PROCEEDINGS

A Two day National Seminar on Multi-Disciplinary Research in Contemporary Era: Exploring Innovative Trends

20th & 21st February, 2025

Organized by
Department of Humanities
and
Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC)

Editors

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THE COLLECTION OF INDIAN PHD THESIS AND DISSERTATIONS ON SHODHGANGA: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

The Centre for Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) developed and maintains Shodhganga, a digital archive of Indian Electronic Thesis and Dissertations (ETDs), as part of the University Grants Commission (UGC) program. The platform is a repository of PhD thesis submitted by research scholars across Indian universities and higher education institutions. It aims to ensure open access to Indian scholarly research and promote academic collaboration. Shodhganga significantly contributes to reducing duplication in research, supporting the academic growth of students and researchers, and providing comprehensive data for further exploration in diverse fields. It is a cornerstone of India's efforts to digitize and democratize access to higher education research. ETDs will grow more widespread in the days ahead as funding bodies and accreditation bodies such as AICTE, UGC, and NAAC evaluate innovative universities based on their ETD and IR projects. The INFLIBNET Centre came up with the term "Shodhganga" to refer to the digital archive of Indian electronic thesis and dissertations. "Shodh" means investigation and discovery and is borrowed from Sanskrit. Of all the rivers on the Indian subcontinent, the "Ganga" is the longest, biggest, and most revered. An ever-evolving, ever-flowing river that has captivated India's heart from the beginning of time and brought innumerable millions of people to its banks, the Ganges is a representation of the country's centuries-old culture and civilisation. The INFLIBNET Centre is responsible for organising and maintaining Shodhganga, a repository of Indian intellectual production. The purpose of this article, which focuses on a collection of Indian PhD thesis on Shodhganga, was to explore and analyse various aspects of the platform.

Keyword: *Shodhganga; Indian PhD Thesis; Repository*

Introduction:

Shodhganga, a flagship initiative by the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre under the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India, is a digital repository aimed at preserving and disseminating doctoral research conducted in Indian universities. The name "Shodhganga" is derived from the Sanskrit words *"Shodh,"* meaning research, and *"Ganga,"* symbolizing the sacred river, signifying the continuous flow of knowledge. This platform is a cornerstone in India's efforts to promote open access to academic resources and ensure transparency in higher education.

The repository addresses key challenges in academic research, including limited accessibility to thesis, the duplication of research efforts, and the need for preserving intellectual output. In alignment with the UGC mandate, universities across India are required to submit electronic versions of their PhD thesis and dissertations to Shodhganga, fostering an ecosystem of shared knowledge and academic accountability.

As of today, Shodhganga hosts a vast collection of research across diverse disciplines, ranging from science, technology, and medicine to humanities, social sciences, and arts. The repository not only enables researchers to access cutting-edge studies but also provides a platform for academic institutions to showcase their contributions to the global research community.

This study focuses on analysing the role and impact of Shodhganga, including its content diversity, accessibility, quality standards, and its effectiveness in preventing plagiarism and duplication. It also explores the challenges faced in its implementation and provides recommendations for enhancing its functionality and outreach.

By examining the features and potential of Shodhganga, this analysis seeks to shed light on how digital repositories can contribute to the democratization of knowledge, inspire future research, and uphold academic integrity in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Purpose

The purpose of Shodhganga is to serve as a centralized digital repository for PhD thesis and dissertations submitted by Indian researchers, fostering open access to scholarly knowledge and enhancing the visibility of academic work. It aligns with the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India's vision to promote transparency, accountability, and innovation in higher education.

1. **Preservation of Research Output**: Shodhganga ensures the systematic storage and long-term preservation of doctoral research conducted across Indian universities. By providing a digital archive, it safeguards valuable academic contributions for future generations.

2. **Promoting Open Access**: The repository democratizes access to high-quality research by making thesis and dissertations freely available to scholars, students, and the public worldwide. This encourages knowledge sharing and collaboration across disciplines and borders.

3. **Preventing Duplication of Research**: By offering a platform for easy access to existing research, Shodhganga minimizes redundant studies and promotes originality in academic work. The repository, integrated with plagiarism detection tools like URKUND, helps maintain the integrity of research output.

4. **Showcasing Institutional Contributions**: Shodhganga enables universities to showcase the breadth and depth of their research output, enhancing their academic reputation and fostering greater participation in the global research community.

5. **Facilitating Research Collaboration**: By providing an organized and searchable database, Shodhganga serves as a resource for identifying research trends, potential collaborators, and unexplored areas of study.

