Libraries and information centres in the UAE

Libraries and information centres in the UAE have been categorised broadly as mentioned below to provide the general idea of the libraries and its parent organizations. This is no effort to picture the whole family of libraries in the country but to mention only simple libraries which have been considered by the researcher, hoping that the below mentioned type of classification, would give general impression of the libraries in the UAE. Some of the libraries have been dealt in detail to get the nerve picture of the libraries and information centres in the UAE.

Classification of libraries in the UAE

Government organizations

Federal government

Ministry Libraries

Ministry of Information and Culture

Cultural Foundation of Abu Dhabi Emirate

The Centre for Documentation and Research

The National Library

Arab Gulf Library

Children Library
Public Libraries

Public Libraries of Dubai Emirate
Public Libraries of Sharjah Emirate
Public Libraries in Abu Dhabi and other Emirates

Ministry of Education
University Library
School Libraries
Other academic institutions' Libraries

Ministry of Defence
Military Defence Libraries
Civil Defence Libraries

State government
Oil and Gas Organizations' Libraries
Industries' Libraries
Chamber of Commerce and Industries' Libraries
Municipalities' Libraries
Religious Organizations' Libraries

International and Regional Organizations
Embassies' and Consulate Offices' Libraries
Trade Organizations' Libraries
Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) Library
Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development (ADFAED) Library
Public Sector Organizations (e.g., Etisalat, Banks etc.)
Information/Data Banks (private as well as government)
Private Organizations (e.g., Trade, Industries, educational etc.)

It would be premature to expect the organized library and information services in the private sector because the country is still in its formative stage with respect to the field of library and information services. However, few specialized libraries and information services like Arab Information Bank (AIB) at Dubai, Information Bank of Ajman University of Science and Technology at Ajman etc., are providing a fairly good services to the needy persons and organizations. Most of the libraries are belonging to the government organizations and doing well. This is because of the reason that they have been set up at the time of establishing the infrastructure for the country.

Ministry libraries

Majority of the federal as well as state government offices have established libraries. At the initial stage, these libraries were only a small heap of books and ministry reports. Donated publications were collected from the regional
as well as international organizations at the time of its establishment, which added extra strength to the collection. Libraries belonging to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Finance and Industries, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Information and Culture etc., have been growing along with the passage of time both in quality and in quantity. Same is the case with state government libraries, municipalities' libraries, Chambers of Commerce and Industries' libraries.

Ministry of Information and Culture

There are two departments under this Ministry, viz., the Department of Culture and the Department of Libraries. This thesis is focussing on the development of libraries in UAE and hence the second department i.e., Department of Libraries is considered for discussion. The Department of Libraries is mainly responsible for organizing library services throughout the country. Though some libraries have got independent status, still as the federation policy, the programmes and procedures come under the umbrella of this department. The following three emirates are responsible for maintaining libraries in their respective regions.
The United Arab Emirates felt its necessity of opening the Cultural Centre at the national level within the context of cultural mobility. Thus its founding was in fact, proposed and discussed immediately after its independence in December, 1971. UAE law No. 7 of 1981, gave the Cultural Foundation, an official status, which has been defined as an autonomous public body and states that the foundation is vested with the full legal powers to dispose of its own affairs. The objectives of the Foundation were defined as under: the undertaking of a leading role that comprises the encouragement of cultural activity, through stimulation of a cultural current by exploiting all suitable means such as running the National Library, organizing and conducting a programme of lectures, seminars, symposia, literary competitions etc. Other activities include, organizing the cultural exhibitions of books, arts, folklore dance, and also the encouragement of literary and artistic movements through research, publications, collection of country's history and culture etc.
The Cultural Foundation comprises of three institutions which undertake the various activities directed at achieving the aims of the Foundation. They are:

1) The Centre for Documentation and Research
2) The National Library
3) The Institute for Culture and Arts

The following is the brief introduction of only first two of the above mentioned institutions, giving more emphasis on its library services.

1) The Centre for Documentation and Research

The Centre for Documentation and Research was founded in 1968, three years before the proclamation of the federal state on the 2nd of December, 1971. After experiencing with different affiliations, the Centre became one of the institutions of the Cultural Foundation in 1984.

The activities of the centre are divided into the following spheres:

a) Collection of documents or copies of documents relevant to the United Arab Emirates, in the first place, and
then documents relevant to the Arab Gulf region, and the Arab presence in Eastern Africa to the south of Bab-al-Mandab. Copies of these documents are obtained from foreign archives, such as those of the British India Office, Public Records Office and Foreign Office; Indian, Portuguese, French, German, American and Ottoman archives.

b) Building up a specialized library with a suitable number of books and references on this region, concentrating on the United Arab Emirates. This is the main base for most of the information and details that provides T.V., Radio and Newspapers. It emerges as a very important source to the most of the Gulf and Arab countries and becomes an essential reference to all establishments and government organizations, who need explanations i.e., more details and more information about UAE; specially about the cultural activities and information documents. This library makes available statistics and other information necessary for the Ministry of Information and Culture to prepare plans, studies, programmes. The reports concerned for meetings, agreements etc., of Ministry of Information and Culture are being analysed, classified and arranged in the library for follow up and for future reference. It stores varieties of guides, annual reports and directories of various organizations as reference in the library. Also it takes important
newspapers and other documents for making copy by microfilm periodically in order to facilitate its use at any time.

