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**An Exploratory Study of Gender Differences in Writing  
Self-Efficacy Beliefs among Third-year Undergraduate  
Students at M'sila University**

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the Degree of Master in Applied Linguistics

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## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate my work and my entire effort to those who were there with me during  
this educational journey.

To my loving parents, for always loving and supporting me.

To my sisters and brothers, for always being there with me, helping me and guiding me, being  
the role model that I have always looked up for.

Special thanks to my sister Sarah.

To my nieces and nephews.

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and academic life and longed to see this achievement come true.

And lastly, to my dear friends, for the continuous support and love, though this hard times

Without all of you, this work would never been possible.

Zaoui Nourliman

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my work to the many reasons that were always there to support me in  
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will be part of my life.

To the memory of my dearest cousin, Sassi; may Allah have mercy on your soul.

Mokrani Hanine.

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## ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the relationship between third-year undergraduate students' English writing self-efficacy beliefs and their writing performance across genders, at Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila. It aimed to answer two major research questions. The first sought to explore the differences that may exist between male and female EFL undergraduate students in as far as their general self-efficacy beliefs and their English writing self-efficacy were concerned, while the second aimed to examine whether their writing self-efficacy was (positively) correlated with their writing performance. The sample of the study consisted of a random selection of fifty-two male and female learners, divided, per gender, into two groups of 26 each. The data for this study were collected from a questionnaire and a written expression test (exam scores) to explore the participants' general and writing self-efficacy beliefs as well as their writing performance, respectively. The quantitative analysis of the findings demonstrated that while no significant differences were found between male and female students' general self-efficacy beliefs, a relatively high level of English writing self-efficacy was observed among female participants, compared to their male peers. The results also showed that there was a significant positive correlation between the students' writing self-efficacy and their writing performance. The most significant implication that was drawn from this study focus on the importance of enhancing EFL learners' self-efficacy beliefs, which in turn contribute to improving their writing performance.

**Key terms:** English as a foreign language, gender differences, undergraduate EFL learners, writing performance, writing self-efficacy.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
L1	The First Language
L2	The Second Language
GSE	General Self-Efficacy
LMD	Licence-Master-Doctorat
WE	Written Expression
WSE	Writing Self Efficacy
GSES	General Self Efficacy Scale
EWSES	English Writing Self Efficacy Scale

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# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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## **1. Background of the Study**

Over the preceding years, self-efficacy has developed as one of the most important studied variables within the instructional, passionate, and educational sciences. Self-efficacy is a person's perception in his or her ability to muster the cognitive, motivational, and behavioural resources had to perform in a supplied situation (Bandura, 1997). That is, self-efficacy is a situation-precise talent perception.

It is believed to preserve a sizeable characteristic within the mastering method through promoting or stopping a learner's progress (Bandura, 1984). Bandura similarly asserted that a person's attitudes, abilities, and cognitive capabilities represent what is known as a 'self-system'. This association represents a significant part of the manner one perceives conditions and features in reaction to demanding conditions (Bandura, 1984).

Furthermore, self-efficacy encompasses a very important impact on educational settings. In step with Bandura (1986), the idea in self-efficacy indicates the capability of learners to accomplish a given educational task at a selected level. Studies on EFL learners' self-efficacy and its relationship to English accomplishment have discovered that the learners' achievements resembled their judgements on their ability (Mahyuddin, Elias, Cheong, Muhamad, Noordin & Abdullah, 2006; Schunk & Swartz, 1991).

Wong (2005) find out that newbies who maintain excessive writing self-efficacy ideals consumed longer on a bit of writing task, motivated in obtaining a decent grade, take part in writing tasks, and disclosed a large diploma of writing development. However, newbies who exhibit terrible writing action have lower self-efficacy than human beings who exhibit better writing action (Shell et al., 1989).

Previous studies (e.g, Bandura, 1984; Shell et al., 1989; and Schunk & Swartz, 1991) carried out on rookies' self-efficacy and writing overall performance of EFL college

students at university revise that rookies hold excessive ranges of self-efficacy in phrases in their capacity to write in English, revealing that those who are greater assured of their writing abilities carry out better.

Some investigators proclaimed that the gender factors do exactly have a massive effect at the rookies writing overall performance, detecting that ladies rookies own more potent self-assurance of their writing competencies than do males, at the very least thru lycee (Pajares et al., 1999; Pajares & Valiante, 1997, 1999, 2001; Wigfield, Eccles, MacIver, Reuman, & Midgley, 1991; and notice Wigfield, Eccles, & Pintrich, 1996).

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

Studies into the bond connecting gender and writing are mixed. Generally, as teachers and students appeared to believe that, female students are better writers than male students. However, the results concerning differences in writing self-efficacy have not been totally consistent. As, other investigators presume that in writing self-efficacy, there are no gender differences, whereas others have reported noticeable differences favouring females students.

Pajares, Miller, & Johnson researches were conducted to investigate deeper within the different sides of Teaching English as a Foreign Language. However, up to now, far too little attention has been given to the gender differences in writing self-efficacy beliefs among third-year students at M'sila University, as whenever the learners from M'sila university receive low grades in their writing tasks, they insisted that they do not possess the needed ability to write effectively and academically correct.

This research main concern is to discover whether female and male students of Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila contradict in their writing self-efficacy.

### **3. Research Aims**

The current study aims to :

- Find out whether there is any significant difference in the writing self-beliefs between male and female learners of Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila.
- Figure out the essential role of self-efficacy in the learners' academic achievements.
- Determine the type of relationship between male / female third-year students of Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila writing self-efficacy and their writing performance.

### **4. Research Questions and Hypotheses**

This study initial focus is to determine whether male and female learners of Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila differ in their writing self-efficacy beliefs, and investigates the relationship between the third-year student's writing self-efficacy and their writing performance, indicating the role self-efficacy do reflect on their writing performances.

Therefore, this research attempts to answer the following inquiries:

- Is there any significant differences between male and female students of Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila writing self-efficacy?
- Is there a relationship between male-female students' writing self-efficacy and their writing performance?

From previous studies on writing self-efficacy, it is hypothesized that, female students showed a better writing performance than male students did, as female students have shown a great interest in learning languages, whereas male students were totally invested in learning mathematic and science.

## **5. Research Instruments**

This particular study regarded as a correlational research investigation, as it contains three different variables, the academic self-efficacy of the chosen participants and the other ones were their writing performance and gender.

The instruments used in this research are questionnaire and the first-term written expression exam scores. The first section of the questionnaire is the General Self-Efficacy Scale (SGSES) designed by Sherer et al as it administered to assess the participants' self-efficacy. SGSES is a self-report questionnaire which consists of 17 statements. Another questionnaire is distributed to the participant in the form of writing self-efficacy questionnaire. Each participant is required to fill out the given questionnaire as it distributed aiming to point out the relationship between self-efficacy, and writing performance of a sample third-year undergraduate students in M'sila university.

Also, after asking the administration of our department permission, the students' written expression grades for the last semester will be evaluated taking into consideration their performance and gender. The interpretation and analysis of the collected data will be of great help to reach the study intentions and verify or reject the proposed inquiries.

## **6. Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study will to the benefit to the EFL learning process, as it may provide a significant step in understanding the learners' writing difficulties as the students become more aware of the importance of writing self-efficacy beliefs to develop their academic writing. It contributes to decreasing the students writing problems in order to become good academic writers, keeping in mind that Gender difference is a salient issue that affects the learners' writing self-efficacy in the EFL learning process.

## **7. Structure of the Dissertation**

The present work is divided into three main chapters. As the chapter could also be divided into sections. The first chapter reviews the related literature. The second one deals with the practical part of the study, and lastly, the third chapter discuss the founded results.

The first chapter is divided into two main sections that cover the theoretical aspects of the topic. The first section comprises the whole related information to self-efficacy, its sources, theories, beliefs, and academic achievement, shedding light on its effect on the language learning process. The second section is a supplement of the first section, which comprises of self-efficacy task specificity, writing self-efficacy, writing apprehension, writing confidence, and writing and gender differences.

The second chapter is devoted to the research methodology and the used instruments. The methodological devision of the study focuses on describing the research design, population and sample, data collection tools and instrument( the distributed questionnaire, and the observation of the learners' written expression first semester grades ), and the statistical tools used to analyse the collected data.

The third chapter, the discussion of the findings, it comprises of three sections the first section dedicated to will tackle the finding of the investigation, the data analysis process, presenting the results of the students' questionnaire and observation of the exam grades. The second section devoted to the discussion of the founded result and finally suggest some possible solutions. And lastly, the third section tacke which left of the study, from future, limitation of the study, general conclusion, references, and appendices.

## **8. Definition of Key Terms**

**Academic tasks:** it is defined by the answers students are required to produce and the routes that can be used to achieve these answers (Chen, Gully, Whiteman, & Kilcullen, 2000; Scholz et al., 2002).

**Writing self-efficacy:** to students' beliefs in their ability to perform written English task successfully, which includes composition, correct punctuation and grammar Bandura ( 2003).

**Gender differences:** the patterns of behaviours, attitudes, and expectations linked with a particular sex, being either male or female (Pajares & Valiante, 2001).

**Self-Efficacy:** learner's beliefs about their capabilities to produce effects (Bandura, 1977).

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## **Introduction**

This chapter addresses the theoretical part of the research. The chapter presents the definitions of social-cognitive theory, the theory of self-efficacy and its sources, the value of self-efficacy academic achievements, self-regulation. It also sheds light on writing self-efficacy, writing apprehension, writing performance, writing competence, gender and writing, and gender perceptions. This chapter will provide an overview of relevant constructs that are the focus of this dissertation, including definitions of key variables and a review of existing research.

This chapter highlights the most important elements related to self-efficacy and its essential role in learning the foreign language. Researchers try to investigate how self-efficacy contribute to developing writing skills. The first section provides different definitions of social-cognitive theory, the theory of self-efficacy and its sources, identifies the value of self-efficacy and academic achievements and the value of outcomes. Besides, mentioning the self-regulation and its relation to self-efficacy. This section will also include the teacher influence on the learners' self-efficacy level. In the second section, this research identifies the notion of writing self-efficacy as it is defined by many researchers, its relation to writing competence, writing apprehension, and writing performance, in addition to that it tackles the issue of gender and writing, mentioning the gender perceptions and stereotypes.

## ➤ SECTION ONE: SELF-EFFICACY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON LEARNING

### 1.1.1. Nature of Self-efficacy

#### 1.1.1.1. *Historical Background*

Despite the fashionable roots of "self-efficacy," interest in ideas about personal autonomy contains a rich history in philosophy and psychology. Spinoza, David Hume, John Locke, James and (recently) Gilbert Ryle all didn't grasp the role of "volition" and "will" in attribute (Russell, 1945; Vessey, 1967). The theories of motivation for results (White, 1959), motivation for successes (McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1953), social thinking (Rotter, 1966), and helplessness (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978) are only one or two of the opposite hypotheses that have attempted to look at the links between expectations of non-public ability and human actions and psychological well-being (see also Skinner, 1995; Molden & Dweck, 2006). Nevertheless, Bandura's 1977 study formalized the concept of presumed competence as "self-efficacy," explicitly defined, and rooted it in an exceedingly philosophy of how it evolves and impacts human behaviour (Bandura, 1977).

#### 1.1.1.2. *Defining Self-Efficacy*

Differentiating self-efficacy from similar concepts is one amongst the best ways to urge a more robust understanding of how it's described and measured. Self-efficacy isn't a perceived skill; it's what i think I can do with my abilities under certain circumstances and conditions. it's not about my confidence in my abilities to execute specific and irrelevant motor actions, but about my capacity to prepare and orchestrate knowledge and skills in evolving and challenging circumstances. (Akhtar, 2008) Beliefs on self-efficacy don't seem to be casual attributions, which are interpretations of events surely actions and their effects. self-efficacy beliefs are individuals convictions on what a personal should achieve.

Beliefs in self-efficacy don't seem to be thoughts or expectations to succeed in a specific goal. An intention is what they think they might actually do; and research has shown that intentions are littered with a spread of influences, including, not only, confidence in self-efficacy (Maddux, 1999a).

Self-efficacy isn't self-esteem. Self-esteem is what a personal thinks of themselves, and the way they feel about what they consider themselves. Efficacy beliefs in an exceedingly given domain can only result in its self-esteem in direct proportion to the importance they place thereon domain.

Self-efficacy isn't a controlling motive, drive or need. a personal can have a robust need for control during a given domain and still have weak beliefs about their efficacy for that domain. Belief in self-efficacy isn't an expected outcome (Bandura, 1997) or planned outcome actions (Maddux, 1999a).

A behaviour – outcome hypothesis is an assumption that a particular action during a given situation will cause a selected outcome. A belief in self-efficacy may be a belief that an individual can implement the behaviour or behaviours which generate the result. Self-efficacy isn't characteristic of personality. it is a collection of beliefs about the power to mix abilities and skills in specific environments and situations to accomplish optimal goals.

Measures of "general" self-efficacy are developed (e.g., Chen, Gully, & Eden, 2001; Sherer et al . , 1982; Tipton & Worthington, 1984) and are often employed in studies but haven't been as effective as more precise self-efficacy indicators in determining what people will kill more complex conditions (Bandura, 1997; Maddux, 1995).

