

## A BIBLIOMETRIC STUDY OF AUTHORSHIP CHARACTERISTICS IN “KEKAL ABADI, UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA LIBRARY BULLETIN 1995- 2004”

Tiew, Wai Sin  
Head of History Department  
Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Hulu Kelang  
wstiew@hotmail.com

### **Abstract**

*This bibliometric study attempts to explore the authorship characteristics in Kekal Abadi, University of Malaya Library Bulletin published by the University of Malaya Library since 1982. A total of 32 articles published in 24 issues of Kekal Abadi, University of Malaya Library Bulletin covering the period of 1995 to 2004 were analyzed. Author characteristics such as name, gender, status, institutional affiliation, language preference of authors, authorship of articles and length of articles were obtained, studied and analyzed. The findings reveals single-authored articles far outnumbered multi-authored articles at 69%, female contributors (76%) predominates male contributors (24%), middle-level professionals were the largest contributors of articles (79%), 78% of the articles published were in English, the top ranked contributor is Zaiton bt Osman, Consultant Librarian, Open University of Malaysia with four contributions and the most prolific institution is University of Malaya Library of Malaysia with 22 contributing authors.*

### **Publishing History of Kekal Abadi, University of Malaya Library Bulletin**

*Kekal Abadi, University of Malaya Library Bulletin, is the brainchild of a former Chief Librarian of the University of Malaya Library (UML), Mrs. Khoo Siew Mun (Shaikha, 1993). The library bulletin in an A4 booklet format, is published by UML as a forum for the University of Malaya's librarians to contribute to the corpus of library and information science literature apart from informing others of the happenings in the library. The publication of the bulletin is managed by an Editorial Board comprising of librarians attached to UML, together with the help of an appointed desktop publishing typesetter, coordinator and an advisor, the Chief Librarian of UML. The appointment as members of the Editorial Board, desktop publishing typesetter and coordinator is rotated each year amongst the university librarians and is decided by the Library Management comprising of the various Head of Divisions of UML (Tiew, 2001). The first issue was published in March 1982 as Volume 1, Issue 1 with the name *Kekal Abadi, Berita Perpustakaan**

*Universiti Malaya. It was published quarterly until Volume 16 (1997). Volumes 17 (1998) and 18 (1999) were published as single issues. Beginning with Volume 19 (2000), it was published twice yearly. Hence, the publishing frequency of this bulletin changes according to certain developments within the publishing institution or other unforeseen editorial problems.*

However, it is very clear that the Editorial Board of the bulletin is trying its very best to keep the bulletin alive. The latest issue of the bulletin is Volume 23, Number 2, December 2004 which was published in early 2007, a delay of about three years. According to Che Puteh Ismail (personal communication, May 22, 2007), the Chief Librarian of UML, serious efforts were being taken by the Editorial Board to produce the publication according to its publishing schedule. Among the problems faced by the Editorial Board are the lack of articles submitted, the quality of articles submitted and the editorial process of the said articles. The forthcoming issue will be Volume 24, Number 1, July 2005 which will probably be published in late 2007. The remaining issues of the bulletin will also be published up to year 2007. As of Volume 23, Number 1 July 2004 the bulletin was renamed *Kekal Abadi, Buletin Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya = Kekal Abadi, University of Malaya Library Bulletin*. In addition, together with the change in title, a new glossy colour photograph of the main library's building is on the cover to replace the earlier black and white photograph (Volume 21 Number 1, June 2002). However, as of Volume 23, Number 2 December 2004, the bulletin was published in a book form and bound due to its thickness (Che Puteh Ismail, 2007). Previously, all issues of the bulletin were stapled. One interesting aspect of the bulletin is that it is distributed free to interested parties. The bulletin can also be accessed in PDF format through the UML's website at <http://www.umlib.um.edu.my> as of Volume 22, Number 1, June 2003.

*Kekal Abadi* accepts articles written either in Bahasa Melayu or English relating to the library science discipline especially on academic libraries, subject to the approval of the Editorial Board. On the whole, the bulletin was regularly indexed by *LISA* with an average of eight articles per year abstracted (Sen, 1996).

