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EFL Students' Attitude on Mendeley-Based Instruction for Scientific Writing in Indonesian Higher Education

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Abstract

This paper reports a study on Mendeley-based instruction for scientific writing in Indonesian higher education. It particularly focuses on examining the students' attitude on scientific writing through the use of Mendeley Reference Manager in their scientific writing classroom practices. The study employs a survey research utilizing Survey Monkey in collecting data in the defining process on how the 100 students perceive their academic writing and how they translate into their classroom writing practice using Mendeley-based instruction for their scientific writing classroom activities. The research result demonstrates that there were marked differences in the way the students view their academic writing using Mendeley-based instruction for their scientific writing classroom activities. From the students' perspectives, there were three categories identified in the analysis: (1) Well Equipped Mendeley (WEM); (2) Fairly Equipped Mendeley (FEM); and (3) Lowly Equipped Mendeley (LEM). The WEM students tend to have a better academic writing in their study on scientific writing. The FEM students displayed their academic writing with some difficulties in their writing practices emerged from their academic writing. The LEM students, on the other hand, found it very challenging during their study in scientific writing classes. What is evident is that the more students are equipped with knowledge on Mendeley-based instruction, the better their academic writing performance is.

Keywords: Mendeley-based Instruction, Higher Education, Academic Writing

Introduction

Academic honesty comprises the fundamental aspect for enriching academic integrity. The continual uncertainty by teachers in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) country is that the lack of writing ability by the students in academic writing might lead them to academic dishonesty. A changing attitude appeared to be central to develop confidence and self-reliance in becoming literate in two languages (Basri, Garner, & Akil, 2018). Teachers may have taught academic writing skills and students may have passed the writing courses, but some students might remain poor in academic writing skills. Teachers expect to improve the students' writing skills, but they continually apply the established rating to assess students' writing project.

Hence, what teachers expect from their students is different from what the students might hope from their teachers.

The main objective of academic writing is to avoid academic dishonesty by developing the honor codes (McCabe & Trevino, 1993). Academic writing skill subjects entail students to engage in academic writing intensively. Students are not only projected to get ahead of writing project course and thesis writing, but they are also prepared to implement their academic writing skills in getting published in well-known national or international publications. The publications' policy for students is supposed to facilitate further study or better career for students as well as for the reputation of their university. An increased expectation for the academic writing quality in the university level requires the writing honesty as the quality indicator that might lead the students to be aware of the issue of academic integrity.

Indonesian higher education experienced many failures in academic dishonesty due to inappropriate citation. There were many undergraduate theses that can prove students' low consciousness to cite resources properly and supervisors' poor mind-set on the consequence of inappropriate citation (Yugianingrum, 2008). This acute problem may have warned the students' study completion. Therefore, teachers required to consider the appropriate citation demand in enriching the students' academic integrity. There were many theses' authors violated by the citation style convention, lack of citing skill, low supervisors' awareness in directing the students to cite properly, and low universities' control. This might exacerbate the academic dishonesty.

Universities in Indonesia have begun in an attempt to promote their profile by reducing any form of plagiarism as a move to an era of Internationalization (Abduh, Rosmaladewi, & Basri, 2018). However not all universities in Indonesia are committed to combat the academic dishonesty (Cahyono, 2009). Academic dishonesty in Indonesia stays alive as the consequence of students are required to follow the thesis format, but lack of the regulation to fight plagiarism (Octaberlina, 2009). However, this was responded by the Ministry of Education (Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional Indonesia, 2010) by issuing the Minister of National Education Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia on the effort of Plagiarism Prevention and Anticipation in Indonesian Higher Education. Indeed, this regulation is projected to deter plagiarism incidences in Indonesian Higher Education. However, misunderstandings on the culture and inconsistencies on the lecturers' plagiarism understanding restrain the creative thinking of students as well as their academic writing skills (Adiningrum, 2011).

Thus, students are required to be accustomed to getting published under the supervision of lecturers to promote the culture of academic honesty in academic writing. This is in line with

the policy of the Directorate of Indonesian Higher Education that requires students to get published in a local journal for bachelor's degree, national journal for master's degree, and international journal for doctorate degree (DIKTI, 2012). However, the students' uncertainty knowledge on academic dishonesty need more consideration on teaching and educating the students to paraphrase and quote properly to develop academic writing skills (Manalu, 2013). Ignoring paraphrasing, citing and quoting properly as fundamental skills in academic writing might lead students to be engaged in academic dishonesty.