### **1.1.2. Social-cognitive Theory**

Social cognitive theory is an approach to explaining human thought, behaviour, motivation, and emotion that means humans are capable of self-reflection and self-regulation and are active keystones of their world rather than just passive reactors. Although some controversy has been created by the conceptions of will and independence in human behaviour (e.g. Howard & Conway, 1986; Williams, 1992).

Bandura (1986) set an assumption of human agency which suggests that individuals are representatives proactively involved in shaping their own development and outcomes which "what people think, believe, and feel affects how they behave" (Bandura, 1986, p. 25). Individuals possess a self-system that enables them to exert a measure of influence over their values, feelings, inspiration, and behaviours consistent with Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986). This self-system provides reference mechanisms and a group of subfunctions for grasping, monitoring, and evaluating behaviour, resulting from the interaction between the system and influencing environmental sources. This also plays a self-regulatory function by allowing individuals to manage their emotional processes and actions and thereby change their environment.

### **1.1.3. Self-Efficacy Emergence**

According to Bandura et al. (Bandura, 2001, 2006; Barone, Maddux, & Snyder, 1997; Molden & Dweck, 2006). Knowing how beliefs develop in self-efficacy demands a knowledge of a deeper theoretical framework. Self-efficacy is healthier understood within the sight of social cognitive theory — an approach to understanding human thought, action, inspiration, and sentiment meaning humans are active shapers of their lives instead of being merely passive reactors. science is principally made out of 4 fundamental principles, which are condensed and simplified in:

a) Every human has strong cognitive abilities that allow the event of internal experiential models, the event of innovative courses of action, the theoretical evaluating of such courses of action by divining results, and thus the transfer of complicated encounters and information to others. they might also from self-observation, monitor and regulate their actions, feelings and emotions. Such self-reflective exercises provide the degree for self-regulation.

b)"Self" and "personality" are socially embedded. they're our or others' impressions (reliable or not) on the patterns of social cognition, feeling, and behaviour as they appear in circumstances patterns. Thus, self and personality aren't only what waken their encounters with others; they're produced in these experiences, and in these encounters, they are going to change.

c) Interactive drives are natural phenomena, internal personal thoughts (cognition, feeling, and biological activities). human answer environmental activities cognitively, efficiently and behaviorally. humans also exert regulation over their own actions through cognition, which then influences not just the environment but also their emotional, affective and biological systems.

d)In pursuit of goals, humans are within the role of self-regulation; they choose objectives and control their behaviour. their capacity to predict or establish perceptions lies at the idea of self-regulation — to use previous information and practice to shape beliefs about potential events and conditions and beliefs about their abilities and behaviours.

Both findings suggest that two overlapping variables affect the early creation of self-efficacy attitudes in the first place. Firstly, it is influenced by the growth of the capacity for typical thought, particularly the ability to understand the relationships between cause and effect and the ability to self-observe and self-reflect. The development of a sense of personal

identity starts in infancy and progresses from the awareness of the causal connection between events to an understanding that behaviours yield outcomes, to the acknowledgement that they may be the source of acts that influence their environment. When the comprehension of language by children grows, so does their capacity for abstract reasoning, and therefore their capacity for self-awareness and a sense of personal identity (Bandura, 1997).

Secondly, the production of efficacy beliefs is affected by the sensitivity of the surroundings to manipulation and control attempts by the infant or child. Environments that are sensitive to the behaviour of the infant promote the development of efficacy beliefs, while nonresponsive settings hinder this development. Developing efficacy beliefs encourages experimentation, which in effect strengthens a sense of autonomy for the child. The social atmosphere of the infant (parents in particular) is typically the most critical aspect of his or her setting. Therefore, children typically acquire a sense of efficacy by participating in acts that affect other people's behaviour and then generalize to the non-social world (Bandura, 1997). Parents can facilitate or inhibit the creation of this sense of agency not just by their reactions to the acts of the infant or child, but also through motivating and empowering the child to discover and learn his or her surroundings.

#### **1.1.4. Sources of self-efficacy**

Bandura (1997), embedded in his social cognitive theory, implied that individuals shape their beliefs in self-efficacy by analyzing knowledge from four key sources: (1) mastery experiences; (2) vicarious experiences (modelling); (3) verbal (social) persuasion; and (4) physiological and affective states.

##### ***1.1.4.1. Mastery experiences***

Mastery experiences are the most powerful of the four sources of self-efficacy. They are described as one's retrospective evaluation of past achievements or mission failures.

Therefore, individuals will generally perceive and assess the outcomes obtained after performing a specific task, and assessments of competence with the task will consequently be established based on those reflections. Whenever individuals perceive their actions to be effective, their self-efficacy correlated with potential achievement of a comparable task is enhanced. If individuals assume that their actions have not created the desired result, their confidence is diminished to achieve in a similar task within the future (Bandura, 1997; Usher & Pajares, 2006). Self-efficacy beliefs are stated as one's actions or performance are appraised cognitively.

Therefore, expectations of mastery experiences are always stronger self-efficacy predictors than empirical tests (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Usher & Pajares, 2006).

#### ***1.1.4.2. Vicarious experiences (modelling)***

Besides interpreting the outcomes of their performance, individuals develop their self-efficacy beliefs through the vicarious experience of witnessing and analyzing others' performance (Usher & Pajares, 2006).

In other words, modelling can be very effective in establishing self-efficacy beliefs. Also, the closer the observer identifies with the model, the more likely an observer's efficacy will change (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Schunk, 1987). Vicarious knowledge can also be very useful when students are unaware of their abilities or have little experience of the mission. Observing a model completes a difficult task can, therefore, convince people that they can succeed in the task too. Likewise, seeing a model fail with such a task can diminish the efficacy of the observer (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Usher & Pajares, 2006).

Vicarious learning experiences are often important for judging one's peers' success compared to their results. Self-efficacy with a task, for example, can improve if one considers his / her success as superior to his / her peers or decreases if they believe that they are doing worse (Usher & Pajares, 2006).

#### ***1.1.4.3. Verbal/ social persuasion***

According to Bandura ( 1986, 1997), the third source of self-efficacy includes the verbal (social) persuasions individuals obtain from significant others. Verbal/social persuasion requires input from other people, such as parents, instructors, coaches and peers. When students develop their sense of competence in one area, they are also dependent on evaluative input from others. The efficacy of this feedback depends on the persuader's assumed competence, dependability, and reputation (Bandura, 1986). However, Bandura also concluded that verbal persuasions are constrained in their potential to produce long-lasting self-efficacy improvements and that it could be more common than verbal persuasions that weaken self-efficacy than improve it (Bandura, 1986). Nonetheless, encouraging messages and constructive reinforcement can serve to boost the efforts and self-confidence of students, particularly when followed by other success-bringing conditions (Usher & Pajares 2006).

#### ***1.1.4.4. physiological and affective states***

Finally, the creeds of self-efficacy are told by emotional and physiological states. Both conditions contain levels of agitation, exhaustion, discomfort and tension. Students can look after and understand these physiological signals, and use this knowledge to gain input into how effectively they should accomplish a task. For example, when an assignment causes feelings of tension or stress, these signals may weaken the student's self-efficacy beliefs, as students can perceive them as indicators of imminent failure. People with low self-efficacy are more likely to perceive previous encounters negatively than those with high self-efficacy, which can increase their uncertainty about potential results of these activities and contribute to avoidance behaviours. In contrast, students with higher self-efficacy beliefs may not be as affected by negative physiological conditions or previous experiences that have failed (Bandura, 1997).

In general, increasing the physical and psychological well-being of a person and decreasing negative emotional states can increase self-efficacy and anticipated success with a challenge (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Usher & Pajares, 2006).



*Figure 1. Bandura' Self-efficacy Sources (Bandura, 1986)*

#### **1.1.5. Self-Efficacy Importance for learning foreign languages**

To thoroughly explain the various ways self-efficacy beliefs are significant for the training process, it's going to take along time. Therefore, this study will mainly specialise in three essential areas, self-efficacy and psychological adjustment; self-efficacy and also the learner physical health; self-efficacy and self-regulation.

### ***1.1.5.1. Self-Efficacy and learners' Psychological Well-Being***

Philosophers agree that for contentment and a sense of psychological well-being a way of control over our behaviour, the environment and our thoughts and feelings is important. Loss of control feelings is common among people seeking help from psychotherapists and therapists. In several common psychological problems, self-efficacy beliefs play a significant role, low self-efficacy expectations are a vital feature of depression (Bandura, 1997; Maddux & Meier, 1995).

Depressed learners typically find they're less likely to act efficiently in other critical aspects of life than the general public. Unstable anxiety and avoiding behaviour result directly from belief in low self-efficacy to manage threatening situations (Bandura, 1997; Williams, 1995). Self-efficacy beliefs also play an important role in drug abuse and eating disorders (Bandura, 1997; DiClemente, Fairhurst, & Piotrowski, 1995). Improving self-efficacy to resolve the problem and to include self-control techniques in particularly difficult circumstances is important for effective treatment treatments for both of those issues (Bandura, 1997; Maddux, 1995).

### ***1.1.5.3. Self-Efficacy and Self-Regulation***

Self-efficacy has contributed much to the understanding of how learners direct their actions in achieving desired goals. Self-regulation relies on three overlapping elements (Barone et al., 1997): *goals or standards of performance*; *self-evaluative reactions to performance*; and *self-efficacy beliefs*. Goals are essential to self-regulation, as the learners try to regulate their actions, thoughts, and emotions to achieve those goals. The capacity to predict desired future outcomes and conditions helps them to build opportunities that inspire and direct their actions and expectations by which to track their success and measure both their success and our skill. Self-evaluative responses are essential in self-regulation because

their beliefs about the progress they make (or do not) towards their objectives are important determinants of their emotional reactions during goal-directed activity.

In turn, these emotional responses can boost or disrupt. Beliefs in self-efficacy have many effects on self-regulation. First, they influence the objectives they set. The higher the self-efficacy in a single area of accomplishment, the loftier the goals they set for themselves in that area would be. Secondly, they influence the choice of goal-oriented activities, effort spending, persistence in the face of challenges and difficulties (Bandura, 1997), and responses to presumed disparities between expectations and actual performance of the learners (Bandura, 1997). If a learner possesses strong self-efficacy beliefs, he/she will be relatively resistant to self-regulation disruptions that can arise from hardships and failures, and he/she will achieve success. Persistence usually yields desired results, and that success then boosts his/her sense of effectiveness. Third, belief in self-efficacy influences the effectiveness and efficiency of problem-solving and decision (Bandura, 1997).

Faced with complex decisions, people who have confidence in their ability to solve problems more effectively using their cognitive resources than those who doubt their cognitive abilities do (e.g., Bandura, 1997). Such efficiency typically leads to improved solutions and greater success. In the face of challenges, I'm likely to remain "task-diagnostic" when I possess high self-efficacy and aim to search for solutions to complex problems. However, if my self-efficacy is weak, I'm more likely to become "self-diagnosed" and focus on my inadequacies, which weaken my attempts to identify and overcome the issue (Bandura, 1997).

#### ***1.1.5.4. Physiological and emotional states***

When learners are quiet they generally feel more self-effective than when they are awoken and disturbed. Thus, strategies to control and reduce emotional excitement (specifically anxiety) whereas trying new habits should enhance beliefs about self-efficacy and increase the probability of successful execution. The most common strategies for reducing the physiological excitement typically associated with low self-efficacy and poor performance are hypnosis, biofeedback, relaxation training, meditation, and medication.

## **SECTION TWO: WRITING SELF-EFFICACY and GENDER**

### **PERCEPTIONS**

#### **1.2.1. Self-efficacy task specificity**

Researchers claim that task-specific self-efficacy is a better predictor of task performance and behaviour than generalized self-efficacy (Scholz, Dona, Sud, & Schwarzer, 2002; Smith, Kass, Rotunda & Schneider, 2006). Preceding studies found that task-specific and generalized self-efficacy are profoundly correlated (Chen, Gully, Whiteman, & Kilcullen, 2000; Scholz et al., 2002). However, Bandura (1997) has indicated that task-specific self-efficacy is more helpful in predicting performance. An investigation that was done by Scholz et al. (2002) supports this assertion, concluding that task-specific self-efficacy is significant for helping individuals overcome specific failures and avoiding performance deficits in the future.

#### **1.2.2. Self-efficacy and writing**

Writing self-efficacy is what researchers (e.g., Bandura, Pajares) refer to as the learners' belief in their capacity to perform a particular written task successfully, and to be confident in composing various types of written texts. That can include composition, correctly punctuating, writing and creating grammatically correct samples of writing.

Many language instructors suppose that speaking and listening are the most difficult abilities to learn due to the ear-factor involved in both skills. Richards and Renandya (2002) claimed that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to enhance thanks to the difficulty of not only producing and arranging ideas but also in translating these ideas into readable text. As stated by Bandura, students who appraised themselves as poor writers tend to make brief or incomplete pieces of writing and being hesitating to engage in writing works, whereas students with higher writing self-efficacy are usually able to complete writing tasks

at a higher standard. (Bandura, 1994). In addition to that, the skills involved in writing are highly complex as L2 writers have to pay high attention to a lot of things such as planning and organizing as well as spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on, also writers are highly anticipated to produce correct grammar and spelling sentences and use limited structures in their writing (Bowen, Madsen and Hilferty, 1985).

