

WRITING ATTITUDE AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS DETERMINANTS IN BOOSTING EFL LEARNERS' WRITING PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: This study aimed to find out whether or not there was a significant correlation between students' writing attitude, emotional intelligence and their writing performance, and the predictor variables and the criterion variable. It involved 121 students of the English Education Study Programs of Tridianti, PGRI, and Muhammadiyah Universities in Palembang. The data were collected through the use of Writing Attitude Questionnaire, Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire and a writing test. The data were analyzed by using the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient and partial correlation analysis. The results showed that there were significant correlations in a row of the writing attitude and writing performance with r -obtained was 0.342. There results showed there were significant correlations of emotional intelligence and writing performance because the value of 0.028 with the correlation coefficient of .140. and the results of the partial correlation showed that writing attitude, emotional intelligence, and writing performance had a significant correlation with r value of .280 and p -value of $<.001$.

Keywords: *writing attitude; emotional intelligence; writing performance*

INTRODUCTION

Writing has a vital role in language production that used for global mediation of knowledge (Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal, 2016). In Indonesia context where English is taught as a foreign language, writing becomes the most difficult skill to master (Setyowati & Sukmawan, 2016). Indonesian EFL learners generally have difficulties in writing the analytical exposition text (Zuana, 2020, Engladesta, 2020). In addition, Fajri, Inderawati, and Mirizon (2015) share the similar findings that students still face some difficulties when they had to produce a text. The problems are caused by lack of grammar, vocabulary and grammatical pattern of a certain text. Because of its complexity, many EFL students have a negative attitude toward writing because they view it as "difficult and stressful" (Setyowati & Sukmawan, 2016). In short, the finding of these studies claimed that the Indonesian EFL students' analytical exposition ability showed unsatisfied writing performance.

As reported by several studies, writing attitude is proved to be an essential factor which significantly correlates with the students' writing performance. Attitude can affect a person's behavior especially in learning writing. For example, students with a good attitude tend to write more often and expend greater effort when composing than those with less favorable attitude, leading to individual differences in writing achievement. It supported by Inderawati and finova (2018), positive attitudes will occur when the students spend more effort to learn the language. Plotnik's report (as cited in Bulut, 2017) state that attitude involves an assessment of an object, person or event on a continuum extending from negative to positive and makes us prone to behaving in a certain way in the face of that object, person or event. Göçer's report (as cited in Bulut, 2017) points out that the interests, desires and attitudes of each individual are not the same for the writing skills which are very important in the communication and social life of

individuals and stresses that one of the factors that affect the written expression achievement of individuals and cause them to move away from writing is their attitude towards writing. Akaydin & Kurnaz's report (as cited in Bulut, 2017) emphasized variables such as education, family environment, and personal characteristics are influential in the emergence of different attitudes towards writing.

Another factor which influences the students' writing performance is Emotional-Intelligence (EI). It refers the ability to monitor one's own and others' feeling and emotion, and as one of the indicators of students' success in learning. Emotional intelligence is considered as an important matter because it gives strong impact on one's action. Therefore, many institutions suggest Emotional intelligence to be included in teaching especially in writing.

As Emotional Intelligence believed to be a good predictor of learning success, it is also expected to be able to influence students' success in writing. Several Studies conducted in the past have shown a good relationship between EI and Writing Performance. The first result was reported by Ni'mah, Kadarisman, Sutyati (2016) They found there was a relatively strong positive relationship between EI and writing performance. The finding showed ($r=.240$ and $\text{sig}=.049<.05$), it means there was a significant correlation between EI and Writing Performance. Therefore, they concluded that knowing EI of the students' could enhance the students writing performance. In line with that, Wulandari, Inderawati, and Hayati (2020) found that the connection between Writing Attitudes and Writing Performance straight. The result showed that the significant value (p-value) was 0.000. It showed that there was positive correlation between students' writing attitude and writing achievement, which means that more positive students' writing attitude, will be better their writing achievement and also vice versa.

