



# Effects of Competitive Team-Based Learning on EFL Students' Motivation in Paragraph Writing

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## Abstract

This study investigates the effects of competitive team-based learning on EFL students' motivation in paragraph writing. The study employed a quasi-experimental design. Two sections of 45 second year economics department students participated in the study. While the 23 students were assigned as treatment group and learned through competitive team-based learning method, the other 22 students were taken as comparison group, and they learned through conventional method. Data were obtained through close ended motivation questionnaire, and the data were analyzed using independent sample t-test and paired sample t-test. The results revealed that treatment group students who learned through CTBL exhibited a statistically significant improvement in their motivation in paragraph writing classes compared to the comparison group who learned in conventional way. The findings show that competitive team-based learning is important method to improve EFL students' motivation in paragraph writing lessons. Hence, this study recommends other researchers, teachers and syllabus designers to give due attention to CTBL when carrying out any academic activities such as classroom teaching, material developing and conducting further researches.

## Keywords

Motivation, Competitive team-based learning, Competition

## 1. Introduction

English language writing is an important skill that is used for academic and real-life purposes. In line with this, Shiach (2007) states that writing skill is an invaluable tool if learners are to bring the intended achievements in any courses at any levels. Zemach (2005) also says that students especially those who enrolled in universities and colleges need to develop writing skills that will lead them to academic success. This idea is also supported by local researchers in Ethiopia. For example, according to Haregewoin (2008), much of the work of a university student consists of writing without which any student can hardly succeed in his/her academic career. Ayele and Tesfaye (2019) also point out that those learners who have adequate writing skills will be at a great advantage in academic success including language skills acquisition.

All these ideas reveal that students should be assisted to develop their writing skills. And this can be done by teaching learners in ways that motivate them in their learning process. According to Nation (2009), writing instruction should be interesting for learners so that they can experience a feeling of success in most of their writing tasks. As Ur (1991), the term motivation stands for a situation that makes learners willing or eager to invest effort in learning activities and to progress. According to Rosmayanti and Yanuarti (2018), motivation is one of the major factors that may affect students' achievement in second language learning. Will (2016) states that students who are motivated tend to do better than those who are not motivated as it is when students have something to achieve that they become successful. Gardner and Lambert (1972) cited in Ur, (1991) support this idea stating that motivation is very strongly related to achievement in



language learning. Therefore, promoting learners' motivation in learning activities is fundamental to effective language learning in general and writing practice in particular.

Although motivation is considered as a vital component and the greatest factor influencing students' learning, different researchers have reported that students in Ethiopia are less motivated due to different reasons. For example, Amare (2022) conducted a study to assess the effects of corpus-based instruction on EFL students' academic writing critical thinking skills, engagement, and perception. This local researcher mentioned that he observed the students had a lack of motivation to identify their academic writing gaps, engage in various academic writing activities, and improve their academic writing skills during the course of study. Another researcher, Bantalem (2021) indicated that he reviewed that lack of students' motivation to be engaged in academic writing is a common problem that had been identified in previous second and foreign language studies.

The researcher also could observe how students become reluctant to participate actively when they are ordered to do writing tasks in traditional groups. There is one specific case I came across from my writing course: I offered Intermediate Writing Skills course for summer students in 2011 academic year. I gave them group assignments to write paragraphs on their own topics and I ordered them to submit their assignments in the next day on which they sat for another mid exam. When students came to the exam, they came up with their written paragraphs. I collected the assignments before I distributed the exam papers to students because one of the exam questions required students to write the topic of the paragraphs they had written in group before. Only 12 students from 58 students could write the topics of their assignments correctly. This shows that probably only some active students who remembered the topics of their respective assignments had done the paragraph writing assignments and finally the other members registered their names without any contribution. As additional evidences, some students were found registered in two or more groups, and still, names of some students were missing from the group lists. This shows that students were not motivated enough and did not give attention to participate in the group assignments and only some active students completed the tasks followed by registering names of students who did not participate in works. In general, the results from the local studies and the classroom incidents show students' problems related with their motivation.

For Atkins et al (1995), it is what happens inside the classroom that is most important in motivating or demotivating students for their tasks. A teacher can do this by his/her actions one of which is using suitable learning methods that promote students' motivation in the learning process.

