabilities—such as confidence in their ability to express ideas effectively—are more likely to invest effort in writing tasks. This aligns with research indicating that when students anticipate success, they tend to adopt proactive learning strategies, leading to improved writing skills. Furthermore, Rosenzweig and colleagues underscore the importance of the perceived value of writing. They suggest that students motivated by intrinsic factors (e.g., interest in writing) and extrinsic factors (e.g., recognition or grades) are more likely to excel in their writing endeavours. Such insights imply that fostering both high expectancies and strong values surrounding writing can be crucial for enhancing learners' motivation.

Building on this foundation, Anthony et al. (2025) explore the applications of EVT in promoting motivated behaviour in various cognitive tasks, including writing. Their findings suggest that targeted interventions designed to enhance learners' expectancies—such as providing constructive feedback and setting achievable writing goals—can significantly boost their motivation to engage in writing activities. The authors highlight that creating a supportive learning environment that acknowledges different levels of writing proficiency can further reinforce students' motivation by making them feel capable and valued. This suggests that instructional strategies grounded in EVT could be instrumental in motivating L2 learners to pursue mastery in writing.

Additionally, Xu (2022) provides a nuanced perspective by investigating the motivations behind students' preparation for high-stakes writing assessments through the lens of EVT. The study reveals that learners' motivation to prepare for writing tests is not only influenced by their expectancies but also by their interpretations of the value associated with achieving specific goals (e.g., passing a test versus mastering writing skills). This highlights the potential conflict between goal-oriented motivation and intrinsic motivation, suggesting that learners might engage in strategic behaviours that prioritize short-term success over deep engagement with the writing process. Xu's findings emphasize the importance of aligning instructional goals with learners' intrinsic values, thereby promoting a more holistic approach to writing education.

In summary, the literature reinforces the critical role of Expectancy-Value Theory in understanding L2 learners' writing motivation. By recognizing the interplay of expectancies and values, educators can better support students in developing motivation that leads to sustained engagement and mastery in writing. Interventions aimed at enhancing learners' confidence and attributing significant value to writing tasks will likely foster a more motivated learner, ultimately facilitating their path to writing proficiency.

Learners' Writing Demotivation through the Lens of EVT

Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT) is a framework for understanding students' motivation and can effectively shed light on the phenomenon of writing demotivation among learners. Essentially, EVT posits that individuals' motivation is influenced by their expectations of success and the value they place on the task at hand. When applied to writing, this theory reveals critical insights into why some learners may develop a lack of interest or motivation towards writing tasks.

Rosenzweig, Wigfield, and Eccles (2019) delve into the components of EVT, emphasizing that both expectancy beliefs and task values play pivotal roles in shaping students' motivation and overall academic engagement. When applied to writing, learners may struggle with low expectancy beliefs—meaning they doubt their writing abilities or anticipate poor outcomes. Such doubts can stem from previous negative experiences with writing, such as receiving unfavourable feedback or encountering challenges in articulating ideas. When students feel they have little chance of succeeding in writing, their motivation to engage deeply in writing tasks diminishes, leading to demotivation.

Moreover, the value aspect of EVT is equally crucial. If learners do not see writing as valuable—either because they fail to recognize its relevance to their personal or professional lives, or due to a lack of intrinsic interest—they are less likely to invest effort into improving their writing skills. This aligns with Anthony et al. (2025), who discuss how understanding and enhancing task values can significantly impact motivation. They argue that creating meaningful connections to writing tasks and demonstrating their relevance can help shift learners' perceptions, making them more inclined to engage with their writing. Without such relevance, writing becomes a chore rather than a valuable skill, further exacerbating feelings of demotivation.

Additionally, the interplay between expectancy and value highlights a crucial dynamic: low expectancies combined with low value can create a sense of futility amongst learners. When students believe that they will fail to succeed and simultaneously perceive writing as unimportant or boring, their motivation can plummet. This duality of expectation and value aligns with common experiences in educational settings and underscores the necessity for interventions that specifically target both factors.

Given the insights from Rosenzweig et al. (2019) and Anthony et al. (2025), it is clear that addressing writing demotivation requires a dual approach. Educators can foster higher expectancies through targeted support, constructive feedback, and skill-building opportunities, thereby helping learners build confidence in their writing capabilities. Concurrently, instructors should enhance the perceived value of writing through engaging assignments, real-world applications, and personal relevance, making writing tasks feel meaningful and worthwhile.

In summary, analysing learners' writing demotivation through the lens of Expectancy-Value Theory underscores the importance of both expectancies and task values. By understanding and addressing these interrelated components, educators can create an environment that promotes motivation and facilitates greater engagement in writing tasks, ultimately leading to improved writing outcomes.

