
A Bibliometric study of Postgraduate Theses in Library and Information Science

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Bibliometrics is the statistical analysis of bibliographic information of research outputs and publications. It is observed that in the field of Library and Information Science this type of research is used more effectively to overcome problems faced by librarians such as selection and weeding out of information resources. Further, bibliometric analytical research demonstrates the impact of researches on researchers. These studies identify the emerging areas of research as well as strengths and weaknesses, top performing journals and researchers in a subject area and finally inform future research priorities too. Also, the rareness of this kind of researches, improve the significance of this study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the pattern of references in masters' theses in the field of Library and Information Science. For this research study 50 Master's of Library and Information Science (MLS) postgraduate theses submitted to University of Colombo during the period from 1999 to 2009 were analyzed. Citations were extracted from list of references, bibliographies and title pages. Data collected was cross-classified and tabulated according to research needs.

Total of 3349 citations were found from 50 postgraduate theses. Out of those citations 3329(99.40%) were in English, 17(.51%) in Sinhala language 2 citations in French (0.06%) and only 1 (0.03%) in Tamil. Study revealed that journals were the most heavily used source of material with 41% of the citations. The second most heavily used source of material was books accounting for 34% of the citations. Most heavily used journal was "College and Research Libraries" while most heavily used book was the "Encyclopedia of Information and Library Science". Among those citations, single author contribution accounts for 2162 citations (64%) and two authors contributions were 583 citations (17%) while three authors contribution of citations were 111(3%). More than three authors contribution accounts for only 28(1%) while corporate author contribution was 188(6%). Language-wise distribution of citations showed that the usage of Sinhala citations is negligible compared to English citations. It was concluded from the study, still the English journals are the most important reference of the Library and Information Science discipline in the Masters' level. Recommendations were made to strengthen the quality of postgraduate research encouraging to use more current journal articles in the printed and electronic versions as well.

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