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SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES

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Referencing and Academic Integrity and Excellence: An Evaluation

Onyemelukwe, Ifeoma Mabel

Abstract

The objective of this study is to establish a correlation, if any, between referencing and academic integrity and excellence. It is purely descriptive and draws principally from experiential knowledge following 42 years of meritorious service to Ahmadu Bello University and effective supervision of over 200 BA projects and 49 PhD theses and master's dissertations. It is shown that all outside source[s] of information reflected in an assignment or academic research writing of any sort must be properly acknowledged and referenced in the body of the writeup and in works cited references or bibliography placed at the end of the work according to the approved reference style sheet. The types of sourced data to be referenced and those that need not be referenced are clearly spelt out. Even summarized or paraphrased data or information translated from one language to another must be properly referenced. The reasons for ensuring proper referencing are highlighted, among which are: to make allowance for fact-checking, to respect the author's moral right, intellectual property/honesty right or copyright law and avoid plagiarism or academic theft. It concludes that proper referencing is a sure way to achieve academic integrity and excellence.

Keywords: referencing, academic integrity, excellence, evaluation

Introduction

WHEN A PERSON USES SOMEONE ELSE'S WORDS OR IDEAS IN HIS assignment or academic research writing (B.A./B.Ed/B.Sc./project, M.A./M.Sc. dissertation or doctoral thesis), he is expected to give the original or secondary source[s] of those words or ideas in his writing. This is called referencing. Sometimes, they fail to do so wittingly or unwittingly. Other times, they attempt to reference the used materials or information but do so in an incorrect way. Take for example, they may give the wrong source or the source might be correct but the page reference might be wrong: "Chinua Achebe's

character in *Anthills of the Savannah* asserts that the Igbo cherish greatly the art of speech, and that the proverb is the palm-oil with which words are eaten" (10). The paraphrased statement is actually from one of Achebe's fictional characters but that character is definitely not in the cited novel but in *Things Fall Apart* (*TFA*). Therefore, this is an incorrect referencing. That statement is actually found on page 5 of *TFA* and not page 10. Thus, the page referenced is incorrect. Another example of incorrect referencing is ascribing to a co-authored article or book a single authorship, for example: drawing an information from "L'écocritique dans Gouverneurs de la rosée de Jacques Roumain," an article jointly published by Pascal Ohanma and Ifeoma Onyemelukwe in *JALAL: Journal of Languages and Literatures* 6.1 (2015): 86-103, and referencing it to only Ifeoma Onyemelukwe. This is a form of plagiarism which is to be avoided. This goes to emphasize the importance of proper referencing and it is what motivated the present study.

The motive draws from the writer's 42 years of meritorious service to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and of effective supervision of over 200 BA projects, 49 PhD Theses and MA Dissertations, among other responsibilities. The research is, thus, purely descriptive and distills principally from experiential knowledge. The objective of the study is to establish a correlation, if any, between referencing and academic integrity and excellence.

The discussion starts with definition and explanation of key concepts. It goes on to examine what to be referenced and what not to be referenced; importance of referencing, referencing styles and varieties of style sheets. Next, it presents succinctly MLA 2007 Edition, APA 6th Referencing Style, Chicago Reference Style and the Vancouver Reference Style. It focuses on MLA Style sheet and points out the differences between: i. Notes and Bibliographical References and ii. "Works Cited," "References" and "Bibliography" before drawing up a conclusion.

Definition and Explanation of Key Concepts
The key concepts are: Academic integrity and excellence and referencing.

Academic integrity and excellence
Academic integrity has to do with intellectual honesty/property, setting high standards for oneself and maintaining them. It implies that the individual shuns academic dishonesty as this naturally undermines academic excellence. An individual known for academic integrity is upright and trustworthy in all his dealings in the academic field – learning, teaching and research. He carries out his academic work ethically and morally. Academic integrity gives no room for any form of examination malpractice, aiding and abetting of it, cheating and lying of any sort and sex for marks/grades. It abhors academic theft also known as plagiarism.

The word "excellence" means greatness. It denotes the very best. It refers to the attribute of being outstanding or extremely good. The practice of excelling or emerging the best at something: studying, teaching, research or educational

institution, is known as excellence. Excellence is a virtue well sought after but it is very difficult to come by.

