



The correlation between writing attitude and academic writing competence at state university in Bengkulu city

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Abstract. This study aims to examine the correlation between students' writing attitudes and academic writing competence among state university students in Bengkulu City. The samples of this research were 111 University students. This research used three instruments, they are: questionnaire, writing test, and interview. This research used a mixed-method design with the explanatory sequential design. The data were analyzed by using application SPSS 29. The mean result of writing attitude was 74.31. It was categorized as had positive attitude. The mean result of academic writing competence was 78.87. It was categorized as very good. Pearson product moment correlation was used to find out the correlation between. writing attitude and writing competence. The result showed that Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is 0.824, indicating a very strong positive correlation between writing attitude and academic writing competence. Based on the interview the affective responses revealed that students generally perceived academic writing as a vital component of their academic development. Most participants acknowledged that writing facilitates the communication of ideas, enhances critical thinking, and supports the demands of academic and professional tasks.

Introduction

Writing is universally acknowledged as a core academic skill, essential not only for the communication of knowledge but also for critical thinking and intellectual development. Within academic environments, students' attitudes toward writing play a crucial role in shaping their success. Writing plays a pivotal role in academic achievement, yet many university students continue to struggle with writing due not only to skill deficits but also to negative attitudes toward the writing process. The urgency of this research arises from the growing recognition that writing attitudes shaped by confidence, motivation, and emotional engagement directly influence students' writing competence. Despite this, existing literature predominantly focuses on students in urban or Western contexts, neglecting those in peripheral areas like Bengkulu City, Indonesia. These students may face unique socio-cultural and institutional challenges that remain underexplored (Suhardita et al., 2024). Without context-specific data, educators lack the necessary insight to design effective, inclusive writing instruction.

Thus, this study seeks to fill a critical gap by investigating how writing attitudes correlate with academic writing competence in a context that has been largely overlooked in prior research. Writing is inherently a complex cognitive and emotional process that demands mental effort, psychological investment, and a sustained commitment to learning. Positive writing attitudes such as confidence, determination, and enjoyment of the writing process are recognized as key factors in improving academic writing outcomes (Hayati et al., 2021). Conversely, negative attitudes, which often stem from prior experiences of failure, fear, or apathy, can significantly hinder students' progress and limit their potential in developing effective writing skills (Khadawardi, 2022).

There is a growing body of research indicating that motivation and writing competence are deeply interconnected. Competent writers are generally more motivated, as previous successful experiences lead to a sense of self-efficacy and satisfaction (Hendra et al., 2025). These students often engage more meaningfully in the writing process because they find it less daunting and more rewarding. Their earlier accomplishments create a reinforcing cycle, where motivation fuels effort and continued effort leads to greater achievement. On the other hand, students with limited writing skills may face repeated setbacks, leading to discouragement and reluctance to write, which can perpetuate their struggles (Hayati et al., 2021). This bidirectional relationship between motivation and competence underscores the importance of fostering both in educational settings .

Developmental trends also support this interdependence. As students advance through their academic careers, their writing competence typically improves, which in turn contributes to increased motivation. In early educational stages, students may feel uncertain about their writing abilities, resulting in lower engagement. However, with continued exposure, structured guidance, and positive feedback, students gradually build confidence and begin to recognize writing as a valuable skill in both academic and professional domains. This realization enhances their intrinsic motivation to write (Mujtaba et al., 2023). Educational support structures that empower students to perceive writing as a meaningful and achievable goal are therefore vital for long-term academic growth (Purnadewi & Widana, 2023).

Attitudes toward writing exert a strong influence on students' engagement with writing tasks and the quality of their output. Positive attitudes—including belief in one's writing capabilities, genuine interest, and appreciation for writing—are strongly associated with higher achievement level (Khadawardi, 2022). Students who approach writing as a productive and stimulating intellectual exercise generally outperform peers who view it as a tedious obligation (Smith & Johnson, 2023). In contrast, negative perceptions—such as fear of failure, anxiety, or disinterest—can undermine performance by reducing persistence and effort. Thus, attitude serves as a filter through which students experience the writing process, impacting both their behavior and outcomes (Hayati et al., 2021).

