Lead City International Journal of Library, Information & Communication Sciences

PRINT ISSN
3027-0022
e-ISSN
3027-0901

Open Access · Peer-Reviewed

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 2 YEAR 2026 pp. 112–123 DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Use of Reference Tools among Postgraduate Students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, Ijagun

Dr. Temitope A. Osisanwo[1*], Solarin N Florence[2] & Adeagbo Segun Olaoluwa[3]

[1,2,3,] *Department of Library and Information Science, Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria*

osisanwota@tasued.edu.ng[1*] osisdetopsy@yahoo.com[2] adeagboolaoluwasegun@gmail.com[3]

ARTICLE INFO

ARTICLE TYPE
Original Research

RECEIVED
30 August, 2026

REVISED
03 October, 2026

ACCEPTED
10 October, 2026

PUBLISHED ONLINE
31 October, 2026

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR
Osisanwo, Taiwo A.
osisanwota@tasued.edu.ng

HOW TO CITE
Osisanwo, T. A., Solarin, N. F. & Adeagbo, S. O. (2026). Use of Reference Tools among Postgraduate Students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, Ijagun. *Lead City International Journal of Library, Information & Communication Sciences*, 3(2), 112–123. https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

ABSTRACT

Effective use of reference tools has become imperative for postgraduate students in engaging in academic activities, conducting quality research and producing scholarly publications. Hence, the study investigated the assessment of the use of reference tools among postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education (TASFUED), Ijagun. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study, with the total population comprising six hundred and thirty-seven (637) postgraduate students across the five colleges of TASFUED. A sample size of two hundred and forty-six (246) respondents was drawn using a proportionate stratified sampling technique. Two hundred and forty-six (246) copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents, and 173 were returned and found usable for analysis. Data were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that the major reference tools available to postgraduate students were Google Scholar 165(95.4%) and ResearchGate 153(88.4%) The extent to which postgraduate students of TASFUED use reference tools was high ($\bar{x}$ = 2.81). The challenges impeding the use of reference tools among postgraduate students are irregular power supply ($\bar{x}$ = 3.35), unreliable internet connectivity ($\bar{x}$ = 3.33) and time constraints due to academic workload ($\bar{x}$ = 3.29). The study concluded that while postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, Ijagun demonstrated a great extent of use of basic and common reference management tools and academic databases, gaps still exist in the effective use of advanced reference tools like Mendeley, EndNote, and Scopus. It was therefore recommended that the university library and postgraduate college should organise regular workshops, seminars and hands-on training programmes on the use of advanced reference management tools.

Keywords: *Reference Tools, Reference Management Software, Postgraduate Students, Academic Writing*

Article is published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

Print ISSN 3027-0022· e-ISSN 3027-0901
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

1. INTRODUCTION

Reference tools are essential information resources that help library users locate, identify, verify, and retrieve information efficiently. Good knowledge of these tools and their usage is imperative to academic endeavour. When writing scholarly or academic work, it is crucial to have good reference management systems and tools (Rezeki, 2019). Reference tools are resources that writers and researchers use to manage their project references, to record and use bibliographic citations, or references (Pradhan & Karmbe, 2020). Traditional reference tools include dictionaries, encyclopaedias, handbooks, atlases, indexes, abstracts, bibliographies, directories and yearbooks, as well as digital reference tools such as online databases, Google Scholar, library discovery systems, citation databases and reference management software like Mendeley, Zotero and EndNote.

Several reference management tools have become popular worldwide; Mendeley, EndNote, Zotero, and RefWorks are just a few, and they vary in features and interfaces. These tools not only help you organise and store references but can also work with a word processor to cite sources in the text and create bibliographies in a variety of styles. The popular research management programs include Zotero, Mendeley, EndNote, RefWorks, Citavi, Jab Ref, Pro Cite, Bookends, Papers, Qiqqa, and others (Borah et al, 2022). These reference management software programmes were developed by different agencies because each journal, such as Harvard and the American Psychological Association (APA), requires a different format of the references. These reference management systems can be used to create various bibliographic styles in one click.

