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# Legal Deposit in the Sultanate of Oman: The Law of Printing and Publishing and its Role in Building Oman's Culture of Democracy

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## ABSTRACT

Omani citizens participate in building the culture of democracy through the implementation of the legal deposit or the Law of Printing and Publishing. Legal deposit is the law that requires individuals and agencies who are responsible for printing and applying the law in Oman, whether they are publishers, printing houses or authors, to submit certain copies of their work or publications to a repository, usually a library. The present study aims to explore the reality of the Omani Law of Printing and Publishing and discover how the law defines the term "publications". In addition to the role of this law in building the Omani culture of democracy, the study uses an interpretive research paradigm of applied unstructured interviews and content analysis. Twenty-four printing houses were interviewed. The findings determined that definition of the term "publications", according to the law, is very general and covers different items, and the Law of Printing and Publishing plays an essential role in the building of Oman's culture of democracy. The study also found that all of the printing houses interviewed participated in creating the Omani culture by depositing the requested copies of their publications, although four of them had negative beliefs about the law of "Printing and Publishing". In addition, the study found (19=79.1%) of the sample interpreted the term "culture of democracy" in a positive way.

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## 1. Introduction

Legal deposit is a governmental regulation that usually concerns books and journals and different types of printed materials. Nowadays the law includes digital materials. Historically, legal deposit was first enacted in France in 1537 (Iqbal, Qutab, & Soroya, 2015; Rabina, 2009) and now exists in many countries (UNESCO, 2002). Legal deposit is important for the growth of a national collection of published works such as scientific research, literature, etc., and for the transfer of national published works and intellectual heritage to new generations (Fenerci, 2008). According to Iqbal, Qutab, and

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Soroya (2015), there are several objectives for the legal deposit law; however, the most significant one is to preserve the cultural heritage. Other objectives are to create a basis for a national bibliography or to support libraries with published material. Nicholson (2015) highlighted the importance of legal deposit as "an internationally recognized practice within the global library community, which ensures that the documentary or cultural heritage of a nation is collected, accessioned, stored, protected, preserved and made accessible for the benefit of its citizens and future generations." While legal deposit laws differ greatly in their details, the main provision of most legal deposit laws is that publishers or printing houses are required to submit a specified number of copies of each publication they produce to a recognized national depository (Larivière, 2000; Jasion, 1991). Once received, the publications are recorded in either a catalogue or national bibliography, with some copies stored for posterity, and some made available to the public for research or recreational use.

As mentioned earlier, the requested copies have to be submitted to a national depository, and usually this is a national library. National libraries specifically and libraries in general have changed; as Krolak (2005) mentioned, they are no longer passive keepers and preservers of books. Rather, they have evolved to become facilitators of information and lifelong learning opportunities, with an emphasis on service, identifying user needs and communicating solutions, as well as protectors of local and national culture by storing popular and academic knowledge and material for current and future generations. In fact, several authors (Krolak, 2005; Jain & Nfila, 2011; Rodney, 1973) agree that libraries and information centers play a vital role in national development through providing an integral component – information – required in decision-making and mapping the way forward in societies. Phiri in Achitabwino (2007) argues that for democratic process to make sense, those who govern must be aware of the needs of those who are governed. This can only be achieved if politicians and electorates are provided with information related to democracy, human rights and the role of the law.

Indeed, it is very important for a library to raise community awareness about culture and democracy, and if the libraries are successful in providing the community members with the right skills to access the culture, and how to behave according to that culture, they will achieve one of the goals that they are established to fulfil. Krolak (2005) stated that constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information. One way for libraries to build a national collection with unlimited knowledge is through the legal deposit law. Fenerci (2008) also stated that legal deposit has a substantial cultural role in establishing the "production-use" cycle of knowledge and ensuring its continuity. It ensures the availability of knowledge at national and international levels through the exchange of bibliographical control.

The relationship between culture and democracy is considered to be a dependent relationship. This is because the practice of democracy depends on the development and access to cultural resources. However, it is not easy to define the term "democracy". According to Rodrik (2014), there is no concrete definition of what democracy is; the literal meaning of the term 'democracy' simply refers

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to a rule by the people. Historically, there were two board phases for the development of cultural democracy (Bianchini & Bloomfield, 2001). The first one was from the late 1940s until the late 1960s, where Cincotta (1998) argues that culture was more than a reference to art, literature, or music, but also a reference to "the behaviors, practices, and norms that define the ability of a people to govern themselves." During this period, cultural policies adopted the less ambitious goal of the "democratization of culture", based on the power of experts to define cultural value and the role of the state to civilize the majority of people, by making culture more widely accessible to them (Foth, 2006).

The second phase was during the period between the late 1960s and mid-1980s. During this period, there was growth in cultural demand. This arose, in part, from the general decline in the hours of labor per day, the increase in the proportion of disposable income spent on leisure activities, and higher levels of mass education and literacy. Responding to the growing public demand for culture, cultural policies now put a greater emphasis on the importance of popular participation in cultural activities as a means for social emancipation and community development (Bianchini & Bloomfield, 2001; Foth, 2006). The focus of urban cultural policies were expanded to "cultural democracy", which refers to the philosophy or policy emphasizing pluralism, participation and equity within and between a variety of different cultures (Goldbard, 2006). The definition of "culture" extended to include not only more modern and popular forms of arts such as electronic music, video, photography, comics, and murals, but also amateur activities with a new focus on local initiatives and participation (Duelund, 2008).

What is the connection between cultural democracy and the law of legal deposit? The answer is the involvement and the behavior of the knowledge producers (publishers, printing houses and authors) in the creation of knowledge through their obedience to legal deposit and their submission of the requested copies, and their acknowledgement of the right of the nations to access to collections to benefit from them. Cultural democracy gave the nation the freedom to access cultural information. As Foth (2006), mentioned, community members would not be passive in art activities, but would also be involved actively in the construction process of their cultural knowledge.

## 2. Study Background

Historically, Sultanate of Oman practiced democracy a long time ago, before his majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said took the government reins. According to Gardet (1967), the Sultanate of Oman is the inheritor of a unique political tradition, the imama (imamate) (democracy system), and this unique political tradition has a special place in the Arab Islamic world.

According to Kashef (1981), the imāma system is based on the implementation of the shūrā principle, which constitutes a continuing and mandatory law. This principle of justice and equality reflects the spirit of political power in Islam; it aims at the unification of the nation and of society

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through effective participation by the citizens. It also aims to realize the principle of consensus, and, in addition, the imama system is based on the free election of the imam.

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said was raised in a culture of democracy congenital from his Islamic and Arabic traditions, and since his majesty took the reins of the government in 1970, his vision about the Sultanate of Oman was a state in which oil revenues should drive development and end Oman's political isolation, a characteristic that had been a hallmark for decades (Banham, 2014). His vision about the country development and the political isolation drove him to the investment in the human capital. One of the investments in human capital came through the establishment of the government facilities and infrastructure, including ministries such as the Ministry of Education. In addition, his majesty gave attention to education. In one of his speeches his majesty said "at the time we first set the education process in motion, we appealed for education to take place 'even under the shade of the trees.' We appealed for the entire population – male and female, young and old – to be given the opportunity to join the march of knowledge without discrimination. Because the clear river of knowledge is one from which all should drink, and the channels flowing from it should carry richness, fecundity and growth to every part of Oman's pure and noble land (Oxford Business Group, 2016)."

In the environment of democracy, imama, *shūrā* (consultation and allegiance) and marching of knowledge without discrimination, his majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said was raised. As a result, he practiced democracy with his people. According to the Oman Qaboos website, throughout the years, his Majesty the Sultan has taken a number of tours to inspect projects, to follow governmental performance, to meet with citizens and talk to them, or for other purposes that he considers important. The Annual Tour covers a number of provinces and regions of the Sultanate, and lasts for several weeks. This tour has far-reaching scope and implications, in terms of economy, politics and development (Oman Qaboos, 2016). In addition, the Middle East Online website states that "During his Meet-the-People-Tour, Sultan Qaboos will meet with his people to identify their needs and requirements in terms of services, as well as listening to their observations and proposals about developing such services and enhancing the role played by the governmental departments in delivering these services to different parts of the Sultanate within the framework of the comprehensive and sustainable development plans" (Middle East Online website, 2013). His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said believes in democracy which means for him simply respecting others' opinions, voting and freedom of expression. Kaplan (2011) agrees and has stated that compared with other Arab countries, Oman has scored comparatively well in recent years in human rights reports compiled by the U. S. State Department.