2) National Library

The National Library of UAE has emerged as a cultural place of Foundation's one of the activities of cultural functions as per the objectives defined in the UAE Law No. 7 of 1981 "concerning the establishment of the Documentation and Cultural institutions foundation". Also it was considered as one of the three institutions which undertook the various activities directed at achieving the aims of the "Cultural Foundation". [4].

The objective of the National Library is to collect the nation's intellectual works and also to assemble a collection of major sources, and as great and as varied a collection as possible of international intellectual works. This collection is arranged and preserved in a way to enable the community in general, and any one with an interest in knowledge and culture, to benefit from it. Efforts are also made to guarantee the safety and protection of this cultural wealth from destruction, decay or loss.
The National Library is also concerned with meeting the needs of children, ladies, and those of adults who had no opportunity to go to school at the normal age of schooling. This is in addition to its endeavours to the requirements of educated and knowledgeable individuals, of both sexes and of all ages. The National Library has got three sections i.e., 1) Main Library, 2) Arab Gulf Library, 3) Children Library.

As per the 1989 report of books department, the collection was of 65,000 reference books in Arabic, 12,000 reference books in English. In addition to this, 500 Arabic and 650 foreign periodicals were received. Objective of the acquisition department is to collect any title of Arabic books irrespective of its level of study, and more valuable foreign books mostly in English and some in French. The policy is to collect six copies each of title in the library. Recently the library has added nearly 200 titles of the Ph.D. dissertation and master degree theses from Cairo and Gulf countries which speak about Gulf area and specifically about the UAE. As a part of continuous process of accumulating theses, the library is keeping an eye on the scholars who are at present doing research in any field pertaining to any part of Gulf and any person from any Gulf countries working on any topic, even for outside the Gulf also. This
process may boost them to collect more titles of these works.

The National Library has got audio and video halls which contain film relaying machines, cassette decks, slide projectors, tape recorders of popular poems, poetic functions, programmes of language learning and video films, which cover the cultural establishments, in addition, films of meetings, documentary films and scientific films. This library is equipped with head phones to avoid disturbance to others.

The National Library is bringing out from time to time some publications like, national bibliography, index of periodical publications, the catalogue of publications which are considered as tools for handling information services.

An effort is being undertaken for compiling an union catalogue of periodicals at the national level. The National Library has already distributed questionnaires to collect data for the union catalogue.

Arab Gulf Library

This library forms an integral part of National
Library, Arab Gulf Library was set up in 1987. The library contains books, periodicals and studies on UAE in particular and the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, beside Iraq and Iran in general. The library is being set up under the instructions of the UAE Rulers' Representative and Chairman of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, to make books and representative related to the Arab Gulf countries easily available for the students and researchers.

The collection in the library is being classified according to the countries i.e., totally (eight countries) eight sections, each containing books related to each of the Gulf countries. The books in Arabic, English and in other foreign languages have been classified and indexed for better retrieval purpose.[13].

Children Library

This is functioning under the supervision of the National Library. In order to attract the children, all possible efforts are made to equip the library with ultra-modern facilities. Excellent collection including books, toys, photographs, video and computer games etc., are provided. The seating arrangement and the total environment is quite congenial to the liking of the children. The library
hours and other extra curricular facilities are suitable to children.

Public Libraries

Public library is now acknowledged as the indispensable part of community life. It promotes literacy, provides a wide range of reading materials for all ages, and acts as a centre of community information services. The Public library of the nation is the only effective repository of the nation's cultural heritage. It is a depository of the cultural past and sustainer of the intellectual activity that anticipates the future. It is in a nutshell, a training school for democracy. By considering these aspects, the Ministry of Information and Culture of UAE has founded many public libraries and cultural centres in all the seven emirates after its independence. The ministry gives priority to open new libraries according to the need and requirement of the citizens. The ministry expects that all the employees who are working in the public library to be moderate and maintain service oriented nature towards the users of the libraries and to facilitate the kind of use and self comfort to the users so that they can get maximum benefit from the knowledge available in the library. The ministry aims to distribute culture and knowledge in all
parts of the country to help the future generation and make their life happy. For this reason the ministry has opened a special division for the library affairs and it is connected with the Cultural Department in the ministry.

The model Public library according to UAE Ministrial Decision No. 115/1981 which was amended with No.37/1982 states that "the libraries must open its doors at morning and at evening for all citizens in order to spread and achieve to distribute Knowledge and Culture by all means. Public libraries in the country will have open shelves according to the technical classified system (DDC) in order to facilitate the workers and the users in the public library. These libraries are to situate in the middle of the cities and popular sides in order to make it easy to reach either in big city or in small village". [16].

One of the salient features observed in the set up of public libraries in UAE is that there is a separate provision for men, women and children having books and periodicals organized separately according to the language in each section.

Public libraries and Cultural Centres in the Dubai Emirate are being controlled by the Dubai Municipality and
in the Sharjah Emirate by Culture Department of Sharjah, whereas other public libraries of the UAE are under the Ministry of Information and Culture. By all standards Dubai and Sharjah Emirates are capable of developing cultural education in their respective emirates.

