# Awareness and Use of Plagiarism Detection Tools: A Correlational Study among LIS Postgraduates in Nigerian Universities

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**Abstract**

Statement of the Problem. The issue of plagiarism has gained significant attention due to its detrimental impact on the quality and integrity of research. Plagiarism not only undermines the credibility of scholarly work but also hinders the development of critical thinking and originality among researchers. While the proliferation of online resources has made accessing information easier, it has also inadvertently increased the potential for plagiarism. Despite the availability of numerous plagiarism detection tools, there seems to be a lack of comprehensive understanding among LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian library schools regarding the existence, features, and benefits of these tools. This study examined the awareness and use of plagiarism detection tools among Library and Information Science postgraduate students in Nigerian universities and explored the relationship between awareness and actual usage.

Method. A correlational research design was used, and data were collected from 146 students across ten universities through a validated questionnaire. The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results. The findings revealed high awareness and strong use of Turnitin, moderate awareness and use of EagleScan, and comparatively lower engagement with the Third Eye tool. Significant positive relationships were found between awareness and usage of all three tools, showing that students who are more knowledgeable about plagiarism checkers are more likely to apply them in their research. The results further indicate that these tools contribute to student learning beyond compliance by supporting improved citation practices, paraphrasing skills, and originality.

Originality. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, this study is the first to investigate the awareness and usage of specific plagiarism detection tools among Library and Information Science postgraduate students in Nigeria. By establishing a significant link between awareness and practical use, it provides novel empirical evidence crucial for shaping effective academic integrity training and policy in library schools.

Keywords: Plagiarism checkers; Academic integrity; Library and Information Science; Research ethics; Nigerian universities

**Introduction**

The advent of the internet, which serves as a reservoir of global knowledge, has enabled students, academics, researchers, and other categories of persons from every part of the world to gain access to various information collections or resources, hence it exposes the risks of uncritical and indiscriminate use of other people's intellectual property. It appears that the challenge bedeviling higher institutions today is the fear that many postgraduate students' academic works lack originality in content, especially in this era where information is easily accessed through the internet. Given this, academic writing is subject to certain ethical norms and standards, and not having a clear understanding of these rules may lead researchers to commit plagiarism.

The term, plagiarism is rooted in concepts such as cheating, academic dishonesty, academic misconduct, academic fraud, and unethical use of information. Plagiarism is the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. According to Abduldayan et al. (2019), plagiarism is described as academic malpractice and a breach of academic trust and integrity. Plagiarism has to do with the intentional and unintentional use of another person's work without acknowledgment. This implies that, once other persons' effort is not acknowledged, plagiarism sets in. In a nutshell, plagiarism could be viewed as an illegal and fraudulent means of ascribing words, phrases, sentences, and intellectual ideas of another person as being one's own without due acknowledgment of the source of the information. Succinctly put, it is merely cloning the expressions and thoughts of another person without authorization and acknowledgment. Whether intentional or not, plagiarism violates ethical standards in the field of scholarship and research.

The occurrences and practices of plagiarism have become more common among students and other stakeholders in the academic community, because they have constant access to the internet, hence access to journals and other publications that can be copied. This fraudulent behaviour among students in tertiary institutions, most especially at the university level, is of great concern in this era when the internet has become the epicentre of academic and research activities. Corroborating the above assertion, Tran et al. (2022) opined that higher education across the globe is experiencing heightened reported cases of plagiarism in the 21st century. The commonness or the pervasiveness of plagiarism is heightened by the introduction of information and communication technologies (ICTs) into the educational system, as well as the availability of online resources. The consequence of this intellectual larceny of other scholars' intellectual property without proper referencing reduces the quality of academic standards. However, despite concerted efforts by universities in both developed and developing countries to reduce the occurrence of plagiarism, the rate of plagiarism has continued to rise. These efforts include the use of plagiarism detection software, sensitization and awareness of the forms

of plagiarism, the teaching of referencing and citation skills, etc. (Hussein, 2022; Aboyade et al., 2025).

The rise in plagiarism cases has been attributed to a variety of factors, including poor writing skills; lack of knowledge about policy; laziness among students and researchers; poor command of English; lack of adequate time to complete given assignments; unfamiliarity with the repercussions that are associated with plagiarism; reliance of students and researchers on commercial bureaus and profit-making businesses that lure academicians to pay for easy and fast research services; the increased use of information and communication technology (ICT) in writing has made it easier to copy and paste; and finally, the pressure to publish or perform under publish or perish clarion (Abbasi et al., 2021).

While considering factors that facilitate the occurrence of plagiarism in Nigerian universities, Abduldayan et al. (2019) identified the most significant causes of students' plagiarism as the 'ease of copying from the internet', desire to earn good grades, poor knowledge of appropriate citing principles, and pressure to meet assignment deadlines. Nakitare and Otike (2022) indicate that students do not have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism and how it can be avoided and some students plagiarise unintentionally when they are unfamiliar with proper ways of quoting, paraphrasing, citing, and referencing. Mostofa et al. (2020) mention that students plagiarize simply because they do not know how to properly handle the actual plagiarism software. This implies that plagiarism is associated with a lack of adequate writing and paraphrasing skills.

