

# Do Learners' Self-Efficacy Predict Their Use of Writing Strategies?

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## ABSTRACT

Writing skill is a crucial skill for students in tertiary level education. For students who do not possess good writing skills, they might be intimidated by writing tasks and assignments. This low self-efficacy might hinder them from performing in a writing task. Hence, this study aims to investigate the relationship between students' self-efficacy and the writing strategies (metacognitive, effort regulation, cognitive, society, and affective strategies) that they use. A quantitative approach was employed, specifically the survey research design to determine the relationship between these two variables. A total of 147 university students from a public university in Selangor, Malaysia were involved in this study, who responded to a questionnaire distributed through online platforms. In general, the findings of this study found that generally students had high self-efficacy, and they employed various strategies in order to complete their writing tasks. The implication of this study is that while teaching writing strategies to students is helpful, students' confidence and self-efficacy should also be raised in the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, writing strategies, writing, writing tasks, tertiary education

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

Writing is a fundamental skill in language learning and academic success, enabling learners to communicate ideas, construct knowledge, and participate in academic discourse. In the field of education, writing skills are increasingly becoming more important, as learners are expected to communicate academically, professionally, and digitally. However, despite learning writing skills in schools for a long period of time, learners are still struggling because in writing, they do not just simply write. In the writing process, learners are expected to brainstorm ideas, organise, and put their ideas into written text. In addition, they are also required to check and revise their work to ensure that their writing is fulfilling a task's requirements. Recent studies show that good writing relies not just on language skills, but also on how well learners manage their thinking, motivation, and behavior while they write (Shen & Bai, 2024; Hwang, 2025).

Self-efficacy is one of the influence factors in writing that becomes scholars' attention. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is an individual's belief of their capabilities to accomplish a task successfully. In the context of writing, it refers to a learner's confidence in their ability to express their ideas effectively while overcoming any writing-related challenges, which eventually help them to complete their writing tasks (Pajares, 2003). As stated by Graham (2025), self-efficacy is identified consistently by previous scholars to influence learners' engagement in writing activities and their use of self-regulated writing strategies.

Given its role in shaping learners' engagement and self-regulation during writing, researchers have also highlighted the importance of writing strategies in supporting the writing process. These strategies include metacognitive strategies for planning and monitoring, cognitive strategies for composing and revising, social strategies for seeking assistance and feedback, affective strategies for managing emotions, and effort regulation strategies for maintaining effort and persistence when facing writing difficulties (Teng & Zhang, 2020)

The relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategies can be understood through Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Regulated Learning Theory, which posit that learners' beliefs influence the effort they invest and the strategies they employ when completing tasks (Bandura, 1997; Zimmerman, 2000). Recent studies have consistently shown that learners with stronger writing self-efficacy are more likely to employ self-regulated writing strategies, including cognitive, metacognitive, social, affective, and effort regulation strategies. These strategies have been associated with improved writing performance and proficiency, with self-efficacy emerging as an important predictor of both strategy use and writing achievement (Kong & Wang, 2022; Zhang & Zhang, 2024; Zhu & Sun, 2025). Similarly, Hwang (2025) highlighted the importance of fostering writing self-efficacy while equipping learners with effective self-regulated learning strategies to enhance writing skills. Collectively, these findings suggest a close relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategy use, where learners with greater confidence are more likely to engage in strategic learning behaviours that support successful writing outcomes.

Although research has demonstrated the importance of both self-efficacy and writing strategies, much of the existing literature has focused on their contribution to writing performance rather than learners' perceptions of these constructs and their interrelationship. Given the increasing emphasis on learner autonomy and self-regulated learning in higher education, further investigation is needed to better understand how learners perceive their writing self-efficacy and use various writing strategies. Therefore, this study seeks to examine learners' perceptions of self-efficacy and writing strategies, including metacognitive, cognitive, social, affective, and effort regulation strategies, as well as to determine the relationships between self-efficacy and writing strategies.

## 1.2 Statement of Problem

Writing is one of the most challenging tasks for students to do in the academic setting, as learners are not only required to navigate their linguistic knowledge, but they also need to consistently employ critical thinking and manipulate various resources. In order to have a good performance in writing, the concept of self-efficacy which is the learners' belief in their capability to plan, monitor, and revise is crucial for students to have (Cheng et al., 2025). Research has long established that self-efficacy in writing is an integral psychological predictor in one's writing performance. It was proven many times in the previous studies that students who have high self-efficacy beliefs tend to engage more and strategically in the writing processes (Cheng et al., 2026). Even though the importance of self-efficacy in education is significant in the body of literature, many students are still struggling with their writing task. The psychological aspect in this process further aggravates this situation, specifically in relation to students' self-belief and their use of strategies in writing, which remain insufficiently studied in the tertiary level context (Fajrina et al., 2023).