To practice democracy, his majesty has issued different laws to organize civil life for the Omani nation. This could be because he believes that the goal of the law is to organize the political and social life of a society in order to ensure its orderly development (Larivihre, 2000). He has also established the Ministry of Legal Affairs, whose mission is "to develop and support the legislative system, rendering legal opinions in a manner that leads to the unification of legal understandings, safeguarding the interests of the government in contracts and international agreements, and publishing

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and clarifying Omani laws (Ministry of Legal Affairs, 2013)." Through this ministry, his majesty has issued the laws and legislations that have helped Omanis to feel they are equal to each other. Examples of these laws are: the basic law of the state that was issued in 1996, the law of interpretation and general text that was issued in 1973, The Omani Penal Code that was issued in 1974, the law of economic development which was issued in 1975, the law of manuscript protection which was issued in 1977, the Law of Printing and Publishing of 1984, the Act of National Heritage issued in 1980, etc. (Ministry of Legal Affairs, 2013).

Besides, since the beginning of the glorious renaissance his majesty has given attention to the national intellectual heritage, according to Al-Wahaiby (2004). Oman was aware of the importance of setting a system to preserve the intellectual property of the Omani people and to protect it from vandalism and the impact of natural elements, as well as to prevent any action that might lead to its extinction. To maintain the cultural and intellectual property in the country the Omani Heritage Protection Law (1976), the Manuscript Protection Law (1977), the Print and Publication Law (1984), the Censorship Law (1997), Copy Right Protection law (1996) were enacted, followed by the Intellectual Property Right laws when Oman decided to join the World Trade Organization, in accordance with the (TRIPS) agreement. One way to help Omanis to protect their intellectual heritage is through asking individuals to submit their intellectual works to a certain place and to know exactly what to submit and how many copies. There are guidelines which are reflected in the Law of Publications in 1975; this law is also known as the law of legal deposit. In 1984, the Omani government revised and made critical changes to this law; the 1984 law superseded the law of 1975, and the government called this new act the Law of Printing and Publishing.

The Omani Law of Printing and Publishing focuses on collecting publications that are central to the intellectual and scientific contributions of the country. The law is a legal mandate that includes requesting copies of any new publication that is published in the country. Due to the large role of this law, it can enable the Ministry of Information and the Press and Publications Department to develop comprehensive national collections; these collections can be utilised in a variety of library services, such as bibliographies, standardized lists and indices. However, the success of these services depends on the activation and application of the law of Printing and Publishing.

### 3. The Problem of the Study

The researchers believe that Omani citizens participate in making and creating Oman's culture of democracy in different ways; one example is the participation in Al-Shūrā voting, where Omani citizens have the right to nominate their representatives. This agrees with Kaplan (2011) who stated that Omani citizens have participated in free and fair elections for the Majlis al-Shūrā that advises Sultan Qaboos bin Said. In addition, the researchers believe the active participation and implementation of the Law of Printing and Publishing is another method for Omani citizens to participate in decision making on Omanis' political, social and intellectual aspects. However, during a conversation with

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some staff members from the Press and Publications Department, in the Ministry of Information, and informal conversations with a huge number of students at Sultan Qaboos University, the researchers have concluded that, despite the importance of the law of Printing and Publishing and its role in protecting the cultural heritage of the nation and protecting authors' copyrights, educated people, the main players and the educated people in the Sultanate of Oman, are unaware of this important law and its importance in their cultural democratic life.

#### 4. Questions of the Study and Aims

In light of the above, and to shed light on the central role of the Law of Printing and Publishing in Omani cultural democracy, there are some research questions that this study aims at addressing:

1. What is the reality of the Omani Law of Printing and Publishing?
2. How does the Law of Printing and Publishing define the term "publications"?
3. What are the beliefs of the main role players in the Law of Printing and Publishing?
4. How do the main role players behave toward the Law of Printing and Publishing?
5. What does the term "culture of democracy" mean for the role players?
6. What is the relationship between culture of democracy and law of Printing and Publishing?

This study aims to:

- Explore the reality of the Omani Law of Printing and Publishing.
- Discover how the Law of Printing and Publishing defines the term "publications."
- Discover the beliefs of the main role players in the Law of Printing and Publishing.
- Discover the main role players behavior toward the Law of Printing and Publishing
- Explore the importance of this law in building Oman's culture of democracy.

#### 5. Value of the Study

This study is important and worthwhile for several reasons. For example,

- It is the first study about the Omani law of Printing and Publishing.
  - It will explain the exact meaning of the term "publications."
  - It will inform the Omani citizenry about the role of the Law of Printing and Publishing in building Oman's culture of democracy.
  - It will inform the educated people and the Omani citizens about the role that law of "Printing and Publishing" plays in enhancing the culture of democracy.
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## 6. Literature Review

Many studies have discussed the notion of legal deposit (Jasion, 1991; Muir, 2001; Borbinha et al., 2000; Stephens & Gibby, 2011); however, no existent study connects legal deposit with cultural democracy. The aim of this section is review the studies that are related to legal deposit and the culture of democracy.

The study by Iqbal, Qutab, and Soroya (2015) aimed to explore the situation of print publication in Pakistan and further develop feasible and reliable methods/techniques that can be used to measure the level of compliance to the depository law of the country. This study was the first attempt of its kind of measuring the compliance level of Pakistani publishers using the check list techniques which was contiguous for the four years, 2010-2013. The sample technique (indicator A1.1.4.2 b) was selected after considering numerous list checking techniques, either proposed by ISO, ISO/TR 28118:2009 or Koninklijke Bibliotheek (KB) studies and Penzhorn studies. Two hundred commercial publishers from Lahore and Rawalpindi, in an equal ratio, were selected through convenience sampling. The analysis of existing data was carried out to obtain figures indicating the number/percentages of books delivered as legal deposit. It revealed a compliance rate of 18% to 30% which was very low in comparison to most countries which claim to have 100% or nearly 100% compliance. The compliance of larger publishers was better as compared to medium and smaller publishers. The compliance rate of English books was comparatively better, but Urdu books and especially Islamic book compliance rate was not up to the mark. It also revealed that the publication of PNB (Pakistan National Bibliography) was not consistent until 1999, but after that period, the national bibliography was published annually. The coverage of the 2014 publications was late.

In another study by Gurses (2014) on democracy in Turkey, the researcher believes that the rise of Islamist movements in the Muslim world has been the subject of heated debate among scholars and policy makers. One group of scholars argues that Islamists use elections as a façade and warn against their political ascendancy via electoral democracy. Another group of scholars; however, points to the moderating effects that democracy has on views held by Islamists. This current researcher does not present a novel theory but rather attempts to improve on existing studies by providing a test for the inclusion-moderation hypothesis using the data on Turkey collected by the World Values Survey. The findings from the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis, as well as in-depth face-to-face interviews with members of the Islamist parties and communities in Turkey show that Islamists develop positive attitudes toward electoral democracy to the extent that they are allowed to share power. Islamists' support for democracy, however, seems to be fragmented, provisional and driven by pragmatism more than a principled commitment to democratic norms and values.

With regard to the culture of democracy in the Arab world, the study by Fattah (2004) about Islam and democracy aimed to find an answer to the following empirical puzzle: do the attitudes of ordinary educated Muslims stand as an obstacle toward the adoption of democracy? This research

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question calls for empirical/behavioral methodological tools that bring into focus contemporary Muslims' attitudes rather than ancient jurists' contributions. The researcher collected the data through written and web-based surveys in 32 Muslim societies. The study concluded that at the aggregate level, Muslim societies are perplexed with two types of sub-cultures: the culture of "dictator" and the culture of "democracy-as-a-must."

