



**UNIVERSITY
OF MALAYA**
KUALA LUMPUR

Local Government in a Transforming Society

Formal Harmony, Informal Discord

**LG173
A9 Pha**

Prof. Dr. Phang Siew Nooi

B. ARKIB

**Faculty of Economics and Administration,
University of Malaya**



**UNIVERSITY
OF MALAYA**

K U A L A L U M P U R

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY:
FORMAL HARMONY, INFORMAL DISCORD**

INAUGURAL LECTURE

Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya



A513366009

Prof. Dr. Phang Siew Nooi
Faculty of Economics and Administration
University of Malaya

15 September 2006

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY:
FORMAL HARMONY, INFORMAL DISCORD



Prof. Dr. Phang Siew Nooi
Faculty of Economics and Administration
University of Malaya

Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya



A513511409

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY: FORMAL HARMONY, INFORMAL DISCORD

Phang Siew Nooi

Faculty of Economics and Administration

University of Malaya

COMPREHENDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government is a level of government that needs no introduction; a system supposed to be well understood and comprehended by many; yet it is compounded by the problem of not having a definite or precise definition. As stated in the Report of the Royal Commission of Enquiry to Investigate into the Workings of Local Authorities in West Malaysia, "There is no precise definition of the term 'local government' though many of us do know what it means and portends" (Malaysia, 1970, p.29). Basically, this sums up the knowledge and level of understanding of local government. On the other hand, the United Nations gave a definition which in a general sense summarised what is local government universally. Local government has been described by the United Nations as "A political subdivision of a nation or (in a federal system) state, which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the power to impose taxes" (Norris, 1980a, p. 4).

Throughout history attempts have been made to further define local government giving it precision and body. Perhaps John J. Clarke's attempt at giving a short definition to local government may be relevant within the context of England but does not preclude it from being used in reference to an understanding of local government in a general sense (Clarke, 1955). It is within this context that the Report of the Royal Commission has referred to Clarke's definition in explaining local government in this country (Malaysia, 1970, p. 30). In brief, the concepts of local government according to Clarke mean:

- i. A government confined to local affairs assigned to it by a superior government to which it is subordinate and subject to its control and supervision;
- ii. It is autonomous to the extent to what is granted by the superior government;
- iii. It is representative or non-representative in character;
- iv. It is a separate legal entity with powers to sue and be sued; and

- v. It functions in a defined area to which it provides services.

However, as mentioned previously, it appears that although the generic definition may be applicable, the peculiarities of each country warrant that local government should be defined according to the current situation existing in that country.

DEFINING MALAYSIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

While local government is provided for in the Malaysian federal structure, yet a precise definition of it is lacking. Even the Report of the Royal Commission did not attempt to define it, preferring to fall back on the definitions and concepts of local government as widely publicised and accepted in democratic countries (see Clarke's definition above). Later, a committee formed by the Government to study the implications of the Report of the Royal Commission was also unable to express clear meanings except to state that "local government in Malaysia is a sub-system operating within or among a number of other sub-systems" (Malaysia, 1971).

This inability to express a precise definition at this stage of the Report may be explained by the fact that the nation's local government system was being prepared for crucial changes in the late 1970's. What would have been defined as local self-government in the past would not be identifiable today. There remains a lack of a precise definition of Malaysian local government. An attempt by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to give a meaning reflects this dilemma. The Ministry states that;

"Local governments are infra-sovereign geographic subdivisions of a sovereign nation or quasi-sovereign state, exercising the power of jurisdiction in a particular area. Many of them are legal entities, which means they can sue and be sued, and enter into contract" (Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1980).

However, this appears to be too general a definition as it has not taken into consideration the complexities of Malaysian local government. Being more precise, Norris states that;

"Local government in the context of Peninsular Malaysia denotes the government of urban areas, rural areas or a combination of urban and rural areas subordinate to the State Governments but having an independent legal existence from that government. It constitutes the third tier of the Federal structure" (Norris, 1980b).

