ENHANCING STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION IN ENGLISH CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT-*The objective of this study is to analyze the "Enhancing students' engagement and motivation in English creative writing skills." For this purpose, two questionnaires, one for students and other for teachers, were developed for collection of data.The survey method and face-to-face interview techniques were used to collect data from a sample of 130 students and 10 teachers that belonged to Government schools in Multan city. Fixed method approach was adopted to analyze the . Five points Likert scale was used to measure the attitude of the students about language hazards, teachers' lessons, lack of interest in writing skill, available resources, reading habits, awareness about writing tools, testing and assessment system. The response of teachers was recorded and compared with one another. SPSS software was used to calculate the results. Our findings show that the students can get motivated by paying full attention to their reading and writing skills. The continuous assessment may enhance students' creative writing skill.*

KEYWORDS: *Enhancement, Motivation, Mixed-method approach*

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1-INTRODUCTION:

1.1 Background of study:

The research study is carried out to measure the ability of writing skill among the students of Government schools. As it is generally observed that writing skill is the most ignored skills amongst all, although this is the productive expertise. This study is based on the rationale that enforcing formal and authentic assessment strategies is essential for developing creative thinking and oral and written communication skill.

1.2 Main Research Problem:

There is a growing world-wide inclination for children to start learning English at an earlier age in many schools to create a versatile group of writers. Furthermore, there have been more studies focusing on secondary students. Students of secondary classes normally hesitant due to the poor grammar. Their academic career only focuses on cramming. In that case they feel shy and less motivated towards studies. This is the main problem of this research paper how to improve writing skill among the students.

1.3 Objective of study:

Main objectives of the study include:

● To study the environment of engagement and motivation of students in creative writing.

● To motivate and engage the students, in writing English text, with good grammar and vocabulary.

● To enhance and encourage reading skills for learning better comprehension of the language text.

● To support them in developing their own understanding about learning language.

● To suggest how creative writing skills can be enhanced among students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Oberman and Kapka, (2001) stated that an aptitude towards writing can be improved by learning through repetition. If the teachers would be aware of the writing process, this would help in teaching appropriate strategies that would also improve the writing abilities of students in educational environment. Accordingly, studies conducted in Karachi, at primary level shared the view that young students are lacking writing skills and the teachers don't seem to using a proper writing procedure too. Therefore, this study was aimed at describing the difficulties pertaining to composition writing and strategies to develop writing abilities of the students to write creatively. Mainly, there are five stages of writing process that include: Prewriting, Drafting, Revising, Editing and Publishing. Learning the writing process is important for the students as it enables students to express their thoughts, knowledge and feelings efficiently.

Awan (2014) stated that the role of teachers in enhancing the writing skill and creativity among students is vital. The different strategies followed by teachers to improve the learning of students prove fruitful. Similarly, the evaluation and assessment of students through quiz, short questions and assignments also very important. These techniques must be used widely.

According to Brookes and Marshall (2004) imagination and originality are valued more than the standardization of thought and truthfulness while characterizing creative writing. While assessing the student for creative writing, they are given space to fabricate the content.

Sharples, (1996) stated that the students to write creatively, it is essential that their thoughts should not be restricted in any way.

Rechards, (1990) contended that planning, organization and discovery of thought are prerequisites for creative writing. If the students are restrained they will not be able to sustain the uniqueness of their work and the creativity might be compromised as well.

Basaran, (2007) said that the most appropriate variety on study is narration,

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speaking in terms of creative writing.

Kucuk, (2007) elaborated that this genre encompasses the factual and fictional text created by the students. In order to motivate the students to engage in creative writing exercises the teachers should provide sufficient opportunities to the students to involve themselves in high order thinking and a regular habit of reading. Recently, it has been observed that researchers in language learning area are intensely interested in the area of learning strategies.

According to Bajarano et al (1997), small group helps the students to devise their own learning strategies. Even after this point had been established, a small number of researchers looked into the effectiveness of these learning strategies- one of which was brain storming-in the field of teaching creative skills such as writing.

