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Exploring EFL students' motivation in essay writing through writing beliefs, self-efficacy, and attitudes: a case from Papua, Indonesia

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Abstract

Although writing motivation has been widely investigated, limited research has focused on the three elements of internal motivation: writing beliefs, self-efficacy, and attitudes, let alone in the Papuan context. This study explored 32 Papuan EFL undergraduate students' internal motivation in essay writing through a purposive sampling technique. This research adopted a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data. In collecting the quantitative data, a questionnaire was distributed through the Google Forms platform and analyzed using SPSS 26.0. Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain qualitative data and analyzed by reading the data transcription and listening to the data recording three times to gain more valid information about the students' internal motivation in writing. The findings revealed that most EFL students had realized the importance of writing (WB1; M=3.63). Some students also demonstrated self-efficacy as writers (SE1; M=3.67), while others still felt anxious during writing (SE4; 3.60). Furthermore, some participants had created a positive attitude toward writing, whereas others did not. This research offers pedagogical implications for the lecturers and educators to promote the importance of writing to their students, encourage them to increase their self-efficacy as writers, and create positive attitudes toward writing.

Keywords: essay writing; Papuan EFL students; self-efficacy; writing attitudes; writing beliefs; writing motivation

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Introduction

In the academic context, motivation has been considered one crucial element in determining the success of achievement in writing within English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) context (Baaijen et al., 2014; Bruning & Horn, 2000; Pajares, 2003). In other words, writing proficiency correlates significantly with motivation (Diasti & Mbato, 2020; Gazioğlu, 2019; Van Blankenstein et al., 2019). According to Dörnyei and Csizér (2002), motivation is one of the crucial elements in determining students' learning outcomes. It indicates that if students are highly motivated in writing, they can produce good pieces of writing (Goldburg, 2013; Mbato & Cendra, 2019; Siska et al., 2021). In this sense, motivation can lead and guide them to acquire writing proficiency (Ling et al., 2021; Wright et al., 2019). In other words, motivation is not only for encouraging students to learn but also for guiding them to achieve their goals (Salikin et al., 2017). Thus, it can be inferred that students should acquire the motivation to help them achieve their learning goals, especially in writing.

Several current studies tried to investigate students' motivation in writing by measuring three motivational elements: writing beliefs, self-efficacy, and attitudes. For example, White and Bruning (2005) conducted a study entitled the correlation between writing beliefs and motivation. They found that the students who perceived writing as an appropriate way to enhance their language skills would be more motivated in writing. Moreover, Bruning and Horn's (2000) findings revealed that many students who created and developed a negative attitude toward writing felt unmotivated in the process of writing. Meanwhile, Wright et al. (2020) emphasized that students often neglect writing activities because they are not confident in their writing abilities, especially in a

second language context. In line with this, Fareed et al. (2016) also found that many EFL students in Pakistan felt anxiety during writing, making them unable to pour down their ideas in the written language.

Furthermore, Shen et al. (2020) conducted a study regarding Hongkong EFL students' motivation in writing. The results suggested that many students were anxious and not interested in writing because they lacked practice and knowledge about grammar and vocabulary. Similarly, Toba et al. (2019) investigated Indonesian EFL students' motivation in writing and found that many students had a low level of writing motivation. In this sense, Indonesian EFL students tended to develop a negative attitude toward writing.

Other studies showed different results. For example, Yu et al. (2019) tried to explore Chinese EFL students' motivation in writing. This study collected data from 1190 EFL students at 35 Chinese universities. The results showed that the majority of the participants were motivated to write in English. It occurred because most of the students created positive attitudes toward writing. In this sense, they had a low level of anxiety and uncertain control in writing. In addition, another study by Aktaş and Akyol (2020) reported that Turkey students' motivation had a significant relationship with their self-efficacy as writers. They also found that many students in Turkey perceived writing as an important skill in achieving their language proficiency.

In such conditions, we were interested in investigating Papuan EFL students' internal motivation in essay writing by measuring these three motivational elements: writing beliefs, self-efficacy, and attitudes toward writing. We used these components because most existing studies did not cover these elements comprehensively in investigating EFL students' motivation in writing. For example, some studies only focused on students' writing beliefs (Baaijen et al., 2014; White & Bruning, 2005), writing beliefs and self-efficacy (Aktaş & Akyol, 2020; Shen et al., 2020; Pajares, 2003), self-efficacy and attitude toward writing (Van Blankenstein et al., 2019; Yu et al., 2019), attitude toward writing (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Gazioğlu, 2019; Göçen, 2019; Toba et al., 2019). On the other hand, only one study has investigated students' motivation in essay writing (Wilson & Czik, 2016). However, this study did not concern the EFL context. It focused on the role of teachers' feedback in enhancing students' motivation in essay writing in the USA context. Therefore, it was imperative to explore students' motivation in essay writing by measuring these three motivational elements in the EFL context.

