This study was carried out to explore the perceptions of upper secondary students towards librarianship as a career, concerning their level of awareness, the nature of the job and educational qualifications of a professional librarian. The study was also designed to find out factors that motivate or discourage students to choose librarianship as a career. The survey method, in the form of questionnaires modified from studies done by Genoni and Greeve (1997), Bloch and Bloch (1981) and Baruchson-Aribib and Mendelovitz (2004), were administered to randomly selected Form Five and Form Six students in twelve secondary schools in Petaling Jaya and Subang Jaya, Selangor. The response rate was 91.58%. The results of the findings reveal that the respondents had a very low level of awareness toward a career in librarianship. 49.84% were aware of a career in librarianship, but only 12% of the respondents would give a thought to be a librarian. 88.3% of the respondents were unaware of the existence of Public Higher Learning Institutions offering LIS programs. The respondents were also unaware of many job opportunities available in a broad range of places. They associated the place of employment with Higher Learning Institutions (78.0%), Schools (73.5%); and Museum and Archives (56.7%) only. "Check in and check out materials" and "Shelves and re-shelves books" were the two most recognized repetitive functions that were believed to be performed by a librarian. 64.9% underestimated the starting salary of librarian. A majority (83.1%) were also ignorant about the level of education demanded to work as a librarian. The librarians were rated the lowest among ten occupation included in the study. "Reading and love of books"(71.6%) and "Love interaction with public" (70.5%) remained the main reasons for being attracted to librarianship. "Other Career Chosen" (91.4%) and "Boring" (56.9%) were two perceived reasons of not considering librarianship as a career. The results of this study can be used by leaders in the profession and recruiters to develop strategies and help school leavers perceive librarianship in a more positive way. Expanding the informational sources about librarianship can facilitate the recruitment process. The future of this profession rests largely on the success of attracting better people into the profession, thus the profession should take into consideration the views of the generation of future professionals.
ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dijalankan untuk meninjau tanggapan pelajar-pelajar sekolah menengah atas terhadap kerjaya pustakawan dan sejauh manakah kesedaran dan kefahaman mereka tentang profession mi. Di samping itu, penyelidikan ini juga bertujuan untuk mengkaji faktor-faktor yang menggalakkan atau menghalang mereka dari memilih kerjaya ini. Kajian dijalankan dengan menggunakan kaedah soal selidik yang telah diubahsuai daripada kajian yang dibuat oleh Genoni dan Greeve (1997), Bloch dan Bloch (1981) dan Baruchson-Arbib dan Mendelovitz (2004). Kajian ini melibatkan 689 orang pelajar Tingkatan Lima dan Tingkatan Enam yang dipilih secara rawak di dua belas sekolah menengah di Petaling Jaya dan Subang Jaya, Selangor. Sebanyak 91.58% telah memulangkan borang soal selidik. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan kebanyakan responden mempunyai tahap kesedaran dan kefahaman yang sangat rendah terhadap kerjaya mi. 49.84% responden sedar tentang kewujudan kerjaya ini tetapi hanya 12% sahaja yang sanggup memilihnya sebagai kerjaya pilihan mereka di masa hadapan. Selain itu, 88.3% responden langsung tidak menyedari tentang kewujudan Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Awam yang menawarkan kursus di bidang Sains Perpustakaan dan Maklumat. Responden juga tidak megetahui tentang peluang-peluang pekerjaan bagi seorang pustakawan bahkan mereka hanya mengaitkannya dengan Institusi Pengajian Tinggi (78.0%), Sekolah (73.5%), Muzium dan Arkib (56.7%) sahaja. Sementara itu "Menguruskan pemulangan dan pinjaman bahan" dan "Menyusun buku" adalah dua tugasan utama yang dikenalpasti bagi seorang pustakawan. Selain itu, 64.9% daripada responden menyatakan bahawa gaji pustakawan sangat rendah daripada yang sepatutnya. Majoriti daripada responden (83.1%) juga tidak mengetahui tahap pendidikan yang diperlukan untuk menjadi seorang pustakawan bahkan pustakawan juga telah diletakkan di tahap yang paling bawah di antara sepuluh pekerjaan dalam senarai kajian. "Suka membaca / Suka buku" (71.6%) dan "Suka berinteraksi dengan masyarakat" (70.5%) adalah dua sebab terpenting yang dikenalpasti menjadi tarikan kepada kerjaya ini manakala "Memilih kerjaya lain" dan "Bosan" adalah dua faktor mengapa responden tidak tertarik pada kerjaya ini. Daripada dapatan kajian, dicadangkan agar para pemimpin profession ini dan pihak yang berkenaan dapat merangka satu pelan tindakan dan menggubal strategi yang membolehkan para pelajar dan remaja lepasan sekolah dapat menyedari tentang kewujudan profession ini dan seterusnya memberi kefahaman tentang kerjaya ini dengan lebih positif. Sesungguhnya, hala tuju kerjaya ini pada masa hadapan sememangnya bergantung kepada keupayaan menarik lebih ramai remaja yang berwawasan menyertai profession mi.
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<tr>
<td>AALL</td>
<td>American Association of Law Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACRL</td>
<td>Association of College and Research Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALA</td>
<td>American Library Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALIA</td>
<td>Australian Library and Information Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>Canadian Library Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPRD</td>
<td>Educational Planning &amp; Research Divisions</td>
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<td>IFLA</td>
<td>International Federation of Library Association</td>
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<td>IIUM</td>
<td>International Islamic University of Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPTA</td>
<td>Institusi Pendidikan Tinggi Awam (Public Higher Learning Institution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPNS</td>
<td>Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri Selangor</td>
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<td>LIS</td>
<td>Library and Information Science</td>
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<td>PPM</td>
<td>Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia</td>
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<td>PPM</td>
<td>Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia</td>
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<tr>
<td>RTMLA</td>
<td>The Round Table for the Management of Library Associations</td>
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<td>SLIS</td>
<td>School of Library and Information Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPM</td>
<td>Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia</td>
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<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Packages For The Social Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>STPM</td>
<td>Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia</td>
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<td>UiTM</td>
<td>University of Technology Mara</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Malaysia has undergone significant changes in the last few years as a result of various measures undertaken by the government to meet the changing world economy, which then has had tremendous impact on its human resources. Thus, if Malaysia is to continue to progress and become a fully developed nation by the year 2020 with a united, caring, and progressive society and a strong economy, it has to formulate and implement policies for the development of its human resources to the fullest talent, expertise and energies in all sectors including librarians and library personnel. An educated, skilled, productive, disciplined and competent workforce will be a major asset to the nation (Shahar, 1994). McKee (2003) wrote:

"Investment in people is the single most important factor in business success whether in the commercial sector or in the public sector"

In other words, the success of an organization depends on the calibre of its human resources. It is the quality of the people that determines the continued survival and growth of the organization (Tan, 1998). It is clear that the future of one profession both rests largely on the success of attracting more people especially younger generation into the profession and the ability of the profession to retain its workforce. Thus, it is important for each profession or organization to develop the strategies to appeal to the newcomers to their workplace and make their profession or organization as appealing and as rewarding as possible as a career choice for them.

