UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA
University Publication Centre (UPENA)

Voice of Academia

Academic Series of Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah

SPECIAL ISSUE: SELECTED PAPERS FORM THE 6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (ICOPS2017)

VoA
Volume 13 (1)
2018

COMMITTEE PAGE

VOICE OF ACADEMIA
SPECIAL ISSUE: SELECTED PAPERS FORM THE 6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ICOPS2017)

Chief Editor
Noor Zahirah Mohd Sidek

Managing Editor
Law Kuan Kheng

Reviewers
Nurliyana Maludin, Faculty of Business & Finance, UNITAR
Nurul 'Ayn Ahmad Sayuti, Faculty of Art & Design, UiTM
Santhanamery Tominathan, Faculty of Business Management, UiTM
Wan Normila Mohamad, Faculty of Business Management, UiTM
Zauyah Abd Razak, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, UiTM
Zuraidah Zaaba, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, UiTM
Dahlia Ibrahim, Faculty of Business Management, UiTM
Wan Adibah Wan Ismail, Faculty of Accountancy, UiTM
Nor Suziwana Tahir, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, UiTM
Mahadir Ladisma, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, UiTM
Hafizah Besar Sa'aid, Faculty of Business Management, UiTM
Nur Fakhzan Marwan, Faculty of Business Management, UiTM
Asri Salleh, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, UiTM
Roziya Abu, Faculty of Information Management, UiTM
Noor Syahidah Mohamad Akhir, Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies, UiTM
Nadrawina Isnin, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, UiTM
Haijon Gunggut, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, UiTM
Nadzri Ab Ghani, Faculty of Accountancy, UiTM
Marzlin Marzuki, Faculty of Accountancy, UiTM
Intan Marzita Saidon, Faculty of Accountancy, UiTM
Fadilah Puteh, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, UiTM
Azree Ahmad, Faculty of Information Management, UiTM
Maznah Wan Omar, Faculty of Business Management, UiTM
Tuan Nooriani Tuan Ismail, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, UiTM
Ainul Muhsein, Pusat Pengajian Pengurusan, USM

Language Editors
Aishah Musa
Zetty Harisha Harun
Robekhah Harun
Syakirah Mohammed
Fathiyah Ahmad @ Ahmad Jali
Bawani Selvaraj
Sharina Saad

IT – Khairul Wanis Ahmad
Formatting & Editing – Etty Harniza Harun
Graphic Designer- Syahrini Shawalludin

Copyright © 2018 by the Universiti Teknologi MARA, Kedah

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission, in writing, from the publisher.

© Voice of Academia is jointly published by the Universiti Teknologi MARA, Kedah and Penerbit UiTM (UiTM Press), Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia, Shah Alam, Selangor. Printed by Perpustakaan Sultan Badlishah, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Kedah.

The views, opinions and technical recommendations expressed by the contributors and authors are entirely their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, the Faculty or the University.

TABLE OF CONTENT

1 **Informative Water Supply Challenges On The Development Of Towns: A Study Of Minna Town Central Nigeria**
Salihu Ibrahim, Ahmad Zaharuddin Sani Ahmad Sabri
Page 1 - 8

2 **Academic Library Outreach Program Encounters**
Nur Amira Eliana Abd Halim, Roziya Abu
Page 9 - 16

3 **Library: An Evolving Entity**
Roziya Abu, Mary Carroll
Page 17 - 27

4 **The Role of Colonial State in the Emergence of Modern Minna Town 1910-1960**
Salihu Ibrahim, Ahmad Zaharuddin Sani Ahmad Sabri
Page 28 - 36

5 **The Efficacy of Online Shaming as a Modality for Social Control**
Haswira Nor Mohamad Hashim, Anida Mahmood, Nurul Shuhada Suhaimi
Page 37 - 45

6 **21st Century Librarian Lead to an Effective Academic Library Services & Development**
Hasniza Hassim
Page 46 - 52

7 **Prevalent Culture of Online Shaming Amongst UiTM Law Students**
Haswira Nor Mohamad Hashim, Anida Mahmood, Nurul Shuhada Suhaimi
Page 53 - 60

Voice of Academia
Academic Series of Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah
Available online at http://voa.uitm.edu.my

