

## **ELECTRONIC THESES AND DISSERTATIONS : A UNIQUE OPEN ACCESS RESOURCE**

**Mrs. Shilpa S. Waghchoure**  
**Librarian,**  
**Gokhale Education Society's**  
**College of Education and Research**  
**Parel, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.**

**Dr. (Mrs) Indira Shukla**  
**Principal,**  
**Gokhale Education Society's**  
**College of Education and Research**  
**Parel, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.**

### **ABSTRACT**

*Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) increases the availability of research to the academic community worldwide, increase the exposure to potential employers, improve student understanding of electronic publishing issues and reduces the need for library space. Technical innovations are changing the way we communicate and share information around the globe. In addition to the multimedia aspects discussed above, the ETD will be given an address on the World Wide Web after it is publicly released so it can be accessible worldwide. The purpose of this paper is to give an overview of electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) as important and unique collections that facilitate open access.*

**Keywords :** *ICT, ETD, Scholarly Communication, E-Resources*

### **INTRODUCTION**

ETDs increase the availability of research to the academic community

worldwide, increase the exposure to potential employers, improve student understanding of electronic publishing issues and reduce the need for library space. Technical innovations are changing the way we communicate and share information around the globe. ETDs offer a new generation of theses and dissertations that can include color diagrams, color images, hypertext links, audio, video, animations, spreadsheets, databases, simulations, and virtual reality worlds. In addition to the multimedia aspects discussed above, the ETD will be given an address on the World Wide Web after it is publicly released so it can be accessible worldwide. In this way the ETD can answer other's questions and inspire further research. Through the World Wide Web, people anywhere in the world can link directly to students' ETDs or ETD collections at NC State and other universities. ETD is cost-effective for both student and university. The student will save time and money by virtually eliminating the paper review by the advisory committees and ETD Editor as well as the high cost of printing multiple high quality hard copies of the thesis or dissertation. By receiving them electronically, the university is allowed to fulfill its responsibilities of recording and archiving theses and dissertations more economically. This is a key responsibility of the university, which is easier and less costly (in this time of tight budgets) to fulfill when the workflow involves electronic documents. ETDs help in accelerating workflow within the university and library systems and make theses and dissertations more quickly available to outside audiences.

#### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:**

1. Yin Zhang, Kyiho Lee, Bum-Jong You, (2001) indicates that the KISTI ETD system usage has seen a significant increase since its second year. While most users appear to be domestic users, the system also attracts users from many other countries, suggesting that the KISTI ETD system has become a part of the international networked digital library of theses and dissertations. It was also found that there are a very large number of one-time visitors to the KISTI ETD system. Nevertheless, the system began to maintain a frequent user group in its second year in service.
2. Yi Jin, (2004) introduces the China Networked Digital Library of Theses and

Dissertations project initiated by the China Academic Library and Information System and current research into related technologies, including metadata standards, OAI metadata harvesting protocol, standard document format and intellectual property protection. Research work on multilingual and cross-lingual searching, personalization and knowledge organization is also described. The goals of the China Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations are to establish electronic theses and dissertations collections for Chinese academic universities.

3. Kristin Yiotis, (2008) discusses the originating institutions and organizations including Virginia Tech Initiative, the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and the United States Department of Education.
4. Nicholas Joint, (2009) finds that the case for the superior benefits of digital thesis services as opposed to print-only thesis provision has undoubtedly been made. However, the relative merits of different levels of public versus private sector involvement in the national digital thesis system are open to debate, which means that ETD information systems can be structured very differently from one country to another. The US and UK systems are particularly different from each other and form a focus of discussion.
5. Felicitas C. Ratanya, (2010) presents a brief introduction of the importance of ETD as materials for open access. This is with emphasis on the Kenya Information Preservation Society (KIPS) project which has, since 1993, been digitizing theses from a number of participating institutions across the country. This paper relies heavily on literature derived from existing documentation, online searches and website exploration, and the KIPS's union list of theses and dissertations CD-ROM.
6. Eun G. Park, Marc Richard, (2011) examines empirical data collected from data providers among Canadian institutional repositories. The result of this study may be beneficial to the achievement of interoperability across institutional repositories and to the development of a standardized application profile for Canadian institutional repositories.

### **NEED OF ETDs**

- Greater freedom for authors to demonstrate creatively the result of their research more flexibility include active links to other electronic research and resources include illustrations with sound, motion, etc.; computer simulations
- Alternative ways to share drafts among authors and committee members more timely feedback committee members may be away from the university
- Development of faculty and students as electronic scholars
- Easy to prepare PDF [like sending a document to a printer]
- Reduce costs to produce the final product
- Improve access to the information in graduate research by making it immediately available to a huge audience through the Internet

### **ADVANTAGES OF ETDs**

- More timely public access to current research
- Serve more users with reduced staff
- Fewer physical copies to handle
- Less shelf space required for storage
- Less expense to ship them for microfilming
- Reduce processing costs

### **OBJECTIVES OF ETDs**

- free publicity for your research - authors of electronic theses become more widely known and their reputations are enhanced
- easy worldwide access to your theses for colleagues and collaborators
- easy worldwide access to your theses for job and grant applications
- a raised profile for your research institutions
- reduce costs at the point of graduation since there is no need to have multiple copies printed.