Scholars' attention to the relationship between writing self-efficacy and the utilisation of writing strategies has been increasing. Writing processes that involve planning, drafting, revising, self-monitoring, and feedback-seeking behaviours are some of the cognitive tools that students use to manage their writing demands, which help students to be more independent and autonomous in their learning process (Teng & Huang, 2019; Teng, Qin, & Wang, 2022). The past studies have established that there is a strong connection between self-efficacy beliefs and writing strategies. In other words, students are more likely to employ various metacognitive and self-regulatory strategies when they have a high self-efficacy in writing (Cheng & Zhang, 2024; Zhang, 2022). Research has also identified that linguistic and genre performance self-efficacy are significant determinants of writing performance, with the use of self-regulated learning strategies as mediation (Kong & Teng, 2024). In addition, Nigussie et al. (2024) also found that the Ethiopian EFL students who employed a broader variety of strategies such as planning, revising, and self-monitoring reported have notably higher confidence in their writing abilities (Nigussie et al., 2024). These findings highlight that self-efficacy influences writing outcomes, and it also interacts dynamically with students' strategic behaviours throughout the writing process.

Although many studies have explored writing self-efficacy and writing strategies on their own, less is known about how they work together in different groups of learners. Feedback on writing has been found to strongly influence both self-efficacy and self-regulated strategies. However, research content, methods, and contextual scope in writing self-efficacy studies remain limited, with insufficient attention given to how self-efficacy profiles differ across learners and how these profiles shape their strategic engagement with writing tasks (Cheng & Zhang, 2024). Moreover, although writing self-efficacy has been studied in relation to writing anxiety and writing performance, studies that simultaneously investigate its relationship with specific writing strategy use across multiple dimensions including cognitive, metacognitive, and social-behavioural strategies are still lacking. In light of these gaps, the present study aims to investigate the relationship between students' writing self-efficacy and their writing strategies, with the intent of informing more holistic and evidence-based approaches to writing instruction in higher education.

### 1.3 Objective of the Study and Research Questions

This study is done to explore self-efficacy and writing strategies. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the learners' perception of their self-efficacy in writing?
- 2) What are the learners' perception of their metacognitive strategies in writing?
- 3) What are the learners' perception of their effort regulation strategies in writing?
- 4) What are the learners' perception of their cognitive strategies in writing?
- 5) What are the learners' perception of their social strategies in writing?
- 6) What are the learners' perception of their affective strategies in writing?
- 7) Is there a significant relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategies?

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategies.

- 8) Can self-efficacy predict the use of writing strategies among learners?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework of the Study

#### 2.1.1 Self-Efficacy in Writing

Writing self-efficacy refers to a learner's confidence when completing a writing task. Bandura's work (1997) showed that internal beliefs strongly influence the way a person faces challenges. In universities, students who feel confident about their writing are more likely to work harder, stay motivated when tasks become difficult, and try different strategies to improve their writing (Cheng & Zhang, 2024). However, when that confidence is missing, the writing process can easily become overwhelming. As academic writing requires a lot of cognitive processes, investigating learners' self-efficacy could help educators to understand the struggles that learners face in writing tasks (Fajrina et al., 2023).

#### 2.1.2 Writing Strategies

Writing strategies refer to the intentional, goal-oriented techniques and measures that writers employ to develop ideas, plan, organize, revise, and reflect in the process of writing and to deal with the problems encountered in the writing task to produce better writing (Flower, 1998 & Graham et al., 2013). Writing strategies commonly involved three writing stages namely prewriting, writing and rewriting. Numerous studies have

shown that writing strategies are crucial in language learning as they can differentiate between less and more skilled writers (Al-Jarrah et al., 2018, Aluemalai & Maniam, 2020), Chen, 2022 & Baharudin et al., 2023).

A robust theoretical framework for writing strategies is grounded in cognitive and metacognitive theories of writing. Flower and Hayes' Cognitive Process Theory of Writing (1981), the most foundational theory for writing strategies, conceptualises writing as a recursive process involving planning, translating (drafting) and reviewing. Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) suggests that writing is influenced by the interaction between a person's thoughts (metacognition), their behaviour, and the environment. This means writing strategies involve making plans, monitoring and evaluating. However, later research development especially in the context of English as a second language learning associates writing strategies with not only cognitive and metacognitive strategies but also effort regulation, social, and affective strategies, making the categorization of the strategies more comprehensive (Raoofi et al., 2017). Table 1 below presents the categorization and definition of each strategy based on Raoofi et al. (2017).

Table 1: Categorization and definition of writing strategies

| Writing strategies | Definition                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Metacognitive      | Higher-order regulatory processes used to plan, monitor, and evaluate writing. These strategies reflect learners' awareness and control over their writing process.  |
| Effort regulation  | Learners' ability to maintain effort, persistence, and concentration during writing tasks, especially when tasks are difficult or uninteresting.                     |
| Cognitive          | Direct strategies used to manipulate language and content during writing. These strategies involve active engagement with linguistic resources and idea development. |
| Social             | Help-seeking behaviours where learners interact with others to improve their writing.                                                                                |
| Affective          | Techniques used to regulate emotions, attitudes, and motivation related to writing.                                                                                  |

## 2.2 Past Studies on Self-Efficacy and Writing

Early studies consistently reported that learners with higher levels of writing self-efficacy demonstrated greater motivation, persistence, and writing achievement than those with lower self-efficacy (Pajares, 2003; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2007). These findings established self-efficacy as a significant predictor of writing success and highlighted its role in influencing learners' engagement with writing tasks. The literature also suggested that learners who possess stronger confidence in their writing abilities are more likely to persevere when encountering writing difficulties and to invest greater effort in completing writing tasks.