Researchers have also stated the important role the level of student awareness plays in determining their attitudes towards plagiarism. Moss et al. (2018) revealed that poor understanding of the concept of plagiarism was ranked as the highest reason behind plagiarism. However, there are many electronic detection software programmes for eliminating the problem in place. A range of software packages have now become available for tracking down and minimizing plagiarism. According to Adamu and Dan-Iya (2020), a variety of plagiarism software applications, such as Turnitin, 3rd Eye, Eaglescan, Turnitin, Copyscape, Duplichecker, Plagscan and Copyleaks, designed to detect plagiarism from Internet sources have appeared in recent years. These services usually provide the facility to measure the level of similarity between a student's work and material publicly accessible online.

The recent increase in plagiarism cases has resulted in increased legislation in various jurisdictions. In most countries, plagiarism is considered a crime, and as such, laws prohibiting plagiarism have been enacted. Nakitare and Otike (2022) reveal that many Nigerian universities have policies and guidelines that stipulate the level of similarity, what is allowed, how the sources should be acknowledged, and who takes credit for a piece of work, among others. The policies need to be detailed enough to show what needs to be done and by whom, the necessary processes, levels of similarities accepted, the

consequences for plagiarism, and what can be done to plagiarists, among others. Khan et al. (2022) state that many universities have laid down proper procedures for submitting assignments and other tasks, and also offer training and awareness sessions regarding plagiarism to both students and educators as another step against plagiarism. Abbasi et al. (2021) observe that some universities have a plagiarism policy section in their academic misconduct policies and regulations; as such, any plagiarism by students leads to punitive punishment. Hussein (2022) argue that though the availability of plagiarism policies forms the basis of the fight against plagiarism, there is also a need for institutions to create awareness among faculty and students on the availability of the policies, including their functions.

In scholarly communication and research, indulging in plagiarism is serious misconduct that violates the basic principles of science. Therefore, it is highly discouraged and severely punished to encourage academic integrity. For example, students in many universities who get detected face harsh sanctions like suspension, missing graduation or having to redo classes (Nakitare & Otike, 2020). This is because plagiarism affects the reputation of the researcher, the institution, and the whole purpose of research. However, despite the detrimental effects of plagiarism, the practice is still highly prevalent in many levels of education and research. In Nigeria institutions of higher learning, there seems to be a lack of cohesion among universities on the appropriate ways plagiarism should be handled in universities; the fight against plagiarism is not being given the ultimate attention it deserves, a situation that is likely to jeopardize teaching, learning, research and innovation practice in Nigerian universities if not adequately addressed (Abduldayan et al., 2019). Nigeria, a country with a growing emphasis on research and academic achievement, faces unique challenges in fostering a culture of proper attribution and originality in scholarly endeavors. As postgraduate students in LIS embark on their academic journeys to become information professionals and researchers, it is crucial to assess their familiarity with plagiarism, their awareness of available plagiarism detection tools, and their actual usage of these tools in their research processes. It is based on the foregoing that this study seeks to examine the relationship between awareness of plagiarism checkers and their usage for research by library and information science (LIS) in Nigerian universities.

### Statement of the Problem

The issue of plagiarism has gained significant attention due to its detrimental impact on the quality and integrity of research. Plagiarism not only undermines the credibility of scholarly work but also hinders the development of critical thinking and originality among researchers. While the proliferation of online resources has made accessing information easier, it has also inadvertently increased the potential for plagiarism. Postgraduate students, often striving to meet demanding academic requirements, may resort to

unoriginal content in their research, either due to a lack of understanding of plagiarism or inadequate awareness about the available plagiarism detection tools.

Despite the availability of numerous plagiarism detection tools, there seems to be a lack of comprehensive understanding among LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian library schools regarding the existence, features, and benefits of these tools. Preliminary investigations have revealed that library schools in Nigeria may not be adequately integrating plagiarism awareness and education into their curricula. Given the potential benefits of plagiarism checkers in enhancing research quality and promoting ethical research practices, there might be a discrepancy between the availability of these tools and their actual utilization by LIS postgraduate students. Consequently, the lack of awareness and proper usage of plagiarism checkers among LIS postgraduate students could have profound consequences for the integrity of research conducted within library schools in Nigeria. Based on the researcher's knowledge, it seemed no study has been conducted in this area, hence the need to determine the awareness of plagiarism checkers and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities. Based on this, the following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of awareness of plagiarism detection tools (Turnitin, EagleScan, and 3rd Eye) among LIS postgraduate students?
2. To what extent do LIS postgraduate students use plagiarism detection tools (Turnitin, EagleScan, and 3rd Eye) for their research activities?


