

Exploring the Landscape of Electronic Theses and Dissertations: Insights from Central Universities in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh on Shodhganga

Ashwini Latte

Research Scholar, Dept. of Library and Information Science, Rani Channamma University,
Belagavi, Karnataka, India
gashwini364@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the landscape of Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) submitted by central universities in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh to the Shodhganga repository. With a focus on language preferences, top-contributing departments, and temporal trends, the research reveals key insights into the evolving nature of doctoral research. The overwhelming preference for English, constituting 78.81% of ETD submissions, underscores the global academic community's inclination toward this language. Varied top-contributing departments, such as Chemistry, Hindi, and Social Sciences, highlight the diverse academic strengths across universities. The decade from 2010 to 2019 emerges as the period with the highest submission rate, indicating a surge in doctoral research activities. Furthermore, the substantial contribution of 6,785 theses between 2020 and 2023 reflects the continued dedication to scholarly production. The study emphasizes the importance of platforms like Shodhganga in fostering open access to scholarly work, collaboration, and preserving the intellectual heritage of the academic community. Overall, this research contributes valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on the global advancement of higher education in the digital era.

KEYWORDS: Shodhganga, INFLIBNET, Theses, Central Universities, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh.

INTRODUCTION

Theses and dissertations are important sources of research information for researchers, policymakers, graduate students, and other professionals (Alam & Pandey, 2012). In today's knowledge-driven culture, obtaining precise information is vital and profoundly influences individual development. The principles of unrestricted access to information and the liberty associated with its creation, processing, and dissemination are fundamental to the global welfare of humanity. The higher education system, particularly in the realm of academic research, notably at the doctoral level, plays a substantial role in the generation and expansion of knowledge. Moreover, academic research

is crucial for safeguarding the intellectual heritage of our society and establishes a robust groundwork for continued exploration in various fields (Katagi & Kumbar, 2022). Each year, post-degree candidates from Indian universities generate these important research results. These people, who make up the "intellectual core" of universities, represent the significant scholarly contributions and research output of their particular establishments and act as an invaluable historical archive tracing the activities of the research and teaching community (Middleton et al., 2015). These summarise important research findings with real-world implications for many businesses and important economic sectors of the nation. For the sake of future generations, it is vital to guarantee the long-term accessibility and preservation of this important knowledge.

However, restrictions such as publishing procedures, copyright issues, and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) hinder the open dissemination of PhD research. In the last decade, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have significantly influenced academia and scholarly communication, particularly in the areas of information generation, accessibility, and sharing. In the contemporary era, individuals are immersed in electronic facets like e-business, e-learning, and e-government (Lamba & Madhusudhan, 2018). The electronic landscape has extended its influence to libraries as well. Within library premises, electronic resources, services, and these are progressively gaining importance. As per the online dictionary of library and information science, Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) are defined as Ph.D. theses submitted to universities in digital form rather than the traditional hard copy format. Doctoral research programs are recognized as pivotal for the global advancement of higher education, with universities playing a substantial role in molding researchers. Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) are regarded as fundamental to Graduate Education (Sivasubramanian, 2018). Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) have been recognized as a primary and valuable educational resource. They are considered rich and distinctive information sources, often not reaching traditional publication channels, leading to their underutilization in libraries. To enhance the dissemination of this research, the optimal approach is an electronic publication with open access to the Internet. This ensures that these documents are readily accessible and retrievable globally at any time, thereby increasing the visibility of individual researchers and the universities engaged in research activities. Consequently, numerous academic and research institutions worldwide are establishing their own Individual Institutional Repositories (IRs). These repositories serve as platforms for hosting Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs), providing free access to institutional patrons. In India, a substantial number of institutions across the country have initiated efforts to establish their IRs. Recognizing this trend, the Government of India has introduced a national-level initiative called Shodhganga, serving as a comprehensive repository for Indian Theses and Dissertations.

