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A Study of Journal Overlaps, Duplicates and Costs
in the field of Computer Science held in Selected
Malaysian University Libraries

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out the holding status of the journal collection in computer science in five selected local university libraries, that is libraries of the University of Malaya (UM), University of Science Malaysia (USM), University of Technology Malaysia (UTM), National University of Malaysia (UKM) and University Putra Malaysia (UPM). These universities are selected because they offered courses on computer science. The study also aims to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of computer science journal collection in these universities and the degree of duplicates, overlaps, and the costs of serials in computer science. The study focused on 301 current journal titles of computer science listed under seven subject categories in *Journal Citation Report (JCR)*. The study involves the checking of availability and holding of these titles in the five university libraries through their online public access catalogue (OPAC). The listed journal titles were also checked against *ULRICH's International Periodicals Directory* (1999) for their prices, frequencies and full titles. The results show that the title availability of journals in computer science is generally poor ranging from over 40% by UTM and 16% for UKM and UM achieved an availability status of 34.22%. Of the 301 journal titles, 115 (38.20%) titles overlap among the libraries, 97 titles (32.23%) represent unique titles, and 89 titles (29.57%) have not been subscribed. The percentage of unique titles is high for UM and UTM libraries. The percentage of overlaps was much higher compared to unique titles, indicating that the five university libraries in Malaysia hold many similar journal titles in computer science. UM and UTM have the same number of overlap titles (83 each, 48%). The degree of title overlaps in terms of subject categorization was also analysed. A study of the journal prices

indicate that most have increased their prices for about more than 50%. In order to study the cost of overlaps, UM library's overlap journal titles was taken as a case study. The 83 overlap titles subscribed by UM were also held by more than two libraries. The costs of the overlaps are calculated according to the cost of overlapping for two, three, four and five libraries. The cost of overlap for UM library is US\$79,650.40 and it is taken that if two libraries subscribe the same title the cost will be doubled to US\$159,300.80. From the 83 sampled titles, 27 titles were held in two libraries, 22 titles held in three libraries, 28 titles overlapped in four libraries and 6 titles were held by 6 libraries. Overall, the cost of overlaps was calculated as US\$163,170.60, which can be reduced if the libraries cooperate in an agreed acquisition programme to battle the escalating journal prices.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

IEEE – Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineerings

ISI – Institute of Scientific Information

ISSN – International Standard Serial Number

JCR – Journal Citation Reports

NDLF – National Digital Library Federation

OCLC – Online Computer Library Center

OPAC – Online Public Access Catalogue

SCI – Science Citation Index

STM – Science, Technology and Medicine

UKM – Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

UM – Universiti Malaya

UPM – Universiti Putra Malaysia

USM – Universiti Sains Malaysia

UTM - Universiti Teknologi Malaysia