

Self-Efficacy and Its Impact on Task Value and Writing Anxiety

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ABSTRACT

Self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety are key motivational constructs that influence learners' engagement and performance in writing. Higher levels of self-efficacy and perceived task value are associated with greater motivation and lower writing anxiety, while low self-efficacy can increase learners' anxiety during writing tasks. Therefore, examining these constructs across genders and fields of study can provide valuable insights for developing more effective, targeted writing instruction. This study was conducted to explore the influence of self-efficacy on task value and writing anxiety. This quantitative study was conducted to explore the influence of self-efficacy on task value and writing anxiety. A convenience sample of 230 participants responded to the survey. Overall, the findings indicate that learners demonstrated high writing self-efficacy and task value while experiencing moderate cognitive and somatic anxiety but low avoidance behaviour, suggesting that positive motivational beliefs may support continued engagement in English writing despite the presence of writing-related anxiety. The findings suggest that writing instruction should address both learners' motivational beliefs and their emotional experiences.

Keywords: writing anxiety, self-efficacy, task value, ESL learners

INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

Self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety are three motivational constructs that are closely connected to how learners engage with the writing process. Self-efficacy, as proposed by Bandura (1997), is described as a learner's belief in his or her own capability to complete a given task successfully. This belief influences how much effort a learner is willing to put into writing and how long he or she is willing to persist when the task becomes difficult.

Task value, on the other hand, is explained by Zhang et al. (2014) as the level of importance, usefulness, and interest that a learner attaches to a learning task. When a writing task is seen as valuable, learners tend to be more motivated to complete it. Writing anxiety, as conceptualised by Cheng (2004), is described as a multidimensional construct made up of cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and avoidance behaviour, all of which can obstruct a learner's writing performance.

Although these three constructs have each been studied extensively on their own, the relationship between self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety among learners of different genders and fields of study is still relevant to investigate further, as motivation and anxiety in writing do not affect all learners in the same way.

Relating this to Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, a learner's emotional state acts as a filter that can either support or block language performance. When a learner has strong self-efficacy and perceives the writing task as valuable, the affective filter is lowered, and this allows the learner to engage in writing with less anxiety (Yang, 2025). On the other hand, when self-efficacy is low, the affective filter is raised, and this increases the learner's vulnerability to writing anxiety (Fortuna, 2025). Therefore, this study finds it relevant to examine self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety together and to determine whether these three constructs differ across gender and field of study so that writing instruction can be better informed and targeted.

Statement of Problem

Many studies have looked into self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety, but most of these studies tend to examine the constructs separately rather than in relation to one another. Studies on self-efficacy mostly focus on its effect on writing performance or achievement (Bandura, 1997; Zhang et al., 2014), while studies on writing anxiety tend to look only at its cognitive, somatic, and avoidance dimensions without connecting them back to the learner's underlying motivational beliefs (Cheng, 2004; Hussain, 2018).

Furthermore, few studies have examined whether self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety differ according to demographic factors such as gender and field of study, even though learners from different backgrounds may experience writing motivation and anxiety differently. This shows that there is a gap in understanding not only how self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety relate to one another, but also how these constructs vary across different groups of learners.

Studies that apply Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis to the writing context remain limited, as they tend to focus more on general language attitude or anxiety rather than writing-specific anxiety in relation to task value (Fortuna, 2025; Yang, 2025). This is an important issue, as writing anxiety is closely tied to how a task is perceived and valued by the learner and not merely to general apprehension towards language use. Rahmat et al. (2026), in their systematic review of writer's block in academic writing, found that motivational and affective factors are among the key dimensions underlying persistent writing difficulties, and their review points to these dimensions as a direction worth pursuing in future research.

This shows that the relationship between self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety still requires further investigation. Therefore, this study is done to explore the influence of self-efficacy on task value and writing anxiety and to determine whether these constructs differ significantly across gender and field of study.

Objective of the Study and Research Questions

This study is done to explore the influence of self-efficacy on task value and writing anxiety. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions:

- Is there a significant relationship between self-efficacy across gender and field of study?
H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy across gender and field of study
- Is there a significant relationship between task value across gender and field of study?
H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between task value across gender and field of study
- Is there a significant relationship between writing anxiety across gender and field of study?
H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between writing anxiety across gender and field of study
- How do learners perceive self-efficacy in writing?
- How do learners perceive task value in writing?
- How do learners perceive anxiety in writing?
- Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and task value in writing?
H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and task value in writing
- Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and writing anxiety?
H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and writing anxiety

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Self-Efficacy (Bandura, 1997) & Motivation in Writing

Within academic language learning contexts, self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1997) as individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to execute actions necessary to achieve specific outcomes, which serves as the psychological anchor for academic task performance. According to this theory, individuals' motivation, emotional states, and behaviours are fundamentally dictated by their subjective beliefs rather than by objective reality. In writing domains, this self-referential cognitive judgement directly dictates how learners evaluate task value and manage emotional strain during composition. As students encounter complex writing tasks, high self-efficacy enhances their perception of task value, leading them to view writing activities as meaningful, useful, and worth mastering rather than merely procedural requirements (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020).