INFLIBNET

It is a significant national initiative launched by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India in March 1991, with its headquarters located at Gujarat University Campus in Ahmedabad. The primary activities and services provided by INFLIBNET encompass the automation of academic libraries and information centres, the establishment of union databases such as IndCat containing resources available in academic libraries, the promotion of resource sharing among academic libraries, and the facilitation of information access and transfer. On behalf of the UGC, the INFLIBNET Centre has undertaken several new initiatives to benefit the academic community. These initiatives include: i) Shodhganga, a repository of Indian theses and dissertations; ii) Shodhgangotri, a repository for

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synopses submitted to universities for registration under PhD programs; iii) OJAS@INFLIBNET, an open-access journal publishing platform; iv) Shibboleth-based access management system; v) Open-source software research and development; vi) InfoPortal, a comprehensive gateway to all Indian electronic scholarly content; vii) e-PG Pathshala, e-content for postgraduate courses; and viii) Measuring Research Output of Indian Universities (INFLIBNET Centre Gandhinagar, n.d.).

SHODHGANGA

Shodhganga serves as a digital repository for the theses and dissertations submitted to Indian universities and is maintained by the Inflibnet Center, an autonomous Inter-University Centre under the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India. Research students and universities can submit their theses through the "Shodhganga" project. The entire content of documents submitted to Shodhganga is accessible for reading and downloading in open access to the global academic community. The repository currently holds a collection of 510,730 full-text theses, 13,145 synopses and 77 MRPs/PDFs/Fellowships reports. The establishment of the Shodhganga repository was a result of the University Grants Commission making it obligatory, through regulations issued in June 2009, for all universities to submit soft copies of PhD theses and M.Phil. dissertations to the UGC for hosting in the INFLIBNET. Universities must enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the INFLIBNET Centre to participate in the Shodhganga project, and currently, 756 universities have signed such MOUs with INFLIBNET. Additionally, universities can receive funds from the UGC for the establishment of Institutional and Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) repositories *Shodhganga : A Reservoir of Indian Theses @ INFLIBNET*, n.d (2024).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

ETDs (Electronic Theses and Dissertations) have a long history of being made publicly accessible. Using open-access repository software, open-access ETDs make previous ETDs accessible. In their paper "Contributions to the Shodhganga Repository by the Central Universities of India," **Jhamb & Samim (2017)** used the Shodhganga website as a source for their content analysis procedures. Their research revealed that Aligarh Muslim University is the main contributor to the Shodhganga repository, with a greater proportion of theses submitted to Shodhganga coming from the Faculty of Science at Aligarh Muslim University. According to **Das & Saikia (2014)**, just three of the sixteen universities in Assam are affiliated with Shodhganga, and these three institutions have turned in a very small number of Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs). The study's conclusion emphasized how crucial it is that all universities deposit their ETDs in Shodhganga, regardless of whether they are State, Central, or Deemed universities.

ETDs are electronic versions of theses that are available to the public online, according to **Chakravarty (2019)** who views them as a sophisticated means of disseminating an author's ideas. The main emphasis of their research is a web study that makes use of Webometrics to analyze the quantity, kind, organization, efficacy, and usage of hyperlinks. The software utilized for Indian ETD repositories is also examined in the study. Furthermore, Chakravarty uses the Web Analyzer Test Score (WATS) to assess the functionality of the national ETD repository of India's web portal. A follow-up investigation by **Esh,(2015)** looked at the ETD donations from West Bengal's nine institutions. Only five of the 22 institutions in West Bengal have formal Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with INFLIBNET. Without requiring the formality of a Memorandum of Understanding with Shodhganga,

the remaining 4 institutions provide their ETDs. The study found that just 228 ETDs have been supplied by West Bengali universities.

Mishra (2016) aimed to investigate the various features of doctoral theses that were posted to the Shodhganga repository. Ph.D. theses from various universities are not being uploaded to the Shodhganga repository as quickly as they should be, according to this study, which included qualitative and quantitative analyses of theses. The study emphasizes how important motivation is for college students. Furthermore, Mishra emphasizes how Shodhganga helps to reduce the possibility of redundant research and serves as a disincentive to the unethical practice of colleges throughout India awarding PhD doctorates. **Pand (2016)** looks at the current state of Shodhganga, an open-access national archive for Indian theses and dissertations, or ETDs. They discover that management makes up the bulk of theses submitted to Shodhganga, with economics and education coming a close second. Additionally, they demonstrate the yearly growth in both users and searches on Shodhganga. Lastly, they heartily urge the addition of theses from IISERs, NITs, and IITs to the Shodhganga repository.

