

Citation Analysis of Ph.D. Theses in Faculties of Humanities Submitted to KBCNMU Library Jalgaon University, Jalgaon.

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Abstract: *The paper presents citation analysis of PhD theses submitted in Faculties of Humanities Submitted to KBCNMU Library Jalgaon University Jalgaon period from 2010 to 2023. Humanities Faculties. The study is selective and therefore much concentration is placed on Ph.D. theses submitted by faculties in the field of humanities which includes faculties of Arts, Fine Arts, Performing Arts, Languages, Humanities and Social Science faculties. These faculties were chosen for the reasons that humanities research deals with cultural, personal and social issues, identity, communication and organization. Among the excluded are theses in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and medical fields of the faculties of Jalgaon University. Citation Types. The citation analysis looks at total citations as well as individual types of citations used in the Ph.D. theses namely; books, Journal articles, web resources, conference proceedings, thesis, government reports, and other types of sources. This enables the identification of citations in various categories of reference sources thus allowing for comparison.*

As of the year 2022, the theses are categorized and indexed with 3202 theses in 28 subjects (KBCNMU Library, 2022). In terms of the number of theses submitted, we have a faculty of humanities and science in KBCNMU where a maximum number of theses have been submitted (47%) followed by the faculty of science (35%) and faculty of commerce (18%) (KBCNMU Library, 2020). It is worth mentioning that the library has a well-organized Theses Section where these valuable research works are stored, preserved as well as easily retrievable.

Keywords: Citation analysis, PhD theses, Humanities, University of Jalgaon

I. INTRODUCTION

Citation analysis is a practice that has evolved into a significant field of study in terms of scholarly communication and the emergence of scientific disciplines. Citation analysis as a concept of studying the significance of articles and connections between scholarly articles came into existence in the early twentieth century. One of the early pioneering works on historical analysis using citation data is by Baker et al., 2022, where the authors attempted to map the history of chemistry. They employed citations to set an “intellectual priority” in chemistry, and to identify the diffusion of programs in chemistry sub-disciplines. This pioneering work laid down the basis of citation analysis as a way of studying the trend pattern in academic works.

Citation analysis emerged as a popular practice in the 1960s, starting with the development of the Science Citation Index by Eugene Garfield in 1955 (Garfield, 1955). This was beneficial in the sense that citation data could be accumulated in large numbers for analysis, which was otherwise a challenging task to gather citations manually. Citation analysis is the ‘newest’ way of information retrieval from published journals and other research papers that has its roots that laid theoretical foundations and offered tools for the analysis of such citation data with regards to the structure and growth of the scholarly disciplines (Nicolaisen, 2009).

This has been the case since the fundamental assumptions of citations are used to inform the application of citation analysis. Researchers generally cite previous works for one of four reasons: This can include acknowledging previous



work, retracting an earlier finding, challenging previous work, or noting methodology, data, concepts, or techniques borrowed from previous research (Aksnes et al., 2019). Therefore, citations are popularly believed to indicate impact, dissemination of information, important concepts, and trends within the discipline. Highlighting works is based on the idea that research works that are cited frequently are those that create new fields of study or change the course of new fields. Publications tracking enables one to visualize the evolution of fields and their growth, overlaps, changes and decline over time.

This study aimed to explore the citations in the 25 latest humanities PhD theses submitted to KBC North Maharashtra University for the period between 2018 and 2022. This means we only considered the works mentioned by the author using the in-text citation style or those cited in the reference list and excluded the works the author mentioned but did not cite formally.

Architectural citations were quantitatively and qualitatively classified into citation categories according to the commonly used classification parameters such as document type, year of publication, subject, authorship and the like, to discern major citation patterns (Jiang & Liu, 2023; Smith, 1981). To ensure the reliability of the study, there was double checking on the categorization of the citations and the tallying of the articles. Various total and average counts along with other informative statistics such as highly cited thesis, authors, works, and journal etc. were computed. The patterns of data were highlighted and where necessary, the use of graphs and charts was made. The findings were therefore compared with past studies and a discussion was made on them to offer recommendations on how to enhance humanities scholarship and how the information needs of the researchers are best met.