The presence of Mendeley as the open source of reference and citation manager that can highlight the quoted sentences or paragraph and listing the automatic references at the end page of students' writing is expected to lead students improve their academic writing skills. Introducing the use of Mendeley is also expected to avoid the incidences in academic writing that might trap the students in the issue of inappropriate citation and quotation (Patak & Akib, 2012, 2015). In addition, Mendeley is also a social network for author and researcher to share ideas scholarly and conduct research collaboratively (Patak & Akib, 2012). Finally, Mendeley software is just a tool that can help students to cite and quote properly, the academic honesty needs more serious attention by lecturers to supervise the students' writing and provide meaningful feedback.

This study stems on the responses from students on the use Mendeley reference management software in academic writing. Hence, this study aims at exploring the attitude of university students on Mendeley-based instruction for scientific writing classroom practices.

Method

This study implemented survey research, which is projected to find data for determining the unambiguous group's characteristics (Aldridge & Levine, 2001; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). The researchers explored the responses from students on the use of Mendeley reference management software in academic writing. The survey research is often conducted to assess the perception of respondents in a specific or global scope. Nowadays survey research is commonly used by a variety of groups to find out the characteristics of respondents on a certain topic or issue.

The researchers made the statements on the survey based on the default features of Mendeley Reference Manager Software (Mendeley, 2015). The items in the survey were divided into six (6) categories that consists of (1) Reference Manager, (2) Red & Annotate, (3) Add & Organize, (4) Collaborate, (5) Backup, Sync, & Mobile, and (6) Network & Discover.

The survey was transferred to survey monkey (Patak, 2015). The survey was conducted in the period of the 21st of September to the 19th of November, 2017.

All the respondents in this study were students of Universitas Muslim Indonesia and are members of Indonesian Mendeley Community. There were 100 members filling out the online survey posted in a Facebook group of Indonesian Mendeley Community. The respondents were chosen due to the limitation of courses that required reference managers to be utilized. Hence 5 classes were chosen as a sample which was taken from 5 different majors each in "academic writing" course which acts as a compulsory course within the university.

The data in this study were analyzed based on the summary provided by the survey monkey. The researchers analyzed the data through categorical analysis. The researchers provided the description on respondents' attitude based on six categories; (1) Reference Manager, (2) Red & Annotate, (3) Add & Organize, (4) Collaborate, (5) Backup, Sync, & Mobile, and (6) Network & Discover. The data analysis focused on the majority responses towards the level of difficulty for each item.

Results and Discussions

The analysis in this study was divided into six categories. These categories are (1) Reference Manager, (2) Red & Annotate, (3) Add & Organize, (4) Collaborate, (5) Backup, Sync, & Mobile, and (6) Network & Discover. The researchers provided the description of each item on each category in the following sections. After conducting the survey research on students' perception towards Mendeley-based instruction in academic writing, the researchers analyzed the result based on the six categories.

Reference Manager

Figure 1 below indicated that there were 2 respondents skipped this category. This category consisted of 5 options. These options are quick and simple installation, citation styles for thousands of journals, create bibliographies instantly, flexible formatting, and collaborate on bibliographies.

