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Management of Change in Cataloguing:  
A Survey of Practices in Covenant  
University and University of Lagos,  
Nigeria

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## **Management of Change in Cataloguing: A Survey of Practices in Covenant University and University of Lagos, Nigeria**

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### **Introduction**

The extent of the use of library resources depends greatly upon the quality of the library catalogue. Most libraries have moved away from manual cataloguing as they have embraced the new technologies. Mohammed (1997) is of the view that information technology is rapidly transforming the content and services of libraries. Mason (2004) observes that libraries are a classic example of how automation has impacted on the traditional ways that work is done, particularly in cataloguing departments—changing how, and by whom, the cataloguing is done. Ajibero (2003) also notes that as a result of the impact of ICT on technical services, the roles of cataloguers have completely changed. Their roles now involve operations that have become integrated. He further asserted that cataloguers have become inter-dependent in their pursuit to provide bibliographic control and access.

Coyle and Hillmann (2007) assert that changes in the context in which libraries function have brought the library and its catalogue to a crisis point. According to them, the development of computer technology and electronic document production presents a significantly different challenge than libraries had only fifty years ago, a time when information resources were rooted in the era of books and periodicals, and the card catalogue was the entry point to the library's physical holdings.

Calhoun (2006) observes that one area where change is essential is in the area of library catalogues and cataloguing. Cataloguing rules used today according to him represent an unbroken continuum that began in the early 19th century. The rules he noted were developed for linear presentation, either in printed book catalogues, or in alphabetically arranged card catalogues, thus the emphasis on “headings”, those carefully crafted strings that are designed to be placed in an ordered list (“Smith, James” “Smith, John”). He further averred that headings in alphabetical order were once the only access points into the catalogue, but as catalogue entries became machine readable records, the rules for cataloguing remained essentially the same. “More recently, library systems developers have worked hard to create a machine readable library catalogue that provides functionality beyond that of analog card catalogue, for instance by allowing keyword searching of all data in the catalogue record. However, the struggle to accommodate technological changes with data created using the old rules is clearly not optimal, and hinders the ability of libraries to create innovative services”.

Gorman (1998) says that by the end of the twentieth century, with the explosion of digital formats and the internet, the treatment of non-book formats using the model of book cataloguing has become less useful. According to him, even conventionally published materials began to appear on the market in multiple formats. In addition, he noted that the much looser distribution channel of the internet eliminated the packaging and any vestige of description that those packages contributed. He further posited that the switch from physical media formats distributed through traditional channels to web-distributed digital

information pulled the last remaining rug from under cataloguers who were used to relatively stable materials.

He maintains that descriptive rules based on predictable stable and named “sources of information” (title pages, table of contents etc) about a resource, with a prescribed order of preference, were not adaptable to resources without title pages or pages and not suitable for resources that exist in a state of constant change. Schneider (2007) challenged the cataloguing practices as exemplified by the Library of Congress Working Group on the future of bibliographic control. She believes that the future of cataloguing is one of a new type of order and data control based on web developments. It is her contention that how we do things in traditional cataloguing may be very different but that much of what we value like shared standards, controlled vocabularies, and unique identifiers are exactly what leaders in the web community are working on also. While it is necessary that library cataloguing should approximate what obtains in the web world, there is need to optimize the editorial capabilities of cataloguers to ensure quality control of records added to the database or catalogue.

Library of Congress (2006) in its report on the changing nature of cataloguing notes that the catalogue operates against a backdrop of flat or declining use of library collections, flashy and powerful alternatives for information discovery, rapid changes in information technology, rising expectations of library patrons, mass digitization projects, and an incipient revolution in scholarly information exchange. It called on library managers to move swiftly to establish the catalogue within the framework of online information systems of all kinds.

The report challenges librarians and indeed cataloguers to consider the following issues as they seek to manage the change which is imminent:

- What is the current state of standards and technologies to support unified access to multiple repositories, including catalogues?
- What are the future roles of MARC and cataloguing content rules?
- What are the challenges to the economic sustainability of the current model of the catalogue?
- What do 21st century information seekers need from catalogues?
- In what ways might libraries leverage catalogue data for new uses?
- What partnerships are worthy of pursuing with the publishing, systems, scholarly and information technology communities?