**Literature Review**

Plagiarism has become a central topic in academic discourse due to its severe consequences for individual researchers and institutions. It undermines academic credibility, damages institutional reputation, and limits opportunities for students and researchers, including scholarships and career advancement (Levine & Pazdernik, 2018). The proliferation of digital resources has further complicated the problem. The widespread availability of internet materials has altered how information is accessed and used, increasing the risk of indiscriminate copying (Bouaamri et al., 2022). Studies note that the expansion of online content has made plagiarism easier, more frequent, and more culturally normalized in academic environments (Khan et al., 2021; Risquez et al., 2011; Wang, 2019). Although digital access facilitates learning, it also opens opportunities for academic dishonesty while simultaneously providing institutions with efficient tools to trace copied content (Youmans, 2011).

These rising cases of plagiarism have prompted legal and institutional responses globally. In many jurisdictions, plagiarism is treated as a punishable academic or legal offense, regulated either through direct legislation or embedded within copyright and intellectual

property laws. Institutions have developed policies and procedures to deter, detect, and sanction academic misconduct (Owens & White, 2013). However, such policies vary widely across institutions and can either deter or unintentionally encourage academic cheating depending on their clarity and enforcement (Levine & Pazdernik, 2018). Effective plagiarism policies must clearly outline acceptable similarity levels, procedures for handling cases, and consequences for misconduct (Mammen & Meyiwa, 2013; Sutherland-Smith, 2011). Scholars further emphasize that the mere existence of policies is insufficient; institutions must also raise awareness among students and staff to ensure proper understanding and implementation (Ramzan et al., 2012).

The emergence of plagiarism detection tools has become one of the most prominent institutional responses. These tools compare submitted work against extensive online repositories to identify similarity levels. Manual detection methods are often laborious and impractical, especially when dealing with large volumes of texts (Babalola, 2022), whereas electronic detection offers automated and scalable solutions (Ndebele, 2020). Tools such as Turnitin and other commercial systems have become widely used in higher education to promote academic integrity and deter misconduct (Levine & Pazdernik, 2018). Evidence from several studies shows that plagiarism-checking software can support academic honesty by helping users identify copied text, improve citation practices, and promote originality (Cortes-Vera et al., 2018; Shang, 2019; Heckler et al., 2013). However, these tools also have limitations. Some can only detect verbatim copying and may miss content from deep-web or print-based sources, raising concerns about their comprehensiveness (Marar & Hamza, 2019; Goh, 2013). Moreover, their presence does not guarantee deterrence, as some students continue to plagiarize despite awareness of detection systems (Batane, 2010).

Beyond technical solutions, several studies highlight the role of students' understanding of plagiarism. Students often exhibit confusion about what constitutes plagiarism, contributing to unintentional offenses (Tyson, 2010; Kokkinaki et al., 2015). Research across disciplines consistently reports low levels of awareness and misconceptions about plagiarism among students, even at higher academic levels (Ryan et al., 2009; Ramzan et al., 2012). Scholars argue that addressing plagiarism requires both detection mechanisms and continuous education on proper citation, paraphrasing, and ethical writing (Cortes-Vera et al., 2018). Awareness training and exposure to anti-plagiarism tools have been shown to reduce textual plagiarism by improving students' understanding of originality and proper referencing (Shang, 2019).

Various factors influencing plagiarism have also been documented. Students may plagiarize due to academic pressure, heavy workloads, or the desire to achieve high grades (Koh et al., 2011; Ramzan et al., 2012). Among academic staff and researchers, plagiarism may be driven by publication pressure, career advancement, or competition

for research funding (Higgins et al., 2016). Language barriers further heighten the risk of plagiarism among non-native English writers (Marar & Hamza, 2020). In developing countries, such as Nigeria, plagiarism remains a persistent challenge, exacerbated by inconsistent policy implementation, limited technological infrastructure, and inadequate awareness initiatives (Aboyade et al., 2025).

### *Gap in Literature*

Although many studies have explored plagiarism, its causes, and students' misunderstandings of academic dishonesty, most evidence centers on general student populations rather than Library and Information Science (LIS) postgraduates, who are expected to model ethical information behavior (Ryan et al., 2009; Kokkinaki et al., 2015; Ramzan et al., 2012). Research has also acknowledged the increasing relevance of plagiarism detection tools and their role in promoting academic integrity (Levine & Pazdernik, 2018; Cortes-Vera et al., 2018). However, little is known about postgraduate students' actual awareness and usage of specific tools such as Turnitin, EagleScan, and 3rd Eye in Nigerian universities.  Existing Nigerian studies focus mainly on undergraduates or academic staff (Aboyade et al., 2025, Abduldayan et al., 2019), leaving a notable gap regarding postgraduate researchers.  Moreover, although some studies highlight the educational value of plagiarism checkers in improving citation and originality (Shang, 2019; Heckler et al., 2013), no current evidence links awareness to usage among LIS postgraduate students in Nigeria. This gap is important given their role as future information professionals. This study therefore addresses the lack of empirical data on how aware LIS postgraduate students are of plagiarism detection tools and the extent to which they use them for research. Based on this, the following hypotheses were stated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between awareness of Turnitin plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities
2. There is no significant relationship between awareness of EagleScan plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities
3. There is no significant relationship between awareness of 3rd Eye plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities

### Methodology

The study adopted a correlational design. The correlational design examines the degree, patterns, and strength of the relationship between two or more variables being studied. According to Krause (2018), a correlational research design is a scientific approach used in research to examine the relationship between two or more variables. Thus, the

correlational design provides clues for the proper understanding of patterns of relationships among variables in the study. The population of the study comprised 149 library and information science (LIS) postgraduate students in Nigerian universities. A convenience sampling technique was employed by the researchers to select library schools offering postgraduate programmes in Nigeria. At the end, 10 universities were selected based on the active reach of the researchers to these universities. Further, based on the convenience sampling technique adopted, participants who were willing and agreed to complete the questionnaire participated in the survey. The sampling approach remains suitable for exploratory studies designed to identify trends and relationships within hard-to-reach academic populations.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into three sections. Section A contained demographic information of the respondents, including gender, age, and programme. Section B measured awareness of plagiarism detection tools, while Section C assessed usage of the tools for research activities (Appendix A). Each of the items in Section B and C was assigned a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) - 4 points; Agree (A) – 3 points; Disagree (2) – points; and Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1point. The questionnaire items were developed directly from existing literature on plagiarism and text-matching software (Abduldayan et al., 2019; Aboyade et al., 2025; Babalola, 2022; Khan et al., 2021; Shang, 2019). Items were constructed to reflect the specific functional dimensions of plagiarism checkers in this research. In addition, face and content validity were used to ascertain the instruments' validity. The instrument was validated by the experts in the field of library and information science. The instrument was vetted in relation to the objectives of the study. Suggested modifications were incorporated in the final copy of the instruments. Also, the Cronbach method was adopted to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. In so doing, 30 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the postgraduate students in library schools who were not part of the study. The Cronbach Alpha Method was used to establish the consistency reliability coefficient. The results indicated an overall index value of 0.89, which showed that the instruments for data collection were very reliable. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Means and standard deviations addressed the research questions, whereas Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) tested the hypotheses at the 0.05 significance level using SPSS version 25. Ethical standards were upheld throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Out of 149 questionnaires administered to LIS postgraduate students 10 Nigerian universities, only 146 copies representing 97.9% were successfully filled and completed.

**Results**

This section covers the study's analyses of research questions and hypotheses. Tables 1 and 2 comprise the analyses of the study's research questions. Further, Tables 3, 4, and 5 contain the results of the hypotheses.

**Table 1: Awareness of Plagiarism Checkers by LIS Postgraduate Students**

| S/n | Turnitin Awareness | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | SD |
|-----|--------------------|----|----|----|----|------|-----|
| 1. | Project research writing | 82 | 48 | 10 | 6 | 3.41 | 0.79 |
| 2. | Detecting plagiarism writing | 85 | 45 | 10 | 6 | 3.42 | 0.78 |
| 3. | Reducing citation mistakes | 78 | 52 | 10 | 6 | 3.39 | 0.80 |
| 4. | Originality in research papers | 80 | 50 | 12 | 4 | 3.41 | 0.76 |
| 5. | Prevention of plagiarism in research work | 83 | 47 | 10 | 6 | 3.42 | 0.79 |
| **S/n** | **EagleScan Awareness** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **Mean** | **SD** |
| 6. | Minimizing inappropriate copying | 60 | 55 | 20 | 11 | 3.12 | 0.88 |
| 7. | Detecting plagiarism writing | 62 | 53 | 21 | 10 | 3.13 | 0.87 |
| 8. | Reducing citation mistakes | 58 | 57 | 22 | 9 | 3.12 | 0.85 |
| 9. | Originality in research papers | 59 | 56 | 23 | 8 | 3.13 | 0.84 |
| 10. | Prevention of plagiarism in research work | 61 | 54 | 21 | 10 | 3.14 | 0.86 |
| **S/n** | **3rd Eye Awareness** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **Mean** | **SD** |
| 11. | Reducing similarity index | 45 | 55 | 30 | 16 | 2.94 | 0.95 |
| 12. | Minimizing inappropriate copying | 44 | 54 | 32 | 16 | 2.92 | 0.96 |
| 13. | Detecting plagiarism writing | 46 | 52 | 32 | 16 | 2.93 | 0.95 |
| 14. | Reducing citation mistakes | 43 | 56 | 31 | 16 | 2.91 | 0.94 |
| 15. | Originality in research papers | 45 | 53 | 32 | 16 | 2.92 | 0.95 |