The role of educators and instructional strategies in shaping writing attitudes cannot be overstated. Effective pedagogical practices that frame writing as an engaging and rewarding activity can positively transform students' perceptions. Teachers who integrate student interests into writing assignments, provide constructive and encouraging feedback, and create opportunities for creativity are better positioned to foster enthusiasm and persistence (Nasim & Raana, 2024). Moreover, building students' sense of self efficacy through goal setting, reflection, and the celebration of incremental achievements—can bolster their motivation and overall performance. Academic writing competence extends beyond mechanical skill; it involves the ability to structure arguments, present ideas clearly, and participate critically in scholarly discourse. In higher education, it is not only a tool for assessment but a measure of a student's intellectual maturity and academic readiness. However, many students encounter significant barriers to developing this competence, often influenced by their pre-existing attitudes toward writing. Students who lack

confidence or who perceive writing as excessively difficult may avoid writing tasks, which in turn hampers their development. Conversely, those who view writing as a means of self-expression or as a necessary academic pursuit are more likely to engage consistently, thereby strengthening their abilities over time (Mujtaba et al., 2023).

Despite the significance of this relationship, research into writing attitudes and competence has largely concentrated on specific populations—particularly first-year students, language learners, or students in Western and Malaysian academic contexts. While these studies have generated valuable insights, they often overlook culturally and institutionally diverse student populations. For instance, studies by Graham et al. (2007) addressed the writing attitudes of Western students and school-aged children, respectively, without accounting for the socio-educational dynamics present in other regions or higher education contexts.

This neglect has resulted in several key research gaps. First, a population gap persists: most studies have centered on urban or well-resourced academic settings, often excluding students from smaller cities or developing regions. Few have explored the writing attitudes and competence of students from state universities in peripheral cities, such as Bengkulu. Students in such contexts may face distinct challenges, including limited access to academic resources, socio-economic constraints, and cultural expectations, all of which can influence their writing attitudes and outcomes. Existing research does not adequately address how these contextual factors impact writing development in underrepresented student groups (Khadawardi, 2022).

Second, there exists a methodological gap. Much of the previous literature has relied on either qualitative or quantitative approaches in isolation. While qualitative studies offer rich insights into students' personal experiences and beliefs, they often lack generalizability. Quantitative studies, on the other hand, may provide broader patterns but fail to capture the nuanced dynamics of individual student perspectives. The integration of both methods—through a mixed-methods design—can yield a more holistic understanding of how writing attitudes and competence intersect. Previous studies have rarely adopted such designs, limiting their ability to fully explain the complexities of the relationship between attitude and competence (Nasim & Raana, 2024).

To address these gaps, the present study focuses on English students at two state universities in Bengkulu City, a demographic that has been largely underexplored. By targeting students in this context, the research contributes to a more inclusive understanding of academic writing development in Indonesia. Furthermore, the study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative surveys to measure students' writing attitudes and competence, and qualitative Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to explore their challenges. This dual-method design allows for both breadth and depth, capturing statistical trends while also contextualizing them within students' lived realities.

The aim of this study is to investigate the correlation between students' writing attitudes and their academic writing competence. By examining how attitudes—both positive and negative—shape writing performance, the study seeks to provide actionable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and academic institutions. The central research question is: What is the relationship between writing attitude and academic writing competence among English students at state universities in Bengkulu City? In pursuit of this goal, the study titled “The Correlation between Writing Attitude and Academic Writing Competence among English Students at State Universities in Bengkulu City” was undertaken. The findings are expected to inform instructional practices and academic policy, especially in settings that have been historically overlooked in academic writing research.

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher had framed the following research questions:

1. What is the writing attitude of state university students in Bengkulu City?
2. What is the academic writing competence of state university students in Bengkulu City?
3. Is there any correlation between writing attitude and academic writing competence among state university students in Bengkulu City?
4. Why do state university students in Bengkulu City hold specific attitudes toward writing?

