

Abstracts of DATAD Workshop Presentations

Historical Practice in Managing Theses and Dissertations at African Universities and University Libraries

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents practice in managing theses and dissertations in selected African Universities. It analyzes the life cycle of a thesis/dissertation paying particular attention to the circumstances surrounding the production process and use. Therefore, the paper investigates whether there are written guidelines on how the life cycle of a thesis/dissertation should be managed and how this information is made accessible to all concerned parties. What are the contents of the guidelines in terms of thesis development and supervision, approval processes, intellectual property rights and use of the final product including deposition in information retrieval systems, borrowing, copying and reproduction? Preliminary investigations indicate that there are similarities and differences among African universities on the way theses and dissertations are managed. These are identified and discussed in this paper highlighting strengths and weaknesses in the management processes. The paper further investigates the audiences of these theses/ dissertations and how the use varies among the different category of study such as humanities, social sciences and science and technology. In conclusion, the paper summarizes the major issues in the management of theses and dissertation in African universities in the context of intellectual property issues and the formulation of an appropriate business model.

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African Studies Library Collections in the United States - How U.S. Academic Communities Acquire and Make Use of Dissertation Literature from African Universities

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ABSTRACT

This paper will begin with some background to the growth of interest in African studies/African studies library collections in the U.S. in the mid-20th century. It will discuss the emphasis from the start on African-produced materials as integral. Historical highlights include the central role of Northwestern University (evolution of program library, 1930s/40s), establishment of formal Program (1948) and Library (1954), national conference on Africana libraries (1954), establishment of African Studies Association (1957) and librarians committee, establishment of CAMP (1963). The paper will review the developments of African scholars arriving at

Northwestern (1950s-); early outreach to African librarian colleagues, Nairobi conference (1967); early inter-institutional cooperation, and national and international collaboration.

In particular, the paper will focus on the period from very late 1960s to near present, in which evolving models of acquiring materials of all types were developed. This includes the emergence of vendors in Africa and non-African vendors working in Africa to supply the North American/European library market with African materials. The paper will describe the U.S. interest in publications, theses and dissertations from African universities and the manner in which the emerging vendor scene did or did not offer these materials (ethical and otherwise); strategies in North American institutions to acquire university publications, theses and dissertations (especially Northwestern's); developing/changing inter-institutional cooperation with African universities; role of ALC, CAMP and ASA; and ongoing confirmation on part of North American Africanist librarians/scholars of the importance of access to research coming from African universities and programs to share American research especially theses (ASA field research program; research standards and guidelines).

Finally, the paper will show how during the present time North American institutions acquire African theses and dissertations, how they are used in Africanist scholarship today, and how their availability influences Africanist scholarship and graduate studies. It will discuss how inter-institutional cooperative contacts encourage this, and will demonstrate some examples such as the Northwestern model, Ford funded Northwestern-University of Ghana-CODESRIA linkage and the Title VI dissertation project. Finally, the paper will explore the role of digital technology and the Web in the acquisition of this type of literature.

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Basic Issues of Francophone, Anglophone, and International Intellectual Property, with Regard to Unpublished Materials

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ABSTRACT

The aim of my presentation will explore some of the intellectual property consequences of creating a regional electronic thesis database for the DATAD universities, and – in particular – how intellectual property laws might enable those universities to control over, and derive economic benefit from, the contents of such a database. Throughout my presentation, I will emphasize the ways in which, where some issues are concerned, the intellectual property laws of the community of Francophone nations differ from those of its Anglophone counterparts.

As a predicate to my discussion the IP consequences of the database project, I will explore the approaches taken under various national laws to the ownership of copyrightable works and patentable inventions produced by members of university communities – especially graduate students. I will suggest that, at least in most cases, the default condition is that rights in such productions belong to the individual(s) who produce them. From the universities standpoint,

therefore, it is important to develop and employ a system of contractual agreements governing this threshold issue of ownership.