Note: Sometimes, programs for managing citations or bibliographies are called reference management software. But the words may be different, yet the same concept is depicted. Software that maintains a bibliographic database of records and creates the bibliographic citations (references) that are needed for these records in scholarly research is called reference management software, citation management software, reference tools or bibliographic management software (Kavitha & Sathya, 2024).

Bibliographic references are readily collected, sorted, shared and cited using reference tools. These tools can also distribute references among team members, automatically create bibliographies and in-text citations, and manage PDFs. These tools are crucial to the support of teaching, learning and research and help to access credible, authoritative information. According to Borah, Husain, Saikia and Nath (2022), the importance of reference management software cannot be overlooked as it helps the researcher to organise, archive and share the references that are relevant to the research area and are retrieved from the specialised database. Bibliographic citations are generated and used by academic writers with the help of reference management software, or citation management software.

Print ISSN 3027-0022· e-ISSN 3027-0901
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

Postgraduate students constitute one of the most intensive users of reference management tools because their academic activities involve literature searching, research proposal writing, thesis preparation, and scholarly publishing. The Effective use of reference tools enables postgraduate students to identify relevant literature, evaluate information sources, organise citations, and produce high-quality research with reduced plagiarism and improved academic integrity. Consequently, proficiency in the use of reference tools has become an important component of information literacy in higher education.

As students advance to postgraduate studies, there is a growing expectation that they will be able to contribute to academic writing in their respective fields. However, they frequently lack the requisite ability to effectively use reference management tools that can enhance their academic and research writing. Simisaye (2020, Osisanwo 2025) noted that quality academic and research writing is sorely lacking, particularly among postgraduate students in Nigerian Universities. This was linked to a lack of proper exposure to good reference management tools and resources.

1.2: Statement of the Problem

Despite the availability of a wide range of reference tools at the disposal of postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, it's unfortunate that these tools have not been effectively deployed to support their learning, academic writing, and research activities. Limited awareness, inadequate search skills, preference for general internet search engines, and insufficient information literacy may contribute to the underutilization of these valuable reference tools. This situation can negatively affect the quality of literature reviews, research outputs, and academic performance. Therefore, this study seeks to assess the use of reference tools among postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, with a view to providing evidence that can guide strategies for improving their effective use.

1.3: Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Identify the types of reference tools used by postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education.
2. Determine the extent to which postgraduate students use reference tools for their academic and research activities.
3. Examine the challenges impeding the effective use of reference tools among postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education.

Print ISSN 3027-0022· e-ISSN 3027-0901
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

1.4: Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. What types of reference tools are used by postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education?
2. To what extent do postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education use reference tools for their academic and research activities?
3. What are the challenges impeding the effective use of reference tools among postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reference tools remain indispensable resources for scholarly communication because they facilitate quick access to reliable and authoritative information. Recent studies indicate that the increasing availability of electronic reference resources has significantly changed information-seeking behaviour among university students, with digital platforms becoming the preferred means of accessing scholarly information. Nevertheless, effective utilisation depends largely on users' awareness, information literacy, and technological competence.

Advancements have been made in some Reference Management Software (RMS) that make it easier to import and export references in different word processors, including MS Word and LibreOffice. This integration makes citation and reference list generation easy. In addition, some tools can be connected to browsers like Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox, allowing the user to export resources straight to the library RMS. Some tools include the ability to store documents and bibliographic information and to enable teams to annotate shared sources collaboratively (Hermanns & Skinner, 2022).

Academic and research work can be expected to produce better results in terms of quality and accuracy if Reference Management Software (RMS) tools are used (Rincón et al., 2022). Manual citation and referencing were previously seen as a time-consuming and tedious task, while others saw it as mundane (Glassman, 2018). Technology, on the other hand, has both positive and negative effects on users, but according to Rincón et al. (2022), RMS has a significant role in research activity as it supports the user in three important activities in academic research, which are related to information search, saving and writing. The most prevalent Reference Management Software identified by Tremblay and Walker (2019) and Murphree et al. (2018) are Zotero, Mendeley, EndNote and RefWorks.

