



Intrinsic Writing Motivation and English Academic Performance of Grade-8 Students

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Received 02/05/2026

Revised 18/06/2026

Accepted 20/07/2026

Abstract

Background and Aim: Although numerous studies have been conducted on academic motivation, there is still a lack of research on the relationship between intrinsic writing motivation, specifically in terms of self-actualization and self-determination, and English academic performance among Filipino Junior High School students. This study was based on the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and it aimed to investigate the extent of intrinsic writing motivation and its correlation with the English academic performance of Grade 8 students.

Materials and Methods: The study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between intrinsic writing motivation and English academic performance. Data were collected from 109 Grade 8 students using an adapted version of the Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire developed by Ashley R. Payne. The instrument consisted of 16 items designed to measure two dimensions of intrinsic writing motivation, namely self-actualization and self-determination. Academic performance was measured by the final English grades of students. The adapted questionnaire was expert-validated and found to have an acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .89). The level of motivation and performance was calculated using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation), and Pearson correlation was applied to determine the relationship between variables with a level of significance of 0.05.

Results: Findings revealed very high levels of Self-actualization ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.35$) and Self-determination ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.34$). The students' performance in English academics was at a very satisfactory to outstanding level. Moreover, it was found that there was a statistically significant yet weak positive correlation between overall intrinsic writing motivation and English academic performance ($r = .217$, $p = .024$).

Conclusion: The results are aligned with the S.D.T. theory, as it has been found that intrinsic writing motivation is positively related to English academic achievement, albeit this relationship is small, which implies that other academic and contextual factors also contribute to English achievement.

Keywords: Intrinsic Writing Motivation, Self-actualization, Self-determination, English Academic Performance, Junior high School Students

Introduction

Writing competency is an essential academic competence that allows the learner to convey ideas, apply higher-order thinking, and achieve success in other disciplines. Writing is generally considered one of the most cognitively challenging macro skills in English language education that involves linguistic knowledge, self-regulation, and maintained motivational interaction (Alzubi & Nazim, 2024; Li, Yao, and Zhu, 2024). With the escalated academic requirements at the junior high school level, it is not only that students should formulate grammatically correct texts, but rather to develop the ability to formulate reasoned arguments and explanations that are coherent. These expectations explain why motivation plays a critical role in maintaining engagement and enhancing performance in writing assignments.

Motivation, especially intrinsic motivation, has been identified as one of the psychological determinants of academic success. Intrinsic motivation is the process of doing something based on its own satisfaction, interest, or value instead of the rewards it provides (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Intrinsically motivated students are likely to continue with difficult tasks, use more sophisticated learning methods, and achieve better grades (Howard et al., 2021). Intrinsic motivation has also been linked to higher quality of writing, more revision, and better academic performance in writing contexts (Li et al., 2024).

Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) is a component of the Self-Determination Theory and is used to explain the process of motivation occurring as a continuum from external regulation to complete intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Students may be introduced to writing for a variety of





reasons, including grades and what teachers expect, but as they gain autonomy, competence, and personal relevance, they begin to appreciate the importance of writing. In so doing, this process of internalization serves as a theoretical foundation to explore the concept of writing motivation and its dimensions, namely self-actualization and self-determination.

The international importance of improving academic competencies, such as literacy and writing skills, is underlined in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations (2015). Specifically, SDG 4 is expected to inform and provide inclusive and equitable quality education and opportunities for lifelong learning to all. Target 4.1 emphasizes the significance of making sure that every learner attains the relevant and effective learning outcomes, including literacy proficiency. This global educational requirement is directly related to writing competence and academic performance in the English language. Moreover, building up the writing and language skills of the students will aid their long-term employability and productivity, hence indirectly enhancing SDG 8, which fosters sustained, inclusive economic growth by enhancing skills.

Writing motivation helps students become active learners and independent learners, and helps develop the students' ability to read and write, which can contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education). Intrinsic motivation to write can help students engage in language learning activities to promote equitable and inclusive educational outcomes.

It is in this international learning environment that one realizes that internal determinants of writing performance are important. Although a lot of literature has been on academic motivation in general, very little has been done on in-depth research on intrinsic writing motivation as an indicator of overall English academic performance at the junior high school level. Most of the available studies focus on motivation when it comes to writing certain writing tasks or single writing tests (Alzubi & Nazim, 2024; Li et al., 2024). Though these studies present insightful information, most of them usually limit their inquiry to the total performance of the students in English, which includes writing, reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, and oral communication.

