

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' WRITING MOTIVATION AND THEIR SKILL IN WRITING ENGLISH ARGUMENTATIVE TEXTS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the correlation between students' writing motivation and their skill to writing English argumentative texts among eleventh-grade students at SMAN 2 Kelayang. A quantitative correlational research design was used, with 84 students participating in the study. The data were obtained through a writing motivation questionnaire and a writing test. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation test with SPSS version 27. The findings showed that the correlation coefficient between students' writing motivation and writing skill was 0.753, indicating a strong positive correlation between the two variables. Additionally, the significance value was 0.000, which was lower than 0.05, indicating that the correlation was statistically significant. In conclusion, a significant positive correlation was found between students' writing motivation and their writing skill in English argumentative texts. The results suggest that higher levels of motivation are associated with better writing performance.

Keywords: *Writing Motivation, Writing skill, Argumentative Writing, Quantitative Research*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered one of the essential productive skill in English learning because it allows students to communicate their ideas, opinions, and arguments through written language. Graham and Perin (2017) explain that writing is a complicated activity involving idea organization, grammatical accuracy, and effective meaning delivery. Likewise, Hyland (2019) emphasizes that writing is not merely a language activity but also a communicative process that requires writings to pay attention to audience and purpose. In the EFL context, writing becomes more demanding, particularly in composing argumentative texts. Students are expected to present logical opinions and provide supporting evidence to strengthen their

arguments. Therefore, argumentative writing requires both language proficiency and critical thinking skill.

Despite its importance, many students still face difficulties in writing argumentative texts. Students frequently encounter problems in organizing ideas, developing arguments, and using suitable vocabulary and grammar. Besides language-related factors, psychological factors such as motivation also affect students' writing achievement. According to Graham (2018), motivated students are more likely to participate actively in the processes of planning, drafting, revising, and editing their writing. In addition, Bandura (2018) states that learners with strong confidence and motivation usually demonstrate greater persistence in completing writing tasks. This suggests that motivation has an important role in supporting students' involvement and consistency in writing activities.

A number of previous studies have highlighted the correlation between writing motivation and writing achievement. Zhang (2017) reported that students with higher motivation tended to create more structured argumentative essays. Similarly, Rahimi and Gheitanchian (2019) found that motivated learners showed better writing fluency and stronger argument development. Furthermore, Lv and Chen (2021) revealed that motivation positively affected students' text organization, coherence, and engagement during writing activities. Another study by Fathi and Derakhshan (2019) also showed that students who possessed higher writing motivation were more confident and active in expressing their ideas through writing. These findings indicate that motivation plays a significant role in improving students' writing performance.

Based on observations and interviews conducted with English teachers and eleventh-grade students at SMAN 2 Kelayang in November 2025, several issues related to students' writing skill were identified. Many students demonstrated low motivation in writing English argumentative texts, lacked confidence in expressing their ideas, and experienced difficulties in arranging ideas coherently. In addition, students were often hesitant to revise their writing because they were afraid of making mistakes. These problems suggest that students' writing motivation may influence their skill to produce effective argumentative texts. Therefore, this study

is intended to investigate the correlation between students' writing motivation and their writing skill in English argumentative texts among eleventh-grade students at SMAN 2 Kelayang.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing

Writing is regarded as one of the essential productive skill in English learning because it allows students to communicate ideas, thoughts, and opinions through written language. Graham and Perin (2017) explain that writing is a complicated activity involving idea organization, grammatical accuracy, and effective communication of meaning. Likewise, Hyland (2019) emphasizes that writing is not only related to language use but also to communication, since writings must pay attention to the audience, purpose, and context of the text. Therefore, writing can be viewed as a skill that integrates both linguistic competence and communicative skill.

Writing requires learners to master several important aspects, including content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. According to MacArthur, Graham, and Fitzgerald (2016), effective writing depends on the writingr's skill to present ideas clearly, arrange information logically, and apply appropriate language accurately. In addition, writing involves a number of stages such as planning, drafting, revising, and editing, which help students improve the quality of their texts. Consequently, writing is considered a demanding process that requires continuous practice and critical thinking skill.