Reference Manager

Answered: 98   Skipped: 2
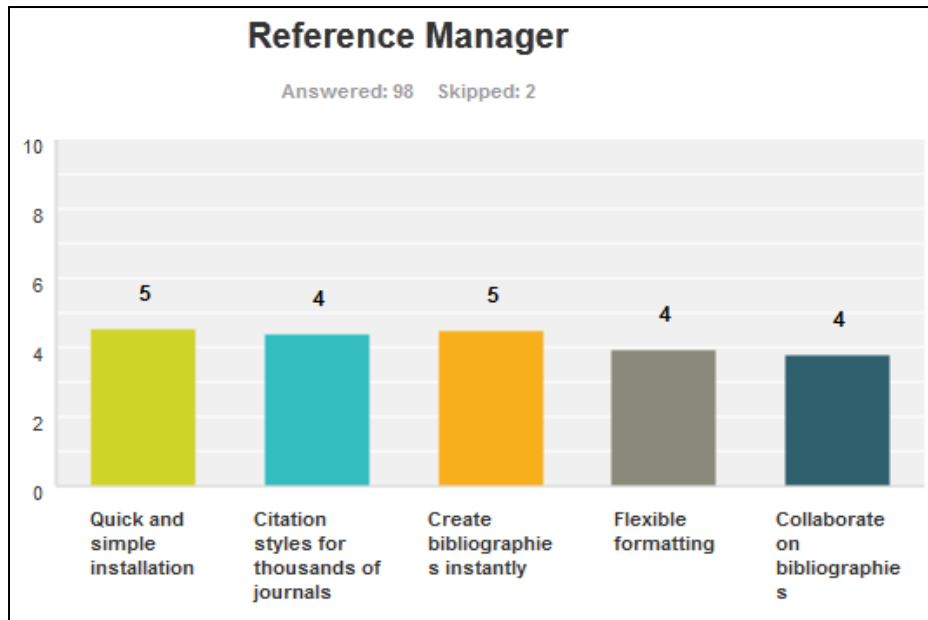
	Very Difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very Easy	Total	Weighted Average
Quick and simple installation	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	6.19% 6	35.05% 34	58.76% 57	97	4.53
Citation styles for thousands of journals	0.00% 0	1.03% 1	10.31% 10	34.02% 33	54.64% 53	97	4.42
Create bibliographies instantly	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8.33% 8	33.33% 32	58.33% 56	96	4.50
Flexible formatting	1.04% 1	5.21% 5	23.96% 23	35.42% 34	34.38% 33	96	3.97
Collaborate on bibliographies	0.00% 0	13.68% 13	22.11% 21	36.84% 35	27.37% 26	95	3.78

Figure 1 above indicated that there were no respondents chose "very difficult" and "difficult", 6 respondents chose "moderate", 34 respondents chose "easy", and 57 respondents chose "very easy" on option *quick and simple installation*. This was similar to option *create bibliographies instantly* in that there were no respondents who chose "very difficult" and "difficult", 8 respondents chose "moderate", 32 respondents chose "easy", and 56 respondents chose "very easy". There was no respondents chose "very difficult", only 1 respondents chose "difficult", 10 respondents chose "moderate", 33 respondents chose "easy", and 53 respondents chose "very easy" on *citation styles for thousands of journals* option. There was only 1 respondent chose "very difficult", 5 respondents chose "difficult", 23 respondents chose "moderate", 34 respondents chose "easy", and 33 respondents chose "very easy" on option of *flexible formatting*. There were no respondents who chose "very difficult", 13 respondents chose "difficult", 21 respondents chose "moderate", 35 respondents chose "easy", and 26 respondents chose "very easy" on *collaborate on bibliographies* option.

Read and Annotate

Figure 2 below indicated that 98 respondents gave responses. There were 2 respondents skipped this category. This category consisted of item save time navigating PDFs, annotate and highlight, share annotations with others, and save and print annotations.
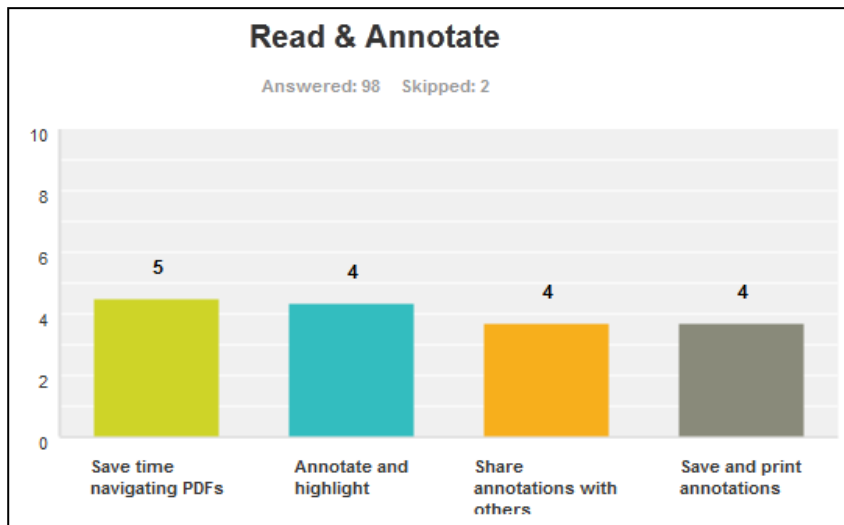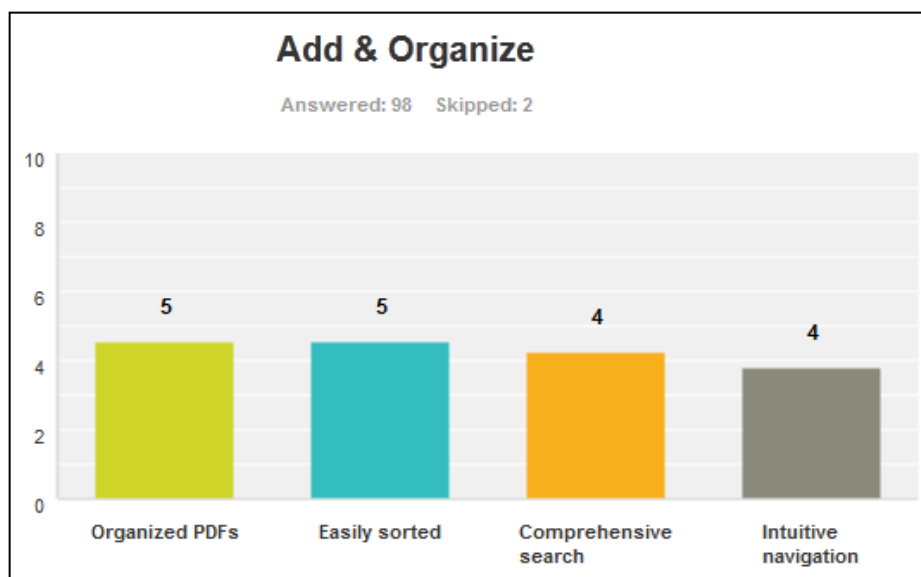