Public Libraries in the Dubai Emirate

The public library of Dubai situated on the Deira Creek Side established in 1964, considered as the first public library not only in the UAE, but also in the whole of Gulf region. This is administered by the Dubai Municipality. Since its inception, the municipality is giving moderate priority for developing public library as a system by spending huge amount and launching many projects to improve the utilization of the library by their citizens.

Main public library of Dubai is located in a strategic position and is in a commanding place to attract the attention of the users community with its varied programmes. Periodical announcement in the newspaper and other media, regarding its activities and special programmes have enhanced the popularity of this library.
Branch libraries

Four branch libraries were opened in Dubai by the municipality during November 1989 as a part of the emirate's 18th National Day Celebration, to encourage the reading habit among people. These libraries are situated at Al Rashidiya, Al Safaa, Hoor Al Anz and Um Sakeen. As mentioned in his opening speech by H.H. Shaikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Minister of Finance and Industry and Chairman of Dubai Municipality, "The Government of Dubai has a priority to develop its libraries. Also disclosed that the main public library in Dubai at Al Ras area will be developed to become a major source of supply for the branch public libraries which opened just". [14]. This is the best way the government can provide better public service which will eventually become a source of knowledge available to everybody.

Municipality is planning to connect all the Public Libraries by a computer network to co-ordinate all the services from the main Public Library located in Al Ras area.

These four branch libraries include a ladies room, separated from the men's room by a children hall, along with lecture hall and a multipurpose hall that can be transformed
into a children's theatre, a film theatre or a lecture hall.

Each branch library has the capacity to store 25,000 books. Audio visual materials are also available in these libraries. There are recreation centres with toys for children to improve their ability and their mental standard. Each library has got the facility for a prayer hall.

These libraries will receive students and teachers in a batch from various schools as part of their study tour to the library as per the instruction of the Ministry of Education to the libraries as well as the schools. The purpose of arranging such visits is to inculcate the importance of the libraries at the young stage so that children can develop their reading habit from their formative age itself.

To encourage the youngsters in their reading interest, one of the public libraries in Dubai i.e., Hoor Al Anz library is holding an annual event on every June 10, to honour those boys and girls who attend the library regularly as "Friends of the Library".

Public Libraries in the Sharjah Emirate

Department of Culture has the aim of spreading
cultural awareness through running libraries, organizing arts and folklore activities, extending help to handicapped people including children and adults, encouraging to exhibit the hidden talents of young children through exhibitions, competitions, etc. Throughout the year, the department has several programmes for the citizens of Sharjah Emirate along with the organization of annual book fairs.

The Emirate of Sharjah has built a huge and sophisticated Cultural Centre which is most famous in the Gulf region, which opened in 1986. This Centre shares its role to enrich the cultural movement in the Emirate of Sharjah. It is being situated in the area of Falaaj. This Centre's major portion is occupied by Central Library, which supervises the branch libraries having scattered all over the Sharjah Emirate i.e., at Kalba and Khor Fakkan with special sections for children. This Central Library is containing nearly 20,000 volumes in English and Arabic. The comfortable reading arrangement has been made by individuals requirements. The first time in the Gulf area that this library contains research cell with a pleasing atmosphere for reading and thinking. There is a store facility in two rooms, each having capacity of 50,000 volumes. In addition to this huge collection, there is a collection of historical documents and rare book centre.
Like any other big centre, this library has also got the facility of microform services, video and audio equipment and binding section which is full fledged. There is an attractive arrangement for blind people i.e., hearing library. A unit of recording sound is installed which records the books and cassette tapes. The blind students can hear their programme of study. It is an opportunity to read without special system of writing (brille). There is also good collection of cultural and educational films and also gramophones and rare musical notes.

Branch libraries

The Department of Culture of Sharjah Emirate has opened branch libraries at Khor Fakkan and Kalba towns of the emirate. Both branches are built and organized on the similar basis of the public library at Sharjah. Each one includes, sections for men, women and children. The cultural directorate in Sharjah is having a plan to open five libraries in Sharjah city and four libraries in the areas of Daid, Dibba, Khor Fakkan and Kalba.

There are three children libraries in the areas of Khajamiya, Al Rufaa and Al Talla in the Sharjah area, whereas two children libraries in Kalba and Khor Fakkan in
the eastern area. Books and other reading materials provided in these libraries to suit the taste of various kinds of children to pass their leisure time usefully.

Public Libraries in the Abu Dhabi Emirate

As part of the continuous efforts of UAE's Ministry of Information and Culture, a public library at the first Zayed street has been opened during 1981. Along with its vast collection of publications nearly 15,000 volumes, has got some rare collection of Arabic art, mosque in the history of Egypt etc. This library acts as a bridge between the readers community of locals as well as expatriates and knowledge, which is in the form of culture, literature, thoughts, new ideas, humanity subjects, etc.

Baniyas Central Library

This library has been opened during June 1990 by the Ministry of Information and Culture who spreads the importance of the libraries throughout the country. The Ministry feels that by stressing the importance of encouraging the country's youth to indulge in reading as many good books as they could and also ministry is planning to spread knowledge and culture on all levels throughout the country.
At the time of inaugurating Baniyas Central Library, the Ministry announced that the Ministry was in the process of building three big libraries at Abu Dhabi, two at Al Ain and one at Shahama and another at Baniyas area. The objective of establishing these libraries will be to spread knowledge and culture to the small towns and remote areas. It was necessary to create interest among the youth in book reading, which was vital to the progress and development of the country.

