

The Correlations among Writing Motivation, Anxiety and Proficiency

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Abstract

Writing cannot be separated from everyday life, both in education and other fields such as communication. Writing motivation and writing anxiety has always been a research topic because it was rare for researchers to combine three variables. The researcher is interested in examining these three variables. There were three purposes of this study. There were (1) to measure the correlation between the students' writing motivation and writing proficiency, (2) to measure the correlation between the students' writing anxiety and writing proficiency, (3) to measure the correlation between students' writing motivation, writing anxiety and writing proficiency. The design of the study was quantitative research with a correlation design. The research instruments were questionnaires and writing test. Two types of questionnaires were used. First, about students' writing motivation, the researcher used a questionnaire of the Self-Beliefs, Writing-Beliefs, and Attitude Survey (SWAS) developed by Wright et al. (2019). The second questionnaire to writing anxiety used a second language writing anxiety questionnaire (SLWAI) developed by Cheng (2004). The writing test was an argumentative text. The total sample of the research was 21 students fifth-semester students of the English Department at a state university in Palangka Raya Indonesia. The numerical data were analyzed by Kendall's Correlation Coefficient that showed that: (1) the correlation between writing motivation and writing proficiency was the significant (2-tailed) $0.396 > 0.05$, (2) the correlation between writing anxiety and writing proficiency was the significant (2-tailed) $0.024 < 0.05$, the correlation writing motivation, writing anxiety and writing proficiency was the significant (2-tailed) $.090 > 0.05$. Thus, it sums that there was no correlation between writing motivation and writing proficiency. There was a correlation between writing anxiety and writing proficiency, and there was no correlation between writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency.

Keywords: Writing Motivation; Writing Anxiety; Writing Proficiency.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most critical skills for EFL students. Good writing ability is very influential in some aspects for students. Writing is very important for helping a person express himself easily in language skills (Balci, 2017). Wright et al. (2019) stated that writing supports conveying information to other parties. Writing in a foreign language is an important language skill to acquire the importance of communication in the globalization era (Wahyuni and Umam, 2017). Writing is the abilities and affective factors that help individuals communicate, think critically and make choices through the writing process about messages (Wright et al., 2019). When people have been able to go through all the writing process well, then it can be said that they have excellent writing proficiency.

Writing proficiency affects the quality of work and the understanding of professionalism, among others. Writing proficiency is described as students who can pour ideas, control emotions and attitudes, and behaviors when they complete or produce good and appropriate writing that they expect (Goldburg, 2013). Writing proficiency includes all abilities and skills relevant to the expression of ideas via a written word.

Several factors influence the writing proficiency that students have, such as writing motivation and writing anxiety. Writers differ in terms of cognitive and linguistic talents, age, gender, amount of registering interest, self-efficacy, anxiety, and other factors (Al-Saadi, 2020). Cahyono and Rahayu (2020) motivation has been seen as a factor influencing performance in second language learning. They found that students who want to be good at writing must consistently increase their motivation to participate in writing courses and focus on their tasks. According to (Liu 2020; Yu et al., 2019; Nasihah and Cahyono, 2017), motivation affects students' final grades in a learning experience. Nasihah and Cahyono (2017) found there was a significant relationship between motivation and writing proficiency. Motivation is a topic of particular significance to students of English as a foreign language (EFL). So, motivation is a factor that makes students more excited and excited in learning something, such as learning in writing. Students will get good results in learning if they are highly motivated. Writing motivation is the variety of reasons a student chooses to engage in or avoid writing tasks (Wright et al., 2019). Four factors influence writing motivation. They are beliefs about the self as a writer (self-concept and self-efficacy), thoughts about writing, and writing attitude (Wright et al., 2019). In addition to writing motivation, several other factors can affect student outcomes or achievements in the writing course. One of them is writing anxiety.

Anxiety in the foreign language is a feeling of tension and apprehension directly linked to language skills, like speaking, listening, writing, and learning (Wahyuni and Umam, 2017). Fear of negative input from teachers, low self-confidence, and weak linguistic skills are the critical causes of writing anxiety (Rezaei and Jafari, 2014). Writing anxiety is one of the factors that cause low results or achievements obtained by students in the writing course. Writing anxiety is that students feel afraid and nervous and do not believe in their ability to write lessons. In two institutes of higher education in Shiraz, Iran, high level of writing with cognitive anxiety because of low self-confidence and poor linguistic knowledge, and fear of teachers' negative feedback (Rezaei and Jafari, 2014).

