



## Referencing Revisited: A Comparative look at MLA, APA and IS:IDBR

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This paper compares the fundamental characteristics, in-text referencing format, and reference formatting of three commonly utilized citation styles in scholarly discourse: MLA, APA, and IS:IDBR. The review encompasses literature on citation styles, bibliographic references, citation generation platforms, scholarly articles, and manuals of MLA, APA, and IS:IDBR. These sources serve as the theoretical foundation aligned with the research objectives. The study confines its scope to the comparative analysis of three citation styles, focusing solely on their features, in-text formats, and reference formats, excluding other aspects. Nonetheless, the findings are poised to assist researchers and academics in selecting the most suitable citation style for their research endeavours. Upon examination, the study reveals that MLA is perceived as more user-friendly for students than APA, while IS:IDBR emerges as a comprehensive citation style offering a versatile approach. This study derives insights from original research data extracted and synthesized from a comprehensive literature review.

**Keywords-** Citation Style, Bibliographic References, MLA, APA, IS: IDBR, In-text Citations

### 1. Introduction

The proliferation of online and openly accessible scientific literature across many journals and books is attributed to the exponential growth in online publication. Publishers and readers alike prioritize well-structured, error-free content. Key elements such as bibliographical referencing, in-text citations, linguistic precision, and effective data visualization ensure readability, originality, and quality in scientific literature. Diverse citation styles cater to specific disciplines, each offering a framework for organizing bibliographic information.

Comparative analysis of prevalent citation styles, such as the Modern Language Association (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA), and Indian Standard Information and Documentation – Bibliographic References (IS: IDBR), presents an intriguing prospect. However, many researchers lack proficiency in reference creation, prompting the development of automatic citation generators. Nonetheless, these tools often fail to accommodate various citation styles, leaving room for improvement, one of them IS: IDBR. The adoption of citation styles is influenced by numerous factors, including:

- a) *Recommendation by supervisors:* Academic supervisors may advise utilizing a particular citation style.
- b) *Journal policies:* Compatibility with the citation style may align with the target journal's requirements.
- c) *Publisher's preference:* Publishers may choose the citation style.
- d) *Availability of citation management software:* Automatic citation generators within such software facilitate adherence to specific citation styles.
- e) *Faculty preference:* The popularity and widespread use of citation styles among faculty members can influence their selection.
- f) *Awareness and ease of use:* The selection of a citation style may hinge upon its familiarity and simplicity of application.

Researchers often encounter citation styles during their undergraduate or master's projects, either at their discretion or under the guidance of their supervisors. Consequently, students become acquainted with citation styles through their undergraduate assignments. They familiarize themselves with referencing practices and citation styles, applying them to their theses, research articles, books, and

other scholarly works. They explore various citation styles available to them and often consider the preferences of their academic seniors. Their perspectives on citation styles may vary. Some may prioritize conformity with academic conventions and institutional expectations, while others may emphasize convenience and ease of use. Additionally, they may weigh the advantages and disadvantages of different citation styles regarding clarity, consistency, and compatibility with their field of study. Their citation style selection ultimately reflects personal preference, institutional guidelines, and scholarly conventions.

## 2. Review of Literature

In the realm of comparing citation styles, there exists a need for more comprehensive studies. Existing research on citation styles suggests that aspects such as structuring bibliographic information, including arrangement, capitalization, punctuation, integration with the text, placement within the body, and organization within reference lists, all constitute elements of style<sup>1</sup>. Interestingly, citation style regulations intersect with linguistic conventions involving issues of aesthetics and design. Authors employ citations to persuade and educate readers and attribute credit or critique to prior works. Conversely, readers consult references to validate assertions, verify facts, seek additional resources, and acknowledge the contributions of previous authors<sup>1</sup>. As Hunter<sup>2</sup> aptly puts it, a citation functions as a directional marker and acknowledges indebtedness to a source.

Editors of journals must leverage the layout, design, and physical presentation of publications to attract their target audience effectively. Alphabetically arranged references aid librarians in navigating bibliographies efficiently. However, incomplete citations, excessive abbreviations, references to obscure sources, and inaccuracies in publication details pose challenges for librarians. It is well-recognized that citation requirements vary across disciplines<sup>1</sup>. Camacho<sup>3</sup> notes that while writers often credit direct quotations appropriately, they may overlook acknowledging sources when paraphrasing ideas.

