EVALUATION OF CATALOGUING AND CLASSIFICATION COMPETENCIES OF LIBRARIANS IN NIGERIAN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Bamise, Olasehinde Fadekemi

Africana Section, Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State,Nigeria

Oluwaniyi, Joseph Tunji

Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

Igbeneghu, Bruno I. (Ph.D)

Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT: *A cross-sectional study of 84 cataloguers from 20 academic libraries across the geopolitical zones of Nigeria were randomly selected for the study. Their cataloguing and classification competencies; available cataloguing tools and the problems encountered were evaluated. A 32-item structured questionnaire under three sections was administered to the selected cataloguers. The mean value calculated for competencies in cataloguing and classifications skills is 3.3. "Finding it convenient to make good judgments in handling gray areas" had the least variable score of 2.6. The mean value for the cataloguing tools commonly used is 3.4. "Web Dewey and/or printed Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC)" has the least score of 2.2. "No training opportunity for continuous professional development" has the highest score of 3.8. Current cataloguing tools should be provided nationwide and also training opportunities that will help these librarians keep abreast of changing cataloguing rules for effective service delivery in Nigerian academic libraries.*

KEY WORDS: Cataloguing, classification, librarian, academic libraries.

INTRODUCTION

It is no gainsay that development in Information and Communication Technology has created a revolution in information packaging and dissemination. The growing experience of technological advancement and proliferating electronic information resources necessitate cataloguing and classification competencies. Hence, there is a high demand for professionals in the field of information processing and dissemination to possess specialized knowledge for an improved

collections and services in academic libraries. Cataloguing and classification competency represents the distinct services needed to provide high quality professional support to users of bibliographic records. Competencies in cataloguing and classification are distinct and peculiar to cataloguers. These are technical services which enhance the understanding and processing of information for easy access and retrieval. American Library Association described Cataloguing and classification as processes performed repeatedly with each process demanding that a cataloguer returns to an earlier point in the process, revising the information creation approach such that the basic rules are followed. Cataloguing and classification competencies are displayed in knowledge creation across diverse disciplines. With tremendous advancement in various disciplines, the great challenge for cataloguers in academic library is keeping pace with the knowledge and technological expertise necessary for packaging and creating accurate bibliographic record of the accelerated growing information. The introduction of information communication technology facilitates in academic libraries has enhanced information generation, access, storage and dissemination. Information literacy skill therefore, is a very relevant skill which enables one to conveniently and effectively navigate the vast information available as a result of information explosion of today

Objectives of the Study
The objectives of this study are:
i.   to examine the cataloguing and classification competencies of cataloguers in academic libraries in Nigeria;
ii.   identify the cataloguing tools in use in the academic libraries;
iii.   identify the problems encountered by cataloguers in academic libraries in discharging; cataloguing and classification duties.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cataloguing and classification in the digital age
Cataloguing and classification have for the time immemorial been the pivot of librarianship. Cataloguing represents the process of formulating catalogue entries for all materials available in the library. Among the library resources longing for bibliographic description are: print and non-print books, scripts, periodicals, electronic resources such as: floppy disk, DVD, CD ROMS and audio visual materials. Esse (2013) described cataloguing as simply the bibliographic description of documents by means of different classification procedures and rules. Through the processes of cataloguing and classification, each material acquired by the library is individualize and given a sole number for proper identification. An access point is thereby provided for every document in the library notwithstanding the quantity, differences in nature and discipline. Without prior organization of these documents, accessibility may become difficult, time wasting and frustrating.

Aina (2004) emphasized the necessity of cataloguing and classification services in locating required materials in the midst of the numerous items in the library collection. Cataloguing and classification are hence, the key activities that bring to the fore the development in various fields of knowledge in contact with those who will appreciate them.

