



## Challenges of Cataloguing Work in University Libraries in Benue State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*The study examines challenges of cataloguing book materials (work) in university libraries in Benue State, Nigeria. The purposes of the study were to identify the knowledge base and skills of cataloguers, to verify the cataloguing tools used in cataloguing work, to identify the type of cataloguing used, to determine the challenges of .cataloguing work in university libraries in Benue State. A descriptive survey research design was used. The population of the study consisted of 21 cataloguers which was used as sample size hence census survey technique was adopted. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Statistical tools used for the analysis were frequency counts and mean rating score. The findings of the study reviewed that there are in adequate staff, insufficient cataloguing tools, lack of professionals with adequate cataloguing knowledge and skill, and lack of cataloguers in other languages such as French. The study recommended that, there should be adequate provision of professional cataloguers with the requisite knowledge for cataloguing work, there should be sufficient relevant cataloguing tools for the cataloguers for cataloguing work, specialist should be provided and train and retrained to enable them live up to their responsibilities in university libraries in Benue State among others.*

**Keywords:** *Cataloguing, Book, University Library, Challenges, Nigeria*

### Introduction

Library which situate within university is known as university library. The prime obligation of any university library is to the member of the institution to which it belongs. The main function of the university library is to provide information materials for teaching, learning, research and community services. Apparently, university libraries stock thousands of information resources such as books, journals and other types of materials in supporting teaching, learning and research activities of their universities. These library materials are in print (book form), non-print and electronic formats (Ozioko, 2016). Book materials however constitute by far the majority of information resources in libraries. They are otherwise called print materials.

To access book materials in the library, three means are widely used (Siegel, 2020). They are catalogues, indexes and abstracts. The most widely used to provide access to book materials in libraries in developing countries such as Nigeria is the catalogue. In order to do that, sufficient information on book materials must be captured and identified to enable them to be



retrieved and used. This process is known as cataloguing. Cataloguing work is the process of organizing library materials or resources for easy access and retrieval. Ogunniyi & Nwalo (2015) state the purpose of organizing library materials as to make location of library materials easy, save time and space, facilitate easy accessibility to the materials, enhance effective utilization of the materials and make library attractive to its users.

According to Aboyade & Aboyade (2017), cataloguing work is the preparation of technical information about a book which may be transferred physically onto a card or electronically as online catalogue according to set rules as specified in AACRII or RDA. It is also the process of describing a book in bibliographic terms. It includes the name of the author, the title, subtitle, edition statement, place of publication, publisher, the number of pages and the accession number.

However, there are challenges that can mar the effective cataloguing work. When these occur libraries are characterized with a faulty cataloguing system as newly acquired book materials after the initial administration of ownership stamp are sent to the shelves. The users, that is, both teachers and students and even library staff are seen spending so much time and efforts searching for available book materials. Moreover, in some situation so much time is spent in the name of cataloguing work that do not appear on time. And when they eventually appear, they have no entries in the catalogue not to mention class number by which to shelf and retrieve them. Academic activities therefore suffer delay and quality in the process. In university libraries in Benue State, similar situation has been observed. Hence the need for an empirical work to ascertain the challenges of cataloguing work in university libraries such as Francis Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi, Benue State University Library and University of Mkar Library in Benue State.

The University of Agriculture Library established in 1988 with six college libraries in the colleges of fisheries, engineering, food science and technology, science, management sciences, veterinary medicine and veterinary teaching hospital. The main library currently contains over 62,364 volumes of books and over 5000 journals.

Benue State University library founded in 1992 consists of the main library, the post graduate library and seven faculty libraries. At inception, the library had about 6000 volumes of books and 200 journals in the main library initially located in the center of the main campus.