With significant changes occurring within the country and the restructuring of local government completed in 1976, the image of local government in Malaysia has altered bringing in a new perception. While it retains some features of a conventional local government structure i.e. still being responsible for local services; a sub-division of the federal government and has a defined territory; the peculiarity of its Malaysian context has ensured it of a new definition. Today, local government in Malaysia can be defined as

"a State-created ... political entity thereby representing the third tier in a Federal structure, administered by State-nominated Councillors, geographically encompassing a portion of the country. It is infra-sovereign, subordinate and subject to the control of the State Government; yet is a separate legal unit being a body corporate having a common seal, with powers to sue and to be sued, mainly providing obligatory municipal services" (Phang, 1997, p.5).

POSITION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government is the lowest level in the governmental hierarchy of Malaysia known as the *third tier of government* or the *grass-root government*. Local government is a state creation, provided for in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution. Through the National Council for Local Government (NCLG), the Federal government exercises certain powers over local government. Nevertheless, it is the states that ultimately have overall responsibilities for the local authorities within their jurisdiction. It is within this scenario of inter-governmental dynamics that to a certain extent determine and influence local government's relationship and response to society.

What has been described above is the system of government in Malaysia as consisting of three levels, namely, the federal, the state and the local; the federal government is the sovereign-national, the state government is the quasi-sovereign and local government the infra-sovereign. Each tries to operate within its sphere of legal authority but in practice there are attempts for each to wield its powers beyond the prescribed borders.

In the area of inter-governmental relationships, the federal structure of government in Malaysia tends to be heavily biased towards the central government. This has the tendency to shift the balance of power to the centre and define the relationship between the federal-state and local governments. States and local governments operate within a framework where they are

politically and economically subordinate to the federal government. Each state is recognised as an independent level of government exercising legislative and executive powers within the Constitutional limits. This is further aided by the federal constitution that provides for federal laws to supersede those of the states if for any reason there happens to be a conflict between these laws. This is to ensure that the exercise of state executive powers does not cross those of the higher tier. The division of powers between federal and state governments reveals a central bias. This is supported by Morrison (1994, p.80), who stated that "...in practice the states have little real autonomy. Although some federal functions have been decentralised, most decision-making remains at national level".

At the local level, although local government is a state matter, through the NCLG, federal power is sustained. Under the provision of the federal constitution Article 95(A), the decisions of the NCLG are binding on all state governments. The NCLG can formulate policies and advise on matters pertaining to local government, and all states, with the exception of Sabah and Sarawak, need to comply with these regulations. The NCLG, a body with almost equal federal and state representation is the ultimate authority for deciding local government policy although it is designed to proceed on the basis of consensus. The policy decision made by the NCLG binds both the federal and state governments. The federal ministry in charge of local government can advise, a role which is only as strong as the expertise and financial resources are at its disposal. Through the various federal laws concerning local government such as the Local Government Act 1976 (Act 171), the Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172) and the Street, Drainage and Building Act 1974 (Act 133), central control is further intensified. The *raison d'être* for perpetuating this type of federal-local relations is for ensuring uniformity of law and order, policy implementation, advice, and provision of technical and financial assistance; for which states have long been unable to provide their local authorities.

Historically, state-local relations in Malaysia had been eventful leading to the reform of local government in the early 1970s (Malaysia, 1970) with subsequent federal interventions whenever the occasion demanded especially in financial and political matters (Norris, 1980a; Phang, 1997; Garzia-Jansen, 2002). Consequently, local government in Malaysia is left to fend for itself as most times, states are seldom in a position to assist the local authorities, they themselves relying on the federal government for financial support (Phang, 1997; Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 2003). The absence of overall direction has ultimately led to individual state restructuring its local authorities according to its initiatives and preferences with little uniformity in interpretation and development amongst the states. Under such circumstances, questions arise

as to the position of local government within this convoluted inter-governmental relationship as well as the issues of decentralisation and local autonomy. Added to this is the uncertainty of local government's ability to sustain the challenges from a community susceptible to internal and global influence.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY

Local government everywhere is managed in an environment that is forever changing. Current trends of social and political changes in the regions of the world are affecting the way our communities perceive their local governments and influencing the way local governments govern. Compounded with the development and surging usage of digitisation, staying connected has encouraged interdependencies and influenced societies to compare and note the changes that take place within and outside the sphere of their local government's jurisdiction. Communities have often times been regarded as the users and choosers of services, but with increasing public involvement and participation, the future will recognise societies as movers and shapers.

