

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' WRITING ATTITUDE AND THEIR WRITING ACHIEVEMENT AMONG TWELFTH GRADERS

Nurul Hamidah *, Mutiara Ayu

Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia

Jl. ZA. Pagar Alam No.9 -11, Labuhan Ratu, Kec. Kedaton, Kota Bandar Lampung, Lampung 35132, Indonesia

Email: nurulhamidah189@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the correlation between students' writing attitudes and their writing achievement among twelfth-grade students at SMA Tri Sukses Natar. Writing is considered one of the most essential skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning since it reflects students' critical thinking ability, language competence, and confidence in expressing ideas in written form. This research employed a quantitative correlational design involving 23 twelfth-grade science students. The data were collected through a writing attitude questionnaire and a writing achievement test in the form of a descriptive essay consisting of 200–250 words. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 21 with the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation formula to determine the relationship between the two variables. The results showed that the students' mean score of writing attitude was 2.87, indicating a neutral to positive attitude, while the mean score of their writing achievement was 55.91, which falls into the “fair” category. The correlation result showed that $r = -0.131$, indicating a very weak and negative correlation, which is statistically insignificant. This finding suggests that students' positive attitudes toward writing do not necessarily translate into higher writing performance. It implies that other factors, such as motivation, language proficiency, and writing practice, may play a more influential role. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to foster students' enthusiasm for writing by providing constructive feedback, creating an enjoyable learning atmosphere, and giving more opportunities for authentic writing practice.

Keywords: Writing Attitude, Writing Achievement, EFL Students, Correlation, English Learning

INTRODUCTION

Writing, along with reading and comprehension, is a fundamental component of foreign language acquisition. As one of the four essential language skills, writing reflects a learner's capacity to organize thoughts, construct meaning, and apply linguistic knowledge in a coherent and purposeful way. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), writing holds particular importance because it not only demonstrates students' mastery of grammar

and vocabulary but also reveals their ability to think critically and communicate effectively in academic and professional contexts. Writing competence is therefore widely recognized as an indicator of educational success and a prerequisite for participation in both academic and civic life (Anwar, 2000).

Despite its importance, the development of writing skills continues to pose significant challenges for EFL learners across different contexts. Many students, even after years of English instruction, struggle to produce well-organized and grammatically accurate compositions. Dean (2010) notes that a growing number of students graduate from secondary schools without sufficient writing proficiency, indicating a need for more effective instructional approaches. This issue is not confined to any one region; it is evident across various educational settings where English is taught as a foreign or second language.

Previous research has shown that writing is particularly demanding for learners due to its complex cognitive and linguistic nature. Kroll (1990) emphasizes that writing involves multiple simultaneous processes such as idea generation, organization, drafting, revising, and editing that require both linguistic accuracy and conceptual clarity. Similarly, Deane et al. (2008) identify that difficulties often emerge when writers attempt to gather and organize ideas, apply correct punctuation, and manage spelling and grammatical conventions.

These challenges make writing not merely a skill to be learned but a process that demands sustained effort, strategic thinking, and emotional engagement. Furthermore, students' perceptions and attitudes toward writing play a crucial role in determining how successfully they engage with the writing process. Studies have revealed that negative attitudes such as anxiety, low confidence, or lack of motivation that can significantly hinder students' writing development (Hashemian & Heidari, 2013; Al Asmari, 2013). Learners who perceive writing as a stressful or meaningless task tend to participate less actively in writing activities, resulting in lower achievement. Conversely, positive writing attitudes foster engagement, persistence, and creative expression, all of which contribute to improved writing outcomes.

Research on EFL writing difficulties also highlights the influence of instructional strategies. Teachers' use of strategic writing instruction has been shown to help students overcome linguistic and organizational challenges by emphasizing process-oriented learning. For example, Alodwan and Ibnian (2014) and Okasha and Hamdi (2014) argue that effective strategy instruction allows learners to focus on developing ideas rather than solely on producing error-free texts. Through guided practice, feedback, and reflection, students become more confident and autonomous writers, viewing writing as a manageable and meaningful communicative act.