The University of Mkar operates a collegiate system comprising of three colleges; the college of food science technology, College of natural and applied science, college of social and management science, with various departments. The university library has sitting capacity or over 1000 students. It currently contains over 5000 volumes of books and a good number of journals and newspapers (University of Mkar; the vision booklet 2006:3).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Cataloguing of book materials in university libraries provides access to information to library patrons based on required knowledge, skills, tools of cataloguers and their adequacy. The process ensures that newly acquired library materials are quickly and readily catalogued to enable library users' access information sources easily and promptly. This also enables the orderly arrangements of materials on the shelves as well as tracking them whenever necessary. By this, patrons know what the library has in terms of a given author, on a given subject and in a given kind of literature and where it can be found in the library at any giving time.



However, there seem to be poor attitude of cataloguing in university libraries in Benue State as many book materials remained uncatalogued after ownership stamp is first administers on them. As such book materials appear to be available yet inaccessible. This is because it is difficult to trace them, not to mention their existence known. There is no way to track them as they are without call or location number by which they can be traced. As such students, teachers and library staff are seen wasting a lot of time and efforts in accessing library materials promptly and easily. Book materials demanded or requested for cannot be obtained readily. There is neither guarantee that they can be obtained within a stipulated time. In addition during accreditations specific books demanded by accreditation team are unaccounted for causing a lot of embarrassment to the university library. As such frustration set in among students and researchers as well as library staff in attempt to assist to no avail. If nothing is done fast the resultant effect is delay in research activities, bad image for the university libraries and their professionals. These and many more are the issues that warrant an empirical study into the appraisal of challenges of cataloguing book materials in university libraries in Benue State.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions raised to guide this study were:

1. What are the knowledge-base and skills of cataloguers in university libraries in Benue State?
2. What cataloguing tools are used in university libraries in Benue State?
3. What type of cataloguing is used in University Libraries in Benue State?
4. What are the challenges of cataloguing work in university libraries in Benue State?

### **Literature Review**

University library house a wide variety of materials on many different topics and in many different formats. The primary purpose is to support teaching, learning and research in ways consistent with and supportive of the institution's mission and goals. Hence library resources and services should be sufficient in quality, depth, diversity and currency to support the institutions' curriculum Ishola, (2014). This is because of the different programmes universities offer. Among the different information materials found in the library, book material constitutes one of the major source of it collection (Ozioko, 2016). Ikegune (2016) stated that book materials are library materials that fall under the category of nonfiction print media. According to her they include reference materials, general nonfiction, periodicals and vertical file materials. Riley et al (2018) admitted that textbooks or documents which fall in the category of print materials are information bearing materials with characters produced by mechanical or electronic means in hard copies. He also noted that they can be in electronic formats. They can be grouped in two, reference and non-reference materials. Oluwaseun & Olusegun (2016) viewed that book materials fall under the broad term of library resources as noted by Mngutyô & Ogar, (2016) when they stated that library resources are those information bearing materials in printed, non-printed and electronic formats, internet, including caliber of staff, their information handling skills, resource persons, adequate finance, equipment for information acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination.

Usage of book materials in libraries is dependent on cataloguing activities. Cataloguing is the process of describing a work or listing book materials. This involves determining main entry, describing works, determining added entries and subject entries (Ape, Mngutyô & Agber, 2016). Information contained in the cataloguing record provides many access points needed by the patron looking for information in the library. The effectiveness of libraries generally depends on the information service delivery (catalogues, indexes, abstracts etc. the products of cataloguing, indexing, abstracting) it uses (Mngutyô, 2011).



Cataloguing involves the cataloguer having the technical know-how that is knowledge of cataloguing. This is the ability to read a book technically and represent the information on an entry, the ability to read and understand and use cataloguing tools in cataloguing. Another important aspect of it is ability to describe the content of book materials. Today there is also the need for ICT literacy and skill because of online copy cataloguing. Other types of cataloguing are original manual cataloguing, commercial cataloguing and combine cataloguing, cooperative cataloguing. In original cataloguing however which is practiced by many academic libraries, adequacy of cataloguers is important. This involves manual cataloguing where the cataloguer goes through a physical book to extract information for an entry. The more they are the faster the materials are catalogued and the earlier they are out for use. But where they are inadequate much time is spent by the few cataloguers to do the work. It is in such situation that many university libraries are in haste to make book materials available to users without much thought in engaging inexperienced personnel leading to partial cataloguing.

