

**INFORMATION NEEDS OF USERS PATRONIZING
THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF MALAYSIA**

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INFORMATION NEEDS OF USERS PATRONIZING THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF MALAYSIA

ABSTRACT

The National Archives of Malaysia has a vision of becoming the centre of excellence for information sources and services by the year 2020. This vision is a support to make Malaysia a developed nation with strong moral and ethical values through the national heritage. The literature indicates that in an archival context, user studies remain unlimited. Even in Malaysia, archival user study, especially on archival user information needs, have not been empirically investigated. In order for archivists to respond adequately to the needs of researchers using their services, they must first understand the kinds of information which particular user group requires. This study is designed to help the National Archives of Malaysia identify the information needs of the users so that the National Archives of Malaysia can serve them effectively and more efficiently. For that purpose, this study explored the information needs of users while using archives or archival materials as their primary sources of information, and discovered the users actual use of primary sources. In this regard, the headquarters of the National Archives of Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur has been chosen as the case setting. This study used a qualitative data gathering technique using interviews. Observation and document analysis were also employed for data collection. All registered researchers who patronized the National Archives of Malaysia served as survey population and a total of 20 participants were purposively sampled. The qualitative data were analyzed descriptively and results were presented narratively. The results of this study found that archival user information needs to be categorized into 5

main areas: purpose of archive information needs, popular archive information subject, preferred type of archived material, reasons leading to visit the National Archives of Malaysia and archives' user concern in obtaining required information. Finally, this study gives additional input on how the crucial role of the National Archives of Malaysia may be strengthened to provide sufficient archives information and convenient facilities for its users. The findings can then be utilized by archivists in their efforts to respond more effectively to the needs of this particular group of archival users.

Keywords: information, information needs, archives, archives information needs

KEPERLUAN MAKLUMAT PENGGUNA KERAP

ARKIB NEGARA MALAYSIA

ABSTRAK

Arkib Negara Malaysia mempunyai visi untuk menjadi pusat sumber maklumat yang cemerlang menjelang tahun 2020. Visi ini merupakan sokongan untuk menjadikan Malaysia sebuah negara maju dengan nilai moral dan etika yang kuat melalui warisan kebangsaan. Dalam konteks arkib, kajian mengenai pengguna arkib tidak begitu biasa diperkatakan. Malah di Malaysia, penyelidikan pengguna arkib khususnya mengenai keperluan maklumat pengguna arkib masih belum dibincangkan secara mendalam. Kajian ini direka untuk membantu Arkib Negara Malaysia mengenal pasti keperluan maklumat pengguna supaya Arkib Negara Malaysia sentiasa dapat memenuhi keperluan pengguna dengan lebih baik dan berkhidmat dengan lebih efisien. Bagi tujuan tersebut, kajian ini telah meneroka keperluan maklumat pengguna semasa menggunakan bahan arkib sebagai sumber utama maklumat mereka. Ibu pejabat Arkib Negara Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur telah dipilih sebagai penetapan kes. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah kualitatif dengan kaji selidik sebagai teknik penyelidikan. Manakala pemerhatian, temu duga dan analisis dokumen digunakan sebagai alat pengumpulan data. Semua penyelidik berdaftar yang mengunjungi Arkib Negara Malaysia bertindak sebagai populasi kajian dan disampel secara bertujuan. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif dan hasilnya dibentangkan dalam bentuk naratif. Hasil kajian ini mendapati keperluan untuk maklumat pengguna arkib dapat dikelaskan kepada 5 perkara utama iaitu tujuan kepada keperluan maklumat, subjek maklumat arkib yang popular, jenis bahan arkib yang digemari, faktor yang mendorong kepada lawatan ke Arkib Negara Malaysia dan kebimbangan pengguna dalam mendapatkan maklumat

yang diperlukan. Akhir sekali, kajian ini memberi input tambahan mengenai peranan penting Arkib Negara Malaysia dalam menyediakan maklumat arkib yang mencukupi termasuk kemudahan yang selesa untuk pengguna.

Katakunci: maklumat, keperluan maklumat, arkib, keperluan maklumat arkib

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

COMPASS	Computerized Archival System and Services
OFA	Online Finding Aids
UNESCO	United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture

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Appendix A: Faculty Consent Letter

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The background of the National Archives of Malaysia including description of the main function and referral services provided introduces the chapter. The chapter presents the statement of the research problem, followed by a set of research objectives, and the research questions posed. The chapter also provides a brief explanation of the significance of the study and its delimitations. Lastly, the chapter concludes with an outline of a structure adopted for the remaining sections of the dissertation.

1.1 Background and Research Contexts

All over the world, archives and museum have been the place of custody for documentary heritage of humans. Archives as institution and records as documents are generally seen by users as a passive resource to be exploited for various historical and cultural purposes (Schwartz and Cook 2002). Professional evidence provided insights that when the name “National Archives of Malaysia” is mentioned, the roles and functions is often misunderstood. People would generally think that the National Archives of Malaysia is only related to old items, shabby things and antique objects.

However, the words "items, things or objects" are inaccurate to be associated with the National Archives of Malaysia. The words actually reflect the main function of the National Museum Departments. For this matter, the National Archives of Malaysia is determined to foster widespread awareness on historical information safe kept for the

public viewing (Official Portal of the National Archives of Malaysia, available at <http://www.arkib.gov.my/en/web/guest/arkib-negara-malaysia>). Officially the National Archives of Malaysia has two main functions with various activities and programmes under it.

First, the National Archives of Malaysia is responsible to the government records, in any form, from the creation until the disposition or transfer process to National Archives of Malaysia. This first function is generally recognized as a record management field. Government records embodied under National Archives of Malaysia's custody and control include records of federal and state governments, federal and state statutory bodies, federal and state Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) and include personal letter of a statesman figures or individual figure who contributes to the country's historical information from various fields.

The National Archives of Malaysia's second function is archives administration. The vital and valuable government records are not allowed to be destroyed. These records would be transferred to the National Archives of Malaysia and would be known or recognized as an archival material after the records age reach 25 years under the National Archives of Malaysia's custody. These archives would be kept, properly preserved and conserved (if needed) so that they could be used as reference and evidence in future access. This second function covers the management of statesman's memorial.

The journey of the National Archives of Malaysia to carry out its functions and objectives from the beginning of the establishment until now has undergone various changes and developments. Based on the Report on the Public Record Office and

National Archives 1958-1962, National Archives of Malaysia was officially established in December 1957. At that time, the National Archives of Malaysia was known as the Public Record Office (PRO) and headed by the Keeper. The Keeper had to manage three divisions under him, which are the Records Service, General Administration and Archives Service (see Figure 1.1).

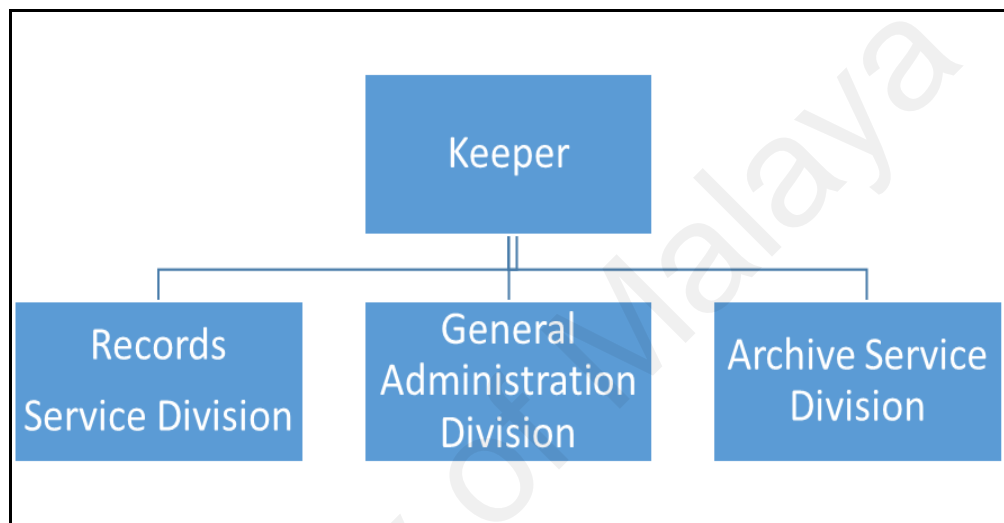


Figure 1.1: Organization Chart of the Public Records Office 1957

In 1963, the Public Record Office was known as the National Archives of Malaysia. The National Library Service, which was established in 1966, is one of the units under National Archives (see Figure 1.2). According to the National Archive's Annual Report 1963-1994, the National Library Service then was officially established as the National Library of Malaysia in 1971.