This heightened valuation, coupled with strong efficacy beliefs, directly mitigates writing anxiety, which is a pervasive affective obstacle characterised by cognitive apprehension, somatic tension, and avoidance behaviours (Pajares, 2003). When learners believe they possess the cognitive and self-regulatory tools to draft and revise effectively, their perceived control reduces fear of negative evaluation, turning anxiety into productive focus. Conversely, low self-efficacy undermines perceived task value and heightens writing apprehension, triggering an affective barrier that suppresses effort and persistence. Recognising this mechanism underscores that writing motivation is fundamentally driven by efficacy beliefs, which regulate both how deeply students value writing tasks and how effectively they navigate writing anxiety.

Affective Filter Hypothesis by Krashen (1982) and writing anxiety

The Affective Filter Hypothesis, proposed by Stephen Krashen (1982), emphasises understanding the impact of language production through emotional variables in the context of writing anxiety. The affective filter is described as the internal psychological barrier that has the power to either alleviate or hinder a learner's language performance based on his emotional state (Fortuna, 2025 & Hussain, 2018). When a student experiences high writing anxiety but low self-efficacy, the affective filter is raised, which blocks the cognitive processing and expression that are mandatory parts of successful writing. On the other hand, when a task is perceived as high value, which is seen as interesting or meaningful, and coupled with strong self-efficacy, the affective filter decreases, and it allows learners to engage more confidently with the writing task as the anxiety level is lowered (Yang, 2025). Relating the affective filter to academic writing, an increased level of affective filter manifests as writer's block and anxiety, which will eventually lower the student's perceived value of the writing task and negatively impact the overall performance (Fortuna, 2025). Therefore, managing the affective filter is crucial, as it has a direct relation to writing anxiety, where the bolstering of self-efficacy can help to mitigate writing anxiety and foster a positive outlook on task value.

Past Studies

The Influence of Writing Motivation on Writing Anxiety

A considerable number of studies have been conducted to investigate the influence of writing motivation on writing anxiety among second language learners. Researchers generally agree that learners with higher writing motivation, particularly writing self-efficacy, tend to experience lower levels of writing anxiety and are more willing to participate in writing activities.

Li (2022) examined the relationship between English writing self-efficacy and psychological anxiety among 595 Chinese university students using a questionnaire survey. The findings revealed a significant negative relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety, indicating that students with higher confidence experienced lower anxiety. The study recommended providing learners with continuous writing practice to strengthen learners' confidence. Similarly, Zhou et al. (2022) investigated the relationships among writing

anxiety, writing self-efficacy, self-regulated writing strategies, and writing engagement among 340 Chinese secondary school students using a questionnaire survey. The findings showed that students with higher writing self-efficacy demonstrated greater writing engagement despite experiencing writing anxiety. The researchers recommended incorporating self-regulated writing strategies to improve learners' confidence and reduce anxiety. The findings of these studies consistently emphasise the important role of writing self-efficacy in reducing writing anxiety and promoting learners' engagement in writing activities.

Building on this evidence, more recent studies have further examined this relationship across different educational contexts and research designs. Busse et al. (2023) investigated the interplay between writing self-efficacy, writing anxiety, and text quality among 208 secondary school students in Germany. Using questionnaires and response surface analyses, the researchers found that learners with higher writing self-efficacy generally produced better-quality texts and experienced lower levels of writing anxiety.

The findings suggested that strengthening learners' confidence could simultaneously improve writing performance and reduce writing anxiety. More recently, Shen et al. (2024) conducted a two-wave longitudinal study involving 301 learners to investigate the relationships among metacognitive strategies, writing self-efficacy, and writing anxiety. The findings showed that writing self-efficacy remained a significant predictor of lower writing anxiety over time, while metacognitive strategy use further enhanced learners' confidence in writing. The researchers concluded that writing instruction should integrate strategy training with activities that strengthen learners' self-efficacy to minimise writing anxiety.

