

Second Language Writing Anxiety among Faculty Scholars of a State University in the Philippines and Its Sex-Disaggregated Data

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ABSTRACT: The study investigated the causes and the nature of writing anxiety specifically in the use of English as the second official language of the Philippines. Further, it accounted and analyzed its sex-disaggregated data. This was done among faculty scholars of Central Luzon State University. The respondents were randomly chosen from among the purposively identified faculty scholars of the university pursuing their graduate degrees - master's and doctorate, in the different graduate curricular offerings in various universities in the Philippines and abroad, that require a thesis or dissertation as the final requirement for obtaining a graduate degree. The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) of Cheng (2004), a questionnaire composed of 22 items with three open-ended questions was used to collect responses. The responses were scored and measured on a five-point Likert response scale. The differences in Second Language Writing Anxiety (SLWA) between male and female participants were analyzed using the Mann-Whitney Test, which is ideal for analyzing statistically the difference between the distributions of data of unparalleled groups with the comparison of ranks and scores. Based on the study findings, the most prominent nature of SLWA among participants is cognitive anxiety. Other sources of anxiety include the availability of external and internal resources and environmental elements. In relation to sex, males scored higher in terms of the level of anxiety compared to females. Lastly, it is forwarded that educators and the pedagogical approach may utilize a positive feedback mechanism as negative evaluation promotes anxiety even in composing in a second language.

Keywords: writing anxiety, second language, cognitive anxiety, sex-disaggregated data, faculty scholars

I. INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in the Philippines believes that the quality of education depends largely on the qualifications and competencies of the faculty members. Cognizant of this, through CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 20, s. 2008, the government stipulates that faculty members at a higher education level must be at least a master's degree holder in their field of teaching. The full implementation of this regulation took place during the academic year 2011-2012. To meet this CMO requirement, CHED provides scholarships and other mechanisms to faculty members of higher education institutions (HEIs) to finish master's or doctorate degrees. Moreover, to build a strong foundation for the educational system, CHED mandates the existence of a Faculty and Staff Development Program (FSDP), a very essential factor in ensuring quality education. As reported in available literatures and studies, faculty development is an area of concern among Philippine higher education institutions [12]. The commission declares that in attaining quality teaching in HEIs, the qualifications and competencies of more than half or 70,000 teachers must be upgraded. In addition,

to compete and be at par with neighboring regions that are now offering seamless curricular programs that are technologically adaptive, the commission emphasizes the need for Philippine academic institutions to invest in creating pathways to hone experts in order to capacitate career-ready students for the global arena.

Given that continuous growth is essential to deliver quality education, to this effect, investing in human capital as a major form of investment can be translated into capacity building. The commission believes that higher education institutions are doing their share in the development of the countryside by developing expert academics, especially in the learning transfer scheme. This then calls for the sending out of faculty and staff in higher education institutions on scholarships, local and abroad.

In Central Luzon State University, a number of faculty members sent for graduate studies were observed to be delayed in reporting back to work due to their inability to finish their thesis or dissertation papers within the prescribed period. Some of them even reported back to work without finishing the degree; hence, facing all the consequences of violating their scholarship contract with the university. This finds resemblance to what Huerta et al. [31] reported that a low percentage of advanced degree students finish their program on time or do not finish it at all. This aligns with the findings of [27], who noted that scholarly production of write-ups induces anxiety among graduate students. As a result, they encounter research-related anxiety, especially during the process of conducting research [42]. These problems motivated this study. Faculty scholars are bound by contract and are expected to finish the degree within the prescribed time. Their universities expect them to demonstrate scholarly writing skills in order to produce the academic work required of them during and after their scholarship.

With this, writing skills are important in coping with university life and the ability to write and produce papers that adhere to research is synonymous with academic success [22, 6].

When the measure of success for graduate students is their ability to write academic papers such as theses or dissertations, they may experience anxiety about their writing skills [27]. Thesen [60] pointed out that universities rely largely on formal written language for their literacy practices. Writing requires concentration and effort [50] as it is a cognitive challenge since it aids in the assessment of linguistic proficiency, memory ability, and reasoning ability [56, 63]. It requires the recollection of information from long-term memory. Essentially, writing demands a strong ability to think on comprehensible topics [4]. Further, writing ability necessitates a well-structured method of presenting ideas in an orderly and organized manner [58]. With the fear of satisfying this expectation, the students arrived at writing classes full of anxiety and nervousness about writing [18]. As a result, English writing became a cause of anxiety for students and professionals alike, more particularly for ESL learners who are the focus of this paper.

