

Doctoral Thesis as Source of Information for Research Scholar at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract - Paper examines the key findings of a survey about use and utilization of doctoral thesis among the research scholars of Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati. A structured questionnaire was distributed to 200 research scholars; 160 responses were obtained. It examined the purpose, reference of contents, frequency, factors affecting utilization, impact of doctoral thesis and to elicit researcher's perceptions towards the use of thesis. The population chosen for this study was research scholars of science, Arts and Humanity disciplines.

Keywords: Doctoral thesis; Sri Venkateswara University; Research Scholars; User Studies.

Introduction

"Stories create opportunities for readers to consider values that guide human action in both the imaginary context of the story and the real context of their lives"

- Mr. Estes and Ms. Vasques-Levy.

A thesis or dissertation is the written report of a research study undertaken in fulfillment or partial fulfilment of a graduate degree such as a doctorate, masters degree, bachelors (honours) degree, or a postgraduate diploma. It is an undertaking that allows you to explore areas or problems in detail, and develop and utilise your thinking and analytical skills. Your thesis or dissertation should demonstrate a capacity for independent thinking, contribute to existing scholarship and must meet international standards for such scholarly research. (University of Auckland, 2014).

Searching for significant and relevant information that is useful in scientific research can be a challenging task. Researcher use and cite different types of information sources in their research work and study. It is known that Manuscripts, Journal, Books, Thesis/Dissertations etc. Thesis and dissertations are known to be the rich and unique source of information, often the only source of research work that does not find its way into various publication channels. (Mohanty and Das, 2014). Inventions and innovation are mainly based on former scientific work published in periodicals or technical papers. To work successfully and to avoid any waste of costs of investment in work already carried out elsewhere, it is necessary to practice a continuous review of current publications particularly those concerning the specific field of activity. The time spent on this work is said to take about 5% of the work hours. (Biomed, 1989).

A thesis reflects quality of research work conducted by a student and the ability of an institution to lead and support original work of research in a given discipline. It is not just an essay, as written at the earlier academic levels; but an in-depth study of a chosen field. Thesis

and dissertations are known to be the rich and unique source of information, often the only source for research work that manifestation of result of four to five years of intense work involving huge investment of resources, both mental and physical and infrastructure and other support from the universities. A thesis reflects quality of research work conducted by a student and the ability of an institution to lead and support original work of research in a given discipline. Universities, through research, make important contributions to the growth and development of industries and government businesses, thereby promoting national and global (Okiki, 2013) development.

Dissertations and Theses as a Research Tool

Theses and dissertations are an often overlooked source of information for research. They can offer the following benefits:

- Just like journal articles, conference proceedings, and other forms of literature, they present original research. Recently completed theses can provide "sneak previews" of ideas and findings that have yet to reach the public via other publication formats.
- They may be the only publicly-available work by authors who do not otherwise publish for general audiences or through commercial publishers.
- They contain extensive bibliographies.
- They provide inspiration for the formatting and presentation of ideas, graphs, charts, and other components of a document.
- They provide insight into the early work of a particular person and have value for historical and biographical purposes.

Databases focusing on Dissertations and Theses

The following sources focus primarily or exclusively on theses and dissertations; some provide direct access to full-text.

- DART-Europe E-theses Portal
- DSpace@MIT
- Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD)
- Open Access Theses and Dissertations (OATD)
- Open access (OA) theses and dissertations from institutions worldwide.
- Ethos
- Shodhganga@INFLIBNET Centre

General Sources Indexing Dissertations and Theses

- Worldcat.org
- GoogleScholar

Citing Dissertations and Theses

Most citation styles, including APA, Chicago, and MLA, provide specific instructions for formatting these citations. Although requirements for citing dissertations vary according by style, they generally seek to convey the following information: that the item is a dissertation (rather than an article or a book); the type of degree it resulted in (master's, PhD, etc);

whether it was published; and which institution granted the degree. An example of a citation for a dissertation is presented here in four major citation styles:

Review Literature:

