

## Effectiveness of Editing and Proofreading Skills in Improving Academic Writing of Law Students

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Writing skills are the most difficult language skills for students, especially those students with English as a Second Language (ESL) and as an English Foreign Language (EFL) in various academic institutions. This situation has made most college students fail to write effective academic works. This study assessed the effectiveness of the Editing and Proofreading Skills Course in improving the academic writing of law students in Tanzania. Specifically, the study assessed the common errors made by law students in academic writing. The study involved the action research design consisting of pre- and post-interventions. Data were collected through observations and questionnaire methods. Data were analysed statistically through the Wilcoxon Signed-rank test and the McNemar exact test at 95% confidence intervals to analyse the before and after intervention data. The study found that law students had a limited basic understanding of the editing and proofreading techniques before the intervention. After the intervention, there was a significant improvement in students' writing skills as the results showed an exact p-value of 0.000. It recommends the inclusion of specific instructions on Editing and Proofreading Skills Courses as part of the Legal Education Curriculum in Tanzania.

Keywords: editing skills, writing skills, self-editing, peer editing, proofreading, EFL/ESL, academic writing, Tanzania

### INTRODUCTION

Writing skills are used when drafting or composing different academic works including essays, papers, dissertations, proposals, and even when doing different examinations. Writing skills are one of the most challenging skills for students, especially those who have learned English as a Foreign Language (EFL). According to scholars, writing is the most difficult skill to be mastered by a second or foreign-language student (Richards & Renandya, 2002; Wati & Sari, 2019).

The complexities in writing skills are rooted in students' failure to master different techniques and procedures for effective academic writing. For instance, all college students are supposed to master three stages of writing academic work. These stages include the pre-writing stage, writing stage, and post-writing stages (Apsari, 2017; Wati & Sari, 2019). There are more challenges in composing effective academic works during the writing and post-writing stages.

The writing stage involves composing the paper, which is sometimes characterised by several errors. According to scholars, the drafting phase is an attempt to draw ideas or thoughts together in a coherent piece of writing, with more content where the focus is on what the author wants to write before considering what should be written or communicated (University of Western Cape, 2003). After writing the first draft, the author can consider revising the draft to improve its quality. The revision phase of writing helps the writer to correct the content and the structure of the draft by looking at how the argument is logically flowing, how the linking devices are used, the linkage of points, unnecessary repetitions, and the proper use of units of discourse such as sentences, paragraphs

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and chapters (University of Western Cape, 2003). This stage involves revising the second draft, editing it, and preparing the final draft of the paper (Wati & Sari, 2019). In editing and proofreading the draft, the author is advised to check the text for grammatical correctness and adherence to the writing conventions, including the appropriate use of discourse vocabulary, formal style, grammatical clarity such as appropriate sentence structure, word classes, tenses, spellings, and citations (University of Western Cape, 2003). According to Azariadis (2017), editing skills help the author to improve the expression by eliminating redundancies, tautologies, and repetitions or may improve the structure of your arguments. The author may add several ideas that he thinks are necessary for his writing, and revise, and edit his composition (Apsari, 2017).

The most challenging problem of academic writing among college students is associated with their failure to follow these stages of writing academic papers or essays, especially the last stage of post-writing. University or college students are not often skilful in the written language and face some difficulties of different kinds (Pospelova, 2016). This situation makes most college students, especially those who have learned English as their second or foreign language fail to compose the error-free versions of the texts with ideas flowing logically and coherently. As a result of these problems, most colleges or universities have adopted teaching of the Editing and Proofreading Skills Course to their students as a coping tactic for improving writing skills. Editing and proofreading skills have been playing an imperative role in improving the academic works of students of various levels and programs globally and in specific countries. According to Sangeetha (2020), the editing and revision stages play a significant role in the writing process and enhance students' writing skills.

