

**THE LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE (LRC) AND
READING MOTIVATION AMONG SECONDARY
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SULTANATE OF OMAN BY**

AZIZA AHMED HILAL AL-TOUBI

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degree of Master of Library and Information Science

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ABSTRACT


This research was conducted to measure the current status of the learning resource centres (LRCs) at the secondary stage students in Sultanate of Oman; to appraise the reading motivations of students at the secondary stage, and to examine the relationship between the learning resource centres and the factors that influence reading motivation among students. This study applied the quantitative survey method to 375 male and female students from grade 11 and 12. The sample for this study was chosen through stratified random sampling. The results tabulated highlight the students' satisfaction at the secondary level with the status of learning resource centres and the availability of facilities inside the LRCs. In this study, the result showed implies that the resources of information in the Learning Resource Centre are available and support the curriculum. The findings in this study indicate that the dimension of staff is one of the most influencing factors for students' satisfaction with the current state of Learning Resource Centres. From the results gathered, there is a need of support for the Internet service and the provision of printers to students and electronic information resources at LRCs. The results of the study indicated that intrinsic reading motivation has a deeper impact on reading motivation among high school students, compared to extrinsic motivation. The findings also revealed that there is a positive relationship between the dimensions of the current state of the learning resource centres and the intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation. The finding is a new addition in the field of learning resource centres. There is a tendency that the reading motivation among students will be positively impacted by the convenient and comfortable condition of LRCs. The evidence from this study has shown a positive impact on the continuous development of learning resource centres and the importance of employing the right people to manage LRCs, so they can create a harmonious reading community.

خلاصة البحث

سعى هذا البحث الكمي إلى دراسة الوضع الحالي لمراكز مصادر التعلم بالمرحلة الثانوية في سلطنة عمان ، وفحص دوافع القراءة لدى الطلاب في المرحلة الثانوية ومن ثم فحص العلاقة بين مركز مصادر التعلم بأبعاده الأربعة (البيئة والمرافق ، الموظفين ، الخدمات) ودوافع القراءة لدى الطلاب. استخدم الباحث الاستبيان لمعرفة تصورات المستجيبين والمتمثلة في 375 طالبا وطالبة من الصفين 11 و12 بالمرحلة الثانوية باستخدام العينة الطبقية العشوائية. وأظهرت النتائج رضا الطلاب بالمرحلة الثانوية عن الوضع الحالي لمراكز مصادر التعلم وتوفر المرافق فيه مع ملاحظات بدعم خدمة الإنترنت في مراكز مصادر التعلم، والحاجة إلى توفير طابعات للطلاب وتوفير المزيد من مصادر المعلومات الإلكترونية. في هذه الدراسة أكدت النتائج توفر مصادر المعلومات في مركز مصادر التعلم وأنها داعمة للمنهج الدراسي. وأشارت النتائج في هذه الدراسة أن بعد الموظفين هو أحد أكثر العوامل تأثيرا على رضا الطلاب في الوضع الحالي لمراكز مصادر التعلم. أوضحت نتائج الدراسة أن عوامل دوافع القراءة الداخلية لديها تأثير أعمق في دوافع القراءة لدى الطلاب في المرحلة الثانوية من الدوافع الخارجية. وكشفت الدراسة وجود علاقة ايجابية بين أبعاد مركز مصادر التعلم وعوامل دوافع القراءة لدى الطلاب. وهذه إضافة جديدة في حقل مراكز مصادر التعلم فكلما ارتفع مستوى واقع مراكز مصادر التعلم، ارتفعت معه دافعية القراءة لدى الطلاب. وهذا يظهر الأثر الإيجابي في العناية بالتطوير الدائم لمراكز مصادر التعلم وتوظيف متخصصين في المجال لإدارته بتنشئة جيل قارئ نافع لمجتمعه.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Library and Information Science



.....
Sharifah Nur Amirah Sarif Abdullah
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Library and Information Science

.....
Roosfa Bin Hashim
Internal Examiner

.....
Wan Ab. Kadir Wan Dollah
External Examiner

This dissertation was submitted to the Department of Library and Information Science and is accepted as a fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Library and Information Science.

