



Pengukuran Motivasi Menulis Akademik Mahasiswa EFL Melalui Penggunaan ChatGPT (*Measuring EFL Students' Motivation in Academic Writing Through the Use of ChatGPT*)

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Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received: 23 Juli 2026 Revised: 27 Juli 2026 Accepted: 28 Juli 2026 Keywords: ChatGPT usage Academic writing motivation EFL students Self-Determination Theory Correlational study Kata Kunci: Penggunaan ChatGPT Motivasi menulis akademik Mahasiswa EFL Teori Penentuan Diri Studi Korelasi	The increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT has transformed students' academic writing practices. While ChatGPT offers various forms of writing assistance, its relationship with students' motivation to write remains a subject of debate. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the relationship between ChatGPT usage and academic writing motivation among EFL students at Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2020), this study employed a quantitative correlational design involving 100 fourth-semester students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using the Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire (AWMQ) adapted from Payne (2012) and the ChatGPT Usage Scale adapted from Nemt-allah et al. (2024). The data were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation after meeting the assumption of normality. The findings revealed that the participants demonstrated a moderate level of academic writing motivation. Furthermore, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between ChatGPT usage and academic writing motivation ($r = -.244$, $p = .015$). This indicates that students who reported more frequent use of ChatGPT tended to exhibit lower levels of motivation in academic writing, although the strength of the relationship was weak. Since this study adopted a correlational design, no causal relationship can be established. These findings suggest that the use of ChatGPT may be associated with changes in students' motivation toward academic writing and highlight the importance of promoting balanced and responsible use of AI tools in educational contexts. Abstrak Meningkatnya penggunaan alat kecerdasan buatan (Artificial Intelligence/AI) seperti ChatGPT telah mengubah praktik penulisan akademik mahasiswa. Meskipun ChatGPT menawarkan berbagai bentuk bantuan dalam menulis, hubungannya dengan motivasi mahasiswa dalam menulis masih menjadi perdebatan. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji hubungan antara penggunaan ChatGPT dan motivasi menulis akademik pada mahasiswa EFL di Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. Berlandaskan Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2020), penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuantitatif korelasional yang melibatkan 100 mahasiswa semester empat yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire (AWMQ) yang diadaptasi dari Payne (2012) dan ChatGPT Usage Scale yang diadaptasi dari Nemt-allah et al. (2024). Data dianalisis menggunakan Pearson Product-Moment Correlation setelah memenuhi asumsi normalitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa partisipan memiliki tingkat motivasi menulis akademik yang sedang. Selain itu, ditemukan hubungan negatif yang signifikan secara statistik antara penggunaan ChatGPT dan motivasi menulis akademik ($r = -.244$, $p = .015$). Temuan ini

menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa yang melaporkan penggunaan ChatGPT yang lebih tinggi cenderung memiliki tingkat motivasi menulis akademik yang lebih rendah, meskipun kekuatan hubungan tersebut tergolong lemah. Karena penelitian ini menggunakan desain korelasional, hubungan sebab-akibat tidak dapat disimpulkan. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa penggunaan ChatGPT dapat berkaitan dengan perubahan motivasi mahasiswa dalam menulis akademik serta menyoroti pentingnya penggunaan alat AI secara seimbang dan bertanggung jawab dalam konteks pendidikan.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Academic writing skills are among the most challenging competencies for EFL students, as they require not only mastery of linguistic aspects but also strong learning motivation. In practice, many students continue to struggle with generating ideas, structuring arguments systematically, and completing academic writing tasks effectively, difficulties that often translate into low engagement, procrastination, and suboptimal writing quality. As Hyland (2003) argues, academic writing requires a complex integration of language, critical thinking, and disciplinary conventions, a demand that is particularly heavy for EFL learners. Because academic writing simultaneously places cognitive, linguistic, and organizational demands on students, requiring them to construct logical arguments, apply academic conventions, and maintain coherence and cohesion in their texts, it is frequently perceived as an exhausting task, one that leads many students to display comparatively low motivation when confronted with writing assignments. Difficulties in language production are, in turn, closely tied to learners' motivation, especially when a task calls for a high degree of accuracy and organization (Richards, 2008). Learning motivation therefore becomes a key factor that merits close attention in efforts to strengthen EFL students' academic writing competence.