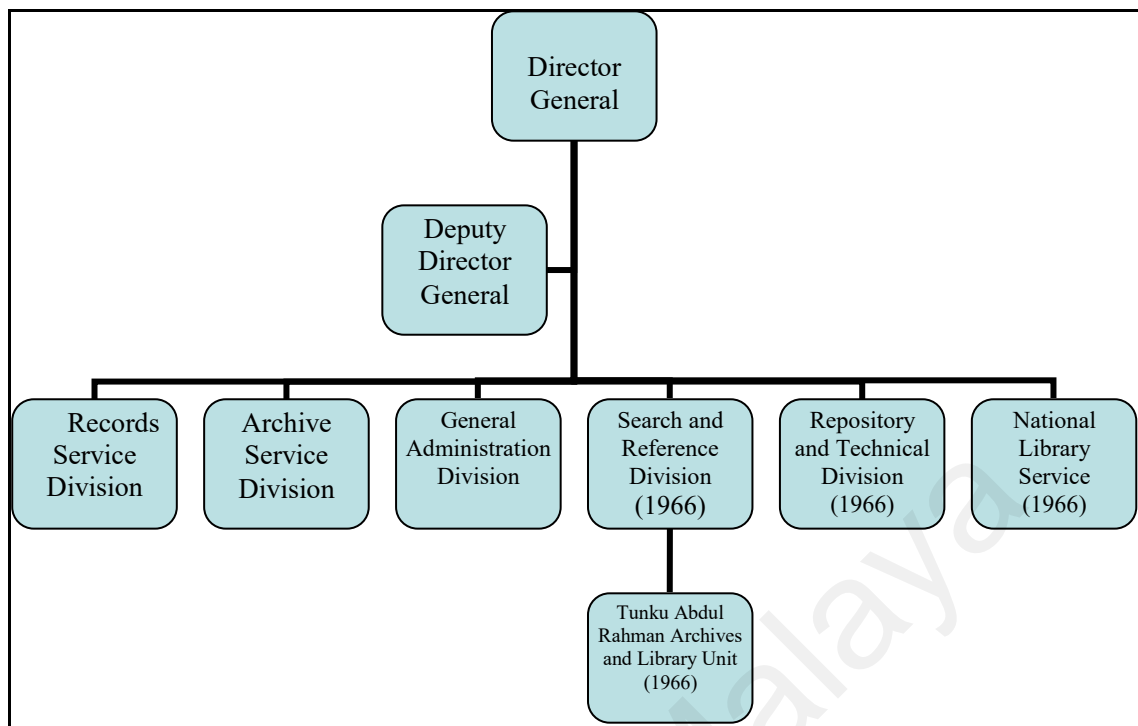


Figure 1.2: Organization Chart of National Archives of Malaysia and the National Library Service, 1970

The National Archives of Malaysia and National Library of Malaysia have their own specialized fields operated under the same Departmental head. Both organizations are co-operating closely to provide materials for research. Archivists are aware of the librarians' holdings and vice versa. However, as these two institutions handled different materials and had different methodologies in arranging and describing them, the policy makers and administrators of the National Archives of Malaysia felt that they should create two separate departments. The National Archives of Malaysia Annual Report 1963-1994 recorded that the government agreed to separate the National Archives and National Library, and in June 1977 the National Library of Malaysia became an institution in its own right. Since that, the National Archives of Malaysia also started to move forward independently.

The National Archives of Malaysia is the official custodian of government records and archives. National Archives of Malaysia has numerous sources of information. These

included hundred thousand of files from the ministries and department, service books, audiovisual collections, official publications, research and technical reports as well as personal collections (figure statesman). The characteristics of records and archives which were kept in the National Archives of Malaysia is authentic, unique (no other copies), accountable and valuable make it as a primary source of information.

Similar to any other national archives worldwide, users of the National Archives of Malaysia are mainly among the academic scholars and researchers. Most of the researchers are students, conducting research at various levels, from secondary school to doctoral level. However, people, in general assume that the archives are only used by academics. This is no longer the case. People use archives for all kinds of research now. They made a research to archives to complement the information gathering in TV programs, local history studies, town plans and architecture, journalism, political interests, even school excursion, personal visits and sightseeing as discussed by Otu and Asante (2015).

Archival information at the national and national level may be used for various purposes, and the use of information held in local and global archives provides significant justification for their existence, which would be ultimately be a national or international heritage. Kemoni, Wamukoya and Kiplang'at (2003) listed the following stakeholders as the typical user of information of archival sources: the government representatives who require information about government activities, established academic researchers from a wide range of disciplines, student researchers, genealogist and the general public including school students. The authors emphasized that the essential utility and value of information housed in archives are articulated through its use for research purposes.

Pearce-Moses as in the A Glossary of Archival and Record Terminology defined archives as “non-current records permanently preserved, with or without selection by those responsible for their creation or by their successors in function for their own use or by an appropriate archival repository because of their archival value” (Pearce-Moses, 2005, p. 29). Archives or archival materials are very crucial in terms of national boundaries, national administration, citizenship issues, as evidence in court, tracing the family tree including a study of the socio-economic and socio-culture. The National Archives of Malaysia even kept some records before the country's independence as early as the 1850s. These types of information have become the attractiveness of users who need information in their field of study or their references.

There are various types of information needs according to the user's level of education and their study purposes. Nowadays users tend to depend on the internet as the main sources in meeting their information needs. Certainly, there is no harm to refer to the internet, but to what extent is the validity of the information received? People today openly dare to distribute fabricated facts and misleading information about the past to the public in order to achieve their desires. The use of archival materials as the main source of reference is important to ensure that the information received is accurate, authentic and reliable. The user's personal view, evaluation, or acceptance, then will determine how the information is elaborated and presented.

As the National Archives of Malaysia provides referral services to users, people normally assume that the procedure of using archive material information is totally the same as the library. Well, it is true that archives and libraries provide information to users, but the form of reference material provided has differentiated the reference

procedures. Basically, the principle of providing reference services is the same at all archive institutions around the world.

1.2 Statement of Problem

With the creation of the National Archives of Malaysia, the Malaysian government demonstrated its willingness to preserve and promote its' national heritage. Malaysian cultural heritage would not only be preserved but showcased to the whole world, Malaysians and non-Malaysians through the national archives. As such, there is a need to make available information that is documented in archives material from the archives repositories. The statement is executed by the National Archives of Malaysia through the referral service provided. Referral service is one of the most National Archives of Malaysia's crucial obligations to the communities. It is to ensure that the National Archives of Malaysia can become a prestigious research centre in Malaysia as it was mention obviously in its visions as stated below;

“Leading the transformation of Records Management and Archives Administration as an outstanding National Research Centre by 2020”

“Peneraju transformasi Pengurusan Rekod dan Pentadbiran Arkib sebagai Pusat Penyelidikan Negara yang cemerlang menjelang 2020”

(National Archives of Malaysia, n.d.)

As a centre of excellence for information sources and services, the National Archives of Malaysia needs to be able to provide and fulfil the archival information needs to their customers. It will thus be of interest to users to refer and use the archive collections by visiting the National Archives of Malaysia, either physically or virtual. Users will be

more likely to refer to the National Archives of Malaysia if their information needs are being met, readily available and favourable.

But, does the National Archives of Malaysia know what the information needs of their users are? What is the most wanted or most popular information of archives? To what extent the National Archives of Malaysia has met the archive user information needs when referring to the existing collection. Are they satisfied? Do users face any problems or barriers while getting archive information? There are many issues related to the needs of the archives user information that could be explored, revealed and discussed. All these aspects have not been formally and thoroughly studied in the National Archives of Malaysia as far as this research is concerned.

The information needs of the archival user are essential for being fulfilled to ensure that their tasks or goals are met. Vilar and Šauperl (2017) argued that the development of archival digital collections should follow user needs, as library and information science practice shows that otherwise collections may lack usability. Literature indicates that users' studies have been lacking in the archival context, archives unlike libraries have so far focused little attention on their users and their information needs.

Through past literary studies, lack of knowledge and understanding of users' information needs have affected in planning, designing and determining actions that need to be taken in the future. These situations have been discussed by Banmeke and Oluwu (2003). It has been seen as a gap that needs to be taken care of to ensure the function of a government agency goes well, from a public point of view. The overall aim of the study was therefore to gather additional information to help us shape a more

detailed profile of archives users and their information needs and to verify whether the identified services and resources were adequate for them.

1.3 Research Objectives and Research Questions

The justification for the existences of an archival institution is through the use of the information provided by them (Blaise and David, 1993). Thus, to ensure that the reference services provided by National Archives of Malaysia are strongly useful and meet the needs of the users, National Archives of Malaysia have to find out what is their user's information needs. In accordance of the statement of problem above, the main objectives of the study have been identified as follows:

- i) To explore the information needs of archive users in the National Archives of Malaysia.
- ii) To identify whether the services and resources of the National Archives of Malaysia meet the requirements of the archives' user information.
- iii) To find out the concerns of archive users when obtaining information in the National Archives of Malaysia.

In order to assured that the three Research Objectives above can be further examined, the research question has been outlined as below:

- (i) What are the information needs of users patronizing the National Archives of Malaysia?
- (ii) To what extent are the services and resources provided by the National Archives of Malaysia meet the archives' user information needs?

- (iii) What are the concerns of archive users in obtaining the information in the National Archives of Malaysia?

To ensure that answers can be obtained from the research questions, an interview with the semi-structured questions has been used. The first part of the semi-structured question is to get the population information. The second part is open-ended questions that give users the freedom to answer and express their opinions to answer the research questions about the information needs.

1.4 Significance of the study

Previously, the National Archives of Malaysia seems to be so 'overbearing' by providing archive information through referral services without curiosity about their user information needs. This study will be valuable to the National Archives of Malaysia to recognize the information needs of their user and evaluate the concern of archival users.

The outcome of this study can help the National Archives of Malaysia to monitor and study the effectiveness and appropriateness of existing referral services from the user perspective. It can be a catalyst for the National Archives of Malaysia to achieve its vision through improvements that can be made from the findings of this study. Even the National Archives of Malaysia can intensify their research work to track historical information either locally or overseas to fill in the gap of archive information that users need.

