

In-Text Citations and Referencing Styles Adopted in Academic Writings: A Review of the Literature

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Abstract

This paper presents a review of the literature on the in-text citations and referencing styles adopted in academic writings. Citing or referencing sources in technical writings is an important aspect of academic writing. It is the means by which authors acknowledge ideas, thoughts, writings and words of others used in his/her work, thus, avoiding plagiarism. Referencing demonstrates that the writer has read relevant background literature and can provide authority for the statements made. Proper citation allows others to locate the materials used. However, a cursory check on many such academic writings revealed that writers, authors and researchers seldom adhere to the rules guiding the styles adopted as expected. Thus, a review of the literature with a view to providing an update of the common styles adopted and possible variations and inadequacies inherent in their usage is thoroughly examined. Here, the different referencing styles peculiar to different disciplines and used in different fields and for specific purposes are accounted for. These include Harvard, American Psychological Association, Modern Language Association and Turabian (Chicago). Turabian has two versions (Chicago/Turabian Notes), popular in the History and Humanity disciplines, and Chicago/Turabian Author-Date often used for the Physical, Natural and Social Sciences, Vancouver, Council of Science Editors, and American Sociological Association. Critical issues revealed by this review are that wide-scale variations exist in the styles adopted in academic writing, and the inability of many writers to pay attention to details and follow instructions and rules guiding citing and referencing accurately and consistently. It is, therefore, recommended that librarians in collaboration with Faculty and School Management should prepare citation style guides to be used by students for the various departments, colleges or faculties. Students should be given acceptable format used in their respective departments, colleges or faculties. Sensitization of the students through seminars or workshops on the essence and

strategic importance on how to cite reference correctly during the first and final year should be given adequate consideration.

Keywords: Citation, In-text Citations, Referencing Styles, Academic Writing, Review of Literature

Introduction

The first rule of academic writing is “intellectual honesty”. In higher institutions of learning, students at all levels are expected to be honest, and forthright in their academic endeavours. Proper attribution of the work of others is expected. To falsify the results of one’s research or other findings with the intent to deceive (fabrication) or steal the words or ideas of another as if they are one’s work (plagiarism) violates this rule. Writing in a discipline requires a complete, active, struggling engagement with the facts and principles of a discipline Rose (as cited in Singh, 2015). According to Arkoudis and Tran (2007), academic writing as a form of thinking is fundamental to the academic success of the students. Hyland (2007) also highlighted that as a form of thought, especially in tertiary literacy, students’ ability in sustaining arguments and synthesizing ideas to write in English for academic purposes is crucial for academic success. Therefore, when submitting written work, it is essential for any source used in its preparation to be accurately cited. A clear and consistent style is needed to ensure that those reading the work can find the source you have quoted to follow up your arguments or verify quotations.

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Citations make one's writing more persuasive; they are not used to avoid plagiarism; they have other essential roles as well. By citing the work of a particular author, you acknowledge and respect the intellectual property rights of that researcher (Lamprey & Atta-Obeng, 2012). Researchers are therefore free to use millions of ideas, insights and arguments published by other authors or writers. According to Hart (2005), the citations map the space of your discipline and allow you to navigate your way through your chosen field of study. In academic communities, the ethics of research demand that writers be credited for their works and their writings. Not to do so is to plagiarize, to intentionally or unintentionally appropriate the ideas, languages, or works of another without sufficient acknowledgement.

Neville (2007) defined referencing as the process of acknowledging one's sources. Sources may include anything you take information from sources such as books, journals, magazines, newspapers, websites, lecture notes, legislation, maps, television and radio programmes, work of arts and dramatic performances. Failure to reference correctly or worse still not to reference at all may lead to accusations of plagiarism which is a serious offence in the academic community and may lead to disciplinary action. According to Bowden and Di Benedetto (2001), citing references is an art or skill, which requires acknowledgement. They recommended that there should be a collaboration between faculty and librarians in teaching students about reference citation formats used in academia. They further attested that collaboration between faculty and librarians is beneficial because many sources of information, especially those available in electronic formats, may not necessarily be authoritative or accurate and therefore by collaborating with librarians, faculty would be able to help students evaluate their sources of information and cite references appropriately.

