

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss an overview of the research. It covered background of the research, problem of the research, purpose of the research, significance of the research, operational definition, scope and limitation of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Writing is an important skill that plays an important role in various aspects of life. Graham and Perin (2007) stated that writing is a crucial tool for organizing thoughts, constructing logical arguments, and enhancing learning. They highlighted that writing facilitates cognitive processes, enabling individuals to reflect deeply on their ideas, structure arguments systematically, and communicate effectively.

Writing is not merely a medium for recording information but an active process of generating and refining knowledge. Strategies such as summarization, the use of text structures, and the integration of feedback are particularly vital. These strategies help writers identify key points, establish relationships between ideas, and present arguments clearly, which contributes to text coherence and reader comprehension.

Furthermore, Graham and Perin (2007) emphasized that writing plays an essential role in academic and professional contexts, fostering skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and creative innovation. Harmer (2004) agree that cohesion and coherence in text is very important to ensure the message can be understood clearly by the reader.

Writing anxiety is a complex condition and has a negative impact on a person's ability to write effectively. Rezaei and Jafari (2014) emphasize that there is a significant negative correlation between writing anxiety and students' writing performance. They highlight that as anxiety increases, the quality of the written work tends to decrease. This anxiety is primarily driven by factors such as pressure from lecturers and high expectations regarding the quality of the students' writing. Harmer (2004), and Horwitz and Cope (1986) indicated that fear of negative evaluation and inability to meet academic expectations are major causes of writing anxiety.

The issue of writing anxiety among English education students in Indonesia indicates that many students feel anxious and stressed when they have to write in English. Jawas (2019) identified that in-class essay assignments are a predominant factor contributing to writing anxiety among Indonesian EFL students. This research underscores the adverse effects of anxiety on students' writing performance. Similarly, Wahyuni et al. (2019) revealed that writing anxiety is a common issue faced by Indonesian EFL college students, with contributing factors such as limited vocabulary, difficulties in grammar, and fear of negative evaluation. These challenges contribute significantly to students' struggles with writing in English.

Several factors that are known to cause anxiety in writing include difficulty starting to write, negative feelings, lack of self-confidence, perfectionism, lack of mastery of English grammar and vocabulary, time pressure, and lack of positive feedback. Bulqiyah et al. (2021) mentioned that students often face affective challenges when writing, including a lack of practice and low confidence. In

addition, Harmer (2004) emphasizes that negative feelings can arise as a result of comparison with other people's abilities, which worsens self-confidence. Hyland (2003) added that perfectionism can cause students to spend excessive time perfecting their writing, thereby increasing anxiety.

Luthfiyati et al. (2023) also stated that a lack of mastery of grammar and vocabulary can make students feel incompetent in expressing their ideas. Time pressure, as stated by Horwitz and Cope (1986), often causes additional stress, which makes the writing process even more daunting. Qashoa (2014) notes that a lack of positive feedback from teachers can exacerbate students' anxiety, because they feel they are not getting the support they need to develop. In this respect Pajares & Johnson (1994, p. 327) assert, "that one important source of students' self-confidence lies in the feedback that students receive from their teachers." Finally, that all of these factors are interrelated and can influence students' motivation and writing results. By understanding these factors, it is hoped that effective strategies can be developed to overcome anxiety in writing.

In addition, there are gender differences in writing experience, anxiety and self-confidence. Research by Cheng (2002) reported that female students experienced significantly higher levels of second language writing anxiety than male, with no significant difference among students across education levels. Furthermore, in Özkan and Da's (2015) and Anggraini (2005) study, male students were found to undergo more writing anxiety than female students.

Female often feel greater pressure to perform perfectly and are more likely to receive criticism regarding their appearance and performance, which increases feelings of anxiety and low self-esteem when writing (Pajares & Valiante, 2001).

Gender is a socio-cultural concept that refers to the roles, behaviors, identities and characteristics associated with male and female in society. It is learned and internalized through the socialization process. Gender plays an important role in shaping responses to academic pressure, including writing-related pressure. One factor of concern in writing anxiety studies is gender differences, which significantly influence a person's experience of writing anxiety. Research shows that female tend to experience higher levels of writing anxiety than male (Pajares & Valiante, 2001). This may be related to differences in how individuals respond to social pressures and expectations associated with their gender.

Some research suggests that female may be more susceptible to feelings of fear of failure and anxiety about judgment than male (Özkan and Da 2015). Social factors, such as gender stereotypes and societal expectations, can influence an individual's self-perception of their writing ability. Additionally, female may experience additional pressure to meet higher standards in writing to conform to existing gender expectations.