Examining the APA style reveals its suitability for student use, comprehensive coverage of various citation instances, and alignment with library cataloguing practices. The APA manual dedicates an

entire chapter to in-text citations and positions the reference list after each relevant chapter or section, primarily catering to journal articles. This approach minimizes redundancy and simplifies formatting. Unlike other citation styles, APA employs parenthetical author-date citations when the author's name and publication date are not integrated into the text. This convention reflects academia's reliance on authoritative sources<sup>1</sup>.

Comparative research on APA and MLA usage demonstrates that APA dominates in top-tier business journals, with 11% utilizing this style, while none employ MLA<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, the APA style prevails within nursing journals, and 70% of indexed publications use it<sup>4</sup>. A study focusing on the Indian Standard citation format identified deficiencies, particularly its lack of guidelines for referencing digital communication such as emails, tweets, e-books, and e-documents<sup>5</sup>. Despite this, citation styles remain dynamic and subject to frequent updates<sup>6</sup>. The third iteration of the Indian Standard now includes guidelines addressing these shortcomings. However, a Google search reveals the absence of an automatic citation generator for the Indian Standard, a feature readily available for most other citation styles.

Various citation styles exhibit several issues. For instance, in introductory-level textbooks, including in-text parenthetical citations introduces complexity and potential obstacles for student readers. In these textbooks, predicting the placement of APA-style references within the text can be challenging. They may appear anywhere within a paragraph, even disrupting sentences, ranging from a single author and year to extensive lists of authors and studies spanning multiple lines. Consequently, readers may need help to skim through them automatically, potentially taxing working memory as they attempt to maintain the text's coherence. In essence, APA citations will likely disrupt the narrative flow and impede the prioritization of core content and reading strategies<sup>7</sup>.

## 3. Aim and Objectives

The research paper undertakes a comparative analysis of three commonly utilized referencing styles among researchers. The objectives are as follows:

- (i) To assess the fundamental characteristics of MLA, APA, and IS: IDBR citation styles.
- (ii) To examine the in-text reference formatting employed in the cited styles.

(iii) To scrutinize the structure, format, and features of reference citations across the referencing styles under investigation.

#### 4. Research Methodology

We are reviewing the literature encompassing citation styles, bibliographical referencing, and citation generators. Our sources include websites, research articles from reputable journals, and manuals such as MLA, APA, and IS: IDBR. Analysis:

- a) We have identified several categories to outline the fundamental characteristics of the citation styles. These categories are presented in tabular form.
- b) The referencing format and structure of MLA, APA, and IS: IDBR are individually outlined and then compared across categories such as single authors, multiple authors, and instances with no authors.
- c) Similarly, in a comparative table, we compare the in-text citation styles for the above styles across various scenarios (single author, multiple authors, etc.).

Our approach is based on the guidelines provided by the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of MLA, the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of APA, and the IS: IDBR manual from 2014, which is aligned with our research objectives. The findings are discussed, and conclusions are drawn regarding the citation format and usage of IS: IDBR, APA, and MLA.

#### 5. Findings and Discussion

The Indian Standard Information and Documentation – Bibliographic References (IS:

IDBR) (IS 2381 Part 1, 2, 3)<sup>8,9</sup> adopts principles from the ISO standard (ISO 690:2014). In 1951, the Modern Language Association introduced its MLA<sup>10</sup> style sheet after extensive collaboration with librarians, educators, students, writers, and editors. Recognized for its clarity and versatility, the MLA style sheet is predominantly utilized in humanities, arts, and literature. Notably, around 6000 journals adhere to MLA citation guidelines. Conversely, the American Psychological Association (APA)<sup>11</sup> established its citation style in 1929. While crucial for scholarly pursuits in psychology, APA guidelines are relevant across various social science disciplines, including education.

##### 5.1. Basic Features:

The essential attributes of citation styles, as described in citation guides, manuals, websites, and research articles, are summarized (Table I).

**5.2. Structure/Format:** Every citation style follows a specific format for displaying references. Formats for citation styles such as MLA, APA, and IS: IDBR outline their fundamental elements clearly. These formats differ among the mentioned citation styles. Table II demonstrates how these three styles are presented.

##### 5.3. Punctuation Marks:

Table III displays the punctuation marks utilized in in-text referencing and list referencing for MLA, APA, and IS: IDBR styles.

##### 5.4. Books:

Table IV compares the style format for a book in MLA, APA, and IS: IDBR.