Different referencing styles, systems or methods have been created by different disciplines and are used in different fields and for specific purposes. The documentation methods are Harvard, American Psychological Association (APA), Modern Language Association (MLA), and Turabian (often referred to as Chicago). Turabian has two versions, namely, Chicago/Turabian Notes, which is often used by History and Humanity disciplines and Chicago/Turabian Author-Date often used for the Physical, Natural and Social Sciences, Vancouver, Council of Science Editors (CSE) and American Sociological Association (ASA).

Citing and Referencing: Harvard Method

The Harvard system, also known as "Author-Date" style of referencing, is very similar to the APA system of reference, with only subtle differences in how the reference list is written. The differences between Harvard and APA are as follows:

- In Harvard system, "Reference List" is used to list out the references at the end of the piece of text, whereas the same is indicated by "References" in the APA system of referencing.
- Any edited work is cited by using "(ed[s])" or "edited by" in the Harvard system of referencing whereas the APA system used the "(Ed[s])" for the same purpose. In Harvard referencing style, the names of the editor(s) are put after writing the title of edited work; whereas, in the APA referencing, the same is put before the title of the edited work.
- In Harvard system, page numbers are cited by (year: page number), i.e. (2017:45). The same is referenced in APA style of referencing as (2017, p. 45).

In Harvard style, there are two kinds of citations. These are in-text citations and bibliographic (or reference list) citations. In-text citations occur in the text of an article that includes the author, the date and often a page number, while "bibliographic" (or reference list) citations occur at the end of a paper giving full bibliographic details of all in-text citations. The following rules for in-text and reference list should be followed in the Harvard format:

- Use a comma between the year and page.
- Use a semi-colon between multiple sources or citations (It should, however, be noted that multiple sources or citations are listed alphabetically by author).
- When authors' names are incorporated in the text, parentheses are placed around the year.
- If the work has two or three authors, include all names in your citation.
- In the case of a work that has more than three authors, use the surname of the first-listed author (followed by et al. ["and others"]).
- When reference is made to more than one work by the same author, arrange in chronological order (order by least recent to most recent).

- Reference to a number of works published by the same author in the same year should be distinguished by using lower case letters attached to the date.
- In the case of two authors with the same surname, use the first given initial to distinguish them. If the first given initial is the same, use the second initial.
- Arrange entries in alphabetical order by the surname of the author/editor in the reference list or bibliography.
- The reference list should contain all the items cited or quoted from.

American Psychological Association (APA) Referencing Style

American Psychological Association (APA) is also referred to as a “parenthetical” referencing style. The rules of APA are drawn from an extensive body of psychological literature, from editors and authors experienced in scholarly writings, and from authorities and publication practices. The general rules of APA style include the following in-text citations:

- The author’s last name; the work’s date of publication; and the page number appears only in a citation to a direct quotation [these items must match exactly the corresponding entry, e.g. (Issa, 2015, p. 45)].
- The researcher is also permitted to include the author’s name in a sentence, omitting it from the brackets. For instance, Issa, (2015, pp. 64–67) observes that ... it should be stated that for multiple pages. The abbreviation “pp” should be used and include the full page range, i.e. “64–67” as opposed to “64–7”.
- When paraphrasing or referring to an idea contained in another work, the researcher is encouraged to provide a page or paragraph number, especially when it would help an interested reader locate the relevant passage in a long or complex text.
- If you are referring to an entire work, include only the author’s last name and year of publication in brackets. If you are referring to the part of a work, the researcher must include page numbers or their equivalent.
- When citing a source you have not read yourself, but which, therefore, to in a source you have read

(also known as “secondary referencing”), name the original work and give a citation for the secondary source. For example, Aina (as cited in Issa, 2009, p. 25) stated that ... or Aina (2003, as cited in Issa, 2009, p. 25).