Abu & Caroll / Voice of Academia 13 (1) 2018 No. 3

Voice of Academia
ISSN: 1985-5079

LIBRARY: AN EVOLVING ENTITY

Roziya Abu[1], Mary Carroll[2]

Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, 06010 Kedah, Malaysia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received June 2017
Received in revised form
July 2017
Accepted June 2017
Published December 2017

Keywords:
library history, public library, community development, community empowerment

Corresponding Author:
roziya.abu@kedah.uitm.edu.my

ABSTRACT

In the breach on information technological innovativeness, a library has become a more dynamic informative institution. Library's collection development has become more diversified and less physical, and the public library's roles and functions are now extended to not just the storage and gathering of information and knowledge, but also to interacting, communicating and socializing. In many countries around the world, the contemporary public library stands as a community hub. It has become an engaging, inspiring and informative citizen's centre. Hence it helps to build strong and empowered communities. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the initiatives of development activities and programs that underpin libraries and public libraries in supporting their local community development.

©2018 UiTM Kedah. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction of Public Library: The Historical Context of Libraries

Libraries are said to be as old as the written word and to have existed for almost as long as records have been kept (Lerner, 2000). The existence of libraries can be traced to as early as 3000BCE, and libraries are known to have existed in some of the most famous early civilizations including those of ancient Egypt, Babylonia and Sumer. In these early libraries, however, no obvious distinction was made between a 'record room', an archive and a library (Maidabino, 2010).

These early libraries and their collections were mostly associated with civil administration, religion and trade, and they were located in palaces and places of worship. According to Wayne A. Weigand (2009), 'many early libraries were located in temples where scribes recorded information that the governing class considered important, and preserved, classified and arranged it for future reference'. These early library collections included items such as myths, ritual proverbs and hymns, manuals of botany, zoology and mineralogy, mathematics, business records, property ownership and medical remedies. Over time, additional documentation was added to these collections including historical documents and literary works, and these 'record rooms' became more like our current concept of a library.

These early libraries were not public libraries in the sense we understand it today. Libraries, like the library of Alexandria, were built for the purpose of catering to royalty, the clergy, scholars, and other elite members of the community. Despite this, such libraries can be seen as symbols of the

importance and power placed by communities on the organization, control and access to knowledge. These private and royal libraries laid the foundations for more contemporary ideas concerning the place of libraries in communities around the world today. The tradition of such 'exclusive' libraries was to continue in the Western world throughout the next centuries, however, as early as 500BCE a more contemporary idea of the public library began to emerge.

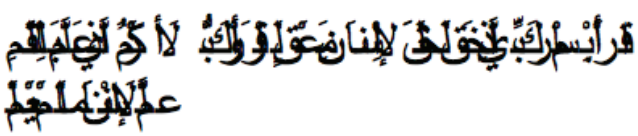
2. Public library development

In 500BCE, the ancient cities of Athens and Samos were among the earliest ancient cities of the Greek Empire to establish the 'first government-sponsored library for the use of their local public and not just for the ruling elites' (Murray, 2009). Meanwhile in 440BCE, the Romans built libraries; according to Murray, 'Roman public libraries were even placed in public baths, a token of the luxurious lifestyle of the empire's wealthiest citizens who grew up with a love of books and literature' (Murray 2009).

Greek and Roman public libraries flourished hand in hand with many private elite and professional libraries, but because of the low literacy rate among the population, these public libraries in reality served only a small number and a small part of the population and finally closed down. Murray states that the fall of the Roman Empire brought 'a culture and intellectual darkness' (Murray, 2009) in the Western world and very few libraries were built in the centuries which followed this roman approach. What remained of the great libraries fell victim to neglect and war.

Libraries did not disappear altogether in the West, and with the spread of Christianity between 450CE and 1450CE, church and monastic libraries began to grow. These monastic libraries laid the foundation for the concept and organization of today's contemporary libraries. In these religious establishments, Christian monks set up a textual copying system and began copying many classical and ancient manuscripts and church writings. These libraries also supported the building of schools serving local clergy and civil servants. As was the situation in the ancient world, however, these libraries were not open to the public and according to Murray (2009, p. 33), 'borrowers were usually nobles or government officials or individuals who were benefactors of the monastery'. This was as close to a public library as a monastic library ever came in this era (Murray, 2009).

