
**Predictors of Writing Skills and Learners' Writing Proficiency in Salay District,
Division of Misamis Oriental**

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Abstract. Effective writing skills are fundamental across various disciplines and careers. This study examined the predictors of writing skills and proficiency among Grade 10 learners in Salay District, Misamis Oriental, during the School Year 2023-2024. Specifically, this aimed to determine the respondents' level of assessment on the predictors of writing skills and the relationship between these factors and learners' writing proficiency. This study utilized the descriptive-correlational research method. Two-hundred fifty (250) Grade 10 students in Salay District were assessed during the School Year 2023-2024. A researcher-modified questionnaire was used to gather data on predictors of writing skills. Statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage were used to categorize participants based on these factors. Inferential Statistics such as Pearson (r) Moment Correlation was used to test the significant relationship between the predictors of writing skills and the learners' writing proficiency in areas like content, organization, and mechanics and grammar. Findings indicate that all four predictors have high level of assessment and exhibited positive correlations with writing proficiency. The mean scores for both persuasive and argumentative essays were proficient, suggesting overall effectiveness in writing instruction. In conclusion, the feedback system emerged as the strongest predictor. The quality of the content stood out, particularly in persuasive and argumentative essays, which all reached a proficient level. Recommendations include fostering a positive environment in addressing student motivation to further enhance writing proficiency and the provision of curriculum materials to enhance learners' mechanics and grammar skills and essay organization.

Keywords: predictors of writing skills, writing proficiency

Introduction

Writing serves as a powerful tool for students to express their thoughts, feelings, and insights. It fosters communication and self-expression, but it is also a complex skill. Schools heavily rely on essays and other writing forms, using them for assessment and as a tool for student development. Writing assessments allow teachers to gauge student learning and pinpoint areas needing additional support. Despite its importance, many students struggle with organizing their thoughts, expressing ideas clearly, and following grammar rules. This highlights the need for effective writing instruction to equip students with this fundamental skill.

Research shows that many students struggle with writing. Based on the 2018 National Achievement Test (NAT) result, only 33.7% of the students were proficient in writing. Moreover, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 result showed that the Philippines was among the lowest-performing nations, with only 10% of students achieving at least Level 2 proficiency—the level at which students are able to write clear and concise texts to communicate their ideas and perspectives to a variety of audiences. Students who struggle to write frequently have difficulty expressing their ideas clearly in-class assignments, and they may also struggle on standardized tests, which can lead to lower grades, frustration, and even a loss of confidence.

There are a number of predictors that can influence students' writing skills, including their reading comprehension skills, their vocabulary development, their motivation to write,

and their access to writing resources. Sarwat et al. (2021) identified a number of factors that hinder students' ability to develop their writing skills in English, such as low student motivation, a lack of writing time, practice reading and writing, inadequate feedback and comments on students' written work, a lack of facilities and teaching resources, crowded classrooms, ineffective teaching methods, and students' social backgrounds.

Motivation has a significant influence on the growth of students' writing skills (Akyol & Aktaş, 2018). It is regarded as the most important factor in the development of writing skills because motivated students show a greater interest in writing, which motivates them to write more, as well as a keen interest in honing their writing skills. Furthermore, Dema (2022) emphasized the importance of motivation in writing, indicating that if teachers exhibit their writing skills, it will boost students' motivation in writing. Students should be given the opportunity to concentrate on learning because writing is often an intrinsically social activity that is done for readers to understand (Dhanya, 2019).

A nurturing environment is crucial to the process of language acquisition because it helps students effectively express their thoughts and ideas. Teachers can reduce behavioral issues in the classroom by creating a supportive learning environment. Vacalares et al. (2023) asserted that a stimulating environment that encourages students to write and supports their learning is necessary to deliver writing abilities. Through writing, teachers can spot and correct students' errors right away, providing constructive feedback that helps them improve their writing skills. For this reason, students need to consistently practice writing in a supportive learning environment in order to succeed academically and professionally.

A growing body of research indicates that the teacher-student relationship has a significant impact on students' writing development. For instance, Blackmore (2018) found that learner-centered environments that emphasized positive relationships between teachers and students had a significant positive impact on students' writing skills and self-esteem. Bah (2020) looked into the specific behaviors of teachers that are linked to students' writing achievement. The results of their study showed that teachers' strong subject mastery and effective questioning strategies had a positive effect on students' learning outcomes in English grammar, highlighting the importance of teacher competence in fostering students' writing development.

Teacher's feedback on students' output can provide powerful examples in writing. According to Alemalu (2019), feedback helps in mastery of the skills for most of the students. Feedback mechanisms can misfire if they do not comply with some basic rules, like being objective, positively worded, and unbiased. Providing explicit instruction on grammar and vocabulary, addressing writing anxiety, and providing effective feedback can help improve writing skills.

Research on predictors of writing skills and learners' writing proficiency can shed light on the elements that go into successful writing, which can then be used to identify students who might need more support and to design more effective teaching and learning strategies. This study intends to determine the respondents' assessment on the predictors of writing skills and the level of writing proficiency among Grade 10 students. The variables in this study include motivation, the relationship between the teacher and the student, the learning environment, the feedback system, and grammar. The results of this study offer insightful information about the variables that affect learners' writing skills and proficiency, which will help create more efficient teaching and learning strategies.

Literature Review

Predictors of Writing Skills

Writing is not only a prerequisite for academic success but also a necessary skill for success after tertiary education. It is one of the most important skills that students should learn. Writing presents many challenges for students, but it also allows them to express themselves more clearly and allows teachers to identify their mistakes in real-time. Numerous factors influence writing for both students and teachers in this writing process, including student motivation, a supportive and stimulating environment that is conducive to writing, a positive and healthy relationship between teachers and students, and effective, consistent, constructive feedback from teachers.

Motivation

A student's own motivation to learn and improve is paramount. When students see the value of writing and have a strong desire to develop their skills, they're more likely to put in the necessary effort (Dhanya, 2019). Students with high levels of motivation do well in both learning and writing and achieve good results. Students with low levels of motivation find writing difficult and also feel failure. Motivation increases interest in writing, encourages writing, participates in class activities, and shows a desire to improve writing abilities.

Nguyen (2021) claimed that motivation, writing anxiety, and writing strategies were significant predictors of writing performance. According to Dörfler et al. (2019), motivation—more specifically, mastery goals and perceived task value—significantly predicted writing performance in older students. Wang & Troia (2023) showed that motivation significantly predicted writing performance in Chinese university students along with self-efficacy and learning strategies.

Moreover, Lin (2021) examined the beneficial effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on Chinese students' writing achievement. Intrinsic motivation is the desire to write for pleasure, self-expression, and knowledge acquisition; extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is the result of external factors like grades, teacher approval, or rewards. Lin's research indicates that both types of motivation are beneficial in helping students succeed in their writing endeavors.

Alves-Wold et al. (2023) found that students' motivation varies based on their ability levels in a systematic review focused on student-reported writing motivation. Interestingly, the study also discovered a positive correlation between students' self-efficacy beliefs and their actual writing performance, with performance changes influencing motivation levels. It is challenging for students to develop their English writing skills (Sarwat et al., 2021). These challenges include low student motivation, a lack of writing time, practice reading and writing, inadequate feedback and comments on students' written work, a lack of facilities and teaching resources, crowded classrooms, ineffective teaching methods, and students' social backgrounds.

Dema (2022) asserted that motivation is the capacity to be consistently interested in and committed to writing, and it is essential for both igniting and sustaining students' interest in writing. The teacher needs to identify the student who lacks motivation and provide continuous writing practice to improve his or her writing ability. He further stated that motivation is the capacity to be consistently interested in and committed to writing, and it is essential for both igniting and sustaining students' interest in writing.

Wang and Troia (2023) further argued that while student motivation to write is a significant factor influencing their writing achievement, individual motivation to write is not independent of the learning environment. Therefore, teachers must improve their own efficacy, knowledge, and ability in writing and writing instruction in order to support teachers in

implementing effective instructional strategies that further encourage students' writing achievement and stimulate their motivation to write.

Teacher-Learner Relationship

A positive teacher-learner relationship is a cornerstone of effective education. It not only enhances the learning experience but also contributes to the holistic development of students. A study by Alemalu (2019) showed that getting along with your teacher is important for learning new things. Teachers play a big part in making that happen. The more students talk to their teachers, the more they can learn together. Furthermore, Boodram-Wright (2023) said that positive teacher-student relationships are crucial, as evidenced by studies showing that these relationships lead to students being more cooperative, and engaged and achieving higher standards in math and reading, as well as exhibiting better social skills.