Furthermore, the recent motivation studies reveal the multidimensionality of intrinsic motivation, especially the constructs that are consistent with the self-determination theory, like autonomy, competence, and personal growth (Howard et al., 2021). Nonetheless, little empirical data have been collected to examine how variables like self-actualization and self-determination in the writing context directly connect with a set of measurable academic variables like English grades in the secondary education setting. In the developing world, where quality education and literacy rates are still burning issues, it is particularly important to determine psychological aspects that lead to better academic performance.

Although many studies have focused on the impact of motivation on academic performance, limited research has focused on how intrinsic writing motivation relates to academic performance in English in junior high school in the Philippines' secondary education system. This study addresses this gap by investigating how the self-actualization and self-determination components of intrinsic writing motivation relate to students' academic performance in English.

The motivation to learn English is especially important in the Philippine context in education. Although educational reforms have been made, literacy and language performance in school education remain an issue for Filipino learners, as evidenced by the international assessment of learning outcomes, Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), in which Filipino students have consistently performed at a level lower than the average of the OECD. All of the above concerns indicate that psychological factors that can facilitate language learning outcomes, especially for junior high school students, should be examined.

Grade 8 is a pivotal developmental period in which there is a heightened sense of independence and identity. The early adolescent years are a time of increased self-concept and motivational orientations, so this is a crucial phase to investigate the ways internal motivational processes shape academic behaviors and outcomes.

The study is aimed at contributing to both motivation theory and language education research by placing intrinsic motivation to write in the context of overall academic performance. The results can be used in teaching methods to promote self-directedness, significant interaction, and long-term interest in writing activities. After all, increasing intrinsic motivation in writing can have a positive effect on





the academic performance of students in English, and thus help to achieve the desired quality output in education in accordance with SDG 4 and the long-term development of human capital as per SDG 8. It is through this exploration that the study highlights the need to develop internal motivational resources as one of the avenues towards enhancing academic performance and promoting international educational objectives.

Traditionally, writing motivation has been studied in relation to writing achievement, but the present study looks at its relation to overall English academic performance. This is justified as English grades are built on a composite evaluation of language skills, which involves writing, reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, speaking, and critical thinking. Writing is a multifaceted language proficiency that cannot be separated from these skills, so students who are intrinsically motivated to write could also be more intrinsically motivated and more successful when completing other English language tasks.

Objectives

In this study, the researcher sought to establish the correlation existing between intrinsic writing motivation and the academic performance of students in Grade-8 Junior High School in English. Particularly, it attempts to:

1. Determine the level of intrinsic writing motivation among Grade-8 students in terms of: (1) self-actualization; (2) self-determination.
2. Determine the level of English academic performance of Grade-8 students as reflected in their English final grades.
3. Determine whether a significant relationship exists between overall intrinsic writing motivation and the English academic performance of Grade 8 students.

Null Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the overall intrinsic writing motivation and the English academic performance of Grade 8 students.

Literature review

Intrinsic Motivation in Writing

This approach encourages students to engage actively in their writing activities. Intrinsic Motivation in Writing. This method motivates students to be very active in their writing tasks. Motivation is very important in the engagement and success of students in writing activities. Intrinsic motivation is the process of doing something because it is inherently interesting, enjoyable, or personally meaningful instead of being done as a result of outside rewards or pressures. Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci claim that intrinsic motivation grows when learners feel autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the learning conditions, the main postulates of Self-Determination Theory. With such psychological needs met, students will be more likely to show more involvement, persistence, and enjoyment of academic activities like writing. Recent research highlights the fact that intrinsic motivation plays a very important role in determining how much students are willing to engage in writing activities. According to research carried out by Graham (2023), students who are intrinsically motivated to write have a higher probability of taking up writing tasks, putting effort into the process of making improvements in their writing, and have a better chance of developing stronger writing abilities. In the same vein, Camacho et al. (2023) found that students who have a greater intrinsic motivation to write have increased persistence in writing and also create better quality written work. These results indicate that intrinsic motivation is a highly vital element in nurturing writing competence among students.

Self-Actualization in Writing Motivation

Self-actualization is part of the framework of Maslow's theory of human motivation, yet it shares conceptual similarities with SDT, in both its focus on personal growth and self-development and its emphasis on the realization of the individual's potential. Ryan and Deci (2020) used to suggest that behaviours are intrinsically motivated when the person wants to grow, master, or improve themselves.





Self-actualization can, therefore, be considered as a motivational dimension to complement the personal meaning and fulfilment that students gained from writing activities.

