



## **Exploring the Relationship among Attitude toward Course and Teacher, Writing Self-Regulation, Task Achievement of Iranian EFL Learners**

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### **Abstract**

The attitude-behavior relationship has long been a bone of contention among scholars. This study attempted to examine the correlation of attitude toward the teacher and the course with writing self-regulation and task achievements among EFL university learners in the Iranian context, using Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple-regression techniques. A total of one hundred and sixteen undergraduate sophomores undergoing mandatory essay writing courses participated in the study. Based on the findings, attitudes toward the teacher and the course were not significantly correlated with the cognitive, meta-cognitive, and behavioral strategies, and the task achievement. At the same time, it significantly correlated with the self-efficacy, goal, and motivation. However, the attitude toward the teacher was found to be the stronger predictor of task achievement. Further regression analyses disclosed that the attitude toward teacher was the only predictor of the motivational strategies. Pedagogical applications, implications, and insights for the furtherance of the foreign language program in domain-specific tasks of EFL writing are eventually discussed.

**Keywords:** *EFL; Attitude toward Course and Teacher; Writing Self-Regulation; Achievement*

## 1. Introduction

Attitude opens a vista of supposition about an entity, void or plausible, ahead of individuals for entry into an action. Attitudes are perdurable systems of positive or negative evaluations, emotional receptions, and tendencies toward or against the action in response to social objects (Krech et al., 1962). Gardner (1980), expounding on Likert's concept of attitude (1932), identifies attitude as the sum of a total of human's instinctive compulsion and feelings, bias or bigotry, or presupposed notions, apprehension, menace, and convictions about any definite entity. According to Ajzen (2005), attitude is proclivity for response, either favorable or unfavorable, to an object, individual, agency, policy, or event, which as a hypothetical construct is not directly observable and must be inferred from measurable responses. Mantle-Bromley (1995) robustly believes that students' attitudes should constitute an integral element of second language learning pedagogy. Pintrich and Schunk (2002) underscore the pivotal roles of non-intelligence variables, especially motivation and attitude, in preventing the individual needs of language learners by dint of raising their awareness of their learning styles and releasing their potential to find the ability to take the helm of their learning of target language. Ellis (2008) accentuates the mutual nexus between attitude and achievement as attitude affects the level of second language proficiency while they are reciprocally influenced by this success. Ziaee et al. (2021) evidenced the interplay of attitude and motivation, affecting language learners' writing performance.

According to Spolsky (2006), language learning context is crucial at shaping one's attitude. This signifies the social context as a significant factor in the development of the students' attitudes toward not just the language being learned but also the speakers of the language and the language learning contexts. It ties the social context to second language learning. Upbringings, history, achievement, age, and geographical area where one is raised affect attitude (Gardner & Smythe, 1975; Jones, 1950; Jordan, 1941). Parents' and peers' attitudes as parts of social context mold a person's attitudes from early childhood (Brown, 2000). The classroom environment characteristics have an impact on the students' attitudes toward learning (Fabunmi & Isaiah, 2007).

Popham (2005) acknowledges the importance of attitudes in language learning, noting that the promotion of positive attitudes of the students toward learning in an academic setting helps them proactively become autonomous learners. Positive attitude expands learners' motivated behavior (Csize'et al., 2010). Similarly, Karahan (2007) concluded that learners with positive language attitudes exhibited positive behaviors in learning the target language. Skehan (1991) presents a relational model of attitudes, motivation, and success in language learning. The model implies that positive attitudes derive from the inclusion of a comprehensive framework, engulfing the classroom events,



materials, and general educational reward motif. To [Skehan \(1991\)](#), appealing materials, the extent of the varieties of the classroom tasks, and the nature of the classroom organization and teacher-student relationship affect the student's motivation. Positive attitudes toward the learning situation (teacher and course) fall under the realm of integrative motivation.

Gardner's second language acquisition theory ([1985](#)) emphasizes the role of teacher's (i.e., teaching method) in classroom significant in molding the students' attitude. However, the socio-educational theory of Gardner is more than a framework, approach, and praxis. It goes far further to unify all sub-theories of learning and teaching as long as language is taken as a social entity. A close nexus between the learners' attitudes toward courses and proficiency of the teachers is documented ([Maniruzzaman, 1998](#)). Positive attitudes are realized in the guise of the positive behaviors toward the study courses, as the students immerse themselves in the courses and invest the effort to learn more ([Kara, 2009](#)). These individuals appear to be more interested in solving problems, obtaining information and skills useful for daily life, and motivating themselves emotionally. [Gan \(2004\)](#) canvasses that provided a student has positive attitude toward the target language and is confident and self-directed, s/he uses a variety of language strategies compared to one who holds negative ones. Students with positive attitudes invest more effort in language learning by the use of the strategies like asking and answering questions and information exchange ([Baker, 1993](#)). As per [Ni'mah et al. \(2017\)](#), learners with negative attitudes see English writing as an arduous task. [Totoy Freire \(2023\)](#) evidenced that not only self-regulating strategies improve and develop students' writing skills but they also develop positive attitudes required for bolstering their writing performance.

