

LEGAL DEPOSIT OF ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS:
PERPUSTAKAAN NEGARA MALAYSIA'S EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to analyse the statistical data of non-print/ electronic publications received and registered by the National Depository Centre, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia since the enforcement of the *Deposit of Library Material Act, 1986*. Statistical data of non-print/electronic publications received from the years 1988 to 2000 were obtained from the National Depository Centre, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia. The study revealed that out of the 7,926 titles of non-print publications received and registered from the year 1988 - 2000, only 165 titles (2.08%) are electronic publications, of which CD-ROMs constitute 1.87%, while diskettes and computer software constitute 0.19% and 0.03% respectively. The subject coverage of the electronic publications since it was first received and registered in 1996 varied. The findings also indicated that the types of electronic publications received and registered by the National Depository Centre are limited to off-line electronic publications namely, CD-ROMs, diskettes and computer software. The legal deposits of on-line electronic publications are yet to materialise. This study was also supported with the interview technique to obtain information regarding the issues related to legal deposit of electronic publications. The questionnaires developed for the interviews were based on several issues related to legal deposit of electronic publications. They include the ineffectiveness of the legal deposit legislation, inadequate number of staff handling legal deposit of not only electronic publications but also of other non-print material, little public awareness of the importance

of legal deposit of electronic publications and the fear of publishers in legal deposit of electronic publications. As a result of the findings of this study, several recommendations were suggested to ensure success of legal deposit of electronic publications. They include the amendment of the *Deposit of Library Material Act, 1986*, increase in the number of staff and expertise in handling legal deposit of electronic publications, increase public awareness and overcoming publishers' fear of legal deposit of electronic publications and the extension of legal deposit of electronic publications to include on-line electronic publications.