



## Undergraduate Students' Anxiety in Academic Writing at Universitas Negeri Padang

Mutiara Hadis<sup>1</sup> and M. Affandi Arianto<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Universitas Negeri Padang

Correspondence Email: [mutiarahadis84@gmail.com](mailto:mutiarahadis84@gmail.com)

### Article History

Published: 2024-11-05

### Abstract

This study examines the level of writing anxiety among English Language Education students at Universitas Negeri Padang, in regards to Academic Writing. Writing anxiety is prevalent issue that hinders student from expressing ideal fluently and confidently, potentially impacting their academic success. The research sample consists of 58 students, and data was collected through questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from Cheng (2004), measured the students' writing anxiety levels using the SLWAI. The study found that, on average, the students had a moderate level of anxiety. Overall, this study highlights the presence of writing anxiety among English Language Education students and provides insights into the reasons behind it and the strategies used to address it. This study also underscores the need for targeted interventions, such as writing workshops and supportive feedback mechanisms, to help students manage their confidence in academic writing. In addition, the findings provide valuable insights for educators and curriculum developers.

### Keywords:

Writing Anxiety, Level, Academic Writing

©2024 The Author(s) Publish by Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris FBS UNP. This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

**How to Cite:** Hadis, M., Arianto, M. A. (2024). Undergraduate Students' Anxiety in Academic Writing at Universitas Negeri Padang. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 13. (4): pp. 1225-1231, DOI: [10.24036/jelt.v13i4.131060](https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v13i4.131060)

## INTRODUCTION

Academic writing is a form of writing that requires the author to demonstrate a high level of critical thinking. Furthermore, this type of writing is frequently encountered in writing journals, articles, theses, and other similar formats, where the requisite form is formal and critical. Academic writing is a distinctive form of writing that is subject to unique regulations and conventions (Oshima and Hogue, 2007). This presents a significant challenge for students, particularly those majoring in English, and it is not uncommon for students to experience writing anxiety as a result.

Writing anxiety is a psychological state characterized by feelings of anxiety and fear that typically arise during the writing process. As Cheng (2002) notes, writing anxiety can pose a significant challenge for students, negatively impacting their learning and writing abilities. It can also lead to a decline in motivation and performance during academic pursuits.

As posited by Zhang (2005), writing anxiety can be classified into three distinct levels: low, medium, and high. Students with different levels of anxiety also have different causes of anxiety. A number of studies have identified the primary causes of students experiencing writing anxiety. The most frequently cited causes are difficulties in selecting a suitable topic (Wahyuni, 2019) and a lack of confidence in one's own writing abilities (Sabti et al., 2019). Additionally, numerous other factors contribute to students' experiences of writing anxiety, including time constraints and linguistic challenges.

The present study is concerned with the level of writing anxiety experienced by students, which may be classified as high, moderate, or low. In addition, this study was conducted in order to get to know more deeply about students' anxiety in academic writing.

## **METHOD**

### ***1. Research Design***

This research was conducted using a descriptive approach. The primary aim of this study is to provide a detailed explanation of the issues experienced by students, particularly regarding their writing anxiety. By employing this method, the researcher seeks to comprehensively understand the various factors contributing to students' anxiety in academic writing contexts.

### ***2. Population and Sample***

The population in this study consists of English Education students at Universitas Negeri Padang who were admitted in 2021. Specifically, there are 139 students across five classes included in this population. To determine the sample size for the research, the researcher applied Slovin's formula, which is commonly used in survey research to ensure a representative sample based on the population size and desired margin of error. Using this formula, a sample of 58 students was derived, selected randomly from the larger population. This random sampling technique was employed to minimize bias and enhance the generalizability of the finding

### ***3. Instrumentation***

In this study, a questionnaire served as the primary instrument for measuring students' anxiety levels. This questionnaire was adapted from Cheng (2004) to suit the context of the research. Originally intended to assess writing anxiety in ESL students, the researcher tailored the questions to focus on the writing anxiety levels of EFL students in the English Department at Universitas Negeri Padang. The questionnaire consisted of 22 items, using a four-point Likert scale for responses.

### ***4. Validity and Reliability***

Each item used in this study was thoroughly consulted and validated by Dian Safitri, S.Pd., M.Pd., a faculty member in the English Education department. This validation process ensured that the items were relevant and appropriate for measuring writing anxiety among EFL students. To further establish the credibility of the questionnaire, the researcher employed SPSS 26 to assess the reliability of each item. This statistical analysis is crucial, as it helps determine the consistency and stability of the measurement tool.

The results from the reliability analysis indicated that the questionnaire demonstrated a high reliability score of 0.793 across the 22 items. This score

suggests that the items effectively measure the intended construct of writing anxiety and can be relied upon for further analysis.

