

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The major purpose of this study was to find out how postgraduate students at University of Malaya use the Internet and what they perceive the impact of the Internet to be on the library. It also aimed to find out what changes the librarians at the University of Malaya foresee the Internet will have on the library, and how can they meet the challenge of the Internet.

The methods used to conduct this study were:

1. Questionnaires in multiple choice formats were distributed to collect data from postgraduate students at the University of Malaya as library and Internet users.
2. Interviews were used to collect data from library professionals, to know their expectations of the role of the library in the future. The interviews were in a structured form due to the fact that the size of the sample was small.

#### **Pilot Study**

A pilot survey was carried out to make sure that the questions fit the purposes of the study. Further, it was done to recognize the difficulties that may confront the researcher when implementing the study.

The pilot study also helped to examine some aspects of the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, and the following steps were taken:

1. Adapting the questions used to the target group of the study.

2. Administering the questionnaire to small samples to recognize the extent to which they were adequate and how students responded to them.

The subjects in the pilot study were ten students randomly chosen from the postgraduate student population at the University of Malaya.

The pilot survey helped also to know the following:

1. The extent to which postgraduate students would cooperate with the researcher.
2. The extent to which the questions and language were clear to the target group.
3. The difficulties that might confront the implementation process.

The questions, both in the questionnaire and interview, were changed based on the feedback received.

### **The Population and the Sample**

The population targeted in this research comprised postgraduate students at the University of Malaya who use the UNIX laboratory at the Computer Center, Faculty of Science and the different faculties in UM. The lab was selected because, from a geographical point of view, it was the most central place on the campus. In addition facilities in this lab is open to all postgraduate students from all faculties in the UM.

A simple random sampling technique was used by the researcher to select a sample of postgraduate students at the University of Malaya. About 100

postgraduate students were selected to respond to the questionnaire pertaining to the use of both the UM library and the Internet.

To determine the perceptions of information professionals, a total of 18 professional librarians at the UM library were interviewed to collect information pertaining to the changing role of the library in the future.

The use of two different methods for the different groups stems from the fact that those information professionals were considered to be more experts than students. For this reason, structured interviews were used to obtain more open-ended and useful information. It also anticipated that they would have more diverse views.

## **Instruments**

### **1. The Questionnaire (Appendix 1)**

The questionnaire, which was designed by the researcher, based on other questionnaires used elsewhere consisted of 26 questions to assess students' use of the Internet and their views on the impact that the Internet will have on the library in this era of information technology.

The questionnaire was divided into 5 sections. Section A comprised 3 questions on the background of the postgraduate students. Sections B and C comprised 11 questions pertaining to patterns of use of the Internet. Section D comprised 7 questions that described the assistance provided by librarians to postgraduate students on how to use the Internet efficiently, and finally Section E included questions about the

changes in the role of library and librarians due to the introduction of the Internet.

## **2. The Interview (Appendix 2)**

A prepared list of questions, divided into two main sections was used in the interview. Section A comprised of two questions about the professional and their academic background, while Section B comprised 9 questions about perceptions on the impact the Internet will have on the library in the future and the challenge librarians are expected to face in this era of information technology.

### **Data analysis techniques**

The results of the questionnaire were analyzed statistically using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Cross tabulation was mainly used to find out the relationships between different variables, and hence to find out what effects the Internet will have on the library.