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# **Cataloguing and Classification as Predictors of Library Use Among the Users of Libraries of Public Universities in Kwara State**

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates cataloguing and classification as a predictor of library use among users of libraries of public universities in Kwara State. Descriptive survey method is used for the population of users of libraries of Kwara State University, Malete and University of Ilorin. Convenience sampling is used to select 427 users who filled the online questionnaire titled Questionnaire for Cataloguing and Classification as a Predictor of Library Use among Users of Libraries of Public Universities in Kwara State. Findings revealed that 69.1% of users consult the library catalogues before using information resources, while subject, class number, series and author(s) of information resources are the major access points used in searching and locating information resources to be used in the library. This study concludes that consulting library catalogues before using information resources minimizes the stress users will go through when searching for information resources in the library and increases users' library usage. It recommends amongst other things that catalogue cards are properly filed and subjects of information resources of their libraries are adequately covered in order to enhance easy location and use of information resources.

**Keywords**: Cataloguing, Classification, Information Resources, Library Users, Libraries, Kwara State University, University of Ilorin

### **INTRODUCTION**

Public universities are referred to as public because their affairs are being administered by either the Federal or State government. This means that the establishment, control and administration of universities by either the Federal or State tier of government qualifies such university as public owned. Public universities, like their private owned counterparts, cannot operate effectively without a functioning library with up-to-date collection and quality information services to support the mandates of the university (Ajani & Ismaila, 2021).

Public universities' libraries are libraries found in the universities established, owned, managed and financed by the government through the public funds. The libraries of these universities bridge the gap between students, researchers and scholars in the university system and the information resources they need to expand scholarships, serve as the nerve center and intellectual hub that provide information resources needed to support the university system to achieve the motives for which the university is established.

Central to the services of all libraries are cataloguing and classification (Jimoh and Igwe, 2011) and libraries of public universities are inclusive. This is because through cataloguing and classification, information resources housed in the library will be processed, described based on their bibliographic details and organised into different subjects or disciplines, based on the common characteristics of the library information resources. The output of cataloguing and classification is to have a catalogue and assigned call number, which will aid in finding and location of information materials on the shelves.

Jimoh and Nwalo (2016) succinctly viewed cataloguing as the process of describing books and other information materials, showing the bibliographic details such as author, editor, publisher, series, tracing and other access points. It entails the process through which a library catalogue is created in order to achieve easy retrieval of information. Cataloguing consists of two major aspects: Descriptive and subject cataloguing. Descriptive cataloguing highlights the important bibliographic elements of the book, while subject cataloguing which is also known as classification identifies the subject treated by the book. Having identified the subject of the book, it is, thereafter, classified according to the schedules of an acceptable classification scheme.

Classification groups related subject together and assigns appropriate notation from a classification scheme for easy identification of an item as a member of the group. Aina (2012) submitted that cataloguing and classification are a complex process used in providing access tools to materials in a collection so that users of such collections can access the materials in that collection. Cataloguing and classification are essential to library services by serving as a search tool necessary for every collection to be arranged in logical and systematic order.

The vital impact of cataloguing and classification to provision of quick access to information resources makes this study focuses on users of two academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria: University of Ilorin and Kwara State University, Malete. The reason for the choice of the two libraries is because they housed more than two-hundred-thousand information resources in both print and electronic formats. The institutions their libraries were understudied have closed to fifty-thousand students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. However, only the undergraduate were sampled in this study.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Cataloguing and Classification are integral components of knowledge organisation in libraries and information centers. They are double-edged sword that facilitates quick, easy and timely access to information resources in libraries. Through the cataloguing and classification, images of libraries have been redeemed and it has helped in increasing the level of patronage of libraries because it boosts users' confidence in the prompt identification, location and retrieval of information resources on the library shelves.

As vital as cataloguing and classification are to maximising the usage of library information resources, it has been established by Jimoh and Nwalo (2016); David-West and Angrey (2018) that most libraries have not attached importance to cataloguing and classification. This makes it difficult for library users to identify, find, locate, retrieve and eventually use library collections

optimally. Hence, this paper is designed to unravel the status of cataloguing and classification as a predictor of library use among the users of libraries of public universities in Kwara State.