Having realized all these, the Malaysian government has developed policies and plans which give due recognition to human resource development. The policies and plans include the Vision 2020 (Malaysia: the Way Forward), the Second Outline Perspectives
Plans (OPP2) which includes the National Development Policy, the Sixth Malaysian Plan, the National Policy on Library and Information Services, the Science and Technology Policy and many others that have similar objectives that is to build a progressive, prosperous and united nation (Shahar, 1994). Adding to this, in the second thrust of 9th plan, the Prime Minister announced that the development of human capital, the upgrading of the mentality and intellectual capacity of a nation is one of the biggest challenges under the Ninth Malaysia Plan. If Malaysian wish to become a knowledge-based economy and wish to be a developed country and maintain that developed status, the development of human capital must be a priority. In the context of globalisation, high quality human capital has become a necessity, not merely a luxury (Abdullah, 2006).

As a result of various government policies and plans to make Malaysia an advanced affluent nation by the year 2020, Malaysia is experiencing and will experience rapid economic transformation, which will accelerate further within the next 25 years. According to Shahar (1994), if libraries and information centres are to be recognized as agents of change within the context of a new affluent and information-rich society, one should ensure that one would be able to cope with the new demand of library services. Thus, human resource development for librarians and information personnel should provide the necessary education and training that will enable them to play a new role in this ever-changing environment. However, the library profession is facing the shortage of qualified librarian, and this problem is no different in the past and nor better in the present (Lim, 1970); (Zaiton et al., 2004). Thus, this concern centers around the question of whether or not there will be a sufficient number of adequately qualified librarians to staff the libraries today and in decades to come.

How is it to compete for the best and the most ambitious "young blood" into the profession if this profession continues to be a subject of negative images and certain
level of misunderstanding?. Recruiting and retaining enough of the best, brightest, and
diverse individuals into librarianship workforce to meet present and future anticipated
needs for information experts is really a challenge this profession currently faces.
According to Matarazzo (cited in Matarazzo and Mika, 2004), over 60% of librarians in
the United States were 45 years old or older and that 78,000 librarians were between
the ages of 45 and 54. He concluded that the primary factor that has led to an ageing
workforce is because of a decline in young people choosing Library and Information
Science (LIS) as a career.

However, the real challenge to the library and information (LIS) profession, in
particular, reacts to workforce issues that there is no one who is seriously studying
workforce planning for the profession. In the ‘forward’ to Demographic Change in
Academic Librarianship, Neal (cited in Matarazzo and Mika, 2004) remarked the
following:

*Workforce planning has never been strength of the American library profession in
general, or higher education for librarianship in particular. The field has rarely
secured a dependable assessment of supply and demand for professional
positions..... As a result, national professional and institutional strategies have not
been developed to guide the preparation, advancement, and replacement of
librarians.*

Matarazzo and Mika (2004) expressed concern that this profession did not seem to
care enough to study itself and its human resources needs since this profession did not
have accurate information on its future, its job market, accurate retirement statistics
and reasons that younger students are not choosing librarianship as a career and
many others. Thus, they suggested all those to be the areas of future research. They
concluded there was an essential need to attract good quality students into the library
profession as the recruitment and retention of the library and information students are
critical issues in contemporary library education.
The following section will present overseas jobs outlook, Malaysia’s jobs outlook, a brief history of library education in Malaysia, an overview of negative image of the librarian, statement of the problem, research questions, the statement of significance, limitations and scope of the study, and definitions of key terms for this study.

1.2 Job Outlook / Prospects in Other Countries

The growth of high technology industries, particularly in ICT, has created an increased demand for a large work force in many occupations including librarians. Kleiman (1992) in her book entitled “The 100 best jobs for the 1990s and beyond” identified a librarian as one of the 100 or more best jobs and career for the 1990s and into the 21st century. According to Crosby in her article "Information experts in the information age", the number of librarians jobs is expected to increase by about 5% between the period of 1998 -2008. By 2008, librarians are expected to hold 7,000 more jobs than in 1998. Many experienced librarians are expected to retire, switch to other occupations or leave the occupation for other reasons, thus creating about 39,000 jobs opening for new librarians between 1998 to 2008 (Crosby, 2001).

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2004), in the United States of America, over the 2002 -2012 period, it is projected that there will be a 23.3% increase in the number of professional and related jobs. About three-quarters of the job growth will come from three groups of professional occupations, that are computer and mathematical occupations, healthcare practitioners and technical occupations, and education training and library occupations, which will add to 4.9 million jobs combined. Employment of librarians is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations over the 2002 -2012 period. Adding on to this, the latest report on "Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2004-2005 Edition" reported that a large number of
retirements in the next decade is expected to result in many job openings for librarians to replace those who leave.

The profession is also experiencing a labor gap between increasing demand for library and information science professionals and a declining supply of qualified individuals. The annual conference of the American Library Association (ALA) in summer 2000, highlighted the job shortage: Recruiters had 997 jobs available, the most at the conference since 1982, but only 489 job seekers applied, the fewest since 1965. The number of accredited graduate-level library programs at colleges throughout the United States and Canada has dropped from about 100 two decades ago to just 56 in the year 2000 (Billups, 2000).

Librarianship is also suffering from the "graying" issues of the library profession (ACRL, 2002). Recent reports based on census data and the Monthly Labor Review pointed out that more than 25% of librarians will reach the age of 65 by 2009, while 40% will achieve that status by 2019 (Berry, 2002). In addition, the problem is being compounded: Only 12% of librarians fit in the 25-34 year age range, versus 25% in that range in comparable professions (Wilder, 1995). Lynch (2002) claimed that 60% of librarians currently employed will reach retirement age by 2020 and thus with this volume of potential retirements, there is a need to increase the number of MLIS graduates to fill a vacated position. Moreover, the booming technology job market and a rapidly graying workforce have combined to create a serious shortage of librarians in public schools, universities and community facilities around the country (Billups, 2000).

