

# PRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NIGERIA: THE JOURNEY SO FAR.

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## ABSTRACT:

The mandate for the production of a National Bibliography of Nigeria came into place with the enactment of the Decree 29 of 1970 which empowered the National Library Board to assemble all published works in Nigeria, about Nigeria and outside Nigeria. This collection forms the core materials which the National Bibliography of Nigeria is centered upon. This paper attempts to take a chronological look at the modalities for the processing and production of the Bibliography; highlights the problems encountered in the process and proffers solutions for a better and faster result.

## DEFINITION

Harrod (1977) defined the National Bibliography as a bibliography which lists all the books and other publications published, or distributed in significant quantity, in a particular country; sometimes publications published within a lengthy period of many years. It is also used to indicate a bibliography of publications about a country (whether written by its nationals or not), and those written in the language of the country as well as those published in it.

The concise Oxford English Dictionary defines Bibliography as the action or process of compiling something. i.e. especially a book or a record, compiled from different sources.

Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus defines Bibliography as the list of books on a subject or by a particular author.

## THE FOUNDATIONS

The history of the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) dates back to 1950 when the then University College, Ibadan started the compilation



on the strength of the 1950 Publications Ordinance.

**(a) Publications Ordinance, 1950:** This was the first depository law initiated in Nigeria. It came into force on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 1950. The Ordinance provided for the deposit of two copies of all publications issued in Nigeria with the then University College of Ibadan and also with the office of the Chief Secretary to the Government. It stipulated that the publisher of every book produced in Nigeria should deposit within one month of publication, two copies of the book to the Librarian of the University of Ibadan for preservation. The ordinance was not specific on the extent or the type of materials that should be acquired through the law. The University of Ibadan Library was instructed as it were, only to receive, but not to organize and publicize the materials acquired. It was also vague on the "deposit for", because it merely named the "publisher" for making the deposit. In spite of all these, the University of Ibadan Library, under the able leadership of Professor John Harris, was able to lay a good foundation for the current National Bibliography of Nigeria.

With the initiative of John Harris, the then University Librarian, the University started the weekly list, then quarterly and annual lists of the Nigerian Publications, as it was then called for over two decades (1950-1973)

**(b) National Library Decree 1970** A change of hand was effected in 1970 when the National Library Decree, No. 29 of 1970 was promulgated. This decree abrogated the publications ordinance of 1950 and assigned to the National Library of Nigeria, which was founded in November 1964, the functions of collecting the Legal Deposit materials and compiling the National Bibliography of Nigeria. Section 4 (i) - (7) deals so comprehensively with deposit obligations that all the deficiencies of the 1950 publications ordinance were obliterated. The decree defines all the essential elements, such as the type of materials to be deposited, depositors, and the number of copies to be deposited by the various categories of publishers. Most importantly, the Decree specifically assigns responsibility for the deposit and the deposited materials. It named both the receiving, as well as the conserving agencies, and prescribed what should be done with the materials received.



### **(i) STIPULATION ON NUMBER AND TYPE OF MATERIALS DEPOSITED**

The Decree enjoined a commercial publisher to deposit three perfect copies of every title published in Nigeria to the National Library of Nigeria; one copy of these should be forwarded to the University of Ibadan Library for preservation. The purpose of this provision is in two folds; namely, to continue the privilege hitherto enjoyed by it and for the University Library to serve as an alternative location for all the published materials in Nigeria in case of theft, loss or inferno. The Federal Government and all its Agencies are expected to deposit twenty-five copies of their publications, while each of the state government (36 of them excluding the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja) should deposit ten copies. The provisions of the 1970 Decree ensure full support for, and recognition of, the National Bibliography of Nigeria by the Nigerian Government

### **(ii) DEVELOPMENT SINCE 1970**

The development of the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) since the National Library took over the responsibility for its production from the University of Ibadan in 1970 is characterized by changes in specific aspects, such as format of the entries regarding bibliographic details, coverage and scope; acquisitions, organizations, adoption of ISBD (M) and the arrangement of entries.