In a study by Tessler (2002) about Islamic orientations and their influence on attitudes toward democracy in the Arab World, the researcher believes that research on democratic transitions and consolidation has emphasized the importance not only of structural factors, such as institutional reform and economic development, but also political culture. There are, however, differing scholarly opinions about whether a democratic political culture can emerge in the Arab world. More specifically, there is a disagreement about whether the Islamic attachments of ordinary citizens discourage the emergence of democratic attitudes and values. Against this background, the present study uses World Values Survey data from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Algeria to assess the influence of Islamic orientations on attitudes toward democracy. Two separate attitudinal measures pertaining to democracy are dependent variables in the analysis. Independent variables include measures pertaining to both personal religious involvement and the role of Islam in political affairs. The results of this analysis, which are similar in all four countries, show that strong Islamic attachments do not discourage or otherwise influence support for democracy to any significant degree.

With regard to the reality and implementation of legal deposit, the studies reached the conclusion that the terms "legal deposit" and "publication" are not clear. For instance, Penzhorn et al. (2008), in their study about implementing and managing legal deposit in South Africa, found that publishers and libraries faced a problem with the understanding and wording of the legal deposit act; this was the question of what constitutes a "publication", with specific reference to the legal deposit of ephemera and similar types of material. In the UK the situation is much better and clear in comparison with South Africa, because in the UK there is a Legal Deposit Advisory Panel (LDAP), and this LDAP focused during its first years on analysing types of non-print material and, in particular, on evaluating options for the deposit of three categories: off-line, including hand-held items such as CDs and DVDs (excluding sound and moving image which are not covered by the Act); free UK online publications including those that are free and publicly available on the UK Web sites where there is no barrier to access through commerce or subscription; and scholarly e-journals (Milne & Tuck, 2008).

The IFLANET (2009) believes that, in a print environment, it has been relatively easy to define what should be considered a "publication" for legal deposit purposes, but when including material such as compilations, the definition becomes a bit more complex in a digital environment. A publication is generally defined as a document consisting of sequential text and/or other data, such as images, sounds, etc., that is structured or organized and edited as an independent unit. It exists in a physical place that is made available to the public in multiple copies and can be acquired by anyone (IFLANET, 2009). Within a digital environment, a publication is a document that is produced, distributed and

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stored in an electronic form, which is available either in a tangible format, such as a diskette or a CD-ROM, or in an online format, such as in databases or as Internet documents, with a combination of information content, and its software provides search opportunities not available within a print environment (IFLANET, 2009). Chisita (2010) observed that the legal deposit of online resources presents serious challenges regarding copyrights, authentication, and preservation.

Penzhorn et al. (2008) examined the implementation of legal deposit in South Africa and aimed to study the attitudes, opinions and behaviors of publishers and legal deposit libraries that could affect the delivery of legal deposit material. They studied the attitudes of the role players (authors, publishers, printers, etc.) and other producers of publications toward legal deposit. Penzhorn et al. (2008) found that, although nearly all the publishers interviewed in their study regularly deposited their publications, only 30% of them felt positive about the principle of preservation, and very few could see any benefits from the system of legal deposit for them as publishers. They also concluded that there is a need to create awareness of the value of the legal deposit system for publishers and the general public. This finding agrees with Fenerci (2008), who determined that messages about the importance of legal deposit in Turkey could not be carried to printing houses, publishers and public libraries as important stakeholders. With regard to communication between the key players and the legal deposit libraries, Penzhorn et al. (2008) found that there is a lack of communication between libraries and publishers, between legal deposit libraries, and between libraries and legal deposit committees. There is a lack of communication between legal deposit libraries and role players in terms of shaping an organization and working towards a purpose. Though the various legal deposit libraries function as individual entities, they are collectively responsible for ensuring the successful implementation of legal deposit and in this sense could be regarded as one "organization" with a common goal and purpose. Without meaningful communication between the libraries regarding legal deposit, relevant and important information cannot be transmitted, cooperation cannot take place and the expected results cannot be achieved. Communication between libraries and legal deposit committees has to be especially sensitive to what the libraries perceive as a total lack of communication with them regarding the issues involved in effectively monitoring legal deposit. As the "managing" body is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the legal deposit system, the Committee should provide for the giving and receiving of feedback at both management and general employee levels (DuBrin, 2000; Watson, 2002).

## 7. Contribution to knowledge

This study will add value to knowledge in term of exploring the role of the legal deposit around the world as a component in building cultural democracy especially in the Arab world. Previous studies agreed that the cultural democracy in the Arab world almost does not exist, and there is no study that connects legal deposit to cultural democracy; whereas this study will be different because it connects the legal deposit and cultural democracy and it examines the existent of democracy in a country like the Sultanate of Oman.

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## 8. Methodology

Because this research aims to explore the reality of legal deposit in the Sultanate of Oman and the role of law in building the Omani democratic culture, the most suitable paradigm is the interpretive research paradigm; therefore, this is a qualitative study which is descriptive in nature. According to Andrade (2009), an interpretive research paradigm provides deep insights into "the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). Researchers in this paradigm emphasize knowledge of the subject as it is lived by the social actors (Al-Saleem, 2006). The aim of using this research paradigm is to understand the meaning of this human phenomenon in context, as Humphrey (2010) believes that the meaning which can be understood from individual experiences will help in developing a theory or pattern.

### *8.1 Methods of the study*

To capture the lived experience from the point of view of those who lived it to and to achieve the study aims, two methods were applied:

- a) **Unstructured interviews:** The researchers held formal interviews with staff members from the Press and Publications Department to assess their experiences and perceptions of the reality of the legal deposit law. The researchers also conducted informal interviews with 24 printing houses in this study that act as publishers.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face. The researchers met with each staff member four times. They also had permission to contact the 24 printing houses by telephone and to text them via Whats App, any time, in case some of the answers were not clear and needed more elaboration.

- b) **Content Analysis (CA):** The second method applied in this study was content analysis. Using this tool, the researchers analysed the Law of Printing and Publishing to discover how the law defines the term "publication". The researchers also visited the website of the Ministry of Information and analysed the information related to publications.

### *8.2 Study Population and Study Sample*

The study was conducted in the beginning of 2015. The study involved two kinds of samples: a purposive sample, which was the staff of the Press and Publications Department, and stratified random samplings. The total number of printing houses was 120, according to the list that the researchers collected from the Press and Publications Department in the Ministry of Information and from this number the researchers chose 24 printing houses, which was 20% of the total. The sample of the printing and distribution houses was selected according to their governorate to be a representative sample. In fact, the administrative division of the Sultanate of Oman contains eleven governorates. However, the sample number of the printing and distribution houses from Al Wusta,

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Ash Sharqiyah North and South, Al Wusta and Musandam governorates were less than Muscat and Dhofar because Muscat and Dhofar are the biggest governances in terms of population and cultural and civic life. To gain access to the printing houses, the Press and Publications Department provided the researchers with a list of printing houses in the Sultanate of Oman. (1) Table 1 shows the printing houses samples.

Table 1. Printing Houses Samples

N	Printing and distribution house Name	Governorate	Date of approval
1	Modern Muscat	Muscat	1999
2	National Printing House	Muscat	1999
3	Untied for Printing	Muscat	2002
4	Sky Printing and Distribution House	Muscat	2009
5	Ethics Printing House	Muscat	2009
6	Integrity Printing and Distribution House	Muscat	2010
7	South Bride	Dhofar	2000
8	Salalah	Dhofar	2005
9	Creative	Dhofar	2009
10	Khareef Season	Dhofar	2009
11	Al-Mazyona	Dhofar	2013
12	Dhalkut	Dhofar	2013
13	MahdahPress	Al Burymi	2010
14	AalJabriya	Al Burymi	2012
15	Blue Vision	Al Burymi	2014
16	Al Sunaynah	Al Burymi	2014
17	Sur Press	Ash Sharqiyah North	2012
18	Public	Ash Sharqiyah North	2013
19	Jalan Bani Bu Ali	Ash Sharqiyah South	2014
20	Ras Madrika	Al Wusta	2014
21	KhasabDistribution House	Musandam	2014
22	SoharPrinting and Distribution House	Al Batinah North	2011
23	Al SuwaiqPrinting and Distribution House	Al Batinah North	2013
24	Barka Press	Al Batinah South	2013

Table 1 shows the names of the printing and distribution houses and their governorates. For ethical reasons, the real names of the printing and distribution houses have been changed to preserve their privacy. The study sample was randomly selected. Table (1) shows the stratified random samplings and the geographical distribution of the printing houses in the Sultanate of Oman. The table shows the number of printing houses: (6= 1.2%) that were from Muscat and Dhofar governorates, while (4= 0.8%) were from Al Burymi governorate, and the least number of the samples were from Al Wusta and Musandam (1=0.2%). Modern Muscat represents the Muscat governorate, while Creative represents the Dhofar governorate, Public represents the Ash Sharqiyah North, and Blue Vision

represents the Al Burymi governorate. Modern Muscat was the first printing houses from the sample to gain approval from the Press and Publications Department to begin publishing in 1999, and Blue Vision, Al Sunaynah, Jalan Bani Bu Ali, Ras Madrika, Khasab distribution houses were the last to gain approval in 2014.