**Table 1. Reliability of Questionnaire**

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.793	22

#### 5. Technique of data collection

In this study, to gather data on the level of writing anxiety experienced by students in academic writing, the researcher distributed a questionnaire link via WhatsApp to each individual participant. This method ensured that all students had easy access to the questionnaire, making it convenient for them to respond. These questionnaires were administered online through a Google Form link, which facilitated honest and candid responses from the students.

#### 6. Technique of data analysis

To analyze the data from the questionnaire, the researcher employed descriptive analysis using Microsoft Excel. In the questionnaire, questions 1, 4, 17, 18, and 22 were scored in reverse, as the statements in these items were positive in nature. The results revealed the level of students' writing anxiety, and the data were categorized based on the types of anxiety they experience, including cognitive, somatic, and avoidance anxiety.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Research Finding***

The findings of this study are based on the analysis of a questionnaire administered to 58 English Education students at Universitas Negeri Padang. The purpose of this research is to determine the level of writing anxiety among students, particularly in academic writing. The data was collected from the initial questionnaire, which is an adaptation of Cheng's (2004) Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI). The results can be summarized in the table below.

**Table 3. Students' Level of Anxiety**

Level	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Number of Students	Percentage
Low	35	49	17	29.3%
Middle	50	65	32	55.1%
High	66	71	9	15.6%

According to the data, 29.3% of the 58 students experienced a low level of anxiety about academic writing. Among these students, the anxiety scores range from a minimum of 17 to a maximum of 49. The majority, 55.1%, or 32 students, experience a moderate level of anxiety. The scores range from a minimum of 50 to a maximum of 69 at the moderate level. Last, the other 15.5%, equivalent to 9 students, have a high level of anxiety. At this level, the minimum score was 66, and the maximum score was 71. It can be concluded that the level of students writing anxiety in academic writing was moderate.

**Discussion**

The main objective of this research is to measure the level of writing anxiety among students at Universitas Negeri Padang, particularly focusing on the English Education students from the 2021 class. The results from the initial questionnaire indicate that these students have an average level of anxiety regarding academic writing. This finding aligns with previous research conducted by Wahyuni et al. (2019), suggesting a consistent trend in writing anxiety among similar populations.

However, this research contrasts with the findings of Afdalia (2017) and Syarifuddin (2020), which reported that students experienced a high level of writing anxiety. This discrepancy highlights the variability in anxiety levels across different studies and may suggest the influence of specific factors such as teaching methods, institutional support, or individual differences in student experiences. Further exploration of these variables could provide deeper insights into the factors affecting writing anxiety among students.

**CONCLUSION**

This study has revealed writing anxiety among English Education students at Universitas Negeri Padang. In this study, the findings stated that English Education students at Universitas Negeri Padang have an average level of anxiety. Based on the results of this study, it can be learned that writing anxiety remains a significant issue that warrants further investigation, especially within the learning process. Additionally, problems related to academic writing still need to be addressed in order to find solutions that prevent students from experiencing anxiety when writing.

**REFERENCES**

- Afdalia, T., Mirza, A. A., & Widiastuty, H. (2023). An analysis of students' writing anxiety and strategies used in writing English journal article. *JELITA*, 4(2), 55-67.
- Arikunto, S. (2006). *Metode penelitian kualitatif*. Jakarta: bumi aksara, 168.
- Aurora, C., Sani, R. D., & Sesmiyanti, S. (2022). Analysis Students' Anxiety in Writing English Paragraph at University of PGRI Sumatera Barat. *Journal of Asian Studies: Culture, Language, Art and Communications*, 3(1), 1-8.
- Awada, G., & Ghaith, G. (2014). Impact of Using the WebQuest Technological Model on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Writing Achievement and Apprehension. *Arab World English Journal*.
- Britton, J. (2003). Spectator role and the beginnings of writing. *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory: A Reader. Revised and Updated.*, 164.
- Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2004). *Language assessment. Principles and Classroom Practices*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, 20.
- Caswell, R. (2004). *Strategies for teaching writing*. ASCD.
- Cheng, Y. S. (2002). Factors associated with foreign language writing anxiety. *Foreign Language Annals*, 35(6), 647-656. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2002.tb01903.x>.
- Cheng, Y. S. (2004). A measure of second language writing anxiety: Scale development and preliminary validation. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13(4), 313-335. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.07.001>.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2005). *Mixed methods research: Developments, debates, and dilemma* (pp. 315-326). Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Dacwang, C. W. (2014). L2 writing anxiety of the students of the maritime academy of Asia and the Pacific. *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 7(3), 469–483.
- Gibaldi, J. (2009). *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.
- Hassan, B. A. (2001). The relationship of writing apprehension and self-esteem to the writing quality and quantity of EFL university students. Mansoura: Mansoura University.
- Harmer, J. (2004). *How to teach writing*. Pearson Longman
- Heale, R., & Twycross, A. (2015). Validity and reliability in quantitative studies. *Evidence-based nursing*, 18(3), 66-67.
- Irvin, L. L. (2010). What is academic writing. *Writing spaces: Readings on writing*, 1, 3-17.
- Kondo, D. S., & Ling, Y. Y. (2004). Strategies for coping with language anxiety: The case of students of English in Japan. *ELT Journal*, 58(3), 258-265. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/58.3.258>
- Kurt, G., & Atay, D. (2007). The effects of peer feedback on the writing anxiety of prospective Turkish teachers of EFL. *Journal of Theory and Practice in Education*, 3(1), 12-23. Retrieved from [http://eku.comu.edu.tr/index/3/1/gkurt\\_datay.pdf](http://eku.comu.edu.tr/index/3/1/gkurt_datay.pdf).
- Lan, Y. F., Hung, C. L., & Hsu, H. J. (2011). Effects of guided writing strategies on

