http://dx.doi.org/10.20880/kler.2021.56.5.87.

Cross-cultural Validation of the Self-Beliefs, Writing-Beliefs, and Attitude Survey and Its Relationship with Writing Activities

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I. Introduction

The importance of academic and everyday writing proficiency in the 21st century society has been well-documented in terms of individuals' learning success in schools, in workplaces, and throughout their entire lives (e.g., Graham & Perin, 2007; MacArthur et al., 2016). However, recent results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2017) indicate that American adolescents do not have sufficient writing proficiency necessary for college learning and professional work. In fact, only 27% of both 8th and 12th graders were at or above proficient level. These findings are present in other countries; for example, Kim (2017) analyzed informative, persuasive, and narrative essays of Korean middle school students and reported a similar trend. Most of the participating students scored in the below-basic proficiency group with their lowest scores on their persuasive essays. Although nearly all of the participants (89.1%) reported that they believe writing is very important in schools and workplaces, 65% of them stated that they do not often write in their everyday lives. In addition, more than half of the participants (54.2%) stated that they do not enjoy writing activities in their everyday lives.

Among various factors that influence writing proficiency, writing

motivation is considered as one of the most significant indicators. Defined as an individual's drive to initiate or continue writing (Bruning & Horn, 2000), writing motivation significantly predicts students' writing engagement, spelling knowledge, and their academic overall achievement (Bruning & Kaufman, 2016). Research has revealed that a child can write any text without being motivated, but the writing and learning outcomes often remain at superficial levels and children cannot develop sustainable and productive writing routines and habits without being motivated.

Based on these concerns, this study aims to validate a Korean version of the Self-Beliefs, Writing-Beliefs, and Attitude Survey (SWAS), which was originally developed by Wright et al. (2019). Currently, there are few valid and reliable writing motivation surveys available for Korean adolescents. The lack of a valid and reliable instrument makes it difficult for teachers and researchers to assess students' writing motivation and to design effective writing instruction using the data.

II. Literature Review

Writing motivation is "a dynamic construct that can vary by discipline, situation, or developmental stage" (Wright et al., 2019, p.66). According to a study reviewing seven measures of writing motivation (Tate & Warschauer, 2018), there was little consensus on the structure of the construct (i.e., what writing motivation exactly comprises). Some of the reviewed studies only examined the self-efficacy, so their results failed to capture the full scope of writing motivation. Other studies focused more on students' orientations towards writing. In Table 1, we present studies we found related to the development or validation of writing motivation instruments.

Table 1. A review of writing motivation scales

Study	Participants	Major constructs	Sub-factors
Bruning et al. (2013)	High school students	Self-efficacy	1) Self-efficacy for writing ideation 2) Self-efficacy for writing conventions 3) Self-efficacy for writing self-regulation
Bottomley et al. (1997)	Elementary school students	Self-perception	1) General progress 2) Specific progress 3) Observational comparison 4) Social feedback 5) Physiological states
Graham et al. (2017)	Grade 4	Writing motivation	1) Attitude toward writing 2) Self-efficacy for writing
Hamilton et al. (2013)	Grades 2-7	Goal orientation	1) Writing mastery orientation 2) Creative self-expression orientation 3) Social communication orientation 4) Writing ego orientation 5) Writing avoidance/alienation orientation
Kear et al. (2000)	Elementary school students	Attitudes toward writing	1) Academic 2) Recreational
Pajares (2007)	Grades 4-11	Self-efficacy beliefs	1) Self-efficacy for basic skills 2) Self-efficacy for composition skills
Pintrich et al. (1991)	College students	Motivated strategies	1) Intrinsic goal orientation 2) Extrinsic goal orientation 3) Task value 4) Control beliefs 5) Self-efficacy for learning and performance 6) Test anxiety
MacArthur et al. (2016)	Community college students	Writing motivation	1) Self-efficacy 2) Goal orientation - Avoidance - Performance - Mastery 3) Beliefs about writing - Content - Conventions 4) Affect