Conceptual frame

This study adapts Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT)—developed by Jacquelynne Eccles and Allan Wigfield, in the 1980s—that explores L2 learners' motivation (the beliefs and task value) and the challenges to write (Wang & Xue, 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024). This theory exposes three key concepts that affect learners' motivation: (1) Expectancy, (2) Value, and (3) Cost (Wang & Xue, 2022). In practice, the whole concept revolves around how confident students feel about their writing ability (the belief), how important and relevant the skills are for them (the relevance), and what the challenges are that prevent them from performing the task (the cost). Students are more likely to progress actively and sharpen their writing skills when they feel confident in their abilities and recognize the significance and benefits of writing. However, if they perceive writing as very challenging, demanding, or emotionally exhausting, they may abandon the task—even when they understand its significance. By integrating these components, the framework points out a foundation to investigate L2 learners' motivational beliefs and values, as well as the obstacles they perceive in academic writing. This understanding can support the creation of practical, learner-centered approaches that build confidence, highlight relevance, and promote perseverance.

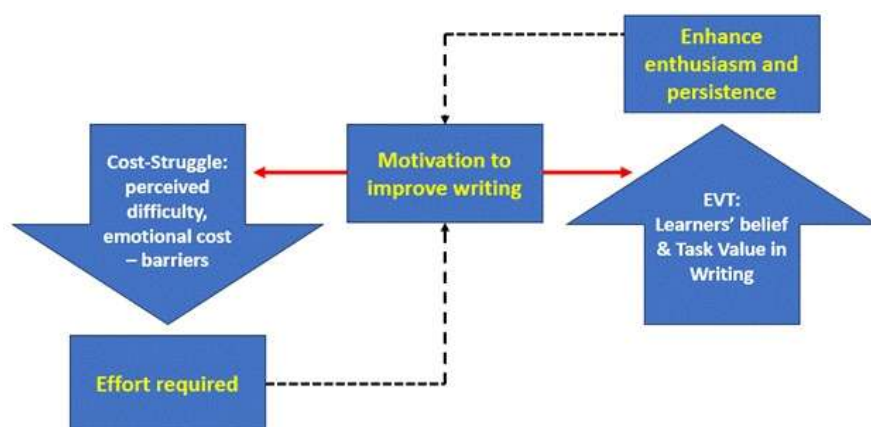


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study: Mapping Students' Belief, Task Value and Cost-Struggle of the Writing Tasks that Shape their Writing Motivation

With reference to figure 1 above, the researcher seeks to explore the relationship between;

- students' perception of their writing ability and their perceived cost-related factors that influence writing motivation,
- students' beliefs about their writing ability and students' task value that influence writing motivation

METHODOLOGY

This study in the form of a survey was administered to 224 bachelor degree students from one public university in Selangor, Malaysia. The population of this study comprised 535 students from semester one to six of undergraduate students from the English for Professional Communication program. Referring to the sample size determination table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), that much population with a confidence level of 95% requires the number of responses to be 224 respondents. The quantitative data was collected using a Likert-type survey: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree. The survey questionnaire, which focuses on learners' writing motivation (beliefs and values) and their challenges based on EVT theory, consists of sections that represent (1) participants' demographic profile; and (2) survey on research questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

The survey items were adapted from studies by Bruning et al. (2013), Teng et al. (2018), Cheng (2004), Wigfield & Eccles (2000) and Graham et al. (2022). The relevant content and survey items were chosen and modified to cater to the purpose of this study and to complement the research questions. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents online. The data was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 29 (SPSS v29), and the results were reported in the form of tables presenting the mean, standard deviation and correlation using Pearson Correlation. Cronbach analysis for the survey shows .881, thus showing high internal reliability; refer to Table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha: Reliability Statistics

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

	N	%
Cases Valid	224	100.0
Excluded ^a	0	.0
Total	224	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.881	36

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Table 2: Distribution of Items in the Survey

No	Items	Clusters	No of Items
1	Demographic Profiles	Gender Semester MUET Writing Scores Perceived Writing Skills	
2	Expectancy Beliefs (Writing Ability)		12
3	Task Value of Writing	Interest Value Utility Value Attainment Value Other Value	3 3 3 3
4	Perceived Cost of Writing	Effort Cost Psychological Cost (Anxiety / Fear) Opportunity Cost General Cost	3 3 3 3
	TOTAL:		36

Table 2 shows the distribution of items in the survey. The first section is the Demographic Profile requires the participants to respond to their Gender, which Semester they are in, their MUET Writing Scores and their Perceived Writing Scores. The next sections were to seek participants' belief about their writing ability, task value of writing, and finally, their perceived cost of writing.