## 9. Findings

To study the reality of the Omani law of Printing and Publishing, the researchers studied the existence of the law and analysed the articles related to the law of "Printing and Publishing" as well as the definition of the term "publications" according to the law of Printing and Publishing. Table (2) defines the term "publications" according to the law of Printing and Publishing.

Table 2. The Law of Printing and Publishing define the term "publications" and the articles related to deposit

The Law of Printing and Publishing	term "publications" according to the law of Printing and Publishing Law
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Article 10:</b> Before publishing any publication, the Printer shall deposit five copies of the same to the Ministry of Information and he/she shall be given a receipt to this effect.</li> <li>• <b>Article 15:</b> In case of any breach of the provisions of the articles mentioned above, the offender shall be punished by imprisonment not exceeding one year or by a fine not exceeding RO 500 or by both penalties, with a chance that the printing press might be temporarily or permanently shut down.</li> </ul> <p>(Ministry of Information, 2016.  <a href="http://www.omaninfo.om/english/module.php?module=pages-showpage&amp;CatID=162&amp;ID=547">http://www.omaninfo.om/english/module.php?module=pages-showpage&amp;CatID=162&amp;ID=547</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Article 3/1:</b> "refers to any script writings, drawings, pictures, photographs or any other means of copying or photocopying whenever the material is copied, photocopied or transcribed by any means and becomes ready for circulation, with the exception of personal publications or publications related to commercial activity provided their content does not constitute any breach of the provisions of this law or any other law".</li> </ul> <p>(Ministry of Information, 2016.  <a href="http://www.omaninfo.om/english/module.php?module=pages-showpage&amp;CatID=162&amp;ID=547">http://www.omaninfo.om/english/module.php?module=pages-showpage&amp;CatID=162&amp;ID=547</a></p>

Table 2 reveals that the law of Printing and Publishing has two articles that deal with the legal deposit article number (10), and article number (15). In addition Table 2 defines the term "publication."

Table 3 shows the beliefs of the printing houses about the law of Printing and Publishing.

Table 3. The beliefs of the printing houses about the Law of Printing and Publishing

Printing and distribution house Name	beliefs of the mean role players
1 Modern Muscat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The law is important for the compilation of resources that will help in the creation of the national bibliography.</li> </ul>
2 National Printing house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Without this law the Omani collection related to heritage will be lost.</li> </ul>

Printing and distribution house Name	beliefs of the mean role players
3 Untied for Printing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oman is a modern country, and his majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said planned since he took the reins of government to move the country from cultural isolation, cultural and civil delays that the country had previously experienced. The country now is a country of law and this law is one of those elements that helps in the establishment of cultural life.</li> </ul>
4 Sky Printing and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is an important law to organize the cultural life so everyone feels they are equal in terms of following the law.</li> </ul>
5 Ethics Printing House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The law aims to treat the role players equally.</li> </ul>
6 Integrity Printing and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Law of Printing and Publishing aims to protect authors' rights.</li> </ul>
7 South Bride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Law of aims to protect Oman's intellectual heritage.</li> </ul>
8 Salalah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This law helps distribution and circulation or printing houses to learn about the regulation for submitting the requested copies to the Ministry of Information.</li> </ul>
9 Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Law of Printing and Publishing aims to protect authors' rights.</li> </ul>
10 Khareef Season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because of this law all of the printing houses can be equal.</li> </ul>
11 Al-Mazyona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I cannot understand the importance of the law but I have to follow the regulations.</li> </ul>
12 Dhalkut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maybe it is important for intellectual heritage.</li> </ul>
13 MahdahPress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because the submission is free of charge, this means this law is important and the government would like to encourage the main role players to submit the copies.</li> </ul>
14 Al Jabriya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Law aims to protect Oman's intellectual heritage.</li> </ul>
15 Blue Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are advantages of the Law of Printing and Publishing.</li> </ul>
16 Al Sunaynah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Law of Printing and Publishing aims to protect authors' rights.</li> </ul>
17 Sur Press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Law aims to protect Oman's intellectual heritage.</li> </ul>
18 Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This law will not play a role in the country's development, and it should not be compulsory.</li> </ul>
19 Jalan Bani Bu Ali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The aim of the law is not clear for me as I started the business a year ago but I think this law is important to protect authors' rights.</li> </ul>
20 Ras Madrika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The law is important to organize the cultural life.</li> </ul>
21 KhasabDistribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To achieve equality between role players in terms of submitting the same numbers of copies.</li> </ul>
22 SoharPrinting and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To organize the civil life.</li> </ul>
23 Al SuwaiqPrinting and distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Law of Printing and Publishing aims to protect authors' rights.</li> </ul>
24 Barka Press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To help the Sultanate to protect their intellectual heritage.</li> </ul>

Table 3 summarizes the beliefs of the important role of the printing houses, according to the table (4=16.6%) either do not believe in the important role of the Law of Printing and Publishing or the role of the law is not clear for them and these printing houses were Al-Mazyona, Dhalkut, Public, Jalan Bani Bu Ali compared with (20= 83.3%) that have positive beliefs about the importance of the law.

Table 4 shows the behavior of the printing and distribution houses and whether or not they have submitted the copies.

Table 4. The behaviour of the printing houses towards the Law of Printing and Publishing

Printing and distribution house Name	Behaviour towards the Law of Printing and Publishing Submission of the 5 copies
1 Modern Muscat	√
2 National Printing house	√
3 Untied for Printing	√
4 Sky Printing and Distribution house	√
5 Ethics Printing House	√
6 Integrity Printing and Distribution House	√
7 South Bride	√
8 Salalah	√
9 Creative	√
10 Khareef Season	√
11 Al-Mazyona	√
12 Dhalkut	√
13 Mahdah press	√
14 Al Jabriya	√
15 Blue Vision	√
16 Al Sunaynah	√
17 Sur Press	√
18 Public	√
19 Jalan Bani Bu Ali	√
20 Ras Madrika	√
21 KhasabDistribution House	√
22 SoharPrinting and Distribution house	√
23 Al SuwaiqPrinting and Distribution House	√
24 Barka Press	√

Table 4 shows that (24= 20%) the whole sample submitted their copies to the Ministry of Information.

The study also aims to find out how the printing houses interpret the term "culture of democracy." Table 5 summarizes these interpretations.

Table 5. The interpretation for the term "culture democracy" from view point of the printing houses

Printing and distribution house Name	The meaning of the term "culture democracy"
1 Modern Muscat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behave as a good citizen and respect the law and participate in the country's development.</li> </ul>
2 National Printing House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The right to choose your candidates in al Shura Council, the right to do what you would like to do, and say what you want to say without a conflict with the country's regulations.</li> </ul>
3 Untied for Printing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is related to your norms, beliefs about something and sharing this culture with others.</li> </ul>
4 Sky Printing and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the respect of the laws and regulations either for the country or for the people.</li> </ul>
5 Ethics Printing House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do what you want without conflict with others' rights and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
6 Integrity Printing and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do what you want without conflict with others' rights and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
7 South Bride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is related to your norms, beliefs about something and sharing this culture with others.</li> </ul>
8 Salalah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is related to your norms, beliefs about something and sharing this culture with others.</li> </ul>
9 Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is related to your norms, beliefs about something and sharing this culture with others.</li> </ul>
10 Khareef Season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive participation in the country's development and transfer of this culture to everyone in the community.</li> </ul>
11 Al-Mazyona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do whatever you want and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
12 Dhalkut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do whatever you want and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
13 Mahdah press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do whatever you want without conflict with others' rights and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
14 Al Jjabriya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say what comes to your mind and do what you would like to do, and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
15 Blue Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is related to your norms, beliefs about something and sharing this culture with others.</li> </ul>
16 Al Sunaynah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know your rights and your duties and transfer this culture to others and act as these rights and duties state.</li> </ul>
17 Sur Press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behave as a good citizen and follow the rules and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
18 Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do whatever you want and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
19 Jalan Bani Bu Ali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do whatever you want and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
20 Ras Madrika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know your rights and your duties and transfer this culture to others and act as these rights and duties state.</li> </ul>
21 Khasab Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do whatever you want without conflict with others' rights and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
22 SoharPrinting and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect the rules and participate in country development.</li> </ul>
23 Al Suwaiq Printing and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do whatever you want without conflict with others' rights and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>
24 Barka Press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do whatever you want without conflict with others' rights and transfer this culture to others.</li> </ul>

Table 5 shows the interpretations of the printing houses, and it is clear that the interpretations focused on behavior and actions.

