
Cataloguing and Classification Education: The Nigerian Perspective

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Abstract

The paper focused on cataloguing and classification education in library schools in Nigeria. Cataloguing and classification courses are the heart and soul in library schools. The process of systematic organization of acquired information resources is through cataloguing and classification. Library schools still made cataloguing and classification courses compulsory despite the introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) into library and information services in Nigeria. Cataloguing and classification education in South Africa, Brazil, United States of America and Nigeria were discussed in this paper. Resources like cataloguing tools, cataloguing and classification laboratory, computer laboratory and instructor were also described. The paper concluded that cataloguing and classification tools, laboratories, computer laboratory and instructors were inadequate in some library schools which may hinder effective teaching and learning of these courses. Recommendations were made for effective cataloguing and classification education in Nigeria.

Introduction

Education can be defined as the activity which is aimed at the development of knowledge, moral values and understanding needed in all circumstances of life, and not just knowledge and skills pertaining to a restricted field of knowledge (Oketunji, 2005). Oketunji further stated that the objectives of tertiary education are to train and produce individuals in such a way that they can develop fully in their careers. A library school is an institution of higher learning specialising in the training of librarians. According to Saleh (2011) the first library school in Nigeria is the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of Ibadan which began as the Institute of Librarianship was opened in 1960 at the University College Ibadan and the second was at the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, in 1968. Saleh (2011) further stated that two additional library schools were established at Bayero University, Kano and University of Maiduguri in 1977 and 1978 respectively (Saleh, 2011 and University of Ibadan, Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies, 2011). Presently, there are over fifty institutions including universities (federal, states and private), polytechnics and colleges of education across the country (Southern and Northern Nigeria) that offer library and information science programmes at Certificate; Ordinary, National and Higher Diploma; Degree and Higher Degree levels. Library schools train librarians who are expected to work in library and information centres, in various sections including cataloguing and classification. Cataloguing and classification is the process of organising information resources such that information seekers could easily access and retrieve information in library and information centres.

Cataloguing education in library schools aims to produce librarians and information scientists that are capable of effectively managing library and information centres after graduating. Iwe (2005) asserted that since library education started in Nigeria about half a century ago, cataloguing has been regarded as a core subject in the curricula of library schools. With the diversification of subjects, some core subjects were made electives but cataloguing was not affected because of it is the hub of librarianship. Library schools still retained the compulsory status of cataloguing despite the introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) into library and information services in Nigeria. Cataloguing is important in the organisation of information resources for easy access and retrieval whether in a traditional or in

an electronic library. Cataloguing processes are those activities that occur from the time a book enters the cataloguing department until it is sent to the shelf and the final catalogue product, whether cards or machine-readable records or some form of printed catalogue has been made (Abolaji, 2005). Nwalo (2005), citing Afolabi and Osaniyi (1986) stated that cataloguing and classification are the heart and soul of librarianship. Cataloguing and classification education requires students to acquire theoretical and practical knowledge on how to organise and retrieve information resources at minimum ease. Adedibu, Akinboro and Abdussalam (2012) asserted that cataloguing and classification make retrieval of library materials easy for users. Adedibu, Akinboro and Abdussalam (2012) citing Adedibu (2009) stated that the purpose of organising library materials is to make location of library materials easy, save time and space, facilitate easy accessibility to the materials, enhance effective utilisation of the materials and make the library attractive to its users.

Cataloguing and Classification Education in Library Schools

Library schools are expected to expose students of librarianship to the rudiments of cataloguing and classification to enable users of library and information centres enjoy the benefits specified. Cataloguing is divided into two parts namely, descriptive and subject cataloguing. According to Aina (2004), descriptive cataloguing is that part of cataloguing which involves providing a bibliographic description using elements that are taken from the physical make-up of each document as well as choice of access points. Atinmo (2007) pointed out that prior to the evolution of the Internet, the cataloguer organised the library collection through descriptive and subject cataloguing of resources using standard tools which had been developed over many years. Adedibu, Akinboro and Abdussalam (2012) described the process of descriptive cataloguing as first allocating access points to the document. This entails the description of the essential parts such as the person or body responsible for the work, title, pagination, publisher, place of publication, edition and series note. All the parts listed in descriptive cataloguing are expected to follow a standard rule in order to conform to world standard. The Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, Second Edition (AACR2) is the major international standard for cataloguing all types of materials, including books, pamphlets, printed sheets, cartographic materials, manuscript, music and sound recordings, motion pictures and

video records, graphic materials, computer files, three-dimensional artifacts and realia, microforms, and serials (Sales, 2005).