Ministry of Education

As expressed by H.H.Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates "The youth of every nation are its pillars. The pillars of its future". The Ministry of Education is marching towards its mission which spends nearly 20% of the national annual budget for its activities. As per the policy, Ministry of Education, control the total educational activities of the country starting from nursery level to the university education and research programmes.
UAE University Library

Article 1 of the UAE Federal Law No.4, 1976 stipulates that the Emirates University is an independent authority with set objectives. This article indicates the freedom of the university in all its educational affairs and in its relation with the community makes all provision to maintain balance and harmony among the three main functions of the university viz., education, research and social service. [23].

The United Arab Emirates University came into existence in 1977 with four faculties: arts, science, education, administrative and political sciences.

In the initial stage three libraries were started in different faculties and hostels. Both communities of teaching as well learning felt the present facility inconvenient and time consuming. Now under the new system, the central library complex named "The Shaikh Zayed Central Library" with the reading capacity upto 300 at a time came into being in 1987.

This new complex with large main hall has facilities for microfilming, microfiche, audio visual section,
auditorium, several seminar rooms, exclusive study cabins, a cafetaria and a mosque. The objective of arranging all facilities in one place is that the students should feel comfortable and stay in the library for long period.

Under the new system, the borrowing of any reading materials is being arranged only in the central library. As per the prevailing social system, different timings of borrowing and using library for boys and girls is in practice. Generally, for the girls the timings are from 7.30 am to 2.30 pm and for boys from 4.00 pm to 11.00 pm.

The Shaikh Zayed Library has some rare Arabic manuscripts dating back to 400 years. Most of the manuscripts are on Islamic and religious history, Arabic art and profiles of prominent personalities. The library intends to procure every year 45,000 titles (three copies of each title). Plans are underway to go for computerization in book ordering and circulations. Other than conventional documents, the library keeps around 2,500 movie films, 600 video tapes, over 500 still films, 350 slides plus maps, pictures and transparancies. Along with these facilities, there is a full-flushed audio-visual library at the central library.
Other four libraries in different hostels have been considered as reference libraries of which total collection is nearly 250,000 books, periodicals and manuscripts in Arabic, English and French besides some 5,000 microfilms.[21].

In addition to these four libraries, the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS) has established the National Medical Library (NML) in 1987. This library is now fairly prepared to explore the possibilities of linking with international databases. At present this library is having on-line link with MEDLINE (since 1966) and ISI Databases in life sciences and Diskette (since 1990).

The present collection of the library is nearly 10,000 books, 2,000 in Arabic and 8,000 in English, 800 journal subscription to keep students as well as teachers and general public visitors well informed about everything new in the world of medicine and health services. It also has 500 journals in microfiche form as back files.

The mission of the library is to provide efficient access to comprehensive and quality information and support the needs of the faculty as well as those of health service professionals and consumer communities throughout the country. [20].
School Libraries in UAE

Schools in UAE have got a long history of having opened the first school in 1900 at Al Tijamiyah of Sharjah, then followed at Al Ahmadiya of Dubai in 1912. There were non-fee schools run by individual businessmen of pearl diving. These schools were having co-education and boarding facilities. Due to slack in the business and the trouble by the first world war these schools were closed. Later in 1952, the first modern school started in Sharjah with the British supervision and Kuwait government's finance. The schools were running in more number and during 1955, the illiteracy rate brought to 90% in the country. During that time there were 230 schools spread all over the trucial states with six staff.

After the independence of UAE in 1971, the country realised the importance of the education, since then every year nearly 10-12% of the country's total budget is being spent for this noble cause.

The schools are being run at the different stages for the student community as per their age factor.
Apart from the academic schools, there are religious schools, technical schools, military schools which can be joined at the age of six and study at the different levels of the respective courses. Higher educational facilities like University and Higher Colleges of Technology have been provided for higher aspiration of the individual's capacity.

As per the statistics of 1989-90 of UAE's Ministry of Education, there are 435 schools of which 352 of them have libraries. At present 211 trained librarians are employed. The 435 schools and 352 libraries are scattered in the UAE as follows: [11].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>No. of years study</th>
<th>Complete at the age of</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>K.G. Section</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Preparatory</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Ministry of Education acknowledges with great respect the generous donation of H.H. Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Dhs. 2,600,000 to buy books and reference materials to school libraries in the Abu Dhabi Emirate. Total number of 249,000 titles were selected with the help of expert committee. [17].

Defence libraries

The libraries of defence system are being kept up to date in the major military schools and offices at some emirates like Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and Ajman etc.

As per the Ministry of Education's Annual Report of 1989, there are 216 classes and 4,109 students of primary
Apart from military defence schools and training centres libraries, civil defence departments have opened libraries at various emirates to facilitate staff of the department to improve their capabilities by extensive reading of books on civil defence, rescue operations, first aid, fire hazards and safety devices. The libraries also enable its staff to keep themselves abreast with the latest technology in the field.

These libraries are well equipped with audio-visual teaching aids for providing instructions in first-aid, firefighting techniques and rescue operations. Those libraries have got intention of creating public awareness about fire hazards and safety devices, especially among school children along with provision of utilization for researchers, university and college students. One of the regular functions of such libraries is to hold exhibitions to highlight matters relating to civil defence work.

