

National Library Of Kuwait

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Library Overview

The National Library of Kuwait was founded in 1923 through the successful efforts of the Kuwaiti writers. The library received its collection from the Kuwaiti Charitable Society. In 1994, Emiri Decree number 52 was officially ordered to create the national library, and it was entrusted with the responsibility of collection, organization, documentation, and preservation of the country's national heritage and the cultural and intellectual output of the state. The Emiri decree number 57 of 1994 gave provisions for the establishment of the National Library of Kuwait so that it can act as the official state library for preserving government official documents; it also became the national bibliographic centre to provide adequate resources for researchers to find useful information for their various research works, and also to document all the literary works and documents that are available in the state of Kuwait that relates to the Arabian Peninsula, the Arabian Gulf, and the Arab and Islamic civilization. The library is located on Arabian Gulf Street in the Qilba area, which lies towards the east of Al-Maarie Street, Sadu House, and the National Museum to the west. The National Library overlooks the Seif Palace compound and the Gulf of Kuwait in the north, covering an area of approximately 22000 square meters.

Building Of The National Library Of Kuwait

The National Library is a storey building consisting of three floors. The ground is designed specifically to contain public spaces that can be accessed from the main hallway at the front of the building. The lecture hall, the conference hall, and the library diwan section are located on the right side, close to the main entrance. The library's theatre and information desk are all located in the central part of the library building. The building also consists of two sections: west and east. On the ground floor of the library is the western section, which contains the special needs library, the lending library, the teen library, and the children's library. Both the first and second floors of the library building contain reading rooms that are divided into separate branches of knowledge. On the first floor, the western section contains sections on languages, general knowledge, social sciences, psychology, philosophy, and religions. This section of the library also contains a dissertation collection and a collection of books and documents describing the rise of states, especially the Gulf region.

The eastern section on the first floor contains a collection of periodicals, history books, biographies, and geography books. On the second floor of the building, there is the western section that contains archives of the state official newspaper, Kuwait Alyawn, governmental publications, reading rooms for literature and arts, and the publications of international organizations. In its eastern region, there is a

collection of books on references, pure sciences, and applied sciences. Accordingly, the middle part of the library's second floor contains the Kuwaituna Hall, where a collection of specialized information resources concerning all the events that have taken place in Kuwait is stored. The western part of the library's third floor consists of a collection of donated private libraries and audiovisual materials. There are independent sections dedicated to this category and arranged separately according to the characteristics of each collection. Finally, the eastern consists of the Arab heritage management and the library management.

Functions Of The National Library Of Kuwait

The major objectives of the national library are the collection, cultivation, preservation, and endowment of the treasures of general culture, heritage, and knowledge while emphasizing the state of Kuwait. The national library also has numerous major functions that it performs to ensure that it facilitates the process of enhancing the national heritage of the country and promoting research work. Among these functions are the supervision of the country's artistic work deposit system and making sure that the copyrights of the scientific, literary, and international innovations that have been published in the country are protected. The library has a mandate to prepare the National Union Catalog, which objectively contains the process of producing all the relevant materials available in several ministries and libraries, public authorities and institutions, the intellectual heritage, and consequent or related important services to the country.

It represents the state of Kuwait in all professional councils and authorities, institutions, associations that specialize in library affairs, and all other related international, Arabic, and national levels. The library has a duty to establish and develop an effective Electronic Information system that provides services for all the libraries and other related information centres across the nation. The library also has a responsibility to coordinate and cooperate with specialized and research libraries both inside and outside the state of Kuwait to ensure a continuous flow of information (Al-Ansari & Al-Enezi, 2001). Additionally, the National Library of Kuwait has a duty to upgrade the performance level of the national cadres who work in the field of information and libraries. These duties are performed in line with the guidelines of the states' rules and regulations to ensure that they promote the culture and heritage of the state of Kuwait and create an effective environment that promotes learning and access to important information about the nation.