- Moreso, citing authors in APA style should follow these guidelines:
- If the author’s name occurs in the text, follow it with a year of publication in parentheses, e.g. Folorunsho (2014) asserted that.
- If the author’s name is not in the text, insert the last name followed by comma and year in parenthesis, e.g. In a recent study of information need and behaviour of students... (Folorunsho, 2014).
- If the author’s name and the date of publication have been mentioned in the text of your paper, they should not be repeated within parentheses.
- If a work has two authors, always cite both names every time the reference occurs in the text. Connect both names by using the word “and”. For instance, Issa and Tella (2015) affirmed that ... or Omopupa and Salman (2016, pp. 43–48) discuss the way forward in a departmental seminar.
- If a work has two authors and they are not included in the text, insert within parentheses, the last names of the authors joined by an ampersand (&), and the year separated from the authors by a comma, e.g. ... the way forward in the departmental seminar (Omopupa & Salman, 2016) or (Omopupa & Salman, 2016, p. 12).
- If a work has more than two authors (but fewer than six), cite all authors the first time the reference occurs; include the last name followed by “et al.” and the year in subsequent citations of the same reference.
- Quotations: cite the source of direct quotations by enclosing it in parentheses. Include author, year and page number. Punctuation differs according to where the quotation falls.
- If the quoted passage is in the middle of a sentence, end the passage with quotation marks, cite the source in parentheses immediately, and continue the sentence.
- If the quotation falls at the end of a sentence, close the quotation with quotation marks, and cite the source in parentheses after the quotation marks. Then, put the period or full stop after the parentheses.

- xiv. If the quotation is longer than 40 words, it is set off without quotation marks in an indented block with 5 space from the left (double-spaced). The source is cited in parentheses after the final period.

In the bibliography or references, the following rules are strictly adhered to:

- The references should appear at the end of your work on a separate page.
- Only include references you have cited in your work.
- All references should have a hanging indent. That is, all lines of a reference subsequent to the first line should be indented
- In general, references should be listed alphabetically by the last name of the first author of each work.

Special Reference Cases

- In the case of works by different authors with the same family name, list references alphabetically by the authors' initials.
- In the case of multiple works by the same author in different years, list references chronologically (earliest to latest).
- In the case of multiple works by the same author in the same year, list references alphabetically by title in the reference list. Place a lowercase letter (a, b, c, etc.) immediately after the year.
- When referring to books, book chapters, article titles or webpages, capitalize only the first letter of the first word of a title and subtitle, and proper nouns.
- When referring to journal titles, capitalise all major words (do not capitalize words such as 'of', 'and', & 'the' unless they are the first word in the title).
- If no publication date is given, write n.d. in parentheses, e.g. Issa, A. O. (n. d.).
- Italicize book titles and journal titles, but NOT chapter titles or article titles. For journals, italicize volume number, but NOT part or issue number, hence 6(1).

Citing Authors in the References

- *One Author:* Surname, followed by initials, e.g. Aina, L. O.

- *Two Authors:* Surname, followed by initials. Separate author's names with a comma and link with the ampersand (&), rather than "and", e.g. Aina, L. O., & Issa, A. O.
- *Three to Six Authors:* List all authors and separate authors' names with a comma. Use an ampersand (&), rather than "and" before the final author, e.g. Aina, L. O., Issa, A. O., Akinboro, E. O., Olarongbe, S. A., Omopupa, K. T., & Folorunsho, A. L.
- *Eight or More Authors:* List first six authors, separating authors' names with a comma. After the sixth, use three ellipses and then include the final author, e.g. Aina, L. O., Issa, A. O., Idowu, T. A., Tella, A., Omopupa, K. T., Folorunsho, L... & Salman, A. A.
- *Corporate Author:* A corporate author with the period (full stop), followed by a year of publication in parentheses. Title (xx ed, if not the first). Place of publication: Author, e.g. The University of Ilorin. (2016). *Registration guidelines for new intakes. Ilorin: Author.* It should, however, be noted that when the author and publisher are the same, use the word "Author" as the name of the publisher.
- *Editor(s) Instead of the Author(s):* Editor's surname, followed by initials. (Ed.). Year of publication in parentheses. Title (xx ed. if not the first). Place of publication: Publisher.
- *One Chapter/Paper from a Collection in a Book:* Author of chapter's surname followed by initials. Year of publication in parentheses. The Title of chapter. In: Initials of the first editor, Surname of first editor & initials of the second editor, Surname of the second editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. xx-xx). Place of publication: Publisher.