Sanders-Reio et al. (2014)	College students	Beliefs about writing	1) Transmission 2) Transaction 3) Recursive process 4) Audience orientation
Troia et al. (2012)	Grades 4-10	Writing motivation	1) Motivational beliefs - Self-efficacy - Success attribution - Task interest/value 2) Mastery goals 3) Performance goals 4) Avoidance goals
Wright et al. (2019)	Grades 6-8	Writing motivation	1) Writing-beliefs 2) Self-beliefs - Self-concept - Self-efficacy 3) Attitudes
Park (2006)	Middle school students	Writing motivation	1) Cooperative interaction 2) Writing self-efficacy 3) Competitive efforts 4) Challenge
Park (2007)	Pre-service teachers	Writing motivation	1) Writing efficacy 2) Interests 3) Efforts 4) Others' acknowledgement 5) Responsibility 6) Interactions 7) Writing habits
Lee et al. (2006)	Grades 4-6	Writing motivation	1) Publication 2) Efficacy 3) Recognition 4) Catharsis 5) New writing tool 6) Interaction 7) Imitation 8) Beliefs 9) Internet 10) Application

Although structural differences exist, there are some components that are commonly included in the measures of writing motivation: beliefs, self-efficacy, goal orientation, and attitudes. However, these components are not presented on the same conceptual hierarchical levels. For instance, Wright et al. (2019) categorized self-efficacy as a sub-factor of the belief component, whereas MacArthur et al.

(2016) considered it as a distinctive factor from the beliefs factor. Among many differences, we agree on Wright et al.'s (2019) structure, which referred to Conradi et al.'s (2014) definitions of motivational constructs. Therefore, in this section, we will summarize existing findings on the following factors: self-beliefs (i.e., self-concept and self-efficacy), writing-beliefs, and attitudes.

First, self-beliefs, defined as 'beliefs about the self as a writer', denotes two different concepts: self-efficacy and self-concept. Self-efficacy refers to individuals' judgement of their knowledge, skills, and ability to perform a task. Individuals prefer tasks they feel competent in and avoid ones they think are beyond their capacities. Studies on self-efficacy have revealed that it is positively correlated to writing achievement (Bruning et al., 2013; Graham et al., 2017; MacArthur et al., 2016; Pajares, 2007). Self-efficacy is a domain- or task-specific component. Accordingly, measures including highly associated self-efficacy and writing achievements exhibit better construct validity (Bruning et al., 2013; Tate & Warschauer, 2018). Self-concept, on the other hand, refers to a person's broad and general judgement of self as a writer.

Second, writing beliefs refer to the values people place on writing. If someone values writing, it means s/he considers writing as a "useful, enjoyable, otherwise important" task (Conradi et al., 2014, p. 154). Only two studies, MacArthur et al. (2016) and Wright et al. (2019), included items related to students' beliefs about writing, and they reported mixed findings. MacArthur et al. (2016) conducted exploratory factor analysis and found two factors from the beliefs about writing component: beliefs about writing content and beliefs about writing conventions. Only the content factor was highly correlated to other factors such as self-efficacy and goal orientation in the measure of writing motivation. However, writing-beliefs factors were negatively correlated to the writing achievement factors. On the contrary, Wright et al. (2019) showed that students who reported higher levels of writing beliefs produced written products with more words and

better quality.

Finally, attitude is defined as "a set of acquired feelings about [writing] that consistently predispose an individual to engage in or avoid [writing]" (Conradi et al., 2014, p. 154). Although often used interchangeably, attitude conveys a stable stance towards writing, whereas feelings are more like instant, momentary, and can fluctuate based on context. Graham et al. (2017), MacArthur et al. (2016), and Wright et al. (2019) include attitude factors in their tools. Their findings reveal that attitude toward writing is minimally correlated to students' writing achievement, but it affects writing achievement due to its close relation to the self-efficacy factor.

III. Method

1. Participants

In total, 308 eighth graders participated in this study. They were recruited from six schools in four different provinces in South Korea as part of a larger, cross-cultural comparative research project. Their overall achievement level, based on their performance on the Annual National Achievement Test, indicated that all the participating schools were at average levels. We sent out a cooperation email to potential schools with brief information about this study. We next conducted a short orientation with the cooperating teachers to ensure consistent survey administration procedures. All the data were collected via Qualtrics, an online survey platform. Students completed the survey following their teachers' guidelines and took approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete it. There were 147 boys and 160 girls among the participated students and their average age was 15 years old.

