

The Challenges and Prospects of Cataloguing and Classification in Academic Libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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Abstract - The study aimed to investigate the challenges and prospects of cataloguing and classification in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study was made up of 66 practicing librarians who attended the Nigerian Library Association, Bayelsa State chapter 2018 annual conference held in Yenagoa. Questionnaire entitled “Challenges and Prospects of Cataloguing and Classification Questionnaire (CPCCQ)” that contained close-ended items was used to collect data for the study. The findings revealed, inadequate staff, lack of up-to-date tools, difficulties of cataloguing and classifying of backlogged, inadequate motivation, etc. as some challenges militating against the technical sections of the academic libraries studied. The study also reveals, increase advocacy for library automation, available training opportunities outside the State, the introduction of information management system, accelerated movement from manual to computerized method, etc as indication of brighter future or good prospect for the technical sections of the libraries studied. Base on the findings some recommendations were made.

Keywords: Technical Section, Cataloguing, Classification, Academic Libraries, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

I. INTRODUCTION

Cataloguing and classification are two different types of technical jobs that are performed by professional librarians in all types of libraries particularly, the academic libraries where large numbers of collections are usually acquired and processed. These two functions (cataloguing and classification) are either done in manual or electronic in some academic libraries. In some cases, both methods (manual and electronic) are used simultaneously in some libraries. For example, the functions in majority of university libraries in Bayelsa state is still done manually while, very few used automated catalogue (OPAC). The fact is that whether manual or electronic, the procedures for the preparation of the materials remain the same. For every item in the book is described using a standard format. The procedures in cataloguing a book is guided by the rules outlined in the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 2nd edition (AACR2).

In describing cataloguing Esther cited in Isyaku, Bello and Ado (2018), opined that cataloguing is the process of

describing library materials by using its bibliographical data in logical and systematical order as outlined in the cataloguing tool such as AACR2 (p.52). There are two types of cataloguing, descriptive and subject cataloguing. The descriptive cataloguing use the bibliographic data in the material to describe the material while, subject cataloguing identify the subject content of the material. Thus, this process of the description of the material is followed by assigning of classes to the materials.

The assigning of classes to library materials is guided by standard classification schemes (Library of Congress Classification Scheme (LC), Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme (DDC), Bliss Classification Scheme (BC), etc) that are generally accepted and used worldwide. The word classification is used to describe the logical and systematical arrangement of library collections usually by subject content, by their likeness and treatment. In other words, it is the process of putting together similar library materials according to their subject content (Isyaku, Bello & Ado, 2018, p. 52). Thus, Esther cited in Isyaku, Bello and Ado (2018) defined classification as the process of grouping library materials by its subject contents which help to group the same subject together and separate the one that differs and bring those which they have relation closer. The key element in classification is the grouping of likeness materials together and well assigning classes to the grouped materials. Owing to the complex nature of cataloguing and classification functions some peculiar challenges are associated to the section.

Every sections of the library have one challenge or the other but, experience shows that, the ones associated with cataloguing and classification section are more prominent. Thus, majority of librarians lack the interest of working in the section, and as a result many librarians have not work in the technical section (Posigha, Asaba & Oberhiri-Oruma, 2018: p. 178). In spite of the challenges associated with cataloguing and classification, one can say that the future is bright particularly with the increase adoption of modern information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the library. As a matter of fact, experience shows that, the increase information and communication technology (ICT) adoption in the library has given a new face and dimension

to the technical sections of many libraries. Duties that were performed manually are now gradually or completely handled by technological devices in many academic libraries in Nigeria. In addition to the innovative technological devices adopted in the academic libraries, some library administrators have seen the section as the engine room of the library in terms of access to the library holdings. Thus, incentives such as cash reward, opportunity to attend workshop and conference, training, etc are now made available for staff in the section in some libraries.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The mechanism to access needed information is the core responsibility of the technical section. In spite of the importance of the section, it is still bedeviled by several challenges such as inadequate staff, lack of up-to-date working tools, non-chalant attitude of university management towards the few available technical section staff, etc. It is against this background that, this study aims to investigate the challenges and prospects of the cataloguing and classification in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to ascertain the challenges and prospects of the cataloguing and classification in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. In this regard, the study was designed specifically to establish