The explosion of technology has also improved the employment prospects of librarians. The move towards a 'learning society' combined with the rapid growth of information technology, particularly the Internet has brought the librarian and information profession into a new era (Infield, 1997). Librarians with the technological expertise and
skills in Library and Information Science make them more marketable in businesses as well as technology firms as reported "when you go to career fairs at library schools, there are more and more information technology firms there" (Crosby, 2001). Tenopir (2002) held the same view that many new-information-related jobs outside libraries now attract library and information science (LIS) graduates and compete with libraries as employers. Hayden (2003) claimed that today's librarians are employed in an astonishing variety of environments, from a rape advocacy center to the Center for Motion Picture Study.

According to a report by the United States Bureau of Statistics (2004), library science graduates are now courted for jobs as Database managers, Webmasters, or information network administrators as well as in more jobs that are traditional. In addition, according to the Canadian Librarian Associations, CLA (2005), libraries are not the only places to find information experts these days. People skilled in information delivery, work in all kinds of settings. Their skills in management, communication, organization, and systems design and information classification are in demand in fields such as archives, records management and systems analysis.

Increasingly graduates from library and information science programs are choosing non-traditional paths. This new breed can be found working in publishing or for companies that supply goods and services to libraries. Some become web masters, independent information consultants or start their own information-related business. They may hold management positions in associations or corporate positions like electronic image manager or risk management researcher. A good example would be Phil Bradley, who is an information specialist, has worked in the area of electronic publications for over 20 years. He became an Internet Consultant in 1996 and specializes in search, often being referred to as the "UK Search Guru" (Bradley, 2005). These possibilities grow yearly, as emerging information technologies create a need for more information specialists.
The president of the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) in 2002, Dr. Elizabeth Aversa, admitted that "we are moving towards the top of the cycle in desirability of our graduates in both library and non-library environments". She further claimed that there is "tremendous demand for librarians who will provide services to children". The school library media specialists and children's librarians in public libraries were both sorely needed (Tenopir, 2002).

Nancy Kranich, past president of the American Library Association (ALA) claimed that librarians have become more popular ever since the September 11th tragedy. The total number of people using public, business and school facilities represent over 80% of the population. Therefore, librarians must counter a misconception that the Internet can replace the librarian. This could be done by giving information to the public of what a librarian's job is all about (Librarian Wanted, 2002).

It can be concluded that the explosion of technology, the increase of population and the retirement of baby boomers has improved the employment prospects of librarians and information personnel.

### 1.3 Job Prospects in Malaysia

Economic development, mushrooming of higher education institutions including public and private institutions, rapid advancement of information and technology (ICT) and globalization has increased the demand for and the supply of information workers in a much wider range. The number of libraries has increased at an encouraging rate that it surpasses the supply of professional librarians. In 1991, the National Library of Malaysia reported a total of 450 libraries in the country, of which 70 were public libraries, 111 academic libraries, and 265 special libraries. The number showed an increased demand for library professionals. There was an increase of 63% for public libraries, 147% for academic libraries and 58% for special libraries as compared to the
As in the year 2002, the number of public, academic libraries, government and non-government libraries kept on increasing at a considerable rate to almost 1400 institutions compared to 619 institutions a decade ago. The total comprised of 359 academic libraries, 701 public / state libraries, 289 special libraries and other categories of libraries (Direktori Perpustakaan di Malaysia, 2002). The increase in libraries therefore, will increase the demand for professional and non-professional information workers. The Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Haji Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi announced in the 2005 budget that RM85 million would be allocated to build 400 libraries. Again in the 2006 budget, RM30 million will be allocated to build not only more libraries but also to be spent on reading materials in order to promote reading habits among Malaysia especially in the rural areas (Ucapan Budget, 2005). Thus, immediate steps must be taken to increase the number of information workers to keep pace with the expansion of libraries in order to meet present and future anticipated needs for information experts.

However, the concern centres on the question of whether or not there will be a sufficient number of adequately qualified librarians to staff the libraries today and in decades to come. Zawiyah (1995) expressed her concern that the library and information school faced a real challenge when the total number of students entering the library school kept on decreasing. This paramount concern came to a reality in the recent report "Laporan Kajian Keperluan Sumber Manusia Dalam Bidang Perpustakaan dan Perkhidmatan Maklumat di Malaysia" (2004) done by a group of researchers on behalf of the National Library of Malaysia. This report focused on the needs of human resources for the field of library and information services in Malaysia. This report highlighted that there was an imbalance between supply and demand of librarians. The graduates from three local public universities particularly, University of Malaya (UM), MARA University of Technology and International Islamic University,
Malaysia (HUM) are insufficient to cater for the need of professional librarians not only for the present years but also for the years of 2004 — 2008 (Zaiton et al., 2004). The postgraduates and the Bachelor Degree holder, for example, are insufficient to fulfill the demand for the additional posts of librarians that is librarians of the S41 grade for the next five years. Thus, to meet present and future anticipated needs for information experts it is suggested that the number of institutions offering more Library and Information Science must be increased to fulfill the critical demand for the nation for information workers (Abdoulaye, 2004).

Since, Malaysia is one of the fastest growing countries in the Southeast Asia with the total population of nearly 26.13 million in the second quarter of 2005 (Department of Statistics, 2005), a single university certainly cannot accommodate and cater the need to study Library and Information Programme at the undergraduate level. Gupta (1994) commented that in many developing countries, the Library and Information Science programme is not sufficient (but unlike India) and it is actually very true in Malaysia’s scenario. Abdoulaye (2004) also held the same view and he suggested to increase the number of institutions offering the LIS programme at the degree level.

"Laporan Kajian Keperluan Sumber Manusia Da/am Bidang Perpustakaan dan Perkhidmatan Maklumat di Malaysia" (2004) also illuminated the issue that majority of the libraries (58%) are grievously understaffed of professional librarians, para-professional and supporting staff. The National Library of Malaysia (PNM) and all 14 categories of libraries are facing a serious shortage of the librarians. This shortage becomes serious and obvious at the Teacher Training College Libraries, Polytechnic Libraries and Research Institute Libraries and Health Libraries. All these libraries are in need of professional librarians who are holding the post of a librarian position and the senior librarian position. The report indicated three reasons for the shortage:
• the difficulty in filling open positions; some of the vacant positions have no applicants.
• New positions are applied for but not approved by the Civil Service Department (JPA)
• Additional staffs applied for the existing position but are not approved by the Civil Service Department (JPA).
• Lack of financial support for human resources. (Zaiton et al., 2004).

"Laporan Kajian Keperluan Sumber Manusia Dalam Bidang Perpustakaan dan Perkhidmatan Maklumat di Malaysia" also brought the issue that majority of the libraries are not only plagued by a shortage of qualified librarians, but also of trained librarians and staff. Surprisingly, majority of the libraries (56.5%) are managed and run by the supporting staffs (29.6%), and staffs who do not have a library and information qualifications (26.9%). In short, the paraprofessional staffs shoulder the responsibilities of the professional duty.