# **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study will be conducted with both general and specific objectives. The general objective is to ascertain if cataloguing and classification serve as a predictor of library use among the users of libraries of public universities in Kwara State.

The specific objectives are to:

- 1. Determine if users consult the library catalogues before using the information resources of libraries of public universities in Kwara State,
- 2. Find out the ways cataloguing and classification promote usage of information resources among users of libraries of public universities in Kwara State,
- 3. Evaluate the benefits of cataloguing and classification to users when using information resources of libraries of public universities in Kwara State, and;
- 4. Find out the challenges of cataloguing and classification limiting users from using information resources of libraries of public universities in Kwara State.

# **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study will aim at answering the following question:

- 1. Do users consult the library catalogues before using the information resources of libraries of public universities in Kwara State?
- 2. What are the ways cataloguing and classification promote usage of information resources among users of libraries of public universities in Kwara State?
- 3. What are the benefits of cataloguing and classification to users when using information resources of libraries of public universities in Kwara State?
- 4. What are the challenges of cataloguing and classification limiting users from using information resources of libraries of public universities in Kwara State?

# **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Many studies have validated the assertion that cataloguing and classification are highly useful to both the librarians and users. From the point of librarians, it helps in stock management, location and retrieval of information materials, while also helps in saving the time of the users thereby encourage the users to continuously patronise the library for their information needs. Tyopev, Igbudu and Ver (2020) conducted a study on "Undergraduates' awareness, use and satisfaction with online public access catalogue (OPAC) of Benue State University Library, Makurdi, Nigeria." They reported that a majority of the respondents indicated that they are not aware of the OPAC and concluded that there is poor awareness of the OPAC services among undergraduates of Benue State University Library.

Cabonero and Donendo (2013), in their paper titled "*Cataloging and classification skills* of Library and Information Science practitioners in their workplaces: A case analysis." The respondents interviewed in their study believed that cataloguing and classification have important contributions to the successful processing of materials for use by library clienteles, no matter what type of library it maybe. They further submitted that without cataloguing and classification which are integral parts of knowledge organisation, information resources in the library will be difficult to identify and locate, let alone used.

David-West and Angrey (2018), in their paper titled "*Cataloguing and classification skills and information dissemination in libraries*." They affirmed that cataloguing and classification are useful for the dissemination of information in libraries by noting that access to information by users helps developing countries to eradicate illiteracy. Accepting that cataloguing and classification aid information dissemination, they further recommend that library and information resources should be organized in a way that it can be accessed and retrieved in a timely manner. Information dissemination requires systematic collection, organization and storage of information relevant to the needs of the user community.

Muhammad, Baffa and Garba (2018) conducted a research on "*Cataloguing and classification of library materials in libraries of Kano State, Northwestern Nigeria: challenges and prospects.*" They reported that the major challenges of cataloguing and classification in today's libraries are low patronage of the library among the users due to increase availability and use of Information Communication Technology (ICT), inadequate bibliographical data by the local printers or publishers, inconsistency in the subject headings and assignment of notation, shortage of staff and attitudes of staff towards shelving and shelf reading.

David-West and Wali (2020) conducted a research on "Student's attitude towards cataloguing and classification in University of Port Harcourt: a case study of Student's Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)," their findings concluded that cataloguing and classification is the gateway to information resources, access and utilization. The conclusion of David-West and Wali can be inferred to mean that cataloguing and classification provide the keys to the library information resources through different access points like author, title, subject, classification number, call number, ISBN/ISSN and other bibliographic information about information resources library catalogues recorded.

The emergence of electronic cataloguing has further improved the effect of cataloguing and classification on the use of library information resources. This was stressed in Orbih and Aina (2014) when they studied "*The issues, benefits and challenges of original cataloguing versus copy cataloguing: The experience at the Lagos State University.*" They reported that Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP), online cataloguing using databases of other libraries and resource sharing of catalogue details among libraries have been valuable in the dissemination and use of information resources among the library users.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study is conducted by using the descriptive survey method. This method, according to different scholars, is suitable to a research situation where the population is heterogeneous and the researcher has to pick a portion of the population (Kolawole and Ijiebor, 2018) that will provide data to represent the research results. The population of the study is users of public universities'

libraries in Kwara State. Random sampling is used to collect data from the respondents with the use of an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was made available online for two weeks in order to create room for more users to fill the questionnaire. The data collected is presented and analysed using simple percentage and frequency table.