Cataloguing and classification are the guide to all the library pools. Cataloguing can be done originally or copied. Either of the two methods requires expertise for perfect record. Original cataloguing involves creation of bibliographic records without making reference to other records prepared by another cataloguer elsewhere whereas copy cataloguing is the preparation of bibliographic records by with already prepared records by another person in another library. This involves the use of Machine Readable MARC standard format. In cataloguing, three major parts are essential; allocating access points, subject heading and classification numbers. Bello and Mansor (2012) recognised that growth in Information and communication technology as well as electronic resources have not altered the requisite tasks and services of cataloguers, it only calls for an improvement in description of electronic these resources. Hider (2006) stressed the need for core cataloguing skills and knowledge. In addition to computer literacy skill, it is expected of a cataloguer to possess good searching, critical thinking and evaluation skills for effective service delivery. The use of ICTs makes possible for academic libraries to use online library catalogues. The searching of catalogues around the world has been easy through the Internet. Ezeani (2010) identified some online catalogues websites which provide among other services facilities for Machine Reading Catalogue (MARC) records; which provide online catalogues in addition to publishers' catalogues and books-in-print for a robust cataloging record.

Cataloguing processes have witnessed pragmatic changes in the guiding rules and tools. There are two standard rules for material description. The Anglo-American Cataloguing Rule (AACR) and Resource Description and Access (RDA). AACR which has since undergone revision up to the second time is used for printed materials while RDA is used to describe the electronic materials. Improvement due to technological advancement has brought a tremendous increase in volume and format of information materials with changes in users' expectation. There is therefore a demand for new technological skills and information literacy. There is a need for cataloguers to be able to develop machine-readable catalogues with the present day information technologies that will be accessible anywhere regardless of the location. Esse 2013) stressed that cataloguers must realize the idea of the digital library. The fact is that the library users are no more limited to those within library immediate location, but the entire universe of different category of users with the expectations of getting their diverse information needs met.

Necessity for cataloguers' competency

Bahmann (2007) described cataloguers as professional librarians, sizeable in number but are indispensable in providing important but veiled services to libraries and library users. Apart from the supervisory roles of a cataloguer, the primary duties of a cataloguer is to prepare bibliographic record and provide access and retrieval of items in the library. Bello and Mansor (2012) identified the activities expected of a cataloguer that require the core cataloguing skills to include: original cataloguing which involves both descriptive and subject cataloguing, copy cataloguing, and authority control. For a cataloguer to effectively perform these roles, certain tools and rules must be followed. The traditional role of cataloguers has been expanded by the present electronic environment. This necessitates the knowledge of automated cataloguing system, professional knowledge coupled with technical skills. As cataloguers has the responsibility to facilitate patron access to information resources. These tasks cannot be done without following specific rules provided by: Anglo American Cataloguing Rules (AACR) and Machine Readable Cataloguing Standards (MARC). The knowledge of these cataloguing rules and skills in the use of LCC, LCSH DDC as the case may be will ever be relevant in academic libraries.

A cataloguer with his or her professional qualification, having learnt a little bit of theory on continuously completes new records. He or she is cumbered with formatting, punctuation and ensures that everything displays in the catalogue is accurate. He or she checks punctuation, uniformity with existing records and authorities and access points. A good cataloguer will not just copy a catalogue without reviewing the records because records that are perfect at an instance are hard to find. There may be misspellings, punctuation errors. Apart from importing records, a cataloguer creates electronic reading lists, makes decisions regarding terminology in order to create appropriate locations for the various items such that searching the catalogue becomes easier for the use of DVDs, CDs, books on tape, electronic documents, reference materials, books, magazines and indigenous publications using cataloguing tools with his/her sharpened pencil and eraser. A seasoned cataloguer ensures that the author and title are correct, look through the book, turn to bibliographic tools and provide the best, most accurate record. Attention to details is the hallmark of an exceptional cataloguer because he or she knows that accurate bibliographic records and improved access is a good advertisement for the library. However, regular training and conferences attendance will help cataloguers keep abreast of changing cataloguing rules and tools.

METHODOLOGY

This cross-sectional study was conducted among academic librarians. 84 cataloguers from 20 academic libraries that cut across all the geopolitical zones of the country were selected during a national conference for the study. A structured, self –administered questionnaire consisting of three parts was used. To eliminate bias, the questionnaire was handed over to a member of the conference local organizing committee to be given to all consenting participants. They were

returned immediately after completion. The questionnaire was divided into 3 sections with 32 items altogether. The first section contains 16 items which asks questions about the cataloguing and classification competencies of cataloguers with responses such as "Strongly Agree" "Agree", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" which were placed on 4-point scale ranging from 1 to 4. The second section of the questionnaire contains 10 items asking questions on the cataloguing tools used by the cataloguers, using a 5-point scale of "Very Often", "Often", "Sometimes", "Rarely" and "Never". The third section contains 6 items about the problems militating against cataloguers' service delivery. This was assessed using a 5-point scale of "Strongly Agree" "Agree", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree". Data collected represent the responses of the cataloguers

