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## Survey of Grey Literature of National Library and Archives of Iran

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### Abstract:

*The further rise of electronic publishing has come to change the scale and diversity of grey literature facing librarians and other information practitioners. Grey literature is an important source of information due to the uniqueness of the content that gets published. Grey literature may thusly reduce publication bias, increase reviews' comprehensiveness and timeliness and foster a balanced picture of available evidence. National Library and Archives of Iran as National Heritage Guardians are tasked with collecting and organizing grey literature that are not publicly available because of their nature. A variety of grey literature in this review included (dissertation, Announcement, Brochure, standard, Pamphlet, Newsletter, Project, Guidebook, Report, Poster, Government document, Curriculum Vitae and Bulletin).*

*The results of this research show that: more than a quarter of the resources of the National Library and Archives of Iran are grey literature. A third of the grey resources were uploaded to the Digital Library of the National Library and Archives of Iran. Because the users of theses and dissertations are more than a variety of grey literature, therefore two thirds of the resources in the digital library are theses and dissertations. Guide books, newsletters, bulletins, and Curriculum Vitae are the sources that do not have a major contribution to the grey literature of the National Library. A review of date of publication of grey resources revealed that government documents are the oldest resource in this series.*

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**Keywords:** Grey literature, National library, Iran

## **Introduction:**

The further rise of electronic publishing has come to change the scale and diversity of grey literature facing librarians and other information practitioners. Grey literature is “That which is produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats, but which is not controlled by commercial publishers moves the field of grey literature beyond established borders into new frontiers, where lines of demarcation between conventional/non-conventional and published/unpublished literature cease to obstruct further development and expansion”.<sup>1</sup>

Twelfth International Conference on Grey Literature in Prague in 2010 defined grey literature as follows:

"Grey literature stands for manifold document types produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats that are protected by intellectual property rights, of sufficient quality to be collected and preserved by libraries and institutional repositories, but not controlled by commercial publishers; i.e. where publishing is not the primary activity of the producing body."<sup>2</sup>

Grey literature is an important source of information due to the uniqueness of the content that gets published. Because commercial publishers are looking to make a profit on the materials they publish, they often overlook niche research areas that serve smaller populations. Grey literature is one way to search for information in emerging or less popular research areas.<sup>3</sup>

Grey literature is an important source of information. Though not scholarly, it is produced by researchers and practitioners in the field. It can often be produced more quickly, have greater flexibility, and be more detailed than other types of literature. “Grey literature serves scholars and lay readers alike with research summaries, facts, statistics, and other data that offer a more comprehensive view of the topic of interest<sup>4</sup>.

Grey literature may thusly reduce publication bias, increase reviews' comprehensiveness and timeliness and foster a balanced picture of available evidence.<sup>5</sup> Also, ideas and new methods reported in grey outlets sometimes represent the initial findings of studies that will later (possibly years later) be published in more formal outlets. Grey literature is frequently the "first port of call" when individuals and organizations report important research outcomes.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://repository.arizona.edu/bitstream/handle/10150/106108/Types\\_Grey\\_Lit.htm;jsessionid=2C8A8E0E51DC4D7C0BD875BB1690E1A4?sequence=42](https://repository.arizona.edu/bitstream/handle/10150/106108/Types_Grey_Lit.htm;jsessionid=2C8A8E0E51DC4D7C0BD875BB1690E1A4?sequence=42)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.opengrey.eu/item/display/10068/700015>

<sup>3</sup> <https://libguides.royalroads.ca/greylit/value>

<sup>4</sup> <https://csulb.libguides.com/greylit>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29266844>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235260055\\_Grey\\_literature\\_and\\_library\\_and\\_information\\_studies\\_a\\_global\\_perspective](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235260055_Grey_literature_and_library_and_information_studies_a_global_perspective)