Tompkins (2004) stated that writing process resembles a road map, through this the students, actions and thoughts can be monitored right from the beginning till the end. He further said that a stage from this process can be skipped and reached to later on but cannot be skipped altogether. In order to make the students think creatively, they should be given opportunity to see world through windows and observe it and they can write creatively without any fear.

Hun & O Donnell, (1970) emphasized that all the educational schools place great importance on writing. Whilst teaching, the teachers often find that some students are able to articulate their thoughts quite well while the others are not. This is mainly because writing is a skill that some students are more proficient in than others. As we all know, writing is an important skill especially in settings where English is taught as a foreign language. In classes where students are required to master certain genres of writing, the importance of writing as a skill is highlighted. It becomes vital for the teachers in the educational settings to pay concentration on the growing needs of the students, their parents' expectations from their children to write in English and the requirement of the schools. Hence, this study was established with an aim of enhancing the creative writing skills.

Williams and Burden (1997) argued that as it is described by "[extensive] routine with regards to [the] syntactic framework through un-contextualized sentences" without satisfactory contemplations for significance specifically, the capability of English as an innovative and by expressive medium has been ignored in the essential classroom, in spite of some experiencing changes to the English dialect educational programs which are gone for urging more introduction to and utilization of the imaginative parts of English through the dialect expression.

Do¨rnyei, (2003) stressed that instructors can work effectively to enhance students' inspiration. One method for improving students' inspiration and engagement to compose is to give chances to them to connect with at a more significant level with the dialect through refocusing their written work classes to make them important to their social setting, and in addition planning composing errands which have importance and enthusiasm to them and offer open doors for social communication. The truth that English, which is a moment or extra dialect for the greater part of students, remains the dialect of guideline in South Africa, likewise exhibits a test to learning and educating at college.

Banda (2007) stated that the issue of poor scholastic composition to students having no other alternative yet to think about English, which is their second, third or fourth dialect. Besides, as Jacobs (2005:476) contends, students who are educated in a moment dialect (English in this specific circumstance) are denied quick access to content. For example, the examination abilities show, characterized as the hypothesis of dialect which underlines surface structures, sentence structure and spelling (Lea and Street 1998:159), tends to concentrate predominantly on de-contextualized surface highlights of dialect, for example, language structure and punctuation.

As indicated by Boughey (2000:281), the impediments of the examination abilities demonstrate are that they name ESL students as not having any dialect and recommend that their dialect issues can be comprehended through presenting healing English classes educated by English dialect experts.

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Wingate (2006) suggested that insufficient methodologies, including the examination abilities display, ought to be totally relinquished, this investigation contends that no single model can address students" composing challenges as students belong to different communities and have distinctive scholarly needs

## 2.1- Distinction of this study:

This research study is different from quoted studies in a way that it has been conducted in Multan city to analyze the level of engagement and motivation of the students in creative writing activities. The primary data, which was collected from different public schools, was used in this research. Although this a specific study, yet its result can be generalized for further research.

3- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

In this section, nature of research, type of data, population and sample of study, selected variables, analytical techniques, data collection techniques and research procedure is being discussed. This study follows a mixed-method approach because of the nature of the problem, research questionnaires and structured interviews were the sources of data collection. The questionnaire include mainstream questions in order to seek students perception about enhancing 'engagement and motivation in English creative writing skills and qualitative approach is adopted to take in-depth interviews of teachers of English discipline regarding their views on implementation of curriculum design model, influence of creative writing skills on learner's performance, strategies and tools used in testing and assessing writing tasks, challenges of teaching in underprivileged schools , how feedback proves beneficial for learners and shortcomings of examination system. These methods are discussed in detail in terms of their structure, design, collection and procedure.

