

Exploring English Writing Motivation and Anxiety Among Undergraduate Students in a Public University

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ABSTRACT

Writing is a core academic competency at the tertiary level, yet many undergraduates experience anxiety during writing, particularly in second-language (L2) contexts where idea generation, organisation, and language control converge under evaluation pressures. At the same time, motivational beliefs such as self-efficacy and task value are expected to support engagement and persistence in academic writing. However, prior work reports mixed findings on how writing anxiety relates to these motivational beliefs, leaving a conceptual gap in L2 writing research. This study addresses that gap by examining the interplay between writing anxiety and writing motivation among undergraduates in a Malaysian public university. This quantitative survey involved 132 undergraduates and used a 31-item Likert-scale instrument organised into two sections: Writing Motivation (self-efficacy; task value) and Writing Anxiety (cognitive, somatic, avoidance). Reliability for subscales ranged from good to excellent. Descriptive results showed that anxiety was most salient in evaluative and time-pressured situations, whereas students reported generally high self-efficacy and task value. Correlation analyses indicated no significant relationships between writing anxiety and self-efficacy, and between writing anxiety and task value, and inferential tests showed no significant differences in anxiety or self-efficacy across education background or disciplinary clusters. The overall findings suggest that writing anxiety coexists with strong motivational beliefs and operates as a situational rather than trait-like inhibitor in this context. Pedagogically, the study implies the need to reduce evaluation salience and time pressure through assessment design and pacing, while sustaining students' existing competence beliefs and perceived value for writing. Conceptually, the results support a differentiated view in which motivation and anxiety proceed in parallel processes, inviting longitudinal and mixed-methods to test conditional pathways that may mediate their interplay.

Keywords: writing motivation, writing anxiety, second-language writing, academic writing

INTRODUCTION

Background Of Study

Writing is an essential skill that extends beyond a single sector and is required across various fields of society, such as the business and hospitality sectors (Roshid & Kankaanranta, 2025; Purnamawati et al., 2025). Although writing is important across many sectors, it is particularly significant in academic contexts. This is especially true for students at the tertiary level, as the requirements of each written assignment, examination, and project become increasingly difficult. Although most students possess basic writing skills, academic writing can still pose challenges, particularly for learners in second-language (L2) contexts. This research paper aims to examine the complex relationship between writing anxiety and writing motivation among learners, with a particular emphasis on self-efficacy and task value.

In general, writing involved demanding cognitive and mental processes, as it requires learners to generate ideas, organise content, and apply appropriate linguistic structures simultaneously. These operations can lead to emotional and psychological challenges, such as writing anxiety. This condition is characterised by tension, nervousness, and worry experienced during the writing process (Wern & Rahmat, 2021). It is a crucial factor for learners, as those with writing anxiety may struggle with skill development and possess poor writing knowledge, which may lead to poor performance or even a total inability to write (Prasetyaningrum et al., 2021). Consequently, this is a significant issue that warrants further investigation, specifically regarding its relationship with motivation.

Literature defines learners' writing motivation as a broad concept encompassing their preferences for writing tasks and situations, emotional states during writing, beliefs about their writing abilities and skills, the value they assign to writing, and their individual goals (Abdel Latif, 2019). It is an important aspect of writing, even more so in L2 contexts, as those with no or low motivation are less likely to produce written work effectively, which can lead to writing anxiety. Understanding the connection between anxiety and motivation is therefore crucial for understanding learners' writing behaviour and performance in academic contexts.

Statement of Problem

In classroom contexts, maintaining an appropriate level of student motivation is essential, as it can help reduce issues associated with high writing anxiety. Motivation in writing is closely related to learners' self-efficacy (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021), or their belief in their ability to perform writing tasks, as well as the value they assign to writing activities. As discussed earlier, learners who have the right balance of everything achieve more positive and sustained writing experiences beyond the classroom, including in workplace contexts. However, finding the right balance between encouraging learners to improve their writing skills and overburdening them with excessive writing demands is crucial, as excessive pressure may undermine motivation and heighten writing anxiety.

Various studies have examined writing anxiety and writing motivation, but many have failed to determine their interplay, leading to conflicting results. Studies by Che Shamsudin et al. (2025) and Hashemian and Heidarai (2013) found that the more motivated a learner was during the writing process, the higher-quality writing was produced, compared to those with lower motivation due to anxiety and difficulty focusing while writing. Conversely, a study by Ochoa (2025) found that writing anxiety has no significant influence on students' motivation and performance when writing and stressed the importance of self-efficacy instead. A similar study by Wang et al. (2025) found that the more writing tasks the students receive, instead of higher anxiety levels, it actually increased their motivation to learn more, which contradicts another paper by Yan (2024) who stated that some students view writing tasks as daunting which can lead to writing anxiety which shows that task value is another factor that should be looked into.

As past studies have shown, there are still unresolved issues in determining the true relationship between writing anxiety and writing motivation, as well as the roles of self-efficacy and task value in learners' performance. This study, therefore, seeks to address this research gap by examining learners' perceptions of writing anxiety and

writing motivation, and by exploring the relationships between writing anxiety, self-efficacy, and task value in academic writing contexts. 1.3 Objective of the Study and Research Questions

This study is done to explore the influence of writing anxiety on writing motivation. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions;

- How do learners perceive their writing anxiety?
- How do learners perceive self-efficacy in writing?
- How do learners perceive task value in writing?
- Is there a relationship between writing anxiety and self-efficacy?

(H1- There is no relationship between writing anxiety and self-efficacy)

- Is there a relationship between writing anxiety and task value?

(H2- There is no relationship between writing anxiety and task value)

- Is there a significant difference for writing anxiety and self-efficacy across education background?

(H3- There is no significant difference for writing anxiety and self-efficacy across education background)

- Is there a significant difference for writing anxiety and self-efficacy across disciplines?

- (H4-There is no significant difference for writing anxiety and self-efficacy across disciplines)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Writing Anxiety

Writing anxiety has been widely examined in second language writing studies. It is linked to learners' emotional and psychological responses to writing tasks. A well-established framework proposed by Cheng (2004) conceptualised writing anxiety as a situation specific form of anxiety related directly to the writing process. Cheng (2004) further explained how writing anxiety can negatively impact learners' writing activities in terms of confidence, performance and their willingness to participate.