Table 1 — Basic Features of the Citation Styles

Category	9 <sup>th</sup> MLA	7 <sup>th</sup> APA	IS: IDBR (2014)
Full-Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern Language Association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American Psychological Association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indian Standard Information and Documentation – Bibliographic References</li> </ul>
Current version Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9<sup>th</sup> edition</li> <li>• Humanities and related areas (i.e. literature)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7<sup>th</sup> edition</li> <li>• Social sciences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> version (2014)</li> <li>• Science, social science, arts and humanities</li> </ul>
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on authorship: “(Kumar).”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on publication date: “... (Smith &amp; Johnson, 2009).”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Author (No. Page No.)</li> <li>• Author</li> <li>• Author (Year, Page No.)</li> </ul>
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The format is designed for ease of presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The format is designed for comparing research and determining relevance.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The format is flexible and available in three options</li> </ul>
Level Importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easier</li> <li>• “taught first to students.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult</li> <li>• “taught as an alternative citation style”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive citation style</li> <li>• Only taught in India</li> </ul>

Table 2 — Structure/Format of Citation Styles

Category	9 <sup>th</sup> MLA	7 <sup>th</sup> APA	IS:IDBR (2014)
Basic Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Name(s) of author(s)</li> <li>• Work title</li> <li>• Publication city and year</li> <li>• Publisher</li> <li>• Publication medium (i.e. print, web)”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Name(s) of author(s)</li> <li>• Publication year</li> <li>• Work title</li> <li>• Publication City</li> <li>• Publisher”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name(s) of author(s)</li> <li>• Work Title</li> <li>• Edition</li> <li>• Publication (place, publisher)</li> <li>• Year</li> <li>• Page Nos.</li> <li>• Standard Number</li> </ul>
‘Name’ Format	“MLA uses the full first name;”	“APA uses only the first initial.”	IS:IDBR uses the full first name.
Capital Letters “(excluding articles (a/an/the) and prepositions (of, out, in))”	“MLA capitalizes all major words.”	“APA only capitalizes first words in the titles and proper nouns (names).”	“IS:IDBR capitalizes first words in the titles, proper nouns (names), and full last names.”
Medium of Publication	“MLA states the medium of publication (print, web);”	“APA does not.”	IS:IDBR does only for Online sources
Quotation Mark	“MLA puts the article title in quotation marks;”	“APA does not.”	IS:IDBR doesn’t
Format for Volume and Issue No.	“MLA uses the V.I format for volume and issue numbers;”	“APA uses <i>V(I)</i> .”	IS:IDBR uses V, I

Table 3 — Punctuation Marks of the Citation Styles

Category	9 <sup>th</sup> MLA	7 <sup>th</sup> APA	IS:IDBR (2014)
Double Quotes	“Title of Work”	-	-
Parenthesis	(Year)	(Year; Issue No.) (Year) <i>Volume(Issue)</i>	-
Square Brackets	-	-	Medium [Online] [Cited Date]
Italics	<i>Journal Title</i>	<i>Journal Title</i> <i>Volume</i>	<i>Journal Title</i>
Colon	Volume.Issue (Year): City of Publisher: Publisher	City of Pub, State: Publisher	Available from the Internet:
<>	<URL (optional)>	-	<url>
Comma	Lastname,	Lastname, Journal Title, Volume(Issue),	Lastname, Journal Title, Month Year, Vol., No., <i>LAST NAME</i>
Words in Capital Letters	-	-	<i>LAST NAME</i>
Full Stop	First name. <i>Title of Work.</i> Year. Medium.	First Initial. (Year). <i>Title of work.</i> Publisher.	First name. <i>Title.</i> Ed. Year. p. ISBN.

### 5.5. Journal Article:

The formats for writing references for journal articles in MLA, APA, and IS:IDBR are outlined in Table V.

### 5.6. Online Sources:

Table VI compares the formats for writing references for online databases in MLA, APA, and IS:IDBR.

Table 4 — Citation Style's Format - Books

Category	9 <sup>th</sup> MLA	7 <sup>th</sup> APA	IS:IDBR (2014)
Book Template	"Lastname, Firstname. <i>Title of Work</i> . City of Pub: Publisher, Year. Medium."	"Lastname, First Initial. (Year). <i>Title of work</i> . City of Pub, State: Publisher."	LASTNAME, Firstname. <i>Title</i> . Ed. Place: Publisher, Year. p. ISBN.
Book Example	"Johnson, Thomas. <i>Studies in College</i> . New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003. Print."	"Johnson, T. (2003). <i>Studies in college</i> . New York, NY: McGraw-Hill."	"JOHNSON, T. <i>Studies in college</i> . 12th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003. ISBN 9781260169614."