Pertaining to these three internal motivational elements in writing, Baaijen et al. (2014) asserted that writing belief refers to the student's awareness of the importance of writing. In this case, students must believe that writing has good

value that can contribute to developing their capability. If the students realize that writing activity can improve their ability, they will keep engaging in it. Thus, they will be more motivated in writing (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Therefore, it can be deduced that students who want to produce a piece of writing should believe that writing will enable them to achieve English proficiency.

Meanwhile, self-belief generally refers to self-efficacy, as proposed by Bandura (1986). Shen et al. (2020) defined it as an individual's belief about him/herself as a writer. In this sense, if the students believe they have the ability to write, they will be able to accomplish a writing task (Van Blankenstein et al., 2019). According to Pajares (2003), self-efficacy is needed by students to keep their motivation on the right track. In line with this, Shah et al. (2011) asserted that students with high self-efficacy levels could successfully perform writing tasks. In other words, students with self-efficacy can motivate themselves to put more effort into writing (Wright et al., 2019). Therefore, Papuan EFL students should boost their self-confidence in order to succeed in the writing process.

Furthermore, an attitude refers to students' opinions and perceptions about writing. According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), students develop their attitudes toward writing based on their experiences and interpretation of those experiences. In line with this, Wright et al. (2019) emphasized that the students motivated in writing can be identified by looking at their attitudes toward writing. It indicates that motivated students develop positive attitudes toward writing (Setyowati & Sukmawan, 2016). In this case, a writing activity must be seen as useful, enjoyable, and essential for the students to enhance their writing skills (Conradi et al., 2014). Similarly, Göçen (2019) asserted that students who develop a negative attitude toward writing might be demotivated during writing. In other words, they cannot enjoy writing an essay or even escape from a writing activity (Graham et al., 1993). Thus, students who want to perform better in writing should develop positive attitudes.

In the context of ESL/EFL, writing is a crucial skill student must acquire. Rao and Durga (2018) emphasized that writing is an essential skill EFL students should obtain to support their academic lives and prepare them for a better future. It indicates that students will be enabled to improve their language proficiency through writing. In other words, writing can be an appropriate strategy to enlarge students' second language proficiency (Hyland, 2001; Tridinanti et al., 2020). Meanwhile, Gazioğlu (2019) asserted that writing is an essential skill that enables students to express themselves easily in another language. It also can enhance students' ability to communicate across time and place and broadens their horizons (Brown, 2007; Fareed et al., 2016; Wright et

al., 2019; 2020). Therefore, EFL students need to make some breakthroughs in developing their writing skills to acquire English proficiency quickly.

However, writing has been considered a difficult skill to be acquired (Göçen, 2019; Lahuerta, 2018; Mbato & Cendra, 2019; Miftah, 2015). According to Albertson and Billingsley (2001), writing is a skill developed slower and harder than other skills such as listening, reading, and speaking. It occurs because, in the writing process, a writer needs time, practice, experience, and strategy to pour down their ideas into a written language (Wijekumar et al., 2019). In line with this, Prastikawati et al. (2020) also claimed that writing is a complex skill that combines physical, cognitive, and affective competencies. It indicates that the students must be able to create an appropriate situation where they can freely transfer their ideas in writing (Baroudy, 2008). Moreover, they should regulate their emotion, build their imagination, and pour their knowledge into the written language during writing.

Furthermore, Tridinanti et al. (2020) asserted that writing contains psychological, linguistic, and cognitive problems that can make the students feel difficult to write. Psychological problems in writing refer to students' attitudes toward writing, such as anxiety, low confidence, nervousness, and negative expectation during writing (Driscoll & Powell, 2016). Meanwhile, Linguistic problems are linked to linguistic features, such as structure, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling (Prastikawati et al., 2020; Wijekumar et al., 2019). Furthermore, cognitive problems related to students' ability to write down their feelings, experiences, perceptions, and knowledge in written language (Fareed et al., 2016; Miftah, 2015).