Most of grey literature is considered less prestigious, reliable, and “official” than publication in a peer-reviewed journal. But they are still fully legitimate avenues of publication. Often they are used to publicize early findings, before a study is entirely complete. Or, in the case of theses, they are published as a condition of receiving an advanced degree. Government technical reports are issued either by agencies that do scientific research themselves or else by a lab that has received government funding. Increasingly, such labs may be required to publish technical reports as a condition of receiving such funding.<sup>7</sup>

Although we found restrictions of some academic communities, the use of this kind of reference have been growing, justifying its importance. In many cases, it is the only primary information source about some subjects. The Internet has led to increase of the grey literature uses, such as reports and studies. Websites, electronic presentations and interactions with on-line groups have made possible the exchange of more information, allowing the evolution of the knowledge in accounting and business administration.<sup>8</sup> However, the benefits of including grey literature may far outweigh the cost in time and resource needed to search for it.

Considering the importance of these resources mentioned above, the researchers have been conducting a survey on grey literature in the National Library of Iran. National Library and Archives of Iran as National Heritage Guardians are tasked with collecting and organizing grey literature that are not publicly available because of their nature. More than a quarter of the resources available at the National library and Archives of Iran are grey literature.

A variety of grey literature varies in different sources. In GreyNet International 2019<sup>9</sup> website, there are over a hundred and fifty different types of grey literature, which is the basis of this research. There are 13 types of grey literature in the National Library and Archives of Iran. It should be noted that National Library of Iran have 3287 Curriculum Vitae (CV). Curriculum Vitae are not part of the grey resources on the GreyNet International 2019, but since their nature is like grey literature, they were also studied in this Survey.

A variety of grey literature in this review included (dissertation, Announcement, Brochure, standard, Pamphlet, Newsletter, Project, Guidebook, Report, Poster, Government document, Curriculum Vitae and Bulletin).

### **Research Questions:**

Questions that have to be answered in this research, are as follows:

1. What kind of grey literature are in National Library and Archives of Iran, and how many of them are in the digital library?
2. What are the year of publication of grey literature in National Library and Archives of Iran?

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<sup>7</sup> <https://guides.library.cornell.edu/greylit>

<sup>8</sup> <https://rbgn.fecap.br/RBGN/article/view/52>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.greynet.org/greysourceindex/documenttypes.html>

<b>Kind of Grey literature</b>	<b>Number of Grey literature</b>	<b>Number of Grey literature in digital library</b>
Dissertation	306700	242176
Announcement	14578	7239
Brochure	15806	-
Standard	27499	-
Pamphlet	13180	-
Newsletter	1235	127
Project	9897	66
Guidebook	5	-
Report	26132	-
Poster	20553	-
Governmant document	553506	87418
Curriculum Vitae	3287	-
Bulletin	1630	126
Total	994008	337152

3. What is the oldest source in any kind of grey literature?
4. How many dissertations there are in each level in National Library and Archives of Iran?