Similarly, several legal institutions have incorporated Editing and Proofreading Skills courses into their legal education curriculums. This is the most important course to them because law students are highly expected to master writing skills which eventually will be used in drafting different legal documents. For instance, at the Institute of Judicial Administration Lushoto, which is in Tanzania, first-year students of diploma in law are taught editing and proofreading skills to be able to demonstrate these skills in different academic works. Teaching editing and proofreading skills among the law students has not been assessed its effectiveness. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of the Editing and Proofreading Skills Course in improving law students' academic writing in Tanzania. Specifically, the study examined the effectiveness of editing and proofreading skills courses taught in improving academic works, assessed the extent of mastery of editing techniques in writing essays, and finally, examined the common errors made by law students when writing different academic works including essays.

### **Literature Review**

This section reviews the empirical literature related to the effectiveness of editing and proofreading skills in improving academic writing among students in different contexts. Numerous studies have been conducted on different techniques for improving students' academic writing skills globally and in specific countries. The majority of studies have been done more specifically on how students can improve their academic works after composing the paper through feedback from teachers, revision, editing, and proofreading techniques. Scholars who have conducted their empirical studies on the importance of editing skills in improving the writing skills of students can be classified into four categories. Some investigated the importance of teachers' feedback and correction in improving the academic work of students. The second group of scholars examined the importance of self-editing. Another group of scholars assessed the effectiveness of peer editing in improving students' writing skills. Finally, another group of scholars compared the effectiveness of both self-editing and peer-editing techniques.

Some scholars investigated the effects of editing and proofreading in terms of teachers' feedback and correction responses on students' writing. There are numerous findings and conclusions from the

literature on the role of teacher's feedback and correction responses. There are those scholars who found that teacher feedback had a positive impact in improving students' writing skills while others the vice versa. A plentiful number of studies have been conducted to investigate the usefulness of teachers' feedback in improving students' writing skills. One of the ways of editing students' works is through teachers' feedback.

The first study investigated on teaching and learning in higher education (Smith & Brown, 1995). According to Smith and Brown (1995), teacher feedback plays an important role in improving organization, style, grammatical and lexical correction, and appropriateness. Other studies investigated the corrective feedback from teachers to affect students' compositions. For instance, a study was conducted to assess the impact of corrective feedback when teaching ESL/ EFL reading and writing (Nation, 2009). It was found that Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing helps teach students of all levels of ESL/EFL to improve proficiency in how to develop their reading and writing (Nation, 2009).

Furthermore, a study investigated the effectiveness of the content-focused feedback approach (Ashwell, 2000). This study compared the content-focused to the form-focused feedback of teachers to students' writing. The control pattern was zero. It was found that teachers' corrective feedback of content-focused approach did not give significant changes in improving students' writing skills (Ashwell, 2000).

Another study examined the effective use of coded and underlined forms of corrective feedback on second English language learners in the university in improving their writing skills (Ferris & Roberts, 2001). This study found that the treatment groups performed better than the control groups that received no feedback. This implied that the corrective feedback of teachers was useful in improving students' writing skills.

A similar kind of study was done to examine the use of corrective feedback in improving writing skills (Chandler, 2003). Contrary to the findings of the previous study, this study found that the direct correction and simple underlining of errors were significantly more effective than the underlining and describing the error types (Chandler, 2003).

An additional study investigated the effectiveness of direct and indirect corrective feedback in second language writing at the University of Bahrain media students (Mubarak, 2013). It was found that there were some improvements in students' writing, but neither type had a significant effect on their writing skills due to their low level of English. Generally, it was concluded that although teachers' feedback had positive effects in foreign contexts, its impacts on students' writing in Bahrain Higher education needed good feedback (Mubarak, 2013).

Other scholars investigated the importance of self-editing techniques in enhancing students' writing skills. The self-editing technique can be defined as the process of students improving their writing by transferring the micro-skills they learn when editing texts (Pospelova, 2016). According to this scholar, self-editing skills are extremely important, especially to foreign language learners, and without these skills, students would fail to compose appropriate their academic works (Pospelova, 2016).