Zainab, Edzan and Siti Suzana (2004) carried out tracer a study on the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) Programme at the University of Malaya, finding out that graduates work in various types of employment agencies as indicated in Table 1.3-1. From the 48 graduates, 16 (33%) work as librarians, 11(23%) are teachers, 6 (12%) are lecturers, 3 are information officers, 2 are executives, and 1 is a information system executive. Their study revealed further that the job status of MLIS graduates is as good as no unemployment was reported, other than those who voluntarily do not work because of family commitment. This may be due to the specialized and narrow field of LIS in Malaysia and the expanding job opportunities in new institutions of higher learning, which is mushrooming at a fast pace and the opportunities afforded in information in large local and multinational corporations in Malaysia.
Table 1.3-1: Employment Agencies of MLIS graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF EMPLOYERS</th>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institution of Higher Learning</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Library (Sabah)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book shop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Department (Manpower Department)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Embassy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astro Broadcasting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysian AIDS Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Agency (Bernama)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot be ascertained</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Zainab, Edzan and Siti Suzana (2004).

Other tracer studies done at the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) also reported that most graduates of Library and Information science programs were working at the academic Universities or College Libraries (43 graduates), 8 graduates working in Special Libraries, 5 graduates working at the National Library of Malaysia, 7 graduates are lecturers, 2 graduates working in Public Libraries, 7 graduates working at the College Academic Libraries and 28 international graduates students served their own countries (Zaiton et al., 2004). It can be summarized that the profession has very good employment prospects as no unemployment was reported.

But what concern most is that people tend to opt into this profession as a second career choice, or in other words people land in the profession not by choice but by accident. According to Chng (1976) librarianship seemed to be a career only considered by Malaysian librarians after their graduation from a university. His findings also revealed that 59.6% respondents would not advise their children to be librarians. As the concluded remark, he urged the profession to expose more young people to the possibilities of the profession to attract more motivated people to the job.
1.4 Brief History of Library Education in Malaysia

Library and Information Science Education in Malaysia was developed through the collaborative efforts of individuals, professionals and non-profit organizations and institutions (Abdoulaye, 2004). The movement for any form of library education and training in Malaysia could be traced to the formation of the Malayan Library Group in 1955 (Wijasuriya, Lim and Nadarajah, 1975). Zawiyah (1995) added that library training began in 1957 when the Specialist Teacher's Training Institute offered training to schools teachers.

In the year 1955, the Malayan Library Group (MLG) was formed. The formation of MLG became the nucleus for the formation of the present Librarians Association of Malaysia or known as Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM) (N.N Edzan and Abrizah, 2003). MLG was actively organizing classes in librarianship with the sole purpose of enhancing the quality of library services in Malaya because no formal library education programs were offered at that particular time (Abdoulaye, 2004). Table 1.4-1 presents the development of Library and Information science education in Malaysia chronologically as being summarized by N.N.Edzan and Abrizah (2003):
Table 1.4-1: The development of Library and Information Science Education in Malaysia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>W.J. Plumbe, a librarian at the University of Malaya (UM), submitted a proposal to the UM authorities urging them to include a library school in the second phase of the university building programme with the support of Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM). At the same time, PPM continued part-time classes to prepare students for the Library Association (United Kingdom) examination (Wijasuriya, 1975) cited in N.N. Edzan and Abrizah, 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>PPM sent a memorandum to the UM authorities again urging for the creation of a library school at the university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>The Higher Education Planning Committee (HEPC) Report revitalized the establishment of the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>As a result of HEPC Report, the MARA Institute of Technology (MIT) introduced a professional course in librarianship leading to the Library Association (United Kingdom) examination and accreditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>At the Southeast Asian Regional Branch, International Council of Archives (SARBICA) Conference on Archivology in Jakarta, both SARBICA and PPM agreed to the establishment of a postgraduate school of librarianship at UM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>A memorandum was sent to the National Library Committee (NLC), which was subsequently approved by NLC with a recommendation for the establishment of the school at UM. PPM strongly felt and insisted that the establishment of the post graduate school should be at UM because a university should host a program. MIT was not a university then and as such, there was no post graduate program in Malaysia yet. They also felt that the course at MIT was not tailored to suit the local environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>MIT developed and introduced a new curriculum for a three-year course leading to Diploma in Library Science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>The MLIS program was offered for the first time by UM for the 1987/1988 session at the Institute Advance Studies. However, this course was suspended the following year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>The International Islamic University, Malaysia (HUM) introduced the MLIS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>The MLIS programme in UM was revived and transferred to the Faculty of Computer and Information Technology in November 1994.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) introduced the Master in Information Science, whilst MARA University of Technology (UiTM) started the Master of Science in Information Management Programme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N.N. Edzan and Abrizah, 2003)

Basically at present, there are three (3) local public universities offering the Library and Information Science (LIS) in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Malaysia:
• Bachelor of Science in Information Studies (Hans), specializing in Information Resource Centre Management offered by the MARA University of Technology (UiTM).

• Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) in the International Islamic University of Malaysia (HUM).

• Master of Library and Information Science in University Malaya (UM). (Zaiton et al., 2004); (Abdoulaye, 2004).

Over the years, curricula in schools of librarianship underwent major changes. For example, the MLIS curriculum at University of Malaya (UM) prior to the year 2000, initially very much embedded in the traditional library science courses. However, the year 2000, the curriculum was revised not only to cater for the needs of students from diverse background but also to meet the demand for more IT oriented students (N.N. Edzan and Abrizah, 2003). Furthermore, information professionals have to be knowledgeable and competent in a specialized area to compete in the job market and they can no longer be generalists. The Library and Information Science schools have to equip graduates to be able to function immediately as competent professionals and hold their own in the market place (Higgins and Khoo, 2000). Moore (1987) added that the schools also have to redesign their curriculum to equip their graduates with the type of skills, which are being demanded by the emerging job market.

1.4.1 Students Enrollment in the Library and Information Science

In 2005, the Director-General of IPT (Institutions of Higher Learning) Management Department, Ministry of Higher Education, Datuk Prof. Dr Hassan announced that a total of 39,976 students who had passed the Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia and matriculation had been chosen based on meritocracy to pursue higher studies at public institutions of higher learning (IPTA) this year. He gave detailed on the number of students pursuing nine competitive study programmes namely Medicine, Dentistry,
Pharmacy, Electronic Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Law, Accountancy and Economics. There were 910 places for medicine, 190 for dentistry, 284 for pharmacy. Electronic engineering offered 1,701 places, chemical engineering 881 places, and mechanical engineering 1,455 places. Law offered 294 places, accountancy 1,121 places, and economics 1,167 (Bernama, June 24, 2005). The statistics show that Library and Information Science was not included as a competitive study program.