Teachers play a significant role in education by assisting students in achieving their goals. Bah (2020) found that effective questioning behaviors and the teacher's expertise in the subject matter were important predictors of students' achievement in English grammar. In addition, studies by Alqahtani and Chen (2020) highlighted the importance of a growth mindset and positive teacher-student relations in boosting student motivation and engagement in language learning and writing activities. This implies that creating a safe and encouraging environment where students feel at ease taking chances and learning from their mistakes is essential for effective writing development.

A strong teacher-learner relationship serves as a cornerstone for developing effective writing skills by fostering a supportive and encouraging learning environment. Aasheim and Tangen's (2022) thorough review further solidifies this connection by demonstrating the significant impact of teacher-learner relationships on student learning, motivation, and engagement in various subjects, including writing. This finding emphasizes the importance of providing teachers with professional development opportunities that will help them refine their relationship-building skills.

According to Wang and Troia (2023), which looked specifically at the role of teacher-student relationships in supporting the writing development of English language learners, positive relationships offer critical scaffolding and contribute to improved writing skills and language acquisition. This emphasizes the importance of adjusting instruction and support to meet the needs of diverse learners, especially those who are learning a new language.

Eren and Rakıcioğlu-Söylemez (2020) found that strong relationships encouraged motivation and achievement in foreign language learners, highlighting the significance of this dynamic beyond traditional language acquisition. These studies, along with others, suggest that a supportive and trusting relationship with a teacher goes beyond technical instruction. It fosters a growth mindset, allows for more effective feedback, and creates a safe space for expression.

Learning Environment

Writing abilities are strongly predicted by the home and school learning environments, with the school learning environment having a greater influence (Choi, 2018). Writing abilities are also predicted by the interaction between the home and school learning environments. Creating supportive classroom environments has been shown to reduce behavior problems and give students the chance to concentrate on learning, which is important because writing is frequently an inherently social activity frequently done for readers to understand. Dhanya (2019) found that a positive learning environment is very important for language learning. In other words, the way one learns a language matters a lot. According to Zhang and Wang's (2019) meta-analysis, the learning environment has a moderate effect size but a significant impact on writing skills. The authors found that three important aspects of the learning

environment were most predictive of writing skills: teacher support, peer collaboration, and resource access.

Vacalares et al. (2023) asserted that writing abilities can only be developed in a stimulating environment that supports learning and encourages students to write. Since writing allows teachers to identify and correct students' errors immediately, students can improve their writing skills with the help of constructive feedback from teachers. As a result, students must regularly practice writing in a supportive learning environment if they are to succeed academically and professionally.

The environment for writing is one of the vital enabling factors that affect writing (Dema, 2022). The current findings highlight the need for a conducive writing environment to enable students to write. Moreover, Dhanya (2019) claims that it is essential that a positive environment support language learning because it has been shown that doing so lowers behavior issues and allows students to focus on their studies.

According to Wang and Chen (2021), middle school students who were part of a collaborative learning environment improved their writing skills considerably more than students in a traditional learning environment. The authors attributed these improvements to the increased opportunities that the collaborative learning environment provided for peer collaboration and feedback.

Similarly, a 2020 study by Hu and Gao (2020) found that English language learners who learned in a learning environment that was rich in language opportunities and provided scaffolding and support outperformed students in a learning environment that was less rich in language opportunities and provided less scaffolding and support. In addition, Vacalares et al. (2023) claimed that recognition of appropriate facilities further emphasizes their positive influence in facilitating effective learning experiences for students. The significance of this finding lies in the fact that a well-ventilated classroom environment contributes to the best conditions for learning, with increased motivation, active participation in class discussions, and ultimately better academic performance for students.

Feedback System

Feedback mechanisms can backfire if they do not follow certain basic rules, such as being objective, positively worded, and unbiased. According to Alemalu (2019), feedback helps in mastery of the skills for most students. Teachers' comments to students' output can provide powerful examples in writing. A study by Liu and Zhou (2018) found that students receiving specific feedback on organization showed greater improvement in structuring their arguments compared to those receiving general feedback.

Moreover, Wang and Chen (2021) discovered that a feedback system that offered students expert and peer feedback was also a good indicator of writing proficiency; students who got this kind of feedback demonstrated a noteworthy improvement in their writing abilities compared to those who did not. Feedback helps students identify areas where they excel and areas that need improvement. This self-awareness empowers them to target their efforts effectively.

Smith and Jones (2018) emphasized that feedback is a significant predictor of writing success after finding that students who received feedback from a teacher or peer on their writing skills outperformed students who did not receive feedback on writing assessments. Chen and Lee (2020) also claimed the use of peer feedback systems to predict writing skills. They discovered that these systems could predict writing skills with a moderate degree of accuracy, and they came to the conclusion that students could benefit from using peer feedback systems in addition to teacher feedback to help them become better writers.

Brown and Brown (2019) looked into the use of automated feedback systems to predict writing skills. They found that these systems could predict writing skills quite accurately, and

they came to the conclusion that these systems could be a useful tool for identifying students who require extra writing support. A growing body of research has consistently highlighted the significance of feedback systems in assisting students in developing their writing skills (Nguyen, 2021). Effective feedback is strongly correlated with improved writing, and feedback is critical in assisting students in understanding writing expectations, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and refining their work.

Azfal (2018) highlights that teacher feedback provides substantial guidance and expertise. Students gain a deeper understanding of concepts and can benefit from the instructor's broader knowledge base. However, the benefits of teacher feedback go beyond simply pointing out mistakes. Research indicates that feedback from peers and teachers can be beneficial in helping students develop. While peer feedback encourages students to apply their critical thinking and self-evaluation skills, teacher feedback offers valuable guidance and expertise (Ngon et al., 2018; Nichlas-Conesa et al., 2019).

Writing Proficiency

Writing proficiency is a critical skill for success in school, college, and the workplace. A growing body of research has examined the factors that influence writing proficiency and the best practices for teaching writing. According to Bahri (2021), there are a few common problems that students encounter when writing review texts. These problems include the following: grammatical problems, where students struggle to use the correct tenses; organizing problems, where students struggle to organize the idea; writing orientation and interpretative recount problems, which are organization problems; and vocabulary problems, where students use words that are inappropriate.

Budjalemba and Listyani (2020) said that one of the most difficult tasks for students learning English as a second language or as a foreign language is writing. However, it also improves their ability to express themselves and makes it simpler for teachers to spot mistakes in their work, making it one of the most crucial skills that students should acquire.

Content

Content is important when assessing students' writing proficiency. According to McArthur et al. (2019), content assessment gives information about a student's ability to synthesize and analyze information. A well-written content shows students' ability to understand the task instructions and to engage in critical thinking. Teachers can learn a lot about a range of writing-related topics by analyzing students' writing content. As Graham and Perin (2018) point out, well-developed content ultimately reflects a student's critical thinking skills. Content that has been well-developed demonstrates logical reasoning, evidence-based support, and perceptive analysis.

Strong essays should be clear, concise, and devoid of unnecessary or extraneous information. They should also show that the writer has a thorough understanding of the subject, make compelling arguments, and provide evidence to back up their claims. Smith (2019) found that both teachers and students rated essays with strong content higher than essays with weak content, supporting the claim that content is the most important factor in determining the quality of an essay.

As noted by Zamel and Rao (2018) and Ackerley and Pike (2020), well-developed ideas are crucial, and content assessment plays a role in determining whether the writing directly responds to the prompt or assignment requirements. Well-developed content is comprised of concise, pertinent main points bolstered by details that show a thorough understanding of the subject (Wu, 2020).

Amani and Heidari (2020) looked at the relationship between writing strategies, writing proficiency, and content knowledge. They found that both writing strategies and content

knowledge significantly improved writing proficiency, and that teachers should focus on assisting EFL learners in developing both writing strategies and content knowledge. They also found that essays with concise and clear writing were easier to read and understand than those with wordy or unclear writing.

According to research by Asif et al. (2018), who created a content-based writing assessment for English as foreign language learners, strong arguments are more persuasive in essays than weak arguments. The assessment measured the learners' writing proficiency based on the learners' topic knowledge and was found to be a valid and reliable measure.

Henderson et al. (2019) observed that many writing prompts required students to apply their knowledge to real-world situations. Their content analysis of writing prompts used in high-stakes writing assessments in the United States revealed that the prompts varied in complexity, specificity, and emphasis on content knowledge. These findings highlight the need for thoughtfully designed writing prompts that effectively assess content knowledge and its application.

On the same line, Fox (2018) explored the function of content knowledge in writing assessments by conducting a comprehensive literature review. His results demonstrate the complexity of content knowledge and the range of methods used to measure it. He also validates the significant predictive power of content knowledge on writing proficiency, suggesting that content knowledge is important for writing assessment.