Aina (2004) posited that AACR2 is truly international as many national committees of other countries in which AACR2 is used had made input. It is divided into two parts. Part 1 is titled the description which provides for general rules for describing all types of information carriers while Part 2 is devoted to headings, uniform titles, and references. Aina highlighted the principles on which AACR2 is based as follows: descriptions are to be formulated in accordance with the specifications of the International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD), all media of communication are to be treated equally, descriptions are based on the bibliographic item; and access points are to be derived from the nature of the work being catalogued and not the nature of the bibliographic entity to be catalogued. Atinmo (2007) listed the tools for cataloguing as Anglo American Cataloguing Rules Second Edition (AACR2), 1978, revised 1988, the International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD), Sears List of Subject Headings, and Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH).

Nwalo (2012) cited in Segun (2011) stated that the AACR2 which provided rules for description of print, non-print and electronic resources have been found not to be very suitable for describing web resources and was replaced by the Resource Description Access (RDA) published in 2010 and fully implemented in libraries in the USA from January 2013. RDA is the new standard for resource description and access designed for the digital world. Nwalo further averred that RDA provides a comprehensive set of guidelines and instructions on resource description and access covering all types of content and media. Cerbo (2011) described RDA as an additional tool to aid the cataloguer in supplying the right information in the right format to the researchers or patrons who deem the information of value. Library and information schools are expected to make provision for new development in their cataloguing and classification laboratory.

The next step to descriptive cataloguing is subject cataloguing. Adedibu, et al (2012) affirmed that the second step in cataloguing is assigning subject to the document. The document must be examined carefully to get the required information from the title, sub-title, covers, jacket description, content page, references and

existing catalogue. Concepts which best describe the subject and which a user is most likely to search should be identified. Furthermore, Adedibu averred that a tool called Subject Headings should be consulted to find suitable and appropriate uniform headings which use alphabetical, structured controlled language and cross-references or related terms. Library of Congress Subject Headings and Sears List of Subject Headings have been the most influential and popular ones used by libraries. On the importance of assigning subject headings to library resources, Sales (2005) submitted that it enables the catalogue user to find everything the library has on a given subject. It may be noted that when the cataloguer wants to determine the subject that is being treated in a particular resource in the library, the title may not be the best place to check because it may mislead the cataloguer. Students need to know how to do subject analysis of information resources. Once the subject of an information resource has been found in the subject headings being used in the library, the next step is classification.

According to Dina and Fawale-Oluwole (2002), classification in the library is the systematic arrangement of library resources according to the subjects treated in them. In other words, modern classification uses the subject treatment of information resources as the sole criterion for separating one from the other. Dina and Fawale-Oluwole further stated that resources are classified according to the subject they treat. It is through classification that call numbers or class marks are assigned to library books and non-book materials through which they can be located on the shelves. American Library Association-ALA (2012) defined classification as the process of assigning a number to an item so as to be able to shelve the item with other items on the same subject. The tools for classification are referred to as classification schemes such as Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme (DDC), Library of Congress Classification Scheme (LC), Universal Decimal Classification Scheme (UDC), Bliss Classification Scheme and Colon Classification Scheme (Dina and Fawale-Oluwole, 2002). The most commonly used classification schemes in the United States of America, according to American Library Association (2012), are Dewey Decimal Classification and the Library of Congress Classification. Both schemes are used widely and actively updated. The two schemes are also, the most widely used classification schemes in libraries and information centres in Nigeria.

Information and Communication Technology, Cataloguing and Classification

The introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) into the library system has made cataloguing and classification processes more interesting. Zaid (2008) asserted that original cataloguing and classification of library materials is a pain-staking and time consuming exercise. It is possible to have materials processed within a week with the deployment of ICTs which the traditional methods of cataloguing and classification could not have catalogued for months in the cataloguing section. Zaid (2008) shared the experience of the University of Lagos Library thus:

“several backlogs of un-catalogued materials have been processed through the aid of the internet. She stated further that the number of books processed increased from 45,496 processed in 2006/2007 to 180,680 processed in 2007/2008 academic session. Library and information schools are expected to allow their students to have access to computer laboratory with internet access to enable students have the practical knowledge”

Zaid (2008) and Adeleke (2009) listed web-driven facilities that cataloguers can adopt to make their work easier, more interesting and efficient as Online Computer Library Center's (OCLC) World-Cat, the Library of Congress Online catalogue, Dewey Online catalog, National Library of Medicine, National Agricultural library catalogue, Library of Congress Classification Web and the Cataloguing Calculator. Students should be allowed to experience some of these facilities in library and information schools for them to have more interest and possibly perform well in the courses.