Special libraries

The libraries described briefly in the earlier
paragraphs from the network of general libraries are having an access to the general public. Apart from these, there are some libraries which are belonging to oil and gas organizations, industries, chamber of commerce and industries, municipalities, international trade and business organizations, embassies and consulate offices. These libraries have special collections confined to special subject interest. Apart from the above categories there are some libraries established by special interest groups to meet their own needs. Many of these are attached to learned societies and popular organizations of the country which were established after the independence of UAE.

**Information/Data Banks**

This is the age of competition and the age of information. Information explosion is all pervasive. The rapid proliferation of information has made it impossible to store and retrieve the needed information. Timely, reliable and inexpensive information is the need of the hour. Technology has provided a broad spectrum of tools to help and manage information. Fast developments in the field of micrographics have paved the way for large scale information storage as well as information transmission process.
Information/Data centres/banks are nothing but more sophisticated special libraries, wherein modern technology and equipment are being used to store, process, retrieve and disseminate the required information to the needy persons at the required time. To provide such specialized pin-pointed service, the UAE has established already ample centres and still this process is going on. By establishing data and information banks, information/data consciousness can be created and furthered.

Following are the centres indentified as Information/Data centres/banks and a brief outline of the same is mentioned.

1) Arab Information Bank
2) Statistical Centre and Information Bank of Dubai Emirate
3) Trade Data Bank at UK Embassy
4) Information Bank in the Ajman College of Science and Technology
5) Industrial Data and Information Bank (IDIB) at General Industry Corporation (GIC) Abu Dhabi (Formative stage)
A phenomenon attracting much attention in the industrial world today is the steadily increasing number of information banks specializing in the various human political, economical, social and scientific activities. This is accompanied by an increasing number of users.

Availability of the right information at the right time is vital to successful management of business. The establishment of Arab Information Bank (AIB) at Dubai in 1983 was first major attempt in the Arab World to streamline information availability in the region. Today, any person anywhere in the world can, by just using a keyboard, have an access to the bank through international telecommunications data network, and receive any information needed on the Arab World.

The main objective was and still to build up a central bank for giving information on the Arab World. Al Bayan Establishment, was aware of the fact that the great shortage of reliable information on the Arab World integrated with an ever increasing demand for such information at a time when the importance of the Arab World is steadily increasing in the international areas.
The Arab Information Bank is constantly accumulating articles on an average rate of 50 articles per day on different subjects covering various issues and developments in the Arab World under the titles of Economics, Energy, Financial data, Health, Education, Transportation, Communications, Culture, Religion, Industry, Social Issues, Politics, International Relations, Arab-Israeli Conflict and many more, allowing the Arab countries, at last, to be accurately described to the world. [2].

The medium of this bank is in English. The information is being collected from each popular newspapers of individual countries. A specialized team of editors and translators re-edit articles daily from various Arab newspapers, select information, evaluate it according to certain criteria drawn up in order to satisfy the various user sectors. The information is then summarised, without deviation from the content, and translated into English. Titles and indexes are then added to ensure a straightforward retrieval process.

Once the information has been re-edited and translated, the technical team stores the information in the computer according to a special programme which has been designed to enable users to obtain information easily. All
information entered by the technical team must pass through the control section whereby all mistakes and repetitions are eradicated. At this point the information becomes available through telecommunications data networks.

Arab Information Bank (AIB) has also been engaged in the process of making other specialized international data banks available through its system. By means of Bilateral Gateway arrangement, AIB is already connected to many European databanks such as "Genious", the West Germany databanks and "Infocheck" the UK's largest company databank.

As a proof of its world-wide demand, "DIALOG" has acquired AIB's licence in holding AIB on "DIALOG" in order to market it to its users world-wide.

One of the most recent databases made available on AIB is the 'Company Database' which provides basic data for companies in the UAE. The system works under the same guidelines as internationally available systems such as 'Infocheck' in the UK and 'Genious' in West Germany.

In addition, 'Global Scan' an international database network is now available on AIB and covers Europe, America, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, the Far East and the UAE.
(2) Statistical Centre and Information Bank at Dubai Emirate

With the co-operation of United Nations, Dubai municipality has fulfilled the plan for establishing the first statistical centre and the information bank in Dubai to cover all different activities of Dubai for the present and future. The UN statistics expert started co-operating with municipality at the end of January, 1988, which took six months to prepare plan of introducing the statistics centre and the information bank, having coverage of the investment plans which Dubai municipality executes and also all the plans of Federal ministries and local directorates. The statistical centre started the programming work for the short (two years) and long period (five years). The programme for the short period includes preparing statistical annual book for Dubai, whereas the long range plan (five years) includes the preparation of standard figures of foreign trades and other activities. The execution of this project includes establishing information bank in the municipality in two stages. Short stage from 3-5 years which plans to introduce the bank, its aim and its role to be clarified to the establishments of Dubai and to the ministries. Also this project includes how to store information and retrieve it. The second stage will start after
providing the bank with the experienced employees who are qualified in the field of classification and who can execute the work in a very efficient way. This project includes the renewal administrative work in statistical centres, computer centres and libraries of the municipality. All activities are coming under the umbrella of the statistical and technical and documentation centre. This centre includes another three departments of Information and Statistics, Documentation and Libraries. [18].