There is need therefore for library catalogues to provide access to more content and to offer significantly enhanced functionality based on the features of popular search engines. More users want, expect, and pursue full text. In increasing numbers, they look beyond the catalogue when searching for electronic journals, databases and websites.

## **Changes in Cataloguing**

The introduction of computers into cataloguing marked a turning point in the way it is being done and by whom the cataloguing is done. The introduction of non-professionals to cataloguing is one of such changes. Para-professionals in the library can now perform conveniently tasks solely meant for cataloguers. Nwalo (2007) states that paraprofessionals in libraries can now effectively perform much of the duties that hitherto were the exclusive preserve of professionals. The California Occupational Guide (1996) describes how automation has in many cases changed cataloguing of routine materials from being primarily a responsibility of the librarian to a paraprofessional responsibility for employees assigned to the cataloguing department.

Resource-sharing of cataloguing activities is another very notable change being currently experienced in cataloguing. It helps to save cost and reduce to the barest minimum, duplication of efforts in cataloguing. Nwalo (2006) notes that resource-sharing is of immense benefits to libraries and their

users as it makes information more readily available, saves costs and prevents duplication of effort especially in cataloguing and classification.

Outsourcing of cataloguing activities is another development that is being experienced in the ICT era and it is one of the changes experienced in cataloguing. Outsourcing is subcontracting a process, such as product design or manufacturing, to a third-party company. Outsourcing of cataloguing becomes necessary as a result of backlogs experienced by libraries that are newly automating their services. It serves as an alternative means for eliminating these backlogs ("Outsourcing")

Online cataloguing also constitutes one of the major changes in cataloguing. It involves locating and copying cataloguing data online through international computer networks. It is common to see libraries hooked to the catalogues of other libraries to copy cataloguing details instead of embarking on original cataloguing. The Library of Congress and Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC) are examples of libraries who have their catalogues uploaded on the internet.

## **Profile of Institutions under Study**

### **Covenant University Library**

Covenant University is a mission university owned by the Living Faith Church Worldwide. It was established in 2002 and is located in Ota, Ogun State. It has a student population of more than 6,000.

At the inception of the institution, the library was operating from a temporary site until 2005 when the world class magnificent building was completed. The library, which is popularly referred to as Centre for Learning Resources has a collection of over 50,000 volumes of books, over 350 journal titles and seven online databases with thousands of electronic journals and textbooks.

The technical services department is one of the units in the library. The cataloguing section is under this department. Cataloguing and classification of materials start by first searching the library database to ascertain if the material to be catalogued is already there, if not, the LC online catalogue is searched to copy cataloguing details. Materials not found in either of the two databases are then classified originally using the Library of Congress Classification Scheme and LCSH.

In a move to automate its activities, the library adopted the use of Alice for Windows Software to catalogue all its resources. The library catalogue is made accessible to users through the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC).

### **University of Lagos Library**

The University of Lagos was founded in 1962 and it is made up of two campuses, the main campus at Akoka, Yaba and the College of Medicine in Idi-Araba, Surulere. Both sites are in the mainland of Lagos. The institution has more than 39,000 students.

The cataloguing section of the University of Lagos library is under the Technical Services Department of the library. This is where books and non-book materials are processed. In a move to automate its activities, the library adopted the Tinlib application software in 1994 but soon migrated to Glas application software in year 2004 when it was discovered that Tinlib software was DOS based and so was not user friendly.

Materials in the library are organized using the Library of Congress Classification Scheme except for Law books that are classified using Moys Classification Scheme. Holdings of the library are communicated to the public through the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) using the Graphical

Library to the Public Software. Author/title and Subject catalogues serve as backup to the databases when there is power outage.

In 2005, the use of the Library of Congress online database and OCLC for online cataloguing was introduced in order to enhance services rendered to their users.

The total collection of the library is about 470,000 volumes including journals.