More recent research has extended this understanding by examining the relationship between writing self-efficacy and self-regulated writing behaviours. Zhang and Zhang (2024) found that learners with stronger writing self-efficacy were more likely to employ self-regulated writing strategies, indicating that confidence in writing supports strategic engagement throughout the writing process. Similarly, Graham et al. (2025) reported that improvements in writing instruction were associated with gains in learners' writing self-efficacy, reinforcing the reciprocal relationship between writing competence and confidence. Furthermore, Zhu and Sun (2025) found a significant positive relationship between writing self-efficacy and self-regulated writing strategies across different proficiency levels, suggesting that learners' beliefs about their writing capabilities may influence how effectively they regulate their writing processes.

Despite the growing body of evidence supporting the importance of writing self-efficacy, several issues remain underexplored. While previous studies have demonstrated positive associations between self-efficacy, writing performance, and self-regulated learning, comparatively fewer studies have investigated learners' perceptions of writing self-efficacy alongside multiple dimensions of writing strategy use. Therefore, further

research is needed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how learners perceive writing self-efficacy and how these perceptions relate to the use of different writing strategies.

### 2.3 Past Studies on Writing Strategies

Substantial research has explored the writing strategies that students employ and the influence these strategies have on writing performance. Bui, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2023) examined the academic writing strategies used by Vietnamese EFL pre-service teachers when completing their writing assignments. Drawing on written work from 17 pre-service teachers and interviews with 10 of them, the study found that cognitive, social, and metacognitive strategies were the most frequently used across the planning, drafting, and revising stages. The findings suggested that learners require explicit instruction in applying writing strategies, as many use them without full awareness. In a comparable investigation, Shen and Bai (2024) looked at self-regulated writing strategy use and its connection to writing performance among 340 Chinese university students, employing a validated questionnaire and writing test scores. Their results indicated that self-efficacy was a strong predictor of strategy use, while gender and academic major had only a limited influence. This implies that strengthening students' writing confidence is a prerequisite for meaningful engagement with writing strategies.

Han (2024) explored the effects of metacognitive writing strategy instruction on the writing performance and motivation of 50 Chinese EFL learners, who were split into an experimental and a control group over a sixteen-week programme. Data were gathered through writing tasks, a motivation scale, and interviews. The findings showed that the experimental group achieved significantly greater gains in both writing performance and motivation than the control group, suggesting that direct strategy instruction can simultaneously improve writing quality and boost learner motivation. Likewise, Khosravi, Dastgoshadeh, and Jalilzadeh (2023) examined the effects of metacognitive strategy instruction delivered through a flipped classroom on the writing performance, anxiety, and self-efficacy of 45 Iranian EFL learners. Using a writing test, an anxiety scale, and a self-efficacy questionnaire, the study found notable improvements in performance and self-efficacy alongside reduced writing anxiety, indicating that pairing strategy instruction with innovative delivery formats creates a more supportive environment for student writers.

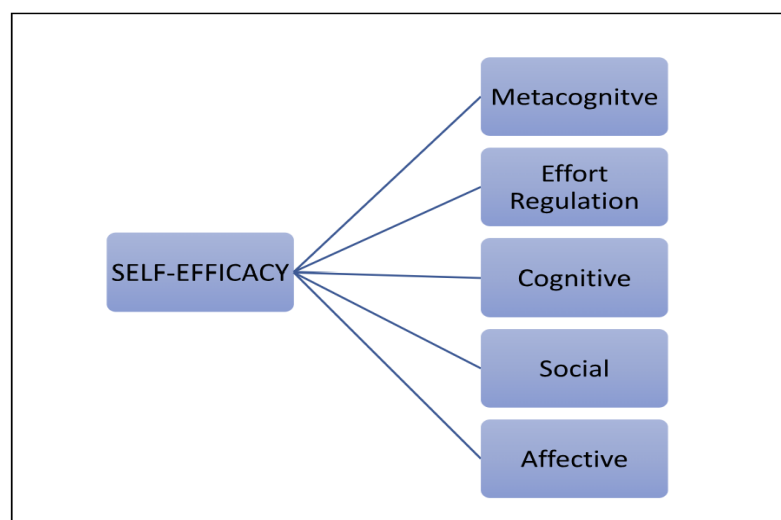
Qin, Zhang, and Xiao (2022) validated a metacognitive writing strategies instrument and investigated its predictive value for the writing performance of 503 Chinese university EFL students. Using the metacognitive strategies in writing questionnaire alongside a semester-end writing test, the findings showed that all eight metacognitive strategy components collectively accounted for 87% of the variance in students' writing outcomes, reinforcing the view that metacognitive awareness is a central element of writing competence. In a related study, Teng, Qin, and Wang (2022) also validated a multidimensional writing strategies instrument with EFL learners and found that metacognitive strategies, treated as a unified construct, strongly predicted academic writing performance, underscoring the importance of planning, monitoring, and reviewing as key cognitive activities in effective writing. Taken together, these two studies indicate that assessing writing strategy use in a comprehensive and multidimensional way offers more useful insights for writing instruction than examining strategies individually.