In this framework, writing anxiety has been categorised into three main types namely, cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety and avoidance behaviour. Cognitive anxiety refers to learners' negative expectations, worries and beliefs about their ability to write. Next, another type of writing anxiety is called somatic anxiety. This refers to learners' physical reactions such as feeling nervous, tense, sweating or having a faster heartbeat when they are doing their writing tasks. Lastly, avoidance behavior which refers to learners who try to avoid any writing activities or deliberately delay completing their writing tasks because they feel anxious. These three factors mentioned help explain and provide a comprehensive understanding of learners who are affected by writing anxiety.

Self-Determination Theory and writing motivation

Autonomy, competence, relatedness

Ryan and Deci (2000) proposed Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to explain motivation in learning contexts. In this context in which learners feel anxious when they engage in writing activities, writing motivation is crucial. When learners are motivated, they will know their reasons, goals and internal drive which can encourage them

to engage in writing activities by feeling less anxious. According to the theory, motivation is influenced by the fulfilment of three basic psychological needs.

The first basic psychology need is autonomy, which refers to learners' sense of choice and control when they are going through the learning process. Learners who feel that they have more freedom in choosing how and what to write will be more likely to be motivated than those who do not. The second type of psychological need is competence, which refers to learners' belief in their ability to perform writing activities. Learners who perceive themselves as capable writers tend to have a higher motivation. The third and last basic psychological need is relatedness, which refers to learners' feeling of connection to the learning environment and support from peers and teachers. When they feel supported and appreciated, their motivation to write will most likely increase. These three components highlight the role of psychological needs in shaping learners' writing motivation.

Past Studies

Past Studies on Writing Anxiety

Several studies have been done to investigate writing anxiety among learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL). These past studies have focused on its causes, levels and effects on students' writing experience.

The study by Kucuk (2023) was conducted to investigate factors that contribute to writing anxiety among EFL learners. A total of 94 respondents from secondary school, high school and university students in Iraq were involved in the study. Data were collected using a questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The findings revealed that students experienced writing anxiety mainly due to several factors which are limited grammar and vocabulary knowledge, time constraints, and fear of making mistakes. The study also found that feedback from teachers and peers did not significantly contribute to the increase of students' anxiety. Additionally, when students were given topics which were familiar and considered interesting, a lower level of anxiety was reported. The findings from this study suggest that writing tasks should be tailored to match students' proficiency levels and interests. This will likely help to reduce students' writing anxiety and improve their writing performance.

Similarly, the study by Jasman et al. (2023) explored levels, types and causes of writing anxiety among university students in Malaysia. The study involved 172 students from the diploma engineering programme from Universiti Teknologi Mara. The study employed a quantitative approach using two instruments: the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) developed by Cheng (2004) and the Causes and Strategies to Alleviate Writing Anxiety Survey (CSWAS). The findings of the study revealed that students faced a high level of anxiety mainly with somatic anxiety being the most dominant type followed by cognitive anxiety and avoidance behaviour. The main factors contributing to writing anxiety in this study were low self-confidence, fear of feedback from instructors, linguistic difficulties and time pressure. The implications of these findings suggest that to reduce students' anxiety and to help them improve their writing skills, teachers should adopt supportive teaching strategies.

Overall, these studies show that writing anxiety is a common issue among EFL and ESL learners. It is influenced by both linguistic and psychological factors. The findings highlight the importance for students to have instructional support, appropriate task design, and positive learning environments in addressing writing anxiety, which is relevant to the focus of the present study.

Past Studies on Writing Motivation

Many studies have been done to examine writing motivation among EFL and ESL students. The focus areas of the study were mainly on instructional practices and psychological factors which influence students' engagement and writing outcomes.

Yang et al. (2025) conducted a study to investigate the impact of modified academic materials on writing motivation among EFL learners in an online learning context. A total of 47 students were involved in the study and it employed Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) to measure motivation. The findings revealed that students

who were exposed to interactive and learner-centered learning materials managed to demonstrate a significantly higher writing motivation compared to students who use conventional materials. This study suggests that appropriate instructional design can enhance learners' motivation to write, which may also influence their emotional responses towards writing tasks.

In another study by De Smedt et al. (2023), different types of writing motivation relate to students' self-efficacy, achievement goals and writing performance were examined. The study involved 390 secondary students aged 16 to 18 from Belgium. Data were collected using questionnaires measuring writing motivation, self-efficacy, and achievement goals, along with an argumentative writing task. The findings showed that autonomous motivation, which is driven by personal interest and value, was positively related to writing performance. On the other hand, controlled motivation which was driven by external pressure, was not significantly related to performance. The study also found that students with higher self-efficacy and mastery goals were more likely to develop autonomous motivation. These findings suggest that writing instruction should support students' autonomy, competence, and confidence to enhance writing motivation and performance.

Previous studies show that writing motivation among EFL and ESL learners is influenced by both how writing is taught and how students feel about their own abilities. When students are exposed to interactive and supportive learning materials, they tend to be more motivated to write. In addition, factors such as confidence, autonomy, and personal interest play an important role in encouraging students to engage in writing tasks. In relation to the present study, these findings suggest that students' writing motivation is closely connected to their writing experiences and emotions. Therefore, examining writing motivation together with writing anxiety is important in gaining a better understanding of students' writing behaviour and engagement.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Many academic writers face writing anxiety. Interestingly, some have writing anxiety because they feel they are not competent in writing while others fear writing because they are anxious to do well (Rahmat, 2021). According to Cheng (2004) there are three types of writing anxiety. The first is cognitive anxiety and this type of anxiety is related to the writer's perceptions on writing. Next is somatic anxiety and this refers to the writers showing body language, behaviour and physical symptoms when given a writing task. The last type is avoidance behaviour. When individuals have writing anxiety, they may sometimes turn to other tasks instead of completing the writing task.

Is there a relationship between writing anxiety and writing motivation? According to Zhang, et.al. (2014), writers are motivated when they have (i) self-efficacy and they are aware of the (ii) task value. According to Cheng (2004), writers may face anxiety such as (i) cognitive anxiety, (ii) somatic anxiety and (iii) avoidance behaviour.