Anxiety as a feeling of dread, or uneasiness in many contexts has always triggered individuals in different circumstances and by and large, prevents individuals from releasing their full capabilities to produce better work. It can hinder people to be constructivists [46]. Among the so-called non-native users or speakers of the lingua franca, English, a specific anxiety known as Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) is documented. It is "a separate complex construct of self-perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and actions linked with classroom language learning deriving from the uniqueness of the language learning process" [30]. FLA is a situation-specific worry caused by the formal learning required in a foreign language [30]. Na [45] considers FLA as one of the most important affective factors influencing foreign language learning. Moreover, the tension associated with second language contexts includes reading, speaking, listening, and writing. Foreign language reading anxiety is the fear of reading comprehension, a negative attitude toward reading, and a fear of unfamiliar culture [65]. On the other hand, foreign language speaking is the skill most affected by language anxiety [30], and affects oral performance [13]. Foreign language listening anxiety, on the one hand, is the fear of listening to a foreign language as manifested, particularly, with the feeling of confusion in identifying the sounds of a foreign language [29].

The consideration now is on the factors that hinder them from producing such scholarly writing. Writing is presumed to be a task that elicits fear. In this respect, it outweighs any benefit one may get from the content

(Sevidy-Benton & O'Kelly, 2015, as cited in [27]). This results in giving apprehensive and negative feelings toward scholarly writing (Writing Center at UNC-Chapel, 2016, as cited in [27]). It is a known barrier among graduate students that hinders them from finishing their program [31]. In addition, the high expectations among graduate students such as that they are more mature and brighter, and more independent result in more monitored writing tasks which somehow create more tension and problems [9]. Moreover, self-imposed pressure for perfect work or just even more presentable work especially among faculty scholars also causes anxiety. Cheng [14] reported that institutional practices, personal beliefs about writing and learning to write, self-perceptions, and interpersonal threats induce anxiety. Cheng [14] further categorized sources of writing anxiety into somatic anxiety, avoidance behavior, and cognitive anxiety. Somatic anxiety is caused by increased physiological arousal and unpleasant feeling states. A learner who experiences these sweats and shakes has rapid breathing and headache, and an increased heart rate. Meanwhile, avoidance behavior is related to behavioral aspects that manifest when the learner is anxious resulting in finding ways not to write. Referring to the learners' mental aspect when they feel anxious, cognitive anxiety, on the other hand, makes the learners mindful of others' perceptions, opinions on the writing output, and negative expectations.

Second language writing anxiety is specific to the L2 learning context (Horwitz, 1986; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1999, as cited in [14]). Immature second language writing proficiency intensified when L2 is used as a test rather than communication [32].

Recent studies have implicated the idea that writing or composing anxiety as a specific anxiety that has caught the attention of concerned authorities in the field is indeed a variable that induces negativity, thereby affecting performance in the quality of output in writing activity [49]. In a more recent study on the effects of writing anxiety, [1] identifies contextual-related and learner-related variables, such as "target language, learners' age, and foreign language proficiency"; highlighting the need to "make the results of a particular study more generalizable." It can be noted here that L2 writing anxiety needs to get a visibility so it can offer more in-depth insights and frame of learning for better management.

While most studies of second language anxiety focus on the impact of anxiety on speaking and listening, pointing out that oral classroom activities as the greatest cause of anxiety among foreign and second language learners [3, 68, 26, 28], more recent and thorough research offer validation and reliability that consider writing anxiety as a specific type of anxiety, exclusive to writing skills [35, 33, 36]. Although literatures on anxiety in writing or composing using the second language around the globe are on the rise, there are still gaps on assessing and addressing writing anxiety, especially at the level where writing is much required to merit achievement, and finding out who is more likely to experience it among male and female graduate students, especially those who are faculty scholars under university scholarships. Further, in extent and case of investigation in the Philippines, however, this remains a gap that needs attention including the case of a university to help its graduate scholars to report back on time.

This paper includes sex as a construct considering that it is an area being looked into in terms of the delivery of instruction in a multicultural context [10]. It has remained a significant predictor of writing [31], and it is a recent concept to correlate with writing anxiety other than linguistic, psychological, and cognitive factors (Bryne, 1993, as cited in [7]). Moreover, its investigation can affirm or contradict what other scholars' varying results reveal: [39] and [11] found that female students have a higher level of writing anxiety than males; whereas [7] shared that no significant difference was established between male and female levels of writing anxiety. These scenarios affirm that there is still limited understanding of sex differences in terms of writing anxiety, hence its inclusion in the study.