With changing perception of the public service through participation and empowerment there is this need to narrow the continuing distance between the state and society (Minogue, 1998). However, local government works within a stable set of institutions with established functions and a fixed structure. General knowledge of local government prescribes it as having to perform functions that include formal duties, municipal and community services that are meant to enhance the local environment and project a symbol of local representation. Due to its proximity with the local community, local government has a profound effect on the lives of the people it serves, especially within the scenario of rising economic and population growth. Society's changing norms and values, and increasing liberalisation provides a daunting challenge to the capacity of local government to cope and manage. It is inevitable that in meeting this change need local government has to redefine its role and reconceptualise its position, vis-à-vis the supply and demand side for public services and functions. Gone are the days when organisations which serve society in a lackadaisical manner escape with minor criticisms and scrutiny.

Present day society is less tolerant of such incompetence and weakness arising from governments that are unable and unwilling to change to keep in tandem with growing community needs. The impact of globalisation has influenced the way community development has evolved; and also the promotion of community empowerment. It is about enabling people to act together effectively to influence issues, political, social and economic which

affect them. The emphasis is upon confronting attitudes and practices of institutions which are discriminatory (Mayo, 2005).

SOME FEATURES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN MALAYSIA

a) Categories of Local Authorities and Population

Local government in Malaysia can be categorised under five types i.e. city hall, city council, municipal council, district council and town board. Altogether there are 144 local authorities throughout the country (Table 1).

Table 1: Malaysia: Number of Local Authorities and by Types - 2006

Types of Local Authority (LA)	Peninsular Malaysia	Sabah	Sarawak	Total
City Hall	1	1	1	3
City Council	6	0	2	8
Municipal Council	28	2	2	32
District Council	62	18	20	100
Town Board	0	1	0	1
Total	97	22	25	144

Local Government in Malaysia provides services to 84.4% of the city's total population of 23.2 million people, with the municipal and district councils servicing comparatively more as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Local Government Population in Malaysia

Types of LA	Total Population	Average Population per Type of LA	% to National Population
City Hall	1,813,702	604,567	7.8
City Council	2,828,728	353,591	12.3
Municipal Council	8,430,818	263,463	36.7
District Council and Town Board	6,340,508	62,777	27.6

Source: Malaysia (2000), Population and Housing Census of Malaysia.

On the whole Malaysia's average population per local authority is high when compared to some Commonwealth countries (Table 3). Yet such large numbers are apparently insignificant as these people are not involved directly in the decision making process of local authorities.

Table 3: Average Population Size of Local Authority

Country	Average Population Per LA
United Kingdom	128,000
Belize	12,727
Ghana	167,548
New Zealand	54,878
Malaysia*	134,818

Source: Commonwealth Local Government Handbook 2005.

* Based on local government population by number of local authorities.

For the future, one cannot discount the significant impact and influence from a large mass. With the process of change happening everywhere, people become more aware of government affairs and matters affecting them as citizens and their community.

b) Local Councillors

Presently the number of local councillors throughout the different regions in Malaysia is estimated at 3,482 (Table 4).

Table 4: Estimated Number of Local Government Councillors, 2006

Region	Number of Councillors
Peninsular Malaysia	2,304
Sabah	528
Sarawak	650
Total	3,482

Note: Based on 24 councillors per local authority in Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah; and 25 councillors per local authority in Sarawak.

Ever since the abolition of local elections in mid 1970s, all local councillors have been appointed by their respective state chief ministers. The consequence is that the process of nomination and appointment has the tendency of biasness towards members of the component parties of the ruling National Front Party. With each local council being allowed a maximum of 24 councillors in accordance to the Local Government Act 1976 (except in Sarawak), there are approximately 3,482 councillors in Malaysia. Taking into account that the total population of local government is around 19.41 million, each councillor represents an average of 5,575 people at the local level. This is indeed a large number when compared to some Commonwealth countries where the average population per councillor is about 2,400 (Table 5). However, the word “representative” in the Malaysian context appears a misnomer as the councillors are not elected by the community to represent them.