Other challenges may include array of different cataloguing software used by different academic libraries with no coordination makes it difficult to exchange records, choice of library software not given consideration before purchase, shortage of man power, staff attitude towards automation, inadequate training (Posigha, Ojohwoh & Oruma 2019). Ediegboyan et al (2016) enumerating problems faced by cataloguers in a bit to deliver information accurately, speedily and in total package no matter in whatever format and from wherever sources in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as follows: state of electricity in Nigeria is nothing to write home about, difficulties of some librarians to accept new innovations in the library. Other problems of automation in this regard are information resources confusion in the changes of style and format of information resources; time wasting and endless training because of many types of software that keep up appearing and the need the cataloguer to learn the new devices, inadequate funds to update and keep abreast with new technologies that may be introduced and loss of data on systems as a result of frequent outages.

### **Methodology**

Descriptive Survey design was used for the study, the study was carried out in Benue State, the population of the study consisted of three university library staff in Benue state with a sample size of 21 librarian cataloguers in the cataloguing unit, instrument for data collection was questionnaire titled challenges of cataloguing book materials (work) in university libraries questionnaire (CCBMULQ). The instrument was validated by three experts from library and information science, the questionnaire was trial tested using a sample of fifteen cataloguers from university of Nsukka library which was not part of the study area. The scores obtained were for the reliability using Cronbach Alpha with coefficient of 0.880. data for the study were analyse using percentages, mean and standard deviation.



**Knowledge-base and skills of cataloguers in university libraries in Benue State**

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Knowledge-Based and Skills of Cataloguers in University Libraries in Benue State**

**Descriptive Statistics**

SN		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Reading a book technically to gather information for cataloguing.	213	4.286	.87014
2	Applying AACRII to cataloguing	213	5.714	.97834
3	Providing cataloguing description	212	6.667	.91287
4	Analyzing the subject(s) of information sources	213	2.381	.70034
5	Using subject list to assign subject headings	212	7.619	.62488
6	Applying see and see also cross references	213	0.476	.74001
7	Using classification schemes to classify the subject of information sources	212	9.524	.74001
8	Arranging catalogue entries alphabetically using prescribed rules	213	2.857	.78376
9	Using computerized catalogue to store and receive catalogue information	213	1.905	.74960
10	Preparing types of catalogues (dictionary and classified)	213	0.952	.99523
	Cluster Mean	213	1.124	.4110
	Valid N (list wise)	21		

Table 1 shows the mean rating scores of knowledge based and skills of cataloguers in university libraries in Benue state. From the table all the items are above 2.50 with the cluster mean of 3.124. This implies that reading a book technically to gather information for cataloguing, applying AACRII to cataloguing, providing cataloguing description, analyzing the subject(s) of information sources, using subject list to assign subject headings, applying see and see also cross references, using classification schemes to classify the subject of information sources, arranging catalogue entries alphabetically using prescribed rules, using computerized catalogue to store and receive catalogue information and preparing types of catalogues (dictionary and classified) are the knowledge-base and skills of cataloguers in university libraries in Benue State.