### **ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATIONS**

### Table 1

Attributes	Options	F	Per %
Institution of	Kwara State University	293	69%
respondents	University of Ilorin	134	31%
-	Total	427	100%
Gender	Male	137	32%
	Female	290	68%
	Total	427	100%
Level of respondents	100 level	77	18%
-	200 level	106	25%
	300 level	123	29%
	400 level	121	28%
	Total	427	100%
Age range	15 – 19 years	187	44%
0 0	20-24 years	117	27%
	25 – 29 years	94	22%
	30-34 years	21	5%
	35 and above years	8	2%
	Total	427	100%

Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 1 above reveals that majority of the respondents (69%) are from Kwara State University, while only 31% are from University of Ilorin. It also shows that 68% of respondents are female, with males having 32%. 29% are in 300 level, 28% in 400 level, 25% in 200 level and only 18% are in 100 level. 44% are within the age range of 15 - 19 years, 20 - 24 years have 27%, while 25 - 29 years have 22%.

# Research Question One: Do Users Consult the Library Catalogues Before Using the Information Resources of Libraries of Public Universities in Kwara State?

### Table 2

Users Consultation of Library Catalogues

Attributes	F	Per %
Yes	295	69.1%
No	132	30.9%
Total	427	100%

Table 2 indicates that 69.1% of respondents consult the library catalogues before consulting the information materials in their libraries, while 30.9% don't consult library catalogues before using the information resources in their libraries. As expected, users of academic libraries should enlighten individuals, this therefore means that they should follow standardised procedures in their dealings with the library resources. The major reason users consult library catalogues is to save their time, due to the access points they provide. Obiozor-Ekeze (2016) posited that cataloguing is concerned with providing the correct and accurate physical description of a document (print and non-print), showing the user the location of the book, its physical description, and its subject content using acceptable rules – Anglo American Cataloguing Rules II (AACR II), International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD), Resources Description and Access (RDA).

Cataloguing and classification are keys and very vital in the description, arrangement and location of information resources in libraries, which their unavailability makes it difficult for library users to access the information resources housed in libraries. Akidi and Omekwu (2019) noted that cataloguing and classification are a gateway to information resources access and utilization; means of organizing library resources to ensure that access and retrieval of such information resources are made easy. Librarians have observed that users consult library catalogues before using information materials provided in academic libraries. They further stressed the importance of consulting library catalogues by stating that cataloguing and classification are a gateway to information resource access and utilization, as well as a method of organizing library resources to ensure easy access and retrieval of such information resources.

### **Research Question Two: What Are the Ways Cataloguing and Classification Promote** Usage of Information Resources Among Users of Libraries of Public Universities in Kwara State?

### Table 3

Ways Cataloguing and Classification Promote Usage of Information Resources

S/N	I		Yes		No			
	Attributes	F	%	F	%	Mean	Std. Dev.	
1.	Title of the information resources	290	67.9%	137	32.1%	1.32	.467	
2.	Author(s) of the information resources	328	76.8%	99	23.2%	1.23	.423	
3.	Subject of the information resources	335	78.5%	92	21.5%	1.22	.412	
4.	ISBN/ISSN of the information resources	296	69.3%	131	30.7%	1.31	.462	
5.	Series of the information resources	327	76.6%	100	23.4%	1.23	.424	
6.	Class number of the information resources	333	78.0%	94	22.0%	1.22	.415	

Table 3 reveals that 78.5% of the respondents believed that cataloguing and classification promote their usage of information resources in their libraries through subject of the information resources, followed by 78.0% who also believed that class number of the information resources in library catalogues promote their usage of information resources in their libraries, while 76.8% believed that author(s) of the information resources promote their usage of libraries' information resources.

Ordinarily, subject is the easiest access point for library users, it is only those who are versed in research, reading or have books recommended to them that would be searching for information resources through other access points. For instance, students, scholars and researcher of Biology, Chemistry or Mass Communication would ask for information on their subject interest and rarely by author(s). The respondents affirm their position with 78.0% choosing class number as another major means of using information resources in their libraries.

