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4. **Empirical Studies in Digital Reference Studies**

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**ABSTRACT**

An array of empirical studies on digital reference services that were conducted in the developed countries was surveyed. It is found that provision of digital reference services in different library settings is pervasive in the developed world. The constraint detected from the survey is related to the maturity level of implementation of digital reference services in the various institutions and organizations.

4.1 **Developed Countries**

In examining the capability of the Internet as a reference tool, Zumalt & Pasicznyuk (1998) conducted a three-fold test of Internet effectiveness in terms of its depth, accuracy, and durability. They found that from a 209 question sample, 129 (61 percent) questions were answered using the Internet alone. As a result, they found that the Internet could provide answers to a significant percentage of actual reference questions. The study also found no significant differences between the accuracy of information obtained through the Internet sources and traditional reference tools. Surprisingly, throughout the study the researchers found that the Internet sites showed its durability or dependability in providing information over time.