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## THE USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES AMONG THE USERS OF PENANG PUBLIC LIBRARY CORPORATION

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**Abstract.** Public libraries place importance on information technology for the delivery of quality services. One aspect of quality services is knowing the usage in the electronic information resources (EIRs) among the users. This study was carried out to investigate the use of the EIRs at the Penang Public Library Corporation (PPLC). The findings revealed that EIRs services provided by PPLC are being regularly used by the users. It was noted that the younger group relied more on the EIRs. The most preferred EIRs were Internet (51.9%) and OPAC (43.2%). The preference of Internet was higher among school students with 25% users and college students with 17.2% users, whereas preference of OPAC was higher among the professional group with 30% users. It was determined also that most of the users who used Internet were for information searching. For OPAC, they seemed more likely to use title search in searching library materials and they learned to use the OPAC by themselves. The usage of other EIRs were less popular with Electronic Journals (19.1%), Online databases (16.0%) and CD-ROMs (7.4%). It is recommended that PPLC must strive aggressively to promote the less popular EIRs that are provided but seldom used by the library users. PPLC also needs to improve its training programme in order to help users to enhance the use of EIRs.

### Introduction

Traditionally, libraries have been defined as organizations that acquire, organize and disseminate information. Libraries are needed to enrich our minds and defend our right to know, just as other institutions that protect our safety and property.

The Oxford Dictionary, Thesaurus and Wordpower Guide (2001) defines a “library” as a building or room containing a collection of books and periodicals for use by the public or the members of an institution. Saskatchewan Libraries (2001) defines a library as a social institution, as libraries reflect and shape society itself. One of its fundamental roles is the preservation of information and knowledge for the library patron. Simply stated, libraries are still the most likely place where one can find specific information in an easily accessible, physical location.

Libraries today are known as a vast store of information, and have the ability to organize, manage and disseminate information and knowledge which can contribute in achieving a knowledge-rich society in any country. As the twentieth-first century begins, it has turned libraries and information centers into new institutions with the growth in the electronic dissemination of information. This trend is likely to help libraries continue existing as in the past. However, the basic purpose of libraries to organize and disseminate information is now needed more than ever. Moreover, with the widespread availability and use of electronic information, libraries are no longer defined by the size of their physical collection but rather by the amount of information to which they can provide access.

Based on the definitions above, libraries were generally divided into five major categories; National Libraries, Academic Libraries, Public Libraries, Special Libraries and School Libraries. The five types of libraries mentioned are only the primary kinds. In reality many libraries are combinations or blends of more than one basic type. Each library has its general roles and a specific group of customers to serve.

### *Public Libraries and Their Roles*

According to the *IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (1994)*, the Public Library is the local center of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users. The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access to all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. All age groups must find material relevant to

their needs. Collections and services have to include all types of appropriate media and modern technologies as well as traditional materials.

The roles of public libraries are described in many documents, including manifestos. The first Public Library Manifesto was published in 1945 and later revised in 1972 and 1994. The *IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto* (1994) describes the role of public libraries as:

“the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for life long learning, independent decision-making and cultural development for the individual and social groups” and

“the Public Library as a living force for education, culture and information and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women.”

Ordinarily, the public library has been considered as a purveyor of culture through the provision of literature and a provider of educational materials. In most developing countries the educational role has been extended not only to support the informal educational enrichment program needed by the lifelong learner, but also to serve as a resource for the development of reading habits of its public (Ahmad Bak-eri, 1998).

Providing access to knowledge in a variety of formats to support formal and informal education has been the basis in the foundation and maintenance of most public libraries and remains the core purpose of the public library.

### ***Public Libraries in Malaysia***

The 19<sup>th</sup> century is important to Malaysian library development because it witnessed the birth of three public libraries that is Penang Library, Malacca Library and The Kuala Lumpur Book Club, which have survived until today. The Kuala Lumpur Book Club is now known as *Pustaka Peringatan Kuala Lumpur*.

The Penang Public Library was opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1817 as a subscription library. As the British influence spread across the states of Peninsular Malaya, more subscription libraries were established. Malacca established its first subscription library in 1818, followed by Kuala Lumpur Book Club, in 1898, and Ipoh in 1930. The first free public library was established in Kota Bahru, Kelantan in 1938, followed by Butterworth in 1954. A public library service in Sabah was formalized with the establishment of Sabah State Library in 1953 (Lim, 1970).