Demographic Analysis

Findings for Demographic Profile

Table 3: Gender

Gender		
	N	%
Male	52	23.2%
Female	172	76.8%

Table 4: Semester

Semester		
	N	%
Sem1&2	177	79.0%
Sem 3&4	42	18.8%
Sem 5&6	5	2.2%

Table 5: MUET Scores

Muet		
	N	%
4	161	71.9%
4.5	49	21.9%
5	10	4.5%
5.5	4	1.8%

Table 6: Student's Perceived Writing Skill

PercWritingSkill		
	N	%
Weak	3	1.3%
Average	118	52.7%
Good	96	42.9%
Very Good	7	3.1%

Based on table 3, table 4, table 5, and table 6, a total of 224 students from one public university in Shah Alam, Selangor, enrolled in the Applied Language Studies (English for Professional Communication) program have participated in the study. The participants comprised 23.2% male students and 76.8% female students. Majority of the participants were from Semester one and two (79%), followed by Semester three and four (18.8%), and the least is from Semester five and six (2.2%). For the MUET achievement, 71.9% of the participants scored Band 4, 21.9% scored Band 4.5, 4.5% scored Band 5, and 1.8% scored Band 5.5. Finally, for students' self-perceptions on their writing ability, 1.3% responded that they are weak, 52.7% responded as average, 42.9% responded as good, and 3.1% responded that they are very good.

Descriptive Statistics

Findings for RQ1, RQ2 and RQ3

This section presents data to answer research question 1 (*How do beliefs about writing ability shape students' motivation to write?*)

Table 7: Beliefs about writing ability shape students' motivation to write

Item No.	Questionnaire Item	Mean (M)	SD
EBq1	I believe I can write a well-organized paragraph in English.	3.68	.872
EBq2	I am confident in my ability to express my ideas clearly in writing.	3.67	.829
EBq3	I can use appropriate grammar when writing in English.	3.49	.711
EBq4	I can choose suitable vocabulary when writing essays or paragraphs.	3.68	.823
EBq5	I can revise my writing to improve clarity and coherence.	3.73	.822
EBq6	I believe I can complete most writing tasks successfully.	3.72	.781
EBq7	I believe I can improve my writing skills with practice.	4.32	.711
EBq8	I can generate ideas easily when writing in English.	3.74	.823
EBq9	I am confident that I can perform well in writing assignments.	3.53	.872
EBq10	I believe I can organize my ideas logically in writing.	3.69	.823
EBq11	I feel capable of completing challenging writing tasks.	3.47	.829
EBq12	I believe I have the ability to become a good writer in English.	3.60	.829

Research Question 1 (RQ1) examined students' expectancy belief of their writing ability, the mean scores ranged from 3.47 (SD: .786) to 4.32 (SD: .736). This is to show that students have positive beliefs about their writing skills. The highest mean is 4.32 (SD: .736) for item EBq7 (I believe I can improve my writing skills with practice) which demonstrates that students strongly agree they are able to improve their writing skills when they are given the opportunity to do practices. They have the confidence in self-improvement as they value the practice as a key to improve. However, the lowest mean is 3.47 (SD: .786) for item EBq11 which suggests students were not very sure of their ability and worried to handle if they are given complex writing assignments. The next findings will show the mean scores that reflected more beliefs about students' writing skills. For item EBq8, the mean score is the second highest (M=3.74; SD: .823), which shows that students are confident to generate ideas and they should not have issues to initiate any writing task given. The third highest mean score (M=3.73; SD: .822) is for item EBq5. This demonstrates the positive effort about revising work and also to show that the students have some existing skills to check on their work for improvement. The next mean score is the fourth highest (M=3.72; SD: .781) which is about the belief that students will complete most writing tasks successfully. This shows that students have solid confidence in handling their writing task though not as strong as their belief in improvement through practices. For item EBq10, the mean score is M=3.69 (SD: .823) which is the fifth highest. This suggests that some students have the ability to structure their writing and are able to arrange their ideas into paragraphs consistently. This finding correlates to the next item EBq1 with mean score M=3.68 (SD: .872). Though this finding demonstrates students' ability in organizing their paragraphs, the mean score suggests that some students may have struggled to organize their ideas when completing English writing assignments. The next findings which are at the sixth and the seventh highest mean (EBq4, M = 3.68; SD = .823, and EBq2, M = 3.67; SD = .829) reveal that some students have the confidence in their lexical choice and to express ideas clearly in writing. This strength allows students to write effectively. However, based on the mean score, it can be determined that not many students have such ability. The next items scored lower means—(EBq12, M= 3.60; SD: .829); (EBq9, M= 3.53; SD: .872); and (EBq3, M= 3.49; SD: .711), indicating that though there are potentials amongst the students to foresee their long-term writing potential, some are not convinced of their competency to achieve the goal. Some students also are not confident when given formal writing assessments and do not see their best ability when asked about their grammar competency. In brief, the results show that

students are observed to have positive outcomes about their belief in their writing skills; hence the findings provide the idea that practices are the main concern to develop better writing skills. However, there are also students who lack confidence in grammar proficiency, formal assessments, and challenging writing tasks that can motivate them to continue writing.