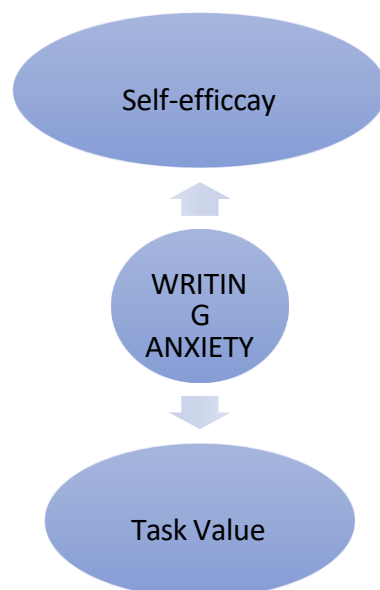


Figure 1- Conceptual Framework of the Study

The Influence of Writing Anxiety and Writing Motivation

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study is done to explore the influence of writing anxiety on writing motivation. A convenient sample of 132 participants responded to the survey. The instrument used is a 5 Likert-scale survey and is rooted from 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 | Uncertain |
| 4 | Agree |
| 5 | Strongly Agree |

Table 2- Distribution of Items in the Survey

| SECT | VARIABLE | CONSTRUCTS | No Of Items | Tot Iem | Cronbach Alpha |
|------|---|---------------------|-------------|---------|----------------|
| B | Writing Motivation (Zhang et al., 2014) | Self-Efficacy | 5 | 9 | .909 |
| | | Task value scale | 4 | | |
| C | Writing Anxiety (Cheng, 2004) | Cognitive | 8 | 22 | .884 |
| | | Somatic | 7 | | |
| | | Avoidance Behaviour | 7 | | |
| | | Total | | 31 | .881 |

Table 2 shows the distribution of items in the survey instrument as it is derived from Zhang et al. (2014) and Cheng (2004)'s concept of the influence of writing anxiety and writing motivation. The survey consisted of a total of 31 items divided into two main sections. Two variables were measured and the first variable is Section B involving Writing Motivation that was based on Zhang et al. (2014) concept which assessed two sub-variables which are the learners' self-efficacy (with a total of 5 items) and task value scale (with a total of 4 items) making it altogether a total of 9 items ($\alpha = .909$). Next, Section C assessed the learners' Writing Anxiety derived from Cheng (2004) with three sub-variables; cognitive (8 items), somatic (7 items), and avoidance behaviour (7 items), altogether a total of 22 items ($\alpha = .884$). On the whole, the reliability levels achieved range from good (one variable) to excellent (three variables) and indicate high internal consistency and the survey is suitable for further statistical analysis.

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 one. Table 3 above shows the distribution and interpretation of Cronbach Alpha range. According to Ahmad et al. (2024), Cronbach Alpha scores between 0.7 to 0.9 is considered acceptable to excellent.

Table 2 also shows the reliability of the survey. The analysis shows a Cronbach alpha of .909 for Writing Motivation.884 for Writing Anxiety. The overall Cronbach Alpha for all 31 items is .881;thus, revealing a 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 representatives, 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 | 29% |
| | | Female | 71% |
| 2 | Education Background | Diploma | 49% |
| | | Bachelor Degree | 51% |
| 3 | Discipline | Science & Technology | 45% |
| | | Social Sciences & Humanities | 55% |
| 4 | Academic Year | First Year | 55% |
| | | Second Year | 35% |
| | | Third Year | 6% |
| | | Final Year | 4% |

The demographic analysis of the respondents were classified into four clusters, as illustrated in Table 4. The sample was predominantly female, with females comprising 71% of the participants and males accounting for 29%. Next, in terms of education background cluster, most of the respondents are doing their bachelor degree accounting for 51%, while the remaining respondents are doing their diploma accounting for 49%. Moving on to the discipline cluster, social sciences and humanities constitute 55% of the sample, while science and technology account for 45%. Lastly, for the academic year cluster, the majority of the respondents are first year students with 55% of the sample, second year students account for 35%, third year students account for 6%, and only 4% of the respondents are final year students. It can be seen that gender and academic year clusters are not well-balanced in terms of the number of samples, but balanced sample size for education background and discipline clusters. Overall, the use of percentage reporting provides a clear overview of participant characteristics and supports the interpretation and generalisability of the research findings.

Descriptive Statistics

Why is there a need to report the mean and standard deviation? According to Vetter (2017), Mean (M) represents the average, or 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 indicates they are more spread out. It is good to have a high SD.

Findings for Writing Anxiety

This section presents data to answer research question 1- How do learners perceive their writing anxiety? In the context of this study, this is measured by (i) cognitive anxiety, (ii) somatic anxiety, and (iii) avoidance behaviour.

Table 5- Mean for Cognitive Anxiety (CA)

| ITEM | Mean | SD |
|---|------|------|
| CAQ1. While writing in English, I’m not nervous at all. | 3.45 | 0.28 |
| CAQ2. While writing English compositions, I feel worried and uneasy if I know they will be evaluated. | 3.52 | 0.97 |
| CAQ3. I don’t worry that my English compositions are a lot worse than others’. | 3.14 | 1.09 |
| CAQ4. If my English composition is to be evaluated, I would worry about getting a very poor grade. | 3.92 | 0.94 |
| CAQ5. I’m afraid that other students would deride my English composition if they read it. | 3.59 | 0.92 |
| CAQ6. I don’t worry at all about what other people would think of my English compositions. | 3.20 | 1.07 |
| CAQ7. I’m afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample to be discussed in class. | 3.69 | 1.03 |
| CAQ8. I’m not afraid at all that my English compositions would be rated as very poor. | 2.25 | 1.23 |

Table 5 presents the mean scores for items measuring the learners’ cognitive anxiety. The data indicates a general inclination towards cognitive anxiety specifically in terms of poor performance in the classroom. One item has the highest mean score of 3.92 which is “CAQ4. If my English composition is to be evaluated, I would worry about getting a very poor grade”. This is followed by the mean score of 3.69 for the item “CAQ7. I’m afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample to be discussed in class”. One item represents the lowest mean score of 2.25 which is “CAQ8. I’m not afraid at all that my English compositions would be rated as very poor”.

Table 6- Mean for Somatic Anxiety (SA)

| ITEM | Mean | SD |
|---|------|------|
| SAQ1. I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint. | 3.25 | 0.94 |
| SAQ2. My mind often goes blank when I start to work on an English composition. | 3.15 | 1.09 |
| SAQ3. I tremble or perspire when I write English compositions under time pressure. | 3.17 | 1.06 |
| SAQ4. My thoughts become jumbled when I write English compositions under time constraint. | 3.35 | 0.94 |
| SAQ5. I often feel panic when I write English compositions under time constraints. | 3.17 | 1.08 |
| SAQ6. I freeze up when unexpectedly asked to write English compositions. | 3.11 | 1.14 |
| SAQ7. I usually feel my whole-body rigid and tense when I write English compositions. | 2.89 | 1.09 |

Table 6 displays the mean scores for learners’ somatic anxiety. The data reveals a heightened emphasis on the anxiety of writing English within a certain time limitation. The statement “SAQ4. My thoughts become jumbled when I write English compositions under time constraint” garnered the highest mean score of 3.35. Followed closely by the statement “SAQ1. I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint” with a mean score of 3.25. The lowest mean score will be the statement “SAQ7. I usually feel my whole-body rigid and tense when I write English compositions” (2.89).