The cause of concern is also because the intake for the Library and Information Science Program at the degree and post degree level are either declining or remain stagnant. According to "Laporan Kajian Keperluan Sumber Manusia Dalam Bidang Perpustakaan dan Perkhidmatan Maklumat di Malaysia" (2004) the total number of students is expected to enroll over the five years period (2004-2008) either remain stagnant or keep on decreasing. Table 1.4-2 shows details:

Table 1.4-2: Projected Total Number of Student enrollment (2004 -2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Projected total number of students enrollment (2004-2008)</th>
<th>Projected number of students per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Library and Information Science, UIAM</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Library and Information Science, UM</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Science in Information Studies, UiTM</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.4-2 shows that UIAM is projected to have a steady increase with 57 students’ enrollment per year. The total of UM students enrollment, on the other hand, remains stagnant for the coming 5 years. For the Bachelor of Science in Information Studies, UiTM is projected to decrease with only 150 students per year. However, when the comparison is made, University of Malaya has only 17 students for the intake of June to November 2005, which is far below the projected enrollment that is projected to have 30 students per year as shown in table 1.4-2. Therefore, something must be done to
attract people especially younger generation to meet present and future needs of information professional.

1.5 Librarians Association of Malaysia (PPM)

The researcher felt that it is important to examine the background of the Librarians Association of Malaysia (PPM) in terms of what activities has been done in promoting the librarianship. It is because Librarians Association of Malaysian (PPM) is known as a Malaysian association dedicated to the professionalism of librarians and the library businesses as well as to unite all persons engaged in library work or interested in libraries as well as striving for the advancement of libraries and library profession in Malaysia.

The earliest attempt at forming a professional association of librarians for Malaya came about in 1955 with the establishment of the Malayan Library Group (MLG). Shortly after Malaya achieved independence in 1957, the MLG changed its name to the Library Association of Malaya and Singapore, but it was dissolved in 1960. Then, the Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (PPPTM) was inaugurated in January 1960. With the formation of Malaysia on 31st August, 1963, the PPPTM became the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia or Library Association of Malaysia (Wijasuriya, Lim and Nadarajah, 1975). In 1999, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia changed its name to Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (Librarians Association of Malaysia).

The concern of this association also includes professional education, training and the improvement of the status and qualifications of librarians (Wijasuriya, Lim and Nadarajah, 1975) as well as to undertake, promote and encourage activities such as conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings, forum, etc. for the advancement of libraries and library profession (Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia, 2005). Its objectives
are parallel to the role of the association as claimed by Zaiton (1982) that the professional association plays an important role in professionalizing the library profession because:

a) It provides the occupation with the means to professionalize

b) It serves as the voice of the profession

c) It fosters unity and inculcates a sense of identity

To meet those objectives, PPM continually presents these following activities:

• Publishes Association's bulletin Berita PPM and monographs on library and information science

• Holds professional development programmes including annual conferences, seminars, workshops and courses

• As a member of the International Federations of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and participating in the Roundtable for the Library Association Management and the Asia/Oceania Group

• Member of the Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL)

• Co-organizer of the Biennial PPM/LAS Joint Congress

• Bestows awards of excellence for student from Schools of library and information science

The mission of this association is committed to the creation of an information-rich knowledge-based civil society, through the promotion of information equity, lifelong and independent learning, and enhancement of library and information professionals after recognizing that libraries and information centres are strategic resources for national development. The achievements of Librarians Association of Malaysia can be summed up as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>ACHIEVEMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Submission of a Memorandum on Public Library Service in the Federation of Malaya to the Minister of Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Campaign for the establishment of the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia which was set up in 1968. Publication of a consultative report entitled Blueprint for Public Library Development in Malaysia undertaken by Hedwig Anuar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-1972</td>
<td>Conducted courses for candidates attempting the Library Associations (Britain) external exams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Co-organized the First Conference of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL I). Formation of Conference of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Formulation of a Memorandum for the establishment of a Post-Graduate School of Librarianship and Archives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Presentation of a Memorandum to the Royal Commission on the Salaries and Conditions of Services of Statutory Bodies for Public Authorities of the Malaysian Government which contributed to the establishment respectable salary scale for professional librarians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Hosted the Fifth Congress of Southeast Librarians (CONSAL V).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Produced a Blueprint for School Library Development in Malaysia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Hosted the Tenth Congress of Southeast Librarians (CONSAL X).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Launched the Home Page for Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Sponsored and co-organized the International Conference for Library and Information Science Professionals in the Asia Pacific Region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Co-organized public libraries conferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Organized for the first time the Symposium on Librarian Association and Professionalism: A Paradox among Information Professionals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia, 2005)

PPM also plays a crucial role in promoting librarianship. PPM has not only actively encouraged professional education and training for librarianship but also engaged in many conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings, forum, etc. for the advancement of libraries and library profession in Malaysia. In 2003, for example, a public libraries conference was organized by the Penang Public Library in cooperation with PNM and PPM with support of IFLA to highlight the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in the promotion of library and information services to the public. In
2005, University Sains Malaysia with cooperation of PPM organized the International Conference Libraries (ICOL), which partly the main objective was to highlight the value of libraries and librarian in the society (Berita Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia, 2005).

One of the latest activities done by PPM was giving an Excellence Awards for Libraries. The idea of giving this award was mooted at the PPM Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2002 and first made in 2005 in conjunction with PPM's Golden Jubilee. PPM has decided that this award would focus on excellence in user education and library promotion, which was necessary to correct any erroneous perception as well as to promote good public relationship with the community (Berita Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia, 2005). Part of the objectives by giving this inaugural award would value libraries that have successfully promoted librarianship and information to the public at large.

It can be concluded that the role of PPM is in line with its objectives, which is striving for the advancement of libraries and library profession in Malaysia. One of the Executive Officers at the PPM, whom the researcher spoke with confirmed that the target groups of the PPM are only confined to those who have entered the profession already or in other words the professional and Para-professional.

1.6 Teacher Librarian

It is important to examine the background of a teacher librarian as a student gets the first impression and exposure on the librarian profession from the school. The responsibility of introducing the career in librarianship in the first place indeed rests on the shoulder of the teacher librarian. The upper secondary students have worked very closely with them for quite some time and have experienced feelings and beliefs projected by the teacher librarian related to the conditions of the job, which possibly
influence their perceptions toward librarianship as a career whether directly or indirectly.