Rules Guiding Electronic Sources

- In the text, the same principles apply as for printed documents although page numbers may be needed to be replaced by paragraph numbers or subheadings if these are available.
- In the references or reference list, the format is much the same as for a printed source, but adds the web address (URL), and ignores the place of publication and publisher. However, with the "Sixth Edition of APA", it is no longer necessary to put the date that a document was retrieved, and use the phrase "Retrieved from" ...

Modern Language Association (MLA) Referencing Style

Modern Language Association (MLA) style is generally used for academic writings in the humanities. It covers many aspects of research writings including evaluating sources, the mechanics of writing, the format of the research paper, plagiarism as well as the ways to cite sources. It uses in-text citations rather than footnotes or endnotes. The in-text citations usually appear in parentheses and correspond directly to an entry in the list of works cited. However, according to the 8th edition the “Handbook of Modern Language Association” published in 2016, several significant changes have been effected to the MLA style. The updates are as follows:

- *Abbreviations*: In previous editions, certain abbreviations could be used (e.g. “ed.” for “editor” and “trans.” for “translated by”). Based on the new edition, these words should be spelt out fully. It is still recommended that you abbreviate months with four or more letters (e.g. “September” is written as “Sept.”).
- *Multiple Authors*: Previously, if work had one, two or three authors, all the names would be listed. Now, each author is listed only if a work has one or two authors.
- In works cited entries, the city of publication and medium of publication (e.g. Print, the Web) are no longer required.
- In works cited entries, the volume and issue numbers of journal articles used to be represented as follows: vol#(issue#) [e.g. 3(2)]. However, now they are represented as vol. #, no. # (e.g. vol. 3, no. 2).
 - i. For sources found online, include a URL or doi. If possible, use a permanent link or a doi. Do not use URL shorteners (e.g. bit.ly, goo.gl) as these are unstable and your reader may not be able to access these sites in the future (MLA, 2016).

Here are the general features of MLA:

- The list of references should begin on a separate page, with the title “Works Cited”.
- Arrange entries alphabetically, using the last name of the author. If no author is given, alphabetize by the title, eliminating any initial A, An, or The.
- Begin each entry at the left margin. Indent the following lines one-half inch from the left margin.

- Double-space within each entry, and between each entry.
- Follow carefully the punctuation, underlining and capitalization in the examples.
- Shorten the name of the publishing company by eliminating articles (A, An or The), business abbreviations (Co., Inc. and Ltd.) and descriptive words (Books, House and Press). However, when citing a University Press, add the abbreviation “UP” (Ohio State UP). If the publisher’s name is the name of one or more persons, cite the first surname only (Abrams).

In MLA, with in-text citations, the researcher acknowledges a source by providing a brief reference to exactly where in the source he found the information. The reader can then use the complete reference listed in the “Works Cited” page at the end of your paper to verify what you have written. Therefore, in-text citations have the following characteristics:

- In most cases, providing the author’s last name and a page number is sufficient.
- If the author’s name is mentioned in the sentence, only cite the page number in parentheses.
- If the author’s name is not mentioned in the sentence, cite both the name and the page number.
- If there are two authors, include the last name of each, e.g. (Issa and Omopupa, 67).
- If there are three or more authors, include the last name of the first author followed by “et al.” without any intervening punctuation, e.g. (Issa et al. 45).
- If there is no author, as is the case with some web pages, include either the whole title of the work in the text or use a shortened form of the title in parentheses, using the first words of the title. Italicize the titles of books or entire websites and place the titles of articles or individual web pages in quotation marks.
- If the source has no page numbers but has labelled section or paragraph numbers, you can indicate these numbers in your parenthetical reference. If there are no such reference marks, do not create or include them in your reference.
- When directly quoting a source, place the parenthetical citation after the quote. Long quotations (more than four lines) should be indented by half-inch

and no quotation. Place the period at the end of an indented quotation.