[Gardner \(1985\)](#) encourages prognosis of learner's attitude as it significantly impacts academic success with this understanding that any English teaching attempt is futile unless learners enjoy a positive attitude. There is an interrelationship between the levels of interaction with the teacher, attitude development, and achievement ([Yunus et al., 2011](#)). [Mantle-Bromley \(1995\)](#) stated that the students' attitudes toward language, teacher, classroom, speakers, and culture have been found to statistically significantly relate to both the students' success and their tendencies to carry on the study of language, into the bargain. In light of the literature mentioned above, this study aimed to impart a more fine-grained picture of the relationship between attitude toward the course and teacher, writing self-regulation strategy variables, and the student's achievement on tasks. Therefore, the following research questions as parts of this study were put forward to be answered:

RQ1. Is there any significant relationship among the students' attitude toward course and teacher, writing self-regulation, and task achievement?

RQ2. Which one, attitude toward course or teacher, contributes more to the students' writing self-regulation and task achievement?

The study assumed that attitude toward the course and teacher, writing self-regulation, and achievement on task would be positively related in the Iranian context. To establish that there are significant relationship among the students' toward the course and teacher, writing self-regulation, and task achievement and that the aspects of the learning situation attitudes including toward the course and teacher would contribute to writing self-regulation and task achievement, the following research hypotheses were formed.

H1: There will be significant relationship among the students' attitudes toward the course and teacher, writing self-regulation, and task achievement.

H2: One of the two variables, attitude toward course or teacher, contributes more to the students' writing self-regulation and task achievement.

## **2. Review of the Related Literature**

Gardner's socio-educational model (1983, 1985, 1988) seeks to expound how proficiency in a second language is tied to certain aspects of the social context via intervening variables like motivation and anxiety. The model focuses on second language learning in the classroom. Individuals' use of strategies and their attitudes are predictors of learning outcomes. Gardner's theory does not assume a dichotomy of integrative/instrumental orientation but a broader conceptualization of the integrative motive comprised of a triad of components: firstly, integrativeness implicating integrative trend, interest in foreign languages, and attitudes toward the second language community; secondly, attitudes toward the learning situation, including attitudes toward the teacher and the course; and thirdly, motivation, put forward by Gardner as motivational intensity, wish to learn the language, and attitudes toward learning the language.

Gardner (1985) splits attitudes in language learning process into two subcategories: attitude toward the language learning and attitude toward the language community, which pertains to social attitudes. Educational attitudes are attitudes toward the teacher, the course, and the language learning. Social attitude, on the other hand, zeros in on the cultural implication of SLA, like attitudes toward French Canadians and ethnocentrism. According to Gardner, these two types of attitudes affect achievement in second language learning. However, he believes that attitudes toward learning the language exert greater leverage and are



more closely pertained to achievement than attitudes toward the second language community.

Attitude research is built upon two psychological strands: the behaviorist and the mentalist (or cognitive). Attitude conceptualized as verbal behavior was introduced by [Skinner \(1957\)](#) in the triads of tacting, intra-verbal, and manding functions. Mentalist approach considers attitudes as an internal state of readiness subject to arousal if triggered by stimulation of some sort, which in turn affect the responses of the individual, which can be inferred through introspection as they are not directly observable ([McKenzie, 2010](#)).

Measurements of attitudes are done into two ways. In *explicit* measures, people's attitudes are directly asked to report in two common ways, which are the Likert scale and semantic differential; conversely, in *implicit* (or indirect) measures, inferences about a person's attitude are made needless to ask them directly using various measures forms and size like monitoring or Fazio's priming procedure, a complicated psychological procedure, which is commonly used in situations in which people either are reluctant to or are incapable of supplying their accurate evaluations of an object. However, no measure of attitudes is complete as long as it is affected by the context ([Bizeret al., 2003](#)). In addition, perceptions and attitudes are intangible attributes ([Wesely, 2012](#)), difficult to demarcate and define readily. However, perceptions and attitudes can be identified by inquiring into individuals' responses to stimulus or queries and inferring from them. Perceptions and attitudes are individualistic and collectivistic, influenced often by interactions with other individuals.

However, [Wicker's \(1969\)](#) review study highlights the consistency between attitude and behavior relationship. Wicker's rudimentary meta-analysis of the 42 experimentally-studied literatures uncloaked the correlation coefficients hardly above .30 and often near zero in attitude-behavior research in experimental settings. [Figa-Talamanca's \(1972\)](#) review study endorsed dissonance and lack of correspondence between attitude and behavior. However, [Schuman and Johnson's \(1976\)](#) review of survey studies evidenced a small to moderate correlation between attitude and behavior. Likewise, [Kraus's \(1995\)](#) meta-analysis study of 88 attitude-behavior research indicated that attitude is a statistically significant predictor of behavior.

[Fakeye \(2010\)](#) and [Visser \(2008\)](#) proclaim that attitude is an all-important variable affecting language performance. Attitude and belief affect behavioral commitments and intentions, which, in turn, influence contextual behavior ([Milfont, 2007](#)). [Lee \(2013\)](#) showed that the attitude toward writing is strongly associated with writing success. [Alluhaybi \(2015\)](#) evidenced that attitude toward writing, apprehension, and self-efficacy were germane and antecedents to writing competence. [Bulut \(2017\)](#), in a correlational study on primary fourth-grade

Turkish students, evidenced a high linkage between writing attitude and self-efficacy beliefs having predictive effects both on the writing summarization. It is overtly conspicuous that attitude affects behavior (Ruffellet al., 1998).