### **1.2.3. Writing self-efficacy and writing performance**

Bandura (2003) stated that self-efficacy has many forms, including learners' opinion about their capability when approaching constant changes within the learning process. learners who evaluate themselves as capable (efficacious) of performing certain tasks or activities are highly able to do that particular task.

Fifth-grade students were examined by Pajares and Valiante (2001) to detect the influence of writing self-efficacy, writing ability, perceived usefulness of writing, and writing apprehension on the essay-writing performance, they spotted that regardless of the anticipated strong effect of writing ability, self-efficacy beliefs play a significant role in predicting the students' performance, therefore academic achievements of an individual can be easily influenced by the learners' surrounding behaviours which are resulted by self-efficacy, other researchers such as Lane & Lane, 2001; Lane, Lane & Kyprianou, 2004; Pajares, 2000; Pajares & Johnson, 1996; Pajares & Valiente, 2001, also support the suppose of self-efficacy affects the academic achievement including writing achievement. However, In writing, a strong sense of self-confidence in the writing task is required, which also can be called as writing self-efficacy, therefore, learners can write once they have confidence in their writing abilities, being more assertive when dealing with written tasks.

Self-efficacy has three main degrees which are: high, mid and low. Learners with high confidence in their abilities of writing are believed to possess a high self-efficacy level, having a positive sense once they write, doing their best to accomplish the given tasks by

using their cognitive strategies (Lavelle, 2006). Shell, Murphy, & Bruning (1989), investigated the correlation between writing and reading self-efficacy of undergraduate students and their writing and reading achievement. As they established a scale that measured students' skills in writing components (e.g. spelling and parts of speech) and also students' skills in different writing tasks (e.g. writing a letter and an essay).

Their findings demonstrate that writing self-efficacy (both task efficacy and component efficacy) had significant power in predicting students writing achievement. The same result has also been founded by other researchers from the same era. The same case was once again investigated by Pajares and Valiente (2001) as they examine the writing self-efficacy of elementary-school students, discovering that their preassumptions of the writing tasks significantly predicted their writing performance.

Moreover, also White and Bruning (2005) investigated the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing performance on post-secondary learners, concluding that the students' assumptions about their writing had a great impact on the writing they produce. Jones (2007) did research on 118 freshman learners' writing self-efficacy seeking to see their internal sense of control over their writing performance. The samples were from different places including Asians, African-Americans, Latinos, both males, and females. Reporting that the findings showed a significant difference between the learners with weak writing skills and learners that have stronger writing skills.

“Self-beliefs had a higher impact on course grade than earlier writing accomplishment for the immature students than the knowledgeable students” (Jones, 2007, p.18). Although the significant role that self-efficacy possessed on the students' academic achievements some researchers believe that the students' high self-efficacy in writing may not surely indicate better writing performance.

#### **1.2.4. Writing apprehension**

Writing apprehension is learner's tendencies to approach or avoid tasks that require writing accompanied by some amount of evaluation. Writers with high apprehensive levels find writing unfruitful, a punishment. Therefore, whenever they face such situations that require writing abilities, they avoid it (Daly and Miller, 1975b). They experience a high amount of anxiety, once they are dealing with writing tasks (Daly and Haley, 1975a). That can be detected in the behaviours the learner show when writing. Low apprehensive level learners, on the other hand, are likely to be more confident in their abilities to write, enjoy writing. Thus Writing apprehension influences the learners' occupational and academic choices (Daly and Shzmo, 1976, 1978). Individuals that possess a high apprehensive level like professions that do not require much writing. In opposition to that low apprehensive learners prefer and select occupations and academic majors that demand more competitive writing skills.

Apprehension influences the contentment of learners learning in class. It also influences the prediction of writing success, attendance habits in advanced composition courses, including any writing project inside the out-class (Daly and Miller, 1975). Teachers detected that highly apprehensive learners are likely to fail in academic subjects than their low apprehensive counterparts (Daly, 1979b). Also, some researchers have demonstrated that the loss in training skills and the negative feedback of the teachers to early writing attempts, assumed to affect later levels of writing anxiety of the learners (Harvley-Felder, 1978).

#### **1.2.5. Writing apprehension and writing performance**

Writing apprehension was first coined by Daly and Miller (1975) describing an anxiety writing form that is correlated with SAT-verbal scores negatively. Recently, investigators (eg Pajares & Johnson, 1996; Pajares & Valiante, 1997, 1999, 2001) have declared that even though writing performances and writing apprehension are negatively

correlated with each other, once the beliefs of self-efficacy are controlled, the influence of apprehension is nullified. These results are in accord with Bandura's (1986) claim that self-efficacy beliefs mediate anxiety; that is, anxiety feelings are predominantly a product of the lack of confidence with which students approach a task. Similar results have been reported by researchers investigating anxiety role in mathematics.

### **1.2.6. Writing confidence and writing competence**

Daly and Miller (1975b) outlined Writing competence as learners' talents to perform on tasks that testify writing-related skills. what proportion a learner will determine as correct or incorrect in writing sample--whether words or phrases, sentences unconnected from a context, or associate degree extended discourse passages. From Daly and Miller analysis, in addition, because the approach of writing apprehension, it's claimed that learners with high apprehensive level tend to avoid the tasks that area unit necessary to -develop and maintain competencies in writing-related skills, leading to an absence in their competences' stock.

Findings on learners' writing self-efficacy have systematically incontestible that writing performances and writing self-efficacy beliefs area unit connected. the bulk of the first studies conducted on self-efficacy were testifying faculty undergraduates (e.g., McCarthy, Meier, & Rinderer, 1985; Meier, McCarthy, & Schmeck, 1984). The impact estimates for the influence of writing self-efficacy on writing performance in numerous models ranged from .32 to .42. totally different results determined that writing performance in regression models that enclosed self-efficacy are often foreseen by neither writing apprehension nor alternative motivation variables. Many up to date investigators'(e.g., Pajares, Miller, & Johnson, 1999; Pajares & Johnson, 1996; Pajares & Valiante, 1997, 1999, 2001; politician, Bruning, & Timme, 1994; Schunk & Schwartz, 1993; Shell, Colvin, & Bruning, 1995; Wachholz & Etheridge, 1996; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994; and see Bruning & Horn, 2000) findings support these results.

Universally, these findings discovered that writing self-efficacy represents a big aid to the prediction of writing outcomes and interpose between previous and succeeding accomplishment in writing. Even once vigorous covariates because the ability to write pre-assessing or previous expertise in writing performances area unit taken into thought. alternative analyses for writing self-efficacy and writing outcomes, detected that the Correlations between writing self-efficacy and writing performances usually vary from .30 to .50, reckoning on the age and ability of the scholars. As self-efficacy judgments have an effect on the learners' selections, expend effort, activities perseverance that determines the approach they approach the same activities, and also the old anxiety, one clarification was provided from the purpose of low self-efficacy beliefs on why students' writing motivation and accomplishment are often reduced as they pursue their learning. For educators for remediating writing skills, they must take into thought learners lack confidence, that they'll develop of previous expertise, of current educational hardship, of faulty comparisons with peers, or a negative message received.

### **1.2.7. Self-concept and Self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy beliefs take issue from self-concept beliefs fully, within which self-concept is often sited at a site level of specificity and includes judgments of self-worth. whereas self-efficacy is a lot of usually calculable at the extent of skill- or task-specific. an article self-concept tackle subject like “Writing makes Maine feel inadequate,” vary in tone and substance from a self-efficacy read which will raise “How positively area unit that you simply will correctly spell all words in a very one-page story or composition?” Writing self-concept isn't exceptional within the motivation literature, preferably, the central point of studies has been linguistic self-concept. Skaalvik(1997) have detected a big relationship between educational outcomes like reading and verbal self-concept, Marsh(1989) conjointly

reported necessary gender variations in verbal self-concepts favouring ladies, As Crain (1996) further that these variations could exist even at terribly early ages.

Furthermore, researchers agree that associate degree individual's self-concept major element area unit self-efficacy beliefs (Bong & Clark, 1999).

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### **1.2.8. Gender and Writing**

Students disagree in their preferences of varied learning skills may be a truth. The affiliation between tutorial confidence and gender has been a centre of writing space analysis, and therefore the results haven't been firm. Some researchers have detected that there are not any gender variations in writing self-efficacy across tutorial grades (Shell et al., 1995). within the alternative hand, some investigators have detected that females proclaim to possess stronger confidence in their writing capabilities than do males, a minimum of through lycee (Pajares et al., 1999; Pajares &

Valiante, 1997, 1999, 2001; Wigfield, Eccles, MacIver, Reuman, & Midgley, 1991; and see Wigfield, Eccles, & Pintrich, 1996). the variety might seem at early ages (from Crain, 1996; Sir John Carew Eccles, Wigfield, Harold, & Blumenfeld, 1993). Investigators have noticed that females in their tutorial motivation and competency perceptions encounter a deterioration, once they reach high school (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Phillips & Zimmerman, 1990), maybe it's resulted of encountering new, strange room structures that emphasize a masculine style of discourse (Cleary, 1996).

#### ***1.2.8.1. Gender perceptions***

Early studies presume that males were more confident in their mathematics, scientific skills than were females. For instance, Fennema and Sherman (1977), in a study of over 1200 high school learners, declared that male had more positive attitudes toward mathematics and feel confident in their ability to learn it. In a subsequent study of 1320

middle school students, they once again discovered that males were more confident. Once they compared the result from both middle and high school, they detect that these differences in confidence level, learners progressed from grade to another. Early studies demonstrated that, by middle school, boys rated mathematics as more useful than did girls (Fennema & Sherman, 1977; Hilton & Berglünd, 1974) and that girls' perceptions of usefulness decline throughout high school (Sherman, 1980).

Research that included the domains of mathematics, English, Sports and instrumental music demonstrated that gender differences in perceiving skills and perceiving task difficulties in line with gender stereotypes regarding these domains: that is male students had higher expectancies than female students in math and sports, whereas female students had higher expectancies than male students in English and music (Eccles et al., 1983, 1993; Wigfield et al., 1997). These differences were discovered in learners as young as the first grade and increase as they grow. Investigators(eg Pajares, Miller, & Johnson, &, 1999) declared that research into the link between gender and writing is mixed. While it appears that teachers, and students, generally believe that girls are better than boys are at writing, even though the results regarding gender differences in writing self-efficacy have not been consistent.

Distinction based on gender, have been found in the inducting structures discussed. For instance, they are mentioned in learners' value of writing perceived (Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, & Rogers, 1982, 1995; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992) in the writing apprehension they experience once they attempt writing tasks (Pajares et al., 1999, 2000), in their orientations of achievement goal (Pajares et al., 2000), and in their self-worth feelings that are associated with writing (Marsh, 1990). Gender differences have also been detected in learners' confidence that they own multiple self-regulated learning strategies (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). For instance, during elementary school, girls express

higher self-efficacy for self-regulation than do boys (Pajares et al., 1999) also in middle school (Pajares et al., 2000; Pajares & Valiante, 2001).

Female learners' voiced greater confidence in their capability in using strategies, as an illustration, finishing assignments on time, studying even though they busy, memorizing knowledge presented in class and textbooks, and engaging in class discussions (Pajares et al., 1999) Some investigators (eg Eisenberg, Martin, & Fabes, 1996; Hackett, 1985; Harter, Waters, & Whitesell, 1997; Matsui, 1994) have disputed that some gender differences in social, personality, and academic variables may be a servant of gender direction, rather than of gender, the stereotypic beliefs about gender that students hold. For instance, gender differences in variables, such as moral voice or sympathy tend to dissolve when gender beliefs are available (Harter et al., 1997; Karniol, Gabay, Ochion, & Harari, 1998).

Researchers have also declared that students' achievement-related perceptions gender variation can be resulted by the gender appropriateness of the academic field under investigation stereotypes (see Eccles, 1987a; Meece & Courtney, 1992). Eccles (1987b) paradigm of educational and occupational choice presumes that cultural environment factors, such like gender role stereotypes of individuals, are partly in charge not only for behavioural outcomes difference, for instance in career selection and course but also expectancy beliefs and perceived value of tasks and activities differences.

Most research in connection to this proclaim has been conducted in the area of mathematics and science, where researchers stated that girls register in fewer science and mathematics classes in part and its because they gender-type mathematics and science as male kind of domains (see Hackett, 1995).

To detect the degree to which gender differences in achievement and writing motivation are a gender stereotypic beliefs function rather than of gender, investigators have questioned elementary and middle school students in American society to tell how strongly

they identified with characteristics stereotypically associated with males or females (see Pajares et al., 1999; Pajares & Valiante, 2001). The findings showed that when gender orientation beliefs were controlled, writing self-efficacy gender differences were rendered non-significant. Instead of writing self-efficacy beliefs was associated with possessing a feminine orientation.

## **Conclusion**

The analytical portion of the present work was dedicated to this chapter. This chapter was divided into two sections: self-efficacy and its influence on learning, and writing self-efficacy and gender differences.