Competitive learning is one of the active learning methods that can make students' learning interesting. According to Verhoeff (1997), applying competitive learning in classroom challenges students to give their best, and thus it enhances their motivation and learning. Fulu(2007) also shows that competitive learning can lead to increases in the efforts, dedication and motivation levels of students through by decreasing opportunities for failure and boredom. Besides, Faria& Wellington (2004) claim that the use of competitive learning creates an environment that motivates the students thereby building their confidence, and making learning fun. In the same way, according to Chung (2008), when students learn through competitive learning, they will be motivated and engaged more thereby taking responsibility for their own learning.

However, some scholars claim that competitive learning may have negative influences on students' motivation especially the low achievers. For example, for Murray (2019), competitive learning motivates only high-achieving students in the class, but it is de-motivating the lower achieving ones. However, this idea was strongly opposed by Debelak and Ozturk (2008) who argue that competitive learning can be source of motivation and hard work and benefits not only gifted students but also the ones who are not gifted.

In order to reduce the potential challenges of competitive learning and to use it successfully in classroom, experts have recommended different mechanisms. For example, Fulu (2007) points out that competitive learning works best in friendly classroom where both fun and recognition are attached to it. Fredrik et al (2015) and Hosseini (2018) suggest that good results can be obtained from competitive learning when combined with cooperation; this makes most scholars on the area to focus on competitive team based- learning than individual based competitive learning as they believe in that the former can use the advantages of both cooperation and competition. In this regard, Nichols (2009) states that inter-group competitive learning increases cooperation within groups, as students are unified in working towards a common goal of outperforming the other teams. According to Al-Bahadili et al. (2014), competitive team based- learning helps teachers to overcome many of student's problems such as lack of motivation, insufficient practices, and inadequate team work practices.

Although different studies have been conducted concerning learners' motivation, there is lack of studies on the effects of competitive team-based learning on students' motivation to learn EFL skills in general and writing skill in particular. As far as the researcher's knowledge is concerned, there are only two global studies that were conducted on the influences of competitive learning on students' motivation. For example, Altrapolsi and Suwaed(2017), conducted to investigate how to motivate Libyan EFL students to play an active role in their learning process by using competitive learning in classroom. This study showed that competitive learning can motivate students, especially when combined with interesting tasks, clear goals and instructions. It can provide students with the opportunities to not only learn English language, but also to gain confidence and actively participate in that learning process. Another study was done by Seco (2019) to engage senior high school students through inter-group competitive learning, and came up with the findings



revealing that this learning method encouraged students to participate in learning process, and it had also a positive impact on their final learning outcomes.

In addition to unavailability of abundant related works, the ones aforementioned have been conducted in contexts out-side Ethiopia and effects of the method were assessed in relation to the learners' motivation in their learning in general. Therefore, the present study was carried out to fill these contextual and subject matter gaps.

## 2. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to investigate the effect competitive team-based learning on EFL students' motivation in paragraph writing. It had the following basic research question.

- Is there any significant mean difference in EFL students' motivation between those who learn with CTBL and conventional way in paragraph writing?

## 3. Literature Review

### 3.1 Motivation and Its Role in Language Learning

The concept of motivation has been defined by different scholars as follows. The dictionary meaning shows that the word motivation is derived from the word 'motive' which means needs, desires or drives within the individuals. Harmer (2001) defines motivation as some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something. According to Dornyei (2001), motivation is a concept that explains why people decide to do something, how hard they are going to pursue it and how long they are willing to sustain the activity.

Although scholars define motivation in different words, they seem to agree on that it is a vital component and the greatest factor influencing students' language learning success. For example, Atkins et al (1995) say that motivation is the essential element for successful language learning. "Motivation is a star player in the cast of characters assigned to second language learning scenarios around the world" (Brown, 2007). It is to mean that motivation is the most influential one among the factors of language learning. According to Ur (1991), learners who are motivated are willing and eager to invest effort in learning activities and to progress. As Naiman et al. (1978) cited in Ur (1991), the most successful language learners are, among other things, those who display the following typical characteristics associated with motivation. They are not disturbed or frustrated by situations involving a temporary lack of understanding or confusion; they can live with these patiently, in the confidence that understanding will come later.

#### 3.1.1 Sources of Learners' Motivation

Harmer (2001) categorized the sources of motivation into three major types which include teacher's behavior, the society and significant others.

