



Motivation and Writing Achievement: Examining Academic Writing Achievement among Libyan English Major Students

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الدافعية والتحصيل في الكتابة: فحص تحصيل الكتابة الأكاديمية بين طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية الليبيين

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Abstract:

This study investigated the relationship between writing motivation and writing achievement among Libyan undergraduate students majoring in English. The study aimed to determine whether writing motivation was associated with students' writing performance and to examine its predictive role in writing achievement. A quantitative correlational research design was employed, involving a sample of 51 English-major students from a Libyan university. Data were collected using a standardized writing motivation questionnaire and participants' writing achievement scores obtained from their academic records. Statistical analyses were conducted using Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine the relationship between the two variables and simple linear regression to determine the predictive power of writing motivation. The findings revealed a moderate positive correlation between writing motivation and writing achievement, indicating that students with higher levels of motivation tended to achieve better writing performance. Regression analysis further demonstrated that writing motivation significantly predicted writing achievement. These findings highlight the importance of fostering students' motivation as a means of improving writing outcomes in English language learning. The study recommends that English language instructors incorporate motivational teaching strategies and supportive classroom practices to enhance students' engagement, confidence, and overall writing achievement in higher education contexts.

Keywords: Writing motivation; Writing achievement; English-major students; Libya.

الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء العلاقة بين دافعية الكتابة والتحصيل الكتابي لدى طلبة تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية في إحدى الجامعات الليبية، كما سعت إلى تحديد مدى قدرة دافعية الكتابة على التنبؤ بمستوى التحصيل الكتابي لدى الطلبة. اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الكمي الوصفي الارتباطي، وشملت عينة مكونة من (51) طالباً وطالبة من طلبة مرحلة البكالوريوس. جُمعت البيانات باستخدام استبانة مقننة لقياس دافعية الكتابة، بالإضافة إلى درجات التحصيل الكتابي المستمدة من السجلات الأكاديمية للمشاركين. وتم تحليل البيانات إحصائياً باستخدام معامل ارتباط بيرسون للكشف عن طبيعة العلاقة بين المتغيرين، وتحليل الانحدار الخطي البسيط لقياس القدرة التنبؤية لدافعية الكتابة في التحصيل الكتابي. وأظهرت النتائج وجود علاقة إيجابية متوسطة بين دافعية الكتابة والتحصيل الكتابي، مما يشير إلى أن الطلبة ذوي الدافعية المرتفعة يحققون أداءً أفضل في مهارات الكتابة. كما بينت نتائج تحليل الانحدار أن دافعية الكتابة تُعد متغيراً ذا دلالة إحصائية في التنبؤ بالتحصيل الكتابي. وتؤكد هذه النتائج أهمية تنمية دافعية الطلبة من خلال تبني ممارسات تدريسية داعمة واستراتيجيات تعليمية محفزة، بما يساهم في تعزيز

مشاركته الأكاديمية، وزيادة ثقته بقدراتهم الكتابية، وتحسين مستوى أدائهم في الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية في مؤسسات التعليم العالي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: دافعية الكتابة؛ التحصيل الكتابي؛ طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية؛ ليبيا.

Introduction

It is understood that writing is a cognitively quite demanding activity. The assignment's difficulty, the student's limited vocabulary, and the student's grammar difficulties might make writing in English as a foreign language a demanding task (Sabti et al., 2019). Consequently, within the Libyan educational context, students enrolled in Libyan universities may ultimately recognize that competent writing entails a broad spectrum of challenges, particularly given that the English language is predominantly taught in universities as a primary foreign language in English language departments. Proficiency in English, notably in the outcome of writing, is essential for learners, as departments of foreign languages, mainly English in this context at Libyan universities, provide courses in English. Mastery of a written word is the ultimate achievement of every language learning endeavor. Language competency may be achieved via writing in a foreign language. Students' ability to express themselves in written English is evaluated by this test. Teachers and students alike may benefit greatly from thorough writing evaluations since they allow for the identification of certain areas in which writing education can be improved. However, Payen (2012) argues that students who lack motivation in writing will struggle to complete academic writing curricular tasks. Which later can be apparent in their writing achievements. The amount of motivation that an individual has may be characterized as the extent to which they are eager to participate in the process of writing, as stated by Dornyei (2005). The acquisition of writing abilities is related to career and educational success. Writing competence is a complicated progression that depends on perceptive and linguistic talents, yet this capability may be altered through several factors that may facilitate or impede writing performance. Motivational variables may affect language proficiency but, more specifically, writing achievement. To address the current situation, researchers in Libya should study how motivational factors affect academic writing achievements among university students.