Table 5 — Citation Style's Format – Journals

Category	9 <sup>th</sup> MLA	7 <sup>th</sup> APA	IS:IDBR (2014)
Journal Article Template	"Last name, First name. "Title of Work." <i>Journal Title</i> Volume. Issue (Year): Page numbers. Medium."	"Last name, First Initial. (Year). Title of work. <i>Journal Title, Volume</i> (Issue), page numbers."	"LASTNAME, First name. Title of Work. <i>Journal Title</i> , Month Year, Vol., No., p."
Journal Article Example	"Smith, Linda. "Students in Danger." <i>New England Journal of Student Progress</i> 7.2 (2007): 142-154. Print."	"Smith, L. (2007). Students in danger. <i>New England Journal of Student Progress</i> , 7(2), 142-154."	"KUMAR, Naresh. Library Leadership Qualities and Skills: The International Master Digital Library Learning Case Study. <i>International Information &amp; Library Review</i> , Feb 2022, 54, 1, pp.68-79."

Table 6 — Citation Style's Format – Online Sources

Category	9 <sup>th</sup> MLA	7 <sup>th</sup> APA	IS:IDBR (2014)
Online Sources Template	"Author. <i>Title of Site</i> . Sponsor, Date created (use n.d. if not given). Medium. Date accessed. <URL (optional)>."	"Author. (Year, Month [use n.d. if not given]). Article or page sub-title. <i>Major Publication Title</i> , volume or issue number (if available). Retrieved from <a href="http://url">http://url</a> ."	"LASTNAME, Firstname. Title of Work. <i>Journal Title[Online]</i> , Month Year, Vol., No. [cited Date], p. Available from Internet: <url>. ISSN."
Online Sources Example	"Department of Enrollment Management. <i>2013 Fall Term Comparison</i> . University of Houston-Clear Lake, 24 Oct. 2013. Web. 21 Oct. 2014."	"Department of Enrollment Management. (2013). 2013 Fall Term Comparison. <i>Enrollment Management 2013 Reports</i> . Retrieved from <a href="http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/PRV/EnrollmentManagement/image.s/Enrollment%20and%20SCH-Fall%2013%20Yr%2010242013%20final.pdf">http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/PRV/EnrollmentManagement/image.s/Enrollment%20and%20SCH-Fall%2013%20Yr%2010242013%20final.pdf</a> "	"KUMAR, Naresh. Library Leadership Qualities and Skills: The International Master Digital Library Learning Case Study. <i>International Information &amp; Library Review[Online]</i> , Feb 2022, 54, 1 [cited 2022-03-12], pp.68-79. Available from Internet: < <a href="http://www.doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2022.2025671">http://www.doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2022.2025671</a> >.ISSN."

## 6. Automatic Citation Generators

"Manually creating citations for a document is a laborious process, requiring significant effort and consuming valuable time for researchers."<sup>12</sup>

Several citation generation tools, both automatic and manual, including social networking tools called citation generators, are available for MLA and APA styles. However, no such tools currently exist for IS:IDBR. Some examples of automatic citation generators include:

1. Bib Builder,
2. BibMe,
3. CitationCreation,
4. Citation Machine,
5. Citation producer,
6. Citation Wizard,
7. CiteFast,

8. CiteMaker,
9. Cite This Me,
10. EasyBib,
11. eTurabian,
12. Knight Cite,
13. Make Citation,
14. Mick Schroeder,
15. OttoBib,
16. Recipes4Success.

Some of the Citation Management tools are:

- 1) EndNote
- 2) Mendeley
- 3) Zotero

## 7. In-Text Citations:

The in-text reference citation formats for MLA, APA, and IS: IDBR for one, two, three or more authors, corporate authors, and cases where no author