Numerous studies examined the effectiveness of the self-editing technique. For instance, one study was conducted to investigate the role of self-editing techniques in enhancing the writing skills of English as a foreign language student (Sangeetha, 2020). Data from this study were collected through students' composition scores, questionnaire surveys, and semi-structured interviews. The findings from qualitative data showed that students' writing skills improved significantly after using the self-editing technique. Also, it has highlighted the students' perceptions regarding learning of self-editing

skills in writing classes. Additionally, quantitative findings demonstrated that the significant implications of self-editing revision can facilitate students' writing skills (Sangeetha, 2020).

Another study explored the efficacy and its effect on academic engagement: Meta-analysis (Fatimah, Murwani, Farida, & Hitipeuw, 2024). The study aimed to meta-analyse correlational studies on self-efficacy and academic engagement between 2015 and 2022. Meta-analysis was used to examine correlation studies on the effect of self-efficacy on academic engagement. The meta-analysis calculated 68 effect sizes for the 24 studies. It was found that the random effects model and the effect size were significant, with a moderate average effect size ( $d=0.54$ ). The results also indicate that the effects of self-efficacy on academic engagement vary significantly depending on geographical regions.

Another study assessed the influence of self-editing in boosting writing in English as the second language on the micro-skills of learners of the second year of the Faculty of Economics at the National Research University of the Higher School of Economics in Moscow (Pospelova, 2016). This study analysed 50 essays written in English as the second language and reported on the most frequent errors they usually commit in their formal writing. It was found that students were more often weak in producing coherent and cohesive paragraphs they lacked appropriate argumentation and were most often inaccurate in using grammatical structures and lexis (Pospelova, 2016).

Other studies were conducted to investigate the effectiveness of peer editing techniques in improving the writing skills of students. For instance, a recent study was conducted to examine how peer editing can improve the writing skills of students of grade XI of Bahasa dan Budaya in Kudus (Nugroho, 2021). In this study, 35 students were selected in the class to participate in this action research consisting of two cycles that involved planning, observing, and reflecting. The findings of this study showed that there were improvements in the writing skills of students when peer editing was implemented in classroom situations (Nugroho, 2021).

A similar study was conducted on class XI students in SMK TI Pembangunan Cimahi aiming to improve students' skills of writing (Wati & Sari, 2019). Data were collected through observation and writing tests. The findings of the study revealed that peer editing improved students' writing skills. It was also found that peer editing was an appropriate technique for students of grade XI in SMK TI Pembangunan Cimahi (Wati & Sari, 2019).

Other studies have been conducted to investigate the usefulness of peer editing in improving the writing skills of learners. Additional studies investigated the role of editing skills in correcting errors made by students in their academic writing. Wali (2017) investigated the role of peer editing review in developing written accuracy for Bahrain Polytechnic students. This case study reported that students were able to recognise errors relatively correctly in peer editing exercises, but they needed more time and practice to correct such errors (Wali, 2017). This implied that the peer editing technique was ineffective in enhancing the writing skills of students. This was attributed mainly to their weakness in the English language and lack of sufficient training in editing skills (Wali, 2017).

The last group of scholars compared the effectiveness of self-editing and peer editing in improving students' academic writing skills. In this group of scholars, these two techniques were compared to examine the one that was more effective than the other in improving the quality of students' writing skills. One of the studies was conducted by Dially in 2010. This study examined the effectiveness of peer editing by comparing it with the effectiveness of self-editing in students' revision practices (Dially, 2010). The findings of this study report that peer-editing reduced significantly only the rule-based errors in the revised draft.

A similar study was also conducted by Arfan and Noor in 2008 on the effectiveness of peer editing and self-editing techniques in improving students' academic compositions (Arfan & Noor, 2018). This

descriptive study experimented on 40 students to assess the effects of these editing techniques in improving the quality of writing. It was found that peer editing helped students improve their writing skills more than the self-editing technique (Arfan & Noor, 2018)

The last study investigated organizing students' independent work at universities for professional competency formation and personality development (Tsvetkova, Saenko, Levina, Kondratenko, & Khimmataliev, 2021). The purpose of the research is to identify the features of organizing students' independent work and to study the psychological component of this process. The study used a questionnaire for the subjective assessment of the organization of students' independent work and valid psychodiagnostic methods for diagnosing personality characteristics of attitudes toward innovation. The study involved 52 students and 46 teachers from universities in Russia and Bulgaria. It was found that a teacher plays a leading role in organizing the independent work of students, so he/she must be able to quickly and effectively manage this process. There is a need for experience exchange, and interaction of teachers within the framework of international conferences and foreign internships to improve the educational process.