3.1 Nature of research:

Mixed method approach is used in this research that involves collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data to investigate questions of interest (See Figure 1)

Figure 1: Data collection

Mixed method

Qualitative

Quantitative

Interview

Observation
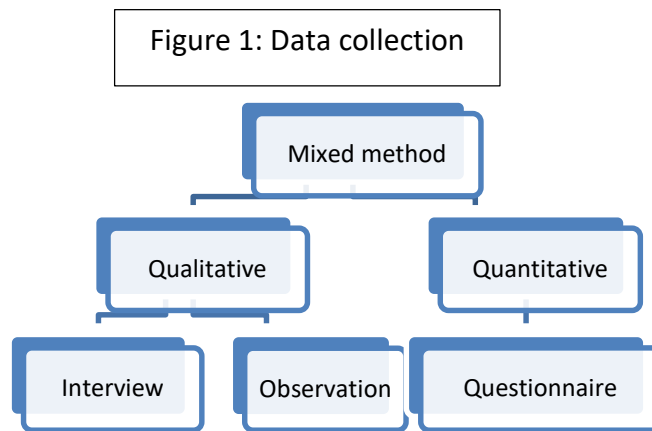
Questionnaire

3.2 Type of data:

We collected primary data through structured questionnaire. The process of collecting data and its source has been shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Primary data

Type of data

Primary data

Questionnaire

In-depth interviews
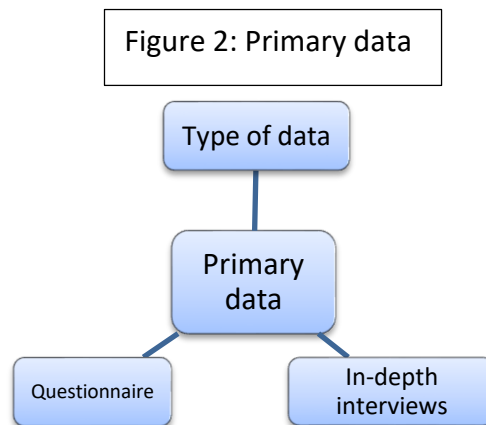
3.3 Sample of study:

The purpose of sampling is to collect information about the population with a specific goal to draw some conclusions. For this purpose, quantitative random sampling technique applied. Probability sampling technique is employed as it is a deliberate and unbiased process. This forms the basis of random sampling. Random sampling meets assumptions of many statistical procedures. For qualitative cluster sampling was used in this study. (See Figure3).

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Qualitative Sampling

Figure 3: Qualitative sampling
- Probability sampling
- Cluster sampling
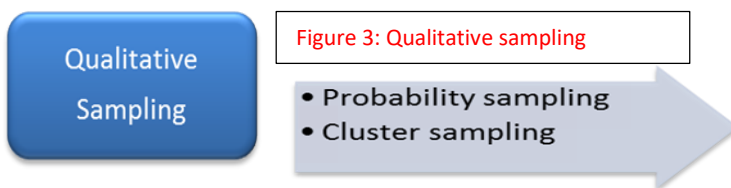
The students from 6 to 8 class were included in this study as participants and their total number was 130. The sampling institutions were Government High schools located in Multan city.

3.4   Data collection method

Reid (2006) suggests that reliability and validity of questionnaire is equally important in conducting surveys in educational research. Student's questionnaire and teacher's interview were two main methods of data collection (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Mixed-method approach

Mixed method • Methods of Data collection

Students • Questionnaires

Teachers • In-depth interviews
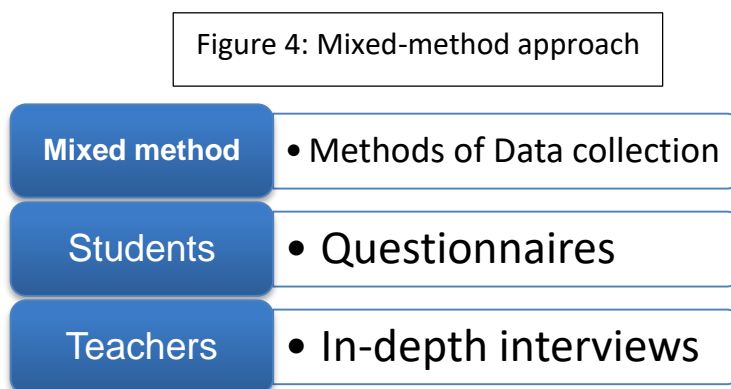
First stage of development of questionnaire consisted of relevant literature i.e. books, journals, articles and research papers. In the second stage, supervisor was consulted to review the items and variables of questionnaire. He gave clear instructions for constructing a questionnaire. Third stage of data collection involved conducting a