Graham et al. (2007), through tripartite structural modeling, tested unidirectional influences of writing attitude on writing achievement, unidirectional influence of writing achievement on writing attitude, and bidirectional and reciprocal effect of writing attitude and achievement. Results disclosed the best model fit for the predictive effect of writing attitude on writing achievement denoting statistically significantly direct path between the attitude and achievement. No statistical difference was observed among younger and older students in respect of attitude toward writing, despite the fact that the third-grade students proved to be better writers than first-grade ones. Additionally, no statistical difference in writing achievement across genders was evidenced, though girls appeared more upbeat about writing than boys.

Hashemian and Heidari (2013) evidenced that the foreign language learners' instrumental motivation is not associated with the academic writing success, while the integrative motivation is correlated with the writing skill. However, the negative attitude was not linked with the second language writing success, but the positive attitudes and the writing skill were related. Asadzadian and Asadzadian (2019) evidenced that attitudes significantly correlate with the writing skill and positively predict motivation. Floranti and Adiantika (2021), examining 35 senior high school Indonesian students, recorded that attitude moderately correlated with students' writing ability. Türkben (2021), investigating the effect of the 12-week self-regulation strategy instruction on the writing skill developments of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade (middle school) students, evidenced that the experimental group compared to the control one had significantly higher levels of written expression, writing self-regulation, and writing attitude.

Hosseini Mohseni Sadabadiand & Mohseni (2019) found that EFL learners with cognitive ability plasticity had higher writing motivation. Agesty et al. (2021) found that 121 English students' writing attitudes correlated significantly with writing performance. Khadawardi (2022) documented that the Saudi students perceived English academic writing challengeable, betraying mild to moderate positive attitudes. Joni et al. (2019) noted that the students in the semester sixth expressed positive attitudes toward writing. Molaei (2022), investigating 50 female language learners at institutes in Iran aged 18 to 25 evidenced that the teacher-student interaction is significantly related to the self-regulated learning strategies, as positively and significantly were predicted by the responsibility and admonishing variables.



Kian et al. (2020), in a study on 240 public and private school students, evidenced significant relation and predictor power of the attitude toward teacher and class on motivation/self-regulation. Further, self-control, motivation/self-regulation, and student-student relation variables were significantly positively correlated. Asadzadeh Maleki et al. (2020) validated the causal contribution and the direct significance of the teacher-student interaction to the academic success of 218 EFL learners as mediated by the effects of self-regulated learning. Wulandari et al. (2020) evidenced the writing attitudes and the writing achievements of the students are significantly and positively related.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Study design

A cross-sectional correlational research design, in the guise of survey immediately administrated after assigning an in-class argumentative essay writing task, was used in this study, which is the most prevalent second language sampling method (Dörnyei, 2007). Pearson product-moment correlation and regression analyses were computed to assess the relation between the intended variables.

#### 3.2. Participants

A total of 116 sophomore undergraduate state-run university (Kashan, Arak, and Qom) students majoring in English language (47 male & 69 female), aged 19 to 23, taking essay writing courses, participated in this study. The collection of writing tasks and administration of surveys were pivoted on convenience sampling. Three two-credit courses, namely, a paragraph writing course and two grammar ones, the participants had already undergone. Moreover, to ensure the internal validity of the data and the homogeneity in order to reduce the variations for the intended analyses, the Oxford Quick Placement Test (UCLES, 2001) was given to the participants, whereon they were ranked intermediate level on English language proficiency.

#### 3.3. Instruments

A set of questionnaires; namely, a 47-item subscale of Attitude toward the Learning Situation adapted from the AMTB (Attitude Motivation Test Battery) questionnaire originated by Gardner et al. (1977) and an 83-item *writing self-regulation instrument* adapted and validated by Lichtinger et al. (2006), which is an integrated self-report instrument using a 7-point Likert scale (anchored by “not at all true of me” and “very true of me”) designed for gauging students’ sundry applications of self-regulated learning strategies in writing task, goal achievement, and academic efficacy, was applied in the present study. Lichtinger et al. (2006)

corroborated the validity of the subscales correlated against the established self-regulated learning measures (e.g., Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire; Pintrich et al., 1993) and administrated to a high school student sample. However, the academic efficacy and goal subscales were adapted by Lichtinger et al. (2006) from Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey (Midgley et al., 2000).