## Objectives

This study is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To investigate changes in cataloguing practices among the selected academic libraries.
2. To determine strategies adopted by the two institutions in managing these cataloguing changes.
3. To determine the involvement of non-professionals in cataloguing activities and methods adopted to ensure quality control over their involvement.
4. To examine resource sharing activities among cataloguers in the selected libraries.

## Methodology

The descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The target population of the study are all librarians who are currently serving or have served in the cataloguing section of the University of Lagos and Covenant University libraries. The sample consisted of Thirty-seven cataloguers purposively selected.

A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data so as to elicit the views of cataloguers as to how they have been able to manage changes that have occurred over the years in cataloguing. The questionnaire is divided into three (3) sections. Section A deals with the respondents' biodata; Section B contains items measuring changes in cataloguing while Section C covers resource sharing.

The Cronbach's alpha Co-efficient ( $r$ ) was used to test the reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach's alpha returned a correlation coefficient of 0.79 which indicates that the instrument is reliable enough for the conduct of this study.

## Data Analysis, Results, and Findings

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Sex

Sex	Frequency	%
Male	16	46
Female	19	54
Total	35	100

Table 1 depicts that 54 percent of the respondents are female while 46 percent represents male. This is expected as there is a greater preponderance of female librarians compared to their male counterparts.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents According to Work Experience as Cataloguers

Work experience as Cataloguer	Frequency	%
1-5 years	25	71
6-10 years	07	20
11-15 years	03	09
16 and above	-	-
Total	35	100

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents have a work experience as cataloguers ranging from 1-10 years representing 32 or 91 percent of the total sample.

Table 3: Distribution of Questionnaire according to University affiliation

University affiliation	Frequency distributed	% distributed	Frequency retrieved	% retrieved
University of Lagos (Unilag)	25	68	23	66
Covenant University (CU)	12	32	12	34
Total	37	100	35	100

The completed and returned copies of questionnaire from the institutions under study are as reflected in table 3. Out of 37 copies distributed to various respondents, 35 representing 94.5 percent were duly completed, retrieved and used for the analysis.

Table 4: Changes in cataloguing practices

Changes in cataloguing practices	CU.		Unilag	
	N	%	N	%
The use of Cataloguing-In-Publication (CIP)	12	100	23	100
Online cataloguing using the databases of other reputable libraries	12	100	16	70
Involvement of non-professionals in copy cataloguing	-	-	11	48
Changing from one classification scheme to another	-	-	3	13
Introduction of library software resulting in different cataloguing modules	10	83	19	83
Emergence of outsourcing of cataloguing activities	11	92	20	87
Resource-sharing of cataloguing bibliographic details among libraries	3	25	5	22
Retrospective conversion of manual cataloguing records into electronic format using library software	10	83	15	65
Migration of cataloguing records from one library software to another	7	58	12	52
Cataloguing internet resources and other electronic files	10	83	19	83
The presentation of catalogues in an electronic format known as Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)	12	100	19	83

The responses confirm that there have been remarkable changes in cataloguing practices in the libraries under study. These changes as reflected in table 4 include: the use of Cataloguing-In-Publication (CIP), online cataloguing using the databases of other reputable libraries, involvement of non-professionals in copy cataloguing, introduction of softwares, cataloguing of internet resources and other electronic files, the presentation of catalogues in an electronic format known as Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) among others. Both universities engage in copy cataloguing (100 percent), while

Covenant University ranked online cataloguing as a major cataloguing change. University of Lagos (48 percent) involves non-professionals in cataloguing whereas Covenant University (0 percent), still maintains the sanctity of cataloguing as a core assignment of professionals. These findings recognize a departure from original cataloguing to already prepared bibliographic records. Other changes in cataloguing practices and their comparative rankings among the selected institutions are as reflected in table 4. Donohue Group (2008) and Omekwu, Egberongbe & John-Okeke (2006) corroborate the above findings.