While the Western world was plunged into chaos after the fall of the Roman Empire, many of the scholarly traditions remained uninterrupted in the Eastern or Byzantine Empire. In the sixth century in the East, beginning from 610 to 632CE (slowly over a period of 23 years) was the first Islamic Quranic revelations in Mecca. These revelations emphasized the importance of reading and learning (literacy) for humanity and creation, as indicated in the first five verses of Surah Al-Alaq of the Holy Qur'an:



(O Beloved!) Read (commencing) with the name of Allah; who has created (everything); He created man from a mass suspended like a leech (in the mother's womb). Read and your Lord is Most Generous; He Who taught man (reading and writing) by

the pen. He; who (besides that) taught man (all that) which he did not know. (Al-Quran verses 1-5)

This revelation also emphasized on the seeking of knowledge and education, and as a result, by the seventh century CE, knowledge was developing rapidly in the Arab Muslim civilization.

2.1The Arab Muslim World Libraries

Libraries in the Arab Muslim world (as in medieval Europe) became closely attached to places of worship: mosques. Mosques performed multiple tasks in education, from the facilitation to the dissemination of learning and knowledge. In the beginning, these mosque libraries were used exclusively by scholars and the clergy. This was also due to the low literacy rates among the public. However, in later years, the libraries of several mosques had begun to open their doors to public use. Among the most famous of these was 'the House of Wisdom' (Murray, 2009, p. 55) which was open to the public in 830CE in Baghdad but was founded by Caliph Harun Al-Rashid (789-809CE) during the Abbasid period (750-1100CE). The House of Wisdom was well known for its many works of astronomy and science that had been translated into the Arabic language. However, the library lasted only until the Mongols came to Baghdad in 1336CE. Nonetheless, by the 15th century CE, the Arab Islam empire was established in Central Asia, between Eastern and Southern Asia and Europe, and with the fall of Byzantine (Constantinople) to Muslims in 1453, the Arab Muslims had unlimited access to all of the Byzantine Greek and Roman book collections and libraries.

2.2 Asian Libraries

Many followers of Buddhism, Confucianism and Islam transported various religious texts and manuscripts to Asia (Weigand, 2009). In the 6th century BCE, the rise of Jainism, Buddhism and Islam led to the evolution of many religious writings and libraries. These libraries were built to collect, preserve and replicate these religious literatures. In India, for instance, many libraries were established for preserving Buddhist scripts. However, these libraries were attached to palaces and their local places of worship. The Chinese empire was known to be active in compiling official 'manuscripts' and constructing their official libraries. These Chinese libraries were mostly used by scholars to assist the emperor with advice needed; as Lerner (2000) comments: 'the libraries of medieval Europe served the glory of God, but those of China were tools of the state' (p. 40). Under the Han (206BCE to 220CE) dynasty, Chinese literature flourished. The Han founded an imperial training school to educate and produce Chinese scholars. An imperial library was also formally established to 'collect the officially approved classics' and 'to control the detail of the Confucian doctrine that justified their claim to rule China' (Lerner, 2000). Book production rapidly increased after the invention of paper and the use of woodblock printing. This situation allowed followers of Confucius and Buddha to bring their religious texts to other parts of Asia such as India. According to Weigand (2009), three types of libraries existed in India's ancient period (3000BCE to 1206CE), 'some were attached to palaces and courts; others to centers of learning; others to places of worship' (Weigand 2009). Nonetheless, access to these libraries was still limited to scholars, the clergy and elites.

2.3 Western Europe Libraries

In the 17th century, the Reformation in Western Europe, along with the growth of printing and the publishing industry, meant that book learning and literacy were no longer exclusive to the aristocrats and the clerical scholars. Libraries became open to public use; however, back then the concept of public use was not necessarily associated with the current meaning of a public library.

According to an English statesman and scholar, Sir Thomas Bodley (who also spent his retirement years and personal fortune on building a library for the Oxford University; the Bodleian Library), public use in this era meant that 'men could use the library freely, although no one would be permitted to borrow books' (Murray, 2009). In addition, a public library offered very few books to be borrowed; instead books were chained (for protection from theft) and mostly could only be read in-house. At this time, subscription and social libraries were also considered as public libraries; and with war, politics, economic, scientific and social development issues surrounding the daily life of citizens, printed materials such as newspapers became one of the most popular reading materials available to public. Soon many started to join subscription and social libraries. These types of public libraries were provided to the public through local news-stands and stalls (where broadsheets could be put up and sold), and bookshops around the cities.