In 1965, a Standing Committee on Public Libraries was set up by *Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia* to encourage the organization and development of public libraries at all levels throughout Malaysia. In 1968, the Blueprint for Public Library Development was launched.

Today, public libraries in Malaysia often function as local centers for making knowledge and information readily available to the general public through its main library, district libraries, branch libraries, town libraries, mobile libraries, village libraries and reading rooms.

### ***The Penang Public Library Corporation***

The first library to be established in Malaya under the British was a small subscription library in Penang in 1817. As a subscription library, it was formed as an independent society and was managed by a Committee elected annually at the Annual General Meeting of members. The Secretary of the Committee served in an honorary capacity as “librarian”, but he was usually assisted by a paid library clerk who was responsible for maintaining all routine records.

Membership of the library tended to exclusive in those days. Not everybody could join as a member although he/she was willing to pay the required entrance fee and monthly subscription. In the case of Penang Library his/her acceptance as a member was conditional upon his/her obtaining a two-thirds majority in a ballot by members. The library was used mostly by Europeans. Furthermore, the library was founded to cater specifically for the reading needs of the European community. Little is known about the early history due to the Japanese invasion (Lim, 1970).

On June 13 1972, the Penang Public Library Corporation Enactment was passed by the State Assembly. With the implementation of this enactment, the Penang Public Library Corporation was formed. It took over the Penang Library in 1972 and the Butterworth Library in 1974. In April 1973, the Penang Library decided to provide free library services to motivate and encourage the people to use the library facilities. Only a refundable deposit was charged at the time of enrollment. With the amendment of the Penang Public Library Rules (Amendment) 1991, a new policy was implemented to charge subscription and registration fees to be a member of the library (PPLC, 2003).

### Present Situation

The Penang Public Library Corporation currently has its headquarters in Seberang Jaya, Perai (mainland) and its branches in George Town, Balik Pulau, Bukit Mertajam and Jawi. The corporation also has its own Children's Library in Jalan Scotland, Penang, and 1 township library in Bagan Ajam, 2 libraries at shopping mall in KOMTAR and Bayan Baru, 51 village/community cyber libraries and 10 mobile libraries. All these libraries are well distributed all over the island and the mainland. The library network is widespread and located not only in the urban areas but also in the remote villages, thus establishing a network of information services among the public. According to Penang Public Library Corporation, it has made a paradigm shift by developing all its libraries as electronic libraries (being the first public library in Malaysia to have linkages to all its libraries), taking advantage of the enabling technologies, creating a single, integrated virtual library. The aim is to make global intellectual knowledge readily available online to the general public through its 69 service points.

### Management of the Library

Moving to a knowledge-based society requires the Penang Public Library Corporation to visualize and strategize its mission and vision to create services combining the traditional library and web-based services. As any organization, Penang Public Library Corporation stated clearly its vision and mission as follows:

*Vision:* Penang Public Library Corporation as a medium towards information, a knowledgeable and reading society to achieve the nation's vision.

*Mission:* Ensure citizens of Penang enjoy the opportunities of various hi-tech services parallel to state expansion and development program.

It is clear that electronic information resources provided by the Penang Public Library Corporation play an important role to the communities. The library has visualized and strategized its mission and vision to create new services in line with the advancement of the technology. However, little is known on how the electronic information resources are being utilized in meeting the needs of the public user.

A study was carried out in early 2005 to the use and effectiveness of electronic information resources among the users of Penang Public Library Corporation. This paper reports on the findings of the study.

### Methodology

This study employed a multi-method approach to collect data; including a printed questionnaire survey, group interview, observations, and examination of documents.

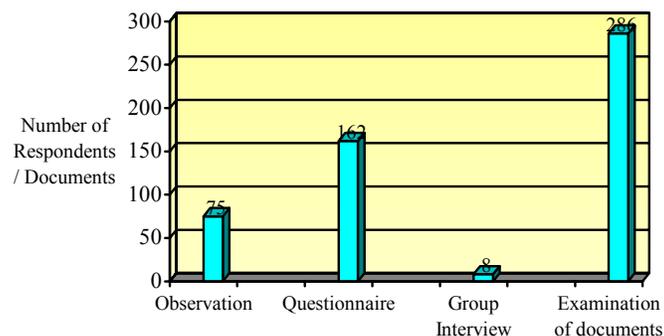


Figure 1. Methods used in the study

### Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of three sections; Section A comprised 4 questions related to demographic information such as gender, age, race and category. Section B comprised of 15 questions which asked general questions pertaining usage of the EIRs. Section C comprised 7 questions which focus on the satisfaction with EIRs and the performance of the library. In this section questions using a five point