The significance of cataloguing and classification in promoting library usage among users is affirmed by Obiozor-Ekeze's (2016) where she submitted that the main reason for classifying information materials in libraries is to create access such as subjects, class numbers, authors, titles and series, for information materials because the more accessible information sources are, the more likely they are to be used. Cataloguing and classification facilitates access to the library information resources through titles, while the authors of the information resources are also considered as means of access, not just its subjects. This agrees with Orbih and Aina (2014) that it is used for the description of the essential parts of a publication. Furthermore, ISBN/ISSN and class number of the information resources provide access to information resources; while card catalogue and/or online catalogue also provide means of access to the library information resources.

The findings where 76.6% of respondents posited that series of the information resources promote their library usage can be contested. However, it can be argued that the respondents are conscious of their choices, because as it was shown in the Table for Demographic Characteristics of Respondents that significant percentage of the respondents are in 300 and 400 levels. This means that since most of the respondents have reached the level that requires serious research to prepare their assignments, projects and seminar papers, using journals, newspapers, reports, conference proceedings, magazines and serial publications becomes inevitable for them.

# **Research Question Three: What Are the Benefits of Cataloguing and Classification to Users When Using Information Resources of Libraries of Public Universities in Kwara State?**

### Table 4

Benefits of Cataloguing and Classification to Users

Table 4 above reveals that 49.4% of users of Kwara State University and University of

S/	Attributes	SA			Α		U		D		SD		
S/ N		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	Making searching for information more easier	58	13.6%	211	49.4%	36	8.4%	47	11.0%	75	17.6%	2.70	1.32
2.	Guiding users to the relevant information resources in the library	92	21.5%	170	39.8%	55	12.9%	52	12.2%	58	13.6%	2.56	1.31
3.	Helping in finding and retrieving useful information for research	54	12.6%	229	53.6%	27	6.3%	91	21.3%	26	6.1%	2.55	1.13
4.	Saving time in finding information resources	60	14.1%	181	42.4%	95	22.2%	64	15.0%	27	6.3%	2.57	1.10
5.	Exposing users to other relevant information resources close to their search	61	14.3%	233	54.6%	50	11.7%	26	6.1%	57	13.3%	2.50	1.20

Ilorin libraries agreed that cataloguing and classification make searching for information more easier with  $(2.70 \pm 1.32)$  ranked highest; followed by cataloguing and classification guiding users to the relevant information resources in the library  $(2.56 \pm 1.31)$ . Cataloguing and classification saving time in finding information resources ranked third with  $(2.57 \pm 1.10)$ . However, exposing users to other relevant information resources closed to their search ranked lowest  $(2.50 \pm 1.20)$ .

Findings of this table indicate that cataloguing and classification have enormous value on efficient description of information resources with the aim of enhancing easy location, identification and retrieval of information resources in libraries. The realisation of importance of cataloguing and classification makes Nwalo (2003) posited that cataloguing and classification are essential means of accessing library information materials, which in the end facilitate their usage.

Orbih and Aina (2014) and Obiozor-Ekeze (2016) further stressed the importance of cataloguing and classification by submitting that cataloguing and classification aid the usage of information resources by making the search for information in the library easier; guiding users to the relevant

information materials in the library; helping in finding and retrieving information materials in the library; and saving time in finding information materials.

### Research Question Four: What Are the Challenges of Cataloguing and Classification Limiting Users from Using Information Resources of Libraries of Public Universities in Kwara State?

### Table 5

Challenges of Cataloguing and Classification Limiting Users from Using Information Resources

S/		Ye	es	N	0	_	
S/ N	Attributes	F	%	F	%	Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	Inadequate knowledge of how library information resources are arranged	327	76.6%	100	23.4%	1.23	0.42
2.	Lack of awareness of cataloguing and classification in the library	349	81.7%	78	18.3%	1.18	0.39
3.	Poor awareness of electronic cataloguing system	326	76.3%	101	23.7%	1.24	0.42
4.	Inadequate coverage of subjects treated by the information resources in the library	326	76.3%	101	23.7%	1.24	0.42
6.	Improper filing/arrangement of catalogue cards	328	76.8%	99	23.2%	1.23	0.42
6.	Inadequate availability of catalogue cards' cabinets	310	72.6%	117	27.4%	1.27	0.44
7.	Improper shelving of information and information	320	74.9%	107	25.1%	1.25	0.43

