

**RESEARCH WORKS IN LIBRARY AND  
INFORMATION SCIENCE  
VOLUME 2**

**Yushiana Mansor**



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**Editor**

Yushiana Mansor



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## **2. OPAC IN LIBRARIES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This chapter outlines the development of online catalogue (OPAC) in libraries. Functions of OPAC are briefly discussed. Though OPAC could assist users in finding library materials, a number of factors have been found to affect OPAC performance. Research on OPAC user study exhibited some of the problems users' experience in accomplishing retrieval tasks using OPAC.

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The development of online catalogues has been a response to two essential problems, i.e. production and maintenance rather than to the problems and possibilities of use or enhancing accessibility. The online catalogue has been defined as any computer-based set of bibliographic data that can be accessed by library users working directly at a terminal (Fayen, 1983).

The development of online catalogues has passed through three decades of development. Firstly was in the early 1960s when library communities were fascinated with the computer technology, which resulted in increased efficiency and cost savings. Eventually, the commercial vendors' involvement in 1970s that started to enter university libraries as computer based library systems. Lastly, the economic and technical role of the 1980s in which the library administrator took over their own operations instead of relying on the networks (Thomas, 1991).