There are a variety of terms used in different countries to describe the person responsible for managing a school library. The term teacher-librarian is widely used in the United Kingdom that refers to the full-time teacher but given a few hours per week to organize the school library. Davies (1979), quoted by Herring (1988), claimed that library media specialist or school media specialist are the terms used in the United States of America. It refers to a member of the teaching faculty who has broad professional preparation in educational media. The library media specialist is a certified teacher and is knowledgeable about the educational processes, methodology, strategies and designs; is conversant with curriculum and media content; and is an expert in programming the most effective use of media to make teaching and learning more effective, efficient and rewarding. According to the Canadian Library Association, CLA (2005), teacher librarians are fully qualified teachers, who typically undertake post-graduate education in library studies. They work in partnership with classroom teachers to provide a wide range of learning resources to students in the elementary and secondary school environments; to plan, teach and evaluate instructional programs; to promote literacy among students; develop library collections; and supervise the support staff. In Malaysia, the term 'school resources centre coordinator (s) or ‘Penyelaras Pusat Sumber’ is used to denote the head of the school resources centre (Abrizah, 1998).

According to Abrizah (1998) the majority of the government schools did not have a full time librarian. Typically, the school library was run part time. She agreed that personnel involved in the school library management would require expertise in both education and library science but the level of expertise necessary in either field would vary. She further highlighted that teacher librarians in many cases had no prior knowledge on
how to run a school library before training was provided (Abrizah, 1998). Fatimah (2002) also claimed that 63.4% of teacher librarians had no proper training but were managing the school resource center they knew best from experience and the little knowledge acquired during their training at the teacher training colleges. It is actually true from the researcher’s own experience that she has had no experience prior to appointment as Media Resource Centre Coordinator. The researcher was not only unfamiliar with the role of librarian but also unfamiliar a wide range of different tasks performed by a librarian.

According to Lee et al., (2003) Malaysia did not have full-time teacher librarians. Instead, selected teachers were asked to take charge of the school resource center as one of their administrative duties. Although majority of them were very dedicated, they were constrained by lack of training and time. Adding to this, Raja Abdullah and Saidina Omar (2003) claimed that almost all of school libraries were managed in an ad hoc manner while the teacher librarian position has been regularly changed and the time allocated has been at the average of about six hours per week only.

The scene is neither different nor better around the world. There was a serious shortage of primary school teacher-librarians in Victoria, said Mary Manning, the executive officer of the School Library Association of Victoria. Her concerns were backed by Victoria University research. In 2000, lecturers Mary Carroll and Sue Reynolds mailed surveys to 584 metropolitan government primary schools and received 197 replies. Only 13% of people managing the libraries were trained teacher-librarians. While many libraries were run by librarians, library technicians and teachers. Disturbingly, 12% of primary school libraries were run by people with no formal qualifications, and 62 of the schools without teacher-librarians in their libraries had at least one who had been assigned to classroom teaching, according to the survey (Cook, 2004).
Sweeney (1996) reported a survey of eight teachers of varying grade levels and subject areas who have worked cooperatively with teacher-librarians on program planning and teaching. Teachers were asked about their perceptions of cooperative program planning and teaching with teacher-librarians. Part of her finding revealed that teachers saw teacher-librarians as partners in unit planning but not necessarily in teaching. They felt that the students still "belonged" to them and that the teacher-librarian was there to help facilitate the classroom teacher's goals. Although there was a perception that the teacher-librarian was more of a teacher now than in the past, the teacher-librarian's classroom management skills were not fully appreciated by classroom teachers. Teachers felt that teacher-librarians were not assertive enough in promoting their programs and services to the school community, and did not often initiate unit planning but only work with teachers who approached them.

Nakamura's (2000) study, comparing teachers' perceptions of school libraries and librarians in Tokyo and Honolulu, noted that there was still some confusion among the Honolulu respondents about the school librarian's role. "Perceptions about school librarians differed from one teacher to another and many teachers still seemed to have limited awareness of the role of the school librarian". In Canada, Miller (2004) reported that she was caught off-guard when she was notified as a teacher-librarian without any formal training or perception of current views on teacher-librarianship or had very little ideas or understanding of the role of the teacher-librarian.

Reporting on a recent School Library Journal survey, Whelan cited in Miller (2004) gave more examples of the lack of understanding of the role of the teacher-librarian. She found that classroom teachers might view teacher-librarians as inconsequential because they did not assign grades. Additionally, some elementary teachers tended to view the librarian as a baby-sitter, while secondary teachers tended to take ownership of what they did, to the exclusion of the librarian. All too often according to the Power
of Partnerships cited in Miller (2004), media specialists were treated more like a clerk than they are a resource person or teacher.

Clearly, a lack of understanding of the role of the teacher-librarian is an ongoing concern, domestically and internationally. Lack of understanding of those role might not project a very good image for the students related to librarian's conditions of the job, which possibly influencing upper secondary students' perceptions toward librarianship as a career whether directly or indirectly.

1.7 Negative Image of the Profession

Historically, librarians around the world have been stereotyped and described as 'dull', 'boring', 'dowdy', and someone who shelves books, checks books in and out, and goes around shushing the library customer (Lay, 2004). This stereotypical representation of libraries and librarians have proved to be remarkably resistant to change, although there was a research which indicated that those stereotypes were based more on myth than fact according to Scherdin and Beaubien (1995) cited in Genoni and Greeve (1997). Adding to this, Genoni and Greeve, (1997) wrote:

"The prevailing stereotypes convey, at best, a view of the profession which is unexciting and fails to express the full range of responsibility it presents; and at worst a set of images so negative as to severely discourage any otherwise interested person from pursuing it as a career option"

Furthermore, a literature review reveals that many people do not decide on librarianship from the onset of their life career. Choice of the profession either tends to be because of influence, experience, or as the only alternative left (Bello, 1996). For example, Atkinson (1974) cited in Bello (1996) reported Schroeder, a Spanish librarian who once said: "I never wanted to be a librarian when I grew up, it never occurred to me". Elisa Topper, assistant dean at Dominican University's Graduate School of Library and Information Science, asked two young women who attended a high school
career day in the Chicago of what they thought about a career in libraries. Their answer came in two words: "Books and boring" (Lenzini, 2002).

In Malaysia, librarianship was regarded as not a 'popular' career option. The research done revealed that the top five careers which students chose were teachers, doctors, accountants, engineers and architects. They chose these careers because they were very popular among the students and in the society at large. The choice of librarianship as a career were not even in the list (Sollahunuddin, 1999).

Most surprisingly, the ALA notes that the Wall Street Journals Interactive Edition Jobs Rated Almanac ranked the growth potential of librarianship 245th out of 250 jobs, based on several factors including salary, promotions and employment (Billups, 2000).

