

**RESEARCH WORKS IN LIBRARY AND
INFORMATION SCIENCE
VOLUME 1**

**Yushiana Mansor
Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar**



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Editors

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CONTENTS

DEDICATION	<i>iii</i>
PREFACE	<i>viii</i>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	<i>ix</i>
INTRODUCTION	<i>x</i>
1. Evan’s Model For Collection Development	
<i>Basri Hassan, Ruhill Fahima Mohammad, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	<i>1</i>
2. Librarian Competencies And Experiences In Collection Development	
<i>Basri Hassan, Ruhill Fahima Mohammad, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	<i>7</i>
3. Digital Reference Service Guidelines	
<i>Rasyidah Mohd Daud, Basri Hassan, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	<i>11</i>
4. Emperical Studies In digital Reference Services	
<i>Rasyidah Mohd Daud, Basri Hassan, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	<i>23</i>
5. Analysis Of Librarian’s Reference Interview	
<i>Rasyidah Mohd Daud, Basri Hassan, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	<i>33</i>
6. Level Of Digital Reference Services Offered	
<i>Rasyidah Mohd Daud, Basri Hassan, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	<i>41</i>
7. Issues And Problems Of Reference Services	
<i>Rasyidah Mohd Daud, Basri Hassan, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	<i>53</i>
8. OPAC Evolution	
<i>Musa Mohamed Ghazali, Yushiana Mansor</i>	<i>61</i>

9. Subject Search In OPAC	
<i>Musa Mohamed Ghazali, Yushiana Mansor</i>	67
10. Users' Experience In Using OPAC	
<i>Musa Mohamed Ghazali, Yushiana Mansor</i>	73
11. Searching For Islamic Works Using OPAC	
<i>Musa Mohamed Ghazali, Yushiana Mansor</i>	87
12. Factors Affecting OPAC Subject Search	
<i>Musa Mohamed Ghazali, Yushiana Mansor</i>	102
13. Users' Perceptions Of IIUM OPAC	
<i>Musa Mohamed Ghazali, Yushiana Mansor</i>	119
14. Development And Application Of Classification Schemes	
<i>Lukmanul Hakim, Yushiana Mansor</i>	127
15. Classifying Internet Resources	
<i>Lukmanul Hakim, Yushiana Mansor</i>	135
16. Web User Evaluation	
<i>Lukmanul Hakim, Yushiana Mansor</i>	143
17. Catcha.com.my: Principles And Structure	
<i>Lukmanul Hakim, Yushiana Mansor</i>	149
18. Classificatory Models Of Catcha.com.my	
<i>Lukmanul Hakim, Yushiana Mansor</i>	159
19. User Evaluation Of Catcha.com.my	
<i>Lukmanul Hakim, Yushiana Mansor</i>	165
20. Catcha.com.my: User Satisfaction Of Classificatory Model	
<i>Lukmanul Hakim, Yushiana Mansor</i>	181

21. Students' Perceptions Of School Resource Centre Quality	
<i>Wahidah Mohd Zain, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	187
22. Measuring Quality At School Resource Centre	
<i>Wahidah Mohd Zain, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	195
23. Intensity Usage Of School Resource Centre	
<i>Wahidah Mohd Zain, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	209
24. Material Used At School Resource Centre	
<i>Wahidah Mohd Zain, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	219
25. Time Of Access At School Resource Centre	
<i>Wahidah Mohd Zain, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	231
26. Awareness Of The Red Spot Materials	
<i>Wahidah Mohd Zain, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	241
27. Quality Collection At School Resource Centre	
<i>Wahidah Mohd Zain, Ahmad Bakeri Abu Bakar</i>	247
28. Metadata For Digital Art Objects	
<i>Safura Idris, Yushiana Mansor</i>	271
29. Selected Metadata for Images	
<i>Safura Idris, Yushiana Mansor</i>	277
30. Searching And Retrieving Digital Images	
<i>Safura Idris, Yushiana Mansor</i>	285

9. SUBJECT SEARCH IN OPAC

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ABSTRACT

This chapter shares important findings from previous research of OPAC user studies. User studies gave useful insights into how users interact with OPAC in locating library materials. Compared to known-item search, subject search has been found to be more problematic. A number of factors contributed to such phenomena. Factors to improve subject search in OPAC is discussed.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Previous studies of users' interaction with OPAC found that the users frequently used the "known item search" feature as an access point to locate the library materials compared to the subject search. It was also found that users faced more difficulties and problems when doing subject search compared to known items searches. Large and Bahesti (1997) proved that in transaction logs analysis, it was suggested that anything from 24% to 78% of OPAC searches were for authors or titles. User surveys pointed to a slightly narrower range between 33% and 67%. This reflects the preference of known items search. Studies of card catalogue use showed that more experienced users of the card catalogue, including library staff, faculty, and advanced students, were more likely to perform known item searches than subject searches (Larson, 1991).