A research evaluating the effectiveness of electronic theses and dissertations efforts at Nigerian federal institutions were carried out by **Adetoro Salau et al., (2020)**. According to the report, these colleges have not achieved any notable advancements in terms of system design, policy, or content. A significant contributing element to the low worldwide exposure and accessibility of ETDs in African nations is mismanagement. To increase the exposure of ETD repositories in African nations, the authors recommend the implementation of OAI-PMH and other value-added services. **Devi & Verma (2017)** did a study aimed at assessing the degree of engagement between North Eastern Central Universities in India and Shodhganga. According to their results, only seven of North East India's nine central universities were actively supporting Shodhganga. Furthermore, the study showed that among the major institutions in the Northeastern United States, scientific departments made a significant contribution to Shodhganga.

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ To determine the overall count of electronic theses submitted to the Shodhganga repository.
- ✓ Identify the ten universities that have made the highest contributions to Shodhganga.
- ✓ Examine the year-wise progression and development of E-theses in Shodhganga specifically from the central universities of Delhi and UP.
- ✓ Categorize the language distribution of E-theses submitted to Shodhganga by central universities in Delhi and UP.
- ✓ Evaluate and rank the top five departments of each university based on the number of theses they have contributed to Shodhganga.

METHODOLOGY

To fulfil the stated research objectives, a thorough investigation of the Shodhganga repository was undertaken, centering on central universities located in Delhi and UP. Information was procured from the Shodhganga databases hosted by INFLIBNET, accessible at <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in>. This repository serves as a primary platform for doctoral theses submitted to various Indian universities associated with Shodhganga INFLIBNET. The data compilation was categorized by university and department, covering submissions until December 2023. The results

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were articulated through tables and figures, and the analysis was conducted using straightforward percentages. Specifically, for this study, 11 out of the total 13 central universities, situated in Delhi and UP, were carefully selected.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The research is confined to the examination and analysis of 11 central universities situated in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh (UP). The study specifically focuses on the electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) available in the Shodhganga repository up until December 2023. It is important to note that only central universities in Delhi and UP are considered in this investigation. Delhi has a total of 7 central universities, while UP has 6 central universities; however, only four universities from UP are included in the study. Notably, Rajiv Gandhi National Aviation University (RGNAU) and Rani Laxmi Bai Central Agricultural University (RLBCAU) are excluded from the study due to their lack of contribution to Shodhganga with E-theses until December 2023.

Table 1. List of Top 10 Contributing Universities to Shodhganga.

Sl. No.	Name of the University	No. of Thesis contributed
1.	Anna University	15486
2.	University of Madras	14688
3.	University of Calcutta	14098
4.	Savitribai Phule Pune University	12414
5.	Chhatrapati Sahuji Maharaj University	10152
6.	Aligarh Muslim University	9965
7.	Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bihar University	9675
8.	Andhra University	9599
9.	Panjab University	8924
10	V.B.S Purvanchal University	8912

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 2. List of Central Universities in Delhi and UP.

Sl. No.	Name of the University with Abbreviations	Year of Establishment	Place	Thesis contributed to Shodhganga Dec 2023
1.	Aligarh Muslim University (AMU)	1920	Aligarh	9965
2.	Banaras Hindu University (BHU)	1916	Varanasi	7418
3.	Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)	1969	New Delhi	6646
4.	University of Delhi (UOD)	1922	New Delhi	5299
5.	University of Allahabad (UOA)	1887	Allahabad	2399
6.	Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI)	1920	New Delhi	2359
7.	Indhira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)	1985	New Delhi	906

8.	Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University (SLBSNSU)	1962	New Delhi	544
9.	Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU)	1996	Lucknow	525
10	Central Sanskrit University (CSU)	1970	New Delhi	288
11.	South Asian University (SAU)	2010	New Delhi	02
Total				36,351