Overall, previous studies consistently show that learners with stronger writing self-efficacy experience lower writing anxiety and demonstrate greater engagement in writing activities. However, most studies have primarily focused on the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety, while relatively little attention has been given to task value as another important motivational construct that may influence writing anxiety. Therefore, the present study extends previous research by examining self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety simultaneously among Malaysian university students.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1 below presents the conceptual framework of the study. This framework positions self-efficacy as a central motivational belief that shapes how learners perceive writing tasks and regulate emotional responses during writing. Grounded in Self-Efficacy Theory, Bandura (1977) argues that individuals' beliefs about their capabilities influence motivation, effort, persistence, and resilience when facing challenging tasks such as academic writing. High writing self-efficacy enhances learners' confidence to engage in writing and increases their willingness to invest effort, which in turn strengthens task value, defined as the perceived importance, usefulness, and interest of the writing task (Zhang et al., 2014).

When learners value writing tasks and expect success, motivation increases, and emotional barriers are reduced. Conversely, low self-efficacy diminishes task value and heightens vulnerability to writing anxiety, which is explained through Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, whereby anxiety acts as an emotional barrier that blocks effective language production. Writing anxiety is further conceptualised using Cheng's (2004) multidimensional model, encompassing cognitive anxiety (worry and negative expectations), somatic anxiety (physiological tension), and avoidance behaviour, all of which undermine writing performance.

Empirical evidence suggests that if such anxiety is not addressed through pedagogical or strategic intervention, it may escalate into persistent writing blocks that hinder writing development and academic progress (Rahmat et al., 2026). Collectively, the framework explains how self-efficacy influences task value and emotional regulation, thereby shaping learners' writing motivation and anxiety experiences.



Figure 1- Conceptual Framework of the Study- Self-Efficacy and its Impact on Task Value and Writing Anxiety

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study is done to explore the influence of self-efficacy on task value and writing anxiety. A convenience sample of 230 participants responded to the survey. The instrument used is a 5-point Likert-scale survey and is based on Zhang et al. (2014) and Cheng (2004) to reveal the variables in Table 3 below. Table 1 below shows the categories used for the Likert scale; 1 is for Strongly Disagree, 2 is for Disagree, 3 is for Undecided, 4 is for Agree, and 5 is for Strongly Agree.

Table 1: Likert Scale Use

1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

Table 2: Distribution of Items in the Survey

SECT	VARIABLE	CONSTRUCTS	No Of Items INDICATOR	
B	Writing Motivation (Zhang et al., 2014)	Self-Efficacy	5 (.904)	
		Task value scale	4 (.818)	

C	Writing Anxiety (Cheng, 2004)	Cognitive	8	22 (.860)
		Somatic	7	
		Avoidance Behaviour	7	
		Total	31	

Table 3: Reliability Levels, Cronbach's Alpha Ranges, and Their Interpretations

Reliability Level	Cronbach's Alpha range	Interpretation
Excellent	0.9 and above	Indicates very high internal consistency
Good	0.80-0.89	Reflects strong internal consistency
Acceptable	0.70-0.79	Indicates acceptable internal consistency
Questionable	0.60-0.69	Reflects questionable internal consistency
Poor	Below 0.6	Indicates poor internal consistency

In order to determine the internal reliability of the instrument, reliability analysis is conducted. Table 3 above shows the distribution and interpretation of the Cronbach's alpha range. According to Ahmad et al. (2024), Cronbach's alpha scores between 0.7 and 0.9 are considered acceptable to excellent.

Table 3 also shows the reliability of the survey. The analysis shows a Cronbach's alpha of .904 for Self-Efficacy, .818 for Task Value, and .860 for Writing Anxiety. The overall Cronbach's alpha for all 31 items is .869, thus revealing good reliability of the instrument chosen/used. Further analysis using SPSS is done to present findings to answer the research questions for this study.

FINDINGS

Demographic Analysis

According to Zienefuss et.al (2021), researchers report demographic data in percentages to establish sample representativeness and allow for generalizability to a larger population. The reporting also provides an overview of participants' characteristics. Percentages offer a clear and understandable picture of the sample makeup.

Table 4- Percentage for Demographic Profile

Question	Demographic Profile	Categories	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	38%
		Female	62%
2	Discipline	Science & Technology	39%

		Social Sciences & Humanities	61%
3	Type of Class preferred	Face-to-face	78%
		Online	22%

Table 4 presents the percentage distribution of the demographic profile of the respondents. In terms of gender, the majority of the respondents were female, making up 62% of the sample, while male respondents made up the remaining 38%. This indicates that the sample was largely dominated by female respondents. For discipline, more than half of the respondents were from Social Sciences & Humanities (61%), while the remaining 39% were from Science & Technology, showing a slightly higher representation of Social Sciences & Humanities students in this study. In terms of preferred type of class, a clear majority of respondents preferred face-to-face classes (78%), compared to only 22% who preferred online classes. This suggests that most respondents in this study still favour face-to-face learning over online learning.