Despite the introduction of computer and Internet services in the library, cataloguing and classification courses are still imperative in library and information schools. Holley (2002) asserted that cataloguing remains a fundamental component of library and information science and has many lessons to teach the architects of the Internet age. All students can benefit from taking a cataloguing course, especially if it stresses cataloguing within a larger context that also includes indexing and Internet search engines.

Curriculum experts may include the current issues like information and communication technology in cataloguing and classification curriculum to make the courses more relevant to the needs of the students in the 21st Century. In a survey of library school graduates in the United States (US), Kovacs and Dayton (2002) found that, of the 191 respondents, whether they had positions as cataloguers or not, the overwhelming majority (89%) felt that such a course is essential and should be required. Truly, the course should be compulsory in the library and information schools because of its importance in the organisation of library resources. Ocholla, Ocholla, Olson, Glover and Guimaraes (2012) surveyed three-country's (South Africa, Brazil and United States of America) instructors in library schools and revealed thus; South African respondents from the eight- library and information science (LIS) schools offering cataloguing and classification education considered cataloguing and classification to be a core LIS course; the backbone of librarianship's professional qualification; a course that supports knowledge of library information and reference services.

According to Ocholla, et al (2012), in Brazil, information processing, including classification, indexing, abstracting, cataloguing and information retrieval are believed to be the nucleus of LIS studies, and constitute an average 25% of the hours of the total library course. All the respondents declared that classification and cataloguing teaching in library schools are "surely very important", but also consider the need for changes and adaptations to fit new users' needs including the need to furnish technological empowerment to librarians and users. All but one of the United States (US) respondents agreed, although not whole-heartedly, that cataloguing and classification should be available to students. Most of them suggested that it should be an elective rather than a required course. The survey gave prominence to the teaching of cataloguing and classification in South Africa and Brazil library schools except in the US where the respondents suggested elective status for the courses which gives room to students to have a choice of not registering for them since they are not compulsory. Cataloguing and classification knowledge is still necessary in library schools since the knowledge is needed in other sections of the library like reference and circulation. The infusion of information and communication technology (ICT) into the teaching of the courses is very important since it is being used in library activities. Ocholla et al (2012) citing Hsieh-Yee (2008) averred that the traditional catalogue while trusted by users is not a first

choice in finding information and is no longer cost-effective; theory and principles of knowledge organisation are still necessary and need to be connected with technological knowledge.

In Nigerian library schools, undergraduates are required to take two core/compulsory cataloguing and classification courses titled “Organisation of Knowledge I”- LIS 202 and Organisation of Knowledge II”- LIS 301 (Lawal, 2009 and University of Ibadan, Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies, 2011). Cataloguing and classification education is still very important in library and information schools for students to be able to organise library resources. There is need for the library and information schools in Nigeria to provide good atmosphere for the library school students to learn how to use the computer in cataloguing and classifying library resources. All the equipment needed in the computer laboratory should be made available and accessible for students’ use. Cataloguing and classification is still necessary in library and information schools with the knowledge of information and communication technology (ICT) being incorporated into it. In the words of Gorman (2002), enemies of cataloguing today include ill-informed administrators, information scientists in library schools, and those who think that alternatives to vocabulary control and bibliographic architecture- such as Google are better and cheaper than cataloguing. He concluded that bibliographic control and cataloguing should be at the heart of library education.