By looking into the nature of foreign language anxiety or second language anxiety at that and in this case, this research may contribute to the improvement of the academic achievement and to some extent help graduate students finish their graduate courses ideally on time, or within a reasonable time. Understanding the sources of its nature can be one big step. Yu [64] forwards that writing anxiety is induced by the learners' difficulty in "expressing themselves in writing and lack of writing habits; they do not have self-confidence and

have trouble in organizing and arranging ideas for content development.” Placing this in the spectrum, this research can offer promising results in helping learners overcome anxiety and use their full capabilities in the writing task, which in this case is producing a master’s thesis or dissertation. More so because they are under scholarships, more is expected of them to satisfy the requirements stipulated in the contract, and so they can report back to work with the degree and its accompanying laurel in their name that may give them more dignity in the workplace.

Running through the aforesaid discussions, the research aim is to investigate the second language writing anxiety among faculty scholars. Specifically, the research objectives are: (1) to explain the nature and the causes of second language writing anxiety among these faculty scholars; (2) establish the male and female sex-disaggregated data; and (3) suggest some realistic, possible, and practical solutions based on the findings that could be taken in the context of the continuous betterment of the pedagogy and the academe.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING ANXIETY

Cheng, Horwitz, and Schallert [15] contend that research leading toward determining second or foreign-language writing anxiety is called for and is demanded to make writing a skillful undertaking as previous research reveal that the existing anxiety instruments do not solely measure writing anxiety but also underscoring the different variables at play. For one, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) of [15] is directed to speaking anxiety and shows general English classroom performance components [2] and the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Test (SLWAT) of [16, 17] has a strong language skill-specific anxiety element [15]. Previous studies such as those of [15] have asserted that second language classroom anxiety is different from second language writing anxiety specifically on anxiety-causing factors: for second language anxiety, “low self-confidence, failure, and poor performance” whereas for second language writing anxiety, “low writing-related self-esteem, and negative perception on writing activity.” Another notable difference is that they could be statistically distinguished (Pae, 2013 & Chen, 2019 as cited in [35]).

Second language writing anxiety as [15] put it is a special anxiety that is particularly language-skill-specific anxiety. It is different from foreign language listening anxiety for this focuses on the fear of misunderstanding and misinterpreting the input listened to [57]. In contrast, foreign language speaking anxiety is said to be the fear of using or speaking the language wrongly or erroneously in the conventions of standard English as determined by the normativity of the language in the given locale – as explained by the World Englishes (Woodrow, 2006) as cited in [35]. Lastly, foreign reading anxiety, which needlessly is specific to reading as one macro skill is the fear of unfamiliar scripts and writing systems, and the inclusion of cultural material as well [54].

Writing is private activity where writers express their own thoughts and follow own processes [52]. As such, it is believed as the last skill to be possibly induced and overpowered by anxiety. Interestingly, it is also prone to anxiety [14]. Past traumatic experiences, unfavorable feedback from educators, insufficient writing skills, time constraints, subject matter knowledge, and linguistic awareness are among the recognized factors highlighted in the literature [20]. Its impact on classroom performance (Bayat, 2014 as cited in [67]), and its level, sources, and consequences [20] have been pursued to offer better instructional models and strategies that could improve the academe and the concerned industry.

2. WRITING ANXIETY INSTRUMENT

Research that extrapolates on the relationship of anxiety to achievement in terms of language acquisition has reported that there is indeed a correlation between the two [28]. Consequently, scholars' interest in exploring the connection between anxiety and second language development has spurred the development of various instruments aimed at understanding this relationship [14].

Onwuegbuzie et al. [48] highlighted some of these, including the French Class Anxiety Scale, which assesses anxiety levels during French classes, and the French Use Anxiety Scale by [38], which measures anxiety when using French outside the classroom. Additionally, the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale, introduced by [30], posits the existence of a specific anxiety construct known as "Foreign Language Anxiety," attributing students' discomfort in language classes to this factor. They introduced the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) as an instrument which, according to [61], this "33-statement measure assesses communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation associated with language anxiety. It covers negative performance expectancies, social comparisons, psychophysiological symptoms, and avoidance behaviors" [61]. Input, Processing, and Output Anxiety Scales [38] further contribute to understanding anxiety in language learning. Input anxiety reflects the fear experienced by foreign language students when presented with new words, phrases, or sentences. Processing anxiety involves apprehension during cognitive operations performed on external stimuli, particularly when students organize and store input. Output anxiety pertains to the worry experienced when students are required to demonstrate their ability to produce previously learned materials [48]. Internet search also provides other measures including what [37] enumerated, the Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (Kim, 2000), and the Foreign Language Performance Anxiety Scale (Kim, 2002).