This section presents data to answer research question 2 (*How does task value about writing shape students' motivation to write?*)

Below are the means for each component under RQ2. It is divided into 4 areas = INTEREST, UTILITY, ATTAINMENT AND OTHERS.

Table 8: Mean Scores for Each Item for 'Interest', 'Utility', 'Attainment' and 'Other Task Values

Category	Item No.	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Interest Value (TVI)	1	I enjoy writing because it allows me to express my thoughts and ideas.	4.11	0.815
	2	I find writing activities interesting and engaging.	3.88	0.888
	3	Writing gives me satisfaction when I complete a piece of work.	4.05	0.895
Utility Value (TVU)	4	Writing skills are important for my academic success.	4.36	0.750
	5	Writing skills will be useful for my future career.	4.26	0.802
	6	Writing helps me improve my grammar and language skills.	4.34	0.752
Attainment Value (TVA)	7	Writing reflects my abilities as a student.	4.28	0.783
	8	Doing well in writing tasks is personally meaningful to me.	4.31	0.797
	9	I want to become a better writer because it is an important skill.	4.25	0.820
Other Value (TVO)	10	Writing helps me share my ideas and experiences with others.	4.23	0.814
	11	Writing activities help me develop my thinking skills.	4.31	0.752
	12	Learning to write well in English is valuable for my future.	4.38	0.737

Table 9: Mean Scores of the 4 clusters - 'Interest', 'Utility', 'Attainment' and 'Other Task Values

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TVI_Mean	224	1.00	5.00	4.0134	.76763
TVU_Mean	224	1.00	5.00	4.3199	.69256
TVA_Mean	224	1.00	5.00	4.2783	.72361
TVO_Mean	224	1.00	5.00	4.3095	.69908
Valid N (listwise)	224				

The descriptive analysis for Research Question 2 (RQ2) examined students' task value about writing across the four clusters that is (1) Interest, (2) Utility, (3) Attainment and (4) Other Task Values. Based on table 8 and table 9, the mean scores ranged from 4.01 (SD: .768) to 4.32 (SD: .693). This indicates that students have positive perceptions of the value of their writing tasks and skills which motivate them to continue writing. The highest mean (M=4.32; SD: .693) was for TVU items (Utility value). This suggests that students agreed about fulfilling writing tasks as these efforts are beneficial for their whole academic attainment—focusing on mastering

language skills, and meaningful for their future career. Next, TVO items (Other value) mean ($M=4.31$; $SD: .699$) and TVA (Attainment value) mean ($M=4.28$; $SD: .724$), both recorded slightly lower mean compared to TVU which suggested that students still value their writing skills and tasks as significant to their life because believing in their own ability, being proud of their achievement, being able to share experience with people by writing, and developing their cognitive skills are self-fulfilling. This reflects how important the achievement is to them which in the end, relates to their future goals. Finally, the lowest mean was for TVI items (Interest value)— $M=4.01$; $SD: .768$). This shows that students have the feeling about appreciating their practical and achievement aspects more than the enjoyment itself. Hence, this finding reveals that students' motivation in writing tasks is shaped by the usefulness of the task and the importance of the activity in comparison to putting on top value of their personal interest.

This section presents the findings to answer Research Question 3: (*What perceived cost-related factors negatively influence students' motivation to enhance their writing skills?*)

In the context of this study, cost-related factors are examined through four clusters: effort cost, psychological cost, opportunity cost, and general cost.

Table 10: Mean Scores of 'Cost-Related' Factors

Category	Item No.	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Effort Cost (CRE)	1	Writing tasks require too much time and effort.	3.25	0.905
	2	Writing assignments feels mentally exhausting.	2.98	1.011
	3	Writing tasks require more effort than other subjects.	3.11	1.058
Psychological Cost (Anxiety / Fear) (CRP)	4	I worry that my writing will be judged negatively by others.	3.55	1.201
	5	I feel nervous when my teacher evaluates my writing.	3.80	1.015
	6	I lack confidence when completing writing assignments.	3.19	1.077
Opportunity Cost (CRO)	7	Writing assignments takes time away from other subjects.	2.91	1.022
	8	Writing tasks reduce the time I have for leisure activities.	2.73	1.043
	9	I feel stressed when I have multiple writing tasks at the same time.	3.37	1.141
General Cost (CRG)	10	I often procrastinate on writing assignments because they feel overwhelming.	3.12	1.118
	11	Writing assignments interfere with my ability to focus on other work.	2.73	1.047
	12	Writing tasks sometimes make learning English less enjoyable.	2.33	1.074