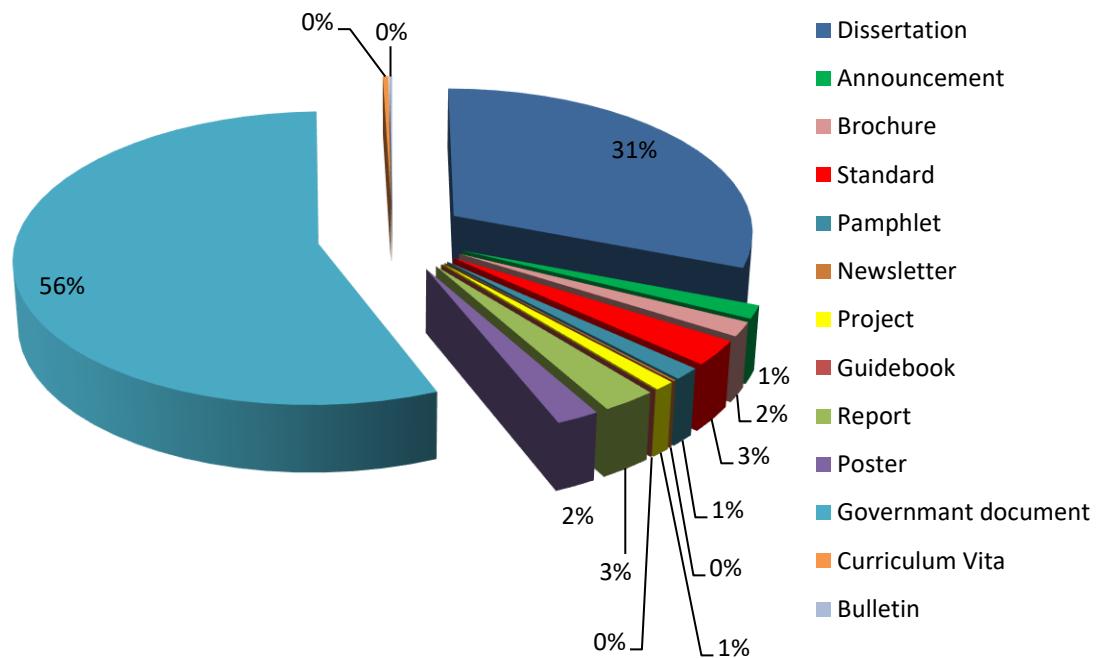
**Table 1. Number and variety of grey literature**

Table 1 shows the number and variety of grey literature available in the National Library as well as in Digital Library of National Library.

As shown in this table, the number of grey literature is 994008 in the National Library and Archives of Iran. The largest number of grey literature is government documents with 553506 records, after that dissertations with 306700 records are in the next place.

337152 grey literature are loaded in the digital library, and dissertations with 242176 have the largest share in the digital library.