Citations from citation data providers can be used to trace back to a source and to avoid plagiarism. The publishers' websites, Google Scholar, SciFinder, SciVerse, Scopus, and Web of Science are examples of these. These databases enable users to search and access scholarly articles, papers and other publications, and give information on how to properly cite the sources used in research (Awang et al., 2019; Martín-Martín et al., 2021, Osisanwo, 2025). Researchers typically use reference management software to retrieve, save, arrange and share references from a specialised database. This software often possesses different styles of citation

Print ISSN 3027-0022· e-ISSN 3027-0901
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

and can automatically provide references, depending on the requirements of the specified citation style. This enables authors to quickly set up and set up reference lists for their research papers, articles and other publications. Some current reference management systems have the option of integrating with word processing systems, making it even easier for authors to use and manage references. (Setiani et al., 2021).

Mvula (2023) studied the level of awareness and use of Reference Management Software among the teaching faculty of the University of Zambia. The study revealed that, in general, faculty members understood the value and benefits of digital reference tools, but they noted that facilitating conditions were factors that affected their use of these tools, including access to the Internet, institutional support, training, and access to digital infrastructure. The authors suggested strengthening user education, improving technological facilities and consideration for increasing utilization of the same. In the same way, Nitsos et al. (2022) examined the uses and adoption of reference management software among post-graduate students at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. They found that electronic information resources positively impacted research productivity, but their efficient use was hindered by the lack of adequate ICT facilities, the instability of internet service and a lack of information literacy. Continuous Library orientation and enhanced access to electronic resources were the focus of the study.

In addition to information access, the use of reference management software is now increasingly key to postgraduate research. Rezeki (2019) discovered that postgraduate student researchers and academics showed a higher rate of use of reference management software compared to taught postgraduate students. The research findings indicated that information literacy training should incorporate training on the use of citation management tools and on scholarly workflow to enhance research efficiency and quality of academic writing.

Overall, recent literature suggests that while postgraduate students increasingly rely on digital reference tools, variations in awareness, competence, institutional support, and infrastructure continue to influence their level of utilisation. This indicates a need for institution-specific studies, particularly in Nigerian universities such as Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, to provide empirical evidence for improving library services and postgraduate research support.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive survey research design. The population included six hundred and thirty-seven (637) postgraduate students of the five colleges of TASFUED. Two hundred and forty-six (246) respondents were selected by a proportionate stratified sampling technique, and the sampling size for the colleges was proportionally distributed according to the number of individuals in each college. The sample size for the study was calculated by Slovin's formula, which is suitable for a study when the number of the population size is known.

Data were collected by using a researcher-made questionnaire. While two hundred and forty-six (246) copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents, only One Hundred and seventy-three (173) copies were returned and found usable for analysis. Frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation were used to analyse the data.

Print ISSN 3027-0022· e-ISSN 3027-0901
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the 246 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents, 173(70.3%) copies were returned duly completed and found usable for this study.

Demographic Information of the Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents (N = 173)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	71	41.0
	Female	102	59.0
Age Range	20–30 years	54	31.2
	31–40 years	63	36.4
	41–50 years	38	22.0
	51 years and above	18	10.4
Level of Study	PGD	46	26.6
	MSc.	58	33.5
	MLIS	42	24.3
	MPhil	18	10.4
	PhD	9	5.2

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study. The total number of respondents was 173. The gender distribution shows that 102(59.0%) of the respondents were female, while 71(41.0%) were male. This indicates that female postgraduate students constituted the majority of the respondents. With respect to age distribution, the majority of the respondents, 63(36.4%), were within the age range of 31–40 years. This was followed by 54(31.2%) who were within 20–30 years, 38(22.0%) who were within 41–50 years, while 18(10.4%) were 51 years and above. This implies that most of the postgraduate students were within the active early and mid-adult academic age range. Regarding level of study, the result revealed that 58(33.5%) were MSc. students, which constituted the highest proportion. This was followed by 46(26.6%) PGD students, 42(24.3%) MLIS students, 18(10.4%) MPhil students, while PhD students accounted for 9(5.2%), which was the least. This indicates that the study was largely dominated by master's-level postgraduate students.

