

Citation Analysis of Postgraduate Theses in Aesthetic Studies: Maintain the Balanced Collection to Address Research Information Needs

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Abstract

This study analyses the citation patterns of postgraduate theses in aesthetic studies submitted to the University of the Visual & Performing Arts (UVPA), Sri Lanka from 2010 to 2020. The study aims to explore the research information needs of the postgraduate students of UVPA that helps to maintain the balanced collection at the library and to enhance the user education process. Five thousand one hundred and fifty-two (5152) citations available in the hundred and twenty-five (125) postgraduate theses submitted to UVPA were examined using variables; source type and format, citation style and accuracy, language, year, and geographical variations of publication. Findings show that the majority of the citations are represented printed materials (74%) while low usage shows electronic resources. Out of the printed materials, the majority are textbooks published locally in the Sinhala language. As the study areas in investigated theses were based on local study settings in dance and music disciplines, local publications may be cited mostly. The citation analysis shows that there are significant numbers of incomplete citations (76%) with errors in the bibliographic details and punctuation. It raises the requirement of a proper mechanism to implement the user education program including the content of referencing and citation styles by the library. The study reveals that the utilization of updated resources by the postgraduate students in UVPA is very less since 56% of the cited sources were published before 2000. Citations show considerable use of YouTube videos and other audiovisual materials as the theses are compiled for music, dance, and other performing arts disciplines. It is recommended to re-visit the available library collection and to consider the information demand of the postgraduate students in aesthetic studies when acquiring materials. The library shall be conducted awareness sessions on the access of databases to increase citations from updated e- resources. Further, the study emphasizes the need of developing a standard guideline to follow the proper citation style for postgraduate theses at the UVPA.

Keywords: *Aesthetic studies, Citation analysis, Collection development, information needs, Postgraduate theses*