This study offers both practical and theoretical significance. Practically, it provides insights into the writing attitudes and academic writing competence of state university students in Bengkulu City, which can inform improvements in educational programs and teaching strategies. It also helps educators identify key factors influencing students' writing attitudes, enabling more targeted interventions to enhance writing skills. Theoretically, the research contributes to educational attitude theory by examining the role of writing attitudes in academic competence, and enriches writing competence models by integrating both cognitive and affective dimensions. By focusing on Indonesian university students, it adds culturally relevant insights to the global discourse on academic writing.

Method

Subject and setting

This research uses a mixed-method design with the explanatory sequential design. The explanatory sequential design involves the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data, with the purpose of using the results from the quantitative phase to inform the qualitative phase (Ishtiaq, 2019). This approaches to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the writing attitudes and academic writing competencies among students. The primary focus was on quantitative methods, with qualitative methods employed to enhance and support the findings derived from the quantitative analysis.

Tabel 1. Population

No.	Category	Number of Students
1.	University A	88 students
2.	University B	65 students
TOTAL		153 students

To determine the required sample size, the researcher used the Slovin formula (Anugraheni et al., 2023). Based on the calculation, the required sample size is 111 respondents, for University A 56 respondents and University B 55 respondents.

Research Instruments

To comprehensively measure writing attitudes and competence, this study employed three instruments: a writing attitude questionnaire adapted from Setyowati et al. (2023), a writing test on a discussion topic, and interviews conducted through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). These instruments ensured triangulation and alignment with theoretical frameworks.

The questionnaire consisted of 25 items across three aspects— affective, cognitive, and behavioral—rated on a 4-point Likert scale. It was distributed online via Google Forms, and responses were interpreted using the scoring system by Pornel et al. (2013) to classify attitudes from “very negative” to “very positive”. In writing test, students were asked to write a 250-word discussion text on the theme “The use of AI in education” within 60 minutes. The writing was

assessed using a standardized rubric adapted from J.B. Heaton, with score interpretation referring to [Riduwan and Sunarto \(2013\)](#) to categorize writing competence.

In Interview, focus Group Discussions were conducted with 10 selected participants to gain qualitative insights into writing attitudes and competence. The interviews were guided by open-ended questions based on the quantitative results, allowing a deeper exploration of motivation, challenges, and perceptions of academic writing.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through surveys, writing tests, and in-person FGDs. The questionnaire measured students' attitudes toward writing, the writing test evaluated their competence, and the FGDs provided qualitative data to support and deepen the interpretation of the quantitative findings. In survey the researcher came to the class and gave instructions to completing the questionnaire. In writing test the researcher came to the class and gave the instructions for conducted discussion text. Secondly, students were allocated 60 minutes to complete their discussion text, which should minimum 250 words. Third, for this study involved using a scoring rubric, the scoring rubric evaluated five main criteria: content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. In interview firstly, each FGD consist of 10 participants carefully selected participants. Secondly, participants were selected using Slovin's formula, which helps to ensure a representative sample of the student population. Thirdly, the FGDs were selected using a series of open ended questions designed, the researcher as a moderator to guide the discussion.

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data from the questionnaire and writing test were analyzed using descriptive statistics in Microsoft Excel and analysis correlation used Pearson's correlation via SPSS. 29, while qualitative data from FGDs were analyzed thematically. This combination allowed for a comprehensive understanding and triangulation of the data.

Hypothesis Analysis

The study tested the hypothesis using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The null hypothesis (H_0) stated that there is no significant correlation between writing attitude and academic writing competence, while the alternative (H_a) proposed a significant relationship. Decision-making was based on a significance level of 0.05, following [Sujarweni's \(2014\)](#) classification of correlation strength.

Results and Discussion

Findings

The writing attitude of state university students in Bengkulu City

Based on the result writing test, The maximum score was 97, and the lowest score was 41. The mean of the writing attitude scores for the participants was 74.31 and the standard deviation was 8.73. The descriptive statistical analysis of writing attitude questionnaire for the participants is shown below.

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Writing Attitude

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Writing Attitude	111	41	97	74.31	8.73

In distribution of data frequency, the researcher got the interval score and percentage. The result of the writing attitude is described in table 3.