The studies reviewed above consistently demonstrate that writing strategies, particularly metacognitive and self-regulated ones, play a vital role in improving students' writing performance, motivation, and self-efficacy. Direct strategy instruction has been shown to produce measurable gains in writing quality and learner confidence (Han, 2024; Khosravi et al., 2023), while self-efficacy has emerged as a key factor influencing whether students engage meaningfully with strategies in the first place. However, most of these studies were conducted in Chinese and Iranian EFL contexts, leaving other learner populations underexplored. More importantly, the specific relationship between students' self-efficacy beliefs and their use of writing strategies in higher education settings has not been sufficiently examined. This gap underscores the relevance of the present study, which seeks to investigate how self-efficacy and writing strategy use are connected among university students, with the aim of informing more targeted and effective approaches to writing instruction.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Self-efficacy is a learner's belief in their capability and ability to accomplish a learning task successfully.

In the context of academic writing, Rahmat et al. (2026) specify that a learner's self-efficacy is heightened when they think that their writing can be accepted and valued by their intended audience. These positive perceptions strengthen the learners' confidence and willingness to engage more deeply in their writing process. Figure 1 below presents the conceptual framework for this study, which examines the relationship between learners' self-efficacy and the writing strategies that they use. This framework combines the writing motivation models proposed by Zhang et al. (2014) and Raoofi et al. (2017). Zhang et al. (2014) argued that writers' motivation is highly influenced by their self-efficacy beliefs and task value, which determine the level of effort and persistence that a writer shows in their writing tasks. Furthermore, Raoofi et al. (2017) further complemented this view, explaining that writers who are motivated would be more willing to use various writing strategies, . These strategies include metacognitive, effort regulation, cognitive, social, and affective strategies to manage and improve their writing performance. Together, these perspectives suggest that higher self-efficacy fosters greater motivation, which in turn leads to more strategic and effective writing behaviour.



**Figure 1- Conceptual Framework of the Study**

## METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study is done to explore motivation and writing strategies. A convenient sample of 147 participants responded to the survey. The instrument used is a 5 Likert-scale survey and is rooted from Zhang et al. (2014) and Raoofi et al. (2017) to reveal the variables in Table 3 below. Table 2 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 2: Likert Scale Use**

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Disagree |
| 2 | Disagree          |
| 3 | Uncertain         |
| 4 | Agree             |
| 5 | Strongly Agree    |

**Table 3: Distribution of Items in the Survey**

| SECTION | VARIABLE             | CONSTRUCTS    | NO. OF ITEMS | TOT  |
|---------|----------------------|---------------|--------------|------|
| B       | (Zhang et.al., 2014) | Self-Efficacy | 5            | .867 |

|   |                                         |                   |    |      |
|---|-----------------------------------------|-------------------|----|------|
| C | Writing Strategies (Raofi et.al., 2017) | Metacognitive     | 10 | .921 |
|   |                                         | Effort Regulation | 5  | .814 |
|   |                                         | Cognitive         | 6  | .868 |
|   |                                         | Social            | 4  | .898 |
|   |                                         | Affective         | 3  | .806 |
|   |                                         | Total             | 33 | .955 |

Table 3 shows the distribution of items in the survey. Section B has 5 items on Self-efficacy. Section C has 28 writing items. In order to determine the internal reliability of the instrument, reliability analysis is conducted. Table 4 below 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 3 also shows the reliability of the survey. The analysis shows a Cronbach alpha of .867 for self-efficacy, .921 for metacognitive, .814 for effort regulation, .868 for cognitive, .898 for social and .806 for affective strategies. The overall Cronbach alpha for all 33 items is .955; 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.

Table 4: Reliability Levels, Cronbach's Alpha Ranges, and the 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        |

## FINDINGS

### 4.1 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 5: Percentage of Demographic Profiles

| Questions | Demographic Profiles | Categories                  | Percentage (%) |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| 1         | Gender               | Male                        | 30%            |
|           |                      | Female                      | 70%            |
| 2         | Discipline           | Science & Technology        | 38%            |
|           |                      | Humanities & Social Science | 62%            |
| 3         | Level                | Degree                      | 70%            |
|           |                      | Diploma                     | 30%            |

Table 5 describes the demographic profile of 147 participants based on gender, discipline and education level. Most respondents (70%) were female while another 30% were male. In terms of discipline, 62% of the

respondents were Humanities & Social Science students while the other 38% were Science & Technology students. Lastly, the majority of the respondents (70%) were Degree students while the rest (30) were Diploma students.

## 4.2 Descriptive Statistics Analyses

### 4.2.1 Findings for Self-Efficacy in Writing

This section presents data to answer research question 1: How do learners perceive self-efficacy in writing?

