An Evaluation of the Use of ETDs by the PhD Students in Library of Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Sri Lanka

Kamani Perera
Librarian
Regional Centre for Strategic studies, Sri Lanka
Kamaniperera2015@yahoo.com, librarian@rcss.org
+94775965252 (M)
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Introduction

• ETDs beat traditional paper based theses environment
• Still there are limitations to ETD’s implementation
• ETDs
  – Can play a significant role in repositories
  – Improve data skills of research scholars
  – Provide accurate data sets to fulfill the information gap
  – Support to accomplish novel research
Problem Statement

• ETDs are playing major role in institutional repositories in academic sector.

• But, still there is a gap of awareness and accessing relevant PhD thesis for students’ research purposes.

• Focused to
  – evaluate PhD students’ awareness, frequency and expectations and
  – to eliminate those gaps, if any
  – to facilitate in providing effective ETDs to research scholars
Purpose of the Study

• To discover the usage of ETDs
• To examine the motivational factors that influence use of the ETDs
• To identify most frequently used ETDs
• To ensure the standard, performance, reliability, appearance, and commitment to delivery time of the required information
Methodology – Data Collection

- Method - Survey questionnaire
- Study population – PhD students 2014 -2015
Literature Review

- ETDs are
  - Playing dynamic role in academic sector
  - Adding value to the students’ CV
  - Boosting research knowledge in greater scale

- RCSS ETD Repository
  - Used open access websites to buildup the ETDs
  - Preserved as PDF documents
  - Born digital/converted to digital (Perera, 2015)

- According to Fox (2004)
  - ETDs prepare the next generation of scholars to function effectively as knowledge workers
Literature Review contd.

• Importance of ETDs in academic sector
  – Topic identification
  – Comprehensive review
  – Literature review
  – Currency
  – Methodology/Theory Development
  – Future research
  – Test and measurement instruments
  – Unique topic area exploration
  – Writing styles
  – Formatting ideas (Gaur and McLean, 2015)
Similarly Copeland and Penman (2004) stated
- Improved access to the research findings
- Improved levels of use of research material
- Promote research profiles of universities/institutions

How libraries benefit from ETDs?
- Save storage space
- Save staff time
- Reduces no. of inter library loans
- Easy collection of usage statistics
- Improve the customer satisfaction
Data Analysis

Purpose of using ETDs @ RCSS

- Educational: 37
- Research: 47
- Just for Interest: 9
- Other: 4
Data Analysis

Motivational Factors of using ETDs @ RCSS

- Relevancy
- Currency
- Reliability
- Accessibility

Years: 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98
Goals

RCSS Workshops on Writing Skills for Research/Dissertations

The students of the workshops are encouraged to refer the ETD repository @ RCSS
• Students are advised
  – To avoid plagiarism (paraphrasing, summarizing and citing the original work)
  – To discuss their own experience, challenges, successes, failures of their research study
Conclusion

• This research study has proved
  – ETD repository at RCSS for research and education
  – PhD students are motivated to use ETDs at RCSS due to its
    » Relevancy
    » Reliability
    » Accessibility
    » Currency
• And it is very important to do annual evaluations to find out the successes and failures to provide effective ETD services to the RCSS scholars.
Thank you