Tabel 3. Distribution of Students' Writing Attitude

Table 3: Distribution of Students' Writing Attitude					
	N	Score	Category	Students of Number	Percentage
Writing attitude	111	85-100	Strongly Positive	14	12.61%
		69-84	Positive	72	64.86%
		53-68	Fairly Positive	23	20.72%
		37-52	Negative	2	1.80%
		20-36	Strongly Negative	0	0%
Total				111	100%

Based on table above, the highest result writing attitude category in positive attitude there were 72 students (64.86%) who got score bellow 69-84 and the lowest category in negative attitude there were 2 students (1.80%) who got score 37-52. Based on the result of writing attitude from 3 Aspect, the researcher got the mean value was 2.97. This value stated that the student's writing attitude was positive category. The highest average result of 3 aspects indicators was cognitive aspects with an average number 3.06 and the result of the lowest in affective aspect with average 2.92.

Table 4. The Result of Writing Attitude Students' Response on Questionnaire

No	Indicator	SA	A	DA	SDA	Likert Scale Score				Total Score	Mean	Category
						4	3	2	1			
1.	Affective aspect	142	552	179	15	568	1656	358	15	2597	2.92	Positive
2.	Cognitive Aspect	210	535	130	3	840	1605	260	13	2718	3.06	Positive
3.	Behavioral Aspect	185	593	193	28	740	1779	386	28	2933	2.94	Positive

(SA= Strongly Agree; A= Agree; DA= Disagree; SDA= Strongly Disagree)

Based on the result the total in cognitive aspect greater than affective aspect and behavioral aspects. From the questionnaire, there were 25 questions that have 8 Affective aspect statements, 8 cognitive aspect statements, and 9 aspect statements. The table displays the total for each statement, which displays the number of those who choose a scale of 1-4 for each statement. Then total the whole scale 1-4 was followed by the final total score and the average value in each statement. Following are the results of students' answers to each statement in the questionnaire and the results are grouped based on indicators writing attitude, namely affective, cognitive and behavioral aspects. The academic writing competence of state university students in Bengkulu City.

The writing test in this research was to find out the ability of students in writing discussion text. There are five components content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. In writing test, the researcher took research in make writing test. In this writing test the researcher got the score of discussion text writing test from the 2 raters. The descriptive statistical analysis of writing test for the participants is shown below. The maximum score was 96, and the lowest score were 53. The mean of the writing achievement scores for the participants were 78.87 and the standard deviation were 8.14 (Table 8 below).

1. Affective Aspect

The following table shows the results of an analysis of each statement that students selected in the questionnaire, particularly with the Affective aspect. It can be seen that the average score on the table.

Table 5. The result of Affective aspect

No.	Indicator	SA	A	DA	SDA	Likert Scale Score				Total Score	Mean	Category
						4	3	2	1			
1.	Q1	16	77	17	1	64	231	34	1	330	2.97	Positive
2.	Q2	21	79	11	0	84	237	22	0	343	3.09	Positive
3.	Q3	24	76	11	0	96	228	22	0	346	3.12	Positive
4.	Q4	18	57	33	3	72	171	66	3	312	2.81	Positive
5.	Q5	21	63	25	2	84	189	50	2	325	2.93	Positive
6.	Q6	11	58	40	2	44	174	80	2	300	2.70	Positive
7.	Q7	18	61	27	5	72	183	54	5	314	2.83	Positive
8.	Q8	13	81	15	2	52	243	30	2	327	2.92	Positive

On the affective aspect indicator, there were 8 statements in the questionnaire. The results showed that the total those who choose a scale of 4 (Strongly agree) were 142 students, scale of 3 (agree) were 552 students, scale of 2 (disagree) 179 students and then those who chose a scale of 1 (Strongly disagree) were 15 students..

2. Cognitive aspect

On the cognitive aspect, there are 8 statements in the questionnaire. Each statement related to cognitive aspect, in this aspect all in positive category. The results of an analysis can be seen that on the table.