I also will distinguish between copyright and patent rights, which come into being in different ways, require different levels of investment to perfect and preserve, and endure for different periods of time. Broadly speaking, patent rights are the more difficult and expensive to claim, and also the more vulnerable. (Specifically, in the latter regard, the inclusion of a thesis in an electronically accessible thesis database actually may prevent the subsequent assertion of patent rights in the invention that thesis discloses.) In this connection, I'll devote some time to describing in general terms how universities in the United States manage their IP portfolios at an institutional level.

Another point I'll emphasize is the nature of the exclusive rights – and the limitations on those rights – that apply under copyright law in all nations. The goal will be to point out that copyright proprietors do not, in fact, enjoy plenary authority over the works they own. Instead, they can control some uses (reproduction, distribution) and not others (commentary and quotation). This, in turn, will be the basis for discussing some of the potentials and pitfalls of the management of copyrights on line. In this connection, I'll also devote some time to discussing the potential for so-called “digital rights management” systems (based on passwords, encryption, etc.) to supplement traditional copyright.

Another topic that could be addressed, depending on time and interest, is the international protection of intellectual property, which could be directly relevant here, since there would likely be extensive interest from outside Africa in Ph.D. dissertations from DATAD universities. Also, I would hope to spend some time discussing database protection under *sui generis* laws, as practiced in the European Union, and the problems of protection for traditional knowledge (including folklore, technological and scientific know-how, and agricultural methods). These are interesting and controversial topics, and both may have some indirect relevance to the implementation of a thesis depository.

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Knowledge Production, International Information Flows, and Intellectual Property: An African Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Until a few decades ago, or at least until the publication in 1980 of the McBride Report *Many voices, one world*, the information problem in Africa tended to be seen as one of supplying Africa, an “under-developed” continent, with information generated in the developing countries: sustaining a North-South information flow through aid and charitable enterprises in support of African development efforts. The North-South information flow remains of vital importance.

However, a balanced view requires that we also consider information flows in other directions: namely South-North and South-South information flows.

This paper considers these three forms of information flow from an African perspective, with the emphasis on the influence of international developments in intellectual property rights on North-South and South-North relations. It first considers current developments in intellectual property rights that threaten the North-South information flow, before stating the importance to the humanity of the world of South-North information flows, and lastly, exploring the most neglected of the three: information flows between African countries.

North-South information flows today face critical challenges through international efforts by multinational companies and the governments of developed countries, to tighten control over intellectual property. Prompted by the realisation that information is the strategic resource of our time, spurred on by the structural changes that are taking place in knowledge production and dissemination in the digital age, and concerned about widespread information piracy, the United States, the European Union and other governments are pushing through the adoption of stricter intellectual property regimes and employing their economic muscle to force their adoption by poorer countries. In the process, information is becoming a commodity and the information commons, that free space for the sharing of ideas and information that has supported the intellectual advancement of humankind, has become an endangered environment. Among the (hopefully) unintended consequences of this development could well be a reduction of the access that African countries have to North-generated information.

It seems hardly necessary to state that African societies, communities and scholars have much to contribute to a humane world. By a humane world we mean a world in which cultural diversity and different modes of imagining and knowing are appreciated and encouraged. Their suppression in order that all knowledge and understanding can be fitted into the strait-jacket of a dominant Western world-view is also an impoverishment of the wealthy nations. It can be argued, following the events of 11 September 2001, that such a humane world would also be a safer world for all.

This is not to say that the insights gained by African societies and communities over millennia of struggle with and adaptation to a harsh environment are not being appreciated. And today the interest is not only on the part of ethnological museums and collectors of “primitive” art. The latter part of the 20th century also saw the advent of modern-day “tomb raiders” who seek to corner and patent potentially lucrative indigenous knowledge. This form of “appreciation” is a mixed blessing. Africa needs to disseminate its contribution to the heritage of the world, without entering a new era of exploitation. African scholars and academic and research institutions face a dual challenge: to effectively disseminate their intellectual contribution, while at the same time jealously defending their intellectual property and that of traditional communities from selfish exploitation.