The Research Questions

1. What are the levels of writing motivation amongst Libyan English major students?
2. Is there a relation between motivation and writing achievement?
3. Does writing motivation influence writing achievement?

Research Problem

Language accuracy, organization, critical thinking, and consistent work are some of the most difficult academic skills for English students to master, and writing is at the top of that list. As a result of these issues, some students may not be as invested in writing assignments, which might affect their overall performance (Erkan & Saban, 2011). One of the most important factors in whether or not students will stick with, improve upon, and ultimately succeed in academic writing is their level of motivation.

Few opportunities exist for students in Libya to practice English outside of the classroom, and many of those who do depend on their time at university to help them catch up. Students' motivation to write and their achievement in the classroom might suffer as a result. There is a lack of study in the Libyan context that specifically addresses the impact of motivation as a predictor of writing success, despite the abundance of literature on writing achievement. Considering this, the aim of this study is to investigate in what way academic writing achievement is impacted because of students' levels of motivation among Libyan English majors.

Research Aims

The present research seeks to explore the predictive significance of motivation in the academic writing achievement of Libyan English major students. In particular, it aims to:

1. To find out the degree of writing motivation of Libyan students in the English language major.
2. To gauge the extent of academic writing achievement of Libyan students majoring in English.
3. To investigate the association between writing motivation and writing achievement.
4. To determine whether writing motivation is a major predictor of students' academic writing success.
5. Offer pedagogical suggestions to increase students' writing motivation to improve students' writing performance.

Literature Review

Faculty members at universities in Libya frequently assume the responsibility of reforming their educational courses and materials, as indicated by Suwaed (2015). This encompasses selecting a teaching method (i.e., the manner of classroom communication that they believe will be most effective in facilitating student learning). Two of the numerous factors that restrict the course material and the activities and projects in which students will participate are the quantity of learners registered in the class and the prior knowledge of the topic of the instructors

and students. Additionally, the strategy or method that a teacher employs is influenced by their beliefs regarding the most effective approach to teaching writing. The focus on production method is the predominant method used in Libyan teaching and academic lecturing, which prioritizes students' language skills, as noted by Suwaed (2011, p. 50). The product approach prioritizes the final written piece above the process students undertake to create it. Due to their substantial emphasis on linguistic input rather than communicative output, Libyan educators commonly adopt the grammar-translation approach (Baresh, 2022; Diaab, 2016). Memorization and interpretation of Arabic are the primary tenets of this approach, which fails to capture the end results without a focus on the factors that affect the process of the writing in this context.

In addition to the instructional style, several elements affect students' writing achievements. Motivation is a factor that may influence students' writing achievements. Students aim to achieve proficiency in writing, generating effective composition in a foreign language, and conveying opinions and concepts skillfully. Furthermore, according to Bruning and Horn (2000), one of the most important outcomes of writing instruction is the development of motivation, which is a crucial component of continuous education. As stated by Pajares (1996), the level of students' writing abilities is significantly influenced by their level of motivation to write. Based on the findings of Wright et al. (2019), the decisions that students make regarding when they engage in and conclude their writing endeavors may be classified as either internal or external factors. For example, motivation, self-efficacy, and confidence in students' writing are all examples of internal characteristics that arise from inside the person, as stated by Wright et al. (2019). External variables emanate from outside the individual in question. The aforementioned components often correlate with an individual's thoughts, opinions, values, and tendencies about writing.

When students have strong self-confidence with their own writing and believe in themselves and their writing abilities, they are more likely to approach writing assignments with excitement and do well. This is because they are more likely to believe that they are capable of writing. The students' self-assurance in their writing talents, the expectations of the instructor, the nature of the writing work, and the availability of tools and support are all instances of external impacts. A student's decision to participate in writing activities and their degree of commitment to working through those activities may be significantly influenced by the aforementioned elements. It is probable that these factors will have a substantial effect. When students have a teacher who is encouraging and who gives them precise direction and constructive criticism, for example, they may be motivated to improve their writing and take it seriously. This is due to the teacher giving them informative instructions along with constructive criticism (Wright et al., 2019).

Ryan and Deci (2000) state When a student writes because they enjoy the writing task, the feeling of a challenge excites them and drives them to achieve more. It is the best example of intrinsic motivation. It is the goal of inclination towards writing to achieve the best, which merely stems from a person's own will or choice. On the other hand, the degree of extrinsic motivation can be measured by external means, such as in university entrance exams and potential work employment, and grants (Liu, 2020).