	Very Difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very Easy	Total	Weighted Average
Save time navigating PDFs	0.00% 0	1.02% 1	7.14% 7	30.61% 30	61.22% 60	98	4.52
Annotate and highlight	0.00% 0	3.13% 3	13.54% 13	29.17% 28	54.17% 52	96	4.34
Share annotations with others	2.06% 2	16.49% 16	19.59% 19	31.96% 31	29.90% 29	97	3.71
Save and print annotations	6.19% 6	7.22% 7	23.71% 23	35.05% 34	27.84% 27	97	3.71

Figure 2 above showed that there was no respondents chose "very difficult", 1 respondents chose "difficult", 7 respondents chose "moderate", 30 respondents chose "easy", and 60 respondents chose "very easy". This is similar to item *annotate and highlight* that there was no respondents chose "very difficult", while 3 respondents chose "difficult", 13 respondents chose "moderate", 28 respondents chose "easy", and 52 respondents chose "very easy". Interestingly, item *share annotation with others* and *save and print annotation* performed the same weighted average by 3.71. However, they were different from each level of difficulty. There were 2 respondents chose "very difficult", 16 respondents chose "difficult", 19 respondents chose "moderate", 31 respondents chose "easy", and 29 respondents chose "very easy" on item of *share annotations with others*. *Save and print annotations* performed higher number of respondents chose "very difficult", 6 compared to 2 respondents on item of

share annotation with others, whereas less number of respondents chose "difficult" on *save and print annotations* compared to 16 respondents on *share annotation with others*. However, number of respondents chose "moderate" and "easy" were higher on save and print annotations, 23 and 34 compared to 19 and 31 respondents respectively, whereas les number of respondents chose "very easy" on *save and print annotations* compared to respondents on *share annotations with others* item.

Add and Organize

Figure 3 below performed that there were 98 respondents gave their responses, while 2 others skipped this category. This category consisted of items organized PDFs, easily sorted, comprehensive search, and intuitive navigation. The Figure 3 below showed that there were no respondents chose "very difficult" and "difficult" on organized PDFs and easily sorted item.
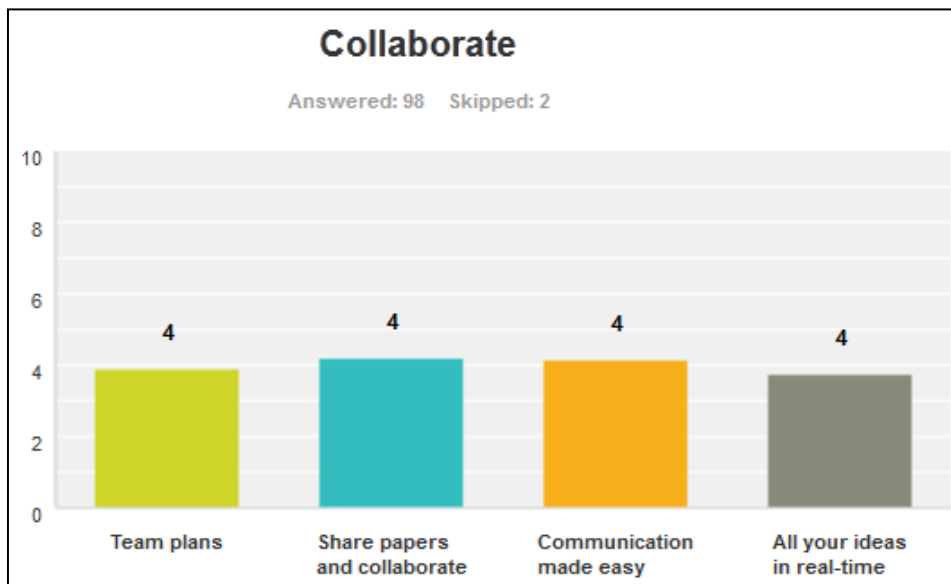

