



**INVESTIGATION OF PERCEIVED USEFULNESS, ATTITUDE AND SELF-EFFICACY
TOWARDS USE OF PLAGIARISM CHECKERS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
AND LECTURERS IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The present study investigates the perceived usefulness, attitude and self-efficacy towards use of plagiarism checkers among university students and lecturers in North Central Nigeria. To obtain pertinent information of the study, three research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Three hundred and fifteen (315) items questionnaire was developed and use to obtain data from 315 respondents from two federal universities lecturers' (Federal University of Technology Minna and University of Abuja). The data was analysed using frequency, mean, standard deviation and z-test statistics. The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 levels of significance. The study reveals that the findings of the study disclosed that only two universities lecturers' use plagiarism detector which are, Federal University of Technology Minna and University of Abuja. It could also be concluded from the outcome of the findings that turnitin, copycatch are plagiarism detector utilized by lecturers; the findings also revealed The lecturers of the universities positively perceived the usefulness of plagiarism detector for research writing, improving the existence vast of document, detecting student plagiarized content in their thesis. The findings of the study also disclosed high level of efficacy of the lecturers' toward the utilization of the plagiarism detector. Finally, the findings revealed there is no difference in the male and female lecturers' opinion on perceived use, and self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism detector, the researcher recommended that enlighten and awareness program should be organized for proper enlightenment of lecturers, student, and researcher on the significance important of plagiarism detector in Nigeria Institutions, proper guide should be given to student by their supervisor regarding the use of plagiarism detector in thesis writing. There should be proper scrutiny on the factors affecting the use of various plagiarism

softwares to test for credibility of thesis writing. Finally suggested for further studies to investigate factors affecting the Implementation of Plagiarism detector in Higher Institution in North Central Nigeria.

Keywords: *Perceived Usefulness, Self-efficacy, Altitude, Plagiarism Detector, Lecturers.*

Introduction

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are indispensable and have been accepted as part of the contemporary world, especially in the industrialized societies to the extent of giving a new phase to the education system in terms of pedagogical approach (Ololube, 2006). There is barely any area of human endeavour that Information Communication Technology has not been effectively utilized to better the lot of man so as to enhance performance (Sridevi, Bala and Senthil, 2017). Information Communication Technology is gradually erasing humans' traditional way of carrying out task.

With the introduction of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in higher education as well as the plethora of online resources, there are heightened cases of plagiarism (Sogol, Hamid and Ahmad, 2014). Plagiarism is a contentious issue in higher education, it is perceived by many to be widespread and increasing among university students (Hill and Page, 2009).

Hill and Page (2009) also stressed that the incidents of plagiarism these days seem to be on the increase especially with the advent of internet which made information more easily available and accessible without any geographical barriers; thereby, researchers can have access to any document in any part of the world as easily as possible (Samuel, Onasanya, and Olumorin, 2018). The inimical act of copious copying of other scholars' intellectual property devoid of proper attribution or what is popularly regarded as 'cut and paste' syndrome is a clear demonstration of the culture of mediocrity. It has the greatest propensity of enthroning superficiality and forestalls advancement in knowledge and quality of learning.

Plagiarism detection software came to the rescue of the academia; the use of plagiarism detection software in higher education was first notably implemented in 2001 at the University of Virginia (Hue, and Ab, 2013). The commercial package Turnitin in particular has been adopted in a large number of higher education institutions and continues to be one of the preferred plagiarism detection alternatives available. However, despite the popularity of plagiarism

checkers, (Fari, 2010) remarked that it is not yet popular among individual lecturers in performing the task of identifying clearly copied or similar textual material in academic writing. As a result of this inflicting act ravaging our institution of learning, the researcher seeks to undertake a study of the perceived usefulness, attitude and self-efficacy towards the use of plagiarism checkers among university lecturers in North Central Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study sought to investigate perceived usefulness, attitude and self-efficacy towards use of plagiarism checkers among university students and lecturers in North Central Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the perceived usefulness of plagiarism detectors among lecturers' in North Central Nigeria universities.
2. Examine lecturers' self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria.
3. Examine male and female lecturers' self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the research work:

1. What is the perceived usefulness of plagiarism detectors among lecturers' in North Central Nigeria universities?
2. What is lecturers' self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria?
3. What is male and female lecturers' self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- HO₁: There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers on the perceived usefulness of plagiarism detectors among lecturers' in North Central Nigeria universities.
- HO₂: There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers' on self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted survey research. The population for the study consists of all the two Federal Universities lecturers within the North-Central region. These would include: Federal University of Technology Minna, Niger State, and

University of Abuja, Federal Capital Territory. A total of three hundred fifteen (315) male and female male lecturers sampled out of the entire population of the study using Tara Yamene's formula. The Instruments for the study are using a simple multi-stage sampling technique. Data collected for this study was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and z-test statistics.