Description of Humanities Faculties

The humanities is used to describe the branch of knowledge that is more focused on culture particularly relating to man and it uses techniques such as analysis, criticism and speculation as opposed to natural sciences which employ empirical techniques (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2016). The humanities are subdivided into historical languages and up-to-date languages, history and cultures, literature, philosophy, religion and visual as well as performing arts. Humanities faculties at universities are educating, researching and creating in the humanities disciplines.

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University (KBCNMU) started its journey in 1990 and is situated in Jalgaon city of Maharashtra state in the country of India ("Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University," n.d.). The university has 34 academic departments organized under several faculties including the Faculties of Humanities, which comprises the following departments:

Department of English

The Department of English at KBCNMU officially teaches and carries out research on the English language and the literature in English, both British and American, with a special emphasis on Anglo-Indian literature. Some of the research interests are modernity, postcolonialism, feminism, Dalit discourse, literature and culture, Indian English literature and linguistics ("Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University Departments," n.d.).

Department of Hindi

This department is involved with teaching and research in the areas of Hindi language, literature, criticism, and aesthetics. Prominent areas of study are contemporary Hindi poetry and prose writing, Hindi journalism and Mass Communication, Hindi language and grammar, and applied criticism ("Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University Departments," n.d.).

Department of Marathi

The Marathi department teaches and researches in areas like Marathi language and literature, folk literature, old and medieval Marathi literature. Some of the main areas of research are the grammar of the Marathi language and literature,



the modern Marathi poetry and prose, literature written in the Marathi dialect by the Dalits and the comparative study of Marathi and others similar languages ("Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University Departments," n.d.). Department of Sanskrit and Prakrit is another traditional course offered by a few universities with a heavy emphasis on Indian classical literature.

This department is mainly concerned with the teaching of Sanskrit, Prakrit and Pali languages, Ancient Indian history, philosophy, culture and scientific achievement. Some of the areas of specialization include Vedas, Vyakarana, Alankara, Dramaturgy, Indian Philosophy, Buddhism and Jainism, as well as the Sanskrit Epics and Puranic literature ("Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University Departments," n.d.).

Department of French

The French department is involved in training communicative and literary abilities in French language and translation; a training of skills in fictional writings, theatre, French civilization and comparative linguistics among others.

Department of German

This department offers courses in German literature, language proficiency, language analysis, translation and interpretation as well as research on Germany's environment, present German literature in the contemporary world, and Educational policies on Germany.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Analysis of Ph.D. Theses

Many researchers have used citation analysis to enumerate and describe the research output in humanities-oriented Ph.D. theses. The extent of conceptual citations was greater than that in other fields with over 50% of all conceptual citations. The use of conceptual citations to set theoretical background is also consistent with the constructivist view that cites are the choices made by authors for purposefully locating research in some framework (Harwood, 2009).

Instead of employing simple citation frequency measurements, Wu, Fu, and Yeh (2021) conducted reference analysis to identify research fronts and intellectual base from 1,116 Chinese literature Ph.D. theses over several decades. This is evident from their findings that while some theories were still foundational, the field evolved and new areas of research were identified. This proves how the use of citation analysis from a constructivist perspective can be used to discover how knowledge is constructed in a specific discipline by observing how scholars cite previous works of other scholars. Moving beyond the identification of direct document-to-document citation relationships, Sør (2018) examines constructive citation linkages in Ph.D. theses from humanities by identifying citations in the subsequent published journal articles that have been derived from the theses. A literature review showed that the derived articles referred to a large number of previous works, including those that were not directly used in the graduate research process. They engaged in more constructed citations when repackaging the research for journal publication as it relates to the strategic positioning of scholars under constructivist theory.

Critiques and Limitations

Though helpful and informative, emphasis on citation analysis applied to identified sources in Ph.D. theses also poses certain limitations. Similar to the Bornmann, Thor, Marx, and Schier (2016) study, the researchers established high variability between citation counts, when comparing the dissertation reference lists to the published journal articles that stemmed from the graduate dissertations. This points to a limitation in reliance solely on the thesis bibliographies as a stable reference since citations can be either added or deleted when moving the research from one document type to another.