Since the archive material is unique and there is no other copy in the world, it should be well-maintained. The discovery of the frequency and popularity of referenced archive

materials from this study can guide National Archives of Malaysia to prioritize a particular collection of archives for digitization. Nowadays users prefer to get information online. Users want information as quickly as possible and want to save on search costs in terms of time and money. The Online Finding Aids (OFA) system has been in existence since 2010. This medium can be used to further the digitization of the types and subjects of popular archive materials.

Nowadays the method of digitizing archive material information has become a trend in providing access to users. In addition to being trendy and convenient for users, it retains the physical form of the archive material itself. Elements that damage the archival material can be minimized as a result of hand contact (sweat), movement in and out of material from the repository, torn, scratched or smuggled out of the archive. The significances of all of the above make this study important to the National Archives of Malaysia.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

This research was delimited to the National Archives of Malaysia's users. Since the respondents or the informants are the users, they must be a registered researcher. Users will not be allowed to refer to the archive material if they do not register as a researcher. Users can only make reference to the National Archives of Malaysia's library collections on the Mezzanine floor. There are no cost issues because the registration is free.

The second delimitation of this study would be limited to the experience and knowledge of respondents while using the archives. Therefore, respondents must not be the first time

user. This is to ensure that the right decision or opinion will be obtained and to avoid unfair assessment by users who have never used archive reference services before.

The third delimitation of the study is that the findings will only be collected at the National Archives of Malaysia headquarters in Jalan Sultan Abdul Hamid (Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Other users of the institutions under the National Archives of Malaysia such as memorials and state branch archives will not be counted as a respondent. This case study will only focus on respondents who make reference and use access services with complete facilities in terms of infrastructure, manpower and collection of archival materials.

1.6 Key Terms Definitions

To ensure that the understanding in this study coincides with the intended purpose, the following definitions are provided;

(a) Information Needs

“The term information need is often understood as an individual or group's desire to locate and obtain information to satisfy a conscious or unconscious need. Rarely mentioned in general literature about needs, it is a common term in information science. According to Hjørland (1997) it is closely related to the concept of relevance: If something is relevant for a person in relation to a given task, we might say that the person needs the information for that task.”

(Wilson, 1981)

(b) Archives

For the purpose of the study, the archives mean any government records and archives including non-government records which were kept and preserved in the National Archives of Malaysia for national value or lasting historical value.

(National Archives of Malaysia Act, 2003)

(c) Archival Materials

“Materials created or received by a person, family, or organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs that are preserved because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator.”

(Pearce-Moses, 2005)

(d) National Archives of Malaysia

“National Archives of Malaysia is declared to be a federal archive for the purpose of providing guidelines in the creation, acquisition, storage and preservation of records and providing facilities for reference, research or other purposes.”

(National Archives of Malaysia Act, 2003)

1.7 Organization of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Chapter One consists of the introduction which explain research contexts; statement of research problems; research

objectives and research questions; significance of the study; delimitation of study; and definition of key terms used. Chapter Two discusses a review of relevant literature to clarify the concept of information needs and issues surrounding this topic in archival perspectives. Chapter Three contains the detail regarding research design and methodology. Chapter Four reports all findings and analysis synthesized from collected data. Chapter Five highlights the main findings and analysis within Chapter Four, discusses the results and concludes the study by providing summary of the analyzed findings, suggests recommendations for future studies and research contribution to field of study.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review or searches on information needs of the user and other related concepts, terms and issues on archival perspectives. These reviews of literature are divided into 4 subtopics. These subtopics developed through various scholars and researcher's point of view on the term of information, information needs, archives user study and archives user information needs.

Literature reviews are sourced from the online databases, e-journal, e-books, online and offline proceedings/ conference papers, printed books, theses and dissertations.

2.1 Information

Information is needed by all people in daily life. An example of information we often want to know is time. In a form of numbers, time information is needed to determine what actions we will take next or implement in our daily life. Just like the Muslims themselves, it is important to know the information about the time to perform the five-day worship daily, the hours of fasting in Ramadan and so on. As mentioned by Hossain and Islam (2012) "Information is needed everywhere and for everybody, but in a different way. Availability of information enables the individuals or groups to make rational decision and reduce their level of uncertainty (p. 15)".

According to Liew in his article titled "Understanding data, information, knowledge and their inter-relationships" stated that "information is message that contains relevant

meaning, implication, or input for decision and/or action. Information comes from both current and historical sources. Basically, the purpose of information is to aid in making decisions and/or solving problems or realizing an opportunity.” (Liew, 2007, p.5). Liew's statement underscores the importance and need for informational data in everyday life.

In the context of archival institutions, data and information on Malaysian history and national administration are kept in various forms. In line with the function of the National Archives of Malaysia as the "custodian" of national vital information, digitization is one of the methods implemented to preserve the physical materials of archives and provide quick access to information. As in the National Archives of Malaysia, the information of archival material is digitized in the COMPASS System and OFA System (web-based) database.

Sometimes the meaning of information and data is quite confusing and does not seem to make any difference. While data contains facts or ideas, information refers to a more complex concept consisting of various data elements. Information can take many forms, including words, sounds, images, and formulas. Information is meant for systematic communication to enable right decision.

2.2 Information Needs

Topics regarding information needs or requirements have started being discussed by researchers since the early 1900's. Wilson's model of 1981 on the user's need stated that information need is depending on previous levels of satisfaction from information acquired previously, leading to a sequence of activities that make demands on

information systems and sources resulting in either success or failure. Wilson's own later revisions, taking account of newly developed theories of individual information seeking behavior. Wilson (1981) added that information needs introduces intervening variables that could be role related or source characteristics which are of import in the heritage sector as it is these that are most likely to determine the seeking of information.

According to Belkin (1980), the proponent of the Anomalous States of Knowledge (ASK) concept for explaining how information needs arise. He mentioned that an information need arises when a human individual encounters an ASK. An ASK is a situation where "the user realizes that there is an anomaly in [their] state of knowledge with respect to the problem faced. The person may address the anomaly by seeking information" (Belkin, 1980, p.137). Belkin (1980) added that "after obtaining information, the person will evaluate again whether the anomaly still exists. If it does, and the person is still motivated to resolve it, more information may be sought" (p. 137). Through this evaluation that information needs are determined.

Belkin and Vickery (1989) also found out that every search begins with a problem and a need to resolve the problem, the gap between this is refers to information need, which lead to information seeking. Naveed, Anwar and Bano (2012) had mention in their article that Anwar and Supaat (1998) stated that "consideration of user's information needs is a very vital element in the provision of need-based and relevant information to them". They also explained that Rosenberg (1993) wrote "the lack of knowledge of information needs of a particular community is a major obstacle in the design of need-based information services that can provide more relevant information to its users."

Tahir, Mahmood and Shafique (2008) mentioned that Zhang (1998) stresses that thorough understanding of user information needs and information seeking behavior is fundamental to the provision of successful information services. They also added in their article that Devadason and Lingman (1997) explained “the understanding of information needs and information-seeking behavior of various professional groups is essential as it helps in the planning, implementation, and operation of information system, and services in works settings” (Tahir, Mahmood and Shafique, 2008, p.1) .

From the library aspect, Tahir, Mahmood and Shafique (2008) also include White (1975) statement that “if academic librarians are to realistically serve academic researchers, they must recognize the changing needs and variations in information gathering and provide services that would be most useful” (p. 2). Paisley (1968) moved from information needs/ uses toward strong guidelines for information system. He studied the theories of information-processing behavior that will generate propositions concerning channel selection; amount of seeking; effects on productivity of information quality, quantity, currency, and diversity; the role of motivational and personality factors.

Paisley (1968) also investigated a concentric conceptual framework for user research. In the framework, he places the information users at the centre of ten systems, which are: the scientist within his culture, the scientist within a political system the scientist within a membership group, the scientist within a reference group, the scientist within an invisible college, the scientist within a formal organization, the scientist within a work team, the scientist within his own head, the scientist within a legal/economical system, and the scientist within a formal. Therefore, it is obvious that when the users have information needs, they are search for an answer to a question or a solution to problem.

Besides Faibisoff and Ely (1974) mentioned that “if information needs can be considered a generic concept, then there were subsets which address information demands (or requirements) and information wants (or desires) (p. 7)”. However, the details (the breakdown) of information needs will not be discussed further in this chapter. The above statement only describes the information needs in general to understand the user information needs that have been discussed by previous researchers.

2.3 Archives User

It is undeniable that user studies have long been studied and discussed within the library field. According to Miller (1986), the first library user study emerged since in the late 1940s. While the archive profession only began to investigate the archives user studies in the late 1970s. However, most of the existing literature on archival user studies is geared towards specific topics and it is varied, not about user studies as a whole. Miller (1986) added that the archivist often reprimands the archive community in the 1980s which tends to underestimate the needs of their user. From that point on, archive user studies are actively discussed in the literature.

Although several user studies have been conducted in archives, they are much fewer in number than those conducted in the context of libraries. Duff and Johnson (2002) argued that one particular reason why archivists lagged behind librarians in their user studies was because of the former’s resistance to social and behavioral science research techniques, especially those applied to library and information science. Duff and Johnson (2002) also opined that another reason might be that users of archives are more difficult to study compared to library users, since the former research needs are diffused

and difficult to assess; and they are not familiar and comfortable to articulating their information needs.

As mentioned by Rhee (2015), “archive institutions and libraries both have users, but the two communities seem to have different attitudes about user studies. Archival institutions have conducted many fewer user studies than libraries, and where the library community seems to have accepted user studies, the archival community is much more at odds (p. 37)”.

Valuable models for designing user studies have been offered by Conway and Maher. In addition to improving services to users, user studies may have a secondary benefit. Quoting Maher (1986, p. 15), "The more archivists know about the use of their holdings, the more ammunition they will have in the battle to convince people that archives really matter”.