In addition, Pranowo (2018) argues that there is no writing tradition in some areas, specifically in the Indonesian context. In this case, Indonesian people historically communicate with others by speaking (oral tradition). Thus, Indonesian EFL students tend to avoid writing activities. In other words, Indonesian students do not develop a habit of writing (Syafii & Miftah, 2020). It is one of the reasons why Indonesian students have a low level of literacy skills compared with other countries (Yantoro, 2021). Consequently, many EFL students need help to pour their ideas into written language or even escape from writing activities.

Some evidence shows that Papuan students have low literacy skills in the Papuan context. It is proven based on the results of the Human Development Index (HDI) in 2017, which stated that literacy in Papua was the lowest ranking compared to other provinces in Indonesia (Indramawan, 2018). Similarly, in 2017 the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) found that Papuan students still had the lowest literacy skills (Triyanto, 2019). It indicates that

Papuan students still need to improve their literacy skills effectively. Therefore, Papuan EFL students should build up their motivation to enhance their literacy skills, specifically writing proficiency, in this context.

As indicated above that the literacy skills of Papuan students were the lowest compared to other provinces in Indonesia. So far, studies have yet to investigate these three motivational elements in the Papuan context. Therefore, a study was needed to fill the gap by studying Papuan EFL students' motivation in essay writing by measuring students' writing beliefs, self-efficacy, and attitudes holistically. One research question was formulated, "To what extent do Papuan EFL students have the motivation in essay writing encompassing writing belief, self-efficacy, and writing attitude?" It was undeniable that this study would provide more comprehensive data on Papuan EFL students' motivation in essay writing, particularly at the university level.

Method

Research design

This research adopted a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data. According to Creswell (2014), a mixed method is a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, which are collected, analyzed, and identified discretely, whose results will be compared to one another to determine whether they are related or unrelated. This study used this method to analyze and compare the situations from the quantitative and qualitative data. Thus, the data would be richer to be analyzed and reported.

Participants

The participants of this research were 32 undergraduate students majoring in English education from a university in Timika, Papua, Indonesia. They consisted of 15 students who were taking an Academic Essay Writing class in the fourth semester, and 17 who finished that class participated in this study. These participants were selected through the purposive sampling technique. According to Creswell (2014), the purposive sampling technique is used to choose the participants based on their experiences and knowledge in a certain context. In selecting the participants, it used two types of criteria. Firstly, the participants had to have experience in writing an essay. Secondly, the participants were still taking an Academic Essay Writing class or had finished that class. Therefore, they could give valid responses based on their writing

experiences.

Furthermore, in conducting semi-structured interviews, we distributed a consent form to determine the participants' willingness to contribute to the interview section. Six participants agreed to be interviewed in this study. We employed abbreviations in the interview section to conceal the participants' identities. In this case, Student 1 was abbreviated to St.1; Student 2 was abbreviated to St.2; and so on. The demographic data of the participants can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic data of the participants

Socio demographics items	Details	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	9	28.1
	Female	23	71.9
Semester	Fourth	15	46.9
	Sixth	8	25
	Eighth	6	18.8
	Tenth	2	6.3
	Twelfth	1	3.1

Research instruments

In this study, we employed two instruments in collecting the data: a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. There were 15 questions in the questionnaire that consisted of three components of motivation in writing, namely, writing belief (WB), self-efficacy (SE), and attitude toward writing (SA). The questionnaire on writing beliefs contained five statements: (1) "writing is very important for me," (2) "I am aware of the importance of writing in enhancing my English skills," (3) "I can improve my English skills by writing," (4) "writing an essay can make me think critically," and (5) "I must develop my writing skills."

Moreover, the questionnaire on self-efficacy comprised five statements: (1) "I believe that I can produce a good piece of essay writing," (2) "when writing an essay, it is easy for me to get started," (3) "it is easy for me to write my ideas into good sentences," (4) "I tend to feel anxious while writing an essay", and (5) "it is hard for me to correct my mistake in essay writing." Similarly, the questionnaire on students' attitudes toward writing consisted of 5 statements: (1) "I like writing the most," (2) "I usually write whenever I want," (3) "writing is an enjoyable activity for me," (4) "writing is not a waste of time," and (5) "writing is a stressful activity for me."

