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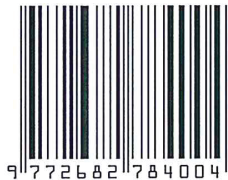
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STUDY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY MEASUREMENT FOR MALAYSIA RURAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT

Sustainability is a subject that often been widely discussed in many fields. In Malaysia, sustainability that have been highlighted in 11th Malaysia Plan, with the aim for a future that is built on the focus of macroeconomic policy including improving Malaysian wellbeing, human capital development that is future-proof, green and sustainable growth, and infrastructure that supports economic development and a citizen-centric public service with high productivity. Eventually, many Malaysian local and international sectors are now implementing sustainability in their organization, and it's time for the library to follow this trend in order to keep the existence of libraries. This study focuses on sustainability of rural libraries in Malaysia which is handled by National Library of Malaysia (NLM). Discussion in this article focuses on the three crucial aspects of sustainable development, namely; economic, environmental and social with concentration on library staffing and the users and non-users of rural libraries all over Malaysia .

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1. Introduction

In the year 2017, it is recorded that, there are 1469 rural libraries in Malaysia (Rosham, 2017). Rural libraries in Malaysia are the initiative taken by National Library of Malaysia to bring the information to rural community and inculcate reading habit among them. The first rural library in Malaysia was established in 2000 whereby started at twenty-five (25) rural libraries built at seven (7) selected states. After several years of establishment, National Library of Malaysia increased the amount of rural libraries to 1,114 in 2012. Meanwhile, by 2008, there are four (4) rural libraries that are well equipped with collections such as books, magazines, newspapers as well as computers and internet connections to the users. Moreover, it also completed with landscape and attractive design in order to attract rural community to use libraries (National Library of Malaysia, 2008).

Rural libraries in West Malaysia that being handled by National Library of Malaysia will be focused in this study. National Library of Malaysia is the federal division under Ministry of

Education (MoE). National library department has been started in 1966 under National Archive of Malaysia and it has been expanded into a part of Malaysia National Library and Archive Department in 1971. National Library of Malaysia has been officially recognized as Federal Division through National Library Act (Act1980) endorsed on 1st September 1972. It became stand-alone federal division in 1977 (Kuala Lumpur, 2010). The objectives of national library are; 1) to make available for the use of present and future generation a national collection of library resources, 2) to facilitate nation-wide access to library resources available within the country and abroad, and 3) to provide leadership on matters pertaining to libraries. The functions of national library include; 1)to advise and assist in the national planning and development of libraries, 2) to co-operate with professional and other bodies at national and international level for the development of libraries, 3)to provide training in order to upgrade professionalism in library matters, 4)to promote the establishment of a network of special libraries in keeping with national standards of provision, 5) To promote and facilitate the establishment of a nationwide system of public libraries in keeping with national standards of provision, 6) To promote and facilitate the inculcation of the reading habit. Rural libraries are the alternatives of national library to accomplished their objectives and functions to the rural community.

2. Problem Statement

Sustainability has always been a dominated discussions everywhere and in almost every field including business, organization, manufacturing and many more. It is not a new concept, instead it has evolved over time and often influenced by many factors (Giovannoni & Fabietti, 2014). Sustainability refers to the capacity to continue an activity that is indeterminately, which can be related to environment, economic and social activity that have variant meaning depending on their disciplines (Markulev & Long, 2013). Sustainability is widely considered as an important part in a contemporary life and it even been highlighted in Malaysian Government 11th Malaysia Plan. It brings the attention to apply sustainability concept in libraries generally and rural libraries specifically.

Sustainability for rural libraries is very crucial due to the purpose of rural libraries as a mechanism which benefited community. To date, there are 1469 of rural libraries in Malaysia, 509 of them handled by National Libraries of Malaysia while the rest of them handled by state libraries (Rosham, 2017). This indicates that rural libraries are important to Malaysian community and it must be sustain.

There are insufficient literatures on sustainability in libraries generally and rural libraries specifically. To date, there only few studies on sustainability for libraries. Karioja in 2013 has written a thesis on sustainability in libraries which focus in environmental which is 'green library'. He suggested that there is a need for future study on libraries sustainability, with different focus; namely economic and social sustainability. In addition, International Federation Library Association (IFLA) has already aware of library sustainability issues; however, the focus was on only environment factors, not on social and economy factors. To date, insufficient literatures focused on sustainability in rural libraries and no literature focused on the rural libraries' sustainability from these three (3) aspects; environment, economy and social. A study showed that there many spaces for improvement of sustainability in libraries (Karioja & Niemitalo, 2013).