Table 5 above shows that majority (81.7%) of users of Kwara State University and University of Ilorin libraries believed that lack of awareness of cataloguing and classification in the library is challenge to them in using the information resources in libraries in their institutions, 76.8% believed that improper filing/arrangement of catalogue cards is also a challenge, while 76.3% believed that inadequate coverage of subjects treated by the information resources in the library and absence of electronic cataloguing system are challenges to using information resources in libraries in their institutions. However, 27.4% opined that imadequate availability of catalogue cards' cabinets is not a challenge, while 25.1% also opined that improper shelving of information materials is not a challenge to them when using information resources in libraries in their institutions.

Based on the results of the table, it can be deduced that there are a lot of challenges affecting users from using information resources in libraries of Kwara State University and University of Ilorin. The results are consistent with the findings of Orbin and Aina (2014)

where they found that librarians perceived that inadequate coverage of subjects treated by the information resources in the library; lack of awareness of cataloguing and classification in the library; and unavailability of electronic cataloguing system in the library is a challenge to using information resources in the library.

Posigha, Ojohwoh and Oberhiri-Oruma (2019) also discovered that inadequate knowledge of how library information resources are arranged, unavailability of electronic cataloguing system, inadequate coverage of subjects treated by the information resources in the library and improper shelving of information materials are challenges to using information resources in academic libraries. Adebayo (2013) has a different view by finding out that insufficient number of professional cataloguers among others, lack of ICT skills are the challenges associated with cataloguing of information resources in selected university libraries in southwest Nigeria.

Finding out that absence of electronic cataloguing system challenges the use of information resources in the libraries understudied contradicts the findings of Ajani and Ismaila (2021), where 97.3% of users of Kwara State University agreed that OPAC of their institution's library is more visible than the card catalogues. And also, based on observations of these researchers, there is adequate and up-to-date electronic cataloguing system in the libraries understudied.

# **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cataloguing and classification are integral parts of library services. The end products of cataloguing and classification such as catalogue cards, OPACs or WebPACs aid in easy location and retrieval of information resources housed by libraries. It is therefore logical to conclude that consulting library catalogues before minimises the stress users have to go through when searching for information resources. Classification number, subject, author and series are the major access points used in searching and locating information resources in public universities in Kwara State. Cataloguing and classification have significant benefits on information services provided to users of public universities in Kwara State by saving users' time, make searching for information more easier and guiding users to relevant information resources in the library. Among the challenges limiting users from exploiting the benefits of cataloguing and classification are lack of awareness of cataloguing and classification, improper filing/arrangement of catalogue cards and inadequate coverage of subjects treated by the information resources.

Based on the findings, this study hereby recommends the following:

1. Users of libraries in public universities in Kwara State should be encouraged to always consult the library catalogues so as to reduce their time when searching for information resources in libraries in their institutions.

2. Orientation of users of public universities in Kwara State should focus on teaching users how to exploit every access point available for every information resources in libraries in their institutions.

3. Users of libraries in public universities in Kwara State should be exposed to the benefits of cataloguing and classification can serve them for easy searching and identifying for information resources in their institutions.

4. Cataloguers and classifiers of libraries in public universities in Kwara State should ensure that subjects of information resources of their libraries are adequately covered, and catalogue cards are properly filed.

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Florence O. Ajani, Ph.D. is the Deputy University Librarian of Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria. She is a registered librarian with a profound and avid interest in Knowledge Organisation, Globalisation in Libraries, Reference Services and Academic Librarianship. She is a member of Nigerian Library Association (NLA) and Nigerian School Library Association (NSLA). She holds a B.Sc. degree in Computer Science from University of Ilorin (1997), Master of Library, Archival and Information Studies (2005) and Ph.D. degree in School Media from the University of Ibadan (2018). For more than a decade, Dr. Ajani has been expanding the frontiers of Librarianship through teaching and research which have culminated in different publications in conference proceedings, seminar papers and journal articles at both local and international fronts.

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