### 3.4. Procedure

The participants were assigned to write an argumentative essay on the given topic in the classroom within forty minutes. The assessment of the overall quality of the essays was set on IELTS scoring procedure (Shaw & Falvey, 2008). Two PhD holders in TEFL were invited to evaluate the writing performances. The average of the scores given was considered as final mark for each participant. The data analysis for the study was done through SPSS 22 program. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to find the relationship among attitude toward course and teacher, writing self-regulation, and task achievement. Additional analysis in the form of multiple linear stepwise regression analysis was used to find whether attitude toward course or teacher contributes more to the task achievement and to explore the variances in writing self-regulation including meta-cognitive, motivational, behavioral, cognitive strategies, goal orientations, and efficacy variables accounted for by attitude toward course and teacher.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics for the scores on the surveys are portrayed in Table 1, including mean and standard deviations of all the subcomponents of attitude, writing self-regulation, and task achievement variables

**Table 1**

*Mean and Standard Deviations for Attitude, Writing Self-regulation, and Task Achievement*

Total	goal	cognitive	motivation	meta cog	efficacy	behavior	c attitude grade	t attitude
<b>M</b>	154.2537	38.5208	40.1849	114.6028	25.7348	18.8108	117.7850 6.1963	116.4272
<b>SD</b>	34.38016	10.98630	9.58015	22.60116	6.39998	6.67858	25.39983 1.46971	24.30872



*Note.* meta cog = meta-cognition; c attitude= course attitude; t attitude= teacher attitude.

Concerning the outcomes of descriptive statistics tabulated in Table 1, meta-cognition (114.6028) was found to have much higher mean score than motivation, cognition, and behavior (40.18, 38.52, 18.81, respectively). This suggests that the students were more meta-cognitively involved. Likewise, the meta-cognition had higher standard deviation than the other variables, indicating scores were more widely spread.

As Table 2 showcases, behavioral and cognitive strategies had mean values of 18.81 and 38.52, respectively, whereas mean score of efficacy appeared as 25.73. The outcomes, likewise, suggest that the students scored highest on attitude toward the course and teacher, 117.78 and 116.42, respectively.

#### *4.2. Scale Validity and Reliability*

After calculating Cronbach alpha coefficient for the attitude questionnaire, a significant internal consistency ( $\alpha=.959$ ) was reported, which provided psychometric property of a high value of internal consistency to use the scale for further analysis. The coefficient alpha reported for the writing self-regulation instrument was found to be ( $\alpha$ ) =.944, indicating a high value of internal consistency. The systematic relations found in this study between students' different types of goal orientations and their self-reported uses of self-regulation in writing strategies bear out the validity of the responses to the survey questions. The validity of AMTB was corroborated in some studies (Gardner, 2005; Atay & Kurt, 2010; Alavi Shoshtari, 2004). Lichtinger et al. (2006) corroborated the validity of the subscales through correlations with the established self-regulated learning measures, the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (Pintrich et al., 1993), and through its administration to an independent sample of high school students.

#### *4.3. Inferential results*

As part of inferential statistics, correlation and multiple linear stepwise regression analyses were used to answer each of research questions.

##### *4.3.1. Correlation analysis*

The primary aim of the present study was to find the relationship between the students' attitudes toward the course and teacher, self-regulatory strategies for writing, and achievement task. To examine the relationship, pearson product-moment correlation analysis was computed. Table 2 demonstrates the zero-order

correlations and summary statistics for the motivational orientations and writing efficacy.

#### 4.3.1.1. Relationships between Attitude, Writing Self-Regulation, and Task Achievement

In line with the principal aim of the present study, the inter-component correlations between attitude and writing self-regulation subcomponents, comprising goal, cognitive, meta-cognitive, motivational, and behavioral dimensions, were examined. Correlation analysis was administered to discern the relations. Table 2 illustrates the correlations and summary statistics for those variables.

**Table 2**

#### *Relationship between Attitude, Writing Self-regulation, and Task Achievement*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Goal	-								
2. Cognitive	.422**	-							
3. Motivation	.623**	.470**	-						
4. Meta-cognitive	.481**	.394**	.652**	-					
5. Self-efficacy	.285**	.278**	.481**	.543**	-				
6. Behavioral strategy	.330**	.407**	.387**	.401**	.148	-			
7. Teacher attitude	.292**	.022	.301**	.132	.224*	-.037	-		
8. Course attitude	.232**	-.044	.302**	.126	.266*	-.097	.638**	-	
9. Grade	.048	-.008	-.007	-.070	.102	-.092	-.135	-.019	-

*p*<.05. \*\**p*<.01.

Table 2 depicts the associations between the variables. Based on Table 2, it can be claimed that there is a negative nexus between both attitudes and help-seeking as a behavioral strategy ( $r = -0.069$ ). Those students with a higher attitude have a lower tendency to ask for help. The table also exhibits the highest correlation between attitude toward the course and teacher among other variables. Attitude toward course and attitude toward teacher were negatively correlated with the grade ( $-0.019$  and  $-0.135$ ), respectively. Attitude toward course was significantly related to attitude toward teacher ( $r=63$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Attitude toward course and attitude toward teacher were significantly related to self-efficacy and motivation both, ( $r=266$ ,  $p<.01$  and  $r= 224$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $r=302$ , and  $r=301$ ,  $p<.01$ , respectively).

#### 4.3.2. Linear stepwise regression analysis



In order to determine whether attitude toward course or teacher had more contribution to self-regulation in writing, goals, and task achievement of Iranian EFL learners, a series of stepwise multiple regression analyses were applied. The linear regression analysis was executed to determine which variable of the attitude construct contributes more to explaining variances in the meta-cognitive, motivational, behavioral, writing strategy, academic efficacy, and task achievement variables. Standardized regression coefficients or beta weights ( $\beta$ ) were exploited to identify the unique contribution of each dimension to the variance in dependent variables. Hence, stepwise regression analysis was computed using two predictor variables (dimensions of attitude toward the learning situation). Using multiple linear stepwise regression technique, the scores on the self-regulation and task achievement variables were regressed on the linear combination of the two variables in the model. Two independent variables were entered into the regression equation simultaneously. The results of this analysis are shown in the following Table.

