**INTRODUCTION**

- Self-evaluation of writing skills has been associated with writing self-efficacy and performance. Writing self-efficacy involves self-assessed writing skills and application of writing strategies.  
- According to Bandura's self-efficacy theory, there can be a discrepancy between a person's self-belief and outcomes. Expectation alone does not necessarily produce a desired outcome.  
- Previous research has found undergraduate students overestimate their writing abilities. However, as they advance in their academic careers, their self-assessment of skills becomes more aligned with achieved performance.  

**METHOD**

**Participants**

- Undergraduate psychology students (N = 159)  
  - 57 lower-division, 103 upper-division  
  - 56 upper-division had a literature review assignment graded by their professor on a rubric.  
  - One participant excluded for excessive non-responding.  

**Measure**

- Adapted from ESLP 82 Questionnaire with questions regarding English as a second language removed.  
- 72 questions about self-reported (a) organization (e.g., setting deadlines, conducting research) and (b) mechanics (e.g., proofreading, formatting) and strategies used (a) before, (b) during, and (c) after writing.  
- From the full questionnaire, several subscales were created by grouping questions by topic.

**TABLE 1. ESLP-R Total Scores and Subscales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Views on their overall writing ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Ability to write logically in an appropriate format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Ability to use grammar and style accurately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Strategies implemented as part of the writing process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Writing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Reviewing, brainstorming, or outlining before beginning to write.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During-Writing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Habits and behaviors to produce consistent and accurate writing projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Writing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Editing, soliciting feedback, and making corrections to benefit current and future writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>Total for Skills and Strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESULTS**

**Hypothesis 1**

- As hypothesized, Mechanical Skills had a stronger correlation with During-Writing Strategies (r = .56) than with Pre- and Post-Writing Strategies (r = .39 and .36, respectively). Although unanticipated, Organization Skills were associated with During-Writing Strategies (r = .62, Table 3).  

**Hypothesis 2**

- As hypothesized, Organization Skills had a stronger correlation with Pre-Writing Strategies (r = .53) than did Mechanics (r = .39). These scales evidenced similar correlations with Post-Writing Strategies (r = .40 and .36, respectively; Table 3).  

**Hypothesis 3**

- Contrary to our hypothesis, we found a stronger correlation between self-reported Writing Skills and Strategies for lower-division students (r = .72) than for upper-division students (r = .45; Table 4).  

**Hypothesis 4**

- As hypothesized, the association between Total Score and achieved writing assignment grade was negligible (r = .38). Thus, ESLP-R Total Score was an inadequate predictor of achieved performance.

**TABLE 3. Correlations Between Subscales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Writing</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During-Writing</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Writing</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 4. Results for Upper- and Lower-Division Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower-Division</td>
<td>139.07</td>
<td>16.84</td>
<td>153.71</td>
<td>20.23</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper-Division</td>
<td>136.08</td>
<td>19.35</td>
<td>126.11</td>
<td>20.86</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION**

- Results suggest self-efficacy is not uniform throughout the writing process (i.e., pre-, during-, & post-writing).  
- We found that higher self-report on Organization was associated with higher scores on all subscales, and was strongest during pre- and during-writing.  
- We expected to find a higher association between upper-division students' self-reported writing skills and their graded assignments than was observed. Since transfer students come from various colleges, it is difficult to determine if performance is due to self-efficacy or environmental factors.  
- Student beliefs about their writing skills did not align with their achieved writing grade. Thus, only improving students’ writing self-efficacy beliefs may not be enough to improve quality of their work.  
- Writing skills and strategies need to be taught, practiced, and evaluated to align self-efficacy and abilities.  

**Limitations & Future Directions**

- This study was limited to a small sample of psychology students. In the future, researchers should collect data from a larger student population across disciplines.  
- In future studies, researchers should also collect pre- and post-class evaluations to determine if self-efficacy changes over the course of the semester.  
- Only a small number of participants had graded assignments for comparison. Additional studies could address this by having graded assignments for all participants.  
- Although face valid, the ESLP-R has not been validated. Such research should be conducted to examine its utility.

**REFERENCES**


**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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