This paper takes a moral, rather than a legal view of intellectual property. It briefly considers the moral basis for compliance with intellectual property rights, taking human rights and specifically information rights as the point of departure and proposing the four types of social justice (commutative, contributive, distributive and retributive justice) as the moral tool for ensuring

compliance with moral principles in the rough and tumble of the “free market” in the information “commodity”.

The implications for the management of the intellectual property manifested in African theses and dissertations is then considered in more detail. The emphasis is on finding the optimal balance between their effective and sustainable international dissemination and the needs and moral rights of the authors, their institutions, and the societies and communities which provided the research infrastructure and, in many cases, research data. We consider not only moral principles and guidelines for dealing with theses and dissertations, but also attempt to relate these to practical issues of recording knowledge, bibliographic organisation and dissemination, which are critical for the frequently neglected South-South dimension of information flow.

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The Economics of Scholarly Communications – With Special Bearing on Unpublished Materials and Emerging Models of Electronic Text Publishing

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ABSTRACT

This presentation has three major focuses:

First, the principle aspects of the economics of scholarly communication

Second, the key aspects of the scholarly communications process, with a special effort to detail the many players involved in the complex process of authoring, publishing, disseminating, preserving, and using scholarly materials.

Third, the key elements of programs that disseminate scholarly materials electronically—with a particular focus on gray literature. We do not have access to the accounts for any of these programs so we cannot say how close they are to meeting their costs from their revenue streams. But this review may help us to think realistically about a business model for DATAD.

Key principles of the economics of scholarly communication include the following:

- Intellectual property is characterized by substantial fixed costs of the creation of the property and lower marginal costs for distribution to a consumer. One could argue that society’s welfare would be maximized by providing access to anyone who sought to use the intellectual property at the marginal cost at that level of access. However, the owner of the property must cover those fixed costs as well and some of the consumers, presumably those with the higher ability to pay that reflects in their being willing to pay more, must be charged higher prices.
- The fixed costs of publishing scholarly materials, especially that involving electronic formats, can be substantial. These costs are often referred to as *first copy costs* in the literature about publishing economics.

- Many of the economic costs of scholarly publishing are not recognized as they are not cash costs or a unit is providing services for which it does not charge. If a library or the academic computing office of a university is providing services to a publishing initiative, it is using funds and staff that could be doing other work. An economic analysis should reflect all such expenditures as they are true costs of the enterprise. Work that is done with no charge initially may involve cash outlays eventually. Scholarly publishers find that scholars are less willing to spend their time being journal editors and reviewers of articles and books if they are not paid for that effort.
- The cost of providing access to electronically-delivered scholarship to an additional institution or individual is modest—once the scholarship is being published and delivered. However, the more technical assistance or account maintenance activity a user group requires the higher the cost of serving that group.
- An optimal business model for disseminating such material is one that would cover all of the costs of providing the materials while maximizing access to them. Such a model would include price discrimination. That is wealthier communities would pay more of the fixed costs of publishing and distributing these materials and those with a lower ability to pay would be charged a price that reflects the cost of serving them and their ability to pay. Such a model will work only if the wealthier communities value the publications such that they are willing to pay the higher prices that cover these fixed costs.
- Publishers of scholarly materials recognize the characteristics of their products and as they make them available electronically they are increasingly employing market models that recognize these characteristics.
- Institutions (libraries) are significant determinants of purchasing of scholarly materials while individuals are the key beneficiaries from the availability of various such materials. It is difficult for libraries to determine the spending pattern that will yield the greatest benefit to their institutions.
- Scholarly institutions are fighting the increasing market power of major commercial publishers like Elsevier by developing new models for dissemination of scholarly work, primarily by utilizing digital methods of publication and dissemination. Among these are (a) institutional repositories for the products of research of scholars who belong to that institution and with free access at least to the other scholars at that institution; (b) new journals with traditional subscription models launched by university presses, scholarly societies, or libraries to compete with particularly costly commercial journals; (c) new open access journals competing with commercial journals that seek to have the costs of publishing paid up front by authors and their sponsors with the articles freely available to everyone.