6. **Encouraging Compliance with UGC Mandates**: The platform supports the UGC's directive requiring Indian universities to submit electronic copies of their thesis, promoting consistency and standardization in research dissemination.

The overarching purpose of Shodhganga is to create a robust framework for sharing, preserving, and utilizing academic research, contributing significantly to the progress of education, innovation, and knowledge production in India.

Review of Literature

Digital repositories have emerged as essential tools for archiving and disseminating scholarly knowledge. **Suber (2012)** defines open access repositories as platforms that provide unrestricted access to scholarly research, facilitating global knowledge sharing. They enhance the visibility of research, increase citations, and promote collaboration. Studies by **Björk**et al. (2010) highlight that repositories like

Shodhganga reduce barriers to accessing academic resources, particularly in developing countries.

Several scholars have examined the impact of Shodhganga on India's research landscape. According to **Mallaiah and Kumble (2016),** Shodhganga has significantly contributed to the visibility of Indian research by providing an accessible platform for thesis. They note that the repository reflects the diversity of research in India, covering a wide array of disciplines and languages.

Choudhury and Kumar (2019) emphasize the role of Shodhganga in reducing plagiarism and duplication of research. With tools like URKUND integrated into the platform, universities are better equipped to maintain academic integrity. Similarly, Mishra (2015) acknowledges that Shodhganga has been instrumental in democratizing access to academic resources, particularly benefiting scholars in remote areas.

Studies by **Singh and Babbar (2017)** reveal that Shodhganga has witnessed a steady increase in its collection size and user base, demonstrating its effectiveness in meeting the needs of Indian scholars. However, their research also points out challenges such as the uneven participation of universities, with some institutions failing to upload thesis in a timely manner.

Further, **Jagtap and Shelke (2019)** highlight the need for a user-friendly interface, advanced search options, and better categorization to enhance usability. They suggest that improvements in technological infrastructure could make the repository more accessible and efficient.

One critical issue raised in the literature is the linguistic diversity of submissions. Studies by **Das and Chakraborty (2018)** note that while Shodhganga includes thesis in regional languages, English dominates the repository. This reflects broader trends in Indian academia, where English often serves as the primary medium of instruction and research. Addressing this imbalance could further enrich the repository's inclusivity.

Procedure for Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Shodhganga

For universities or institutions to contribute their PhD thesis and dissertations to **Shodhganga**, they must sign a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **INFLIBNET Centre** (Information and Library Network), which manages the repository. Below is the step-by-step procedure to establish the MoU:

1. Understand the MoU Requirements

Before initiating the MoU process:

➢ Ensure the university/institution is recognized by the **University Grants Commission (UGC)** or an equivalent authority.

➢ Confirm that the institution is committed to submitting electronic copies of all awarded PhD thesis.

➢ Be aware of the UGC's **Plagiarism Policy** and ensure the institution is compliant.

2. Prepare Necessary Documentation

The institution must prepare the following documents for the MoU process:

➢ **Institutional Details**: Name, address, and official contact details of the university.

➢ **Authorized Signatory Information**: Details of the representative authorized to sign the MoU on behalf of the university (e.g., Vice-Chancellor or Registrar).

➢ **List of PhD Programs**: A brief outline of the research programs offered by the institution.

➢ **Past Thesis Records**: If applicable, a summary of the thesis awarded before the MoU.

3.Contact the INFLIBNET Centre

Initiate communication with the INFLIBNET Centre to express interest in signing an MoU:

➢ **Address**: INFLIBNET Centre, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

➢ **Email**: shodhganga@inflibnet.ac.in

➢ **Website**: www.inflibnet.ac.in

The institution may request a draft copy of the MoU for review.

4. Review and Finalize the MoU

➢ **Draft Review**: The INFLIBNET Centre will provide the institution with a draft MoU. This document outlines the roles and responsibilities of both parties, including:

❖ The institution's commitment to submit thesis.

- ❖ INFLIBNET's responsibility to maintain and provide access to the repository.
- ❖ Usage of plagiarism detection tools.
➢ **Approval by Institution Authorities**: The draft must be reviewed and approved by the institution's governing body or legal counsel.

5. **Signing the MoU**

➢ Both the **authorized signatory of the institution** and the **Director of the INFLIBNET Centre** will sign the final MoU.

➢ The signed MoU is typically prepared in two copies, one for each party.

6. **Implementation of MoU Terms**

Once the MoU is signed:

➢ The institution is officially registered with Shodhganga.

➢ The institution must appoint a Shodhganga Coordinator (usually a librarian or faculty member) to oversee the submission process.