In the 18th century, various academic libraries around the world developed at a steady pace, along with the emergence of local universities and colleges. Many of these academic libraries were also open to public use, provided that the users were registered members or had subscription registration. In fact, many private libraries were also open to public use but again, only if the users were registered members or had a form of subscription registration (Lerner, 2000; Murray, 2009).

Contemporary librarians generally divide libraries into four types: 'public, academic, school and special ' (Weigand, 2009) . In a more contemporary understanding, the notion of the public library goes beyond just ownership and use; today, the term 'public library' refers to 'the municipal or regional circulating library that is not only publicly owned and tax supported but also open to any citizens who desire to use it' (Harris, 1999); that is, it is a free public library.

3. The 'free' and 'public' library

The contemporary Western idea of the public library has been said to provide the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Many contemporary Western scholars such as Jennifer McDaniel, Aimee Babcock-Ellis and Jessica Hernandezo and Western organizations such as FOLA would similarly define public libraries as institution that:

> established under state enabling laws or regulations to serve a community, district, or region, and provide at least; an organized collection of printed or other library materials; administration by paid staff; have an established schedule in which services of the staff are available to the public; have the facilities necessary to support collection, staff, and schedule; and being supported in whole or in part with public funds. (IMLS, 2012)

On the other hand, the International Encyclopaedia of Information and Library Science describes public libraries as,

[1]This last category constitutes a miscellany, into which are included libraries of many kinds including national libraries (Weigand 2009, p. 539).

[2]Academic libraries are 'libraries that are attached to academic institutions above the secondary or high school level, serving the teaching and research needs of students and staff' (Feather and Sturges 2003, p. 3). A school library 'supports teachers, other school staff and pupils in all areas of the curriculum – literacy and reading; information skills and independent learning – and gives equality of opportunity for all' (Feather and Sturges 2003, p. 567), and Special libraries are 'information resource centers located in corporations, private businesses, government agencies, museums, colleges, hospitals, associations and other organizations with special information needs. Special libraries collect, monitor, organize, analyze, evaluate, package and disseminate resources material for their parent or client organizations' (Feather and Sturges 2003, p. 616).

> provided through public funding for the use and the public good. Public Libraries make use of material in printed, audio-visual and electronic formats in order to collect, preserve, organize, retrieve, disseminate and communicate information, ideas and the creative products of the human imagination. (Feather and Sturges 2003, p. 530)

Both these descriptions of public libraries concur in the fact that public libraries are provided to the public through public funding, and they are for the use of the public.

It is vital for any democratic nations to provide free public libraries to their citizens in the name of political, economic and social progress and development. The idea of the free public library involves a local library funded by local funding such as taxation. In Britain, before the introduction of free public libraries, there were limited types of libraries available to the public; one that was well known was the subscription library (Drake, 2009). These libraries originated in the 17th century and were generally set up by a small group of people within a society, to be used primarily by those who paid a subscription fee. The poor and less fortunate individuals were excluded from the privileges of using these library services. It was only after 1797 that a library became available to the poor members of the society (Thomas, 1966). The introduction of the free public library demolished the monopoly of the elite and of selected groups of individuals. It allowed the lower- and middle-class members of society to participate and develop their knowledge and literacy.

The development of the free library was and is still closely linked with knowledge and free thinking; it developed along with an understanding of the needs of democracy and the need for educated citizens. There is also a strong correlation between the public library movement and public education, with the realization that every citizen has the right to free access to community-owned resources. David H. Stam (2001) emphasizes that 'public library development lead to reforms in both England and the United States to abolish slavery, treat the insane more humanly and educate the young' (p. 145).

Later in the early 20th century, further innovations were introduced in public libraries, namely travelling libraries or 'bookmobiles'; this service involved transporting books to readers in rural or outlying areas (Lagemann, 1989). Contemporary public library collections are not restricted to books; they have almost always contained many different varieties of materials. In contemporary libraries, collections include both printed and non-printed materials; the materials in library collections include manuscripts, recordings, maps, microfiches, CD-ROMs, computer software, online databases, films and audio-visual material. However, the main mission of a public library is to 'collect, organize, preserve and provide access to knowledge and information to the users and community surrounding it' (Orgunsola, 2008, p. 43).