**(a) FORMAT OF THE ENTRIES:** In the area of actual recording, remarkable developments have been in the production of the National Bibliography of Nigeria. Prior to 1970 the University of Ibadan recorded only the title, the imprint and the collation of each of the publications listed. The National Library on taking over in July, 1970, provided full bibliographic details for each entry, featuring the full descriptive cataloguing according to the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, (AACR2); it used the subject classification of the Library of Congress List of Subject Headings; Classification numbers of the Library of Congress Scheme and the Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme. It also used the "call numbers" which are a combination of the Library of Congress Classification Scheme and the author's number derived from the Cutter/Sanborn's Three Figure Table. The added entries are also provided. The difference between the two formats in relation to the entry can be seen from these examples:



## UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

ADEDEJI, Adeniyi. 1939 -

Survey of highway development in the Western Region of Nigeria.  
(Ibadan, Ministry of Economic Planning), 1960.

Iv, 79p, maps. (fold) tab. 21.5cm 10s 6d

P. O. 60 - 299

## NATIONAL LIBRARY OF NIGERIA

330. 9669

NWANKWO, Uchenna

On national reconciliation and development ideology of the Nigerian Centrists/Uchenna Nwankwo. - Ikeja, Lagos (19, Afariogun, Seriki-Afro Avenue, P.O. Box 6249, Surulere): Central Productions, 2002.

Viii, 152p.; 21 cm

ISBN: 978-3167-3-8

(pbk)

1. Nigeria - Economic conditions
2. Nigeria - Politics and government.
3. Nigeria - Social conditions.
1. Title.

HC 1055. N992

LD 2002 - 1317

## SCOPE OF COVERAGE

The National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) comprises all books, pamphlets, maps and government publications, published in Nigeria, irrespective of size, in whatever language, together with those about Nigeria or by Nigerians published abroad. It also includes new serial titles. The inclusion of items of indigenous interest, published abroad and acquired by the National Library, arose from the desire to achieve a complete converge of all items on Nigeria wherever they may be published. Such items published abroad appear in the NBN without Legal Deposit



Numbers. The possibility of establishing a different medium for covering items published abroad is now being considered.

### **ARRANGEMENT OF ENTRIES**

Another significant development since the National Library took over the production of the NBN is in the arrangement of the entries. Until December, 1975, the materials in the NBN were arranged as follows:

- (a) Works in English Language (excluding government publications);
- (b) Government publications;
- (c) Works in vernacular i.e. Nigerian Languages;
- (d) Nigeriana published outside the country and acquired by the National Library;
- (e) Nigerian periodicals and newspapers.

This arrangement originated from the University of Ibadan. From January 1976, a classified arrangement under the main classes of the Dewey Decimal Classification, is used in Classified Sequence with author/title and series indexes. There is also a section for new serial titles.

However, since the National Library took over the responsibility there have been some innovations among which are:

- (a) The Classified Subject;
- (b) The Author/Title and Series Index;
- (c) The Subject Index.

### **THE CLASSIFIED SUBJECT**

The classified subject section contains the bibliographic information on all items. The entries are arranged according to the Dewey Decimal system of subject classification.

### **THE AUTHORS, TITLES AND SERIES INDEX**

The author, the title and the series index is arranged in one alphabetical sequence of authors, titles, editors, compilers, series, etc. One can easily trace out a book if the author or the title is known. The user is given the classification number which enables him/her to trace it in the first classified section of the bibliography.



## HINTS ABOUT THE FILING

Filing is the action of arranging papers, non-book materials and other documents, and records or other items into pre-determined sequences; It is also the subsequential insertion of additional items in their correct places.

The filing order in the NBN is in numerical sequence, e.g. 000-900. Also, the data are arranged in chronological ascending order, e.g. 2000, 2001, 2003, etc. while the abbreviations without the interior punctuation are filed as words; e.g. INEC, NUC, FEPA NCAA.

## THE SUBJECT INDEX

The National Bibliography of Nigeria NBN has a very exhaustive "subject index" which is one of its unique features. The subject index comprises details of the different aspects of the subject matter of the documents treated in the "classified subject section". Each aspect of the subject is listed with a classification number. For example, books dealing with any subject and its related aspects can be located by means of the classification number from the "classified subject section".