- If you are citing more than one reference at the same point in a document, separate the references with a semi-colon, e.g. (Aina 64; Issa 41).
- If the work has no author, use the title.
- If you are citing multiple works by the same author, put a comma after the author's name and add title words, e.g. (Issa, "Practical Guides to Project Writing" 56) and (Issa, "Fundamentals to Library Studies" 23–26) to distinguish between them in the in-text citation. The researcher must do this when citing each of the sources throughout the piece of writing.
- If two authors have the same surname, use their first initial, e.g. (G. Brown 26).

The alphabetical list of works cited that appears at the end of your paper contains more information about all of the sources you have cited, allowing readers to refer to them, as needed.

The rules guiding the "Works Cited list" are as follows:

- The recommended heading for the reference list is Works Cited, which should be centred and must be on a new page.
- Entries are arranged alphabetically by the author's last name or by the title if there is no author.
- Entries are double-spaced.
- Capitalize the first word of the title or subtitle and all other significant words.
- Author's names should be listed with full forenames if known.
- The name of the first author is inverted to list the family name first. If there are additional authors, their names are not inverted. For instance, Issa, Abdulwahab and Tunde Omopupa. *Library Education*. Ilorin: Ashgate Publishers, 2014. Print.
- If you cite more than one work by the same author, give the name in the first entry only. Thereafter, use three hyphens instead of the name. For instance, Issa, Abdulwahab and Tunde Omopupa. *Library Education*. Ilorin: Ashgate Publishers, 2014. Print.
- ----- *Information Literacy*. Ilorin: Ashgate Publishers, 2014. Print.

- If a reference does not have an author, list it by title. Ignore the leading article (A, An and The) when inserting the reference to the alphabetical works cited list.
- Titles of books are italicized and titles of articles are placed in quotation marks. All important words should be capitalized. For example, Olarongbe, Shuaib. *Knowledge Management*. Ibadan: Sterling-Holden Publishers, 2016 and Isah, Abdulmumin. "The role of libraries and librarians in the information literacy competency of undergraduates in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria". *Middlebelt Journal of Library and Information Science*. 3.2 (2009): 34-40.
- If you cannot validate a reference's authorship, date of publication or its authoritativeness, especially if it is an online resource; consider using another similar reference that is more authoritative instead.
- For a journal article in an online database (e.g. via the Library website), include the name of the database (italicized), the medium of publication (Web) and the date of access (optional). However, it can be helpful to include this information, especially if the source you are using does not have a date of publication.
- When there are two or more cities or places listed for the one publisher, select the first listed place of publication.
- When the title page lists two or more publishers which are not just two or more offices of the same publisher, include all of them, in the order given, as part of the publication information, putting a semi-colon after the name of each publisher but the last (e.g. Cambridge: Cambridge UP; London: Routledge, 2002.) (MLA, 2016).

Chicago Referencing System

Chicago Manual of Style presents two basic documentation systems: The Humanities style (notes and bibliography) and the Author-Date system. The Humanities style is preferred by many in the humanities, including those in literature, history and the arts. It accommodates a variety of sources, including esoteric ones less appropriate to the author system.

On the other hand, the author-date system is usually cited in parentheses by the author's last name and date of publication. The short citations are amplified in a list of references, where full bibliographic information is provided. The in-text author-date citations are always enclosed in parentheses, and are composed of three elements:

- The first element consists of last name(s) of one, two or three authors. Use "and others" for more than three authors, as for notes and bibliographies. If a work has no author, use the first words of the title in the parenthetical reference and as the initial element in the reference list.
- Follow the first element by the year of publication, separated from the first element only by a space.
- Follow the year by a comma, space and then the page or pages you are quoting or referring to. Omit for works lacking pagination.

Reference list entries are organized following the same rules as bibliographies:

- The beginning of each reference list entry must correspond to the first name or title word used in your in-text citations. This is to permit your reader to quickly find each matching complete reference in the list.
- The year of publication follows the author(s) or title (only if no author) and must match the year used in parenthetical references. The year is not repeated later in the reference as part of the publication information. Other date elements (months and days) are left unchanged from the form used in bibliographies.
- In titles and subtitles of works, capitalize only the first letter and proper names (sentence case). In journal titles, capitalize all significant words (title case) (The University of Chicago, 2010).