In fulfilling the above mission, public libraries preserve many valuable records of cultures and activities that can be passed down to generations. A library becomes an essential tie in linking the past, present and future of a community and a nation. As stated in the UNESCO Manifesto, 'the Public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision making and cultural development of the individual and social group' (IFLA/UNESCO, Public Library Manifesto 1994).

Information technology has shifted the public library to become a more dynamic information institution. Collection development has become more diversified and less physical, and the public library's roles and functions are now extended to not just the storage and gathering of information and knowledge, but also to interacting, communicating and socializing. In many countries around

the world, the contemporary public library stands for a community hub: 'Public libraries engage, inspire and inform citizens and help build strong communities' (Bundy, 2003a; 2003b). They have also been described as 'the heart of the community' (Goulding, 2006). Anne Goulding in her book, Public Libraries in the 21st Century, argues that although public libraries tend to try to be all things to all people, nonetheless, the idea that surrounds the role and purpose of public libraries has not and will not change: they are the focus of a community's information resources: 'it is about giving people the access to knowledge so that individuals, families, and communities can reach their potential' (Goulding, 2006).

In a dynamic sense, information can be viewed as having a life cycle involving collection, storage, retrieval and dissemination, and within the context of the advancement of technology and the information superhighway, the need for information security and protection has become vital. Nonetheless, whether specific information is meaningful or informative is subject to the information receiver. Information has always been widely accepted as a national economic and social development resource. It is therefore 'not free'. It has to be protected and guarded from being 'misused'.

Protection of information is needed for many reasons. In situations where information is needed for research, planning, education, innovation, management and community development, information becomes 'valuable'; it can also, however, be perceived as a 'threat' to a community, government or country (Henrici, 2001). Information policies are therefore established in order to protect particular information.

4. Contemporary Public Library Development

In Malaysia, the establishment of the 'first non-subscription libraries began with the Carnegie Library in Kota Bharu town, Kelantan in 1938' (Lincoln Resource Centre, 2011, p. 2). This was followed by the Butterworth Library in the State of Penang and in the province of Wellesley (now known as Seberang Perai) in 1954 (Wijayasuria, 1985); it later expanded to several other major towns in Malaysia (Lim, 1974). Through the colonial period, the Malaysian public libraries were very much influenced by the Western colonial and post-colonial powers (Britain and the United States), yet the local indigenous culture remained intact. This has remained a priority for Malaysian public libraries; the NLM and all state public libraries in Malaysia strive hard to promote and preserve their relevant cultures, namely the indigenous Malay, the Malaysian Indian, the Malaysian Chinese and the Malaysian cultures in general, in spite of the strong Western and other external cultural influences. Nonetheless, funds alone will not ensure a public library's success.

4.1 Post-Colonial Influence

The British, with their first settlement in Penang in 1786, were responsible for introducing the formal concept of the library to Malaysia (Lim, 1970). The British established a firm foundation for the Malaysian contemporary educational system (primary, secondary and tertiary) (Hussin, 2004), and later this was followed by the development of library institutions within the education system as a learning resource for school children. When the British education system spread throughout Malaysia, more libraries were needed to serve the increasing number of students. As well as being influenced by the British modes of practice, public libraries in Malaysia have benefited greatly from several Western consultants, such as Hedwiq Anuar, Alex Wilson and John Taylor. The contributions of these consultants is described by Wijayasuriya (1998):

> Hedwig Anuar, he prepared the Blueprint for Public Library Development in Malaysia (1968); Alex Wilson, he prepared the public library State of Kedah development plan (1978); John Taylor, prepared the ten-year development plan for State of Penang Public Library Corporation (1987) and also Stephen Parker, who prepared the public library development plan for the State of Sabah and State of Sarawak. (Wijasuriya, 1998, p. 62)