Table 7- Mean for Avoidance Behaviour (AB)

| ITEM | Mean | SD |
|--|------|------|
| ABQ1. I often choose to write down my thoughts in English. | 3.81 | 0.87 |
| ABQ2. I usually do my best to avoid writing English compositions. | 2.80 | 1.14 |
| ABQ3. I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English. | 2.73 | 1.21 |
| ABQ4. Unless I have no choice, I would not use English to write composition. | 2.79 | 1.14 |
| ABQ5. I would do my best to excuse myself if asked to write English compositions. | 2.81 | 1.17 |
| ABQ6. I usually seek every possible chance to write English compositions outside of class. | 3.36 | 0.98 |
| ABQ7. Whenever possible, I would use English to write compositions. | 3.80 | 0.82 |

Table 7 outlines the mean scores for items related to learners' avoidance behaviour. The results indicate that respondents generally perceive the possibility of utilising the English language in writing compositions if the situation is acceptable to them. One item has the highest mean score of 3.81 which is “ABQ1. I often choose to write down my thoughts in English”. This is followed by the mean score of 3.80 for one item which is “ABQ7. Whenever possible, I would use English to write compositions”. One item represents the lowest mean score of 2.71 which is “ABQ3. I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English”.

Findings for Self-Efficacy

This section presents data to answer research question 2- How do learners perceive self-efficacy in writing?

Table 8- Mean for Self-Efficacy (SE)

| ITEM | Mean | SD |
|---|------|------|
| SEQ1I am sure I can learn the skills taught in WRITING class well. | 3.98 | 0.70 |
| SEQ2I can do the hardest work in my WRITING class if I try. | 3.90 | 0.81 |
| SEQ3I can do almost all the work in WRITING class if I do not give up. | 4.23 | 0.73 |
| SEQ4 If I have enough time, I can do a good job in all my WRITING work. | 4.16 | 0.80 |
| SEQ5 Even if the work in WRITING is hard, I can learn it | 4.18 | 0.69 |

Table 8 presents the mean scores for learners’ self-efficacy. From the data, it can be seen that the respondents have a high tendency to complete the work in writing class when they have the desire to complete the task. The statement “SEQ3I can do almost all the work in WRITING class if I do not give up” has the highest mean score of 4.23. This is followed by the statement “SEQ5 Even if the work in WRITING is hard, I can learn it” with a mean score of 4.18. The lowest mean score is the statement “SEQ2I can do the hardest work in my WRITING class if I try” with the score of 3.90.

Findings for Task value

This section presents data to answer research question 3- How do learners perceive task value in writing?

Table 9-Mean for Task Value scale (TV)

| ITEM | Mean | SD |
|---|------|------|
| TVQ1 I think learning WRITING is important. | 4.65 | 0.65 |
| TVQ2 I find WRITING interesting. | 4.30 | 0.65 |
| TVQ3 What I learn in WRITING is useful. | 4.45 | 0.70 |
| TVQ4 Compared to other subjects, WRITING is useful. | 4.20 | 0.82 |

Table 9 represents the learners’ task value scale, which reflects the respondents value in completing writing tasks. One item has the highest mean score of 4.65 which is “TVQ1 I think learning WRITING is important”. This is followed by the item with the score of 4.45 which is “TVQ3 What I learn in WRITING is useful”. One item has the lowest mean score of 4.20 which is “TVQ4 Compared to other subjects, WRITING is useful”.

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 research questions on correlation. To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between writing motivation (self-efficacy and task-value) and writing anxiety, data is analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in tables below.

Findings for Relationship between writing anxiety and self-efficacy

This section presents data to answer research question 4- Is there a relationship between writing anxiety and self-efficacy?

(H1- There is no relationship between writing anxiety and self-efficacy)

Table 10- Correlation between writing anxiety and self-efficacy

| | | WRITING ANXIETY | SELF-EFFICACY |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| WRITING ANXIETY | Pearson (Correlation) | 1 | .105 |
| | Sig (2-tailed) | | .231 |
| | N | 132 | 132 |
| SELF-EFFICACY | Pearson (Correlation) | .105 | 1 |
| | Sig (2-tailed) | .231 | |
| | N | 132 | 132 |

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

Table 10 shows there is no association between writing anxiety and self-efficacy ($r=0.105, p=.231$). Null hypothesis is accepted.

Findings for Relationship between This section presents data to answer research question 5- Is there a relationship between writing anxiety and task value?

(H2- There is no relationship between writing anxiety and task value)

Table 11- Correlation between writing anxiety and task value

| | | WRITING ANXIETY | TASK VALUE |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------|
| WRITING ANXIETY | Pearson (Correlation) | 1 | .152 |
| | Sig (2-tailed) | | .082 |
| | N | 132 | 132 |
| TASK VALUE | Pearson (Correlation) | .152 | 1 |
| | Sig (2-tailed) | .082 | |
| | N | 132 | 132 |

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

Table 11 shows there is no association between writing anxiety and task value ($r=.152, p=.082$). Null hypothesis is accepted.

Inferential Statistics (significant difference)

According to He (2024), there are three main functions of a T-test and ANOVA. Firstly, both are done to compare means. This test is 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 done 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.

Findings for Significant Difference for all factors across Clusters

This section presents data to answer research question 6: Is there a significant difference for writing motivation and anxiety across education background?

(H3- There is no significant difference for writing motivation and anxiety across education background)

Table 12- T-test for writing motivation and anxiety across education background

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|---|------|------------------------------|---------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|--------|
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Significance | | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | One-Sided p | Two-Sided p | | | Lower | Upper |
| WRITING_MOTIVATION | Equal variances assumed | .358 | .551 | -.757 | 130 | .225 | .450 | -.07610 | .10054 | -.27501 | .12281 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | -.750 | 116.219 | .227 | .455 | -.07610 | .10142 | -.27698 | .12477 |
| WRITING_ANXEITY | Equal variances assumed | 1.442 | .232 | -.479 | 130 | .316 | .633 | -.04713 | .09834 | -.24167 | .14742 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | -.483 | 126.518 | .315 | .630 | -.04713 | .09766 | -.24039 | .14614 |

With reference to table 12, a T-test was conducted to examine the effects of writing motivation and anxiety on education levels. The analysis shows there is no significant difference between writing motivation (F=0.358,p=.450)and anxiety (F=1.442, p=.633)across education levels.

