

The Role of Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Writing Performance of Pakistani ESL Learners at Middle-Level

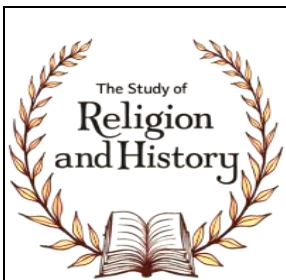
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Abstract:

Writing is one of the most essential but also the most challenging skills for ESL learners, especially at the middle-school level, when students start to build long-term confidence or anxiety about writing in English. This research explores the significance of writing self-efficacy for the performance of writing in English among Pakistani middle-level ESL learners in District Sahiwal, using the Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997) and underpinned by sociocultural perspectives. Quantitative research design was used to collect the data of 81 female students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 during a writing performance test and a self-efficacy questionnaire. The perceived confidence of the students, their writing problems, and the impact of the teacher and classroom support were studied using descriptive statistical analysis. The results indicated that despite the high rates at which most students indicated that they experienced high levels of self-efficacy in writing and expressed positive beliefs in their writing skills, their actual performance in writing did not cease to display consistent weaknesses in the fundamental aspects of language, especially vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. Such a discrepancy between the perceived confidence and the actual performance shows that self-efficacy is not enough to guarantee successful writing results in the absence of sufficient linguistic competence. Moreover, the teacher feedback, guidance, and classroom support were also noted to play an important role in increasing the confidence of students, but these support practices failed to lead to a significant improvement in writing performance. The research points to the necessity of ESL instructional practices that would incorporate the strategies of confidence building, overt language teaching, and skill acquisition. The study will also shape the very sparse body of knowledge on writing self-efficacy in Pakistani middle-level ESL learners and provide implications for the teachers, curriculum developers, and policy-makers.

Keywords:

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Writing Self-Efficacy; ESL Learners; English Writing Performance; Middle- Level Students;
Teacher Support; Pakistan

Introduction:

Writing offers a way to communicate, think, learn, and understand oneself (S. Harris and Graham, 2019). It affects reading comprehension, makes classroom material easier to understand, and is crucial to students' success in the classroom (Bangert-Drowns et al. 2004; Camping and associates. S. Graham et al., 2020. (2015). Despite the significance of writing, earlier studies consistently demonstrated that elementary school pupils do not acquire sufficient writing abilities (De Smedt et al., S. Graham et al., 2017. (2015). This happens in part because writing is a difficult and complex task that presents writers with difficulties that are as much related to affective and confidence factors as they are to cognitive and linguistic factors (Bruning & Kauffman, 2016). Coordination of multiple cognitive processes is necessary when learning to write (e.g., The g. spelling, handwriting, organizing, translating, and editing). Additionally, it necessitates consistent, long-term practice that is mostly dependent on students' motivation (Camacho et al., 2020; De Smedt et al., 2017; Limpo et al., 2020).

Although researchers are still investigating the factors that encourage teenagers to write, recent studies show a strong correlation between motivation and students' performance on writing assignments (Zumbrunn, Marrs, and Mewborn, 2016). Teachers and academics need reliable assessments to ascertain whether writing abilities are primarily a result of cognitive ability and knowledge, affective issues (e.g., The g. motivation), or both. Students may be perceived as having poor writing abilities if they lack motivation to write, even if this is untrue (Johnston & Costello, 2005). Students may be placed on a path of particular coursework and lowered expectations if they are found to have underdeveloped skills. However, these effects cannot be measured in the absence of a reliable instrument for gauging students' motivation for writing.

A key concept in social cognitive theory, self-efficacy was first introduced by Bandura (1997) and refers to a person's confidence in their ability to carry out the actions necessary to accomplish particular task outcomes. By influencing students' goal-setting behaviors, sustained effort investment, and resilience in the face of adversity, self-efficacy has a direct impact on academic performance (Pajares, 2003). High self-efficacy learners exhibit superior analytical, inferential, and evaluative skills (Wang, 2021). In order to maximize learning trajectories, they are more likely to take on difficult tasks and strategically apply metacognitive techniques (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2020). While students with lower self-efficacy may avoid creative expression out of fear of making mistakes, those with strong self-efficacy would like to actively experiment with complex syntactic structures and rhetorical devices in writing contexts (Zhou, 2018). this discrepancy in mental processes.

A crucial subject in writing research is the connection between students' writing performance, writing motivation, and writing self-efficacy (Chea and Shumow 2017; Pajares 2003).