Research Question One: *What types of reference tools are used by postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education*?

Table 2: Types of Reference tools used for academic and research by the postgraduate students

S/N	Reference Tools	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Google Scholar	165	95.4
2	ResearchGate	153	88.4
3	Turnitin	149	86.1
4	Academia.edu	147	85.0
5	Grammarly	141	81.5
6	Mendeley	132	76.3
7	Scopus	128	74.0
8	Web of Science	119	68.8
9	Zotero	118	68.2

Print ISSN 3027-0022· e-ISSN 3027-0901
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

10	ORCID	97	56.1
11	Notion	84	48.6
12	Evernote	79	45.7
13	BibTeX	72	41.6
14	EndNote	64	37.0
15	JabRef	58	33.5
16	RefWorks	52	30.1
17	Citavi	41	23.7

Table 2 shows the reference tools for academic writing and research available to postgraduate students at Tai Solarin Federal University of Education. The result shows that Google Scholar was the most widely available reference tool 165(95.4%), followed by ResearchGate 153(88.4%), Turnitin 149(86.1%), Academia.edu 147(85.0%), and Grammarly 141(81.5%), Mendeley 132(76.3%), Scopus 128(74.0%), Web of Science 119(68.8%), Zotero 118(68.2%) and ORCID 97(56.1%). It could be concluded that the reference tools for academic writing and research available to postgraduate students in Tai Solarin University of Education are Google Scholar, ResearchGate and Turnitin

Research Question Two: *What is the extent to which postgraduate students of TASFUED use reference tools for their academic and research activities?*

Table 3: The extent of use of reference tools among postgraduate students

S/N	Reference tools	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	SD
1	JabRef	19(11.0%)	48(27.7%)	61(35.3%)	45(26.0%)	2.24	0.99
2	BibTeX	21(12.1%)	46(26.6%)	59(34.1%)	47(27.2%)	2.24	1.01
3	Citavi	24(13.9%)	55(31.8%)	57(32.9%)	37(21.4%)	2.38	1.02
4	Notion	27(15.6%)	51(29.5%)	56(32.4%)	39(22.5%)	2.38	1.03
5	Evernote	33(19.1%)	57(32.9%)	50(28.9%)	33(19.1%)	2.52	1.02
6	RefWorks	31(17.9%)	62(35.8%)	49(28.3%)	31(17.9%)	2.54	1.01
7	Web of Science	41(23.7%)	66(38.2%)	42(24.3%)	24(13.9%)	2.72	0.99
8	ORCID	46(26.6%)	71(41.0%)	37(21.4%)	19(11.0%)	2.83	0.96
9	EndNote	49(28.3%)	67(38.7%)	38(22.0%)	19(11.0%)	2.84	0.96
10	Scopus	52(30.1%)	69(39.9%)	35(20.2%)	17 (9.8%)	2.90	0.95
11	Zotero	58(33.5%)	74(42.8%)	28(16.2%)	13 (7.5%)	3.02	0.89
12	Academia.edu	59(34.1%)	72(41.6%)	29(16.8%)	13 (7.5%)	3.02	0.89
13	ResearchGate	64(37.0%)	70(40.5%)	25(14.5%)	14(8.1%)	3.06	0.90
14	Mendeley	66(38.2%)	71(41.0%)	24(13.9%)	12 (6.9%)	3.10	0.87
15	Turnitin	76(43.9%)	63(36.4%)	23(13.3%)	11 (6.4%)	3.18	0.89
16	Grammarly	88(50.9%)	60(34.7%)	18(10.4%)	7 (4.0%)	3.32	0.82
17	Google Scholar	97(56.1%)	54(31.2%)	16 (9.2%)	6 (3.5%)	3.40	0.79
						2.81	0.94