Writing motivation and writing anxiety are two things that can affect students' success in learning to write. Then, they are also able to influence students' writing proficiency. Various studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between the two. They only reviewed two factors and focused on students' motivation. The researcher will focus on writing motivation. However, it is rare for research to explore all three aspects, writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency. So, the writer decided to investigate those three factors. Therefore, the writer will examine the relationship between writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency.

METHOD

The population in the study was of fifth-semester students of the English Department at a state university in Palangka Raya Indonesia who took Argumentative writing. The total population was 103 students. In addition, the writer uses G*Power 3.1.9.7 software to determine the minimal sample size. The sample size must be set to attain a given level of strength. A test's power is the likelihood that a single test will affect if one exists in the population. (Field, 2017). The total sample size is 21. Based on the result of the sample size, the researcher used simple randomized sampling as a sampling technique in this study. In a basic random sampling procedure, the sample was randomly selected from the population.

The study's design was quantitative research with a correlation design based on the study's goal and research topic. Writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency were the three variables examined in this study. The writer chose this design because the correlational design was intended to measure the correlation between the variables. The correlational design will reveal the results of high or low calculations and whether or not there is a relationship between several variables. The instruments utilized to measure the students' motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency were a questionnaire and a test. To measure writing motivation and writing anxiety, a questionnaire was used. To measure students' writing proficiency, a writing test was used.

There were two types of questionnaires used in this study. The first questionnaire was used to measure students' writing motivation and the second one was a questionnaire used to measure students' writing anxiety. The researcher used a questionnaire developed by (Wright et al., 2019) about students' writing motivation. It is about 30 questionnaires of the Self-Beliefs, Writing-Beliefs, and Attitude Survey (SWAS). The second questionnaire to writing anxiety, the researcher used questionnaire was adopted from (Cheng, 2004). The questionnaire was about 22 questionnaires Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI). The researcher used the writing to find out students' writing proficiency. The writing test was an argumentative text. The theme was online learning during the covid-19 pandemic. The researcher and the lecturer checked the writing test result based on the scoring rubric adopted from (Sabti et al., 2019).

For collecting the data, the first stage that the researcher did was requesting a permit to research the English education study program. The researcher asked the participants to be study subjects. The researcher would then plan the tools (writing motivation questionnaire, writing anxiety and writing test). The next step was to provide the researcher with an overview of the purpose of the study and the questionnaire response

method to be distributed by the researcher through share the link <https://bit.ly/384EO5Y> the link of SLWAI, <https://bit.ly/383MNjz> the link of SWAS and <https://bit.ly/305RPb2> the link of writing test. The researcher distributed the link by using the WhatsApp group. The researcher assigned the questionnaires and writing test to the sample class. After that, the participants answered the questionnaires and writing test on a google form. The researcher gave the participants time to answer the questionnaires and write tests. The researcher gave time to complete the questionnaire to anticipate the obstacles that occur in online classes. Such as not opening class groups and disruption of the internet system owned by students. After all the participants answered the questionnaire, the researcher collected the data from March to April 2021.

The researcher cooperated with the lecturer to examine their work of writing test based on a scoring rubric of writing. The rubric that the researcher used is adopted from Sabti et al. (2019). Content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics were some of the features of the scoring rubric for the writing test, with each one having four rating levels of excellent to very good, good to average, fair to poor, and very poor. Based on the explanation above, the scoring rubric helped the researcher and lecturer to give evaluations and scores for the students. The researcher used the analytical score for writing evaluation since the analytical score would be analyzed or scaled for content, organization, grammar, vocabulary and writing mechanics.

FINDINGS

1. The Correlation Between Students' Writing Motivation and Writing Proficiency

This Passage answered the first research question, "Do the higher writing motivation students have, the better they write in English?". Kendall's Tau (non-parametric) was used to examine the correlation between students' writing motivation and writing proficiency because the data of Writing proficiency was not a normal distribution. The result is shown in table 1.

Table 1. The Correlation between Students' Writing Motivation and Writing Proficiency
Correlations

| | | | writing motivatio n | writing proficienc y | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Kendall's tau_b | writing motivation | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .136 | |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .396 | |
| | | N | 21 | 21 | |
| | Bootstr ap ^c | Bias | Std. Error | .000 | .000 |
| | | | 95% Confidence Interval | Low er | 1.000 -.293 |
| | | | Upp er | 1.000 .514 | |
| | | writing proficiency | Correlation Coefficient | .136 | 1.000 |
| | | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .396 | . |
| | N | | 21 | 21 | |
| | Bootstr ap ^c | Bias | Std. Error | .000 | .000 |
| 95% Confidence Interval | | | Low er | -.293 1.000 | |
| | | Upp er | .514 1.000 | | |

c. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples

The correlation between students' writing motivation and writing proficiency is shown in Table 1. The result of correlation between students' writing motivation and writing proficiency $r = .136$, $[-0.293, 0.514]$, $p = .396$. This significance value tells us that the probability of getting a correlation coefficient was at least this big in a sample of 21 people. The significance value was upper the standard criterion of 0.05, indicating a 'statistically not significant' relationship.