Aristotle, a 4th Century B.C. Greek philosopher, regarded as one of the most influential philosophers in the history of the world, reveals, in one of his works: *Nichomachean Ethics* translated into English by Robert C. Bartelette and Susan D. Collins, that excellence is of two types – intellectual excellence and moral excellence. According to Aristotle, "intellectual excellence owes its birth and growth mainly to instruction and so requires time and experience while moral excellence translated as "virtue" in some editions of his book is the result of habit or custom" (checkyourfact.com, https://www.scribd.com). The Holy Bible sheds a lot of light on this Aristotelian concept of excellence. While imparting good leadership qualities to Joshua after the death of Moses, God stresses on good success: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success" (Joshua 1:8).

This statement implies that there is bad success. This is why God commands Joshua to read the Bible and meditate on the word of God at all times so that he will always be morally and ethically right and have good success. Internet fraudsters, kidnappers, body organ harvesters, armed robbers, bandits and prostitutes may make millions, build mansions and parade themselves as having succeeded in life. This cannot be regarded as positive success. Such individuals are lacking in moral excellence, to borrow the term from Aristotle as earlier stated. Similarly, students, teachers, researchers and educational institutions that aid and abet examination malpractice or academic theft may enjoy intellectual excellence while lacking in moral excellence. These devious characters, without any doubt, are devoid of academic integrity. Thus, academic integrity has a close affinity with moral excellence.

Will Durant, in his work titled, *The Story of Philosophy* (1926), in an effort to express in his own words a certain Aristotelian concept stated thus: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act but a habit" (checkyourfact.com). Students and researchers must, therefore, cultivate the habit of both intellectual and moral excellence.

Referencing

Definition of referencing abounds in print and internet sources. It means acknowledging your source[s] of information (written or spoken) in your assignment or any form of academic research writing (www.kent.ac.uk). Referencing is defined as the practice of acknowledging the original and secondary sources of all information obtained from other people's works; in the body of an assignment or academic writing (in-text citation or referencing) or at the end of it (Works Cited, References or Bibliography) (owll.massey. ac.az>referencing). Original source refers to where the information appeared

initially. For example: Aimé Césaire, who invented the terminology, Négritude defines it as: "Conscience d'être Noir, la simple reconnaissance d'un fait, qui implique acceptation, une prise en charge de son destin de Noir, de son histoire et de sa culture." Where this definition appears originally is sourced as original source of that information. A researcher or student who cannot lay hands on the original source of this definition can fall back on what is referred to as secondary source, e.g., Lilian Kesteloot cites this Césaire's definition of Négritude in her work: *Anthologie négro-africaine, la littérature de 1918-1981* and the student upon using this definition from Kesteloot's work is obliged to acknowledge the secondary source of information in his in-text citation thus: (Césaire cited by Kesteloot 113). If the writing is in French then the reference will read: (Césaire cité par Kesteloot 113). Details of publication of Kesteloot's work will appear in Works Cited (Œuvres citées) or References (Références) or Bibliography (Bibliographie) at the end of the academic writing. Referencing denotes "a formal system of indicating when an author's words or ideas have been used in academic writing" (owl.massey.ac.nz>referencing>). Referencing has been defined as "a consistent method or process of acknowledging or crediting the sources an individual has used in writing a piece of work, be it an assignment, an essay, a project of any sort." (Onyemelukwe, "Plagiarism or Academic Theft" 10).

What to be referenced

One is expected to reference all sources used in one's write-up such as words, ideas, facts, views, videos, images, websites, audios, diagrams, statistics and data (https://eee.murdoch.edu.ay>library>). Also to be referenced are: maps, figures, schemas. Tables adapted or modified from someone else's own must be referenced. References must be made to relevant works of established authorities and experts in the researcher's field of study.

Sourced materials to be referenced include: journal articles, printed books, book chapters, E-books, personal interviews, newspapers, magazines, Internet or electronic sources, letters, emails, online discussion forums, ideas, concepts, expressed opinions, analysis, computer code, pictures or illustrations, charts, diagrams, images (graph, tables, video, multimedia, etc), music or other performance media, theories, movie/visual documentary, television programmes, advertissements, pamphlets or brochures and designs, drawings or plans.