Table 1 presents the level of awareness of plagiarism detection tools among LIS postgraduate students. The mean values indicate that respondents generally demonstrated a high level of awareness of Turnitin, a moderate level of awareness of EagleScan, and a relatively lower awareness of 3rd Eye. Specifically, all items related to Turnitin recorded mean scores ranging from 3.39 to 3.42, which fall above the decision benchmark of 2.50. This suggests that postgraduate students are highly familiar with Turnitin as a tool for project research writing, plagiarism detection, reducing citation errors, ensuring originality, and preventing plagiarism in academic work. In contrast, the mean scores for EagleScan ranged between 3.12 and 3.14, indicating a moderate but still positive awareness of the tool across all measured indicators. Students acknowledged EagleScan's role in detecting inappropriate copying, identifying plagiarism, reducing citation mistakes, and supporting originality, but awareness levels were not as strong as those recorded for Turnitin. Meanwhile, awareness of the 3rd Eye plagiarism detection tool showed the lowest ratings, with mean values between 2.91 and 2.94, which, although slightly above the midpoint, suggest relatively limited familiarity.

This implies that while some students are aware of the functions of 3rd Eye, such as reducing similarity index, minimizing inappropriate copying, and promoting originality, knowledge of this tool is not as widespread as it is for Turnitin and EagleScan.

**Table 2: Use of Plagiarism Tools for Research Activities**

| S/n | Item | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | SD |
|-----|------|----|----|----|----|------|-----|
| 16. | The use of Turnitin promotes plagiarism detection | 84 | 46 | 10 | 6 | 3.42 | 0.78 |
| 17. | Using Turnitin ensures originality in research papers | 82 | 48 | 10 | 6 | 3.41 | 0.79 |
| 18. | Use of EagleScan helps detect plagiarized works | 63 | 53 | 20 | 10 | 3.16 | 0.87 |
| 19. | Utilization of EagleScan upholds originality in research papers | 60 | 55 | 21 | 10 | 3.14 | 0.88 |
| 20. | Use of 3rd Eye ensures originality in research papers | 47 | 52 | 31 | 16 | 2.95 | 0.96 |
| 21. | Using 3rd Eye helps in plagiarism detection | 49 | 50 | 30 | 17 | 2.96 | 0.97 |

Table 2 presents data on the extent to which LIS postgraduate students use plagiarism detection tools for various research activities. The interpretation based on the mean values shows a pattern similar to that observed in Table 1. The findings reveal that Turnitin is the most widely used tool, with mean scores of 3.41 and 3.42 for promoting plagiarism detection and ensuring originality in research papers, respectively. These high mean values indicate strong utilization of Turnitin in research processes and reinforce its dominant role in academic integrity practices among postgraduate students. The data further show a moderate level of use of EagleScan, with mean scores of 3.14 and 3.16, suggesting that while students acknowledge its usefulness in detecting plagiarized works and maintaining originality, its application in academic work is not as extensive as that of Turnitin. In comparison, the use of 3rd Eye is the least frequent among the three tools assessed. Mean values of 2.95 and 2.96 imply that respondents use 3rd Eye only to a small extent for ensuring originality and detecting plagiarism.

*Hypotheses Testing*

**Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation between Turnitin plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students**

| SN | Variables | | Turnitin plagiarism checker | Usage for Research |
|----|-----------|---|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Turnitin plagiarism checker | Pearson Correlation | 1 | . 832 |

| SN | Variables | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .001 |
| | | N | 146 | 146 |
| 2 | Usage for Research | Pearson Correlation | . 832 | 1 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | |
| | | N | 146 | 146 |

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows that the pair of Turnitin plagiarism checker and research usage obtained a correlation coefficient of r = 0.832. This indicates a positive and high relationship and is statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level (Sig. 0.001 < 0.05). Consequently, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between Turnitin plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities, was rejected. There is therefore, a significant relationship between Turnitin plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities.

**Table 4: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between EagleScan plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students**

| SN | Variables | | EagleScan Plagiarism tool | Usage for Research |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | EagleScan Plagiarism tool | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .532 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .001 |
| | | N | 146 | 146 |
| 2 | Usage for research | Pearson Correlation | .532 | 1 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | |
| | | N | 146 | 146 |

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows the pair of Eaglescan plagiarism tool and usage for research obtained a correlation coefficient of r = 0. 532. This indicates a positive and moderate relationship and is statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level (Sig.0.001 < 0.05). As a result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between EagleScan plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities, was rejected. There is, therefore, a significant relationship between EagleScan plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities.