Archives’ user information needs is one of the elements under user studies. For those archives user studies need to be researched, refined and fully understood. Rhee (2015) categorized that the information need of archive user is one of the three (3) major categories classified under archives user studies. Other than the information needs are; information seeking and information use.

2.4 Archives’ User Information Needs

As Jimerson urged that “In order to avoid becoming irrelevant in the modern information society. Archivist must establish the importance of archives in meeting user

needs". (Jimerson, 1989, p.332) He emphasizes the importance of focusing on users and their needs through redefining archivist attitudes, self-images and procedures.

Despite the centrality of use to archival works, user studies have been neglected recently. Maher (1986) emphasized the analysis of user studies as a component of archival and manuscripts service programmes. Banmeke and Olowu (2005) finds that the particular information needs of a specific community should be identified in order to meet their needs and aspirations.

While Zaverdinos-Kockott (2004) mentioned in order to achieve applicability, the information needs of communities should be assessed and the correct information sources and services put in place. The job or research extended by such information is viewed as the information needs (Line, 1969), and would be recognized as doing so by the recipient meeting of need is useful and crucial to the person. Line (1969) added that people make a supposition that in order to accomplish safely, happily, successfully, and competently. Their information needs should be encountered or they need to be given enough information.

Meanwhile, informational requirements arise when people recognizes the gap in his knowledge and wants to solve it (Belkin, 1989). While Freeman (1984) emphasized the need to facilitate and appreciate the potential users of the archives. The needs and attention must be given to the focus group or specific users and should be prioritized. This has shown that the archivist has to pay attention to the needs of the users in order to increase the use of valuable record referrals.

In addition, the fifth objective of the National Archives of Malaysia "to facilitate and thereby promote the use of archival materials as a source of reference and research" (National Archives of Malaysia, n.d) also seems to be unknown to the extent of its achievement. Is the objective achieved? If the National Archives of Malaysia does not really know what the information needs of archives' user is how it is possible to facilitate the searching or selection of "archive treasures" and promote it to users. After all, the National Archives of Malaysia's desire to become an excellent national research centre may be just a dream.

Relates to the information needs of the user and the reference services provided by the National Archives of Malaysia, Dowler (1988) emphasized that user reference service be prioritized, and not "last in operational states priorities" if use is the measure and justification of archives. He added that in many cases and too often at that, the organization's needs, services and products are emphasized, and then only potential users are identified and convinced to use archives. This shows that referral services and archives' user information needs are interconnected. By understanding the information needs of user then we know how to provide excellent reference services.

The urgency to review the services of providing information from the user's perspectives is as crucial as Freeman (1984) expressed in her article "In the Eyes of the Beholder" that advanced technologies and information systems may make archives a stagnant and there is an urgency to reconceptualise archives basic services and procedures from the user's point of view. Freeman also added that "not because our material is irrelevant to current or retrospective questions but rather because of the difficulty users have in reaching the information hidden in the records we hold" (Freeman, 1984, p. 112).

In examining users of archives, the tendency has been to focus on archivists' needs. An instructive example of this is the effort by the Illinois State Archives to promote scholarly use of its holdings. The attempt failed, not because the records could not support scholarly use, but because the Archives had not evaluated the needs of its users. This clearly shows that user evaluation is a powerful motivation for many users of archival information. An important area for investigation would be the underlying human needs which archival research can satisfy.

As Gracy II concludes in his study of resource allocators stated that "making archives a more common and accessible concept, and doing more to open them to use and visiting, should diminish the various elements of dustiness and mustiness, sheer acquisitiveness, territoriality, and dead accumulation" (Gracy II, 1986, p.60). The trinity of archival functions is selection, preservation, and access. The National Archives of Malaysia is a place of knowledge, memory, nourishment, and power. Archives at once protect and preserve records; legitimize and sanctify certain documents while negating and destroying others; and provide access to selected sources while controlling the researchers and conditions under which they may examine the archival record.

2.5 Summary

The literature review shows the need and importance of studying what is the information needs of archives' user. These interests need to be taken care of by the service providers so they know their users' needs in the form of information. The next chapter presents the research methodology used to address the aim and objectives of the study.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall design of the study on the exploration of the information need of the archives' users. It explains how the interview was carried out, the process of data collection and how the data were analyzed. This chapter is divided into several sections; (1) research design, (2) population and sample, (3) selection of participants, (4) data collection instrument, (5) data collection procedures, (6) Data analysis, (7) ethical consideration, (8) trustworthiness of data and (9) summary of the chapter.

3.1 Research Design

In general, research designs mean a single step in planning and implementing particular research. This study could be classified as an exploratory study with empirical qualitative research method. It attempted to assess the information needs of users who patronize the National Archives of Malaysia. The nature of this study required the use of the data gathering method throughout an interview session, observation and document analysis. This enabled to collect a large amount of data. Furthermore, the method provided an opportunity for respondents to give frank answers, what is on their mind, what they think and how they feel about something.

3.2 Population and Sample

As mentioned earlier, the population of this study consisted of the registered users who patronize the National Archives of Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur. This study employs the purposive sampling technique. Selecting of a sample of users was based on the certain criteria that have been set. All respondent was asked to respond anonymously to the interviews.

The sample size or number of respondents interviewed depends largely on the willingness of the interviewed users at the time and of course when the information provided is saturated. From 23 February 2018 to 18 April 2018, 20 users from 1,987 populations were sampled, taking into account after the data collected had reached the level of saturation. Data analysis of these 20 respondents were described and defined. Table 3.1 shows the breakdown of the respondents.

Table 3.1: Population and Sample of the Study

MONTH	POPULATION (NUMBER OF PATRONS)	SAMPLE
February 2018	278	2
Mac 2018	1058	12
April 2018	651	6
Total	1987	20

3.3 Selection of Participants

Research participants were purposively selected among those users who patronized the National Archives of Malaysia and fulfilled the criteria that have been as follows:

- 3.3.1 Participants must voluntarily agree to be interview for at least 40 minutes.
- 3.3.2 Participants must intend to do research in National Archives of Malaysia, not for other purposes, such as for leisure, sightseeing or just to accompany someone.
- 3.3.3 Participants must be registered as a archives researcher. The registration is free of charge.
- 3.3.4 Participants must have patronized the archives before. Participants should not be a first-time visitor.

Participants are free to express their answers and thoughts questioned to them. The interviews were conducted in the Malay language and sometimes code-switching between English and Malay, at various locations in the National Archives to which the users preferred. But most of the interview sessions were conducted at the National Archive's Cafeteria.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

In order to understand the viewpoint of participants, qualitative methods data gathering techniques such as observations, interviews, report and statistical analysis are ideal approaches. In this study, data were collected through observation, analysis of document and semi-structured interviews were applied to the selected participant. Both open and

closed questions were asked. Analysis was made after saturation of data involving 20 interviews and audio recorder was used during the interview sessions.

This study employed semi-structured interviews that consist of several key questions that not only helped define the areas to be explored, but also allowed the interviewer or interviewee to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response to the interview questions in more detail. According to Britten (1999) and Stoop and Berg (2003), these methods are capable to capture “what, why and how” of the phenomenon and document how a person perceives and experiences a system in a social context. The semi-structured questions in this interview is presented in Appendix B.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Before the interview process was conducted, observations were made in a research hall of National Archives of Malaysia to get an early idea about the users. All the participants were given a consent form to be filled up before the interview session started (see Appendix C. Consent form means that a person receives a written form that describes the research and they need to sign the form to document his or her consent to participate. As mentioned by Denzin (2000, p.157) “written informed consent may also be described as documented informed consent that they have to read and sign up before they were interviewed”.

Participation was voluntary and the research participants could withdraw from the interview at any point of time. The information is confidential and protected. Interviews had been conducted for more than one month and the duration of the interview took between 40 minutes to one hour and 30 minutes. During the interview session, extensive

notes were written using the actual words used by the respondent. In order to capture the correct words and exact meaning responded by participants, a digital recorder was used to record the conversation in every interview session. The interview session will be to stop if the data reached saturation.

The actual interviews session was conducted from 23rd February 2018 (Friday) to 18 April 2018 (Wednesday). A total of 18 interviews were conducted the same day after consent was obtained. Meanwhile, 2 more interviews were conducted few days after consent was obtained. The date and time were set for the 2 interviews. The sample size of the study was 20 respondents because the answer had reached saturation level in the 20th interview session. As described by Gillham (2005), that data is saturated when the same answer is given by the interviewees.

Dey (1999) mentioned that saturation is then narrowly correlated to the perception of theoretical sampling the indication that sampling is directed by the crucial resemblances and differences required by the emerging theory. While Bryman (2012) defined that saturation causes the researcher to chain sampling, data collection and data analysis, rather than considering them as isolated points in a linear process.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis strategy is carried out in accordance with the standard processes in the qualitative study as described in the following sections.

3.6.1 Transcription of Data

Language transfers data coding and information classification have resulted in the transcription process taking a long time to complete. As discussed by Grbich (2013), qualitative research is not simply a matter of choosing and applying a process. Data analysis processes in qualitative methods are very complex. Voice data were transcribed verbatim and translated in English seems most of the participants prefer to speak in Malay language or some participants used both, Malay and English language. After collecting data from the field, all the data were transcribed and translated to English language. Transcription simply means converting all data into textual form. All 20 transcriptions of conversation in interview session were transferred in the Microsoft Words. An example of a transcript of interviews in Malay language is appended (see Appendix D).