Self-actualization is one aspect of intrinsic writing motivation, which implies the wish of students to communicate their thoughts, ideas, and emotions through writing. Writing also allows learners to be self-expressive, reflective, and personal. Students tend to be more active when they consider writing as an important and personally satisfying activity. Recent studies confirm the significance of self-actualization in motivation for writing. Graham (2023) conducted an investigation and discovered that students who perceive writing as a form of self-expression are more likely to show greater motivation towards and involvement in writing activities. In addition, Troia et al. (2022) found that students who have some level of personal satisfaction with writing tend to spend time and effort on enhancing their writing skills. Moreover, language education research also underlines that the possibility of self-expression can improve the motivation of students to write. According to Lee and Hannafin (2021), instructional methods that involve the learner with the right to share personal ideas and experiences are associated with high engagement and motivation levels regarding writing amongst students. These results indicate that the intrinsic motivation of students can be reinforced by means of meaningful writing tasks that encourage self-expression.

Self-Determination and Student Motivation

Self-determination is the capability of students to control themselves in terms of their learning behavior and persistence in undertaking academic tasks. Highly self-determined students are persistent, responsible, and committed to upgrading their academic performance. Self-determined learners tend to plan their writing, revise their writing, and attempt to improve the quality of their writing in writing activities. Self-determination has been extensively reported in educational studies to have an effect on academic achievement.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is an approach to intrinsic motivation that recognizes three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017). In the study of motivation in writing, however, researchers have also studied general orientations to personal growth, self-expression, and satisfaction.

Research by Ryan and Deci (2020) has shown that self-determined learners are more engaged and persistent when performing learning tasks since they have a feeling of control over their learning. Such learners stand a higher chance of goal setting, track their progress, and persevere in order to succeed in academics. The importance of self-determination in the development of writing is also emphasized in recent studies. Troia et al. (2022) established that students who exhibit greater self-determination levels in writing activities exhibit increased motivation in writing activities and create more developed written assignments. In the same way, Camacho et al. (2023) indicated that persistence and self-regulation of the students are major factors that affect their performance in writing.

It is also significant that self-actualization is included in the concept of self-determination because, in the educational context, writing is a means of creativity, reflection, and personal expression as well as an academic need. In view of these two aspects, the present study conceptualizes intrinsic writing motivation in two dimensions: sense of autonomy and seeking personal growth through writing.

Writing Motivation in Southeast Asian Language Learning Contexts

Motivation is a powerful determinant of L2 achievement through recent research in the Asian context. Alzubi and Nazim (2024) discovered that the intrinsic interest of students in the writing topic positively affected their engagement and quality of written productions in the English language learning (ELL) context. Xu et al. (2024) also found that learning motivation is a significant factor in the achievement of English, as it helps to improve students' self-efficacy and active involvement in the classroom.

Learning English is very significant for both teaching and communication purposes in the Southeast Asia region; therefore, motivation plays an important role in English learning. The linguistic settings in the region are often complex, and learners have to engage in a range of English learning tasks over an extended period. English is still a compulsory course in the Philippines and is the main medium of instruction in various learning fields. Empirical studies on the relationships between intrinsic motivation for writing and academic performance in English writing in junior high school, however, are limited. Most studies done in the Philippines are on general academic motivation, reading skills, or





language anxiety, but not on writing-specific motivation. This gap calls for local studies and research that will examine the relationship between the intrinsic motivation to write and the academic outcomes of Filipino students.

Intrinsic Motivation and Academic Performance

An increasing number of studies have shown that intrinsic motivation has a close relationship with the academic performance of students. Motivated learners are likely to exert more effort in learning activities, show more persistence when they face obstacles, and use effective learning strategies. Consequently, intrinsic motivation tends to be associated with positive educational results. The studies conducted in language learning have always emphasized the significance of motivation in educational attainment. Dörnyei (2021) highlighted the fact that motivation is among the most significant variables in success in second language learning. Motivated students learn a language better because they tend to apply the language skills more, engage actively in classroom activities, and attain higher levels of proficiency. Equally, Alrabai (2022) discovered that more intrinsically motivated students are more academically engaged and have higher performance in the language subjects. When the learners are internally motivated, they are more likely to take learning tasks with more enthusiasm and persistence, hence leading to better academic performance.

Intrinsic Writing Motivation and Academic Achievement

The results of increasing research have indicated that intrinsic motivation is one of the factors that significantly contribute to students' academic achievement, especially in language learning and writing development. Research consistently indicates that student writers who are motivated to write for personal interest, enjoyment, and self-fulfillment are more likely to be persistent, involved, and successful in their writing than those who write for mostly external purposes (Graham, 2023; Howard et al., 2021). Likewise, Wang and Troia (2023) found that motivated writers tend to be more effective in their writing strategies and their writing performance. Other researchers also found that writing engagement is another important pathway between motivation and writing achievement of secondary school students (Zhang et al., 2024).