Library means to select, preserve, collect, archive, provide access to the information. Library also engage with the research, learning and publications as well as maintaining spaces for users and collections (Wilkin, 2015). Libraries needed in all aspects of our life. That's why there are five types

of libraries namely national library, public library, academic library, special library and school library. Rural community also needs rural libraries as the place where they seek for information and center for them to socialize. This study covered three pillars of sustainability (environment, economic and social) for rural libraries in Malaysia. These sustainability aspects will support rural libraries to sustain in the community as long as they are needed.

This study focuses on investigating the sustainability of rural libraries in Malaysia looking at the importance of rural libraries towards the community. Initially, there have been three crucial aspects of sustainable development, namely; economic, environmental and social (Ahmadi et al., 2017; Wu et al., 2017). Recently, 'sustainability' subject has been widely discussed and have been highlighted in 11th Malaysia Plan. The Eleventh Plan aims for a future that is built on the focus of macroeconomic policy including all Malaysians, improved wellbeing for all, human capital development that is future-proof, green and sustainable growth, and infrastructure that supports economic development and a citizen-centric public service with high productivity. By time, all sectors were implementing sustainability in their organization, and it's time for the library to follow this trend in order to keep the existence of the rural libraries. Basically, library sustainability consists of three elements; economic, social, and environment. Social sustainability brought a definition to assure welfare from generation to generation continuously. Economic sustainability means that library is financially stable without losing funds or incurring debts. In the other hand, environment in library aspect defined as the responsibility of libraries to handle environmental issues and aware of environment management (Karioja, 2009)

3. Literature Reviews

Sustainability can be defined as the capacity to bear with certain situation, so that it will be maintained and long lasting. There are more than 200 definitions of sustainable development can be found (Parkin, Sommer, & Uren, 2003). There are three (3) pillars of sustainability namely; economic, environmental and social (Saadatian, Lim, Mat, & Sopian, 2012). It was also supported by the World Summit on Social Development whereby it stressed on three main elements of sustainable development; environment, social equity and economic sustainability (Markulev & Long, 2013). However, a research by Ben-Eli in 2006 highlighted five (5) domains of sustainability which are; the material domain, the economic domain, the domain of life, the social domain and the spiritual domain.

These three pillars of sustainability (environment, social and economy) are strongly related with each other (Rafiaani et al., 2017). Environmental and social sustainability are strongly related to each other while economic and social sustainability has significant effects to each other (Reddy & Thomson, 2015). It was due to a research done showed that happiness is the indicator of sustainable well-being (social) which the highest well-being did not consume highest resources. Economic problems also can lead to social problems which is unemployment. Similar research was done by Menegaki in 2017 indicated relation between economic, environment and social sustainability related with each other. It stated that less developed country (economy) may appreciate cleaner environment (environment), tighter human connection (social), less family problems and consist of happy community (Menegaki, Marques, & Fuinhas, 2017). However, only environment sustainability will be discussed in this study.

According to Yiing, et. al, in 2013, sustainability in Malaysia started in 7th Malaysia Plan (1996-2000), sustainable development of energy resources and renewable was highlighted in 8th

Malaysia Plan (2001-2005), while in 9th Malaysia Plan (2006-2010) stressed on environment, economic and social aspects. In addition, improving the standard and sustainability of better life quality through public transport, electricity, water and healthcare have been strained in 10th Malaysia Plan (2011-2015). Library sustainability refers to the placement of a library's core values and resources such as staff time, facilities, collections, services and technology to endure the challenges in order to bring new and energetic life in all aspects of library operation and outreach (New York Library Association, 2017). An environmentally sustainable system must maintain a stable resource base, including maintenance of biodiversity, other ecosystem function and atmospheric stability (Harris, 2003). Malaysia has been ranked as the second in Asia regarding environmental sustainability and the ninth among 133 countries based on efforts taken to implement environment sustainability (Saadatian, 2012).

The American Library Association's (ALA) Task Force on the Environment (TFOE) initiated "green" concepts in librarianship. Since 1990, TFOE has aimed to create awareness among libraries and its communities towards environmental resources, addressed and find solutions to green concerns and practices in libraries, organized on greening ALA conferences, and encouraged alertness of environmental issues in the ALA and library community. The Task Force has been educating librarians and the public by organizing environmentally focused programs and providing an open-access platform for scholars and librarians to research on environment, then published them in journals ((Jankowska & Marcum, 2010). Many libraries have already implemented green practices in their services particularly recycling which is absence in institution green policies. Moreover, United States Green Building Council have created Leadership for Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) in order to build environment friendly building. This kind of building will have used nontoxic recycle materials and furniture, as well as using low energy electricity which will lead to low cost of maintenance.

Karioja in 2013 highlighted several characteristics in environment sustainability namely; environmental issues, environmental management strategies and environmental finance. It also has been supported by Michnik in 2015 that also highlighted libraries that work for environment sustainable development will implement through library activities, library services and library buildings being designed that will bring less negative impact to the environment.