Based on the informal interview with the undergraduate EFL students of Tridianti, PGRI and Muhammadiyah Universities who having taken all the writing courses, some of them were satisfied with their current writing performance especially in analytical exposition. They were confuse to write them opinion or arguments and constructing an idea. It supported by Janiarti (2015), an analytical exposition text is difficult because in this text the students are intended to write their arguments in order to persuade the reader. The students who can not stringing words

will hate writing lesson and impact their score in writing. Furthermore, some students boring with writing materials, it supported by Inderawati (2020) teaching materials used by the lecturer were only material compiled from the internet. It means that, the material was not vary. In this globalization era, teacher can use social networking to make variations in learning writing because the use of social networking is really important at this time (Inderawati, 2018). Social media has become a new tool for teaching and learning activities in the 21st century (Inderawati, Petrus, & Jaya, 2019). In relation to the students' writing performance, some of the lecturers used student-centered approach while the others used teacher-centered approach and did not use any activities related to students' emotional intelligences and attitude. As a result, most of the students never identified their intelligence profile since they did not know what emotional intelligences were.

Another research from Adegboyega (2019) found there was a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and attitude of Nigerian undergraduate student. Students with high emotional intelligence tend to have positive attitude. This means that, the increase in emotional intelligence level will positively disposed students' attitude toward writing. Furthermore, Adegboyega (2016) found that relationship between emotional intelligence and attitude to brokerage firms' performance in Tehran Stock Exchange was significant. Those with low emotional intelligence are usually rigid, inflexible, need rules and structure to feel secure. Thus, people with strong emotional intelligence do have a positive and balanced attitudinal view of situations while those with a weak emotional intelligence tend to have a negative and biased attitudinal view of situations.

This situation is supported by Wulandari, Inderawati, and Hayati (2020) who examined the paragraph writing of undergraduate EFL students of Sriwijaya University. they revealed that there was positive correlation between students' writing attitude and writing achievement. Hidayati (2018) who investigated her study in Muhammadiyah university Palembang also found the major of the students were categorized into moderate level of having attitude toward writing. It means that there was significant influence between attitude toward writing. In terms of emotional intelligences and writing performance, Kusdina (2017) found that there was a significant correlation between the

types of emotional intelligences to their writing performance.

In this study, the writer will use sixth semester students as sample because they have taken all of the writing subjects assigned therefore it is safe to assume that they have already mastered the writing skill needed for university level. the writer is interested to conduct this study in private universities in Palembang namely Tridinanti, PGRI, and Muhammadiyah since there are very little study on writing and emotional intelligence conducted in those universities. Moreover, from the mini research prior to this research conducted by the writer there, the writer found out that some of the English study program students in Tridinanti, PGRI, and Muhammadiyah university found writing activity as a challenging subject. They are also not familiar with writing attitude and emotional intelligence. Accordingly, they never identify their intelligence profile and writing attitude. Taking into consideration of these findings, the writer would like to conduct a study entitled the correlation among writing attitude, emotional intelligence, and writing performance of English education study program students of private universities in Palembang.

METHOD

This study was a correlational study. In this study, the data were obtained from the questionnaires and a writing performance test using analytical exposition text. The students' writing attitude, emotional intelligence and their writing performance were correlated to find out whether there was a significant correlation among each of them. Then the correlation was administered by having person product moment analysis. Since there was correlation, the influence and percentage among variables were analyzed by having regression analysis through Statistical Package for Social and Science (SPSS).

The students were asked to read the instruction and complete the writing attitude and the emotional intelligence questionnaires. After completing the questionnaires, they did the writing test in the form of analytical exposition in essay writing. While doing the test, the students were not allowed to ask each other, and concerning the content, they were not allowed to use their dictionary. After doing the test, the writer scored the test manually.

The population of this study was all English Education Study Program students of Tridinanti, PGRI, and Muhammadiyah Universities in Palembang in the academic year 2019-2020. They

already took all the writing courses in their study programs. The number of the sample was 121 students consisting of 38 Tridinanti students, 40 PGRI students, and 43 Muhammadiyah students. To obtain the information about the students' writing attitude, the writing attitude questionnaire adapted from Podsen (1997) was distributed before the reading comprehension test was conducted. There were 20 items in the questionnaire measuring two types of writing attitude: positive and negative attitude. The students were asked to read each statement and rate themselves by using the Likert scale intervals. The possible score range from 20 to 100 with higher score indicating a more positive, more confident attitude toward writing and one's self a writer. The data about the students' emotional intelligence were collected by adopting emotional intelligence questionnaire adopted from Mohapel (2015). The scoring system used a writing rubric of Jacobs, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hugney (1981).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Writing attitude questionnaire

It was revealed that from the questionnaire, the students' writing attitude was categorized into moderate level. As shown in Table 9, 10 out of 121 students categorized into high level (8.26%) and 111 students categorized in moderate level (91.73%). While, 0 students categorized in low level.