.....
Roslina Othman
Head, Department of Library and
Information Science

This dissertation was submitted to the Kulliyah of Information and Communication Technology and is accepted as a fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Library and Information Science.

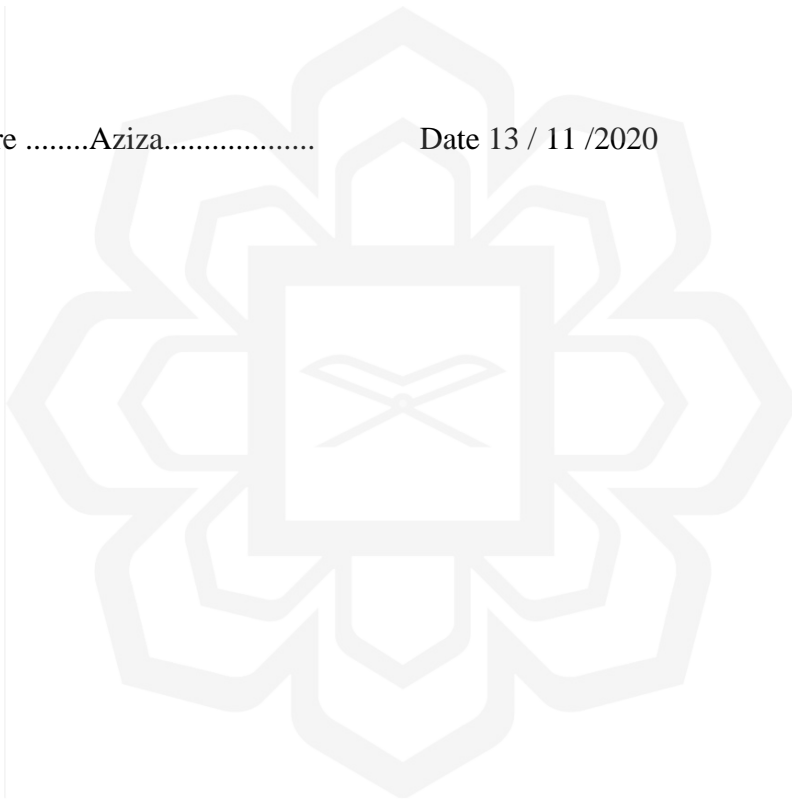
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Abdul Wahab Bin Abdul Rahman
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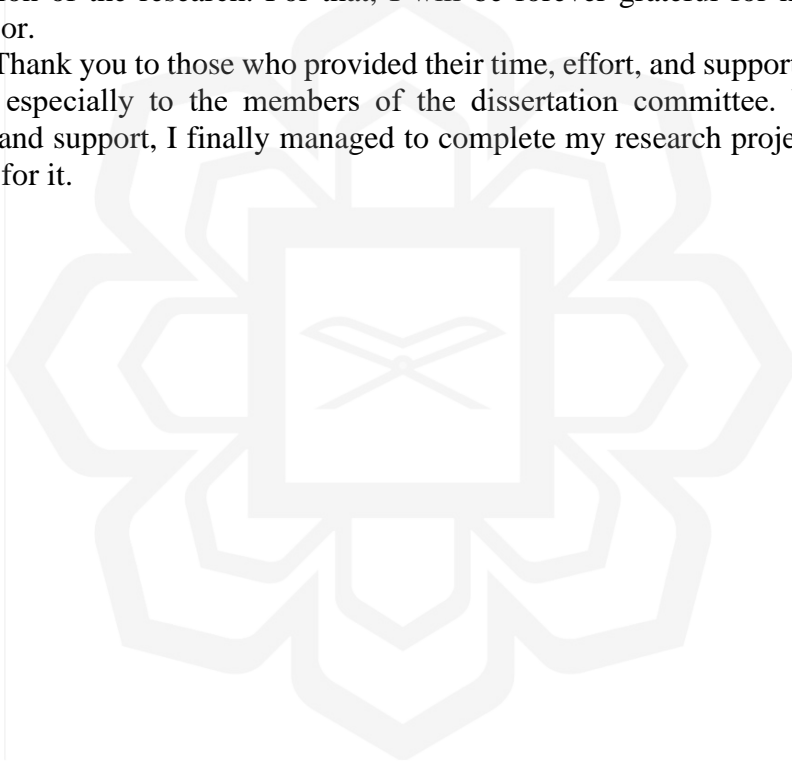