In Malaysia, Green Building Index (GBI) developed by Malaysian experts in order to ensure environment sustainability. The main goal of GBI is to save energy, resources, recycle materials and harmonize the building with the Malaysia climate, traditions, culture and its environment, maintaining the ecosystem capacity at local and international level. There are six (6) elements that should be considered in GBI, namely; 1) energy efficiency 2) indoor environmental quality 3) sustainable site planning and management 4) materials and resources 5) water efficiency 6) innovation (Saadatian, Haw, Mat, & Sopian, 2012). GBI is an influential medium to promote sustainable development in the building. It can create awareness among architects, engineers, developers and designers regarding sustainable. The same approach used by Canada libraries whereby they built their libraries based on Canada Green Building specifications regarding design, construction and operation (K. Townsend, 2014). Many libraries in Canada have implemented environment sustainability through the building design, programs and activities to the users. Among the programs or events organized are bees, chicken keeping, composting, film screening, gardening, guest speakers, host farmer's market and local food.

Bruntland has reported about sustainability development since 1987. He defined sustainability development as development that meets the current needs of the community without giving in the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In addition, the application of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) in libraries will reduce a lot of papers and thus help conserve the environment. 859 units of rural libraries in Malaysia equipped with ICT facilities with internet connections through the program Universal Service Provision (USP) by Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water (KeTTHA) and Ministry of Communication and Multimedia (SKMM) (Kuala Lumpur, 2010).

An economically sustainable system must be able to produce goods and services continuously in order to maintain manageable levels of government income and external debts (Harris, 2003). Sustainable economy also brought a mean that libraries have control towards its financial resources (Michnik, 2015). Economic sustainability requires that different kind of sources that make economic can be developed. One of the sturdiest indicator of sustainable community is healthy economy (Hancks, 2011). Healthy economy means that availability of jobs was sufficient for community. Indirectly, community will have stable life which allows them to sustain. It also means that community ensure that they have continuous income for current and future generations (Spangenberg, 2005).

A social sustainable system must achieve adequate provision of social services including health and education, political accountability and gender equity (Harris, 2003). It is also supported by Yu in 2017 who also highlighted in social equality and fair treatment to improve social sustainability. In addition, Yu also stressed in health and safety as another important element in social sustainability which has not been highlighted in another study.

In the other hand, social sustainability can be defined as satisfying basic human needs (Jeekel, 2017). In addition, Jeekel also highlighted four (4) orientations of social sustainability; 1) Development of social sustainability that provide better distribution of power, better housing, more freedom, better education and more worldwide equality, 2) Bridge the social sustainability whereby creating lifestyles and environment that will enhance the social sustainability itself, 3) Maintenance of social sustainability which closely related with social acceptance, this orientation also bring the idea of merge the three pillars of sustainability namely economic, social and environment, and 4) liberation of the social domain is the core issue, without much relation to other forms of sustainability. Social sustainability in this orientation is seen as forming situations of social justice, fairness, equality, facilitating that working and blooming communities can be sustained. There are many factors of social sustainability to be considered, namely education and training, social justice, participation and local democracy, health, quality of life, wellbeing, social capital, community, safety, fair distribution of salary, social order, social and community cohesion, social network, social interaction, sense of community and belonging, employment, active community and cultural traditions. It was being supported by Vanclay in 2002 whereby he stated that there are seven categories in social impacts; health and social well-being, livability, economic and material well-being, cultural, family and community, institutional, political and

4. Research Methodology.

Qualitative approach was chosen for this study due to the concerned with qualitative phenomenon which involve quality (Rajasekar, Philominathan, & Chinnathambi, 2013).

Qualitative methodology is the best methodology for this study as to seek in depth understanding towards rural libraries' sustainability. Though with different orientations and definitions of qualitative approach, many researchers has agreed on the following characteristics of qualitative research; understanding from the perspective of the participants; researcher as the primary instrument of data collection; a requirement for fieldwork; an inductive research strategy, that is, builds towards theory from observations and intuitive understanding gained from field; and a descriptive report, with words and pictures to convey what is learned (Sullivan & Sargeant, 2011; Taquette & Minayo, 2015).

Essentially, qualitative approach is in this study because this study involve several situations such as; 1) It is non-numerical, descriptive, applies reasoning and uses words type of study. 2) Its aim is to get the meaning, feeling and describe the situation of the rural library users, rural library non users and rural library service provider - librarian. 3) this study qualitative data is graphed instead it is being explore. 4) this study investigates the why and how of decision making in Malaysian rural library management and sustainability issues.

