

National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan: An Open Full-text Database

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The National Central Library, as delineated in the Degree Deferral Law, is the only legal depository for theses and dissertations in Taiwan and has the responsibility to collect, archive, and make available this research. NCL's aim in digitalizing theses and dissertations is founded on the principle of open access, where the public can freely, equally, and openly access the information they need. As government resources come from the people, they should be used to benefit the people. NCL has done just that in creating a database of dissertations and theses in Taiwan that makes possible freedom in research dissemination, assistance to the disadvantaged, the reduction of the urban-rural gap, and the ideal of equality in academics.

National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan was officially opened to the public on June 10, 2010. Since that time, over 600,000 theses and dissertations have been collected. During peak use times, there have been over 25,000 users online. As such, it has become one of the most important academic resource websites by the Taiwan government to assist with scholarly research. The system is a national academic research support platform that features a cloud catalog and cloud database through the assistance of colleges and universities across Taiwan. Since participating institutions do not need to create separate databases for their own theses and dissertations, this translates into reduced costs for universities in terms of computer hardware, system maintenance, and IT personnel.

Furthermore, National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan breaks through traditional designs of database search systems by adjusting functions and capabilities of the search software to meet ever increasing needs of users. Apart from bibliometrics and search analysis capabilities and enhanced academic research support, policy support, knowledge value, and knowledge management services, data analysis is available for each stage of academic research. The ultimate goal in this growing system is to create a virtual theses and dissertation expert system.

This system is a free resource for the benefit of the Taiwan public and academic community worldwide. Through permanent archiving and non-exclusive

authorization arrangements, educational resources are rerouted to assist universities and colleges in promoting their research across the globe and allowing the whole world access to the research results of Taiwan's institutions of higher education.

Keyword: National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations, equality in academics, virtual theses and dissertation expert system