Likert-type scale of 0 – 5 ranging from No Opinion, Very Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Satisfied and Very Satisfied were applied and there were two questions were open-ended to obtain the respondents ideas and comments in their own words. A total of 200 forms have been distributed to users of Penang Public Library Corporation who visited the Cyber Cafe, OPAC Section and Electronic Journal Section. The questionnaires were distributed from 22<sup>nd</sup> January until 19<sup>th</sup> February 2005; and were personally hand-delivered. Out of 200 questionnaires distributed, 162 were returned, with a response rate of 81%. The 162 respondents were fairly balanced in terms of gender, with 85 (52.47%) females and 77 (47.53%) males. In terms of race, the results show that there were 87 (53.7%) Malay respondents, 38 (23.5%) Chinese, 35 (21.6%) Indians, and 2 (1.2%) Others, comprising Siamese and Sikh. Table 1 shows the Cross Tabulation of Gender and Race. Table 2 shows the category of the respondents.

**Table 1. Breakdown of respondents**

		Race				Total
		Malay	Chinese	Indian	Others	
Gender	Male	44	21	10	2	77
	Female	43	17	25	0	85
Total		<b>87</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>162</b>

**Table 2. Category of Respondents**

Category	Frequency	Percent
Professional	31	19.1
College student	25	15.4
School student	23	14.2
University student	19	11.7
Academician	16	9.9
Businessman/woman	15	9.3
Housewife	13	8.0
Unemployed	9	5.6
Retired/Pensioner	3	1.9
Others	8	4.9
Total	<b>162</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From the table above, it can be seen that the majority (60.4%) of the respondents were professionals, college, school and university students.

The survey data was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) Version 12.0 for Windows.

### **Observations**

Two sessions were conducted and the main objective is to gain the pattern of EIRs usage among the users. A total of 75 users were observed on 8<sup>th</sup> January and 19<sup>th</sup> February 2005. The observations were manually recorded and the data were analyzed. Based on field observation, the data collected was recorded and information was jotted in a log book. The frequency of occurrences was calculated. All data was analyzed for similarities and differences.

Observation among the users using OPAC was conducted to obtain information and to investigate the following aspects:

1. Which group (younger or older) uses the EIRs most
2. The amount of time spent accessing information at each section
3. Whom did they ask for help and

4. Which section of the library is the most popular

***Group Interview***

The Group Interviews were carried out on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2005. The target groups were selected based on regularly users who visit the EIRs section. They were selected mainly because as regular users they can express ideas and give some comments and also suggestions on the effectiveness of the EIRs services provided by the library. Eight participants were selected for the discussions. Those users were approached and who were willing to participate in the interview were invited. They were first asked some introductory questions, aiming to get some general information. Later, they were asked to give comments and suggestions on aspects which were related to the usage of EIRs. The interview was conducted in both English and Malay language as to allow participants to express themselves freely and also to create an informality situation. The interview took about 1 ½ hours. The time, date and venue of the interview sessions were chosen by the Reference Librarian. The interview was recorded manually by an assistant.

***Examination of Documents***

Documents related to the usage of EIRs; namely Internet and Online Databases were examined and analyzed. A total of 21 documents of the Online Databases and the total of 265 documents of Internet usage were examined. Documents were examined and the data was coded manually and was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) Version 12.0 for Windows.

***Findings***

***Usage of Electronic Information Resources (EIRs)***

*EIRs usage among PPLC Library Users*

One of the main objectives of this survey was to investigate the EIR usage of the PPLC library users. Based on the respondents feedback, 108 (66.7%) of the respondents indicated that they used EIRs and only 54 (33.3%) did not use EIRs provided by the library.

The younger group uses EIRs more than the older group. This is seen in the first two groups of 13 – 29 years with a total of 79 respondents who used EIRs, compared to those of the age 30 and above where only 29 respondents used EIRs. This is also supported from the observations done on 8<sup>th</sup> January and 19<sup>th</sup> February 2005 between 10.15am - 4.30pm, where it was observed that there were 51 younger group users used EIRs compared to 14 older users.

Thus it can be inferred that the younger library users use electronic information resources more than older users.