Various anxiety instruments have been developed, but some researchers have noted a predominant focus on speaking-related items. This has led to doubts about their suitability for measuring anxiety related to language skills other than speaking [2, 15]. In response, scholars have initiated the development of skill-specific instruments. For instance, there is a reading-specific instrument, the FL Reading Anxiety Scale by [54], as discussed in [44]. Similarly, a listening-specific instrument is represented by the Foreign Language Learning Survey by Kim (2000), reported by [59]. Speaking anxiety is addressed through the Personal Report for Communication Apprehension by McCroskey (1970), as highlighted in [21]. For a comprehensive overview of different types of language skills anxiety measures, researchers can refer to [21]. Additionally, a writing-specific instrument, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Cheng (1999) as mentioned by [61], has been developed.

The birth of the development of instruments in investigating second language writing anxiety, rooted in the development of an instrument designed for L1 learning context, the Daly–Miller Writing Apprehension Test [16, 17], which is the most commonly used measurement instrument by researchers [15, 25, 40].

However, the Daly–Miller WAT has been found to exhibit limitations, yielding varied results when implemented [24]. Acknowledging the necessity for a writing anxiety measure that avoids conflating writing anxiety with self-confidence, Cheng [14] delved into factors associated with second language writing anxiety. Noting that writing anxiety measure should distinguish between writing anxiety and self-confidence, Cheng [14], developed a multidimensional L2 writing scale, the SLWAI which assesses the levels and types of L2 writing anxiety. This instrument adheres to a three-dimensional conceptualization, encompassing anxiety, avoidance behavior, and cognitive and somatic anxieties. Addressing the cognitive aspect of anxiety experience, it incorporates concerns about "undesirable outcomes, uneasiness with performance, and apprehension about others' perceptions." The somatic aspect includes psychological effects such as nervousness and tension experienced by an individual. The final type pertains to anxiety manifesting as avoidance behavior, where students actively refrain from engaging in writing tasks.

3. STUDIES ON SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING ANXIETY

The findings derived from [66] to conduct a study using [14] SLWAI instrument. His study also investigated the level and types of second language writing anxiety, as well as attempted to determine the causes of such anxiety among Chinese English majors (freshmen and sophomores. Zhang [66] found out that Chinese English major students experienced high levels of second language writing anxiety, and that sophomores experienced higher levels of anxiety than freshmen. Similar to [14] and [66] revealed that

cognitive anxiety is the most common type of second language writing anxiety. In addition, [66] pointed out that “insufficient writing practice, linguistic difficulties, fear of test, low self-confidence, and lack of topical knowledge were the causes of second-language writing anxiety.” From the results of his study, he presented his own SLWAI to measure not only the level and types of second language writing anxiety but also their causes.

Recognizing the adequacy of [66] SLWAI in studying second language writing anxiety in a more comprehensive approach, researchers adopted this instrument and found interesting results. For instance, [62] conducted an investigation into the extent, prevalent types, and primary factors contributing to writing anxiety among EFL students at an Islamic State College in Indonesia. The findings indicated that over half of the participants exhibited a high level of writing anxiety, while more than 40% experienced a moderate level, and 2% reported a low level of writing anxiety. Additionally, cognitive writing anxiety emerged as the predominant type. Furthermore, the primary contributors to second language writing anxiety among the respondents included “linguistic challenges, apprehension of negative feedback from teachers, inadequate opportunities for writing practice, and time constraints.” On the other hand, [19] reported different results from that of [62] using [66] SLWAI in investigating Egyptian learners enrolled in the Intensive English Program (IEP). El-Shimi [19] reported that Somatic Anxiety was the most common type of second language writing anxiety, followed by Cognitive Anxiety, and a very small percentage for Avoidance Anxiety. The causes of the students’ second language anxiety, as connected with their most common type of anxiety, were associated more with physiological and psychological effects resulting from their anxiety experience.

This present study investigated the second language writing anxiety of faculty scholars in the university together with their sex disaggregated data using SLWAI of [14].

III. MATERIAL AND METHOD

1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study utilized the mixed-method design. Mixed method design, as defined by [23], includes at least a qualitative method and a quantitative method. In this study, quantitative method was used for the instrument-based responses, while qualitative for the essay responses. The research framework below was used to guide the researchers in conducting the study (Figure 1).