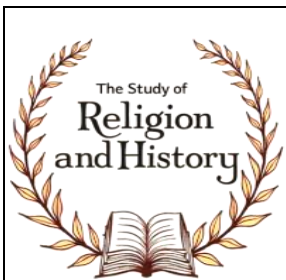
Nonetheless, the majority of current research either examines the relationship between writing motivation and self-efficacy separately or focuses on the effects of writing motivation or self-efficacy on students' writing achievement, respectively (Ng et al., 2021; Yeung et al., 2022, 2020). Particularly in the area of Chinese writing research, very few studies have looked at these factors simultaneously. Additionally, the majority of the literature currently in publication uses samples of Western or Caucasian students to examine writing motivation and self-efficacy (Camping et al. 2020; Rocha et al.; Rasteiro and Limpo 2023, 2019), and few studies have looked into other ethnic groups. The research findings regarding students' motivational beliefs and academic performance may be influenced by the distinctiveness of educational settings.

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Thus, the suggested study will examine the place of self-efficacy beliefs as far as the performance of Pakistani middle-level ESL learners in English writing in the District Sahiwal. The study will determine the writing problems faced by the students, test the confidence of the students in writing, and determine the role of teacher and classroom support by using a writing test and a self-efficacy questionnaire. The results of the research shall assist in understanding writing self-efficacy in middle-level ESL learners better than they can help policy makers, teachers, and curriculum designers to understand the methods of improving writing teaching in Pakistani classrooms.

Significance

This research is important because it adds to the existing body of writing self-efficacy research by addressing the population that was the least studied in the previous studies, which is Pakistani middle-level ESL learners. The study is based on the Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997), which can be used to explain the role that the beliefs of the learners about their writing skills might play in their write-up performance. Through the self-efficacy and writing problems like

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grammar, vocabulary, and spelling, the study would offer a better insight into the psychological and academic influences on ESL writing at the Pakistani middle-school level.

In practice, the results of this research can be used by the teacher of the English language, curriculum developers, and policymakers. The findings will assist teachers to know the confidence of students and writing difficulties to embrace supportive teaching instructions, give constructive feedback, and establish a stimulating classroom atmosphere. The study could also be applied in curriculum development since it highlights the importance of integrating the aspects of confidence and learner-centered instruction in teaching English writing, which eventually could help improve the performance of writing and create better learning experiences on middle level learner of English as a second language.

Research Questions

1. How much are the Pakistani ESL learners at the middle level in terms of English writing self-efficacy?
2. What is the confidence of middle-level ESL students in the use of grammar, vocabulary, and spelling in writing English?
3. How effective is teacher and peer support in building writing self-efficacy in learners?
4. What are the challenges encountered by Pakistani middle-level ESL students in writing English?

Research Objectives

- . To study the degree of EFL self-efficacy of middle-level ESL learners in Pakistan.
- . To find the perceived skills of the learners in grammar, vocabulary, and spelling skills in the English written language.
- . To test the hypothesis that teacher and classroom support can help students improve their writing levels of self-efficacy.
- . To ascertain the challenges of middle-level ESL students in English writing.

Literature Review:

Among all language skills, writing is the most challenging (Zhang and Guo, 2012) and requires a cognitive process (Bruning et al., Hayes, 2000; 2013). Self-efficacy is a cognitive concept that refers to subjective beliefs in one's capacity to carry out a task (Bandura, 1997). Because writing self-efficacy and cognition are similar, writing self-efficacy has been extensively researched. People's assessments of their ability to complete a writing task based on their evaluations of "various composition, grammar, usage, and mechanical skills" are known as writing self-efficacy (Pajares & Valiante, 2001, p. 369). Prior research showed a positive correlation between writing outcomes and writing self-efficacy (Woottipong, 2020; Sun & Wang, 2020; Micheaux & White, 2019; Paramartha, 2016; Kirmizi, 2015; Pajares & Valiante, 1999). Researching writing self-efficacy is therefore crucial and essential. This study's goal is to compare the difference.

Along with speaking, listening, reading, writing, and viewing, English writing is an essential skill for students to acquire. It entails using written English to convey information, concepts, feelings, and thoughts. Students' writing achievement and strategy use are significantly impacted by their level of self-efficacy in English writing. Numerous academics have studied the factors that affect it. By consulting pertinent literature, this paper examines current research on self-efficacy in English writing from both domestic and international sources. First, it uses data to present the current research's development trend. The key findings of recent research on writing self-efficacy are then thoroughly examined and summarized. Lastly, it evaluates the flaws in the

current research and offers recommendations. The study comes to the conclusion that research on writing self-efficacy primarily focuses on five areas: examining the degree of writing self-efficacy and the connection between writing and self-efficacy (Zhang, 2024).