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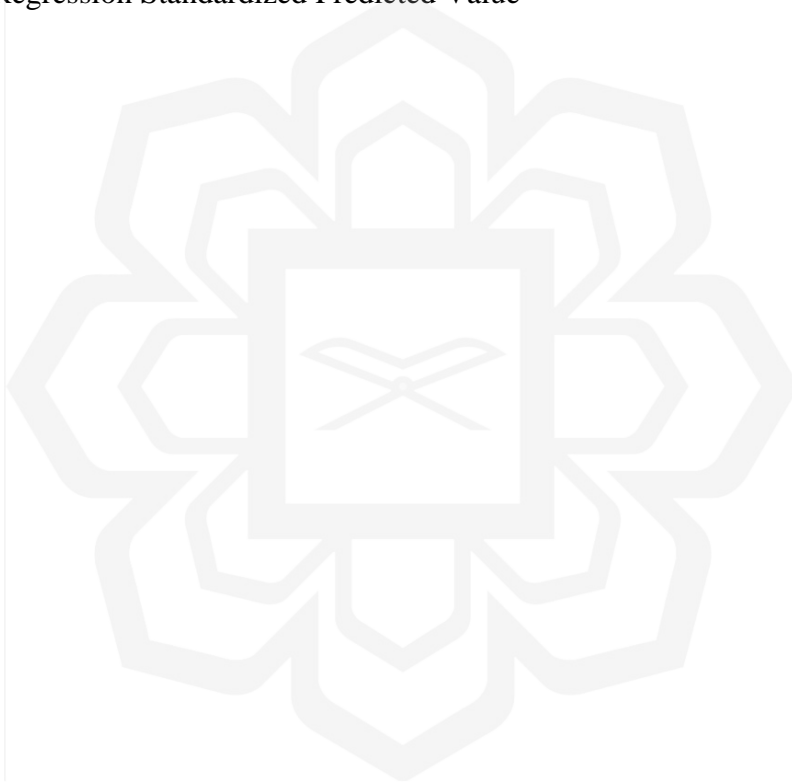


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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Sultanate of Oman has been interested in the field of education and its development to keep abreast of everything new in the field of education and information technology. The interest has been discussed since the application of the basic education system in the Sultanate's schools in 1997/1998. During the 2001/2002 school year, the basic education system for middle and high school schools began to face a transformation and changes such as the transition from school libraries to Learning Resource Centres took place. Books are no longer the only source of information and set up centres to take account of individual differences among students and achieve self-learning (Al-Farsi, 2008). Learning Resource Centres have been established in each of the basic education schools in the Sultanate of Oman, and they are equipped with state-of-the-art educational and technological equipment because the Ministry of Education believes that it is a necessity to produce students who will be able to deal with modern technologies. This situation has led to the interaction of students in schools with learning resource centres (Al-Kindi, 2006; Al-Maamari & Al-Sulaymani, 2009).

The Learning Resource Centre is one of the important facilities in the school in shaping the student's thinking, and its objectives are to promote and encourage reading habits of the learners, develop and improve students' ability to learn and to become independent learners through the services and activities provided by the Centre for students and teachers (Oriogu 2015; Al-aqili, 2018).

The word (Iqara) which means “read” is the first word that was addressed by the revelation of Jibril peace be upon him to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and it came within Quranic verses:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ (1) خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (2) اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ

Translation: “Read (Prophet Muhammad) in the Name of your Lord who created (1) created the human from a (blood) clot (2) Read! Your Lord is the Most Generous (3)” (-Al-'Alaq1-3).

This is a clear statement of the importance and the place of reading behaviour in Islam as the key to knowledge and science and the path of progress and prosperity and this world. The precious value of reading deserved to be the first word from the Messenger of Heaven to the Messenger of the earth.