Organization

Strong organization is a cornerstone of effective writing, and numerous studies highlight its crucial role in student writing proficiency. Ruggles and Wollard (2018) found that giving students organizational cues improves writing fluency and results in higher-quality writing, suggesting that students who can effectively use these cues will demonstrate stronger writing proficiency. Heisey (2020) provided additional evidence in favor of this theory by demonstrating how structured organization instruction dramatically enhances students' organizational abilities, suggesting that mastering strong organizational skills is a teachable component of writing proficiency.

A positive correlation was found between writing quality and organizational structure by Swales and Pearson's (2019) corpus analysis that well-structured writing is generally easier to follow and more coherent, which improves reader comprehension and engagement and emphasizes the relationship between reader comprehension and a well-structured piece. Organization is important, even for non-writers. An organized piece is easier to read and more engaging, proving that effective communication—the cornerstone of writing proficiency—requires organization. This relationship is further reinforced by the cross-cultural study by Sirringhaus and Schreiber (2018) which demonstrates how effective organizational patterns promote better writing in all languages.

According to Lunsford et al. (2018), an essay that is well-organized presents ideas in a way that makes sense and leads the reader through the essay's flow of ideas. A well-structured essay has a thesis statement that is clear, ideas are organized logically, and transitions are executed well. Effective instruction in organizational strategies can significantly improve writing quality. Hacker (2021) emphasizes the importance of a clearly defined structure with a beginning, middle, and end, and each paragraph focusing on a single main idea. This structure provides a logical flow that aids in reader comprehension, which is a crucial part of writing proficiency.

Bloomquist and Gebhard (2018) found that teaching organization improves writing quality in general and helps students become more organized, indicating that strong writing proficiency requires organization. Furthermore, Ruggles and Wollard's (2018) emphasized the value of providing organizational cues to support writers in achieving writing fluency. These

cues can serve as scaffolding tools, assisting writers in organizing their thoughts and producing coherent, well-structured prose.

A well-organized essay has a clear and logical flow, with each paragraph supporting the thesis statement and contributing to the overall development of the argument. In a study conducted by Brown (2018), students who received a clear and concise outline of an essay topic were able to write better essays than students who did not receive an outline. This suggests that outlines can help students organize their thoughts and produce more focused essays.

Tribble (2020) defines organization as the way a writer guides the reader through the text, further emphasizing its importance. Strong organizational skills enable students to effectively navigate the reader through their ideas, which is a crucial component of writing. She argues that a well-organized essay uses a variety of techniques, such as transitions, headings, and subheadings, to help the reader follow the essay's flow of ideas. According to Miller (2019), students who were able to make effective transitions in their essays outperformed those who did not. This suggests that transitions can facilitate students' ability to make connections between ideas and produce essays that are more coherent.

Mechanics and Grammar

Writing proficiency is a multifaceted ability that is impacted by a number of variables, such as vocabulary, reading comprehension, and even socioeconomic background (Saldajeno, 2022). Students who have a strong understanding of grammar rules are better able to write precise and concise sentences, which is why grammar knowledge is important for writing proficiency. However, teachers can help students improve their writing skills. Zhang and Wang (2020) asserted that teacher feedback can improve all aspects of writing, including content, organization, style, mechanics, and grammar. They have found that peer feedback had a significant positive impact on the writing proficiency of EFL students in all five of these areas.

Mechanics and grammar continue to be essential components of writing proficiency. Davis (2023) highlights that good mechanics and grammar not only increase the readability and comprehension of an essay but also the writer's credibility and professionalism. This is why Miller (2018) stressed the importance of mechanics and grammar in creating essays that are both informative and impactful. In order to create essays that are both significant and educational, Wilson (2021) highlights the importance of proper mechanics and grammar, going beyond simple error prevention to improve the writing's overall impact.

When it comes to writing essays, grammar and mechanics are essential components that guarantee the writer's point is made clearly, precisely, and elegantly. According to Smith (2019), mechanics, which includes spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, is the foundation that supports grammatical structures. Together, mechanics and grammar form the basis of effective communication, allowing the writer to engage the reader without the distraction of linguistic errors, as stated by Brown (2022). Grammar, on the other hand, governs the rules of language, dictating the correct usage of sentence structure, verb tense agreement, and pronoun selection, as emphasized by Jones (2020).

According to Taylor (2020), flawless grammar and mechanics draw the reader's focus to the essay's content and make it easier for them to understand the writer's arguments and points of view. Grammar and mechanics are the tools writers use to persuade readers and effectively express themselves; to put it another way, writing proficiency is a broad concept, but grammar and mechanics are the building blocks of clear communication. Taken together, mechanics and grammar serve as the invisible hand that guides the reader through the essay, ensuring a seamless and enjoyable reading experience. Accurate grammar and mechanics support the content rather than detract from it, allowing readers to concentrate on the essay's main ideas and points of contention more readily.

The relevance of mechanics and grammar in writing proficiency has been demonstrated by the research of Heisey (2020), Smith (2019), and Jones (2018). These studies also found that while mechanics and grammar are important for clear and concise communication and contribute to overall writing quality, they should not be the only focus of writing assessments. The multimodal method of evaluating writing proficiency, as put forth by Jones (2018), calls for a more comprehensive assessment that includes other crucial writing abilities, such as content development, organization, and style, in addition to mechanics and grammar. This method is in line with the increasing realization that writing proficiency is not only determined by grammatical correctness but also by the capacity to articulate ideas clearly and rationally construct arguments.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the predictors of writing skills and the learner's writing proficiency in Salay District, Division of Misamis Oriental for School Year 2023-2024. Particularly, this paper sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do the respondents assess the predictors of writing skills as to motivation, teacher-learner relationship, learning environment and feedback system?
2. What is the respondents' level of writing proficiency during the First Quarter and Second Quarter based on content, organization, and mechanics and grammar?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' assessment of the predictors of writing skills and their writing proficiency?

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Vygotsky's Socio-cultural Theory. Children learn independently, but they are shaped by their environment and peers, family, and others. Sociocultural theories acknowledge the interactive nature of learning. Lev Vygotsky built on the work of Marie Clay to state that children learn best when they work with someone more experienced and with whom they have a connection; this theory is also known as emergent literacy. Vygotsky asserted that the researcher needs to consider how and where they occur in growth that is, both the process and product of learning need to be considered. He advocated focusing on the genesis of a developmental process and seeking a dynamic, causal explanation as well as focusing on the outcome of learning. He took issue with the psychological research methods of his contemporaries in that they focused on the product of learning, the static outcomes, which involved primarily description.

According to a study of Lin (2021) which looked at the relationship between students' social interactions and their writing development, students who had more opportunities to interact with each other about their writing improved their writing skills more. Additionally, Anderson and Sharma (2019) emphasize the beneficial effects of teacher-learner relationships on writing growth; emerging research from a sociocultural perspective has highlighted the multifaceted nature of writing development, emphasizing the interplay of individual and social factors.

In the realm of scientific research and hypothesis testing, the null hypothesis posits that any observed differences or associations are due to random chance or inherent variability rather than a genuine cause-and-effect relationship. Researchers use the null hypothesis as a benchmark to rigorously evaluate their findings. It is a statement that embodies a fundamental concept in research – the absence of an effect or relationship between variables. By statistically analyzing their hypotheses, researchers hope to either accept or reject the null hypothesis, ultimately shedding light on the presence or absence of meaningful effects in their studies.

This study predicts no significant difference on the respondents' writing proficiency considering the content, organization, sentence structure, and mechanics and grammar during

the first and second quarters. Furthermore, this also predicts no significant relationships between the respondents' writing proficiency and their assessments of predictors of their writing abilities such as motivation, teacher-learner relationship, learning environment and feedback system.

Scope and Limitations

This study examined the predictors of writing skills and the writing proficiency of students in Salay District, Division of Misamis Oriental for school year 2023-2024. The study's respondents were limited to Grade 10 students in secondary schools in Salay district, with a sample size of 250 students. The study focused on the following independent variables only – motivation, teacher-learner relationship, learning environment, and feedback system. Additionally, the dependent variable of the study is the students' writing proficiency where their Persuasive Essay (first quarter) and Argumentative Essay (second quarter) outputs were the basis in measuring their writing proficiency.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used the descriptive-correlational research design. Descriptive design aimed at gathering data about the existing condition. According to Doyle, et al. (2019), descriptive design is a research methodology that focuses on collecting and analyzing data to accurately and objectively portray the characteristics, patterns, and trends of the subject matter without attempting to establish causal relationships or draw conclusions beyond the observed data. It is a systematic approach to gathering information to describe a phenomenon, situation, or population.

This design was chosen to determine the writing proficiency of the respondents including both their weaknesses and strengths in written composition and the predictors affecting it. By statistically examining the correlations between the independent variables and the dependent variable of the study using a descriptive-correlational design, it can be determined whether and how these factors might predict or influence the learners' writing skills.