The subject index is arranged in an alphabetical sequence with their classification numbers. With the different facets and relationships, as a user, one could easily see the subject treatment of the materials without going through the entire book; hence, the subject index is a comprehensive guide to the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) which helps libraries/librarians in having a standardized classification of their collections with uniformity. For example, a book treating shorthand and its related fields is treated thus:

Shorthand	
Exercises for dictation	653.15
Pitman	
Problems, exercises, etc.	653.424076
Study and teaching	653,424076

Also, a book treating labour and its related fields is treated as follows:



Labour	331
Nigeria.	
Addresses, essay, lectures, etc	331.09669
Labour law	
Nigeria	433.66901
Labour market	
Nigeria	331.1209669
Labour movement	
Nigeria	331.809669

## CLASSIFICATION

Although works are listed and arranged by the Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme, there is also a provision for the Library of Congress Classification Numbers. Additional Classification Number for all government publications is provided using the National Library of Nigeria's Home-made Classification Scheme, specially designed for official documents. The advantage of the provision of double or triple classification numbers is to assist the librarians from various types of libraries that are using different types of classification numbers. Librarians who subscribe to the annual issues of the NBN, and receive copies regularly, can use it for both cataloguing and classification information.

## ORGANIZATION

### PRODUCTION: METHODOLOGY

The production of the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) involves various departments of the National Library as follows:

The acquisition of the legal deposit materials, which forms the content of the NBN, is handled by the Legal Deposit Division of the Collection Development and Processing Department (CDPD).

The materials that are listed in the Data Base of the International Programmes and Publications (IPP) are processed in the Legal Deposit Division and sent to the National Bibliographic Control Department (NBCD) for necessary action.

The Divisions that are responsible for handling these operations are the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) and the International



Programmes and Publications (IPP). They are responsible for the technical work which includes: cataloguing and classification; checking and editing of all the materials that are catalogued and classified. While the NBN compilation/Name Authority does the subject index, the statistical analyses of all the various items, the new serial titles etc, are handled by the Management and Training Section for publications.

(i) Hitherto, the photographic production and the printing of the bibliography, used to be handled by the Reprographic Section. Presently, the printing is done by commercial printers, and the distribution/sales is done by the National Bibliographic Control Department (NBCD).

#### THE USE OF COMPUTERS.

The National Library of Nigeria has begun the relevant studies on the application of computers to her operations like cataloguing, Reference and Bibliographic Services. The National Library is currently using Computerized Documentation System/ Integrated Sets of Information System (CDS/ISIS) software package designed by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

It is worthy to note that the production of the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) has taken a new dimension as it is now stored in Compact Disk (CD). This has helped the library to overcome the problem of space.

#### OTHER FEATURES IN THE NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NIGERIA

Other prominent features that are listed during the compilation of the National Bibliography of Nigeria include:

- (a) New Serials Titles for a given year's edition
- (b) List of Publishers and Printers whose works are listed.
- (c) An extract of the enabling Decree incorporated for the entire world to have an idea.
- (d) Statistical tables.

The statistical tables listed include:

- (i) Publications outside Nigeria.



- (ii) Serial Publications.
- (iii) Statistical tables of works received for ten years (official i.e. Government or Government Agencies.)
- (iv) Statistical tables of works received for ten years (Non-Official publications i.e. English Language).
- (v) Publications in Nigerian Languages.
- (vi) Places of Publication.

**CONCLUSION:**

The steps taken by the National Library of Nigeria since it took over the production of the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) from the University of Ibadan were aimed at making it rank among the best in the world. With its descriptive cataloguing, classification, arrangement and frequency, the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) compares favourably with the leading National Bibliographies, like the Library of congress, the British National Bibliography, the Bibliotheque Nationale, the National Bibliography of Ghana, the Canadian National Bibliography, to mention a few.

The National Library hopes to embark on a restructuring of the machinery for the production of the NBN, with a view to expanding it in readiness for providing an access to her branches through a Wide Area Network (WAN). It is hoped that through this, the National Library of Nigeria will further foster the objectives of the Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC).



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