Strategic writing, therefore, involves the application of deliberate techniques that help students plan, monitor, and evaluate their writing performance. Okasha and Hamdi (2014) define it as the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies to achieve specific writing goals. Similarly, Calhoun and Hale (2003) emphasize that writing strategies are best learned through gradual instruction, where teachers initially provide modeling and support before allowing students to take greater control of their learning. This scaffolding process helps learners internalize effective strategies, leading to greater independence and self-regulation in writing.

While numerous studies have explored the use of writing strategies and their impact on student performance, relatively fewer have examined how students' attitudes toward writing

correlate with their actual writing achievement. Attitude, as a psychological construct, encompasses students' beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies toward writing tasks. Understanding this affective dimension is essential because even the most effective instructional strategies may fail if students possess negative attitudes toward writing. Exploring the relationship between writing attitude and writing achievement can therefore provide valuable insights into how emotional and motivational factors influence writing performance in EFL contexts.

In light of these considerations, the present study aims to investigate the correlation between students' writing attitudes and their writing achievement among twelfth-grade students of SMA Tri Sukses Natar. By examining how students' perceptions of writing relate to their actual performance, this study seeks to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of writing instruction in EFL classrooms. The findings are expected to inform teachers and curriculum designers about the importance of fostering positive attitudes toward writing as part of an integrated approach to improving students' overall writing competence.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

Research Design

In this study, a correlational design was employed to determine the relationship between students' attitudes toward writing and their writing achievement. This design was deemed appropriate because it allows the researcher to explore the degree of association between these two variables without altering the natural learning conditions. The use of correlation statistics provides a clear understanding of whether and to what extent students' attitudes influence their writing performance. The participants in this study consisted of 23 students from the twelfth grade of the science major (Science 2) at SMA Tri Sukses Natar. The data were collected using a questionnaire designed to measure students' writing attitudes. Prior to administering the questionnaire, a reliability test was conducted using SPSS for Windows version 21 to ensure the internal consistency and dependability of the instrument. The results of this reliability analysis are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.591	23

Table 1 shows an unwavering measurement of survey quality using Cronbach's alpha 0.591, indicating unwavering low quality. There are 23 questions. Survey using a Likert scale, Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Uncertain (U), Aggre (A), Strongly agree (SA) and where each item has a value ranging from 4 to 1.

Population and Sample

1. Population

The population of the present study comprised twelfth-grade students of Science 2 at SMA Tri Sukses Natar. Based on school records, this group consisted of 23 students enrolled in a single class. This population was selected because these students had been exposed to English writing instruction, making them relevant participants for investigating the correlation between writing attitudes and writing achievement.

2. Sample

In this study, the sample was chosen using purposive sampling, a non-probability technique commonly employed in both qualitative and quantitative research. According to Fraenkel et al. (2012), purposive sampling differs from convenience sampling in that participants are selected intentionally rather than randomly. Researchers exercise professional judgment to choose individuals believed to provide the most relevant and accurate data. Johnson and Christensen (2012) further emphasize that purposive sampling requires the researcher to clearly define the characteristics of interest within the population and to intentionally select participants who meet those criteria.

The decision to employ purposive sampling in this study was based on the need for a homogeneous group of participants with similar educational backgrounds and experiences in English writing. All selected students were taking writing-related subjects, ensuring that their attitudes and achievements in writing could be meaningfully compared. Although Creswell (2012) recommends a minimum of 30 participants for correlational studies, and Fraenkel et al. (2012) suggest at least 50 participants to detect reliable relationships, this study utilized 23 participants due to the limited number of students in the target population. Despite the small sample size, the data were considered adequate for preliminary correlation analysis within the specific classroom context.

In summary, the sample for this study consisted of 23 twelfth-grade students from Science 2 at SMA Tri Sukses Natar, selected purposively based on their engagement in writing instruction and relevance to the research objectives.

Data Collection

Two main instruments were employed in this study: a Writing Attitude Questionnaire and a Writing Achievement Test. Both instruments were administered to the same participants to ensure data consistency and allow interrelational analyses between the two variables.

a. Writing Attitude Questionnaire

According to Johnson and Christensen (2012, p. 162), a questionnaire is a self-report data-collection instrument completed by each research participant as part of the study. Students' attitudes toward writing were measured using a structured questionnaire adapted from Wolcott and Buhr (2002). The instrument consisted of 30 items rated on five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The questionnaire items were grouped into four sub-dimensions representing key aspects of writing attitude: enjoyment, ease, ability/competence, and strategy use. The reliability of the instrument was tested using SPSS version 21, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.591, indicating moderate internal consistency suitable for exploratory research.