Particularly for college students, self-regulated learning (SRL) is regarded as a crucial skill for lifelong learning that calls for clear instruction and regular practice. In China, very little is known about SRL's impact on students' academic performance in English as a foreign language (EFL), despite the wealth of intervention studies on the subject in the West. In order to investigate the efficacy of a self-regulated language learning intervention (developed using Zimmerman's cyclical phase model of SRL) on Chinese EFL learners, the current study employed a mixed-methods approach. One hundred sophomores from two intact classes were chosen for an experimental or control group, and their motivation, strategic competence, and English proficiency were assessed at pre-, mid-, and post-tests. Thirty students were chosen to participate in semi-structured follow-up interviews following the post-test. The quantitative findings showed that the experimental group had significantly increased (Yang et al., 2024).

Variability in writing performance is thought to be explained by individual differences in motivational beliefs, such as writing efficacy and attitudes toward writing in various contexts (academic, recreational, print, or digital). After controlling for variance related to gender, free/reduced lunch status, students' first language, disability status, reading self-efficacy, and attitudes toward reading, this study examined whether writing self-efficacy and attitudes toward writing made a statistically significant and unique contribution to predicting performance on a norm-referenced writing measure. The study involved 185 middle school students, 58% of whom were male. After controlling for the other variables, writing attitudes and self-efficacy together explained a statistically significant and distinct variance in writing scores, supporting the theory that writing motivational beliefs play a significant role in middle school students' writing (Graham et al., 2018).

The results of two empirical studies on students' reported use of self-regulatory writing techniques and the connections with their writing performance in an English as a foreign language (EFL) secondary school setting are presented in this paper. In order to validate the conclusions and applications of a Self-Regulatory Writing Strategy Questionnaire, Study One used a factorial design with exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis; Study Two investigated learner individual differences in the development of self-regulatory writing strategies and the predictive effects of these strategies on students' writing performance. Two convenience samples of 669 and 239 young EFL learners in Chinese junior secondary schools served as the participants. The construct validity of the questionnaire responses was demonstrated by the results. Female students reported using self-regulatory writing techniques,

and students in higher grade levels reported using them more frequently than those in lower grade levels (Teng et al., 2022).

This study looked at the academic writing self-efficacy and learning strategies of Iraqi EFL students. 60 undergraduate and graduate students were recruited for the study using a mixed-method approach and purposive sampling. The validated Self-efficacy in Academic Writing Scale (SEAWS) and Self-efficacy questionnaire are used to measure participants' self-efficacy in academic writing. Instructors grade pertinent writing assignments anonymously. Semi-structured interviews are used to examine participants' experiences with learning activities and academic writing self-efficacy. The writing self-efficacy model and social cognition theory provided the theoretical framework for this study. To get a full picture, the study gathers qualitative data from interviews and quantitative data from self-efficacy surveys conducted before and after the experiment. Learning activities, self-efficacy, and academic writing performance were all examined using SPSS software (Kamil, 2024).

According to research, writing performance is predicted by writing motivation, which declines throughout school. However, cross-sectional studies are the main source of this evidence. Here, we used a longitudinal approach to: (a) assess the evolution of writing attitudes, writing self-efficacy domains, and writing motivations from Grade 6 to Grade 7; and (b) assess their concurrent and longitudinal contribution to the quality of opinion essays in Grade 7, after adjusting for Grade 6 quality. In order to do this, 112 Portuguese students wrote two opinion pieces in Grade 6 and one year later in Grade 7, as well as filled out questionnaires about motivation. Results indicated that self-efficacy did not decrease while attitudes and all reasons to write did. Furthermore, Grade 7 opinion essay quality was linked to both Grade 6 essay quality and Grade 7 self-efficacy for self-regulation and intrinsic motives. Put differently, students' writing appears to be more influenced by their current motivational beliefs (Rasteiro & Limpo, 2022).

Writing instruction is frequently overemphasized in some years and neglected in others because writing is only tested in specific grades in many states. This study looks at how middle school students' motivation for writing varies. Shortly after the seventh graders finished a high-stakes writing test, we gave the Self-Beliefs, Writing Beliefs, and Attitude Survey (SWAS) to a cross-sectional sample of students at two middle schools. The findings show that both sixth and eighth graders had higher average writing motivation scores than their seventh-grade counterparts, and that sixth graders had higher average writing attitudes and beliefs than eighth graders. Students' motivation to write and perspectives on writing may be impacted by the different pressures and lack of writing (Wright et al., 2020).