Library Collections

The National Library of Kuwait contains both varied and basic collections of Arabic and foreign books. The library also has a large selection of foreign and Arabic periodicals, which are divided into different categories as follows: the privately donated collections, Arabic and foreign books collection, International bodies and organizations collection, Archive books collection, Arabic and periodicals collection, Arab and Islamic collection, Government publications collection, and PhD and master thesis

collection. Additionally, the library also contains collections that have been donated by early pioneers and includes a rare collection of periodicals and books. Apart from these collections, the National Library of Kuwait also contain microfilms of Islamic and Arabic manuscripts that are available in the British Library, which counts up to approximately 15000 manuscripts on Microfiche in addition to several other library's online databases, which include ProQuest dissertation and theses, Business source complete, and Academic search complete.

Services Provided By The National Library Of Kuwait

In an effort to ensure that the state of Kuwait obtains continuous provision of access to credible information and has protected storage for its documents, the library works to ensure that it provides a variety of services to the citizens of Kuwait and other individuals who may wish to gain access to information stored in the library. Among these services are the provision of legal deposit services and intellectual property protection, the provision of effective channels for retrieving information and searching databases, and online and electronic systems. The library also provides the International Standard Book Number (ISBN). Additionally, the library also provides support and continuous services such as selective broadcasting of information, photography, and ongoing briefing.

The National Council For Culture, Arts, And Letters

The Arabic Heritage Observatory

The Arabic Observatory is an observatory section in the Department of Culture and Arts in the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters. The Arabic Observation was established as a section in the second half of 1979 to serve as the nucleus of a centre for collecting, studying, and investigating heritage while putting its interest in manuscripts and information and serving as a reference for the new generation of heritage scholars and researchers as well. From the time of its establishment, the Arabic Heritage Observatory began its operation with the following:

- The Observatory Library is a heritage library that is growing steadily with the following three main tributaries: photographs and manuscripts that are based on the informed choice from worldwide libraries, publications and books in various knowledge and sciences. It also contains several catalogues of published manuscripts obtained from various archives in the world.
- Cataloguing Manuscripts: One of the most important projects undertaken by the Observatory is cataloguing its photographers and manuscripts. The cataloguing process is performed on three basic levels. The first level is the general catalogue, which has limitations in terms of its work title, source, and author. In the second level, there is a detailed description of the manuscript and the materials it contains, as well as a study of its important characteristics and other places

where the manuscript exists. Accordingly, the third level entails a cataloguing process that is carried out by the computer to make searching of the manuscript easy and also create a simple basis for entering relevant information that relates to the manuscript. Currently, the Catalogue of Photographed Manuscripts and the Catalogue of the Medical Manuscripts available in the Arabic Heritage Observatory have been published. Of these manuscripts, at least 1400 of them and photographs have been entered into the library's computer. However, work is underway to complete the task of entering all the manuscripts and photographs into the library's computer system. There is also the process of cataloguing the oriental journals in the observatory so that they are made available to individuals who are interested in heritage studies. It also provides them with information about the efforts of the orientalist concerning the major aspects of Arab Islamic civilization. Additionally, there is a very highly equipped photocopying section in the observatory that performs the duty of photocopying manuscripts and reproducing films into papers or films. In 1994, the Department of Heritage and its Publication, in accordance with the pursuance of the objectives of the Ministry of Information, was included as one of the major contents of the Arabic Heritage Observatory in the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters.