Findings for Significant Difference for all factors across Clusters

This section presents data to answer research question 7: Is there a significant difference for writing motivation and anxiety across disciplines?

● (H4-There is no significant difference for writing motivation and anxiety across disciplines)

Table 13- T test for writing motivation and anxiety across disciplines

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|---|------|------------------------------|---------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|--------|
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Significance | | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | One-Sided p | Two-Sided p | | | Lower | Upper |
| WRITING_MOTIVATION | Equal variances assumed | .434 | .511 | -.220 | 130 | .413 | .826 | -.02222 | .10112 | -.22227 | .17783 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | -.213 | 103.672 | .416 | .832 | -.02222 | .10423 | -.22892 | .18448 |
| WRITING_ANXEITY | Equal variances assumed | 2.025 | .157 | .091 | 130 | .464 | .928 | .00896 | .09878 | -.18647 | .20440 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | .089 | 116.458 | .464 | .929 | .00896 | .10024 | -.18957 | .20750 |

With reference to table 13, a T-test was conducted to examine the effects of writing motivation and anxiety on disciplines. The analysis shows there is no significant difference between writing motivation ($F=0.434$, $p=.826$) and anxiety ($F=2.025$, $p=.928$) across disciplines. Null hypothesis is accepted.

CONCLUSION

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The aim of this study was to explore the influence of writing anxiety on writing motivation. To this end, the findings indicated several key findings were found between relevance and all two variables.

How do learners perceive their writing anxiety?

From the findings, it can be found that learners perceived their writing anxiety as most visible when writing is tied to evaluation and classroom exposure, rather than as a constant fear across all writing situations. In general, they were more likely to feel anxious when they imagined their writing being graded or openly discussed, while they were less likely to express confidence that poor ratings would not worry them. This pattern reflects the view that writing anxiety is often shaped by learners' expectations and worries about how their writing will be judged, which is central to cognitive anxiety as outlined by Cheng (2004). When evaluation becomes the centre of attention, anxiety shifts from being a private feeling into a performance concern that can quietly shape how learners approach writing tasks.

The students also perceived writing anxiety through physical and mental strain that becomes stronger under time constraints, suggesting that anxiety is not only "in the mind" but also felt in the body. In simple terms, they were more likely to report confusion, blankness, and nervous reactions when writing had to be completed quickly, while stronger bodily tension was less consistently endorsed. This matches the earlier point in your paper that writing demands several processes at once; generating ideas, organising content, and managing language, which can result in tension and worry during writing (Wern & Rahmat, 2021). This is because time pressure compresses thinking and language control into a short window, it can magnify anxiety even among learners who may cope well in less rushed writing conditions.

At the same time, learners' responses suggest that avoidance is not their dominant reaction, even though avoidance is part of the established model of writing anxiety. Overall, they appeared more willing to use English for writing when opportunities felt reasonable, while stronger avoidance tendencies were less strongly reflected. This is consistent with Cheng's (2004) categorisation of avoidance behaviour as only one dimension of writing anxiety, meaning anxious learners do not always withdraw fully but may still engage when task demands feel manageable. Learners seem to manage anxiety by controlling their level of exposure to writing situations, which implies that avoidance can be selective rather than complete.

When these perceptions are viewed alongside past studies in your review, your findings fit well with the argument that writing anxiety often grows from self-confidence concerns, feedback pressure, and time demands. For example, Jasman et al. (2023) reported that university learners experienced high writing anxiety and linked it to low confidence, fear of instructors' feedback, linguistic difficulties, and time pressure, which closely resonates with your learners' stronger anxiety around evaluation and timed writing. Similarly, Kucuk (2023) found that learners' anxiety was connected to limited grammar and vocabulary knowledge, time constraints, and fear of mistakes, and also noted that familiar and interesting topics lowered anxiety, which helps explain why anxiety may rise most when learners anticipate formal judgment rather than routine writing. Taken together, the evidence suggests that learners' writing anxiety is not random, but is tied to situations where errors feel costly and where the possibility of negative judgment feels immediate.

Overall, learners perceived writing anxiety as context-sensitive and linked to classroom conditions, especially evaluation and time constraints, while showing less clear support for a strong tendency to avoid writing completely. This matters because the pattern points to anxiety as something that can be shaped by instructional design, rather than as a fixed learner trait, and the past studies you cited already imply that supportive strategies and more thoughtful task design can reduce anxiety in meaningful ways (Jasman et al., 2023; Kucuk, 2023). If

anxiety is largely triggered by classroom pressures, then changes in how writing is timed, evaluated, and responded to may offer a realistic path to improving learners' writing experience without lowering academic expectations.

How do learners perceive self-efficacy in writing?

The students in this study perceived their self-efficacy in writing as generally high and resilient, suggesting that they believe they can cope with writing demands when they put in effort. In simple terms, they expressed stronger confidence in their ability to complete writing tasks through persistence and learning, while their confidence was comparatively lower when the task was framed as the hardest work in class. This overall pattern supports the view that self-efficacy is closely linked to learners' beliefs about what they can achieve through effort and strategy, which is central to how self-efficacy functions in learning contexts (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). The learners appear to treat writing success as something that can be built through commitment rather than something fixed by talent, which signals a growth-oriented confidence even when tasks feel demanding.

At the same time, the findings indicate that learners' self-efficacy is more stable when writing challenges are framed as learnable, rather than when challenges are framed as extreme difficulty. Their strongest perceptions point to "not giving up" and "being able to learn even if work is hard," whereas the weakest perception sits around doing the hardest work even with effort. This aligns with Self-Determination Theory, in which feelings of competence support more sustained motivation, and competence tends to grow when learners experience progress and mastery over tasks (Ryan & Deci, 2000). When learners interpret difficulty as part of learning rather than as a threat, they are more likely to maintain confidence, which may protect them from giving up during challenging writing episodes.

Moreover, learners' high self-efficacy can be read as a sign that they still see themselves as capable writers despite the anxiety pressures described earlier in your findings, which makes the emotional picture more nuanced. Rather than reflecting helplessness, their self-efficacy responses suggest that they believe time and effort can improve outcomes, especially when writing tasks are approached with enough preparation. This is consistent with De Smedt et al. (2023), who found that higher self-efficacy is associated with more autonomous forms of motivation and can support stronger writing engagement and outcomes. The coexistence of anxiety and strong self-efficacy implies that learners may feel pressured by writing situations, yet still hold a workable sense of capability that can be strengthened through supportive classroom practices.