	Very Difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very Easy	Total	Weighted Average
Organized PDFs	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8.16% 8	30.61% 30	61.22% 60	98	4.53
Easily sorted	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	6.19% 6	32.99% 32	60.82% 59	97	4.55
Comprehensive search	0.00% 0	3.09% 3	21.65% 21	24.74% 24	50.52% 49	97	4.23
Intuitive navigation	1.03% 1	7.22% 7	27.84% 27	39.18% 38	24.74% 24	97	3.79

The Figure 3 above showed that only 1 item (intuitive navigation) was chosen by only 1 respondent. Item of *organized PDFs and easily sorted* showed the similarity that there was no respondents choosing "very difficult" and "difficult"; however, they selected "moderate",

"easy", and "very easy". There were higher number of respondents choosing "moderate" and "very easy" on *organized PDFs* item, 8 and 60 respectively compared to 6 respondents choosing "moderate" and 59 "very easy" on *easily sorted*, while there were 32respondents who chose "easy" on *easily sorted item* compared to 30 respondents choosing "easy" on *organized PDFs* item. The 3 respondents chose "difficult", 21 "moderate", 24 "easy", and 49 students on "very easy" for *comprehensive search*, whereas 1 respondent chose "very difficult", 7 respondents chose "difficult", 27 chose "moderate", 38 respondents chose "easy", and 24 respondents chose "very easy" on item *intuitive navigation*.

Collaborate

Figure 4 below showed that there were 98 respondents gave their responses in this category meaning that 2 other respondents skipped it. This category consisted of team plans, share papers and collaborate, communication made easy, and all your ideas in real-time items.
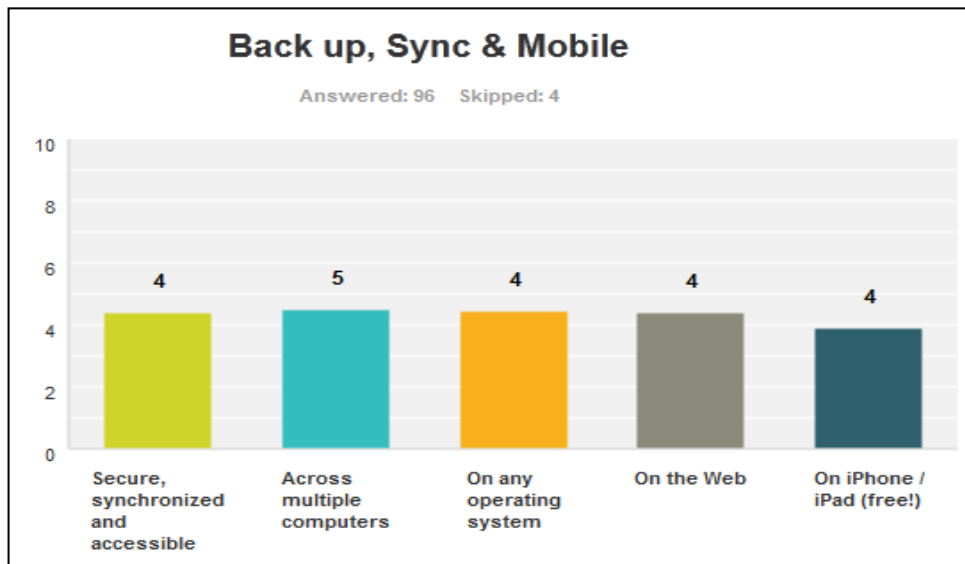