1. The challenges of cataloguing and classification section in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.
2. The prospects of cataloguing and classification section in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.
3. The relationship between the challenges and prospects of cataloguing and classification section in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were developed to guide the study

1. What are challenges of cataloguing and classification section in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?
2. What are the prospects of cataloguing and classification section in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?

A. Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between the challenges and prospects of cataloguing and classification section in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

V. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section of the paper reviews related literatures on cataloguing and classification challenges and prospects. The technical (cataloguing and classification) section of a library

particularly academic library is one of the most important sections of the entire library that requires adequate attention. Over the years of working in the technical section of academic library, the section of the library has not been given adequate attention in some academic libraries. Thus, resulting to several complicated challenges that may or not have sustainable solution.

Esther (2004) in her study enumerated some of the challenges encountered in cataloguing and classification section by librarians and libraries in organizing knowledge to include: Attitudes of staff towards shelf reading and supervision, lack of motivation, inadequate reading materials, shortage of staff, inadequate orientation, users no longer have to physically visit the library to retrieve information.

From the point of the usefulness of digital services to cataloguing, Onyemaizu (2019) examines usefulness of cataloguing for digital services and challenges faced during the process. Digital or online catalogue is designed so that the documents can be accessed via terminals, so that library users may directly and effectively search for and retrieve bibliographic records without the assistance of a human intermediary. In spite of usefulness of digital cataloging, like flexibility and been current, easy updating among others, Nigerian libraries are not properly practicing digital cataloguing because of challenges like erratic power supply, inadequate funding, under-staffing, lack of cataloguing expertise or knowledge among others. The present paper also describes that these challenges can be overcome by the provision of adequate funds, adequate staffing and training, and stable power supply.

Cabonero and Dolendo (2013) also studied cataloging and classification skills of library and information science practitioners in their workplaces. The study determined the cataloging and classification skills of library and information science graduates which is centered on assessing the cataloging and classification skills of academic and school librarians in three areas namely, descriptive cataloging, subject analysis and classification. Case analysis was used to five practicing librarians who graduated with the degree Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Library Science and Bachelor of Library and Information Science from the College of Teacher Education, Benguet State University (BSU). Findings of the study revealed that the cataloging and classification skills of the five library and information science graduates of BSU are generally proficient in the basic areas of descriptive cataloging, subject analysis and classification but found greatest difficulty on subject. Isyaku, Bello and Ado (2018) investigated the challenges and prospects of cataloguing and classification of library materials in libraries of Kano State, Northwest Nigeria. The paper focuses on organization of library materials which helps to deliver effective services effectively and efficiently. The study identified that librarians are no longer interested in cataloguing and classification units due to its tedious nature

and naturally like to avoid the work. This is what affects the technical department of all libraries in Kano state. The paper further highlights some of the challenges and prospects, and offered suggestions on how to minimize the challenges or do away with them completely.

Manaf and Ibrahim (2016) investigated cataloguers and classifiers’ perception towards cataloguing and classification practices. The study adopted descriptive design. All the 67 academic librarians working in six selected institution libraries were studied. The study adopted questionnaire method to collect data from the respondents. The data analysis was done using inferential statistic. The findings revealed librarians’ have positive perception towards cataloguing and classification activities. It also shows that majority of the respondents indicated interest in working in technical section of the library. It also revealed some challenges to include: lack of up-to-date tools, inadequate working tools and unconducive working environment.