Direct observations and informal reports from students who feel anxious when writing in English encourage researchers' interest in studying this anxiety. In addition, the relationship between writing anxiety and gender attracts attention for further research. Many studies show that gender can influence academic anxiety and various aspects of mental health and education. However, there has not been much research that specifically investigates the relationship between gender and writing anxiety in the context of English education in Indonesia.

The ideal condition for writing anxiety among English language education students is a low or controlled level of anxiety, thus allowing students to write more

confidently and effectively. It is important for students to maintain a low level of writing anxiety, because high anxiety can hinder the learning process. In fact, many English language education students in Indonesia experience high writing anxiety. Based on observations and literature studies, many students feel anxious and stressed when required to write in English. Factors that contribute to this include lack of writing practice, negative experiences in writing assessments, and social and cultural influences. Additionally, gender differences may play a role in levels of writing anxiety, and some research suggests that female tend to experience higher levels of academic anxiety than male.

Based on the aforementioned explanation, the researcher aims to assess the significance of the correlation between gender and writing anxiety among English education students. What differentiates this research from previous research is its focus on English education students in Jember. Therefore, the author conducted research to observe the impacts that occur. The hope is that these results can provide guidance for lecturers and educational institutions in developing teaching approaches that can reduce writing anxiety among students, especially by considering gender differences. This in turn improved the quality of English language learning in Indonesia.

1.2 Problem of the Research

Based on the research background, the problem of this research are formulated as follow “ Is there a significant correlation between second language writing anxiety (SLWA) and gender among English Education students in Jember”

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The research aims to investigate whether there is a significant correlation between Second Language Writing Anxiety (SLWA) and gender among English Education students in Jember.

1.4 Operational Definition of the Terms

1. Writing Anxiety: Anxiety and fear that arise when carrying out writing assignments.
2. Cognitive anxiety: Cognitive anxiety refers to the mental aspects of anxiety, such as excessive worry, negative thoughts, and fear of failure, which interfere with the writing process and performance.
3. Somatic anxiety: Somatic anxiety involves the physical symptoms of anxiety, such as a pounding heart, sweating, or trembling, which occur when students face writing tasks or anticipate negative outcomes.
4. Avoidance anxiety: Avoidance anxiety is the tendency to avoid writing tasks altogether due to fear of failure, negative feedback, or the perception that one's writing skills are inadequate.
5. Fear of evaluation: Fear of evaluation is the apprehension or worry about how others, particularly teachers or peers, will judge the quality of one's writing. This fear often leads to stress and reluctance to share written work.
6. Difficulty starting: Difficulty starting refers to the struggle and hesitation students face when beginning to write, often caused by a lack of ideas, fear of making mistakes, or uncertainty about how to organize their thoughts.
7. Negative feelings: Negative feelings include emotions such as frustration, self-doubt, and a sense of hopelessness that students may experience during

the writing process, particularly when they perceive their progress as inadequate.

8. Lack of self confidence: Lack of self-confidence is the students' belief that their writing abilities are insufficient or below the required standard, leading to hesitation, insecurity, and reluctance to engage in writing tasks.
9. Perfectionism: Perfectionism is the tendency to set overly high and often unrealistic standards for writing, causing students to obsess over small details, over-revise their work, and experience increased anxiety when those standards are not met.
10. Gender: The gender of the students who were research subjects was classified as male or female.
11. English Language Education Students: Students enrolled in English Education study programs at University of Muhammadiyah Jember and University of Jember.

1.5 Significant of the Research

1.1.1 Theoretical Benefits

The significant of this study is expected to add to the literature on the relationship between gender and writing anxiety, especially in the context of English education students in Jember.

1.1.2 Practical Significants

a. For Student

The results can help students to understand more about the relationship between gender and students' writing anxiety when learning a second language.

b. For Lecturer

The results of this research help lecturers get more information about the relationship between gender and writing anxiety when students write a second language.

c. For Other Researcher

The results of this research can help other researchers to expand researchers' knowledge for teaching writing.

1.6 Scope of the Research

This research focuses on anxiety about writing second languages among English Education students in Jember. Students will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about their level of writing anxiety. This study uses descriptive analysis and correlation tests, including the point biserial correlation test, to evaluate the relationship between writing anxiety and gender (male and female). Indicators of writing anxiety include students fear of evaluation, difficulty getting started, negative feelings, lack of confidence, and perfectionism.