Generally, numerous empirical studies have been conducted to assess the effectiveness of various techniques of editing in improving the quality of students' writing skills. There were contradicting findings and conclusions across the varied techniques. In the first group of scholars, teachers' feedback was reported to have both positive and negative effects in improving the quality of writing. The same goes for the second, third, and fourth groups. Self-editing and peer editing have been highlighted to have different effects in improving students' writing skills. There is a need for more empirical studies to be conducted in this area to assess its effectiveness in different contexts. There is a paucity of literature that assessed the effectiveness of editing skills taught to law students in higher learning institutions. This study assessed the efficacy of the Editing and Proofreading Skills course taught to law students in the Tanzanian context.

## **METHOD**

This part presents the research methods used to collect and analyse data for this study. This study was conducted in the Tanzanian context at the Institute of Judicial Administration Lushoto (IJA) which is in the Tanga Region. The IJA is the technical college that offers National Technical Awards (NTA) levels 4, 5, and 6 in law subjects. This area was purposely chosen as the study area because it is one of the legal institutions that teaches editing and proofreading skills courses as a part of its curriculum.

This study used the Action Research Design. The action research is the research design or technique that involves collecting, analysing, and interpreting data that are repetitive in nature following certain procedures. Bailey (2001) defines action research as a method of data collection and interpretation that comprises a repeating cycle of procedures (Bailey, 2001). According to Burn (2010), the primary objective of action research is to find a problematic scenario that the participants, including instructors and students, believe is worth investigating further. A problematic area could be done better or is being examined for improvement. According to Mlowe and Diyanett (2012), this repetitive cycle of research involves four main themes including the purpose of the study is to resolve the organizational problem, its involvement or collaboration of practitioners in the research, its interactive nature of the research involving diagnosis, planning, taking action and evaluation and finally, the implications of the study (Mlowe & Diyanett, 2012, p. 42). This study used the action research design because it involved resolving the problem of poor writing skills by teaching them editing skills. The teacher, who was the researcher, and students participated in the action research by learning and applying skills of editing to improve their writing. Additionally, the iterative nature of action research aligns with the study goal of implementing ongoing interventions to address identified deficiencies in writing proficiency.

This study used a mixed research approach. Acknowledging the complex nature of the research problem, a mixed research approach was adopted to capture both qualitative and quantitative data. This approach facilitated an in-depth exploration of the aspects of editing and proofreading skills, while also quantifying the impact of the intervention. The study involved participant observation for qualitative elements and closed-ended questionnaires for quantitative data. 100 forms of questionnaires were distributed to 100 students before and after the interventions to assess the effectiveness of the editing and proofreading skills in improving students' academic writing. Participant observation is the method that allows the observer or investigator to share life with the groups being observed and make himself/ herself a member of the observed group (Mlowe & Diyanett, 2012). In this study, the researcher participated in teaching the topic of Editing Skills. He assessed the knowledge and skills possessed by students before being taught the topic. After learning and practicing self and peer editing and proofreading techniques, the investigator reassessed how students' writing skills have improved after learning and practicing such skills.

The second method of data collection involved filling out questionnaires. A questionnaire refers to a method of collecting statistical and qualitative data that consists of a series of questions asked to respondents/ individuals to obtain statistically useful information about a given topic under study (Roopa & Satya, 2012). Questionnaires were distributed to 100 students before teaching them the topic of Editing Skills to assess their knowledge and skills in editing their academic works. After a series of teaching, learning, and practicing self and peer-editing skills, the questionnaires were redistributed to students to assess knowledge and skills acquired after learning. This method facilitated the systematic collection of quantitative data, enabling us to gauge changes in students' editing knowledge and skills over time.