Table 5: Strategies adopted by cataloguers for managing change in cataloguing practices

Strategies in managing change	CU.		Unilag	
	N	%	N	%
Outsourcing	1	8	4	17
Procurement of ICT	12	100	21	91
Employment of Systems Engineers as part of library staff	10	83	3	13
Attendance of workshops and conferences	12	100	20	87
Staff exchange/attachment to other reputable libraries	1	8	4	17
Enhanced supervision of non-professionals involved in copy cataloguing	-	-	13	57
Insistence that every fresh employee be computer literate	12	100	16	70
Provision of necessary infrastructures to create enabling environment for automation	12	100	21	91

Table 5 shows that cataloguers in the two libraries under study adopt several strategies to cope with changes in cataloguing practices. The application of ICT is ranked as the most frequently used strategy by the institutions, followed by sponsorship of staff to attend conferences and workshops. Staff exchange was hardly employed as a strategy. The relative and comparative ranking of different strategies by these institutions are as presented in table 5. The finding is consistent with literature as reported by Nwachukwu (2005), Nwalo (2007), and Atinmo (2006).

Table 6: Involvement of non-professionals in cataloguing practices

Involvement of non-professionals in cataloguing	CU		UniLag	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	-	-	17	74
No	12	100	3	13

Table 7: Methods Adopted to Ensure Quality Control Over Non-Professionals' Involvement in Cataloguing

Quality control measures	CU.		UniLag	
	N	%	N	%
Through close supervision by librarians	-	0	16	70
Training the non-professionals in copy cataloguing	-	0	11	48
Designate a librarian to constantly edit the catalogue for possible recataloguing	-	0	15	65
The use of prepared worksheet by librarians to be keyed in by non-professionals	-	0	7	30

Table 6 clearly indicates that the involvement of non-professionals in cataloguing practices in academic libraries is fast becoming a reality. University of Lagos (74 percent) affirms to the involvement

of non-professionals. This agrees with the findings of Mason (2008) and Oketunji (2007). However, table 7 also shows the measures adopted by University of Lagos to ensure quality control over the involvement of non-professionals. These include: Close supervision (70 percent), Training the non-professionals in copy cataloguing (48 percent).

Table 8: Resource-sharing activities as a way of managing change

Resource-sharing among Nigerian cataloguers	CU.		UniLag	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	4	32	10	43
No	7	58	13	57

Table 8 depicts very little or no resource-sharing among cataloguers in the libraries under study. CU (32 percent), Unilag (43 percent) indicated that there is marginal resource-sharing activities among cataloguers as a way of managing change. This is not a healthy situation as ICT ought to propel collaboration among professionals.

Table 9: Kinds of Resource-Sharing Activities

Kinds of Resource sharing	CU		UniLag	
	N	%	N	%
Exchange of catalogues	2	17	6	26
Exchange of personnel	1	8	1	4
Exchange of cataloguing tools	2	17	10	43
Joint acquisition of software	2	17	4	17

Table 9 shows the kinds of resource-sharing activities that exist among cataloguers in the two libraries. They include the following areas: exchange of catalogues, joint acquisition of software exchange of personnel and exchange of cataloguing tools.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Cataloguing practices have witnessed radical transformations over the years as a result of the introduction of ICT. The changes are reflected in both information sources and new tools in managing cataloguing records. These include; computers, internet, CD-ROMs, online databases, electronic files, metadata structures, library software packages, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) as well as creation of hyperlinks. Cataloguers in the two institutions under study have responded positively to managing these changes as the study revealed several strategies adopted to cope and attempts at mainstreaming the cataloguing practices to international standards.

Globalization of information networks puts a serious demand on all professionals including cataloguers. To maintain the status-quo would be tantamount to extinction and irrelevance.

Funding is central to the standardization of library practices especially as it relates to the application of ICT to cataloguing. Academic libraries should adopt a strategic approach that would generate required fund to procure software, internet facilities, bandwidth and other peripherals needed in a modern setting. The institution must actively engage the corporate world to assist through their social responsibility initiatives. Private-public partnership is inevitable in this direction.

Resource sharing in an ICT-era is made possible through uploading institutional catalogues to the internet. It is therefore recommended that libraries should ensure that their bibliographical records are visible on the web. This forms the basis for the crystallization of true virtual library.

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