It is thought that motivational beliefs, such as writing self-efficacy and attitude toward writing, can either help or hinder writing by affecting the decision to write, the amount of effort put into writing, and the cognitive tools that writers use. In the current study, we looked at 2,124 Grade 2 Norwegian students' attitudes toward writing and self-efficacy for writing self-regulation (1,069 girls and 1,055 boys). We looked into whether students with different language statuses (Norwegian first language, Norwegian and another language, both first language, or language other than Norwegian first language) and girls and boys differed in each of these beliefs. We also investigated whether each of these writing motivational beliefs contributed statistically differently to the prediction of students' writing quality. We adjusted for variance about individual and school factors in each of these analyses. Compared to boys, girls had a more positive attitude toward writing (Skar et al., 2023).

Research Gap

It has been demonstrated in numerous studies that self-efficacy beliefs have a strong effect on the performance of students in writing. Nonetheless, the research has predominantly been conducted in the Western or East Asian settings, with very minimal research conducted on Pakistani ESL students. In Pakistan, studies on English writing are conducted primarily on the secondary level or university level students, and middle-level learners (Grades 6 to 8) in District Sahiwal are generally overlooked. This is a critical gap as middle school is a key phase where students learn to form confidence or fear about English writing. The differences in instructional practices, the lack of exposure to the English language, and classroom practices in Pakistan precondition the need to research self-efficacy in this particular context.

Moreover, most of the past experiments involved complicated questionnaires, which can hardly be comprehended by younger learners, and these might not be a good representation of their actual self-efficacy beliefs. The majority of the studies also focus on writing self-efficacy alone and do not take into consideration the related aspects like grammar skills, vocabulary knowledge, effort, persistence, teacher support, and perceived writing performance of the students in combination. Besides, little is done to investigate the personal perceptions of the students regarding their writing problems. Thus, a need arises to conduct a simple and learner-friendly context-specific study to identify the role of self-efficacy in the writing performance of Pakistani middle-level ESL learners. This research is expected to help fill this gap by offering a more detailed and practical interpretation of English writing in the middle level of District Sahiwal in Pakistan.

Research Methodology

Methodology refers to the organized method, which encompasses techniques, tools, and procedures that a researcher employs to carry out a study, gather data, and analyze it to solve a research question or issue (Jalbani et al., 2023; Arshad, Ahmad & Zafar, 2025; Yousaf et al., 2025). It offers a coherent and sound structure for a study, guaranteeing that the research goals and objectives are achieved and that the findings are dependable and can be assessed or replicated by others (Arshad, Mehmood & Ahmad, 2025; Soomro et al., 2025).

Research Design

The main goal of this study was to use a quantitative approach to determine the relationship between learning activities and academic writing self-efficacy among District Sahiwal ESL learners of Pakistan at the middle level. Based on the aforementioned research questions, the study also employed a quantitative method to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the subjects' experience and self – efficacy database.

Theoretical Framework

The data provided in this research is related in the first place to the Social Cognitive Theory introduced by Bandura and devoted to the notion of self-efficacy as the conviction of a person that he/she is capable of accomplishing certain actions (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy is a determinant that plays an important role in motivation, effort, persistence, and resilience during learning issues. High levels of self-efficacy make the learner more active in tasks demanded, have control over the strategy of learning, and get through the hardships, which affects performance positively (Zimmerman and Bandura, 1994). When ESL writing is considered, the students who view themselves as good writers are better placed to attempt complicated writing assignments, revise their work, and use strategies to advance the level of clarity and coherence, which ultimately leads to better writing performance (Pajares, 2003).

Besides the framework developed by Bandura, the paper also relies on a sociocultural theory developed by Vygotsky, which highlights that learning occurs through social interactions, direction, and feedback (Vygotsky, 1978). Teacher and peer social support can be used to increase confidence in learners, offer scaffolding, and assist in building self-regulatory skills, which are essential in successful writing. The interaction between the cognitive beliefs and the social interactions implies that self-efficacy is not solely the product of individual experiences, but also shared learning chances, feedback, and encouragement.

The research will also attempt to investigate the effects of self-efficacy beliefs on the writing performance of Pakistani middle-level ESL learners by taking these views into account. This relationship can be understood to shed light on the relationship between confidence and motivation of learners and social and instructional factors that interact to influence the writing proficiency. This model can be used as the basis of the design of strategies and interventions to

improve self-efficacy and writing performance in ESL classrooms, and the significance of both the psychological and the social aspects of language acquisition.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of three groups. The first group was Grade 6th, the second was Grade 7th, and the third group was Grade 8th. The number of participants in all these groups was 81. From these 81 participants, 25 participants belonged to Grade 6th, 27 participants belonged to Grade 7th and 29 participants belonged to Grade 8th. The average age of all the participants belonging to all these three groups was between 11 and 14 years old. All the participants belong to all three grades belonged to the same female gender. All the participants provided informed consent, and ethical considerations were observed throughout the study.