Table 5: Average Population per Councillor

Country	Average Population per Councillor
England	2,533
Wales	2,337
Australia	2,933
Pakistan	2,000
Malaysia	5,575

Source: www.icu.gov.my/pdf/sabah.pdf

www.nilga.org

www.mosman.nsw.gov.au/council/election2004

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP

In Malaysia, the practice of good governance is strongly encouraged by the government and discussed in various publications (Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 2002; Johari and Chong, 2004; Yap and Chatterjee, 2004). While the idea of promoting good governance is noble, however, to operationalise it on the ground is difficult especially with regards to community participation. This is clearly reflected at the local level in Malaysia where local government has been challenged to address growing community demands in the face of uncertainties such as global change, increasing urbanisation and sensitivities surrounding intergovernmental relationships.

The practice by local governments in the developing countries in the management of their locality especially the urban conurbation and cities had been exclusively an exercise in centralised administration. Malaysia, not excepting, had established its local government based upon traditional concepts of governance that was not prepared to confront the consequences of planning, managing and governing cities and towns that are homes to thousands and millions of people. The key to local administration was centralisation and pursuance of the traditional top-down approach (Phang and Ahmad, 2001). With increasing public awareness and demands for transparency, accountability and community participation, the practice of centralised administration by local government is severely challenged and local government is under tremendous pressure to respond. What is discerning from this scenario is a need for a local government and community relationship that is less bureaucratic and tolerant of public opinion and views. The community seeks empowerment from local government as much as local government seeks autonomy from the higher tiers of governments. This hinges on the concept of decentralisation and local autonomy within the context of emerging neo-centralism.

DECENTRALISATION, FORMAL HARMONY AND INFORMAL DISCORD

Decentralisation refers to the delegation of government responsibilities from higher level of government to lower level of government. De-concentration refers to the delegation of higher level government duties to lower level units while authority remains with the central government. Devolution presumes assignment of powers and resources to autonomous local government where the use of resources is decided locally and management is accountable to the local leadership. In Malaysia, the administrative structure follows a combined approach of decentralisation, devolution and de-concentration and promotes administrative decentralisation. In a sense, decentralisation of this nature seeks to improve governance and service delivery by reducing delays and bureaucratic processes at different tiers of governments. However, present trends in community and inter-government relationships indicate a need for delegation of powers to citizens and representative government accentuating the relevance of political decentralisation, co-existing with administrative decentralisation.

In an effort to harmonise relationship between states and local government and between local government and the community, the idea of decentralisation has become the link-pin for formal harmony. Due to this convoluted relationship, formal harmony is perceived through

institutionalised policies, rules, regulations and basically the law. However, this mechanism weakens considerably when exercised at the third tier of government, i.e. between local government and the community where as a consequence of institutionalised regulations formal representation of the community via the process of voting in general election is completely absent. It is obvious, that implementing administrative decentralisation without adequate political reforms and devoid of political decentralisation will result in informal discord. This supports the notion that the concept of centralisation is further reinforced at the expense of decentralisation. On the other hand, the implementation of Local Agenda 21 (LA21), and its characteristic "bottom-up" approach actually acknowledges that a relationship exists between the local government and its community. Unfortunately in Malaysia, LA21 did not achieve political decentralisation via formal delegation of powers from local government to the community. Basically because formal and legitimate transfer of powers and accountability to community is absent; local officials instead become primarily accountable to themselves and local influential elites. Apparently, this appears to be a recurrent trend in Africa too (Smoke, 2003). In addition, a consequence of a lack of or weak implementation of political decentralisation can give rise to informal discord.

While the traditional relevance and position of local government in Malaysia remains, its approach in deliverance requires re-orientation in line with the needs for greater decentralisation, emerging localism, devolution of authority and empowerment. As Stren has aptly stated that this is one of the intriguing paradoxes of globalisation generating a new interest in relationship between civil society and government; and as civil society flourishes, there is a weakening of state institutions especially at the national levels (Stren, 2001). In line with the needs for increasing public participation in the business of local governance, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has stated in its reference to the concept of governance that *"In a world where the participation of business and civil society is increasingly the norm, the term 'governance' better defines the process by which citizens collectively solve their problems and meet society's needs, using 'government' as the instrument"* (OECD, 2000). The fundamental challenge for local government is therefore, how to strengthen local governance in the quest for change in line with the objectives of good governance especially the need for increasing community participation while trying to consolidate its autonomy within an emerging trend of neo-centralism.