Inferential Statistics

According to He (2024), there are three main functions of a T-test and ANOVA. Firstly, both are done to compare means. These tests are also done to determine if the average scores (mean) or values of two groups, or one group against a known value, are different enough to be considered statistically meaningful and are not just due to random chance. Secondly, T-test and ANOVA are done to test hypotheses. Researchers use t-tests and ANOVA to test hypotheses about means, such as whether a new treatment significantly impacts a variable or if there's a difference in performance between two distinct groups. Lastly, T-test and ANOVA are used to identify significant differences. The output of a t-test provides a p-value (significance value). If this p-value is below a predetermined threshold (often 0.05), it indicates a statistically significant difference, allowing researchers to draw conclusions about the populations from which their samples were drawn.

A one-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) is a statistical method used to compare the means of three or more independent (unrelated) groups to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between them. It is a parametric test that evaluates the effect of a single independent variable (the factor) on a dependent variable.

Findings for Self-Efficacy

This section presents data to answer research question 1: Is there a significant relationship between self-efficacy across gender and field of study?

Table 5: T-Test/ANOVA for self-efficacy across gender and field of study

		MEAN	SD	T-Statistics df	p-value	OUTCOME
Gender	Male	4.12	0.63	t(228)=.207	0.836	H ₀ Accepted
	Female	4.10	0.63			

Discipline	Science & Technology	4.11	0.60			
	Social Sciences & Humanities	4.11	0.64	$t(228)=-.10$	0.496	H ₀ Accepted
Type of Class preferred	Face-to-face	4.11	0.63	$t(228)=-0.104$	0.917	H ₀ Accepted
	Online	4.11	0.63			

With reference to Table 5, a one way T-Test was conducted to examine the effects of self-efficacy across gender and field of study. The analysis in Table 5 shows there is no significant difference in self-efficacy across gender and field of study. The null hypothesis is accepted for H₀₁.

Findings for Task Value

This section presents data to answer research question 2: Is there a significant relationship between task value across gender and field of study?

Table 6: T-Test/ANOVA for task value across gender and field of study

		MEAN	SD	T-Statistics df	p-value	OUTCOME
Gender	Male	4.16	0.62	$t(228)=-.997$	.0320	H ₀ Accepted
	Female	4.24	0.60			
Discipline	Science & Technology	4.14	0.64	$t(228)=-1.379$	0.169	H ₀ Accepted
	Social Sciences & Humanities	4.25	0.58			
Type of Class preferred	Face-to-face	4.21	0.61	$t(228)=.248$	0.805	H ₀ Accepted
	Online	4.19	0.61			

With reference to Table 6, a one way T-Test was conducted to examine the effects of task value across gender and field of study. The analysis in Table 6 shows there is no significant difference in task value across gender and field of study. The null hypothesis is accepted for H_{02} .

Findings for Writing Anxiety

This section presents data to answer research question 3: Is there a significant relationship between writing anxiety across gender and field of study?

Table 7: T-Test/ANOVA for writing anxiety across gender and field of study

		MEAN	SD	T-Statistics df	p-value	OUTCOME
Gender	Male	3.13	0.56	$t(228)=-.80$	0.497	H_0 Accepted
	Female	3.18	0.52			
Discipline	Science & Technology	3.11	0.49	$t(228)=-.948$	0.344	H_0 Accepted
	Social Sciences & Humanities	3.18	0.53			
Type of Class preferred	Face-to-face	3.18	0.56	$t(228)=1.542$	0.124	H_0 Accepted
	Online	3.06	0.44			

With reference to Table 7, a one way T-Test was conducted to examine the effects of writing anxiety across gender and field of study. The analysis in Table 6 shows there is no significant difference in writing anxiety across gender and field of study. The null hypothesis is accepted for H_{03} .

Descriptive Statistics

Why is there a need to report the mean and standard deviation? According to Vetter (2017), the mean (M) represents the average, or the centre of a data set. Standard deviation (SD) indicates the typical distance of individual observations from the mean, which shows the data's variability or spread. A low SD means the data points are clustered close to the mean, while a high SD means they are spread out. It is good to have a high SD.

Findings for Self-Efficacy in Writing

This section presents data to answer research question 4: How do learners perceive self-efficacy in writing?