**figure 1. the percentage of grey literature**

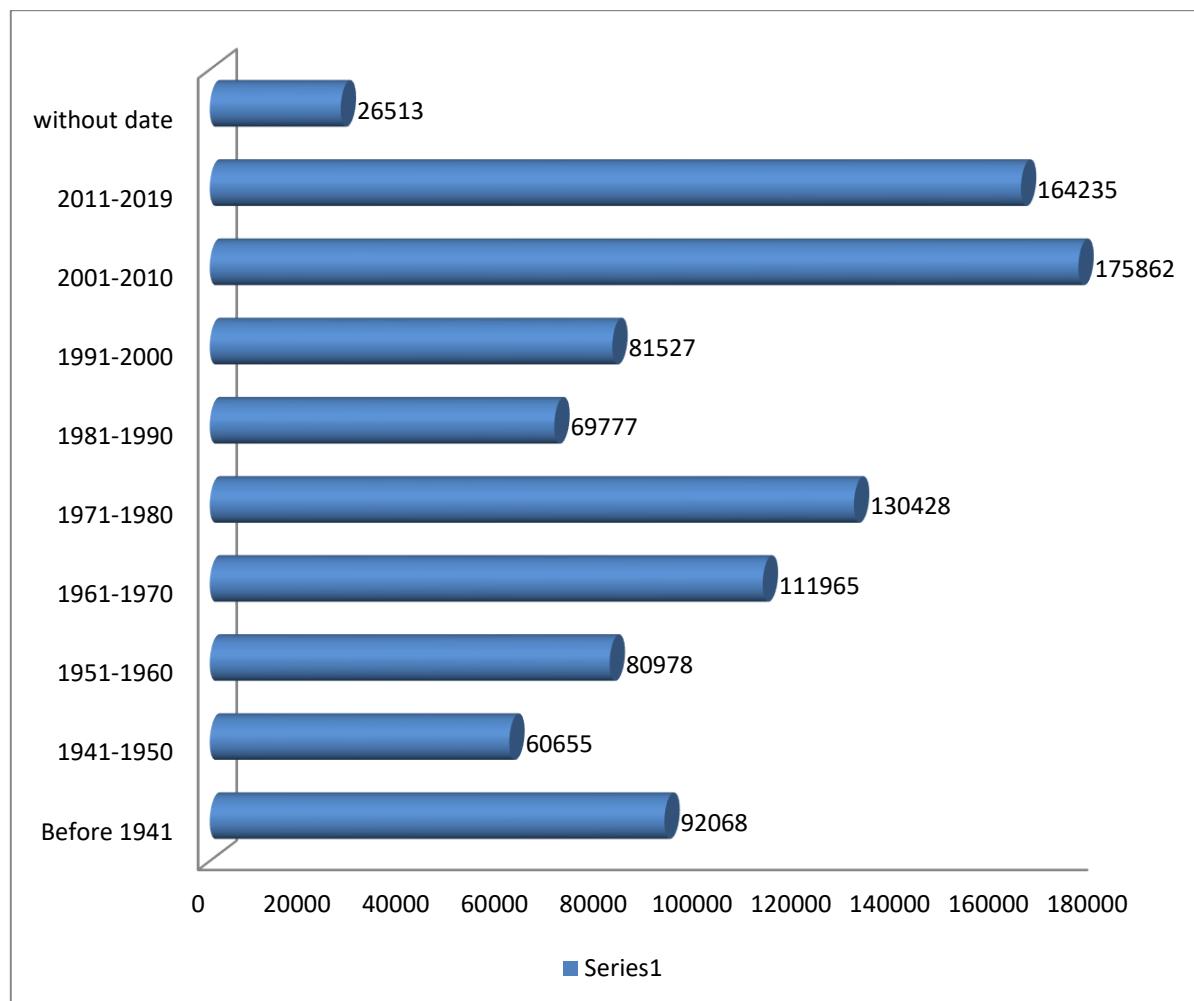


The figure 1 represents percentage of grey literature in the National Library and Archives of Iran. As it is clear in the figure, guide books, newsletters, bulletins, and Curriculum Vitae are the sources that do not have a major contribution to the grey literature of the National Library.

Date	Curriculum Vitae	Poster	Bulletin	Government document	Newsletter	Report	Pamphlet	Announcement	standard	dissertation	Project	Brochure	Guide books	Total
<b>before 1941</b>	18	20	32	91388	3	13	440	5	0	139	0	10	0	92068
<b>1941- 1950</b>	0	2	13	59250	1	29	366	16	0	962	1	15	0	60655
<b>1951- 1960</b>	46	15	95	77534	11	133	577	148	0	2369	10	38	2	80978
<b>1961- 1970</b>	656	16	194	106489	14	622	1096	279	430	1905	74	190	0	111965
<b>1971- 1980</b>	1088	1096	244	107426	59	2022	2533	11085	1423	2913	255	284	0	130428
<b>1981- 1990</b>	171	2356	251	52986	112	6361	1847	2538	718	1757	265	415	0	69777
<b>1991- 2000</b>	7	1568	489	38061	420	7633	2508	135	2728	25181	1517	1280	0	81527
<b>2001- 2010</b>	0	9941	231	12941	473	4788	2344	90	5778	132772	3292	3212	0	175862
<b>2011- 2019</b>	1	721	51	961	135	3055	1002	99	16422	137252	3943	593	0	164235
<b>without date</b>	1300	4818	30	6470	7	1476	467	183	-	1450	540	9769	3	26513
<b>Total</b>	3287	20553	1630	553506	1235	26132	13180	14578	27499	306700	9897	15806	5	994008

**Table 2. Types of grey literature in terms of publication date**

**figure 2. Types of grey literature in terms of publication date**



As shown in table 2 and figure 2, between 2001 and 2010, the National Library and Archives of Iran has the largest source of grey literature.