2. The Correlation Between Students' Writing Anxiety and Writing Proficiency

This Passage answered the second research question, "Do the lower writing anxiety students have, the better they write in English?". Kendall's Tau (non-parametric) was used to examine the correlation between students' writing anxiety and writing proficiency because the data of Writing proficiency was not a normal distribution. The result is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The Correlation between Students' Writing Anxiety and Writing Proficiency Correlations

| | | writing anxiety | | writing proficiency | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| Kendall's tau_b | writing anxiety | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .370* | |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .024 | |
| | N | 21 | 21 | | |
| | Boots trap ^c | Bias | .000 | .002 | |
| | | Std. Error | .000 | .157 | |
| | | 95% Confidence Interval | Lo | 1.000 | .063 |
| | | | Up | 1.000 | .672 |
| | writing proficiency | writing anxiety | Correlation Coefficient | .370* | 1.000 |
| | | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .024 | . |
| | | N | 21 | 21 | |
| Boots trap ^c | | Bias | .002 | .000 | |
| | | Std. Error | .157 | .000 | |
| | | 95% Confidence Interval | Lo | .063 | 1.000 |
| | | | Up | .672 | 1.000 |

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

c. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples

The correlation between students' writing anxiety and writing proficiency is shown in Table 2. The result of correlation between students' writing anxiety and writing proficiency $r = .370$, $[0.063, 0.672]$, $p = .024$. This significance value tells us that the probability of getting a correlation coefficient was at least this big in a sample of 21 people. The significance value was less than the standard criterion of 0.05, indicating a 'statistically was significant' relationship.

3. The Correlations among Students' Writing Motivation, Writing Anxiety and Writing Proficiency

This passage answered the last research question in this study "Do the higher writing motivation and the lower level of writing anxiety students have, the better they write in English?". The correlations of students writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency are shown in table 3.

Table 3. The Correlations of Writing Motivation, Writing Anxiety, and Writing Proficiency

| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 1678.621 | 2 | 839.310 | 2.754 | .090 ^b |
| | Residual | 5486.189 | 18 | 304.788 | | |
| | Total | 7164.810 | 20 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: writing test
b. Predictors: (Constant), anxiety, motivation

R has a value of .484 ($R = .484$). This value is the correlation of writing motivation, writing anxiety, and students' writing proficiency. The value of R^2 is .234, which means that writing motivation and writing anxiety expenditure can account for 1,59 % of the variation in students' writing proficiency. The value of the F-statistic is 2.754, and its associated significance value of $p > 0.05$. Therefore, it can conclude that there were no significant correlations between writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the correlation between the students' writing motivation and writing proficiency, the correlation between the students' writing motivation and students' writing anxiety, and the correlation between the students' writing motivation, writing anxiety and writing proficiency. To measure writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency, the instruments used questionnaires and test. To measure students' writing motivation and students' writing anxiety, a questionnaire was used. While to measure students' writing proficiency, the test was employed. The analysis of the data was carried out by using SPSS program version 24.

There were two types of questionnaires used in this study. The first questionnaire was used to measure students' writing motivation and the second one was the questionnaire used to measure students' writing anxiety. In this study, the researcher adopted questionnaires from other researchers. That's because the questionnaire follows the instrument required in this study. The result of data wants to look for in this study can be obtained using questionnaires adopted from other researchers. Concerning students' writing motivation, the researcher used a questionnaire developed by Wright et al., (2019). The second questionnaire to writing anxiety, the researcher used a questionnaire was adopted from Cheng (2004).

Based on the calculation of normality and linearity used SPSS program version 24, the result showed that the data distribution was not normal, and the variables have a linear association. Then, it can be concluded that the study can be analyzed using nonparametric statistics with multiple correlations. The discussion of every variable is explained below.

The first result was a correlation between writing motivation and writing proficiency. Based on the calculation result using SPSS 24, it was shown that there was

no significant correlation between students' writing motivation and writing proficiency. The significance value between students' writing motivation and writing proficiency was 0.396. This value indicates that it was upper than 0.05 ($0.396 > 0.05$). It means that the students' writing motivation has not significantly influenced writing motivation.