In providing all the statements in the questionnaire, we used abbreviations

to categorize them. In this case, statement 1 for writing belief was abbreviated to WB1, statement 2 for self-efficacy was abbreviated to SE2, statement 3 for writing attitude was abbreviated to SA3, and so on. The questionnaire on writing beliefs was adopted from Eccles et al. (2006). Meanwhile, the questionnaire on self-efficacy and self-attitude was adapted and adopted from Graham et al. (1993). They measured this questionnaire to find out its validity and reliability. The results indicated that this questionnaire was reliable (Cronbach's alpha = .84) and valid to be used.

However, we did not use all the questionnaire items in this study but adapted some to suit the EFL context. In this sense, the questionnaire on self-efficacy from Graham et al. (1993) consisted of seven items. Yet, two items were eliminated because they were irrelevant to the EFL context. These statements were: (1) it is for me to pour down my ideas in the first language, and (2) it is easy for me to criticize them in the first language. On the other hand, the questionnaire on self-attitudes was adopted without modification. Therefore, we needed to re-measure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire in this study.

According to Cresswell (2014), the questionnaire is valid if the score of the R Table is less than the score of the R Count. In this case, 32 participants contributed to this study, so R Table was .374. After calculating the data in SPSS, the score of the R Count was higher than R Table, which was around .451 up to .732. Thus, it could be inferred that all the questions were valid and could be employed in this study.

Furthermore, According to Zohrabi (2013), the reliability of the questionnaire must be measured to determine how far the measurement results are still consistent if measurements are taken twice or more against the same symptoms. In this sense, the questionnaire is reliable if the score of Cronbach's Alpha is bigger than Cronbach's Alpha standardization (0.6). After measuring the questionnaire's reliability, the result indicated that the total score of all statements was bigger than Cronbach's Alpha standardization. Consequently, each statement in the questionnaire was reliable and could be used in this study as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Reliability statistics

Cronbach's alpha standardization	Cronbach's alpha	N of items
0.6	0.830	15

In addition, we employed a Likert-scale questionnaire from 1 to 5 degrees to measure Papuan EFL students' motivation in essay writing. It consisted of

"strongly agree" (5), "agree" (4), "neutral" (3), "disagree" (2), and "strongly disagree" (1).

Before conducting semi-structured interviews, we analyzed the quantitative data from the questionnaire to obtain the results on participants' writing beliefs, self-efficacy, and attitudes toward writing. The interview questions were then formulated based on these results. Thus, six questions were employed in the interview section. These questions comprised two questions about writing beliefs, two about self-efficacy, and two about students' attitudes.

Data collection

In this study, a questionnaire was employed to collect the quantitative data. It was used to gain empirical information through the participants' numerical data regarding their essay-writing experiences. In this case, the quantitative data from the questionnaire enabled us to get basic knowledge or general information from the participants' experiences in essay writing.

After getting the permission letter from the principal, we used mobile WhatsApp to contact the head of the English study program to ask about his willingness to allow us to conduct this study. Before gathering data from the participants, we distributed a consent form to determine whether they agreed to participate in this study. Moreover, we used Google Forms to share the questionnaire with the participants through the head of the English study program. Participants were given two weeks to complete the questionnaire, from April 16th to 30th, 2022. After obtaining the quantitative data from the questionnaire, we tabulated it in descriptive statistics and provided it as a percentage. We then used these results to formulate questions for the interviews.

Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain specific information by focusing more on exploring participants' experiences. In other words, the qualitative data from the interviews enabled us to put ourselves in another person's shoes to understand the participants' subjective experiences. Thus, we could envisage the actual situations the participants encountered.

Before conducting semi-structured interviews, we contacted each participant personally to allocate interview time. After setting the time, each participant was interviewed through WhatsApp. During the interviews, the researcher recorded them and used the Indonesian language, so the participants could understand the questions and give their responses freely. Before interviewing each participant, the researcher briefly explained this study's purpose and the mechanism in the interviews section. Furthermore, the researcher asked general questions (e.g., participant's willingness to be

interviewed, name, semester, and age) to specific questions (their writing beliefs, self-efficacy, and attitudes toward writing). During the interviews, the researcher took notes to highlight the important points based on their answers and re-questioned them to gain more information regarding their experiences in writing an essay. Each interview section lasted 25 to 45 minutes, and it took around one week to finish interviewing six participants. The results of the interviews were then transcribed into structured paragraphs to analyze.