Some students feel that once they have summarized or paraphrased someone else's statement, the summary or paraphrasing suffices and so there is no need of referencing. This is absolutely wrong. Even summarized and paraphrased ideas or statements must be referenced. For example:

   i.   Direct quotation: "Okoye said the next half a dozen sentences in proverbs. Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten" (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 5).

   ii.   Paraphrased Statement: Okoye uttered some proverbs. The Igbo cherish

greatly the art of speech, and they see proverbs as palm-oil for eating words (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 5). Same goes for a summarized statement.

Note, sourced materials quoted verbatim or as exact words (written or spoken), that is, direct quotation, after being referenced, as shown above, must be placed in quotation marks or indented depending on the referencing style used.

Some students think that after translating an information from English or any other language to French and vice-versa, referencing will not be necessary. This is not absolutely correct. Even after translating the information or idea from one language to another, you need to acknowledge and reference your source[s] of information. But you do not enclose the translated data in inverted commas. In a paper you wrote in French, for example, you saw a statement in English by Mishra and Hodge which will advance your argument and you translated it into French as follows: *Le multiculturalisme textuel, l'interlangue, le multilinguisme et la métatextualité constituent de véritables indicateurs des influences de la mondialisation sur la littérature africaine. Ils confirment également que le syncrétisme* (*c'est-à-dire, la fusion de deux éléments culturels ou religieux, l'appréhension globale ou plus ou moins confuse d'une entité*) *et l'hybridité* (*c'est-à-dire le produit de mélange de deux choses ou plus différentes*) *sont des traits distinctifs de l'écriture postcolonial*e (Mishra and Hodge 287). Notice, the data is not enclosed in inverted commas but it is properly referenced.

What not to be referenced

Avoid citing non-academic sources as they may not be reliable. The academic community frowns upon references to Wikipedia. Therefore, avoid drawing information from there and making references to it. Common knowledge or facts, which everyone is most likely to know and are widely available in a number of sources or folklore need not be acknowledged or referenced. However, what constitutes common knowledge and facts varies across disciplines. You may wish to seek knowledge from experts and scholars in your field.

Notice, you need not reference when writing:

i. Your own experiences as in a reflective journal

ii. Your own thoughts, comments or conclusion in an assignment or academic research writing

iii. Your own observation or results of an experiment, e.g., a report on a field trip

iv. Evaluating or offering your own analysis (student-unsw.edu. au>why>reference).

Importance of referencing

It is saddening to note that a good number of students think that referencing betrays their academic weakness, lack of competence and originality. This is a very wrong notion. My long years of experience of supervision of academic

research writing at various levels have taught me that contrary to this erroneous view, proper referencing, not just anyhow referencing, announces the high level of research work carried out by the writer and showcases his academic integrity and excellence. Furthermore, it discloses the length and breadth of research work done and provides details of the sources of information used in the academic research writing. As a matter of fact, proper referencing is the hallmark of good scholarship (https://www.researchgate.net/ publication/341050084_plagiarism_or_academic_theft_typology).

It provides the reader with ready and easy access to the writer's source documents for possible verification, where necessary, of the authenticity of the arguments advanced and their bases (https://www.macmillanihe/com>page). Accurate referencing, thus, makes room for fact-check. The reader may want to ascertain the veracity and currency of your sourced information. He may want to ensure that you have a correct understanding of the sourced data or he may simply want to read more on a topic. Any of these reasons will compel him to check the original source, hence the usefulness of proper referencing.

References to relevant works of established authorities and experts in your area of research goes to add value to your comments and arguments. This is a vivid demonstration of your wide coverage, examination, review and analysis of other researchers" opinions and writings" (https://www.macmillanihe/ com>page).The importance of referencing cannot be overemphasized. Citations make your writing more persuasive, authoritative and credible. Therefore, proper referencing adds credibility, authenticity and reliability to your academic research output. More importantly, proper referencing helps you avoid plagiarism or academic theft. Plagiarism refers to the intentional or unintentional presentation of someone else's work as your own. This common phenomenon is strictly prohibited in the academic community. Different penalties are imposed on offenders for plagiarizing in assignments and project writing. Mastering and demonstrating proper referencing in an academic writing is the principal way to avoid plagiarism. This is particularly so because research findings have shown that a lot of students plagiarisze out of ignorance, out of lack of knowledge of accurate referencing (Onyemelukwe, Plagiarism or Academic Theft 10).