The study aims to understand from the view point of the printing houses, the relationship between the culture of democracy and the Law of Printing and Publishing. Table (6) highlights the view of the printing houses.

Table 6. The relationship between the Culture of Democracy and Law of Printing and Publishing

Printing and distribution house Name	Relationship between culture democracy and Law of Printing and Publishing
1 Modern Muscat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although the law of Printing and Publishing is a compulsory law, when we as printing and distribution houses behave positively and submit the 5 copies of the materials before publishing that means we are good citizens and the awareness of democracy helps in collecting or building the country's intellectual heritage.</li> </ul>
2 National Printing House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be good citizens and behave well in following the law of Printing and Publishing.</li> </ul>
3 Untied for Printing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Law of Printing and Publishing is a compulsory law which forces the main role players to submit the 5 copies, however, it aims to build the country's collection of intellectual heritage, so when we as main role players follow the rules we participate in building the country.</li> </ul>
4 Sky Printing and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect the law and be good and educated citizens and build the country.</li> </ul>
5 Ethics Printing House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Democracy helps people to behave with good manners and respect the law.</li> </ul>
6 Integrity Printing and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although the Law of Printing and Publishing is a mandatory law, democracy rises from the behavior of the printing houses in respecting and applying the law.</li> </ul>
7 South Bride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect the Law of Printing and Publishing although it is an obligatory law.</li> </ul>
8 Salalah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We understand the importance of the law of Printing and Publishing. We as publishers and printing houses respect it and follow it to help in building the intellectual heritage of the country.</li> </ul>
9 Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow the Law of Printing and Publishing to help in building the country's cultural collection.</li> </ul>
10 Khareef Season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applying the rules which help the country to protect its intellectual heritage.</li> </ul>
11 Al-Mazyona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I do not know</li> </ul>
12 Dhalkut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No relation</li> </ul>
13 Mahdah Press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I do not know</li> </ul>
14 Al Jabriya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I do not know</li> </ul>
15 Blue Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Democracy is about practicing and transforming your practice to others, in this case practice in submitting the requested copies of the collection to the Ministry of Information</li> </ul>



Printing and distribution house Name	Relationship between culture democracy and Law of Printing and Publishing
16 Al Sunaynah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democracy concerns practice and the Law of Printing and Publishing concerns protecting authors' rights as publishers by submitting the requested copies to the Ministry of Information. In this way, we behave as good citizens and we participate in building the country's collection of materials as well as we protect and protect authors' rights.</li> </ul>
17 Sur Press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the rules of the Law of Printing and Publishing helps in building the country's intellectual heritage.</li> </ul>
18 Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no relationship between democracy and Law of Printing and Publishing</li> </ul>
19 Jalan Bani Bu Ali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationship between the culture of democracy and the Law of Printing and Publishing is democracy concerns behavior and the law of Printing and Publishing concerns following the rules and submitting the 5 copies to the Ministry of Information.</li> </ul>
20 Ras Madrika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democracy means doing the duties especially if the duties will help in the country's development. We are obliged as publishing and printing houses to submit the copies that will assist in the country's development.</li> </ul>
21 Khasab Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democracy for me means doing what you want without conflict with others' rights and transferring this culture to others, so to avoid conflict I have to submit the 5 copies.</li> </ul>
22 SoharPrinting and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationship between the culture of democracy and the Law of Printing and Publishing is that democracy concerns the positive participation in the country's development. To participate positively for me as a printing house is to submit the requested copies.</li> </ul>
23 Al Suwaiq Printing and Distribution House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationship between democracy and the Law of Printing and Publishing is that, democracy is about behaving positively and this means in our business to submit the requested copies to the Ministry of Information.</li> </ul>
24 Barka Press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationship between the culture of democracy and the Law of Printing and Publishing is that democracy is about the positive participation in the country's development. To participate positively for me as a printing house is to submit the requested copies.</li> </ul>

Table 6 shows that the relationship between the culture of democracy and the Law of Printing and Publishing. According to the table, the relationship between the culture of democracy and the Law of Printing and Publishing can be categorized into three groups: the group which knows the relationship, the group which does not know and the group which states there is no relation.

## 10. Discussion

### *10.1 The reality of the Omani Law of Printing and Publishing*

This study aimed to explore the role of the Law of Printing and Publishing in building Oman's culture of democracy. This study explored the reality of legal deposit in Oman and determined if the printing houses comply with the law. To explore this, the study began by exploring the existences of the law. The study found that, the Sultanate of Oman issued the first law of printing and publications in 1975 and it was called the law of Publications." Then in 1984, the Omani government revised it and made critical changes to the law of 1975; the 1984 law superseded the law of 1975. It was called the law of "Printing and Publishing". The researchers believe that the Sultanate issued the law of "Printing and Publishing" in 1984 as a response to the change in political, social and economic life. The first law of printing and publications was called the law of "publications" which was issued in 1975 five years after His Majesty took the reins of the government. It seems that his Majesty, from the first day of taking the reins of the government, had a vision about the Sultanate of Oman as a state in which oil revenues drove development and ended Oman's political isolation, a characteristic that had been a hallmark for decades (Banham, 2014). For this, his majesty focused on the cultural heritage. In fact, in five years of his reign of government, His Majesty made critical changes in the country, while according to Halliday (1975) before his verdict mentioned, Oman was the country of prohibitions. It was prohibited to build houses of cob, to wear sunglasses, to smoke tobacco, to own books, for women to travel abroad, etc.; all these actions were deemed to be offences and were punishable by 'the laws'. So the law of "publications" that was issued in 1975 came to organize the profession of press, printing and publishing (Sultan of Oman, 1975). However, after 9 years from issuing the law of "Publications" it was normal to review the law and update it to make it appropriate to the current requirements. Truly, there are some differences between both of the laws. For example the law of "1975" had "55" provisions while the law of "1984" had "71" provisions (Al Kindi, 2004). Both the law of "Publications" and the law of "Printing and Publications" were to organize the profession of press, printing and publishing because the press is the tongue of the government. William (2004) described Arab countries as generally ones that fit into the authoritarian media system model. These media systems are set up by the government and licensed under laws that exhaustively regulate the actions of journalists, creating a press that tends to support state policies rather than act as a watchdog. Additionally, Marthoz (2012) thinks the media was key a factor in the Arab revolutions. If the Sultanate organized and reformed this profession, it could follow that it can organize the other matters in the Sultanate.

### *10.2 The definition of the term "publications" according to the Law of Printing and Publishing:*

With regard to identifying the meaning of the term "publications", according to the law of "Printing and Publishing", Table 2 shows that the law of "Printing and Publications" has two articles related to the deposit of materials and it is like the road map that guides the main role players who have to deposit as to when to deposit, what to deposit and in case of the violation of the law what

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the punishment stated is in these articles (10) and (15). Table 2 shows that article (10) of the law informs us that the law of "Printing and Publishing" is a compulsory law that forces the printing or the distribution houses to deposit five copies of the same to the Ministry of Information before publishing any publication, and he/she shall be given a receipt to this effect. The Omani law of "Printing and Publications" is a compulsory law because it protects the national cultural heritage. If the law were voluntary, the printing houses would not submit the copies if they do not realize the importance of the law (Besser & Malssen, 2010). In addition, the British library believes legal deposit supports a cycle of knowledge, whereby deposited works provide inspiration and source material for new books that will eventually achieve publication, in addition to creating a national collection". Furthermore, his Majesty planned to make the law compulsory to show the Omani nation that they are equal and live in a democratic state.