Data analysis

In analyzing quantitative data from the questionnaire, we gathered and put the data into an excel file. The data were then analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS26.0) to gauge all statements' mean score and standard deviation. The method that was used to measure the mean score was descriptive analysis. After that, we categorized the mean score of all statements based on five groups, starting from very low to very high. Thus, the range of mean scores were "1.00 to 1.80" (very low), "1.81ward to 2.60" (low), "2.61 to 3.40" (moderate), "3.41 to 4.20" (high) and "4.21 to 5.00" (very high) as suggested by Creswell (2014).

Meanwhile, in analyzing the qualitative data from the interview, we read the data transcription that was made previously and listened to the data recording three times to become familiar with the data and enable them to capture the whole meaning so that the results could be reported correctly. In reporting the results of qualitative data, we established the trustworthiness of the data by employing three main criteria: credibility, transferability, and confirmability (Zohrabi, 2013). In this case, we triangulated the qualitative data by comparing a participant's answers to another regarding their experience in the writing process. Thus, the findings were credible.

In addition, we compared the participants' responses to other contexts with similar situations or phenomena. It indicated that the findings were applicable or transferable to other contexts. Finally, the results from the interview were reported based on the participant's responses to the questions without adding further interpretation from us. Consequently, the findings were confirmable.

Findings

In this part, we provided the results of quantitative and qualitative data regarding the aim of this study. This study aimed to explore Papuan EFL students' motivation in essay writing that was measured based on the three

internal motivational elements: writing beliefs, self-beliefs, and writing attitudes. Therefore, we divided it into three subtopics consisting of Papuan EFL students' writing beliefs, Papuan EFL students' self-efficacy, and Papuan EFL students' attitudes toward writing.

Papuan EFL students' writing beliefs

Five statements have been employed to measure students' awareness of the importance of writing. Table 3 displays the results of students' awareness of the importance of writing.

Table 3

Participants' responses to their writing beliefs

Code	Statement	Frequency					LI*	Mean	SD*
		SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)			
WB1	Writing is very important for me	6.3	12.5	18.8	37.5	25	H*	3.63	1.217
WB2	I am aware of the importance of essay writing in enhancing my English skills	18.8	9.4	25	25	21.9	M*	3.30	1.393
WB3	I can improve my English skills by writing	9.4	28.1	25	28.1	9.4	M*	3.10	1.125
WB4	Writing an essay can make me think critically	12.5	9.4	12.5	28.1	37.5	H*	3.87	1.252
WB5	I must develop my writing skill	6.3	3.1	12.5	46.9	31.3	M*	2.97	1.098
	Total	10.6	12.5	18.76	33.12	25.2	M*	3.37	1.217

Note. SD= Strongly Disagree; D=Disagree; N=Neutral; A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree; LI*=Level Interpretation; H*=High; M*=Moderate; SD*=Standard Deviation

Table 3 shows that all the statements had good results. In this case, the mean score of each statement was at a moderate and high level. Three statements were at a moderate level, such as WB2 (M=3.30), WB3 (M=3.10), and WB5 (M=2.97), while two statements had high results. The first one was from statement WB4, in which they believed writing an essay could make them think critically (37.5%, M=3.87). Secondly, the participants also perceived that writing was very important (WB1, 25%, M=3.63). This finding gained support in the interview section. One student claimed that:

Writing an essay is very important because, in the process of writing, we usually try to compare and contrast theory and reality. This is very useful for us in enhancing our critical thinking skills. (St.1)

Another student also gave his opinion:

In my opinion, writing is very important in academic life. As students, we are demanded to produce a good piece of writing, especially essay writing, to support our future carrier. We can think critically to pour our ideas and thoughts into written language by writing. (St.3)

Based on those arguments, the participant's awareness of the importance of writing had been appropriately created. In other words, they realized that writing had a good value for developing language proficiency. Thus, they became motivated to improve their writing skill. One participant clarified that:

I believe that writing an essay can be useful for me in achieving English proficiency. Therefore, I always encourage and motivate myself to create writing habits to produce good writing. (St. 6)

The above data show that most participants believed that writing an essay plays a crucial role in shaping their critical thinking skills. In other words, they believed that writing could activate the ways to think more comprehensively in sharing their ideas with the readers in written language. The results also suggested that the participants had perceived that writing activity could contribute to developing their English proficiency. Therefore, the participants tried to encourage themselves to be more motivated in writing by perceiving writing activities had good values that would support them for better future careers. The more they believed that writing activity would benefit their careers, the more motivated they became in writing.