Table 8: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for Self-Efficacy (SE)

ITEM	M	SD
SEQ1: I am sure I can learn the skills taught in WRITING class well.	4.07	0.70
SEQ2: I can do the hardest work in my WRITING class if I try.	4.02	0.76
SEQ3: I can do almost all the work in WRITING class if I do not give up.	4.18	0.75
SEQ4: If I have enough time, I can do a good job in all my WRITING work.	4.16	0.72
SEQ5: Even if the work in WRITING is hard, I can learn it	4.12	0.74

Table 8 illustrates the mean and standard deviation scores for self-efficacy. The highest scores ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 4.16$) are recorded for SEQ3, 'I can do almost all the work in WRITING class if I do not give up'. Meanwhile, the lowest score ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 0.76$) is reflected in SEQ2, which is 'I can do the hardest work in my WRITING class if I try'. Overall, the descriptive statistics displayed in Table 8 indicate an overall high level of self-efficacy among the participants regarding their writing capabilities. It also demonstrates that the respondents possess a robust sense of self-efficacy and confidence in their capacity to succeed in writing tasks.

Findings for Task value in writing

This section presents data to answer research question 5: How do learners perceive task value in writing?

Table 9: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for Task Value scale (TV)

ITEM	M	SD
TVQ1: I think learning WRITING is important.	4.54	0.64
TVQ2: I find WRITING interesting.	4.04	0.80
TVQ3: What I learn in WRITING is useful.	4.39	0.77
TVQ4: Compared to other subjects, WRITING is useful.	3.98	0.80

For task value in writing, the highest is for the statement TVQ1, 'I think learning writing is important' ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 0.64$). The second highest is the statement from TVQ3, 'What I learn in writing is useful' ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.77$). This is further followed by the statement TVQ2, 'I find writing interesting' ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 0.80$). Lastly, the statement TVQ4 is 'Compared to other subjects, writing is useful' ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.80$), which is the lowest mean and standard deviation for task value in writing.

Findings for Writing Anxiety

This section presents data to answer research question 6: How do learners perceive anxiety in writing? In the context of this study, this is measured by (i) cognitive, (ii) somatic, and (iii) avoidance behaviour.

Table 10: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for Cognitive Anxiety (CA)

ITEM	M	SD
CAQ1: While writing in English, I'm not nervous at all.	3.54	0.95
CAQ2: While writing English compositions, I feel worried and uneasy if I know they will be evaluated.	3.55	0.94
CAQ3: I don't worry that my English compositions are a lot worse than others'.	2.91	1.13
CAQ4: If my English composition is to be evaluated, I would worry about getting a very poor grade.	3.91	0.97
CQQ5: I'm afraid that other students would deride my English composition if they read it.	3.40	1.10
CAQ6: I don't worry at all about what other people would think of my English compositions.	3.17	1.05
CAQ7: I'm afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample to be discussed in class.	3.37	1.12
CAQ8: I'm not afraid at all that my English compositions would be rated as very poor.	2.89	1.16

Table 10 presents the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) for Cognitive Anxiety (CA). The highest mean is recorded for CAQ4 ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.97$), indicating that learners were most concerned about receiving poor grades when their English compositions were evaluated. This is followed by CAQ2 ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.94$) and CAQ1 ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 0.95$), suggesting that learners generally experienced worry and nervousness during writing, particularly when assessment was involved. Moderate mean scores are also observed for CAQ5 ($M = 3.40$) and CAQ7 ($M = 3.37$), reflecting concerns about negative peer judgement and having their compositions discussed in class. Meanwhile, CAQ6 recorded a mean of 3.17 ($SD = 1.05$), indicating that learners were somewhat concerned about how others perceived their writing. The lowest mean scores are reported for CAQ3 ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 1.13$) and CAQ8 ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 1.16$), suggesting that fewer learners felt confident that their compositions would compare favourably with those of their peers or receive positive evaluations. Overall, the findings indicate that learners' cognitive anxiety is largely influenced by concerns related to evaluation, academic performance, and the opinions of others.

Table 11: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for Somatic Anxiety (SA)

ITEM	M	SD
SAQ1: I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint.	3.30	1.05
SAQ2: My mind often goes blank when I start to work on an English composition.	3.21	1.03
SAQ3: I tremble or perspire when I write English compositions under time pressure.	3.11	1.05

SAQ4: My thoughts become jumbled when I write English compositions under time constraint.	3.21	1.01
SAQ5: I often feel panic when I write English compositions under time constraint.	3.09	1.13
SAQ6: I freeze up when unexpectedly asked to write English compositions.	3.00	1.12
SAQ7: I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I write English compositions.	2.73	1.08