Data Collection

There were two phases to the data collection process. To collect data, a test was conducted on the students where they were to write so as to test their writing performance. The test involved the students coming up with written answers to prompts presented. The test was aimed at analyzing the writing of students in relation to certain factors like organization, vocabulary, grammar, coherence, and content without assigning them numerical values. A student questionnaire used in the quantitative phase was developed based on the findings of this phase. Twelve of the questionnaire's 27 items assessed teachers' perceived motivational techniques (e.g. The remaining 15 items evaluated students' self-efficacy in academic writing, including goal-setting, building confidence, feedback, and autonomy support.

Data Analysis:

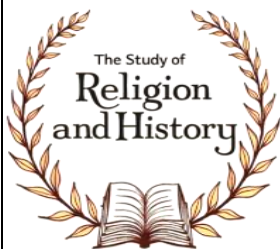
The writing test and the self-efficacy questionnaire results were described using descriptive statistics to assess the tendency in the performance and beliefs. Descriptive statistics will be used when grouping or summarizing the patterns of responses and when providing frequencies and percentages (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2012). Frequency distributions were also employed to establish the most frequent writing challenges amongst the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). They were analyzed with SPSS version 25, and the results were interpreted against the theoretical constructs of self-efficacy and writing performance.

Self-Efficacy Questionnaire Results

The self-efficacy questionnaire had 21 items, each having three options, i.e., Agree, Disagree, and Not Sure. General response patterns were computed in terms of percentages to give a general account of the self-efficacy beliefs that students have towards English writing. The response about Q1: 79% students agree, 5% students were disagree and 16% students were Not Sure. In the Q2: 80% students were agree, 4% students were disagree, and 16% students were Not Sure. In Q3: 67% students were agree, 21% students were disagree and 12% students were Not Sure. In Q4: 72% were agree, 15% students were disagree, and 14% students were Not Sure. In Q5:

64% students were agree, 11% students were disagree, and 25% students were Not Sure. In Q6: 49% students were agree, 33% students were disagree, and 17% students were Not Sure. In Q7: 60% students were Agree, 21% students were disagree, and 19% students were Not Sure. In Q8: 37% students were agree, 30% students were disagree and 33% students were Not Sure. In Q9: 85% students were agree, 10% students were disagree, and 5% students were Not Sure. In Q10: 75% students were agree, 6% students were disagree, 19% students were Not Sure. In Q11: 54% students agreed, 14% students were disagree, and 32% students were Not Sure. In Q12: 88% students were agree, 7% students were disagree, and 5% students were not sure. In Q13: 49% students were agree, 35% students were disagree and 16% students were Not Sure. In Q14: 78% students were agree, 9% students were disagree, and 14 % students were Not Sure. In Q15: 81% students were agree, 4% students were disagree, and 15% students were Not Sure. In Q16: 62% students were agree, 17% students were disagree, and 21% students were Not Sure. In Q17: 81% students were agree, 10% students were disagree, and 9% students were Not Sure. In Q18: 65% students were agree, 21% students were disagree, and 14 % students were Not Sure. In Q19: 90% students were agree, 6% students were disagree, and 4% students were Not Sure. In Q20: 84% students were agree, 11% students disagreed, and 5% students were Not Sure. In Q21: 75% students were agree, 9% students were disagree, and 16% students were Not Sure.