Study Setting

This study was conducted in the public secondary schools in Salay District, Division of Misamis Oriental for School Year 2023-2024. The Division of Misamis Oriental has a total of 1,335 schools, including 1,117 public schools and 218 private schools. Salay district has a population of more than 30,000 people, and is home to 15 public elementary schools, five (5) public secondary schools, and three (3) private schools. The municipality's land area is 92.79 square kilometers, or 35.83 square miles, making up 2.96% of Misamis Oriental's total area. As of the 2020 Census, 29,998 people lived there, making up 3.13% of the province's total population and 0.60% of the entire population of the Northern Mindanao region. These numbers are used to calculate the population density, which comes out to 323 people per square kilometer or 837 people per square mile.

Salay district is constituted of five public secondary schools, namely: 1) Salay National High School, 2) Inobulan Honga Gue National High School, 3) Looc National High School, 4) Alipuaton Integrated High School, and 5) Tinagaan Integrated School. Figure 3, shows the survey locations of the five (5) public secondary schools in Salay District of the Division of Misamis Oriental.

Since the district consists of five secondary schools only, the researcher will choose each one for this study to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the writing proficiency levels within the district. By collecting information from each of the five schools, the researcher

will be able to create a thorough picture of the writing proficiency levels in the Salay district as a whole.

Study Population and Sampling Technique

The respondents of this study were the two hundred twenty (250) Grade 10 Junior High school students from the five secondary schools in Salay District, Division of Misamis Oriental, during the School Year 2023-2024. The students were officially enrolled in the aforementioned district of Misamis Oriental. The distribution of respondents is shown in Table A.

In this study, the Grade 10 Junior High School students were the target respondents coming from the five secondary schools in Salay District, Division of Misamis Oriental. They were selected randomly through stratified random sampling from all the seven hundred fifty (750) Grade 10 students of the district. Slovin's formula was employed to determine the sample size with a margin of error of 0.05.

Table A: Distribution of Respondents

Name of School	Population	Respondents
Alipuaton Integrated School	22	20
Inobulan Hunga Gue National High School	65	28
Looc National High School	51	30
Salay National High School	470	157
Tinagaan Integrated School	17	15
Total	750	250

Research Instruments

This study utilized a patterned and modified questionnaire in drawing information from the respondents. The instrument has two parts. Part I consists of ten (10) indicators in each of the independent variables. This has been patterned from the study of Vacalares et al. (2023) entitled "Factors affecting the writing skills of the education students: A descriptive study".

The second part of the research instrument is the writing proficiency which consists of content, organization, and mechanics ad grammar. Their output was rated through a rubric (Appendix F) adopted from the English 10 Self-Learning Module (SLM) based on the K to 12 Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) in the Department of Education. The researcher used the Grade 10 learners' performance task outputs from their First and Second Quarter such as Persuasive Essay (First Quarter) and Argumentative Essay (Second Quarter) in English 10.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The following statistical tools were utilized in analyzing the data gathered to answer the specific problems of the study: Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage were used to distinguish the fundamental characteristics of the data in a study and distribute the respondents among the predictors of writing skills. Inferential statistics such as Pearson r Moment Correlation was used to determine the significant relationship between the level of perception on the predictors of writing skills and the learners' writing proficiency.

Ethical Consideration

To ensure ethical conduct, the School of Graduate and Professional Studies established protocols outlining responsible research practices. This research strictly followed these guidelines to ensure ethical procedure. Respondents were inclined to participate honestly and openly thus assured that their identities and personal information be kept confidential, so it is

crucial to ensure their privacy and anonymity. The rigorous ethics review procedure, which acted as a protection to preserve diverse ethical standards, was an essential component of this ethical commitment.

Participants understand the implications of the study in order to make such informed choices, and in most cases, researchers and participants have approached the procedure casually. Informed consent guarantees and promotes the rights of the subjects as autonomous participants who deserve respect, benefits, and justice and can withdraw from the study at any time.

Students were asked to remove or replace any personally identifiable information such as names, school names, or contact details from the data during the analysis and reporting. Pseudonym assignments were done to respondents to protect their identities. The data generated by this study were kept confidential. Respondents were not named in any manner of publication and identities were strictly private. Research files, papers, documents and audio recordings were kept secured and only the researcher can access them.

The ethical framework included strong security measures to protect participant privacy and the collected data. These included limiting access to authorized personnel only and encrypting data when needed to prevent unintentional disclosure of information to unauthorized parties.

An Institutional Review Board (IRB) or ethics committee was consulted to obtain ethical approval in order to guarantee that the research design and data handling techniques adhere to ethical standards and guidelines. This general ethical approach sought to provide knowledge while highlighting the well-being, rights and dignity of all participants.

Results and Discussions

Problem 1. How do the respondents assess the predictors of writing skills as to motivation, teacher-learner relationship, learning environment and feedback system?

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents' Level of Assessment of the Predictors of Writing Skills as to Motivation

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
<i>As a student...</i>			
I am motivated in taking down notes to support my ideas in writing.	3.12	0.76	Most of the Time
I am motivated to do well in writing paragraph.	2.89	0.80	Most of the Time
I am motivated to make my writing assignments fun for myself.	2.91	0.91	Most of the Time
I am motivated to my ideas clearer as I am writing.	3.10	0.77	Most of the Time
I am motivated to my ideas clearer as I am writing.	3.04	0.78	Most of the Time
I am motivated to organize my ideas when I write a paragraph	2.98	0.81	Most of the Time
I am motivated to give myself a reward when I have finished writing.	2.92	0.99	Most of the Time
I am motivated to put in the effort to improve my writing skills.	3.31	0.77	At all Times
I am motivated to improve my writing skills because I think they are important for my future success.	3.43	0.70	At all Times
I am motivated to use the feedback given to me to improve my writing skills.	3.17	0.84	Most of the Time

Overall	3.09	0.81	Most of the Time
Legend: 3.26-4.00 At all Times/Very High			
2.51-3.25 Most of the Time /High			
1.76 – 2.50 Seldom/Low			
1.00-1.75 Never/Very Low			

Table 1 illustrates the mean and standard distribution of the respondents' assessment of the predictors of writing skills as to **motivation**. The **overall** mean of 3.09 (SD=0.81) indicates a description of **Most of the Time** which means that they have a **High** level of motivation in their writing activities. This indicates that strong motivation appears to be positively linked with improved writing abilities. As observed, students who are highly motivated to write can excel in the activity which may include writing activities. This is likely because motivated students are more likely to put in the effort required to improve their writing, such as practicing regularly and seeking feedback.

This confirms the study of Akyol and Aktas (2018) which found that motivation has a significant influence on the growth of students' writing skills. Students who find writing engaging are more likely to develop stronger writing abilities. Dhanya (2019) supported these findings that students with high levels of motivation do well in both learning and writing and achieve good results. This is most likely due to their increased engagement in the process and increased focus on producing well-organized and well-written pieces of writing. Furthermore, Dema (2022) emphasizes the importance of motivation in writing, indicating that if teachers exhibit their writing skills, it will boost students' motivation in writing. Motivation is the capacity to be consistently interested in and committed to writing, and it is essential for both igniting and sustaining students' interest in writing.

In particular, the indicator **As a student, I am motivated to improve my writing skills because I think they are important for my future success** obtained the highest mean score of 3.43 (SD=0.70) which has a description of **At all Times** and interpreted as **Very High** level. This means that their writing skills are necessary in succeeding their endeavors in the future. This implies that motivation is a significant factor influencing writing performance highlighting the importance of learners' motivation in achieving better writing outcomes. When students recognize the necessity of strong writing skills for future success, their motivation to improve is likely to increase. This is because they see writing as a valuable tool that can help them achieve their goals.

Dema (2022) supported these findings as he stated that motivation is the capacity to be consistently interested in and committed to writing, and it is essential for both igniting and sustaining students' interest in writing. Students who are motivated exhibit a keen interest in improving their writing skills and a greater interest in writing, which drives them to write more. According to Dörfler et al. (2019), motivation significantly predicted writing performance in older students. As a result, motivation is thought to be the most significant factor in the development of writing skills more specifically mastery goals and perceived task value. Wang and Troia (2023) further argued that while student motivation to write is a significant factor influencing their writing achievement, individual motivation to write is not independent of the learning environment.

On the other hand, the indicator **As a student, I am motivated to do well in writing paragraph** obtained the lowest mean of 2.89 (SD=0.80) which has the description **Most of the Time** and interpreted as **High** level. This implies that in addition to finding paragraph writing difficult, students might not be intrinsically motivated to write well. Students may not only find paragraph writing challenging but also lack intrinsic motivation in this area. This could be due to a number of factors, including difficulty grasping the structure and organization of a paragraph, having little experience with efficient paragraph writing strategies, or having concerns about grammar, mechanics, or effectively expressing oneself. However, because the

interpretation is in high level, most of the respondents can actually do well in paragraph writing and confident enough to write well-organized paragraphs.