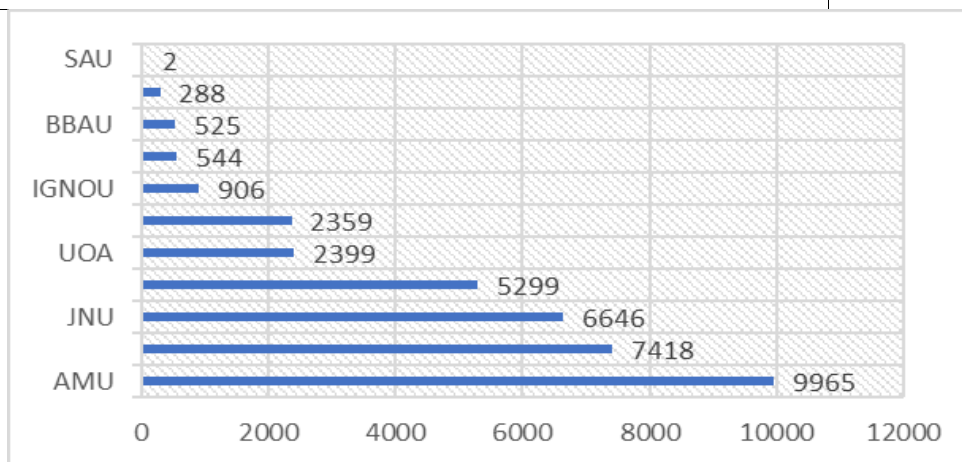


Fig. 1 Central Universities of Delhi and UP with Theses contribution

Table 2. provides information on the establishment date, location, and total number of theses that central universities in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh had submitted to the Shodhganga repository as of December 2023. Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) leads with 9965 theses, closely followed by Banaras Hindu University (BHU) with 7418 theses. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) contributes 6646 theses, while the University of Delhi (UOD) and the University of Allahabad (UOA) have 5299 and 2399 theses, respectively. Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) has contributed 2359 theses and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has 906 theses. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University (SLBSNSU) and Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU) have 544 and 525 theses, respectively. Central Sanskrit University (CSU) and South Asian University (SAU) contributes 288 and 2 theses, respectively. In total, these universities have collectively contributed 36,351 theses to Shodhganga.

Table 3. Language -wise ETDs submitted to Shodhganga

Name of the University	English	Hindi	Urdu	Sanskrit	Arabic	Bengali	Punjabi	French	Russian	Others	Total
AMU	8573	296	203	20	4	3	-	-	-	751	9850
BHU	4426	2681	9	221	-	34	-	1	-	38	7410
JNU	6134	225	88	16	-	-	-	18	9	150	6640
UOD	4362	651	91	73	-	12	21	-	-	88	5298
UOA	1636	591	31	26	-	-	-	-	-	110	2394

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JMI	2103	65	135	8	2	-	-	-	-	45	2358
IGNOU	808	94	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	905
SLBSNSU	-	1	-	284	-	-	-	-	-	258	543
BBAU	496	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	525
CSU	-	-	-	287	-	-	-	-	-	1	288
SAU	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total	28540	4633	557	935	6	49	21	19	9	1444	36216
Percentage	(78.8 1%)	(12.7 9%)	(1.5 3%)	(2.5 8%)	(0.01 6%)	(0.1 3%)	(0.0 7%)	(0.05 2%)	(0.0 %4)	(3.1 %8)	(10 0%)