Those issues have rightly caused concern among the profession and those who care for its future well being at a time when it is more crucial than ever to attract capable and ambitious young people into its ranks. Barbara Bintlf, the president of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), feels strongly, "now is the time to promote the field and librarian themselves, to improve the public perception rather than remaining quietly competent" (ACRL, 2002).

So, this study was undertaken because of those particular issues especially in Malaysia. "Something" is needed to spur interest in and attract attention to the career opportunities in librarianship. The study was carried out to examine what the upper secondary students (17 — 19 year-olds) "resist" of going into this field. What do they think of librarianship as a career? Do they have a lingering negative or positive image of this profession? What are the reasons of choosing or not choosing this as a career?

1.8 Statement of Problem
Recruitment and retention of Library and Information Science students are critical issues in contemporary library education. These issues are neither well researched nor
addressed. With the influx of technologies advancement, mushrooming of higher learning institutions, increasing population size and aging population, the greater demand for higher quality and motivated librarians, the need to attract good quality young students into the library profession is essential. Thus, the basis for this study was derived from the literature and history of the library profession. Research has identified several areas of concern with regard to the librarianship as a career choice.

First, despite the desirability of attracting good quality students into the librarian profession, however, there has been remarkably little research done into exactly how this particular age group (17 -19 year-olds) perceives the profession as a career choice especially in Malaysia. Furthermore, most of the research done in this area has been carried out overseas, some in Australia but primarily in the United States and Britain. Van House (1988) claimed there was also lack of recent studies on the choice of librarianship as a profession and she suggested further’....... more research is needed on career choice generally, on environmental and personal influencing factors, and on the process of people’s decision to enter librarianship”. Matarazzo and Mika (2004) also claimed the ironic situation that the profession lack basic information about reasons for why younger students are not choosing librarianship as a career despite the fact that this profession is superb in locating information.

In addition, in Malaysia, there appear to be no reports of any study directed specifically at this upper secondary group. However, one study conducted by Chng Saw Keok in 1976 entitled “The library profession in Malaysia” aimed to study the background of the Malaysian librarians and their attitudes to the profession. He succinctly stated that the lack of information on the profession through the vocational guidance counselors in schools could account for the fact only the counselors influenced only two Malaysian librarians. Thus, there is a need to know on how this particular group perceives the librarianship as a career, what the perceived factors that attract or detract from choosing
librarianship as a career; and what are their lingering images they hold on to this profession.

Many literature reviews have repeated that librarianship is regarded as an undervalued profession and does not have the social standing compare to other profession. Librarianship is also not a first career choice. Chng (1976) and Bosseau and Martin (1995) called librarianship the "accidental profession". It is also disheartening that the profession continually receives 'unappealing' images, reputations and status. Furthermore, another substantial concern is that there seems to have a little understanding amongst the general public of what library and information (LIS) workers do and what responsibilities they undertake (Genoni and Greeve, 1997; Kisiedu, 1992; Prins and De Gier, 1992). Thus, this study was necessary to be undertaken in order to address and to explore whether those issues of concern prevail in this younger age group through the analysis of their perceptions toward librarianship as a career.

The recent report "Laporan Kajian Keperluan Sumber Manusia Dalam Bidang Perpustakaan dan Perkhidmatan Maklumat di Malaysia" (2004), which focused on the human resources need in the field of library and information services, highlights that there is an imbalance between supply and demand of librarians. The graduates from three local public universities are insufficient to cater the need of professional librarians not only for the present year but also for the years of 2004 — 2008 (Zaiton et al., 2004). There also seems to be either no direct path or 'restricted path' to enter this profession as the first career choice. As stated earlier, at present there is only one local public university that is UiTM offering Library and Information Science Program at the undergraduate level whereas the other two that are IIUM and UM offer at the Post graduate level. Future Malaysian librarians are upper secondary students of today. Thus, the study is vital to address their level of awareness on the program offered.
Concern over the intake of young students entering the Library and Information science Program over the past five years (1999 -2003) and projected enrollment trend over the period of 2004 -2008 either remain stagnant or only show remarkably little increase also has helped to stir this interest. All these raise the question 'why'. There seems to be no efforts either to increase the intake or to create awareness among young students and people at large about the Library and Information Science program. Therefore, this study was intended to fill the gap of this need by investigating young students' perception and their level of awareness toward the LIS program.

Lack of research on this specific area and recurrent shortages of librarian, coupled with the increasing demand for high quality and motivated librarian to cater the future information needs on the library profession, are issues, which prompted this investigation of upper secondary school students' career choice.

1.9 Research Objectives

The main purpose of this study was to explore and to examine upper secondary school students' perceptions concerning librarianship as a future career. The objectives of this study were to:

1. identify the level of upper secondary students' awareness toward a career in librarianship.
2. explore upper secondary students' perceptions toward the nature of the job and educational qualifications of a professional librarian.
3. find out factors that motivate or discourage upper secondary students to choose librarianship as a career.

1.10 Research Questions

This study seeks to explore and to assess the perception of upper secondary students towards librarianship as a future career. Specifically, it aims to seek answers to the following eight research questions:
1. Are upper secondary school students aware of a career in librarianship?

2. Are upper secondary school students aware of a degree offered in Library and Information Science (LIS) at public universities?

3. What is the perception of upper secondary students towards the places where librarians work?

4. What is the perception of upper secondary students towards the educational qualifications needed to be a librarian?

5. What is the perception of upper secondary students towards the starting salary of librarians?

6. What is the perception of upper secondary students towards the role and nature of the work that librarians do?

7. How do upper secondary school students rank librarians against other professional career groups?

8. What are the perceived factors that motivate or discourage upper secondary school students to choose librarianship as a future career?

1.11 The Significance of the Study

This study has attempted to contribute some general knowledge about the perceptions of the upper secondary school students toward librarianship as a career in Malaysia. The study also explored the perceived factors that could attract or detract new faces into librarianship which has not accorded attention in library research. This will hopefully help to ensure the survival and growth of this profession in Malaysia. It is also hoped that the findings derived from the study could provide some ideas related to the students' perceptions rather than to extrapolate to the profession based on 'gut feeling' as opposed to informed strategy. Conducting such an extensive study today using all relevant data sources also would help the profession to better understand the
trends and what is happening in term of youngsters' perception to the current librarians' profession through published reports of the findings.