*Types of EIRs Used*

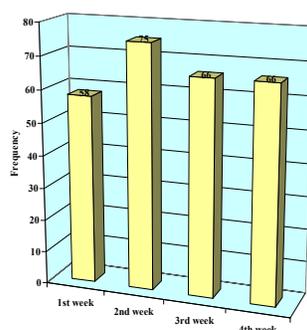
Users were asked the types of EIRs used. It was observed that Internet and OPAC had the highest users, with 88 (54.3%) respondents and 68 (42%) respondents respectively, while only 13 (8%) said they used CD-ROMs. This suggests that Internet and OPAC were utilized more by the PPLC users. However, it is interesting to note that all EIRs provided by PPLC are being used by the users. The findings showed that the usage positively matches the PPLC mission to ensure citizens of Penang enjoy the opportunities of various hi-tech services parallel to the state's expansion and development program.

*Users' Access Time Using Internet*

The highest percentage 90.6% of the users spent one hour of their time while accessing the Internet.

*Variation in use of Internet*

Based on the examination of document as shown in Figure 1, it showed the variation use of Internet by week.



**Figure 1. Total Usage of Internet in the Month of January 2005 (n=265)**

From the analysis, it was observed that, usage of Internet is slightly higher on the 2<sup>nd</sup> week and relatively less in the 1<sup>st</sup> week. However, it was observed that the usage of Internet has almost similar distribution throughout the weeks.

#### *Purpose of Using Internet*

Users were asked to indicate their usage of Internet services provided by the library. From the results, it was observed that 84 respondents (51.9%) used the Internet. This represents 66.7% of the EIR users. Their main purpose of using the Internet was to search for information as reported by 37% of the respondents.

This finding is similar to Al-Haddabi (2004) who noted that 58.4% postgraduate's students preferred to use Internet for their information searching.

However, from the group interview, nearly all participants reported that they used Internet to look up for information to do their assignments.

#### *Usage of OPAC*

66.0% of the respondents, representing 66.7% of the EIR users, used the OPAC.

#### *Searching Method*

Out of 70 respondents (43.2%) who used OPAC, 39 respondents (24.1%) searched by title. This suggests that users primarily searched for resources by title. This may be due to users being more familiar with the title than other search approaches. It may also be that they remembered the title better than an author. The low use of searching by keywords is surprising.

These results are similar to the findings of (Norden and Lawrence, 1981 and Sirdhar, M.S, 2002) who found that the title searches were more frequent than author searches. It is also similar to a study done by Ariyapala and Edzan (2002), which revealed that the highest percentage of OPAC used, was to find book title (81.0%).

#### *Users' Access Time using OPAC*

Through observations done on 8<sup>th</sup> January and 19<sup>th</sup> February 2005 between 10.15am - 4.30pm each day, the average user access time using OPAC was calculated. Most users spent only a short amount of time (5-10 minutes) accessing the OPAC. However, in certain circumstances the same user kept on continuing accessing OPAC several times.

#### *Reasons for Not Using EIRs*

54 respondents (33.3%) did not use EIRs provided by the PPLC. The reasons given by 22 respondents (13.8%) were that they did not need EIRs, 12 respondents (7.4%) did not know how to use them, 11 respondents (6.8%) said that they never heard of any and it was complicated and difficult to use.

### **Training in Using EIRs**

The majority of respondents (34 respondents or 21%) were somewhat satisfied with the training, while 28 respondents (17.3%) were dissatisfied. This gives an indication that users felt training was very much required. These findings are in line with (Ibrahim, 2004) who mentioned that training provided by the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) library was rather less satisfied. The findings also supported Ramzy and Ur (2004) who mentioned a large number of users proposed a variety of measures of formal orientation and training to become more effective users. A few comments from the respondents were also made about their dissatisfaction, as outlined below:

1. Complicated to use electronic resources and therefore training is needed
2. No training provided
3. No clear instruction in using EIRs
4. Not enough information given on how to use
5. Explanation on using OPAC is needed.
6. Need assistance in using EIRs

Based on the group interviews on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2005, 4 participants commented that the library should promote the EIRs services. Thus, the library needs to provide extensive training for the users in order to have greater impact on the usage of EIRs.