Deposit System In The National Library Of Kuwait

Deposit System Of The Artistic Works In Kuwait

The deposit system refers to a system that requires a publisher, author or printer to undertake registration and obtain a deposit number for the finest bound of copies of the artistic and other related works that are available within the state's official deposit centre. This gives provisions for documenting national intellectual production, guaranteeing copyrights that relate to scientific, literary, and artistic innovations that have been published in the country, and also protecting the intellectual property rights of all types and forms of artistic works. Therefore, the National Library of Kuwait, under the guidelines of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, acts as the official library as well as the national bibliographic centre charged with the duty of supervising the deposit system of all artistic work in Kuwait. The national library performs this duty in accordance with the provisions of Article 2 and Article 1 of Article 3 of the Emiri decree number 52 of 1994 upon its establishment. It also operates in accordance with the provisions of Law Number 64 of 1999 regarding intellectual property rights and the provisions of Article 2 of the Ministerial Decree Number 30 of 2003 concerning the deposit system of protected works. From the time of its establishment, the National Library has been tasked with the duty to collect, preserve, and organize all the sources of information that have been published in Kuwait, regardless of the nationality of the author. It also collects information published by Kuwaiti nations and their creators in other countries. The library provides this service without any charges as the process is funded by the national government. This deposit system is also applicable to printers, producers, authors, and publishers.

Works That Require Assigning Of Deposit Number

Artistic work is any publication and other related materials that have been prepared for publication through the production of its copies so that they can circulate and be distributed to the public. Additionally, material which is not considered books or periodicals, such as models, audiovisual recordings, silent and animated clips, maps, images, drawings, photographs, discs, slides, engravings, and assembled collection of several means of disseminating information in carriers or containers are also considered as artistic works and should be documented by the national library. Accordingly, any artistic or intellectual work that has been produced within the borders of Kuwait and printed in other countries by Kuwaiti authors and publishers is subject to deposit. These include:

1. Books, dictionaries, guides, booklets, abstracts, pamphlets, annals, indexes, dictionaries, calendars, glossaries, and encyclopedias.
2. Private newspapers, periodicals, semi-governmental and governmental documents.
3. Publication of conference proceedings, posters, atlases, charts, photographs, and maps.
4. Published and unpublished studies, textbooks, research works, bibliographies, and national reports.
5. Various governmental publications and publications regarding the blind (braille work).
6. Higher learning institutions theses for master's and PhD.
7. Both audio and visual materials such as films, documentaries and artistic films, artistic models, digital images, slides, photographs, and discs.
8. Bundled combination of numerous modes of transmission of information, computer tapes, programs, and CDs.
9. Family tree history and genealogy.
10. Commemorative and official postage stamps.

The library's deposit system is not only limited to new publications that have been issued for the first time. It also applies to all other editions that seem to differ from the original edition, whether the difference is in content such as abbreviated copies, augmented, corrected, or revised copies. It also includes all other reprinted and reproduced works and translations of works into different languages. Additionally, if the work that is subject to the deposit consists of numerous parts or volumes that are supposed to be published at different intervals or separately, then every part or volume of the work must stand alone according to the terms of the deposit.

Obtaining The Deposit Number And The Required Documents

The author or publisher of any artistic work has to make a formal request to the national library to be provided with deposit forms. The number varies according to the form or type of work. The author completes their data and attaches a copy of the publication's title page together with its contents if

the work is a book and a copy of the identity document. The library studies then makes a deposit application based on the information received from an author or publisher, together with the attached documents. If this application has been accepted by the National Library of Kuwait, the deposit number and the International Standard Serial Number, together with the cataloguing in the publication, shall be assigned and delivered to the depositor within the shortest time frame possible.

Appropriate Time To Visit The National Library Of Kuwait To Obtain The Deposit Number

Authors are allowed to make requests for the deposit number from the library after the determination of their works and before they print in their final form during the time when the library considers it sufficient to study an application, assign the number, and make preparations for the cataloguing in the publication. The information is then printed on the respective work. The deposit number is usually printed on the verso of the title page together with the cataloguing in the publication data.

The Number Of Copies To Be Deposited To The National Library After Completion Of Work

The number of copies that an author or publisher can be allowed to deposit to the library depends on the type of work represented by the author. For instance, for a book, the author will be required to make three finely bound copies. A periodical only requires one copy of each of its issues; for electronic work, two copies are required, and one copy is required for any other work.

The International Standard Book Number (ISBN)

The International Standard Book Number is a standard specification established by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). It is a universal serial number used for numbering publications and books across the globe. The ISBN provides an exceptional identification number for every book or publication produced in any publishing house.