The result supports the claim of Dhanya (2019) that motivation is the key to writing well. Students with high levels of motivation do well in both learning and writing and achieve good results. Students with low levels of motivation find writing difficult. While individual motivation to write is not independent of the learning environment, Wang and Troia (2023) claim that student motivation to write is a significant factor influencing their writing performance. Therefore, teachers must improve their own efficacy, knowledge, and proficiency in writing and writing instruction in order to support themselves in putting into practice effective teaching strategies that encourage students to write and further support their writing achievement.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents' Assessment of the Predictors of Writing Skills as to Teacher-Learner Relationship

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
<i>My teacher...</i>			
makes me feel comfortable asking questions about writing.	2.98	0.88	Most of the Time
encourages me to take risks in my writing.	3.00	0.83	Most of the Time
provides me with helpful feedback on my writing.	3.11	0.85	Most of the Time
provides me with clear expectations for writing assignments.	3.18	0.79	Most of the Time
has a positive impact on my motivation to write.	3.12	0.85	Most of the Time
provides me with clear and helpful feedback on my writing.	3.14	0.87	Most of the Time
supports me in my writing development.	3.14	0.85	Most of the Time
believes in my ability to write well.	3.22	0.81	Most of the Time
is approachable and easy to talk to concerning my writing activities.	3.25	0.78	Most of the Time
is supporting and encouraging me in my writing skills.	3.18	0.79	Most of the Time
Overall	3.13	0.83	Most of the Time
Legend: 3.26-4.00 At all Times/Very High 1.76 – 2.50 Seldom/Low 2.51-3.25 Most of the Time /High 1.00-1.75 Never/Very Low			

Table 2 illustrates the mean and standard distribution of the respondents' assessment of the predictors of writing skills as to **teacher-learner relationship**. The **overall** mean of 3.13 (SD=0.83) indicates a description of **Most of the Time** which means that the respondents have a **High** level of assessment. This indicates that learners write more effectively when they have a positive relationship with their teacher. Students are more likely to be motivated and engaged in the learning process when they perceive their teacher to be caring and supportive. Moreover, a positive relationship between the teacher and the student can foster a more open and trusting learning environment, which in turn can encourage students to take chances and try new things in their writing.

The findings of this study support the study of Alemalu (2019) which found that a healthy teacher-student relationship is vital in the acquisition of new skills and teachers play a key role in building these relationships. A positive teacher-learner relationship is a cornerstone of effective education. In addition, Alqahtani and Chen (2020) highlighted the importance of a growth mindset and positive teacher-learner relations in boosting student motivation and engagement in language learning and writing activities.

Furthermore, the indicator **My teacher is approachable and easy to talk to concerning my writing activities** obtained the highest mean score of 3.25 (SD=0.78), which has a description of **Most of the Time** interpreted as **High** level. This implies that most students feel comfortable talking to their teachers about their writing. Students who feel comfortable asking questions and receiving clarification on their writing assignments can lead to a more positive learning experience and a deeper understanding of the writing process. Teachers should create a warm, inviting, and transparent environment where students feel comfortable doing so. This will empower students to take ownership of their learning and improve their writing skills.

A study by Dhanya (2019) showed that getting along with your teacher is important for learning new things. Teacher-student relationship has been identified as an important predictor that improves student learning and academic outcomes. A strong teacher-learner relationship serves as a cornerstone for developing effective writing skills by fostering a supportive and encouraging learning environment. Aasheim and Tangen (2022) further solidified this connection by demonstrating the significant impact of teacher-learner relationships on student learning, motivation, and engagement in various subjects, including writing. This finding emphasizes the importance of providing teachers with professional development opportunities that will help them refine their relationship-building skills.

On the contrary, the indicator **My teacher makes me feel comfortable asking questions about writing** obtained the lowest mean of 2.98 (SD=0.88), which has the description **Most of the Time** interpreted as **High** level of assessment. Teachers should focus on creating an even more transparent and supportive learning environment in the classroom where students are encouraged to ask questions and receive feedback, even though they believe their teachers are friendly. However, since the interpretation is High level, this means that students also feel comfortable asking questions about writing which indicates a potentially strong foundation for further improvement in their writing skills even though this indicator has the lowest mean among the results.

The result confirms the study of Bah (2020) that looked into the specific behaviors of students that are linked to students' writing achievement. This emphasized the importance of adjusting instruction and support to meet the needs of diverse learners, especially those who are learning a new language. Additionally, according Zhang and Wang (2019), positive relationships offer critical scaffolding and contribute to improved writing skills and language acquisition.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents' Assessment of the Predictors of Writing Skills as to Learning Environment

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
<i>Our learning environment...</i>			
creates a positive and supportive classroom for writing.	3.32	0.80	At all Times
facilities access to make writing workshops easier and support services to scaffold students' learning.	3.08	0.79	Most of the Time
encourages collaboration and peer feedback among students.	3.02	0.78	Most of the Time
promotes positive attitudes towards writing and encourages students to take risks and experiment with their writing.	3.14	0.83	Most of the Time
fosters a love of learning and writing.	3.18	0.84	Most of the Time
has opportunities to practice writing in different ways in my classroom.	3.22	0.79	Most of the Time

has equipped with adequate resources for writing, such as computers, printers, and reference materials.	3.10	0.83	Most of the Time
is well-lit and free from distractions	2.84	0.84	Most of the Time
is conducive to focused and productive work.	3.02	0.81	Most of the Time
is comfortable and inviting.	3.12	0.81	Most of the Time
Overall	3.11	0.81	Most of the Time
Legend: 3.26-4.00 At all Times/Very High 1.76 – 2.50 Seldom/Low 2.51-3.25 Most of the Time /High 1.00-1.75 Never/Very Low			

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of the respondents' predictors of writing skills as to **learning environment**. The **overall** mean of 3.11 (SD=0.81) with a description of **Most of the Time** indicates that the respondents' level of assessment on this variable is **High** level. The results show an overall positive perception of the learning environment's role in writing development. Most respondents viewed the environment as supportive and felt that most of the indicators are not very highly observable in the learning environment. Nevertheless, the fact remains that students find their learning environment to be an important predictor in improving their writing skills.

The result affirms Vacalares et al. (2023) as they assert that a stimulating environment that encourages students to write and supports their learning is necessary to deliver writing abilities. Through writing, teachers can spot and correct students' errors right away, providing constructive feedback that helps them improve their writing skills. For this reason, students need to consistently practice writing in a supportive learning environment in order to succeed academically and professionally.

The indicator **Our environment creates a positive and supportive classroom for writing** obtained the highest mean score of 3.32 (SD=0.80) which has a description of **At all Times** indicating a **Very High** level of assessment. This indicates that the way classrooms are set up can really affect how well students learn to write. Creating a positive and supportive classroom for writing got the best score, which shows that this is important. There is always room to make things better, though, so improvements can be made to classrooms to help students write even better.

According to Dhanya (2019), students should be given the opportunity to concentrate on learning because writing is often an intrinsically social activity that is done for readers to understand. A nurturing environment is essential to the process of language acquisition because it helps students effectively express their thoughts and ideas. Vacalares et al. (2023) further stated that teachers can reduce behavioral issues in the classroom by creating a supportive learning environment. Students who feel safe and accepted are more likely to take risks, experiment with language, and ask questions.

On one hand, the indicator **Our environment is well-lit and free from distractions** obtained the lowest mean of 2.84 (SD=0.84) which has the description **Most of the Time** interpreted as **High** level of assessment. This can be attributed to the fact that there are times in the school where the students create a lot of noise around the environment. Also, some of the rooms have insufficient lighting facilities. The data could also be attributed to the students' environment at home which may have inadequate lighting especially in the night time. It must be understood that most of the students do not belong to well-off families who can provide ideal lighting facilities. In some instances, students' homes have no electricity and so they resort to use kerosene lamps only.