Resources for Teaching and Learning Cataloguing and Classification in Library Schools

Resources for teaching and learning cataloguing and classification courses in library schools are physical (cataloguing and computer laboratories), human (lecturers and cataloguing instructors) and instructional resources (textbooks and cataloguing tools). This paper discusses cataloguing tools, cataloguing and classification laboratory, computer laboratory and cataloguing instructor. Cataloguing tools are very essential in teaching and learning cataloguing and classification courses in library schools. According to Aina (2007) the processing of library materials is an important task in the library profession. Thus, all students must be adept in cataloguing, classification, indexing and abstracting. Tools needed for these activities are

expensive, yet they must be available to students on one-to-one in an LIS school. Cataloguing tools refer to specialised publications and equipment, hardware and software used in cataloguing and classification. Aina (2007) lists the required cataloguing tools to be made available as follows: at least, 20 sets of both the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) scheme and Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR); 10 copies of Library of Congress Subject Headings; and Sears List of Subject Headings. In addition to Aina's list, Library of Congress Classification Scheme, Cutter numbers are expected to be used in students' practical. In addition to the listed cataloguing and classification tools, Cutter number is required for the completion of assigning numbers to information resources with the use of Library of Congress classification scheme. These tools are expected to be kept in cataloguing and classification laboratory to enable students to have access to them during practical classes.

Cataloguing laboratory is a room designated for practical cataloguing and classification with the use of tools. In order to turn theories learnt by students into practicals, lecturers are expected to make use of tools in the laboratory. In the Polytechnic library school setting, Saka, Garba and Zarmi (2016) citing NBTE (2002) stated that there should be well-furnished cataloguing and classification laboratory with the following tools with ratio: Sear's List of Subject Heading (1 copy: 10 students), Anglo American Cataloguing Rules II (AACR2)- revised edition (1 copy: 10 students), Library of Congress Subject Headings (1 set), Dewey Decimal Classification (1 copy: 10 students), AACR2- 1967 (1 copy: 10 students), Universal Decimal Classification Scheme (1 set). In the absence of these tools and their use in the laboratory or where there is no laboratory in the library schools, students may perceive the courses as being difficult or abstract in nature. In a survey of twenty (20) universities library schools Issa, Idowu,

Harande and Igwe (2016) discovered that lack of cataloguing and classification laboratory with requisite tools for practical exercises was part of the challenges identified which affect quality of library and information education in Nigeria by the respondents.

Cataloguing and classification laboratory are expected to be manned by a professional called laboratory instructor. Laboratory instructors in cataloguing and classification are experts in the field. Lecturers teaching the students in the classroom while an instructor in charge of cataloguing and classification laboratory is expected to make cataloguing and classification tools available for students' practical work. In addition, laboratory instructors are expected to guide the students in the use of cataloguing and classification tools as it is being done in the science laboratory. Cataloguing and classification instructors are to assist the students to identify all the tools and teach them how to systematically make use of the tools in the laboratory. The provision of cataloguing and classification laboratory tools and instructors will enable the students to balance theories taught in the classroom with practicals in the laboratory. These facilities will enable students develop keen interest in cataloguing and classification courses which will in turn lead to improvement in their academic achievement. Similarly, students will have positive attitude towards the course which may culminate into production of graduates ready be cataloguers in libraries and information centres. In a study by Ogunniyi and Nwalo (2015), it was reported that majority of the library schools surveyed in Southern Nigeria had no cataloguing laboratory and library instructors. Despite the importance of computer laboratory in teaching and learning in library and information science schools especially in cataloguing and classification courses, studies have revealed that these vital resources are not adequately provided. Saka, Garba and Zarmai (2016) citing Diso (2009), Saleh (2011), Atsugh and Ukende (2013) averred that

computer laboratory among other infrastructures/facilities are grossly inadequate in Nigerian library schools.

Conclusion

Cataloguing and classification education is still relevant and compulsory in library and information schools in Nigeria in spite of the domineering role of information and communication technologies (ICT). Cataloguing and classification tools, laboratory, computer laboratory and instructors were inadequately provided for in some library schools in Nigeria; this may hinder effective teaching and learning of cataloguing and classification courses in library schools in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for effective cataloguing and classification education in Nigerian library schools:

1. National Universities Commission (NUC) in conjunction with the Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) should make sure that necessary facilities and resources are available before any new library school is approved in any tertiary institutions in Nigeria to ensure effective teaching and learning of cataloguing and classification courses in particular and library and information education in general.

2. NUC and LRCN should make sure that none of the existing library schools pass accreditation processes without adequate resources/ facilities for teaching and learning.
3. Library schools management should endeavor to provide all the required cataloguing tools in the cataloguing laboratory, a functional computer laboratory and employ cataloguing instructors. The provision of other needed resources in ensuring continuous cataloguing and classification education in library schools in Nigeria is crucial.

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