The first section emphasized the self-efficacy and academic achievement. Starting by giving a background and defining the notion of self-efficacy, its importance, pointing out the most important sources of self-efficacy and mention the social-cognitive theory and theory of self-efficacy.

The second section, tackles self-efficacy task specificity, precisely writing self-efficacy. It also presents full descriptions of writing self-efficacy influence on writing performance, writing apprehension, writing confidence and self-concept, discussing writing self-efficacy, in other words, it clarified the issues that could occur in the writing process, writing and gender and gender perceptions

## **CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY DESIGN**

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## **Introduction**

The research methodology chapter is devoted to the description of the main research instruments used in this study.

This is devoted to the description of the selected method, the population, sample, and sampling procedures. It also provides a detailed explanation of the data collection instruments, the aim behind selecting them, and the procedure (s) of data analysis.

### **2.1. Research Design**

This study is regarded as correlational research, explaining the relationship between three variables.

The first variable consists of the **English writing self-efficacy** level of the chosen sample, while the second is their **writing performance**. These two variables are treated in relation to the **learners' gender differences**, which is the third variable of the present research, aiming to examine the relationship between male and female third-year student's writing self-efficacy and their writing performance.

The focus of this study is to identify the relationship between these three variables. The *writing performance* is considered as a dependent variable, as learners' writing performance may depend on different factors. *self-efficacy* is regarded as an independent variable in that it can stand alone, and *gender differences* stands as a moderating variable; that is to say, In a cause-and-effect relationship, a mediating variable is a variable that links the independent and dependent variables, allowing the relationship between *writing performance* and *self-efficacy* to be better explained.

## **2.2. Research Sample and Population**

### **2.2.1. Research Population**

In this research, the selected population is third-year undergraduate students, majoring in English Language and Literature, from the English Department at Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila, as the total number of the third-year students there is 105 students. These learners have received a writing course for two years.

### **2.2.2. Research sample**

Fifty-two third-year students who are enrolled at the Mohamed Boudiaf University English Department, M'sila, were selected for this study.

The procedure followed in selecting the sample of the present study consisted of a simple random sampling.

In this study, the questionnaire was administered to fifty-two students, out of a total population of 105. The students were randomly chosen from the English department at M'sila University, with twenty-six male to participate in the research. As for the English written exam test scores, forty-eight students were chosen randomly as the sample for study with twenty-four students for both females and males.

## **2.3. Data Collection Instruments**

In this investigation, the data were obtained using a questionnaire, also an English written exam test scores.

The questionnaire consisted of a general self-efficacy scale and an English writing self-efficacy scale, from Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, & Rogers, (1982).

The objective of the present research is to examine the relationship between the participants' writing self-efficacy level, gender, and their writing performance.

What follows is a detailed description of the students' questionnaire (Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, & Rogers, (1982). general self-efficacy and the English writing self-efficacy) and the writing test (students' first term test results).

### **2.3.1. English writing self-efficacy questionnaire**

The main aim of using a questionnaire, in this study, is to obtain data on the participants' general self-efficacy and their writing self-efficacy level.

The questionnaire is composed of three main sections. The first consists of general information on the respondents, and it contains three questions. The second section refers to the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES), adopted from Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, & Rogers, (1982). (write the full reference and year). It is a primary general self-efficacy measure that has been used extensively in studying students self-efficacy. it includes 17 statements. The third section is labelled the English Writing Self-efficacy Scale (EWSES); it contains 36 statements and it measures the participants' perceptions about their confidence level in writing in English as a foreign language.

The GSES and EWSES are measured through a five-Likert scale arranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*.

### **2.3.2. First-term Written Expression Exam Scores**

In order to measure the writing performance of third-year students at M'sila University, we compared the writing self-efficacy beliefs founded from the questionnaire and the students' First-term Written Expression Exam Scores, aiming to see if the questionnaire results do reflect the students actual writing performance.

## 2.4. Data Analysis Procedure

To analyse the obtained data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used. Other statistical operations were conducted using the Microsoft Excel, version 2007.

For Excel, It was mainly used to perform a variety set of statistical functions, including a set of mathematical functions, and a ToolPak for data analysis. Calculating both the mean and the standard deviation of the founded values. As for the SPSS, it was of great help to classify and arrange the questionnaire results.

In this study, descriptive statistics were calculated, including the frequencies (F), the respondents mean (X), the percentages (%) founded values, the sample standard deviation (SD), and the Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r).

The mean X is the average number in a data group, where we add up all the observed values of a sample item and then divide by the number of participants in the study.

The respondents' mean formula is:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{(\sum x_i)}{n}$$

$\sum$  = the sum of the values.

$x_i$  = the observed values of a sample item.

n = the number of participants in the study.

The term standard deviation indicates how distant from the standard value is. The word deviation means the measure used to calculate the variation value or how diffused numbers are. Standard deviation is a measure of the statistical dispersion. "Dispersement" informs users how spread out the data is. In fact, it indicates how much of the data is spread around the mean or average. (Sarkar, Jyotirmoy ; Rashid, Mamunur,2017)

The equation to measure the standard deviation is:

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_i^N = (x_i - \bar{X})^2}{N - 1}}$$

SD = (sample) standard deviation.

$N$  = the number of participants.

$x_i$  = the observed values of a sample item.

$\bar{X}$  = the mean value of the observed values.

In statistics, Pearson's correlation coefficient or Pearson's  $r$  is defined as measuring the strength of the relationship between two variables and their interrelationships.

In simple words, as one of the studied variable increases, Pearson's correlation coefficient measures the consequence of a change on the other variable, calculating the effect of change in one variable when the other variable changes.

The equation to measure Pearson's correlation coefficient is:

$$r = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n \sum x^2 - (\sum x^2)][n \sum y^2 - (\sum y^2)]}}$$

$r$  = Pearson's correlation coefficient.

$n$  = the number of pairs of scores.

$\sum xy$  = the sum of the products of paired scores.

$\sum x$  = the sum of x scores.

$\sum y$  = the sum of y scores.

$\sum x^2$  = the sum of squared x scores.

$\Sigma y^2$  = the sum of squared y scores.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with the research design of the present study, the population and sample, and the data collection instruments and analysis procedure.

The following chapter is devoted to the analysis and interpretation of the findings of this research and the discussion of the results in relation to the research questions.

## **CHAPTER THREE: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS**

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## **SECTION ONE: ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS**

### **Introduction**

This section analyses quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire and the test. The researchers provide a detailed analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the questionnaire, as well as the evaluation of the written expression exam scores, in order to answer the research questions.

This chapter is the main part of the study as a whole. It concentrates on analysing gender differences among third-year undergraduate students at M'sila University in their writing self-efficacy beliefs. This study is based on a two-section questionnaire which was dedicated to students to highlight the importance of writing self-efficacy and the observation of the students' written expression first-semester exam score.

The research aims to find out if there is a substantial difference between male and female third-year English students in writing self-efficacy, as it examines existing data from third-year students in order to determine if there is a predictive relationship between gender and writing self-efficacy beliefs.

### 3.1. Findings

The data collected for this research were collected from two research tools: a questionnaire and the students' first-term written expression exam results.

The analysis of the results was conducted quantitatively through Microsoft office Excel and, then, qualitatively, through the interpretation of the founded results.

#### 3.1.1. Students' Questionnaire Results

The results obtained from the students' questionnaire were analysed through Microsoft office Excel mainly. The number of students to whom the questionnaire was administered was fifty-two, which consists of 50% out of the total number (105) of third-year undergraduate students of English at the University of M'sila. The results were analysed quantitatively by means of software named the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis included descriptive statistics and percentage analysis of the average, and standard deviation and the results are displayed in tables, as it is described below.

##### 3.1.1.1. General Information

###### Question 1. Gender

Male  Female

**Table 1**

###### *Students' Gender*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number of respondents (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Male</b>	26	50 %
<b>Female</b>	26	50 %

---

In the above table, we can clearly detect that the number of male and female participants are equal, at the first of the study the number of male participants (62%) outnumbered the females (38%), it was totally contradicting, as females are known for being

more interested in studying English as a foreign language than males. But as the study mainly focuses on gender differences as the main variable, we tried to pursue as many participants as possible from both males and females.

**Question 2. Number of years studying English writing**

Less than 2 years  More than 2 years

**Table 2**

*Number of years studying English writing*

Years	Number of respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
Less than 2 years	01	02 %
More than 2 years	51	98 %

Asking such a question was for the purpose to try to involve students more and try to catch their attention and makes them relax more, as the table 2 results show that the majority (98%) of third-year students who are 51 of the studied sample(52) have studied and are already familiar with the English writing courses for more two years, however, one of the participants (02%) response differently, mentioning that he/she had suffered from lack of written expression teachers, whereas the other participants had not mentioned such point.

**Question 3. How do you estimate your English (paragraph and essay) writing performance**

Advanced  Good  Average  Below average

**Table 3**

*English writing performance evaluation*

<b>English writing performance</b>	<b>Number of respondents (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Advanced</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>06%</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Below Average</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>02%</b>

Students were asked to score their English writing performance from advanced to below average on a four-tier scale. The data are evaluated and displayed in table 3. As provided in the table, a considerable number of students ranges from the level good (52%) to average (40%). The minority of students consider their level as advanced and below average (06%) and (02%). The function of this question was to give an opportunity for students to assess themselves. Self-evaluation is of a great impact. As it is courage students responsibilities and involvement.

### ***1.1.2. General Self-Efficacy Scale (SGSES)***

The students' answers for this section were summed up and presented in table (4). Students grades were divided according to their gender, calculating both the mean and standard deviation of each item within the scale.

**Table 4**

#### ***Students' general self-efficacy results***

	<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>	
	<b>M</b>	<b>DV</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>DV</b>
<b>1- When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work.</b>	2.15	1.01	4,12	0.33

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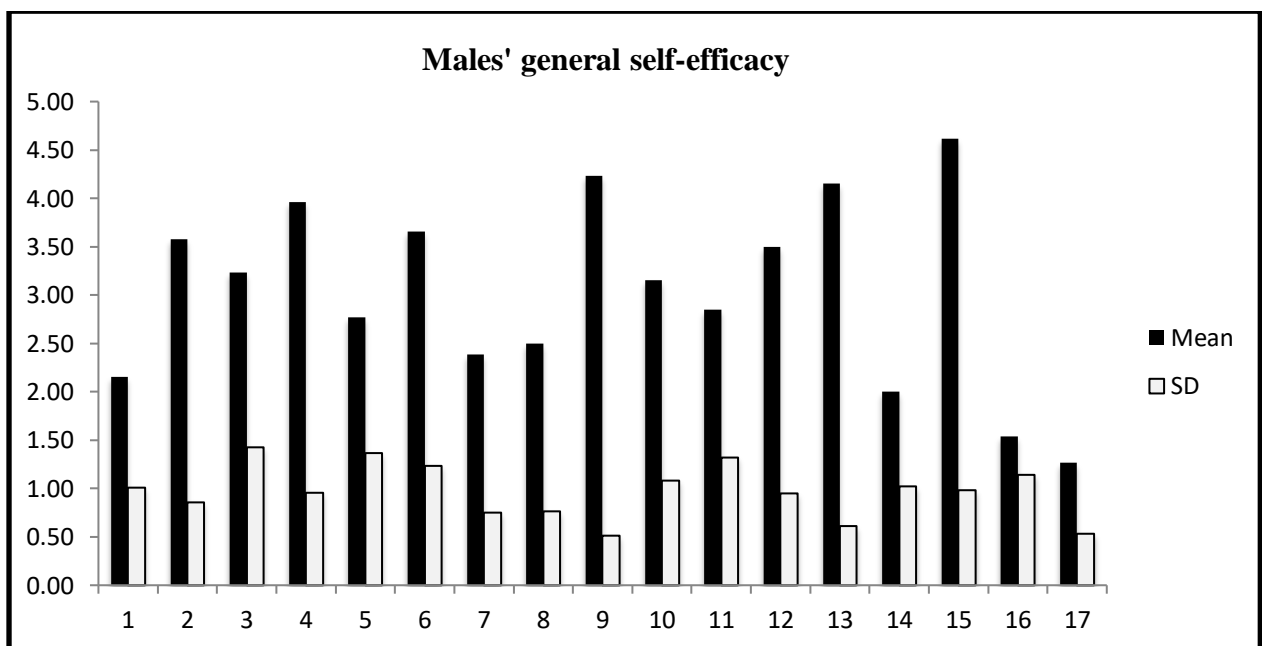
2- <b>One of my problems is that I cannot get down to work when I should.</b>	3.58	0.86	2.27	0.67
3- <b>If I can't do a job the first time I keep trying until I can.</b>	3.23	1.42	4.08	0.39
4- <b>When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them.</b>	3.96	0.96	2.08	0.63
5- <b>I give up on things before completing them</b>	2.77	1.37	2.15	0.61
6- <b>I avoid facing difficulties</b>	3.65	1.23	4.04	0.20
7- <b>If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it.</b>	2.38	0.75	2.08	0.48
8- <b>When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it.</b>	2.50	0.76	4.08	0.27
9- <b>When I decide to do something new, I go right to work on it.</b>	4.23	0.51	4.08	0.27
10- <b>When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful</b>	3.15	1.08	2.12	0.59
11- <b>When unexpected problems occur, I don't handle them well</b>	2.85	1.32	3.73	0.67
12- <b>I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me.</b>	3.50	0.95	2.15	0.46
13- <b>Failure just makes me try harder</b>	4.15	0.61	3.96	0.45
14- <b>I feel insecure about my ability to do things.</b>	2.00	1.02	2.23	0.82
15- <b>I am a self-reliant person</b>	4.62	0.98	4.12	0.33
16- <b>I give up easily</b>	1.54	1.14	1,92	0.56
17- <b>I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in life.</b>	1.27	1.58	2.15	0.73
<b>Mean</b>	3.03	0.28	3.02	0.18