A case study method for this study is choosen because it is a specific field or qualitative research method and thus is in investigation of phenomena as they occur without intervention from the researcher (Connaway & Powell, 2015). Yin defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result, relies on multiple source of evidence with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion and as another results benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

Hence, the case study strategy used in this study is particular interest to enrich understanding of the context of rural libraries sustainability research(Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2008). Six rural libraries in Peninsular Malaysia that is under the supervision of Malaysia National Library were investigated in this study. The users, non-users and library staffs of rural libraries were interviewed in order to find out elements that should be include to sustain rural libraries in Malaysia. This paper, discusses the preliminary findings of this study.

5. Finding & Disucssion

Initial this study has been done in PD Kg Kelubi, Jitra Kedah. Two (2) persons has been interviewed; library staff and a user of the library. Few question related to sustainability of rural library were asked;

Preliminary questions

Library Staffs

1. Demographic questions (name, age, working experience)
2. What is your education background?
3. Do you understand the library policy, management and job description of your position?
4. What is your initiative towards rural libraries development?
5. Do you think rural libraries have failed to serve community around rural libraries?
6. How is the usage of rural libraries?

Users of Rural Libraries

1. Demographic questions (name, age, how long the respondents live at the village, belonging to the community, type of occupation, marriage status, family income)
2. Frequency of going to rural library
3. Why are you going to rural library?
4. What is your expectation towards rural library?
5. Do you think the location of rural library are strategic?
6. How about the interior design?

The outcome of interview session has been transcribed below;

LIBRARY STAFF	
Demographic questions (name, age, working experience)	Name will be anonymous. I have been working for seven years
What is your education background?	I have a Degree in Information System, UiTM.
Do you understand the library policy, management and job description of your position?	I am fully understand rural library policy, management and her job description.
Do you think rural libraries have failed to serve community around rural libraries?	I thought rural library succeed in fulfilling user needs. However, the location of PD Kampung Kelubi are not strategic due to the location is in the middle of industrial area.
What is your initiative towards rural libraries development?	I planned to organize a lot of activities in order to encourage users to come to the library. Among of them are 'gotong royong', plant flowers, reading activity, etc.
How is the usage of rural libraries?	There 15 users per day in average. A lot of users on school holidays because a lot of users are primary and secondary school students.

LIBRARY USER	
Demographic questions (name, age, how long the respondents live at the village, belonging to the community, type of occupation, marriage status, family income)	Name is anonymous. I am the resident of the village. I am the pensioner of police clerk. I have 7 kids with one wife. My family income is around RM 2,000.
Frequency of going to rural library	I went to rural library 3-4 times a week.
Why are you going to rural library?	I am using rural library to read religious book. Hence, I am the committee of rural library.
What is your expectation towards rural library?	I would like the library to develop their collection towards religious collection. I like the environment and staff of rural library. I hope that rural library will be completed with internet, coffee corner, and computers.
Do you think the location of rural library are strategic?	I think the location of the library is not strategic. It is in the middle of industrial area and there is a lot of lorry which might be dangerous to the visitors.
How about the interior design?	The interior design is just nice. Not much can be done due to the small space.

Based on the interviews and data analyzed from the session, it was found that rural library needed by the community. It plays roles in the community in order to engage them. It shows that rural libraries will be able to sustain looking at these three factors; environment, economic and social. Library staff have done several initiatives to organize programs and activities in order to encourage users to come and visit the library. Furthermore, committee of rural library consists of library staffs and the community ensure that activities organize by the rural library known by the community. It seems current rural libraries has successfully fulfil the information needs of their community members. Nevertheless, there is still a relatively medium level of usage by residents in the community. And apparently users are very selective in the types of material and activities that they engaged in these libraries.

Both library users and library staff member, endorsed the importance of having a library in their community. They concur that currently their rural public library makes a vital contribution to the community, especially for their children's self development. However, sustainability factor comes from the provider itself whereby they need to provide a proper site and building for rural library.

6. Conclusion

As the conclusion, sustainability measurement for rural libraries in Malaysia is very important to ensure rural libraries will be fully utilized and provide information needed by the community. Furthermore, this study will fulfill the gap of sustainability research in libraries. It sought to provide researchers, librarians generally and libraries especially rural libraries with a better understanding of rural libraries sustainability in Malaysia. It will enrich library and information science literature by providing study on sustainable factors of rural libraries in Malaysia.

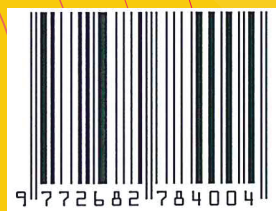
Rural libraries and librarians will get significant advantage in developing rural libraries, organized programs, activities, providing services and collections which will fulfill local community needs rather than make it standardized all over the country. It was due to different needs by different community in Malaysia. These will lead to the fully utilization of rural libraries. An additional key contribution of this study is to create awareness among community to fully utilize collections and services provided by the rural library. Furthermore, the results would serve as a basis for sustainable development framework for rural libraries and will lead towards sustainability of rural libraries.

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