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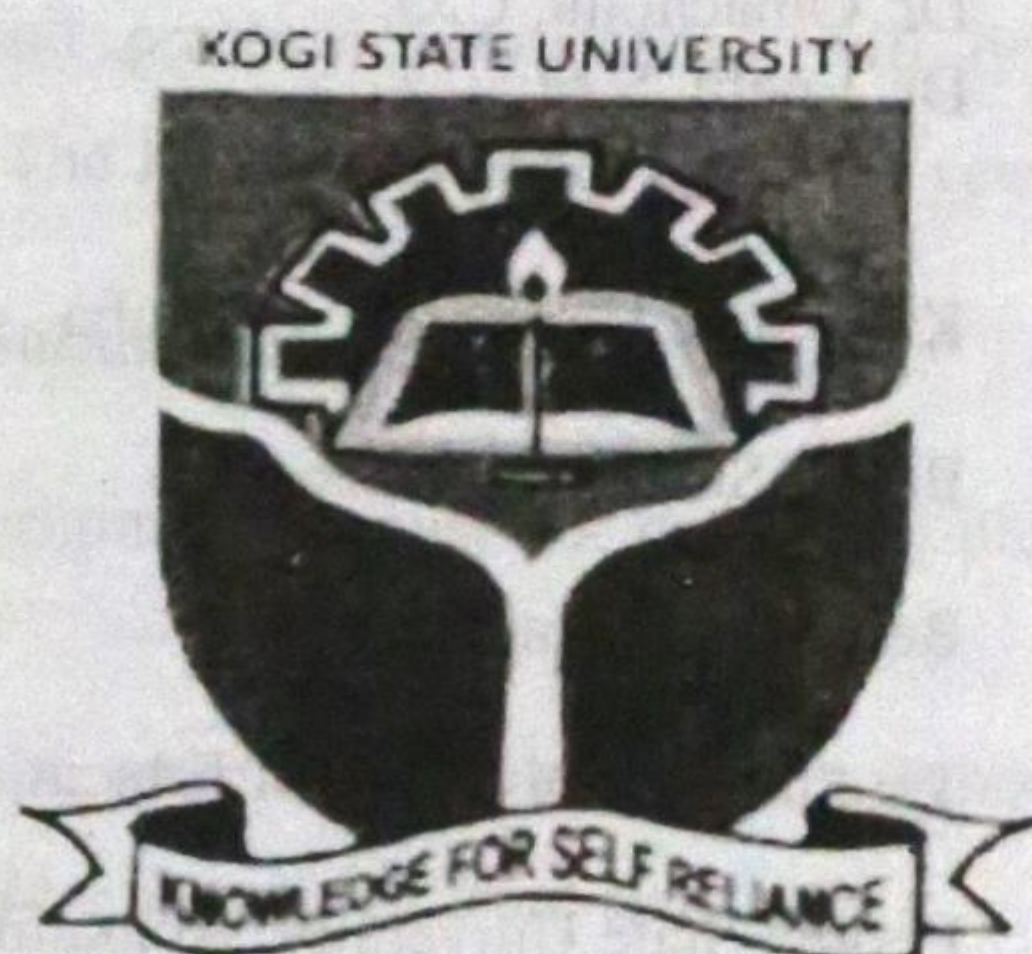


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THE EDITORIAL

This is the first volume and the second number (volume 1 No.2) of the Faculty of Education based Journal, Kogi Journal of Education and Pedagogy (KOJEP). The mission is directed at advancing knowledge through promotion and high quality research.

This volume comprised of thirty-eight (38) article which have successfully scaled through the scrutiny of reputable blind-reviewers in the education industry.

The articles focused on modern issue in the field of education. It cuts across various disciplines in education such as educational planning and administrative, social sciences, management, guidance and counselling, arts and humanities, curriculum, educational technology among others. It is a must copy for libraries, educational managers, students of research and documentation agencies.

I extend appreciation to all members of the publication committee and to all editors and reviewers who have done good jobs to the realization of this work. Our vision is to make our journal publication a globally acceptable medium of dissemination of quality and reliable scientific information and innovative research findings.