**Cataloguing tools used in university libraries in Benue State**

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Cataloguing Tools Used in University Libraries in Benue State**

**Descriptive Statistics**

SN		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	MARC 21	21	3.5714	.59761
2	AACR2	21	2.9524	.58959
3	Sears list of subject heading	21	2.4571	.47809
4	Bibliographies	21	3.2857	.71714
5	Library of Congress online	21	3.1905	.74960
6	AACR1	21	2.8571	1.06234
7	Library of Congress list of subject heading	21	3.6667	.73030
8	Computerized cataloguing	21	3.9048	.43644
9	DDC list of subject heading	21	1.7619	.43644
10	Cataloguing In Publication data (CIP)	21	3.4762	.51177
12	Resource Description and Access (RDA)	21	2.9048	.94365
13	Others	21	1.1429	.47809
	Cluster Mean	21	2.9780	.15791
	Valid N (list wise)	21		



Table 2 shows that the mean rating scores of cataloguing tools used in university libraries in Benue state. From the table, all the items are above 2.50, except items 3, 9, and 13 whose mean rating scores are below 2.50. This implies that MARC 21, AACR2, bibliographies, Library of Congress online, AACR1, Library of Congress list of subject heading, computerized cataloguing, Cataloguing In Publication data (CIP) and Resource Description and Access (RDA) are the cataloguing tools used in university libraries in Benue State.

**Types of cataloguing used in University Libraries in Benue State?**

**Table 3: Mean responses and Standard Deviation on Types of Cataloguing Used in University Libraries in Benue State**

SN		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
27	Manual (original cataloguing)	21	2.7619	.76842
28	Online cataloguing	21	2.6667	.65828
29	Copy (Derived cataloguing)	21	2.8571	.72703
30	Commercial (outsourcing cataloguing)	21	3.0952	.70034
31	Others	21	1.3810	.86465
	Cluster Mean	21	2.5524	.40450
	Valid N (listwise)	21		

From the table 3, all the items captured to represent the mean rating scores of types of cataloguing used in university libraries in Benue State are above 2.50 except item 31 that has its mean rating score below 2.50. This entails that manual (original cataloguing), online cataloguing, copy (derived cataloguing) and commercial (outsourcing cataloguing) are the types of cataloguing used in University Libraries in Benue State.

**Challenges of cataloguing work in university libraries in Benue State**

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Challenges of Cataloguing work in University Libraries in Benue State**

		Descriptive Statistics		
SN		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	There are inadequate staff	21	3.7619	.43644
2	There are no monitoring personnel to monitor catalogue activities	21	3.1905	.74960
3	There are too many book materials to be catalogued	21	3.0000	.83666
4	Lack of cataloguers in other languages such as French etc.	21	3.3810	.58959
	Cluster Mean	21	3.2585	.21485
	Valid N (list wise)	21		

Table 4 shows that the mean rating scores of challenges of cataloguing work in university libraries in Benue State. From the table, all the items are above 2.50, which is to say that inadequate staff, , lack of monitoring personnel to monitor catalogue activities, too many book materials to be catalogued and lack of cataloguers in other languages such as French and others are the challenges of cataloguing work in university libraries in Benue State.

**Results of Findings**

There are 21 Cataloguers in university libraries in Benue State.

Reading a book technically to gather information for cataloguing, applying AACRII to cataloguing, providing cataloguing description, analyzing the subject(s) of information sources, using subject list to assign subject headings, applying see and see also cross references,



using classification schemes to classify the subject of information sources, arranging catalogue entries alphabetically using prescribed rules, using computerized catalogue to store and receiving cataloguing information and preparing types of catalogues (dictionary and classified) are the knowledge-base and skills of cataloguers in university libraries in Benue State.

MARC 21, AACR2, bibliographies, Library of Congress online, AACR1, Library of Congress list of subject heading, computerized cataloguing, Cataloguing In Publication data (CIP) and Resource Description and Access (RDA) are the cataloguing tools used in university libraries in Benue State.

It is also discovered that inadequate staff, insufficient cataloguing tools, lack of professionals with adequate cataloguing knowledge & skill, lack of policy on cataloguing, lack of monitoring personnel to monitor catalogue activities, too many book materials to be catalogued and lack of cataloguers in other languages such as french are the challenges of cataloguing work in university libraries in Benue State.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

The findings of the study revealed that there are 11 Cataloguers in Benue State University Library; there are, 6 Cataloguers from Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi and there are 4 Cataloguers from University of Mkar, which is to say that there are a total number of 21 Cataloguers in university libraries in Benue State. This is not good enough in ratio to the number of book materials that are expected to be catalogued in the libraries in question.