Table 6. The Result of cognitive aspect

No	Indicator	SA	A	DA	SDA	Likert Scale Score				Total Score	Mean	Category
						4	3	2	1			
1.	Q9	27	74	9	1	108	222	18	1	349	3.14	Positive
2.	Q10	12	65	32	2	48	195	64	2	309	2.78	Positive
3.	Q11	17	60	31	3	68	180	62	3	313	2.82	Positive
4.	Q12	39	65	5	2	156	195	10	2	363	3.27	Positive
5.	Q13	10	66	34	1	40	198	68	1	307	2.77	Positive
6.	Q14	41	64	5	1	164	192	10	1	367	3.31	Positive
7.	Q15	35	64	11	1	140	192	22	1	355	3.20	Positive
8.	Q16	29	77	3	2	116	231	6	2	355	3.20	Positive

The results showed that the total those who choose a scale of 4 (Strongly agree) were 210 students, scale of 3 (agree) were 535 students, scale of 2 (disagree) 130 students and then those who chose a scale of 1(Strongly disagree) were 13 students.

3. Behavioral aspect

The table below is the results of the analysis of each statement that the students choose on the questionnaire, namely behavioral aspect. The mean value states that behavioral aspect indicator is positive. The results of behavioral aspect it can be seen in the table 7.

Table 7. The result of behavioral aspect

No.	Indicator	SA	A	DA	SDA	Likert Scale Score				Total Score	Mean	Category
						4	3	2	1			
1.	Q17	8	70	30	3	32	210	60	3	305	2.75	Positive
2.	Q18	4	47	56	4	16	141	112	4	273	2.46	Negative
3.	Q19	25	75	9	2	100	225	18	2	345	3.11	Positive

No.	Indicator	SA	A	DA	SDA	Likert Scale Score				Total Score	Mean	Category
						4	3	2	1			
4.	Q20	29	65	14	3	116	195	28	3	342	3.08	Positive
5.	Q21	26	72	10	3	104	216	20	3	343	3.09	Positive
6.	Q22	22	78	7	4	88	234	14	4	340	3.06	Positive
7.	Q23	18	58	30	5	72	174	60	5	311	2.80	Positive
8.	Q24	14	60	35	2	56	180	70	2	308	2.77	Positive
9	Q25	39	68	2	2	156	204	4	2	366	3.30	Positive

The table above shows that on behavioral aspects, there were 9 statements based on behavioral aspect. The results of the students' answers to the statements showed that the total those who choose a scale of 4 (Strongly agree) were 185 students, scale of 3 (agree) were 593 students, scale of 2 (disagree) 193 students and then those who chose a scale of 1 (Strongly disagree) were 28 students. After finding the results of the answers from the questionnaire writing attitude, the researcher inputted the answer data from the students into the Excel program. The data from the Likert scale is converted in tens form to make it easier to calculate the correlation test. From the table below, it can be seen that writing attitude students at the state university in Bengkulu City is a positive attitude.

Table 8. Descriptive Analysis of Writing Test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Academic Writing Competence	111	53	96	78.87	8.14

Based on the result of writing competence, there were fourty four students (39.64%) who got the scores bellow 81%-100% in category very good, sixty-six students (59.64%) who got the scores between 61%-80% in category good, one student (0.90%) who got the score between 41%-60% in category Enough and not students got bad and very bad category. It can be seen in the table 9.

Table 9. Scoring and Interpretation Writing Test

	N	Percentage Interval	Total Students	Description	Percentage
Writing competence	111	81% - 100%	44	Very good	39.64%
		61% - 80%	66	Good	59.46%
		41% - 60%	1	Enough	0.90%
		21% - 40%	0	Bad	0.00%
		0 % - 20 %	0	Very bad	0.00%
Total			111		100%

Interpretation score adopted by [Riduwan and Sunarto \(2013\)](#)

Correlation between writing attitude and academic writing competence among state university students in Bengkulu City

Based on the result, pearson correlation (r) obtained (0.824) was upper than r -table (0.1848), and p (0.000) was lower than 0.05, it means that H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted which means that there is a significant correlation between the variables. The result can be seen in the table 10.

Table 10. Correlation Test Correlations

Score Writing Attitude	Pearson Correlation	1	.824**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	111	111
Score Academic Writing Competence	Pearson Correlation	.824**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	111	111

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

Based on Table 10, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is 0.824, indicating a very strong positive correlation between writing attitude and academic writing competence. So, this suggests that students with a better attitude towards writing tend to have higher academic writing competence. Furthermore, since the finding of this study found that there is significant correlation between writing attitude and academic writing competence, so the influence of writing attitude and academic writing competence can be analysed further.

