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**PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC ARCHIVES
ADMINISTRATION TASKS IN MALAYSIA BASED ON THE
NATIONAL ARCHIVES ACT 2003 (ACT 629)**

Ahmad Azman Mohamad Ramli^{1*}, Noor Faraliza Samsudin², Intan Nurbaizura Zainuddin³, Mohd Naim Mohd Nasfi⁴, Norhidayu Md Yatim⁵, Dr. Seri Intan Idayu Shahrul Asari⁶, Razifah Othman⁷, Kasmarini Baharuddin⁸

- ¹ Pengajian Sains Maklumat, Kolej Pengajian Pengkomputeran, Informatik dan Matematik, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Rembau, Malaysia
Email: ahmadazman@uitm.edu.my
 - ² Pengajian Sains Maklumat, Kolej Pengajian Pengkomputeran, Informatik dan Matematik, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Rembau, Malaysia
Email: noorf053@uitm.edu.my
 - ³ Pengajian Sains Maklumat, Kolej Pengajian Pengkomputeran, Informatik dan Matematik, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Rembau, Malaysia
Email: intan422@uitm.edu.my
 - ⁴ Pengajian Sains Maklumat, Kolej Pengajian Pengkomputeran, Informatik dan Matematik, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Rembau, Malaysia
Email: naim932@uitm.edu.my
 - ⁵ Pengajian Sains Maklumat, Kolej Pengajian Pengkomputeran, Informatik dan Matematik, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Rembau, Malaysia
Email: norhidayu@uitm.edu.my
 - ⁶ Pengajian Sains Maklumat, Kolej Pengajian Pengkomputeran, Informatik dan Matematik, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Rembau, Malaysia
Email: seriintan@uitm.edu.my
 - ⁷ Pengajian Sains Maklumat, Kolej Pengajian Pengkomputeran, Informatik dan Matematik, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Rembau, Malaysia
Email: razif879@uitm.edu.my
 - ⁸ Pengajian Sains Maklumat, Kolej Pengajian Pengkomputeran, Informatik dan Matematik, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Negeri Selangor, Kampus Puncak Perdana, Malaysia
Email: kas@uitm.edu.my
- * Corresponding Author

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Abstract:

The National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) is an act enacted to ensure that public archives in Malaysia can be administered well to ensure that this valuable source of information is always safe, accessible and used for reference by current and future researchers. Among the provisions in this act are those related to the tasks that need to be carried out to ensure that the public archives can always be administered well. In this regard, the objective of this paper is

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to analyze the question of what the tasks and their characteristics are. The method used to achieve this objective is to use the literature review method on the content of information sources such as the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629), reference books, articles, acts and other related regulations. Based on this analysis, it was found that there are four public archives administration tasks as stipulated by this act. The names of the four tasks are the processing and preservation of public archives, access to public archives, access to classified archives and prohibition on reproduction and publication of public archives. The characteristics of each of these tasks are discussed in this paper. It is hoped that the results of this analysis will contribute to increasing the reader's knowledge of the administrative tasks of public archives in Malaysia and their characteristics as stipulated by the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629). It is also hoped that the findings from this analysis will be able to catalyze more in-depth study related to the administrative tasks of this very valuable information source of our nation in the future.

Keywords:

Administration, Archives, National Archives Act 2003 (Act (629), Public Archives, Tasks

Introduction

The National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) is an act enacted to ensure that public archives in Malaysia can be well preserved for present and future use. This Act was enacted to replace the National Archives Act 1966 which was repealed. Among the important provisions in this act are those relating to the tasks that need to be carried out to ensure that the public archives can always be administered well. In this regard, the objective of this paper is to analyze the question of what these tasks are and their characteristics. The method used to achieve this objective is by using the literature review method on the content of information sources such as the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629), reference books, articles, acts and other related regulations. It is hoped that the results of this analysis will contribute to increasing the reader's knowledge of the administrative tasks of public archives in Malaysia as stipulated by the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) and its characteristics. It is also hoped that the findings from this initial analysis will be able to serve as a catalyst for more in-depth study on this issue in the future.