Table 1. *The distribution of the students' writing attitude questionnaire (N = 121)*

No	Interval	Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	69 – 100	High	10	8.26%
2	40 – 68	Moderate	111	91.73%
3	20 – 39	Low	0	0%
Total			121	100%

There were two types of statement in writing attitude questionnaire used in this research. They were positive and negative attitudes. The questionnaire ranged from Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Table 10 presents the result of the analysis for the first type of writing attitude, that is, positive statement. The result showed most students had positive attitude toward writing. This was supported by the students' response to the item number 2 (I have no fear of my writing being evaluated) in which 34.71% of them agreed with this statement. In addition, the result of the students' response to the item no 8 also showed that 32.23% (Agree) and 3.31% (Strongly Agree) admitted that they were interested in writing.

Table 3 presents the result of the analysis for the second type of writing attitude, that is, negative statement. The results indicate that students avoid writing whenever possible as shown by the responses to the item number 1. The result showed that 26.45% of the students thought that they agreed not to write if it is not necessary and 23.97% of them agreed to write whenever possible.

Table 2. The data distribution of positive statements in writing attitude questionnaire (N=121)

Item No	Statement	Strong Agree		Agree		Don't know		Disagree		Strong disagree		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
2	I have no fear of my writing being evaluated	1	0.82	42	34.71	45	37.19	31	25.62	2	1.65	121	100
3	I look forward to writing down my ideas	1	0.82	29	23.97	47	38.84	38	31.40	6	4.96	121	100
7	I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication	2	1.65	30	24.79	54	44.63	26	21.49	9	7.44	121	100
8	I like to write my ideas down	4	3.31	39	32.23	57	47.11	18	14.88	3	2.48	121	100
9	I feel confident in my ability to express my ideas in writing	1	0.82	33	27.27	58	47.93	26	21.49	3	2.48	121	100
10	I like to have my friends read what I have written	6	4.96	27	22.31	54	44.63	29	23.97	5	4.13	121	100
12	People seem to enjoy what I write	3	2.48	25	20.60	59	48.76	33	27.27	1	0.82	121	100
13	I enjoy writing	3	2.48	32	26.45	51	42.15	29	23.97	6	4.96	121	100
16	I like seeing my thoughts on paper	8	6.61	29	23.97	55	45.45	27	22.31	2	1.65	121	100
17	Discussing my writing with others is an enjoyable experience	4	3.31	42	34.71	54	44.63	21	17.35	0	0	121	100
18	It is easy for me to write good letters	5	4.13	29	23.97	62	51.24	23	19.01	2	1.65	121	100
20	Writing is a lot of fun	1	0.2	39	32.23	56	46.28	21	17.35	4	3.31	121	100

Table 3. The data distribution of negative statements on writing attitude questionnaire (N=121)

Item No	Statement	Strong Agree		Agree		Don't Know		Disagree		Strong Disagree		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	I avoid writing whenever possible	4	3.31	32	26.45	56	46.28	29	23.97	0	0	121	100
4	I am afraid of writing when I know it might be evaluated	3	2.48	28	23.14	57	47.11	32	26.45	1	0.82	121	100
5	My mind seems to go blank when I start writing	3	2.48	30	24.79	60	49.59	26	21.49	2	1.65	121	100
6	Expressing my ideas through writing is a waste of time	4	3.31	24	19.83	56	46.28	34	28.10	3	2.48	121	100
11	I am nervous about my writing	4	3.31	31	25.62	51	42.15	33	27.27	1	0.82	121	100
14	I never seem to be	3	2.48	30	24.79	46	38.02	40	33.06	2	1.65	121	100

	able to write down my ideas clearly												
15	I'm not a good writer	1	0.82	29	23.97	60	49.59	29	23.97	2	1.65	121	100
19	I don't think I write as well as most people	1	0.82	28	23.14	49	40.50	38	31.40	1	0.82	121	100

In addition, the result of the students' response to the item no 5 showed that 24.79% of them went blank when they started writing. It means they did not have any ideas to write down. This was supported by the students' responses to the item number 14 (I never seem to be able to write down my ideas clearly).

Students' emotional intelligence questionnaire

The results showed that the lowest score of the emotional intelligences questionnaire was 122 and the highest was 199 (see Appendix XX). For each aspect, 8 students were in high category in self-awareness, 3 students were in high category in emotional management, 7 students were in high category in social emotional awareness, 7 students were in high category in relationship management. The distribution is presented in the table 2.

