

# Cataloguing and Classification: Dynamic Areas for Professional (Librarians) Networking in Developing Framework for a National Union Catalogue in Nigeria

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**Abstrac** - The word around us is full of physical variables that are constantly changing. If we can measure these variables and represent them as a digital quantity, then we can equally record, restore, retrieve, re-organize, manipulate and use them in some other ways in quantities imaginably through information dissemination and services. To tackle the battle imposed upon by the “Omnipotent” National Union Catalogue in Nigeria, the professional librarians have to equip themselves with the mentality of keeping abreast of current developments in the library networking technologies with determination and develop their own “Home-made Schemes” that would form a framework for a National Union Catalogue if not for Africa as a whole but for Nigeria as a Nation. This paper illustrates the importance of cataloguing and classification in organizing our libraries and attempts how the professional librarians can brainstorm together to develop a framework of a comprehensive list of a National Union Catalogue in Nigeria for our future generations as a boon.

**Keywords** - national union catalogue, networking, mome-made scheme, Nigeria.

## I. Introduction

In this information age, cataloguing and classification have become a personal trainer course. Library organizations and data collections are an integral part of our daily activities. When you surf the internet by filling a questionnaire form in an on-line process, or perhaps, open a new mail address through an electronic scanner, your personal information has

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becomes part of a data-base. Therefore, consciously or unconsciously, you have encountered with cataloguing.

(Sonaiké, 2005) summarized cataloguing and classification in the library profession by saying that they are professional functions and activities that has no substitute for human being, that technology can only assist and cannot replace the intellectual rigour of capturing the essential details which are required to identify a specific item within a library collection. Also (Hall, 2003) reiterated that there are some undoubted uninformed people, who assume that the internet replaces the work of the professional librarians, that Users or patrons need the skilled help of librarians whether using traditional prints sources or searching the internet.

Besides, (Ola, 2001) opines that every item in the library is an entity that has its own identifiers and must be recognizable. He goes on to say that an item in the library collection can neither be sufficiently identified by its authors nor by its title but by its feature which dictates its identity because, an author may have written and responsible for many works in the library collection. While (Adeyemi, 2005) asserted that cataloguing is concerned with an accurate description of the physical properties of a library document ranges from print to non- print, Audio, visual or both. That it is a skillful art which is subject to specific rules and guidelines that the practioners acquires through a period of professional training. Furthermore, that cataloguing is a skill whose finesse and speed of application takes time and experience to develop, also that cataloguing and classification are a skill that requires an eye – for- minute detail and indeed a skill which teaches patience. (Ogunrombi, 2010) give his own account when he clearly stated that, it was no longer news to librarians that cataloguing is a tedious process which requires professionalism and paying attention to details. He argued that cataloguing is all about the organization of knowledge which in the long run breeds quick access to information need in the library.

The above distinguished experts in the profession have actually rolled out the rudiments and principles of cataloguing and classification in the field of librarianship by raising the dust and shaping all sort of problems that are involved in the technical services, ranging from tracking

down and fixing past cataloguing assuming mistakes of being and not being a successful cataloguers.

## II. Definition Concepts of Cataloguing and Classification

The primary purpose of library catalogue is to point library users to relevant materials. The most important rule to remember in cataloguing is that of the users needs which comes first. Although, cataloguing profession is packed with rules for interpretations, modifications, directions, instructions and usage, yet, there are crucial times to bend the rules without breaking them to enable users to have access to the information need to their satisfaction. Just like (Scott, 2005) reaffirmed that cataloguing does not require an obsession with minutiae or tendency toward rigidity, that what they don't teach you in library school is that to be a good cataloguer demands more than adherence to Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 1&2 (AACR I & II), knowledge of Subject Headings, using Sears' List and Library of Congress Subject Heading (LCSH) or the familiarity with automation systems. That the most important aspects of cataloguing are the ones that cannot be taught but the logical mind that loves cataloguing and classification as a course in the library profession and use it to tackle or solve emerging problems.

Assigning subject headings to determine the call numbers requires the ability to assess and interpret the content of the book and how it relates to other items that made the book to be unique. However, (Scott, 2005) argued that no matter how comprehensive the rules for cataloguing may seem, there are always items that could still fall through the cracks. That the challenges of providing access to a book with no title page, or a magazine that changes its name every month needs to embrace the cataloguers thinking ability and efficiency to provide access to such items in the library collection with ease retrieval on the shelves.

(Nwalo, 2005) asserted that cataloguing and classification are done together in a library, that the Department of cataloguing and classification of the library dictates the total organization and arrangement of the library collection in all. In "all" items in the library co-notes that there is no single library materials found in the library collection without passing through the rudiments of cataloguing and classification either in electronic format or manually.