Despite this growing consensus, the strength of the relationship between intrinsic motivation and Even with this general agreement, the effectiveness of the link between IM and academic outcomes is dependent upon studies. Although some researchers found moderate to strong correlations between motivation and literacy outcomes (Camacho et al., 2023; Wang & Troia, 2023), others believe that motivation is a factor in literacy achievement only part of the time, given that literacy is also shaped by the quality of instruction, self-efficacy, socioeconomic factors, and learning environments (Howard et al., 2021; Schober et al., 2022).

Together, these studies suggest that intrinsic motivation (including intrinsic drives and psychological engagement) has a positive impact on writing and language performance. Yet, the majority of these studies examine either the features of writing tasks, process characteristics, or specific sub-constructs of motivation without directly examining the relationships between integrated motivational dimensions (self-actualization and self-determination) and general academic grades in English subjects, especially among junior high school students. This highlights the need for research that explores relations between students' intrinsic motivation for writing and academic performance in general English classes - the purpose of this study.

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which suggests that people's intrinsic motivation is based on satisfying their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2020). In relation to writing, intrinsic motivation is students' inner interest and motivation to engage in writing activities for personal enjoyment, development, and improvement rather than external rewards. In this research, intrinsic motivation to write is defined in terms of two key facets: self-actualization and self-determination.

The study combines two aspects of intrinsic writing motivation, namely self-actualization and self-determination, under the lens of complementary dimensions. Both concepts, self-actualization and self-determination, refer to positive aspects and inner growth, personal fulfillment, and autonomous involvement, though the basis of each is distinct. Both self-actualization and self-determination have



their roots in different concepts, but both refer to positive aspects and inner growth, personal fulfillment, and autonomous involvement. In writing contexts, self-actualization is manifested as the motivation to communicate and develop oneself through writing, while self-determination is manifested as independent, persistent, and self-regulated approaches to writing tasks. These dimensions together are meaningful indicators of intrinsic motivation.

Self-actualization is related to students' personal satisfaction, enjoyment, and achievement of writing tasks. Students who view writing as meaningful and in line with their personal objectives will be more engaged and persistent in their writing tasks. Self-determination, however, relates to students' self-initiated engagement and persistence, goal-setting, and responsibility in writing activities. SDT proposes that students who sense self-determination and internal regulation demonstrate greater academic engagement and achievement (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

As shown in Figure 1, the model suggests the connection between intrinsic writing motivation, which is operationalized through two motivational dimensions (self-actualization and self-determination), as the independent variable, and English academic performance as the dependent variable. English academic performance, assessed using students' final grades, refers to the mastery of English language skills, including writing, reading, grammar, and communication. Intrinsic motivation has been empirically proven to have a positive impact on academic engagement and performance, including in literacy and writing (Wang & Troia, 2023; Zhang et al., 2024).

Thus, the conceptual model suggests that increased internal motivational factors in writing can increase students' engagement and, in turn, increase their academic performance in English.

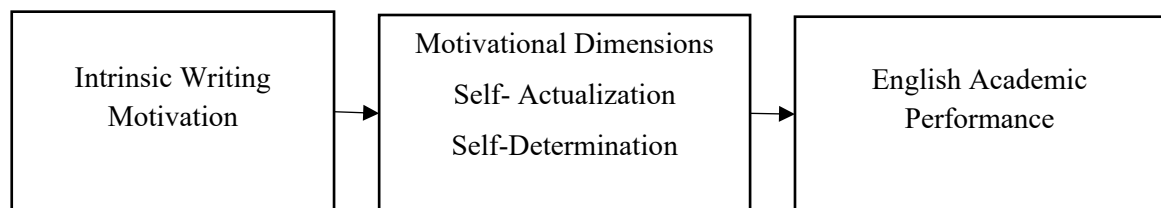


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Study

Methodology

1. Research Design

This study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational design to determine the relationship between intrinsic writing motivation and English academic performance of Grade 8 students in Junior High School. It is suitable to use a correlational design as the research aims at establishing the level and nature of the relationship between naturally occurring variables without manipulating them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this regard, the intrinsic writing motivation (with its aspects of self-actualization and self-determination) is assessed with the help of the questionnaire, whereas the academic performance in English is identified based on the official grades of students. The statistical test of the presence of significant correlations between motivation and academic outcomes is possible through the design of a correlational analysis of the relationship, especially the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. It is an appropriate method to find significant educational relationships in natural school environments and preserve rigor in methods (Fraenkel et al., 2019).

