National ETD Repository Evaluation Using Web Analyzer:
A Webometric Analysis of Shodhganga, India

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ABSTRACT

ETDs are the Swiss-army-knife which has unearthed the shades of grey by bringing forth the until now hidden research to the forefront of the world. ETDs powered by open source software like DSpace, EPrints build up information ecosystem for effective storage and retrieval of theses and dissertations which take years of hard work to culminate. Such systems need to be evaluated as its purpose gets defeated if users find it hard to retrieve desired information from it. Webometrics involves the study of the web through which one can analyze the number of hyperlinks, type and structure of the hyperlinks, website usage and its effectiveness. The present article is an attempt to assess the performance of online portal of the national ETD repository of India by using Web Analyzer Test Score (WATS). It also highlights the status of Open Access (OA) ETD repositories with respect to other OA content like research papers, conference papers, etc. along with exploring the software used for Indian ETD Repositories. The overall score of the webometric analysis was found to be 6.4.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

A dissertation or thesis is a work submitted in support of candidature for a doctorate or master's degree, which presents the author's research and findings. Electronic versions of theses and dissertations collectively are called ETDs (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation). Johns Hopkins University which started its ETD program beginning in the fall semester of 2013, defined an ETD as the digital version of a dissertation that is available to the public via the internet (Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries, n.d.). The Digital Library and Archives (DLA) section of the Virginia Tech (USA), which started its journey towards ETDs from January 1, 1997, considers ETDs as a technologically advanced medium for expressing the author's ideas. An ETD documents the author's years of academic commitment. The DLA describes why the work was done, how the research relates to previous work as recorded in the literature, research methods used, the results, interpretation and discussion of the results, and a

summary of conclusions. The ETD is different, however. The DLA website enumerated the benefits of having theses and dissertations in the electronic format as follows:

- More access to research:
    - Research is available on campus.
    - Research is accessible worldwide.
- Less expense to authors and libraries:
    - No paper costs
    - No copying costs
    - No physical shelf space
    - Lower cataloguing costs
- Better presentation of research (not available in paper format):
    - Addition of multimedia files
    - More dynamic presentation of data
    - Hyperlinks
    - Programs and code

Duke University Libraries website has explained the benefits of ETDs to their students under the heading "What are the benefits of open access for my thesis or dissertation?" The benefits mentioned on their library ETD webpage resolves around:

- Greater visibility: helps improve reputation by making their research work highly accessible in electronic form.
- Rapid pace of scholarly communication via Internet to avoid long delays
- Economical as no additional costs associated with print theses and dissertations.
- Submitted ETDs part of a growing international collection through the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations and other such OA repositories.
- Easy discovery, and in turn making it much harder for anyone to appropriate research without giving due credit to the researcher.
- Full text availability of ETDs through open access is cited more often and is cited sooner.
- Multimedia objects, including colour images, hyperlinks, audio, video, spreadsheets and databases, even virtual reality worlds can be easily incorporated into and made available through ETDs.
- Researchers can include a stable URL for research work in their CV.
- OAI compliant ETD repositories are found by popular search engines.
- Open access to ETDs is the public contribution to scholarship.
- Fulfil unforeseeable information needs of diverse user community.
- 24/7 availability and accessibility of ETDs generates newer possibilities for interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary research
- Facilitate the formation of unexpected research collaborations as the result of open access to scholarship.

STUDY OBJECTIVES:

Building a framework for a national ETD repository requires meticulous planning form ab initio. Study of the features, strengths and limitations of such a project through scientific method demands evidence based approach. The present study has adopted webometric analysis to deeper insight of the national ETD repository of India for which the following objectives have been framed:

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