Invariably, the concept definition of cataloguing and classification is an elastic conscience phenomenon based on the Five (5) laws of library science advocated by one of the famous and founding fathers of the profession, also, an Information Scientist, S.R. Ranganathan as follows:-

- i. Books are for use
- ii. Every books its users
- iii. Every users his book
- iv. Do not waste the time of the library user
- v. The library is a growing organism.

The above postulated laws gave an instinct dynamic prospect and ideas of what cataloguing and classification would bear in the future of librarianship as at the time of its origins.

Taking all these profounded doctrines of cataloguing and classification into consideration, there would be need to recognize the following;

- i. Catalogue
- ii. Cataloguing in the Library
- iii. Class and
- iv. Classification.

(Gates, 1979) defined the library catalogue as a systematic listing of the books and materials in a library with descriptive information about each one: (i.e) author, title, edition, publisher, date, physical appearance, subject matter, special features and location. While (Reitz, 2004) simply define catalogue as a comprehensive list of books, periodicals (Serials-magazines, Journals, newspapers), maps and other materials in a given collection, arranged in systematic order to facilitate retrieval usually in alphabetically by the author, title and subject. The list of the items such as books, journals, records, documents, theses, dissertations and other non print media resources whether in microforms or other electronic formats found in the library is called library catalogue. (Igbeka, 1998) stated that original cataloguing exists from the scratch. That original cataloguing is done when a book or any other library materials has no traces of incorporated bibliographical descriptions such as Cataloguing-In-Publication (CIP), National Union of Catalogue (NUC), Computer Disc-Machine Readable Catalogue (CD-MARC), found in or on those newly acquired materials as they arrived into the library. So, library catalogue is an indispensable tool in any given library. However, library catalogue is a key to the information seeking resources in the library as well as an important reference or an index to the engine room of an established library. Library catalogue is all about physical description of all the library records in the library collection for user's identification.

Cataloguing is the process of producing a catalogue. It is a process that involves all the activities needed in describing the physical bibliographic description of an item in the library collection from the acquiring date up to the shelf, ready for it user. Others see it as the process of assigning the bibliographic information of book and non-book media on a catalogue card in the library. (Ola, 2005) enumerated two types of cataloguing in the libraries which include:

- i. Descriptive cataloguing and
- ii. Subject cataloguing.

Descriptive cataloguing deals with the physical appearance as it is seen at hand while cataloguing. Although, one may say that descriptive cataloguing can be done primarily by any library staff but there are rules and regulations to be followed for consistency and standardization. The AACRI and II, Cutter Rules, American Library Association (ALA) code and in many cases, Internal or In-House-Made Library Scheme gave rules and principles a cataloguer should follow and

information that are necessary, which a user can use to search for and to retrieve these needed materials on the shelves in the library without much time wasting and stress free. In a Nut-shell, the difference between catalogue and cataloguing is that, a catalogue is a systematic list of library materials while cataloguing is simply put as the process of creating entries for listing of the catalogue.

Subject cataloguing is the assigning of classification numbers and subject headings to the items of the library collection (Ola, 2005) as he quoted. (Wynar, 1985) while (Aina, 2004) defined subject cataloguing as the part of the bibliographic record which provides the subject headings of the document and as well as the classification number.

Subject cataloguing is far beyond the mere physical seen of the book at hand; The process of bringing and interpreting the meaning and conveying the message of the intellectual content of the Author to the user of the book in the library is what subject cataloguing is all about.

In most cases, users may not even know or remember the name of the Author or the title but the subject, therefore they use the subject to gain access to the book in the library collection. Meanwhile, subject heading is used by the cataloguer to treat the book, using all common features that can be easily identified with the book for access or retrieval on the shelves by the users.

(ALA, 1983) Glossary of library and information science, described subject heading as an access point to a bibliographic record, consisting of words or phrases which designate the subject of the work(s) contained in the bibliographic item. These bibliographic items include the Author, title, edition, imprint, collection, series, note, ISBN, call number, added entries or tracings.

Other forms or types of library catalogue include:

- i. Card catalogue
- ii. Book catalogue
- iii. Sheaf catalogue (Not too common in usage)
- iv. Dictionary catalogue
- v. Classified catalogue
- vi. Computer output microform (Com) catalogue
- vii. CD-Rom catalogue
- viii. OPAC: Online public access catalogue.

But for the purpose of this paper, it is necessary to focus on the electronic dynamic aspect of cataloguing and classification and their importance in the digital age.