Furthermore, writing contributes significantly to students' academic success and intellectual development. Klimova (2021) states that writing activities encourage students to analyze information, organize thoughts systematically, and express arguments effectively. Through regular writing practice, students are able to strengthen not only their language proficiency but also their creativity and problem-solving skill. Thus, writing plays an important role in supporting students' academic and communicative competence.

Argumentative Writing

Argumentative writing is a form of writing that aims to persuade readers through logical reasoning and supporting evidence. According to van Eemeren (2017), argumentative writing involves developing and defending claims by using clear arguments and valid evidence. In this type of writing, students are expected to express opinions systematically and support their viewpoints with convincing explanations. Therefore, argumentative writing requires learners to think critically and present ideas in an organized manner.

In addition, argumentative writing helps students strengthen their analytical and reasoning skill. Nussbaum (2018) explains that argumentative writing trains students to assess information, compare viewpoints, and justify ideas logically. Similarly, Abbas and Herdi (2025) mention that argumentative writing supports the development of academic literacy because students learn how to construct coherent and well-structured arguments. As a result, students become more capable of producing persuasive and meaningful texts.

Nevertheless, many students still encounter difficulties in writing argumentative essays. Common problems include generating ideas, organizing arguments, and using suitable vocabulary and grammar. Rumabutar and Hidayati (2024) state that students need strong critical thinking skill and sufficient writing practice in order to create effective argumentative texts. Therefore, argumentative writing is often considered one of the most difficult skill for EFL learners because it demands both language mastery and logical reasoning.

Writing Motivation

Writing motivation can be defined as the internal and external factors that encourage students to participate in writing activities and sustain their effort throughout the writing process. Deci and Ryan (1985) divide motivation into intrinsic motivation, which originates from personal interest and enjoyment, and extrinsic motivation, which is influenced by outside factors such as grades, rewards, and academic requirements. Students who possess high motivation usually demonstrate greater enthusiasm and active participation in writing tasks. Hence,

motivation is considered an important factor in improving students' writing achievement.

Furthermore, writing motivation affects students' confidence, persistence, and engagement in completing writing assignments. Graham (2018) explains that motivated learners are more willing to take part in the processes of planning, drafting, revising, and editing their work. In the same way, Bandura (2018) states that students with strong self-efficacy tend to show greater confidence and perseverance when facing challenges in writing. Consequently, motivated students are generally more active and consistent in developing their writing skill.

A number of previous studies also indicate that writing motivation positively influences students' writing performance. Zhang (2017) found that students with higher motivation were likely to produce more organized argumentative essays. Likewise, Rahimi and Gheitanchian (2019) reported that motivated learners demonstrated better writing fluency and clearer development of arguments. In addition, Lv and Chen (2021) revealed that motivation had a positive effect on text organization, coherence, and students' participation in writing activities. Therefore, writing motivation can be regarded as an important factor in enhancing students' writing quality and learning engagement.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a quantitative correlational design to explore the correlation between students' writing motivation and their skill in writing English argumentative texts. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), quantitative research focuses on examining correlations between variables through statistical procedures. In this study, writing motivation was identified as the independent variable, whereas writing skill acted as the dependent variable. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to investigate whether a significant correlation existed between students' writing motivation and their argumentative writing skill.

The study was carried out at SMAN 2 Kelayang involving eleventh-grade students as the participants. The data were gathered through two research instruments, namely a writing motivation questionnaire and a writing test. The

questionnaire aimed to determine students' levels of motivation in writing activities, while the writing test was conducted to evaluate students' argumentative writing performance based on several aspects, including content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

In addition, the collected data were analyzed statistically by using correlation analysis to determine the correlation between the two variables. Sugiyono (2017) explains that correlational analysis is commonly applied in quantitative research to identify the strength of the correlation between variables. Therefore, this statistical method was considered suitable for examining the correlation between students' writing motivation and their argumentative writing skill.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section describes the descriptive statistical results of students' writing motivation and their skill in writing English argumentative texts. The data were collected through a writing motivation questionnaire and a writing test given to the eleventh-grade students.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistical results of students' writing motivation and their writing skill in English argumentative texts are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic Data

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Motivation	84	78.00	108.00	90.6905	5.15770
Writing	84	78.00	99.00	90.2500	4.71060
Valid N (listwise)	84				

Based on Table 1, the findings revealed that students' writing motivation and writing skill were categorized at relatively good levels. The average score of writing motivation was 90.69, whereas the mean score of writing skill reached 90.27. Furthermore, the standard deviation values showed that the distribution of both variables was fairly stable, indicating that the students' scores were relatively consistent.