Professor Tolorunleke Reuben Tunde

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CONSTRAINTS TO CATALOGUING AND CLASSIFICATION OF ARABIC LITERATURE IN NIGERIAN LIBRARIES

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Abstract

This paper is an expository research type. It identified the constraints that Cataloguers in non-Arabic speaking libraries usually face during the process of cataloguing and classifying Arabic collections. The researcher employed on-the-job personal observation of cataloguing activities of Cataloguers at Kogi State University Library and those at the University of Ilorin library as a research instrument. The paper found that Cataloguers who did not have background knowledge in Arabic Language could not read Arabic texts for the purpose of cataloguing them while those with Arabic language background without Librarianship qualification could not effectively assign subject headings and class marks to the texts. It therefore recommended among others the recruitment of Librarians with subject background in Arabic language as Cataloguers of Arabic literature in the library.

Keywords: Arabic literature, Cataloguing and classification, Cataloguing error, Cataloguing and Classification constraints.

Background to the Study

Cataloguing and Classification of library books by Librarians connotes two-in-one cataloguing procedure. According to Bowman (2003), Cataloguing and classification is a process of preparing a list of books by librarians. If cataloguing is effective, library clientele will be able to find a book whose author, title or the subject is known. Such cataloguing product will show what the library has by a given author, on a given subject and in a given literature so that library users will be able to find any book of their choice in the library through its author, title, class mark or subject heading. A Cataloguing Librarian is therefore expected to similarly catalogue Arabic books by pointing out important search terms such as the author, the title, the subject(s) that the materials cover and their location numbers so that library clientele will be able to locate any Arabic books of their choice through any of the enumerated search terms.

Statement of the Problem

According to Omoniyi (2008), Librarians often catalogue and classify books wrongly. To catalogue and classify Arabic literature correctly is therefore always problematic. The core reason for the difficulties in identifying authors, titles, subjects and class numbers of Arabic books is due to the poor bibliographic information, the writing system, the layout and print runs of specialized materials such as Arabic materials. One of the bibliographic control terms in the process of book cataloguing and classification is also the use of International Standard Book Number (ISBN) which every published book must contain. However, the bulk of Arabic book collections do not show ISBN. Therefore, non-inclusion of ISBN, long list of names that stand for an author, long list of titles within titles, sub-titles within sub-titles to represent the main title and the inclusion of places of birth in the authors' description are potential constraints to effective cataloguing and classification of Arabic books as most non-Arabic language speaking



cataloguing librarians often find the constraints cumbersome to handle successfully when cataloguing and classifying Arabic books.

Purpose of the Study

This study was carried out primarily to identify and discuss the constraints to cataloguing and classification of Arabic books by librarians at the University of Ilorin and Kogi State University Libraries. Specifically, the study intended to:

- i. identify Cataloguers of Arabic books in the libraries under study and their educational qualifications.
- ii. identify the types of Arabic collections in the libraries.
- iii. find out the relevance of Arabic books to the libraries.
- iv. height the use of Arabic collections in the libraries
- v. identify the various constraints to cataloguing and classification of Arabic books in the libraries.

Literature Review

Librarianship scholars and practitioners have endeavored to explain the concept of cataloguing and classification from different perspectives. According to Bowman (2003), cataloguing and classification is a process of preparing a list of books by librarians. Kumar(1991) defined cataloguing and classification as a process and product of a systematic description of printed and non-printed information resources in the library so that the intended users of such library resources will be able to access the materials without hindrances. Omoniyi (2008) argued that it is when effective cataloguing is achieved that library clientele will be able to easily locate a book of which one or all of the authors, the titles and the subjects are known. Furthermore, effective cataloguing "will show what the library has in its collection by a given author on a given subject in a given literature," and the clientele will be able "to find any book using its subject(s) heading." Omoniyi (2008) also concluded, "Arising from the expectations enumerated above, the librarian is required to catalogue books by pointing out important search features such as the author, the title, and subject fields so that library clientele will be able to locate the books of their choice through any of the search variables." (Ogundipe, 2005).

In this paper, Arabic books are considered as grey materials. As Debachere (2005) cited in Daniel (2019) aptly put it, "the term grey material collectively covers an extensive range of materials that cannot be found easily through conventional channels but are frequently original and usually recent". The acquisition of Arabic materials follows similar procedures as other books; starting with identification, compilation, selection of vendors, ordering, and supply procedures. Arabic collections however have a fewer number of vendors due to the special formats such as writing system, prints, language, and binding in which the materials appear when acquired for processing. The utilization of Arabic materials by library clientele is similar to their needs for non-Arabic collections. Arabic discipline covers nearly all aspects of knowledge; as such, scholars, researchers, students and lay readers make use of Arabic materials for diverse purposes.