3.6.2 Organization of the Data.

To avoid any confusion, the data that has been transcribed was organized according to the research questions. To get a view set of data thoroughly, the data organized manually in a tabular spreadsheet consist of row of respondent and column of answer. The purpose is to ensure the answers of 2 categories of questions are obtained accurately.

3.6.3 Generate Codes From the Data.

Overall transcribed interviews were extracting to the keywords or codes and grouping the codes. To compress the data into easily understandable concepts, coding is the best way to be more efficient in the data analysis process. The codes were derived from the data analysis collected as well as from the observation and research objectives. Coding

includes categorizing the data into concepts, properties and patterns. In addition, coding is important to help determining the data collected from the interviews.

To generate code from transcribed data, it starts with summarizing the data center theme. After data encoding, the theme or pattern was built to get a deeper picture of the meaning of the data. The relationship between open codes has been identified and compiled / grouped into creating a potential theme. Of the 20 transcription interviews performed, the similar answers that have appeared have been determined.

3.6.4 Identify and Grouping the Relationship Among the Open Codes

All the gathered data on the users' experiences, views and perceptions are thematically analyzed, based on identifying patterns across a data set and clustering similar meanings. There are some approaches regarding the thematic analysis. It was an inductive way, deductive way, a semantic way, a latent way, a realist or essentialist way and a constructionist way. This study used the inductive way approach whereby the coding and themes are directed by the content of the data. What is vitally important is that the analysis is theoretically coherent and consistent.

Five themes were created from this study. Data analyzed according to different group, sorted and grouped to create potential theme/sub theme, some codes were retained, some formed new theme and other were grouped to shaped broader theme. Proper name was assigned for the theme. The five themes of the archive information need are discovered as; (1) purpose of archive information needs, (2) popular subject of archive information, (3) preferred archive material, (4) a catalyst of National Archive Malaysia's patrons and (5) issues concerns of archive users. The analyzed data was then

synthesized and presented in narrative form. The findings and conclusion were described based on the objectives and the research questions of this study.

3.7 Ethical considerations

For the purposes of this study, the interview session started only with participant willingness and approval. Every effort was made to ensure that participants were understood about the study and participant confidentiality was protected. Informed consent (Appendix C) was obtained and anonymity of the research participants was guaranteed in the analysis and reporting of the findings.

3.8 Trustworthiness of data

The reliability of this data is made through peer checking on recordings and transcriptions that have been made. Trustworthiness of data take into consideration of transferability, credibility, dependability and confirmability.

3.9 Summary

This chapter provides an overview of research design and methodology used for this study. An interview was employed to gather data in order to answer the semi-structured questions verbally which explore the information needs of archives' user. The data derived from the interview will be captured verbatim and listed in the transcript form. Thus the data tabulated and analyzed and synthesized in narrative form. The next chapter, Chapter Four discusses the findings and result for analysis of data collected from 20 interviews session.

Chapter Four

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study in two main sections. Based on the research objectives presented in Chapter 1, the semi-structured interview questions were developed to discover the right answers for each research questions. The first section is about the participant information and the second section is on the information needs of archives users. The participant information category indicated data on population, gender, age, education status and the origin of the participants. Meanwhile, the archive user information needs category reveals five (5) important discoveries based on these research questions:

- (i) What are the information needs of users patronizing the National Archives of Malaysia?
- (ii) To what extent are the services and resources provided by the National Archives of Malaysia meet the archives' user information needs?
- (iii) What are the concerns of archive users in obtaining the information in the National Archives of Malaysia?

These semi-structured interviews were provided to address the objectives of this study, which is to explore the information needs of users who patronize the National Archives of Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur.

4.1 Participants Information

Individuals who fulfilled the selection of participant criteria were chosen as participants or informants of this study. In February 2018, 2 users were sampled as participants, 12 users in March 2018 and 6 users in April 2018. The total attendance of the users in February 2018, Mac 2018 and April 2018 were obtained from the Researcher Attendance's Statistic, given from the Reference and Access Section, National Archives of Malaysia. This statistic is also can be generated from the Computerization of the Archives and Services System (COMPASS system).

In percentages, the sample for February 2018 was 10 percent, March 2018 60 percent and April 2018 30 percent. This percentage of population sample is clearly can be seen in the form of a pie chart as in Figure 4.1.1.

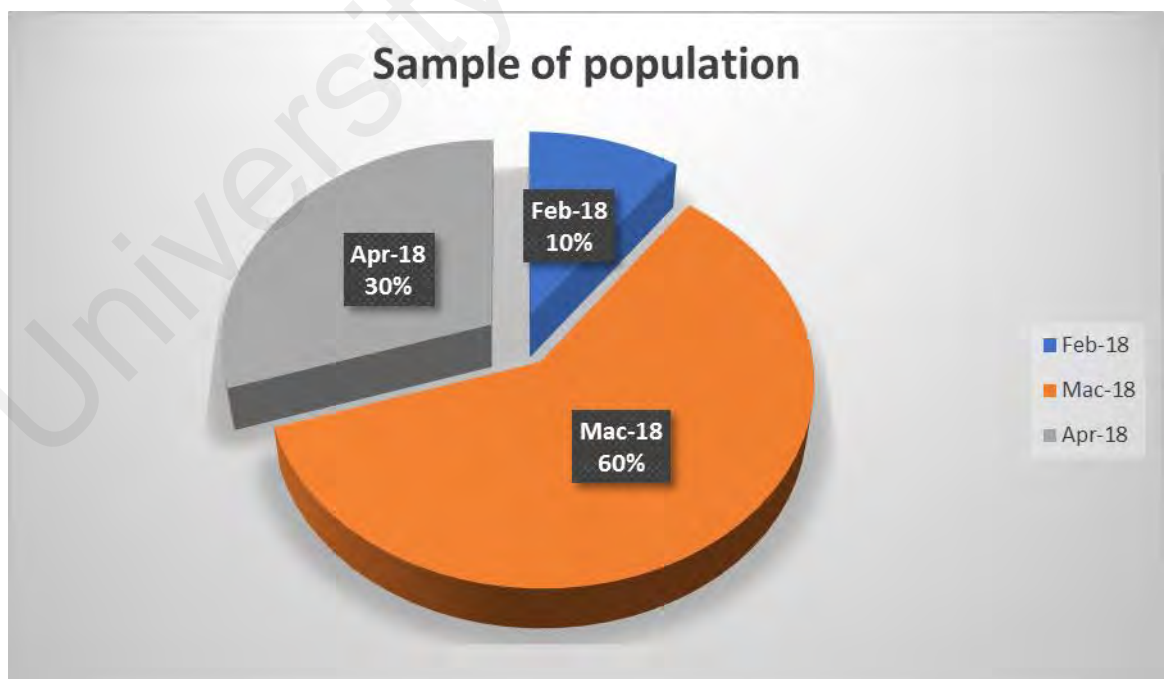


Figure 4.1: The Sample of the Study by Month

As mentioned earlier, this study was based on 20 interview sessions; 6 conducted with males and 14 with females. From the 20 participants interviewed, participant ages were in the range of 21 to 52 years old.

Table 4.1: Age of participants ($N=20$)

Numbers of participants	Age
9	22
2	21
2	23
1	28
1	32
1	38
1	39
1	40
1	43
1	52

Table 4.1 shows that participants who aged 22 years old were sampled the most of this study. This age factor indicates the level of education of participants and their reason patronizing to the National Archives of Malaysia. It was found that the 22-year-old participants were diploma graduates student pursuing a bachelor's degree either in public and private universities. General description of participants' information on age, education background, state of origin, frequency of visits and gender are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: The Summary of Participants Information

<u>Participants</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Academic Background</u>	<u>State of Origin</u>	<u>Frequency of Visit (In 2018)</u>	<u>Gender</u>
User 1	52	PHD holder	Selangor	12	Female
User 2	43	Master Degree holder	Selangor	6	Female
User 3	22	Diploma/ STPM holder	Perak	4	Male
User 4	22	Diploma/ STPM holder	Perak	5	Male
User 5	22	Diploma/ STPM holder	Perak	4	Female
User 6	22	Diploma/ STPM holder	Selangor	6	Female
User 7	38	First Degree holder	Selangor	3	Female
User 8	39	First Degree holder	Selangor	3	Female
User t 9	32	First Degree holder	Kuala Lumpur	4	Female
User 10	23	Diploma/ STPM holder	Kuala Lumpur	6	Female
User 11	22	Diploma/ STPM holder	Kuala Lumpur	7	Male
User 12	22	Diploma/ STPM holder	Negeri Sembilan	5	Female
User 13	23	Diploma/ STPM holder	Kuala Lumpur	6	Female
User 14	22	Diploma/ STPM holder	Negeri Sembilan	5	Male
User 15	22	Diploma/ STPM holder	Kuala Lumpur	5	Female
User 16	40	First Degree holder	Kuala Lumpur	3	Female
User 17	21	Diploma/ STPM holder	Perak	5	Female
User 18	28	First Degree holder	Selangor	6	Male
User 19	22	Diploma/ STPM holder	Putrajaya	8	Female
User 20	21	Diploma/ STPM holder	Putrajaya	7	Male

During the interview session, participants were not required to specify their name and race as to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the data presented. In term of education background, 65 percent of respondents ware diploma/ STPM holder, 15 percent were first degree holder, 5 percent was master degree holder and 5 percent was

PHD holder. The majority who patronized the National Archives of Malaysia are in their capacity as a student.