From a theoretical standpoint, motivation is a psychological force that governs how much effort learners are willing to invest and how long they sustain that effort (Dörnyei, 2001). Self-Determination Theory (SDT), proposed by Ryan and Deci (2000, 2020), distinguishes intrinsic motivation, engagement pursued for its own interest or enjoyment, from extrinsic motivation, engagement driven by external factors such as grades, lecturer expectations, or learning assistance. Because EFL students learn English under conditions of comparatively limited exposure outside the classroom, extrinsic sources of motivation, including lecturer support, learning resources, and educational technology, carry particular weight in this population, which makes SDT a fitting lens for understanding academic writing motivation among EFL learners.

Alongside these developments in language pedagogy, educational technology has expanded rapidly, and artificial intelligence tools, ChatGPT foremost among them, have become an increasingly common source of writing support for students. Digital tools can facilitate language learning by supplying additional resources and scaffolding (Warschauer, 2004). Yet even as AI integration in education continues to widen, how the use of such tools relates to students' motivation to write remains only partially understood. ChatGPT can assist brainstorming, idea organization, and the development of coherence, and prior studies have linked its use to greater confidence and reduced writing anxiety. At the same time, motivation in academic writing is shaped by many factors beyond any single tool, among them personal interest, learning environment, mood, academic demands, and lecturer support, so the association between the level of ChatGPT use and motivation warrants dedicated empirical attention.

Several studies have examined ChatGPT's role in EFL writing instruction and student motivation. Song and Song (2023) and Ahmed (2023) found that ChatGPT can support the writing process when used as a classroom tool, while Wang and Lin (2024) reported that ChatGPT use is associated with greater confidence and lower writing anxiety among students. However, these studies primarily address the effectiveness, perceptions, or general impact of ChatGPT use rather than the statistical relationship between the intensity of ChatGPT use and academic writing motivation. This leaves a research gap concerning how the level of ChatGPT usage specifically relates to EFL students' academic writing motivation, particularly within English Language Education programs in Indonesia.

To address this gap, the present study employed a quantitative correlational design to examine the relationship between ChatGPT usage and academic writing motivation among fourth-semester EFL students at Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. Specifically, this study aimed (1) to measure the extent of EFL students' motivation in academic writing when using ChatGPT, and (2) to examine the significance of the relationship between ChatGPT usage and academic writing motivation. Theoretically, the findings are expected to extend the literature on writing motivation into the era of AI-assisted learning; practically, they are expected to help lecturers and institutions design more adaptive, ethical, and student-centered approaches to AI use in the writing classroom. The remainder of this article is organized as follows: Section 2 describes the research method, Section 3 presents the results and discussion, and Section 4 offers the conclusion and recommendations.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research strategy with a correlational approach, chosen because the aim was to examine the relationship between two variables, ChatGPT usage as the independent variable and academic writing motivation as the dependent variable, rather than to manipulate either variable. Correlational research is appropriate for testing the degree of relationship between two or more variables without experimental manipulation (Creswell, 2012). This design allowed the researchers to determine both the extent to which ChatGPT usage was associated with academic writing motivation and whether the relationship reached statistical significance within an EFL learning context.

The research was conducted at the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Letters and Culture, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. This location was selected because students in the program, particularly those in their fourth semester, had already completed the Academic Writing course and were therefore expected to have direct, relevant experience with academic writing as well as familiarity with AI-based tools such as ChatGPT, making them well positioned to provide accurate data on the relationship under investigation.

The population comprised fourth-semester students of the English Education Study Program in the 2024/2025 academic year, a group selected because they had already gained experience producing academic texts through several writing-focused courses and were generally familiar with, or had begun to use, AI-based technologies such as ChatGPT to support their academic work. From this population, a sample of 100 students was drawn using purposive sampling, with prior use of ChatGPT for academic purposes, particularly in writing activities, serving as the principal selection criterion. This technique was considered appropriate because not every student in the population had direct experience using ChatGPT, so a targeted approach was needed to obtain valid and relevant data. A sample of 100 respondents was regarded as adequate for correlational analysis, consistent with the view that correlational studies can achieve an acceptable level of confidence with samples ranging from 30 to 100 respondents (Cohen, 1988; Sugiyono, 2013).