By class it means putting or grouping of objects or concepts base on one or more characteristics and attributes of the same qualities and common features for the purpose of classifying them accordingly. Book documents that have the same subject content can be group together into a class and those that are of difference subject content can be separated and arrange in orderly according to their usefulness. Just as (Harrison, 1973) define classification as the process by which we group things according to their likenesses and separate

them according to their differences. (Aina, 2004) sees bibliographic classification as the systematic arrangement of library collections on the shelves in the library. While (Gates, 1979) defined classification as the systematic arrangement of objects, ideas, books, or other items in the library which have like quantity or characteristics into groups or classes.

The concept of bibliographic classification in the library is apply to objects, mental, action, intellectual, knowledge and relationships, This is in agreement with the Five (5) basic concept of classification facets introduced by S.R Ranganathan, famously called PMEST.

P- Personality= object

M- Matter = mental – aspect of the object.

E- Energy = Operation, process, technique (Intellectual)

S – Space = Location, Action.

T – Time = Period – knowledge searching and interaction.

We all engage to undertake classification on daily bases either at home or place of work. Take for instance you may decide to use adjective to distinguish one thing from the other by using colour, shape, size, length, wide or breath, height etc or when we go shopping at the supermarket, articles and wares are arranged according to their common qualities and features in different departments. Like staple food, cosmetics, beverages, men wears, ladies/women wears, detergents, confectionaries etc or in a bookshops, books are arranged according to their subjects and grouped together in different departments, e.g. economics, political science, literature books fiction and non-fictions books, children books, pictorial books, English language text books, mathematics, social science, reference materials, writing materials in all and sundries. We organize our library from departments to units. Also, the university is organized in such a way that all objects (individuals) know where he/she belongs, e.g. Colleges, Faculties, Departments, Institutes, Centres, units, Post-graduate School, Distance Learning Centres etc all these are essence of classification. We can go on and on but our major concern here in this paper is to focus on bibliographic classification.

According to (Cutter 1904) he defines book classification as the grouping of books written on the same or similar subjects. Bibliographic classification of library materials is an integral part of subject cataloguing. (Ola, 2001) asserted that the overall objective of cataloguing and classification is not only to facilitate accessibility and identification but also retrieval. Information retrieval is concern with finding documents that are relevant to users' area of interest of information need in the library collection. So, it is the responsibility of the librarian to provide adequate accessibility, availability and usability of those materials.

Therefore it is not enough for the library to just acquire library materials for users only. Cataloguing and classification serves as an index to the library collection. They are devices that help the library users to filter though a pool of information source in other to separate the wheat from the chaff, using all sort of bibliographic attributes as

directed by the classification schemes and notations assigned to the subject heading of the documents.

Example of these classification schemes are:-

- i. The Library of Congress Classification (LC) developed between 1899 and 1920 by American Senate Congress Council
- ii. Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) devised by Melvil Dewey in 1876
- iii. Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) by Paul Otlet Henri Lanfontaine in 1905
- iv. Colon Classification (CC) by S.R. Ranganathan in 1933
- v. Bliss Bibliographic Classification (BBC) by Henry Evelyn Bliss in 1935
- vi. Subject Classification (SC) by James Duff Brown in 1906
- vii. In-House or Special Home Made Scheme e.g National Library of Nigeria (NC, OD, etc)

The most widely use of all these schemes are the Library of Congress by mostly academic or (Universities) Libraries, and Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) Schemes and most commonly in usage by public and in Nigerian Libraries. The National Library of Nigeria combined both the Library of Congress (LC), Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) and Home-Made Scheme to class their library materials.

### **III. Dynamic Areas in Developing Framework for a National Union Catalogue in Nigeria**

The dynamic areas in developing library cataloguing and classification starts in the ancient times. We change from clay tablets to papyrus scrolls, to sheet of paper and form papers to bound of books, from stylus to quill pen, from quill pen to the printing press, now from printing press to the electronic format in different forms. That is from computer analogue to digital.

Cataloguing and classification has been on the trends of universal changes in development. Take for instance, the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 1&2 (AACRI and II), the Library of Congress Subject Heading (LCSH), the Sears' List and all other classification schemes have been on a development front line from one edition to the latest and from time to time. It is the up-datedness of these library instruments or tools that gradually leads to the Universal Machine Readable Catalogue (UNMARC) which was first publish in 1977 and is currently under the supervision of the International Federation Libraries Association (IFLA) Universal Bibliographic Control and International MARC Core activities (UBCIM) programme to facilitate the International Exchange of Bibliographic Records between National Bibliographic Agencies which was latter change to the United State Machine Record (USMARC) in 1978 (Reitz,

2004). The USMARC gave the details of how the National Union Catalogue started in U.S Library of Congress in 1948, which became the most comprehensive complete version of Machine-Readable Catalogue (MARC).