Based on the observation done on 8<sup>th</sup> January and 19<sup>th</sup> February 2005, it was found that the OPAC terminals are situated quite far from the Librarian's Desk. This situation might hinder the users to approach the librarian easily. As a result, users seemed to use the systems on their own or were more likely to ask friends/parent more compared to approaching the Librarian for help. This finding is in line with the study done by Ariyapala and Edzan (2002) who found that 66.7% of their students learnt OPAC by themselves. This finding is also supported by the group interviews, where a few respondents commented that they were 'shy' to approach the librarian. This cannot be explained to why they were reluctant to approach the librarian.

In order to better serve the users it was suggested that the staff of PPLC must always be proactive in offering their help to the users as librarians are the forefront of information and dissemination. This is in line with the study done by Tenopir (2003) who mentioned that the existence of the libraries is needed as users rely more on electronic subscriptions provided by the libraries. Previous researches suggested that library services could be upgraded by providing more library materials and educating the users to gain help from the librarians whenever needed.

### **EIRs Advantages and Disadvantages**

On the pros and cons of using EIRs, *fast and efficient* seemed to be thought of as an advantage by most respondents (34%) while another 24.7% considered it as *easy to get information* and 22.2% indicated as *variety of information* available.

This was also mentioned in the group interview where the advantages of Internet were perceived as information that is available 24 hours a day. Two respondents stated,

*"Can do things freely"*

*" Gives the ability to do work at anytime of the day until late at night"*

The three main disadvantages of EIRs that were ranked according to percentage as follows:

- |                                       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Takes time                         | 25.3% |
| 2. Difficult to get right information | 17.8% |
| 3. Relevancy of information           | 14.8% |
| 4. Insufficient information           | 11.1% |

During the group interviews; most frequently mentioned factor about disadvantages of the Internet usage was the quantity of information that was obtained. It was difficult to determine the relevant information. As quoted by a respondent:

*"You can get carried away by keeping on searching and ended-up looking at irrelevant information."*

### ***Users' Suggestions on How to Improve EIRs Services Provided by PPLC***

This section gathered the respondents' opinions on how to improve EIRs services provided by PPLC. A total of 64 (60.5%) respondents gave their suggestions. Those suggestions can be categorized as follows:

1. To add computers in the Internet Section and speed up the connections
2. To add OPAC terminals
3. Maintenance of the computers need to be look into
4. Need staff to assist the users
5. Need user education program
6. Promote the services provided
7. Reduce charges or provide free service of the Internet

### ***Summary of the Findings***

The analysis of the data led to the followings findings:

1. All EIRs provided by PPLC are being used by the users and it positively matches the PPLC's mission.
2. Younger age group rely more on the EIRs.
3. Internet is the most popular EIRs used and this is followed by OPAC. However the usage of CD-ROMs, Online databases and Electronic Journals has not been fully utilized by majority of the respondents due to lack of awareness and effective promotions by the library.
4. Reasons for not using EIRs included being unaware of the services, not needing the electronic resources, and not knowing how to use.
5. Library users requested guidance from the librarian and effective training programmes to help them in using the EIRs efficiently.

## **Discussion**

### ***EIRs usage in PPLC***

Based on the findings, the demographic factors (age and category of respondents), the number of respondents who used the EIRs was found to be from the school, college, university and professional groups. The younger group used the EIR differently than older group. The younger group in the age of 13 – 29 years was more likely to use Internet for:

Chatting	-	89.5%
Email	-	84.5%
Browsing WWW	-	84.3%
Assignment	-	83.3%
Games	-	83.3%
Information searching	-	78.5%

Respondents over the age of 30 and above used Internet activities less. Older group was most likely to use EIRs for:

Information searching	-	21.7%
Browsing WWW	-	15.8%
Email	-	15.5%
Chatting	-	10.6%
Assignment	-	16.7%
Games	-	-

Whereas for the usage of Online databases, CD-ROMs and electronic journals it was found out the age of 29 years and above used more of the services. This is due to the usage of these types of EIR was more specific to certain category of users. Internet and OPAC were seen as EIRs preferred among the PPLC users. This was probably due to their familiarity in using these types of electronic information resources. Another possible reason could be that the respondents had been exposed to the Internet much earlier as compared to other types of EIRs. Through the findings, it was indicated that the users used the EIRs according to their preferences. This suggested that users may use online database, electronic journals and CD-ROMs more frequently and if they were aware of their benefits. In order to help users

enhance the use of others EIRs, PPLC need to adequately promote others EIRs and improve its training programme.

### ***Training on the use of EIRs***

In today information age it should be agreed that there is an increase in information resources available especially those published electronically. Individuals who were not familiar with these sources will not be able to select the most accurate and effective one and will not benefit from its content. Therefore, it was suggested that training on the use of these resources should be done as to promote the usage of it.