Table 2 shows that most students were in a low category in each domain; 49.59% in Self Awareness domain, 73.55% in Emotional Management domain, 50.41 % in Social Emotional Awareness domain, and 39.67% in Relationship Management domain. Meanwhile, the relationship management was in the medium category (54.54%). Furthermore, there were few students (having an Emotional Awareness category in each domain of emotional intelligence.

The results of the students' writing performance

The distribution of students' writing performance is described through five categories: Excellent, Good, Average, Fair, and Poor. The results of the students' writing performance were obtained by having the mean score of writing performance from each student given by 3 raters. The results showed that the lowest score was 46 and the highest was 77.00 (see Appendix XX). The distribution is presented in the table 5. Table 5 shows that most students had an average score (89.26%). Meanwhile few students had good score (4.96%) and Fair score (5.78%).

Statistical analyses

The research questions from number 1 to number 4 were answered by using two kinds of statistical analysis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis and Partial Correlation Analysis. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis was used to find out whether or not there was any significant correlation between the students' writing attitude and their writing performance, between emotional intelligence and writing performance, and between writing attitude and emotional intelligence. Meanwhile, the PCA was used to find out whether or not there was any significant correlation between the predictor variables and the criterion variable

Table 4. *The distribution of the students' emotional intelligence (N = 121)*

No	Interval	Category	Self-Awareness		Emotional Management		Social Emotional Awareness		Relationship Management	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	35 - 40	High	8	6.61	3	2.48	7	5.78	7	5.78
2	25 - 34	Medium	53	43.80	29	23.97	53	43.80	66	54.54
3	0 - 24	Low	60	49.59	89	73.55	61	50.41	48	39.67
Total			121	100	121	100	121	100	121	100

Table 5. *The distribution of students' writing performance (N=121)*

No	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	90.00 – 100.00	Excellent	0	0%
2	70.00 – 89.99	Good	6	4.96%
3	51.00 – 69.99	Average	108	89.26%
4	36.00 – 50.99	Fair	7	5.78%
5	10.00 – 35.99	Poor	0	0%
Total			121	100.00%

Students' writing attitude and their writing performance

Based on the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, the result indicated that the correlation coefficient or the *r*-obtained was

0.342 with the probability value less than 0.000 lower than the alpha level of 0.01 showing that there was a significant correlation between the writing attitude and writing performance. The results of the correlation summarized in the table 6.

Table 6. *Correlation between the students' writing attitude and writing performance*

	Writing Performance
Pearson Correlation	0.342**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
N	121
Pearson Correlation	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Students' emotional intelligence and their writing performance

It was found that there was a significant correlation between the students' emotional intelligence and their writing performance because the significance value of .028 was lower than that of (.05) with the correlation coefficient of .140.

In addition, the correlation analyses were also conducted to find out the significant correlations among each domain of emotional intelligence and writing performance. It was found that all aspects of the emotional intelligence had a significant correlation with the writing performance on the grounds that the significance values of them were lower than (.05) Table 8 presents the correlation results.

Predictor variables and the criterion variable

The results of the partial correlation showed that writing attitude, emotional intelligence, and writing performance had a significant correlation with r value of .280 and p-value of <.001. Table 7 presents the result.

Table 7. *Correlation between the students' emotional intelligence and writing performance*

	Writing Performance
Pearson Correlation	0.140*
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.028
N	121
Pearson Correlation	1

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

Table 8. *Correlation among each domain of emotional intelligence and writing performance (N=121)*

Correlation	Writing Performance	Self- Awareness	Emotional Management	Social Emotional Awareness	Relationship Management
Writing Performance	1	.191*	.107*	.184*	.258*
	Pearson Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	.024	.026	.015
	N	121	121	121	121
Self Awareness	.191*	1	.157*	.180*	.294*
	Pearson Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	.034	.030	.007
	N	121	121	121	121
Emotional Management	.107*	.157*	1	.362**	.208*
	Pearson Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	.034	.000	.022
	N	121	121	121	121
Sosial Emotional Awareness	.184*	.180*	.362**	1	.225*
	Pearson Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.030	.000	.013
	N	121	121	121	121
Relantionship Management	.258*	.294	.208*	.225*	1
	Pearson Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.007	.022	.013
	N	121	121	121	121

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

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9. *Correlation between predictor variables (writing attitude and emotional intelligence) and criterion variables (writing performance)*

Correlation	EI	WP	WA
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EI	Correlation	1	.140	.204
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.028	.0017
	N	121	121	121
WP	Correlation	.140	1	.342
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028		.000
	N	121	121	121