The Dictionary for Library and Information Science (2004) reported that the National Union Catalogue (NUC) started as a series of printed catalogues issued by the Library of Congress that began in 1948 as an author list of printed card and titles reported as held by other Libraries in North America. This is a heroic pre-digital attempts to create a Union Catalogue of National scope to facilitate resource sharing.

The development of Machine-Readable Catalogue MARC was an advocate feature of the National Union Catalogue, which has been largely superseded by the availability bibliographic data-base in the various libraries of nowadays. Furthermore the National Union Catalogue of Manuscript Collection (NUCMC) was a co-operative cataloguing programme sponsored by the Library of Congress in 1959, which provides cataloguing of Archival and Manuscripts materials at no charge to repositories in the United State of America that met its eligibility guidelines. The MARC record was from the NUCMC records that was created by the cataloguers based on cataloguing data supplied to the National repositories. (Aina, 2004) stated that the United States Marching Readable Cataloguing (USMARC) is the standard format used throughout the English-speaking world.

Invariably, this USMARC had long became a standardized instrument of tools for classification schemes such as Dewey Decimal Classification, Library of Congress, Sears' List and Library of Congress Subject Headings. Other MARC formats have been provided and produced by the National Cataloguing Agencies of British Library, Germany, France, Canada, Austria (Aina, 2004).

Libraries of all types are in the position to embark on planned library framework of co-operation that could harmonize a National Development of Libraries and its Profession World-Wide. The process of forming a National Union of Cataloguing (NUC) in Nigeria has been on the trend holds of lack of unity and continuity.

The National Library of Nigeria (NLN) actually endorsed the inter-lending scheme in (1973) by inviting libraries on their own interest to participate in the scheme to ease and stamp-fill the Library Co-operation in the country. Also, some academic, public, special, private and other libraries came to agreement in 1974 and made some recommendations for National Union Catalogue for Library Co-operation in Nigeria. These were some of the recommendations made according to Bankole, (1978):

- i. That National Bibliographic and Lending Centre (NBCD) should be established at the National Library of Nigeria.
- ii. That a National Union Catalogue of books and periodicals should also be established and International



- Standard Book Number (ISBN) and International Standard Serials Number (ISSN) be indicated on all cards sent to the National Union Catalogue Centre.
- iii. Each participating library should create an Inter-Lending unit.
  - iv. Courier Services should be established to supplement the postal system for effective service delivery.

The above recommendations were immediately implemented by the National Library of Nigeria when she eventually launched and published a handbook on Inter-Lending programme in 1976. Also, a National Union List of Serial (NULS) was published in 1977. In 1980, the National Library of Nigeria sponsored a conference on library co-operation for the development of libraries in the country.

Since the technology advancement and library networking was still at the lower ebb in the country as at that time, the Inter-Library Lending (ILL) and library co-operation was arranged in such a way that the National Inter-Library Lending Centre were usually informed when a library cannot meet up to satisfy user's request for materials and information need. The centre will then arrange for loans and sent by mail or courier services to the needy users. (Olanlokun and Salisu, 1993) reiterated that the Nigerian Libraries under the auspices of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) co-operation has been in various facets of librarianship and that the Nigerian Universities libraries have a co-operative scheme for acquisition of materials on Africa that not much has been achieved because of some problems, such as funding and un-cooperative attitude of other libraries in attending to such request.

By and Large, the Nigerian libraries had earlier discovered that both the Dewey, Library of Congress and other library classification schemes did not cover Africa interest in all subjects due to so many factors thinkable.

Therefore, the National Library of Nigeria and some academic and public libraries in Nigeria decided to develop their own local Home-Made Classification Schemes just like the United State of America did when USMARC was propounded, that became nationwide acceptance standard of National Union Catalogue NUC today, especially, in the English speaking countries all over the world. According to (Adebimpe, 2006) quoted (Oke, 1992) by saying that among the home-made schemes developed by the Nigerian Libraries were Moses classification which was named after Sybil Moses, the African-American Librarian who was in charge of government documents, at the Hezekiah Oluwusanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University. Other Home-Made Scheme include the National Library of Nigeria Home-Made Scheme, the University of Lagos and the University of Jos Home-Made Schemes.

#### **IV. The Dynamic Challenges Towards A National Union Catalogue For National Repositories In The Digital Age**

In this age of digital information dissemination, it is obvious that the change has come, and it is still coming. The dynamic challenges toward an effective library organization and providing efficient services starts with cataloguing and classification in any given library. How to tackle these challenges in an Information Networking Environment for easy accessibility and availability of Information need to the library users is the change and the challenges we are talking about.

