

ABSTRACT

The primary aim of this study was to assess the information needs of foreign women in Malaysia, with a particular focus on the Sudanese community. The study identified the main information needs, the sources they used to find the information, their use of the library and the types of materials they utilized in seeking information.

A postal questionnaire was used for data collection. Ninety copies of questionnaires were distributed to the Sudanese women living in Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya. The response rate was 73.3%, with 66 out of the 90 questionnaires being returned. The majority of the respondents were housewives (48.5%) with students being next (33.3%).

An analysis of the data showed that the main information needs were related to continuing their education, the education of their children, parenting, concerns about their family health, child-care, tackling youth problems and other every day concerns. The respondents showed a tendency to have multiple information needs and sources. The main sources of information for housewives were through contact with friends, radio, television and newspapers. The students cited the library and the Internet as their main information sources. The student respondents mentioned books as their main sources of information in the library, while journals, the Internet and newspapers came next.

The main obstacles in meeting the information needs of the respondents, were limitations in *Bahasa Melayu* and the English language, lack of information

regarding continuing their education, chances of education for their children and lack of finance.

On the facilities available in the library, it was found that CD-ROMs and the Internet were mostly used. It was noted also that most of the students did not have library user instruction programs.