In library practice, librarians often commit errors when cataloguing library materials. Cataloguing error is an instance of assigning subjects that are incorrect to books and, consequently, grouping the materials into a wrong class and place on the library shelves. Omoniyi (1997) argued that a book that is wrongly catalogued and classified is as good as being lost because the target users of the materials will not be able to locate them where the texts are supposed to be found in both the library catalogues and on the shelves. According to Abdullahi (2000) cited in Omoniyi (2008), "an error is a product of intellectual defects or incompetence."



Citing Corder (1967), Omoniyi (2002) opined that cataloguing error requires remedial training to bring librarians to the target level of competence in book cataloguing performance.

According to Agaja, Adeniji and Salma (2003) cited in Omoniyi (2008), insufficient knowledge base of librarians in the subject coverage of a book and lack of training in the language in which a book is written are a few of the sources of cataloguing errors among librarians.

Research Questions

The following questions were generated to get this research:

1. What is the population, with academic qualifications, of Arabic books cataloguers in your library?
2. What type of Arabic materials are in your library collection?
3. What relevance is ascribed to Arabic materials in your library?
4. What is the perception of Arabic materials cataloguing among librarians in your library?
5. What is the level of involvement of Librarians in the cataloguing of Arabic materials in your library?
6. What are the constraints to the cataloguing of Arabic materials in your library?

Data Analysis and Findings

Table 1a: Population of Arabic books cataloguers in both libraries

Library	Cataloguer	Arabic Collection Cataloguer
A	More than 5	1
B	More than 5	1

Table 1b: Educational Background of Arabic book cataloguers

Library	Academic Qualification Cataloguer
A	B.A (Hons) Arabic, M.A. Arabic, MLS
B	B.A (Hons) Arabic, M.A. Arabic, PhD Arabic (in view)

Table (1a) above shows that both libraries under study had one Cataloguer of Arabic collections each. The table (1b) reveals that in library A, the cataloguer obtained two sets of academic qualifications in Arabic language/literature and librarianship library. In the table(1b), the cataloguer obtained B.A. and M.A qualifications in Arabic language/literature only. This implies that the cataloguing librarian in library A is an Academic Librarian with Arabic Language /literature as a subject background in addition to MLS Librarianship qualification. The cataloguer in library B is however no a n Academic Librarian since he/she only possessed a Degree in Arabic Language/Literature without any Degree in Librarianship. This finding tends to confirm Omoniyi(1997) who asserted that background knowledge in a discipline makes it possible for librarians to catalogue books in which they have background knowledge more accurately than a librarian without a subject background would do. The researcher therefore advocated the employment of certified librarians with a subject background as cataloguers by academic libraries.

Constraints to Cataloguing and Classification of Arabic books.

Thirteen (13) Cataloguing Librarians responded differently to the questions about:

- i. perception of Arabic Books
- ii. involvement in Cataloguing and Classification of Arabic Collections
- iii. peculiarities that differentiate Arabic materials from books in other disciplines.



Table 2: Types of Arabic materials available in the libraries under study.

Library	Materials
A	Text books, monographs, theses/dissertate fiction, non-fiction, Islamic religion, Arab history, science, culture, literature philosophy, law, language, reference, manuscripts, e-resources
B	Text books, Islamic religion, theses/dissertations, fiction, non-fiction

As the table (2) shows, there are more of Arabic collection varieties in library A than what is available in library B. While the types of Arabic materials in library A range from text books, monographs, theses/dissertations, fiction, non-fiction, Islamic religion, Arab history, science, culture, literature, philosophy, law, language, references and manuscripts, those in library B range from just text books, Islamic religion, language, literature, fiction, non-fiction and theses/dissertations. The conjecture is that library A had more wherewithal to acquire different types of Arabic materials in diverse subject areas of Arab than what the library B acquired in its stock; probably because library A is a Federal University while that of B is State owned with, perhaps, lesser finances to acquire diverse Arabic collections.

Table 3: Utilization of Arabic Collection in the libraries studied

Library	Use of Arabic materials
A	Teaching, learning, research, religion, pleasure, selective dissemination of information, self development, current awareness, history, legal
B	teaching, learning, research, religion

The table (3) above reveals that library A used its Arabic collections for a wide variety of purposes such as teaching, learning, research, religion, pleasure, history, legal, selective dissemination of information, self-development and current awareness. However, Arabic materials did not have wide utilization in library B as the resources were only used for teaching, learning, religion and research purposes. The discrepancy in the use of Arabic collections in the two libraries might probably be as a result of the fact that library A, being a larger federal institution had more Arabic collection clientele than library B with a fewer population of library users of Arabic resources.