**Table 3**

*Summary of Regression Analyses Predicting Use of Writing Self-regulation & Grade*

Variables	goal		cognitive		motivation		metacognitive		efficacy		behavior		grade	
	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$
Teac Att	.370	.262*	.010	.025	.117	.293**	.204	.230	.054	.210+	.015	.056+	-.020	-.363*
Cou Att	.070	.051		.004	.009	.035	.085		-.046	-.050	.043	.164	-.035	-.128
	.014	.247+												
$R^2$	.090	.063	.001	-.025	.125	.103	.041	.015	.112	.086	.010	-.015	.083	.058

+ $p < .10$ . \* $p < .01$ . \*\* $p < .001$ . \*\*\* $p < .0001$ .  
 Note. Teac Atti= teacher attitude; Cou Att= course attitude.

The table above lists regression coefficients. Standardized regression coefficients or beta weights ( $\beta$ ) were used to identify which of the two individual subcategories of attitude contributed uniquely to the variance in students' achievement on task. The beta weight for course attitude was 0.247, and for teacher attitude (-0.363). The predictive powers for these variables were significant at the alpha value of .086 and .013, respectively. This significant predictive power of attitude toward the teacher made it the first strongest predictor

of task achievement, though negatively. Each one-point increase on the teacher attitude scale predicted a 0.058-point decrease in writing self-regulation.

As shown in Table 3, the most considerable beta weight (0.293) was recorded for attitude toward the teacher, explaining about ten percent of the variance in students' motivational strategies. The predictive power for this category was significant at the alpha value of 0.05. This significant predictive power made it the only positive determinant of self-regulatory strategy in writing. However, attitude toward the teacher statistically significantly and negatively contributed to explaining the variance, about five percent in students' reported achievement on task. Each one-point uptick on the 7-point attitude toward the teacher subscale predicted a 0.08-point decrease in the task achievement of the Iranian EFL learners. Attitude toward the course was found to statistically significantly predict achievement on task ( $\beta = .247, p \leq .10$ ). Each one-point increase on a 7-point Likert subscale on the attitude toward course predicts a 0.08 point increase on the achievement on task of Iranian EFL learners.

## 5. Discussion

This study aimed to examine the relationship among attitudes toward the course and teacher, writing self-regulatory strategies, and task achievement, using correlation and regression analyses. A notable finding was the correlation of the attitude toward the course and teacher and achievement. A moderate-strength correlation was found between the attitude toward the course and the attitude toward the teacher. Notably, the attitude toward the course and the teacher was unrelated to the cognitive strategies, in general. The course and teacher attitude variables were significantly correlated with the goal. The results yielded the significant and positive correlate of the attitude to the motivation.

The two sub-categories of attitude toward the learning situation; that is, attitude toward the course and teacher, were further examined for their predictive power. Attitude toward the course statistically significantly and positively and attitude toward the teacher statistically significantly and negatively contributed to explaining the variance in the students' task achievements. The upshots of the present study corroborate findings by [Skar et al. \(2023\)](#), evidencing that the writing motivational beliefs have a significantly unique contribution to predicting the students' writing quality. It was found that the attitude toward the teacher significantly and positively predict the motivational strategies. As noticed, Iranian EFL learners' cognitive and meta-cognitive behaviors were not significantly predicted by their attitudes toward the course and the teacher. The regression analysis denoted that the attitude toward the course and teacher predict achievement on task.



The finding that the attitude toward the teacher was significantly and positively related to the goals conveys that the students are motivated in their orientations toward their goals, which are cognitively modulated. It appears that they find themselves sticking to their values and standards and accordingly choose their ways; however, internally or externally directed. They wage into a task by being confident in their knowledge, intellect, and competency. The students also seem to pick up an avoidance behavior in response to the situation that disagrees with them, such as perceiving the teacher untrustworthy, unapproachable, or unlikeable, until their misconceptions about their former experiences is resolved.

Noteworthy, the course attitude was significantly correlated with a goal. The implication of the relationship is that as the writing course is perceived as difficult, avoidance or investment behavior is expected to be observed. It seems that the students choose to conceive and think of the writing course as a difficult task rather than feeling confident and committed to investing effort in the task so as to creatively find a way out of it. The students attune their performances to their perceptions of their study course for realizing their goals. The way they construe the course relates to the mechanism they choose to enter an activity. They balance the extent of their efforts based on their conceptions of a task and make their plans accordingly to realize their goals. It is conceived that their attitudes shape their goals, making others than the task the arbitrator of their achievements whenever they find themselves perfect in their eyes. These students, looking most concerned about their performances imagining they are judged, differently react and respond to a task felt to be difficult.

