Chapter Three

Referencing in Research Report Writing

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Abstract

Referencing forms an important aspect of research report writing which cannot be ignored by the researcher or students. There are so many referencing styles, and it adaptation may vary from one institution to another. To be well baked in a particular writing style can be acquired with the frequency of writing using a particular style. However, researchers need to understand and know how to use a particular style and later master more of the styles. This paper thus explores the use of the America Psychological Association format (APA). This format has been thoroughly discussed and explained with examples to enable would-be researchers and students to use it.

Keywords

References, In-Text, Out-of-Text, Format

3.1   Introduction

Referencing is a standardized method of formatting the information sources one has used in a written work. Referencing is a critical path in research write up for publication. One can use good experimental designs, appropriate hypotheses testing procedures and have excellent diction BUT one work would remain on the table in his room if he or she does not work on referencing.

3.2   Reasons for Referencing

1. Acknowledges the source (avoiding plagiarism).

2. Allows the reader to trace the source.

3. Shows adherence to academic writing standards.

4. Provides evidence that you have read and considered the relevant literature.

5. Allows validation and confirmation of sources used in your work.

6. Gives credibility to one's work.

3.3   The APA (America Psychological Association) Style of Referencing

The APA is used for reference in the social sciences: psychology, economics, sociology, social work etc. Since most works done in these areas are research base and these researches are improved upon year by year or with time, the APA system adopts the Author-Date style of referencing with the main text. It thus presupposes that any work done later must be an improvement over a similar work done earlier, hence the need for the date. It requires that tables, figures, charts, graphs, tables etc used for illustration and explanation must be well

labeled and be as close as possible to the information they explain or illustrate.

The following are the guidelines to follow for in-text citations when using the APA format for referencing.

(A) A Work by One or More Authors

Whenever the work of an author is cited, he or she must be referenced in-text using the last name and the date of publication of the article cited. When the name of the author is captured in the signal phrase, the year of publication is placed immediately in parenthesis after it. However, if the name of the author is not captured in the signal phrase or opening statement, the name of the author and the year are placed in parenthesis with each separated by a comma at the end of the statement. If a direct quotation is cited, then, the author's name, year of publication and the page number(s) are placed in parenthesis with each separated by a comma at the end of the statement. In the case of direct quotation, only put the page(s) number preceded by p. or pp. in parenthesis at the end of the statement.

An Author

Eg. Kittie (1920) shows that money is life.

Two Authors

Eg. Rockson and Techie (1820) reveal that hands must thoroughly be washed before eating.

Three to Five Authors

Eg. Rockson, Techie, Kyei and Keni (1988) conclude that ….

A MUST for the first time, but for subsequent citations in the same work use.

Eg. Rockson et al. (1988) conclude that …

Six and more Authors

Eg. Max et al. (1997) indicate that ….

For a direct Quote:

E.g. According to Kittie (1920), "Some bacteria are only harmful to us if they make exotoxins" (p.76).

If the authors for a work are not identified in a signal phrase or opening statements, then below are ways of going about the in-text citation:

An Author

Eg. Money is life (Kittie, 1920).

Two Authors

Eg. Hands must thoroughly be washed before eating (Rockson and Techie, 1820).

Three to Five Authors

Eg. Teachers are well respected all over the world (Rockson, Techie, Kyei, and Keni, 1999).

A MUST for the first time, but for subsequent citations in the same work use:

Eg. Teachers are well respected all over the world (Rockson *et al.*, 1999).

Six and more Authors

Eg. Some bacteria are only harmful to us if they make exotoxins (Max *et al.*,

1997).

Direct quotes must be handled as below:

Eg. We need fear some bacteria only "if they make exotoxins" (Kittie, 1997, p. 23).

(B) Citing From Two or More Works by an Author Published in the Same Year

The same procedure is followed as in the case of citing from a single work with same author, the only difference in this case is to distinguish the works by placing a lower case letter starting from a…z after the year of publication to indicate the order in which the various works were published within the year. This letter should be used in ordering the list of cited work by the author at the bibliography where the entries arranged alphabetically by title. The name of the author should be followed by a comma; the year and lower case letter also by a comma apart from the last as illustrated in the example below.

Eg. Thirty percent of men who date are likely to be men who have married (Baffour, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2000d).