**Table 5: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between 3rd Eye plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students**

| SN | Variables | | 3rd Eye Plagiarism checker | Usage for research |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3rd Eye Plagiarism checker | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .452 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .004 |
| | | N | 146 | 146 |
| 2 | Usage for research | Pearson Correlation | .452 | 1 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .004 | |
| | | N | 146 | 146 |

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows that the pair of 3rd eye plagiarism and usage of research obtained a correlation coefficient of r = 0.452. This indicates a positive and moderate relationship and is statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level (0.004 < 0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant relationship between 3rd Eye plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities, was accepted. There is thus a significant relationship between 3rd Eye plagiarism checker and its usage for research by LIS postgraduate students in Nigerian universities.

**Discussion of the Findings**

The findings of this study show that Library and Information Science (LIS) postgraduate students in Nigerian universities possess a strong awareness of plagiarism detection tools and actively use them during research writing. The most notable pattern is that students are particularly familiar with well-established plagiarism checkers, and this awareness translates directly into actual usage. This indicates that plagiarism detection tools have become a central component of postgraduate academic practice, supporting both ethical writing and quality scholarship. This trend aligns with the increasing institutional emphasis on academic integrity reported in global studies (Heckler et al., 2013; Youmans, 2011).

A major finding is the high awareness of Turnitin among LIS postgraduate students, accompanied by extensive use of the tool for detecting plagiarism and improving originality. This strong relationship between awareness and use suggests that students consider Turnitin not only a monitoring mechanism but also an instructional aid. This outcome is consistent with the assertions of Levine and Pazdernik (2018), who found that Turnitin facilitates transparency and reinforces students' understanding of academic integrity. Similarly, Buckley and Cowap (2023) observed that Turnitin's feedback helps students correct citation errors and improve paraphrasing, which aligns with the

experiences reflected in the current study. The finding also supports Abduldayan et al. (2019), who noted that students tend to rely on Turnitin because it is widely institutionalized and perceived as reliable for identifying textual overlap. Thus, the present outcome reinforces earlier evidence that increasing familiarity with Turnitin enhances ethical writing practices among students.

The study also revealed substantial awareness of EagleScan among postgraduate students, accompanied by moderate but meaningful usage. This suggests that students recognize EagleScan as a credible alternative to Turnitin, particularly within local institutional environments. This finding aligns with Nwosu and Chukwuere (2020) observation that many Nigerian universities incorporate plagiarism into their institutional guidelines for verifying originality in student submissions. It also aligns with Nakitare and Otike's (2020) observation that researchers increasingly use plagiarism tools before final submission to improve manuscript quality. The moderate but significant relationship between awareness and use of EagleScan reflects a growing acceptance of indigenous or locally developed plagiarism detection systems, supporting the claim by Aboyade et al. (2025) that students in Nigerian universities are becoming more aware of locally accessible plagiarism management tools.

In the case of the 3rd Eye plagiarism checker, the findings show that awareness exists but is comparatively lower, leading to a modest level of usage. Nonetheless, the significant relationship between awareness and use demonstrates that students who understand the tool's functions are more likely to adopt it. This result aligns with studies that emphasize the importance of awareness as a driver of tool adoption. For instance, Mostofa et al. (2021) argue that researchers' engagement with plagiarism detection software is shaped largely by their familiarity with its features and perceived usefulness. Moss et al. (2018) similarly note that understanding how plagiarism occurs reduces both intentional and unintentional misconduct. Therefore, although 3rd Eye is less commonly used, its adoption pattern in this study reflects broader evidence that awareness remains a strong determinant of behavioral engagement with plagiarism checkers.

Across all the tools examined, the consistent pattern is that higher awareness corresponds with stronger usage. This reinforces the view that students' knowledge about plagiarism tools plays a crucial role in shaping their academic behavior. The finding aligns with Shang (2019), who demonstrated that exposure to plagiarism software enhances students' attitudes toward originality and improves their writing competence. It also supports Khan et al. (2021), who found that awareness interventions increase students' confidence in avoiding plagiarism and adopting ethical writing practices. This suggests that plagiarism detection tools serve not only punitive purposes but also formative educational functions that improve the quality of postgraduate research.

Furthermore, the findings contrast with earlier studies that reported poor awareness of plagiarism tools among Nigerian students (Babalola, 2022; Aboyade et al., 2025). The more encouraging results in the present study may indicate improvements in institutional policies, access to technology, and a stronger emphasis on academic integrity training within LIS programmes. This positive shift corresponds with global trends described by Cortes-Vera et al. (2018), who noted that integrating plagiarism detection tools into academic workflows increases both awareness and compliance with ethical writing norms.

Generally, the findings agree with the broader literature that emphasizes the necessity of plagiarism detection systems in promoting originality, enhancing citation practices, and strengthening research integrity. The significant relationships observed between awareness and usage across all tools reinforce the argument by Ndebele (2020) that plagiarism detection tools are indispensable components of contemporary scholarly communication. In sum, the study contributes to existing evidence by demonstrating that LIS postgraduate students in Nigeria display meaningful engagement with plagiarism detection systems, and this engagement is shaped by their level of awareness, indicating the crucial role of training and institutional support in sustaining academic integrity.