Table 6: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for Self-Efficacy (SE)

| ITEMS | M    | SD   |
|-------|------|------|
| SEQ1  | 4.04 | 0.68 |
| SEQ2  | 4.09 | 0.71 |
| SEQ3  | 4.18 | 0.66 |
| SEQ4  | 4.20 | 0.72 |
| SEQ5  | 4.18 | 0.74 |

Table 6 presents the learners' perception on their self-efficacy in writing. Based on the table, the learners believed that they could do well in their writing if they have enough time, as this item (SEQ4) presents the highest mean score ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ). Following closely is item SEQ3, where the learners agreed that they can do almost all their writing work if they do not give up ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ) and they can learn writing even though it is hard (item SEQ5) ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ). These results indicate that if learners are not rushed and have the determination, they will be able to complete their writing tasks well. On the other hand, the lowest mean score refers to the item SEQ1(I am sure I can learn the skills taught in writing class well) with a mean score of 4.04 ( $SD = 0.68$ ). This shows that the learners are unsure with their capability of learning the writing skills.

### 4.2.2 Findings for Metacognitive Writing Strategies

Table 7: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for Metacognitive (MWS)

| ITEMS  | M    | SD   |
|--------|------|------|
| MWSQ1  | 4.03 | 0.72 |
| MWSQ 2 | 4.13 | 0.71 |
| MWSQ 3 | 4.11 | 0.77 |
| MWSQ 4 | 4.12 | 0.82 |
| MWSQ 5 | 4.05 | 0.74 |
| MWSQ 6 | 4.07 | 0.76 |
| MWSQ 7 | 4.09 | 0.77 |
| MWSQ8  | 4.03 | 0.74 |
| MWSQ9  | 3.95 | 0.86 |
| MWSQ10 | 4.08 | 0.71 |

Table 7 shows the learners' perceptions on metacognitive strategies in writing. Among the items, the highest mean score ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ) is recorded for revising writing to ensure that all intended content is included (MWSQ2), followed closely by checking for writing for grammatical accuracy (item MWSQ4) ( $M =$

4.12,  $SD = 0.82$ ) and checking spelling ( $M = 4.11$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ). These findings indicate that learners place considerable emphasis on reviewing and improving the quality of their written work. In contrast, item MWSQ9, going through the drafting stages in writing recorded the lowest mean score ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = 9.85$ ), although the mean remained relatively high. The overall findings suggest that learners perceive metacognitive strategies positively and regularly apply self-monitoring, planning, and evaluation strategies when completing writing tasks.

#### 4.2.3 Findings for Effort Regulation in Writing

Table 8: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for effort regulation (ERS)

| ITEMS | M    | SD   |
|-------|------|------|
| ERSQ1 | 3.67 | 0.92 |
| ERSQ2 | 4.01 | 0.79 |
| ERSQ3 | 4.04 | 0.68 |
| ERSQ4 | 4.12 | 0.68 |
| ERSQ5 | 4.10 | 0.77 |

Table 8 presents the mean and standard deviation scores for the Effort Regulation Strategies (ERS) subscale, addressing research question 3 on how learners perceive effort regulation strategies in writing. Overall, students reported moderately high to high levels of effort regulation across all five items, with mean scores ranging from 3.67 to 4.12. The highest-rated item was ERSQ4 ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ), indicating that students reported concentrating as hard as they could when completing writing tasks, followed by ERSQ5 ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ), which reflected students' willingness to invest considerable time and energy to produce good written assignments. ERSQ3 ( $M = 4.04$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ) and ERSQ2 ( $M = 4.01$ ,  $SD = 0.79$ ) also obtained high mean scores, where students generally persisted through difficult writing activities and worked hard even when they did not enjoy the tasks. The lowest-rated item was ERSQ1 ( $M = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 0.92$ ), in which students least agreed that they write a lot to develop their writing skills.

#### 4.2.4 Findings for Cognitive Writing Strategies

Table 9: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for cognitive (CWS)

| ITEMS  | M    | SD   |
|--------|------|------|
| CWSQ1  | 3.98 | 0.82 |
| CWSQ 2 | 3.86 | 0.80 |
| CWSQ 3 | 4.13 | 0.68 |
| CWSQ 4 | 4.03 | 0.84 |
| CWSQ 5 | 4.21 | 0.80 |
| CWSQ 6 | 4.18 | 0.74 |

Table 9 shows the mean scores for the cognitive writing strategies (CWS). The item with the highest mean score was CWSQ5 ( $M = 4.21$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ ), where students mostly agreed that they drew upon their personal experiences and prior knowledge when writing. This was closely followed by item CWSQ6 ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ), where students agreed with their tendency to use effective linking words to ensure clear and logical connections between sentences and paragraphs. The third highest mean score was item CWSQ3 ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ), which stated that brainstorming was a common strategy used by students for generating ideas prior to writing. Item CWSQ2 obtained the lowest mean score ( $M = 3.86$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ ), which referred to the use of newly memorised vocabulary in sentences.

#### 4.2.5 Findings for Social Writing Strategies

This section presents data to answer research question 8: How do learners perceive social strategies in writing?