Table 11 presents the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) for Somatic Anxiety (SA). The highest mean is recorded for the statement SAQ1, 'I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint' (M = 3.30, SD = 1.05). This is followed closely by the statements SAQ2, 'My mind often goes blank when I start to work on an English composition', and SAQ4, 'My thoughts become jumbled when I write English compositions under time constraint', both (M = 3.21, SD = 1.03 and 1.01) respectively. The statement SAQ3, 'I tremble or perspire when I write English compositions under time pressure', recorded a mean of 3.11 (M = 3.11, SD = 1.05), while SAQ5, 'I often feel panic when I write English compositions under time constraint', recorded a mean of 3.09 (M = 3.09, SD = 1.13). The statement SAQ6, 'I freeze up when unexpectedly asked to write English compositions', followed at a mean of 3.00. Lastly, the lowest mean is recorded for the statement SAQ7, 'I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I write English compositions,' at (M = 2.73, SD = 1.08). Overall, the findings suggest that learners experience somatic anxiety most strongly through a pounding heart under time pressure, while whole-body rigidity and tension are the least commonly experienced physical symptoms of writing anxiety.

Table 12 Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for Avoidance Behaviour (AB)

ITEM	M	SD
ABQ1: I often choose to write down my thoughts in English.	3.73	1.03
ABQ2: I usually do my best to avoid writing English compositions.	2.63	1.10
ABQ3: I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English.	2.52	1.10
ABQ4: Unless I have no choice, I would not use English to write composition.	2.64	1.09
ABQ5: I would do my best to excuse myself if asked to write English compositions.	2.61	1.18
ABQ6: I usually seek every possible chance to write English compositions outside of class.	3.26	1.00
ABQ7: Whenever possible, I would use English to write compositions.	3.63	0.95

Table 12 presents the scores for the mean (M) and standard deviation for avoidance behaviour. The highest mean score (3.73) is recorded for item ABQ1, 'I often choose to write down my thoughts in English' (M = 3.73, SD = 1.03); meanwhile, the second highest score (M = 3.63, SD = 0.95) is recorded for ABQ7,

‘Whenever possible, I would use English to write compositions’. The item with the lowest mean score is ABQ3, ‘I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English’, which has a mean score of ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 1.10$). The higher mean values on positive approach items paired with lower scores across direct avoidance indicators suggest that students generally display an inclination toward actively engaging in English writing rather than deliberately avoiding it. Overall, the descriptive statistics for avoidance behaviour indicate a generally low tendency toward writing avoidance among the respondents.

Exploratory Statistics

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 common tool for describing simple relationships without making a statement about cause and effect. This section presents data to answer the research question on correlation.

To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between Self-Efficacy, Writing Anxiety, and Task Value, data are analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in Table 13 below.

According to He (2024), the coefficient is significant at the 0.05 level, and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0.

Table 13: Correlation between Self-Efficacy, Writing Anxiety, Task Value

		WRITING ANXIETY	TASK VALUE
SELF EFFICACY	Pearson Correlation	.134*	.633**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.043	<.001
	N	230	230
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Findings for the Relationship between self-efficacy and task value in writing.

This section presents data to answer research question 7: Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and task value in writing?

Table 13 shows there is an association between self-efficacy and task value in writing. Correlation analysis shows that there is a weak, significant association between self-efficacy and task value in writing ($r = .134^*$) and ($p = <.001$). This means that there is also a weak positive relationship between self-efficacy and task value in writing.

Findings for the Relationship between self-efficacy and writing anxiety

This section presents data to answer research question 8: Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and writing anxiety?

Table 13 shows there is an association between self-efficacy and writing anxiety. Correlation analysis shows that there is a strong, significant association between self-efficacy and writing anxiety ($r=.633^{**}$) and ($p<.001$). This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between self-efficacy and writing anxiety.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings and Discussions

Inferential statistics

For inferential statistics, to answer research questions 1, 2, and 3, we can see that there is no significant relationship between self-efficacy across genres and fields of study. Starting with gender, there is no significant relationship between male and female students. For research question 2, the analysis shows that there is no significant difference in task value across gender and the field of study. In addition, to answer research question 3, there is also no significant difference in writing anxiety across gender and the field of study. To sum up, it shows that gender, task value, and writing anxiety have nothing to do with the gender of the learners.

Descriptive Statistics

Overall, for research question 4, the findings indicate that the respondents demonstrated a high level of writing self-efficacy and positive perceptions towards the value of learning writing. For self-efficacy, the highest mean was recorded for the statement SEQ3, "I can do almost all the work in WRITING class if I do not give up", while the lowest mean was recorded for the statement SEQ1, which is "I can do the hardest work in my WRITING class if I try."

For research question 5, which is related to the task value in writing, the highest mean was found for the statement TVQ1, "I think learning writing is important", while the lowest mean was recorded for statement TVQ4, which is "Compared to other subjects, writing is useful." These findings suggest that learners generally possessed strong confidence in their writing abilities and recognised writing as an important and useful skill.