In addition, the way learners described self-efficacy in this study matches what past work suggests about how instructional conditions can shape confidence. If learners believe they can learn writing skills well, it often points to learning environments that provide structure, opportunities to practise, and tasks that feel meaningful enough to attempt seriously. This resonates with Deris et al. (2024), where more interactive and learner-centred materials were linked to stronger writing motivation, and motivation is often closely tied to confidence in one's ability to handle tasks. The learners' confidence is unlikely to be purely personal, because it is also shaped by how writing is taught and supported, which means instructional design can quietly raise or reduce self-efficacy over time.

As a whole, learners perceived self-efficacy in writing as a dependable belief in their ability to learn and complete writing work, with the clearest weakness appearing when writing is framed as the hardest possible task. When considered alongside the literature reviewed, the findings are in line with the argument that self-efficacy supports engagement and is closely connected to motivation and achievement processes in writing contexts (De Smedt et al., 2023; Ryan & Deci, 2000). This is because the learners already show a strong base of confidence, teaching that reinforces mastery and progress may be more effective than teaching that relies on pressure, as confidence tends to grow when challenge feels structured rather than overwhelming.

How do learners perceive task value in writing?

The respondents perceived task value in writing as strongly positive, indicating that they view writing as meaningful rather than as a burdensome subject. In general, they placed the greatest value on the importance of learning writing, while comparatively lower value was attached when writing was judged against other subjects, even though that perception still remained positive overall. This pattern suggests that learners do not merely

“accept” writing because it is required; instead, they recognise it as a skill with broad usefulness in academic life, which fits your introduction that frames writing as essential across academic and professional settings. When learners see writing as important in itself, their engagement is more likely to be driven by purpose rather than by short-term classroom demands, which can strengthen persistence in writing tasks.

In addition, learners’ perceptions show that task value was not limited to importance alone, because they also tended to see writing as useful and interesting. They expressed stronger agreement with the usefulness of what they learn in writing, while interest is still high, it somehow appeared slightly less dominant compared to value tied to importance and usefulness. This resonates with the view that writing motivation includes learners’ emotions and the value they assign to writing tasks, which your paper highlights as part of writing motivation in academic contexts (Abdel Latif, 2019). When usefulness becomes a central reason for learning writing, learners may tolerate difficulty better, because the payoff feels real even when the process is uncomfortable.

From a theoretical angle, learners’ strong task value aligns well with Self-Determination Theory, because valuing a learning task can support more internalised forms of motivation. When learners believe that writing matters and connects to their goals, they are more likely to engage with it in a self-directed way, which is consistent with SDT’s emphasis on building motivation through psychological needs and meaningful learning experiences (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the same vein, De Smedt et al. (2023) reported that autonomous motivation is often linked to perceived value and it was positively associated with writing performance, which helps explain why strong task value is an encouraging sign for writing development. Underlying insight: task value can act like a motivational anchor that helps learners stay engaged, which matters most when writing tasks become complex and require sustained effort.

Moreover, the strong task value reported here can be discussed alongside research showing that learning design influences how much learners value writing tasks. When writing activities are presented through interactive and learner-centred materials, learners may experience higher motivation and engagement, and this can raise how useful and worthwhile writing feels to them (Deris et al., 2024). At the same time, because your respondents already report high value, it suggests that learners may have internalised writing as a necessary academic skill even if their writing experiences are sometimes stressful, which complements the broader argument in your paper that writing is highly demanded at tertiary level. Valuing writing does not automatically remove stress, yet it can provide learners with a reason to keep trying, which makes task value an important resource for teaching and support.

In conclusion, learners perceived task value in writing as high across importance, interest, and usefulness, with the clearest emphasis placed on writing as an important skill and the least emphasis placed on comparing writing’s usefulness against other subjects. When linked back to the literature reviewed, these findings are consistent with the idea that learners’ motivation is strengthened when writing is seen as meaningful and connected to real outcomes, especially under learning conditions that support engagement and autonomy (De Smedt et al., 2023; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deris et al., 2024). Underlying insight: because learners already value writing highly, teaching strategies that preserve relevance and interest may be more impactful than strategies that rely mainly on pressure, as value tends to grow when learners feel that writing connects to who they are and what they need.

Is there a relationship between writing anxiety and self-efficacy?

The overall findings indicate that there is no statistically meaningful relationship between writing anxiety and self-efficacy among the learners in this study. Specifically, the correlation analysis showed a weak positive association that was not significant, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis that writing anxiety is not related to self-efficacy in this dataset. In practical terms, learners who reported higher anxiety did not necessarily report lower confidence in their writing ability, and those who felt confident were not automatically free from anxiety either. The results suggest that anxiety and confidence can exist side by side, which means one does not automatically cancel the other in learners’ writing experience.

One way to understand this pattern is to consider that self-efficacy reflects capability beliefs, whereas anxiety reflects emotional pressure, and these may be triggered by different classroom conditions. In the framework,

anxiety is situation-specific and linked to worries about evaluation, time pressure, and avoidance tendencies (Cheng, 2004), while self-efficacy concerns learners' belief that they can learn skills and complete writing tasks when they persist. This distinction helps explain why the two variables may not move together in a simple way, because a learner can believe "I can do this" and still feel stressed when the task involves grades or public discussion. If anxiety is shaped more by classroom pressures than by ability beliefs, then raising confidence alone may not be enough to reduce anxious feelings during writing.

In addition, the absence of a significant relationship aligns with the mixed evidence presented, where previous research has reported inconsistent links between anxiety, motivation, and performance. For instance, Ochoa (2025) reported that writing anxiety had no significant influence on students' motivation and performance and stressed the importance of self-efficacy, which is consistent with the possibility that self-efficacy can operate independently from anxiety. At the same time, studies such as Hashemian and Heidarai (2013) and Che Shamsudin et al. (2025) suggest that motivation is related to better writing outcomes and that anxiety can interfere with focus, so the relationship may depend on task type, context, or how learners interpret evaluation. The inconsistency across studies suggests that the anxiety and self-efficacy link may be conditional, which means it could emerge only under certain writing demands or assessment climates.

Looking from a motivational perspective, the theory helps explain why confidence might remain stable even when anxiety is present, because competence beliefs are supported by learning progress and persistence rather than by emotional comfort alone (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Similarly, De Smedt et al. (2023) showed that self-efficacy relates to stronger motivational processes, yet this does not require the complete absence of negative emotions during writing. Therefore, the result can be discussed as a reminder that writing support should address both strands; strengthening competence beliefs and managing evaluation-related pressures that activate anxiety. Self-efficacy and anxiety may develop through different routes. Effective writing instruction likely needs to build confidence while also reducing avoidable stressors in how writing tasks are timed, evaluated, and responded to.