Two variables were examined in this study. The independent variable, ChatGPT usage, refers to how frequently, extensively, and for what purposes students used ChatGPT during the academic writing process, encompassing activities such as searching for ideas, correcting grammar, developing paragraphs, and organizing coherent text; AI-based tools such as ChatGPT can improve the quality of students' academic writing by offering rapid feedback and context-sensitive suggestions (Rahman, 2023). The dependent variable, academic writing motivation, refers to the internal and external drives underlying students' writing behavior, including their interest, enthusiasm, and effort toward producing quality writing; in the context of language learning, motivation can similarly be understood as the force that initiates, sustains, and directs learners' behavior toward specific goals (Dörnyei, 2001). Table 1 summarizes the operational definitions, dimensions, indicators, and item allocation for both variables.

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Item
Writing Motivation	Intrinsic (autonomy, competence, relatedness)	Enjoyment, interest, confidence, engagement, and self-improvement in academic writing.	1-8
Writing Motivation	Extrinsic (external, introjected, identified, and integrated regulation)	Academic achievement, lecturer feedback, writing practice, academic success, and writing responsibility.	9-15
ChatGPT Usage	Academic writing support	Use of ChatGPT for finding information, generating ideas, brainstorming, organizing ideas, and overcoming writer's block.	16-22
ChatGPT Usage	Perceived benefits of ChatGPT	Use of ChatGPT for paraphrasing, feedback, improving writing quality, saving time, developing arguments, and supporting learning.	23-30

Data were collected using two adapted questionnaires. The first, the Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire (AWMQ), was adapted from the 37-item Likert-scale instrument developed by Payne (2012),

covering intrinsic motivation, internal drives such as interest, satisfaction, and enjoyment in writing, and extrinsic motivation, drives associated with external factors such as academic achievement, grades, and specific expectations. The second, the ChatGPT Usage Scale, was adapted from the 15-item instrument developed by Nemt-allah et al. (2024), which measures three dimensions of ChatGPT usage: Academic Writing Aid, Academic Task Support, and Reliance and Trust. For the purposes of this study, ChatGPT refers specifically to GPT-5.5, the version available on the platform at the time data were collected. Both instruments were adapted linguistically and contextually to suit English Language Education students while preserving their original constructs, and responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Because both instruments had already demonstrated acceptable validity and reliability in the studies from which they were adapted, no separate pilot test was conducted prior to distribution; item wording was instead adjusted to fit the research context without altering the underlying constructs. To confirm that the instruments remained appropriate for the present sample, validity and reliability were nonetheless re-examined using the primary data. Item validity was assessed with Pearson Product-Moment correlation between each item score and its corresponding total scale score, and reliability was assessed with Cronbach's alpha, following the convention that a coefficient of .70 or higher indicates acceptable internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Hair et al., 2010).

Questionnaires were distributed to the 100 respondents through both Google Forms, for online completion, and printed copies, for offline completion, following a brief explanation of the study's purpose and an assurance of confidentiality intended to encourage honest responses. Collected responses were converted into numerical data according to the Likert scale and organized in a spreadsheet, with incomplete, duplicate, or otherwise invalid responses filtered out before analysis.