Soma Raju (1992) conducted a research study to know the awareness, adequacy and the extent to the use of the library sources, tools, facilities and services in the Andhra University Library. The study found that 47.9% of the respondents of all the faculties viewed the library collection average, 28.3% satisfied and 21.4% dissatisfied. 41.4% of the scholars were aware of the special collection and 46.4% of them used it rarely. The study also found that 26.8% of the respondents were average satisfied with the reading facilities and 55.6% were satisfied with library working hours. 63.1% of the respondents were getting staff help ‘sometimes’ only. The study further revealed that 56.5% of the respondents were satisfied with the reference service. They were average satisfied with the inter library loan, reprographic, translation and microfilm reading facilities. **Kuri (2017)** in his paper presented the key findings of a survey about use and utilization of doctoral thesis among the research scholars of Karnatak University, Dharwad (KUD). A structured questionnaire was distributed to 80 research scholars; 60 responses were obtained. It examined the purpose, reference of contents, frequency, factors affecting utilization, impact of doctoral thesis and to elicit researcher's perceptions towards the use of thesis. The population chosen for this study was researchers of science, social science and humanity disciplines. **Rajgoli (2011)** Discusses in his paper that 12536 references appended to 1012 papers published in four Indian LIS Journals for the period of 2002-2010 revealed that there are 999 conference papers in all with an average of 0.99 conference papers per paper. Journal articles have merged as the most important source of information among all the four journals followed by Web resources, books and conference proceedings. A ranked list of highly cited conference is also prepared.

Methodology

The methodology for the proposed study is “Survey Method” with the help of structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared to collect data pertaining to respondent's awareness, use and satisfaction level of research scholars towards the doctoral thesis. A total number of 200 questionnaires were distributed to different disciplines of research scholars at Sri Venkateswara University Library, Tirupati. Out of which 160 valid responses were obtained. The data collected were tabulated and analyzed through the MS Excel software and the data analyzed and presented charts and tables format.

Objectives

- To examine how often and what purpose of library visits the research scholars at S.V. University
- To find out what research scholars are satisfied with information resources.
- To find out the extent to which the doctoral thesis helps research scholar in their research work.
- To identify the problems encountered while using doctoral thesis by research scholars.

Data Analysis

Table-1 shows the frequency of visit by research scholars, 16(51.6%) male and 7(33.3%) female research scholars from Science group, 39(58.2%) male and 18(43.9%) female

research scholars from Arts & Humanities group visited Daily. 8(25.8%)male and 9(42.9%)female research scholars from Science group, 14(20.9%)male and 9(22%)female research scholars from Arts & Humanities group visited Weekly. 6(19.4%)male and 4(19.0%)female research scholars from Science group, 9(13.4) male and 8(19.5) female research scholars from Arts & Humanities group visited Monthly. Remaining very few respondents from Science, Arts & Humanities group visited Occasionally.

Table-1: Frequency of Visits by Research Scholars

Frequency of visit	Science		Arts & Humanities	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Daily	16 (51.6%)	7(33.3%)	39(58.2)	18 (43.9%)
Weekly	8(25.8%)	9(42.9%)	14(20.9%)	9(22%)
Monthly	6(19.4%)	4(19.0%)	9(13.4)	8(19.5)
Occasionally	1(3.2%)	1(4.8%)	5(7.5%)	6(14.6%)
Total	31	21	67	41

Purposes of Library Visit

The research scholars were asked the purpose of library visit, table-2 shows, 9(28.1%) of the male and 5(25%) female respondent visit library to consult doctoral thesis from science group, where as 18(28.1%) male and 8(18.18%) female respondents visit the library to consult doctoral thesis from arts & humanities group. 6(18.8%) male and 4(20%) from Science and 10(15.6%) male and 5(11.36%) female from arts & humanities group respondents visit library to borrow/return books. 5(15.6%) male and 4(20%) female from Science group and 9(14.1%) male, 14(31.82%) female from arts & humanities group visit library to browse internet. 4(12.5%) male, 2(10%) female from science group and 10(15.6%) male, 2(4.5%) female from arts & humanities group respondents visit library to prepare seminar preparation. Remaining

Table 2: Purposes of Library Visit

Purpose of library visit	Science		Arts & Humanities	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Borrow /Return book	6(18.8%)	4(20%)	10(15.6%)	5(11.36%)
Browse internet	5(15.6%)	2(10%)	9(14.1%)	14(31.82%)
Consult material for research	3(9.4%)	4(20%)	8(12.5%)	9(20.45%)
Read Newspapers	3(9.4%)	2(10%)	6(9.4%)	5(11.36%)
Prepare seminar preparation	4(12.5%)	2(10%)	10(15.6)	2(4.5%)
Update the information	2(6.3%)	1(1%)	3(4.7%)	1(2.27%)
To consult doctoral thesis	9(28.1%)	5(25%)	18(28.1%)	8(18.18%)
Total	32	20	64	44

Places to Refer Doctoral Thesis

Table3 shows the places where research scholars prefer to refer doctoral thesis. Majority 53.75% respondents refer doctoral thesis at University Library, where as 18.12% of respondents from other mode, 26.25% in their home department and 1.87% refer from the Online Depository.