The high level of self-efficacy is consistent with the findings of Li (2022), Zhou et al. (2022), Busse et al. (2023), and Shen et al. (2024), that highlighted the important role of writing self-efficacy in promoting learners' confidence and engagement in writing. To add on, the positive perception of task value also suggests that learners who recognise the importance and usefulness of writing may be more willing to engage in writing activities, further supporting the need to consider motivational factors beyond self-efficacy when examining learners' writing experiences.

In terms of writing anxiety and avoidance behaviour, the findings revealed different levels across the different dimensions. For cognitive anxiety, to answer research question 6, CAQ4 had the highest mean and was associated with concerns about receiving poor grades when English compositions were evaluated, while the lowest mean was CAQ8 for the statement concerning whether learners' compositions would receive positive evaluations. For somatic anxiety, the highest mean was SAQ1, which is experiencing a pounding heart when writing English compositions under time constraints, whereas the lowest mean was recorded for feeling the whole body rigid and tense when writing, SAQ7. Meanwhile, for avoidance behaviour, the highest mean was ABQ1, which reflects the tendency to choose to write down thoughts in English, while the lowest mean was associated with trying to avoid situations that require writing in English, ABQ3.

Although learners experienced certain cognitive and physical symptoms of writing anxiety, their relatively low tendency towards direct avoidance suggests that they remained willing to engage in English writing. This finding is consistent with Zhou et al. (2022), who found that learners with higher writing self-efficacy demonstrated greater engagement in writing despite experiencing anxiety. Similarly, the findings of Li (2022), Busse et al. (2023), and Shen et al. (2024) support the importance of strengthening learners' self-efficacy as a means of reducing writing anxiety and encouraging continued participation in writing activities. Taken

together, the present findings reinforce previous research while also highlighting the relevance of task value as an additional motivational dimension that may shape learners' experiences with English writing.

Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

Theoretical and Conceptual Implications

The findings of the present study offer several theoretical implications for understanding writing motivation and anxiety among second language learners. First, the findings provide further support for Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory by demonstrating that learners generally possessed a strong sense of confidence in their writing abilities while also showing a relatively low tendency towards direct avoidance of English writing. This suggests that self-efficacy may play an important role in sustaining learners' willingness to engage with writing tasks even when they experience certain forms of writing anxiety.

The findings also extend the motivational perspective by highlighting task value as an important dimension alongside self-efficacy. The high level of perceived importance and usefulness of writing suggests that learners' motivation may be influenced not only by their beliefs about their ability to perform writing tasks but also by the extent to which they perceive writing as meaningful and useful. Thus, the findings support the view that writing motivation should be understood through multiple motivational dimensions rather than self-efficacy alone. This is particularly relevant to the research gap identified in previous studies, which have predominantly examined the relationship between self-efficacy and writing anxiety while giving comparatively less attention to task value.

Second, the findings provide theoretical support for Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis and Cheng's (2004) multidimensional conceptualisation of writing anxiety. Although the respondents demonstrated positive writing self-efficacy and task value, they still experienced cognitive and somatic symptoms of anxiety, particularly concerns related to evaluation and physical tension under time constraints. This indicates that positive motivational beliefs do not necessarily eliminate writing anxiety, but may coexist with anxiety while learners continue to participate in writing activities. The relatively low tendency towards writing avoidance further suggests that learners may be able to maintain engagement despite experiencing emotional and physical discomfort.

From the perspective of the Affective Filter Hypothesis, these findings imply that emotional barriers may vary in intensity and manifestation rather than functioning as an absolute barrier to language production. At the same time, the presence of cognitive, somatic, and avoidance dimensions supports Cheng's multidimensional view that writing anxiety is not a single psychological construct but involves different forms of emotional and behavioural responses. Therefore, the present findings contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how motivational beliefs and different dimensions of writing anxiety may coexist within the writing experiences of second language learners.

Pedagogical Implications

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings suggest that writing instruction should address both learners' motivational beliefs and their emotional experiences. Teachers can strengthen writing self-efficacy by providing learners with regular opportunities for successful writing experiences, scaffolded writing tasks, constructive feedback, and opportunities to revise their work. At the same time, teachers can enhance task value by explicitly demonstrating the importance, usefulness, and relevance of writing to learners' academic and future needs.

Since evaluation concerns and time-related physical symptoms were among the more prominent aspects of writing anxiety, teachers may also reduce unnecessary pressure by creating a supportive classroom environment, providing clear assessment criteria, allowing sufficient preparation time, and gradually introducing timed writing activities. Such practices may help learners develop greater confidence and recognise the value of writing while reducing the emotional barriers associated with writing anxiety.