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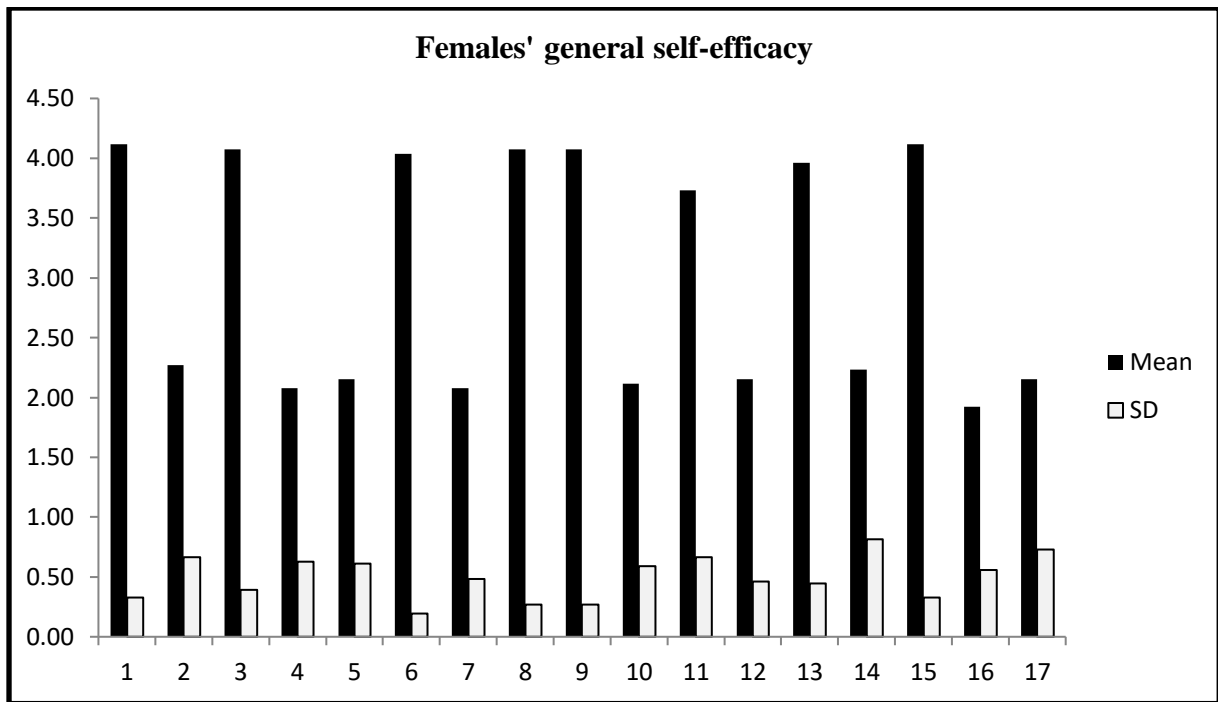
Table 4 represents the Mean and Standard deviation of each item of Sherer et al. Likert scale, for both male and female participants. This scale has 17 items. Each item is rated on a 5 point scale ranging from strongly disagreed 1 point to strongly agree 5 points.

The table shows that the scores increase mainly for these sections, 3 (If I can't do a job the first time I keep trying until I can) with  $M = 3.23$ ,  $SD = 1.42$  for males and  $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = 0.39$  for females, 9 (When I decide to do something new, I go right to work on it) as male participants scores were  $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ , as for females  $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = 0.27$ , 13 (Failure just makes me try harder) males  $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = 0.61$ , and  $M = 3.96$ ,  $SD = 0.45$  for females, and lastly 15 as table of students results show, male participants score  $M = 4.62$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ , while females score.  $M = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 0.33$ , higher scores indicating a higher self-efficacy beliefs the students possess.

Figure 1 and Figure 2 represent the results of the GSE scales for both genders.



*Figure .1 Males' general self-efficacy*



**Figure.2 Females' general self-efficacy**

From figures 1 and figure 2 and also Table 4, we conclude that the gender effect on GSE was examined using Sherer et al. scale, and as the results of the chosen sample indicated the absence of any significant difference in GSE scores of male students ( $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 0.28$ ) and female students ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 0.18$ ), (see Table 4). Therefore, further analyses were carried out on the studied sample.

### **1.1.3. English Writing Self-Efficacy Scale (EWSES)**

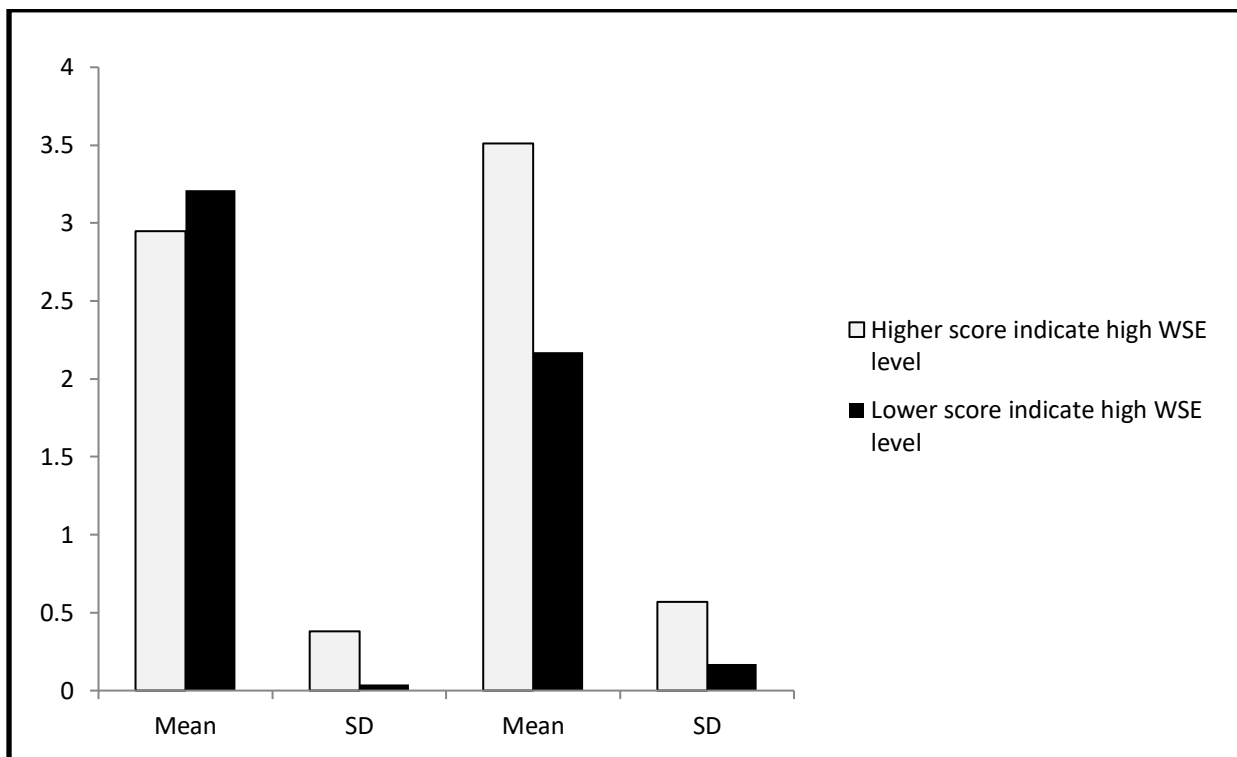
The results of this section were divided into main categories, high scores indicate a high level of writing self-efficacy, and the second one is low scores that display a high level of writing self-efficacy.

Table 5 represents the summation of the two categories.

**Table 5**

*The summary of English Writing Self-efficacy Scale*

Category	Male		Female	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
High score indicate high WSE level	2.95	0.38	3.51	0.57
Low score indicate high WSE level	3.21	0.04	2.17	0.17



*Figure 3. The summary of EWSES*

From the table 5 and this figure we can clearly detect that for the first category ( high scores indicate the possession of high writing self-efficacy beliefs) female participants has surpassed the male participants scoring Mean = 3.51, SD = 0.57, which their score was, Mean = 2.95, SD = 0.38, as for the second category (low score indicate a high level of writing self-efficacy) male participants have scored Mean = 3.2, SD = 0.04 whereas female participants'scores were, Mean = 2.17, SD = 0.17 which means that the writing self-efficacy beliefs level which female participants possess exceeded the WSE level that male participants possess.

**Table 6**

*Students' result of the English Writing Self-efficacy Scale-1*

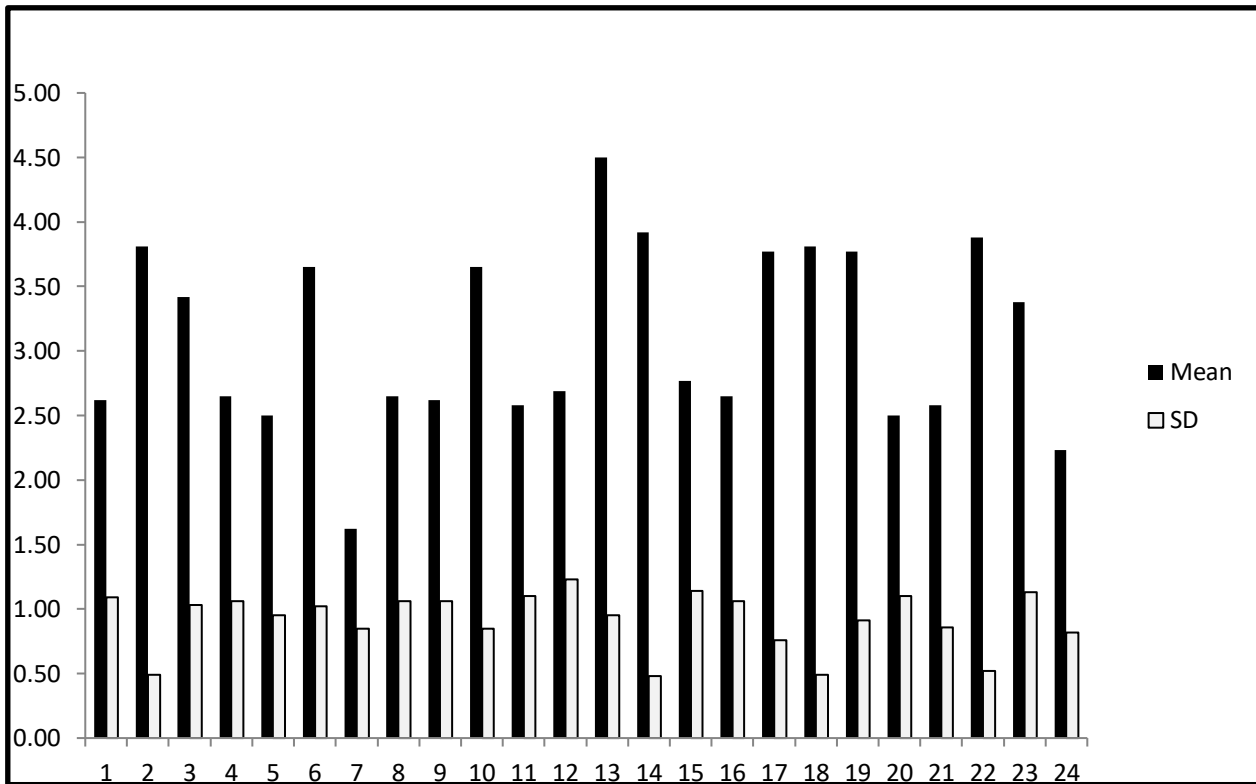
	Male		Female	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<b>1-I enjoy writing.</b>	2.62	1.09	4.12	0.33
<b>2-I can write grammatically correct sentences.</b>	3.81	0.49	4.04	0.53
<b>8-I can avoid distractions while writing.</b>	2.65	1.06	4.04	0.53
<b>11-I can keep writing even when it's difficult.</b>	2.58	1.10	4.15	0.46
<b>13-My writing abilities grow with effort.</b>	4.50	0.95	5.00	0.00
<b>14-I have the ability to deal with most of the writing problems that occur in life.</b>	3.92	0.48	3.77	0.51
<b>16- If I can't write something for the first time, I will keep trying until I do it.</b>	2.77	1.14	4.12	0.33