Hort (2016) studied librarianship career, risks and future of librarians in South Africa. The study adopted descriptive design. Librarians in some selected academic libraries were studied. Interview method was used to collect data for the study. The findings show that librarianship profession is getting more lucrative and getting more attention among young men and women in South Africa. It also reveals some health risks associated with the profession to include: environmental hazard particularly from chemical used in protecting the books and other materials in the library and other health challenges particularly for cataloguers. The study also shows more challenging and competitive future for librarians in South Africa.

Similarly, Orbih and Aina (2014) in their study on issues, benefits and challenges of original cataloguing versus copy cataloguing attested that, in the past, cataloguing and classification were done manually which made the work

very difficult, boring and time consuming. Recently, most university libraries in Nigeria have joined their counterparts in advance countries in the use of computers for processing library collections. The use of computerized cataloguing and classification has made the processing of library collections more accurate, interesting and faster. The above review literatures are related to this study. Though, some are theoretical in nature but studied the same subject area. The empirical studies adopted descriptive design and as well used questionnaire as instrument to collect data, which this study also adopted.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study was made up of 66 practicing librarians who attended the Nigerian Library Association, Bayelsa State chapter 2018 Annual conference held in Yenagoa. Questionnaire entitled “Challenges and Prospects of Cataloguing and Classification Questionnaire (CPCCQ)” that contained close-ended items was used to collect data from the respondents. Copies of the instrument were administered to the 66 respondents within the conference venue with the help of research assistant. Out of the 66 questionnaires administered to the respondents 54 were returned and used for the analysis. Inferential statistics were used to analyze the research questions and hypothesis. Specifically, arithmetic mean was used to analyze the research questions. Thus, items with mean scores equal or greater than 2.50 were regarded as agreed while, items with means score lower than 2.50 were regarded as disagreed to the items.

VII. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Research question 1: What are challenges of cataloguing and classification section in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?

TABLE I SUMMARY TABLE OF THE CHALLENGES OF CATALOGUING AND CLASSIFICATION SECTION IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA

S. No.	Items	Mean	Decision
1	Inadequate cataloguing and classification staff	3.32	Agree
2	Lack of up-to-date classification tools	3.1	Agree
3	Difficulties of cataloguing and classifying backlogged	2.98	Agree
4	Using of manual method cataloguing and classification	2.98	Agree
5	Lack of training opportunities specifically for the section	3.16	Agree
6	Lack of special medical assistance for eyes related issue	3.28	Agree
7	Lack of preferential incentive for technical section staff	2.96	Agree
8	Chalant attitude of university librarians toward cataloguing/classification librarians and the section	2.92	Agree
	Grand mean score	3.08	Agree

The data presented in Table I reveals that items 1(3.32), 2(3.1), 3(2.98), 4(2.98), 5(3.16), 6(3.28), 7(2.96) and 8(2.92) are greater than the mean cut-off score of 2.50. On the

whole, the grand mean score of 3.08 was also greater than cut-off mean score of 250. This implies that the respondents are in agreement with the items indicating the various types

of challenges militating against cataloguing and classification (technical) sections of the libraries studied.

Research question 2: What are the prospects of cataloguing and classification sections in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?

TABLE II SUMMARY TABLE OF PROSPECTS OF CATALOGUING AND CLASSIFICATION SECTIONS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA

S. No.	Items	Mean	Decision
1	Increase advocacy for library automation/ICT adoption for libraries	3.28	Agree
2	Increase training opportunities are available outside the state in Nigeria	3.24	Agree
3	Reduction of eye related problems due to the use of ICT devices	3.08	Agree
4	Introduction of library and information management system	3.28	Agree
5	Regular updating of cat/class knowledge through workshops	3.1	Agree
6	More ICTs facilities are introduce in cat/class sections	3.1	Agree
7	Accelerated move from manual to electronic method	2.98	Agee
8	The availability of short training courses within and outside state in Nigeria on cat/class technology	2.98	Agree
	Grand mean score	3.13	Agree

The data presented in Table II shows that items 1(3.28), 2(3.24), 3(2.08), 4(3.28), 5(3.1), 6(3.1), 7(2.98) and 8(2.98) are greater than the mean cut-off score of 2.50. On the whole, the grand mean score of 3.13 was also greater than cut-off mean score of 250. This implies that the respondents are of the opinion that is brighter future for cataloguing and classification (technical) sections of the libraries investigated.