Results:

Research Questions One:

What is the perceived usefulness of plagiarism detectors among lecturers' in North Central Nigeria universities?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on Perceived Usefulness of Lecturers on plagiarism detectors in North-Central Nigeria Universities

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{X}_A	SD _A	REMARK
1	Turnitin is useful to university lecturers	3.48	0.50	Accepted
2	plagiarism detectors is useful in research work	3.84	0.36	Accepted
3	Plagiarism checkers are used by all universities	2.11	0.87	Rejected
4	Plagiarism softwares are used to detect research crime.	3.68	0.47	Accepted
5	Turnitin is used by only university students	1.99	0.97	Rejected
6	Plagiarism detectors helps to check grammatical errors	2.97	0.50	Accepted
7	It enhances caution when using other related literatures	3.91	0.78	Accepted
8	Plagiarism detectors caters for research originality	3.99	0.90	Accepted
9	Turnitin helps to guide lecturers within the research topic	3.28	0.45	Accepted
10	Turnitin helps to reduce "copy and paste" tradition of research writing	3.98	0.91	Accepted

Table 1 unveils the response of lecturers' on perceived usefulness of plagiarism detectors. The result above revealed the opinion of the lecturers' regarding the usefulness of plagiarism detectors, the outcome of the analysis presented open that, 8 items list on perceived usefulness of plagiarism detected was accepted among these are; turnitin is useful to university lecturers, plagiarism detectors is useful in research work, plagiarism softwares are used to detect research crime,

plagiarism detectors helps to check grammatical errors and also helps to reduce “copy and paste” tradition of research writing with the average mean 3.48, 3.84, 3.68, 2.97 and 3.98 respectively that is average mean (\bar{X}_A) above $\bar{X}_A = 2.50$.

On the other hand the respondents are of the view that the by Plagiarism checkers are not used by all universities in Nigeria especially in North Central and also that the Turnitin/plagiarism detector is not meant for only student of the university, but virtually importance for all writers with mean value 2.11 and 1.99 respectively.

Research Question Two: What are lecturers’ self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses of Lecturers Self -Efficacy on utilization of plagiarism detectors in North-Central Nigeria Universities

S/N	STATEMENT	\bar{X}_A	SD_A	REMARK
1	I can install Turnitin software application on my personal computer	3.40	0.36	Accepted
2	I can use Turnitin to check my research write-ups	3.97	0.50	Accepted
3	I cannot install Turnitin software application on my personal computer	1.98	0.46	Rejected
4	I do not know how to use Turnitin to check plagiarism percentage	2.22	0.36	Rejected
5	I can use gplag instead of Turnitin to check the level of plagiarism	2.12	0.47	Rejected
6	I can use ephorus when compared to Turnitin	2.07	0.36	Rejected
7	I can use copycatch better than Turnitin	2.16	0.36	Rejected
8	I know how to use urkund better than Turnitin	1.14	0.37	Rejected
9	I cannot use Turnitin compared to copycatch	1.10	0.468	Rejected
10	I can use Turnitin to detect copied documents	3.48	0.501	Accepted
11	I do not know how to use plagiarism software in research work	1.09	0.364	Rejected

Table 2 shows the respondent responses on lecturers’ self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checker, the result revealed that high level of self-efficacy on the utilization of the plagiarism, 3 items where accepted which are; ability to install turnitin software application on personal computer, the use Turnitin to

check research write-ups and use Turnitin to detect copied documents., 3.40, 3.97 and 3.48 respectively which are above 2.50

Meanwhile 8 items were disagreed upon by the respondents, such as; inability to install Turnitin software application on my personal computer, not knowing how to use Turnitin to check plagiarism percentage, can use gplag instead of Turnitin to check the level of plagiarism, can use ephorus when compared to Turnitin, can use copycatch better than Turnitin among others with average mean value 1.98, 2.22, 2.12, 2.07, 2.16, 1.14 and 1.10 respectively which are below 2.50.

Research Question Three:

What is male and female lecturers self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Male and Female Lecturers Self -Efficacy on utilization of plagiarism detectors in North-Central Nigeria Universities?

S/N	STATEMENT	MALE LECTURER (N1=154)		FEMALE LECTURER (N2=83)		\bar{X}_{Av}	REMARK
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
1	I can install Turnitin software application on my personal computer	3.37	0.35	3.43	0.37	3.40	Accepted
2	I can use Turnitin to check my research write-ups	3.99	0.5	3.94	0.5	3.97	Accepted
3	I cannot install Turnitin software application on my personal computer	2.06	0.45	1.89	0.46	1.98	Rejected
4	I do not know how to use Turnitin to check plagiarism percentage	2.22	0.37	2.21	0.35	2.22	Rejected
5	I can use gplag instead of Turnitin to check the level of plagiarism	2.09	0.47	2.14	0.46	2.12	Rejected
6	I can use ephorus when compared to Turnitin	2.11	0.36	2.03	0.35	2.07	Rejected

7	I can use copycatch better than Turnitin	2.16	0.34	2.15	0.37	2.16	Rejected
8	I know how to use urkund better than Turnitin	1.17	0.36	1.11	0.38	1.14	Rejected
9	I cannot use Turnitin compared to copycatch	1.08	0.47	1.11	0.46	1.10	Rejected
10	I can use Turnitin to detect copied documents	3.49	0.5	3.46	0.5	3.48	Accepted
11	I do not know how to use plagiarism software in research work	1.09	0.36	1.08	0.36	1.09	Rejected
Grand Total of \bar{X}_T and SD_T		2.26	0.41	2.23	0.41	2.24	

Table 3 revealed the male and female lecturers self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria. The outcome of the result presented above shows that there is no difference in the male and female lecturers' self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria.