Referencing styles and varieties of stylesheets

It is pertinent to note here that a referencing style denotes a particular way of reflecting the original or secondary source[s] of words and ideas that you used in your academic writing. There are different varieties of referencing styles for academic writing, for example, American Psychological Association (APA), Modern Languages Association (MLA), Chicago Style of Referencing and Vancouver Reference Style. Students and researchers are expected to have a mastery of the stylesheet approved for their respective Departments or Faculties to be able to quote correctly in their works the various forms of sourced documents.

MLA 2007 Edition

In the Department of French, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, MLA 2007 edition is, presently, the approved style sheet. Like other referencing styles, it has two parts of referencing: citations within the text of your write-up and Works Cited or Bibliography – a list of references collected at the end of the project.

With regard to citations within the body of the text, MLA 2007 allows two types of citations – intext citation and endnotes. It frowns upon footnotes. Therefore, do not use footnotes when using this model of referencing. Notes used should be collected together (1-10 for example) and reflected as endnotes at the end of each chapter. Notes reflected as endnotes must have been reflected in the body of the chapter as superscripts. I usually advised my supervisees to use in-text citation. To my mind, this is easier and more manageable. If you mention the author's surname while citing him /her, just put the page of the book from where you got the information in brackets at the end of the quotation. For example: Simone de Beauvoir a décrit la femme comme "un second sexe" (49). Notice, the full stop is not placed at the end of the quotation but after the bracket. If the author's surname is not mentioned while quoting him/her, put it before the page reference, e.g., "Concernant la formulation de bons titres, "les sous-titres ne sont pas recommandés"" (Dubois 17). This is so where only one work of the author in question is cited. Where more than one work of his are cited, short titles are included and separated from the author's surname with a comma, e.g., (Achebe, *Morning Yet* 18); (Achebe, *Things Fall* 103).

APA 6th Referencing Style

For APA 6th Referencing Style in-text citation, use the author's surname and the year of publication, both separated by a comma, e.g. (De Beauvoir, 2008). Add the page or page[s] number[s] using a comma to separate it from the year of publication if direct quotation, e.g. (Dubois, 2005, p.17).

Chicago Reference Style

Chicago Reference Style is an "author-date" style. Use only the surname[s] of the author[s] and the year of publication given wholly or partly in round brackets. If you need to be specific, add page, chapter or section numbers, preceded by a comma, e.g. (Camus *La peste,* 12).

The Vancouver Reference Style

The Vancouver Reference Style is a citation style commonly used in Medicine and science which uses numbers within the text that refer to numbered entries in the reference list at the end of the work. It is also known as the "author-number system"

MLA Stylesheet: Differentiating Between Notes and Bibliographical References

MLA students using MLA stylesheet usually find it difficult to master how to write endnotes and differentiate well enough from bibliographical references reflected

only at the end of the whole work. Notes are numbered whereas bibliographical references are not but are arranged in an alphabetical order of authors" surnames. The author's first name precedes his surname in a note whereas in a bibliographical reference, his surname precedes his first name with a comma separating them. Commas separate the major segments in a note but full stops are used for such in a bibliographical reference. Take for example:

Notes:

i. Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (London: Heinemann,1958), 56.
    ii. Calixthe Beyala, *C'est le soleil qui m'a brûlée* (Paris: Stock,1987), 25-26.

Bibliographical references:

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart.* London: Heinemann, 1958.
Beyala, Calixthe. *C'est le soleil qui m'a brûlée.* Paris: Stock, 1987.

A comma separates the author's surname from the title of the work in a note but in a bibliographical reference, a full stop separates the first name from the title. Details about the work - place of publication, publishers and date of publication - are enclosed in brackets ending in a comma in a note but in a bibliographical reference, a full stop separates them from the title and a full stop is at the end. Finally, the exact page or pages where the cited information is obtained is/are included in notes but pages are not reflected in bibliographical references except where it has to do with a book chapter or an article in a scientific journal, in which case, the total number of pages involved will be reflected, e.g., Echenim, Kester. "Cultural Hero in the Novels of Chinua Achebe." *The Nigerian Journal of the Humanities* 8 (1996):1-13. Notice that the names are written in full. Use of initials is not allowed. All names used must be included. MLA 2007 edition frowns upon *ibid, op.cit.* Volumes, numbers, pages are omitted. See, for example, notes 1 and 2 above have no pages or p. or pp. added to the reflected pages. Also, initials are used to represent all well-known publishing houses, e.g., Editions Présence Africaine becomes PA. Notice, Editions is omitted. Presses Universitaires de France becomes PUF. Oxford University Press becomes OUP.