The statistical significance of the changes observed in students' editing proficiency before and after the intervention was assessed using the signed Wilcoxon test for paired data and the McNemar test for dichotomous outcomes. These non-parametric tests were selected because of the data's characteristics, which violated the assumptions of normal distribution and involved paired observations. By employing these tests, a robust statistical analysis was conducted that considered the paired nature of the data, offering dependable insights into the effectiveness of the editing skills intervention.

## **FINDINGS**

This action study was conducted repetitively in three phases. The first phase involved filling out the questionnaire before training students about the course Editing and Proofreading Skills. This action research aimed to assess how much students are aware of and use editing skills to improve their writing skills before training. The second phase involved training students on editing and proofreading skills. This phase involved also doing different practices and giving back responses after exercising to edit their academic works. Training methods included lecturing, group discussions, and assignments with the aid of PowerPoint presentations and flip charts. The topic was taught over three weeks involving 15 hours, five hours each week. Ten hours were used in teaching and learning the topic and 5 hours were for exercises. The last phase involved filling out the same questionnaires to check if there were any improvements in their writing skills.

### **Statistical Data Analysis**

Statistical analysis was done using the SPSS statistical software package, version 25. Descriptive statistics (percentages) were computed from the baseline survey to describe the population and assess the knowledge level of participants on various themes relating to editing and proofreading techniques. Also, identifying common errors relating to editing and proofreading that were committed by the participants before intervention. Further analysis was carried out to assess the effect of intervention; were for continuous data. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to examine the overall effect of editing and proofreading skills intervention. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was utilized as an

alternative for the sample-paired T-test. Since the data violated the assumption of normality, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was used to test the normality as the study sample is greater than 50 (see Table 1). On the other hand, for categorical data, the McNemar exact test at 95% confidence intervals was used to analyse the before and after intervention data to examine the effectiveness of the teaching method in bringing about knowledge improvement on individual topics.

Table 1  
Test of normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov2			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Score before intervention	0.136	100	0.000	0.935	100	0.000
Scores after intervention	0.494	100	0.000	0.423	100	0.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction. Source: (Researcher, 2023).

### General Characteristics of the Subjects

The sample (n 100) comprised 46% (n 46) male and 54% (n 54) female. All participants enrolled in the intervention were law students from the Institute of Judicial Administration Lushoto in Tanzania. Therefore, participants had common characteristics in terms of education level and pursued the same academic programme.

### Common Editing and Proofreading Errors Committed by Law Students

Before the intervention, survey results collected through a questionnaire demonstrated that students had a limited basic understanding of editing and proofreading techniques, as evidenced by the student's self-evaluation of errors they repeatedly committed when editing and proofreading essays and academic writings (Table 2). The most prominent errors revealed by the participants include errors relating to proofreading (80%), pronouns (75%), subject-verb agreement (75%), fragment run-on sentences (72%), thesis, paragraphs, and quotes (71%), spellings and capitalisation (63%), punctuations related errors (59%) and 57% of the participants committed errors concerning to not rereading the assignments to check answers.

Table 2  
Common errors of editing and proofreading made before intervention

No	Type of error	%	N
1	Proofreading the text	80%	80
2	Checking pronouns	75%	75
3	Checking subject-verb agreement	75%	75
4	Checking fragment and run-on sentences	72%	72
5	Checking thesis, paragraphs, and quotes	71%	71
6	Checking spelling and capitalization	63%	63
7	Checking punctuations	59%	59
8	Rereading the assignments to check answers	57%	57

Source: (Researcher, 2023).