2. Research Environment

The research was conducted in a public secondary school in the Kapatagan West District that provides a complete Junior High School program under the national basic education curriculum. English is a core academic subject and is considered an essential part of students' language learning and communication skills. In this school, students engage in multiple writing activities as part of their English curriculum, such as essay writing, reflective writing, and performance-based written tasks. These tasks are continually assessed and form part of students' English marks. These teaching practices offer a suitable academic environment for considering students' intrinsic writing motivation and its possible link with academic performance in English. This school setting offers a classroom environment where genuine teaching practices take place. Studying students in this setting enables the collection of real academic data from their everyday school experiences, thereby ensuring that the study results



reflect their authentic academic engagement and performance rather than through experimental manipulation.

3. Sources of Data and Sampling

The data for this study were collected from Grade 8 students at the Junior High School for the Academic Year 2025-2026. The main data were the students' responses to the Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire, modified for this study. Furthermore, the students' English academic achievement was derived from their English subject grades from school records (with permission from the school administration). The population of this study was 150 students in four sections of Grade 8. The subject of the study was Grade 8 students because they are at the age of adolescence, which has the characteristics of being more independent, forming identity, and changing motivational beliefs, which is suitable for studying intrinsic writing motivation. The sample size was calculated using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error, which yielded a sample size of 109. This method allowed for a large enough sample to accurately represent the population. To maintain representation of students from each section, a stratified random sample was used. Within each section, students were then chosen using simple random sampling via an online randomizer, which ensured an equal chance for all students to be selected. This sampling approach ensured equitable selection of respondents and reduced sampling bias.

4. Research Instrument

This study utilized the Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire by Payne (2012), specifically for the intrinsic writing motivation of learners. The adapted questionnaire was the main tool, and it included 16 questions that were separated into two dimensions of intrinsic writing motivation: self-actualization (8 items) and self-determination (8 items). Several questionnaire items were linguistically simplified to suit Grade 8 learners. The term "academic writing tasks" was changed to 'writing activities in English class'. The instrument designed was reviewed for content validity by three experts in English education. The adapted Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire was found to have good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$). The measure of responses was a four-point Likert scale with options of 4 (Strongly Agree), 3 (Agree), 2 (Disagree), and 1 (Strongly Disagree). The tool was meant to identify the levels at which the students are intrinsically motivated to get involved in writing activities. Along with the questionnaire responses, English academic performance was assessed by examining students' English grades from their school records. These were used as the quantitative measure of students' performance in English and were analyzed to determine the relationship between intrinsic motivation for writing and academic performance.

5. Data Collection

The data collection took place with the consent of the school authorities and an explanation to the respondents on the objective of the study. The survey comprising intrinsic motivation to write was personally administered to the sampled students of Grade 8 by the researcher in a designated classroom. The respondents were also instructed on how to fill out the instrument before they answered the questionnaire, and were assured that their responses were confidential and would only be used in the research. The students had enough time to respond to all the items with the degree of honesty and completeness. The responses were verified and counted after the questionnaires were retrieved. Moreover, the official school records of the students were obtained with due authorization of the scores of the students in English studies, and the grades obtained were used as the measure of the English academic performance in the study.

6. Data Analysis

The collected data were encoded and analyzed using the statistical software Jamovi. Descriptive statistics, specifically the mean and standard deviation, were used to determine the level of intrinsic writing motivation of the students in terms of self-actualization and self-determination, as well as the level of their English academic performance. To examine the relationship between the variables, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was employed to determine whether a significant relationship exists between intrinsic writing motivation and English academic performance. The level of significance was set at 0.05, which served as the basis for accepting or rejecting the null hypotheses of the study. Assumptions of normality, linearity, and absence of extreme outliers were checked before





conducting Pearson's correlation analysis to ensure the suitability of the statistical procedure. The results of the statistical analysis were then presented in tables and interpreted in accordance with the research questions.

7. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were made throughout the conduct of this study. Before data were collected, the school administration was contacted to grant the school permission to administer the questionnaire to the sampled Grade 8 students. The respondents were told the aim of the research, and they were assured that participating in the research was voluntary. They also received a message that their answers would remain confidential and would be used only in academic research. The questionnaire did not require any individual information from the participants to maintain their anonymity. Also, the grades of the students in English were acquired through official school records upon due authorization and were subjected to analysis during the research. All the data gathered was treated with responsible and secure handling in order to safeguard the privacy and rights of the participants.