See Graph No. 1

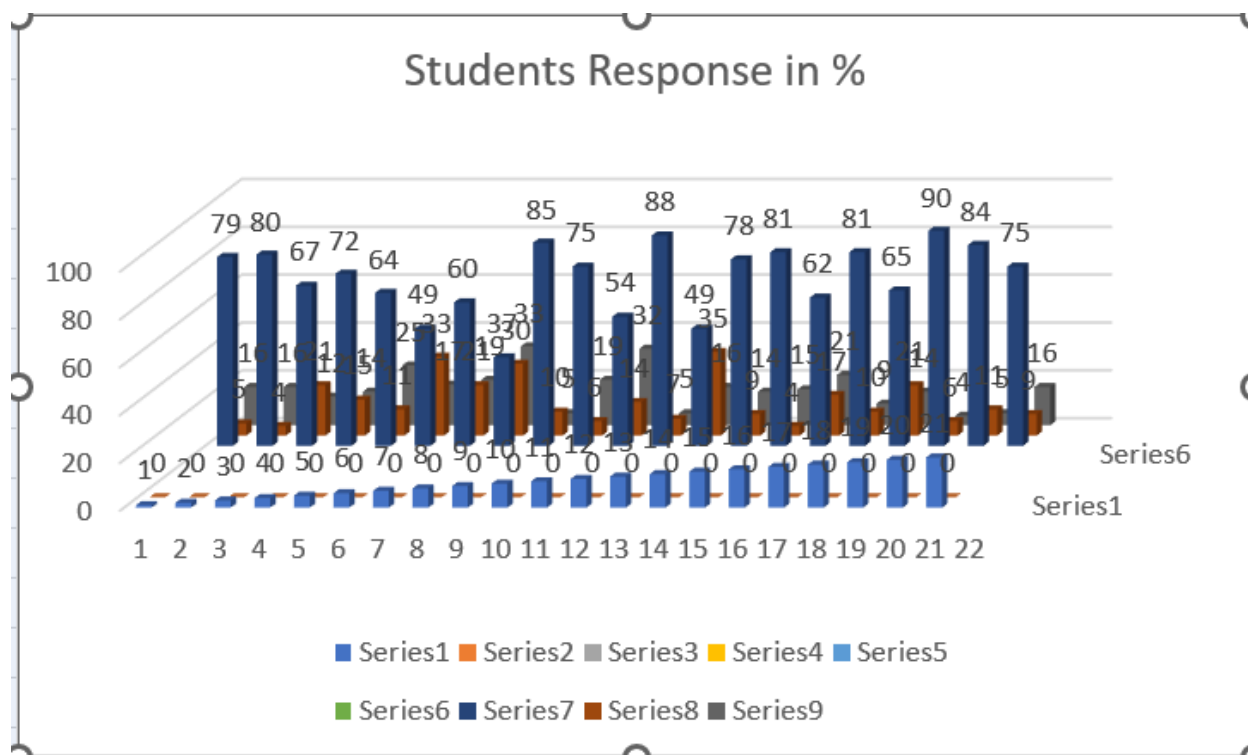


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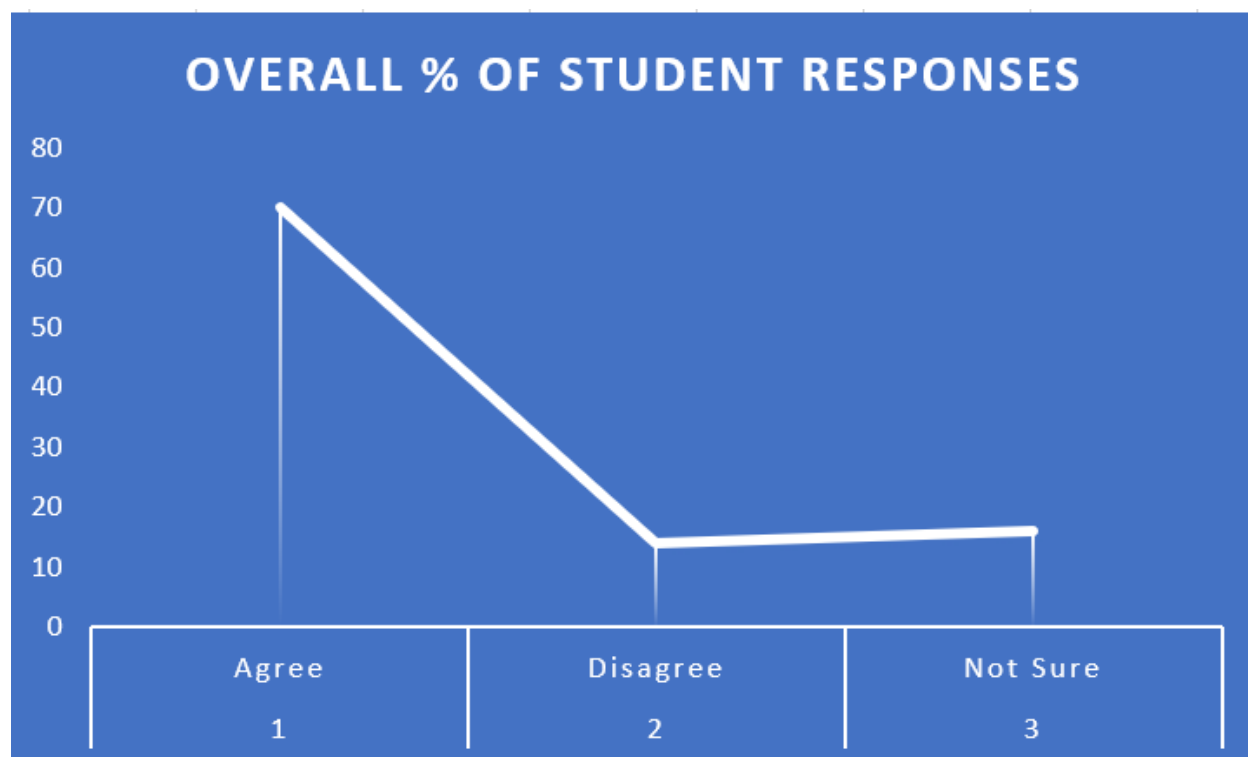


. **Agree:** The majority (70%) responded in the affirmative or the Agree category, which means that most of the respondents had positive attitudes towards their writing skills.