As for the motivational domain of the writing self-regulation, what emerged from the study was that the attitude and motivation were significantly and strongly interrelated with each other. The teacher's role in motivating students was reported to be significant, congruent with [Spolsky's \(1989\)](#) claim that the learner's attitudes are positively related to the development of motivation. It conveys that those students who are not self-reliant look for their teachers to push them through to complete a task. It appears that the students who were not independently well-grown indulge in thinking of their teacher as a motivator whom they expect to tow him along the course. However, this form of attitude can be ascribed to the escape syndrome with which a student may be afflicted to evade the responsibility of learning and attribute his failure to his teacher somehow. However, as long as the teacher seeks for the learners to be reliant and efficient, s/he imbues the students with the feeling that they are understood no matter how different they put their efforts into a task without any fear of punishment and leaves them with the evermore provision of having the chance of mistaking along their courses of actions.

As regards the significant correlate of the attitude toward the course to the writing efficacy, it corroborates the existing research evidencing the positive relationship between the writing attitudes and the writing self-efficacy beliefs (Graham et al., 2007; Zumbunn, et al., 2010). Similarly, Mazeh and Moukarzel (2018) evidenced that self-efficacy significantly positively correlated with attitude toward writing. Results of the present study are congruent with the study done by Skar et al. (2023), finding that the efficacy for the writing self-regulation statistically contributed to the students' writing quality. The attitude toward the course proving to be related to the self-efficacy suggests that the more difficult a task is perceived; the more efficacious belief is formed (Bandura, 1994). The relationship between the efficacy and the attitude toward the course suggests that the students' beliefs about themselves are susceptible to how they perceive their courses. The significant correlation between the self-efficacy and the attitude toward the teacher and the course suggests that the learners' can-do beliefs were closely tied to their attitudes. As expected, the belief system reflects in the capability condition the learners find themselves in.

A notable result was that teacher and course attitude were not correlated significantly with the cognitive and meta-cognitive strategy employments. The correlational analyses showed that course attitude and teacher attitude were not significantly associated with meta-cognitive strategies. The lack of linkage between attitude and self-regulatory strategies reveals that the attitude does not necessarily cause the adoption of self-regulatory behaviors. The chasm between the writing self-regulation and attitude conveys the distinct mechanism of these two cognitive processes. The self-regulation is considered as a coping and doable tactic to weather the storm regardless of their habituated and inured thinking patterns built for an entity at the moment.

Similarly, Tran and Duong (2013) found no significant differences among 241 Vietnamese college non-English majors' attitudes toward English language learning (ELL) and use of self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies across genders. Notably, with meta-cognitive and writing strategy found to be unrelated to attitude toward writing, a distance is highlighted between thought patterns and behaviors when it comes to doing a task, for planning strategies can become contrariwise, even if thinking follows a particular pattern. The association found between the attitude toward the writing course and the goal in this study implies that gaining perspective contributes to the adoption of the goal orientations.

Dissociation between cognitive strategies and attitude alludes to the dissociable schemas followed by distinct mechanisms of responses from these two entities; that is, a student may choose to score off a situation while harboring perverse attitudes (Bagozzi, 1992). The learners wage into a task while their thought patterns are in discord. The students visualize and envisage the results and weight and figure out the consequences to choose what work best for them



or benefits them, irrespective of the perspective and feeling they harbor about a subject or entity on the spot. Under the duress of normative values people scope out their behaviors as it has consequences or pay-offs (Sullivan, 1953). Peer pressure in the classroom compels students to adopt coping strategies to withhold loss of honor and reputation.

Another noteworthy finding relates to the help-seeking which as a behavior is culturally indoctrinated, infiltrated, and shaped by the society, parents, peers, and classmates. It is influenced by the belief systems the individual holds. As Wolters (2010) states, help-seeking conforms to the attitudinal dimension of self-regulation in writing in which learners work in tandem with teachers, parents, peers and others in social attitude to manage their learning. Making question or asking for help is damage to the pride when prejudged, lest it stands for the lack of knowledge in some cultures. However, the high scores for Iranian EFL learners were approximately made on help-seeking versus other tactics, where promoting more of this strategy by teachers helps learners advance their learning achievements to a fare-thee-well. However, it is noteworthy that task and classroom variables influence variances for the records of these strategies.

Help-seeking as a behavioral strategy was correlated with the course attitude. Ryan et al. (1997) purport that help-seeking can be taken as a menace to self-worth. Seeking help when needed is an adaptive behavior concurrent with the lack of confidence if a task can be done independently of others. The relation found between the help-seeking and rapport signals social affinity and connection between these two variables. The respondents outreaching for help and, in return, responding to a request are two chicken-and-egg dividends that make the relationship of exchange in the social communication process by betraying adaptive and non-adaptive behaviors.

Concerning the second research question, attitude toward teachers statistically significantly predicted goal. The effect of attitude toward teachers explaining their self-regulatory behaviors conveys the significant role of teachers. The students seemingly attuned their goal-oriented behavior to their perceptions of their teacher. The student's mindsets were set on the feelings s/he goes through the interaction with their teachers. The students' goal setting is influenced by their reactions to the impressions left by their teachers as a pundit paragon. The apathy or avidity among students about a teacher manifests itself in single or collective engagement or withdrawal from leaning as to respond positively or negatively to a pleasant or unpleasant situation. The students use this tactic to send a message in this way rather than to mend this self-limiting behavior.