Table 4: Perception of Arabic collection by cataloguing librarians

Library	Difficult to catalogue	Easy to catalogue
A	5 (38.5%)	1 (7%)
B	6 (46.2%)	1 (7%)

In the table (4), eleven (84.7%) librarians perceived Arabic collections as difficult to catalogue and classify in both libraries with only two (14%) librarians who perceived Arabic books as very easy to catalogue and classify in the two libraries studied. This implies that the majority of the cataloguers considered Arabic books as difficult to catalogue and classify.

Table 5: Involvement of librarians in the cataloguing and classification of Arabic books.

Library	Involved in processing Arabic Collections	Not involved in processing Arabic book
A	1 (7%)	5 (38.5%)
B	1 (7%)	6 (46.2%)

The table (5) shows that the majority of librarians 11 (84.7%) in both libraries were not involved in cataloguing of Arabic books but 2 (14%) of the cataloguers in the libraries were involved in the processing of Arabic collections. This implies that only the minority of librarians in both libraries were cataloguers of Arabic materials.



Table 6: Peculiarities that serve as constraints to cataloguing and classification of Arabic books by some categories of librarians.

11 (84.6%) respondents who were interviewed in connection with the statement in the table (5) itemized reasons for being unable to catalogue and classify Arabic materials. The listed constraints are, however, not in the order of importance or hierarchy.

Constraints to cataloguing and classification of Arabic books

- i. Lengthy names of authors
- ii. Authors with varied names
- iii. Cutter Number problem
- iv. Difficulty in identifying real author from several names that appear in the book
- v. A single book with many titles and sub-titles that may serve as the real title
- vi. Lengthy titles
- vii. Different cover title page
- viii. Arabic books are not in printed indexes
- ix. Difficulties in determining the correct form of Arabic personal and corporate names
- x. There is no standard Arabic Subject Headings List
- xi. Many authors with sub-titles each
- xii. Poor coverage of Arabic literature, history, culture and customs in Classification Schemes
- xiii. Limitation of the MARC in dealing with Arabic scripts and materials.
- xiv. Most Arabic terms are not captured in L C S H list.
- xv. Arabic books do not include C I P details
- xvi. Problems associated with the meaning of tabs ha which features regularly in Arabic books
- xvii. Inability to vocalize Arabic words and names
- xviii. Difficulty in understanding Arabic orthography, pronunciation and writing system/ style
- xix. Inability to Arabise English or other nationals names
- xx. Inability to read and translate Arabic texts.

Summary

Arising from the purpose of the study and the analysis of data that followed, the two university libraries investigated had one Cataloguer of Arabic Collections each. Of the available two cataloguers of Arabic materials in both libraries, one is a subject specialist having obtained a university Degree in Arabic as well as Library studies while the other one is a generalist having obtained a university Degree only in Arabic studies. Textbooks, monographs, e-resource, non-fiction and books on Arab traits, constitute the bunch of Arabic collections in library A while in library B, electronic Arabic materials, documents and manuscripts were not part of the stock. Arabic resources were used for a variety of purposes such as teaching, learning, religion, pleasure, research, selective dissemination of information, self development and current awareness needs of clientele in library A, users of library B consulted Arabic materials for limited purposes of teaching, religion, learning, pleasure and research only. No fewer than 21 challenges that non- Arabic language speaking librarians identified as constraints to cataloguing and classification of Arabic materials in Nigerian Libraries.

Conclusion

The empirical evidence in the two university libraries studied in this work is suggestive of the reality that many libraries in Nigeria might not have subject specialist librarians to catalogue and classify Arabic collections. The consequence is that it is either Arabic collections



would be left un-catalogued thereby denying users the right to access such materials or where Arabic collections were catalogued by Arabic language speaking non- librarians, the materials would be wrongly catalogued thereby making it impossible for library clientele to have easy access to the resources in the library catalogues and on the shelves.

Recommendations

On the basis of the conclusion above, it is recommended that libraries should employ holders of university (at first or master) degree in Arabic studies as Assistant Librarians and send them for Degree training in librarianship so that they will become subject specialist Librarians II to process Arabic books and offer Arabic services. Holders of Arabic Studies Degree should not be allowed to catalogue any library material until they have been trained as certified Librarians. Libraries should not engage Arabic studies Lecturers to translate Arabic texts for the purpose of cataloguing and classification. This is because translations by non- librarians are prone to errors since such translators cannot be proficient in librarianship registers and expressions.

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