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Prior to correlation analysis, a normality test was performed to determine whether the data satisfied the assumptions required for parametric statistics; a significance value greater than .05 indicated normally distributed data, while a value below .05 indicated otherwise. In this study, the assumption was tested using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on the residual values obtained from the two variables. Once normality was established, Pearson Product-Moment correlation was used to examine the direction and strength of the relationship between ChatGPT usage and academic writing motivation, with coefficients ranging from -1 to +1: a positive coefficient would indicate that higher ChatGPT usage tends to accompany higher writing motivation, and a negative coefficient would indicate the opposite pattern. The correlation coefficient was computed following the Pearson Product-Moment formula presented by Arikunto (2010, p. 170). A significance level of $\alpha = .05$ served as the decision criterion: a p-value below .05 would lead to rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0), indicating a significant relationship between ChatGPT usage and writing motivation, whereas a p-value at or above .05 would lead to its retention.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data for this study were obtained from questionnaires distributed to 100 fourth-semester EFL students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, covering two variables, ChatGPT usage (X) and academic writing motivation (Y). Descriptive statistics and Pearson Product-Moment correlation, computed through SPSS, were used to determine the significance and strength of the relationship between the two variables. The analysis indicated that ChatGPT was used relatively frequently by respondents to support academic writing activities; most students reported that the tool assisted them in generating ideas, refining sentence structure, expanding vocabulary, and organizing academic texts more effectively. Respondents also demonstrated a moderate level of motivation in academic writing overall, suggesting that most remained engaged with writing tasks despite the cognitive and linguistic challenges that academic writing typically entails. The statistical analysis further revealed a weak, statistically significant negative correlation between ChatGPT usage and writing motivation, indicating that students who used ChatGPT more frequently tended to report somewhat lower rather than higher motivation. A detailed account of these findings is presented in the following subsections.

3.1 Respondents' Demographic Information

Respondents were classified by gender, semester level, and frequency of ChatGPT use. Female students made up the majority of the sample (86 respondents), compared with 14 male students, a distribution that reflects the composition of students who met the study's purposive sampling criterion. All 100 respondents were fourth-semester students, selected because they had already received foundational instruction in academic writing and were expected to have practical experience with digital learning tools, including ChatGPT.

Regarding frequency of use, most respondents, 77 students, reported using ChatGPT almost every day, while 19 used it one to three times per week, and only 4 used it rarely, around two to three times per

month (Table 2). These figures indicate that ChatGPT had become a routine feature of respondents' academic lives rather than an occasional resource, a pattern worth bearing in mind when interpreting the negative correlation reported below: although ChatGPT was used pervasively, this high frequency of use did not correspond with elevated writing motivation, and, if anything, coincided with a modest decline.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Frequency of ChatGPT Use

Frequency Category	n	Percentage (%)
Rarely (2-3 times per month)	4	4.0
Sometimes (1-3 times per week)	19	19.0
Often (almost every day)	77	77.0
Total	100	100.0

3.2 Validity Test

Item validity was examined using Pearson Product-Moment correlation between each item score and the corresponding total scale score, with an item considered valid if its r-count exceeded the r-table value of .196 ($n = 100$, $\alpha = .05$, two-tailed). All 15 items of the Writing Motivation scale exceeded this threshold, with r-count values ranging from .378 to .748 (Table 3), and all 14 retained items of the ChatGPT Usage scale likewise exceeded the threshold, with r-count values ranging from .598 to .851, each significant at $p < .001$ (Table 4). The ChatGPT Usage questionnaire originally comprised 15 items; one item failed to meet the validity criterion and was subsequently removed, leaving a final instrument of 29 items (15 for Writing Motivation and 14 for ChatGPT Usage). Taken together, these results confirm that both instruments were psychometrically appropriate for measuring their intended constructs.

Table 3. Validity Test Results for the Writing Motivation Scale (Variable Y)

Item	r-count	r-table	Status
S01	.500	.196	Valid
S02	.378	.196	Valid
S03	.524	.196	Valid
S04	.576	.196	Valid
S05	.501	.196	Valid
S06	.573	.196	Valid
S07	.540	.196	Valid
S08	.407	.196	Valid
S09	.648	.196	Valid
S10	.481	.196	Valid
S11	.696	.196	Valid
S12	.611	.196	Valid
S13	.476	.196	Valid
S14	.691	.196	Valid
S15	.748	.196	Valid

Table 4. Validity Test Results for the ChatGPT Usage Scale (Variable X)

Item	r-count	r-table	Status
S16	.764	.196	Valid
S17	.735	.196	Valid
S18	.805	.196	Valid
S19	.835	.196	Valid
S20	.833	.196	Valid