The teacher's behavior in choosing methods and making other conditions suitable is the first and most important factor. It is the responsibility of the classroom teachers to motivate students especially in foreign language classroom (Atkins et al, 1996). Indeed, teachers can increase learners' motivation using different ways, for example, by introducing various interesting activities in meaningful contexts that can give opportunities for students to make interaction among themselves. As Ur (1991), in order to develop positive motivation in their students, teachers need to do the following things. The first one is using methods students have confidence and feel success in raises extrinsic motivation. Learners who have succeeded in previous tasks will be more willing to engage with the next one, more confident in their chances of succeeding, and more likely to persevere in their efforts. Teacher's authoritative behavior; the effort to maintain discipline, and to keep students under control is another way of motivating learners.

Another source of motivation is the influence of the society. After the class, the first place that the student may be exposed to is his society who determines the level of students' motivation. Harmer (2001) points out that the society surrounding learners can determine whether the language being studied is important and has a valuable status among individuals or not, i.e., it shows whether the image of the language is positive or negative. Those opinions and beliefs will affect the students' attitudes about the language and which has a clear impact on their motivation.

The third element that affect learners' motivation are significant others. Significant others are the closer people to the learner specifically parents, peers, and neighbors.

#### 3.1.2 Assessing Students' Motivation to Learn

Since motivation has crucial effect on learners' learning, researchers have exerted much effort on measuring learners' motivation in second or foreign language learning. It is a fact that motivation cannot be observed and measured directly, but inferred from other learners' verbal responses and activities.

In this regard, by reviewing different literatures on the motivational components that influence writing motivation, Payne (2012) developed the Academic writing motivation questionnaire which can be used by instructors and educational researchers to examine students' motivation in writ classes. It was designed based on the following aspects of motivation: willingness to approach difficult tasks/not apprehension, self-Efficacy, self-regulation, and goal orientation. The questionnaire is a 37-item, Likert-type questionnaire. For each item there is a statement that prompts participants to indicate their level of agreement with the statement. There is a response scale for each item that participants use to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. The response scale ranged from zero to four, and values for the scale are as follows: 0 = Strongly Disagree; 1 = Disagree; 2 = Uncertain; 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly Agree.



- **Willingness to approach difficult tasks/ avoiding apprehension-** writing apprehension can be defined as the negative feeling of anxiety over writing exercises. Writing apprehension typically correlates negatively with writing performance as it leads to avoiding writing tasks. Schunk et al (2008) states that motivated students expend greater effort rather than quit when they encounter difficult material.
- **Self-Efficacy-** according to Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy is an important predictor for human behavior. Self-efficacy beliefs are defined as, "personal beliefs about one's capabilities to organize and implement actions necessary for attaining designated levels of performance" (Bandura, 1986, p. 391).
- **Self-Regulation-** self-regulation (or self-regulated learning) refers to the process of taking control of and evaluating one's own learning and behavior (Schunk, 2008). According to Zimmerman (1994) cited in Payne (2012), students who have the confidence to use self-regulated learning strategies have higher intrinsic motivation and academic achievement, and it predicts the confidence with which they face academic tasks.
- **Goal Orientation-** refers to the situation of focusing on learning the content than performance goals (focusing on demonstrating ability and getting good grades). Since it is associated with an intrinsic interest in learning activities, and positive attitudes towards learning, it is an essential component of motivation.

MacArthur, Philippakos, and Graham (2016) also developed motivation questionnaire focusing on the specific aspects of self-efficacy, affect, achievement goals, and beliefs about writing which are almost similar with that of Payne's (2012) questionnaire.

- **Self-Efficacy-** Self-efficacy refers to individuals' judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to attain designated types of performances affects individuals' choice of activities, engagement, and persistence in the face of obstacles.
- **Affect-** Affect which represents learners' emotional responses, liking or disliking to participate in writing tasks is an important component of motivation; individuals who like to write may engage in writing more often or devote more effort to writing well.
- **Beliefs about Writing-** Beliefs about the nature of writing and what constitutes good writing are likely to affect students' engagement and motivation. Students who believe writing is a way of expressing feelings and ideas and of learning new information are likely to be more engaged in writing tasks than others who believe writing is primarily a skill to be developed.
- **Goal Orientation-** Goal orientation that refers to an individual's reasons or purposes for engaging in learning activities influences how individuals approach learning and achievement. It explains how people approach and respond to achievement situations.

In summary, the above questionnaires with their respective descriptions developed by Payne (2012) and MacArthur, Philippakos, and Graham (2016) give valuable insights for instructors and researchers in understanding and shaping learners' motivation in writing activities. In line with this, the questionnaire in the present study covers aspects of affect, beliefs, goal orientation, and self-efficacy in order to collect data on participants' motivation related to paragraph writing.

