

Electronic theses and dissertations in the e-learning context: A conceptual model for Iran

Sirous Alidousti*; Maryam Saberi

*Assistant Professor, Iranian Research Institute for Scientific Information and Documentation (IranDoc);
Research Assistant, Iranian Research Institute for Scientific Information and Documentation (IranDoc)*

Abstract

Development of e-learning, as one of the results of the widespread application of information technology in education, requires certain infrastructure including the effective management of educational and research information resources. Theses and dissertations, as the major outcome of research by graduate students, are typical examples of such resources. However, without a proper system for managing the information of these documents, developing e-learning at graduate level seems to be a daunting task. Such a system should facilitate the production, organization, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of the information in electronic form. Therefore, in this article, the role of Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) in e-learning is defined. Then, to investigate the current state of these documents in Iran, the manuals of style for writing theses and dissertations and attempts for digitizing them have been examined within 11 major universities. The investigation revealed that there is no system as such for the production and management of ETDs in the country. Therefore, in this article a conceptual model for information management system of EDTs is presented. The system is intended to serve the following major functions: 1) establishing an online context for the production, assessment and confirmation of ETDs at universities; 2) providing of required infrastructure for the expansion of e-learning at graduate level; 3) facilitating online access to ETDs nationwide and worldwide; and 4) providing services for the improvement of ETDs. The system consists of four layers of application including the creation of EDTs, and university, national and international level; and involves 25 sub-systems which will be elaborated.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +9821 66494980 (ext. 360); Fax: +9821 66462254
E-mail address: alidousti@irandoc.ac.ir
P.O. Box: 13185-1371, Tehran, Iran