Table 10 presents the mean scores and standard deviations of the cost-related factors perceived by the respondents. Among the effort-related factors, the highest mean score was recorded for the statement "*Writing tasks require too much time and effort*" ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.905$), indicating that respondents perceived writing tasks as demanding in terms of time and energy. Meanwhile, the statement "*Writing assignments feel mentally exhausting*" obtained a moderate mean score ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 1.011$), suggesting that although respondents experienced some mental burden, the level of exhaustion varied among learners.

For psychological cost, the findings indicate that anxiety and fear were noticeable concerns among respondents. The statement *"I feel nervous when my teacher evaluates my writing"* recorded the highest mean score among all items ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 1.015$). This was followed by *"I worry that my writing will be judged negatively by others"* ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.201$). These results suggest that evaluation-related anxiety and fear of negative judgment may influence students' willingness to engage in writing activities. The item related to lack of confidence in completing writing assignments showed a moderate mean score ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.077$).

Regarding general cost, respondents demonstrated moderate levels of negative perceptions towards writing tasks. The statement *"I often procrastinate on writing assignments because they feel overwhelming"* recorded a mean score of 3.12 ($SD = 1.118$). However, the statement *"Writing tasks sometimes make learning English less enjoyable"* showed the lowest mean score across all cost-related items ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 1.074$), suggesting that respondents generally continued to maintain a positive perception towards English learning despite experiencing certain challenges.

Overall, the findings show that psychological cost, particularly anxiety related to writing evaluation, emerged as the most prominent cost-related factor affecting students' motivation to improve their writing skills. This was followed by effort-related challenges associated with time demands and workload.

Below are the mean scores amongst the 4 clusters - EFFORT, PSYCHOLOGICAL, OPPORTUNITY AND GENERAL COSTS

Table 11: Mean Scores of the 4 clusters - Effort, Psychological, Opportunity and General Costs

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CRe_mean	224	1	5	3.11	.837
CRp_mean	224	1	5	3.51	.973
CRO_mean	224	1	5	3.00	.890
CRg_mean	224	1	5	2.72	.926
Valid N (listwise)	224				

Table 11 presents the descriptive statistics for the four cost clusters based on responses from 224 participants. Among the four clusters, Psychological Cost recorded the highest mean score ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 0.973$), followed by Effort Cost ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.837$) and Opportunity Cost ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.890$). General Cost had the lowest mean score ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 0.926$). The results suggest that, on average, respondents perceived Psychological Cost as the most prominent, while General Cost was perceived to be the least significant among the four cost dimensions.

Correlation

Findings for RQ4, RQ5 and RQ6

Exploratory Statistics

With reference to figure 1, the researchers seek to explore the relationship between;

- students' MUET scores and their beliefs about writing ability,
- students' perception of their writing ability and their perceived cost-related factors that influence writing motivation,
- students' beliefs about their writing ability and students' task value that influence writing motivation.

According to He (2024), correlation is a statistical technique that shows how strongly two variables are related to each other or the degree of association between the two. It's a tool for describing simple relationships without making a statement about cause and effect. This section presents data to answer research questions on correlation.

To determine if there is a significant relationship in the mean scores—between Muet scores and beliefs, students' writing ability and cost-related factors, and students' beliefs and task value—data is analyzed using SPSS (Pearson's) for correlations.

This section presents data to answer research questions 4, 5 and 6.

Correlation between learners' MUET scores and their beliefs about writing ability:

Table 12: Correlation between MUET scores and RQ1 (Learners' beliefs about writing ability)

Correlations			
		Muet	EB
Muet	Pearson Correlation	1	.159*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.017
	N	224	224
EB	Pearson Correlation	.159*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	
	N	224	224

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 12, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between MUET scores and learners' beliefs about writing ability (EB), based on a sample of 224 respondents (RQ4). MUET (Malaysian University English Test) is Malaysia's official English language proficiency test, administered by the Malaysian Examinations Council (MPM). It is compulsory for admission into public universities and widely recognized for academic and professional purposes. The results indicated a statistically significant, positive correlation between the two variables, $r(224) = .159$, $p = .017$. Although the correlation coefficient is weak, the significance at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) suggests that learners with higher MUET scores tended to report more positive beliefs about their writing ability. This implies a modest relationship between actual English proficiency, as measured by MUET, and students' self-perceived writing competence.