### 3.2 Effects of Competitive Team Based Learning on Students' Motivation

Nedjwa (2017) also states that students' motivation needs something more challengeable and debatable that strengthens it. In this regard, having an element of competition, competitive team- based learning challenges students to try their best during their learning process. Competition is a source of motivation both in the field of education and other walks of life (Malikz et al. 2013). In line with these, Fulu (2007) says that competitive learning can lead to increases in the efforts, dedication and motivation levels of students thereby providing them with opportunity to learn beyond their normal curriculum, and motivating students to work harder is at least half the battle in getting them to achieve anything. Cheung & Lam (2001) say that using competitive learning in classroom play a vital role in enhancing students' motivation thereby improving their achievements.

### 3.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The following is the conceptual framework of the present study adapted from Hosseini's (2018) CTBL model. It shows how competitive team- based learning influences students' motivation in writing classes.



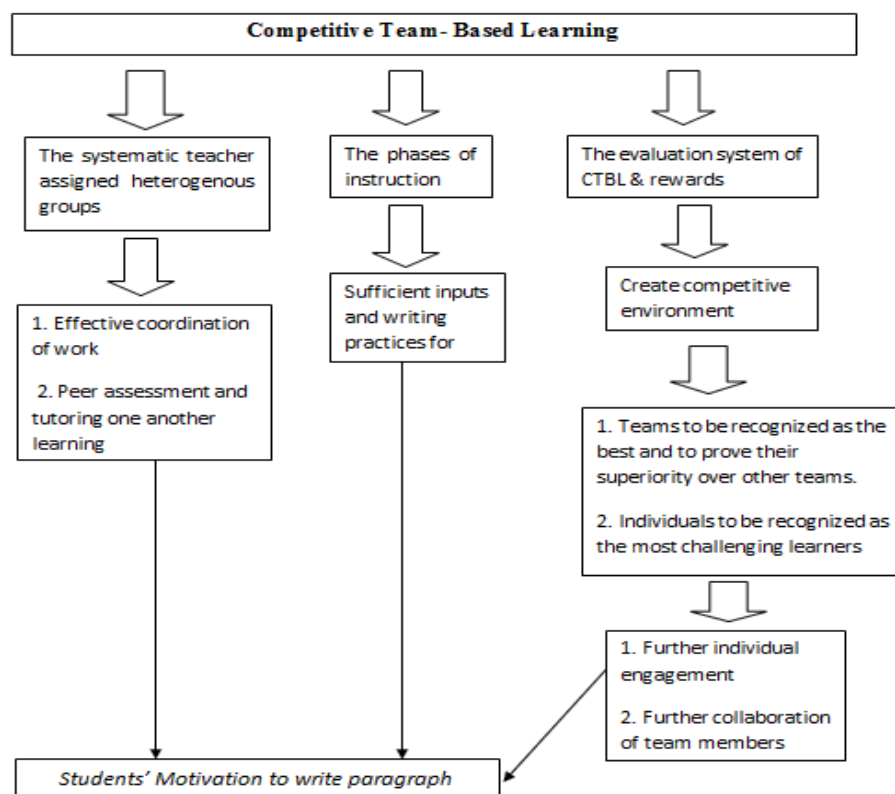


Fig. 1 The Impacts of CTBL on Learners' Motivation in Writing Class

## 4. Research Design and Methods

### 4.1 The Paradigm and the Design of the Study

The positivism paradigm for the present study was adopted based on the following consideration. The objective was intended to assess the effects of CTBL on EFL students' motivation to write paragraphs, and it involved measuring and quantifying motivation through questionnaire (quantitative aspect). This aligns with the positivist paradigm.

The study employed quasi-experimental design specifically non-equivalent pretest-posttest design. For this purpose, the participants in the two groups were given motivation questionnaire before the intervention. Then, after the intervention, the two groups were given the same motivation questionnaire. In doing so, the researcher used the existing classroom structure assigned by the department (intact groups) as treatment and comparison groups. In such contexts where there is no random assignment of participants, scholars such as Muijs (2004) and Wiley (2005) recommend to employ quasi experimental design.

### 4.2 Participants, Setting, and Sampling Techniques of the Study

The participants of the study were 45 second year students in the department of economics at Debre Markos University in 2023-2024. In this study, the researcher employed purposive sampling technique to select the university because of its proximity and the department. Economics department was selected as it was the only department where students took basic writing skills course during semester when the data were collected.