**Conclusion**

This study investigated the awareness and use of plagiarism detection tools among Library and Information Science postgraduate students in Nigerian universities. The findings reveal that students possess a strong understanding of plagiarism checkers and that this awareness plays an important role in shaping how frequently and effectively the tools are used during research. Turnitin emerged as the most familiar and widely applied tool, followed by EagleScan. Awareness and use of the Third Eye tool were lower, although there was still a meaningful link between knowledge of the tool and its adoption in research activities. These results show that plagiarism detection tools have become an essential part of the postgraduate research process and that students rely on them to strengthen originality, improve citation practices, and uphold academic integrity.

The findings are consistent with global scholarship, which shows that the use of plagiarism detection systems supports responsible academic behaviour and improves the quality of scholarly writing. The growing engagement of Nigerian postgraduate students with these tools suggests progress toward international expectations for ethical research practice. It also indicates that the integration of plagiarism education within postgraduate training is beginning to yield positive outcomes. In addition, the study affirms that sustained awareness of plagiarism detection tools is vital for promoting integrity in academic work. Strengthening institutional support, improving access to plagiarism

detection systems, and incorporating structured training into postgraduate programmes will help students develop the skills needed for ethical and responsible research. These efforts will contribute to higher standards of scholarship within Nigerian universities and enhance their credibility within the global academic community. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for specific stakeholders:

1. Universities should continue to strengthen awareness initiatives for plagiarism detection tools. Since higher awareness was strongly linked to consistent use, targeted sensitisation programmes, orientation sessions, and workshops would help sustain and expand students' engagement with these tools. In addition, universities should ensure that plagiarism detection tools such as Turnitin and EagleScan remain readily accessible to postgraduate students. Their frequent use in this study indicates that availability encourages adoption and improves research quality.

2. Postgraduate schools should provide regular training that explains how to interpret similarity reports and how to improve writing through the feedback provided by plagiarism checkers. The study indicates that students use the tools more effectively when they understand their purpose and functions.

3. Departments offering Library and Information Science programmes should integrate practical plagiarism education into coursework. The relationship between awareness and use suggests that hands-on exposure will support responsible writing behaviour and strengthen originality in students' academic work. In addition, LIS postgraduate lecturers should encourage students to check their drafts with plagiarism detection tools during the writing process. This recommendation aligns with the study's finding that the tools support originality and help students refine their work.

### *Implications for LIS Education*

The findings of this study have important implications for Library and Information Science education, especially in the areas of curriculum design, institutional policy development, and capacity building. The significant association between awareness and use of plagiarism detection tools indicates that these technologies influence student learning in ways that extend beyond the enforcement of academic rules. When students engage with tools such as Turnitin, EagleScan, and Third Eye, they are exposed to formative feedback that highlights weaknesses in citation, paraphrasing, and integration of sources. This exposure encourages critical self-reflection and supports the development of stronger academic writing skills. Such learning processes demonstrate that plagiarism detection systems function not only as compliance mechanisms but also as instructional resources that enhance students' understanding of originality, scholarly attribution, and responsible information use. In addition, the implications for curriculum design are equally important. Since students' effective use of detection tools depends on their understanding of how the tools work, LIS programmes can integrate structured instruction on interpreting

similarity reports, revising drafts based on feedback, and strengthening academic argumentation. Embedding these elements within research methods courses or academic writing modules will help students engage with plagiarism detection tools in a more meaningful and pedagogically productive way.

Institutional policy and practice can also benefit from the findings. The strong use of Turnitin and EagleScan suggests that institutions should maintain or expand access to these tools and incorporate them into routine academic processes such as proposal submission and thesis review. Policies that emphasise the educational value of plagiarism checkers can encourage both staff and students to view these tools as part of a holistic approach to research integrity rather than solely as mechanisms for detecting misconduct. Furthermore, the study also carries implications for resource-constrained institutions. The moderate but meaningful use of EagleScan demonstrates the potential of locally developed tools to address challenges faced by universities with limited budgets or unstable subscription access to foreign software. EagleScan offers a practical and cost-effective option for broadening the reach of plagiarism detection services. Scaling its use across institutions could be achieved through inter-university collaborations, shared licensing agreements, and national capacity-building efforts led by academic bodies. These strategies could help ensure that all students, regardless of institutional resources, have consistent access to tools that support ethical scholarship and improved writing skills. Finally, the findings imply that plagiarism detection tools contribute to the formation of a stronger culture of academic integrity in LIS education. As a result, institutions can help students internalise ethical writing practices that will serve them throughout their academic and professional careers.