In contrast with this study, there were previous studies shown different results. Cahyono and Rahayu (2020) explored English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' motivation in writing, writing proficiency, and gender. They found that there was a high correlation between the motivation of the EFL students in writing and their writing skills. It was also found that there were major gaps in motivation in writing and the writing skills of female and male students. This study indicated that EFL students with a higher degree of written encouragement would have better writing skills. The research also found that female students outperformed male students in terms of both writing inspiration and writing skills.

Cahyono and Rahayu (2020) conducted a positive correlation between EFL students' motivation in writing and their writing proficiency. Students tend to be more successful in writing proficiency a higher level of writing proficiency if they have high writing motivation, meaning that if students want to have high writing proficiency, they must continue to cultivate writing motivation (Cahyono and Rahayu, 2020).

Nasihah and Cahyono (2017) investigated Indonesian EFL students' language learning strategies, motivation, and writing achievement. They found a significant correlation between motivation and writing achievement, and there was a substantial correlation between LLSs, motivation, and writing achievement. This means that motivation and LLSs can make EFL students successful in writing courses. Nasihah and Cahyono, 2017 result that there was a significant correlation between motivation and writing achievement. The findings also revealed positive points on their significant correlation score, indicating that the more motivated students were, the higher their achievement writing (Nasihah and Cahyono, 2017). It means that writing motivation influences writing proficiency. Sabti et al., (2019) the result showed a significant correlation between writing achievement motivation and writing performance; participants have higher writing achievement motivation, so the better their writing performance.

There was a result of a previous study similar to this study. Wilby, 2020 showed that there was no correlation between writing motivation and essay scores. In this study, there was no correlation between students' writing motivation and writing proficiency. It can all be caused by students not knowing that motivation in writing can improve their writing proficiency. According to (Wilby, 2020) there was no significant relationship between writing motivation and essay scores because students are unaware of motivation and self-regulation while writing. Motivation to write has an essential role in the achievement of students learning. Students' abilities will not be maximized when students do not cultivate motivation in themselves in learning activities. When motivation is strong, students have faith in the performance of their tasks; when motivation is poor, students may fail to complete or avoid tasks (Wright et al., 2020).

From some of the explanations above, it can be concluded that several factors cause the first result of this study has no significant correlation between students' writing motivation and writing proficiency. One of them is that students not be motivated in

writing. Students consider the writing test given by the researcher to be a task. They don't foster a sense of motivation in writing. Another factor that caused the first result to have no significant correlation is that the sample in this study is less. A small selection also affected the results of the study. The more samples in the study, the more likely there was a relationship between variables.

The second result was a correlation between writing anxiety and writing proficiency. Based on the calculation result using SPSS 24, it was shown that there was a significant correlation between writing anxiety and writing proficiency. The significance value between writing anxiety and writing proficiency was 0.024. This value was less than 0.05 ($0.024 < 0.05$). In other related studies, Rezaei and Jafari (2014) conducted a study investigating the levels, types, and causes of writing anxiety among Iranian EFL students: A mixed-method design. The instruments used Second language writing anxiety inventory (SLWAI) by Cheng (2004) and the Cause of writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI) developed by themselves based on observation and previous researches. The results of the mixed-method study show that there is a high level of anxiety among Iranian EFL students with cognitive anxiety as the dominant type. Meanwhile, fear of negative teacher feedback, low self-confidence, and poor linguistic skills are the leading causes of anxiety in writing.

(Rezaei et al., 2014) found high students' writing anxiety when they did writing assignments. It means that there is a relationship between writing anxiety and writing ability; in other words, if the anxiety of writing is high, then the student's writing ability is lower (Rezaei et al., 2014). Rezaei et al., 2014 found that Iranian EFL students had significant writing anxiety levels, primarily cognitive, as evidenced by a preoccupation with performance and high expectations, and was caused by fear of negative feedback from teachers and low self-confidence weak linguistic competence. Writing is a fun activity for some students, and they can be unburdened when creating a piece of writing. For some students who have difficulty interpreting their thoughts into writing, writing will be an unpleasant activity. Anxiety is defined as having cognitive components of worry and anxiousness and being similar to performance worries such as communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of poor evaluation (Torres and Turner, 2016). Writing anxiety is that students feel afraid, nervous, and do not believe in their ability to write. Sabti et al., 2019 found a significant difference between writing anxiety and writing performance; according to the findings of this study, Iraqi EFL undergraduate students showed a high level of writing anxiety, which could lead to poor writing performance. The second result of this study found there was a significant correlation between writing anxiety and proficiency. These results indicate that writing anxiety is a factor that can affect writing proficiency. Students with high anxiety in writing avoid approaching a writing task because they see it as a threat rather than a challenge and are unwilling to put in more effort to improve their writing performance (Sabti, et al., 2019). Sabti et al. (2019) investigated the impact of writing anxiety, writing achievement motivation, and writing self-efficacy on writing performance. According to the findings of this study, the higher the degree of writing anxiety, the poorer the writing performance, but the higher the level of writing self-efficacy and writing accomplishment motivation, the better the writing performance. Writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety, writing anxiety, and writing accomplishment motivation were found to be adversely correlated, but writing self-

