

**Роль публичных библиотек муниципалитета Амман
в распространении культурной информации**
**The Role of Public Libraries at Greater Amman Municipality
in Spreading Cultural Awareness**

**Роль публічних бібліотек Району Амман
у розповсюдженні культурної інформації**

*Нидал Ибрагим Аль-Ахмад
Колледж Принцессы Али, Университет Аль-Балка,
Амман, Иордания*

*Nidal Ibrahim Al-Ahmad
Princess Alia University College, Al-Balqa' Applied University,
Amman, Jordan*

*Нідал Ібрагім Аль-Ахмад
Коледж Принцеси Алії, Університет Аль-Балка,
Амман, Йорданія*

В данной работе даётся полное представление о роли библиотек муниципалитета Амман в распространении культурной информации. Муниципалитет Амман стремится расширять предоставляемые услуги путём открытия публичных библиотек и центров информационных технологий в каждом районе города; в результате чего количество отделений главной библиотеки достигло 73.

This study aims at highlighting a comprehensive view on the role played by the libraries of Greater Amman Municipality in spreading cultural awareness. Greater Amman Municipality is constantly working to expand its services by establishing public libraries and information technology centers in each neighborhood of the city. As a result of these efforts, the number of branch libraries which are linked to the main library reached (73).

В роботі подано повне уявлення про роль бібліотек Району Амман у розповсюдженні культурної інформації. Муніципалітет Району Амман прагне розширювати перелік послуг, що надаються, шляхом відкриття публічних бібліотек і центрів інформаційних технологій у кожному районі міста, в результаті чого кількість бібліотек-філій головної бібліотеки досягла 73.

Introduction to the study:

Before starting to explore the role of libraries in propagating culture at the local community, we must identify the parent organization that the library is part of it, namely the Greater Amman Municipality especially that the year 2009 will witness centennial celebration of the founding of the Municipality of Amman. Amman saw the light in 1878, when the first group of Circassian immigrants began to flock to the city, followed by waves of other immigrants. Even with the gradual growth of its population Amman remained a small village until 1903 when the Hejazi Railway creating a major turning point in its history as the number of its population increased through arrivals from neighboring villages and relatively distant cities such as Damascus, Jerusalem, Nablus and Jaffa. In 1909 the Ottoman government decided to upgrade Amman by establishing a Municipal Council under regional states law of 17 Ramadan 1294 equivalent to (1870).

The participation of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War caused an increase in traffic to Amman because of the presence of the railway line, accordingly, the number of inhabitants of the town revived commercial traffic there.

When the Ottomans withdrew from all of Syria in September 1918, Amman remained a Directorate of a region during the period (1918-1920). After a battle of Maysaloon, a number of liberty followers arrived to Amman from Syria, thus Amman became a center for national movement led by the late Mayor Said Hare (1920-1925).

The arrival of Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Al-Hussein in Amman on March 1921 had been a decisive turning point in the history of modern Amman as it was chosen the capital of the Emirate of Jordan due to its central location in Jordan, the abundance of water and its links with the railway.

Since then, continuous progress in Amman continued with development and infrastructure transforming the small village into a large city comparable to modern and high class cities of the world.

In 1928 the Government decided to upgrade the region of Amman to a governorate with direct link to higher decision makers without going through the regional director of Balqa' Region until the year 1930 when it was re linked with the governorate center. Another change occurred when the center of the Balqa' Region was annexed to Amman on 21/7/1933, leaving Salt as a linked region to Amman. In 1939 the center of the region was re-annexed to Salt and the Governorate of Amman was linked to the Interior Ministry.

In the early years of the Jordanian Emirate, the Municipality of Amman has been run like other government departments under the law of the Ottoman Department. On January 2, 1923, a ministerial decree was issued providing for the application of all Ottoman laws relating to the capital on the Municipality of Amman. The situation remained so until May 1925 when the Government approved a new law of the municipalities (published in the Arab East newspaper issue Nos.102 and 103 dated 4.5 and 18.5.1925).