Article (10) from the law of "Printing and Publications" answered the questions about when to deposit (time to deposit), who has to deposit, and the number of requested copies. In terms of when, article (10) of the law defined that before publishing, and Besser & Malssen (2010) think it is easier to collect works when they are first issued (rather than much later in their lives), for if the law left the deposit of the publications to be after publishing, there is a possibility that the printing houses would not collaborate easily, especially if the printing houses did not have awareness about the importance of the law. This was the same as the findings of Foo, Wu, Lim et al. (2005) who found that the majority of publishers in Singapore only became aware of legal deposit when they needed to apply for ISBN/ISSN. The researchers reviewed the laws of Printing and Publishing in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to find out if the GCC have a similar law. A recent government report (Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council for the Arab States, 2005) explained that in terms of when to deposit, the GCC was divided on the time to deposit the publication. In four GCC countries, the printing house shave to deposit certain copies after publishing the publications -- the State of Kuwait, the State of Qatar, United Arab Emiratis and the State of Bahrain --, while The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia follows the same system as the Sultanate of Oman. The researchers believe the reason behind requesting five copies to be submitted before publishing is that the first law of printing issued in 1975 and the law of 1984 were made during the time the country was in the beginning of its establishment, and the law needed to be established well in terms of building the national collection and transforming the knowledge to the new generation. Because of these, they had to request the copies before publishing, and this agreed with Al-Wahaiby (2004).

In addition, Larivihre (2000) agreed on the variety of time of deposit however, all the examples he/she mentioned in the guidelines requested the deposit of the materials after publishing, not before, Different countries selected a certain time for deposit. They are collected twice a year in Denmark at one extreme, and to the day of availability to the public at the latest in France at the other extreme. South Africa has a 14-day dispatch rule (i.e. the item must have been mailed or sent by another means within that period), and Canada has a seven-day deposit requirement. Finland requires that deposit be completed within two months and Indonesia, three months. The researchers

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think the legislature requested the time of deposit to be before publishing to guarantee the submission of the materials; however, as the law aims to be a guideline for nations and for printing houses to follow to insure the equality and the participation from them in building the culture of democracy, the law had to identify exactly when to submit the publications. Olanusi (2015) thinks "there are laws and law enforcement systems and sanctions put in place to guide persons and bodies in the overall interests of society in general". This may cause a problem between the author of the material and the printing houses in case the printing houses are not motivated to print the submitted materials. For example, in the study in Singapore, Foo et al. (2005) showed that small publishers, who through ignorance or lack of motivation, do not sometimes approach NLB for the ISBN (book) or ISSN (serial) numbers, thereby making it more difficult for NLB to track such publications. This situation may have arisen because it is not mandatory for publications to carry an ISBN or ISSN number.

In terms of who has to deposit according to the law of "Printing and Publishing," printing houses are responsible for submitting the requested copies. The legislature gives the responsibility of submitting the copies to the printing houses because in the past, especially in 1975, there were no distribution houses and publishers, so the only role that existed and was related to the professions of press and media was that the printing houses organized the press profession. The studies also showed that there wasn't agreement on which of the producers of materials should be responsible for the deposit. France, requires that all documents published, produced, printed or distributed, whether commercially or not, be deposited by the publishers, producers, printing houses or distributors (Larivihre, 2000), while in the UK, Ireland, Nigeria (M2 Presswire, 2003, Olanusi, 2015), and Israel, the publisher or producer, the printing houses and the copyright holders are nominated to submit the requested copies (Rabina, 2009). The Turkish legal deposit law agreed with the Omani law in terms of who was to deposit the requested copies and had the printing houses submit the requested copies to the Ministry of Education (Fenerci, 2008).

In terms of the number of requested copies, article (10) of the law of "Printing and Publishing" states that five copies from each publication, before being published, have to be deposited to the Ministry of Information, the researchers believe that five copies are reasonable; however, the law has not explained where this copies should go. As the time of deposit and to whom to deposit is not the same in all the systems around the world, it is the same case for the number of copies that have to be deposited. In GCC the practice differs from one country to another, so for example in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Kuwait and the State of Qatar two copies have to be deposited, while in the United Arab Emirates 10 copies are requested, and in the State of Bahrain seven copies (Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council for the Arab States, 2005). The summary of article (10) of the law of "Printing and Publishing" is that this article is a guide for the main role player, who is according the law the printing house. This article is a guide for them in terms of when to submit the publications to the Ministry of Information, and how many copies; however, the law does not identify for certain the exact time for submission. The good thing is that the government gives attention to the importance of protecting the national cultural heritage and the transformation of knowledge from one generation to another through asking the

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printing houses to submit the copies. Although, the law of "Printing and Publishing" focuses most of its article on the provisions of press and journalism, the deposit of the publication is included in it.

In addition to guiding the printing houses to their mission and introducing the law of "Printing and Publishing" to the Omani nations, article (15) of the law specified the penalty in case the printing houses did not obey the law. Table 2 shows that in case of offenders, there will be one of the three penalties: to be imprisoned for not more than a year, to pay a fine of not more than RO. 500, or both of the penalties. There is also a chance of closing the printing house temporarily or permanently. In fact, R.O 500 is reasonable for a printing house which runs a business, but the researchers think the aim of the penalty is not to chastise the printing houses but to force them to obey the law and make it effective. Indeed, we wish that the printing houses be persuaded of the vital role of the law of "Printing and Publishing," but if they do not realize its importance, then the penalty might help. Penzhorn et al. (2008) believe that to be effective, the legal deposit law has to be enforceable, and to be enforceable it must put pressure on publishers to obey it by means of a penalty if they fail to obey the law. Indeed, the penalty has to apply in case the printing houses in Oman do not follow the law and it has to be clear; otherwise it will not be an effective legislation, and it will be like the Ugandan case where Matovu and Musoke (2012) researched the annoyance of legal deposit penalties, which were difficult to implement due to unnecessary litigation involved.

According to the interview with the staff from the Press and Publications Department, Ministry of Information, the fine depends on the violation of the offenders. For example, if the printing houses printed 10 different books without permission from the Ministry of Information, he/she would be imprisoned. In the researchers view, the aim of having different penalties is to give the chance for the printing houses to think about their involvement and participation in creating the Omani collection through submitting copies of the publication, as well as to send a message to them that the aim of the law of "Printing and Publishing" is not to punish them but to help the country. Also, the penalty depends on their violation, where they have to choose and decide on what they would like to do. This democracy is rooted in Islam. Imam Mohammad Al-Shirazi, writes in his book *Shura in Islam*, "Drawing from this holy verse, shura is of two kinds: the first is the Muslim governor's consultation of the Muslims about affairs concerning them, and the second is the consultation among Muslims about how to administer their affairs. Therefore, it is a duty on both of the governor and the governed." Imam Al-Shirazi recounts democratic values of participation in government and civil society. Democratic governments cannot exist without citizen participation through elections and/or referendums, and each citizen chooses the government, party, or politician that will advance their interests in issues around healthcare, education, economics, labor, national security, liberal rights, etc... Furthermore, advanced democracies value civil society and its merits. According to Imam Al-Shirazi's (1999) statement, when the printing houses submit the copies or when they break the law and pay the penalty they will be active participants.

The penalty is a part of the law of "Printing and Publishing," so it must be respected, and the law clearly defines the role of printing houses and time to deposit the number of copies and where

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to deposit them, so printing houses have to take the full responsibility towards the law as it is a national mission. Ewekula (2004) explained the aim of article (15) is that it solves the conflicts that might happen between the printing houses in case the rules did not exist or were not clear, and sets the penalty system for the country to guarantee the positive participation in building the national collection. As a democracy all the offenders from the printing houses would be treated equally in terms of the fine.

With regard to the term "publications" according to the Omani Law of Printing and Publishing, Table 2 shows that article 3/1 of the law defined the term "publications" and it "refers to any script writings, drawings, pictures, photographs or any other means of copying or photocopying whenever the material is copied, photocopied or transcribed by any means and becomes ready for circulation, with the exception of personal publications or publications related to commercial activity provided their content does not constitute any breach of the provisions of this law or any other law."