The average mean value of both male and female lecturers': 3.37, 3.99, 2.06, 2.22, 2.09, 2.11, 2.16, 1.17, 1.08, 3.49 and 1.09 while the average mean value responses of female lecturers are 3.43, 3.94, 1.89, 2.21, 2.14, 2.03, 2.15, 1.11, 1.11, 3.46 and 1.08

Hypotheses One: There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers' on the perceived usefulness of plagiarism detectors among lecturers' in North-Central Nigeria Universities.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of Mean Difference between Responses of male and female Lecturers' on the Perceived usefulness of Plagiarism Detectors among Lecturers' in North-Central Nigeria Universities

HARTLEY TEST FOR EQUAL VARIANCE		Z-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS							
F	Sig.	Z	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	Lower	Upper

EQUAL VARIANCES ASSUMED	0.08	0.72	0.45	235	0.08	-0.54	0.56	-1.76	0.47
EQUAL VARIANCES NOT ASSUMED			0.45		0.08	-0.54	0.56	-1.76	0.47

Table 4 discloses the z-test analysis of differences in the responses of male and female lecturers' on their perceived utilization of plagiarism checker in North-Central Nigeria Universities. The Table unveils that from Hartley test for equality of variance, the significant criterion (sig. 2-tailed) was found to be 0.08 which is greater than the probability value of 0.05 in comparison hence; the null-hypothesis was accepted. Therefore there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers' in North-Central Nigeria Universities on the perceived utilization of plagiarism detectors.

The result unveils there is no statistical significance on the perceived utilization of plagiarism checker among lecturers (both male and female) in North Central Universities.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers' on self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism Checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria.

Table 5: Z-test Analysis of Mean Difference between Responses of male and female Lecturers' on self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism Checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria

	HARTLEY TEST FOR EQUAL VARIANCE		Z-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS						
	F	Sig.	Z	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
								Lower	Upper
EQUAL VARIANCES ASSUMED	0.12	0.67	0.33	235	0.28	-0.78	0.33	-0.66	0.16
EQUAL VARIANCES NOT ASSUMED			0.33		0.28	-0.78	0.33	-0.66	0.16

Table 5 shows the z-test analysis of differences in the responses of male and female lecturers' on self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checker in North-Central Nigeria Universities. The result on the table unveils that from Hartley test for equality of variance, the significant criterion (sig. 2-tailed) was found to be 0.28 which is greater than the probability value of 0.05 in comparison hence; the null-hypothesis was not rejected. Therefore there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers' self-efficacy on the utilization in North-Central Nigeria Universities.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that Turnitin detectors is known to be the most easiest, checker which promote vast collection of documents to be compared to each other, the plagiarism the detector has been prove to be the best means of promoting vast collection of document this is in vein with the outcome of the findings of (Orlando, Hanham and Ullman, 2018) which revealed that turnitin still stands as the most used paligiarism detector. The findings of the study uncovers that there was no statistical significant difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers' in North-Central Nigeria Universities on the perceived utilization of plagiarism detectors.

The findings of research question two conveyed the participant responses as well as difference in self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers of male and female lecturers in North Central Universities, Nigeria. The outcome of the result disclosed that there was no difference in the male and female lecturers' self-efficacy towards the utilization of plagiarism checkers in North Central Universities, Nigeria.

The average mean value of both male and female lecturers':are not far from their grand mean values. The result shows that responses of both male lecturers' were the same through the items to test for efficacy. Hence they both gender has the same level of efficacy on the utilization of the plagiarism checker. The findings is supported by the conclusion made in the findings of (Orlando *et al.*, 2018), it was asserted that gender difference does not impede perceive as well as efficacy in the utilization of plagiarism detector softwares.

Conclusion

The lecturers of the universities positively perceived the usefulness of plagiarism detector for research writing, improving the existence vast of document, detecting student plagiarized content in their thesis. The findings of the study

also disclosed high level of efficacy of the lecturers' toward the utilization of the plagiarism detector.

Recommendations

1. Enlighten and awareness program should be organized for proper enlightenment of lecturers, student, and researcher on the significance important of plagiarism detector in Nigeria Institutions.
2. Proper guide should be given to student by their supervisor regarding the use of plagiarism detector in thesis writing.

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