Council of Science Editors (CSE) Referencing Style

The Council of Science Editors (CSE), formerly the Council of Biology Editors, is not only used primarily in the medical sciences but also encompasses all scientific disciplines. There are three formats used in CSE style. These are the citation-sequence system, citation-name system and the name-year system. The rules guiding in-text citations in the CSE are as follows:

- That every in-text citation has a corresponding entry in the reference list.
- In-text citations (also known as parenthetical references) include the author's last name and year of the reference without a comma, e.g. (Issa 2011).
- If there is no author, include the first word(s) of the title (enough to identify the source) followed by an ellipsis (...), e.g. (Quantitative research ... 2014).
- For two (2) authors, list both last names in the in-text citation separated by "and" (not an ampersand "&"), e.g. (Issa and Omopupa 2015).
- For more than two (2) authors, list the first author's last name followed by "et al." and the year, e.g. (Igwe et al. 2009).
- For different authors with the same last name, provide initials or enough other names to distinguish between them, e.g. (Issa A.O. 2007; Issa M 2009). (The Council of Science Editors Manual Style, 8th Edition, 2014).

The general regulations governing the "Reference List" are as follows:

- Only include references that have been cited in the body of the paper should be included. *Organization:* In the N-Y system, entries are listed in alphabetical order by the name of the first author's last name (or, if there is no known author, by organization name or the title of the work). The year is placed after the last author's name, followed by a period.
- *Authors' Names:* List authors' last names, followed by initials for first and middle names. Do not use periods or spaces between the initials. Do not use a comma between the last name and the initials, e.g. Smith BL. Include all authors' names if a work has up to 10 authors; for work with 11 or more authors, list the first 10 names followed by a comma and "et al." ("and others"). For works with two authors, do not use "and" or "&" to separate the authors' names.
- *Multiple Citations by the Same Author:* If you are citing more than one item by the same author(s), list works in chronological order (oldest first).
- *Organization/Group as an Author:* Put the abbreviation of the group name in square brackets so that you can use it in your in-text citation. The abbreviation should appear as the first part of the citation in the end reference, e.g. [NLA] Nigerian Library Association.

- *Formatting Titles:* Do not italicize or underline the titles of books or journals.
- *Titles of Books and Articles:* Only the first letter of the title's first word and any proper nouns should be capitalized. Do not enclose article titles in quotation marks.
- *Titles of Journals:* Abbreviate the titles of any journals that consist of more than one word. Omit articles, conjunctions and prepositions (e.g. the, and, of). Do not use apostrophes. Capitalize all the words or abbreviated words in the title.
- *Page Ranges:* Include page ranges for articles in journals/magazines/newspapers and for chapters in books. When an article appears on discontinuous pages, list all pages or page ranges, separated by commas, e.g. 145–149, 162–174. For chapters in books, use the abbreviation "p." before the numbers (p. 63–90).
- *No Date of Publication:* Use the abbreviation [date unknown]. *Exception:* When citing electronic publications (e.g. websites), use the dates of update/revision (or both) instead.
- *More Than One City of Publication:* Use the first ones listed (CSE, 2014).

Citing and Referencing: Vancouver Style

In Vancouver referencing, which is also known as numeric referencing style, each source is given a number which corresponds to the order in which it appears in the text. If the same source is referred to again in the text, the same number is used. In the text, the reference is provided as a number in brackets at the end of the phrase. For instance, the study suggests that career development ... (1). The references are numbered consecutively in the order in which they appear in the text. The reference must be given with its number in the reference list, even when the author's name is stated in the text. If work is referred to more than once, use the first number for the second and following references. References to more than one source in the same phrase may be entered like this: (2–4), i.e. references 2 through 4 in the reference list, and (2–4, 8), i.e. the references 2 through 4, in addition to reference no. 8 in the list of references. If the reference points to a specific place in the document cited, the page number must be specified, e.g. (1, p.16) meaning page 16 of reference no. 1 in the list of references.