The text of the Act provides for the municipal council to consist of the Mayor of the capital and seven members elected by the residents who elect a deputy mayor of the seven. The mayor is appointed by the chief of Municipality supervisors without the need to be one of the board members with duration of four years. This law continued to be effective until the Council has continued to be valid up to the issuance by the government of new municipality modified law in February 1, 1938.

On November 7, 1931, the mayor of Amman applied to the Prime Minister to link the municipality directly to the ministry, which then was dealing with the country's interior affairs. On January 6, the Executive Board approved the request and the link with ministry directly continued until 20 August 1939 when the Prime Minister decided that the position of the municipality of Amman must be similar to the other municipalities in the Emirate and that it should be linked to a governorate. The municipality of Amman was named the capital municipality (governorate) in 1952 with a population then not exceeding 110,000 inhabitants and within an area not exceeding 30 square kilometers, with no urban development or town planning, even lacking planning maps that constitute a basic planning material.

The Greater Amman Municipality Council

The Greater Amman Municipality Council consists of (68) members, half of them are elected and the other half including the mayor are appointed by the Council of Ministers upon the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

Department of Public Libraries

The Department of Public Libraries at the Greater Amman Municipality is considered the most prominent and oldest cultural monuments in the capital Amman, whereby the Central Library was founded in 1960 upon the philosophy of the Greater Amman Municipality, believing of the importance of the human dimension in the provision of services to citizens and visitors of the city of Amman.

The library celebrated in 2011 to mark the golden jubilee of the fiftieth year of its founding. The public library also seeks to provide its outstanding services and the dissemination of culture to the service recipient while keeping abreast of recent developments, keeping on originality, and by providing high quality services. Along with conserving cultural values to achieve satisfaction for the recipient of the service through a qualified and trained staff in using the methods of modern technology to achieve the advancement of culture and thought in society.

The Department of Public Libraries works hard to establish a public library and technology information centers at each district of Amman; and as a result of these efforts, the number of public libraries and branch libraries (67) amassing more than half a million title and (300) local and international periodical.

The area of the Central Library is (1750) square meters. Users who benefit from the services of public libraries number an average of thousand readers a day. The doors are open daily from 8.00 AM till 6.00 PM except on Fridays and public holidays. Subscribers to the library are about (55) fifty-five thousand subscribers, while the number of books borrowed annually reach (150) one hundred and fifty

thousand books. Computerization and automated loan system at the library has been completed since January 2005.

Public libraries carry a prominent role in supporting the library movement in Jordan whereby it donates collections of books as gifts to different type's public libraries: municipal, school, university, military, mosques and clubs.

Public libraries contribute to promoting and supporting the intellectual production and authors of Jordan in the acquisition of their Jordan intellectual output and presenting it in its different libraries thus propagating intellectual exchange through local, Arab and international levels.

On January 2006, an information Center was opened at the department of Public Libraries in cooperation with the World Bank, turning the department of public libraries a center of depositing documents and publications of the World Bank, allowing users internet access to global databases of the World Bank for free.

The department of Libraries a distinctive and an active membership in Arab and international institutions such as the Jordanian Library Association , the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, the International Society for the libraries of major cities, the Arab Federation for Libraries and information and the Arab club for information.

Functions of the public libraries:

1. Increasing the number of branch libraries in all districts of the city of Amman.
2. Procuring textbooks, references and periodicals, encyclopedias, and all office acquisitions, which contribute to the provision of opportunities for self-education of citizens and create the means of scientific research.
3. Contributing to the revitalization of the cultural movement in the city of Amman, through seminars, lectures and exhibitions and specialized reference books.
4. Documentation of all research studies and services, and areas of the municipality.