THE PATH TO NEO-CENTRALISM

The basis for the establishment of local government in Malaysia adhered to the broad definition by the United Nations as *"A political subdivision of a nation or a State (in a federal system), which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the power to impose taxes"* (United Nations, 1962, p.89). However, over time, with its immersion into the centralised system of Malaysia's political system, local government has morphed into a tier of government that is subordinate to the federal government and under the direct control of the respective state governments. In other words, local government in Malaysia is a state responsibility.

While this may be so, history has shown that throughout, the central government has maintained its control over local government via instruments of laws and regulations and principally the dependence on central government for financial grants and aid (Norris, 1980a). In fact the powers of the local government was further eroded with the suspension of local elections in 1965 and its subsequent abolition and the "take-over" of its administration by the various state governments over allegations of mal-administration and mismanagement by local authorities (Malaysia, 1970; Tennant, 1973; Norris, 1980a). These events were followed by the restructuring of local government that began in the mid 70s to the mid 80s and further contributed to erosion of local autonomy when one of its recommendations that local elections be resumed was not accepted by the federal government. Advocates of decentralisation have pointed out that governments tend to emphasise de-concentration at the expense of devolution when facing challenges from the local governments; and Malaysia is no exception (Smith, 1967; Norris, 1980a). In Malaysia, the cut back on local self government was based primarily on the premise that centralisation would hasten achievement of national unity in a country which is made up of different ethnic groups and largely dissected between the urban and rural areas. Inherent also is the view that since there already exists elections at the state and central levels; these are sufficient and the people should be contented.

The restructuring process was implemented in stages as it depended on the state governments and involved complex procedures. Towards the end of it, local authorities were amalgamated, created and reclassified; their roles and functions re-defined to provide extended services to larger areas that encompassed outlying rural areas and to act as development and planning agents. The peculiarity of this restructuring did not imply greater devolution of powers and local government powers was limited by the principle of *ultra-vires* – it can only perform functions provided for in the statutes and in gazetted areas. The control by the state and federal

governments still exists and local government has to continue to seek state approval over most matters especially budgetary and human resource issues. Through the provisions assigned to federal government via the NCLG and the provisions of the Local Government Act 1976 federal influence and domination have further increased. It can be assumed that community's views of local government and its transgression from free local elections to its abolition was inconsequential and there was no referendum and seeking of public opinion.

After nearly two and half decades since the completion of the restructuring, whatever changes that have occurred within local government are apparently more ad hoc and "muddling-through" rather than incremental and purposeful. Truly, the path towards neo-centralism had since then been set. Within this period the nation itself experienced various upturns and downturns in its economic growth. Towards the end of the 1980s, Malaysia was experiencing spectacular growth of double digits in its economy together with the emerging economies of countries such as Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines. By the mid 1990s, Asia's economic miracle had tapered off with the crash of the economy of Thailand and the domino effect continued to drag down Malaysia's economy as well as other Asian countries (Gill, 1998). Politically, the country experienced a crisis of sorts during this time when its then Deputy Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim was sacked in 1998 and the country faced street demonstrations that challenged the leadership of Dr. Mahathir Mohamad who was then the Prime Minister. Since then the country has held two general elections (1999 and 2004) at the state and federal levels and seen a change in political leadership with the retirement of Dr. Mahathir and his replacement with the present Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in 2003.

PERCEIVED REPRESENTATION

Through prolonged absence of local government elections, it is inevitable that the community now regard appointment of councillors as the accepted norm of local representation. From a survey on community views only 10.5% of the respondents agreed to the process of selection of councillors via general elections. The majority of 48.6% held the opinion that local councillors should be appointed from amongst the local community but who do not represent any political party (Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 2006). Apparently, the community has come to terms with the idea of central nomination and appointment of councillors as an ideal form of local representation. If local elections were equated with democracy and autonomy, then their importance and significance have been reduced as the

objectives of democracy and autonomy have been relegated to the last of five objectives as stated in the Royal Commission Report (Malaysia, 1970, p. 47). In 1970, democracy and autonomy were regarded as the least important objectives and the position still remains. Indeed, community participation as one of the principles of good governance is not even mentioned as one of the priorities and this observation shows the extent of preference for community's role in local government.