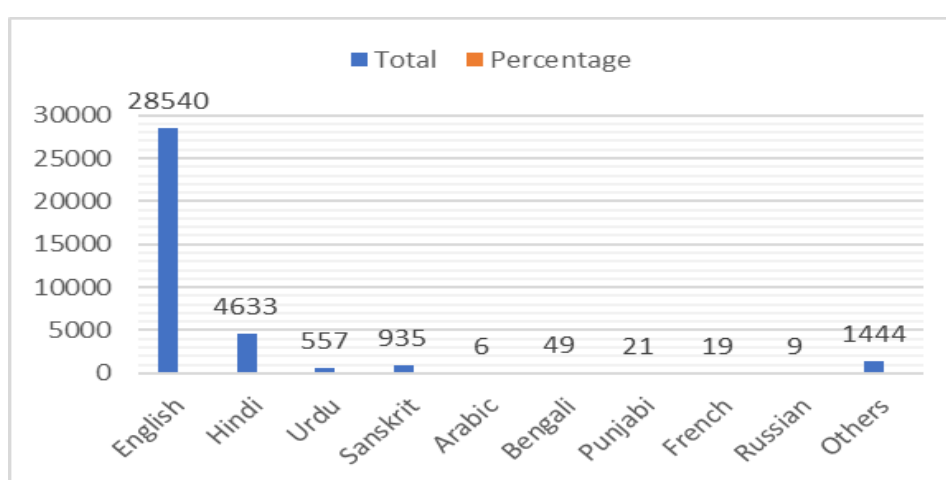


Fig. 2 Language wise ETDs distribution

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of E-Thesis submissions based on language by the central universities of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh in Shodhganga. The table encompasses nine languages: English, Hindi, Urdu, Sanskrit, Arabic, Bengali, Punjabi, French, and Russian. English stands out as the primary preference among researchers, accounting for 78.81% of the total E-Thesis submissions, equivalent to 28,540. Subsequently, Hindi is the second most chosen language, representing 12.79% (4,633), followed by Sanskrit at 2.58% (935), Urdu at 1.53% (557), Bengali at 0.13% (49), Punjabi at 0.057% (21), French at 0.052% (19), Russian at 0.024% (9), and Arabic at 0.016% (6). Additionally, there is a category encompassing other languages, contributing 3.18% (1,444) to the overall E-Thesis submissions. This data underscores the clear preference for English in theses submissions to Shodhganga.

Table 4. Year wise ETDs submitted to Shodhganga.

Name of the University	1935-1939	1940-1949	1950-1959	1960-1969	1970-1979	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2009	2010-2019	2020-2023	Total
AMU	5	16	55	292	662	1121	1055	2161	2977	1303	9647
BHU	2	12	107	255	480	1190	294	32	3274	1740	7386

JNU	-	-	-	46	138	448	1171	2270	1884	555	6512
UOD	-	-	-	3	2	107	220	173	4009	764	5278
UOA	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	127	1370	764	2263
JMI	-	-	-	2	6	59	264	165	806	917	2219
IGNOU	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	653	240	893
SLBSNSU	-	-	-	1	20	30	100	154	194	36	535
BBAU	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	315	207	523
CSU	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	259	288
SAU	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Total	7	28	162	599	1308	2955	3106	5083	15513	6785	35546
Percentage	(0.0 1%)	(0.0 7%)	(0.4 5%)	(1.6 8%)	(3.6 7%)	(8.1 3%)	(8.7 3%)	(14. 2%)	(43. 6%)	(19. 0%)	(100 %)

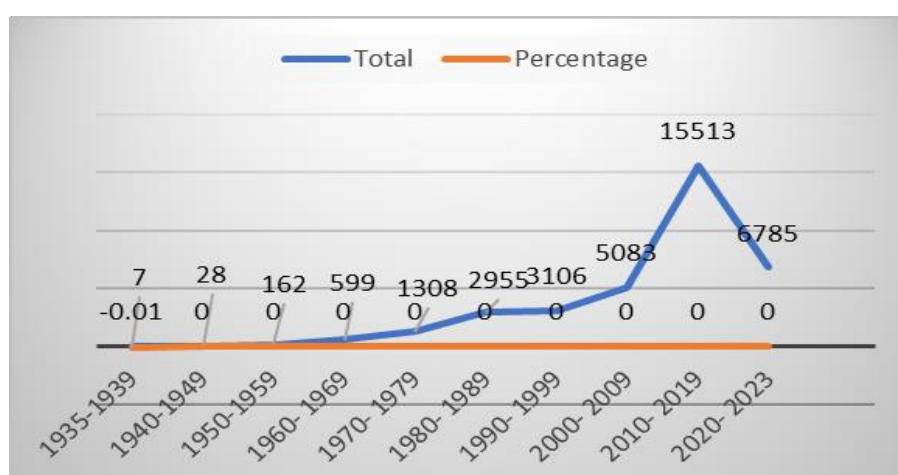


Fig. 3 Year-wise ETDs distribution.