### 4.3 Data Collection Instrument

#### 4.3.1 Motivation Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used to collect data on students' motivation towards paragraph writing both before and after the intervention. When the pre-intervention questionnaire was used to understand students' existing motivation towards paragraph writing before the intervention, the post-intervention questionnaire was used to see if CTBL brought changes in students' motivation towards paragraph writing after the intervention. The items in the questionnaire were adapted from MacArthur, Philippakos, and Graham (2016). Ideas were also taken from Payne's (2012) Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire in developing the questionnaire. The nature of the questionnaire items was close-ended and a five-point Likert type questions ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. It incorporated a total of twenty-five items related to four major aspects of motivation to write which is self-efficacy, achievement goals, beliefs about writing, and affect about writing. Since the questionnaire items in the works of aforementioned researchers were in line with the motivation of general academic writing, they were adapted to fit with paragraph writing skills in this study. In addition, the number of items was reduced to 25 items.

#### 4.3.2 Pre-test

Since the treatment group learned through Hosseini's CTBL model, pre-test on paragraph writing was administered to only treatment group thereby forming five competitive groups where each team involved one higher achiever, two middle



scorers, and one lower performer. The purpose of the pre-test was limited only to form groups involving heterogeneous levels in the treatment group.

#### 4.4 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

In order to come up with accurate data, the validity and reliability of instruments were checked as follows. The motivation questionnaire and pre-test items were given to senior TEFL instructors and another psychology instructor to give their professional judgments. In addition, the reliability of motivation questionnaire was checked using Cronbach Alpha Method, and the reliability coefficient was 0.88 which indicated that it was reliable.

#### 4.5 Intervention Phases

In order to get reliable data from the participants, the study passed the following processes which included preparing necessary materials before the intervention, conducting the intervention, and analyzing the data in the post intervention phase.

##### 4.5.1 The Pre-Intervention Phase

During this phase, a teaching material for the treatment group, training manual, and motivation questionnaire were prepared. Then, the questionnaire was administered to participants in order to measure their existing motivation level to write paragraph. In doing so, two sections of 45 second year economics students were involved. After computing the results from the questionnaire, students were ranked based on their level of motivation. The average motivation level of the students in two groups were almost found homogeneous. Then, one section of the 23 students was taken as treatment group, and the other section of 22 students was taken as comparison group. Then, the pre-test was also administered to the treatment group in order to measure their writing performance thereby forming teams which included high achievers, middle achievers and lower achiever.

##### 4.5.2 The Intervention Phase

The treatment was conducted on expository paragraph writing sessions for 36 hours. In order to avoid variations due to the instructors' teaching practices, both the treatment and comparison groups were taught by one instructor who was selected from the department of English language and literature. In addition to this, the contents and sequence of the paragraph writing lessons were the same in both conditions. Therefore, the only difference was the learning method through which they were attending the delivered expository paragraph lessons.

While the comparison groups were learning through conventional way, the treatment group were learning through Hosseini's (2018) competitive team-based learning model. The researchers adapted Hosseini's model because they believe in that the model matches with the process writing and entails the instructor's pedagogical contributions in helping students during writing class. The teaching and assessment phases with their respective subcomponents were also thought to give students sufficient inputs and practices respectively.