2. Instruments

1) Self-beliefs, writing-beliefs, and attitude survey (SWAS)

We employed Wright et al.'s (2019) SWAS to assess students' writing motivation. The SWAS was developed based on the Conradi et al. (2014) reading motivation model, which includes beliefs about self, beliefs about reading, and predispositions toward reading. It includes 30 items, measuring four constructs, related to writing motivation: self-concept, self-efficacy, beliefs about writing, and attitudes towards writing. A Likert-type rating scale was employed, asking participants to rate various writing activities and events ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

The original version developed in English was translated into Korean language by two research team members and the quality of translation was double-checked by two bilingual literacy researchers. Then, a back-translated version was reviewed by an American literacy scholar with more than 25 years of writing research experience and one American literacy coach with more than 30 years of teaching experience. This back-translation was conducted to evaluate equivalence of meaning between the original scale and translated one. Finally, we conducted informal interviews with five target eighth graders to see if there were any problems in terms of clarity and accuracy in the translated survey. We also asked three secondary school teachers to review the translated items to improve content validity of the scale.

2) Writing activity and motivation scales (WAMS)

We also used the Writing Activity and Motivation Scale (WAMS) to examine the predictive validity of SWAS. WAMS was developed and presented by Troia et al. (2013) and has been widely used to assess writing motivation and engagement. Troia and his colleagues defined writing activity as "the amount and breadth of writing in which students engage" (p. 22). For the purpose of this study, we only used 10

items out of 40 items for measuring the writing activities. Those items ask students to rate "how frequently they engaged in various writing activities in or out of school during the prior month, including writing stories, poems, letters, essays, reports, and creative compositions (e.g., plays, songs), journaling, sharing writing, giving feedback, and using the writing process" (Troia et al., 2013, p.24). Based on teachers' feedback, one item about writing a poem was slightly modified to better reflect current writing activities of Korean students. A Likert-type rating scale was used, asking participants to rate various writing activities ranging from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost daily).

3. Data analysis

1) Data screening

All the responses were entered into SPSS version 27 (IBM, 2020) for final analysis. Prior to the data analysis, frequencies for all the items were run to ensure that no data-entry errors occurred. Before running any analyses, we checked for missing data and outliers. More than 80% of responses were missing in five cases and we removed those cases from subsequent analyses. No outlier was detected. The skewness values were within the range of ±2.0, which indicates a relatively normal distribution according to Lomax and Hahs-Vaughn (2012), the skewness values indicate. To see descriptive patterns of the data, we calculated means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients and presented the information in Table 2.

2) Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

To confirm the factor structure supported by the original scale (Wright et al., 2019) and comprehensive review of literature related to literacy motivation (Conradi et al., 2014), we performed CFA using Mplus (version 8.1). We employed the six steps recommended by Kline (2016). Multiple indices were used to assess and compare the goodness-of-fit of four factorial models: chi-square statistic, compara-

tive fit index (CFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). Hu and Bentler (1999) suggested that RMSEA values of less than 0.6, SRMR values less than .08, and CFI values close to .95 represent good model fits. Other experts suggest a more liberal approach in recommending a threshold of .90 for CFI values to represent adequately fitting models (Byrne, 2001).

IV. Results

1. Descriptive statistics

1) Means (*M*) and Standard Deviations (*SD*)