Papuan EFL students' self-efficacy

We employed five statements to measure students' essay writing self-efficacy. The results can be viewed in Table 4.

Table 4 shows that only some participants had good self-efficacy as writers. It can be proven based on the mean score of three statements at a moderate level (SE2, SE3, and SE5). It indicated that some participants felt it easy to write an essay (SE2 and SE3), while others did not (SE5). Moreover, the findings also suggested that most participants strongly agreed with two statements (SE1 and SE4). From statement SE1, it can be seen that some participants believed that they could produce a good piece of writing (28.1%, M=3.67). This result was

also supported by one of them in the interview section. He admitted that:

Writing an essay is not a piece of cake to be produced, but I still need to produce a good piece of writing. As a writer, I believe in my writing skills. When I can pour down my ideas in terms of written language, I can do it, even though it is difficult. (St. 4)

Table 4

Participants' responses to their self-efficacy

Code	Statement	Frequency					LI*	Mean	SD*
		SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)			
SE1	I believe that I have the ability to produce a good piece of essay writing	6.3	12.5	28.1	25	28.1	H*	3.67	1.155
SE2	When writing an essay, it is easy for me to get started	21.9	21.9	31.3	15.6	9.4	M*	2.80	1.218
SE3	It is easy for me to write my ideas into good sentences.	18.8	9.4	21.9	25	25	M*	3.37	1.426
SE4	I tend to feel anxious while writing an essay.	12.5	12.5	12.5	34.4	28.1	H*	3.60	1.329
SE5	It is hard for me to correct my mistakes in essay writing.	12.5	15.6	28.1	25	18.8	M*	3.37	1.189
	Total	13.5	16.5	23.5	25	21.5	M*	3.36	1.254

Note. SD= Strongly Disagree; D=Disagree; N=Neutral; A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree; LI*=Level Interpretation; H*=High; M*=Moderate; SD*=Standard Deviation

On the other hand, the result from statement SE4 also suggested that some participants tended to feel anxious while writing an essay (28.1%, M=3.60). It indicated that they did not believe in their writing ability as writers. One participant shared that:

For me, writing an essay in English is very difficult. I am not confident in writing because I have little vocabulary that can be used in essay writing, and I do not get used to writing an essay; that's why I tend to ignore it. (St.3)

Based on the data from the above excerpt, it can be viewed that some participants still doubted their writing abilities. According to the participants, two main reasons made them unconfident in writing: lack of vocabulary and not having writing habits. These reasons also made them unmotivated during writing. Consequently, they needed help to produce a good piece of writing. On

the other hand, the results also revealed that some participants believed in themselves as writers. In this sense, they believed that they could produce a good piece of writing. Although they admitted that writing an essay was difficult to do, specifically for pouring down their ideas, they did not directly doubt their writing abilities. It indicated that they had self-efficacy as writers. When the participants had self-efficacy as writers, they would make breakthroughs to find appropriate strategies to help them accomplish essay writing. In other words, they would make a good essay by looking for and using suitable techniques to overcome their writing difficulties. Thus, it can be concluded that some students who already had self-efficacy as writers could produce a good piece of writing. In contrast, others who did not believe in themselves as writers would be demotivated during writing.

Papuan EFL students' attitudes toward writing

Five statements were employed to measure students' attitudes toward writing. The results can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5

Participants' responses to their attitudes toward writing

Code	Statement	Frequency					LI*	Mean	SD*
		SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)			
SA1	I like writing the most	6.3	15.6	15.6	37.5	25	H*	3.60	1.189
SA2	I usually write whenever I want	12.5	9.4	18.8	46.9	12.5	M*	3.40	1.248
SA3	Writing is an enjoyable activity for me	21.9	25	18.8	21.9	12.5	M*	2.77	1.205
SA4	Writing is not a waste of time	12.5	9.4	9.4	21.9	46.9	H*	3.97	1.273
SA5	Writing is a stressful activity for me	6.3	3.1	18.8	53.1	18.8	H*	3.83	.913
	Total	11.6	12.5	16.2	36.2	23.5	H*	3.51	1.185

Note. SD= Strongly Disagree; D=Disagree; N=Neutral; A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree; LI*=Level Interpretation; H*=High; M*=Moderate; SD*=Standard Deviation