A well-ventilated classroom environment contributes to the best conditions for learning, with increased motivation, active participation in class discussions, and ultimately better academic performance for students. Dema (2022) claimed that recognition of appropriate

facilities further emphasizes their positive influence in facilitating effective learning experiences for students. The environment for writing is one of the vital enabling factors that affect writing. the current finding highlights the need for a conducive writing environment to enable students to write.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents' Assessment of the Predictors of Writing Skills as to Feedback System

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
<i>My teacher's feedback...</i>			
helps me understand what I did well and what I can do better as a writer.	3.28	0.84	At all Times
helps me identify areas of my essay that are particularly strong and well-written.	3.18	0.74	Most of the Time
helps me pinpoint areas of my essay that could be improved, even if I wasn't aware of them myself.	3.21	0.81	Most of the Time
helps me identify areas for improvement in the content of my essay, such as clarity, organization, and argumentation.	3.22	0.80	Most of the Time
encourages me to continue learning and improving my writing skills.	3.25	0.80	Most of the Time
points out any grammar, mechanics, or punctuation errors in my essay, helping me understand and correct them.	3.29	0.81	At all Times
offers specific suggestions for improvement that are relevant to my essay and writing style.	3.05	0.83	Most of the Time
provides specific examples of my strengths and weaknesses, so I can understand what I'm doing well and where I need to focus my efforts.	3.27	0.79	At all Times
does not just point out problems; it also suggests concrete ways for me to fix them	3.02	0.87	Most of the Time
is respectful and constructive, providing positive reinforcement alongside areas for improvement.	3.33	0.80	At all Times
Overall	3.21	0.81	Most of the Time
Legend: 3.26-4.00 At all Times/Very High 1.76 – 2.50 Seldom/Low 2.51-3.25 Most of the Time /High 1.00-1.75 Never/Very Low			

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of respondents' assessment of the predictors of writing skills as to **feedback system**. The **overall** mean of 3.21 (SD=0.81) with a description of **Most of the Time** indicates a **High** level of assessment. This indicates that the respondents find feedback system as a useful tool of helping students to improve their writing skills. However, there are some indicators which are not highly observed as reflected in the individual mean scores Nevertheless, the findings revealed that feedback is a potential predictor of students' writing abilities.

Smith and Jones (2018) asserted that feedback is a significant predictor of writing success after finding that students who received feedback from a teacher or peer on their writing skills outperformed students who did not receive feedback on writing assessments. Chen and Lee also (2020) claimed the use of peer feedback systems to predict writing skills. They discovered that these systems could predict writing skills with a moderate degree of accuracy,

and they came to the conclusion that students could benefit from using peer feedback systems in addition to teacher feedback to help them become better writers.

In particular, the indicator **My teacher's feedback is respectful and constructive, providing positive reinforcement alongside areas for improvement** obtained the highest mean score of 3.33 (SD=0.80) which has a description of **At all Times** indicates a **High** level of assessment. This finding highlights the importance of feedback systems that are designed to be both supportive and informative. When teachers provide constructive criticism in a respectful manner, it can be a powerful tool for improving student writing skills. Students who perceive their teachers' feedback as helpful and well-delivered are likely to experience greater gains in writing ability.

The study conducted by Smith and Jones (2018) emphasized that feedback system is a significant predictor of writing success after finding that students who received feedback from a teacher on their writing skills outperformed students who did not receive feedback on writing assessments. Students who received feedback from teachers on their writing tasks significantly outperformed those who didn't receive any feedback at all. This highlights the importance of a structured feedback process in the learning environment. Effective feedback allows students to identify areas of strength and weakness, providing a roadmap for improvement. Without this guidance, students may struggle to recognize their mistakes or grasp how to enhance their writing. The act of receiving feedback itself can also be motivating, demonstrating the teacher's investment in their student's progress.

Conversely, the indicator **My teacher's feedback does not just point out problems; it also suggests concrete ways for me to fix them** obtained the lowest mean of 3.02 (SD=0.87), which has the description **Most of the Time** interpreted as **High** level of assessment. Despite having a positive mean score of 3.02 and being classified as high level of assessment, it has the lowest score when compared to other factors. While students find the feedback to be helpful overall, there may be room for improvement in terms of providing more specific steps. This highlights the potential for enhancing the feedback system by ensuring that teachers consistently provide concrete strategies to address identified deficiencies. These strategies could include providing clear examples, suggesting alternative formulations, or outlining specific strategies students can use to improve their compositions. By incorporating these elements into the feedback process, teachers can empower students to take ownership of their education.

Vacalares et al. (2023) asserted that writing abilities can only be developed in a stimulating environment that supports learning and encourages students to write. Since writing allows teachers to identify and correct students' errors immediately, students can improve their writing skills with the help of constructive feedback from teachers. As a result, students must regularly practice writing in a supportive learning environment if they are to succeed academically and professionally. Azfal (2018) highlights that teacher feedback provides substantial guidance and expertise. Students gained a deeper understanding of concepts and can benefit from the instructor's broader knowledge base.

Table 5: Summary of the Respondents' Assessment of the Predictors of Writing

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Motivation	3.09	0.81	High
Teacher-learner relationship	3.13	0.83	High
Learning Environment	3.11	0.81	High
Feedback System	3.21	0.81	High
Overall	3.14	0.82	High

Legend: 3.26-4.00 *At all Times/Very High*
2.51-3.25 *Most of the Time /High*

1.76 – 2.50 *Seldom/Low*
1.00-1.75 *Never/Very Low*

Table 5 presents the summary of the level of the respondents' assessment on the predictors of writing considering four variables. The **overall** mean is 3.14 (SD=0.82) indicates that the respondents have a **High** level of assessments of the variables. The data implies that the four variables that are presented as predictors of writing skill are generally viewed favorably by respondents. This indicates that incorporating these factors into writing instruction has the potential to be beneficial. Understanding these variables would enable us to design writing lessons that specifically target the abilities and information that students feel are essential for writing success.

This confirms the study of Bang and Cho (2020) which study integrates the combined impact of formative feedback, self-assessment, and peer assessment in a supportive learning environment to have a positive influence on both writing motivation and achievement. Andrade et al. (2022) highlight the need for a supportive environment where feedback is seen as a tool for improvement, encouraging motivation and better writing skills.

In particular, among the four variables, **feedback system** as a predictor to writing obtained the highest mean score of 3.21 with a standard deviation of 0.81, signifying a **High** level of assessment by the respondents. This suggests that most teachers are actively implementing a feedback system in the belief that it fosters improvement in writing skills. This reflects that feedback helps students identify strengths and weaknesses and sets them on a path of improvement. Without this focused guidance, students may find it difficult to see their mistakes or understand how to improve their writing.

This confirms the study of Liu and Zhou (2018) that students receiving specific feedback on organization showed greater improvement in structuring their arguments compared to those receiving general feedback. Feedback helps students identify areas where they excel and areas that need improvement. This self-awareness empowers them to target their efforts effectively. Azfal (2018) highlights that teacher feedback provides substantial guidance and expertise. Students gain a deeper understanding of concepts and can benefit from the instructor's broader knowledge base.

On the contrary, **motivation** got the lowest mean of 3.09 (SD=0.81) which indicates that the respondents have a **High** level of assessment on this variable. This suggests that even though motivation scored lower numerically, it is still considered highly relevant to writing skills by the respondents. Despite having the lowest average score, motivation is interpreted as a strength alongside other factors. The result clearly showed that the feedback system and motivation as well as the learning environment and teacher-learner relationship are good predictors of writing skills.

Nguyen (2021) claimed that motivation, writing anxiety, and writing strategies were significant predictors of writing performance. Students with high levels of motivation do well in both learning and writing and achieved good results. Students with low levels of motivation find writing difficult and also feel failure. Wang and Troia (2023) further argued that while student motivation to write is a significant factor influencing their writing achievement, individual motivation to write is not independent of the learning environment. Therefore, teachers must improve their own efficacy, knowledge, and ability in writing and writing instruction in order to support teachers in implementing effective instructional strategies that further encourage students' writing achievement and stimulate their motivation to write.

Problem 2. What is the respondents' level of writing proficiency during the First Quarter (persuasive essay) and Second Quarter (argumentative essay) based on content, organization, mechanics and grammar?

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents Level of Writing Proficiency Based on Content

Level of Writing Proficiency	First Quarter (Persuasive Essay)		Second Quarter (Argumentative Essay)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Very Proficient	84	33.6	104	41.6
Proficient	73	29.2	79	31.6
Moderate	79	31.6	63	25.2
Good	14	5.6	4	1.6
Total	250	100.0	250	100.0
Mean: 3.91		Mean: 4.18		
SD: 0.70		SD: 0.92		
Description: Proficient		Description: Proficient		
Legend: (12-15 pts.) 4.26-5.00/Very Proficient		(6-8 pts.) 2.76-3.50/Moderate		
(9-11 pts.) 3.51-4.25/Proficient		(3-5 pts.) 1.00-2.75/Good		

Table 6 illustrates the distribution of respondents' level of writing proficiency across two types of essays: persuasive essay and argumentative essay, specifically focusing on the content of their writing. The mean score for persuasive essay is 3.91 (SD=0.70), indicating a **Proficient** level of writing. Similarly, the **mean** score for argumentative essay is 4.18 (SD=0.92) indicating a **Proficient** level. According to the data, students performed better on argumentative essays than on persuasive essays. Argumentative essays typically have a clearly defined structure that is introduced with a claim, followed by reasons and supporting details, and ends with a restatement of the claim. Students may find it easier to follow and organize their ideas around this structure. This structure may be easier for students to follow and structure their ideas around than persuasive essays, which may allow for more flexibility.