. **Disagree:** 14% of the responses were lower down as Disagree, indicating that a lower percentage of students were not as confident about their abilities.

. **Not Sure:** 16% students were Not Sure, indicating that they were not sure of their English writing skills.

See graph No. 2:



These results reveal that although most learners claimed to be confident with their performance in writing, the actual writing performance test revealed that the learners continued to have language skills issues. This is in accordance with the studies that have already been conducted, which have noted that the self-efficacy beliefs are not always directly related to the actual performance outcomes (Zimmerman,2000).

Classroom and Support to Teacher:

According to the questionnaire on teacher and classroom support, it is evident that most students were of the view that their teacher positively influenced them to develop their writing. The majority of them agreed that their free feedback system, clear coaching, and regular practice opportunity were also included in how they perceived they were competent in their writing. This point can be corroborated by the social cognitive theory proposed by Bandura (1997), according to which instructional support as an environmental factor has the potential of enhancing self-efficacy beliefs.

Writing Test Results:

The performance assessment of the writing was conducted on 81 District Sahiwal of Pakistani ESL learners at the middle level. In accordance with the evaluation rubric, the overview of student performance showed that there were a few eminent areas of weakness:

. Improvement in performance in writing:

Only 16 students (19.8%) showed significant improvement in performance in writing. The implication of this is that a small group of learners could use writing strategies, which could be attributed to greater degrees of writing self-efficacy (Pajares, 2023)

. Grammatical errors:

18 students (22.2%) showed the prevalence of grammatical mistakes, which revealed structural weaknesses in language application. Students should have grammar competency as one of the basic writing skills in the ESL setting (Hylland, 2023).

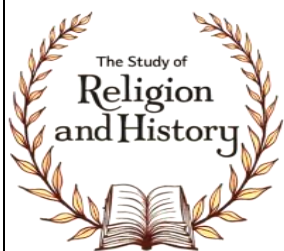
. Lack of vocabulary:

24 students (29.6%) had a vocabulary deficit, which compromised their ability to express their ideas in a clear manner. There is a known relationship between vocabulary knowledge and writing quality (Nation, 2000).

. Spelling errors:

23 students (28.4%) repeated spelling errors which also led to poor spelling errors which also led to poor accuracy.

See figure # 3

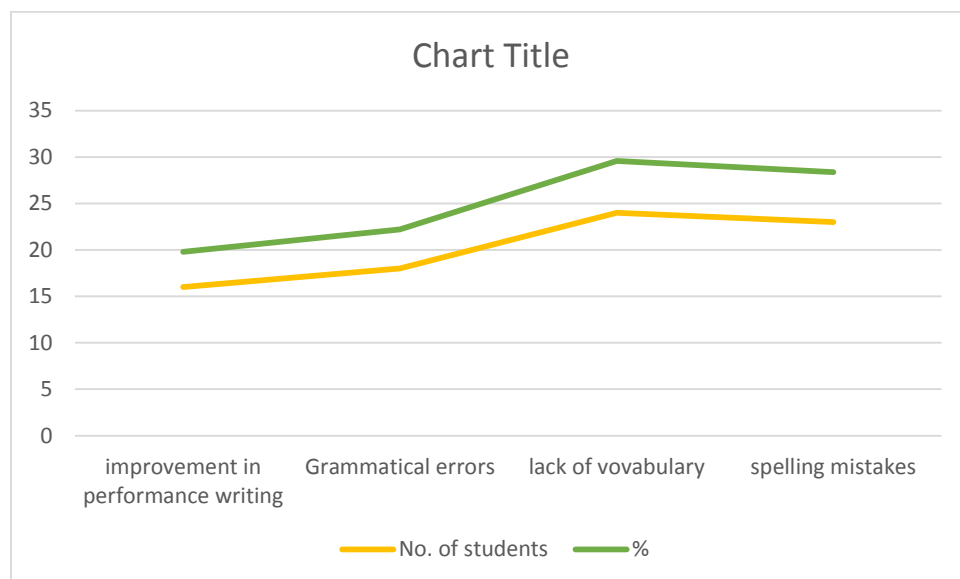


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These results indicate that most students experienced problems in core language skills that are critical to effective writing, which is consistent with the research showing general ESL difficulties in writing at the middle level (Ferris, 2009).