Eg. Climate change is a global problem that can be solved with all hands on deck (Danso, 1997b, 1997c, 1997e).

(C) Citing from an Unknown Author

If the author is unknown, use the first two or three words of the entry as listed on the reference page in the author's position or place or shortened version in parenthesis, along with the date. The title must be italicized or enclosed with quotation marks.

Eg. According to *Institute of Economic Affairs Abstract* (2001), Ghana' population stood at twenty-five million as at 1995.

Eg. In 1995 Ghana's population stood at 25 million ("Global Trends," 2003).

(D) Citing from an Organizational or Corporate Author

The name of the organization, association, foundation or corporation must be spelt out. However if the name can be abbreviated and remain identifiable spell out the name first time and put the abbreviation immediately after it, in brackets. Use the abbreviation for subsequent citation of that same source.

Eg. In 1995 Ghana's population stood at 25 million (Polytechnic Teachers Association of Ghana [POTAG], 1993).

Eg. According to POTAG (1993), technology can greatly enhance the performance of students.

(E) Authors with the Same Last Name

If one cites from two different works with authors bearing the same last names, the initials of the authors first names of the authors are put along the their surnames to distinguish between them. Below is an example to how such a situation should be handled.

E.g. In 1990 the literacy rate for Mexico stood at 75 percent (C. Miller, 1998; S. Miller, 1994).

(F) To Cite Two or More Works by the Same Author

When citing two or more works of the same author, put the author's last name in a parenthesis followed by a comma, and then the years of publication of the various works alongside in the parenthesis. Note that each year must be separated

with a comma apart from the last in the parenthesis. An example of above case is given below:

E.g. Many experimental designs are not analyzed well (Kittison, 1924, 1999).

However if the books were written in the same year then add small case letters to the year from a – z.

E.g. Many experimental designs are not analyzed well (Kittison, 1999a, 1999b).

(G) More than One Work in a Citation from Different Authors

In the above case, arrange the authors' last names in alphabetical order followed by a comma; add the year and separate them by semicolons as show in the example below:

E.g. Some bacteria are only harmful to us if they make exotoxins (Didion, 2010; Kattens, 1999).

(H) Quotation from a Secondary Source (Indirect Source)

This situation occurs or confronts an author when he or she reads from a particular source and in doing so finds a piece of information of interest that he would like to quote when the author whose work he or she is reading also quoted from another source.

In this case he or she captures the name of the author of the book he or she read but puts "as cited in" in parenthesis together with the name of the secondary source followed by a comma and then the year of publication as illustrated in the example below:

E.g. Kov Kittie of FAO feels that international agriculture has reached its limit (as cited in Mann, 1993).

(I)Electronic Texts

These are treated in-text in the same way as print sources: use author, title of text or Website, and page number.

Known author

E.g. According to Mann (1994), water helps all animals to digest food easily.

Unknown author

E.g. Water helps the food eaten to digest (Compost Microbes, 1993).

Direct quotation from website

E.g. "There are many disease causing microbes in the soil" (Soilmicrobes.com, 1993, p. 23).

The following are the entry formats for building a list of cited works under the APA style of referencing for the various types of materials.

For the entry formats, we use the following keys:

| = a space o = no punctuation

── = Underline → = indent ½ inch

(J) Books

Author / editor(s).| (Year of publication). | *Title of the Book*. | Place of Publication: |

→ Publisher.

E.g. Kwabison, W., Larley, R. H., and Maln, A (Ed.). (2009). *The Poisoned*

Chalice. Achimota: Vintage-Press.

(K) Journal Articles

Author(s). (year of publication). | Article Title. | *Journal Title,* | volume number (issue → number), | inclusive page numbers.

E.g. Kwei, F. (1997). The Challenge of Diversity. *ADE Bulletin* 88(1997), 246-250.

(L) Magazine and Newspaper Articles

Author(s). (year of publication – 1990, May 25 or n.d.). | Article Title. | *Publication Title*, | →inclusive page number.

E.g. Adams, K. 1998, Feb. 23). Mangled. *Ghanaian Times,* pp.12, 16.

(M) Electronic Sources

Author(s). | (Date of electronic publication). | *Title of Site*.| Date of access, from electronic →address

E.g. Arthur, S., and Zain, T. (2008). *Four Project Page.* 11 Jan. 2008, from www.soil.edu.com.

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