Nonetheless, it is consistent with Smith's (2018) assertion that content is a critical component of essay quality because students' writing about the content demonstrates that they are more at ease arguing their positions than creating persuasive messages. By implementing these targeted strategies, educators can bridge this gap and equip students with proficiency in both persuasive and argumentative writing, ultimately preparing them for a wider range of communication situations.

In the persuasive essay category, it revealed that the highest frequency, at 84 respondents (29.22%), reached **Very Proficient** level. Similarly, a significant percentage of respondents excelled in the argumentative essay category where 104 respondents (41.6%) obtained the **Very Proficient** level. This indicates that students seem to be proficient in writing argumentative and persuasive essays. This finding highlights the importance of explicitly teaching argumentation strategies and source evaluation throughout the writing process. Learners' proficiency in writing argumentative and persuasive essays is derived from their ability to construct arguments and use evidence in an effective manner.

This finding resonates with a study Zamel and Rao (2018) which noted that content assessment helps determine whether the writing directly addresses the prompt or assignment requirements. investigated the role of content knowledge in writing assessment. Significantly, Fox's research also found a strong correlation between content knowledge and writing skill. This connection aligns with the present finding that persuasive and argumentative essays, which likely require deeper content knowledge, received the highest proficiency scores. These scores further indicate a strong level of writing ability among the respondents.

On the other hand, the lowest frequency is only 14 respondents (5.6%) in the persuasive essay category and 4 respondents (1.6%) in the argumentative essay category. They were able to obtain a **Good** proficiency level. This indicates that a smaller group may need more

assistance in honing their critical thinking and argumentation abilities. This highlights the need to focus on these specific areas for this particular group. Logical reasoning and constructing well-reasoned arguments are essential for persuasive and argumentative essays, which require students to analyze information, develop strong claims, and support them with evidence. By focusing on developing these areas, we can equip them to write at a more proficient level and effectively express their ideas.

Henderson et al. (2019) observed that many writing prompts required students to apply their knowledge to real-world situations. Their content analysis of writing prompts used in high-stakes writing assessments in the United States revealed that the prompts varied in complexity, specificity, and emphasis on content knowledge. These findings highlight the need for thoughtfully designed writing prompts that effectively assess content knowledge and its application.

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents Level of Writing Proficiency Based on Organization

Level of Writing Proficiency	First Quarter (Persuasive Essay)		Second Quarter (Argumentative Essay)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Very Proficient	48	19.2	47	18.8
Proficient	80	32.0	82	32.8
Moderate	89	35.6	106	42.4
Good	33	13.2	15	6.0
Total	250	100.0	250	100.0
	Mean: 3.35 SD: 0.90 Description: Moderate		Mean: 3.64 SD: 0.88 Description: Proficient	

Legend: (12-15 pts.) 4.26-5.00/Very Proficient (6-8 pts.) 2.76-3.50/Moderate
(9-11 pts.) 3.51-4.25/Proficient (3-5 pts.) 1.00-2.75/Good

Table 7 displays the distribution of respondents' level of writing proficiency based on **organization** of their essays, segmented into persuasive and argumentative categories. The mean score for persuasive essay is 3.35 (SD=0.90), indicating a **Moderate** level of writing. Conversely, the mean score for argumentative essay is 3.64 (SD=0.92), signifying a **Proficient** level of writing. This implies that students can generally organize their essays in a way that is understandable and reasonably simple to follow. While the analysis shows students can structure their persuasive and argumentative essays in a clear and generally understandable way, there is a chance their arguments lack depth. This suggests there is potential to strengthen their writing, particularly in terms of organization and argument development. Instruction could focus on crafting stronger essay structures, using smooth transitions, and developing strong evidence to support their claims.

These findings align with Ruggles and Wollard's (2018) emphasis on organization as a critical element of effective writing. While students achieve clear and well-structured essays, there is room to elevate both persuasive and argumentative writing by refining the organization. This could involve crafting more impactful thesis statements, incorporating smoother transitions for a better reading flow, and developing compelling evidence that strengthens their arguments.

In particular, the highest frequency at 89 respondents (35.6%) in persuasive essay and 106 respondents (42.4%) in the argumentative essay achieved a **Moderate** level. This implies that while respondents show a sufficient grasp of the fundamentals of essay structure, they still need to work on developing strong organizational frameworks. Students incorporate the

necessary components, such as an introduction, body paragraphs with arguments in support of the thesis, and conclusion. This emphasizes how important it is to teach effective essay organization strategies. According to research by Brown (2018), students who received clear and concise outlines for their essays produced more focused and well-organized writing. A well-organized essay goes beyond simply including the necessary components. It should boast a clear and logical flow, where each paragraph seamlessly connects to the thesis statement and contributes to the development of the overall argument.

On the other hand, the lowest frequency of 33 respondents (13.2%) in persuasive essay and 15 respondents (6%) in argumentative essay obtained **Good** level of writing. This indicates that a considerable percentage of students find it difficult to create coherent organizational structures for their essays. This could be caused by a variety of factors, including difficulties recognizing the main ideas and putting them in a logical order, difficulties establishing seamless transitions between ideas, or a lack of experience in crafting arguments that are clear and concise. According to Miller (2019), students who were able to make effective transitions in their essays outperformed those who did not. Transitions could facilitate students' ability to make connections between ideas and produce essays that are more coherent.

Table 8: Distribution of Respondents' Level of Writing Proficiency Based on Mechanics and Grammar

Level of Writing Proficiency	First Quarter (Persuasive Essay)		Second Quarter (Argumentative Essay)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Very Proficient	30	12.0	26	10.4
Proficient	72	28.8	87	34.8
Moderate	105	42.0	96	38.4
Good	43	17.2	41	16.4
Total	250	100.0	250	100.0
	Mean: 3.33 SD: 0.82 Description: Moderate		Mean: 3.40 SD: 0.92 Description: Moderate	

Legend: (12-15 pts.) 4.26-5.00/Very Proficient (6-8 pts.) 2.76-3.50/Moderate
(9-11 pts.) 3.51-4.25/Proficient (3-5 pts.) 1.00-2.75/Good

Table 8 shows the distribution of respondents' level of writing proficiency based on mechanics and grammar in both persuasive essay and argumentative essays. The table provides the frequency and percentage of respondents falling within different score ranges for each essay type. The mean score for mechanics and grammar in persuasive essays is 3.33 (SD=0.82), indicating a Moderate level of writing. Conversely, for argumentative essays, the mean score is 3.40 (SD=0.92) indicating a Moderate level. This suggests that more practice is needed in this area. While both persuasive and argumentative essays show a decent grasp of grammar and mechanics, a wider standard deviation in argumentative essays suggests a larger group of students struggle with mechanics in this specific context. This highlights the importance of differentiated instruction. Some students excel regardless of essay type, while others may stumble in argumentative essays.

Smith (2019) and Brown (2022) point out proper mechanics like spelling, punctuation, and capitalization form the foundation for strong grammar and emphasizes that mechanics and grammar together are essential for effective communication. Errors can distract readers and weaken the impact of the writer's arguments. In essence, while both essay styles show a passing grade in mechanics, argumentative essays might benefit from more focused instruction to ensure all students can deliver their arguments with clarity and precision.

Specifically, it revealed that the highest frequency at 105 respondents (42.0%) in persuasive essay and 96 respondents (38.4%) in argumentative essay got the Moderate level of writing. This indicates a basic level of proficiency in mechanics and grammar, but it also identifies a substantial group of students who require additional work. While these learners may not have trouble with basic punctuation or sentence structure, they would probably benefit from improving their knowledge of topics such as subject-verb agreement, proper pronoun reference, or the use of commas in complex sentences. Saldajeno (2022) demonstrates the complexity of writing proficiency by emphasizing the role that grammar knowledge plays in addition to reading comprehension and vocabulary.

Conversely, the lowest frequency is 12.0 (30 respondents) in persuasive essay and 10.4% (26 respondents) in argumentative essay. This denotes that only a small percentage of students showed "Very Proficient" writing. This indicates that these learners have a strong foundation in grammar, mechanics, and clear idea expression. They can produce well-structured and interesting written pieces because they can effectively use a variety of sentence structures, making sure that sentences have balanced phrasing for emphasis or rhythm, and they show a keen understanding of word choice to convey their ideas with accuracy and nuance.

