

Chapter 7

Exploring Student Interests in Shodhganga: Thesis Repository's Web Page Design, Content Delivery, and Navigation

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ABSTRACT

Shodhganga, developed by the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre, serves as a repository for electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) from Indian universities and research institutions. Using data collected from 482 research scholars in Tamil Nadu between December 2023 and March 2024, this research explores how student interests influence the appearance and structure of web pages, content delivery, and hyperlinks and navigation within the platform. The study employs the Student Interest Scale to measure student interests and derives dependent variables—Appearance and Structure of Web Pages, Content Delivery, and Hyperlinks and Navigation—from measures created by Ingrid Stewart, Eunsook Hong, and Neal Strudler (2010). Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients reveal significant positive correlations between student interests and the other variables, indicating a strong relationship. Further linear regression models indicate a statistically significant effect of student interests on each aspect, suggesting their influence on digital repository platforms.

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INTRODUCTION

Shodhganga is a digital repository platform developed by the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre that hosts electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) submitted by research scholars and students affiliated with universities and research institutions in India. It serves as a centralized repository for storing, accessing, and disseminating research outputs, particularly theses and dissertations, across various academic disciplines. Shodhganga aims to promote open access to scholarly works, facilitate academic research, and enhance the visibility and impact of Indian research output by making it freely accessible to the global academic community. Understanding the usage patterns and preferences of research scholars in platforms like Shodhganga holds significant value for several reasons. It allows for the enhancement of user experience by identifying areas for improvement in usability, design, and functionality. By tailoring the platform to meet the needs and preferences of scholars, it becomes more accessible and efficient for research purposes. Studying scholars' preferences towards the appearance, structure, and content delivery of Shodhganga enables optimization of the platform to better serve their needs. This includes improving search features, metadata organization, and navigation tools for easier access to relevant research materials. Moreover, insights gained from such studies can inform strategies to increase user engagement and participation on the platform. Implementing personalized recommendations, feedback mechanisms, and community-building initiatives promotes a vibrant scholarly community around Shodhganga. Shodhganga serves as a repository for electronic theses and dissertations, supporting research endeavors by providing access to valuable resources. Understanding how scholars utilize and engage with the platform facilitates knowledge dissemination and supports open access initiatives. By promoting open access publishing and increasing the visibility of Indian research outputs, platforms like Shodhganga contribute to the broader goals of academic dissemination and collaboration, ultimately advancing research and scholarship. The objective of this book chapter is to explore the interests of research scholars towards Shodhganga (the Reservoir of Indian Electronic Theses & Dissertations), focusing on the appearance and structure of web pages, content delivery, and hyperlinks and navigation of the website.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds exhibit varying perspectives on open access repositories and their motivations for depositing articles within them (Creaser et al., 2010). This diversity stems from the multifaceted nature of schol-

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