piloting questionnaire. For that purpose, a group of 10 students were asked to fill the questionnaire as a pilot test. Questionnaire was comprised of 7 variables, each containing 5 close-ended questions covering the discipline of undergraduate level i.e. humanities (Psychology, English). The questionnaire contains three sections, first section included demographic data (e.g.name, gender, age, education); the second section included the statements; and the third section included open-ended response. In the last stage of data collection, questionnaires were distributed among the students in the classroom. Data collection of qualitative research was done with the help of in-depth interviews of faculty members. It consisted of 7 close-ended questions with a fixed choice of answers constructed to know teachers' viewpoint about testing and assessment in large classes. We preferred qualitative interviewing because of its appropriateness for research. Interviews are proved significant as they help in collecting in-depth data as the participants are more willing to actively participate and respond to answer the questions in the same context.

3.5. Analytical Techniques

For analyzing the quantitative data, SPSS software (Statistical program for social science) for providing a comprehensive analysis of collected data for the study. It proves helpful to take out results in statistical way. Descriptive statistics are employed for frequency computations.

3.6 Frequencies of Quantitative Research sample:

Table 1 shows the frequencies of 52 males (40 percent) and 78 females (60 percent) in the sample, giving a total of 130 respondents.

Table 1 Gender of response

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	52	39.7	40.0	40.0
Female	78	59.5	60.0	100.0
Total	130	99.2	100.0	

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Table 2 shows frequencies of the age of respondents having the age groups between the ages of 17 to 21 years.

Table 2 Age of respondents

Age group	Frequency	Valid Percentage
17-19	84	64.6%
20-21	46	35.4%
Total	130	100

Table 3 shows the response rate shows that 130 participants of arts and humanities department among 200 participants of undergraduate department participated in the study.

Table 3 Response Rate

Research study	Potential participants	Sample of population	Response rate
Bachelors of Sciences	200	130	52%

3.5 Selected variables:

The selected variables of this research study are the followings: -

1. Causes of less interest in writing skills

2. Language hazards

3. Available resources

4. Teachers lesson planning

5. Reading habits of students

6. Awareness of writing tools

7.Testing and assessment system

The students responded to seven variables each comprising of five close-ended questions. Data analysis of 40 close-ended statements of questionnaire was carried out through SPSS software.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Causes of less interest in writing skills

First variable was labeled as CLIWS. It was comprised of following five close-ended statements.

1. I am overburdened due to the weekly study load (CLIWS).
2. I have selective writing topics to experience my writing skills (CLIWS).
3. I have to cover chapters of the text books which makes me less motivated to create a piece of writing (CLIWS).
4. I like regular writing practice (CLIWS).
5. I have to spend more time on grammar or on punctuation when I am asked to write (CLIWS).

The results of the above statements are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Frequency and percentage analysis

Variable	Options	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
CLIWS 1	Frequency	40	17	32	25	16
CLIWS 1	Percentage	30.8	13.1	24.6	19.2	12.3
CLIWS 2	Frequency	55	17	41	10	7
CLIWS 2	Percentage	42.3	13.1	31.5	7.7	5.4
CLIWS 3	Frequency	27	33	26	30	14
CLIWS 3	Percentage	20.8	25.4	20	23.1	10.8
CLIWS 4	Frequency	45	47	22	10	6
CLIWS 4	Percentage	34.6	36.2	16.9	7.7	4.6
CLIWS 5	Frequency	32	52	26	14	6
CLIWS 5	Percentage	24.6	40	20	10.8	4.6

4.2. Language Hazards

Second variable was labeled as LH. It was comprised of following five close-ended statements.

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1. I feel less encouraged to go for self-assessment creating involvement and responsibility (LH).
2. I can learn from peer checking and reading books (LH).
3. I have never been encouraged to deliver presentations (LH).
4. I agree that group work promotes intellectual and social skills (LH).
5. I would like to understand the importance of peer assessment lifts the role of student (LH). The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage analysis

Variable	Options	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
LH 1	Frequency	48	42	21	3	16
LH1	Percentage	36.9	32.3	16.9	2.3	12.2
LH2	Frequency	41	43	27	16	3
LH2	Percentage	31.5	33.1	20.8	12.3	2.3
LH3	Frequency	32	70	12	7	9
LH3	Percentage	24.6	53.8	9.2	5.3	6.9
LH4	Frequency	38	69	12	4	7
LH4	Percentage	29.2	53.1	9.2	3.1	5.4
LH5	Frequency	52	45	25	5	3
LH5	Percentage	40	34.6	19.2	3.8	2.3

4.3. Available Resources

Third variable was labeled as AR. It was comprised of following five close-ended statements.