### Effect of the Editing and Proofreading Skills Intervention

The Wilcoxon test results (Table 3) indicate that there are 100 positive ranks, and there were no ties and negative ranks. This implies that for all 100 participants; post-intervention scores were higher compared to the pre-intervention scores. Although a comparison of the mean of the distribution of the scores before and after intervention was desired due to the non-normality of the data based on Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test results (See Table 1), the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was conducted. The mean of the positive ranks is larger than that for negative ranks, suggesting that scores

for post-intervention are generally larger than for the pre-intervention. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test results in a Z statistic of -8.715, which results in an exact p-value of 0.000. This implies there is a significant improvement in scores after intervention. The results show that the total of the ranks for the negative differences is 0 whilst the total of the ranks for the positive differences is 5050, resulting in a mean rank of 50.50. Here, the mean of the positive ranks is larger than that for negative ranks, suggesting that scores after the intervention were generally larger than for pre-intervention.

Table 3  
Effects of editing and proofreading skills scores using wilcoxon signed rank test among law students

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Scores after intervention - Scores before intervention	Negative Ranks	0 <sup>a</sup>	0.00	0.00
	Positive Ranks	100 <sup>b</sup>	50.50	5050.00
	Ties	0 <sup>c</sup>		
	Total	100		
Z value	-8.715			
P value	.000*			

\* Significance considered as  $P < 0.05$

a. Scores after intervention < Scores before intervention

b. Scores after intervention > Scores before intervention

c. Scores after intervention = Scores before intervention

Note: Data are shown as a mean score during the intervention. Possible scores ranged from 0 to 16.

Source: (Researcher, 2023).

The effect of the intervention on individual themes was assessed using the McNemar test (Table 4). There was a significant ( $P < 0.001$ ) improvement in the overall editing and proofreading knowledge of the participants after the intervention. Out of eight techniques related to editing and proofreading techniques, the McNemar test showed a statistically significant improvement in all techniques. The pre-intervention survey showed that the baseline knowledge about the basics of editing and proofreading skills was negligible. However, after the intervention, the percentage of students who comprehended the techniques almost tripled.

At a baseline, only about 20% of students were proofreading the texts, which increased almost five times (95%) after the intervention. Also, the proportion of participants who checked fragments and run-on sentences increased from 28% to 93%. Number of students checked pronouns increased from 25% to 96%. The number of students rereading the assignments to check the answers doubled from 43% to 98% after the intervention, as did the proportion of participants who were knowledgeable about checking punctuations, verb agreement, thesis paragraphs, and quotes as well as checking spelling and capitalisation.

Also, several students who checked for the thesis of the texts, paragraphs, and quotations increased from 29% before the intervention to 99% after the intervention. The same happened even to students who checked subject-verb agreement. These students increased from 25% before the intervention and after the intervention, they increased to 97%. Similarly, students who checked the correctness of punctuations increased by doubling from 41% in the pre-intervention to 100% in the post-intervention. Finally, those students who checked the correctness of spelling and capitalization tripled from 37% before the intervention to 100% after the intervention. See Table 4.



Table 4  
Bivariate analysis of editing and proofreading skills before and after interventions at ija law students (n 100)

No	Editing and Proofreading Techniques	Before Intervention		After Intervention		McNemar test (P value) *
		%	N	%	N	
1	Checking fragment and run-on sentences	28%	28	93%	93	.000
2	Checking pronouns	25%	25	96%	96	.000
3	Rereading the assignments to check answers	43%	43	98%	98	.000
4	Proofreading the text	20%	20	95%	95	.000
5	Checking thesis, paragraphs, and quotes	29%	29	99%	99	.000
6	Checking subject-verb agreement	25%	25	97%	97	.000
7	Checking punctuations	41%	41	100%	100	.000
8	Checking spelling and capitalization	37%	37	100%	100	.000

\*Significance considered as  $P < 0.05$ ; Not significance  $P > 0.05$

Source: (Researcher, 2023).

## DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study indicate that the law students from the Institute of Judicial Administration Lushoto in Tanzania had a limited understanding of editing and proofreading techniques before the intervention. The majority of the students committed errors related to proofreading, pronouns, subject-verb agreement, fragment and run-on sentences, paragraphs and quotes, spelling and capitalization, and punctuation as well. This highlights the need for interventions aimed at improving these skills among law students.