While contemporary public library development and practice in Malaysia was introduced by the British, influences were also brought by the American library model known as the United States Information Service (USIS). USIS was first established in Mexico in April 1942 and was a joint effort of the ALA (American Library Association) and the US Office of Internal Affairs. The USIS libraries initiated the model of an open shelf collection, namely books, magazine subscriptions, newspapers, government materials, and music materials, as well as microfilms, microfiches and audio-visual materials. The USIS libraries opened 48 hours per week, on most evenings and on Saturdays. Some even operated for short periods of time on Sundays (Sussman, 1973). This format of USIS libraries continues in the current practices of the contemporary public library in Malaysia. USIS in Malaysia later changed its name to LRC (Lincoln Resource Centre), and currently LRC runs many affiliation programs and activities with local public libraries around Malaysia, such as Kuala Lumpur (City) Library, State of Melaka Public Library, State of Sabah (City) Library, State of Sarawak Library, State of Kedah Public Library, State of Kelantan Public Library and State of Penang Public Library.

By 1955, the Malayan Public Library Association (MPLA) had established 62 public libraries and over the years, this number increased to 257 public libraries around Malaysia. However, after independence in 1957, all independent funding came to a halt. Wijayasuriya (1985) states that:

> The MPLA may be considered to be the first attempt to establish a public library service on a national scale. Its [MPLA's] failure emphasizes forcibly the undesirability and impracticality of voluntary support in the field of library promotion. It illustrates what the experience of other countries has already shown, that a national library service can only be provided if supported by public funding. (Wijayasuriya, 1985, p. 75)

In 1968, a state-based decentralized network of library services was recommended and adopted based on the 'Blueprint for Public Library Development in Malaysia' prepared by Hedwig Anuar for the Library Association of Malaysia (Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia). This blueprint attempted to establish a national standard for the Malaysian public library. It was later used to assess the existing service and it also served as a guideline for evaluating and setting up new goals for future public libraries. On September 1st, 1972, the Malaysian National Library Act (80) was passed, and in 1977, the National Library of Malaysia became a State Government Department (Wijasuriya, 1985, p. 77; 1998, p. 62).

4.2 National Library of Malaysia (NLM)

In the beginning, the NLM was established as a unit within the National Archive in 1966; however, the NLM became a full federal department under the Ministry of Education of Malaysia. It was established by the National Library Act (Act 80) passed on 1 September 1972. According to the National Library Act 1972, the NLM was established with the purpose and objective to:

> Make available for the use of the present and future generations a national collection of

> library resources; to facilitate nation-wide access to library resources available within the country and abroad; and to provide leadership on matters pertaining to libraries. (Law of Malaysia, 2006, p. 6)

In keeping with the development of library and information services in Malaysia, this act was subsequently amended in 1987: the NLM was then placed under the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism (MCAT) (Wijasuriya, 1998; NLM, 2011a).

In a multi-ethnic, culturally and linguistically diverse country such as Malaysia, it is a great challenge for a public library to provide services that meet the needs of all Malaysians. As an information service provider, Malaysian public libraries need to formulate strategic plans that will enable their services to create a knowledge base to meet the needs of all groups of Malaysian society effectively and efficiently. The NLM was established to take up this challenge.

Currently, the NLM's role is to coordinate the development of public libraries in all states of Malaysia. The NLM is directly involved in the development of Bahasa Malaysia as the Malaysian National Language and provides support for research activities at national level. At the same time, the NLM provides facilities that contribute to the society's prosperity, and that assist in establishing cultural relations with other countries, while maintaining activities and services related to librarianship as ordered by the Minister (NLM, 2001; 2011a).

In 1987, the NLM extended its responsibility (in accordance with the 1987 amended act) to the establishment of the National Depository Centre to preserve library materials; hence, they act as the National Bibliographic Centre which is in charge of coordinating the national bibliographic network and establishing a national bibliographic database that is accessible to users both locally and abroad. The NLM also operates as the National Centre for conservation, acquisition and documentation of Malay manuscripts; facilitates national standards for public and special libraries; facilitates library cooperation in resource sharing; provides courses to upgrade professionalism in librarianship; and establishes cooperation with national and international professional bodies for the development of libraries (Wijasuriya, 1998; NLM 2001; 2011a).