Objectives of the department of public libraries:

- Raising the level of folk culture of the city of Amman in particular and the Jordanian society in general through providing self-education opportunities for all those interested in reading.
- Reviving and promoting folk literature and encouraging citizens to enjoy and appreciate the material.
- Encouraging people to use their free time effectively and creatively in a way that would help to develop their personal and social attitudes.
- Encouraging talents and skills of scientific, literary and artistic production and publishing innovative such output as widely as possible.
- Bolstering social and economic progress through the provision and facilitating unlimited scientific research.
- Encouraging the cultural movement through the establishment of seminars, lectures and book fairs at various national and international events.
- Facilitating and developing of modern information technology skills through its circulation to the various regions of the Greater Amman Municipality.
- The acquisition of the intellectual output in its different formats, printed and electronic, working on its final production in a way that helps the users to easy and smooth access to information.
- Facilitating and streamlining the procedures of the service provided to users and preparing of programs and action plans related to the quality and quantity with emphasis on respect and good reception in dealing with citizens.

The Department of Public Libraries is characterized and distinguishes its services from other libraries in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, whether public or university or specialized school or exhibits by the following two characteristics:

1. The presence of the Board of Trustees of the library.
2. The presence of a law governing the Department issued in the Official Gazette in two phases: Regulations of The Greater Amman Library No. (4) for the year 1961, and an amended regulation of The Greater Amman Library No. (25) for the year 1990.

Library Board of Trustees:

Duties of the Board of Trustees

The Board works to achieve the following:

1. Extrapolation of the public library system for the Greater Amman Municipality (No. 4) for the year 1961 and discussing the responses drawn to future objectives and the possibility of its amendment.
2. Drawing the general policies of the library in line with the requirements of the next phase.
3. Aspiring for comprehensive and library development to include the following areas:
 - Develop a plan for the premises of libraries and the establishment of related branches with needed furnishing in materials and equipment.
 - Strengthening the basic infrastructure of the libraries.
 - The introduction of a mobile library.
 - The modernization of library services through the introduction of technology.
 - Developing the basis of staff appointment, supplying qualified library staff and upgrading the efficiency of the current training and rehabilitation needed for carrying out specialized work related to libraries.
 - Reviewing the methods followed in acquiring library materials through a well devised plan geared to growth and diversification, away from random patterns.
 - Urging citizens, especially those with high level of education, to donate material from their own libraries to supplement the current library assets.
 - Holding an exchange scheme of library material with outside libraries.
 - Coordination with the Ministry of Education to develop programs that fall within the curriculum to familiarize the student with, and proper use of the library, thus reaching a common co-operation needed to implement the principle of cooperative acquisitions.
 - Promoting the basis of financial allocations to libraries.

Duties of library functions at the organizational chart

1. Supply and exchange Section

The duty of this section is to provide the library and its branches with printed collections, whether books or articles through purchase, gift or exchange. Purchasing is followed by a written policy dependant on studying local community and identifying its general characteristics, taking into account current issues, choosing material of interest to its local and national history away from the orientated influences and personal likes and dislikes of individuals and groups, taking into account the criteria library standards. The procurement is carried out by a special committee for this purpose taking into account access to the lists of publishing houses, visiting the local markets, international exhibitions and individual readers' requests. Material is then recorded accordingly in registry books prepared for this purpose. Purchased material is then put for binding, indexing and classification.

2. Cataloging and Classification Section

This duty of this section is indexing, classification of library material, preparing material technically and printing barcodes, to be ready for use by the library users. Classification in this section is performed according to Dewey decimal classification while indexing is done according to the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, following the international regulation of the descriptors and description bibliography through electronic thesaurus. Duties of this section cover also the work of the Central Library material and other branches'.

3. Department of loan and readers guidance

This Section deals with the loan of books to the library users, according to a special and policy regulations that take into account facilitating the process of books' loan to all without exception used at the Library of Greater Amman, which is the Brown system. This department also guides readers directing them on the best way to access the requested materials.

4. References and heritage section

This section includes a wide range of reference sources that are considered essential for researchers and scholars like encyclopedias, dictionaries, manuals, reference books, translations of historical, geographical, all different materials that are not meant for loan, in addition to books that address the Jordanian heritage. Photocopying services are also available at nominal prices.

