

# Information Retrieval

## Design and Sources

Roslina Othman



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# INFORMATION RETRIEVAL: DESIGN AND SOURCES

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**Editor**

Roslina Othman



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## **10. LABORATORY VERSUS OPERATIONAL SYSTEM TEST**

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Suleiman Shammass Ali and Roslina Othman

### **ABSTRACT**

The chapter looks into the major issues in conducting a laboratory test and an operational evaluation test contributed by these factors: relevance, cognition, user behavior, user-system interaction and system boundaries. These issues involved views and assumptions such as the black-box versus diagnostic experiments, and qualitative versus quantitative methods and presented in this chapter with earlier examples drawn from three groups of evaluation experiments: weighted searching on a front end system, information seeking behavior and the use of OPACs, and the OKAPI experimental retrieval system. This chapter includes comments made on the factors in relation to the major commercially available IR systems.

### **10.1 Introduction**

Robertson and Micheline-Beaulieu put forward the issues in their article in 1992, that the major changes in IR development have also changed the way an evaluation test should be conducted, and the way results to be interpreted. They presented the issues of the laboratory test versus operational system test, with each one at the extreme end of the IR evaluation test spectrum. Laboratory tests are concerned with high degree of control, while operational tests dealt with very little degree of control.

At this current situation with the availability of the commercially available IR systems, both types of test could be done on the same