Results

Research Question 1. The level of intrinsic writing motivation among Grade 8 students in terms of: (1) Self-actualization; and (2) Self-determination

Table 1. Level of Intrinsic Writing Motivation among Grade-8 Students in terms of Self-actualization

Self-Actualization Indicators	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I enjoy expressing my thoughts through writing.	2.00	4.00	3.17	0.448	High
Writing helps me understand myself better.	2.00	4.00	3.23	0.538	Very High
I feel satisfied when I complete a writing task.	3.00	4.00	3.60	0.493	Very High
I write even when it is not required.	1.00	4.00	2.65	0.809	High
Writing allows me to develop my personal ideas.	2.00	4.00	3.41	0.581	Very High
I feel proud when I produce a good piece of writing.	2.00	4.00	3.38	0.605	Very High
I like improving my writing skills.	2.00	4.00	3.17	0.448	High
Writing helps me reach my personal goals.	3.00	4.00	3.23	0.538	High
Over-All	2.13	4.00	3.30	0.352	Very High

Note. Hypothetical Mean: 3.26-4.00=Very High; 2.51-3.25=High; 1.76-2.50=Low; 1.00-1.75= Very low

Table 1 reflected the level of intrinsic writing motivation of Grade 8 students in terms of self-actualization. The findings indicate that the mean of self-actualization is 3.30 (SD = 0.352), and it is regarded as very high. This result shows that the Grade 8 students are typically highly intrinsically motivated to write, especially to express their ideas, generate thoughts, and get personal satisfaction out of the writing assignments. The highest mean score was achieved when I feel satisfied when I complete a writing task (M = 3.60), and the lowest mean score was when I write even when it is not required (M = 2.65), although it is still high. The relatively high standard deviation suggests that there is a lot of variation among students, with some students writing more than is required in class, and others writing more as a duty.

This result indicates that students view the process of writing as a valuable one that enables them to share their thoughts and feel that they have attained some kind of achievement. Self-actualization writing means the inner aspiration of the students to write, as it serves personal needs and





personal growth. This internal motivation can result in increased engagement and perseverance in writing activities.

The outcome reinforces the concepts of the Self-Determination Theory of Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, who assert that students become more interested in learning activities when they have a sense of control and enjoy learning activities. Recent studies affirm this observation as well. Indicatively, Graham (2023) highlighted that when students feel interested in writing personally, they are more likely to be motivated and interested in writing. In the same vein, Camacho et al. (2023) found that students who consider writing as a way of self-expression tend to engage more in writing activities and have better writing results.

This discovery indicates that writing is seen as a meaningful activity and not just a task for school. This aligns with current views of student-centered learning that focus on autonomous learning and personal relevance as bases for continued engagement. This finding implies that educators ought to offer writing exercises that enable learners to share personal thoughts, contemplate experiences, and discuss meaningful topics. These practices have the potential to maintain the intrinsic motivation of students and increase their level of engagement in writing assignments.

Table 2. *Level of Intrinsic Writing Motivation among Grade-8 Students in terms of Self-determination*

Self-determination Indicator	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I put effort into my writing because I want to improve.	2.00	4.00	3.59	0.531	<i>Very High</i>
I continue writing even when the task is challenging.	2.00	4.00	3.45	0.569	<i>Very High</i>
I revise my work to make it better.	2.00	4.00	3.42	0.532	<i>Very High</i>
I take responsibility for my writing performance.	2.00	4.00	3.38	0.541	<i>Very High</i>
I feel motivated to write without being forced.	2.00	4.00	3.12	0.620	<i>High</i>
I set goals for improving my writing.	1.00	4.00	3.24	0.622	<i>High</i>
I plan my ideas before writing.	1.00	4.00	3.38	0.650	<i>Very High</i>
I try to write better than my previous work.	2.00	4.00	3.58	0.532	<i>Very High</i>
Over-All	2.38	4.00	3.39	0.329	<i>Very High</i>

Note. Hypothetical Mean: 3.26-4.00=Very High; 2.51-3.25=High; 1.76-2.50=Low; 1.00-1.75= Very low

Table 2 demonstrated that the mean of self-determination is 3.39 (SD = 0.329), which can be considered very high. This shows that the students have a high level of responsibility, perseverance, and hard work towards enhancing their writing performance. The most frequent indicator (mean score) was I put effort into my writing because I want to improve (M = 3.59), and the lowest mean score was I feel motivated to write without being forced (M = 3.12), which is also considered high.

This observation indicates that the students are well endowed with self-regulated learning behaviors in writing, such as planning their ideas, revising their work, and trying to improve their writing performance. Even when faced with challenges, self-determined learners are more likely to be persistent and work harder to finish writing tasks.

The result matches the Self-Determination Theory, which states that students who feel autonomous and capable tend to be more likely to continue putting effort and persistence into learning activities. Ryan & Deci (2020) assert that learners who are self-determined are likely to show increased engagement and improved academic performance. Similarly, Troia et al. (2022) reported that students who are highly motivated to write and have high self-regulation abilities are more engaged in writing activities and have better writing performance.