Literature Review

A term means a word or phrase that expresses something correctly and appropriately in a field of knowledge (job or art) (Kamus Dewan, 2017). Therefore, to help readers understand more easily the concept or meaning of a word discussed in this paper, it will first define four important terms discussed in this article. All four definitions are obtained from the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629). These terms are records, public records, public archives, and public offices.

Record

The National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) states that "record" is material in written or other form that states facts or events or otherwise records information and includes paper, documents, registers, printed matter, books, maps, plans, drawings, photographs, microfilms, cinematographic films, sound recordings, records produced electronically regardless of their physical form or characteristics and any copies thereof (National Archives of Malaysia, 2003).

Record is information that is being kept, unconcerned with the media and its properties, managed and accepted by an organization, that can be used as operation's evident that contains kept values that are needed to be preserved for a period of time (Smith, Ginn, and Kallaus, 2002). Record is an informative document, in the form of paper and electronic, that is used to perform many functions (Quible, 2005). Therefore, based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that record is referred as information that is kept in any form of media, and it is produced by an organization or individual, for many purposes and functions, especially in stating the facts and occurrences, in proving rights or responsibilities and as well as to be used as a remark of any activity that was carried out as future reference.

Public Record

The National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) states that "public records" are records officially received or issued by any public office in the course of its affairs or by any public servant or public office employee in the course of his official duties and include records of any government enterprise and also include all records which, at the commencement of this Act, are in the custody or under the control of the National Archives of Malaysia established under the National Archives Act 1966 (National Archives of Malaysia, 2003).

Public Archives

The National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) states that "public archives" means "public records" which are determined by the Director General of the National Archives of Malaysia to be of permanent and enduring national or historical value or both and which have been transferred to the National Archives of Malaysia or any other place as directed by the Director General of the National Archives of Malaysia from time to time. The Act also defines public archives as any personal records or other material which are determined by the Director General of the National Archives of Malaysia to be of permanent and enduring national or historical value or both acquired for the National Archives of Malaysia by the Director General of the National Archives of Malaysia (National Archives of Malaysia, 2003).

Public Office

The National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) states that "public office" means s an office of the Federal Government or the Government of any State or an office of any local authority, statutory authority or Government enterprise.

Methodology

To achieve the study objectives, this study uses a qualitative approach, namely conducting a literature review of reference sources to obtain secondary information related to the study topic. Literature review is "a step-by-step process that involves the identification of published and unpublished work from secondary sources on the topic of interest, the evaluation of this work in relation to the problem, and the documentation of this work (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010)."

This paper chooses this method because of its contribution to the achievement of the objectives of this paper. "Literature search will help the researcher to focus on the research problem based on certain aspects found to be important in the published studies (Zainuddin, 2013)." "Literature review convinces readers about the significance of a study (Khor et al., 2009)." Reference materials such as deeds, newspapers, books, social media such as Facebook, websites and others are used to obtain secondary information. The study period is approximately four months, starting from January 2025 until April 2025.

Findings

Based on this initial analysis, it was found that there are four tasks of public archives administration as stipulated by this act. The four tasks are the processing and preservation of public archives, access to public archives, access to classified archives and prohibition of reproduction and publication of public archives. The discussion of the characteristics of each task is as follows:

Processing and preservation of public archives

Section 36 of the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) states that all public archives must be processed and preserved from any threat that may damage the public archives. A threat can be defined as any object, person or other entity that may endanger an asset. They are also defined as "a suggestion that something unpleasant or violent will happen, especially if a particular action or order is not followed (Whitman and Mattrud, 2003). Based on the definitions, it can be defined that the threat to public archives is any object, person or other entity that may endanger the public archives. Danger here means as examples like the public archives are lost, damaged, destroyed and that might make the contents to be incomprehensible. A common example of a threat to a public archive is a threat from temperature and humidity. Temperature that is too high and excessive can affect the public archives that were written on papers to wrinkle, turn yellowish, and will eventually eradicate it into dust. The change in the temperature from low to high and vice versa, over-temperature, or sudden rise of the temperature, would also affect the expansion and contraction of the physical condition of the public archives. This condition can cause the physical condition of public archives to be weakened and damaged (Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia, 2006).