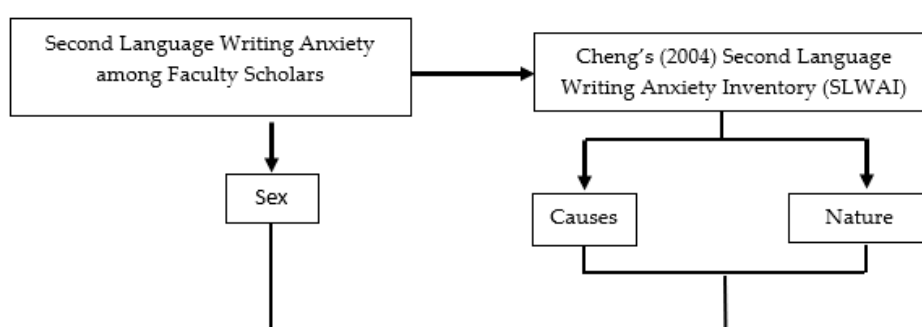


FIGURE 1. Research framework

2. HYPOTHESIS

The study was conducted to determine the writing anxiety of participants and its sex-disaggregated data. This hypothesis was tested:

- There is a significant difference between male and female’s nature of SLWA.

3. PARTICIPANTS

The population of the study is composed of faculty scholars of Central Luzon State University from 2011 to 2020 pursuing their master's and doctorate degrees in the different graduate curricular offerings in different universities in the Philippines and abroad that require a thesis or dissertation as the final requirement for the degree. In this case, both purposive and random sampling were utilized in the study. This university was chosen since the researchers work there and the project got funding support from its Gender and Development Office. This intention was set forth in the study. A list of names was prepared and from the list, random sampling through a lottery was conducted to identify the participants. The sampling technique hopes to bring out in-depth and more detailed information about the writing anxiety of faculty scholars in the university. The list of faculty scholars, some 171 in the initial list, was requested from the Human Resource Development of the Central Luzon State University. The list was trimmed down as it appeared to have duplicate names in the entry. There were some who were sent on scholarship twice within the given period. This means that they are faculty scholars for their master's and doctorate degrees. Some other reasons for the lesser number of participants include their termination of the contract with the university. There were those who had already resigned or terminated service. They were initially sent out on scholarship but for some reason they did not push through. After these considerations, a final list of 133 faculty scholars was obtained. Slovin's formula was utilized to determine the sample size which is 100. The 100 participants were randomly selected through a lottery method. They were asked, with their consent through the email preface, to answer through Google form the 22-item Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory of [14] together with three open-ended questions. Upon responding, they were coded to protect their anonymity. However, only 97 faculty scholars accomplished the Google form and participated in the study and they served as the final respondents.

4. INSTRUMENT

The instrument used is the SLWAI or the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory developed by [14], a 22-item questionnaire. This is scored on a five-point Likert response scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Because five items (1,4,17,18 & 22) were negatively worded, reverse scoring was done before summing up. A score of more than 65 points means a high level of writing anxiety, a score of less than 50 points means a low level of writing anxiety, and a score in-between means a moderate level of anxiety. The items in the SLWAI scale fall under three subscales: cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and avoidance behavior. Cognitive anxiety is when negative expectations, undesirable prospects, and preoccupation with negative performance are experienced. On the other hand, somatic anxiety refers to psychological effects such as nervousness and tension. Lastly, avoidance behavior refers to anxiety where one avoids writing.

For this study, the researchers would like to see the merit of another available and validated unit of measure or inventory – the SLWAI or the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory developed by [14]. The instrument has been found with good reliability and adequate validity. Worth mentioning that it was developed and inspired by a multidimensional perspective. In this respect, the variables of the study could be accounted for.

5. PROCEDURE

Using a mixed-method design, quantitative for the instrument-based responses and qualitative for the essay responses, the collected data were then tallied, tabulated, interpreted, and analyzed. Including a qualitative response gives more useful information for it to voice out the participant's thoughts [5, 8]. Data collected from the open-ended questionnaire were analyzed using pattern coding as suggested [43]. Specifically, the data were reduced by choosing the answers relevant to the questions of the study, then, to concretely visualize the abstracted data and to easily recognize the theme, a table was used to display the data, and finally, interpretation of the themed responses was done.

Moreover, differences in SLWA between male and female participants were analyzed using the Mann-Whitney Test, a statistical test of the difference between the distributions of data collected in two experimental conditions applied to unmatched groups of subjects but comparing the distributions of the ranks of the scores. Assumptions were met explaining the suitability of the Mann-Whitney Test for this study to wit: a) One dependent variable (SLWA) was measured in an ordinal level (Likert scale), b) the data came from two classifications (male and female groups), and c) there was an independence of observation wherein no relationship exists between the male and female groups in the study and there are different sets of participants in the male and female groups with no participant being in more than one group. Further, the data were not distributed in normality and the homoscedasticity assumption was not achieved.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The results of the SLWAI revealed that the majority of the 97 participants (51% female and 49% male) experienced cognitive anxiety (38.05%), followed by avoidance behavior (34.28%), and somatic anxiety (27.67%) as reflected in Figure 2.