Item	r-count	r-table	Status
S21	.845	.196	Valid
S22	.792	.196	Valid
S23	.751	.196	Valid
S24	.851	.196	Valid
S25	.824	.196	Valid
S26	.825	.196	Valid
S27	.759	.196	Valid
S28	.823	.196	Valid
S29	.598	.196	Valid

3.3 Reliability Test

Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient of .70 or above regarded as the minimum acceptable threshold. The Writing Motivation scale achieved an alpha of .840 across its 15 items, indicating good internal consistency; corrected item-total correlations ranged from .284 to .690, and alpha-if-item-deleted values remained between .817 and .841, indicating that no single item removal would have meaningfully improved reliability. The ChatGPT Usage scale achieved an even higher alpha of .953 across 14 items, an excellent level of consistency; item-total correlations for this scale ranged from .539 to .819, with alpha-if-item-deleted values remaining above .948 throughout (Table 5). Both instruments were therefore judged sufficiently reliable for inferential analysis.

Table 5. Reliability Statistics for Both Scales

Variable	Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	Interpretation
Variable Y	Writing Motivation	.840	15	Good
Variable X	ChatGPT Usage	.953	14	Excellent

3.4 Normality Test

Before Pearson correlation was computed, the normality of the residuals was examined using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The test yielded a statistic of .060 with an asymptotic significance of .200; because this value exceeds .05, the null hypothesis of normality was retained. This conclusion was corroborated by a Monte Carlo significance of .512, derived from 10,000 simulated samples with Lilliefors correction (Table 6). The normality assumption having been satisfied, Pearson correlation could appropriately be applied to test the hypothesized relationship.

Table 6. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test

Parameter	Value
N	100
Mean of residuals	.0000000
Std. deviation of residuals	7.33742672
K-S statistic	.060
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.200
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)	.512
99% confidence interval	.499 - .525

3.5 Correlation Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Pearson Product-Moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between ChatGPT usage and writing motivation. The analysis yielded $r = -.244$ ($p = .015$, $n = 100$) (Table 7). Because $p = .015$ is below the $\alpha = .05$ threshold, the correlation is statistically significant; the coefficient itself indicates a weak negative relationship, meaning that students reporting more frequent ChatGPT use tended to score somewhat lower, rather than higher, on the Writing Motivation scale. Accordingly, the null hypothesis (H_0), which posited no significant relationship between ChatGPT usage and EFL students' academic writing motivation, was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was supported: a statistically significant relationship exists between the two variables, negative in direction and weak in magnitude ($|r| = .244$).

Table 7. Pearson Correlation between ChatGPT Usage and Writing Motivation

Variable	ChatGPT Usage (X)	Writing Motivation (Y)
ChatGPT Usage (X)	1	-.244*
Writing Motivation (Y)	-.244*	1
N	100	100
Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.015

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

3.6 Relationship Between ChatGPT Use and Writing Motivation

Before turning to the relationship between the two variables, it is worth considering the overall level of writing motivation observed among participants. Descriptively, fourth-semester EFL students in this study demonstrated a moderate level of academic writing motivation, suggesting that, on balance, students remained engaged with writing tasks even though their motivation was not uniformly high. One plausible explanation is that academic writing continues to place substantial demands on EFL students regardless of the assistance ChatGPT can offer; even when the tool helps generate ideas, organize information, expand vocabulary, or refine sentence structure, students still must construct arguments, apply academic conventions, and meet course requirements largely on their own. ChatGPT support, in other words, does not eliminate the underlying cognitive and linguistic difficulty of the task, which may account for a motivational profile that is moderate rather than markedly high.

Viewed through Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), this moderate profile is unsurprising, since SDT frames motivation as a blend of intrinsic and extrinsic sources rather than a single unified drive. Students may engage in academic writing partly out of personal interest in developing their ideas and partly in response to academic requirements, assessment systems, and lecturer expectations; the moderate motivation observed here likely reflects the interplay of these intrinsic and extrinsic forces within the writing process rather than the influence of any single factor, including ChatGPT.