1. I do not receive plenty of feedback from my teacher to understand the importance of the task (AR).
2. Oral feedback comes back very quickly; however, I need a written response (AR).
3. Feedback helps in making mind map of the task (AR).

4. I like to attend conferences helping me in learning the importance of writing task (AR).

5. I understand the need of assessment and I know it improves learning and instruction (AR).

    The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage analysis

Variable	Options	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
AR 1	Frequency	40	49	27	8	6
AR1	Percentage	30.8	37.7	20.8	6.2	4.6
AR2	Frequency	60	25	36	7	2
AR2	Percentage	46.2	19.2	27.7	5.4	1.5
AR3	Frequency	40	29	39	10	12
AR3	Percentage	30.8	22.3	30	7.7	9.2
AR4	Frequency	22	32	25	39	12
AR4	Percentage	16.9	24.6	19.2	30	9.2
AR5	Frequency	49	50	12	9	10
AR5	Percentage	37.7	38.5	9.2	6.9	7.7

4.4. Teacher Lesson Plan

Fourth variable was labeled as TLP. It was comprised of following five close-ended questions.

1. I believe that motivation helps in developing and sense of competition (TLP)

2. Teacher 's lesson planning could manage to develop feedback which modifies better instructions (TLP)

3. I would like to know the assessment plan from my teacher which would identify academic potential in me. (TLP)

4. Feedback and follow up provide motivation and engagement to learn English creative writing skills. (TLP).

5. Familiarizing with the objective type test (story writing, etc) could be taught to me time to time. (TLP).

The results of fourth variable is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Frequency and percentage analysis

Variable	Options	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TLP	Frequency	55	58	8	2	7
TLP	Percentage	42.3	44.6	6.2	1.5	5.3
TLP	Frequency	46	58	19	5	2
TLP	Percentage	35.4	44.6	14.6	3.8	1.5
TLP	Frequency	41	62	15	5	7
TLP	Percentage	31.5	47.7	11.5	3.8	5.4
TLP	Frequency	25	24	50	28	3
TLP	Percentage	19.2	18.5	38.5	21.5	2.3
TLP	Frequency	53	43	27	4	3
TLP	Percentage	40.8	33.1	20.8	3.1	2.3

4.5-Reading habits of students

Fifth variable was labeled as RHS. It was consisted of following five close-ended questions.

1. Comprehension passage improves writing skill (RHS)
2. I feel trouble in preparing essay type test of my own. (RHS)
3. I understand logical thinking and critical reasoning help writing task motivated and easy (RHS)
4. I would like to understand the comprehensive knowledge, skills and techniques to learn writing skill more effectively. (RHS)
5. Reading could make my composition writing better. (RHS)

The answer to the above statements are given in table 5.

Table 5: Frequency and percentage analysis

Variable	Options	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
RHS 1	Frequency	45	62	11	6	6
RHS 1	Percentage	34.6	47.7	8.5	4.6	4.6
RHS 2	Frequency	38	67	5	6	12
RHS 2	Percentage	29.2	51.5	10.8	3.8	4.6
RHS3	Frequency	52	54	12	7	5
RHS3	Percentage	40	41.5	9.2	5.4	3.8
RHS4	Frequency	51	49	17	10	3
RHS4	Percentage	39.2	37.7	13.1	7.7	2.3
RHS5	Frequency	32	28	43	16	11
RHS5	Percentage	24.6	21.5	33.1	12.3	8.5

4.6- Awareness about writing tools

Sixth variable was labeled as AWS. It was comprised of the following five close-ended questions.

1. I feel that often teacher determines the causes of learning problems (AWS).
2. My teacher has a plan for remedial action for my examination only. (AWS)
3. My teacher takes quizzes at the end of learning or at the end of the test (AWS)
4. I want to learn mind mapping which could help me to connect with the ideas (AWS).
5. Conferences proves beneficial for assessment purpose.