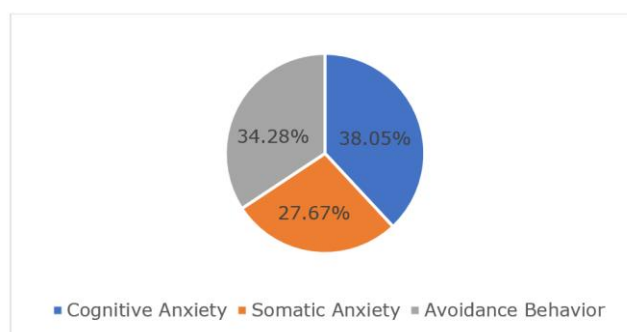


FIGURE 2. Nature of SLWA of the participants

Cognitive anxiety is the one most experienced by the participants. This indicates that the participants experience the fear of negative evaluation [66], and the fear of negative feedback [53]. This finding is similar to the study of [66, 47, 62, 55], which pointed out that cognitive anxiety is the dominant type of writing anxiety among EFL learners. Cheng [14] explained that expectations from others can influence writing anxiety. This is especially so when their works are expected to be presented and evaluated by experts. Feedback becomes all the more anxiety-inducing. Table 1 shows the total means and standard deviations of the participants' responses.

Table 1. Means and standard deviation of participants' responses

	Total Means	SD	Description
Cognitive	2.70	1.19	I have no strong feelings either way
Somatic	2.12	1.03	I disagree
Avoidance	2.08	1.05	I disagree

Legend	Description
1.00 – 1.79	I strongly disagree
1.80 – 2.59	I disagree
2.60 – 3.39	I have no strong feelings either way
3.40 – 4.19	I agree
4.20 – 5.00	I strongly agree

As seen in Table 1, the most experienced SLWA among participants is cognitive anxiety. The participants of the present study, being master's and doctorate students, experience the pressure of the high standards of the universities where they are enrolled and the expectations of the university where they are faculty scholars. McMillen, Garcia, and Bolin [41] stated that graduate students do not perceive themselves as competent writers, and as [27] explained, they experience a lack of confidence in scholarly writing, they reported not to have enough time for writing tasks, and they lack the ability to recognize and use scholarly resources.

Further, in terms of gender, the results of the SLWAI revealed notable results. Table 2 illustrates the results of the SLWAI.

Table 2. Levels of SLWA among male and female participants

Anxiety	Males	Females	Total Participants
Cognitive Anxiety	21.29	21.94	21.61
Somatic Anxiety	15.27	14.35	14.81
Avoidance Behavior	15.55	13.54	14.55
Total Writing Anxiety	52.11	49.83	50.97

It can be seen in Table 2 that there is a moderate level of SLWA among the total participants with a total score of 50.97. The male participants obtained a higher level of SLWA than the female participants with a score of 52.11 (moderate) and 49.83 (low) respectively. In addition, in terms of Somatic Anxiety and Avoidance Behavior, male participants had a higher score than female participants. However, in terms of Cognitive Anxiety, female participants obtained a bit higher score than male participants.

Interestingly, these inconsistent levels between males and females are noted by [51], which found no significant difference between their male and female participants on their level of anxiety, therefore implicated no gender effect in terms of writing anxiety.

These findings conform with the study of [34], which found out that male learners suffered higher SLWA than female learners. This was attributed to insufficient writing practice as a cause of anxiety among the participants. In contrast, [39] and [55] found out that females had higher SLWA than males.

This could be explained by the fact that the desire to satisfy the requirement and approval of the authority who gives the writing task is recognized more by females, the pressure is undermined. In the present study among faculty scholars, males have higher SLWA than females.

This gives the impression that males are more concerned with the feedback that would be given to their academic papers. They appear to be more conscious since it is believed that males are more private and the idea that their work will be read in public creates worry, tension, and other similar feelings.

Moreover, the results of the Mann-Whitney Test revealed that there is no significant difference at 5% level of significance between sex and Cognitive Anxiety and sex and Somatic Anxiety (Table 3). However, it revealed a very highly significant difference ($p < 0.001$) between sex and Avoidance Behavior.

For the present study, males have the tendency to avoid writing since they are anxious and more concerned with the feedbacks they will receive that may affect their male stature. Whereas, females seem to be more open to feedbacks. Males avoid writing at the onset. This way, it was presumed that anxiety is also being guarded. In the absence of an avenue for scrutiny in one's writing output, it seems that there is also no opportunity for their ego and pride to be compromised. Avoidance appears to be protective of their inner well-being, hence defense in an untoward possibility.