This picture becomes more striking when set against the frequency data: 77% of respondents reported using ChatGPT almost daily, yet this high level of use did not correspond with elevated motivation. On the contrary, the correlation analysis showed that more frequent ChatGPT use was weakly but significantly associated with lower writing motivation ($r = -.244$), indicating that frequent access to AI assistance did not translate into stronger engagement with academic writing. One tentative explanation is that academic writing inherently requires students to generate ideas, organize arguments, resolve linguistic problems, and construct text largely on their own; when ChatGPT is used frequently, some of these stages may be partially delegated to the tool, potentially reducing students' depth of engagement with certain parts of the writing process. This interpretation, however, was not directly measured in the present study and should be treated as a plausible rather than a confirmed explanation, especially given that the strength of the correlation was weak, which implies that ChatGPT usage is only one of many factors associated with writing motivation.

Interpreted through the constructs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness central to SDT, the finding suggests that heavy reliance on external assistance may curtail opportunities for students to exercise independent decision-making, build confidence through their own effort, and engage directly with feedback from lecturers and peers during the writing process, each a channel through which motivation is ordinarily sustained. Reduced engagement along these lines could correspond with somewhat lower active participation in writing and, in turn, with lower motivation, although this chain of reasoning remains speculative given the correlational design of the study.

This pattern also stands in partial contrast to earlier research conducted in more structured instructional settings. Song and Song (2023) reported that targeted classroom use of ChatGPT in EFL writing instruction was associated with improved skills and increased motivation, and Ahmed (2023) similarly found that strategic use of ChatGPT during the planning and revision stages of writing was linked to heightened motivation. Notably, these positive outcomes emerged in contexts where AI use was structured by explicit instructional guidance, unlike the largely habitual, unguided daily use documented among respondents in the present study. This contrast suggests that the motivational consequences of ChatGPT use may depend considerably on how, and in what pedagogical context, the tool is used, rather than on frequency of use alone.

A further possible explanation concerns students' awareness of academic integrity and originality issues surrounding AI-assisted writing. Concerns regarding originality, ethical writing practice, and overreliance on AI frequently surface in discussions of ChatGPT use in academic contexts (Putu et al., 2024), and such concerns may generate uncertainty among students about the appropriate role of AI in their own learning. While ChatGPT can simplify aspects of the writing process, it is plausible, though not directly confirmed by the present data, that some students feel less personally invested in their written work as

reliance on the tool increases; this possibility offers one tentative account of why higher ChatGPT usage coincided with lower writing motivation in this study, though it remains one interpretation among several rather than an established conclusion.

At the same time, the modest magnitude of the correlation ($|r| = .244$) is an important qualifier. Writing motivation is a multidimensional construct shaped by many influences beyond AI tool use, including individual learning dispositions, instructional quality, assessment design, and the broader social learning environment; ChatGPT usage alone cannot account for the full range of students' motivational engagement. The finding is therefore best read as evidence of a modest but meaningful association that merits attention, rather than as evidence of a strong or deterministic relationship. Within the EFL learning environment specifically, students' motivation is likely to fluctuate in response to lecturer guidance, classroom experience, academic expectations, mood, confidence in English proficiency, and academic workload, as well as the periodic reminders many students receive from lecturers about responsible use of technological tools; motivation toward academic writing, in short, is probably associated with a combination of personal, instructional, environmental, and technological factors rather than ChatGPT usage in isolation.