Certain studies have reflected students' enthusiasm for their writing assignments, and it was shown in the grades they achieved for their writing assignments when learning a foreign language. For instance, Lo & Hyland (2007) examined specifically the factor of intrinsic motivation and how it might help students improve their writing achievement. It was shown that the writing skills of underperforming students improved significantly when they engaged in subjects of their own interests.

According to Pratiwi et al. (2022), motivation is one of the variables that can be exacerbated or contribute to the difficulties that students face, and that would subsequently be reflected in their writing achievement as it correlates with motivation. And in their research, they found a strong relationship between motivation and writing achievement. Consequently, the capacity to write effectively and succinctly is an indispensable skill that students must acquire to achieve academic and professional success post-graduation from school or college. When it comes to writing this, most students have hurdles, particularly when the content is presented in a language that is not their first language or not their native tongue. Consequently, it's up to the educators that they must recognize the elements or the factors that might predict or influence the writing achievement of the students to assess and enhance their writing abilities to achieve better results. Consequently, there is a vital need for a comprehension of motivational factors in the context of writing that can enhance the instructional techniques that are tailored to students' motivation so we can boost their motivation levels (McGettigan, 2008).

In summary, the literature examined shows that motivation is a key variable in boosting or building students' motivation, which would level up their writing achievement. Moreover, previous studies have established that there is a positive relation between the drive or the desire to write and the success or achievement in writing. In the Libyan higher education context. Few studies reflect the association between achievement in writing and the drive or motivation to write. Thus, this research fills the gap by researching the predictive role of writing motivation in writing achievement among Libyan English major students.

Material and methods

To examine the relationship between the dependent variable that is being measured, writing achievement, which is the outcome of students' writing, and the independent variable motivation, which is the factor that predicts or influences students' writing achievement. Thus, this study adopts a correlation research design. In this design, the researcher does not interfere with or manipulate the variables. The researcher merely examines the relationship between the variables, whether it is a positive or a negative relationship.

Participants Selection

The study involved 51 participants majoring in English language at the University of Tripoli. The present research opted for convenience sampling to collect data from the participants. They were a mixed-gender sample. The participants were students in their seventh semester; they had completed most of their writing modules, and they were enrolled during the academic year of spring 2023. Participants completed the questionnaire on writing motivation during academic settings after obtaining ethical considerations, and they were assured that their participation doesn't affect their grades and all their information will stay completely confidential.

Instruments

To measure the writing motivation of the students, the research used the AWMQ, namely "Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire." This questionnaire was originally established by Payne (2012). On a Likert scale with four points, the AWMQ consists of thirty-seven items that are scored on a scale that ranges from (0 Strongly Disagree), (1 Disagree), (2 Uncertain), (3 Agree), and (4 Strongly Agree). Furthermore, the tool contains 5 subscales, namely, enjoyment, self-efficacy, instrumentality, recognition, and effort. Each one responds to either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, for example. Self-efficacy and enjoyment are deemed measures of intrinsic motivation, while instrumentality and recognition are part of extrinsic motivation.

Payne (2012), who developed this questionnaire, stated that the Cronbach, which is the reliability coefficient of this tool, has a great level of internal consistency, with a value of 0.95.

On the other hand, to gauge students' writing achievement, students' final scores in writing modules were obtained from the instructor of the module; it's a three-credit-hour module that follows the standards of the faculty. These final scores include both midterm and final exams alongside homework and in-class activities. Students' final scores are converted into academic classifications. For instance, scores between 50 and 64 are a Pass, scores between 65 and 74 are Good, scores between 75 and 84 are Very Good, and scores between 85 and 100 are Excellent. These classifications are based on the internal regulations of the faculty.

Results

To gain insights from the data, the researcher used descriptive statistics to explore the overall averages and the standard deviation of both writing motivation and writing achievement. After that, the researcher looked at the relationship between the participants total writing motivation and their writing achievement by employing a Pearson correlation test, and to look at whether motivation is a predictor of achievement, a multiple regression analysis test was employed as well. By using SPSS version 24, the data were analyzed and computed.

Descriptive Statistics

Using the Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire (AWMQ), the research explored the total mean score of the writing motivation across 3 altitudes, starting from low and medium and high on a Likert scale. These levels are classified into high, from 3 to 4; medium, from 2 to 2.9; and low, varying from 0 to 1.9. The researcher who explored the current study suggested this classification.