Also, quotes of less than three lines are integrated into the text and enclosed in quotation marks. Page numbers are given immediately after the reference number. When the page number is given in the in-text reference, it should not be repeated in the reference list. Quotes more than three lines in length are written as a separate, indented paragraph without quotation marks. The reference is placed immediately after the quote. The reference list comprises a single numbered list of citations with full details and it should be ordered numerically in the order in which the references appear in the text. The researcher may also include a separate bibliography, alphabetically ordered by author, which lists works that you have used as part of his research for the work but not cited in the text. However, it should be stated that Vancouver referencing style is most commonly used in medical publications.

American Sociological Association (ASA) Referencing Method

The American Sociological Association (ASA) style provides for the in-text citations and reference list. The in-text references are provided when paraphrasing or quoting directly from a source to credit the author's contributions. In other words, in-text citations must be provided for every sentence that is copied verbatim, paraphrased and/or reworked from any other source other than the researcher's imagination. As mentioned above, if in-text citations are used, there should be a corresponding reference to that source on the "Reference List". The following are the rules guiding in-text references:

- If the author's name is mentioned in the text, use a parenthetical reference to show the year of publication at the end of the sentence, e.g. Issa posited that literature review involves the collation of ideas, views, positions and opinions, expressed in the writings... (2003).
- If the author's name is not mentioned in the text, it should be included along with the year of publication within parentheses, e.g. literature review involves the collation of ideas, views, positions and opinions, expressed in the writings... (Issa 2003).
- Page numbers should be included within parentheses after the year of publication. These are separated by a colon and no spaces, e.g. literature review involves the collation of ideas, views, positions and opinions, expressed in the writings... (Issa 2003:47).

In the case of multiple authors, the following forms should be used:

- The findings confirmed that Unilorin Library School is ... (Aina and Issa 2012:10).
- This was reinforced by recent research on the topic (Aina, Issa, and Olarongbe 2014:12). In-text citations with three authors (cite all three names in the first citation and then cite the first author's name and use et al. in subsequent citations).
- In-text citations with more than three authors (cite the first author's last name and et al. in all citations, including the first one). For example, the research was accurately conducted (Aina et al. 2015:10).
- If multiple sources are cited for the same statement, the author and publication year should be distinguished from other texts with a semi-colon. Cited texts should be arranged by author name or by date; arrangement should be consistent throughout the paper. For instance, some studies suggested that ... (Aina 2010; Igwe 2013; Issa and Giwa 2016).

In the "Reference List", rules and guidelines governing its compilation include:

- References follow the text and endnotes in a separate section headed "References". All references cited in the text must be listed and vice-versa.
- References should be double-spaced.
- List references in alphabetical order by authors' last names.
- Use hanging indentation.
- Invert the author's name (type the last name first). If two or more author names are there, invert only the first.
- Arrange multiple items by same author in order by publication year, from the earliest.
- Distinguish works by the same author in the same year by adding letters a, b, c.
- Use italics for book and periodical titles (underline if italics are not available).
- If no date is available, use "n.d." in place of the date.
- Include the state abbreviation only if the city of publication is not well known (i.e. New York, Chicago and Los Angeles do not need a state abbreviation). For foreign cities, provide the name of the country (ASA, 2014).

Conclusions

The study concludes that there are wide-scale variations in the referencing styles adopted in academic writings, and the ability to pay attention to details and follow instructions and rules guiding citing and referencing accurately and consistently should be the concern of researchers. The emphasis given to referencing practice at an early stage of their studies will be of wider benefit.

Recommendations

The ability to relate one's work to the existing knowledge in the field is a skill that needs to be mastered by every student, and should, therefore, be taught by faculty and librarians to all level of students particularly in their first and final years. Since in-text citations and referencing styles are central to academic writing, it is therefore recommended that library orientation given by librarians to new students at the beginning of every academic year should be replaced with "User Education" or Information Literacy to be offered by students in the first and final years.

Librarians in collaboration with Faculty and School Management should prepare citation style guides to be used by students for the various departments, colleges or faculties. Students should be given an acceptable format to be used in their respective departments, colleges or faculties. Sensitization of the students through seminars or workshops on the essence and strategic importance on how to cite reference correctly during the first and final years should be given adequate consideration.

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