5. Periodicals Section

The task of this section is to supply different periodicals at the Central Library and its branches, whether by purchase, subscription or gift. Such periodicals are registered and offered to the readers. This section is responsible for binding and archiving newspapers and magazines that address the needs of library users. The number of periodicals available at the main and branch libraries reaches than (300).

6. Documentation Section

The task of this section is to document all material related to the city of Amman such as books, studies and research paper, reports, publications and photographs for researchers to have access to them. The section also documents all studies involving engineering studies related to the Greater Amman Municipality, its infrastructure, special locations that need to be preserved for reference, including support material of books and the library special issued publications.

7. Branch libraries

- The task of this section is to supervise the functioning of the branch libraries and follow-up all administrative and technical matters with the (73) branch libraries than include a public, private and children libraries, including in this section the Central Division of the children's central library.
- Given the role of public libraries of the Greater Amman Municipality in the propagation of knowledge-based culture and library services on all regions of the Greater Amman Municipality, being aware of the importance of childhood care and development of the reading faculty as a synonym for home and school activity in refining the thinking process and polishing their talents.
- The Department of Public Libraries has been active recently in helping the Greater Amman Municipality through a well studied plan to increase the number of children's libraries featuring a distinct addition to the diversity of its contents and working towards building a balanced personality of the child. The Greater Amman Municipality has set up the first children's library in Jordan in 1964, a central children's library located in the center of the downtown Amman; an influx of children's libraries mushroomed in various districts of the city, the majority of which are located within the municipality public gardens to draw an enticing environment for raising children.

Activities:

Public libraries, believing in the importance of Children education and care, and that today's children are the builders of the future, children's libraries spread in many parts of Amman offer, in addition to library services, many activities available within the available possibilities and to encourage the reading faculty the following activities:

- Holding poetry reading and contests.
- Children participation in the preparation of the wall monthly or weekly magazine weekly themes includes meaningful and constructive topics.
- Free drawing or painting performed after novel recitation so that the child draws or paints whatever he/she had learned and absorbed of the story.
- Holding open meetings with the children to talk and communicate with professionals of literature, writers and doctors.
- Organizing cultural, literary and scientific contests on various topics.
- Reading a constructive and meaningful story, performed by the library supervisor or one of the children.
- Allowing children to play scientific and educational games and educational media game like chess and intelligence games.

- Organizing special Ramadan religious competition to take place only during the month of Ramadan that include religious competitions, prophetic tradition or Hadith, religious topics, including Quranic verses and Islamic figures.
- Working in handicrafts like the use of composition putties and pastes in order to develop formation skills with animals, plants and other forms.
- Screening of educational films and special children educational and funny films including presentation and amateur acting.
- Theatrical presentation targeted at inculcating the values of good and virtue, instilling good morals in them and encouraging the faculty of creativity and innovation.

8. Administrative Section

Two divisions are attached to this section:

- Division of the secretariat whose task is to organize incoming and outgoing correspondence, opening of related records and follow up with matters related to personnel.
- Division of programming: this project was started at the central library using (Minisis) computer system expressed in its Arabized copy (M21) since years (2003-2005). Following completion of the project and after the completion of the project a programming division was established for the purpose of supervision of the database system (M21) in all sections of the work easily, to address any emergency problems and coordinate with the concerned information technology department for maintenance of existing hardware. In (2007) all branch libraries were linked to the Central Library's and work is still running to date.

On January (2008) the Department of General Libraries was linked to the network of public libraries, Internet and the local network of Greater Amman Municipality.

Recommendations:

1. Choose a suitable place for the Central Library away from the noise because the current location is not appropriate, with no place to line up visitors' cars and its proximity to the street.
2. Work on keeping up with recent developments in the field of computing, and in the field of providing services to beneficiaries.
3. Conduct training courses for workers to keep up with developments in the field of libraries.
4. Distribute brochures, and conduct lectures for the beneficiaries showing how to use and take advantage of library services.