### **SOME IMPORTANT ETDs**

1. Association of African Universities' Database of African Thesis and

### **Dissertation (DATAD)**

The Database of African Theses and Dissertations (DATAD) is a programme to improve management and access to African scholarly work. Theses and dissertations represent a significant proportion of Africa's research activity.

(<http://www.aau.org/datad/database>)

### **2. Australian Digital Theses and Dissertations**

The Australasian Digital Theses (ADT) Program ceased operation on 28 March, 2011. The database server has been decommissioned, and the content of that database will be accessible from the National Library of Australia's Trove service. Each participating university will continue to host their own digital theses and house their own print and other non-digital theses

(<http://www.caul.edu.au/caul-programs/australasian-digital-theses>)

### **3.Brigham Young University: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Search or browse online dissertations and theses from Brigham Young University. Also includes help for current students with guidelines for creating and submitting an electronic thesis or dissertation.([etd.byu.edu](http://etd.byu.edu))

### **4.Duquesne University Library: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Read electronic versions of dissertations or theses written by students at Duquesne University in Pennsylvania. Also offers information for students about preparing and submitting an electronic thesis or dissertation.([www.library.duq.edu/etd](http://www.library.duq.edu/etd))

### **5.Florida State University: Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Initiative**

Browse or search for online dissertations or theses from Florida International University. Offers information for students about submitting an electronic thesis.([etd.fiu.edu](http://etd.fiu.edu))

### **6.George Washington University: Electronic Theses/Dissertations**

Find online, digital versions of dissertations and theses written by graduates of George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Search by department or author. ([etd-gw.wrlc.org/ETD-browse/browse?first\\_letter=all;browse\\_by=department](http://etd-gw.wrlc.org/ETD-browse/browse?first_letter=all;browse_by=department))

### **7.Indian Institute of Science: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

8.Digital repository of theses and dissertations of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India. ([etd.ncsi.iisc.ernet.in](http://etd.ncsi.iisc.ernet.in))

**9. Louisiana State University: Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Library**

Read theses and dissertations from Louisiana State University graduates online. Search for a thesis by department or author name. ([etd.lsu.edu/cgi-bin/ETD-browse/browse](http://etd.lsu.edu/cgi-bin/ETD-browse/browse))

**10. M.I.T. Theses and E-Theses Online**

A collection of selected MIT master's and doctoral theses available online. Includes some scanned work dating back as far as 1888. ([theses.mit.edu](http://theses.mit.edu))

**11. Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD)**

Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD), an international organization dedicated to promoting the adoption, creation, use, dissemination, and preservation of electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs). We support electronic publishing and open access to scholarship in order to enhance the sharing of knowledge worldwide. Our website includes resources for university administrators, librarians, faculty, students, and the general public. Topics include how to find, create, and preserve ETDs; how to set up an ETD program; legal and technical questions; and the latest news and research in the ETD community.

(<http://www.ndltd.org/>)

**12. North Carolina State University: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Online catalog of theses and dissertations completed at North Carolina State University, both print and electronic. Search by author, title, or keyword. ([www.lib.ncsu.edu/etd](http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/etd))

**13. Ohio LINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center**

Find digital dissertations and theses from of 84 Ohio colleges and universities, as well as the State Library of Ohio. Search by author, university, department, or keyword. ([www.ohiolink.edu/etd](http://www.ohiolink.edu/etd))

**14. Pennsylvania State University: Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Archive**

Online collection of all Penn State electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs). Browse by author or department, or search the full text of each dissertation or thesis. ([etda.libraries.psu.edu](http://etda.libraries.psu.edu))

### **15. Rhodes eResearch Repository**

Online collection of academic and research publications, theses, and dissertations from Rhodes University. From Rhodes University Library. ([eprints.ru.ac.za](http://eprints.ru.ac.za))

### **16. Shodhganga**

The project is first in India as a National Repository of Electronic Theses Dissertations (ETD) wherein all universities in India are expected to join after a Gazette notification issued by UGC. Universities are signing MoU with the INFLIBNET Centre to join Shodhganga project by giving a commitment for digitisation of old theses as well as by hosting their current theses in the repository.

(<http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>)

### **17. Sixth Survey of Research in Education**

Research is the backbone of development in all areas. The past researches contribute a lot in the planning, designing and execution of the Researches. Abstracts were classified and Indian experts wrote Trend Reports. The Sixth Survey of Research in Education covers all researches in education and related to it till conducted during 1993 – 2005. (<http://eduresearch.dauniv.ac.in/>)

### **18. Theses Canada Portal**

Find bibliographic records and full-text electronic versions of Canadian dissertations and theses. From Library and Archives Canada, in English and French. ([www.collectionscanada.ca/thesescanada/index-e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.ca/thesescanada/index-e.html))

### **19. University of Helsinki: Electronic Dissertations**

Full-text, online doctoral dissertations and other publications from the University of Helsinki. ([ethesis.helsinki.fi/english.html](http://ethesis.helsinki.fi/english.html))

### **20. University of Kentucky: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Online collection of doctoral dissertations and graduate theses from University of Kentucky students. Also includes helps for students submitting an electronic thesis or dissertation. ([www.uky.edu/ETD](http://www.uky.edu/ETD))

### **21. University of Maine: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Find full-text digital versions of doctoral dissertations and graduate theses from the University of Maine. Search by author, title, department, date, or keyword.