Data Analysis

Responses of the participants were coded, imputed and analyzed by SPSS for Windows version 20.0, (SPSS Inc Chicago Illinois, USA). Descriptive statistics was implemented generally on all the variables. Secondary analysis was completed on the three sections of the questionnaire where variables were measured according to the Likert's scale of measurement. Weight values were assigned to all the responses according to their ranks in the Likert's scale. Value of 1, 2, 3, 4 were assigned to "Strongly disagreed"; "Disagreed"; "Agreed" and "Strongly agreed". Weight values of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were assigned to "Very Often", "Often", "Sometimes", "Rarely" and "Never".

The total weight value (TWV) for each variable was obtained through the summation of the products of the frequency (F) of responses and the respective weight value (W). This is also expressed mathematically as follows: - $TWV = \sum_{i=1}^{5} Fi.Wi$ (where TWV is the total weight value, Fi is the frequency of respondents that rated the variable i; and Wi the weight assigned to the rank of the variable in the Likert's scale.

The score for each variable (VS) was arrived at by dividing the TWV for each item by the total number of respondents which is expressed mathematically below: -

Variable score (VS) = $\dfrac{TWV}{N}$ where N=number of study population. In this instance 84 participants. The variable scores ranged from 1 to 4 or 1 to 5 as the case may be for the responses in each section. The closer the value variable scores to 4 or 5, the higher the significance of the variable for the participants.

The mean (M) for each section was calculated by the summation of all the scores divided by the number of variables measured in the section.

RESULTS

84 cataloguers from 20 academic libraries participated in the study and were analyzed. The mean (M) calculated for the competencies of the cataloguers in cataloguing and classifications skills is

3.3. The following competencies have variable scores (VS) above the section's mean: "identification of access points" which has the highest variable score of 3.9; "identification of cataloguing entries under most specific Subject heading"; "training other library staff and users"; "easily adopting new and emerging standards"; "easily imputing information in the records correctly"; "being time conscious"; "ensuring that cataloging rules and standards are applied"; "having logical and consistent mind-set about cataloguing procedures" and "understanding library documented local procedures, policies, and practices in cataloging". Below the section's mean of 3.3 are the variable scores for the following competencies; "not finding it difficult to spot errors and anomalies on the catalogue"; "understanding the relationship between AACR2/RDA and MARC coding"; " being familiar with the criteria for deciding when to contribute a new record to the bibliographic utility"; "not finding class number misleading"; "being flexible enough to quickly abandon the old ways and adopt the new way"; "knowing how to use national bibliographic utility (e.g., OCLC), including the authority file" and "finding it convenient to make good judgments in handling gray areas and differences in interpretation of cataloging rules and standards" with the least variable score of 2.6. (Table I)

Table I: Cataloging and classification Competencies of cataloguers

S/N	Competencies evaluated	Strongly Agree Rank =4	Agree Rank=3	Disagree Rank=2	Strongly Disagree Rank=1	TWV	VS
1	I can easily identify access points; main entry and added entry.	252	63	0	0	315	3.8*
2	I can identify cataloguing entries under most specific Subject heading that accurately represent content using LCSH	166	162	2	0	330	3.9*
3	I do not find it difficult to spot errors and anomalies on the catalogue and correct them	120	132	6	7	265	3.2
4	I understand the relationship between AACR2/RDA and MARC coding.	44	162	32	2	240	2.9
5	I do train other library staff and users in the effective use of the catalogue	184	78	24	0	286	3.4*
6	I easily adopt new and emerging standards	140	147	0	0	287	3.4*
7	I am familiar with the criteria for deciding when to contribute a new record to the bibliographic utility to avoid duplicate records and unnecessary efforts.	96	180	0	0	276	3.3
8	I can easily input information in the records correctly.	148	138	0	1	287	3.4*
9	I do not find class number misleading	124	126	22	0	272	3.2
10	I am time conscious, maintain record and eliminate backlog	180	117	0	0	297	3.5*
11	I ensure the cataloging rules and standards are applied consistently to ensure quality	184	114	0	0	298	3.5*
12	I have logical and consistent mind-set about cataloguing procedures.	144	144	0	0	288	3.4*
13	I am flexible enough to quickly abandon the old ways and adopt the new way for better productivity.	48	147	32	5	232	2.8
14	I find it convenient to make good judgments in handling gray areas and differences in interpretation of cataloging rules and standards.	96	39	66	14	215	2.6
15	I understand my library documented local procedures, policies, and practices in cataloging to provide consistency throughout the collection and for future use.	140	147	0	0	287	3.4*
16	I know how to use national bibliographic utility (e.g., OCLC), including the authority file.	68	123	40	6	237	2.8
Mean value for cataloguing skills							**3.3**