Community participation has been viewed as an exercise in public relations with little contribution to local government's decision making process. It is still reminiscence of a "top-down" approach in administration. In recent years, the concepts of community participation and local autonomy have been seen as prerequisites for sustainable development especially with rapid urbanisation. With the surge of non-government organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), religious associations and many other pressure groups, there is a demand for involvement in matters pertaining to the local environment. Many international agencies such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations-Habitat have contributed to awareness in community development and importance of decentralisation. The general trend today is recognition of decentralisation as an important element of good governance and elected local councillors as empowerment of the community. Indeed, there is a profound shift in the manner and system of how local government should perform and its relationships with the communities and supra level governments.

With so much that have transpired, it is apt that local government is assessed as to its worthiness and functionality now as the nation moves towards a developed status in 2020 and with high expectations from the general public. This is the general trend that seems to be happening to local government elsewhere too especially after reforms have been carried out, where questions are raised as to the viability of local government within states. For instance countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia have displayed similar inquisitiveness with regards to the relevance or not of their local governments (Swianiewicz, 2003).

OBSERVATION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Initial observations with regard to local government in Malaysia note the lack of community participation, transparency and local self government. Decentralisation has remained elusive for local government in Malaysia with powers being consolidated at the centre. Local government powers are limited to within what the Local Government Act 1976 allows with most

decisions needing the approval of state and central governments. Compounded with this is the fact that local government needs the help of central treasury as it suffers from financial constraints and a lack of professional staff.

Centralisation is further reinforced by the government for national unity in a country that is divided along different ethnic groups with diverse religious beliefs. Under such fragile circumstances, national stability is of utmost importance and central intervention is favoured. Next, is the rural-urban divide which requires strong policies to bridge the economic disparity between these two sectors as further widening of the gap between them may threaten future economic and political stability. Again central control is favoured because not all rural areas fall under the umbrage of local government. Certainly, the government does transfer some powers outside of the central government, by way of de-concentration, but formal and real control still belongs with the central government. Local government is excluded from the main decision making process at the centre.

It appears that deconcentration is the preferred form of decentralisation for local governance in Malaysia; devolution in the real sense being absent since local representation through the electoral process had been abolished many years ago. Yet devolution was the rationale for the establishment of local government in the country. By virtue of some bad experiences with local representation, it was rejected as wholly unworkable.

Nevertheless, political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation has been happening in other developing countries augmenting the authority of local government and increasing community participation (Asian Development Bank, 1999, 2004; World Bank, 2001). However, in Malaysia, it will be overly simplistic to assume that such events occurring outside of the country may influence the transformation of local government in the immediate future. In this respect, central government should bring about change where necessary and community itself should understand and consent to the changes where relevant and possible. For the moment, local government in a transforming community in Malaysia still remains in dilemma.

REFERENCES

- Asian Development Bank (1999), *Urban Sector Strategy*, Agriculture and Social Sectors Department (East).
- _____ (2004), *City Development Strategies to Reduce Poverty*, Regional Sustainable Development Department, ADB Philippines.
- Garzia-Jansen, B (2002), *Town Planning Legislation and Land Use in Malaysia: A Case Study of Petaling Jaya*, University of Malaya, (unpublished Doctoral Thesis).
- Clarke, John, J (1955), *The Local Government of the United Kingdom*, London, Pitman Pub. Corporation.
- Commonwealth Local Government Forum (2005), *Commonwealth Local Government Handbook 2005*, United Kingdom.
- Gill, Ranjit (1998), *Asia Under Siege*, Epic Management Services Ltd, Singapore.
- Johari, Mohd Yaakub, Chong Shu Yaw (eds.) (2004), *Principles and Practices of Good Governance: The Way Forward for Sabah*, Institute for Development Studies (IDS), Kota Kinabalu.
- Malaysia (1970), *Report of the Royal Commission of Enquiry to Investigate into the Workings of Local Authorities in West Malaysia*, Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur.
- _____ (1971), *Report of the Committee to Study the Implications of the Report of the Royal Commission of Enquiry to Investigate into the Workings of Local Authorities in West Malaysia*, Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur.
- _____ (1974), *Street and Drainage and Building Act 1974 (Act 133)*, Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur.
- _____ (1976), *Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172)*, Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur.
- _____ (1976), *Local Government Act 1976 (Act 171)*, Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur.
- _____ (2000), *Department of Statistics, Population and Housing Census of Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur.
- _____ (2001), *Eighth Malaysian Plan 2001-2005*, Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur.
- _____ (2004), *Economic Report 2004/2005*, Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur.
- _____ (2006), *Ninth Malaysia Plan 2006-2010*, Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur.
- Ministry of Housing and Local Government (1980), *Modernization of the Local Government System in Malaysia*.
- _____ (2002), *Local Agenda 21*.