Selection of participants could be made easily as many users have free time waiting for photocopy materials that are being prepared by the Assistant Archivist. Most participants came from Kuala Lumpur and Selangor with 6 participants from each state respectively. Somewhat surprising when there were four (4) participants coming from Perak. When participants were asked why they had come to the Kuala Lumpur Archive and not to the Perak State Archive, the four were informing that Kuala Lumpur was closer to their residence. The other two (2) participants were from Putrajaya, while the remaining two (2) from Negeri Sembilan.

4.2 Information need of archive users

Observations and interviews were conducted to collect all data related to the study. These data have been analyzed descriptively and the results are presented in narrative form. Thus, participants' responses clearly emerged five themes or aspects; (1) the purpose of archive information need, (2) the popular subject of archives information, (3) the preferred archives material, (4) user satisfaction on archive services and resources, (5) the factors encouraged the visit and (6) the concerns of archives' user. To further strengthen the findings of the study, excerpts from respondents' verbatim transcripts were included in this study.

Research Question 1: What are the information needs of users patronizing the National Archives of Malaysia?

Referring to this question, several answers from users were identified and grouped by topic. The first topic is about the purpose of users coming to research at the National Archives of Malaysia. Secondly is popular subject of archives information and third is the preferred archive material in their research.

4.2.1 The purpose of Using Archives Information

As the first question being asked in each interview session, all 20 participants explained their purpose of using archive information. Generally, the purpose of the archive information was sorted and grouped, then divided into two categories; (a) the study requirement; and (b) the job requirement. There were 14 participants using archives for study purposes and 6 participants for a work requirement.

4.2.1.1 Study purposes

A total of 14 respondents stated that their goal of obtaining archive information was to complete their study requirement. These study requirements include completing the task of dissertation, thesis, group project and individual project. The quotes from interview transcripts are translated from Bahasa Malaysia to English language as follows:

“The title of my project study is about the contribution of education before and after independence. I checked in the OFA system (online finding aids) there are some educational leaders I need. That's why I came to National Archive.”

(User 3, 1 March 2018)

“I came for additional information on Tunku Abdul Rahman in my dissertation. There are many books written about him, but I want to find additional information especially in the form of pictures”.

(User 4, 6 March 2018)

“My research is still pending. I need to look for several archives' information. There is another 3 months to submit my dissertation.”

(User 5, 7 March 2018)

“My dissertation is about tin mining in Perak. I have visited the Perak States' National Archives but I found at the Kuala Lumpur headquarters has more material on it.”

(User 11, 21 March 2018)

“Yeah I know. Archives stored past historical documents that can be made references. Therefore I came here to prepare for my dissertation about rubber plantation in Malaya.”

(User 13, 27 March 2018)

“Of course, I came to prepare for my dissertation. Archives stored past historical documents that can be made references.”

(User 14, 28 March 2018)

“It is important for me to attend the National Archives because I need to complete the assignment given by my lecturer.”

(User 15, 3 April 2018)

“I actually studied the resident system in the days before independence. The findings of this study will be presented 3 weeks from now.”

(User 17, 11 April 2018)

“I need to refer the archive information because my dissertation title relates to the history of Malaysia’s administration before independence. I was told by my lecturer that there are many vital records and old documents were kept in the National Archives.”

(User 10, 20 March 2018)

Meanwhile, 4 participants are completing group work directed by their lecturers;

“We are given assignments in groups. I was assigned to search information at the National Archives while my other friends went to the National Library.”

(User 6, 8 March 2018)

“Actually I came here with my 2 friends. We are gathering information to prepare group work. Each person has been assigned a task. The task will complete sooner.”

(User 12, 22 March 2018)

“To add information in our group assignments, my friend has ordered 4 files and I have already booked 2 government publications for reference.”

(User 19, 14 April 2018)

“I came to the National Archives to obtain a copy of the land tax letter during the British administration in Malaya. A copy of this letter will be made an attachment to our group work assignment.”

(User 20, 18 April 2018)

Through the data collected, Participant 2 who is a Master degree holder is preparing her thesis. She is a PhD student in public university.

“I need to refer the archive information to get the authentic fact related to the title of my thesis that I am preparing. In addition to library material references, I also need primary reference material to reinforce my argument in my thesis.”

(User 2, 28 May 2018)

4.2.1.2 Job Requirement

Through observations, participants who intended to complete their job requirement prefer to refer directly to the archivist and assistant archivist who are in charge of the Research Hall. They are trying to get the information they want with the help of officers on duty compared to other participants who are trying to find themselves through manual search (printed finding aids) and online search (online finding aids), which is Computer and Service Archive System, COMPASS System provided in the Research Hall. Extracts from interview transcripts on their archival information requirements are translated in English language as follows:

“I am looking for information on the initial establishment of our department. It is important to be included in my department's Annual Report. Hopefully I can find some supporting documents such as pictures to be a report attachment”

(User 9, 16 March 2018)

“I have made a copy of several letters about the British administration in Sungai Ujong. This information is important to me as proof and support for the research paper I am preparing. God willing will be presented in the "*Seminar Sejarah Malaysia*" scheduled in the coming April.”

(User 1, 23 February 2018)

“I'm happy today. I have just told the school principal that I've got the information she's asking about our school. I found that information in the Kuala Lumpur Technical High School Magazine, Volume 4, 1970.”

(User 16, 4 April 2018)

4.2.2 Popular Subject of Archive Information

When asked about subject areas of the archived information sought, various answers were obtained. The given data has been collected and segregated by subject category. The collection and segregation of this category have been recorded according to the number of participants as in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: The Subject of Archive Information

Subject	Archive Information Requires	Participants	Purpose
History	Government policies during British occupation, verification of facts about British administration on a specific date, British Resident formation of Malaysia, politics history	User 1 User 2 User 3 User 4 User 5 User 6 User 7 User 8 User 9 User 10 User 11 User 12 User 13	Job Study Study Study Study Study Job Job Job Study Study Study Study

		User 14 User 15 User 16 User 17 User 19 User 20	Study Study Job Study Study Study
Law	Cabinet paper, Malaysia acts, court order that has been published in the newspaper, deed issued, government gazettes	User 18 User 20	Job Study
Education	Development of education before and after independent day, education modules, teacher teaching skills, Za'aba (Zainal Abidin bin Ahmad) contributions in education, art literatures	User 1 User 7 User 8 User 9 User 16	Job Job Job Job Job
Land & Agriculture	Land and lease before Malaysia's independent , rubber planting, rubber plantation area, history of palm oil in Malaysia, palm oil area, land ownership	User 4 User 10 User 11 User 12 User 13 User 14 User 15 User 20	Study Study Study Study Study Study Study Study
Economic	Tin mining, tax collection, government subsidies, business, finance, foreign affairs	User 10 User 11 User 20	Study Study Study
Others	Research on film art, defense & security, religious record, royal family etc.	User 2 User 14	Study Study

Through the table presented, the popular subject of archive information was found to be “history”, along with “land & agriculture”, “education”, “economic”, “law” and “other”.

Among the participants' answers are as follows;

“Our group work is about the history of rubber cultivation before and after independence. The development of rubber cultivation needs to be reviewed also from an economic and political perspective.”

(User 10, 20 March 2018)

“Various sources of past references need to be reviewed to ensure that the legal information I have obtained is true and valid. I have also referred to some government gazettes related to the case I was facing”.

(User 18, 12 April 2018)

4.2.3 Preferred Archive Material

To identify the types of archive media information often referred to, the participants are required to state the type of archived materials referenced during their study. All respondents stated more than 1 type of archive material. There are several types of archival materials that are mentioned by participants, but only the most popular or exactly top 5 types of referenced archive materials are counted. The findings for this question are set out in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Type of Archive Material Used by the Participants

Type of archive material	Number of participants
File	20
Still photo	19
News paper	17
Publication	16
Manuscript	8

"I have booked the Selangor secretariat file online and this is a third time booking, previously I have referred 10 files of the Selangor Secretariat."

(User 5, 7 March 2018)

"Most of the archive materials I refer to are files, as well as photos and old newspapers."

(User 13, 27 March 2018)

"To get my school information I refer to magazines, newspapers and some files."

(User 16, 4 April 2018)

"To get information on the history and development of the palm oil industry, I have referred files and pictures. After this, I will check the newspaper for additional information."

(User 14, 28 March 2018)

Research Question 2: To what extent are the services and resources provided by the National Archives of Malaysia meets archives' user information needs?

There were various participants' responses when asked about their views on the services and resources provided. In terms of service, the participants have expressed satisfaction and dissatisfaction in obtaining the information sought.

4.2.4 User Satisfaction on Archive Services and Resources

The participants were asked whether the reference service at the National Archives of Malaysia had met their information needs. Three (3) of the participants responded very positively, like "of course" and "absolutely yes". Seven (7) of participants responded positive with "yes" answers. While there are eight (8) participants gives slightly negative answers like "sometimes ok but sometimes it does not", "sometimes yes but sometimes no" and "not really".

However, from the twenty (20) interviewed participants, two (2) participants have stated "no, so far" and "no". When the participants were asked to explain the reason of their answer, they said that they were dissatisfied with the service provided. Both participants said that the period for getting the archive material after booking was quite long. The same goes for the slow photocopy service. They had to wait until afternoon even though they had ordered the archive material in the morning. Table 4.5 details the verbatim statements given by each of the participants when asked if the services and resources provided have helped them in addressing their information needs.

Table 4.5: Participants' Responses when asked if the National Archives have helped address their information needs

Responses	Participant	Verbatim Responses
Very Positive	User 2	"Absolutely yes. I have no problem with that. Apart from archivists, the librarian who works at the mezzanine floor has also helped me a lot".
Very Positive	User 16	"Absolutely. The services and resources are good, I have no bad experience so far".