Table 3. Differences between the male and female participants' SLWA

	Z-Values	P-Values
Cognitive Anxiety	-0.630	0.529
Somatic Anxiety	-0.487	0.627
Avoidance Behavior	-4.558	<0.001**
Total Writing Anxiety	-0.948	0.343

**-highly significant

Furthermore, the investigation of the nature and causes of the participants' SLWA using their responses to the open-ended questionnaire also reveals noteworthy results.

From the survey on SLWA of faculty of the university, both male and female participants had no problem in writing in English as revealed by No response. Specifically, 36 out of 48 female participants responded no, and 37 out of 49 male participants wrote a no answer as well. The graph portrays the participants' familiarity with the language as it is the second official language of the country. The English language is also used as the primary medium of instruction for educational purposes.

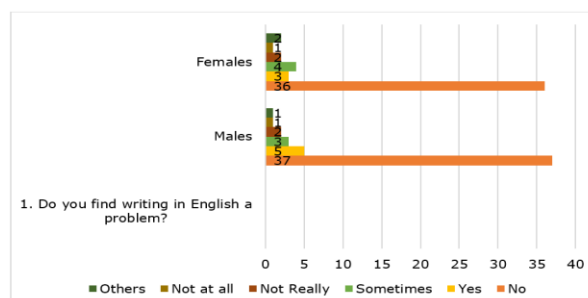


FIGURE 3. Writing in English as problem among the participants

Although the majority of the female participants did not have any problem with writing in English, when it comes to causes of problems in writing in general, an equal number of 23 had contrasting responses divided between the presence and absence of people or circumstances that contribute to the problem in their writing. The female participants identified the committee adviser, professor, school and family, surprising task, insufficiency of ideas/data, the technicality of the topic, unfamiliarity with statistical terms, overflowing of ideas, technical writing know-how, intimidation/expectation from experts, too loud and unpleasant sounds, extreme stress, physical, emotional, mental fatigue, friends, colleagues, limited vocabulary, time constraint, waiting for approval, overwhelming works as factors. These are grouped into: expectations of people (advisory committee, peers, English experts, family); knowledge accessibility (insufficiency of ideas/data, the technicality of the topic, unfamiliarity with statistical terms, limited vocabulary, overflowing ideas); disturbances (too loud and unpleasant sounds, surprising task, time constraint, overflowing ideas, overwhelming work); feedbacks (waiting for approval); and breakdowns (extreme stress, physical, emotional, mental, fatigue).

However, only 14 of the male participants answered yes to anxiety in writing English due to people or circumstances that arise during the work. It pinpoints circumstances such as exhaustion, time pressure, grammatical errors, overthinking, lack of scholarly words, time constraints, beyond specialization topics, poor vocabulary, overwhelming work, noisy environment, multiple engagement and multi-tasking, and intimidation from high-profile technical writers, and students. The male participants struggle mostly under

the group conditions of their work, technicality, environment, disturbances, and knowledge accessibility rather than to people.

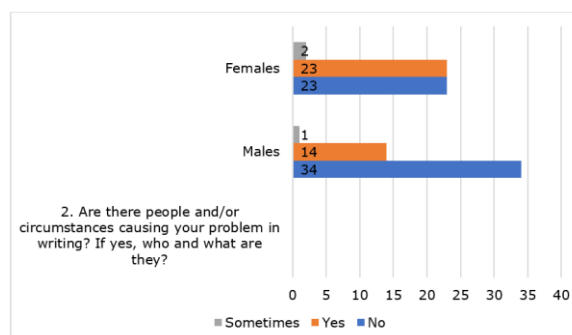


FIGURE 4. Causes of SLWA of participants

For those who identified needing help, the following have been raised to resolve the growing problem: the female participants highlight the university subscription to online applications to check composition, writeshops, peer evaluation, mentoring, training on how to process information, organizing, summarizing articles for the related review of literature, supportive and knowledgeable adviser, help from English expert, feedback and correction, more practice, exposure to technical writing to deepen the know-how, inspiration, enough time to write, and scheduled time in writing. Notably, the male participants emphasize exposure to English through reading and listening, written materials, practice, tools, training and seminars, motivation and encouragement, good adviser, grammar guide and checker software, peer mentoring, and samples.