Despite its expanded responsibilities, the NLM is still accountable for the development of state public libraries, for they are directly linked to the Federal Government . The 9th Schedule of the Federal Constitution (Act A704 Constitution (Amendment) Act 1988) states that libraries are the responsibility of both State and Federal governments. This amendment enables the Director General of the NLM to sit in all state public library board meetings to assist in the planning and coordinating of public library structures in the states . The NLM organizes biannual meetings with librarians of state public libraries to coordinate professional matters and monitor development projects (Wijasuriya, 1998; NLM, 2001; NLM, 2010a). Furthermore, through its Research and Training division, the NLM is responsible for providing courses and examinations for sub-professional staff serving under the Common User Service (CUS) and providing leadership training and programs to all library staff on matters pertaining to libraries in Malaysia (Abu Bakar, 2010a, 2010b); NLM is also responsible for staff confirmation of service and promotion (NLM, 2001, p. 34). In 2009, the total collection of the NLM stood at 3,009,017 including printed and non-printed materials, manuscripts and digital materials. In 2011, there were more than 1,129 public libraries throughout Malaysia including 14 state public libraries (NLM, 2011a).

[3] According to the Incorporation (State Legislatures Competency) Act 1962, public libraries are a state government responsibility

4.3 Malaysian State Public Libraries

Public libraries in Malaysia are run primarily by the State Public Library Corporation in Peninsular Malaysia and the State Library Departments in Sabah and Sarawak. There are 1,408 public libraries in Malaysia; these public libraries are categorized into 14 State Public libraries and six Provincial libraries, 124 Branch or District Libraries, 84 Town Libraries, 1,089 Rural Libraries and 91 Mobile Libraries. State public libraries in Malaysia are overseen by a director and supported by professional and non-professional staff (NLM, 2010a).

According to the 1st Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL) XV Executive Board Meeting Report, the establishment of public libraries in Malaysia is provided for by the Malaysian Federal laws as well as the State Library Enactments (NLM, 2009). Additionally, the Local Government Act provides the administrative structure for the setting up of public libraries by State Local Authorities. This report also states that the Director General of the NLM is a part of the State Public Library Corporation Boards and is required to give advice pertaining to the development of the state public libraries. In addition, under the Malaysian Federal laws, the Federal Government allocates funds according to a five-year development budget as well as being responsible for annual operating expenditures for the state public libraries (NLM, 2009, 2010c).

5. Conclusion

Public libraries have been established as a crucial element in the life of communities. They provide information that is essential for community knowledge and development needs. They are the special agent that promotes the idea of information dissemination and the concept of universal learning (Islam & Islam, 2010). Hence, they offer people and communities access to knowledge and information that are much needed for their 'continuous development of knowledge, personal skills and civic skills and lifelong learning' (Yan & Agnes, 2009, p. 4). Currently, public libraries have increasingly played a key role in community development and in building more cohesive and inclusive communities. Many innovative partnerships and local engagement have supported outreach programs and activities in various libraries. This leads to better community cohesion and improved community relations for public libraries as community hubs. However, the significance of a public library in a community depends on their success in performing their role in meeting the needs of the community, and also how the community values them as an institution that upholds their self-development and the development of their community (Aabo, 2005). In their research on community engagement in public libraries, Hui-Yun Sung, Mark Hepworth and Gillian Ragsdell (2011) established that the involvement of local communities and partnerships are the two main strands in the community engagement process. They suggest that a community project should be community-initiated, community-led and self-sustained, and the library service should act as a facilitator. Nonetheless, community engagement and library partnership are best used to improve and encourage community commitment, participation and involvement in meeting the community's information needs. Moreover, this type of

[4]'The annual federal grant to the states, which is channeled through the NLM, assists in the construction of new library buildings, the renovation of library premises, as well as the purchase of mobile libraries, equipment, and print and non-print materials for the library's collection' (Law of Malaysia 2006).

[5]namely the State Public Library of Melaka; State Public Library of Johor; State Public Library of Perlis; State Public Library of Selangor; State Public Library of Kedah; State Public Library of Pahang; State Public Library of Terengganu; State Public Library of Sabah; State Public Library of Pulau Pinang; State Public Library of Kelantan; State Public Library of Perak; State Public Library of Negeri Sembilan; State Public Library of Sarawak and Memorial Library of Kuala Lumpur.

engagement and partnership will maximize community awareness in improving their local social, cultural, learning and economic outcomes.