International Standard Book Number (ISBN) In Kuwait

The National Library of Kuwait is considered the official body responsible for issuing publishers the ISBN, and it provides guidelines for the general use by Kuwaiti publishers as the national ISBN agency. This service is provided to publishers at zero charges regardless of the fact that the library pays for the annual subscription fee at the International ISBN agency to gain support and control over the

publishing movement within Kuwait. The library uses the ISBN to control the number of cataloguing records in its national bibliography. Additionally, the library performs an audit and reviews the respective ISBNs of different books before making a decision to include them in the national bibliography of Kuwait and make corrections to errors that may be encountered. The library works to make sure that there are at least three copies of each publication or document deposited in the national library so as to ensure that they are all included in the national bibliography.

Advantages Of The ISBN System

The ISBN system aims to provide an identification for all publications across the world. The use of numbers in the ISBN publication system prevents instances of confusion between books with similar titles. It also facilitates the definition of publications in bibliographic databases and the issuance of publisher lists. The ISBN system provides an accurate and restricted search key for the respective beneficiaries since books can be arranged, ordered, and distributed on the basis of their ISBNs. The ISBN number can be easily converted to the BARCODE system, hence facilitating an automatic input in libraries and any organization that uses this system. To obtain the benefits of using the ISBN system, the number has to be printed on the book because it has to be assigned before a book is printed.

Obtaining The ISBN Number And The Required Documents

It is a requirement for the publisher to request that the National Library of Kuwait assign them the ISBNs. Upon making such a request, they are provided with an ISBN application form, which the publisher fills out and then returns to the library. The library then performs an examination of the case, assigns the ISBN number, and makes preparations for cataloguing in the publication. These procedures must be accomplished before the book is released to the printing press in time.

Printing Of The ISBN

The ISBN number is always printed on the verso of the front cover and at the bottom of the back cover of every book. Alternatively, it can be printed at the bottom of a paper's back cover if it exists. If this is not possible, the number has to be printed a clear place on the book usually preceded by the initials ISBN.

Materials That Require Assigning Of The ISBN

The materials that require the ISBN number include multimedia publications, braille publications for the blind, printed books and novels, and publications made in small forms. On the contrary, the ISBN may not be assigned to the following materials: periodic publications such as annual reports, periodicals, and daily newspapers; music sheets, drawings that lack title pages or text; and temporary publications such as annual calendars, diaries, and annual promotional and advertising publications for concerts or theatre programs. This group of publications has been excluded because it needs to be assigned with special international numbers. However, in cases where there exists a given set of titles that form a periodic series with a specific name, this series must have two numbers: the ISBN for an individual and an ISSN for the entire series title. The National Library usually assists authors in obtaining the ISSN number upon request.

Cases In Which The ISBN Number Must Be Assigned For A Book

The ISBN must be assigned to each title that has been published for the first time. The ISBN must also be assigned to each new edition of any published title. This may include changing text, binding type, and reprinting when books are printed in numerous editions, such as paperback if there is more than one publisher for a book because each publisher has to be assigned a different number.

ISBN Structure

The ISBN consist of ten digits, which are divided into four major parts: group number, publisher, title, and check digit. The number is supposed to be read from the left, starting with the ISBN initials. The group number represents a given geographical, linguistic, or national group. Its length varies according to the size of the group publication. The publisher number varies between one to three digits, defining the publisher. The number of digits depends on the size of the publisher's production. The title number is used to identify a specific title, edition, or volume of a specified title. For instance, paperback books are given different numbers when they are cloth-bound. The check number always occupies the tenth and the last position. It is calculated to check the validity of the rest of the ISBN digits. Its method of calculation depends on the previous nine digits. Given the fact that there is a large volume of publishing in some parts of the world and the accelerated movement of publishing, the international ISBN agency has made changes to the ISBN and applied a new system. The library is delighted to inform the authors and publishers about the necessary steps towards the new application.