As shown in Table 5, three statements had a high mean score level, namely statements SA4, SA5, and SA1. This finding was similar to the percentage of all statements. In Table 5, it shows that 46.9% of the participants strongly agreed with statement SA4, i.e., writing was not a waste of time (M=3.97). Another

statement with a high percentage level was statement SA1, where the participants strongly agreed that they liked writing so much (25%, M=3.60). It indicated that the participants had created a positive attitude toward writing. When they were interviewed, one participant asserted that:

Writing is critical to me. When I was in Senior High School, I was taught by my English teachers to pour down my thoughts or ideas in notes. So, I usually write down my feelings, emotions, or the phenomena I face. It has become a habit that cannot be separated from my life. This is the same way I usually do when I become an EFL student. It is very beneficial for me in helping me to write an essay. (St.6)

However, another result also revealed that writing was stressful for them (SM5). This statement's percentage and mean score were high enough (18.8%, M=3.83). It implied that some participants still showed a negative attitude toward essay writing. One participant in the interview section supported this finding. He emphasized that:

When I want to write an essay, I need to learn how to start it. There are many ideas in my mind, but I cannot pour them down in terms of written language. You know, it is hard for me to figure it out. (St.3)

Based on the above excerpt, only some participants had a good attitude toward writing. Some had it, but some did not. Since one participant claimed that he found difficulties pouring down his ideas into written language, it indicated that he perceived writing as a stressful activity. When students assumed that writing was boring activity, they would not put more effort into it. This situation could also decrease their motivation in the process of writing. Thus, they could not maximize their own products of writing. On the contrary, those students who perceived writing as an enjoyable activity would be more motivated to write down their ideas in written language. Besides, they would consider that writing was not a waste of time. By perceiving so, they would enjoy doing writing activities, even though they encounter some difficulties in the process of writing. Thus, they could produce a good piece of essay writing.

Discussion

This part discusses the findings to determine the relationship between previous studies and Papuan EFL students' motivation in essay writing in the current study. The findings of Papuan EFL students' writing beliefs revealed that two statements had a high mean score level: statements WB4 and WB1 (see Table 3).

Statement WB4 suggested that most participants in this study believed in the contribution of essay writing to their critical thinking (65.6%; M=3.87). This finding differed from Amrous and Nejmaoui's (2016) study, which found that most Moroccan EFL students were still unaware of the importance of writing for enhancing their critical thinking. Similarly, Pei et al. (2017) study showed that some Chinese EFL students had not perceived writing activity as a strategy to enhance their critical thinking skills. It indicated that EFL students who have not realized that writing is beneficial to maximize their critical thinking skills would not put more effort into their work. This statement was supported by Moon (2008), who claimed that motivated students could evaluate their works critically. In line with this, Albertson and Billingsley (2001) asserted that writing essays could trigger students to think more comprehensively about their ideas. In this sense, when students pour down their ideas in the written language, they should analyze, criticize and judge their writing products (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017; Miftah, 2015). Thus, it could activate their critical thinking skills.

Meanwhile, the finding from statement WB1 showed that most participants believed that writing was very important for them (62.5%; M=3.63). Their statements in the interview section underpinned this finding. They shared that writing was beneficial for developing their English skills. It indicated that they were aware of the importance of essay writing in enhancing their English proficiency (WB2; M=3.30) and their writing skills in English (WB4; M=3.10). However, it was undeniable that some participants were still unaware of the importance of writing. It could be viewed from the total percentage score of strongly disagree responses (10.6%; see Table 3). Therefore, it can be inferred that not all the participants realized that writing an essay could be beneficial for them in achieving English proficiency. These findings were similar to Akyol and Aktaş (2018) and Wright et al.'s. (2020) studies found that students who perceived writing as having a good value in achieving language proficiency became more engaged in the writing activity, while others who did not perceive writing as having good value would be demotivated in the writing process. This statement was also underpinned by Eccles and Wigfield (2002), who emphasized that students' awareness of the importance of writing could trigger them to be motivated and successful in writing. In this case, when the students were aware of the importance of writing, they would put more effort into producing a good piece of writing (Conradi et al., 2014; Driscoll & Powell, 2016). Thus, their writing skills and language proficiency could be enhanced automatically.