Descriptive statistics for the five variables included in this study are presented in Table 2. Overall, the middle school students who participated in this study reported relatively positive writing motivation ($M_{Attitude} = 2.56$, $M_{Beliefs} = 2.93$), $M_{Self\text{-}concept} = 2.45$, $M_{Efficacy} = 2.54$). Paired samples t-tests showed the mean of beliefs about writing ($M = 2.93$, $SD = .59$) was significantly higher than attitudes ($M = 2.56$, $SD = .64$; $t = 13.63$, $p < .001$), self-concept ($M = 2.45$, $SD = .64$; $t = 15.92$, $p < .001$), and self-efficacy ($M = 2.54$, $SD = .64$; $t = 12.97$, $p < .001$). The means of attitudes ($t = 3.43$, $p < .01$) and self-efficacy ($t = 3.17$, $p < .05$) were significantly higher than that of self-concept. However, there was no significant difference between the means of attitudes and self-efficacy ($t = .50$, $p > .05$).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	*SD*
Attitude	307	8.00	32.00	20.46(2.56)	5.14(.64)
Q2	307	1	4	2.54	.856
Q3	307	1	4	2.22	.868
Q4	307	1	4	2.55	.859
Q5	307	1	4	2.39	.838
Q6	307	1	4	2.28	.874
Q7	307	1	4	2.72	.929
Q8	307	1	4	2.94	.777
Q9	307	1	4	2.82	.849
Beliefs about writing	307	6.00	24.00	17.56(2.93)	3.56(.59)
Q10	307	1	4	2.93	.785
Q11	307	1	4	2.88	.761
Q13	307	1	4	2.51	.868
Q14	307	1	4	3.09	.818
Q15	307	1	4	3.02	.846
Q16	307	1	4	3.14	.718
Self-concept	307	7.00	28.00	17.16(2.45)	4.50(.64)
Q17	307	1	4	2.54	.879
Q18	307	1	4	2.41	.844
Q20	307	1	4	2.54	.817
Q21	307	1	4	2.16	.845
Q22	307	1	4	2.53	.868
Q23	307	1	4	2.26	.783
Q24	307	1	4	2.72	.787
Self-efficacy	307	3.00	12.00	7.63(2.54)	1.92(.64))
Q25	307	1	4	2.27	.826
Q29	307	1	4	2.59	.759
Q30	307	1	4	2.76	.800

2) Correlation coefficients

Correlation coefficients among the three resulting subscales (see Table 3) showed that there was a high relationship between attitudes and beliefs about writing (r =.71). Another high correlation was identified between self-concept and self-efficacy (r =.70). Among the four subscale of SWAS, the self-concept subscale showed the strongest correlation coefficients with writing activity.

Table 3. Correlation coefficients

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Attitude		.71**	.64**	.64**	.49**
2. Beliefs about writing			.64**	.65**	.44**
3. Self-concept				.70**	.62**
4. Self-efficacy					.53**
5. Writing activity					

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3) Internal consistency

Cronbach's alphas were computed and presented in Table 5 as measures of internal consistency of the five motivational factors. Sufficient reliability is evident in the moderate to high coefficients (α's = .74-94). Cronbach's alpha for the entire SWAS instrument was .95.

Table 4. Internal consistency coefficients: cronbach's αs

Subscales	Number of items	Cronbach's *α*
Attitude	8	.89
Beliefs about writing	6	.84
Self-concept	7	.89
Self-efficacy	3	.73
Writing activity	10	.94

2. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

To further analyze the data, we tested the proposed four models to examine a potential measurement model to assess Korean middle school students writing motivation. Chi-square difference tests and all-fit indices indicated that the four-factor model (see Table 5, χ^2 =

970.99, *df* = 399, $p < 0.01$; SRMR = 0.055; RMSEA = 0.068; CFI = 0.875) is a tentatively valid measurement model.

Although both the SRMR and RMSEA estimates were acceptable, the CFI of the four-factor model was still not in the acceptable range (greater than .90), which indicated it did not fully fit the data. As a result, a revised and final model was created based on the proposed factor structure with multiple indicators of items. The following four items with factor-loading under .49 were removed in the revised model:

Q1. I don't like having to rewrite my paper. (Attitudes)

Q12. I don't mind when the teacher asks me to go back and change some of my writing. (Beliefs about writing)

Q19. I don't get good grades in writing because I'm just not smart enough (Self-concept)

Q28. When I get a good grade on a writing assignment, it's because I got lucky. (Self-efficacy)

After removing those items, all the fit indices were improved (see Table 5). To refine the revised model, using the modification indexes, we added three cross-loadings between Q4 and Q5, Q17 and 18, Q29 and Q30. This indicates there are close relationships between the item pairs. In addition, we removed an additional two items that strongly correlated with other constructs. Q26 ("I know that I will do well in writing this year.") was strongly related to beliefs about writing and Q27 ("When I get a good grade on a paper, it is because I tried really hard.") was closely related to both beliefs about writing and self-concept. All the fit indices of the final four-factor model indicated it is a valid theoretical model of writing motivation for Korean middle schoolers, CFI > .93 (χ^2 = 499.71, *df* = 243, $p < 0.001$; SRMR = 0.044; RMSEA = 0.59; CFI = 0.935).