Discussions and Findings:

The results of the current research suggest that English writing self-efficacy and actual writing performance have a complicated association in the case of middle-level ESL students studying in the District Sahiwal, Pakistan. The results of the self-efficacy questionnaire indicated that almost 70 percent of the students had positive beliefs regarding their writing skills. The identified observation confirms the claim of the Social Cognitive Theory developed by Bandura (1997), according to which belief of learners regarding their capabilities also play an important role in motivating, applying effort, and persisting in academic activities. (Pajares and Valiante 2001) also reported similar results, asserting that the students who have greater writing self-efficacy are more likely to be confident about the writing tasks.

Nevertheless, the writing performance test scores were against the self-perceptions of students. It was found that only 19.8 percent of learners had observable positive change in writing performance, whereas most of them were faced with the necessity to work on the basic language element including vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. The biggest problem was the vocabulary lack (29.6%), followed by spelling mistakes (22.2). These findings coincide with earlier ESL studies that found a strong negative impact of limited linguistic resources on middle-level writing quality (Ferris, 2009; Nation, 2000)

The difference between the perceived confidence among the students and their actual writing performance substantiates the argument proposed by Zimmerman (2000) that self-efficacy beliefs do not necessarily correlate with the performance outcomes, especially when the learners are low-seasoned. Despite their perceptions that they were able to write effectively, their written

work showed several areas of continuous failure in form, precision, and expression. Moreover, the results concerning teacher and classroom support were that the majority of students found their teachers' feedback, advice, and encouragement helpful in increasing their confidence in writing. This is in line with the claim by Bandura (1997), who indicates that the environment, including instructional support, has been instrumental in developing self-efficacy beliefs. Besides, the Sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (1978) describes that learning takes place through social interaction and scaffolding, and, therefore, teacher intervention has a positive impact on student confidence. Nonetheless, regardless of this assistance, the fact that there is no relevant enhancement in the writing performance suggests that the concept of confidence-building practices cannot be effective alone in the absence of explicit language training.

All in all, the results indicate that although middle-level ESL learners in Pakistan have fairly high self-efficacy in writing, their writing performance is still limited by a lack of vocabulary knowledge, grammar competence, and spelling accuracy. This supports previous studies about the necessity of providing a balance between motivational support and skill-related teaching (Hyland, 2023; Pajares, 2003).

. Future Implementations:

Based on the findings of this study, it would be recommended that there are some future implications that could be adopted to enhance the writing of English among the middle-level ESL students in Pakistan. First of all, in the instructional practices, the self-efficacy development and explicit language instruction are to be included. Confidence and motivation should be encouraged, but it is necessary to provide systematic learning of grammar, vocabulary, and writing techniques (Hyland, 2023). Second, instructors ought to create scaffolded writing activities through which a student can feel progressive mastery. Bandura (1997) found that mastery experiences represent the most potent source of self-efficacy development. Guided writing, paired work, and revision-based activities are activities that may address the competence of students and their confidence. Third, assessment tools that are easy to use ought to be utilized, especially among middle-level learners. According to Graham et al. (2018), simplified instruments with performance-based assessments will display a truer picture of the writing skills of the students and their motivational beliefs.

In addition, teacher educators must be trained on formative feedback techniques, diagnostic assessment, and individualized instruction through the professional development programs. According to Vygotsky (1978) scaffolding concept, specific feedback, and instructional support may go an extra mile in enhancing the academic abilities of learners, provided that it is in accordance with the level of development. Lastly, further studies ought to be longitudinal and mixed-method studies focused on investigating the variations in writing self-efficacy and performance in the long term. The qualitative data, like interviews and reflective journals, can be included to learn more about how learners see writing challenges (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

Conclusion:

This paper has discussed the correlation between English writing self-efficacy and writing performance among the middle-level ESL learners in District Sahiwal in Pakistan. The results showed that despite the high self-efficacy scores of most students in writing, their performance in writing was impaired by the constant difficulties with vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. These findings reaffirm previous studies, which argue that self-efficacy beliefs are not sufficient to ensure efficient writing performance in the absence of sufficient linguistic competence (Zimmerman, 2000; Ferris, 2009).

The teacher support and classroom practices were identified to have a positive influence on developing the confidence of learners, and this has been consistent with the theoretical views of Bandura (1997) and Vygotsky (1978). Nevertheless, the lack of significant progress in the writing performance suggests that the use of instructional strategies that will integrate psychological support with clear language skills development is necessary.

Finally, the research leads to the gap in the current literature concerning Pakistani middle-level ESL students and reveals the necessity to combine the self-efficacy improvement with intensive language learning. The motivational and the linguistic aspects should be addressed to make middle-school writers of English competent, confident, and effective writers.

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