	Very Difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very Easy	Total	Weighted Average
Team plans	0.00% 0	8.16% 8	24.49% 24	37.76% 37	29.59% 29	98	3.89
Share papers and collaborate	0.00% 0	10.31% 10	14.43% 14	20.62% 20	54.64% 53	97	4.20
Communication made easy	0.00% 0	6.19% 6	22.68% 22	22.68% 22	48.45% 47	97	4.13
All your ideas in real-time	1.03% 1	5.15% 5	36.08% 35	34.02% 33	23.71% 23	97	3.74

Figure 4 above showed that only 1 item (save all your ideas in real-time) was chosen by only 1 respondent. There were no respondents who chose "very difficult", 8 respondents chose "difficult", 24 respondents chose "moderate", 37 respondents chose "easy", and 29

respondents chose "very easy" on item *team plans*. *Share papers and collaborate* item showed that there was no respondents chose "very difficult", 10 respondents chose "difficult", 14 respondents chose "moderate", 20 respondents chose "easy", and 53 respondents chose "very easy". Item *communication made easy* showed that there was no respondent who chose "very difficult", 6 respondents chose "difficult", 22 respondents "moderate" and "easy", and 47 respondents chose "very easy". Item of *all your ideas in real-time* showed that 1 respondent chose "very difficult", 5 respondents chose "difficult", 35 respondents chose "moderate", 33 respondents chose "easy", and 23 respondents chose "very easy".

Backup, Sync, & Mobile

Figure 5 below showed that 96 respondents gave their responses from 100 total respondents. Thus, 4 respondents skipped this category. This category consisted of secure, synchronized and accessible, across multiple computers, on any operating system, on the web, and on iPhone/iPad (free!) items.

	Very Difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very Easy	Total	Weighted Average
Secure, synchronized and accessible	0.00% 0	2.08% 2	11.46% 11	29.17% 28	57.29% 55	96	4.42
Across multiple computers	0.00% 0	1.05% 1	10.53% 10	25.26% 24	63.16% 60	95	4.51
On any operating system	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.74% 14	25.26% 24	60.00% 57	95	4.45
On the Web	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.22% 14	27.17% 25	57.61% 53	92	4.42
On iPhone / iPad (free!)	0.00% 0	8.42% 8	28.42% 27	26.32% 25	36.84% 35	95	3.92

Figure 5 above showed that there was no respondent chose "very difficult" for all items. Item of *secure synchronized and accessible* showed that there were 2 respondents who chose "difficult", 11 respondents chose "moderate", 28 respondents chose "easy" and 55 respondents chose "very easy". *Across multiple computers* showed that there were no respondents who chose "very difficult", 1 respondent chose "difficult", 10 respondents chose "moderate", 24 respondents chose "easy", and 60 respondents chose "very easy". Items of *on any operating system and on the web* had similarities that there were no respondents chose "very difficult" and "difficult", 14 respondents chose "moderate", whereas 24 respondents chose "easy" on item of *on any operating system* compared to 25 respondents on item *on the web* and 53 respondents chose "very easy" on the item of *on the web* while 57 respondents chose item of *on any operating system*. There were no respondents who chose "very difficult" on the item of *on iPhone/iPad (free!)*, 8 respondents chose "difficult", 27 respondents chose "moderate", 25 respondents chose "easy", and 35 respondents chose "very easy".