Differentiating Between "Works Cited," "References" and "Bibliography"

Researchers should be able to differentiate clearly between "Works Cited," "References" and "Bibliography." In a journal article, you arrange all the works cited alphabetically by authors" surnames at the end of the article under the heading: "Works Cited." Similarly, References are a list of references to works cited in the write-up prepared at the end of the project arranged alphabetically by authors" surnames. On the contrary, a bibliography is an exhaustive collection at the end of the project of all works cited or consulted in a particular subject area.

According to MLA 2007 edition, when more than one work of a particular author is cited, short titles are used to differentiate between them. For example:

1. "Is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's?" (Achebe, *Morning Yet* 22).
2. "The author of *Things Fall Apart* is very good at this type of experimentation" (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 26).

In "Works Cited" and "Bibliography," the titles will appear in full but you will alphabetize them, i.e., arrange them alphabetically going by the very first letter of each title. For example:

Achebe, Chinua. *Morning Yet on Creation Day. Essays*. London: Heinemann, 1975.

_____. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann, 1958.

M in Morning comes before T in *Things*. If there are five or more titles, they will all be alphabetized.

Notice that the first entry is in full. But in the subsequent ones, the author's name is represented by three hyphens.

When you have finished writing your assignment or research project of any sort, get some ruled foolscap sheets and label them A to Z. Start reading over your assignment or project from the beginning to the end, carefully recording the numerous references in an alphabetical order of the authors" surnames. One starting with "A" is to be placed on page A, one with "S" on page S, one with "W" on page W, etc. Do this meticulously ensuring that no reference is omitted. The typist should be instructed to type the bibliography following rigorously the order in which the references appear. Another way of doing it is typing all the references and giving a command to the computer to arrange them in an alphabetical order. This is very important because many students fail to produce a comprehensive list of bibliographical references cited in the work. Also run a spelling check to ensure that the names are correctly spelt in the bibliography just as in the body of the work. This is part of ensuring proper referencing.

By this time, you may have grown so tired. But please encourage yourself and do the needful so that mistakes will be minimized. By so doing, references will be properly done, and the academic writing will be excellent. This is a very effective method of ensuring that no references are omitted, none is wrongly entered and the approved referencing style is strictly adhered to. You will be proud of your write-up given that you have not infringed on anybody's intellectual property/ honesty right or copyright law and you have maintained your academic integrity and excellence.

Note, for references from internet, add the author's name and title of the work as well as date of publication of the work before the URL address. Do not enclose the URL address in angle brackets. Remember to add the date of consultation of the work e.g., Retrieved on 10th January, 2021 or Retiré le 10 janvier 2021. Examples of correct internet references are as follows:

Chevrier, Jacques. « Afrique[s]-sur-Seine. » Auto Repères. Revue des littératures du sud no.155-156. Identités littéraires. Juillet-décembre, 2004. www.adpf.asso.fr/librairie/ derniers/pdf/155-156.3pdf. Retiré le 18 décembre 2019.

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Conclusion

An attempt has been made here to ex-ray the meaning of referencing and establish if it has any correlation with academic integrity and excellence. The paper explains, in a nutshell, what referencing style is, what the various reference style sheets are, then dwells on the application of the major ones – APA, MLA, Chicago Reference Style and Vancouver Style of referencing. It exposes what to be referenced and what not to be referenced and why we must reference appropriately. In other words, it highlights the importance of proper referencing.

It has been largely demonstrated that when writing an assignment or an academic research project (BA/BEd/BSc project, MA Dissertation, or PhD Thesis), students and researchers must make sure that all outside sources of information used in their writing are not just acknowledged and referenced but done so in an accurate way. Proper referencing is done principally to ensure the author's moral right, intellectual property/honesty right or copyright law so as to avoid committing plagiarism or academic theft. It goes without saying that proper referencing is a sure way to achieve academic integrity and excellence.

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