The study found that 43.9% respondents (very dissatisfied + dissatisfied + somewhat satisfied) were less satisfied with the training provided by the PPLC. Therefore, it is important for the library to provide good user education programme that could increase the user's capability in 'information skills'. Without good training these valuable electronic resources will be underutilized by the majority of the users. PPLC should also conduct workshops to introduce and demonstrate to the users the full range of EIRs available, especially electronic journals, online databases and CD-ROMs.

Based on the findings, there were some respondents who perceived that information on the Internet was 'difficult to get the right information' and that it was 'difficult to determine relevant information.' Internet was seen as a rich source of information and the library could help to improve the users on Internet information literacy by creating online tutorials. These online tutorials could be a practical use in finding the information needed. The online tutorials should provide some basic Internet search tools, such as search engines and how to use the best keywords for good search strategy. Internet training is important for users who have lack in-depth experience or even for those who have better understanding because technology is always ongoing change.

Hopefully, after attending the training programme the users would develop positive attitude towards the library and feel more confident when using the library services. PPLC must provide training on an-going basis because not all users could use all the resources provided unaided and professional help is very often needed.

### ***Reasons for not using EIRs***

Based on the findings that 7.4% of the respondents 'don't know how to use', there is a possibility that they did not obtain the professional library help they need or they were reluctant to approach the librarian for assistance. In this case the library needs to improve the training program. The library also needs to do marketing and promotion for the EIRs services provided, because it was clearly stated that 6.8% of the respondents answered 'never heard' about the services. In this case the library needs to take a more aggressive approach to market the EIRs. Beside that, 6.8% of the respondents stated that they did not use EIRs because it was 'complicated and difficult to use.' In this situation PPLC should set some strategies to provide training or individual user assistance to some potential users.

However, 13.8% of the respondents said that they did not need EIRs. This may be because they did not know the advantages of EIRs. It is important to note that according to the Public Library Service, IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development (2001), the public library should help its users develop skills that will enable them to make the most effective use of the library's resources and services.

### ***New roles of the Librarians***

Through the observations, it was found out that lack of efficiency of the librarian somehow had led to the low usage of the EIRs. The librarian seemed to neglect the needs of the users, by not attending the users when they faced problem of accessing the EIRs services. This may be due to the fact that PPLC did not have enough staff to attend all the users, or the librarians were bogged down by their heavy workload. The request for guidance and assistance, as suggested by the respondents also justifies this observation.

Nowadays, with the great variety of electronic resources offered by the library, librarians are often seen as electronic-resources expert. PPLC should emphasize on enhancing the role of reference librarian and training of library users for EIRs use should be a high priority. In fact the users need more guidance in using electronic resources than they did in using a library of print materials. Reference librarian should play an important role in advising and recommending these electronic resources that are available in the library and help the users in using them at the point of enquiry and information need. The librarian must develop and maintain a good knowledge of the content and scope of each resource.

## Conclusion

The overall findings of this study revealed that the users at Penang Public Library Corporation used EIRs and the younger group used more of the EIRs services. However it is interesting to note that the age group of 60 and above also used the EIRs services provided by the library. Through these findings it also indicated that the users used EIRs according to their preference and accessibility of the EIRs. Internet and OPAC were seen to be the preferred EIRs. In order to increase the usage of other EIRs, PPLC needs to promote and improve the training programme so as to create awareness of their benefits. Through the suggestions given by users, PPLC should actively guide the users in recommending the resources and help the users in using the electronic resources. The findings also stated that there were users at PPLC who did not use EIRs services. Given this scenario, PPLC needs to plan in term of minimizing the percentage of non-users of EIRs.

## Concluding Statement

The purpose of this study was to find out the usage of EIRs among the users at Penang Public Library Corporation (PPLC), their level of satisfaction with the services provided, satisfaction on the training, and suggestions for improvement. It was found that all EIR facilities provided by the library were being used by the users at different levels. They were generally satisfied with the services but were only somewhat satisfied with the training and they hoped for more training and facilities. It is hoped that the findings will be useful to the PPLC and that the study has made a contribution to the body of knowledge on the use of electronic information resources.

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**Editor's Note: A longer version of this paper can be found on the A-LIEP conference Web site at <http://www.ntu.edu.sg/sci/a-liep>.**