The intervention was successful in improving the editing and proofreading skills of participants, as evidenced by the significant improvement in their scores after the intervention. The Wilcoxon Signed-rank Test showed that the post-intervention scores were generally larger than the pre-intervention scores. The McNemar Test revealed that there was a significant improvement in all eight editing and proofreading techniques assessed with the proportion of students who demonstrated understanding of these techniques almost tripling after the intervention. The improvements were particularly notable in proofreading, checking fragment and run-on sentences, checking pronouns, rereading assignments to check answers, checking thesis, paragraphs, and quotes, checking spelling and capitalization, and checking punctuations.

The findings from this study are consistent with the previous studies on the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving editing and proofreading skills among students. For instance, a study by Wali (2017) found that a writing intervention programme improved writing skills among college students. Similarly, another study showed that an intervention aimed at improving writing skills among grade XI school students led to significant improvements in their writing abilities (Wati & Sari, 2019). The study also adds to the existing literature by demonstrating the effectiveness of a targeted intervention in improving these skills among law students. The findings have implications for educational institutions, highlighting the importance of incorporating targeted interventions to improve the editing and proofreading skills of students, particularly in fields such as law that call for excellent academic writing.

The results of this study have important implications for law students and educators. Law students need to have strong editing and proofreading skills to produce high-quality essays and academic writings. Poor writing skills can negatively affect a student's grades, career prospects, and professional reputation. Since, the ability to write clearly and concisely is critical for lawyers, judges, and legal scholars, as legal documents must be accurate, concise, and free of errors. In addition, employers in the legal field often place a high value on strong writing abilities, as clear and persuasive writing is

critical in a variety of legal contexts, from drafting contracts to arguing cases in court. Therefore, interventions aimed at improving editing and proofreading skills are essential for law students.

Educators in law schools and other institutions of higher education need to incorporate interventions that aim to improve editing and proofreading skills into their teaching curriculum. This can be achieved through various approaches, such as training programmes, workshops, and peer-editing sessions. Such interventions should be integrated into the course content and spread over the entire academic year to ensure that students have enough time to develop these essential skills.

The limitations of this study include the fact that it was conducted in a single institution, limiting the generalizability of the results. Additionally, the study did not consider the impact of other factors, such as language proficiency and prior writing experience, which could have affected the results. Future studies should address these limitations by conducting a study with larger and more diverse samples to increase the generalizability of the findings. Future studies also should consider the impact of other factors that could influence the effectiveness of the intervention.

The results of this study demonstrate that law students from the Institute of Judicial Administration Lushoto in Tanzania had a limited understanding of editing and proofreading techniques before the intervention. The intervention was successful in improving the students' editing and proofreading skills. The findings of this study have important implications for law students and educators, highlighting the need for interventions aimed at improving these skills to enhance students' academic and professional success.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Generally, the results of this study demonstrate that law students from the Institute of Judicial Administration Lushoto in Tanzania had limited knowledge of basic editing and proofreading techniques before intervention. However, the results also indicate that a targeted intervention significantly improved editing and proofreading skills among these law students. The Wilcoxon signed rank test showed a significant improvement in scores after the intervention, and the McNemar test demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in all eight techniques related to editing and proofreading skills.

These findings have important implications for legal education and academic writing in Tanzania. Law students need to have strong editing and proofreading skills to ensure that their written work is of high quality and that they can effectively communicate their ideas to their intended audience. The study suggests that there is a need to include specific instruction on editing and proofreading skills as part of the legal education curriculum in Tanzania and that these skills need to be taught explicitly and systematically.

Furthermore, the study suggests that there are need for interventions that can help students develop their editing and proofreading skills. Such interventions could take the form of workshops, seminars, or individual tutoring sessions. The results of this study indicate that even a brief intervention can have a significant impact on editing and proofreading skills and that it can sustain this impact over time.

Finally, the results of this study suggest that there is a need for further research on editing and proofreading skills in legal education. Specifically, future research could examine the effectiveness of different types of interventions and the optimal timing of such interventions, as well as the relationship between editing and proofreading skills and other aspects of legal writing, such as legal reasoning and analysis.

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