The public archives processing activities specified in this section are storage, classification, and description. An example of good storage is that public archives are stored in a storage area that has good air circulation and an appropriate temperature of between 180 C to 220 C. If the storage area has no air-conditioning facility, fans can be used for air ventilation. It is better to have a storage facility that is installed with 24-hour operational air-conditioning facility (Savumthararaj, 2008). One more example of good storage is that the moisture level in the public archives' storage space should be controlled attentively. This is because high humidity will cause the growth of fungi (fungus and mildew) on the public archives (Roe, 2005). Meanwhile, low levels of humidity will cause public archives, especially those which were made of paper, to become dry and will eventually begin to experience the process of decay (Forde, 2007). In addition, public archives preservation activities include repair, restoration, and transfer of public archives into microfilm recordings, photographic copies, or other forms of storage. The purpose of these activities is to ensure that the public archives are always safe and easily accessible to researchers.

Access to Public Archives

Public archives are primary sources that possess distinctive characteristics. Public archives are also unique, veritable, authentic, reliable and competent as evidence (National Archives of Malaysia, 2008). Section 37 of the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) states that public archives shall be made available to the public after twenty-five years from the date of expiry of the records or materials constituting the public archives or such period as may be prescribed by the Director General of the National Archives of Malaysia. The Director General of Archives must also provide reasonable facilities such as research halls and research equipment to enable the public to refer to the public archives.

However, this section stipulates that no person may make copies or take extracts from any public archives except in accordance with the regulations set by the Director General of the National Archives of Malaysia. An example of such regulations is that if a researcher at the National Archives of Malaysia wishes to make copies of a public archive, he must hand over the public archive to an officer at the research hall to make copies, accompanied by a certain fee. This section also states that no person may make copies or take extracts from any public archives except in accordance with this act. This section further states that any person who contravenes this provision commits an offence and upon conviction shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five thousand ringgit or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to both.

Access to Classified Records

Section 38 of the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) states that classified records in custody of the National Archives shall not be made available for public reference except as provided under this section. Classified records mean public records classified as official secrets in accordance with the Official Secrets Act 1972 [Act 88] (Law Review Commissioner Malaysia, 2006). The Official Secrets Act 1972 is an Act relating to the protection of official secrets and official matters, particularly intended to protect official secrets and official matters, particularly intended to protect official secrets and official matters from falling into the hands of unauthorized people. The meaning of official is any matter relating to the public service in Malaysia (Setiausaha Jemaah Menteri, 2017).

However, this section empowers the Director General of the National Archives of Malaysia to allow a person to refer to a classified record if that person has obtained special written permission for that purpose from the head of the office responsible for the classified record. This means that if a researcher wishes to access a classified record held at the National Archives of Malaysia, he or she must first attempt to obtain special written permission from the creator of the record while the record is still actively being used in an organization.

Prohibition Of Reproduction And Publication Of Public Archives

Section 39 of the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) states that no person shall reproduce or publish the whole or any part of the contents of any public archive except with the prior written permission of the Director General of the National Archives of Malaysia. A person who wishes to reproduce or publish the whole or any part of the contents of any public archive must also comply with any terms and conditions prescribed and pay any fees or charges prescribed by the Director General of the National Archives of Malaysia.

However, this section states that nothing in this section shall be construed as affecting or extending the laws relating to copyright in Malaysia. Copyright is the right to prevent the copying of work which has been created by intellectual effort. It protects information and ideas where these have been reduced into the form of 'work'. (Paul Pedley, 2006).

Conclusion

Based on the discussion here, it clearly shows that the objective of this paper has been achieved. This is because this paper has successfully identified four tasks in the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) that need to be implemented to ensure that public archives can always be administered well. Apart from that, this paper has also successfully discussed the

characteristics of each of the four tasks. In this regard, it is hoped that the discussion in this paper has contributed to the reader's knowledge of the topic. It is also hoped that the findings from this initial analysis will be able to be a catalyst for more in-depth study on the topic in the future. The question proposed for the study is related to the comparison of public archive administration tasks as stipulated by the National Archives Act 2003 (Act 629) with public archive administration tasks as stipulated by archive acts or laws in other countries in the world.

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