This definition is quite general. The researchers believe that perhaps the Omani lawmakers make the law general to cover all the materials that exist, and any new kinds of paper or traditional materials that may appear in the future, and it excludes the non-paper or non-traditional materials because this law covers artistic censorship which includes all types of audio-visual materials, videos and movies. This is called the "law of censorship". This law was issued in 1997, 13 years after the law of "Printing and Publishing" was issued. The law of censorship, however, does not mention anything about electronic resources perhaps because the law was issued in 1997, and according to the site of Press References (2016), Oman introduced Internet service in 1997 (<http://www.pressreference.com/No-Sa/Oman.html>). The researchers believe that since 1997 the law of censorship has not been adjusted or updated to accommodate the new form of electronic resources that emerged because of the use of the Internet. The researchers believe that because the law is addressing artistic censorship, the law of "Printing and Publishing" must be clear and specific about the materials that should be included, because the purpose of the law is to organize the political and social life of a society in order to ensure its orderly development (Larivihre, 2000). This view is in agreement with Matovu and Musoke (2012), who found in general, that legal deposit is subject to numerous challenges in almost all countries, in part because of the lack of a clear demarcation of scope of the legal deposit materials. On the other hand, the researchers disagreed with Matovu and Musoke (2012), who determined that the term "publication" in legal deposit is used in the widest sense possible, and includes traditional printed text materials and non-printed materials, including maps and music and a wide range of non-book materials or audio-visual materials, such as sound recordings, videotapes, learning kits, jigsaw puzzles, cassettes, globes, and machine-readable files. The general definition of the term "publications" in the Omani Law of "Printing and Publishing" matches with Chisita (2010), who found that South Africa has had legal deposit legislation since 1842. It was revised in 1997 to extend the legal deposit to audio-visual and broadcast electronic media; this was achieved by avoiding the definition and enumeration of various media through the use of generic terms like "document" and "media."

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### *10.3 The beliefs of the main role players about the Law of Printing and Publishing*

In terms of the beliefs of the main role players about the Law of Printing and Publishing, the researchers think that the beliefs of the printing houses towards the law are an application of their participation in the Oman's culture of democracy. This is in agreement with Cincotta (1998), who said that culture refers to "the behaviors, practices, of the people." So through the beliefs of the Omani printing houses, the Law of "Printing and Publishing" will reflect their behavior towards the law through their agreement to take responsibility as Omanis who believe in democracy, as well as to applying the law. The researchers studied the printing houses' views of the legal deposit to explore their beliefs. Table 3 showed that there were two groups of beliefs of the printing houses. According to the findings, the first group constituted from 4 (16.6%) printing houses either do not believe in the role of law of "Printing and Publishing," which was the Public Printing House (1=4.1%), or feel that the role of the law is not clear for them (3=12.5%), which were in Al-Mazyona, Dhalkut, Jalan Bani Bu Ali. They compare with the second group of printing houses who have positive beliefs about the importance of the law, which were 20 (83.3%). In general, the results showed the beliefs of the printing houses were mainly positive.

The first group which do not believe in the law of "Printing and Publishing" were newer printing houses who have not yet started their real business (Public, Al-Mazyona, Dhalkut, Jalan Bani Bu Ali) although they got the approval from the Ministry of Information. The researchers think that because the new printing houses have not started their real businesses yet, they do not have the proper ideas about who has to submit the five copies and when. This agrees with Tibane (2005) who found that publishers who are aware of legal deposit, but do not practice it on a regular basis, seem to take everything for granted, to such an extent that legal deposit libraries have to send more than one request to the publisher for them to respond. Therefore, the Department of Press and Publications has to raise awareness about the legal deposit and the regulation of this deposit and the actual practice of this law. This agrees with Nwagwu et al. (2011), who found that the authors and publishers in Nigeria who have awareness about the legal deposit were the most compliant. Furthermore, the newer printing houses have not realized the aim of the law and its importance in creating Oman's national bibliography. The new printing houses believe that this law should be voluntary. They would like to deposit the requested copies only if they want to. Although the Public House knows the penalties for non-compliance, and he follows the law, he was assuming that to practice more democracy the law has to be left to the people to show their real behavior. In addition, Al-Mazyona clarified he could not understand the importance of the law; however, he knows he has to follow the regulations. The researchers think that the Public Printing Houses have called for the law to be voluntary because they think they have to do all the work, from receiving the manuscript from the authors to depositing it at the Press and Publications Department. Bell (2000) and Lariviere (2000), however, disagree with the voluntary route for the law; they believe that if a country decides to go with the voluntary route, it will have to impose penalties on printing houses to ensure enforcement of the law. In addition, Chisita (2010) comments that it is quite a challenge to rely on goodwill to ensure the comprehensiveness of deposit collections,

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which should call for sufficient mechanisms to facilitate enforcement. The practice for countries is diverse in the route of legal deposit. There are two routes of the legal deposit, either compulsory or voluntary. Within the compulsory route the country has to choose to go through a stand-alone legal deposit law such as in Belgium, the Dominican Republic, France, Iran, Latvia and South Africa, or it could be part of another law, such as the national library act (China and Japan) or the copyright act (Australia, Great Britain, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and the United States). A country can choose to build its legal deposit collection through a voluntary route as they do in the Netherlands. According to the website of the national library Koninklijke Bibliotheek, there is no legal deposit regulation in the Netherlands. Therefore, the KB relies on voluntary deposit arrangements with publishers, as laid down in an agreement with the Netherlands Publishers Association. Publishers are invited to submit one free copy of each publication for inclusion in the Deposit Collection (Lariviere, 2000). The researchers think that, if Omani law of "Printing and Publishing" was voluntary, it is not certain that the printing houses would follow the rules, especially the new printing houses who think the law does not play an important role in creating a national bibliography.

In addition the first group of printers who do not believe in the law of "Printing and Publishing" or feel that the law is not clear for them, is located in remote areas, which are far from civilization where the culture of protecting the national intellectual heritage does not exist. In these areas, the awareness of the importance of the law is not very clear and the Ministry of Information needs to work harder to show its importance. The Ministry of Information has to create awareness, especially for the new printing houses or publishers, through different media such as websites, local Omani T.V. interviews, social networks, etc. If the people understand their role they will not panic or be unhappy about the application of the law of Press and Publications. The ministry published the law of "Printing and Publishing" in a printed copy and recently it uploaded the law in both languages (Arabic and English) to their website; however, who cares? The people and the printing houses do not want to read; they would like to see and hear the practice in an interactive way. This agrees with Matovu and Musoke's (2012) study which found the awareness among the publishers was limited. Also, a study by Omekwu (2003) on related experience in Nigeria, which aims to display and access documents published in developing countries, found that there is a lack of bibliographic tools in addition to a lack of awareness of the importance of legal deposit.

The Ministry of Information has to communicate with these people, and the researchers do not want the printing houses to feel there is miscommunication between them and the ministry. They also do not want them to think they have to obey and deposit the five copies blindly; they have to understand why they have to deposit and what it means for the country. The researchers would like them to believe in the law; this agrees with Gordon's (2005) study, which states that any library, including a legal deposit library/institution, which does not identify the importance of freely following communication, will result in failure in what it has set out to achieve. Penzhorn et al. (2008) says that good communication between all the main parties is therefore, fundamental if legal deposit is to be successfully implemented.

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#### *10.4 The behaviour of the printing houses towards the Law of Printing and Publishing:*

With regard to the behavior of the printing houses towards the law of "Printing and Publishing", Table 4 showed that 24 (20%) of the printing houses know that the Omani law of "Printing and Publishing" exists in Oman and the interview with them showed that all of them submitted the five copies. Although Table 3 showed that there were 4 (16.6%) printing houses which either do not believe in the role of law of "Printing and Publishing" or feel the role of the law is not clear for them; however, as a behavior these printing houses also apply the law and submit the five copies. Conversely, the interview with the sample revealed that they had a problem which was "in the law there was not a specific time for submission, so some of them said they submit after one month and some of them after three months. It is better that the Ministry of Information makes an adjustment to the law and specifies the exact time of submission. Most of the legal deposit laws around the world specify the time of submission, but the timing varies. For example in Egypt five copies have to be submitted by the publishers within six months to the National library. (<http://www.library.illinois.edu/ias/iri/arabic>), while in Australia, the publishers have to deposit a copy of their publication within a month. ([http://www.nla.gov.au/sites/default/files/legaldeposit\\_june2012.pdf](http://www.nla.gov.au/sites/default/files/legaldeposit_june2012.pdf)).