Reading is essential in developing and improving the mind. It is a process of restoring the dignity of man in facing societal challenges. It adds value to life and provides access to culture and cultural heritage. Reading helps directly to raise the students’ cultural level and enables them to think properly and speak tactfully (Oriogu, 2015). Reading is a way to invest time in a positive and productive way; it is one of the most important criteria for measuring the progress of societies. It is the reader society that invests the book in a positive way (Khudair, 2016). Because of the importance of reading in life, it was necessary to encourage and motivate students to read and study the motives that enable them to reach the love of reading and make it habitual. The factors affecting the motivations of reading are important to be recognised. For example, self-efficacy is one of the most important aspects of developing reading motivation. Self-efficacy beliefs as a key component of reading motivation influence the reader's decision to engage in a task, to overcome any obstacles, and to perform successfully. These beliefs are part of development effects and among others are

environmental (Chrysos, 2017). Studies have shown an effect between the self-concept of reading and reading motivation among students (Al-Nassar, 2006).

Therefore, based on the influence of motivation in human behaviour, in this research, the study seeks to know the relationship between the current state of Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and the reading motivation in secondary students in Oman.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Reading is one of the most important educational habits which both the family and the school seek to instil in students. In addition, learning resources centres in schools aim to spread knowledge awareness and to improve reading habit with students.

Learning Resource Centres (LRCs) are an environment that helps students to learn, to love knowledge and to explore. The International Library Association (IASL) has emphasized the vital role of Learning Resource Centres (Abdulaziz, 2017; Al-aqili, 2018; Al Musawi & Amer, 2017). Reading is one of the essential skills needed for effective and successful educational growth, and it is one of the most important windows to human knowledge. Therefore, the Learning Resource Centre should be equipped with relevant and up-to-date information resources tailored to build the students mind and develop them to become independent learners (Oriogu, 2015; Shaker, 2011). Reading motivation is an area in need of further research so that educators and interested individuals can stay abreast of the factors that influence adult reading habits and behaviours, particularly during this digital age (Nadelson et al., 2013). Al-Kharousi (2011) mentioned in his study that reading is one of the least common hobbies among students in the school community. Therefore, the Learning Resource Centre should have a role in guiding students on the importance of reading and providing the best environment to achieve this.

Other studies have studied the role of the Learning Resources Centre from a different angle. For example, Idris (2015) and Al-Rakidi (2017) focused on the impact of learning resource centres in improving the cognitive level of secondary students and activate knowledge. Different studies by Muhanna (2012) and Awad (2014) highlighted the reality of Learning Resource Centres, objectives, tasks and ways to develop them. Another two studies by Al-afifi (2014) and Al Musawi (2017) found out about the development of Learning Resource Centres and quality standards. Other studies focused on Learning Resource Centres in sultanate of Oman from different views such as Al-Farsi (2008), Aleabdaliu and Al-Harasii (2012), Al-Kindi (2006), Al-Musawi (2017), Al-Eibri (2013), and Ministry of Education in Sultanate of Oman (2011). Besides, some studies have focused on the motivation of reading associated with specific variables such as gender and grade (Al-Dosari, 2016; Biyik, 2017). Also, a study by Khudair (2016) studied motivation of reading and its relationship to the classroom social environment.

However, despite the developments in societies, there is still a reluctance to read among young people at the global level as confirmed by Mullan (2010), Bowen (2010) and Donnaline (2017). Within the Arab society, studies of Al-Suleimani and Al-Jafri (2004), and Al-Omari (2017) concluded that the trend of students in the middle and secondary stage towards reading is unencouraging. Alayan (2006), Albadri (2019), and Shuweihat (2016) emphasized the youth's reluctance to read. During the Sultanate of Oman, Al Mahruqi (2019) mentioned that there was a decrease in reading rate among students.

In summary, these studies shed light on difficulties that the students are facing to instil exemplary reading habit such as lack of time to visit Learning Resources Centre, difficulty in accessing information about student interest Al-Enezi(2015), Al-Dosari (

2016), Al-Rakidi(2017), lack of adequate support by the school, teacher and family to encourage reading among students (Yasemin Kuşdemir, 2018, Savaskan & Özdemir, 2017), lack of diversity of information sources in learning resource centres (Al-Enezi, 2015; Al-Senousi, 2013).