* value above the section's mean of 3.3

Table II shows the cataloging tools commonly used by the cataloguers. The mean for this section is 3.4. The use of the following tools has variable scores above the section's mean; "Library of Congress Classification (LCC)"; and "Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)" have the highest variable score of 4.5; others are "Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, 2nd edition (AACR2) and/or Resource Description & Access (RDA)"; "Library of Congress Subject Cataloging Manual (LCSCM" and "Library of Congress Name Authorities". The variable scores for the use of "MARC 21 Formats for Bibliographic Data"; "Web Dewey and/or printed Dewey Decimal

Classification (DDC)"; "OCLC Bibliographic Formats and Standards"; "Library of Congress-Program for Cooperative Cataloging Policy Statements (LC-PCC PSs)" and "CONSER Cataloging Manual (for Serials)" were below the sections mean.

Table II: **The use of cataloguing tools.**

S/N	Cataloguing tools	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	TWV	VS
		Rank=5	Rank=4	Rank= 3	Rank=2	Rank=1		
1	Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, 2nd edition (AACR2) and/or Resource Description & Access (RDA)	160	128	33	18	0	339	4.0*
2	MARC 21 Formats for Bibliographic Data	65	28	48	96	0	237	2.8
3	Web Dewey and/or printed Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC)	15	0	66	84	17	182	2.2
4	Library of Congress Classification (LCC)	235	144	0	2	0	381	4.5*
5	Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)	205	168	0	2	0	375	4.5*
6	Library of Congress Subject Cataloging Manual (LCSCM)	205	76	33	24	1	339	4.0*
7	OCLC Bibliographic Formats and Standards	120	0	51	72	7	250	3.0
8	Library of Congress-Program for Cooperative Cataloging Policy Statements (LC-PCC PSs)	55	36	99	36	12	238	2.8
9	Library of Congress Name Authorities	185	104	36	16	0	341	4.1*
10	CONSER Cataloging Manual (for Serials)	5	0	117	58	15	195	2.3
Mean for the use of cataloguing tools								**3.4**

- value is above the section's mean of 3.4

The mean value for the problems militating against service delivery by the cataloguers is 2.4. The variable scores for "No training opportunity for continuous professional development" and "Available tools are obsolete" were above the mean. No training opportunity for continuous professional development and improvement in cataloguing skills has the highest value of 3.8. Variable scores for "difficulty in determining subject content especially when a material has different subjects"; "It takes time to read and understand materials for subject analysis"; Cataloguing and classification exercise are cumbersome" and "difficulty in having knowledge about all discipline" were below the section's mean. (Table III)

Table III: Problems militating against cataloguers' service delivery

S/N	Problems	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	TWV	VS
		Rank=4	Rank=3	Rank=2	Rank=1		
1	I find it difficult to determine subject content especially when a material has different subjects.	0	60	78	25	163	1.9
2	It takes time to read and understand materials for subject analysis	0	0	104	32	136	1.6
3	Cataloguing and classification exercise are cumbersome	24	66	90	11	191	2.3
4	No training opportunity for continuous professional development and improvement in cataloguing skills.	252	63	0	0	315	3.8*
5	Available tools are obsolete	128	138	12	0	278	3.3*
6.	It is difficult to have the knowledge about all discipline.	56	54	48	28	186	1.6
Mean value for problems militating against service delivery							**2.4**