Key: VHE = Very High Extent, HE = High Extent, LE = Low Extent and VLE = Very Low Extent

Print ISSN 3027-0022· e-ISSN 3027-0901
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Table 3 shows that the level of knowledge of the use of reference tools among postgraduate students in TASFUED, Ijagun, was high ($\bar{x}$ = 2.81). The findings revealed that Google Scholar recorded the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 3.40), indicating that Google Scholar was used at a very high extent. This was followed by Grammarly ($\bar{x}$ = 3.32), Turnitin ($\bar{x}$ = 3.18), Mendeley ($\bar{x}$ = 3.10), ResearchGate ($\bar{x}$ = 3.06), Zotero ($\bar{x}$ = 3.02), and Academia.edu ($\bar{x}$ = 3.02). Furthermore, the respondents demonstrated a high extent of use of Scopus ($\bar{x}$ = 2.90), EndNote ($\bar{x}$ = 2.84), ORCID ($\bar{x}$ = 2.83), and Web of Science ($\bar{x}$ = 2.72), indicating that they were relatively knowledgeable in the use of advanced academic indexing and citation management tools. However, the respondents indicated a low extent of use of RefWorks ($\bar{x}$ = 2.54), Evernote ($\bar{x}$ = 2.52), Citavi ($\bar{x}$ = 2.38), Notion ($\bar{x}$ = 2.38), JabRef ($\bar{x}$ = 2.24), and BibTeX ($\bar{x}$ = 2.24). It can be concluded that the level of use of reference tools among postgraduate students in TASFUED, Ijagun, was high.

Research Question Three: *What are the challenges impeding the effective use of reference tools among postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education?*

Table 4: Challenges impeding the effective use of reference tools

S/n	Challenges	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD
1	Low digital literacy skills among some postgraduate students	73 (42.2%)	66 (38.2%)	23 (13.3%)	11 (6.4%)	3.16	0.90
2	Poor orientation programmes in universities on research tools	76 (43.9%)	64 (37.0%)	22 (12.7%)	11 (6.4%)	3.18	0.90
3	Lack of technical support from libraries or ICT units	79 (45.7%)	60 (34.7%)	23 (13.3%)	11 (6.4%)	3.19	0.92
4	Lack of awareness of available reference management tools	78 (45.1%)	63 (36.4%)	21 (12.1%)	11 (6.4%)	3.20	0.90
5	Difficulty understanding citation styles (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.)	81 (46.8%)	61 (35.3%)	20 (11.6%)	11 (6.4%)	3.23	0.91
6	Inadequate training on how to use tools like Zotero and Mendeley	85 (49.1%)	58 (33.5%)	19 (11.0%)	11 (6.4%)	3.25	0.91
7	Limited access to institutional subscriptions (e.g., EndNote, Scopus)	88 (50.9%)	55 (31.8%)	19 (11.0%)	11 (6.4%)	3.27	0.92
8	Time constraints due to academic workload	90 (52.0%)	54 (31.2%)	18 (10.4%)	11 (6.4%)	3.29	0.91

Print ISSN 3027-0022· e-ISSN 3027-0901
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

9	Unreliable internet connectivity affecting use of online tools	94 (54.3%)	52 (30.1%)	17 (9.8%)	10 (5.8%)	3.33	0.90
10	Irregular power supply (common in developing contexts)	97 (56.1%)	50 (28.9%)	16 (9.2%)	10 (5.8%)	3.35	0.89
	Overall Weighted Mean					3.25	0.91