Network and Discover

Figure 6 below showed the same number of responses as the Figure 5 above. There were 96 respondents gave their responses meaning that 4 respondents skipped this category. The items in this category consisted of search millions of papers, public groups, build an online presence, and discover new collaborators.
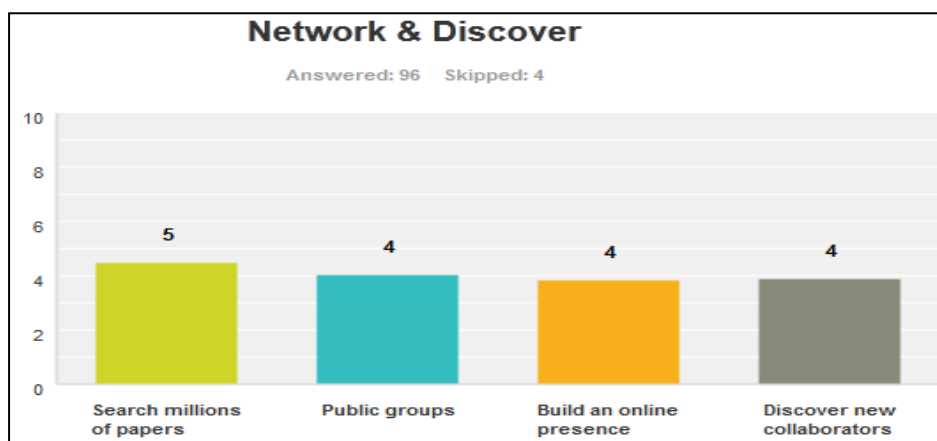
	Very Difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very Easy	Total	Weighted Average
Search millions of papers	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8.33% 8	31.25% 30	60.42% 58	96	4.52
Public groups	0.00% 0	1.05% 1	25.26% 24	43.16% 41	30.53% 29	95	4.03
Build an online presence	0.00% 0	9.57% 9	25.53% 24	36.17% 34	28.72% 27	94	3.84
Discover new collaborators	1.05% 1	10.53% 10	25.26% 24	23.16% 22	40.00% 38	95	3.91

Figure 6 above indicated that there were no respondents chose "very difficult" and "difficult" on item *search millions of papers*; the majority of the respondents (58 respondents) chose "very easy", 30 respondents chose "easy", and 8 respondents chose "moderate". For item *public groups*, there were no respondents chose "very difficult", 1 respondent chose "difficult", 24 respondents chose "moderate", 41 respondents chose "easy", and 29 respondents chose "very easy". Similar to item public groups, there were no respondents chose "very difficult" on item *build on online presence* and 24 respondents chose "moderate" on two other items, *build an online presence* and *discover new collaborators*. Figure 7 above showed that there were 9 respondents chose "difficult", 34 respondents chose "easy", and 27 respondents chose "very easy" on the item of *build an online presence*. For item *discover new collaborators*, there was 1 respondent chose "very difficult", 10 respondents chose "difficult", 22 respondent chose "easy", and 38 respondents chose "very difficult". From the 100 respondents as total number of participants in this study, there were 92 respondents completed all the items in all categorys as in Figure 6.

The data on Figure 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and Figure 6 showed that most of the respondents chose "easy" and "very easy" on all categories in the features of Mendeley based on the weighted average. Based on the weight of 1 for "very difficult", 2 for "difficult", 3 for "moderate", 4 for "easy", and 5 for "very easy", the majority of the respondents' weighted average were higher than 3.5 and almost 5 proved that the features of Mendeley were in a level of "easy" and "very easy" for the Indonesian students to employ in their academic writing. Indeed, the highest percentages of respondents' choices were in a level of "very easy".

The categories of Mendeley proved that the majority of respondents (58.76%) chose "very easy" on *quick and simple installation* item as in Figure 1. The category of *read and annotate* for item of *save time navigating PDFs* showed that 61.22% respondents chose "very easy" as in Figure 2. Similarly, category of *add & organize*, item of *Organized PDFs* as Figure

3 proved that 61.22% chose "very easy". The category of *collaborate for item share papers and collaborate* showed that 54.64% chose "very easy" as in Figure 4. *Back up, sync & mobile* category for *across multiple computers* item showed that 63.16% respondents chose "very easy" as in Figure 5. Finally, there were 60.42% chose "very easy" on item of search millions of papers as in Figure 6 for the category of *network & discover*.

Discussions

In this section, it will present the data summary comprising the six default features of the MCM as in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Data summary of the default features of MCM

Default Features of MCM	Items	Weighted Average	Total Weighted Average
Reference Manager	Quick and Simple installation	4.53	4.24
	Citation styles for thousands of journals	4.42	
	Create bibliographies instantly	4.5	
	Flexible formatting	3.97	
	Collaborate on Bibliographies	3.78	
Read & Annotate	Save time navigating PDFs	4.52	4.07
	Annotate and highlight	4.34	
	Share annotations with others	3.71	
	Save and print annotations	3.71	
Add & Organize	Organized PDFs	4.53	4.28
	Easily sorted	4.55	
	Comprehensive search	4.23	
	Intuitive navigation	3.79	
Collaborate	Team plans	3.89	3.99