In response to the third question, the following information is given:

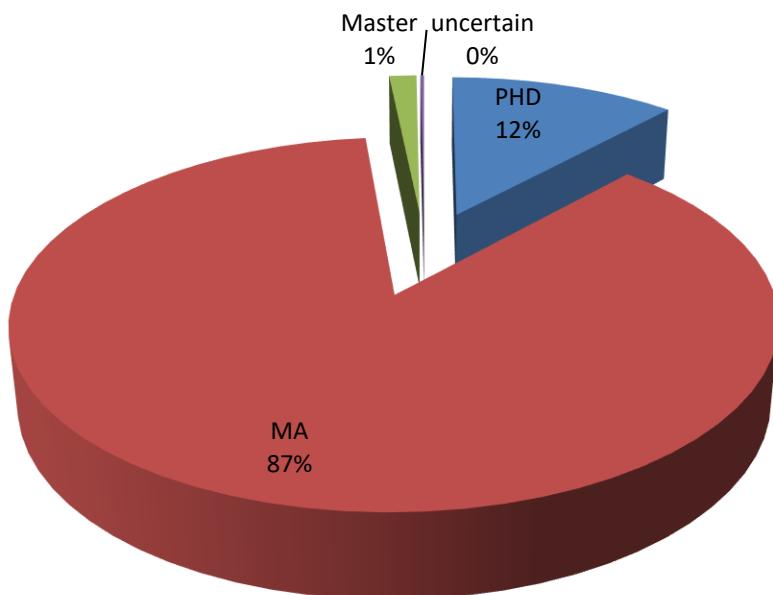
The oldest Curriculum Vita in the National Library and Archives of Iran dates back to 1941. The oldest poster in the National Library and Archives of Iran belonging to 1887. The oldest Bulletin in the National Library and Archives of Iran belonging to 1929. Government document are the oldest sources of grey literature in the National Library and Archives of Iran, which date back to the 14th century. There are 5 newsletters that date back to 1867 in the National Library and Archives of Iran, which are among the oldest of these resources. The oldest report is about 1845. The oldest Pamphlet in the National Library and Archives of Iran, entitled "Oil and Consortium", belonging to 1854. The oldest announcement in the National Library and Archives of Iran dates back to 1311, which relates to the letter of Reza Shah Pahlavi to the Crown Prince. There are 50 standard resources in 1965 in the National Library and Archives of Iran, which are among the oldest of these resources. The oldest dissertation dates back to 1929, which belongs to the Tehran University of Medical Sciences. The oldest non-Persian

dissertation dates back to 1921, which is in German language in the subject of philosophy. The oldest project in the National Library and Archives of Iran, entitled "Water Plumbing Project in Shiraz", belonging to 1946. The oldest brochure dates back to 1901 with title of "Farm recommendations for the implementation of tillage and sowing of wheat." Guidebook of "Visitors to Iran" is the oldest source in this series dates back to 1953.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Farsi Electronic dissertation</b>	<b>Farsi Printed dissertation</b>	<b>Latin Printed dissertation</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>PHD</b>	6031	27563	2532	36126
<b>Master</b>	86438	178193	1006	265637
<b>Bachelor</b>	271	4085	-	4356
<b>Uncertain</b>	157	357	67	581
<b>Total</b>	92896	210199	3605	306700

**Table 3. Number and level of dissertation and thesis**

**figure3. percentage of level of dissertation and thesis**



As shown in Table 3 and Figure 3, Master's theses have the highest share with 87% and after that, the Ph.D. dissertations has the highest share with 12%.

## Conclusion:

More than a quarter of the resources of the National Library and Archives of Iran are grey literature. A third of the grey resources were uploaded to the Digital Library of the National Library and Archives of Iran. Because the users of theses and dissertations are more than a variety of grey literature, therefore two thirds of the resources in the digital library are theses and dissertations. Guide books, newsletters, bulletins, and Curriculum Vitae are the sources that do not have a major contribution to the grey literature of the National Library. A review of date of publication of grey resources revealed that government documents are the oldest resource in this series.

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