Table 10: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for social (SWS)

| ITEMS | M    | SD   |
|-------|------|------|
| SWSQ1 | 3.70 | 1.02 |
| SWSQ2 | 3.67 | 1.03 |
| SWSQ3 | 3.89 | 0.96 |
| SWSQ4 | 3.88 | 0.97 |

Table 10 shows how students navigate the social side of the writing process, and the results present a varied outcome. The highest mean score was for item SWSQ3, where students mostly agreed they try to look for friends or classmates that can help them with their writing ( $M = 3.89$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ). This is followed closely by item SWSQ4, in which students were willing to team up with peers when hitting a roadblock ( $M = 3.88$ ,  $SD = 0.97$ ). In contrast, students least agreed on asking their friends or classmates reading and commenting their work after they are done with their essay (SWSQ2), as this item received the lowest mean score ( $M = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ). A good portion of the group may thrive on social collaboration, while an equally large segment prefers to keep their writing process entirely private.

#### 4.2.6 Findings for Affective Writing Strategies

This section presents data to answer research question 9: How do learners perceive affective strategies in writing?

Table 11: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for affective (AWS)

| ITEMS | M    | SD   |
|-------|------|------|
| AWSQ1 | 3.98 | 0.71 |
| AWSQ2 | 4.10 | 0.82 |
| AWSQ3 | 4.17 | 0.76 |

Table 11 illustrates the mean score and standard deviation values for the affective writing strategies (AWS). The most frequently used strategy is (AWSQ3), ‘I encourage myself to write even when I am afraid of making mistakes’ with the mean value of 4.17 ( $SD = 0.76$ ). This is followed by the strategy whereby the students try to relax whenever they feel afraid of writing (AWSQ2), as the second most frequently used strategy ( $M=4.10$ ,  $SD=0.82$ ). Lastly, ‘I try to write an essay in class with confidence and ease’ (AWSQ1) was the least frequently used strategy ( $M = 3.98$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ) among the students.

### 4.3 Correlation between self-efficacy and writing strategies

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 is a common tool for describing simple relationships without making a statement about cause and effect. Coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale (He, 2024). 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. This section presents data to answer the research question on correlation: “Is there a significant relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategies?” The hypotheses are as per below:

$H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategies.

H<sub>01</sub>: There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategies.

To determine if there is a significant association in the mean score between self-efficacy and writing strategies, data is analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in Table 12 below. In the context of this study, writing strategies refer to metacognitive, effort regulation, cognitive, social and affective strategies.

Table 12: Correlation between self-efficacy and writing strategies

| Self-Efficacy |                       | Metacognitive | Effort Regulation | Cognitive | Social | Affective |
|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|-----------|
|               | Pearson (Correlation) | .680**        | .609**            | .704**    | .270** | .602**    |
|               | Sig (2-tailed)        | <.000         | <.000             | <.000     | <.000  | <.000     |
|               | N                     | 147           | 147               | 147       | 147    | 147       |

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

Table 12 shows that there is an association between self-efficacy and writing strategies. Correlation analysis shows that there were high significant association between self-efficacy and metacognitive ( $r = .680^{**}$ ) and ( $p = .000$ ), self-efficacy and effort regulation ( $r = .609^{**}$ ) and ( $p = .000$ ), self-efficacy and cognitive ( $r = .704^{**}$ ) and ( $p = .000$ ), and self-efficacy and affective strategies ( $r = .602^{**}$ ) and ( $p = .000$ ). However, there was weak significant association between self-efficacy social strategies ( $r = .270^{**}$ ) and ( $p = .000$ ). This means the null hypothesis is rejected for H<sub>01</sub>.

#### 4.4 Self-efficacy as predictor of writing strategies

In this section, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether learners' self-efficacy is able to predict their use of writing strategies when completing a writing task. Before proceeding with the analysis, the assumptions of the analysis were checked, and it was found that no assumptions were violated. Hence, the regression analysis was conducted accordingly, and the results of the analysis are as shown below:

| Table 13: Model Summary                  |                   |          |                   |                            |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model                                    | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1                                        | .716 <sup>a</sup> | .512     | .509              | .36419                     |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-efficacy |                   |          |                   |                            |

Table 13 above presents the correlation between self-efficacy and all writing strategies. Based on the table, there is a high correlation between these two variables ( $R = 0.716$ ). The  $R^2$  value is 0.512, which indicates that 51.2% of writing strategies use can be explained by the learners' self-efficacy, which is quite high.

| Table 14: ANOVA                           |            |                |     |             |         |                    |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|--------------------|
| Model                                     |            | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F       | Sig.               |
| 1                                         | Regression | 20.177         | 1   | 20.177      | 152.123 | <.001 <sup>b</sup> |
|                                           | Residual   | 19.232         | 145 | .133        |         |                    |
|                                           | Total      | 39.409         | 146 |             |         |                    |
| a. Dependent Variable: Writing strategies |            |                |     |             |         |                    |

## b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-efficacy

Table 14 above shows the ANOVA table that reports whether the regression equation fits the data in this study. This table indicates that self-efficacy predicts the writing strategies significantly well since the p-value is less than 0.05 ( $p < .001$ ). Hence, it could be concluded that self-efficacy could reliably predict the learners' use of writing strategies in completing their writing tasks.