Table 3: Places to Refer Doctoral Thesis

Place to Refer thesis	No. of Respondents	%
University Library	86	53.75
Any Other	29	18.12
Department	42	26.25
Online Depository	3	1.87
Total	160	100

Sources of Awarded Thesis

The data recorded in the table 4 reveals that, majority 26.25% of respondents have come to know about awarded thesis from University News, followed by 25% through Shodhganga database 16.25% through Online discussion forums, 12.5% through Newspapers/News letters, 23.3% through University Notices and 10.63% respondents through University website.

Table 4: Information about Awarded Thesis

Sources of awarded Thesis	No. of Respondents	%
Ind-Cat Union catalogue	15	9.38
Newspapers/News letters	20	12.5
Online discussion forums	26	16.25
University News	42	26.25
Shodhganga database	40	25
University website	17	10.63
Total	160	100

Helpfulness of Doctoral Thesis

The table 5 reveals helpfulness of doctoral thesis. It is found that 20% respondents expressed doctoral thesis helps to 'Understand the structure of thesis' followed by 16.25% of respondents expressed doctoral thesis helps to 'Methodology followed for data collection', 11.25% helps in 'Current research in research field', 10% Compile of bibliography, Write research articles and Preparation of research report, 7.5% helps to know Prepare review of literature, 5.63% helps to Prepare synopsis and Supports research work, 3.75% helps in Statistical tool adopted for tabulation.

Table 5 : Helpfulness of Doctoral Thesis

Usefulness of Thesis	No. of Respondents	%
Compile of bibliography	16	10
Current research in research field	18	11.25
Methodology followed for data collection	26	16.25
Preparation of research report	16	10
Prepare review of literature	12	7.5
Prepare synopsis	9	5.63
Statistical tool adopted for tabulation	6	3.75
Supports research work	9	5.63
Understand the structure of thesis	32	20
Write research articles	16	10
Total	160	100

Level of Satisfaction and Awareness about Doctoral Thesis

The table-6 indicates the level of satisfaction towards the arrangement of thesis in the thesis section. The majority 57.5% of respondents satisfied with the arrangement of thesis, 16.88% expressed not satisfied with the arrangement only 13.75% respondents very satisfied with the arrangement, partial satisfied and 11.88% of respondents. In case of Awareness of thesis section, 78.13% respondents are aware of the thesis section only 21.88% not ware about the thesis section.

Table-6: Level of Satisfaction and Awareness about Doctoral Thesis

Level of Satisfaction	No. of respondents	%
Satisfied	92	57.5
Very satisfied	22	13.75
Partial satisfied	19	11.88
Not satisfied	27	16.88
Total	160	100
Awareness	No. of respondents	%
Yes	125	78.13
No	35	21.88
Total	160	100

Problems faced for Accessing Doctoral Thesis

Table 7 reveals various problems faced in using doctoral thesis. Majority 43.13% of respondents facing problems that the photo copying facility is not allowed, followed 24.38% problem of Limited pages allowed, 13.75% Thesis not available, 12.50% Closed access, and 6.25% respondents says no proper assistance.

Table 7: Problems faced for Accessing the Thesis

Problems	No. of respondents	%
Photo copying not allowed	69	43.13
Closed access	20	12.50
No proper assistance	10	6.25
Thesis not available	22	13.75
Limited pages allowed	39	24.38
Total	160	100

Findings & Conclusion

The survey explored the awareness and utilization of Doctoral thesis and the various factors leading to the identification of most preferred parts of the thesis and hindrance faced by the research scholars of Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati. The majority of the participant was male and belongs to the Arts & Humanities discipline and More than 68% of the respondents visit library for the purpose of consult of doctoral thesis. 20% of the research scholars believed that the consultation of doctoral thesis helps to understand the structure of thesis.

The awarded student theses ar directly impacting the character and quality of analysis across the world. From the study it's evident that within the future, the reliance on electronic thesis would undoubtedly show manifold increase. The library ought to venture to supply remote and web-based access to the awarded thesis. any university library has to organize effective

coaching info skill programmes on regular intervals on a way to access on-line thesis repository and enjoyment. The regular reflection on the supply of library facilities and services through feedback from the analysis community is additionally essential to spot their ever-changing wants.

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