References

Aabo, S 2005, 'The role and value of public libraries in the age of digital technologies ', Journal of Librarianship and Information Science, vol. 37, no. 4, pp. 205-11.

Bundy, A 2003a, 'Vision, mission, trumpets: public libraries as social capital', paper presented to NSW Country Public Libraries Association Conference, NSW, Australia.

Bundy, A 2003b, 'The modern public library: the very best investment your community can make', Friends of Libraries Australia.

Drake, M 2009, Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science, Taylor & Francis, 978-0-8493-9712-7 (hardback) 978-0-8493-9711-0 (electronic).

Feather, J & Sturges, P 2003, International encyclopedia of information and library science, 2nd edn, Routledge, London.

Goulding, A 2006 Public Libraries in the 21st Century: Defining Services And Debating the Future.Loughborough University, UK .

Harris, M 1999, History of Libraries in The Western World, 4th edn, The Scarecrow Press Inc., Maryland.

Henrici, I 2001, 'Theoretical Foundation for the Formulation of a National Information Policy for South Africa', University of Pretoria.

Hui-Yun Sung. Hepworth, M. & Ragsdell, G (2011) Community engagement in public libraries. iConference 2011, Seattle, Washington, USA.

Hussin, S 2004, Education in Malaysia: History, System and Philosophy (Pendidikan di Malaysia : sejarah, sistem, dan falsafah), Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur.

IFLA-UNESCO 1994, 'IFLA-UNESCO Public library Manifesto', IFLA-UNESCO.

IMLS. Institute of Museum and Library Services 2012, Public Libraries in the United States Survey, Institute of Museum and Library Services,, viewed 1 February 2012,<http://www.imls.gov/research/public_libraries_in_the_united_states_survey.aspx>.

Islam, MA & Mezbah-ul-Islam, M 2010, 'Community Information Services Through Public Libraries in Bangladesh: Problems and Proposals', Library Philosophy and Practice, no. February 2010.

Lagemann, EC 1989, The Politics of Knowledge: The Carnegie Corporation, Philanthropy, and Public Policy, 1st edn, Wesleyan University Press, Connecticut.

Lerner, FA 2000, Libraries through the Ages, The Continuum Publishing, New York.

Lim, HTE 1974, 'Linraries in Malaysia before teh Coming of the West', Library Review, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1-8.

Maidabino 2010, 'The Availability, Organization, and Use of Archive Records: A study of Public Archives Agencies in Northwestern States of Nigeria', Library Philosophy and Practice.

Murray, SAP 2009, The Library: An Illustrated History, Skyhorse Publishing, Chicago.

NLM 2001, National Library of Malaysia Annual Report, National Library of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.

NLM 2009, 1st CONSAL XV Executive Board Meeting Report: Malaysia (January 2009-December 2009).

NLM 2010a, Annual Rreport to CDNL 2010, National Library of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.

NLM 2010c, 2nd CONSAL XV Executive Board Meeting Report: Malaysia (January 2009-December 2009), NLM.

NLM 2010d, 'Perpustakaan Desa', National Library of Malaysia.

NLM 2011, Dasar Pelupusan Sumber Perpustakaan, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia, viewed12 December 2011, <http://www.pnm.gov.my/docs/DasarLupus.pdf>.

NLM 2011a, NLM History, National Library of Malaysia, viewed 12 May 2011, <http://www.pnm.my/index.php?id=488,http://www.pnm.gov.my/index.php?id=489.

Orgunsola, LA & Okusaga, TO 2008, 'Establishing Virtual Libraries in African Universities: Problems and Prospects', Ozean Journal of Social Sciences 1(1), 2008, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 43-52.

Stam, DH 2001, Memership/Social/Subscription Libraries, Fitzroy Dearborn Publisher, London.

Thomas, K 1966, Early Public Libraries: A History of Libraries in Great Britain before 1850 Library Association, London.

Weigand, WA 2009, 'Libraries and the Invention of Information', in S Eliot & J Rose (eds), A Companion to the History of the Book, Blackwell Publishing, UK.

Wijayasuria, DEK 1985, 'Malaysia: the development of library services', Information Development, vol. 1, no. 2.

Wijayasuria, DEK 1998, 'Towards an Information Society: the Malaysian experience'.

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA CAWANGAN KEDAH

VOA - ISBN:1985-5079