Table 15: Coefficients

| Model |               | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig.  |
|-------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
|       |               | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |       |
| 1     | (Constant)    | 1.305                       | .222       |                           | 5.891  | <.001 |
|       | Self-efficacy | .654                        | .053       | .716                      | 12.334 | <.001 |

## a. Dependent Variable: Writing strategies

As shown in Table 15, there is a self-efficacy can significantly predict the use of writing strategies among the learners ( $\beta = .716$ ,  $t = 12.334$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The unstandardized coefficients ( $\beta = .654$ ,  $SE = .053$ ) shows that for every unit increase in the learners' self-efficacy, there is a .654 increase in the learners' use of writing strategies. Therefore, this study has demonstrated that a higher self-efficacy increases learners' use of writing strategies.

# CONCLUSION

## 5.1 Summary of Findings and Discussions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between students' writing self-efficacy and their writing strategies. There were a total of seven research questions to be answered involving self-efficacy and five writing strategies (Raoofi et al., 2017) were involved in this study, which were metacognitive, effort regulation, cognitive, social, and affective strategies. This study found that in terms of students' writing self-efficacy, a majority of the students agreed that they will be able to write well if they have enough time to work on their writing tasks. The total mean score of this dimension was  $M = 4.14$ , which indicated that students generally have a positive perception of their self-efficacy in writing. This finding is in line with the study by Graham et al. (2025), who stated that when students have positive self-efficacy in writing, it will improve their writing. According to Zhang and Zhang (2024), students with higher and stronger self-efficacy are able to utilize their self-regulated writing strategies.

In regard to the use of metacognitive writing strategy, this study revealed that the students mostly revised their writing to ensure that they did not leave out any content they intended to write. This indicates that when students used this strategy, they were making sure that their writing has as much content as possible. According to Qin, Zhang, and Xiao (2022), when students used metacognitive strategies, it would help to improve their writing performance. Similar results were found in Han (2024) and Khosravi et al. (2023) studies.

Furthermore, it was stated by Shen and Bai (2024) that students' self-efficacy could influence the use of various writing strategies. In terms of effort regulation strategy, it was found that students would concentrate as hard as they could when they are writing. While completing their writing tasks, the students commonly depended on their personal experiences and prior knowledge when using the cognitive strategy. Socially, the students would also seek assistance from their friends or classmates if necessary to finish their writing. Lastly, in regard to the affective strategy, this study found that a majority of students would encourage themselves to write even though they were afraid of making mistakes. Cheng and Zhang (2024) mentioned that when students' self-efficacy is high, they would put more effort and be more resilient to finish their tasks.

This study also reported that there was a significant relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategies. The relationships were especially significant and high among self-efficacy and metacognitive, effort

regulation, cognitive, and affective strategies. Surprisingly, the relationship between self-efficacy and social strategies, even though it is significant, did not yield a high value as compared to the others. Therefore, this suggests that students mostly depend on themselves when writing and did not really look for help from others in order to complete a task. This is in contrast to the study by Bui, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2023) who found that Vietnamese students utilized society strategies, not affective strategies. The different results found present an interesting insight, whereby further research could be conducted to investigate why this difference occurs. In general, this study reported that the students mostly used the affective, cognitive, and metacognitive strategies the most when writing which highlighted that students actively employ various strategies when they are completing their writing tasks and assignments.

Finally, the regression analysis of this study managed to prove that self-efficacy significantly predicted the writing strategies use among the learners. This result aligned with the study by Shen and Bai (2024), in which their study also demonstrated that learners' self-efficacy strongly predicted the strategy use. Therefore, this indicates that in order to encourage learners to engage with more writing strategies, their self-efficacy needs to be improved. When they believe more in themselves, they will be more confident to use more writing strategies to complete and produce good writing output.

## **5.2 Implications and Suggestions for Future Research**

### **5.2.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Implications**

Based on the results of this study, it proved that self-efficacy helps students to have more confidence in employing various strategies. It was proven when this study showed that there was a significant and positive relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategies among students. This is supported by Cheng and Zhang (2024) and Cheng et al., (2026) that students would explore and experiment with various strategies when they feel safe and secure with their writing abilities. The high mean score across four writing strategies shown in this study also suggests that students are not afraid to use writing strategies individually, especially when their self-efficacy is high. This finding validated the writing motivation models proposed by Zhang et al. (2014) and Raoofi et al. (2017), in which higher self-efficacy among students would motivate them to explore and employ multiple writing strategies, hence helping them to improve the outcome of their writing tasks.

### **5.2.2 Pedagogical Implications**

The findings of this study suggest that in order to get students to employ various writing strategies to complete their tasks, instructors should help them to increase their level of self-efficacy, which is students' belief of their ability to perform a learning task. When students feel confident with their writing ability, they are more likely to experiment with various strategies. Among the ways that instructors can help increase their self-efficacy is by ensuring that students truly understand the lesson in their writing classes. Practices and exercises on lessons should be given more frequently and varied, as well as in interesting manners. For example, games could be used in the classroom after each lecture, technology should be integrated in the classroom, and collaborative work could be assigned regularly. It could also help students to be exposed to the writing strategies explicitly, so they are aware of what types of strategies that they could use to complete their tasks. To sum up, providing students with confidence and practical knowledge of writing strategies could help them to better navigate their writing tasks at the tertiary level.