Before distribution, the questionnaire was validated by English education lecturer from

Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia to ensure content clarity and relevance. The questionnaire was administered during regular English writing classes under the supervision of the researcher. Students were instructed to respond honestly to each item, and their responses were collected on the same day.

b. Writing Achievement Test

To measure students' writing achievement, participants were assigned to compose a descriptive essay of approximately 200–250 words on a familiar topic, such as “My Unforgettable Experience” or “My Favorite Place.” The task was designed to assess students' ability to generate ideas, organize information, and apply linguistic accuracy. The essays were evaluated using an analytic scoring rubric adapted from Jacobs et al. (1981), covering five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Each aspect was rated on a 1–5 scale, and the overall score represented students' writing achievement. Inter-rater reliability was ensured by involving two raters, and any scoring discrepancies were discussed and resolved before finalization.

Table 2. Writing Attitude Questionnaire Specification

Writing Attitude	Item of the Questionnaire
Enjoyment	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Ease	7, 8, 9, 10, 11
Ability/competence	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18
Strategy use	19, 20, 21, 22, 23

The Writing Attitude Questionnaire consists of items categorized into specific dimensions. For instance, items 1 to 6 maintain enjoyment, items 7 to 11 relate to ease, items 12 to 18 address ability and competence, and items 19 to 23 focus on strategy use.

Table 3. The Scoring of Questionnaire

Statements	Score
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
Uncertain	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the given statements by selecting a score on the Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (scored as 1) to "Strongly Agree" (scored as 5).

Data Analysis

The data collected from both the Writing Attitude Questionnaire and the Writing Achievement Test were analyzed qualitatively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The purpose of the analysis was to determine whether a significant correlation existed between students' writing attitudes and their writing achievement. First, descriptive statistics were applied to summarize the students' responses to each dimension of the Writing Attitude Questionnaire— enjoyment, ease, ability/confidence and strategy use. The mean scores and standard deviations were calculated to identify the general tendency of students' attitudes toward writing. A mean score ranging from 1.00–2.00 was categorized as *negative attitude*, 2.01–3.00 as *neutral attitude*, and 3.01–5.00 as *positive attitude*.

Second, the writing achievement scores obtained from the analytic scoring rubric adapted from Jacobs et al. (1981) were analyzed to determine the students' performance levels. The scores were classified into five categories: *excellent* (85–100), *good* (70–84), *fair* (55–69), *poor* (46–54) and *very poor* (<45). Third, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was employed to measure the relationship between students' writing attitude scores and their writing achievement scores. This statistical technique was chosen because it is appropriate for measuring the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two continuous variables (Creswell, 2012). The interpretation of the correlation coefficient followed the criteria proposed by Cohen (2007):

o	Correlation	Strength of Correlation
	Coefficient Range	
	0.00–0.19	very weak correlation
	0.20–0.39	weak correlation
	0.40–0.59	moderate correlation
	0.60–0.79	strong correlation
	0.80–1.00	very strong correlation

A significance level (α) of 0.05 was used to determine whether the correlation between the two variables was statistically significant. If the *p-value* was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (stating that there is no correlation) was rejected, indicating a significant relationship between students' writing attitudes and their writing achievement. Conversely, if the *p-value* exceeded 0.05, the null hypothesis was retained, suggesting no significant correlation between the variables.

Lastly, reliability of the attitude questionnaire was analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a value of 0.591, indicating moderate internal consistency. This result implies that while the questionnaire was generally reliable for exploratory purposes, further refinement might improve its consistency for future studies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The overall mean score for students' writing attitude was 2.87, suggesting that participants generally held a neutral to slightly positive attitude toward writing in English. Among the four attitude dimensions, writing apprehension obtained the highest mean (3.08), followed by writing enjoyment (2.98), ease (2.73), and enjoyment (2.71). These results indicate that students tend to approach writing more strategically but still experience difficulties related to confidence and enjoyment. Regarding writing achievement, the students' average essay score was 55.91, categorized as *fair*. This finding aligns with the moderate levels of attitude, suggesting that the students' affective engagement toward writing may influence their performance quality.