<b>18-I believe that I can succeed in almost any writing tasks, that I set my mind to.</b>	2.65	1.06	3.96	0.20
<b>19-When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.</b>	3.81	0.49	4.15	0.37
<b>20-I can write without feeling physical discomfort.</b>	3.77	0.91	4.00	0.40
<b>21-I can manage my time effectively when I have a pressing deadline for the paper.</b>	2.50	1.10	3.88	0.71
<b>22-Compared to other people, I can do most of the written tasks very well</b>	2.58	0.86	4.19	0.40
<b>24-I believe I will be able to achieve most of the writing-related goals that I have set for myself.</b>	3.38	1.13	3.88	0.65
<b>34-I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.</b>	2.23	0.82	2.96	1.15

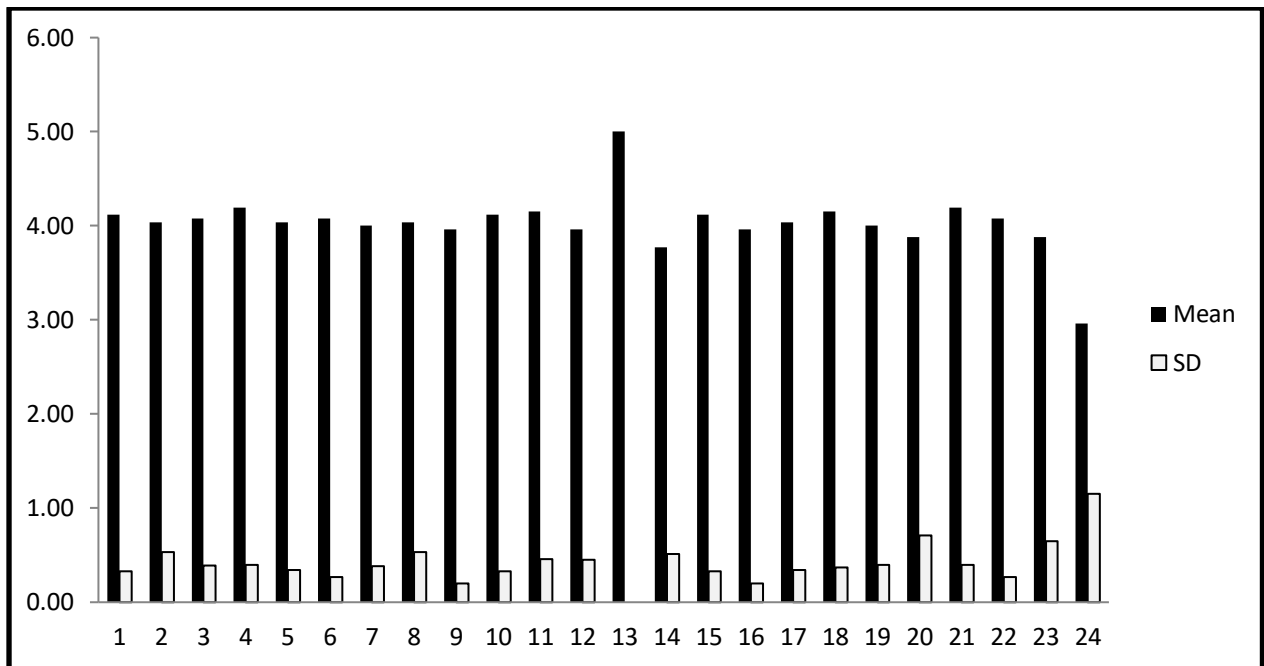
Table 4 represents the Mean and Standard deviation of the most important elements of the first category of the EWSES questionnaire (high ranking state high WSEB level students possess).

The table's results demonstrate that the scores for this segment increase mainly on, 2 ( I can write grammatically correct sentences) with  $M = 4.04$ ,  $SD = 0.53$  for females and  $M = 3.81$ ,  $SD = 0.49$  for males, 14 (I have the ability to deal with most of the writing problems that occur in life.) as male participants scores were  $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = 0.48$ , as for females  $M = 3.77$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ , 16 ( If I can't write something for the first time, I will keep trying until I do it.) with  $M = 2.77$ ,  $SD = 1.14$  for the male participants and  $M = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 0.33$  for females, 19 (When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.) males  $M = 3.81$ ,  $SD = 0.49$ , and  $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = 0.37$  for females and lastly scoring the highest results for both

genders in the 13<sup>th</sup> elements (My writing abilities grow with effort.) as the table of students results above indicate, male participants, scored  $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ , while females get the full score.  $M = 5.00$ ,  $SD = 0.00$  with 100% of the female participants responding with strongly agree.



*Figure 4. Females' Writing Self-efficacy Scale-1 results*



**Figure 5. Males' Writing Self-efficacy Scale-1 results**

Form figure 4 and figure 5 we can clearly detect the visible difference in the male and female participants' responses, As a very interesting data, were gathered from this particular section, providing the first step for answering the study main question, as 90% of the female students' results were very high, scoring  $M = 2.96$  as the lowest score and  $M = 5.00$  as the highest score. As for male students, their scores were not that divergent, as the results were ranged from  $M = 2\sim 3$ , reaching  $M = 4.50$  as their highest score.

**Table 7**

**Students' result of Writing Self-efficacy Scale-2**

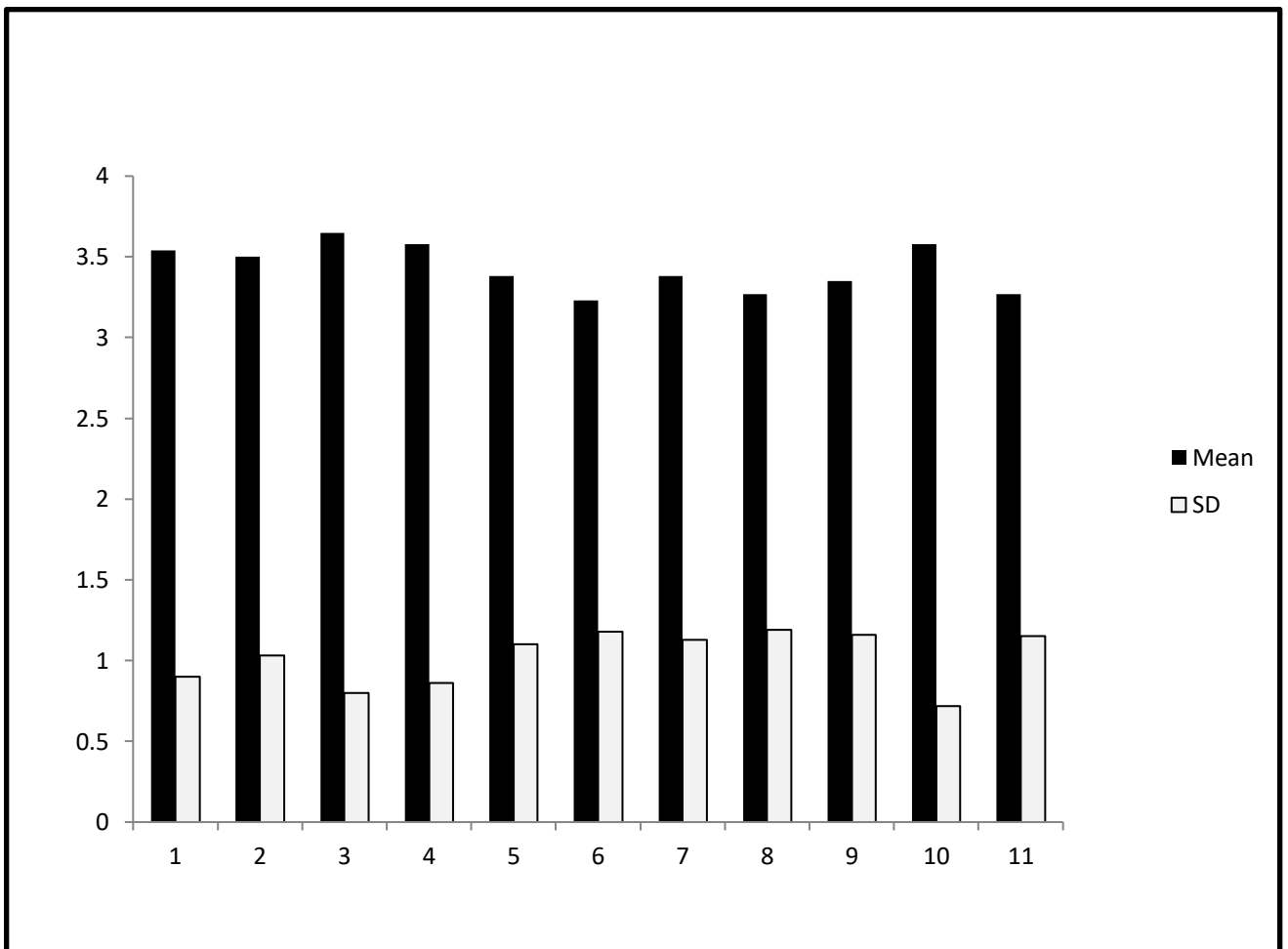
	Male		Female	
	M	SD	M	SD
15- if the given written tasks seem too complicated, I won't even bother trying it.	3.54	0.90	1.69	0.55
25-one of my problems is that when I have to do something written I can't do it/can't handle it.	3.50	1.03	2.08	0.39
26-when I set writing-related goals for myself I	3.65	0.80	2.35	0.75

<b>rarely reach them</b>				
<b>27-when I'm performing hard written tasks I'm not sure I can do it.</b>	3.58	0.86	2.15	0.54
<b>28-I give up my work, before even finishing them.</b>	3.38	1.10	2.12	0.59
<b>30-Expressing ideas through writing seem to be a waste of time.</b>	3.23	1.18	1.88	0.33
<b>31- My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a composition</b>	3.38	1.13	2.00	0.28
<b>32- I avoid writing</b>	3.27	1.19	1.85	0.37
<b>33- I am nervous about writing.</b>	3.35	1.16	3.27	1.25
<b>35- I don't think I write as well as most other people do</b>	3.58	0.72	2.15	0.54
<b>36- I don't trust my writing abilities.</b>	3.27	1.15	2.04	0.45

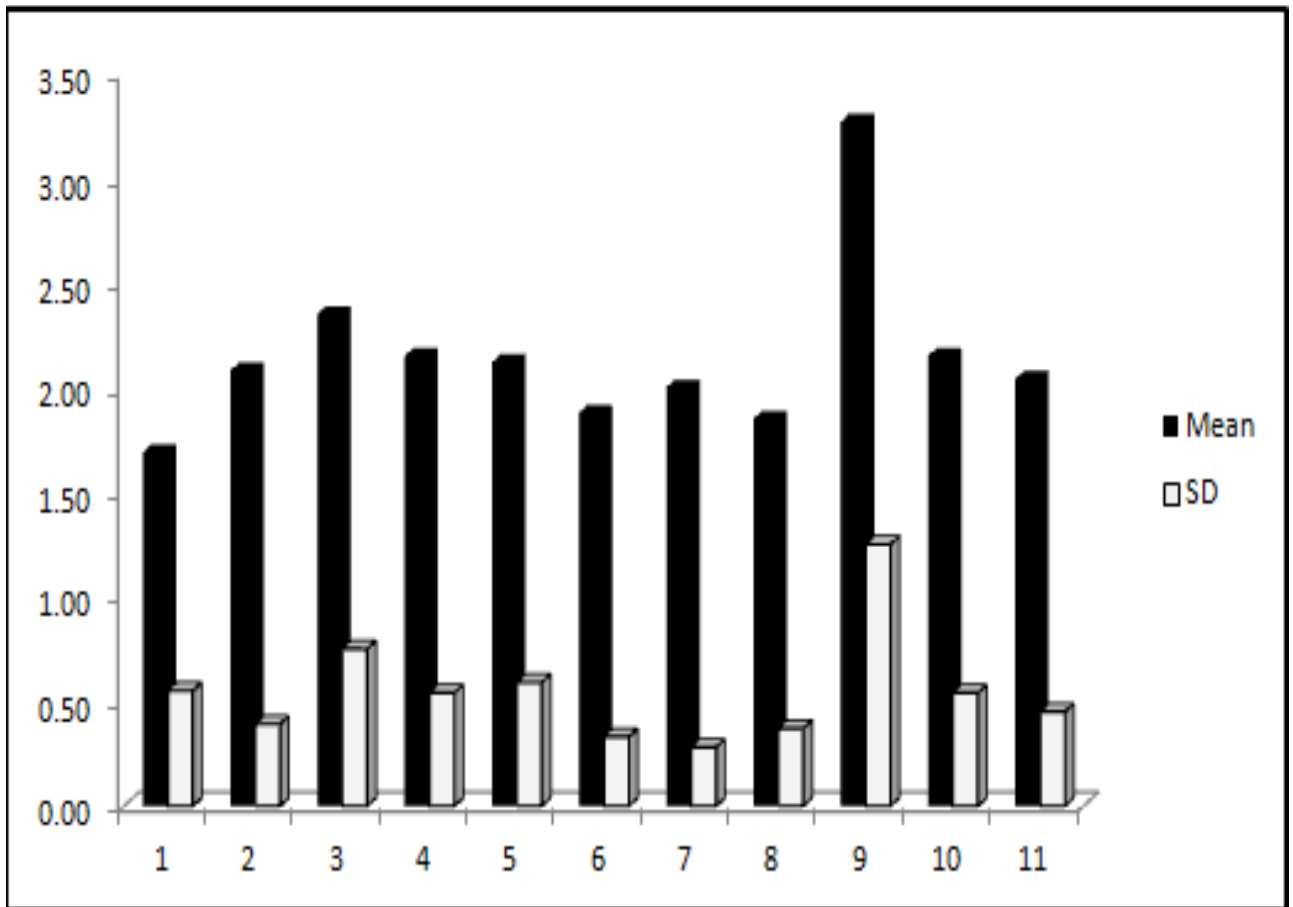
Table 7 illustrates the results of the most important elements of the second category of the EWSES questionnaire ( low scores indicate a high WSEB level students possess ).