Self-regulatory writing behaviors, on the whole, were not predicted by attitude. As far as the respective hypothesis is concerned, this cannot be supported, either. Attitude toward the course was not the predictor of Iranian EFL learners'

cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies. Attitude toward the teacher predicting self-efficacy suggests that the stronger the learner's attitude toward a teacher is, the higher his level of self-efficacious behaviors is. It signals the mediating role of teachers as social agents in classroom explaining the variance in learners' writing ability beliefs. The point is that the learners' attitudes elicited from their self-report perceptions of their learning situations are disconnected from their cognitive and meta-cognitive behaviors, suggesting that the structure of attitude primarily operates independently from the self-regulation system acting more like an antidote to cognitive, affective, contextual, and even relationally-based entanglements and opposites than involving directly in a task on the exterior. Likewise, the attitude was found to have no significant association with the cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies though predicting the task achievement.

Results of the regression analysis showed that the attitude toward teachers is a predictor of motivation. Attitude toward the teacher explaining ten percent of the variance in students' motivational strategies, supporting [Gardner and Lambert's \(1972\)](#) statement that language learners' attitudes do not directly affect achievement, but render as "motivational support". Regression analysis displayed that attitude toward the teacher strongly predicts the learners' motivation. As [Lantolf and Poehner \(2011\)](#) purport, teacher-student interaction alludes to teamwork inside the proximal development zone in which instructors brace learners' development in dialectically integrated activities. It is believed that future growth depends on teacher mediation ([Lantolf & Poehner, 2011](#)).

Regarding the second research question, it was divulged that attitude toward the learning situation in the form of attitude toward the teacher and the course significantly predicted Iranian EFL learners' achievements on the task. Contingent on the outcomes, the second hypothesis for this study that attitude predicts achievements on the task of writing can be supported. The finding suggests that students' perceptions of their learning situation formed into attitudes coincide approximately with their task achievements. The learning situation can work to escalate the construction of the learners' attitudes well on the road to higher task achievement. The outcomes, in general, were congruent with the literature findings ([Gardner, 2010](#); [Maniruzzaman, 1998](#); [Maniruzzaman, 2007](#); [Masgoret et al., 2001](#); [McCoach, 2000](#); [Masgoret & Gardner, 2003](#); [Tennant & Gardner, 2004](#)), on attitude and achievement linkage.

Course and teacher attitudes were found to statistically significantly predict achievement on task, supporting the study's findings by [Graham et al. \(2007\)](#). This relation verifies that a small number of individuals can be found to enter a task without embracing any belief and values related to it. The attitude shown in this study that is not unrelated to achievement conveys that thought motif apropos of achievement realizes itself in practice. Attitude conceived toward a single task has the outcome at its feet, in a negative or positive order, somehow. The nature



of the outcome is set to attitude direction. Achievement, in this way, is a reflection and mirror of attitude. The significant association found between the attitude and the task achievement in this study is consistent with the existing research (Baştuğ, 2015; Bulut, 2017; Graham et al., 2007). The upshots of the present study corroborate findings by Skar et al. (2023), evidencing that the writing motivational beliefs significantly predict the students' writing quality.

The upshot of regression analysis evinced that attitude toward teacher was the strongest predictor of achievement on task among Iranian EFL learners, corroborating the findings by Montalvo et al. (2007) in that students experience motivational and achievement gains when they like their teachers. The result of the further regression analysis displayed that the students' reported task achievements were statistically significantly and negatively accounted for by attitude toward the teacher about five percent of the variance. As seen in Table 3, attitude toward the course statistically considerably and positively (.086) and attitude toward the teacher statistically significantly and negatively (.013) contributed to explaining the variance in students' task achievements.

The result showed that attitude toward teachers was the stronger predictor of task achievement. Iranian EFL learners' attitudes toward the course and the teacher were related, in predictable ways, to their motivations and goals, supporting Gardner's (1999) claim that attitude is the cause of motivation. The variance in students' task achievement was significantly accounted for by attitude toward the teacher. Hence, for enjoying the writing self-regulation to their level best, EFL learners are suggested to build sanguine relationship with teacher as one of the critical assets of the classroom for receiving guidance and raising awareness. However, the fact that self-regulation in writing was not related to task achievement can add to the issue that the once-for-all self-survey of performance is not supposed to bring about infallibility and immediate improvement.

The findings proved the predictive power of attitude toward teachers on task achievement. Notably, the Iranian EFL learners in this study reported that their attitudes reflect no credit on their writing self-regulatory behaviors. The disjunction between attitude and writing self-regulation conveys that it is one thing to harbor an attitude and quite another to behave accordingly. Remarkably, self-regulated learning in the case of essay writing was reported not to be a unified bundle of tactics but consisted of multiple tactics deployed per the adopted goals. Interestingly, it was construed that attitude contributes more to the goal orientation.

The upshots of this study on the predictor power of the attitude on the task achievement show that no matter how on the surface the attitude is unrelated to the self-regulatory behaviors but it is sure to determine the task achievement as a

result. The results signify the importance of attitude in securing success. The finding on the relationship between the attitude and the task achievement is conceivably corroboratory as for the attitude is the determinant of the task achievement, of which looking at the task from the perfectionism angle is the epitome.