Correlation between Students Perceive Writing and learners perceived cost-related factors that influence writing motivation:

Table 13: Correlation between Students Perceive Writing and RQ3 (Learners perceived cost-related factors that influence writing motivation)

Correlations			
		PercWritingSkill	CR_Mean
PercWritingSkill	Pearson Correlation	1	-.264**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	224	224
CR_Mean	Pearson Correlation	-.264**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	224	224

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between students' perceived writing skill and learners' perceived cost-related factors influencing writing motivation among the respondents (RQ5). Based on Table 13, the results revealed a statistically significant, negative correlation between the two variables, $r(224) = -.264$, $p < .001$. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This finding indicates that as students reported higher perceived costs associated with writing, their perceived writing skill tended to be lower. In other words, greater perceived effort, psychological, opportunity, or general costs were associated with weaker self-perceptions of writing ability.

Correlation between learners' beliefs about writing ability that shape their motivation to write and learners task value:

Table 14: Correlation between RQ1 (Learners' beliefs about writing ability shape their motivation to write) and RQ2 (Learners' task value about writing)

Correlations			
		EB_Mean	TV_Mean
EB_Mean	Pearson Correlation	1	.583**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	224	224
TV_Mean	Pearson Correlation	.583**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	224	224

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings for RQ 6, using the Pearson correlation analysis, demonstrated a moderately strong correlation. Based on table 14, it shows a statistically significant positive relationship between learners' belief about their writing skills and their perceived task value of writing; $r(224) = .583$, $p < .001$. This result suggests that learners who believe that they can write well will also be able to foresee the benefits of acquiring and mastering writing skills. When the learners have confidence about their writing competency, they will instil the thought that these writing tasks are meaningful to them for academic pursuance and for their career development in the future. It is observed that the relationship between the learners' confidence and belief about their writing proficiency and how they foresee the benefits of mastering writing skills does heighten their motivation to sustain writing activities. When they believe that they are able to write effectively, they will view the task as valuable which can help them to achieve success academically and professionally. This result is aligned with study by Wang and Xue (2022) when they found that learners who believe in writing competence do value their writing tasks. The confidence the learners possess helps them to see writing as a meaningful task and it will be useful for their future goals. This current result, hence, concludes that learners' engagement to the writing tasks is likely based on their confidence in writing and their sense of value towards the writing tasks.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary of Findings and Discussions

This study investigated students' writing motivation through the lens of Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT), focusing on three motivational dimensions: learners' beliefs about their writing ability, perceived value of writing tasks, and cost-related challenges that may influence their motivation to improve writing skills. Overall, the findings demonstrate that students' motivation to engage in English writing is shaped by the interaction between confidence, perceived usefulness, and the challenges experienced during the writing process. This finding supports the principles of EVT, which explains that learners' motivation is influenced by their expectations of success and the value they attach to a particular task (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000; Rosenzweig et al., 2019). In language learning contexts, learners are more likely to engage in writing activities when they believe they can perform successfully and understand the relevance of the task (Wang & Xue, 2022).

Learners' Beliefs about Writing Ability and Writing Motivation

The findings for Research Question 1 revealed that students generally possessed positive beliefs about their writing ability. The highest mean score was found for the belief that writing skills can be improved through practice, suggesting that students recognize the importance of continuous effort in developing writing competence. This indicates that learners perceive writing ability as a skill that can be developed rather than a fixed ability. Such a perception is important because learners who believe improvement is possible are more likely to demonstrate persistence and maintain engagement in writing activities (Teng, 2021).

This finding reflects the expectancy component of EVT, where learners' motivation is influenced by their confidence in completing a task successfully (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Students who believe that they can improve through practice may be more willing to invest effort because they expect their effort to contribute to better outcomes. Similar findings have been reported by Van Blankenstein et al. (2019), who found that stronger self-efficacy beliefs in academic writing contribute to greater confidence and engagement among learners.

However, the lower mean scores related to completing challenging writing tasks, grammar competency, and formal writing assessments indicate that some students still experience uncertainty when facing more demanding writing situations. This suggests that although students generally have positive perceptions of their ability, their confidence may decrease when tasks require higher-level writing skills. This finding is consistent with Tabari and Goetze (2024), who highlighted that task complexity and anxiety may influence learners' self-efficacy and written production. Therefore, writing instruction should not only focus on improving writing performance but also strengthening learners' confidence through guided practice, constructive feedback, and gradual exposure to complex writing activities (Anthony et al., 2025).