Very interesting data were gathered from the table above, in the 15<sup>th</sup> element ( if the given written tasks seem too complicated, I won't even bother trying it.) we can clearly detect the differences in scores as male participants had scored  $M = 3.54$ ,  $SD = 0.90$  and for the female participants  $M = 1.69$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ , such as the 25<sup>th</sup> element (one of my problems is that when I have to do something written I can't do it/can't handle.) as male participants scores were  $M = 3.50$ ,  $SD = 0.48$ , and for females  $M = 2.08$ ,  $SD = 0.39$ , 26<sup>th</sup> element (when I set writing-related goals for myself I rarely reach them) with  $M = 3.65$ ,  $SD = 0.80$  for the male participants and  $M = 2.35$ ,  $SD = 0.75$  for females, 27<sup>th</sup> element (when I'm performing hard written tasks I'm not sure I can do it..) males  $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ , and  $M = 2.15$ ,  $SD = 0.54$  for females, 30<sup>th</sup> element ( Expressing ideas through writing seem to be a waste of time) with

M=3.23, SD = 1.18 for the male participants and M = 1.88, SD = 0.33 for the female participants, and lastly scoring approximate values for both 35<sup>th</sup> elements as the table of students results above indicate (I don't think I write as well as most other people do.) and the 36<sup>th</sup> element ( I don't trust my writing abilities.) male participants scored M =3.58, SD = 0.72, for the first one and M = 3.27, SD = 1.15 for the second one, while female participants get a lower score for both elements M = 2.15, SD =0.54 and M = 2.04, SD = 0.45.



*Figure 6. Males' WritingSelf-efficacyScale-2 results*



*Figure 7. Females' WritingSelf-efficacyScale-2 results*

From the results which are obtained from the table and the figures 6 and 7, we can precisely trace the significant differences in the responses of male and female participants. As this section gathered very useful information, providing the second and final step for answering the main question of the study. Confirming the first category findings emphasizing on the belief that female third-year students of the University of M'sila possess a higher level of WSEB than male students appeared to possess.

## 1.2. Discussion of Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire tends to achieve the aim of this study which is exploring the Gender Differences in Writing Self-Efficacy Beliefs among Third-year Undergraduate Students at M'sila University. The sample responds to fifty-six questions which are divided into three sections for the sake to testify the students' self-efficacy and their writing self-efficacy beliefs and its contribution for improving their writing achievements.

The first question of the first section was of great importance as our study focuses on the gendered as the main variable so tried to pursue an equal number of participants for both genders, therefore the final results of the first section showed that the number of participants in this study is equally divided for two genders. As for the other two questions, they were for the purpose to try to involve students more and try to catch their attention, as supplementary part to prepare the students for the real questionnaire.

Regarding Sherer et al. general self-efficacy scale (SGSES), to began with, there was no significant variation between the results of the male and female participants, as both of them scored a highly identical result; male students GSE level was ( $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 0.28$ ) and female students GSE level was ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 0.18$ ); showing that third-year students of the university of M'sila possess a high level of GSE.

This particular section was aimed to examine third-year EFL student's self-efficacy and detect any differences between male and female students, but the finding showed that there was no significant change between male EFL students' self- efficacy and female EFL students. so the gender effect on GSE that was examined using Sherer et al. scale indicated the absence of any significant difference in GSE scores of male students and female students proving that both genders possess a similar level of GSE beliefs, Therefore, leading us to focus our study and rely on the second section EWSES results.

As for the second section, the EWSES, this scale was divided into two main categories; high scores indicate a high WSE level students possess, and low scores indicate a high WSE level.

From the first category, It seems that the female students who are included in this research are more likely to possess a higher writing self-efficacy beliefs level, scoring a better average than males, probably because they are more interested in writing. Furthermore, they declare that they are more capable of writing under any circumstances, reaching their purposes and achieve their academic goals. It is deduced that the majority of female students are aware of writing self-efficacy and its benefits to help them face their writing difficulties and helps the learners to achieve a better academic writing level. Concerning writing self-efficacy beliefs, students admit that they do possess them.

As for the male participants, it seems that they possess somehow a lower level of writing self-efficacy than female participants do, admitting that they do not enjoy writing practices, finding writing tasks very difficult and hard to do and therefore most of the time they seem to avoid writing even though they admit that their writing abilities do grow with effort. Which provides us with a primary clue to answer the research's first question.

In addition, almost all male students are not encouraged to do written activities, saying that the English department at M'sila university does not pay much attention to encourage third-year EFL learners' writing abilities, using less effective way since the majority of them seem not interested in writing at all, Therefore, male students need more support to enhance this essential skill.

Students are aware of the writing self-efficacy and writing performance improvement relationship as they declared that possessing a high writing self-efficacy beliefs level is very important to develop their writing achievements.

From the second category of the second section, the results for this part were similar to the ones found in the first category. It appears that third-year female students of the university of m'sila who are included in the study are apparently to possess a higher writing self-efficacy beliefs level, scoring a lower average than males proving once more that their writing self-efficacy belief is higher compared to the one male participants do, confirming that they are more interested in writing as an educational process. In addition to that, they proclaim that they are satisfied with their writing level, already achieved the academic level of writing. Conforming that the majority of female students do know the role that writing self-efficacy play for the learners' to achieve their highest academic writing level.

And as far as the male participants, they seem to have somehow a comparatively low level of self-efficacy in writing than female respondents do, as they scored a higher average this turn.

acknowledging that they do not prefer written practices, stating that English written assignments are extremely stressful and complicated to do, and thereby, plenty of the time, they appear to dodge any written activities although they mentioned before that one's English written skills do improve with work. In addition, third-year male students of the university of m'sila that participated in the study, express their fear of their written pieces to be evaluated, as they do not precisely trust their writing abilities to be judged.

Concerning writing self-efficacy beliefs third-year students at university of m'sila possess, we can clearly detect the obvious difference between male and female students, Recording very distinguished results answering the research main question, and confirming the other studies results ( see the first chapter ) that female students do really possess a high level of self-efficacy when it comes to English written skills, proving that female are more invested in literary studies than mathematical studies that interest male students.

Also, shedding light on WSE importance for better writing achievements, as all students agree that WSE plays a major role contributing to written skills development. Encouraging them to put more effort into their written skills, learning new different writing styles, large vocabulary, and new information and ideas.

### **3.1.2. Students' writing self-efficacy and writing performance Analysis and Interpretation**

In the analysis of the obtained data, Microsoft Office Excel 2007 was used. First, descriptive statistics were calculated. Then, the Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the association between the students' English writing performance in the written expression exam and writing self-efficacy beliefs. Also, the effect of gender on participants' writing performance and self-efficacy beliefs.

#### ***3.1.2.1. Pearson's correlation for male writing self-efficacy & written expression exam scores***

The relationship between male third-year students' writing self-efficacy and writing performance was examined using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

**Table 08**

***The results of Pearson's correlation for male writing self-efficacy & written expression exam scores***

	<b>N</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	<b>Sig (P-value)</b>
<b>Male writing Self-efficacy*Writing</b>	24	0.117	.58

From the table, we can clearly detect that the value of  $r$  is 0.117 a positive value which technically means a positive correlation, even though the relationship between writing self-efficacy and the students writing performance is somehow weak (nb. the nearer the value is to zero, the weaker the relationship).  $r = 0.117$ ,  $n = 24$ ,  $p = .58$   $p < .05$ ; Therefore, confirming any hypothesis that insists on the idea that there is a significant relationship between male EFL students' writing self-efficacy and writing performance.

***3.1.2.2. Pearson's correlation for female writing self-efficacy & written expression exam scores***

Similarly, the relationship between female third-year students' writing self-efficacy and written expression exam results of the first-semester was examined using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

As shown in Table 9.

**Table 09**

***The results of Pearson's correlation for female writing self-efficacy & written expression exam scores***

	<b>N</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	<b>Sig (P-value)</b>
<b>Female writing Self-efficacy*Writing</b>	24	0.434	340

As shown in Table 8, For the female third-year students of M'sila University, the student writing self-efficacy and the first-term written expression exam results were positively correlated,  $r(24) = 0.43$ ,  $p < .05$ . Although it is technically a positive correlation, the relationship between the variables is weak (nb. the nearer the value is to zero, the weaker the relationship).

## **SECTION TWO: DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS**

This particular part is devoted to clarify and give answers to the main questions of this research. The research was carried out essentially to investigate the gender differences in writing self-efficacy beliefs of third-year LMD students at M'sila university. The mix of instruments which are the student questionnaire and the first-term written expression exam were used to conduct this investigation is believed to present the needed data to determine the differences in writing self-efficacy beliefs of the students and its contribution to improving students' writing performance.

The research started with the supposition that females are professional writers than male students, as earlier research indicate that males are more involved in productive, quantitative studies, while compared to females who invested more in literature and art, It was obvious from the review discussion that instructors and learners approved on what was suggested.

The first main problem of this research was Is there any significant difference in self-efficacy in writing English between male and female students? The first tool's study showed that there is a very noticeable difference between male and female writing self-efficacy beliefs. Research by Berry & West, 1993; Bruning & Horn, 2000; Pajares, Valiante, & Cheong, 2007; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996, which reported that gender differences decreased with age when written, mainly due to a decline in the sense of self-efficacy of females. Gender differences are especially common in terms of self-efficacy and success in writing (Hansen, 2009).

For the second question, Is there a relationship between male / female third-year student's writing self-efficacy and their writing performance? it was aimed to examine the relationship between male third-year student's writing self-efficacy and writing performance for the first-term exams. The finding showed that there was quietly a weak relationship

between male students' writing self- efficacy and writing performance at the exams, resulting in a barely positive correlation between the research main variables. Similarly, female EFL students' writing self- efficacy and writing performance were calculated to find out the female results in the writing self-efficacy and their scores in the writing expression test were positively correlated showed that there was a significant relationship between the two variables, somehow these results are in the same way as the previous researchers' findings that have shown a strong desire in writing self-efficacy as they have studied the relationship between writing self-belief and writing final result in universities; these findings showed a strong relationship between them (Pajares, F., 2000, Pajares, F. and M.J. Johnson, 1996, Pajares, F. and G. Valiente, 2001). The result shown in all the motivational conceptions studies regarding writing success was typically found to have the highest self-efficacy Predicting power: these findings uphold the claim made by (Bandura, A., 1986), based on social cognitive theory, that self-efficacy has an essential function in predicting performance in writing.

The aforementioned investigation provided additional proof to support Pajares's report (2000), which declares that the internal systems of students and the beliefs they grasp about their abilities need be provided due attention since they might contribute to success or failure in school. We accept that this study offers to the understanding of students' self-efficacy; this data should allow teachers to improve innovative schooling supplies taking account of these findings and improve their pedagogical exercises. L2 scholars too demand to be supported to develop substantive knowledge of the literature process and to be taught inefficient writing strategies. Such actions could build learners' writing self- efficacy and help them in the long run, as well as allowing them to go through enjoyable, though subconscious, lifelong education experiences.

The third and last question was what role does self-efficacy play in influencing students' academic achievements? According to Bandura, 1994, the people who have self-efficacy beliefs choose how to think, to feel and act. Therefore if individual believe that they can truly reach the desired result, they will have the motivation and confidence to emerge a definite action. While people decide to become part in projects, these self-efficacy beliefs affect them, these beliefs also influence the attempt that they extend and how they tolerate when faced with difficulties. (Bandura, 1986; Pajares, 1997; Schunk, 1991). From the two tools used, it was evident that students are conscious of the value of writing self-efficacy for better writing achievements, as they are aware of WSE importance to improve their academically appropriate writing skills.

## **SECTION THREE: PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

### **Introduction**

The last two parts discussed the approach, procedures and research design used in this study as well as the analysis, interpretation and discussion of evidence. This section provides some suggestions and recommendations that might help to solve some problems and improve the student academic writing achievements by helping students grow a higher self-efficacy belief, in light of the findings.

From the results found, the third-year female student of m'sila university possesses a higher writing self-efficacy beliefs level than male, as the latter complained about their writing problems in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and deadline commitment. It was clear that students are aware of the importance of writing self-efficacy beliefs for better writing performance. Therefore, some points are recommended and some suggestions are proposed to help teachers and learners to promote writing skill.