VIII. TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

A. H_1

Hypothesis 1 stated that, there is no significant difference between the challenges and prospects of cataloguing and classification section in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

TABLE III SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF CATALOGUING AND CLASSIFICATION SECTION IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA

Items	N	SD	X	t-cal.	Df	@	t-crit.	Remark
Challenges	8	409.77	154.37	0.61	14	0.05	2.306	Accepted
Prospects	8	266	156.5					

The analysis presented in Table III shows that, the t-calculated of value of 0.61 is less than the t-critical of 2.308 at 0.05 significant level with 14 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis that stated, there is no significant difference between the challenges and prospects of cataloguing and classification sections in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria is accepted.

IX. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding shows that, several challenges are militating against the technical (cataloguing and classification) sections of the libraries investigated. Thus, these challenges might be more devastating in some libraries than the others. It might be the fact that, those libraries still using manual method are more prone to some of the challenges indicated by the respondents. The unfortunate thing is that some of these challenges are age long problems that can be easily managed if the desire attention is given to the wellbeing of the staff and the section. This finding is in agreement with that of Manaf and Ibrahim (2016) study, which revealed some challenges of technical section to include: lack of up-to-date tools, inadequate working tools and uncondusive

working environment. Similarly, the findings corroborate with that of Esther (2004) findings that identified some of the challenges encountered in cataloguing and classification section by librarians to include: Attitudes of staff towards shelf reading and supervision, lack of motivation, inadequate reading materials, shortage of staff, inadequate orientation, users no longer have to physically visit the library to retrieve information.

The study also revealed the future prospects of the technical sections of the academic libraries studied. The study indicated that the future of the sections is bright particularly due to the increase adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) in the library. Specifically, the bright future prospects of the sections might be as a result of the replacement of manual method with computer method of processing libraries collections which made it fascinating. This finding corroborate that of Orbih and Aina (2014) assertion on cataloguing and classification that stated that, in the past, cataloguing and classification were done manually which made the work very difficult, boring and time consuming. Recently, most university libraries in Nigeria have joined their counterparts

in advance countries in the use of computers for processing library collections. The use of computerized cataloguing and classification has made the processing of library collections more accurate, interesting and faster. This might be one of the reasons why many librarians are developing interest in the section.

X. CONCLUSION

The study investigated the challenges and prospects of cataloguing and classification sections in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. From the findings of the study, it was concluded that there are several challenges militating against cataloguing and classification sections in academic libraries in Bayelsa State, Nigeria as indicated by majority of the respondents. In addition, it is also concluded that the future prospects of cataloguing and classification is very bright as libraries are moving from manual process to computerized method of processing library collections in the libraries under investigation. Thus, from the findings of the study, it was established that there is no relationship between the challenges and prospects as indicated by the respondents. There is a bright future in the academic libraries in Bayelsa State, as more information and communication technologies are still on the way to be adopted by the academic libraries in the entire state.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following are recommended to ameliorate some of the challenges and as well to sustain the anticipated prospects:

1. The library management of the various academic libraries studied should completely automate their libraries to do away with tedious, slow and inaccurate services to more proactive, accurate, fast and interesting services to their users.
2. The library management of the various academic libraries studied should acquire maintainable and

sustainable hard and software that are suitable to the library environment and as well usable to the caliber of staff in their technical sections.

3. The library management of the various academic libraries studied should be sending their technical staff to training programmes, short courses, conferences and workshops on topics or fields that deal with online cataloguing and classification, Resource Description Framework (RDF), Resource Description and Access (RDA) and any other cataloguing and classification related programmes to expose and increase the knowledge of their cataloguing and classification staff.

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