Key aspects of the scholarly communications process include the following:

- Some activities and costs fall on the author, others fall on the publisher and his agents, yet others fall on scholars who referee the publication, and yet others fall on the librarians who acquire and make the journals, books, and gray literature available to their communities for as long as they believe they have value.
- In the case of grey literature, a far greater share falls on the author, but there is still a stage of peer review that involves labor by others in the scholarly community. Grey literature

typically involves less formal publishing processes with little or no copyediting and typesetting undertaken by a publisher. Working papers and the like are printed on photocopiers or other devices designed for small print runs. Conference proceedings may have a more formal printing process, but still not that accorded a professionally published journal or book.

- Electronic dissemination of scholarly literature leads to substantial new fixed costs of software and hardware systems and staff. Archiving of the electronic files is a much more complex issue than archiving of print volumes.
- Electronic dissemination eliminates the costs of mailing scholarly publications to purchasers. It also enables creators of scholarly works to make information about them available widely at low cost. Scholarly publications that are available electronically are likely to have greater use than those that are available only in print form if a pricing model reflects their value to scholars.
- Marketing and subscription fulfillment for scholarly publications, whether print or electronic, is costly for every model other than free distribution.

Key elements of programs that disseminate scholarly materials electronically include:

- The format in which the materials are delivered, e.g., CD-ROM or online with html, PDF, or multiple presentations
- The complexity of the design of the offering, e.g., linked references or not
- The packaging involved—only historic material, only recent and current material, full runs of journals, containing all or part of the journal; only one or multiple works; just one type of work or a mix of works by discipline and possibly across a spectrum of types of users (a scholarly portal); just electronic version or print and electronic versions
- Distributor—publisher, consortium, or third party vendor
- Access to historical material if a subscription is terminated
- Pricing—purchase or subscription, flat rate unlimited use, per user, by size of institution, by country of institution, by other proxy for amount of use, value, or ability to pay, pay per view, availability of consortial deals
- System of archiving material offered
- System of royalties offered to participating publishers or authors
- The magnitude of the program and economies of scale that can be realized
- Outsourcing of various elements of activity to gain expertise and economies of scale

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Vidyanidhi: Vision, Mission, Models, Strategies, and Activities

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ABSTRACT

Vidyanidhi ~ Beginning

Vidyanidhi is an initiative that began as a pilot project in the year 2000 to demonstrate the feasibility of ETDs in the Indian context. Vidyanidhi Pilot project was sponsored by NISSAT, DSIR, Government of India. At the end of the Pilot phase of Vidyanidhi, an online library with two main-layers/products of full text of theses and metadata records/bibliographic records was developed. An understanding of the workflow and methods was another important outcome. Vidyanidhi is now expanding and enlarging its horizons from a pilot to a National Programme with support from the Ford Foundation and Microsoft Corporation.

Vidyanidhi Vision and Mission

With a broad vision of building the research capacities of Indian universities, Vidyanidhi was conceptualized and envisioned as a national online repository (Online Library) of eTheses in India, built on a collaborative and participatory model. The central principle of Vidyanidhi is to help evolve a national information system of doctoral research by facilitating the creation, archiving, and accessing of doctoral theses. The aim is to improve the availability of doctoral research works to society and to preserve it electronically by procuring, collecting, archiving and disseminating doctoral research in India. We believe that this would not only enhance the visibility of Indian academic research but raise the quality as well. This is envisaged to be accomplished by having in place, suitable organizational and technical mechanisms for creating, archiving, and accessing doctoral research works in India. In order to develop the appropriate policy framework, Vidyanidhi has adopted a multi pronged approach- bottom up and top down. Vidyanidhi is liaising and working with the University Grants Commission to evolve a national policy of eTheses- submission, archiving and accessing. Vidyanidhi is also in continuous dialogue with select universities- University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Aligarh Muslim University and others to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding that would not only be mutually beneficial but also contribute to scholarship and society.