Task Value and Students' Motivation to Write

The findings for Research Question 2 showed that students placed high value on writing tasks. Among the four dimensions of task value, utility value recorded the highest mean score, suggesting that students mainly viewed writing as important because of its usefulness for academic success, language development, and future career needs. This indicates that students' motivation is strongly connected to their understanding of the practical benefits of writing proficiency.

This finding supports previous research which emphasizes that learners become more motivated when they recognize the relevance and usefulness of a learning activity (Eodice et al., 2017; Rahimi, 2024). In higher education contexts, students often engage in writing because they understand that writing skills contribute to academic achievement and professional communication. The strong utility value found in this study reflects students' awareness that writing competence is essential beyond classroom requirements.

Interestingly, interest value recorded the lowest mean among the four dimensions, suggesting that students may appreciate writing more for its usefulness and importance rather than enjoyment alone. This finding indicates that students' motivation may be more extrinsically driven by academic and career goals. Nevertheless, intrinsic value remains important because learners who experience satisfaction and enjoyment in writing are more likely to sustain their engagement (Li, 2024). Therefore, instructors may enhance writing motivation by designing meaningful writing activities connected to authentic communication, workplace contexts, and students' future goals (Rahimi, 2024).

Cost-Related Factors Affecting Writing Motivation

The findings for Research Question 3 revealed that psychological cost was the strongest perceived challenge among students, followed by effort cost, opportunity cost, and general cost. In particular, students reported feeling nervous when their writing was evaluated by teachers and worried about negative judgment from others. This highlights that emotional factors significantly influence learners' willingness to engage in writing activities.

The findings support the cost component of EVT, which suggests that learners consider not only the benefits of a task but also the negative experiences and demands associated with completing it (Eccles & Wigfield, 2024). Even when learners recognize writing as valuable, anxiety and fear of failure may reduce their motivation to participate actively. Previous studies have also found that writing anxiety and low confidence can negatively affect students' writing engagement and performance (Sabti et al., 2019).

The moderate level of effort cost further indicates that students perceive writing as a demanding process requiring considerable time and mental energy. Academic writing involves planning, organizing ideas, language selection, revising, and editing, which may increase learners' cognitive demands (Li et al., 2024). However, the lower general cost score suggests that students still maintain a positive perception towards English learning despite experiencing certain difficulties.

These findings highlight the importance of reducing unnecessary psychological barriers in writing classrooms. Teachers may minimize students' anxiety by providing clear instructions, encouraging revision practices, and emphasizing writing development rather than focusing only on errors. Such strategies may strengthen learners' confidence and help them perceive writing as a manageable process (Tsao, 2021).

Relationship between Writing Ability Beliefs, Task Value, and Cost Factors

The correlation findings further explain the interaction between motivational components. The significant positive relationship between MUET scores and students' beliefs about writing ability indicates that students with higher English proficiency tend to demonstrate stronger confidence in their writing competence. Although the relationship was weak, it suggests that language proficiency contributes to learners' self-perceptions. This finding supports previous studies which highlight the connection between self-efficacy and academic performance (Doménech-Betoret et al., 2017).

The negative relationship between perceived writing ability and cost-related factors indicates that students who perceive greater challenges tend to have weaker confidence in their writing skills. This finding demonstrates the relationship between expectancy and cost in EVT. When learners experience high levels of anxiety, effort demands, or competing responsibilities, they may develop doubts about their ability to succeed (Wu & Corpus, 2023).

Meanwhile, the significant positive relationship between writing ability beliefs and task value suggests that confidence and perceived value reinforce each other. Students who believe they can write effectively are more likely to recognize writing as meaningful and beneficial. This finding aligns with Wang and Xue (2022), who explained that learners' confidence in their abilities contributes to their recognition of the value and importance of learning tasks.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that writing motivation is not influenced by a single factor. Instead, students' willingness to improve their writing skills depends on their confidence, their understanding of writing's benefits, and their perceptions of the challenges involved. This supports the EVT framework, which views motivation as the result of the interaction between expectancy, value, and cost (Eccles & Wigfield, 2024).

Summary

In summary, this study shows that students generally demonstrate positive motivation towards English writing. Their motivation is strengthened by confidence in improvement, awareness of writing's usefulness, and recognition of its importance for future goals. Nevertheless, psychological challenges such as evaluation anxiety and uncertainty in completing complex writing tasks remain important barriers. Through an EVT perspective, improving writing motivation requires a balanced approach that develops learners' confidence, strengthens their understanding of writing value, and reduces psychological and effort-related costs (Anthony et al., 2025; Wang & Xue, 2022).