### **5.2.3 Suggestions for Future Research**

Since this study found that the social strategies are the least used among the students, future researchers could conduct a mixed-method study, to further confirm the results of this study, and to deeply investigate the reasons behind this finding. Other than that, it is also suggested for future research to conduct a cross-cultural or comparative study to further investigate the relationship between self-efficacy and writing strategies. This is because different results might emerge across different geographical aspects or institutional types (public vs private institutions). Furthermore, a quasi-experiment study could also be done to investigate whether self-efficacy truly influences students to employ various strategies. Through these various methods and approaches,

future research should be able to bridge the gap between self-efficacy and writing strategies across different demographics.

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## APPENDIX

(This instrument is adapted from Zhang,et.al. ,2014 and Raoofi,et.al., 2017)

| SECT | VARIABLE                                 | CONSTRUCTS        | No of Items |
|------|------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| B    | (Zhang,et.al. , 2014)                    | Self-Efficacy     | 5           |
| C    | Writing Strategies (Raoofi,et.al., 2017) | Metacognitive     | 10          |
|      |                                          | Effort Regulation | 5           |
|      |                                          | Cognitive         | 6           |
|      |                                          | Social            | 4           |
|      |                                          | Affective         | 3           |
|      |                                          | Total             | 33          |

### SECTION B- WRITING MOTIVATION (Zhang,et.al, 2014)

#### (i) Self-Efficacy (SE)

| ITEM                                                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| SEQ1I am sure I can learn the skills taught in WRITING class well.      |   |   |   |   |   |
| SEQ2I can do the hardest work in my WRITING class if I try.             |   |   |   |   |   |
| SEQ3I can do almost all the work in WRITING class if I do not give up.  |   |   |   |   |   |
| SEQ4 If I have enough time, I can do a good job in all my WRITING work. |   |   |   |   |   |
| SEQ5 Even if the work in WRITING is hard, I can learn it                |   |   |   |   |   |

#### (ii) Task Value scale (TV)

| ITEM                                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| TVQ1 I think learning WRITING is important.         |   |   |   |   |   |
| TVQ2 I find WRITING interesting.                    |   |   |   |   |   |
| TVQ3 What I learn in WRITING is useful.             |   |   |   |   |   |
| TVQ4 Compared to other subjects, WRITING is useful. |   |   |   |   |   |

### SECTION C- WRITING STRATEGIES

#### (i) Metacognitive (MWS)

| ITEM                                                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| MWSQ1 I organize my ideas prior to writing.                        |   |   |   |   |   |
| MWSQ 2I check my spelling.                                         |   |   |   |   |   |
| MWSQ 3I check my writing to make sure it is grammatically correct. |   |   |   |   |   |
| MWSQ 4I evaluate and re-evaluate the ideas in my essay.            |   |   |   |   |   |
| MWSQ 5I monitor and evaluate my progress in writing.               |   |   |   |   |   |
| MWSQ6 I go through the planning stages in my writing.              |   |   |   |   |   |
| MWSQ7I go through the revising and editing stages in my writing.   |   |   |   |   |   |

#### (ii) Effort Regulation (ERS)

| ITEM                                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| ERSQ 1I write a lot to develop my writing skills. |   |   |   |   |   |

|                                                                                                |  |  |  |  |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| ERSQ 2I often work hard to do well in my writing even if I don't like English writing tasks.   |  |  |  |  |  |
| ERSQ 3Even if the writing activities are difficult, I don't give up but try to engage in them. |  |  |  |  |  |
| ERSQ 4I concentrate as hard as I can when doing a writing task.                                |  |  |  |  |  |

(iii) Cognitive (CWS)

| ITEM                                                                                                                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| CWSQ1 I use memorized grammatical elements such as singular and plural forms, verb tenses, prefixes and suffixes, etc, in my writing |   |   |   |   |   |
| CWSQ 2I put newly memorized vocabulary in my sentences.                                                                              |   |   |   |   |   |
| CWSQ 3In order to generate ideas for my writing, I usually engage myself in brainstorming.                                           |   |   |   |   |   |
| CWSQ 4I use different words that have the same meaning.                                                                              |   |   |   |   |   |
| CWSQ 5I use my experiences and knowledge in my writing.                                                                              |   |   |   |   |   |
| CWSQ 6I try to use effective linking words to ensure clear and logical relationship between sentences or paragraphs                  |   |   |   |   |   |

(iv) Social (SWS)

| ITEM                                                                                                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| SWSQ1 In order to generate ideas for my writing, I usually discuss the writing topic with a friend or classmate. |   |   |   |   |   |
| SWSQ 2After revising and editing my essay thoroughly, I ask a friend or my classmate to read and comment on it.  |   |   |   |   |   |
| SWSQ 3I try to identify friends or classmates whom I can ask for help in my writing.                             |   |   |   |   |   |
| SWSQ 4When I have trouble writing my essay, I try to do it with my classmates or friends.                        |   |   |   |   |   |

(v) Affective (AWS)

| ITEM                                                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| AWSQ1I try to write an essay in class with confidence and ease.           |   |   |   |   |   |
| AWSQ2I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of writing.                    |   |   |   |   |   |
| AWSQ3I encourage myself to write even when I am afraid of making mistakes |   |   |   |   |   |