Positive	User 3	“Of course it is. In the National Archives, in addition to information from the Ministry or Education Department, there is also a personal collection of Za'aba who is a national educational figure. It really helped my research”.
Positive	User 4	“Yes it does meet my information requirements. Ermm... just be patient if you enter the National Archives Hall (giggling)... yeah because the archival material reference services are not the same as library materials... so it take a while”.
Positive	User 7	“Yes. I think the archives services and resources are good and I am satisfied so far”.
Positive	User 8	“Yes... all good. That's fine with me”.
Positive	User 10	“Yes... satisfied. We find what we want. The archivist has been very helpful to our group.”
Positive	User 12	“Yes... so far so good. Nothing to complaint about”.
Positive	User 20	“Yes... It's just ok. I am satisfied... so far”.
Slightly Negative	User 6	“Sometimes ok but sometime it's not... it is not easy to find information that we want... depends... we need to know how to find the sources. Usually I will ask the archivist for help”.
Slightly Negative	User 9	“Not really... sometimes archivist was not around when I need them... but that's not a big deal as I can refer to the COMPASS system and ask help from my co-workers who are more experienced of doing research here”.
Slightly Negative	User 11	“Not really... Sometimes I cannot refer to the archives because they are confidential. Most likely the information in it can help my research. Feeling frustrated because not being able to refer. This is some of the things that I'm not happy about”.
Slightly Negative	User 13	“Not really... it's great if I found what I want and if the archivist was around to help me, otherwise I just wasting my time searching and googling through the COMPASS system... so it depends on my luck (smiling)”
Slightly Negative	User 15	“Yes and no... I mean sometimes it's ok sometimes not. I really hope the National Archives will improve the photocopying services faster than ever. It was very

		disturbing even though I had the information I was looking for.”
Slightly Negative	User 17	“Not bad. Archives collection have helped me a lot. But to be honest... I just don't like waiting too long to make a copy of the archives material”.
Slightly Negative	User 18	“Sometimes yes but sometimes no... I've been told by the archivist that information in archives collection is not available with titles or topics such as library reference materials. Archive information is a fact that is collected from any form of archives and organized according to the needs of the researcher. It really depends on the information tracking skills.”.
Slightly Negative	User 19	“Not bad. Archivists have helped me a lot. It's just that I don't like to wait too long for photocopying archives”.
Negative	User 1	“No. I'm very disappointed and dissatisfied with the National Archives rules. Cameras or pictures taken on a mobile phone are not allowed here... you know... while I was at the UK Archives... this thing was allowed. Even archival material takes time to received... same thing when to ask for photocopy of the archives... huurrm (sigh)....”
Negative	User 5	“No, so far (sigh)... It took me so long to get what I ordered. This is not include photocopying yet. My research is still pending. I need to look for several archives' information. There is another 3 months to submit my dissertation.”

4.2.5 The Reasons Encouraged the Visits

All participants have given almost the same answers and they also give lengthy explanations about the reasons that encouraged them to come and make a reference of archival materials in the National Archive. Assessment of participants' responses has been divided into three (3) main factors as; (a) Compulsory visit, (b) peer influence and (c) own initiative.

4.2.5.1 Compulsory visit

In terms of compulsory visits, the majority of participants inform that they are directed to patronize the National Archives of Malaysia to obtain primary sources of information on their study. Some of the lecturers of a public university require students to make copies of the archive material and get an endorsement on the copy of the material. This will give them an extra mark. Some of the participants' answers are as follows;

“I need to refer the original sources and get endorsement copy from National Archive of Malaysia. This is what my lecturer told me to do.”

(User 12, 22 March 2018)

“My lecturer informed us that we need to include a copy of an archived material related to our research and must be verified by the ANM. This can help to raise the score of my research.”

(User 11, 21 March 2018)

“Before this, I did not know that most government vital records were kept here, but my boss ordered me to come here to seek the information he wants.”

(User 8, 15 March 2018)

4.2.5.2 Peer Influence

“I came because of my friend. I actually prefer to refer the material online. The National Archives also provides online OFA Systems online browsing. By chance I wanted to make a copy of the archive material, and then I came to take it.”

(User 19, 14 April 2018)

4.2.5.3 Own Initiative

“Actually I want to come to the National Archive .because I know there must be some material related to our project study here.”

(User 6, 8 March 2018)

Research Question 3: What is the concern of archive users in obtaining the information in the National Archives of Malaysia?

4.2.6 **Concerns of Archive Users**

The two most notable issues arise in the interview; the problem of photocopying services and the ability to seek information.

4.2.6.1 Problem of photocopying services

More than 10 users complained because they had to wait long to get copies of archived materials. This is some of their complaints:

“I came today just to take a copy of the archive I ordered yesterday. They could not prepare for me yesterday as too many users applied to make copies of archives materials.

(User 6, 8 March 2018)

“I had to come today because the archive material I sent for copying was not ready yet. I came from Tanjung Malim, Perak. It's sad to spend more money and time to come back.”

(User 17, 11 April 2018)

“I sent the archive materials for copying this morning .. but now it's still not ready. The Research Hall will be closed shortly.”

(User 7, 14 March 2018)

4.2.6.2 Ability to seek for information

Talking about ability to seek archives' information, ten (10) of the participants responded very positively, like "yes", "of course" and “absolutely yes”. They have obtained the required archive information. While there are 8 participants answered like "sometimes I find the material I need but sometimes it does not", “depends on my luck” “yes and no” and “not really”.

However, from the twenty (20) interviewed participants, two (2) participants have stated "no, so far" and “no”. When the participants were asked to explain the reason of their answer, they said it was very difficult for them to get the information needed from the archives. Participants informed that they have searched the archive materials using the "keyword" in the COMPASS system. But the selected archive materials often do not contain what they want. The title of the archive material sometimes does not contain the required information.

But when participants were asked why they did not refer to the desk officer for help, they think it is not necessary to do so and prefer to search for themselves. Really surprising that they rely heavily on friends, including asking the other users of archive who are conducting research at the research hall. This attitude accidentally shows about the user information seeking behavior.

"Only a few descriptive files can help me determine whether the archive material needs to be referred to or not."

(User 15, 3 April 2018)

4.3 Summary

Results from data collection indicate that the information needs of users differ based on their purpose patronizing the National Archives of Malaysia, regardless of age and gender of the users. The information needs are also highly dependent on the favorite subject of archival information, the preferred archive materials, the factors encouraged the visits and the concerns of archival users in obtaining information. The next chapter discusses the main findings and concludes the study.

Chapter Five

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion the overall finding in chapter 4 and a conclusion. The discussion addresses the three (3) objectives set out in Chapter One. These objectives were created to achieve the main purpose of the study that is to know the information needs of archival users at the National Archives of Malaysia in Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur. Conclusions and suggestions for future work are also listed in this chapter. This study is the first study or pioneer about the information needs of users in the National Archives of Malaysia.

To achieve this goal, three (3) objectives were developed, which are:

- (i) To explore the information needs of archive users in the National Archives.
- (ii) To identify whether the services and resources of the National Archives of Malaysia meet the requirements of the archives' user information.
- (iii) To find out the concern of archive users when obtaining information in the National Archives of Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur.

Whereas the research questions are:

- (i) What are the information needs of users patronizing the National Archives of Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur?
- (ii) To what extent do the services and resources provided by the National Archives of Malaysia meet archives' user information needs?

- (iii) What is the concern of archive users in obtaining the information in the National Archives of Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur?

5.1 Discussions

Since its inception in 1957, the National Archives has worked to save government records from various sources and various formats. Many government records have been destroyed and some were brought out of Malaya during the Second World War (WW2). It is the responsibility of the National Archives to collect, store and maintain the government records to avoid permanent loss. For that purpose, various professional programs and activities have been carried out.

Based on the principle of "total archives", the acquisition of archival materials covering government records and non-government records is crucial to proving a sovereign government. The historical value contained in the archive material will be the primary sources of reference and guidance for future generations. Therefore, the National Archives has played its part by providing an archives referral service to its stakeholder. However, there are some issues that never be taken into account whether the need for archival user information need has been identified and fulfilled.

In order to answer the research objectives of this study, interviews were conducted to 20 voluntary users which fulfilled the criteria set. There are three (3) sub-questions that have been highlighted under the archival user information needs. First is about the need for archival information itself. Second is about the services and resources provided and third the concern of archive user to patronize National Archives of Malaysia. These three questions will be discussed as follows:

5.1.1 Research Objectives 1: To explore the information needs of archive users in the National Archives of Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur.

Previous studies show that the “context” of the study has determined what information is needed by the respondent. This can be evidenced by looking at some of the studies that have been made, such as information needs in the context of agriculture (Banmeke and Olowu, 2005), in the context of village residents (Zaverdinos-Kockott 2004), in the context of library users (Bhattacharjee and Sinha, 2014) and in the context of academicians (Al-Shboul and Abrizah, 2014).

In the context of archival material users, the major purpose of user attendance to National Archives of Malaysia is due to the need of information to complete user’s study requirement. This was followed by the job requirement which their presence at the National Archives of Malaysia was “forced” or directed by their supervisors and employers. Somewhat unhealthy to know but at least their supervisors and employers know the main function of National Archives of Malaysia and want to take advantage of it. Majority of archives users are the young adults, who specifically use the archives information services to completing their studies or works.