The meaning of this finding is that teachers need to promote goal setting, revision, and reflective writing experiences that enhance the responsibility and perseverance of students in their writing assignments.

Both dimensions were scored very high, but the score for self-determination ($M = 3.39$) was slightly higher than the score for self-actualization ($M = 3.30$). It indicates that students are more inclined to be personally responsible, self-dependent, and persistent when writing, more so than for personal fulfillment.

Research Question 2. The level of English academic performance of Grade 8 students

Table 3. Level of English Academic Performance of Grade 8 Students

Grading Scale	N	Mean	SD	Interpretation
80 – 84	32	81.60	1.45	Very Satisfactory
85 – 89	41	87.10	1.36	Very Satisfactory
90 – 100	36	91.80	1.98	Outstanding

Note. Grade Interpretation: 90–100=Outstanding; 85–89=Very Satisfactory; 80–84=Satisfactory; 75–79=Fairly Satisfactory

Table 3 presents the data on the level of English academic performance of Grade 8 students expressed in their English grades. The findings reveal that most students scored in the Very Satisfactory and Outstanding grades. In particular, 41 students received grades in the range of 85 -89 ($M = 87.10$, $SD = 1.36$), which can be interpreted as Very Satisfactory, and 36 students received grades in the range of 90-100 ($M = 91.80$, $SD = 1.98$), which can be interpreted as Outstanding. In the meantime, 32 students received grades between 80 and 84 ($M = 81.60$, $SD = 1.45$), which can also be interpreted as Very Satisfactory. These results suggest that the general quality of the average performance of the Grade 8 students in English is generally good, implying that the majority of the learners exhibit a high degree of performance in their English subject.

The high overall levels of English performance seen in the majority of the participants could be due to good teaching in the English class, supportive learning situations, and sustained engagement in English learning activities. It is also conceivable that the favorable grade distribution was due to the assessment practices in school. Thus, achievement levels should be viewed in a wider instructional and institutional setting in which students are being taught.

The results indicate that the learners share a sufficient competence level in language and can achieve the academic standards in English. Excellent performance in English can be an indicator of how well students can comprehend the concepts of the language, use grammar and writing skills, and proficiently perform reading and communication activities. The engagement of students, their motivation to learn, and the positive teaching practices have been largely linked to academic performance in language learning. Research has indicated that, when students are actively involved in the process of language learning and are highly motivated, their academic performance in English is better (Xu et al., 2024). Likewise, findings suggest that classroom behaviors that promote writing development and engagement of students play a significant role in enhancing writing performance and the overall performance of language (Wang & Troia, 2023).

The results of this study have significant implications for English teaching and teaching practice. As the majority of students showed a very satisfactory to excellent performance, teachers must still employ teaching strategies that enhance meaningful involvement in language acquisition, especially in reading and writing tasks. Opportunities for collaborative learning, using real-life communication tasks, and student-centered instruction may also enhance the language proficiency of learners and contribute to their academic success. Meanwhile, teachers ought to offer specific attention to students whose performance proves to be relatively lower in order to make sure that all learners reach higher levels of proficiency. The motivation and engagement of students in English learning should be supported, as these variables have been shown to affect language success and academic performance in general (Zhang et al., 2024).





Research Question 3. Relationship between the overall intrinsic writing motivation and the English academic performance of Grade 8 Students

Table 4 Relationship Between Overall Intrinsic Writing Motivation and English Academic Performance of Grade 8 Students

Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)	Effect size	p-value	Interpretation
Overall Intrinsic Writing Motivation & English Academic Performance	.217	Weak	.024	Significant

Note. $p < .05$

The correlation between the total intrinsic writing motivation and the academic performance in the English subject is given in Table 4. The findings indicate a correlation coefficient of $r = .217$ and a p-value of .024, which indicates the significance of the positive correlation between the variables. This result implies that those students who are more intrinsically motivated to write have higher academic performance in English.

While the correlation coefficient suggests a weak relationship, the finding still suggests that intrinsic motivation is significant for students' learning. Students who find writing enjoyable, feel satisfied with their writing, and are intrinsically motivated to learn and get better achieve strong learning results.

According to Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the obtained correlation ($r = .217$) represents a small effect size, indicating a weak but meaningful association between intrinsic writing motivation and English academic performance. Several factors other than writing motivation affect English grades, such as reading comprehension, language proficiency, instructional quality, prior academic preparation, home support, and assessment practices in the classroom.

The weak correlation could reflect the complexity of the English grade, which is determined by a variety of factors such as reading skills, grammatical knowledge, teaching quality, socioeconomic status, student engagement, and assessment methods. Therefore, intrinsic motivation towards writing plays an important role in English achievement, but should not be regarded as the only factor that leads to academic success.

