

Chapter 9

A Cito Analytical Study of Doctoral Theses in Legal Research

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ABSTRACT

This chapter gives a vivid introduction of the topic selected by the investigator, its terms are explained, and an overview of the methodology adopted for analyzing the objectives framed for the research are also highlighted. The researcher has adopted citation analysis as a technique for analyzing the doctoral dissertations, taken for the study. Citation analysis leads to the measurement of productivity or progress of a subject field and also in establishing the relationship of the authors, institutions, etc. In the present study, a total of 44,522 citations were analyzed from 107 PhD theses in law, which were collected from the legal educational institutions in Kerala.

INTRODUCTION

Citation analysis is a technique adopted to measure the extent of information sources based on citations in dissertations or journal articles. It is one of the important bibliometric techniques involving analysis of the references. Research is an indispensable component for any discipline for the generation of new knowledge, which coupled with skills lead to effective action. Citation analysis denotes the

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statistical analysis or mathematical analysis of references or citations appended at the end of each article. Much useful information for location and identification of existing and emerging knowledge of a discipline comes to the limelight through analysis of both cited and citing papers. It can be used for identifying the core journals and the characteristic features of a discipline such as authorship pattern, bibliographical form, subject type, etc.

Citation is a universal practice. Citing or giving a reference to a document in any learned presentation is the acknowledgement for intellectual debt received from the author or authors. Citation enables the readers to identify, locate, understand and decide whether the cited paper should be consulted or not. For this purpose, the references should contain all the necessary information for easy access and retrieval by the readers. They may be used to substantiate, explain or elaborate a particular point. They may also be referred to contradict or negate the conclusion of an already published work.

The results of high quality academic research written in the form of a report are usually termed as Theses or Dissertation. The main characteristics of these Theses are: they present details of Investigation/Research; they offer findings and conclusions, and they are submitted to an overseeing Body. The Doctoral theses which are products of research activity form an important source of information studies of the citations and may be useful in the decision-making process of the library regarding acquisition of reading materials and provision of better services to the users. These doctoral theses are also important because apart from giving the experimental evidence, it also records a thorough review of works that have already been done in a particular field to show that the proposed work is not done elsewhere. In this process, the researchers cite large number of documents in the theses to establish their claim.

Studies of these citations may be useful in determining the acquisition of reading materials more effectively. Cito analytical studies of doctoral theses have been carried out in extensive numbers in India and abroad, in order to understand the pattern of materials used by the scientists for their research purposes in different disciplines. Citation analysis has been increasingly used in the study of scientific and technological theses to provide qualitative data on their utility and relationship that could be used in several ways. It is one of the important methods employed in the identification of core journals in a particular subject field or for particular scientific community. It is a technique of listing of references appended to articles in significant periodicals and counting the frequency with which the periodicals are cited. This method emphasizes the most profusely cited journals and it can be taken to be the most desirable one in a library collection, for they are likely to be frequently used.

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