➢ INFLIBNET provides training or orientation for the coordinator and relevant staff on how to submit thesis and manage plagiarism detection.

7. **Initiate Thesis Submission**

➢ The institution begins uploading thesis to Shodhganga as per the agreed terms.

➢ Regular updates about submissions are expected, ensuring compliance with UGC guidelines.

Theses and dissertation submission process

Submitting a thesis to Shodhganga involves a structured process coordinated between the researcher, the university, and the Shodhganga repository. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has mandated that all Indian universities deposit their PhD thesis in Shodhganga to ensure accessibility and preservation. Below is a step-by-step guide on how the submission process works:

1.Pre-Submission Requirements

Before submitting a thesis to Shodhganga, certain requirements must be fulfilled:

- ➢ **Plagiarism Check**: The thesis must undergo a plagiarism check using software like URKUND or any other tool approved by the university. The similarity index must comply with UGC guidelines.

- ➢ **Approval from the University**: The final version of the thesis must be approved by the research supervisor and the university's relevant department.

- ➢ **Copyright Clearance**: The researcher needs to ensure there are no copyright violations in the content (e.g., borrowed images, data, or text).

2. Registration with Shodhganga

The university must register with Shodhganga as a contributing institution. This process involves:

- ➢ Signing a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** between the university and INFLIBNET, authorizing the submission of thesis.

- ➢ Appointing a university representative (e.g., a librarian or designated official) to manage the submission process.

3. Submission by the University

The actual submission of the thesis is performed by the university's designated representative. The process includes:

- ➢ **Conversion to PDF/A Format**: The thesis must be converted to a PDF/A file format, ensuring long-term archiving compatibility.

- ➢ **Metadata Preparation**: Key details about the thesis (e.g., title, author, supervisor, abstract, keywords, and university name) must be prepared in a structured format for submission.

- ➢ **Uploading to Shodhganga**: The university representative uploads the thesis and metadata using the repository's submission interface.

4. Plagiarism and Quality Validation

- ➢ **Plagiarism Report Submission**: Along with the thesis, the plagiarism report must be submitted to validate originality.

- ➢ **University Review**: The University verifies the uploaded thesis and metadata for accuracy and quality before final approval.

5. Public Access on Shodhganga

Once the thesis is approved:

➢ The metadata and full text are made available for public access on Shodhganga.

➢ If embargoed (restricted access due to copyright or proprietary reasons), only the metadata is displayed, with the full text made accessible after the embargo period.

Significance of the Collection

1. **Promoting Open Access**:

Shodhganga provides free and unrestricted access to a vast pool of academic research, benefiting scholars, students, and researchers globally.

2. **Preservation of Research**:

It ensures the long-term preservation of India's academic output in a digital format.

3. **Preventing Duplication**:

By offering access to completed research, Shodhganga minimizes redundant studies and fosters originality.

4. **Global Recognition of Indian Research**:

The repository enhances the visibility of Indian research, showcasing its contributions to the global academic community.

Challenges and Recommendations

1. **Uneven Participation**:

Some universities are yet to comply fully with the UGC mandate, leading to an incomplete representation of research output.

➢ **Recommendation**: Enforce stricter adherence to UGC guidelines.

2. **Regional Representation**:

Thesis in regional languages are underrepresented compared to English.

➢ **Recommendation**: Encourage regional universities to submit thesis in local languages.

3. **Technological Limitations**:

The user interface and search capabilities of Shodhganga could be improved for a better user experience.

> ➢ **Recommendation**: Invest in advanced search algorithms and user-friendly design.

Conclusion

Shodhganga is a monumental step in advancing open access to scholarly research in India. Its extensive collection of PhD thesis and dissertations showcases the intellectual achievements of Indian researchers, fostering a culture of knowledge sharing and innovation. With ongoing improvements and increased participation, Shodhganga can further establish itself as a premier global repository for academic research. The Shodhganga repository has emerged as a crucial resource in the academic landscape of India, acting as a centralized digital archive for PhD thesis and dissertations from various universities across the country. By providing open access to a vast collection of scholarly work, Shodhganga promotes the principles of open access, knowledge sharing, and academic transparency.

he collection's diversity—spanning numerous disciplines, languages, and research themes—offers invaluable insights into India's evolving academic research. This repository not only enhances the visibility of Indian research but also supports global academic collaboration by making thesis accessible to scholars worldwide. Furthermore, it contributes significantly to the preservation of academic knowledge, ensuring that doctoral research is digitally archived for future reference.

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