Table 4 demonstrated that 24 (20%) of the printing houses showed that their beliefs match with their behavior towards the law. For example, Modern Muscat, which was founded in 1999, and the Creative, which began operations in 2009, demonstrated good behavior, and their beliefs were positive. The explanation of their behavior was that they understood their role, and, in practice, who had to submit the five copies. The newer printing houses (Public) were approved by the Press and Publications Department to start operating, but due to financial and administrative circumstances, they have not yet practiced the law. Actually, if people understand their role, they will not panic or be unhappy about the application of the law of Printing and Publishing.

In addition, the interview with the staff member from the Press and Publications Department showed that, in terms of printing houses' behavior, most of the printing houses obeyed the law and submitted the requested copies to the department, whether they submitted the copies themselves or the copies were submitted by the authors. The researchers believe that the printing houses compliance with the law is because there is an awareness about its importance and because they want to participate in the building of Oman's cultural democracy. Another explanation might be that there was a plan from the Ministry of Information to create the awareness about the legal deposit. Lor (2003) thinks that effective application of depository law is a continuous procedure that can be linked to overt and planned efforts applied by a trained and efficient staff; however it requires an adequate infrastructure support and dedicated administration. Tibane (2005) suggested that most publishers are willing to comply with legal deposit when they realize that the principle is universal and practiced in many countries.

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### *10.5 The interpretation of term "culture democracy" from the view point of the printing houses:*

It is important to hear from the printing houses what they understood by the term "culture democracy" as they might be not familiar with the term. Table 5 showed the interpretations of the main printing houses, and as it clear the interpretations focused on behavior and actions. The table showed that there are two groups of interpretations, one that interprets "culture democracy" as behavior and as a positive behavior to respect others and the country's laws and regulations. Some views expressed were as follows: "behave as a good citizen and respect the law and participate in country development" (Modern Muscat); "the right to choose your candidates in al shura council, the right to do what you would like to do, and say what you want to say without a conflict with the country regulations" (National Printing House); "It is related to your norms, beliefs about something, and sharing this culture with others" (United for Printing). The second group focuses on behavior, but without limitation. Examples of this are: "do what you want and transfer this culture to others" (Al-Mazyona, Dhalkut, Al Jabriya, Public, Jalan Bani Bu Ali).

We can call the first group of 19 (79.1%) the positive group of interpretation compared with 5 (20.8%) of the sample. The interpretation of the group which has a positive interpretation about the term "culture of democracy" reflects their understanding of the culture of democracy as a behavior and we are the messengers to transform this positive behavior to others. Their interpretation concentrates on behavior and respecting the law or doing what you would like to do without conflict with others. It is like when we say "your freedom ends when the freedom of others begins." In other words, the positive group has a positive involvement in the society and the positive behavior with the ability to do what you would like to do. According to the positive sample, however, democracy is not a free value but a value with a limitation, where the rules and the laws of the country are limited to this value. Ewekula (2004) expressed this view when he was talking about the law. He said law is a set of rules that exists in human society for regulating human conduct, resolving conflicts and avoiding human confrontation. This view agreed with IDLO (2015) that building democracy and the role of law may be convergent and mutually reinforcing processes whenever the rule of law is defined in broad, ends-based terms, rather than in narrow, formal and exclusively procedural terms. A common feature of both democracy and the role of law is that a purely institutional approach does not say anything about actual outcomes. The nexus is strong whenever the role of law is conceived in its relationship with substantive outcomes, like justice and democratic governance.

The positive group has positive interpretations about the "culture of democracy" and their views are affected by their previous Islamic education. Kashef (1981) said the imāma system is based on implementation of the shūrā principle, which constitutes a continuing and mandatory law. This principle of justice and equality reflects the spirit of political power in Islam; it aims at the unification of the nation and of society through effective participation by the citizens. So, the positive group fully understood the meaning of the term democracy and it is not a free value, but a value that adds positive participation and a positive role in society and individuals know

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they have rights as well duties.

The positive group maybe be affected and inspired by the views about the culture of democracy by their education especially if they studied in western countries, where the idea of democracy as Akhavi (2016) found is an idea and a set of practices that emerged in ancient Athens millennia ago, vanished around 320 BCE, and only reappeared in Europe around the seventeenth century, principally in the works of writers such as John Locke (1632–1704). Bertin (2009) said that in Europe there are much better democratic regimes than in many other countries. Many community members, who came back to Oman after their studies in the West, were influenced by the culture of democracy and they transformed their experience to Oman. Some of them have worked for a long time in business and have been close to the Ministry of Information and believe in what the ministry is trying to achieve through issuing the law of "Printing and Publishing". For the negative group, they do not have yet enough experiences about the importance of the law and the commitment of this law.

#### *10.6 The relationship between culture democracy and Law of Printing and Publishing:*

This study aims to find out the view of printing houses about the relationship between the culture of democracy and the law of "Printing and Publishing". Table 6 showed the relationship between the culture of democracy and the law of "Printing and Publishing". According to the table, the relationship between them can be categorized into three groups: the group who knows the relationship, the group who does not know, and the group who is sure there is no relation. The first group for whom the relationship was clear totalled 19 (79.1%) and this group thinks the relationship is between positive behavior of submitted the requested copies and the effect of this behaviour in building and developing the country. On the other hand, the second group of 3 (12.5%) did not know what the relationship was. The last group of 2 (8.3%) was sure there is no relationship (Dhalkut and Public).

Some examples of how the first group felt are as follows: Modern Muscat saw the relationship in "behave positively and submit the 5 copies of the materials before publishing means we have to behave as good citizens towards the country to help in collecting or building the country's intellectual heritage." Salalah's view was "when we understood the importance of the law of Printing and Publishing, we as publishers and printing houses respect it and follow it and this democracy helps in building the intellectual heritage of the country." In fact, 19 (79.1%) views were connected between duties for submission and participation in country development or behaving as good citizens. This group understands the value of democracy as it is. According to Changing Society (2007) democracy represents a set of decision-making institutions that embody respect for the equal worth of all citizens. Powerless and non-privileged people can express their preferences through democratic means.

The second group Al-Mazyona, MahdahPress, and AL Jabriya, are located in the area far away

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from Muscat. Al-Wardi (2009) states that many Arab cities remain centers of tribal concentrations more than veritable urban cities, and the influence of the tribes culture is not only extended to the individuals and groups, but also to political parties and modern movements in the Arab and Islamic world. So, as Al- Wardi said, Bedouins live in locations of Al-Mazyona, Mahdah Press, and Al Jabriya and even though they learn and obtain educational certificates they still will be guided by and be proud of the tribe. Democracy almost does not exist there.

## 11. Conclusion

As we explained previously, culture is not just about art, music and literature; it is more about the behaviors, practices and norms that define the ability of a people to govern themselves. On the other hand, democracy simply means the 'rule by the people.' Accordingly, it is very important to transform the cultural democracy; this is because cultural democracy is very important for citizens, as it protects and promotes cultural diversity and teaches the citizen how to take a role in country's development. The aim of this study was to explore the role of the Law of "Printing and Publishing" in Oman's culture of democracy. To explore this, we examined the reality of the Law of "Printing and Publishing" and the results showed that the law existed in Oman through issuing two articles in the Law of "Printing and Publishing." The study found the definition for the term "publications" is quite general. The results of the study also have shown that the law of "Printing and Publishing" plays a very important role in building Oman's culture of democracy. This is because, first of all, although it is a compulsory law, the Omani printing houses take the responsibility for obeying the law; this shows a high awareness and understanding of the importance of the law. Second, the researchers think the printing houses follow the law of "Printing and Publishing" because Islam asks us, as Muslims, to obey our rulers. Although the law is compulsory and Islam guarantees the right for each Muslim to say "no", the Omani printing houses believe that the law has been issued for their benefit and for the country's benefit. Through the law of "Printing and Publishing," Omani citizens can learn about their culture, their heritage and their intellectual development. The Press and Publications Department is responsible for creating awareness about the law, so it must educate the Omani people about the importance of the law. When they do this, citizens can participate more in creating Oman's culture of democracy.

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