The National Library of Malaysia (PNM) or other related public agencies may be able to utilize the data to make specific policy recommendations, publicity campaign or promotional activities and marketing strategies for targeting change to address any misconception and lack of information on the profession. They could extract the data that appear to have the greatest misconception in regard of students' perception of librarianship. By utilizing the data, hopefully, those who concern for the profession would need to invest time and money to start preparing informative materials describing those 'misunderstanding' issues as well as increasing their awareness and revealing more information to secondary school students regarding educational and career opportunities in the field of librarianship.

In addition, the school counselors and teachers may be able to utilize the data derived from the study as a benchmark that some students may have been misinformed and may be quite naïve about their career choice. Information about students' knowledge of the occupation that they want to enter could be extremely helpful to decide what type of counseling should be offered. In talking to students about their knowledge of occupation, counselors and teachers could learn about their progress in career planning. In addition, the data, hopefully, may be able to raise more concern among the counselors and teachers alike on identifying those students who need career guidance and counseling in career choice (Shari, 2002). Many of them are at the crossroads of their lives, confused and do not know exactly suitable careers to choose, given the wide range of courses available in schools and colleges. This counseling should include information at their highest potential about all career options available in the labor market so that the young students have a complete opportunity set to include in their thoughts about what they would like to do. Consequently, this effort hopefully
would also help to promote career in librarianship amongst students by discussing the potential, future development and direction of the field of librarianship.

The National Library of Malaysia (PNM), national associations and organizations such as the Librarians Association of Malaysia (Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia), the National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN) and others may be able to utilize the data derived from this study to make specific policy recommendations to alleviate the shortage of well-qualified librarians and to counteract any negative perceptions of upper secondary students toward librarianship as a career. They could extract the data on variables that appear to have the greatest influence on career choice, such as career ladder, starting salary, and good contact with librarian, among others. Information gleaned from students’ perceptions in this regard would be useful to building and placing librarianship as an acceptable career choice.

By identifying the current level of students awareness on the career in librarianship in terms of the degree offered in Library and Information Science (LIS) programme at the public universities, this study may illustrate those particular areas helping to perpetuate the current lack of teenagers attracted to the profession. The federal government and the Ministry of Higher Education and particularly Higher Learning Institutions offering LIS itself may be able to utilize the data to make specific marketing strategies and recommendations for targeting change in order to make library schools more noticeable, affordable and accessible.

Vocational planning programs and recruitment strategies developed by the Ministry of Education (MOE) would also benefit from the findings of the study. New programs and strategies could be developed to directly targeted and potential candidates that are perceived as being very vital and required but lacking. Knowing the students perceptions on the profession would provide the policy makers and administrators alike
with a plethora of information about the target market, so that any recruitments strategies could be tailored best to the advantage of the profession and its target market of prospective candidates.

1.12 Scope and Limitations of Research

This research only focused on Form Five and Forms Six students (lower and upper form) as they are already in the process of applying for the admission to universities' undergraduate courses, or in other words they are in the process of selecting a career. In terms of human development stages and career choice, middle and high school (i.e. in Malaysian context, it refers to upper secondary school) are the time adolescents begin to consider realistic career options (ACRL, 2002). This study employed a questionnaire as the data-gathering instrument. Therefore, results are limited to the extent that the respondents have participated seriously and completely in this study. In other words, the researcher relied only on the accuracy of those completing the questionnaire.

The respondents were provided with the researcher's telephone number and e-mail address, however, the opportunity to obtain immediate clarification was not present and this may affect the responses. In addition, the results from the study were gathered from students in an urban area in the state of Selangor, and therefore results are specific only to these students or to those with similar demographics.

The study was intended to be 'attitudinal'. It was designed to measure and explore respondents' current attitude and perception toward librarianship as a future career choice rather than to make any specific attempt to measure the reasons for these perceptions.
The following definitions are intended to clarify the terms used in the study:

**Librarianship**

Librarianship is defined as a profession devoted to applying theory and technology to the creation, selection, organization, management, preservation, dissemination, and utilization of collections of information in all formats. A person formally trained or certified to perform such services is a librarian (Reitz, 2002).

**Library and Information Science Professional / Librarians**

Library and Information Science Professional / Librarians are professionally trained person responsible for the care of a library and its contents, including the selection, processing, and organization of materials and the delivery of information, instruction, and loan services to meet the needs of its users. In the online environment, the role of the librarian is to manage and mediate access to information that may exist only in electronic form. They should have the appropriate academic and professional degrees in their particular specialties. (Reitz, 2002).

**School library.**

This term is used to cover all types of library or collection of materials in school, whether staffing of any kind is provided or not. This term is used in the United Kingdom mainly as generic but is used less in the United States of America (Herring, 1988). In Malaysia, school library is also known as School Library Resource Centre or 'Pusat Sumber Sekolah'.

**School Library Resource Centre (SLRC)**

This term is described as an agency for stimulating the actual creation and use of a resource collection. The SLRC was intended to provide a wide variety of print and especially audiovisual material in school (Herring, 1988).
A library position in the Malaysian government service and it is equivalent to Librarian position.

A library position in the Malaysian government service and it is equivalent to Senior Librarian Position. These positions are acquired through promotion.

**Lower Secondary (Form 1 - Form 3, Age 13 - 15).**

This lower secondary level covers a duration of three years i.e. Form 1 to Form 3, and focuses on general education. At the end of the third year in lower secondary level, the students will be required to sit for a public examination called the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) or the Lower Secondary Assessment (LSA). All students will be promoted to upper secondary level for another 2 years of upper secondary studies, before finally completing 11 years of free education.

**Upper Secondary School**

Students in Malaysian Education School System between the ages of 16 — 19 year-olds (form 4, 5 and 6 (upper and lower)). Upon completion of the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) at Form 3, students proceed to upper secondary schools that offer more specialized fields of study.

**1.14 Organization Of The Study**

This study is organized into five (5) chapters as follows:

- Chapter 1 — Introduction. In this chapter, background information of the study is introduced. The information related to development of the library education, future outlook and job prospects are reviewed. The research questions of this study are identified. The purposes of the study are stated. The scope and limitations of this study as well as the definitions of the key terms are defined.
• Chapter 2 — Review of the Literature. This chapter presents information related to the previous studies done by other researchers regarding the librarianship as a career.

• Chapter 3 — Research Methodology. In this chapter, the research methods are identified and determined. The plan of the study as well as the presentation of methods utilized in gathering data is explained.

• Chapter 4 — Analysis of Data and Presentation. The data gathered is analyzed and presented according to questions detailed in the scope of the study. Results are tabulated in the form of percentages, means and frequencies. In some cases, cross tabulation tests are performed and further significant findings are revealed.

• Chapter 5 - Summary, Discussions and Conclusions. In this chapter, the summary of the main points found in this study, the conclusion and recommendation for further study are highlighted. Investigative results and relevant facts are delineated.