The National Library Of Kuwait Mission

Mission statement: to collect, document, organize, and control all forms of the national cultural heritage of Arabic Islam and the compiled publications and documents concerning the Arab Gulf region, Islamic and Arab culture, especially the documents that relate to Kuwait, its national cultural heritage and other relative affairs both within and outside the borders of the country, and to preserve various valuable international collections that are of interest to the Arab, Kuwait, and the Islamic area.

National Library Of Kuwait Vision Statement

To develop the National Library as one of the state's leading documentary resources in regard to the Republic of Kuwait and act as the apex library that serves the needs of the Kuwaitis while preserving the Arab and Islamic cultural heritage.

Strengths And Weaknesses Of The Management Of The National Library Of Kuwait

Strengths

The National Library of Kuwait is the biggest library in the state of Kuwait. For this reason, it is tasked with many responsibilities that its management has to perform effectively to ensure that it succeeds in creating a conducive environment for disseminating academic knowledge and providing academic materials to all learners and researchers. One of the opportunities that the library has that enhances its operation is a good staff system. The library is composed of staff members who are dedicated to serving their clients and performing their duties effectively. The members of the staff are also flexible, as they can handle different tasks at different time frames to ensure that they expand the scope of their performance. The staff is non-bureaucratic, knowable, and fun to work with because they are determined to give the best in the interests of the nation and promote culture. The library has also been made accessible to users because it provides a comfortable atmosphere for learning and doing personal studies. Library management works hard to ensure that the various research materials are available to every researcher.

The library also insists on the strict observance of rules and regulations concerning access to the library materials to ensure that there is smooth operation within the library premises and that its resources and the safety of the clients are well taken care of. Additionally, the library fosters a good relationship with its faculty members, members of the community, and the students by enhancing its focus on research and educational work, undertaking a proper follow-up on disputed issues and concerns expressed by the library users and finding appropriate solutions to such concerns. Finally, the National Library of Kuwait takes pride in its advanced use of technology to provide duties and

services to the general public. This use of better technology has enabled library management to increase the accessibility of its resources and keep pace with the continuously growing educational demands. These opportunities, enjoyed by the national library, have created a good working environment that promotes the building of research work and growth of the educational system of Kuwaiti nationals and even citizens from other countries. Additionally, the library gets support from the government in conjunction with the Department of Culture, arts and Letters to promote the cultural heritage of the Islamic Arabs by preserving their nation's archived documents.

Weaknesses

Despite the library's several achievements in promoting the cultural heritage of the state of Kuwait, the library also suffers several setbacks that limit its performance. One of these weaknesses is the library building. The library design, to some extent, has become uncomfortable and more complicated for use, especially for new visitors because they find it hard to walk their way to the different sections of the library. The library furniture is also not comfortable, so individuals who come to perform their research work in the library find it hard to use the library resources for long hours. The library also has inadequate internal and external signage and limited internal access because it mainly operates during the morning hours. The National Library of Kuwait also experiences problems of limited budgeting. The National Library officials sometimes provide budget proposals to the financial and administrative affairs sector, yet the budget is sometimes not approved or awarded a smaller amount of money than expected.

This makes it difficult for library managers to meet their financial objectives or even execute their budgets appropriately. Sometimes, the library staff has fewer resources and inadequate training, limiting its ability to provide services to the general public accordingly. The members of the library staff are assigned small staff-multiple duties, they feel unappreciated, and have undefined status in the work place making them lose the passion to serve better. The library has been located in an isolated place; hence, it is not visible to all researchers because some people struggle to find their way to the library premises. There is a large number of individuals who lack an understanding of the services offered by the National Library. For instance, the library does not offer reading space for the junior students. This brings a lot of confusion. There is also a lack of proper working relationships with other libraries in the area. The library is not in a position to reach everyone. Therefore, its ability to offer research services to the nation of Kuwait is limited by this fact.