While collecting the data, one of the respondents is a lawyer and he appointed to defend one case. Because of that he needs to get copies and endorsement from National Archives of Malaysia that the information from the copy of the document is reliable, authentic and original. This finding shows the importance of the National Archives of Malaysia as a government agency that preserved and conserved valuable government transaction information in various form or media.

Through the findings presented in Chapter 4, it is very obvious that the “history” is the popular subject of archive information that many users want to refer. Nineteen (19) out of twenty (20) or 95% participants were referred to “history” subject of archive information. Records of the British era that preserved and conserved by the National Archives of Malaysia became a major attraction to the users.

The historical value contained in the archive makes this category of record very popular, definitely. This popular category followed by “land and agriculture” 40%, “education” 25%, “economic” 25% and the “law” 10% which shares the same percentage with “others” of 10%. The needs of historical archives information have long been popular since the National Archive’s function itself is responsible for collecting, storing and preserving the vital records, which after 25 years is known as archive material.

From the study's findings, files are the most popular archival material that users refer to. The archival material that is often seen on the counter for distribution to users are files. This is in line with the statistical data on the lending of archives material from COMPASS,

5.1.2 Research Objective 2: To identify whether the services and resources of the National Archives of Malaysia meet the requirements of the archives' user information.

Observation and interview results indicate that the information literacy problems in the National Archives of Malaysia is still exists. Although only 2 of the 20 participants were dissatisfied with the search for their archive information, it should be seen as an opportunity to improve the information literacy of archival materials.

Manual of Archival Finding Aids is not a participant's favorite to use to find information in archival materials. They prefer to use archive online browsing which is COMPASS and OFA (web based). This is among the reasons why most of the participants did not want referring to the archivist for assistance. The attitude of seeking information on their own has affected their time for information. They prefer to depending on their luck in searching archive information. It shows that some improvements need to be made especially on user literacy program.

All respondents stated that they would like to access the physical archive, but they would be more than happy to access the archive's information in a digital form. It is a trend nowadays that consumers want all the information at their fingertips. Unfortunately, not all archival material has been digitized. The National Archives of Malaysia is still in the process of digitizing millions of different archival materials.

One of the things proposed by the respondent is to review the rules of using digital devices for copying purposes. It's time for the National Archives to change and keep up with the times. There is a need to review the rules and regulations for making copies of

archival materials using user's camera as is practiced overseas. This will further encourage the presence of users to refer to archive materials and to ensure that the percentage of the archive user information needs is always being fulfilled.

Improvements need to be made especially on the copying service. The management of National Archives of Malaysia need to revise the problem of copy service that is seen quite serious and troublesome users. This problem will be worsening if users come from outside Kuala Lumpur. This service needs to be improved, add some machines and employees to meet high demand during peak hours. If it is not possible to increase the number of employees, it may be possible to borrow an officer from another section. Increasing the number of copy machines or repairing damaged copy machines requires special additional costs. The management should put this matter as a priority.

As Jimerson (1984) suggests, "We must begin to learn systematically, not impressionistically as is our present tendency, which our users are; what kinds of projects they pursue, in what time frames, and under what sponsorship; and, most importantly, how they approach records. Valuable models for designing user studies have been offered by Conway and Maher (p. 338)".

In addition to improving services to users, user studies may have a secondary benefit. Quoting Maher, "The more archivists know about the use of their holdings, the more ammunition they will have in the battle to convince people that archives really matter" (Maher, 1986, p. 15). This will facilitate the National Archives of Malaysia's intention to further enhance the exploitation of information in archive materials in their repositories.

5.1.3 Research Objective 3: To find out the concern of archive users when obtaining information in the National Archives of Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Abdul Halim, Kuala Lumpur.

As a result of interviews with users, it is very obvious that the highest concerned are about dissatisfied with the photocopy service provided. Although it was found through observation that National Archives of Malaysia had used 4 photocopy machines for the service, it was not good enough. The duration of obtaining a copy of the archive material may take more than a day if the number of researchers wants to make a copy at a time. Users were told that not all photocopiers are functioning properly.

It is therefore the responsibility of National Archives of Malaysia to ensure that their services are improved as archival materials cannot be taken out for photocopying elsewhere. Archive material also can only be handled by archive staff for photocopy purposes. Jimerson (1989) in emphasizing the importance of information services and cultural organizations such as libraries and archives despite limited budgetary resources and services for the users. In order to ensure their survival, libraries and archives must gain recognition as useful and offer better yet, essential information service programs. There are no easy answers on how to do it but archivists, especially must find a way.

When it comes to the ability to access archives information, this issue involves both the users and the service providers. The National Archives of Malaysia as a service provider should be more aware and seek how to "approach" users who appear to be less skilled in obtaining needed archival material. In addition to improving services to users, user studies may have a secondary benefit. Quoting Maher, "The more archivists know about the use of their holdings, the more ammunition they will have in the battle to convince

people that archives really matter” (Maher, 1986, p. 15). Meanwhile, users are often unable to access the archive material information due to the lack of knowledge and understanding of the use of archival materials. They often think that archival materials are like library materials where every topic or issues has been provided and bound in one book. Whereas the information contained in the archive material is raw and users or researchers need to process or connect each of the captured information into a complete storyline.

The literacy program and review the regulation of using digital devices for copy. This is to ensure that the percentage of the archive user information needs is always in a high rank. Socializing archival materials via advocacy programmes is necessary to enhance appreciation of the nation’s history towards establishing Malaysian identity. The National Archives of Malaysia can provide controlled access, with all the implications of that term: describing archival records so that people can recognize and get to them; providing access tools, including electronic, Web-based ones; and advising and counselling users on which records best fit their information needs.

In addition, user-friendly concepts need to be applied at all times when dealing with users. Closely related to improving services and usefulness to resource allocated, and perhaps most important, key to survival: becoming "user friendly." Archivists should adopt a marketing orientation to attract users and satisfy their needs for information. Under the findings of user concern, various elements need to be reviewed and improved to achieve the vision set by the National Archives of Malaysia. In the disadvantaged economic situation of the country, human resources constraints and financial factors are the major issues of all government departments, regardless of the level, either at the federal government or the state.

5.2 Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that six (6) aspects have been highlighted on the information needs of archive users. The six (6) aspects are the purpose of archive information, the popular subject in archive information, the preferred archive materials, user satisfaction on archives services and resources, the reasons encourage a visit to the National Archives of Malaysia and concern of archive users. However, out of the 6 aspects found, aspects of user concern are important to take seriously.

User concerns need to be addressed as this will lead to the discovery of the information needs of archives users. The solution to the copy service needs to be resolved immediately as the archived material cannot be handled by the user himself. Problems with the ability of users to search for archival information should also be considered. When it comes to the ability of users to search for information, it seems that archival information literacy is still inadequate or ineffective. It seems that literacy of archival information is still inadequate or ineffective. The National Archives of Malaysia need to get up from their comfort zone and take proactive action in line with current changes.

There has been no doubt that many National Archives programs have been implemented such as record management and archival programmes, exhibitions, educational archives and so forth. However, so far there has been no activity on psychological and physical availability to meet or review archive user information needs. It is recommended that archive users be made aware of other services offered by National Archive and that user needs analysis studies be conducted from time to time in order for National Archive to meet the ever-changing needs of their user information needs. For example, some

people really have a need to know information from the archives. Others may have a "nice-to know" attitude. Information may be essential, valuable, or simply interesting for different users.

The National Archives of Malaysia is encouraged to implement these four steps: (1) analyzing the community we wish to serve; (2) identifying, segmenting, and selecting target groups; (3) designing and promoting appropriate programmes tailored to the needs of each target group; and (4) managing the process through research, planning, and evaluation. Greater rigor and imagination in studying users and potential users will disclose their needs. Providing the best service to the archives users is an insurance in guaranteeing the National Archives of Malaysia's survival.

5.3 Suggestions for future work

Based on the findings and discussions in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, some potential studies have been identified. There are:

5.3.1 A study on the need to improve archival services in addressing the information needs of users at the National Archives of Malaysia.

Interviews in this study are only conducted on users who are patronizing the National Archives of Malaysia. On behalf of the referral service provider, National Archives should also be reviewed and asked about referral services provided. What are their concerns, how consumers behave in obtaining archival information, complaints received and so on.

5.3.2 A study about user's awareness regarding the archive information reference services.

The National Archives should have an idea of the level of user awareness of existing archive information reference services. This is to ensure that the vision of the National Archives to become an excellent archival information research center in the year 2020.

5.3.3 A review of the National Archives of Malaysia's referral policies from the user's perspective.

From the user findings and overviews previously discussed, it is necessary for the National Archives to review the existing material reference policy. It aims to ensure that the National Archives of Malaysia is in line with the advancement of existing information technology without neglecting the security of information that is now at the fingertips.

5.4 Contribution of the Study

This study contributes to the body of knowledge due to its status as a first study (to date) on information needs on users patronizing the National Archives of Malaysia headquarters. The study was conducted to contribute about the purpose of information needs of archive information, the popular subject of archive material, the preferred archive material, the catalyst to the National Archives of Malaysia's patrons and the concerned or archive users. In addition, this study contributes to the development of archival professionalism when the issues, challenges and problem related to the user's

information needs can trigger great thinking on how to serve best for the user. Archive field becomes more relevant in line with current needs.

5.5 Closing Statement

In summary, it can be concluded that this study provides the answer to the state of information needs of archives' user in the National Archives of Malaysia. It has been found that the information needs of archives' user are specific to their purpose, including the subject matter of information and the type of archive material required. The study also presented findings that answered all research questions and met all research objectives.

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