The findings of the study also revealed that reading a book technically to gather information for cataloguing, applying AACR2 to cataloguing, providing cataloguing description, analyzing the subject(s) of information sources, using subject list to assign subject headings, applying see and see also cross references, using classification schemes to classify the subject of information sources, arranging catalogue entries alphabetically using prescribed rules, using computerized catalogue to store and receive catalogue information and preparing types of catalogues (dictionary and classified) are the knowledge-base and skills of cataloguers in university libraries in Benue State. This is in agreement with Aina (2012) who noted that the knowledge needed by cataloguers are technical knowledge and subject knowledge, practical experience on the job, exposure to latest developments in the field in form of capacity building.

Furthermore, the findings of the study showed that MARC 21, AACR2, bibliographies, Library of Congress online, AACR1, Library of Congress list of subject heading, computerized cataloguing, Cataloguing In Publication data (CIP) and Resource Description and Access (RDA) are the cataloguing tools used in university libraries in Benue State. This agrees with Aina (2012) who pointed out that during the process of cataloguing a number of tools are used which include the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, Resource Description Access tools, an index language (which could be library of congress subject Heading lists, Sears list of Subject Headings, thesaurus) and classification schemes.

It was also revealed that manual (original cataloguing), online cataloguing, copy (derived cataloguing) and commercial (outsourcing cataloguing) are the types of cataloguing used in University Libraries in Benue State. This is in line with Orbih & Aina (2014) who also identified types of cataloguing as manual (original cataloguing), online cataloguing, copy (derived cataloguing) and commercial cataloguing in many libraries in Nigeria.

In addition, the findings of the study revealed that inadequate staff, insufficient cataloguing tools, lack of professionals with adequate cataloguing knowledge and skill, lack of policy on



cataloguing, lack of monitoring personnel to monitor catalogue activities, too many book materials to be catalogued and lack of cataloguers in other languages such as French are the challenges of cataloguing work in university libraries in Benue State. This is in line with Oyeronke (2016) who enumerated the challenges of cataloguing as, inadequate staff, insufficient cataloguing tools, lack of adequate physical description, copyright challenge, and inadequate workflow.

### **Conclusion**

University libraries in Benue State have inadequate cataloguers although with technical knowledge and subject knowledge, practical experience on the job, exposure to latest developments in the field in form of capacity building to catalogue book materials. They equally have MARC 21, AACR2, bibliographies, Library of Congress online, AACR1, Library of Congress list of subject heading, computerized cataloguing, Cataloguing In Publication data (CIP) and Resource Description and Access (RDA) as tools of cataloguing work. The types of cataloguing in these libraries are manual (original cataloguing), online cataloguing, copy (derived cataloguing) and commercial (outsourcing cataloguing). However they are confronted with challenges such as inadequate staff, insufficient cataloguing tools, lack of professionals with adequate cataloguing knowledge and skill, lack of policy on cataloguing, lack of monitoring personnel to monitor catalogue activities, too many book materials to be catalogued and lack of cataloguers in other languages such as French. With this, there is no way they could surmount cataloguing work without conscious and deliberate efforts.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the conclusion, this study therefore recommends the following:

1. There should be adequate provision of professional cataloguers with the requisite knowledge for cataloguing work in university libraries in Benue State.
2. There should be sufficient relevant cataloguing tools for the cataloguers for cataloguing work in university libraries in Benue State.
3. University libraries should endeavor to employ subject language cataloguers such as French among others to enable them classify book materials appropriately.
4. University libraries in Benue State should train and retrain existing cataloguers on online or copy cataloguing of book materials to enable cataloguing to be faster and easier.

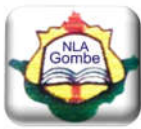
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