Results of Students’ Writing Motivation and Writing Skill

This study examined the correlation between students’ writing motivation and their skill in writing English argumentative texts among eleventh-grade students. The data collected through the writing motivation questionnaire and writing test were processed using SPSS version 27. The findings of students’ writing motivation and writing skill scores are presented in the following section..

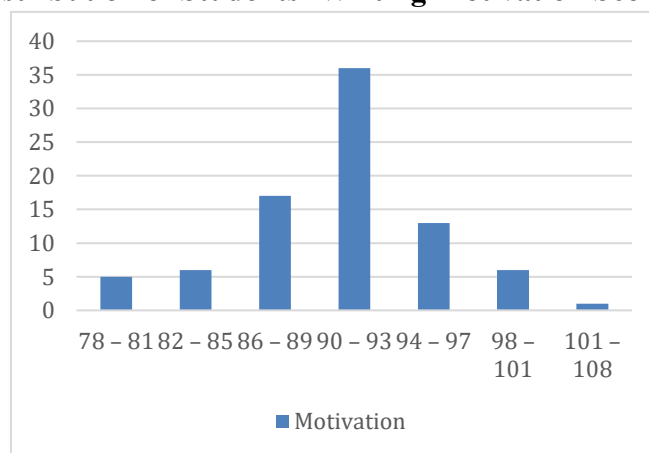
Students’ Motivation Scores

Based on Sturges’ formula, the data was divided into seven class intervals with an interval width of 4. The highest frequency was found in the 90–93 score interval, indicating that most students have a moderate level of motivation to writing. These results suggest that students generally have sufficient motivation to learn to writing in English, although factors such as limited practice, lack of self-confidence, and difficulties in writing may still influence their level of motivation.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Students’ Motivation Scores

Average	Interval Class	Frequency	Predicate	Criteria
90.69	78 – 81	5	Poor	Moderate
	82 – 85	6	Fair	
	86 – 89	17	Enough	
	90 – 93	36	Moderate	
	94 – 97	13	Good	
	98 – 101	6	Very good	
	101 – 108	1	Excellent	

Histogram 1. Distribution of Students’ Writing Motivation Scores



The histogram 1. The students' motivation scores were classified into several categories, from poor to excellent. The largest number of students was found in the score interval of 90–93, which was included in the moderate category. This finding shows that the majority of students had a moderate level of motivation in learning English writing. On the other hand, only a few students were categorized into the lowest and highest motivation levels.

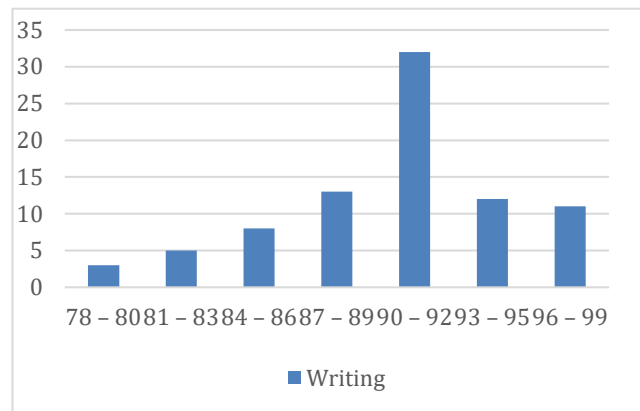
Furthermore, the mean score of 90.69 indicated that the overall level of students' writing motivation was categorized as moderate. This result implies that students generally demonstrated adequate interest and involvement in writing activities, although their motivation still requires improvement in order to achieve better writing performance.