The correlation analysis yielded a Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of -0.131, indicating a very weak negative relationship between students' writing attitude and their writing achievement. Although the direction of the correlation was negative, the relationship was not statistically significant ($p = 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that in this sample, students' writing attitudes did not show a meaningful direct correlation with their writing scores. The absence of a significant correlation between writing attitude and writing achievement suggests that while students may express generally positive views toward writing, these attitudes do not necessarily translate into higher writing performance. Several factors may explain this finding. First, writing proficiency is influenced not only by attitude but also by linguistic competence and instructional quality. Students might possess a positive outlook on writing but still struggle with grammar, vocabulary, or organization due to limited exposure and practice. As Graham and Perin (2007) argue, writing improvement requires sustained instruction focusing on both process and product.

Second, the small sample size ($n = 23$) might have reduced the statistical power to detect significant relationships. Larger samples could reveal stronger or more consistent patterns. Moreover, contextual variables such as motivation, teacher feedback, and classroom environment could mediate the relationship between attitude and achievement. Third, the moderate reliability of the attitude questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.591$) may have limited the precision of measurement, reducing the accuracy of correlation results. Future studies should refine the instrument or increase the number of items to achieve higher reliability. Nevertheless, the results underscore the importance of addressing students' affective engagement in writing classrooms. Teachers should foster enjoyment and confidence by incorporating creative writing activities, peer collaboration, and meaningful feedback. Encouraging students to view writing as a tool for self-expression rather than mere academic obligation can gradually improve both their attitudes and outcomes.

These findings align partially with previous research by Arison (2004) and Pamuji (2013), who also found that writing attitude contributes positively to achievement but interacts with other factors such as motivation and self-efficacy. In this study, students demonstrated awareness of writing strategies but lacked the linguistic mastery to apply them effectively, leading to the weak correlation observed. In conclusion, while students' writing attitudes in this context appear neutral to positive, attitude does not predict writing success. Effective writing pedagogy should therefore integrate cognitive, linguistic, and affective elements to holistically support students' writing development. This research aims to explore the correlation between writing attitude and writing achievement, as indicated by writing

performance, among Senior High Schools students. The study comprises 23 questions, and the results are outlined in the provided information and table.

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
writing_grade	23	51	63	55.91	2.610
valid N (listwise)	23				

Based on the table provided, it can be inferred that the speaking scores range from 51 to 63, with an average score of 55.91. The research aims to explore the connection between students' attitudes towards writing and their writing achievements, as reflected in their speaking performance. Additionally, the table displays 23 statements indicating various writing strategies employed by students with corresponding averages and respondent counts for each strategy.

Table 4. The Students have an Enjoyment about Their Writing

No	Statement	N	Mean
1	I like to write in English	23	2,61
2	Writing in English is a waste of time	23	2,78
3	I feel relaxed when I write in English	23	2,57
4	I like people to read what I've written in English	23	2,70
5	I enjoy writing in English	23	2,83
6.	I feel excited about writing in English	23	2,78
Mean			2,71

This section will outline the enjoyment students derive from engaging in participant writing. Table 6 illustrates the discoveries indicating that students possess specific goals when writing.

Based on a student questionnaire consisting of 6 statements, students showed a relatively low level of agreement with statements related to students' goals in writing. This can be seen from the average score of 2.71, which shows their attitude towards students having a goal in writing. Notably, among these statements, the lowest level of consensus was observed in question 1.I "like to write in English" with a score of 2.61. This strong agreement shows that students have the same view regarding their attitude in writing English.

Table 5. The Students have an Ease about Their Writing

No	Statement	N	Mean
7.	It's easy for me to write in English	23	2,87
8.	It easy for me to remember information when I'am writing in English	23	2,65
9.	It's easy for me to organize my ideas when i write in English	23	2,52
10.	It's easy for me to get ideas when I write in English	23	2,78
11.	It's easy for me to write my ideas in English	23	2,87
Mean			2,73

According to analysis derived from a student questionnaire comprising 6 statements, students demonstrated a moderate level of concurrence with statements concerning their goals in writing. This is evidenced by the average score of 2.73, reflecting their stance on the importance of setting goals in writing. Particularly noteworthy is statement 9, "It's easy for me to organize my ideas when I write in English," which garnered the lowest level of consensus with a score of 2.52. This collective alignment underscores students' shared perspective on the challenges they face in organizing their thoughts when writing in English.