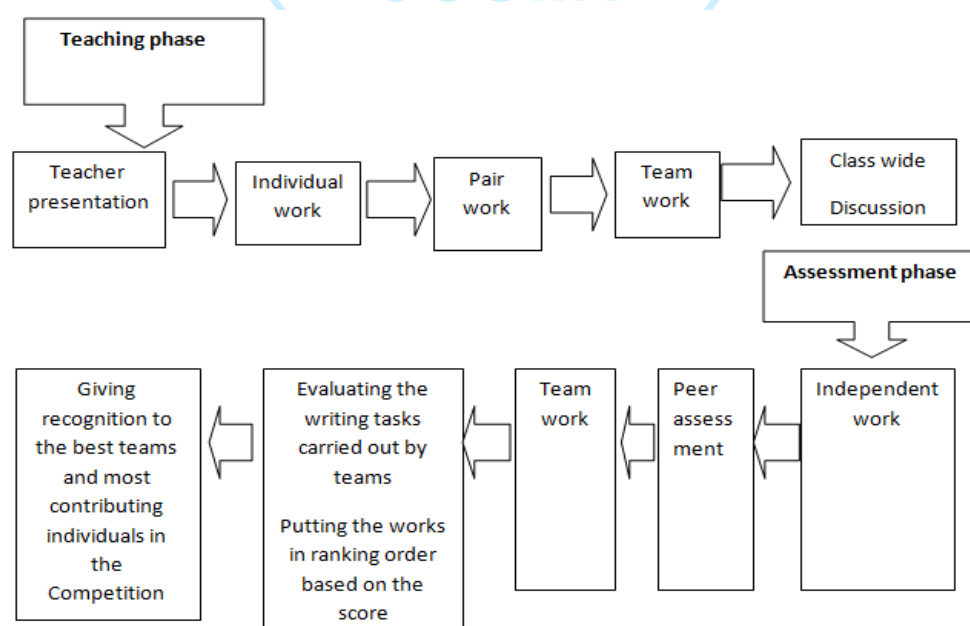


Fig. 2 Competitive Team-Based Learning (adapted from Hosseini, 2018)

The trained instructor implemented CTBL using teaching and assessment phases each of which involved specific activities. In the teaching phase, learners were learning paragraph writing through the following steps: (1) Instructor's presentation, the instructor was introducing the topics of the lessons, and making students to go over the presented topics mentally and try to comprehend it individually before they do in pairs and teams. (2) Pair works, here, learners were being asked to share and discuss what they had understood with their partner thereby detecting misconceptions and uncertainties



about their understandings. During pair works, one middle achiever was working with the high achiever and another middle achiever with the low achiever. This type of group formation helped them to help one another by reducing heterogeneity among paired students. (3) Team-works, after pair works, students were being provided with the opportunities to work in teams in discussing further about the topics and also about the problems they had come along on the path of comprehending the text. This was to give them chance to gain a thorough insight into their teammates' processes, approaches, and styles of thinking and also to test what they had known by comparing with their team members. (4) Class-wide discussions, the instructor was ordering the learners to make class-wide discussion so as to help them to further assimilate their information, understandings, and ideas. Here, they had chance to elaborate, question, discuss, and comparing their understandings of the topics presented.

After these, the assessment phase was meant to check students' understanding during every writing session in the treatment group, and it comprised of the following sub activities:

(1) Independent work of the students, first, the instructor distributed question papers to students to write paragraphs individually.

(2) Pair works, after the given comments, students took the same question papers and started to write paragraphs by sharing ideas with their partners in their pairs.

(3) Team works, the two pairs of each team came together and shared their ideas. They compared their works and decided on relatively better paragraphs produced in their teams. Here, students could get chance to share how they had written their paragraphs to their teammates which was important to fill the gaps in the individual team members' understandings.

(4) Team recognition, finally, there were team recognitions where written works were evaluated by the classroom instructor using specific evaluation criteria/rubrics for the tasks in each session. The instructor provided recognition in the form of verbal reinforcement and symbolic rewards. For this, he appreciated best performer groups verbally after evaluating their works through rubrics.

In addition, the names of the teams were ranked from the first to the last and teams who stood from the first to the third were posted on the wall in classroom using flip charts (symbolic reward) followed by praising them orally through clapping or other motivating words. Then, tangible rewards such as pens and papers were given to the individuals who performed best in the winning teams in order to increase the effort of individual students. This was done to promote competition among students thereby increasing their motivation to learn. The fact that teams received the rewards using the average of scores of individual members was used as means of promoting individual accountability. There was evaluation of efforts of individual students in the treatment class unlike the contexts where writing tasks were done in group followed by group base evaluation.

#### **4.5.3 The Post-Intervention Phase**

After the intervention, questionnaire was administered to both treatment and comparison groups. The test results were analyzed using t-test thereby checking whether the competitive team-based learning improved students' paragraph writing performance significantly or not.

#### **4.6 Data Analysis Methods**

The data from the questionnaire items were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. The descriptive statistics were used to summarize and present the data from questionnaire items in numerical and tabular forms. Inferential statistics were also applied to check whether there were significant differences between the motivation level of treatment group and their counterparts or not. For this purpose, the independent samples t-test was used to calculate and compare the means between the treatment and comparison groups thereby deciding whether there were statistically significant differences between them or not in terms of their motivation in paragraph writing. Paired sample t-test was also employed so as to compare the participants' motivation before and after the intervention.