Recommendations For Improving The Current Management Of The National Library Of Kuwait

There are numerous helpful sources that can be utilized by the library management in their efforts to create a diverse staff that works to ensure that it provides effective services to the nation. The management also has a task to implement new methods that will enable it to utilize its resources

appropriately. The major focus of the national library should be on understanding the needs of its customers by listening and acting accordingly to the voices of its staff, customers, organization, and the entire work process. Therefore, the library management can undertake the following measures to improve its current management situation:

- The National Library of Kuwait needs very specialized and skilled library staff members. Therefore, the library management should work to ensure that it hires professional staff who are degree holders. Additionally, these employees should be offered attractive salary scales, proper official status, and effective incentives to encourage them to work harder and with passion.
- The national library has to be supported with adequate budgeting allocation to help in improving the library's furniture, collections, equipment, and services.
- To avoid waste of resources, small libraries and archives should be merged to form one library that serves the entire state of Kuwait.
- The library needs to develop an appropriate policy that guides the systematic and proper growth of the different library collections in all formats, with the top priority being the building of a core collection.
- The library management should perform a comprehensive and intensive training program for the newly hired professionals and also provide the library's support staff on an ongoing basis. The focus of the training should be on the provision of information services and the application and usage of the latest information technology.
- The library management should also strengthen its resource sharing by establishing a cooperation-sharing network between its departments to enhance the process of coordinating its activities.

Discussion Concerning The Persons Interviewed About Topics Related To The Course

First Interviewee

The first interviewee is called Mr. Nassar. He is the director of Information Services and the Digital Library Department. As a director, Mr. Nassar is in charge of servicing the beneficiaries and the researchers in the library. He is also in charge of supervising the entire library hall. He has a degree in general geography, which makes him fit to hold a senior position in the library department. As part of his job description, he has a responsibility to look after all the five sections that have been distributed throughout the entire library. The director, from his responses to the interview questions, seems to enjoy his work and position at the National Library of Kuwait. He is an educated person with sufficient knowledge about library information and management. With his experience in working at the National Library, Mr Nassar has gained sufficient knowledge about the duties and operations of the library, and he finds pleasure in performing his duties because he knows his rights and obligations at the

workplace. He has also indicated a proper understanding of all the branches of the library, which makes him fit to perform his duties effectively.

Despite the fact that Mr Nassar seems to enjoy performing his duties at the National Library, he is faced with several challenges that seem to hinder the delivery of service to the library and the respective customers. Among these challenges are performing the daily work, pressures from work and having to answer some indirect questions. The interviewee also seems to be experiencing personal conflict while performing his duties concerning the magnitude of the library's collection, which makes the process of obtaining information difficult. Mr. Nassar also feels the pinch of trying to find information amidst the large volumes of collections available in the library. However, he enjoys performing his duties, especially when it comes to working according to his rights. One of his rights is that he is the direct supervisor of the heads of all sections. For this, he has a responsibility to supervise all the library employees. He tries to make his work efficient and encourages employees to work effectively by imposing penalties, although he is permissive.

Some of the things that Mr. Nassar has learnt in the course of performing his duties are having self-confidence and the courage to confront people. He has learnt to be confident in himself and the decisions he makes a quality that enables him to perform his duties effectively and be an outstanding leader. Most of the decisions he makes as the director of the information department are based on data he collects that seems to benefit the decision itself. He then implements such decisions after conducting serious discussions with other members of the department. He undertakes more cooperative work, although he takes a lot of interest in nurturing and developing the process of participation. With three years of experience in managing his position, Mr Nassar has learnt to organize his work accordingly by making daily appointments so as to create a smooth working schedule for himself and other library staff.

Mr Nassar is a responsible employee who works hard to ensure that he honours all his appointments. He is also a hardworking man, as he works hard to meet his work obligations and solve all issues brought to his desk to ensure that the library workflow is kept constant. He is passionate about his work and feels happy whenever he achieves his career objectives or participates in activities that aim at improving the conditions of his workplace. Additionally, as the director of the information department and the overall supervisor of all the sections of the library, Mr. Nassar has an obligation to protect the rights and privacy of the library employees. He has the authority to take action against beneficiaries who seem to conduct themselves inappropriately while within the library premises. He also participates in the process of hiring new employees by conducting interviews for the respective applicants.

References

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