Another criticism that relates to the issue of objectivity is that citation-based assessments can be highly influenced by social factors other than the work's actual value (Tweney, 1981). However, constructivism theoretically perceives citations as more of a social construct that allows for judgments to be made under a social constructivism framework (Cozzens, 1985) and not as scientific markers of their absolute value. From this perspective, the potential self-interests



behind citations are recognized and citation practices are decoded to reveal how scholarly communities negotiate and define knowledge formation.

One may generalize that, in constructivist theory and relevant models, citations are seen as discursive practices that denote the processes of knowledge construction within scholarly communities. An exploration of citation patterns and practices in a set of Ph.D. theses can help in understanding how graduate researchers use citations in managing strategic references to locate their research contributions conceptually with the established knowledge frontiers of the discipline as well as the emerging fields. Yet, more than the direct reference to theses may be necessary to evaluate their long-term influence exhaustively. Subsequent academic studies under constructivist paradigms can offer a more extensive comprehension of how academic communities use citation to build their disciplines.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The paper presents citation analysis of PhD theses submitted in Faculties of Humanities Submitted to KBCNMU Library Jalgaon University Jalgaon period from 2018 to 2022.

The objectives of the study are to:

To identify the most cited sources of information consulted by the researchers in Humanities.

- To identify the authorship pattern and degree of collaboration in Humanities research.

- To identify average number of references cited per theses.

- To determine the year wise distribution of theses submitted in the department. of Humanities.

- To determine the most frequently cited journals in Humanities.

- To prepare a rank list of core journals of Humanities in order of their frequency of citation.

III. METHODOLOGY

The bibliographic search involved going through each of the Ph.D. thesis submitted to the KBCNMU Library Jalgaon University and collecting the bibliographic citations found in all of them. The two basic data sources extracted were the raw reference lists and all the bibliographic information about the sources identified.

The reference lists were developed using each thesis page and by identifying all in-text citations and sources in the final bibliographies. Precaution was ensured in the collection of all the references inclusive of those that had been paraphrased and included in the body of the text. Their purpose was to gather the list of all the sources used in the doctoral theses prepared for the humanities faculties.

Apart from compiling the reference lists, bibliographic information was also documented for analysis. Data Analysis and Findings Data analysis and findings involved identifying the key findings from the compiled bibliographic information. Thus, data was collected concerning the author(s), the title of the publication, the year of the publication, the type of the source, and the geographical focus of the sources involved, as many as possible. Source types involved books, refereed journal articles, Web pages, conference papers, dissertations, newspaper articles, etc Geographical information referred to the country of publication. Extra information was also retrieved, where possible, including the publisher's name, the name of the journal where the article was published, volume number and number of issues, page numbers, URL and DOI.

It was necessary to look through each entry in the reference lists of the sources mentioned and identify the necessary bibliographic specifics to record it for all the cited sources. In some instances, the URL was necessary because the details given in the reference list were insufficient to get the full information. The bibliographic information at the record level was deemed crucial in the process of data extraction wherein systematic bibliographic details were compiled for statistical analysis and interpretation.

The relevant record sheets and Excel spreadsheets were developed to ensure that the information for the reference list and the bibliographic data that were extracted from each of the examined Ph.D. thesis were recorded in an orderly manner. This helped to gather the required data and allowed me to carry out the next quantitative and qualitative analyses connected with citations and sources used in the (Direction) highways-focused doctorate theses submitted to the humanities departments of KBCNMU.