#### **4.7 Ethical Concerns of the Study**

According to Denscombe (2007), researchers are expected to respect the rights and dignity of participants by avoiding any harm to them, and by operating with honesty and integrity. Based on this, the following ethical considerations were taken into account during the whole processes of the study. First, the researcher obtained permission from the economics department before conducting the study. In addition, codes (in number) were used instead of real names to protect participants from any disclosure of their individual identity. Besides, their voluntary participation in the data gathering process was given due consideration. After clearly explaining the purpose of the study to students, the researcher obtained informed consent from them. Furthermore, attempts were made to collect credible data and to analyze carefully followed by reporting and disseminating the findings honestly without any fabrication.

### **5. Data Analyses and Findings**

#### **5.1 Data Analyses and Findings of Students' Motivation from Questionnaire Scores**

Students' level of motivation towards paragraph writing skills was another focus of this study. Thus, both pre-intervention and post-intervention questionnaires were administered to participants in order to measure their initial motivation (before the treatment) and the potential motivation changes (after the intervention) respectively.



### 5.1.1 Results from the Pre-intervention Questionnaires

In order to check whether the existing motivation level of both the treatment and comparison groups was homogenous, close-ended five-points Likert type questionnaires with 25 items were adapted from MacArthur, Philippakos, and Graham (2016) were administered and scored carefully. Then, the motivation results of the two groups were computed using independent samples t-test as indicated in table 1 below.

**Table 1** Students' Pre-intervention Motivation Scores

Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Significance
Treatment Group	23	<b>1.6296</b>	<b>.33340</b>	<b>.760</b>
Comparison Group	22	<b>1.6067</b>	<b>.12086</b>	

**$p > 0.05$**

Table 1 indicates that the mean motivation score of treatment group before the intervention was approximately 1.63 with a standard deviation of 0.33 whereas the comparison group scored a mean motivation score of 1.61 with a standard deviation of 0.12. The t-test p-value was **0.760**, which was greater than the significance level (typically 0.05), and this reveals that there was no statistically significant difference in motivation scores before the intervention between the two groups.

### 5.1.2 Results from the Post-intervention Questionnaire

In order to investigate the effects of competitive team-based learning on students' motivation towards paragraph writing skills, questionnaires were administered to the treatment and comparison groups after the intervention. Then, the participants' scores were computed using independent samples t-test thereby comparing the mean motivation scores between the treatment and comparison groups, and the results are depicted in table 2 below.

**Table 2** Students' Post-intervention Motivation Scores

Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value
Treatment Group	23	4.3878	.29355	<b>.001</b>
Comparison Group	22	3.3891	.30141	

**$P < 0.05$**

Table 2 displays that the treatment group had the mean motivation score approximately 4.39 with a standard deviation of 0.29 after the intervention. The comparison group scored the mean motivation score approximately 3.39 with a standard deviation of 0.30. The independent samples t-test p-value was very close to zero ( $p < 0.05$ ) which means the treatment group had significantly higher motivation scores compared to the comparison group after the intervention. Furthermore, the pre and post mean motivation scores of the participants were compared through paired samples t-test as displayed in table 3 below.

**Table 3** The Comparison of Treatment Group Pre and Post Intervention Motivation Scores

	Paired Differences					T	Df	p-value
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Post intervention motivation- pre intervention motivation	2.75826	.34058	.07102	2.61098	2.90554	38.840	22	.001

**$P < 0.05$**

Table 3 shows that there was a substantial difference between the mean motivation scores of the treatment group before and after the intervention. Since the p-value (.001) is less than the common significance levels, the significant difference in motivation scores suggests that there is evidence to infer that the intervention had an impact on motivation of students. In other words, using competitive team-based learning seems to have positively impacted motivation in the treatment group.

**Table 4** The Comparison of Comparison Group Pre and Post Intervention Motivation Scores

Table 1: The Comparison of Comparison Group Pre and Post Intervention Motivation Scores								
	Paired Differences					T	Df	p-value
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Post intervention motivation- pre intervention motivation	2.515	.0908	0.0112	1.2427	2.1744	11.16	21	.001

**$P < 0.05$**



Table 4 shows that the comparison group scored difference between the mean scores of pre-intervention motivation and post intervention motivation. Since the p-value (.001) is less than the common significance levels, the significant difference in motivation scores suggests that there is evidence to infer that the intervention had an impact on motivation of students. In other words, using conventional method seems to have positively impacted motivation in the comparison group.