## Objectives

A bibliometric examination of authorship characteristics in 32 articles published in 24 issues of *Kekal Abadi* covering the years 1995-2004 was carried out to determine:

1. the authorship pattern of articles
2. the author's productivity of articles
3. the author's gender
4. the author's status
5. the language preference of authors
6. the length of articles
7. the inclusion of abstracts and keywords in articles
8. the ranked list of most prolific contributor of articles
9. the ranked list of most prolific institution

## Scope and Methodology

The study is conducted based on 32 articles published in 24 issues of *Kekal Abadi* covering the years 1995-2004. Author characteristics such as name, gender, status, institutional affiliation, language preference of articles, authorship of articles and inclusion of abstracts and keywords were obtained, studied and analyzed. All the necessary data were compiled, recorded, tabulated and analyzed for making observations as indicated in the objectives of the study. Only research and scholarly articles are taken into consideration whereas course reports, conference reports, tour reports and book reviews are excluded from the study. The determination of the author's status and institutional affiliation is based on the latest article contributed by the said author. It should be noted that in cases where the authorship characteristics cannot be ascertained due to incomplete information, checks, telephone calls or emails were made by the author to verify and obtain the necessary information not found in the articles under study.

## Results and Discussion

### Authorship Pattern

Table 1 depicts the authorship pattern which showed that concentration is on single-authored articles (69%). Two-authored articles comprised 22% of the total 32 articles and three authored articles accounted for a mere 9%. Thus, single-authored articles far outnumbered multi-authored articles. This is consistent with the findings of an earlier study on another Malaysian library and information science journal, *Sekitar Perpustakaan* by the same author which found that single-authored articles (79%) far outnumbered multi-authored articles (21%) (Tiew, 2006).

Authorship	Frequency	%
1	22	69
2	7	22
3	3	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1: Authorship Pattern

### Author's Productivity

Table 2 indicates the productivity of the authors of *Kekal Abadi* with a total of 33 authors contributing 32 articles over a span of ten years. Of these authors, 25 (76%) contributed one article, 5 (15%) contributed two articles, 2 (6%) contributed three articles and 1 (3%) contributed four articles. As indicated by Lotka's Law of Scientific Productivity, only a small number of authors are highly productive compared to the vast majority of authors who normally contribute only one or two articles.

No. of Contributions	No. of Authors	%
1	25	76
2	5	15
3	2	6
4	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2: Author's Productivity

### Author's Gender

Table 3 shows the gender of the contributors in *Kekal Abadi*. The study found that out of a total of 33 authors, 76% or 25 authors were female compared to 24% or 8 male authors. In other words, female contributors predominates male contributors in *Kekal Abadi*. This finding is similar to another study on *Sekitar Perpustakaan* which found that out of 108 authors, 65.74% (71) authors were female compared to 34.26% (37) of male authors (Tiew, 2006).

Gender	Frequency	(%)
Male	8	24
Female	25	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3: Gender of Authors

### Authors by Status

For this study, the same categorization used by Alemna & Badu (1994) and Alemna (1996) was used but expanded in the three categories to include some other designations not found in earlier studies but have contributed to the periodical under study. For this study, authors by status are divided into three categories namely top-level professionals, middle-level professionals and junior professionals. Professors, Associate Professors, Chief Librarians and their Deputies, Director-Generals of National Libraries and their Deputies, State Library Directors, Chief Knowledge Officers and Deans of universities faculties are categorized as top-level professionals whereas middle-level professionals refer to principal librarians, Senior Librarians or their equivalents including Senior Lecturers and Lecturers, Head of Divisions, Head of Units, Head of Departments, Senior Research Fellows, Deputy and Assistant State Library Directors, Consultants, Editor Consultants, Managers and School Resource Centre Coordinators. Junior professionals constitute assistant librarians, tutors and post graduate students and other junior posts not listed. Some of these designations are related to library and information science professions while others are indirectly related.

Table 4 reveals the distribution of authors by their status in *Kekal Abadi*. The study shows that most of the authors who contributed articles to the bulletin are the middle level professionals' category with 79% while 15% constitutes the top-level professionals and the junior professionals 6%. This finding is very similar to a previous study on *Sekitar Perpustakaan* which is published by the National Library of Malaysia and covering the period of 1994 to 2003. That study found 59.3% of the contributors belonging to the middle-level professional category while 29.6% to the top-level professionals, and junior professionals 11.1% (Tiew, 2006).

Status	Frequency	%
Top	5	15
Middle	26	79
Junior	2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4: Authors by Status

### Language Preference of Authors

Table 5 indicates the language preference of authors contributing articles to *Kekal Abadi*. A total of 32 articles contributed by 33 authors were published. In all, 78% of the articles were in English and 22% were in Bahasa Melayu. This finding differs from an earlier study on *Sekitar Perpustakaan* which reveals the opposite trend whereby 56% of articles were written in Bahasa Melayu compared to 44% in English (Tiew, 2006). However, this is not surprising considering the importance of the English language as an international language especially in the field of library and information science.