- students' writing attitudes based on media richness theory. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 10(4), 148-164.
- Liu, M., & Ni, H. (2015). Chinese university EFL learners' foreign language writing anxiety: pattern, effect and causes. *English Language Teaching*, 8(3), 46-58. doi:10.5539/elt.v8n3p46.
- Loppies, H. (2020). Exploring causes and alleviating strategies of English student-teachers' writing anxiety at Pattimura University. *Jurnal Tahuri*, 17(1), 16-25.
- Lowe, C., & Zemliansky, P. (2010). *Writing spaces: readings on writings*, Vol. 2 (Vol. 2). The Saylor Foundation.
- Masriani, E., Mukhaiyar, M., & Wahyuni, D. (2018). Writing anxiety and writing strategies used by English department students of Universitas Negeri Padang. *Lingua Didaktika: Jurnal Bahasa dan Pembelajaran Bahasa*, 12(1), 76-85.
- Nunan, D., & Bailey, K. M. (2009). *Exploring second language classroom research: A comprehensive guide*. Boston: Heinle, Cengage Learning
- Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2007). *Introduction to academic writing* (p. 3). Pearson/Longman.
- Pappamihiel, N. E. (2002). English as a second language students and English language anxiety: Issues in the mainstream classroom. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 36(3), 327-355. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40171530>.
- Qashoa, S. H. H. (2014). English writing anxiety: Alleviating strategies. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 136, 59-65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.05.288>
- Rezai, M., & Jafari, M. (2014). Investigating the levels, types, and causes of writing anxiety among iranian EFL students: A mixed method design. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98, 1545-1554. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.03.577>.
- Rohmah, N., & Muslim, A. B. (2021, April). Writing anxiety in academic writing practice. In *Thirteenth Conference on Applied Linguistics (CONAPLIN 2020)* (pp. 348-354). Atlantis Press.
- Ruddell, M. R. (2005). *Teaching content reading and writing* (4th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. *The International Journal of Progressive Education*, 1, 52-53.
- Sabti, A. A., Md Rashid, S., Nimehchisalem, V., & Darmi, R. (2019). The Impact of Writing Anxiety, Writing Achievement Motivation, and Writing Self-Efficacy on Writing Performance: A Correlational Study of Iraqi Tertiary EFL Learners. *SAGE Open*, 9(4), 215824401989428. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019894289>
- Silva, T. (1993). Toward an understanding of the distinct nature of L2 writing: The ESL research and its implications. *TESOL quarterly*, 27(4), 657-677.
- Vanderstoep, S. W., & Johnson, D. D. (2008). *Research methods for everyday life: Blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Syarifudin, S. (2020). Survey on EFL students' writing anxiety: level, types, and causes. *Eralingua: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Asing Dan Sastra*, 4(2), 122.
- Wahyuni, D., Oktavia, W., & Marlina, L. (2019). Writing anxiety among Indonesian EFL college students: Levels, causes and coping strategies. *Lingua Cultura*,

- 13(1), 67-74. <https://doi.org/10.21512/lc.v13i1.5239>
- Wahyuni, S., & Umam, M. K. (2017). An analysis on writing anxiety of Indonesian EFL college learners. *JEELS (Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies)*, 4(1), 105-128.
- Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing writing*. Cambridge University Press.
- Yi, J. Y. (2009). Defining Writing Ability for Classroom Writing Assessment in High Schools. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, 13(1), 53-69.
- Younas, M., Subhani, A., Arshad, S., Akram, H., Sohail, M., Hamid, M., & Farzeen, M. (2014). Exploring the causes of writing anxiety: A case of BS English students. *Language in India*, 14(8), 197-208.
- Zeidner, M. (1998). Test anxiety: The state of the art.
- Zeidner, M. (1998). An introduction to the domain of test anxiety. *Test anxiety: The state of the art*, 3-27.
- Zhang, H. (2011). *A Study on ESL Writing Anxiety among Chinese English Major-Causes, Effects and Coping Strategies For ESL Writing Anxiety*. Kristiansan University of Sweden