(3) Trade Databank at UK Embassy

British Embassy in Dubai has installed the latest Bell and Howell ABRI 1300 microfile index systems of British standards to help businessmen, consultants and contractors. The system enables any British standards to be viewed and copies printed at the rate of seven per minute and up to 19 at a time. A directory of British standards is printed every year but the specification contained in that gets out dated in many instances within months. With the new system, an up date will be available every three months and the commercial section of the Embassy will assist those who require the specifications. [15].

The same facility is available in the British Embassy, Abu Dhabi.
(4) Information Bank in Ajman College of Science and Technology

Information bank in this unique private institute aims to serve scientific researchers, financial companies, and establishments to provide expertiseness as well as the latest information according to the modern methods available till recently in these fields.

This institute made agreement of exchange programme with Lebanon University in Beirut (Lebanon) to exchange mutually the experience and programmes in the fields of information systems.

(5) Industrial Data and Information Bank (IDIB) at General Industry Corporation (GIC), Abu Dhabi (Formative stage)

General Industry Corporation (GIC) a Abu Dhabi government corporate organization, responsible for registering industries in the Abu Dhabi Emirate and to promote non-petro chemicals based industries by providing possible expertiseness like market survey, engineering and technological consultancy, preparation of pre-feasibility studies etc. In
addition to these facilities, running of some industries as a model so that interested nationals come forward and take over those factories. At present General Industry Corporation (GIC) is running eight factories.

In consultation with UNIDO, GIC has set up an Industrial Data and Information Bank (IDIB) which is in the formative stage and plan to have its own database to keep every department with up to date data and information in the organization. In the second phase, it is proposed to have an interlink among the factories of GIC and all departments at head office.

Other provisions to promote the library and information services in UAE

The bookshops and stationeries in the Arab World are called as "the Libraries", a translation of "Al Maktaba" of Arabic word. This implies that the concept of libraries is more wide in the Arab society than any other societies. This is partly true that sometimes bookshops educate its customers while choosing book from the shop. This is similar way like selecting book from the library either for reading or for borrowing/lending it out of the library.
Book exhibitions

Regular book exhibitions in most of the emirates is a kind of festival for the people of UAE. Many times these exhibitions are clubbed with some of the cultural activities which promote art, folklore, speech of eminent personalities, child and woman progress, etc. The objective and motto of such book exhibitions is "books for everybody". To fulfill this condition, the organizers arrange for cheap selling of books, inviting latest titles in most of the popular fields, and also arrange to bring every section of the society like, students from various schools, ladies, employees of various organizations and government departments etc., to avail the benefit. Especially the libraries will be getting more benefits for buying books on annual basis by considering it as an opportunity for them to see books personally.

Generous donation

His Highness Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the President of UAE, paid a generous donation of US $ 20 million during the international ceremony organized at Aswar on 12-12-1990 by the Egyptian government in co-operation with the UNESCO for resurrecting the ancient Alexandria Library.
which was destroyed by fire 2,000 years ago. This ancient library, which contributed greatly to the civilization of the world may be revived as a centre of learning. UNESCO is working to recreate the great library and scheduled to open in 1995 with a cost of $200 million and having plan to store four million books with world-wide computer links.

Mobile library: a private enterprise

An enterprising business woman Mrs. Madhura Kunti, a library science graduate from India, has successfully steered Duba's only book lending library on wheels since 1979. Entrepreneuring natured lady has launched a mission of library and information services taking to the common and convenient places of general public like Par Dubai, Ghusais, Al Mulla Plaza, Al Shab, Karama, etc., of Dubai areas. A well set built-in van carrying books and magazines of all varieties, moves twice a week with a diversified community of 400 members. Mrs. Madhura says that though it is tedious job mentally and physically, still pays satisfaction of doing job for noble cause. [19].

This is a unique service of mobile library maintained on private capacity. It shows that the people of UAE are having thurst of knowledge and would like to satisfy their
thrust by reading and gathering more information. Therefore, such service can be converted into a commercial venture in future.

**Manpower development programme in library and information science in the UAE**

**Introduction**

Every educational plan - whether it is for the general education of the individual or for a specialized field such as Library and Information Science (L & I S) - is a socio-political document. Geographical location, economic and political life and history, indigenous culture, state of development and the rate of development of the country are some of the influencing factors for promoting the educational programme.

The objective of education in L & I S should be formulated in relation to the information manpower needs of the society, primarily of the country in which the programme operates. One or two schools may also be designated to develop programmes taking into account regional and/or international needs. The information manpower needs are influenced by the role of the information worker in the
information environment prevailing from time to time. The information environment is the totality of the information infrastructure including national policies and plans for information, the trends in information utilization, information sources and services, and developments in information science and technology, nationally and globally. [9].

Professional education

The professional educational programme in particular be designed to serve the country's needs. Therefore, the professional teaching programme should adopt the principle of applying appropriate intermediate technology along with high technology. One should not be over fascinated with new technology which in many cases serve no practical purpose. Hence there should be set objectives to design and develop the training programme. Generally third world countries have mixed population of literate and illiterate. In such situation, the library education should aim to serve requirements of illiterates also. Libraries are not for those who can read, but also for those who cannot read and write. Illiterate people need information just as much as literate people. Since the environment and the capacity of illiterate are not conducive to gain for more information, the library education should further extend its aim of increasing
the appetite of collecting more information like literate population.