In writing an essay, EFL students also needed self-efficacy to boost their confidence in producing their writing products. Based on the findings, two

statements had a high mean score level: statements SE1 and SE4 (see Table 4). As indicated in statement SE1, the participants believed they could produce good writing ($M=3.67$). It indicated that they were confident in writing an essay, even though the writing was often assumed to be a problematic activity. This finding was similar to Aktaş and Akyol's (2020) study, which found that writing motivation significantly correlates with EFL students' self-efficacy. On the hand, Diasti and Mbato, (2020) found that EFL students with a high level of motivation would be more confident in writing. This statement was underpinned by Bandura (1986), who stated that the more students had a high self-efficacy level, the more motivated they were. In this sense, EFL students with a high self-efficacy level would be able to keep their motivation on the right track (Pajares, 2003). Consequently, they would put more effort into writing and producing a good piece.

However, the findings also showed that some participants felt anxious while writing an essay (SE4; $M=3.60$). In the interview section, the participants also confirmed that they needed more vocabulary and practice to write an essay. This finding was similar to Fareed et al. (2016) and Shen et al.'s. (2020) studies. These studies showed that students' lack of vocabulary and practice made them unconfident in the writing process and could also decrease their writing motivation. In other words, anxiety makes the students feel unconfident and demotivated to produce a piece of writing (Siska et al., 2021). According to Nugroho et al. (2020), anxiety derives from the fear of making a mistake or one's inability to trust himself as a writer. Therefore, Papuan EFL students who were still anxious while writing should build their self-confidence to be more motivated and successful in writing.

Pertaining to Papuan EFL students' attitudes toward writing, the results revealed that only some participants demonstrated a positive attitude toward writing. Some participants perceived writing was worth the time (SA4; $M=3.97$) because they liked writing the most (SA1; $M=3.60$). Therefore, they usually wrote whenever they wanted (SA2; $M=3.40$). Furthermore, they also perceived writing as an enjoyable activity (SA3; $M=2.77$). This finding was similar to Yu et al. (2019) and Setyowati and Sukmawan's (2016) studies which found that many EFL students had created a positive attitude toward writing because they assumed writing was an enjoyable activity. This finding was supported by Graham et al. (1993), who claimed that if students assume that writing is a fun activity because of a good score in writing, then they will enjoy and keep trying to do the writing activity, even though they might face difficulties during writing. Thus, Papuan EFL students who perceived writing as enjoyable would be able to produce a powerful piece of writing.

On the contrary, the results also suggested that some tended to create a negative attitude toward writing. Those students claimed that writing was stressful (SA5; M=3.83). This finding was similar to Toba et al.'s. (2019) study found that many EFL students in Indonesia tended to develop a negative attitude toward writing. Therefore, they were unmotivated to write an essay. According to Gazioğlu (2019), EFL students who had created a positive attitude toward writing could display better writing performance than those who had created a negative attitude. In line with this, Göçen (2019) emphasized that EFL students who develop a negative attitude toward writing might be demotivated during writing. It indicates that they cannot enjoy writing essays (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Graham et al., 1993; Toba et al., 2019). In other words, EFL students who develop a negative attitude toward writing based on bad experiences might assume writing activity as a burden and tend to escape from it (Miftah, 2015). Consequently, they might be demotivated during the writing process and could not produce good writing.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore Indonesian EFL students' motivation in essay writing, particularly in the Papuan context, by measuring three internal motivational elements: writing beliefs, self-efficacy, and writing attitudes. Concerning writing beliefs, the results revealed that only some participants had realized the importance of writing for enhancing their writing skills and language proficiency. Moreover, the findings also revealed that some students had a good level of self-efficacy as writers, but others did not. In other words, some students believed they could produce a good essay, while others still felt anxious and doubted their ability in the writing process. Similarly, the results from students' attitudes toward writing also showed a balance between positive and negative. In this case, some students showed positive attitudes toward writing, while others developed negative ones.

Consequently, this study offers pedagogical implications and suggestions for lecturers and educators to promote the importance of writing to their students to be more aware of the benefits of writing. Moreover, they should be able to find and use appropriate strategies to encourage students to increase their self-efficacy as writers to reduce their anxiety level in the writing process. Furthermore, lecturers and educators need to motivate their students to create a positive attitude toward writing by not perceiving writing activity as a burden. Accordingly, EFL students will become more motivated in writing.

However, this study has several limitations. Firstly, it was limited to a small number of participants. In this sense, the participants consisted of one program study and only covered some students. Secondly, we did not observe EFL students' situations directly and relied on reported data. Thirdly, we should have investigated the students' external motivation in essay writing. Therefore, future researchers should employ more participants and observe them directly as they engage in writing to gain more valid data that can contribute to the larger population of Indonesian EFL students at the university level.

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