Key: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 4 shows that the challenges impeding the use of reference tools among postgraduate students are irregular power supply ($\bar{x}$ = 3.35), unreliable internet connectivity ($\bar{x}$ = 3.33), time constraints due to academic workload ($\bar{x}$ = 3.29), limited access to institutional subscriptions such as EndNote and Scopus ($\bar{x}$ = 3.27), inadequate training on how to use tools like Zotero and Mendeley ($\bar{x}$ = 3.25), difficulty understanding citation styles such as APA, MLA, and Chicago ($\bar{x}$ = 3.23), and lack of awareness of available reference management tools ($\bar{x}$ = 3.20) negatively affect their use of reference tools. Furthermore, the respondents agreed that lack of technical support from libraries or ICT units ($\bar{x}$ = 3.19), poor orientation programmes in universities on research tools ($\bar{x}$ = 3.18), and low digital literacy skills among some postgraduate students ($\bar{x}$ = 3.16) also constitute notable challenges. It could therefore be inferred that the challenges facing the use of reference tools among postgraduate students are irregular power supply, unreliable internet connectivity and time constraints due to academic workload.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that the reference tools for academic writing and research available to postgraduate students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, included Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and Turnitin. This suggests that postgraduate students are mostly exposed to widely accessible and commonly used academic platforms rather than a full range of reference management software. This aligns with the position of Zhang (2012) and Basak (2014), who noted that many researchers tend to rely on easily accessible citation data providers and search engines such as Google Scholar for locating scholarly materials, while more advanced reference management tools are less frequently utilised due to awareness and training gaps. Similarly, Awang Puteh et al. (2019) emphasised that tools like Scopus and Web of Science support citation tracking and scholarly discovery, yet their usage is often limited in developing academic environments where subscription constraints exist.

The study further established that the extent to which postgraduate students use reference tools in TASFUED, Ijagun, was high. This finding suggests that despite limited diversity in available tools, students demonstrate a strong understanding of how to use reference tools for academic writing and research purposes. This is consistent with Butros and Taylor (2010), who argued that reference management software enhances academic writing by enabling efficient collection, organisation, and citation of sources. It also corroborates the view of Rincón Castillo et al. (2022), who found that reference management tools improve research quality by simplifying searching, saving, and writing processes. The high level of knowledge may also be attributed to increasing digital literacy among postgraduate students and exposure to research methodology courses that emphasise citation practices and academic integrity

The study also identified challenges impeding the use of reference tools among postgraduate students, which include irregular power supply, unreliable internet connectivity, and time

Print ISSN 3027-0022· e-ISSN 3027-0901
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

constraints due to academic workload. These findings are consistent with Parabhoi et al. (2017), who identified infrastructural deficiencies, lack of technical support, and workload pressures as key barriers to the effective use of reference management tools. Similarly, Mhokole and Kimaryo (2023) reported that unstable internet access and poor power supply significantly reduce the use of reference management software among postgraduate students. In the Nigerian context, these challenges are particularly critical, as digital academic tools depend heavily on stable electricity and internet connectivity for optimal use. These constraints therefore limit students' ability to fully engage with reference tools despite their awareness and knowledge.

Summary of the findings

The findings of the study can be summarised as follows:

1. Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Turnitin, among others, are the available reference tools used by Postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education,
2. The extent to which postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education use reference tools for academic and research activities was high.
3. The challenges impeding the effective use of reference tools among postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education are irregular power supply, unreliable internet connectivity and time constraints due to academic workload, among others.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, Ijagun demonstrated a great extent of use of basic and common reference management tools and academic databases. While many students possess basic awareness of commonly used academic platforms and reference tools, gaps still exist in the effective use of advanced reference tools. These gaps may affect the quality, efficiency, and ethical standards of their research outputs. Therefore, improving competence in the use of reference tools will significantly enhance postgraduate students' research performance, academic integrity, and contribution to knowledge production within Tai Solarin University of Education. Consequently, based on the findings, the following recommendations are suggested.