The libraries should respond in relation to social, educational and recreational change. Libraries should not be only book oriented, but in addition, they should emerge as multi-media centres. Audio-video and audio-visual documents will impress and attract the large population and create a different kinds of awareness. TV is also playing very commandable role in educating and fulfilling the requirement of the general public. This means the library education should have new ways of communicating information to people, people who are literate, partially literate and illiterate. [12].

Teaching methods

Teaching methods should be followed in non-conventional way which are more effective along with the conventional way. For example, when audio-visuals are used, learning effectiveness is increased. Human being can learn 11% through his/her ears. The other senses contribute only a little to the learning process. Human being remembers only 10% of what he/she reads, 20% of what he/she hears, 30% of what he/she sees, 50% of what he/she sees and hears.
Therefore, it is very essential that one should use audio-visuals in the teaching method. Secondly audio-visuals improve repetition. Thirdly audio-visuals enable a more professional presentation and relieve the dependence on print sources and increase awareness. And finally it increases the job satisfaction and also increases the amount of information presented to the students and most importantly leads to an improvement in communication skills. [5].

Libraries of the future

There are two eminent forces that are ushering libraries into a new age. Firstly, the emergence of computer and communication technology, and secondly, the recognition of the importance of information. It seems that computer and communication technologies will greatly affect what libraries do and how they do. These technologies will improve ability to acquire, store, process, and distribute information. Information has been recognized as of paramount importance to the economic, social and individual well being. It has become the basis of improved function of industry, agriculture, trade services. It is now considered as a commodity to be bought and sold. This new attitude towards information has ushered in a new age generally known as "Information Age".
Professional education, as defined by Flexner, encompasses two fundamental components: competence and responsibility. Competence implies, according to Flexner, "intellectual operation", "science and learning", and "communicable techniques", responsibility and such phrases as "individual responsibility", "self organization", and "altruistic innovation". [7].

A librarian, in the "information age" environment, must respond to the challenges of the future. This demands the development of complex of skills, both managerial and technical. In order to provide professional education, keeping in view the changing needs, the programmes for education, should have certain goals, which can be listed below:

i. Management skills
ii. Technical skills in information handling
iii. Information technology skills
iv. Communication skills
v. Information use skills
vi. Analytical skills
Library and information science education programme for UAE

As mentioned earlier, the Library and Information Science (L & I S) education should promote and flourish not only the existing fields but also help to grow the existing fields more efficient and effective way. National policy is to be designed for creating manpower development in the field of Library and Information Science (L & I S) to meet the requirement of government and private sectors which in the case of UAE is 60% and 40% respectively. Therefore, Library and Information Science (L & I S) services should be geared according to the national policy. The UAE's major income is from the oil and gas based industries in particular and agriculture, trade and commerce in general.

Programmes for achieving the goals in different stages and through alternative means may be designed, in such a way that a country like UAE can adopt the appropriate path to suit its own socio-economic policies, resources and capabilities. Also the UAE need not necessarily go through many stages that some of the developed countries had gone through before reaching their present state of development in L & I S. In fact, much can be learnt from the experience of the developed countries so as to make a quantum jump, as it were.
It is also important that schools of L & I S take a leadership role in professional development. Ferez Denton writes: "Unless library schools in some measure assume a role of librarianship, we can hardly expect more than maintenance of the status quo and static condition in librarianship. If progress and improvement are to be achieved they will come to a considerable degree from leadership exercised by the schools which must then be at least a step ahead of the libraries for which they prepare staff members". [6].

Emergent nations are realising in an increasing measure that information systems are important "change" agents. Therefore, programmes and products of L & I S schools should enable the systems to play effectively this role, which goes beyond that of a more concern with the education of library and information personnel. John Dean [8] has identified the following specific objectives of L & I S schools in developing countries in addition to their providing for formal professional education.

1. To identify the areas in which investigation is required and to establish research programmes encompassing both group and individual projects;

2. To promote, prepare, and publish monographs, textbooks, periodicals, etc., useful in the L & I S programmes;
3. To develop a resource centre in L & I S which can become the focus for the exchange of materials between institutions and world over;

4. To maintain continuous professional contact which alumni and to offer them guidance even after they have left the school, both in research as well as practice of library and information work;

5. To establish pilot projects, where local library and information services are inadequate, thereby bringing the community into contact with effective library services;

6. To provide advisory and consultancy services whenever necessary. This is particularly useful in developing countries where professional expertise is not available adequately. The teaching and research staff of the L & I S could help - for example, in the library and information systems and services planning at the local and national levels, or to develop information tools and techniques, particularly suited to the local environment;

7. To be responsible for creating international contacts with other L & I S education centres to facilitate exchange of ideas, studies, teachers, etc., and
8. To devise other means and methods by which the L & I S school could play an active role in society.

Future oriented perspective in L & I S education has implications to 1) library and information manpower forecasts, and 2) type of education in L & I S. Factors affecting these two aspects and their interrelation are shown in the below mentioned figure.
Commitment to life-long learning is important to the library and information science profession because its professionals must themselves participate in life-long learning in order to perform competently their evolving roles in society. Further, they must be prepared to assist adults in creating a learning society.