WA	Correlation	204	.342	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.0017	.000
		N	121	121
WA	EI	1	.280	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	121	121
WP	Correlation	.280	1	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	121	121

In addition, to know the percentage of writing attitude, emotional intelligence on writing performance, R-Square was obtained. The results of regression analysis showed that R-Square (R^2) was .412. it means that students' writing attitude and emotional intelligence gave significant effect in the level 41.2% toward writing performance, and 58.8% was unexplained factors value. Table 19 is shown as the result of Model Summary follow:

Table 10. *Model summary*

Mode	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.412 ^a	.169	.133	5.39532

a. Predictors: (Constant), WritingAttitude, SelfAwareness, RelationshipManagement, SocialEmotionalAwareness, EmotionalManagement

As a result of the writing attitude questionnaire analysis, the majority of the students 111 students or 91.73% students were categorized into moderate level of having attitude toward writing. The data suggest that the students having a positive attitude toward writing viewed writing as an enjoyable experience. According to Hidayati (2018) the positive attitudes create an opportunity for students to increase their writing success, to make more efforts to write and to write more often.

As for the students' emotional intelligence, based on the findings, most of students were in a low category of each domain of emotional intelligence. It means students' ability to perceive emotion and emotional knowledge toward the writing needs to be increased. Fatum (2008) indicates that emotional intelligence influences the students' action and he argues that if a high school-level focuses only on academic instruction and school management in its effort to help students attain academic success, it will fail to achieve its goals. Regarding the results of students' writing performance, more than a half of the sample students (89.26%) were still classified into the average category score in the range of 51.00 – 69.99. Unfortunately, no one of the sample was categorized into excellent writing performance. Only six students (4.96%) were categorized into a good category score. It is

assumed that writing performance of the students is still low. This low achievement might happen because writing is such a complex activity.

Based on the analysis of the correlation between the students' writing attitude and their writing performance above, it was found that r -obtained was .342. This means that there was a significant correlation between the students' writing attitude and writing performance. Hannane (2015) shared the result of her research showing that most students have a negative attitude toward writing. As a result, the students had low performance in writing since they perceived writing as a difficult skill to be mastered.

The other objective of this study was to find out whether there was any significant correlation between students' emotional intelligence and their writing performance. Based on the findings, there was a significant correlation between the emotional intelligence and writing performance. In summary, the emotional intelligence domains such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management were still the important factors in improving the students' writing performance. it is important to educate students to be socially and emotionally intelligence in order for them to receive the maximum benefit of the study, especially in Writing lesson.

The other objective was the correlation between writing attitude and emotional intelligence. The finding showed that there was a significant correlation between writing attitude and emotional intelligence.

In addition, to know the percentage of writing attitude, emotional intelligence on writing performance, R-Square was obtained. The results of regression analysis showed that R-Square (R^2) was .412. it means that students' writing attitude and emotional intelligence gave significant effect in the level 41.2% toward writing performance, and 58.8% was unexplained factors value. It can be concluded that students with positive attitude toward writing would develop their emotional intelligence and led them to achieve maximum performance in writing.

CONCLUSION

There is a positive correlation between students' writing attitude and their writing performance. In addition, there are significant correlations between emotional intelligence and writing performance, and between writing attitude and emotional intelligence. Among the students'

writing attitude, emotional intelligence, and writing performance, they are also significantly correlated.

The result of writing attitude shows that the more positive attitude that someone has, the more confident attitude s/he has toward writing. On the contrary, the more negative attitude one has, the less confident s/he becomes. It might be caused by many factors. One of them is students' fear and anxiety toward writing in that the students feel difficult in putting their ideas clearly, have negative comments from peers and negative feedbacks from their teachers. In university students sometimes writing is considered as the most difficult skill to learn. Many students still face some problems in writing a passage since the writing is the final product of several separate acts that are hugely challenging to learn simultaneously. The students should not be afraid in doing writing or learning English especially in writing (Inderawati, Ariani, Hambali, 2018).

The results of this research imply that to increase the students' writing performance, the teachers of English should be aware of the students' emotional intelligence on writing and motivate the students to write down their ideas whenever possible to improve their performance. By being aware of the intelligence act, the students themselves would also know how to improve themselves most efficiently through using different types of intelligences. They can also create their ways to find strategies in learning English skills, especially the writing attitude, their emotional intelligence in order to improve their writing performance.

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Elsya Agesty, Rita Inderawati, & Eryansyah

Writing attitude and emotional intelligence as determinants in boosting EFL learners' writing performance