Several limitations of the present study warrant acknowledgment. Because the design is cross-sectional and correlational, no conclusion can be drawn about the direction of causality: it remains equally plausible that students who are already less intrinsically motivated toward writing turn to ChatGPT more heavily as a compensatory strategy, rather than that heavy ChatGPT use itself diminishes motivation. All data were also collected through self-report questionnaires, a method inherently susceptible to response bias, and respondents were drawn from a single study program at one university, which limits the generalizability of the findings to broader EFL populations. Future studies employing longitudinal or experimental designs would offer a more robust basis for understanding how different patterns of ChatGPT use relate to writing motivation over time and across instructional contexts.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the findings carry practical relevance. Because higher ChatGPT usage was associated with somewhat lower writing motivation, attention should be directed not only at whether students use AI tools but at how and at which stage of the writing process they use them. A staged approach to AI-assisted writing, in which students complete brainstorming, outlining, and initial drafting largely on their own before turning to ChatGPT for feedback, language refinement, or revision, may help preserve learner autonomy, sustain active engagement with the writing process, and give students room to build writing competence through their own effort, while still allowing them to benefit from the tool's affordances at later stages of the writing cycle. When ChatGPT is positioned in this way, as a support for thinking rather than a replacement for it, it is more likely to complement rather than compete with students' intrinsic engagement in academic writing.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between ChatGPT usage and academic writing motivation among 100 fourth-semester EFL students of the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, using a quantitative correlational design and a 29-item questionnaire measuring ChatGPT Usage (14 items) and Writing Motivation (15 items). Both instruments demonstrated acceptable validity and reliability, and the data satisfied the normality assumption required for Pearson correlation. The analysis yielded a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = -.244$ ($p = .015$), leading to rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis: a statistically significant relationship exists between ChatGPT usage and EFL students' academic writing motivation. The negative direction of the relationship indicates that higher levels of ChatGPT usage were associated with somewhat lower writing motivation, although the relationship is weak in magnitude. Interpreted through Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), this pattern suggests that frequent, unguided reliance on ChatGPT may be linked to reduced intrinsic engagement in the writing process; however, because the design is correlational, no causal claim can be made. ChatGPT nonetheless remains a potentially valuable tool for academic writing when used purposefully, in ways that support rather than substitute for students' independent thinking.

4.2 Suggestions/Recommendations

For students, the findings invite reflection on how ChatGPT is used in daily academic writing practice. Given that 77.0% of respondents reported using ChatGPT on an almost daily basis, and that higher usage was associated with lower writing motivation, students are encouraged to consider whether their use of the tool genuinely supports learning or simply substitutes for it. ChatGPT can be useful for overcoming initial writer's block, exploring vocabulary options, or checking sentence structure, but the core intellectual work of developing arguments, organizing ideas, and constructing meaning should remain the student's own. Establishing clear personal boundaries, for instance by using ChatGPT for brainstorming, outlining, grammar

checking, and revision rather than for generating complete drafts, can help students preserve autonomy, strengthen writing competence, and sustain long-term motivation.

For lecturers and educators, rather than prohibiting ChatGPT outright, a more constructive approach involves integrating structured discussion of responsible and purposeful AI use into writing courses. Assignments that require students to document their writing process, through drafting logs, reflective journals, or staged writing tasks, can help ensure that AI assistance functions as a scaffold for idea development rather than a substitute for students' own thinking. Lecturers are also encouraged to communicate clear expectations regarding acceptable AI use, distinguishing linguistic support, such as vocabulary development, grammatical accuracy, and revision, from uses that displace students' own argumentation and academic voice. Because motivation is shaped not only by AI use but also by feedback quality, classroom experience, and individual learning conditions, lecturers remain central figures in sustaining students' motivation even as AI tools become more accessible. These considerations extend beyond writing courses to English language teaching, TEFL-related courses, and educational technology courses more broadly, and institutions are encouraged to develop clear, principle-based frameworks for AI use rather than relying on blanket prohibitions, so that students receive consistent guidance across courses.

For future researchers, addressing the methodological limitations of the present cross-sectional, single-institution design would strengthen the evidence base in this area. Longitudinal designs that track changes in writing motivation alongside patterns of ChatGPT use over time, and comparative studies involving students from multiple universities or academic disciplines, would help clarify whether the present pattern generalizes beyond this context. Future studies are also encouraged to specify the ChatGPT version used at the time of data collection, since capability differences across versions may correspond to different motivational patterns, and to employ qualitative approaches such as interviews or classroom observation to illuminate the mechanisms underlying the ChatGPT-motivation relationship. Examining moderating variables, such as instructor support, self-efficacy, and academic pressure, and testing interventions such as AI literacy training or institutional AI policy, would further contribute to this growing area of research. Finally, distinguishing between different types of ChatGPT use, such as brainstorming support versus direct text generation, and their respective associations with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, would provide more targeted guidance for responsible AI integration in EFL writing instruction.

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