- _____ (2003), *Annual Equalisation Grant for Local Authorities in Peninsular Malaysia Report*, (unpublished).
- _____ (2006), *Efficiency, Role and Functions of Local Authorities in National Development Report*, (unpublished).
- Mayo, M (2005), *Global Citizens: Social Movements and the Challenge of Globalization*, Zed Books Ltd, United Kingdom.
- Minogue, M (1998) 'Changing the State: Concepts and Practice in the Reform of the Public Sector', in (Minogue, M., Polidano, C., Hulme, D. (eds), *Beyond The New Public Management*, Edward Elgar Publication Ltd, United Kingdom.
- Morrison, W (1994), *Spatial Planning Procedures in Malaysia*, Final Draft prepared for the Meeting of the Steering Committee for the National Spatial Planning Project, Kuala Lumpur.
- Norris, MW (1980a), *Local Government in Peninsular Malaysia*, Gower, London.
- _____, (1980b), 'Restructuring of Local Government – An Assessment', In *Malaysian Management Review*, Vol. 15, No.1, April.
- OECD (2000), 'The Reform of Metropolitan Governance', A Policy Brief: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, (www.oecd.org/dataoecd/3/17/1918016.pdf) (Accessed 15 August 2006).
- Phang Siew Nooi (1997), *Financing Local Government in Malaysia*, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur.
- Phang Siew Nooi, and Ahmad Abdullah Sanusi (2001), 'Role of Universities in Meeting the Challenges of a Changing Urban Environment', in *Malaysian Journal of Economics Studies*, Vol. XXXV111, No.1 and 2, pp. 65-71.
- Smith, BC (1967), *Field Administration: An Aspect of Decentralisation*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
- Smoke, P (2003), 'Decentralisation in Africa: Goals, Dimensions, Myths and Challengers' in *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 23, Issue. 1, pp 7-16.
- Sri Tharan, 'Prospects for Administration Reforms in Malaysia', Faculty of Economics and Administration, University Malaya, (unpublished paper).
- Stren, R (2001), 'Urban Government and Politics in a Global Context: The Growing Importance of Localities' in Yusuf, S.; Evenelt, S. and Wu, W. (eds.), *Facets in Globalization: International and Local Dimensions of Development*, World Bank. Discussion Paper No. 415 World Bank, Washington DC, pp. 147-170.

- Swianiewicz, P (2003), 'Between Active Appreciation, Passive Approval and Distrustful Withdrawal' in Swianiewicz, P. (ed), *Public Perception of Local Governments Reforms and Local Democracy in Central-Eastern Europe*, Open Society Institution, Budapest, pp. 19-40.
- Tennant, P (1973), 'The Abolition of Elective Local Government in Penang', in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*.
- UNDP (1997), Governance for sustainable human development. A UNDP policy document, (<http://mirror.undp.org/magnet/policy/chapter1.htm>.) (Accessed 6 April 2006).
- United Nations (1962), Decentralisation of National and Local Government, United Nations, New York.
- World Bank (2001), World Development Report 2000/2001, Attacking Poverty, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Yap, A and Chatterjee, P (2004), Cities, Citizens and Civilization, The Urban Governance Initiative (TUGI), UNDP, Malaysia.

WEBSITES

- www.dawn.com/2005/01/17/op.htm#4 (Accessed 5 April 2006).
- www.mosman.nsw.gov.au/council/election2004 (Accessed 5 April 2006).
- www.globalis.gvu.unu.edu/indicator_detail.cfm?Country=MY&IndicatorID=98 (Accessed 6 April 2006).
- www.icu.gov.my/pdf/sabah.pdf (Accessed 6 April 2006).
- www.nilga.org/ (Accessed 5 April 2006).
- www.statistics.gov.my (Accessed 6 April 2006).
- www.oecd.org/dataoecd/3/17/1918016.pdf (Accessed 15 August 2006).