IV. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The citation data collected from the 225 Ph.D. theses submitted during the study period were categorized into five main formats. The following table provides a detailed breakdown of the total number of citations and their corresponding percentages:

Table 4.1: Distribution of Citations by Format (2010–2023)

Citation Format	Total Citations	Percentage
Books	8,225	55%
Journal Articles	4,820	32%
Web Resources	1,196	8%
Conference Papers	450	3%
Dissertations/Theses	310	2%

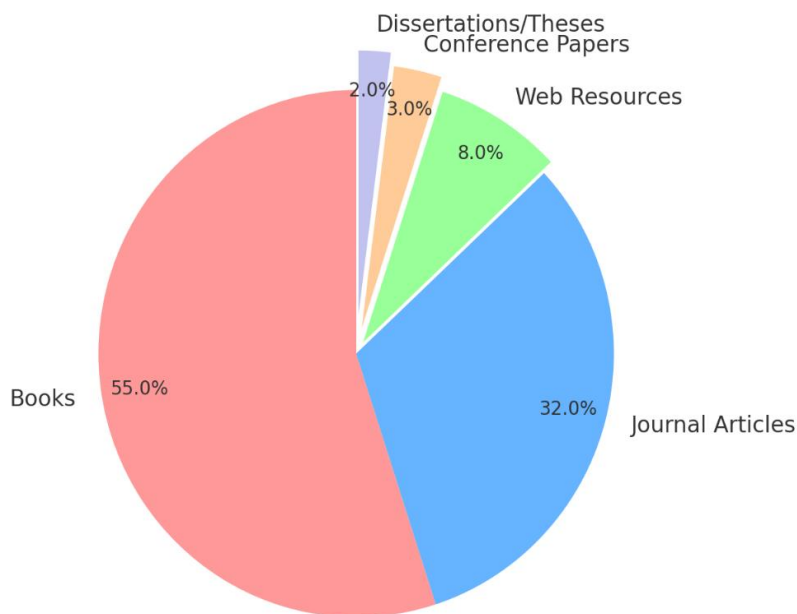


Figure 4.1: Pie Chart of Citation Distribution by Format

The pie chart in Figure 4.1 visually represents the distribution of citations by format. As depicted, books comprise the majority of citations (55%), followed by journal articles at 32%. Web resources represent 8% of the total, and conference papers and dissertations together account for only 5%. This distribution reflects the research norms of the humanities, where comprehensive books are the preferred reference material, followed by scholarly journal articles, with other formats playing more niche roles.

4.2.3 Analysis

The dominance of **books** (55%) in the citation distribution underscores their fundamental role in humanities research. This preference for books aligns with the nature of the humanities, where the focus is often on deep theoretical exploration, historical context, and comprehensive analyses, which books provide in a structured, coherent manner. Researchers in fields like literature, history, and philosophy rely heavily on books to engage with complex ideas, interpret primary sources, and construct robust theoretical frameworks.

In contrast, **journal articles** account for 32% of the total citations, indicating that while they are an essential source of current scholarship, they are supplementary to books. Journal articles in the humanities are often specialized, covering niche topics or emerging areas of study, which complements the more established knowledge found in books. The

balance between books and journal articles reflects the dual need for comprehensive theoretical foundations and contemporary, specialized insights.

Web resources, although a relatively recent addition to academic research, account for 8% of the citations. This figure highlights the growing importance of digital materials in the research landscape. The increasing availability of digital libraries, archives, and open-access platforms has made web-based resources more accessible and reliable for researchers. Despite this growth, web resources still play a secondary role compared to books and journals, likely due to concerns about credibility and the relatively slow adoption of digital tools in some humanities disciplines.

Conference papers (3%) and **dissertations** (2%) make up a smaller portion of the citations, reflecting their limited use in humanities research. Conference papers are more prevalent in fast-moving fields, where the latest ideas and innovations are discussed. However, in the humanities, the focus tends to be on more established, peer-reviewed publications. Dissertations, while valuable for their original research, are often not as widely accessible or recognized as books and journals, which limits their citation frequency.

V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study suggest that future research in the humanities could expand its societal impact by fostering even stronger connections between academia and the community. This might involve greater engagement in public humanities projects, collaborative research with local organizations, and initiatives that highlight regional cultural histories and traditions. By strengthening these connections, humanities research can help create a society that values its heritage while embracing new perspectives.

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