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The results of the above statements are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Frequency and percentage analysis

Variable	Options	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
AWS 1	Frequency	48	41	29	6	6
AWS 1	Percentage	36.9	31.5	22.3	4.6	4.6
AWS 2	Frequency	43	37	38	5	7
AWS2	Percentage	33.1	28.5	29.2	3.8	5.4
AWS3	Frequency	48	54	15	6	7
AWS3	Percentage	36.9	41.5	11.5	4.6	5.4
AWS4	Frequency	42	63	12	8	5
AWS4	Percentage	32.3	48.5	9.2	6.2	3.8
AWS5	Frequency	45	62	14	7	2
AWS5	Percentage	34.6	47.7	10.8	5.4	1.5

7-Testing and assessment system

Seventh variable was labeled as TAS. It was consisted of five close-ended questions.

1. It helps to improve learning and instruction for valuable writing (TAS).
2. It creates motivation and sense of competition in me (TAS).
3. I want a constructive feedback from my teachers to modify the order of my weaknesses (TAS).
4. It helps to identify my academic potential which will lead me towards learning more with confidence (TAS).
4. Feedback provides motivation for erudition by enhancing and encouraging the motivation and engagement in knowing writing skills more quickly. (TAS).

   The results of the above five statements are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Frequency and percentage analysis

Variable	Options	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TAS 1	Frequency	51	65	8	5	5
TAS 1	Percentage	39.2	50	6.2	3.8	3.8
TAS 2	Frequency	45	72	10	1	2
TAS 2	Percentage	34.6	55.4	7.7	0.8	1.5
TAS 3	Frequency	63	56	7	3	1
TAS 3	Percentage	48.5	43.1	5.4	2.3	0.8
TAS 4	Frequency	56	56	13	5	5
TAS 4	Percentage	43.1	43.1	10	3.8	3.8
TAS 5	Frequency	48	62	15	3	1
TAS 5	Percentage	36.9	47.7	11.5	2.3	0.8

5. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

We have drawn following results from data analysis:

The results of our study show that Testing and assessment has a positive impact on student's learning and motivation. Our study highlights the fact that self-assessment encourages student's involvement in creative activities. The responses of students showed that Students learn more from doing assignments than from studying course material. During the study we have noted that delivering presentations help the students to improve their communication skills. Group work promotes more intellectual and social skills among them. Similarly, peer assessment lifts the role and status of student from passive to active learner.

Students get plenty of feedback on how they are doing in class. Feedback of teachers on student's work is often delayed. There is hardly any feedback on student's assignments when they receive it back. Students learn more if they receive more feedback. Feedback mainly shows how well the students are doing in relation to others. It helps students to understand things better and also guide them. Feedback

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prompts them to go back over the material covered earlier in the course. Students do the same amount of work regardless an assignment is due or not. Students prefer to study the things that are going to be covered in the assignments and spend more time in their preparation. Our results reveal that students have to study regularly if they want to do well in the subject. The extend their reading that generate reading habits among them.

6. CONCLUSIONS

We conclude from the above findings and engagement and motivation of the students enhance their creative writing skill. Moreover, the evaluation and assessment procedure also enhance the knowledge level and as well as creativity of the students. Assignments, short tests and quiz also generate the interest of students in their study and improve their performance in the examinations.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS:

There are a number of recommendations that can be made based on the findings of research. Analysis of teacher's interviews show that teachers face the main challenge of difficulty in meeting the needs of mixed ability classes.

1. Different teaching strategies should be developed to cope with these challenges.
2. Maximum use of technology should be opted in large classes to grab student's attention.
3. Teachers should give proper feedback on the writing tasks as the students learn more if they receive more feedback.
4. Shortcomings of examination system should be overwhelmed by compiling and displaying result at the given time available and satisfactory schedule of exams calendar should be made.
5. Testing and assessment should be given supreme importance in class as it motivates the students to study and helps to identify their strength and weakness.

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CONTRIBUTION OF AUTHORS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This research work was carried out in collaboration between two authors.

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