1. University management should strengthen access to advanced reference tools and academic databases such as Mendeley, RefWorks, EndNote, Scopus, and Web of Science by ensuring institutional subscriptions, stable ICT infrastructure, and regular orientation programmes. This will enhance postgraduate students' access to relevant academic writing and research resources.
2. Although postgraduate students of Tai Solarin Federal University of Education's use of reference tools for academic and research activities was at a high level, the library and ICT units should sustain and improve training programmes on the use of reference tools (e.g., Zotero, Mendeley, EndNote) to keep students abreast of emerging tools and advanced features.
3. University authorities should address infrastructural and environmental challenges affecting the use of reference tools, particularly irregular power supply, unreliable internet connectivity, and time constraints. Provision of stable electricity, improved campus Wi-Fi, and flexible research timelines will help mitigate these challenges.

Print ISSN **3027-0022**· e-ISSN **3027-0901**
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

REFERENCES

Awang Puteh, S. E., Hanafi, N., Mansor, A. N., & Hamzah, M. I. (2019). Adoption of reference management software among academic researchers. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 9*(9), 102–115

Basak, S. K. (2014). Reference management software: Comparative analysis of EndNote and Zotero. *International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology, 4*(4), 269–273.

Borah, M., Hussain, M., Saikia, M., & Nath, D. (2022). Awareness and use of reference management software among research scholars: A review. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 2022, 1–16

Butros, A., & Taylor, S. (2010). Managing information: Evaluating and selecting citation management software. *International Journal of Technology, Knowledge and Society, 6*(4), 79–87.

Hermanns, M., & Skinner, C. (2022). Collaborative research and reference management software: Emerging trends in academic writing. *College & Research Libraries News, 83*(4), 168–173

Kavitha, S., & Sathya, P. (2024). Reference management software and academic writing: Emerging trends among researchers. *Library Progress International, 44*(1), 112–125.

Martín-Martín, A., Orduna-Malea, E., Thelwall, M., & Delgado López-Cózar, E. (2021). Google Scholar, Web of Science, and Scopus: A systematic comparison of citations. *Scientometrics, 126*(1), 511–537. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-020-03690-4

Mhokole, T., & Kimaryo, L. A. (2022). Usage of reference management software by postgraduate students at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *University of Dar es Salaam Library Journal, 17*(2), 85–99

Mvula, J. (2023). Awareness and use of reference management software among teaching faculty at the University of Zambia. *Zambia Journal of Library and Information Science, 5*(1), 23–39

Nitsos, I., Malliari, A., & Chamouroudi, A. (2022). Adoption and use of reference management software among postgraduate students at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 48*(6), 102620

Osisanwo, T.A.(2025). Research competence and use of open educational resources by lecturers in federal universities in southwest, Nigeria. *Nigerian School Library Journal*. 24(1) 3-18

Osisanwo, T. A. (2025). Disciplinary Differences, Gender on the Use of Academic Networks as Perceived by Postgraduate Students of Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun. *Journal of Science and Information Technology (JOSIT),* 19 (1) pp. 291-303

Parabhoi, L., Mallick, S., & Das, S. (2017). Challenges in the use of reference management software among postgraduate students and researchers. *DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology, 37*(5), 339–345

Print ISSN **3027-0022**· e-ISSN **3027-0901**
DOI: https://doi.org/10.63741/lcijlics.2026.0302.10-j

Pradhan, P., & Karmbe, M. (2020). Reference management software: Features, functions and applications in research. *International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology, 10*(4), 221–226.

Rezeki, Y. S. (2019). Citation and referencing skills in academic writing among postgraduate students. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics, 4*(3), 357–370

Rincón Castillo, A., Torres, J., & Martínez, D. (2022). The role of reference management software in improving academic writing and research productivity. *Information Development, 38*(4), 622–635

Setiani, R., Wibowo, A., & Nugroho, Y. (2021). Utilization of reference management software in scholarly communication. *Journal of Information and Knowledge Management, 20*(4), 2150047

Simisaye, A. O. (2020). Research productivity among postgraduate students in Nigerian universities: Challenges and prospects. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 1–15.

Tremblay, P., & Walker, C. (2019). Citation management software in academic environments: Trends and challenges. *Information Services & Use, 39*(1–2), 67–81.

Zhang, Y. (2012). Comparison of popular reference management software packages. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 38*(6), 361–367.