The annual increase and development of doctorate theses submitted to the Shodhganga repository from Central Universities in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh is shown in Table 4. 35,546 theses have been submitted in total. According to the data, the greatest number of theses—15,513 (43.6%)—were turned in between 2010 and 2019. 6,785 theses (19%), the second-highest submission, were made in the years 2020–2023. The period from 2000 to 2009 accounts for the third-highest submission rate, with 5,083 theses (14.2%). Following that, the years 1990–1999 had the fourth-highest submission rate (3,106 theses/8.73%), while the years 1980–1989 had the fifth-highest percentage (2,955 theses (8.13%). The following are the standings from sixth to tenth place: 1,308 theses (3.67%) from 1970–1979, 599 theses (1.68%) from 1960–1969, 162 theses (0.45%) from 1950–1959, 28 theses (0.07%) from 1940–1949, and 7 theses (0.01%) from 1935–1939.

Table 5. Top 5 Departments contribution of ETDs by Central Universities of Delhi and UP.

Sl. No.	Name of the University	Department	No. of
1	Aligarh Muslim University (AMU)	Dept. of Chemistry	1024
		Dept. of Botany	533

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		Dept. of Zoology	512
		Dept. of Commerce	448
		Dept. of Bio-Chemistry	443
2	Banaras Hindu University (BHU)	Dept. of Hindi	744
		Dept. of Sanskrit	539
		Dept. of Philosophy & Religion	466
		Dept. of Sociology	341
		Dept. of Commerce	302
3	Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)	School of Social Sciences	1670
		School of International Studies	1554
		School of Language Literature & Culture Studies	827
		School of Life Sciences	508
		School of Environmental Sciences	345
4	University of Delhi (UOD)	Dept. of Chemistry	483
		Dept. of Hindi	339
		Dept. of Sanskrit	226
		Dept. of Zoology	207
		Dept. of Physics & Astrophysics	192
5	University of Allahabad (UOA)	Dept. of Chemistry	207
		Dept. of English & Modern European Languages	178
		Dept. of Sanskrit	147
		Dept. of Ancient History	136
		Dept. of Botany	130
6	Jamia Milia Islamia (JMI)	Dept. of Biosciences	133
		Dept. of Political Science	118
		Dept. of Teacher Training & Non-formal Education	111
		Dept. of Chemistry	107
		Dept. of Urdu	103
7	Indhira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)	School of Social Science	263
		School of Science	111
		Faculty of English	76
		School of Management Studies	74
		School of Tourism Hospitality & Services Management	60
8	Shri Laal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University (SLBSNSU)	Dept. of Vyakarana	87
		Dept. of Sahitya	84
		Dept. of Jyotish	84
		Dept. of Shiksha Shastra	73

		Dept. of Sarva Darshan	45
9	Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU)	Dept. of Environmental Microbiology	38
		Dept. of Science	36
		Dept. of Rural management	32
		Dept. of Applied Plant Science	31
		Dept. of Physics	30
10	Central Sanskrit University (CSU)	Dept. of Sahitya	104
		Dept. of Shiksha Shastra	59
		Dept. of Vyakarana	47
		Dept. of Jyotisha	26
		Dept. of Sarva Darshan	8
11	South Asian University (SAU)	Dept. of Computer Science	2

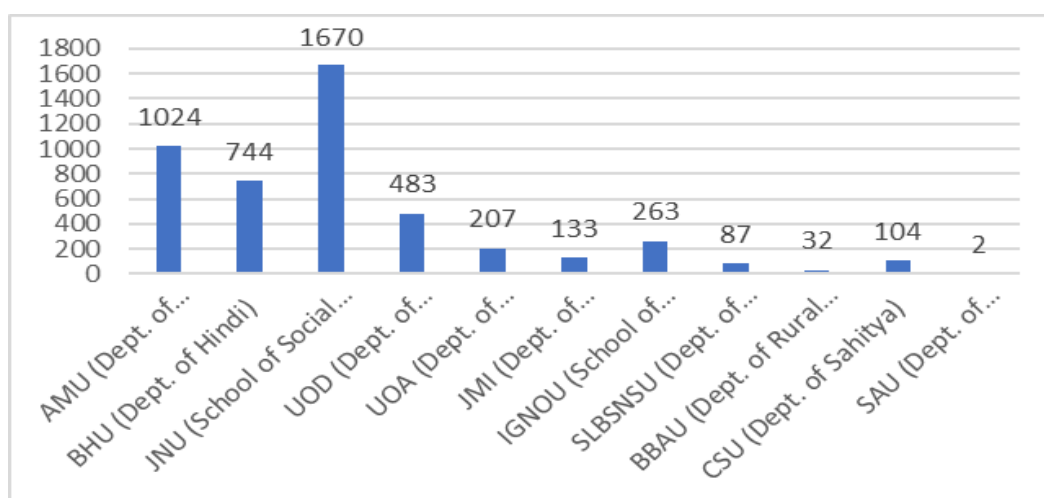


Fig. 4 Top ETDs contributing departments.