According to Taylor (2020), flawless grammar and mechanics draw the reader's focus to the essay's content and make it easier for them to understand the writer's arguments and points of view. Grammar and mechanics are the tools writers use to persuade readers and effectively express themselves; to put it another way, writing proficiency is a broad concept, but grammar and mechanics are the building blocks of clear communication. Davis (2023) highlights that good mechanics and grammar not only increase the readability and comprehension of an essay but also the writer's credibility and professionalism. This is why Miller (2019) stressed the importance of mechanics and grammar in creating essays that are both informative and impactful.

Table 9: Summary of the Respondents' Level of Writing Proficiency during the First and Second Quarter

Level of Writing Proficiency	First Quarter (Persuasive Essay)			Second Quarter (Argumentative Essay)			Overall		
	Mean	SD	Description	Mean	SD	Description	Mean	SD	Description
Content	3.91	0.70	Proficient	4.18	0.92	Proficient	4.05	0.81	Proficient
Organization	3.35	0.90	Moderate	3.64	0.88	Proficient	3.50	0.89	Moderate
Mechanics and Grammar	3.33	0.82	Moderate	3.40	0.92	Moderate	3.37	0.87	Moderate
Overall	3.53	0.81	Proficient	3.74	0.91	Proficient	3.64	0.86	Proficient

Legend: (12-15 pts.) 4.26-5.00/Very Proficient (6-8 pts.) 2.76-3.50/Moderate
(9-11 pts.) 3.51-4.25/Proficient (3-5 pts.) 1.00-2.75/Good

Table 9 presents the summary of the level of writing proficiency of respondents during the first and second quarter. The overall mean rating of writing proficiency is 3.64 (SD=0.86), indicating a Proficient level. This shows a positive trend in writing proficiency between the first and second quarters. This suggests that respondents demonstrated strong skills in content, organization, and mechanics and grammar. The overall mean of 3.53 (SD=0.81) in persuasive essay and 3.74 (SD=0.91) in argumentative essay indicate that the respondents' writing skills modestly improved between the two quarters. In both content and organization, there were improvements from a mean score in the Proficient range in Quarter 1 to a higher Proficient range in Quarter 2. Mechanics and grammar showed a slight improvement as well, although both quarters fell within the Moderate level of writing.

In particular, content obtained the highest mean of 3.91 (SD=0.70) in persuasive essay and 4.18 (SD=0.92) in argumentative essay which indicates that the respondents' level of writing proficiency is Proficient. This implies that students performed strongest in writing persuasive and argumentative essays, obtaining a Proficient level. Students have a good grasp of developing arguments and conveying their points effectively. This indicates that students can analyze information critically, identify relevant evidence, and construct sound arguments to support their claims.

A study by Fox (2018) investigated the role of content knowledge in writing assessment. His review highlighted the multifaceted nature of content knowledge and the variety of methods used to assess it. Importantly, the study also found a strong correlation between content knowledge and writing skill, suggesting that considering content knowledge is crucial in writing assessment. This aligns with the present finding that persuasive and argumentative essays, which likely require deeper content knowledge, received the highest proficiency scores. These scores indicate a strong level of writing ability among the respondents.

Conversely, mechanics and grammar obtained the lowest mean of 3.33 (SD=0.82) in persuasive essay, and 3.40 (SD=0.92) in argumentative essay. Though content seems to be a strong area, with scores reaching the Proficient level, mechanics and grammar remain a focus point. Clear and consistent mechanics and grammar are essential for conveying ideas clearly and concisely, ultimately contributing to the overall quality of a piece. However, these studies also emphasize the importance of a balanced approach.

Several studies, including those by Heisey (2020), Smith (2019), and Jones (2018), highlight the critical role mechanics and grammar play in effective writing. This resonates with findings that show mechanics and grammar scores tend to be lower in persuasive essays and argumentative essays, even when content reaches Proficient levels. This suggests students might struggle with translating their well-developed ideas into polished, error-free writing. This may indicate a need for increased focus on grammar drills, proofreading techniques, or integrating mechanics instruction alongside content development initiatives.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' assessment on the predictors of writing skills and their level of writing proficiency?

Table 10: Result of the Test on Relationship between the Respondents' Assessment on the Predictors of Writing Skills and their level of Writing Proficiency

Predictors of Writing Skills	Level of Writing Proficiency				Overall Measure		
	First Quarter (Persuasive Essay)		Second Quarter (Argumentative Essay)				
	<i>r-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>r-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>r-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Motivation	.321**	.000	.254**	.000	.376**	.000	Significant
Teacher-Learner Relationship	.224**	.002	.289**	.000	.282**	.000	Significant
Learning Environment	.333**	.001	.338**	.000	.344**	.000	Significant
Feedback System	.422**	.000	.401**	.000	.450**	.000	Significant
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							

Table 10 presents a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between various predictors of writing skills and the respondents' level of writing proficiency across different essay types. Notably, the predictors examined include motivation, teacher-learner relationship, learning environment, and feedback system. Writing proficiency was measured in two quarters, with the first quarter focusing on persuasive essays and the second quarter focusing on argumentative essays. Results indicate that all four predictors have a significant positive correlation with writing proficiency in both quarters.

Specifically, motivation exhibits correlations of 0.321**, 0.254**, and 0.376** for persuasive essay, argumentative essay, and overall proficiency respectively, with p-values of .000. Similarly, the quality of the teacher-learner relationship demonstrates significant positive correlations (r-values: 0.224**, 0.289**, and 0.282**; p-values: .002, .000, .000) across all measures of writing proficiency. Furthermore, the learning environment exhibits significant positive correlations (r-values: 0.333**, 0.338**, and 0.344**; p-values: .001) with writing proficiency in all categories. However, the feedback system emerges as the strongest predictor, displaying highly significant positive correlations (r-values: 0.422**, 0.401**, and 0.450**; p-values: .000) across all aspects of writing proficiency.

Students who reported higher levels of motivation tended to write better. When students are motivated, they are more engaged and put in greater effort, leading to higher quality writing. When teaching students to write essays, it is important to get them excited about the task. Motivated students are more likely to put effort into crafting strong essays. Similarly, the quality of the teacher-learner relationship plays a crucial role. For instance, when teachers assist the learners with the essay writing process through providing ample examples, breaking the process down into manageable steps, and allowing students time to research the topic, learners will be better able to comprehend the topic and be prepared to write. When teachers create a safe and encouraging environment, students feel comfortable taking risks and experimenting, raising the development of strong writing skills. Moreover, the most significant factor of writing proficiency is the feedback system. Teacher's comments to the learners' output provide powerful examples in writing. Feedback helps students identify areas where they excel and areas need improvement.

Bahri (2021) asserted that there are a few common problems that students encounter when writing essays. These problems include grammatical problems, where students struggle to use the correct tenses; organizing problems, where students struggle to organize the idea; writing orientation and interpretative recount problems; and vocabulary problems, where students use words that are inappropriate. Furthermore, Amani and Heidari (2020) looked at the relationship between writing strategies, writing proficiency, and content knowledge. They found that both writing strategies and content knowledge significantly improved writing proficiency, and that teachers should focus on assisting EFL learners in developing both writing strategies and content knowledge. They also found that essays with concise and clear writing were easier to read and understand than those with wordy or unclear writing.

The analysis of the data revealed a strong connection between how respondents perceived predictors influencing writing ability and their actual writing proficiency. The null hypothesis is rejected because there is a significant relationship between the respondents' assessment of the predictors of writing skills and their writing proficiency. These findings suggest that addressing factors such as motivation, teacher-learner relationship, learning environment, and particularly, implementing an effective feedback system, all significantly contribute to writing proficiency and could significantly enhance individuals' writing skills across various contexts, encompassing persuasive essays, argumentative essays, and overall proficiency.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it was found out that the Grade 10 learners in Salay district have a high level of assessment on the predictors of writing skills. Among the four variables, the feedback system emerged as the strongest predictor. The positive trend in writing performance is indicated by the fact that argumentative essays demonstrated a higher proficiency level than persuasive essays. Notably, content emerged as the strongest area, with both persuasive and argumentative essays reaching a Proficient level with mean scores of 3.91 and 4.18 respectively. The predictors of writing skills have a significant relationship with the learners' writing proficiency.

Recommendations

In accordance with the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are hereby presented:

1. School administrators should invest in teacher development by providing more training and well-established strategies that will energize and inspire teachers to increase student motivation for essay writing.
2. Teachers should explore and implement drills and effective strategies to strengthen students' mechanics and grammar skills. This could involve incorporating activities like interactive exercises, games focused on grammar rules, peer editing sessions, and varied writing prompts that encourage proper mechanics usage.
3. Teachers should encourage students build a writing habit by blogging or journaling to help them write more consistently, and empower them by leading biweekly peer review workshops with detailed rubric-based feedback.

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