Therefore, since most studies measure the motivation of reading and its relationship to different variables with simple reference to Learning Resource Centres. This research will be a new addition by studying the current state of Learning Resource Centres in secondary school and its relation with reading motivation to find the impact of Learning Resource Centres on students' reading motivation.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will contribute to building a reading school community by knowing the motivations for reading that affect students at the secondary level. Also, this study will be guiding students towards the importance of a reading culture.

On the other hand, given that students are the largest group benefiting from the Learning Resource Center, knowing their perceptions in the current state of Learning Resource Centers will clarify the reality of Learning Resource Centers with students' and show their needs from the Learning Resource Center.

Also, this study will contribute to enriching the scientific content in the field of Learning Resource Centres in terms of knowledge of the impact of Learning Resource Centres on reading motivation of secondary students.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives are as follows:

1. To study the current state of Learning Resource Centres (LRCs) in a secondary school in Oman.
2. To appraise the factors of reading motivation among secondary school students in Oman.
3. To examine the relationships between Learning Resource Centres and reading motivation in secondary schools of Oman

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the stated objectives, the research questions are as follows:

1. What is the current state of Learning Resource Centres (LRCs) in secondary schools of Oman in terms of?
 - 1.1. The availability of facilities and environment in LRC?
 - 1.2. The information resources in LRC?
 - 1.3. The staff?
 - 1.4. The services?
2. What are the factors of reading motivation among secondary school students in Oman? In terms of:
 - 2.1. Intrinsic motivation?
 - 2.2. Extrinsic motivation?
3. To what extent Learning Resource Centres (LRCs) are related to reading motivation in secondary schools in Oman?

1.6 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

1. **Learning Resources Centre:** An educational environment that provides a variety of information resources and a set of services that serve the student, teachers, and the school community, managed by a learning resource specialist. In this study, studying the current status of Learning Resource Centres in the Sultanate of Oman in secondary schools in the region of Dakhiliyah in terms of availability of facilities and environment, information resources, staff and services. This is measured with a specific questionnaire.
2. **Reading motivation:** In this study, it refers to the incentives that encourage students at the secondary school level in the Sultanate of Oman to read, whether intrinsic or extrinsic and link them to the current state of learning resource centre.
3. **Secondary stage in government schools:** In this study, it refers to the basic post-education phase of the education system in Oman. It consists of two years, which includes the eleventh and twelfth grades and the average age of students (16 to 17 years old).

1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has presented and discussed the background of the study. Additionally, the statement of the problem was discussed. This study aims to study the current status of Learning Resource Centres, appraise the factor of reading motivation among secondary school students in the Sultanate of Oman and examine the relationships between Learning Resource Centres and reading motivation in secondary schools of Oman. This chapter also presented the research questions, the significance of the study and operational definition.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE

Many definitions illustrate the concept of the Learning Resource Centres. These are summarized in the following table:

Table 2.1 Definitions of the Learning Resource Centres

Authors	Definition
1- Al-afifi (2014)	A centre with a collection of printed materials, audio and visual under the supervision of specialists called "specialist of centre Learning resources."
2- Al-Saalih & Al-Manaei (2003)	A site in the school that provides services to students, teachers and administrators by providing diverse educational resources, information network and scientific consultations under specialized management to provide a resource-rich learning environment and integrate technology into education
3- Awad 2014)	It is a place that contains diverse materials, devices and educational technology services contributes to the service of school curricula, and by harnessing all its potential to serve teachers and learners, to facilitate the educational learning process.
4- Alshaya (2013)	A strategic place in the school that serves students and teachers by providing various educational materials, supporting the curriculum using modern learning methods, and implementing programs that raise the student's skills in research and reading

5-	Aswan (2019)	An educational environment contains multiple types of information sources that benefit the learner by enabling acquisition of skills in research and self-learning.
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6-	Al- Shahry (2015)	A school site that provides services to school teachers and students and administers them. It contains a variety of information sources and provides services such as the Internet, vocational training and educational devices, managed by specialized staff in the field of libraries and information to provide an educational environment that serves the beneficiary
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Overall, most of the definitions agreed that learning resource centres are an educational environment that serves students, teachers, and administrators at the school by providing diverse sources of information and services. After the previous definitions, this study defines the Learning Resource Centre as a structured learning environment in the school that contains a variety of information resources that serve the educational process and beneficiaries (student, teacher, administrative, community) by providing a range of services under specialized management. The definition of this study is aligned with the definition of Al- Shahry (2015) and Al-Saalih and Al-Manaei (2003).