Regression Analysis

Table 11. ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4952.880	1	4952.880	230.775	.000b
	Residual	2339.355	109	21.462		
	Total	7292.234	110			

a. Dependent Variable: Academic writing competence

b. Predictors: (Constant), Writing Attitude

Table 12. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	21.747	3.786		5.744	.000
	Writing Attitude	.769	.051	.824	15.191	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Academic writing competence

The regression analysis results indicate that Writing Attitude has a significant positive effect on Academic Writing Competence. The unstandardized coefficient ($\beta_1 = 0.769$, $p < 0.001$) suggests that for every one-unit increase in Writing Attitude, Academic Writing Competence increases by 0.769 units, holding other factors constant. The standardized coefficient ($r = 0.824$) indicates a strong relationship between the two variables. The t-value ($t = 15.191$, $p < 0.001$) further confirms that this relationship is statistically significant. Additionally, the constant term ($\beta_0 = 21.747$, $p < 0.001$) represents the estimated Academic Writing Competence when Writing Attitude is zero. Since the significance value (p) for Writing Attitude is well below 0.05, we conclude that Writing Attitude is a strong predictor of Academic Writing Competence.

Tabel 13. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.824a	.679	.676	4.63271

a. Predictors: (Constant), Writing Attitude

The Model Summary table provides key statistics about the regression model predicting Academic Writing Competence based on Writing Attitude. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.824$) indicates a strong positive relationship between the predictor and the dependent variable. The R-Square value (0.679) means that 67.9% of the variance in Academic Writing Competence is explained by Writing Attitude, showing a high explanatory power of the model. The Adjusted R-Square (0.676), which adjusts for the number of predictors, is slightly lower but still confirms a strong model fit. The Standard Error of the Estimate (4.63271) represents the average deviation of observed values from the predicted values, indicating the model's predictive accuracy. Overall, these results suggest that Writing Attitude is a strong predictor of Academic Writing Competence.

The reason why state university students in Bengkulu City hold specific attitudes toward writing

This study presents findings from a focus group discussion with ten English education students at a state university in Bengkulu City. Conducted at Palm Resto and Bakery, the one-hour session explored students' academic writing attitudes from affective, cognitive, and behavioral perspectives. Affective factors emerged as the most dominant. Students recognized the importance of academic writing for expressing ideas and critical thinking but struggled with anxiety, low confidence, and discomfort with feedback. Cognitively, students showed varied motivation—some were goal-oriented while others faced stress and procrastination, shaped by past writing experiences and the quality of feedback received. Behaviorally, a few students practiced writing beyond assignments and used strategies like outlining and peer consultation. However, most only wrote when required and lacked consistent habits. In conclusion, students' writing attitudes are shaped by a complex interplay of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral factors, highlighting the need for writing instruction that combines skill-building with emotional support.

Discussion

The Writing Attitude of State University Students in Bengkulu City

The study found that most English education students at state universities in Bengkulu City have a positive attitude toward academic writing. Writing is viewed not merely as a requirement, but as a means of learning and intellectual growth. Among the three components of attitude—cognitive, behavioral, and affective—the cognitive aspect emerged as the most dominant. Students understood the role of writing in fostering critical thinking and academic engagement. However, emotional barriers such as anxiety, fear of criticism, and low self-confidence were still evident. These findings align with the Tripartite Model of Attitude and Expectancy-Value Theory [Wigfield & Eccles \(2000\)](#), which emphasize the importance of belief in one's ability and task value. Positive attitudes were generally associated with more active writing engagement, as supported by [Latif \(2021\)](#). Nonetheless, emotional readiness remains an issue that may hinder actual performance, a point also reflected in, [Supiah \(2021\)](#), who observed that attitude alone does not guarantee better writing outcomes. Hence, educators should cultivate emotionally supportive and feedback-rich environments that foster both skill and confidence.