Table 6. The Students have an Ability/competence about Their Writing

No	Statement	N	Mean
12.	People understand what I'm saying when I write in English	23	2,87
13.	I like my English writing to be graded	23	3,13
14.	I can express my ideas when I write in English	23	3,04
15.	I think my English papers look good	23	3,09
16.	I think about how long my english should be	23	2,91
17.	I think I'm a good writer	23	3,00
18.	I get high grades for my English writings	23	2,87
Mean			2,98

Based on the table provided which contains 7 statements, the average score is 2.98, which shows that students who feel they have the ability to write are still categorized as low level. The statement "People understand what I'm saying when I write in English" and "I get high grades for my English writings" which garnered the lowest level of consensus with a score of 2.87. This research aims to measure the extent of students' writing abilities.

Table 7. The Students have a Strategy use about Their Writing

No	Statement	N	Mean
19.	Before I write, I outline the ideas I want to write	23	2,83
20.	Before I write, It's help me to mentally visualize the ideas I want to write	23	3,04
21.	Before I write in English, I like to plan what I'm going to write	23	3,04
22.	When I'm write in English, I think about the paragraph I want to use	23	3,22
23.	When I write in English, I think about the topic sentence I want to use	23	3,30
Mean			3,08

Based on the table provided which contains 5 statements that refer to the strategies used by students in writing, the average score is 3.08, which means that the majority of students have strategies when they write. The statement “When I write in English, I think about the topic sentence I want to use” which resulted in the highest level of consensus with the score of 3.30. This research aims to find out the strategies that most students use when they write.

Table 8. Correlations between Students Attitude and Their Writing Achievement

Correlations		Questionnaire	Students_Attitude
Questionnaire	Pearson Correlation	1	-.131
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.553
	N	23	23
Students_Attitude	Pearson Correlation	-.131	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.553	
	N	23	23

Based on the acquired data, the research outcomes reveal a Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.131, indicating a negative linear relationship between the two variables. This implies that as one variable increases, the other tends to decrease. However, the strength of this correlation is relatively weak as the coefficient is not close to -1. Consequently, the research concludes that there exists no significant relationship between student motivation and writing skills. In essence, a Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.131 suggests an absence of a direct correlation between student attitudes and writing achievement. This indicates a slight tendency for writing achievement to diminish as student motivation declines, and vice versa. Although statistically significant, the strength of this relationship remains relatively weak, suggesting that the influence of motivation on writing attitudes is not highly pronounced.

These findings challenge conventional understandings of the interplay between students'

attitudes and writing achievement. They suggest that students can possess proficient writing skills even in the absence of high attitude levels. The negative correlation implies that as attitudes wane, there may be a slight decrease in writing performance, and conversely. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that the impact of motivation on writing achievement may be subject to various unmeasured factors within this study's scope.

CONCLUSION

The term in teaching reading using the written text method is not something new just as classical theory has been modified to suit current conditions. All bad aspects or possibilities must be anticipated with careful preparation. We can also feel high gains as long as we recognize it as a good or success rate. It's like making it an ornament if we let ordinary problems just come out in other words without cooperation. Having said that, it was like a decision where it was to be taken, and how we will solve the bottleneck by finding the solution without replaying. Based on the findings, some conclusions can be drawn. First, students' writing attitude was related positively with the students' English composition performance. The Mean of writing attitude indicates that the students' writing attitude is good enough (55.91). However, the contribution of writing attitude factors to composition performance is still low. Therefore, the students still need more motivation especially from the teachers to give them exciting, practical writing experience in the class supported by many kinds of related material from books, magazines, etc.

Moreover, the students should be given the chance to express themselves through writing without being afraid that their writing is full of such grammatical mistakes. If they have motivation, they might have a better writing attitude since writing is one of the English aspects they should acquire in order to be able to communicate in written or spoken form. In other words, by having good writing perception, positive writing activities and reading interest or preference, hopefully they will have better performance especially in writing. Second, other contributions can also be achieved from gender. Gender does not make a significant difference to writing attitude. Thus, the process of teaching and learning in the class should give the students the same opportunities in writing activities and encourage the students to read a lot to increase the content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics of their writing. Since they might become English teachers in the future, the students should have good perception, positive activities, and reading preference or interest to increase their performance including writing ability.

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