It seems that the Iranian EFL students in this study visualize and scope out the results and envisage the consequences as what works best for them regardless of their concerns about a subject. It conveys that the social environment of the classroom is the place in which they are cautious about actions affected by the normative influence of being under surveillance and vigilance. Moreover, the dominating peer pressure impels them to exert more effort for fear of losing approval. However, it pays them well to do the writing self-regulation despite their disinterest in a subject matter. This undertaking removes setbacks from the process of the writing practice.

To sum up, attitude toward the teacher as an agentive entity affecting learners' self-regulatory behaviors was hypothetically predictable. This study established that the attitude toward the teacher contributing to explaining the variance in the learners' self-regulated writing suggests that the learners' attitudes can be harnessed by understanding teachers who do not let up in their efforts to make the learning situation propitious for learners to feel convenient to dare voice, thought, and concerns as to build up their writing self-regulation. Apropos of the predictive power of attitude toward the teacher on motivational strategies, the results correspond with [Gardner's \(1999\)](#) notion.

Results implicate that the Iranian EFL learners' attitudes are reflected in their writing achievements, while having disturbing effect on their self-regulatory practices. Hence, the findings implicate that the more potent their attitude is, the higher achieving they will be, whereby the need is raised to empower the attitudinal aspects in the Iranian EFL classrooms. The attitude for its longstanding record of control over the experiential gateways of knowledge absorption and formation need unquestionably outweigh and overtake the one-shot self-regulation in contribution to task achievement.

The present research provides some insights into the attitude-achievement relationship. The positive relationship between attitude and task achievement has some implications for educators. It seeks teachers to help learners step into the enterprise of internally-orientated growth than externally sought-after support on the ground that self-directed learning is the fulcrum of academic success. The scission and chasm between writing self-regulatory strategies and attitude alludes to the distinct schemes driving these two mechanisms, in that; a student may choose to score off a situation though their attitudes remaining intact by engaging into a task irrespective of his mindset to reach set goals. This study bolsters



studies documenting that attitude is tied to achievement on task. In sum, the attitude and self-regulation notwithstanding their disunion can collaborate as a buddy system in a joint dry-run for securing academic success. Task achievements can reflect the condition of their mindsets about the learning situation.

All in all, this study was an extension to the variability evidence on the attitude-behavior relationship, while simultaneously attempting to reduce the specificity effect by means of narrowing down the target domain of studies to the essay writing task in EFL program. The results have the most relevant implications in adult education on the importance of boosting educational essences like attitude, motivation, and personality trading off against non-ego variables which at last determines success. It encourages educators to lead students to get a complete knowledge of the attitudinal bases enforcing the locus of control to which they attribute success or failure. This awareness helps students open their minds and overhaul the reasons why they spin excuses and alibis for not investing effort in learning. It enables them to match inaction with unflappable investment in bringing about academic achievements.

## **6. Conclusion**

The present study primarily attempted to understand the relationship between the attitude toward the course and teacher, self-regulatory writing behaviors, and task achievement. The findings divulged that attitude was not significantly correlated with using cognitive, meta-cognitive, and writing strategies, while it proved a significant correlation with achievement on task. The study reported predictive power of attitude toward English teacher on task achievement. The result of regression analysis displayed that attitude toward the teacher was the stronger predictor of achievement on task among Iranian EFL learners.

Results concerning the predictive power of teacher attitude on motivational strategies were generally consistent with previous research done by [Gardner \(1999\)](#). All told, the outcome of the present study relieves the gender bias overshadowing the educational programs in the situated cultural contexts. It obviates the controversy over the co-education system in terms of students' attitudes toward opposite-sex teachers. All in all, this study was an extension to the variability evidence on the attitude-behavior relationship, whereas attempting to reduce the specificity effect by means of narrowing down the target-domain of the investigation into the essay writing task in EFL program.

It can be inferred from the findings that the Iranian EFL learners set a significant store by attitude regarding task achievement. The outcome unveils that it is crucial for teachers as the lead conductors and primary agents of classroom instruction need to establish conditions that work best for the constructive

development of learners' attitudes as significant correlates of task achievements. The findings from the data also let decision-making guide curriculum design and development to put a premium on learners' attitudes toward training, assignments, and appointment of teachers. By cultivating a supportive milieu that secures the experiencing of the responsive learning and mutual rapport, teachers can provide enough latitude in meekly interacting with them and engaging in the task without peril of contempt and out of noblesse oblige.

The results have the most relevant implications in the field of higher education, illustrating the importance of the advancement of educational essences, like attitude, motivation, and behavior, trading off against non-ego variables, which determine success at last. It encourages educators to lead students to attain a complete knowledge of the attitudinal bases of their locus of control with which they attribute success or failure to phenomena. This awareness helps students overhaul the reasons why they spin excuses and alibis not to invest in learning which consequently make them ameliorate and enlarge their outlooks to bring about academic achievement. Casting unresponsive reasons aside, one can allow wiggle room for enjoying the luxury of a host of choices from which a suitable alternative to select. However, it is of far significance that the students need to school themselves to go about writing and soldier on this strenuous affair, notwithstanding that external must-haves and superficial preconditions like interest, mood, motivation, and peace of mind expected are not met.

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