	Share papers and collaborate	4.20	
	Communication made easy	4.13	
	All your ideas in real-time	3.74	
Back up, sync & mobile	Secure synchronized and accessible	4.42	4.34
	Across multiple computers	4.51	
	On any operating system	4.45	
	On the web	4.42	
	On iPhone/iPad (free!)	3.92	
Network & discover	Search millions of papers	4.52	4.08
	Public groups	4.03	
	Build an online presence	3.84	
	Discover new collaborators	3.91	

Indonesian HE students faced no difficulties for the first category which consisted of five features in their scientific writing classroom activities. As seen from Table 1 which revealed total weighted average of 4.24. Despite that, findings revealed that two of the features namely flexible formatting and collaborate on bibliographies was a bit challenging for the HE students among other five items. This is due to students' background with unfamiliarity of software collaborations and MCM software layouts. Nevertheless, students showed great enthusiasm when they started to cite using MCM in their writing practices

As for the second category consisting of five items, the Indonesian students showed a small struggle using MCM in writing contrast to the first category. This was proven by the total weighted average of 4.07 shown in Table 1. The two distinct items which was considered more challenging in the second category were share annotations and print annotations.

Based on the results, the third category was considered much easier than the first and second category. To the Indonesian students, it was easier for them to use during their scientific writing classroom activities. It is shown from Table 1 that the total weighted average was 4.28.

And only intuitive navigation was revealed to be a bit difficult than the other four items within the third category.

From the data in Table 1, The fourth category was found to be the most challenging feature of the MCM during their study. This is evident from the total weighted average of 3.99 shown in Table 1 which are much lower the previous categories. However, two items within this feature namely 'share papers and collaborate' and 'communication made easy' were considered light in difficulty as the weighted average of 4.2 and 4.13 respectively. This is due to the layout of the online collaboration site similar to that of social media sites such as Facebook, hence they found it to be more user friendly.

In direct contrast to the fourth category, the fifth category with the feature of back up, sync & mobile was the least challenging feature to use during their study. It was proved by the total weighted average of 4.344. And only one of the five items in the fifth category "on iPhone/iPad (free!)" was shown to be confusing to students since the majority of Indonesian use android-based phones thus even if they knew about it, they would not be interested with the app.

The sixth category seemed to be steady for the students during their study, which consisted of four features. Data shows that two them were much easier and the other two were quite challenging for the students to comprehend. This is evident from Table 1 revealing features such as search millions of papers, public groups, build an online presence, and discover new collaborators possessing 4.52, 4.03, 3.84, and 3.91 respectively.

Overall, the HE students had statistically showed dissimilar attitudes utilizing the Reference Manager Software during their scientific writing classroom activity and these varying attitudes influenced their works in Academic Writing. The Mendeley-based instruction employed in an academic writing classes seemed to play a part in the process of scientific writing during their classroom activity which further supported by Angelil-Carter (2000) with the importance of reference management stating accurate referencing is not just an optional extra in an academic essay, something to be added on at the end of the process, when the main text is complete, but it is, rather, an integral and constitutive component, since knowing who said what and when and where it was said is essential to understanding the nature of knowledge as something constructed, debated and contested.

Conclusion

The research result demonstrates that there were marked differences in the way the students perceive Mendeley-based instruction for their scientific writing classroom practices.

From the students' perspectives, there were three categories identified in the analysis: (1) Well Equipped Mendeley (WEM); (2) Fairly Equipped Mendeley (FEM); and (3) Lowly Equipped Mendeley (LEM). The WEM students tend to have a better academic writing in their study on scientific writing. The FEM students displayed their academic writing with some difficulties in their writing practices emerged from their academic writing. The LEM students, on the other hand, found it very challenging during their study in scientific writing classes. What is evident is that the more equipped knowledge of the students is on Mendeley-based instruction, the better their academic writing performance are. On a global context, the implication of this study promotes a scholarly understanding on the academic writing of EFL students in a university context using Mendeley-based instruction, a means of preventing plagiarism and raising plagiarism awareness which leads to an increase in academic writing skill in Higher Education as stated by (Erkaya, 2009) that one of the most prevalent cases in EFL student plagiarism is the lack of knowledge about writing research papers. And further supported by Moody (2007) in that the use of information sources is a central, vital aspect of academic writing, not a burdensome convention to which teachers and students must pay lip service before moving on to more important concerns. In addition, this study has underlined the significance of the framework of scientific writing to the level of somewhat sophisticated, predominantly when the academic writing having convergent scripts are highly appreciated and the students are in a nurturing and supportive environment in Indonesian higher education context.

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