Category	1 <sup>st</sup> or Subsequent Citation	9 <sup>th</sup> MLA		7 <sup>th</sup> APA		IS:IDBR (2014)	
		Parenthetical Citation	Narrative Citation	Parenthetical Citation	Narrative Citation	Parenthetical Citation	Narrative Citation
One Author	-	(Last name Page No.)	Last name (Page No.)	(Last name, Year)	Last name (Year)	Author (No.) author (Author, Year)	Author (No. Page No.) author Author (Year, Page No.)
Two Author	-	(Last name A and Last name B Page No.)	Last name A and Last name B (Page No.)	(Last name A & Last name B, Year)	Last name A and Last name B (Year)	Last name A and Last name B (No.) Author A and Author B <sup>No.</sup> (Author A and Author B, Year)	Last name A and Last name B (No. Page No.) Author A and Author B <sup>No.</sup> Author A and Author B (Year, Page No.)
Three or More Authors	-	(Last name A <i>et al.</i> Page No.)	Last name A <i>et al.</i> (Page No.)	(Last name A <i>et al.</i> , Year)	Last name A <i>et al.</i> (Year)	Author <i>et al.</i> (No.) Author <i>et al.</i> <sup>No.</sup> (Author <i>et al.</i> , Year)	Author <i>et al.</i> (No. Page No.) Author <i>et al.</i> <sup>No.</sup> Author <i>et al.</i> (Year, Page No.)
Corporate Author with the abbreviation	1 <sup>st</sup> Citation	(Group Author Page No.)	Group Author (Page No.)	(Group Author, Year)	Group Author (Year)	Corporate body (Associated Country/Institution)	-
	Subsequent Citation	(Group Author* Page No.) Abbreviated	Group Author* (Page No.) Abbreviated	(Group Author*, Year) Abbreviated	Group Author* (Year) Abbreviated	-	-
Corporate Author without abbreviation	1 <sup>st</sup> Citation & Subsequent Citation	(Group Author*, Page No.) * without abbreviated	Group Author (Page No.)	(Group Author*, Year) * without abbreviated	Group Author (Year)	Corporate body (Associated Country/Institution) (No.) Corporate body (Associated Country/Institution) <sup>N</sup> <sub>o.</sub> (Corporate body (Associated Country/Institution), Year)	- - -
No Author	-	Title (Page No.)	-	(“Title,” Year)	-	Title (No.) Title (Title, Year)	Title (No. Page No.) Title Title (Year, Page No.)

is mentioned are detailed in the table covering Parenthetical Citation and Narrative Citation. This illustrates that the IS: IDBR Indian standard provides three options for representing citations.

## 8. Rendering Authors

The sample format, examples for one author, two authors, three or more authors, corporate authors, and cases where no author is mentioned for MLA, APA, and IS: IDBR is detailed in Table VIII.

## 9. Other Features

The majority of the features have been previously addressed. Below are additional features outlined:

Second Hanging Lines (Second Line):

a) MLA<sup>10</sup> - In MLA format, the Reference List should be indented five spaces or one-half inch from the left margin after the first line to create a hanging indentation.

b) APA<sup>11</sup> - In APA style, the Reference List should be indented five spaces or one-half inch from the left margin after the first line to create a hanging indentation.