Language	Number of articles	%
Bahasa Melayu	7	22
English	25	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5: Language Preference of Authors

### Length of Articles

Table 6 indicates the length of articles in term of pages in *Kekal Abadi*. Out of 32 articles, 41% ranges between 1 to 5 pages, 31% between 6 to 10 pages, followed by 19% between 11 to 15 pages. About 9% cover between 16 and above pages. On the whole, the length of articles varies from the shortest with two pages to the longest with 17 pages.

No. of Pages Per Article	Frequency	%
1 - 5	13	41
6 - 10	10	31
11 - 15	6	19
More than 16	3	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6: Length of Articles

**Inclusion of Abstracts and Keywords in Articles**

Table 7 reveals the inclusion of abstracts or keywords in articles of *Kekal Abadi*. Of the 32 articles, 28 articles had abstracts while only six articles providing keywords as part of the article. The rest of the authors do not provide abstracts or keywords in their articles. It was found that *Kekal Abadi* provides both abstracts and keywords in English and Malay as part of their article. This is certainly a good characteristic of a Malaysian LIS periodical because with the presence of English abstracts and keywords, foreign indexing and abstracting services will be able to include them in their collection.

Features	Availability			
	Yes	%	No	%
Abstracts	28	87.5	4	12.5
Keywords	6	18.75	26	81.25

**Table 7:** Inclusion of Abstracts and Keywords in Articles

**Ranked List of Most Prolific Contributors**

Table 8 presents the ranked list of most prolific contributors of articles to *Kekal Abadi*. Topping the list is Zaiton Osman who contributed four articles. Next is Janaki Sinnasamy and Kiran Kaur who each contributed three articles. This is followed by Ding Choo Ming, Ibrahim Ismail, Tan-Lim Suan Hoon, Zaharah Ramly and Zainab Awang Ngah who all contributed two articles each.

Rank	Author's Name	No. of Contributions				Cumulative Total
		One author	Two authors	Three authors	Total	
1	Zaiton Osman	1	2	1	4	4
2	Janaki Sinnasamy	3	0	0	3	7
2	Kiran Kaur	1	0	2	3	10
4	Ding Choo Ming	2	0	0	2	12
4	Ibrahim bin Ismail	2	0	0	2	14
4	Tan Lim Suan Hoon	0	2	0	2	16
4	Zaharah Ramly	1	1	0	2	18
4	Zainab Awang Ngah	1	1	0	2	20

**Table 8:** Ranked List of Most Prolific Contributors

**Ranked List of Most Prolific Institutions**

For this study, only the latest institutional affiliation of each contributing author is taken into consideration if there is any change of work place or occupation of the author during the years under study. With regards to the most prolific institution (Table 9), the study reveals that the UML tops the list with 22 authors, followed by the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, University of Malaya with three authors and the Institute of the Malay World & Civilization, National University of Malaysia and Tan Sri Dr. Abdullah Sanusi Digital Library, Open University of Malaysia with two authors each. Four others institutions only have one contributing author each.

Ranking	Institution	No. of author
1	University of Malaya Library	22
2	Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, University of Malaya	3
3	Institute of the Malay World & Civilization, National University of Malaysia	2
3	Tan Sri Dr. Abdullah Sanusi Digital Library, Open University of Malaysia	2
5	Faculty of Asian Studies, Australian National University	1
5	Faculty of Education, University of Malaya	1
5	Faculty of Science, University of Malaya	1
5	University of Indonesia, Depok	1

**Table 9:** Ranked List of Most Prolific Institutions

## Conclusion

The following conclusions are drawn from the study:

1. Single-authored articles far outnumbered multi-authored articles at 69%.
2. Female contributors (76%) redominates male contributors (24%).
3. Middle-level professionals are the largest group of contributors at 79%.
4. *Kekal Abadi* publishes more articles in English compared to Bahasa Melayu, the national language of Malaysia. About 78% of the articles were published in English while 22% of the articles were in Bahasa Melayu.
5. The top ranked contributor is Zaiton Osman, a former Chief Librarian of the University of Malaya Library with four articles.
6. The most prolific institution is the University of Malaya Library with 22 contributing authors. It is important to note here that *Kekal Abadi* is published by the University of Malaya Library to cater for the professional needs of librarians and to promote the exchange of ideas and experience especially within the publishing institution.

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