The validity of the writing activity subscale of WAMS was tested and the CFA showed a good model fit (χ^2 = 119.093, *df* = 35, $p < 0.001$; SRMR = 0.031; RMSEA = 0.088; CFI = 0.959). All the ten items included in the single-factor model showed relatively high factor loadings ranging from .684 to .866.

Table 5. Model comparison between the base model and the revised model

	χ^2	*df*	SRMR	RMSEA	CFI
1-factor model	1452.50*	405	.067	.092	.770
2-factor model	1233.06*	404	.063	.082	.818
3-factor model	1022.78*	402	.058	.071	.864
4-factor model	970.99*	399	.055	.068	.875
Revised 4-factor model	646.79*	290	.048	.063	.918
Final model	499.71*	243	.044	.059	.935

Note. SRMR (Good: ≤ .05, Acceptable: ≤ .08), RMSEA (Good: ≤ .06, Acceptable: ≤ .08), CFI (Good: ≥ .96, Acceptable: ≥ .90)

*p < .001

V. Discussion and Conclusion

This study examined the validity and reliability of the Korean version of the Self-beliefs, Writing-beliefs, and Attitude Survey (SWAS). We found that the original four-factor model including attitudes, beliefs about writing, self-concept, and self-efficacy and developed for American adolescents-- is applicable to Korean adolescents, as well. In addition, both the entire instrument and the individual subscales showed high internal consistency.

The descriptive findings from the paired samples t-tests indicated that Korean middle schoolers acknowledge the value of writing and consider writing as an important task for their learning and professional success. The participants also showed relatively positive attitudes toward writing and moderate self-efficacy. However, compared with the other three subscales, the Korean middle schoolers showed relatively less positive self-concepts as good writers. As Eccles and Wigfield (2002) suggested simply perceiving that a specific task is valuable is not enough to be actively engaged in the task. Based on

the expectancy and value theory (EVT), they explained that an individual should develop sustainable beliefs that there are high chances of being successful in completing the task. These findings suggest that teachers need to provide their students with multiple opportunities to be successful in various writing tasks (Gambrell, 2011).

The correlation coefficients among the five constructs included in this study showed somewhat interesting relationships. Attitudes were more closely related to beliefs about writing (r=.71) and self-concept was closely related to self-efficacy (r=.70). These findings make sense considering that both attitudes and beliefs about writing are sustainable beliefs on a literacy task (Toste et al., 2020). In contrast, both self-concepts and self-efficacy reflect students' beliefs about themselves as writers in general or in a specific context.

The scores of SWAS were moderately correlated with the writing activity subscale of WAMS, which can be considered as clear evidence of the predictive validity of the Korean SWAS. This finding also indicates that the degree of being motivated in writing and the degree of actual engagement in writing tasks are closely connected. In addition, the fact that self-concept showed the strongest correlation with the writing activity scale emphasizes the importance of developing general perceived competence as writers among adolescents.

Using these translated instruments, future research might examine the relationships among writing motivation, engagement and writing proficiency. Though reading researchers have reported the mediating role of reading engagement between reading motivation and comprehension, this relationship has not yet been fully tested for writing. In addition, it would be possible to explore the relationship between SWAS and other existing motivation instruments, which will allow researchers to understand more nuanced relationships among various motivational factors in writing.

We believe that both SWAS and WAMS instruments employed in this study would be good additional tools for Korean classroom teachers and writing researchers in assessing Korean adolescents' writing

motivation and engagement. The SWAS is strongly grounded in motivation theory and offers assessment data regarding diverse motivational aspects of adolescents' writing.

* Submitted 2021.11.22.
First revision recieved 2021.11.23.
Accepted 2021.12.15.

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of the study was to translate and cross-validate the Korean version of the Self-Beliefs, Writing-Beliefs, and Attitude Survey (SWAS), which was originally developed by Wright et al. (2019). 308 Korean eighth graders participated in this study by responding to the translated surveys via Qualtrics. Confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the original four-factor model including attitudes, beliefs about writing, self-concept, and self-efficacy developed for American adolescents is applicable to Korean adolescents as well. In addition, both the entire instrument and the subscales showed high internal consistency. Implications for classroom teachers and future researchers are discussed.

KEYWORDS Writing Motivation, Self-Concept, Self-Efficacy, Beliefs about Writing, Writing Assessment.