- value is above the section's mean of 2.4

DISCUSSION

In terms of the competency of the cataloguers, descriptive cataloguing is the normal routine exercise for every cataloguer. Every cataloguer should be able to use his or her expertise to identify the entry points; main and added entry points as well as identify cataloguing entries under specific headings using LCSH and they should not find it difficult to identify and correct anomalies in the records. What makes a cataloguer is the ability to identify the entry points, ascertain the use of the headings in the LCSH and bring out the corresponding class number in the LCCS and doing these

with utmost accuracy. Cataloguing and classification are often considered cumbrous tasks because they require a great deal of expertness to handle gray areas and interpret cataloguing rules and standards. In support of this assertion, Orbih and Aina (2014) stressed that cataloguing processing and services processes are procedural, time consuming and costly to do most especially manual cataloguing and classification which are very difficult, boring and time consuming. This probably explains why some of the cataloguers did not find it convenient to make good judgments in handling gray areas and differences in interpretation of cataloging rules and standards. Only a few of the participants which is far below the weighted average of 3.3 indicated that they could handle gray works and interpret cataloguing rules and standards conveniently. This finding is not consistent with the expectation of Sung (2013) who assumed that cataloguers should be able to conveniently handle gray materials. The participants were not flexible enough to quickly abandon the old ways and adopt the new way for better productivity while they did not know how to use national bibliographic utility (e.g., OCLC), including the authority file.

Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) was found to be scarcely used in the Libraries; it is probable that the cataloguers were not familiar with this classification scheme since most of them are from University libraries where LCCS is universally used. CONSER Cataloging Manual (for Serials) are also available in the Libraries for use. A blend of manual with electronic resources employed in cataloguing processes was evaluated. Responses indicated that the two cataloguing tools identified to be commonly used were for manual cataloguing tools. This suggests that the use of electronic catalogue tools was low in these Libraries which similar to the finding in Bello and Mansor (2012).

The two problems identified i.e. preponderance of "obsolete equipment" and "no training opportunity for continuous professional development" were not unconnected with the amount of budgeted fund available in the Nigerian university libraries. Orbih and Aina (2014) in their study acknowledged the need for fund in academic libraries in their study. Only few cataloguers are often sponsored by their institutions to attend conferences and workshops even without consistency. Those cataloguers who might have been given the opportunity at a time may not be given the opportunity at another time. This probably explains why cataloguing is seen as a cumbrous task. It requires a great deal of expertness to handle gray areas and interpret cataloguing rules and standards. Taking time to read and understand materials for subject analysis and knowledge about all discipline and how to determine subject content especially when a material has different subjects may not constitute any problem because cataloguers do work together as a team to tackle complex subjects.

IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

Cataloguers' competencies in information processing, management and bibliographic control for effective retrieval of information are usually enhanced by the growth of publishing industries and explosion of electronic information resources. Our findings show that the participants were not able to handle some gray materials; not flexible enough to adopt new ways for better productivity and prevalently they did not know how to use the national bibliographic utility. Electronic cataloguing tools were unavailable in most of the academic libraries. Also, there exists preponderance of "obsolete equipment" in these libraries; and "little or no training opportunities for continuous professional development and improvement in cataloguing skills". Summarily, these findings imply that the effectiveness of the librarians is presently grossly hindered and consequential adverse effect on the productivity and corporate services the academic libraries. We believe this study will serve as eye opener for all stakeholders of academic libraries in Nigeria and engender enough motivation to remedy the identified inadequacies,

CONCLUSION

Findings from this study revealed that cataloguers can identify cataloguing entries under most specific Subject heading that accurately represent content using LCSH. At the same time, they can easily identify access points; main entry and added entry. The commonly used cataloguing tools in the academic libraries under the study were library of Congress Classification (LCCS) and Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). It was revealed that the major problems militating against cataloguers' service delivery were no training opportunity which is supposed to facilitate cataloguers' continuous professional development and improvement in cataloguing skills. Another problem identified was obsoleteness of available cataloguing tools.

RECOMMENDATION

Adequate current cataloguing tools should be made available in all academic libraries in Nigeria. Cataloguers should be offered regular training and conference opportunities that will help them keep abreast of changing cataloguing rules and tools for effective service delivery in academic libraries.

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