The Academic Writing Competence of State University Students in Bengkulu City

The results showed that most students have good to very good academic writing competence, as measured through content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Their ability to produce well-structured and clear discussion texts indicates an internalization of academic writing norms. This supports the process Writing Approach, where students progress through stages of drafting, revising, and editing, which reduces fear and enhances engagement. Additionally, the findings align with Social Cognitive Theory, which underscores the role of learning environments, feedback, and self-efficacy. The supportive academic context in Bengkulu, along with teacher guidance and collaborative tasks, appears to contribute positively to writing competence. This is consistent with [Susilawati et al. \(2023\)](#) & [Apridayani et al. \(2024\)](#), who highlight the role of

motivation, self-assessment, and teacher feedback. However, other studies such as [Fatimah \(2019\)](#) and [Giridharan \(2012\)](#) indicate that challenges persist, especially when teaching strategies or support systems are inadequate. These differences show that writing competence is multifaceted, influenced by both instructional quality and student discipline. A holistic approach that blends technical skill development with emotional and motivational support is essential.

The Correlation Between Writing Attitude and Academic Writing Competence

This study confirmed a strong positive correlation between writing attitude and academic writing competence. Students with higher writing attitudes—especially those who valued writing and believed in their ability—tended to perform better across writing dimensions. Regression analysis further showed that improvement in writing attitude predicted better writing outcomes. These findings reinforce the effectiveness of the Process Writing Approach and Social Cognitive Theory, where writing is seen as both iterative and influenced by self-belief and feedback. Prior studies [Graham et al. \(2007\)](#) support this relationship, as do findings from [Rushidi \(2013\)](#), who emphasized the impact of media exposure and EAP programs on writing development. However, not all research agrees. [Floranti & Adiantika \(2021\)](#) found weaker correlations, suggesting other factors—like instructional design, feedback quality, or writing opportunities—may affect outcomes. Therefore, while attitude is important, writing competence is shaped by a combination of pedagogy, support systems, and student engagement. Effective writing programs must address both technical and emotional aspects of learning.

Exploring Factors Shaping Students' Attitudes Toward Academic Writing

Through focus group discussions, this study identified emotional, cognitive, and behavioral factors that shape students' attitudes toward academic writing ([Widana et al., 2023](#)). Affective aspects—such as writing anxiety, low confidence, and sensitivity to feedback—were the most influential. Although students acknowledged writing's value for academic success, these emotional barriers often hindered their engagement. This aligns with findings by [Bulqiyah et al. \(2021\)](#) and [Badrasawi et al. \(2016\)](#), who emphasized the role of emotional safety and writing self-efficacy. Cognitively, students displayed varied motivation levels. Those with clear goals and constructive feedback experiences were more engaged, while others felt discouraged by prior failure or vague critiques. Behaviorally, proactive writers with structured habits—like outlining or peer consultation—showed better outcomes. These findings are in line with [Suastra & Menggo \(2020\)](#), who found performance-based tasks improved writing attitudes and competence. Overall, the formation of writing attitude is complex, and affective responses remain central. As suggested by [Genç Ersoy & Göl Dede \(2022\)](#), engaging and motivational learning activities can transform students' perceptions of writing. Educators must create environments that reduce fear, foster feedback, and encourage reflective, independent writing habits.

Conclusion

This study examined the correlation between writing attitude and academic writing competence among English education students at state universities in Bengkulu City. The results showed that most students held positive attitudes toward writing, particularly in the cognitive domain, and demonstrated good to very good academic writing competence. A strong positive correlation was found between writing attitude and competence, indicating that students who value writing and believe in their abilities tend to perform better.

Students' attitudes were shaped by affective, cognitive, and behavioral factors, with emotional readiness—such as confidence and response to feedback—playing a key role in writing engagement. The use of process writing and constructive feedback, supported by a conducive academic environment, contributed to writing development.

The findings suggest that writing instruction should be holistic and student centered, integrating technical, cognitive, and emotional elements. Educators should promote process-based writing, peer collaboration, and digital tools to enhance engagement and independence. Institutions must also provide supportive, feedback-rich environments. Future research should explore these dynamics in diverse contexts, and policymakers should consider writing support programs to address writing anxiety and promote literacy.

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