Ultimately, writing instruction should not focus solely on improving linguistic competence but should also cultivate learners' confidence, perceived value of writing, and ability to manage anxiety during writing tasks.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research could extend the present study by examining the relationships among writing self-efficacy, task value, and writing anxiety using correlational or predictive research designs. While the present study provides descriptive evidence of learners' motivational beliefs and anxiety experiences, further investigation could determine whether and to what extent self-efficacy and task value are associated with different dimensions of writing anxiety, including cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and avoidance behaviour. In particular, future studies could examine whether task value contributes to the relationship between self-efficacy and writing anxiety, as this motivational dimension has received comparatively less attention in previous research. Longitudinal studies could also be conducted to examine how these variables develop over time and whether changes in learners' self-efficacy and perceptions of task value correspond with changes in writing anxiety and engagement.

Future research could also consider expanding the population and research context to provide a broader understanding of writing motivation and anxiety among second language learners. The present study focuses on Malaysian university students; therefore, future studies could involve learners from different educational levels, institutions, geographical regions, or proficiency levels to determine whether similar patterns can be observed across different contexts. Qualitative approaches, such as interviews, reflective journals, or classroom observations, could also complement questionnaire findings by providing deeper insights into learners' personal experiences of writing anxiety, the factors that strengthen or weaken their self-efficacy, and the reasons they perceive writing as important or useful. In addition, intervention-based studies could examine whether strategies such as scaffolded writing practice, self-regulated learning, task repetition, and supportive feedback can strengthen self-efficacy and task value while reducing writing anxiety. Such research would provide more practical evidence for developing writing instruction that addresses both the motivational and emotional needs of second language learners.

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APPENDIX

Writing Motivation and Writing Anxiety

SECT	VARIABLE	CONSTRUCTS	No Of Items INDICATOR	
B	Writing Motivation (Zhang et al., 2014)	Self-Efficacy	5	9
		Task value scale	4	
C	Writing Anxiety (Cheng, 2004)	Cognitive	8	22
		Somatic	7	
		Avoidance Behaviour	7	
		Total		31

SURVEY

SECTION B – Writing Motivation (Zhang et al., 2014 Self-Efficacy (SE))

NO	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
1	SEQ1 I am sure I can learn the skills taught in WRITING class well.					
2	SEQ2I can do the hardest work in my WRITING class if I try.					
3	SEQ3: I can do almost all the work in WRITING class if I do not give up.					
4	SEQ4 If I have enough time, I can do a good job in all my WRITING work.					
5	SEQ5 Even if the work in WRITING is hard, I can learn it					

Task Value scale (TV)

NO	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
1	TVQ1: I think learning WRITING is important.					
2	TVQ2 I find WRITING interesting.					
3	TVQ3 What I learn in WRITING is useful.					
4	TVQ4 Compared to other subjects, WRITING is useful.					

SECTION C – WRITING ANXIETY

Cognitive Anxiety (CA)

NO	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
1	CAQ1. While writing in English, I'm not nervous at all.					
2	CAQ2. While writing English compositions, I feel worried and uneasy if I know they will be evaluated.					
3	CAQ3. I don't worry that my English compositions are a lot worse than others'.					
4	CAQ4. If my English composition is to be evaluated, I would worry about getting a very poor grade.					
5	CQQ5. I'm afraid that other students would deride my English composition if they read it.					
6	CAQ6. I don't worry at all about what other people would think of my English compositions.					

7	CAQ7. I'm afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample to be discussed in class.					
8	CAQ8. I'm not afraid at all that my English compositions would be rated as very poor.					

Somatic Anxiety (SA)

N O	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
1	SAQ1. I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint.					
2	SAQ2. My mind often goes blank when I start to work on an English composition.					
3	SAQ3. I tremble or perspire when I write English compositions under time pressure.					
4	SAQ4. My thoughts become jumbled when I write English compositions under time constraint.					
5	SAQ5. I often feel panic when I write English compositions under time constraint.					
6	SAQ6. I freeze up when unexpectedly asked to write English compositions.					
7	SAQ7. I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I write English compositions.					

Avoidance Behaviour (AB)

N O	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
1	ABQ1. I often choose to write down my thoughts in English.					
2	ABQ2. I usually do my best to avoid writing English compositions.					
3	ABQ3. I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English.					
4	ABQ4. Unless I have no choice, I would not use English to write composition.					
5	ABQ5. I would do my best to excuse myself if asked to write English compositions.					

6	ABQ6. I usually seek every possible chance to write English compositions outside of class.					
7	ABQ7. Whenever possible, I would use English to write compositions.					