Figure 4 shows the needed help of the participants as regards resolving their writing anxiety. In general, all participants demand more effective training, writeshops, and seminars to improve the quality of their English writing skills. These in a way can help the participants lessen their anxiety because working or being with peers during training and writeshops and hearing the facilitators' feedback can accustom them to recognizing their writing flaws; thus, overcoming the fear of negative expectation. In addition, they also want to have more opportunities to access different grammar checker software to increase the productivity of their work. Through this mechanism, participants' vocabulary and knowledge can be improved. Data also show that participants need enough time devoted to improving their skills, thus, constant practice must be done. It may be said that the university cannot provide this concretely because it is more of a private undertaking, however, by providing training workshops, this need can be addressed. Opportunities like these can lead to the advancement of one's skills that are instrumental to the professional growth and satisfaction of the faculty scholars, which consequently can lead to writing success. This frame of reference can also inform policy makers on some interventions that may be very helpful for pedagogical considerations in the management level. Also, on the level of the delivery of instruction, this can offer window for capability building.

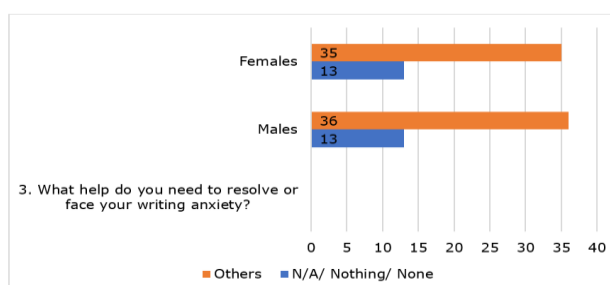


FIGURE 5. Needed Help to Resolve Writing Anxiety of the Participants

V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This section declares the scope and limitations of the study. It also contains the recommendations to address the identified limitations for furtherance of the insights derived and implicated in the study.

The study determined the nature and causes of writing anxiety, and likewise determined significant differences between male and female's SLWA. However, the study is limited in terms of the following: (1) The study made use of the data collected solely from the survey questionnaire composed of a checklist and three open-ended questions. (2) Only a small number of participants were covered and they all came from just one university, which is the home university of the researchers. (3) The study did not perform triangulation, which the researchers recommend in future similar studies. This way, better reliability can be claimed. Another study may also be conducted with a larger sample and population size for better contribution in this field of study.

VI. CONCLUSION

The paper affirms that second language writing anxiety is experienced even by adult professional writers, specifically the graduate students taking master's and doctorate programs. This is inevitable even if the writers are familiar with the English language such as in the case of the participants who have English as their second language which they have been using and learning since their pre-elementary grades or even earlier. This suggests that knowledge of the language cannot guarantee anxiety-free writers. Possibly, cognitive anxiety, as this paper has found out to be the foremost trigger of anxiety among the faculty scholars, is innate or natural among writers especially when the writing activity is time-pressured and expected of quality-check (during the output presentation/defense).

Another insight this study may offer is that causes are not limited to cognitive, avoidance, and somatic anxiety. External resources like devices and connectivity as well as mental resources such as ideas, vocabulary, and knowledge of the subject may also contribute to second language writing anxiety. In addition, environmental elements including noise, workspace, and conditions trigger anxiety.

Statistics may reflect the level of anxiety and differentiate it based on gender like what this present study reveals that males are the ones who have greater anxiety compared to females, but this may not describe the triggers of SLWA and which among these factors cause the most in generating anxiety.

Evaluating the participants' responses conveys the need for sponsoring institutional agencies to provide programs and activities that will help the faculty scholars develop their writing skills such as the provision of grammar and composition software, mentoring, and writeshops. Enhancing the writing skills of faculty scholars through proactive actions will strengthen their capacity to write and reduce their rising problems. The participants involved are the faculty scholars, which means investing in the core workforce of the university will increase the capacity of producing more qualified students. The hierarchy of knowledge prospers when the faculty members are knowledgeable and confident in their field. Investing in faculty scholars has never been a waste of time and effort especially if there is continuous growth and development.

Since the study is limited only to a small number of participants, the study may also be done in a larger context with different age groups. Another interesting point for future investigation is the result that no significant difference has been reflected between sex and cognitive and somatic anxiety, while there is a significant difference between sex and avoidance anxiety. Furthermore, consideration should also be given to the fact that males have a higher level of SLWA than females hence, factors that induce anxiety distinctly for both genders can be investigated in future studies. Lastly, educators and the pedagogical approach to utilize a positive feedback mechanism as negative evaluation promotes anxiety even when composing in a second language seems called for.

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Author Contributions

Conceptualization: MMReyes and JCRavago; Methodology: MMReyes and SCMercurio; Logistics: MMReyes; Data Gathering and Retrieval of Questionnaires: JCRavago and SCMercurio; Facilitation of Statistical Analysis: SCMercurio; Formal Analysis: MMReyes, JCRavago, and SCMercurio; Writing Original Draft Preparation: MMReyes and SCMercurio; Writing Review and Editing: JCRavago and SCMercurio; Supervision: MMReyes.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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