Students' Writing Scores

Based on Sturges' formula, the number of classes is 7, with an interval width of 3. However, since the maximum value in the data is 99, the final interval was adjusted to 96–99 so that all data points could be included in the frequency distribution. Based on the average writing score of 90.27, students' writing skill are categorized as "good." This indicates that the majority of students have achieved a satisfactory level in writing. The distribution also shows that only a small number of students fall into the lower interval, while a larger number of students are found in the middle-to-upper score categories.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Students' Writing Scores

Average	Interval Class	Frequency	Predicate	Criteria
90.27	78 – 80	3	Poor	Good
	81 – 83	5	Fair	
	84 – 86	8	Enough	
	87 – 89	13	Moderate	
	90 – 92	32	Good	
	93 – 95	12	Very good	
	96 – 99	11	Excellent	

Histogram 2. Experimental Class Pre-Test Result

Based on Table 3, the average score of students' writing achievement was 90.27, which fell into the good category. The largest number of students was found in the score interval of 90–92, showing that most students obtained good results in writing performance. Additionally, some students were categorized as very good and excellent, whereas only a small number were included in the lower score categories.

Moreover, the score distribution indicates that most students were capable of composing argumentative texts effectively in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. In general, the findings reveal that the students demonstrated a good level of achievement in writing English argumentative texts.

Data Analysis

Normality Test

The normality test was applied to examine whether the data of students' writing motivation and writing skill had a normal distribution. This procedure was necessary before performing parametric statistical analysis. The data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 27. If the significance value was greater than 0.05, the data were considered normally distributed.

Table 4. The Result of Normality Test

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Motivation	.113	84	.009	.971	84	.051
Writing	.134	84	.001	.972	84	.066
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

According to the results of the Shapiro-Wilk test, the significance value for students' writing motivation was 0.051, whereas the significance value for students' writing skill was 0.066. In the normality test, data are regarded as normally distributed when the significance value exceeds 0.05. Since both variables obtained significance values above 0.05, it can be concluded that the data were normally distributed. Therefore, the data met the assumption of normality and could be analyzed further using parametric statistics, especially the Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis.

Correlation Test

The correlation test was carried out to identify whether there was a significant correlation between students' motivation and writing achievement. In this study, the researcher applied the Pearson Product Moment correlation using SPSS version 27. The analysis involved 84 students as the sample of the research.

Table 5. The Correlation between Students' Motivation and Writing

Pearson Product Moment			
		Motivation	Writing
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.753**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	84	84
Writing	Pearson Correlation	.753**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	84	84
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Based on the Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis, the correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) between students' writing motivation and writing skill was 0.753, which indicated a strong positive correlation between the two variables. This result means that students with higher motivation tended to achieve better writing scores, while students with lower motivation tended to obtain lower writing achievement.

Furthermore, the significance value was 0.000, which was lower than 0.05. This finding indicates that the correlation between students' writing motivation and writing skill was statistically significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that writing motivation had an important correlation with students' achievement in writing English argumentative texts.

Hypothesis Test

The hypothesis test in this study was analyzed by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation with the help of SPSS version 27 to examine the correlation between students' writing motivation and writing skill. The decision of the hypothesis was determined from the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed). When the significance value was below 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, which indicated that there was a significant correlation between the two variables. Furthermore, the level of correlation strength was interpreted based on the correlation coefficient criteria.

Table 6. The Guidance of Correlation Level

Coefficient Interval	Interpretation
0.00 – 0.20	Very Low
0.21 – 0.40	Low
0.41 – 0.60	Moderate
0.61 – 0.80	Strong
0.81 – 1.00	Very Strong

Based on the correlation test result, the Pearson Correlation coefficient between students' writing motivation and writing skill was 0.753, indicating a strong positive correlation between the two variables. This means that students with higher motivation tended to achieve better writing performance, while those with lower motivation tended to obtain lower writing scores.

In addition, the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) was 0.000, which was lower than 0.05. Therefore, the correlation between students' writing motivation and writing skill was statistically significant. Based on these findings, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, indicating that writing motivation had an important correlation with students' writing achievement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be inferred that there was a positive and significant correlation between students' writing motivation and writing skill. The result of the Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.753 with a significance value of 0.000. Because the significance value was lower than 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted, while the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected. In addition, the correlation coefficient showed that the correlation between the two variables was classified as strong.

The findings also demonstrated that students who possessed higher motivation tended to achieve better writing performance, whereas students with lower motivation tended to obtain lower writing scores. Motivation helped students become more active, confident, and engaged in writing activities. Therefore, writing motivation can be regarded as one of the important factors affecting students' achievement in writing English argumentative texts.

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