Conclusion

This study examined students' English writing motivation through the lens of Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT), focusing on expectancy [beliefs about writing ability], value [task value], and cost. Students generally held positive beliefs about their writing ability, especially the belief that writing can be improved through practice. This reflects the expectancy component of EVT and suggests learners view writing as a developable skill rather than a fixed trait. Among the four task value dimensions, utility value was highest. Students viewed writing as important for academic success, language development, and future career goals, indicating their motivation is largely extrinsically driven. Interest value was lowest, suggesting enjoyment plays a smaller role than perceived benefits. Psychological cost was the most prominent challenge, with students reporting nervousness and fear of negative evaluation. Effort cost was also moderate, reflecting the demanding nature of academic writing. This supports EVT's cost component that perceived challenges can reduce motivation even when writing is seen as valuable.

The correlation results showed a weak but significant positive link between MUET proficiency and writing ability beliefs, a significant negative relationship between perceived writing skill and cost factors and a significant positive relationship between writing ability beliefs and task value. This confirms that expectancy, value, and cost interact to shape writing motivation. In summary, students are motivated to write when they feel confident in their ability to improve, recognize the practical value of writing, and face fewer psychological and effort-related barriers.

Pedagogical Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

The findings suggest that ESL writing instruction should go beyond teaching language forms and address students' motivation through three key areas:

Strengthen Learners' Expectancy / Writing Self-Efficacy

Instructors should scaffold complex writing by breaking academic tasks into smaller stages like planning, drafting, revising so that students experience success early. This is because students had positive beliefs that writing can improve with practice, but lower confidence in challenging tasks and formal assessments. Instructors can also provide process-oriented feedback by emphasising improvement and effort rather than only errors, to reduce fear of negative evaluation and build persistence. Furthermore, instructors can model improvement by sharing examples of how writing develops through revision, reinforcing the idea that ability is malleable (Teng, 2021).

Enhance Task Value, Especially Interest Value

Students showed high utility value but low interest value. This means they write because it's "useful," not because they enjoy it. Hence, instructors can connect writing to real-world goals by using authentic tasks such as emails, reports, proposals, or digital portfolios linked to students' future careers. They can also Increase intrinsic engagement by incorporating choice, personal topics, collaborative writing, or reflective blogs to make writing more meaningful and enjoyable. They can also make relevance explicit by regularly explaining why a writing skill matters for university and workplace communication, to maintain strong utility value (Rahimi, 2024).

Reduce Cost-Related Barriers to Participation

Psychological cost was the highest barrier, followed by effort cost. In order to lower these, instructors could create low-anxiety classrooms by using anonymous drafting, peer review, or self-assessment before teacher evaluation to minimize fear of judgment. They could also manage cognitive load by teaching writing strategies explicitly through outlining, organizing ideas, language selection. This makes the effort feel more manageable (Li et al., 2024). Moreover, instructors could normalize struggle by framing revision and difficulty as part of learning, not signs of failure, to counteract anxiety and perceived opportunity costs (Tsao, 2021).

An EVT-informed approach requires instructors to address all three components together. Building confidence alone is not enough if writing remains high-cost and low-interest. By increasing self-efficacy, highlighting value, and reducing psychological/effort costs, instructors can create conditions where students are both willing and able to engage more deeply in English writing.

These are some future research directions that can be taken to enhance the study of motivational dynamics in mastering the English language among university students. Firstly, this study is a cross-sectional study which gives a snippet of what students actually faced. It is suggested that a longitudinal design should be applied in future studies to discover how beliefs, value, and cost change over a semester as students take writing courses. Future studies can investigate the "Interest Value" Gap on how to increase intrinsic enjoyment of writing among Malaysian undergraduates. For example, using digital storytelling, reflective blogs, or writing for real audiences beyond exams. The application of qualitative interviews could better explain why students do not find writing enjoyable. Future research could examine the specific cost that best predicts writing anxiety, avoidance, or performance. It can focus on how psychological cost is linked to teacher feedback style, peer comparison, or

high-stakes assessment. This requires in-depth interviews or a structural equation model (SEM) which could test these paths.

Recommendations

While this study provides valuable insights into the motivational dynamics of English writing mastery using the Expectancy-Value framework, several avenues for future research are suggested.

First, given that data were collected from a single public university in Malaysia, future studies should expand the sample to include participants from multiple universities and diverse educational contexts to enhance the generalizability of findings.

Second, employing a mixed-methods approach could offer a deeper understanding of students' writing motivation. Future research may incorporate interviews, classroom observations, and longitudinal designs to explore how task value, expectancy beliefs, and writing performance evolve over time and across different instructional settings.

Lastly, investigating the role of other motivational constructs, such as self-efficacy, goal orientation, and feedback practices, in relation to second language writing could further enrich the theoretical and pedagogical implications of this line of inquiry.

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