Is there a relationship between writing anxiety and task value?

Overall, the findings show that there is no statistically meaningful relationship between writing anxiety and task value among the learners in this study. The correlation analysis revealed only a weak positive association that was not significant, so the null hypothesis that writing anxiety is not related to task value was accepted. Put simply, learners who reported higher anxiety did not necessarily report lower value for writing, and learners who valued writing strongly were not automatically less anxious when writing. Learners can believe writing matters while still feeling pressured by it, which suggests that valuing a task does not always translate into emotional comfort during performance.

One plausible explanation is that task value reflects perceived importance and usefulness, whereas anxiety is more likely to be triggered by situational pressures such as evaluation and time constraints. In your conceptual discussion, writing anxiety is described as tension and worry experienced during the writing process (Wern & Rahmat, 2021) and is organized into cognitive, somatic, and avoidance dimensions (Cheng, 2004). Task value, on the other hand, relates to what learners believe writing is worth and why they should invest in it, which may remain stable even when writing situations feel demanding. Anxiety is activated by how tasks are experienced in the moment, it may not directly reduce task value unless learners start linking writing to repeated failure or negative judgment.

In addition, your result fits the mixed patterns described in the problem statement, where past studies have not agreed on how anxiety and motivational factors connect. For example, Ochoa (2025) reported that writing anxiety had no significant influence on motivation and performance, which supports the view that motivation-related beliefs may remain intact even when anxiety is present. At the same time, Yan (2024) suggested that some students see writing tasks as daunting and this can lead to anxiety, implying that task perceptions can matter, yet the relationship may depend on how learners interpret the demands of a particular task. The evidence across studies implies that the anxiety-value link may appear only when task demands consistently feel threatening, not when learners can still see writing as worthwhile.

Task value can remain high even when anxiety persists because internalising the importance of learning can coexist with negative emotions during challenging activities (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Likewise, De Smedt et al. (2023) showed that autonomous motivation connected to personal value relates positively to writing outcomes, which suggests that strong value may sustain engagement even when learners feel stressed. Therefore, rather than assuming that anxiety reduces value, your finding encourages a more balanced view: learners may continue to value writing while needing support to manage evaluation pressure and time-related strain. If task value is already strong, interventions that reduce avoidable stressors may be more effective than trying to “convince” learners that writing matters, because they already believe it does.

Is there a significant difference for writing anxiety and self-efficacy across education background?

Overall, the findings indicate that there is no significant difference in writing anxiety and self-efficacy across education background in this study. The independent samples t-test showed that learners from different education backgrounds reported comparable levels of anxiety and comparable confidence in their writing ability, so the null hypothesis was accepted. In other words, being in diploma or bachelor-level study did not appear to separate learners into clearly different profiles of “more anxious/less confident” or “less anxious/more confident”. Education background, by itself, seems to be a weak indicator of how learners feel about writing, which implies that writing experiences may be shaped more by shared academic demands than by programme level.

One reasonable explanation is that learners across education backgrounds may face similar writing conditions, especially when academic writing is treated as a common requirement with similar expectations and assessment practices. Writing anxiety, as conceptualised by Cheng (2004), is situation-specific and often linked to evaluation, time constraints, and fear of negative judgement, which can affect learners regardless of where they begin in the system. At the same time, self-efficacy reflects learners’ belief that they can learn and complete writing tasks through effort and persistence, and these beliefs may develop from classroom support and repeated practice rather than from qualification level alone (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). If both groups are exposed to similar task demands and feedback pressures, it makes sense that their anxiety and confidence would cluster around similar levels, even though their formal education backgrounds differ.

Furthermore, the finding can be discussed in relation to past studies that highlight shared causes of anxiety which cut across learner groups. For instance, Jasman et al. (2023) reported that anxiety was strongly connected to factors such as low confidence, fear of instructor feedback, linguistic difficulty, and time pressure, and these are pressures that can affect learners at different levels when writing tasks carry high stakes. Similarly, Kucuk (2023) identified time constraints and fear of making mistakes as key contributors to writing anxiety, suggesting that these triggers are not exclusive to one educational track. The absence of group differences hints that anxiety may be driven by common classroom stressors, which can operate similarly across programmes unless teaching practices and task designs meaningfully diverge.

Finally, from a motivation perspective, Self-Determination Theory suggests that competence beliefs grow when learners experience progress and feel capable, and these conditions can be present in both diploma and degree contexts if learning support is consistent (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Since your results do not show differences by education background, the discussion can shift from “who is more anxious” to “what conditions raise or reduce anxiety and confidence,” especially because writing instruction can shape learners’ competence perceptions over time. Rather than targeting interventions by education background, it may be more effective to focus on task design, feedback practices, and learning support that strengthen competence while reducing avoidable evaluation-related pressure.

Is there a significant difference for writing anxiety and self-efficacy across disciplines?

The findings of this study indicate that writing anxiety and self-efficacy do not differ significantly across disciplinary groups, suggesting that learners from science and technology fields and those from social sciences and humanities share broadly similar writing-related experiences. In general terms, disciplinary background did not appear to create noticeable gaps in how anxious learners felt about writing or how confident they were in handling writing tasks. This outcome implies that academic writing, as experienced by the participants, functions as a shared institutional practice rather than a discipline-specific challenge. When writing expectations converge

across programmes, disciplinary identity may lose its explanatory power in accounting for differences in learners' emotional and motivational responses to writing.

From a conceptual perspective, this lack of difference can be understood by considering how writing anxiety is defined as a situation-specific response that emerges in reaction to task demands, evaluation, and classroom pressures rather than to disciplinary content alone (Cheng, 2004). If learners across disciplines are assessed using similar writing formats, timelines, and feedback practices, then anxiety is likely to be shaped by these shared conditions rather than by whether the writing occurs in a science or humanities context. Disciplinary boundaries may matter less for anxiety when institutional assessment norms remain largely uniform across faculties.

A similar line of reasoning applies to self-efficacy, which reflects learners' beliefs about their ability to cope with writing tasks through effort and persistence. Confidence in writing may develop through repeated exposure to academic writing conventions and through feedback received in shared foundational courses, instead of through disciplinary expertise alone. This interpretation aligns with De Smedt et al. (2023), who showed that self-efficacy is closely connected to motivational processes and learning experiences, which can function similarly across subject areas when instructional structures are comparable. Learners' confidence appears to be socially and pedagogically shaped, which reduces the likelihood that discipline alone would create sharp differences in self-efficacy.