Table 8 — In-Text Citation Style's Format – Rendering Authors

Category	9 <sup>th</sup> MLA <sup>10</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> APA <sup>11</sup>	IS:IDBR <sup>8,9</sup>
One Author	“Lastname, Firstname. “Title of Work.” <i>Journal Title</i> Volume. Issue (Year): Page numbers. Medium.”	“Last name, First Initial. (Year). Title of work. <i>Journal Title, Volume</i> (Issue), page numbers”.	“LASTNAME, Firstname. Title of Work. <i>Journal Title[Online]</i> , Month Year, Vol., No. [cited Date], p. Available from Internet: <url>. ISSN.”
One Author Example	“Kumar, Naresh. “Library Leadership Qualities and Skills: The International Master Digital Library Learning Case Study.” <i>International Information &amp; Library Review</i> . (2022) DOI: <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2022.2025671">10.1080/10572317.2022.2025671</a> ”	“Kumar, N. (2022). Library Leadership Qualities and Skills: The International Master Digital Library Learning Case Study. <i>International Information &amp; Library Review</i> , 54(1), pp.68-79. Web. 01 Feb. 2022 < <a href="http://www.doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2022.2025671">http://www.doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2022.2025671</a> >”	“KUMAR, Naresh. Library Leadership Qualities and Skills: The International Master Digital Library Learning Case Study. <i>International Information &amp; Library Review[Online]</i> , Feb 2022, 54, 1 [cited 2022-03-12], pp.68-79. Available from Internet: < <a href="http://www.doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2022.2025671">http://www.doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2022.2025671</a> >ISSN.”
Two Authors	“Lastname, Firstname, and Lastname, Firstname. “Title of Work.” <i>Journal Title</i> Volume. Issue (Year): Page numbers. Medium.”	“Last name, First Initial., & Lastname, First Initial. (Year). Title of work. <i>Journal Title, Volume</i> (Issue), page numbers.”	“LASTNAME, Firstname, and LASTNAME, Firstname. Title of Work. <i>Journal Title[Online]</i> , Month Year, Vol., No. [cited Date], p. Available from Internet: <url>. ISSN.”
Two Authors Example	“Madhusudhan, Margam & Singh, Vikas. “Integrated library management systems: Comparative analysis of Koha, Libsys, NewGenLib, and Virtua.” <i>The Electronic Library</i> , 34.2 (2016): 223-249. Web. 18.03.2022 < <a href="http://www.doi.org/10.1108/EL-08-2014-0127">http://www.doi.org/10.1108/EL-08-2014-0127</a> >”	“Madhusudhan, M., & Singh, V. (2016). Integrated library management systems: Comparative analysis of Koha, Libsys, NewGenLib, and Virtua. <i>The Electronic Library</i> , 34(2), 223-249. DOI: <a href="http://www.doi.org/10.1108/EL-08-2014-0127">http://www.doi.org/10.1108/EL-08-2014-0127</a> ”	“MADHUSUDHAN, Margam, and SINGH, Vikas. Integrated library management systems: Comparative analysis of Koha, Libsys, NewGenLib, and Virtua. <i>The Electronic Library</i> , 2016, 34, 2[12/05/2022], pp. 223-249. Available from Internet: < <a href="http://www.doi.org/10.1108/EL-08-2014-0127">http://www.doi.org/10.1108/EL-08-2014-0127</a> >. ISSN 0264-0473.”
Three or More Authors	“Lastname, Firstname, Lastname, Firstname, and Lastname, Firstname. “Title of Work.” <i>Journal Title</i> Volume. Issue (Year): page numbers. Medium.”	“Last name, First Initial., et al. (Year). Title of work. <i>Journal Title, Volume</i> (Issue), page numbers.”	“LASTNAME, Firstname, LASTNAME, Firstname, and LASTNAME, Firstname. Title of Work. <i>Journal Title[Online]</i> , Month Year, Vol., No. [cited Date], p. Available from Internet: <url>. ISSN.”
More than three Authors	“Lastname, Firstname, et al. “Title of Work.” <i>Journal Title</i> Volume. Issue (Year): page numbers. Medium.”	“Last name, First Initial., et al. (Year). Title of work. <i>Journal Title, Volume</i> (Issue), page numbers.”	-
Corporate Author	“Title of Work.” <i>Journal Title</i> Volume. Issue (Year): page numbers. Medium.	“(Year). Title of work. <i>Journal Title, Volume</i> (Issue), page numbers.”	“Organization Name. Title of Work. <i>Journal Title[Online]</i> , Month Year, Vol., No. [cited Date], p. Available from Internet: <url>. ISSN.”
No Author	““Title of Work.” <i>Journal Title</i> Volume. Issue (Year): page numbers. Medium.”	“(Year). Title of work. <i>Journal Title, Volume</i> (Issue), page numbers.”	“Title of Work. <i>Journal Title[Online]</i> , Month Year, Vol., No. [cited Date], p. Available from Internet: <url>. ISSN.”
Maximum authors can be rendered.	First Author's last name, et al.	“21 or more authors Include the first 19 authors' names, ... and then add the final author's name.”	-

c) IS: IDBR<sup>8</sup> – There is no provision for second hanging lines in IS: IDBR formatting.

## 10. Conclusion

Citation styles present the bibliographical details of cited documents in their specified formats. Numerous citation styles cater to various subject areas, each accompanied by manuals to aid users in their accurate application. While citation styles like MLA and APA offer automatic citation tools, IS: IDBR lacks such a

feature. A comparative analysis of MLA, APA, and IS: IDBR encompasses their in-text citation formats, reference list structures, and distinctive features. Examining the in-text reference citation formats across the three styles for scenarios involving one author, two authors, three or more authors, corporate authors, and instances of no author reveals differences between Parenthetical Citation and Narrative Citation. IS: IDBR, as an Indian standard, offers three distinct options for citation representation. MLA finds

extensive use in Humanities and related fields, particularly literature, owing to its presentation-oriented design.

Conversely, APA is favoured in social sciences and is geared towards research comparison and relevance determination. IS: IDBR finds applications across science, social sciences, arts, and humanities, boasting a flexible format with three options. The study's findings suggest that MLA proves more accessible for students than APA, whereas IS: IDBR emerges as a comprehensive citation style offering versatility and adaptability.

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