efficacy and writing achievement motivation were found to be significantly and positively correlated.

The last result was a correlation between writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency. Based on the calculation result using SPSS 24 is shown that there was no significant correlation. The significance value was .090. Moreover, there was no previous study that explained these three variables because there was no research conducted about these three variables before specifically.

Several factors caused the results of this study to be different from previous studies. Several factors caused the results of this study was not significant. First, the instruments were not valid or reliable. Second, the sample size was not sufficient. Next, the research design was not appropriate. Then, there was no significant correlation impact. In this study the first instruments were valid and reliable. The first instruments were already an article journal to study the validation the first instrument (questionnaires). The sample size in this study was sufficient. The researcher used G*power to measure the sample size in this study. The research design in this study was appropriate. The researcher used correlational design because to measure the relationship between variables. The last factor caused the result was no significant, namely there was no correlation impact. The result of this study there was no significant correlation between writing motivation and writing proficiency. There was no significant correlation among writing motivation, anxiety and proficiency. Researcher believes, the last factor caused the result was no significant.

There were several limitations that existed for this study. First, the researcher used correlational design to measure the correlations among writing motivation, writing anxiety and writing proficiency. The students answered the questionnaires and the students did a writing test on the google form. To collect the data in this research, the researcher gave questionnaires and writing test. The researcher did some procedures to collect the data. The data want to look for in this study were writing motivation, writing anxiety, and students' writing proficiency.

After the questionnaire was completed, the data were analyzed using Kendall's Correlation Coefficient to measure correlations between students' motivation and writing proficiency, to measure correlations between writing anxiety and writing proficiency. The data was analyzed using formula multiple correlations to measure correlations between writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency. The next step was to explain the result of analyzing data. In the last one, the researcher concluded from the results of the data. To collect the writing test data, the researcher's first stage was to request a permit to research the English education study program. After that, the researcher asked the participants to be a research subject. The researcher provided an overview of the study's intent and, to obtain students writing scores, the researcher collaborated with the lecturer.

The researcher used Kendall's Correlation Coefficient test to find out and analyze the correlation between writing motivation, writing anxiety, and student's writing proficiency. It was investigated by using SPSS 24 program. Formulation of Kendall's Correlation Coefficient and formula multiple correlations. Before conducting a correlation analysis of variables, the researcher conducted an assumption test. The assumption test used was normality test and linearity test. If the data obtained from these research instruments was invalid, the researcher used a nonparametric statistics test. The

researcher completed the data analysis, and some tests should be done before testing the hypotheses: normality and linearity test.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the results of this study were that there was no significant correlation between students' writing motivation and writing proficiency, there was a significant correlation between students' writing anxiety and writing proficiency, and there was no significant correlation between students' writing motivation, writing anxiety and proficiency.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to measure the correlation between the students' writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency. It seems rare to find research that combines all three variables (writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency). Therefore, this study can be of little help to provide insight into the relationship between writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency. The following conclusions were drawn based on the limitations of this study.

Based on the research questions, several things can be concluded in this study. There were three results of this study. First, there was no significant correlation between writing motivation and writing proficiency. Second, there was a significant correlation between writing anxiety and writing proficiency. The last result, there was no significant correlation between writing motivation, writing anxiety, and writing proficiency. It means that writing motivation at fifth-semester students in the academic year 2018/2019 of IAIN Palangka Raya has not significantly influenced their writing proficiency. Then, writing anxiety at fifth-semester students in the academic year 2018/2019 of IAIN Palangka Raya has significantly influenced their writing proficiency.

The results already found in this study are expected to help better understand the correlations of these three variables. Overall, the results of this study can be utilized in writing courses where writing proficiency is essential in English education.

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