Table 5 presents data on the leading departments in central universities contributing to Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) to the Shodhganga repository. At AMU, the Department of Chemistry holds the highest position, contributing 1024 theses. BHU sees the Department of Hindi in the top spot with 744 theses. JNU's School of Social Sciences leads with 1670 theses. UOD has the Department of Chemistry at the forefront with 483 theses, while UOA has the Department of Chemistry in the top position with 207 theses. JMI features the Department of Biosciences at the top with 133 theses. IGNOU's School of Social Science leads with 263 theses. SLBSNSU has the Department of Vyakarana in the top position with 87 theses. BBAU's Department of Environmental Microbiology is at the forefront with 32 thesis contributions. CSU sees the Department of Sahitya in the top spot with 104 theses. SAU, with only one department, contributes two theses to Shodhganga. Notably, the Department of Chemistry emerges as the top contributor in three of the universities.

FINDINGS

- The study shows that Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) submitted to the Shodhganga repository by central institutions in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh are overwhelmingly preferred in English. With 78.81% of all ETD submissions, English makes up a sizable majority, highlighting the preference of the international academic community for this language.
- The top departments contributing to Shodhganga vary across universities, with disciplines like Chemistry, Hindi, and Social Sciences featuring prominently. This finding highlights the diverse academic landscape and research strengths present in different central universities, showcasing the breadth of subjects covered in doctoral research.
- The decade from 2010 to 2019 had the greatest submission rate, accounting for 43.6% of all theses submitted. This result points to a significant rise in doctorate research activities over this period, which may reflect a greater focus on academic production and research.
- The analysis shows that 6,785 theses (19%) made a significant contribution between 2020 and 2023, suggesting that doctorate research is still gaining traction. This latest rise is evidence of central universities' continued dedication to creating new information and adding to scholarly resources.
- The survey shows entries in languages including Hindi, Sanskrit, Urdu, and others, even though English is the most preferred language. Still, the distribution as a whole points to a chance for more diversification, inviting scholars to contribute in several languages, in keeping with the region's linguistic variety.
- Following the first objective, the Shodhganga repository now comprises 510,350 theses from Indian university collections. This highlights the repository's extensive scholarly research collection, acting as a thorough digital archive that captures a multitude of scholarly contributions from various national institutions.

CONCLUSION

The investigation into the Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) submitted by central universities in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh to the Shodhganga repository has unearthed significant insights into the evolving landscape of doctoral research. As we conclude this scholarly exploration, several key findings come to the forefront, shedding light on the patterns, preferences, and trajectories of academic contributions. The overwhelming preference for English in ETD submissions, constituting 78.81% of the total, underscores the global academic community's inclination toward this language. The top-contributing departments, such as Chemistry, Hindi, and Social Sciences, vary across universities, reflecting the diverse research strengths and academic landscapes of these institutions. Notably, the decade from 2010 to 2019 emerged as the period with the highest submission rate, signifying a surge in doctoral research activities during that time. Moreover, the substantial contribution of 6,785 theses between 2020 and 2023 indicates a continued dedication to scholarly production and the growth of academic knowledge. In conclusion, the study not only provides a comprehensive overview of the electronic theses landscape in central universities but also contributes to the broader discourse on the evolving nature of academic research in the digital era. The findings underscore the importance of platforms like Shodhganga in ensuring open access to scholarly work, fostering collaboration, and preserving the intellectual heritage of the academic community. As central universities continue to play a pivotal role in shaping knowledge, this study serves as a snapshot of their scholarly endeavors and contributes to the ongoing dialogue on the global advancement of higher education.

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