An approach to education for adults gradually emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. It grew along with the realization that continuing education (CE) can be achieved effectively only by understanding the continuing nature of adult learning and is founded in the belief that professional education also takes place all through life. This emphasis, which has opened up many educational opportunities, is concerned with establishing new patterns of learning described by such terms as "open learning", "independent study", "self-directed learning", "directed private study" and "distance education".

Definition

The term continuing professional education (CPE) means different things to different people. Continuing
education is a learning process which builds on and updates previously acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the individual. Continuing education comes after the preparatory education necessary for involvement in or with information, library, media services. It is usually self-initiated learning in which individuals assume responsibility for their own development and for fulfilling their need to learn. It is broader than staff development, which is usually initiated by an organization for the growth of its own human resources. [1].

The need

There is a vital need to seek out and develop practitioners who can apply knowledge, skill and competencies that yield quality performance for the publics served and who can, and are willing to, serve as facilitators and role models for other learners, while the primary responsibility for learning rests on the individual, the profession also has a collective responsibility to integrate CPE as part of its total educational programme; to understand the basic mission of the profession; to be aware of relevant new developments; to improve performance through innovative theory and practice; and to apply ethical principles in the rapidly changing environment.
International organizations

Many international organizations have been active in CE in library and information science, especially in the developing countries. They have spread awareness of the value of CE by organizing short courses; giving support to the start of CE programmes, providing for faculty development, developing educational guidelines, giving funds for students, and organizing conferences with CE components.

Two organizations that have been particularly active and have had great impact are UNESCO, through its General Information Programme (PGI), and the International Federation for Documentation (FID). PGI activities include short courses, visiting lectures, guidelines, faculty development, and evaluation of library and information CE programmes.

FID's chief role has been as an international forum for discussion of educational issues among those concerned with the continuing education of library and information practitioners. Its Education and Training Committee (FID/ET) has been particularly active, organizing international meetings and publishing proceedings, plans, proposals, and differences of opinion. Helpful CE awareness sources are
the FID/ET Newsletter on Education and Training programmes for information personnel and the clearinghouse of Information Education Training materials maintained by FID/ET at Syracuse University.

Continuing professional education in UAE

The job or work especially of any profession should not be stagnant or routine in the present age of competition. As a matter of fact every human being is having similar capacity. But it depends on the individuals environment where one has to expose. In some body's case if the environment is not favourable, he or she should struggle for existence then to compete. This situation holds true for the librarianship. To handle the enormous quantity of information which is ever growing, in an efficient way, todays library professional should be well equipped with the day today's knowledge. To do this regularly reading in the field, attending seminars, workshops etc., are a must.

Though the libraries of UAE are in inception stage, the government through various sections had arranged one day seminar during 1988 through Swedish government undertaking BTJ Products Ltd. This was only a peripheral idea of the library service. Recently during 18-20 November 1989, a
seminar on the present and future situations of Information centres in the Gulf countries held at Abu Dhabi (UAE).

Apart from the above local seminars, some of the workshops and symposium and seminars were conducted at different countries of Gulf region. Few are mentioned below:

1. A workshop on the "development of Libraries and Information systems and services in Kuwait and the Gulf Area" was held in Kuwait City on 15-19 March 1980. Library staff of different Gulf countries attended this workshop, which organized by NSTIC/KISR.

2. The 5th seminar of Instructions concerned with studies of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsular, held in Riyadh, recommended that the individual institutions should exchange bibliographies and data what their respective libraries held. Also that they should exchange maps and areal surveys about each of the countries in the area for the preparation of a unified cartographic guide.

covered such fields as "The management of New Technology", "Application of New Technology", "Bibliographic standardization" and "Co-operation and Control". Delegates from all Gulf countries.

To conclude

In the preceding paragraphs, an outline of libraries in the UAE is given. Sufficient care is taken to cover all the varieties of libraries. In fact the brief description has given a panoramic view of the libraries and highlight the manpower requirement for the management of libraries to fulfill their aims and objectives. The steady growth of institutions and establishments at all levels indicates the subsequent growth of libraries, which calls for the training programme on regular basis, keeping in view the aspirants of the country.

Much of the existing manpower in the UAE libraries is drawn from India, Pakistan, Egypt, Syria and other Arab countries. It is observed that the paucity of training programme in the UAE is clearly visible and therefore there is a need for organizing a regular training programme in the country.
Among six Gulf countries, except Saudi Arabia, no other country is having fulfledged manpower development programme for library and information science except on adhoc basis of providing inhouse training and refresher seminars for the employees of public libraries and academic library staff. In Saudi Arabia, three universities namely; University of King Abdual Aziz, through school of Arts; University of Imam Mohammed, through school of Arabic language and University of Riyadh through Faculty of Arts are providing need based training programmes in library and information science.

There are couple of attempts made by international organizations like UNESCO and UNDP to train the library and information science professionals. This was done with an intention to develop the indigenous manpower. In addition to this there are regular programmes which are being conducted by the Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Information and Culture at the primary level, Sharjah and Dubai Emirates with the sponsorship of Department of Culture and Municipality respectively. Invariably, these programmes are offering the education upto certificate level which is found helpful to prepare the manpower to look after the libraries.
Ministry of Education is also evincing keen interest in organizing educational rehabilitation programmes in which librarianship is also one of the courses. However, it is seen that the course programmes are not in a position to produce the required and adequate manpower. Hence an attempt is made in these following paragraphs to highlight the need for manpower development.
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