### *Limitations and Suggestions for Further Study*

This study was limited in several ways. The research employed a correlational design and relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias, as respondents might have overstated their awareness or usage of plagiarism checkers. The choice of a convenience sampling technique was guided by accessibility to LIS postgraduate students across the selected universities; however, this approach has inherent limitations. Convenience sampling does not give all members of the population an equal chance of being selected, which may introduce sampling bias and restrict the generalizability of the findings beyond the participating institutions. As a result, the study's conclusions should be interpreted with caution, as the responses may not fully represent the experiences of all LIS postgraduate students in Nigeria. Additionally, the study was limited to a sample of LIS postgraduate students from selected Nigerian universities, which may not fully represent the experiences of students in other disciplines or institutions. The study also focused on only three plagiarism detection tools (Turnitin, EagleScan, and 3rd Eye) thus excluding other emerging or institution-specific tools that might influence students' research practices.

Future research should therefore expand the scope to include a wider range of universities and academic disciplines to enable broader generalization of findings. Comparative studies between public and private universities could provide deeper insights into institutional factors that affect the use of plagiarism detection systems. Further studies could also adopt mixed-method approaches, combining quantitative and qualitative data, to explore not only the level of awareness and usage but also the perceptions, attitudes, and challenges postgraduate students face in using these tools. Longitudinal studies could examine how continuous exposure to plagiarism education influences students' research behavior over time and assess the effectiveness of institutional policies on academic integrity in Nigerian higher education.

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# APPENDIX A

*Awareness of Plagiarism Checkers and Their Usage for Research Questionnaire*

Dear Respondent,

We are conducting a study on "Awareness of Plagiarism Checkers and Their Usage for Research by Library and Information Science (LIS) Postgraduates in Nigerian Universities." The purpose of this study is to examine the level of awareness, accessibility, and utilization of plagiarism detection tools among LIS postgraduate students, as well as to explore how these tools contribute to promoting academic integrity and originality in research writing.

You have been carefully selected as part of the study's target respondents because of your experience as a postgraduate student in Library and Information Science. Kindly note that your participation is entirely voluntary, and there are no risks or penalties associated with either participating or choosing not to participate. You are, however, encouraged to respond honestly and objectively to all the items in the questionnaire, as the information you provide will be valuable in understanding the current trends and challenges related to plagiarism detection and research ethics in Nigerian universities.

All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and will be used solely for academic purposes. No names or identifying information will be required on the questionnaire, and your responses will be analyzed and reported in aggregate form only. Completing the questionnaire will take approximately 10–15 minutes.

Your cooperation and candid responses will be highly appreciated, as they will contribute significantly to improving awareness, policy formulation, and best practices in plagiarism prevention and research integrity within LIS education in Nigeria.

Thank you for your time and participation.

**SECTION A:  DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**INSTRUCTION:** Tick the answer(s) and fill in the blank spaces where necessary.

**Institution** _____

**Gender**          Male ( )     Female  ( )

**Age:**          20 – 30 ( )   31 – 40 ( )   41 – 50 ( )   51 – 60 ( )   61 – 70 ( )

**Programme**:          PGDL ( )     MLIS ( )     PhD ( )

**SECTION B: AWARENESS OF PLAGIARISM CHECKERS BY POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS**

**INSTRUCTION:** Tick the answer(s) and fill in the blank spaces where necessary.

Please use the key below to answer the questions in Sections B and C.

The response options are: Strongly Agree (SA) - 4 points; Agree (A) – 3 points; Disagree (2) – points; and Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1point

| S/n | I am aware of the use of Turnitin plagiarism tool for: | SA | A | D | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Project research writing | | | | |
| 2. | Detecting of plagiarism writing | | | | |
| 3. | Reducing citation mistakes | | | | |
| 4. | Originality in research papers | | | | |
| 5. | Prevention of plagiarism in research work | | | | |
| | **I am aware of the use of EagleScan plagiarism tool for:** | | | | |
| 6. | Minimizing inappropriate copying | | | | |
| 7. | Detecting of plagiarism writing | | | | |
| 8. | Reducing citation mistakes | | | | |
| 9. | Originality in research papers | | | | |
| 10. | Prevention of plagiarism in research work | | | | |
| | **I am aware of the use of 3rd Eye plagiarism tool for:** | | | | |
| 11. | Reducing similarity index | | | | |
| 12. | Minimizing inappropriate copying | | | | |
| 13. | Detecting of plagiarism writing | | | | |
| 14. | Reducing citation mistakes | | | | |
| 15. | Originality in research papers | | | | |

**SECTION C: USE OF PLAGIARISM TOOLS FOR RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

| S/n | Use of plagiarism tools for research includes: | SA | A | D | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | The use of Turnitin promotes plagiarism detection | | | | |
| 2. | Using Turnitin for research papers ensures the originality in research papers | | | | |
| 3. | Use of EagleScan helps to detect plagiarized works | | | | |
| 4. | Utilization of EagleScan upholds originality in research papers | | | | |
| 5. | Use of 3$^{rd}$ Eye ensures the originality in research papers | | | | |
| 6. | Using 3$^{rd}$ Eye helps in plagiarism detection | | | | |