The purpose of having a National Union Cataloguing among libraries is to enable libraries to store bibliographic information data which can be accessed and communicated from one library to the other, using computer facilities and ensure a unique standard format that is replicable in all formalities. The international Standard Bibliographic Description For Monographic (ISBD) (M) and International Standard Bibliographic for serials (ISBD) (S), International Standard for Printed Music (ISBD)(PM) and International Standard for Cartographic Materials (ISBD)(CM) have specifies information that should be used in describing documents (Aina, 2004). Apart from these Standard Bibliographic Control standards other electronic format such as MARC, OPAC, CD-ROM etc are inclusive, to facilitate an easy standard framework for a National Union Catalogue and accessibility.

A National Union Catalogue contains a list of the holdings of all libraries in a library system. It is a National list of all libraries that exist in a country that are participating in form of library co-operation or collaboration to have a common bibliographic catalogue of what an each of these library has in their various collections in other to serve library users with the information need, wherever and whenever the needed information material is located within the country. This is done purposely to enhance resources sharing and to provide as an avenue to National repositories.

The National Library of Nigeria have started well for a National Union Catalogue for the country in 1977 but lack of founding and impromptu of library networking and technologies and some other crucial unforeseen circumstances killed the dream. Just like an old saying goes "Sometimes failure occur because we did not know how close we were to success". That is the case of the National Library of Nigeria towards her contribution to the development of having a comprehensive list of a National Union Catalogue in Nigeria today.

Nevertheless, technology may have transformed tremendously the process of gathering information for

distribution which has also gone to an unimaginably proportional position of the library Profession in the digital age. Accordingly, (Tan, 2004) described the transformation and technology innovations as “Here today, gone tomorrow”. So, to take on the battle imposed upon us by the “Almighty” National Union Catalogue in Nigeria, the dynamic gray areas of cataloguing and classification has to be identify for brainstorming by the professional librarians in finding at least some remedy solutions.

## v. Recommendations and Conclusion

The sense of stagnancy of yesteryears should be gone with the retirement by elimination of library cards catalogues. That should be the dynamic philosophy areas, the professional librarians in Nigeria should have in mind for the framework formation development of a National Union Catalogue. This will ease resource sharing and library development in this era of digital information.

(Aina, 2004) Mentioned in his book some of the ways the existing cataloguing and classification tools devised in United State of America (USA) and Europe have treated African documents. According to him they are biased, ignored, compound names were lumped together, patrilineal, matrilineal and offspring’s names were equally inadequately treated or just assigned only few numbers for the allocation covering African Languages, culture, and socio-ethnic and so forth, but silence to give some considerable recommendations.

The above phrases can easily be avoided if the Nigerian professional librarians all over the country and abroad realized that the world is moving to a ‘global village’ as a whole, through technology innovations. Certainly, time shall come when this ‘global village’ will spilt into “regional and community villages or hamlet villages,” by that time, Nigeria could find herself in one those villages and their traditional culture, customs, economics, socio- ethnics, education and political influences will be reflected in the National Union Catalogue for the future.

We can emulate Melvil Dewey, S.R Ranganathan, Library of Congress in United State of America National Union of Catalogue (USNUC) etc to provide our Home-Made Classification Scheme just like the way the National Library of Nigeria started.

## vi. Conclusion

(Sonaik, 2005) suggested that the mechanism to have a National Union Catalogue in Nigeria is to create a registry of digitized library materials among Institutions that have been digitalized in form of a union catalogue for recording a long-term responsibility for storage and preservation of original documents in the library for repositories. While (Adebimpe, 2006) emphasized that the National Library of Nigeria should

be bold enough to take up the legal gauntlet against erring individual or agencies that refuse to comply with the directive emanated from the Institution in respect of having a National Union Catalogue for posterity.

The challenges to be faced to have a National Union of catalogue in Nigeria have been brought to a conclusion through the technology advancements. What need to be done are as follows:

- i. Have a National Digital Libraries Registry.
- ii. Engage in Library Networking
- iii. Make room for Institutional frameworks in academics Libraries
- iv. Library consortia partnerships and collaborations- National and public Libraries should be in control for positive pro-active and inactive situations.

The organizational professional bodies like the Nigerian Library Association (NLA), Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN), National Universities Commission (NUC), National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) and the National Library of Nigeria (NLN) have the physical structure, constitutional legal backing and statutory mandates that established these professional bodies to embark and produce a comprehensive framework of a National Union Catalogue in Nigeria to preserve the National heritage for prosperity and repository for the on-coming generations.

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