Although it less compared with the treatment group, the comparison group' scores improved after the intervention i.e. the difference between the mean of post intervention motivation score and pre intervention motivation score is statistically significant.

## 6. Discussion

This study aimed at investigating the effect of competitive team-based learning on students' motivation in paragraph writing. In doing so, two sections of 45 second year economics department students (23 students in the treatment group and 22 students in the comparison group) were involved in the study. Both pre-intervention and post-intervention questionnaires were administered to the participants. While the former was used in order to identify the participants' existing motivation, the latter was aimed at assessing the effects of CTBL on participants' motivation. This section presents and discusses these results in light of the objective of the study and ideas of scholars as well as findings from the previous related studies.

Based on this, the data from pre-intervention questionnaires were analyzed through independent samples t-test. The first group had a mean score of 1.6296 and the second group got a mean score of 1.6067. The p-value for comparing the mean scores between the two groups was found **.760** ( $P>0.05$ ) which revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in the motivation level between the treatment and comparison groups before the CTBL intervention. This means, in other words, the results from this test showed that the average scores of the two groups were homogeneous.

Then, the first group which had 23 students was assigned as treatment group and the second group with 22 students was assigned as comparison group. Next, the treatment group attended their paragraph writing class through competitive team-based learning whereas the comparison group learned using conventional method which means based on the course syllabus. The contents and sequences of the lessons were the same in both conditions. Even, the two groups were taught by the same instructor from the department of English language and literature.

After the treatment was conducted for 36 hours, a post-intervention questionnaire was administered to the two groups, and the data were analyzed using independent samples t-test. Based on this, the post-intervention questionnaires mean score for the treatment group was 4.3878 whereas the comparison group had a mean score of 3.3891 with a p-value of 0.001( $p<0.005$ ). These results disclosed that the treatment group showed significant improvements in their paragraph writing performances compared to the comparison group.

In addition, scores from the pre-intervention and post-intervention questionnaires for both groups were computed using paired samples t-test. In both cases, the p-values were less than 0.05 indicating that there were statistically significant differences between the pre-intervention and post-intervention questionnaires scores. However, the difference between the two groups lied in the magnitude of the mean difference. The treatment group showed a substantial difference (2.76) between the post-intervention and pre-intervention scores, but the difference between the post-intervention and pre-intervention scores of the comparison group was 1.78, less than that of the treatment group.

The overall results from the questionnaire indicated that the group who learned their writing lessons through competitive team- based learning showed substantial improvement on their motivation compared to their counterparts and their previous scores before the intervention.

These showed that CTBL has considerable effects in enhancing EFL students' motivation to write paragraph. This is in line with idea of Fulu (2007) who say that competitive learning can increases the motivation levels of students thereby providing them with opportunity to work harder and learn beyond their normal curriculum. Similarly, Cheung & Lam (2001) say that using competitive learning in classroom play a vital role in enhancing students' motivation thereby improving their achievements. According to DiNapoli (2018), team based competitive learning can be used as power for motivating students although an overly competitive environment presents its own challenges. Using competitive learning in classroom can enhance students' motivation (Munoz-Merino et al., 2014).

Findings from global studies also agree with the results of present study though they have been conducted on different skills than writing skills. For example, Hosseini and Salar (2019) conducted a study in order to compare the effects of CTBL and reciprocal teaching of reading on learners' reading comprehension. The study came up with findings that show CTBL was more effective in improving the reading comprehension of EFL students. Seco (2019) also conducted a study entitled: Engaging Senior High School Students Through Competitive Collaboration. The study found that competitive collaboration enhances student motivation and improve learning outcomes. In addition, a study by Chen (2019) investigated how different modes of game design influenced learning outcomes focusing on peer learning and intergroup competition, and it came up with the findings that showed peer-competition groups increased students' interests. Besides, Chang et al. (2014) made a study on how a mobile competition game influenced students' engagement and interest in learning about local culture. The results revealed that the mobile competition game positively affected students' motivation in learning about local culture



## 7. Conclusion and Implication

The findings of the study revealed that using competitive team- based learning is effective in enhancing EFL students' motivation to write paragraphs. Therefore, EFL instructors are recommended to use CTBL in their respective writing classrooms. Similarly, syllabus designers should consider the features of CTBL when developing teaching materials for writing course. Besides, researchers are suggested to conduct further studies on the problem understudy thereby coming up with comparable results.

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