Seen alongside earlier studies in your review, the present finding echoes the broader argument that writing anxiety and confidence are influenced more by instructional environments than by learner categories. Jasman et al. (2023) demonstrated that anxiety among university students was driven by factors such as feedback fear, time pressure, and linguistic difficulty, none of which were confined to particular disciplines, while Kucuk (2023) similarly highlighted common anxiety triggers across educational contexts. These consistent stressors help explain why disciplinary background did not lead to significant differences in your data. When the sources of writing pressure are shared across disciplines, learners' emotional and confidence patterns are likely to converge, regardless of the academic field they belong to.

Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

Theoretical and Conceptual Implications

Theoretically, the findings strengthen the view that writing anxiety is situation-specific and multidimensional, but it may not function as a direct motivational "opposite." In this study, learners reported noticeable anxiety patterns (especially around evaluation and time pressure), yet self-efficacy and task value remained high, and correlation results showed no significant association between writing anxiety and self-efficacy, as well as writing anxiety and task value. This outcome is meaningful because Cheng's (2004) model positions writing anxiety as cognitive, somatic, and avoidance-based responses that can interfere with writing performance and engagement, but the results suggest that anxiety may coexist with motivational beliefs rather than automatically reducing them. Writing anxiety may be better understood as a parallel emotional condition that can exist alongside strong motivational beliefs, instead of being treated as a simple predictor of low motivation.

Conceptually, the study refines how self-determination theory (SDT) can be interpreted in academic writing contexts by separating "belief in competence" from "comfort during performance". SDT argues that motivation is supported by autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and learners may remain motivated when these needs are met. The findings indicate that learners' strong self-efficacy and high task value suggest that competence-related beliefs and perceived usefulness are present, even though writing anxiety still appears in evaluative settings. This implies that competence beliefs can develop through learning experiences and support structures even when learners still feel anxious during high-stakes writing tasks. They may feel "capable" and "motivated" while still feeling "pressured," which implies SDT-based interpretation in writing should recognise that motivation does not require the absence of anxiety.

Furthermore, the absence of significant differences across education background and disciplines suggests that writing anxiety and self-efficacy may be shaped more by shared institutional writing demands than by academic grouping. Neither education background nor disciplinary cluster separated learners meaningfully in anxiety or

self-efficacy. This resembles the broader implication seen where learner experiences (whether burnout/motivation or stress/motivation) are often influenced by learning conditions and academic pressures, and not merely by demographic categories. When writing expectations and assessment practices are similar across programmes, learner differences may flatten, which shifts attention toward shared teaching and assessment conditions as the more powerful explanatory factor.

Pedagogical Implications

Pedagogically, the findings suggest that writing instruction should focus on reducing evaluation pressure and time-related strain without weakening learners' existing motivation. It can be found that anxiety was strongly tied to being evaluated and writing under time constraints, while avoidance tendencies were not dominant and motivational perceptions remained high. This means teachers do not need to "build value from zero"; instead, teaching should preserve students' strong task value and self-efficacy by making assessment feel more supportive and predictable. This is because learners already value writing, the immediate teaching priority is to reduce stress triggers that make writing feel risky, especially in graded contexts.

To address cognitive anxiety, instructors can redesign feedback and assessment routines so that evaluation becomes developmental rather than threatening. Since learners' anxiety peaks around grades and public discussion, teachers can use staged drafting, clearer rubrics, and feedback cycles that emphasise improvement over judgment, which helps learners interpret evaluation as guidance rather than a threat. This approach is consistent with the general implication Abd Rashid et al. (2025) study, which stresses the importance of supportive learning environments that attend to students' emotional well-being while managing academic demands. When evaluation is structured as progress-tracking, learners are more likely to stay engaged and less likely to frame writing as a situation where mistakes carry personal cost.

To manage somatic anxiety linked to time pressure, teachers can build timed-writing tolerance gradually instead of using sudden high-stakes time-limited tasks. The findings show that time constraints are a key trigger of somatic strain, so instruction can incorporate low-stakes timed practices, planning templates, and short "thinking time" phases before writing begins. Similar to the pedagogical directions in Abd Rahman et al. (2025), which recommends more practical and supportive activities to sustain motivation and reduce exhaustion, writing courses can include structured rehearsal and simulation with manageable demands. Gradual exposure to timed writing can reduce fear responses while preserving competence, because learners experience control and improvement rather than abrupt pressure.

Finally, because avoidance was not strongly dominant, teachers can leverage learners' willingness to write by expanding low-pressure writing opportunities beyond formal assignments. Informal writing journals, short reflective responses, peer-supported writing circles, or guided online discussion posts can provide meaningful practice without triggering heavy evaluation anxiety. This logic aligns with the broader point raised in both Abd Rashid et al. (2025) and Abd Rahman et al. (2025) which highlighted that engagement improves when learning feels supportive and when demands are balanced with emotional considerations. Hence, increasing low-stakes writing time can help learners normalise writing as routine practice, which may reduce anxiety intensity while keeping their task value intact.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should examine why writing anxiety did not significantly relate to self-efficacy and task value in this context, despite strong theoretical reasons to expect connections. The findings indicate no significant correlations between anxiety and the two motivational constructs, which suggests that relationships may be conditional or mediated by other variables. Future researchers could test mediators such as feedback orientation, perceived teacher support, prior writing achievement, or emotional regulation, because these factors may explain how anxiety is experienced without necessarily reducing learners' perceived competence or value. The "missing link" between anxiety and motivation may sit in how learners interpret classroom pressure, not in anxiety or motivation alone.

In addition, future studies should use designs that go beyond cross-sectional surveys, because writing anxiety can shift over time and across tasks. Longitudinal designs could track learners across a semester to observe whether repeated feedback, drafting cycles, or increasing task difficulty changes the anxiety–motivation relationship. This is consistent with the future-research direction raised in Kucuk (2023) and Abd Rahman et al. (2025), where longitudinal work was proposed to understand evolving patterns of motivation, exhaustion, and disengagement more deeply. Underlying insight: tracking learners across time may reveal relationships that a one-time survey cannot detect, especially when anxiety depends on assessment timing and task demands.

Finally, future researchers should broaden the population and incorporate mixed methods to explain the “why” behind learners’ survey responses. The sample is drawn from one public university context, and group differences were not significant across education background or discipline. Replication across universities, programmes, and proficiency levels would strengthen generalisability, while interviews or reflective journals could clarify how learners maintain high task value and self-efficacy even when they feel anxious. By combining broader sampling with qualitative explanation can show not only what learners feel, but how classroom experiences shape those feelings in real academic writing situations.

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