The results align with the principles of the Self-Determination Theory, stating that intrinsic motivation raises persistence, engagement, and academic success. Ryan and Deci (2020) suggest that intrinsically motivated learners have a higher possibility of exhibiting greater levels of cognitive engagement and performance. Equally, Graham (2023) noted that motivation to write is a powerful indicator of writing development as well as academic achievement in language learning. Furthermore, Dörnyei (2021) concludes that intrinsic motivation is instrumental in maintaining long-term participation of learners in the process of acquiring a second language.

This finding has the implication that the need to encourage intrinsic motivation in writing should be a major teaching objective in English language teaching. Educators can create writing assignments that could enable their creativity, self-expression, and freedom of choice of the topic, which could reinforce the internal motivation of students and possibly improve their academic performance.

Testing of the Hypothesis

Hypothesis Number 1. There is a significant relationship between the overall intrinsic writing motivation and the English academic performance of Grade 8 students, as shown in Table 4.



Knowledge Contribution

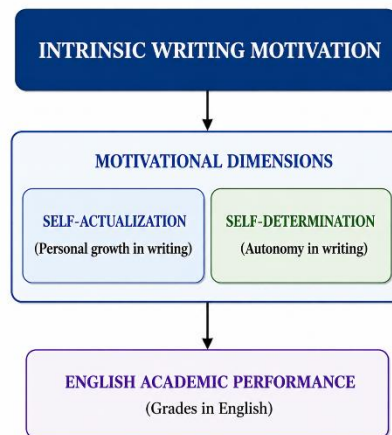


Figure 2. Integrated Knowledge Contribution Model of Intrinsic Writing Motivation and Academic Performance

The study also builds on the concept of Self-Determination Theory as it confirms that there is relevance of intrinsic writing motivation in a rural Philippines secondary-school setting, albeit with a small impact on achievement in English. This makes a meaningful contribution to the field of education, psychology, and the literacy field because it has been empirically supported that intrinsic writing motivation has a positive relationship with English academic performance. In the study, the model of intrinsic writing motivation is conceptualized as self-actualization and self-determination, and is applied in a context specific to secondary language education. Findings complement the previous research by showing that intrinsic motivation is a factor in the achievement of the English language, but it is a limited one, and hence the complexity of academic achievement. Moreover, the findings of the study can be used at the local level to guide instructional practices, curriculum planning, and future research in relation to language learning motivation in similar educational settings.

Conclusion

The study revealed that students in Grade 8 had a high level of intrinsic motivation to write and generally positive English academic performance. A positive correlation, albeit weak, was found between the students' intrinsic writing motivation and their English performance. The students who showed higher levels of intrinsic writing motivation tended to have higher grades in English. The results indicate that motivation is a factor that facilitates language achievement, but it is not the only context, instruction, or academic factor that affects students' language achievement.

Recommendation

According to the results of the study, some recommendations are made to improve students' intrinsic writing motivation and academic achievement in English:

Teachers. English teachers are encouraged to use teaching methods that improve students' intrinsic motivation to write. The Process-Genre Writing Approach can support students in acquiring writing skills by providing guidance and practice while having an awareness of the purpose and structure of various text types. Digital Storytelling Projects can also be used within the context of writing by integrating them into teachers' lessons to enhance students' engagement and creativity in writing. In addition, modules on Student Choice Writing should be offered to provide students with greater choice over the writing topics and activities that engage their interest. The following is also recommended to encourage students to learn collaboratively, reflect, and provide constructive feedback: Conducting Peer Review Workshops.



School Administrators. School administrators are encouraged to reinforce school-wide efforts to promote literacy development and writing motivation. A Writing Across the Curriculum Policy could promote writing in other discipline areas. Also, creating a School-wide Writing Portfolio Program may offer students a chance to track their writing, reflect on their experiences, and display their writing over time.

Curriculum Developers. Curriculum Developers could adapt and use an Autonomy-Supportive Writing Framework in their teaching to foster students' autonomy and agency in writing tasks. Similarly, Reflection-Based Assessment Rubrics can assist learners to analyze their own writing development, to improve their self-regulatory writing abilities, and to pursue ongoing learning and enhancement in writing.

Future Researchers. Future studies can investigate other factors that may affect the academic performance of English, such as factors other than intrinsic writing motivation. Researchers can explore the influence of the language anxiety of English learners, writing self-efficacy, digital literacy, socioeconomic status, and the quality of teacher feedback. A review of these factors may help to better understand the psychological, instructional, and contextual factors that impact students' academic success in the English context.

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