**22. University of Pittsburgh: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Find online versions of dissertations and theses from the University of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania. Also offers help for students completing an electronic thesis or dissertation. ([www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd))

**23. University of Pretoria Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Search or browse electronic dissertations and theses filed by students at the University of Pretoria. Find a thesis by name, title, department, or abstract. Also offers guidance for University of Pretoria students submitting a digital thesis. ([upetd.up.ac.za/UPeTD.htm](http://upetd.up.ac.za/UPeTD.htm))

**24. University of Florida: Electronic Theses & Dissertations**

Find online versions of doctoral dissertations and theses from University of Florida students from 1998 on. Also includes current research and abstracts for papers written at UMI. ([www.uflib.ufl.edu/etd.html](http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/etd.html))

**25. University of Virginia Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Offers students the opportunity to submit their works electronically. ([viva.lib.virginia.edu/etd](http://viva.lib.virginia.edu/etd))

**26. University of South Africa: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Full text of recent theses and dissertations from the University of South Africa, available online. Search for a thesis by author name, department, or keywords from the abstract. ([www.unisa.ac.za/Default.asp?Cmd=ViewContent&ContentID=15350](http://www.unisa.ac.za/Default.asp?Cmd=ViewContent&ContentID=15350))

**27. Vanderbilt University: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Find online versions of doctoral dissertations and graduate theses from Vanderbilt University. Also includes help and resources for Vanderbilt students creating an electronic thesis or dissertation. ([etd.library.vanderbilt.edu/ETD-db](http://etd.library.vanderbilt.edu/ETD-db))

**28. Vidyanidhi**

Vidyanidhi (Meaning 'Treasure of Knowledge' in Sanskrit) is India's premier Digital library initiative to facilitate the creation, archiving and accessing of doctoral theses. Vidyanidhi is an information infrastructure, a digital library, a portal of resources, tools and facilities for doctoral research in India.

(<http://www.vidyanidhi.org.in/>)

**29. Virginia Tech: Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Library**

Online collection of Virginia Tech graduate theses and dissertations in digital and PDF format. Search for a thesis by author, title, department or abstract. Includes facts about ETDs and guidelines for students. ([scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses](http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses))

**30. Virginia Commonwealth University: Electronic Theses & Dissertations**

View online versions of dissertations and theses from students at Virginia Commonwealth University. Search for a thesis by author, department, abstract, or library catalog number. With a guide for VCU students creating a electronic thesis or dissertation. ([etd.vcu.edu](http://etd.vcu.edu))

**31. Wake Forest University: Electronic Theses & Dissertations**

Full-text, online versions of doctoral dissertations and theses submitted by students of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Wake Forest University. Also includes guidance for students on preparing and submitting an online thesis. ([etd.wfu.edu](http://etd.wfu.edu))

**32. Western Michigan University: Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Database**

Search or browse online dissertations and theses from Western Michigan University Students. Also offers guidance for WMU students creating and uploading an electronic thesis or dissertation. ([etd.wmich.edu](http://etd.wmich.edu))

**33. West Virginia University - Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Project Promoting graduate student success at WVU through ETDs since 1998. Access to the WVU ETD collection averages 1.5 million downloads per year from over 100 countries, making WVU graduate research the most popular collection around. The majority of the documents are available as open access (unrestricted). As a result, WVU departments and alumni are able to effectively promote their research and publishing endeavors long after graduation. ([www.wvu.edu/~thesis](http://www.wvu.edu/~thesis) )

**34. Williams College: Electronic Theses**

Online theses and dissertations from students at Williams College in Massachusetts. Find a thesis by author or department. ([www.williams.edu/library/theses](http://www.williams.edu/library/theses))

**35. Worcester Polytechnic Institute: Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

Online collection of digital theses and dissertations from Worcester Polytechnic

Institute. Browse or search for a particular dissertation or thesis, or get help submitting your own ETD. ([www.wpi.edu/Pubs/ETD](http://www.wpi.edu/Pubs/ETD) )

## CONCLUSION

A growing number of institutions are initiating new programs in electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs). Advances in the ETD as a form of scholarly communication must acknowledge the years of groundwork and planning by representatives from a wide spectrum of organizations such as the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD), Virginia Tech, the Coalition for Networked Information and the Council of Graduate Schools. More than a decade of multi-institutional collaborative efforts resulted in the current opportunities for students to engage in scholarly communications in new arenas. A significant factor in further promoting the ETD and other digital library projects involves shifting program emphasis to key participants, the graduate students who author these documents.

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