#### **3.3.1. Pedagogical Implications**

This segment attempts to present implications that are encouraged from the outcomes achieved. The central objects of this investigation are to explore the gender element in differentiating male and female writing self-efficacy beliefs of third-year Undergraduate Students at m'sila university, the facts behind third-year LMD students' writing problems and to investigate students' awareness towards the importance of writing self-efficacy beliefs for improving writing performance. The results unveil that females of third-year students at Mohamed Boudiaf M'sila university, do possess a higher self-efficacy beliefs level than male students, even though that both female and male students are aware of the significant role the

WSE play for better writing achievements, but most of them do not apply it in their education carrier.

Two pedagogical implications were proposed from the results of this research, which are (i) to emphasize teaching writing techniques, and (ii) to put students in groups of students of different backgrounds and gender. As found in this research, respondents' self-efficacy levels are high but this does not mean they will always be at a high level. It is really important to maintain that high standard. To achieve this, teachers should also motivate students to retain their level of confidence and/or even raise their level of confidence, since the degree of self-efficacy depends on the degree of complexity of a given assignment. The higher the level of studies they are practising, the tougher their jobs will be and the more difficult. They would have to do more to build solutions and in thinking, they have to be more logical and analytical. Via social similarities, learners get information about self-efficacy through the experience of the results of others (Shunk & Meece, 2006). Students who identify their peers completing a task will also be able to make sure they understand it. As such, students should work in mixed-gender groups, preferably small groups, so they can learn better from one another. As the distribution of gender in the teaching profession continues to prevail by women, the percentage of female students is higher than that of male. Nonetheless, combining the students of the same gender would not be a concern, because there is no requirement to include an equivalent number of students in groups from the same gender.

Thus, the researcher would like to recommend all written expression teachers to raise their students' awareness about the importance of writing self-efficacy and about its positive effects on enhancing their writing performance.

### **3.3.2. Recommendations for Further Research**

This study has gathered both quantitative and qualitative data from Mohamed Boudiaf M'sila university's only third-year LMD students. It is proposed that prospective studies will find participants from other departments of English at other universities to obtain in-depth perspectives into the degree to which EFL learners use auto-efficacy to enhance writing performance. And to see the attitudes of the teachers towards the importance of building the confidence of the students in the education curriculum and its impacts on the students' writing performance. Furthermore, future research studies can use more than two means of collecting data to gather reliable and valid data. Lastly, the study performed is only descriptive; thus, it would be safer if potential researchers pursue experimental study in order to figure out the effect of gendered writing self-efficacy on the success of the students' writing.

### **3.3.3. Limitation of the study**

The current study had to face a number of limitations, and difficulties that required so much effort and caution in interpreting the results. Firstly, the sample size here (n=52) was not that big to be able to generalize the results to the larger population of EFL learners at the university of M'sila. The data presented here are correlational, and the resulting analysis can not infer a causal association between self-efficacy, gender difference and writing performance. Furthermore, the third-year classes were made up overwhelmingly of females, so the present study face difficulty in pursuing the same number of the participant of the two genders. In fact, one of the most important drawbacks applies to the degree of variability for each individual and the resulting classification of learners. The self-efficacy measure of writing was a self-report questionnaire and the only measure used when assessing the performance and adversity of male-female writing. Also, there was an attempt made to gather more detailed information from the students personally after the distribution of the

questionnaire and a writing test, however, it could not be done as the learner were not available.

## **Conclusion**

This section had included results from the questionnaire given to third-year LMD students in addition to the observation of the first-semester written expression examination scores that were compared with the results of the third-year student questionnaire. This also set out the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings, along with the implications recommendations for future research concerning improving the learners writing self-efficacy for their writing performance to be improved.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research is descriptive; it was conducted to explore gender disparities in writing self-efficacy beliefs among third-year students at M'sila University in order to increase their success in writing. The current study dealt with three important research questions. The first one: Is there any significant difference in self-efficacy in writing English between male and female students? The second one: Is there a relationship between male / female third-year student's writing self-efficacy and their writing performance? The third one: What role does self-efficacy play in influencing students' academic achievements?

This work is a correlational analysis that has followed the mixed-method approach, incorporating quantitative and qualitative approaches. The former is a questionnaire designed at the University of Mohamed Boudiaf M'sila for fifty-two out of one hundred five third-year students. The latter is the scores of the written expression first-term exams of twenty-four students.

The quantitative and qualitative data analysis allows us to arrive at these essential findings. The first research question revealed that female learners possess a higher degree of self-efficacy compared to third-year male students at the University of Mohamed Boudiaf M'sila. Teachers are expected to utilize an educational curriculum to promote and reinforce their learners' confidence and to offer them a programme which includes appropriate materials, guidance, tasks, and facilities to improve their students' writing performance.

In the second research question, Is there a relationship between male/female third-year student's writing self-efficacy and their writing performance? the findings revealed there was quietly a weak relationship between the students' writing self- efficacy and writing performance.

## ***GENERAL CONCLUSION***

Moreover, concerning the third research question, the findings exposed that students admit that they are aware of the importance of possessing a high level of writing self-efficacy, however, the majority of third-year LMD students at Mohamed Boudiaf M'sila university do not seem confident enough in their writing abilities to enhance their writing performance. Therefore, it was concluded that third-year LMD female students at Mohamed Boudiaf M'sila university possess a higher writing self-efficacy level compared to male students, which explained their excellent performance in the written expression examination, even though the majority of the students expressed that they are highly aware of the importance of writing self-efficacy for a better writing performance, however, they do not show the desired confidence in their writing skills and that might be the main reason for their poor we can find that students admit that they are aware of the importance of possessing a high level of writing self-efficacy, however, the majority of third-year LMD students at Mohamed Boudiaf M'sila university do not seem confident in their writing a lot in order to enhance their writing performance.

Eventually, though the WE teachers agree that writing self-efficacy has a positive impact on the writing achievement of the student, third-year students do not seem to be satisfied and confident enough in their writing skills. Therefore these teachers need to increase the level of confidence of the students, allowing them to build the right amount of confidence in their writing skills and boost their performance in writing.

In brief, this investigation proved that strength of self-efficacy is a reliable predictor of writing performance, with more efficacious, learners being more proficient writers, This finding contributes partial support for the construct validation of Bandura's self-efficacy assumption. as Race and gender were discovered to be solid predictors of writing performance, with females constantly performing better than the male learners.

## ***GENERAL CONCLUSION***

Finally, this study suggests that self-efficacy assumption may present a valuable guide for the assessment of one's expectations of proficiency in writing, particularly if cognitive and variables and outcome expectations are considered.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A. Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

The purpose of this study is to examine learners' learning and writing self-efficacy beliefs in order to examine the relationship between learners' self-efficacy beliefs and their learning and writing performance

You are kindly invited to voluntarily answer this questionnaire to the best of your knowledge and as objectively as you can. Your responses will be confidential and unanimous and will strictly be used for research purposes. Your cooperation would be of great help to our research.

#### General Information

Please select the appropriate option that best describes you, by **ticking (✓) the right box** in the following.

##### 1. Gender

Male

Female

##### 2. Number of years studying English writing

Less than 2 years

More than 2 years

##### 3. Writing performance

- How do you **estimate** your **English** (paragraph and essay) **writing performance**?

Advanced  Good  Average  Below average

#### Part One: Students' General Self-efficacy Scale (SGSES)

The following table represents descriptive statements on how EFL learners usually feel about learning tasks (including writing). Please, indicate, with a tick (✓) or symbol (+ or x), whether you **strongly agree, agree, are undecided, disagree** or **strongly disagree** with **each (all) of the following statements**.

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Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
1. When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work.					
2. One of my problems is that I cannot get down to work when I should.					
3. If I can't do a job the first time I keep trying until I can.					
4. When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them.					
5. I give up on things before completing them.					
6. I avoid facing difficulties.					
7. If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it.					
8. When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it.					
9. When I decide to do something new, I go right to work on it.					
10. When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful					
11. When unexpected problems occur, I don't handle them well.					
12. I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me.					
13. Failure just makes me try harder					
14. I feel insecure about my ability to do things.					
15. I am a self-reliant person.					
16. I give up easily					
17. I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in life.					

### Part Two: English Writing Self-Efficacy Scale (EWSES)

The following table represents descriptive statements on how EFL learners usually feel about writing tasks. Please, indicate, with a tick (✓) or symbol (+ or x), whether you **strongly agree**, **agree**, **are undecided**, **disagree** or **strongly disagree** with **each (all) of the following statements**.

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I enjoy writing.					
2. I can write grammatically correct sentences.					
3. I can spell my words correctly.					
4. I can put my ideas into writing.					
5. I can find and correct my grammatical					

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errors.					
6. I can write complete paragraphs easily.					
7. I can start writing assignments quickly.					
8. I can avoid distractions while writing.					
9. I believe I can control my frustration when I write.					
10. I believe I can focus on my writing for at least one hour.					
11. I can keep writing even when it's difficult.					
12. I can think of my writing goals before I write.					
13. My writing abilities grow with effort.					
14. I have the ability to deal with most of the writing problems that occur in life.					
15. if the given written tasks seem too complicated, I won't even bother trying it.					
16. if I can't write something for the first time, I will keep trying until I do it.					
17. Even when things are tough, I can perform written tasks quite well.					
18. I believe that I can succeed in almost any writing tasks, that I set my mind to.					
19. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.					
20. I can write without feeling physical discomfort..(headaches, stomachaches, backaches, insomnia, nausea, muscle tension, crying)					
21. I can manage my time effectively when I have a pressing deadline for the paper.					
22. Compared to other people, I can do most of the written tasks very well.					
23. I believe I will be able to successfully overcome many writing challenges.					
24. I believe I will be able to achieve most of the writing-related goals that I have set for myself.					
25. one of my problems is that when I have to do something written I can't do it/can't handle it.					
26. when I set writing-related goals for myself I rarely reach them.					
27. when I'm performing hard written tasks I'm not sure I can do it.					
28. I give up my work, before even finishing					

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them.					
29. I can provide valuable feedback to my classmates.					
30. Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.					
31. My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a composition.					
32. I avoid writing.					
33. I am nervous about writing.					
34. I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.					
35. I don't think I write as well as most other people do.					
36. I don't trust my writing abilities.					

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix B: Students Written Expression Exam Scores Per Gender**

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<b>Students First-Term Written Expression Exam Scores</b>	
<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>17.50</b>	13.50
<b>12.00</b>	14.50
<b>13.00</b>	13.50
<b>14.50</b>	12.00
<b>09.50</b>	13.50
<b>17.00</b>	10.00
<b>07.50</b>	12.50
<b>12.75</b>	15.50
<b>14.00</b>	10.50
<b>13.50</b>	11.50
<b>10.50</b>	16.00
<b>06.00</b>	15.00
<b>13.00</b>	16.00
<b>10.00</b>	13.00
<b>07.50</b>	13.50
<b>09.50</b>	18.00
<b>08.00</b>	11.00
<b>08.50</b>	10.00
<b>15.00</b>	13.00
<b>11.50</b>	10.00
<b>16.50</b>	10.50
<b>11.50</b>	08.50
<b>08.00</b>	09.50
<b>09.00</b>	10.00

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## المخلص

الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو ايضاح و تسليط الضوء على العلاقة بكتابة اللغة الانجليزية لطلاب السنة الثالثة بجامعة محمد بوضياف المسيلة ومعتقدات الكفاءة الذاتية وأدائهم الكتابية، بين الجنسين، حيث كان الهدف من هذا البحث الإجابة على سؤالين رئيسيين .

حيث قد سعى السؤال الأول إلى استكشاف الاختلافات التي قد توجد بين الطلاب جامعة محمد بوضياف من الذكور والإناث في ما يتعلق بمعتقدات الكفاءة الذاتية العامة وكفاءة الذات بكتابة اللغة الإنجليزية ، بينما كان الهدف السؤال الثاني هو فحص ما إذا كانت الكفاءة الذاتية لكتاباتهم مرتبطة (إيجابياً) بأدائهم الكتابي. حيث تم إدراج اثنين وخمسين متعلما و متعلمة في هذه الدراسة عشوائي، مقسمين حسب الجنس إلى مجموعتين من 26 شخص لكل منهما. حيث تم جمع بيانات هذه الدراسة باستخدام أداتين، استبيان واختبار تعبير كتابي (درجات الامتحان) لاستكشاف معتقدات الكفاءة الذاتية للمتعلمين العامة والكتابية بالإضافة إلى أدائهم الكتابي ، على التوالي.

أظهرت جميع التحليل الكمي للنتائج أنه على الرغم من عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين معتقدات الكفاءة الذاتية العامة للطلاب والطالبات ، فقد لوحظ وجود مستوى عالٍ نسبياً من الكفاءة الذاتية للكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية بين المشاركات الإناث ، مقارنة بأقرانهم من الذكور. كما أظهرت النتائج أن هناك علاقة ارتباط موجبة معنوية بين الكتابة الذاتية للطلاب وأداءهم الكتابي.

التركيز الأكثر أهمية الذي تم استخلاصه من هذه الدراسة على أهمية تعزيز معتقدات الكفاءة الذاتية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ، والتي بدورها تساهم في تحسين أدائهم الكتابي.

**كلمات مفتاحيه:** معتقدات الكفاءة الذاتية، الاداء الكتابي، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ، الاختلافات بين الجنسين ، متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ، كتابة الكفاءة الذاتية.