2.2 THE FOUNDATION OF LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE

The foundation of learning resource centres is linked to the philosophy of the educational institution that provides services to them, and contribute to the progress of school education clearly, and increase its impact on learners students or teachers by taking into account individual differences in thought and diversity of learning resources (Abu Odeh, 2007). Some factors are based on the educational foundations and library, and they help to be the basis of learning centres:

- a. All resources should be directed to serve students and teachers first.

- b. Service: Provide educational and information services in an effective manner.
- c. Administrative Support: Provide continuous administrative support by the Ministry of Education's Department of Education Technologies to enable the Centre to fulfil its responsibilities and provide its services to the beneficiaries.
- d. Communication: Facilitate communication between the centre's management and the beneficiaries of students, teachers, and parents to identify and analyse their needs.
- e. Availability: Provide equal opportunities for beneficiaries to access sources of information from inside and outside the centre (Al-afifi,2014; Al-Enezi, 2015; Al-Saalih & Al-Manaei, 2003)

So, from previous studies, it is found that the basis of Learning Resource Centres is that its goal is to serve the educational process and achieve its objectives in preparation for integrating the service of the Learning Resource Centres with the needs of beneficiaries.

2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE

Stages of development and access to Learning Resource Centres: The sources reported that the Learning Resource Centres passed through five stages to reach the name of Learning Resource Centres. The first stage is the classroom library. This is the earliest stage of developing school libraries, which is a contains resources of printed information only. The second stage, central school libraries must be attached to public education schools, which aim to collect, develop, organise, and present printed information resources to students and teachers (Al-Enezi, 2015). During the third stage,

all books, periodicals and other printed materials, such as dictionaries and encyclopaedias, are collected. Resources related to a particular subject are collected for students and teachers. This kind of library does not spread to the school's needs because of the diversity of subjects.

The fourth stage is the Comprehensive Library, which in this stage, the traditional form of the library has changed. It has become a non-printed material besides printed materials, and there is a need to rehabilitate the staff of these libraries. For stage 5, access to Learning Resource Centres after ensuring that the previous stages are unable to achieve the school's goals and ambition of focusing on education to focus on learning and skills. Therefore, some additions have emerged, such as a learning hall and implementation of various programs that help students to acquire learning skills (Al-aqili 2018; Alyan, 2002; Muhanna, 2012).

2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE

Learning Resource Centres is an important cultural resource in the educational process, and it is the primary source for the teacher and student to take information from their sources because the centre provides an environment conducive to the learner not provided by normal school environments (Al-Farisi, 2008; Al-Eibri, 2103; Al-aqili, 2018). In their study on several points of importance of learning resource centres, it can be summarized that Learning Resource Centres;

1. Provide the ideal environment that enables the learner to use various sources of information;
2. Provide a good classroom model that helps attract students and motivates their interests;

3. The sources of information are classified and arranged so that they are easily accessible;
4. Provide the learners with opportunities for self-learning, improving their skills, and their orientation toward research and reading.

The International Association of Libraries in 2006 confirmed the vital role of Learning Resource Centre in their new sense and the need for their presence in the teaching and learning process. Four basic functions have been developed to clarify the role and importance of the Learning Resource Centre :

- a. Information: Learning Resource Centre provides continuous lifelong learning by providing facilities and the environment suitable for learning as well as training in information search and integration skills, besides teaching and supporting intellectual freedom contains documented information and the speed of access and retrieval.
- b. Educational: Learning Resource Centre provides continuous lifelong learning by providing facilities and the environment suitable for learning as well as training in information search and integration skills, besides teaching and supporting intellectual freedom.
- c. Cultural: Learning Resource Centre supports different experiences, encouraging creativity, and developing positive human relationships.
- d. Entertainment: Learning Resource Centre supports a balanced life and encourages leisure investment in useful works, by providing sources of information, entertainment programs and guidance in exploiting leisure time (Al-Rakiqi, 2017; Alsayd 2013; Muhanna, 2012).