The mission of Vidyanidhi is to empower all stakeholders of scholarship- academe, Government, Industry and Society. By archiving and improved access, Vidyanidhi enhances the visibility of the intellectual property and heritage of researchers and academic institutions. As access increases use and usage, Governments will be able to demonstrate the 'returns' for their investments. The societal obligation to preserve the creative output for the present and future generations will be achieved. The goal of Vidyanidhi is to spearhead the eTheses movement in India, by demonstrating the power of eTheses, preparing and equipping the next generation of researchers with the much needed 'Information Literacy' skills, showcasing the resources and tools that Vidyanidhi offers, and catalyzing the spread of eTheses concept.

Vidyanidhi Strategies

Vidyanidhi strategies centre around the following:

- Developing appropriate policy framework through sensitization, awareness, and liaising with academic institutions and agencies including strategic support and endorsement from the national regulatory apex body such as the University Grants Commission.
- Developing a suitable organisational model focused on participatory and partnership principles. Currently three kinds of committees are envisaged- Steering Committee, Coordinating Committee, Working committees

- Evolving a technical mechanism for implementing the distributed participatory organisational model and to suit the diversity in the requirements of participating institutions
- Developing tools, resources and software for creating, archiving and accessing eTheses
- Develop, promote and help implement standards in all facets of eTheses
- Promote the cause of eTheses through education, training and publicity

Vidyanidhi Activities

Activities of Vidyanidhi include:

- Liaison, networking and promotion
- Content procurement and content building- both metadata and full text
- Creating resources and facilities such as templates, style sheets, tutorials, software and interfaces and others
- Education and training- of both researchers and information professionals
- Mobilising resources and building communities

Progress and Accomplishments

Liaison, Partnership, Networking, and Promotion

- Constitution of the Steering Committee and holding its meeting(May 16, 2003)
- Round Table of Vice chancellors and other faculty (June 14, 2004)
- Designing and producing the Vidyanidhi brochure and the FAQ flyer
- Developing the business plan for Vidyanidhi
- Holding several meetings and dialogues with many universities
- Incorporation of electronic version submission into the University of Mysore Ph.D regulations

Content Procurement and Building

- Metadata from university of Kashmir, Delhi and Aligarh Muslim University
- Vidyanidhi Theses Database currently has 65,000 records
- Full text collection is now 500 theses

Resources and Facilities

- New interfaces and search features
- Addressing the Indian Language issues through Unicode implementation
- Thesis templates style sheets and metadata submission formats
- Software tools for transliteration to Roman scripts
- Software for remote online submission of metadata, experts records and full text
- Software for collaborative workspace developed

Education and Training

- A well equipped lecture cum training hall created
- First training program organized from January 19-23, 2004
- Two training Programs scheduled for March and April

Vidyanidhi will be a catalyst driving the eTheses activities in Indian academic institutions in the next couple of years. Vidyanidhi will drive the eTheses movement in India directly- partnering with UGC and Universities and other academic institutions and having them on board as well as indirectly by spurring the academic community to initiate similar programmes. By the end 2004, Vidyanidhi is expected to have ten universities- University of Kashmir, Srinagar, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, Aligarh Muslim University, University of Hyderabad, University of Pune, Bangalore University, University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Universities, Kuvempu University in its fold. We expect to train 100 doctoral students in Social Sciences and Humanities in ePublishing. The technical/software tools enabling online remote depositing of metadata and full text of theses is in the finishing stages. A collaborative workspace for all participating institutions will be in place shortly.

Since receiving the Ford Foundation Grants, Vidyanidhi has made significant progress in terms of sensitizing the stakeholders, moving towards developing policies, frameworks and implementing mechanisms. Given the diversity in the systems, processes and procedures, Vidyanidhi's broad framework and strategy of a flexible, participatory and collaborative organisational model appears to be the most viable one. We believe that our multi-pronged approach will engender an appropriate business and working model

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