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for writing motivation.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Writing Motivation	2.61	0.42

In Table 1 above, it is shown that writing motivation exhibits the mean ($M = 2.61$) and the standard deviation is ($SD = 0.42$); this reading indicates the students' overall writing motivation is at the medium level.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Writing Achievement classification grades

Classification	Grades	Frequency
Pass	50 to 64	15
Good	65 to 74	23
Very Good	75 to 84	11
Excellent	85 to 100	2
Total		N= 51

Table 2. Illustrate the findings of the descriptive statistics concerning the writing outcome scores and their classification. These grades mirror the marks achieved by participants in their academic writing module. The classification is then converted to grades to reflect the numerical values of the academic classification pertaining to assessment criteria and the internal regulation of the faculty. Furthermore, it showcases the frequency of the students' writing achievement scores; according to the results, 23 students out of 51 received a grade falling within the classification range of 65 to 74, which corresponds to the "Good" classification.

Table 3. shows descriptive statistics for writing achievement.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Writing Achievement	67.92	9.02

In Table 3. It presents the analysis for writing achievement; students' overall achievement in writing is shown as a mean of $M = 67.92$), recording a standard deviation around ($SD = 9.02$) Thus, it is interpreted that the students' overall writing achievement falls within the range of 65-74, which states that English major students in question exhibit a "Good" level of writing achievement.

Inferential Statistics

Table 4. shows Correlation between motivation and achievement in writing

Variables	Writing Motivation	Writing Achievement
Writing Motivation	1	.478**
Writing Achievement	.478**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.000
N	51	51

To explore the connection between writing motivation and writing achievement, the Pearson product–moment correlation test was computed. Table 4 shows a positive, moderate, and significant correlation between achievement and motivation in writing, $r(49) = .478, p < .01$. This result is interpreted as when students have higher levels of motivation in writing, they are inclined to showcase equally high levels of writing achievement.

Table 5. shows regression coefficients for writing motivation predicting writing achievement

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	95% CI for B
(Constant)	40.846	8.846	—	4.618	.000	23.051, 58.641
Writing Motivation	9.261	3.473	.435	2.667	.010	2.274, 16.249

Table 5. presents the findings, indicating that writing motivation exemplifies a notable effect on writing achievement ($B = 9.261, t = 2.667, p = .010$). The p -value is .010, and its 95% confidence interval eliminates 0. Therefore, writing motivation emerges as a significant predictor of writing achievement for English language major students.

Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of this research was to explore the connection between the outcome-dependent variable writing achievement and the independent variable writing motivation and understand if motivation is a predictor of achievement between Libyan English major students at the University of Tripoli.

The results suggest writing motivation is a significant predictor of writing motivation; the higher the motivation, the greater the achievement of writing. These findings are in line with Pratiwi et al. (2022). In their study they emphasized the focus on motivation and how it helps students achieve better grades in writing. Similarly, in the current study, it was pointed out by the results that students with motivation and confidence lower the anxiety and also achieve better results. Moreover, motivation may function as a facilitator that influences the writing achievement of students. Additionally, the findings of current research are also aligned with Lo & Hyland (2007); in their study, they stressed that motivation is a vital determinant of writing achievement. This study equally presented the similar results; motivation contributes uniquely to the outcome variable writing achievement.

It is known that writing requires an effort and loads of cognitive thinking; thus, without motivation, be it intrinsic or extrinsic, students would perform low in their writing achievement. They will be unlikely to engage thoroughly

in the process of writing, affected by their motivation levels. The study results stress that the driving force behind the effort and completing the writing task is mainly motivation; effort and persistence are essential parts of motivation to achieve higher levels of writing achievement. Logically, students who are motivated think, plan, draft ideas, revise, and submit the writing while being motivated; all these are mirrored in writing achievement results.

More importantly, this study indicates that, by the regression coefficient, the motivation does not only correlate positively with writing achievement; it further acts as a predictor of the writing outcome. In contexts where students have limited exposure to the foreign only during class time, motivation becomes a vital factor that plays a significantly more important role in the compensation of these limitations by acting as the drive for success.

From a pedagogical teaching standpoint, writing instruction should move away from teacher-centered instructional methods and move further to incorporate motivational elements, for example, incorporating meaningful, tailored writing tasks that boost learner autonomy and constructive feedback and setting real-world examples that learners can relate to and express in writing. This also would help underperformers to be motivated and reflect their drive to write to achieve better since they fail to activate the motivational drive through typical writing teaching instruction.

In summary, this study underscored the importance of the affective factor motivation in a specific context and how it impacts learners' writing outcomes. Certain limits must be acknowledged, as in samples including only 51 participants; future studies can replicate the study by incorporating a larger sample to generalize the results. Additionally, researchers may further explore how motivation is developed through tailored writing instruction to strengthen the writing achievement in return.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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