

BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL ACTIVITIES IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF NIGERIA: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses bibliographic control activities in the National Library of Nigeria. Current trends in publishing such as e-resources and administration of International Standard Music Number (ISMN) to music publications were highlighted. It enunciates the challenges of complete bibliographic control in the country and proffers solutions to the problems.

INTRODUCTION

Bibliographic control has to do with the organization and management of information for effective utilization. A national bibliography is a list of information materials published within a country, about the country and by authors from that country. The National Library of Nigeria as a National Bibliographic Control Agency is responsible for National Bibliographic Control in the Universal Bibliographic Network aimed at achieving Universal Availability of Publications (UAP).

Okentunji (2006) opined that the National Library of Nigeria is dedicated to building a world-class national resource thereby enabling its citizens to know their country and themselves through their published heritage and to providing an effective gateway to national and international sources of information. Fundamental to the achievement of the National Library's mission is its collection of published works of the country. Bankole (1986) emphasized that the National Library of Nigeria continues to strive harder in her efforts to achieve an effective bibliographic control and that the achievement of an effective and total bibliographic control is considered the most important of the statutory functions and objectives of the National Library of Nigeria.

Many countries produce a national bibliography in some form, whether as a printed publication, a CD-Rom or an online database. Usually this responsibility is undertaken by the country's National Library. Similarly, the National Library of Nigeria by its enabling law, Decree No 29, of 1970, is

responsible for the compilation and production of National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) containing the intellectual output of the nation. There are three main reasons for the production of NBN:

1. To serve as a long-term record of the publishing output of the country;
2. To aid Libraries in the selection and acquisition of new materials;
3. To serve as a current awareness and reference source for Librarians, researchers and bibliographers.

In a vision which was developed during the 1970s, the national bibliography has been seen in the context of universal bibliographic control with the goal to make universally and promptly available, in a form which is internationally acceptable, basic bibliographic data on all publications issued in all countries". Under this vision, each country would be responsible for the bibliographic control of its own publications.

DEFINITION OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL

Behrens (2000) posits that the purpose of bibliographic control is to list information sources in a systematic manner to enable users to become aware of what information is available and where it can be found. This is needed because of information explosion/information overload. He went further to say that the control of information sources is the way we manage them so that we can have some sort of order over the vast store of world's information. Bibliographic control of publications aims at identification of all publications issued locally, nationally and internationally and when national bibliographic control succeeds in all countries, it then becomes possible to have Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) which is the ultimate goal of all bibliographic efforts and programmes worldwide. Harrod (1987) defined bibliographic control as "the creative, development, organization, management and exploitation of records prepared first to describe items held in libraries or on databases and secondly to facilitate users' access to such items. 'On the other hand, Defounga (1995) maintained that "bibliographic control can be described as a concept embracing all the systems concerned with the listing of all the publishing output of a country for the purpose of achieving comprehensiveness and compatibility.

Bibliographic control covers a range of activities which include, the creation of complete bibliographic records for published items, the standardization of bibliographic description, provision of wide access to bibliographic records through the compilation and distribution of union lists and subject

bibliographies and the provision of physical access through consortia, networks or other cooperative endeavours. As publications from various organizations keep increasing in number, the information contained in them can have a profound influence on the nations where the organizations are located. But these publications are useless if they are not accessible to other institutions or individuals. People should be able to locate and use the information they need when they need it, and making these publications accessible is what bibliographic control is all about. Bibliographic control has two distinct facets according to Anderson (1978):

1. It is concerned with the physical objects, books, and other information materials, which make up the national collection (format).
2. It is also concerned with the records of those publications that culminate in the national bibliography (content).

BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL IN NIGERIA: AN OVERVIEW

Decree No. 29 of 1970 Section 4(1) imposes on the National Library of Nigeria, the depository obligation of the nation. This stipulates that private /commercial publishers must deposit three (3) copies of produced books and twenty-five (25) copies of federal government publications in the National Library of Nigeria, while state governments must deposit ten (10) copies of each title published. All copies of such publications are retained in the National Library of Nigeria except one copy which is sent to the University of Ibadan Library for permanent preservation. This includes books, periodicals, pamphlets, newspapers, musical scores, films and all forms of recording.

From available statistics, it is very glaring that not all the materials published in Nigeria are deposited with the National Library of Nigeria especially books, serials, and audio materials. However, the importance of this legal deposit obligation on the part of the publishers in Nigeria must be emphasized if the country is to achieve bibliographic control of her literary output through listing in the National Bibliography. Moreover, the international implications of this is worthy of note as most works published in Nigeria are not known outside the shores of the country as they are not listed in the NBN. Adimorah (1995) observes that authors and publishers within such scenery are denied of international recognition in the same vein as they are precluded from international citation analysis.

The strongest link between the Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) and national bibliographic control is the national bibliography produced promptly and regularly in a country, and recorded in a definite form, the publications that make up the national imprint. However, to satisfy national and

international demands for identification, acquisition and description, those bibliographic records must not only be definite but also comprehensive. Moreso, to make international exchange possible, the records must be in accordance with international bibliographic standards which are accepted nationally and internationally.

THE NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NIGERIA (NBN)

National Bibliography of Nigeria is a publication that lists all the publications of the country by Nigerians and about Nigeria. The National Bibliography of Nigeria is a very useful bibliographic tool for authors, publishers, librarians and all information seekers and those in the book trade. The contents of NBN are prepared to be used not only for book selection and acquisition by librarians and book-sellers but also for copy cataloguing and bibliographic information by librarians in Nigeria and overseas. As NBN is used for copy-cataloguing, there is a very great need for each publication to be devoid of errors. The NBN is the best outlet for Nigerian publishers to reach the world market.

The publication of the National Bibliography of Nigeria became the responsibility of the National Library of Nigeria as a result of the promulgation of the National Library of Nigeria Decree No. 29 of 1970. Section 2(2) f. makes it mandatory for the National Library of Nigeria to publish on a regular basis the National Bibliography of Nigeria. Prior to the decree, the National Bibliography, known as the Nigerian Publications, was produced by the University of Ibadan for two decades, precisely from 1950-1970. The National Library took over the production of the Nigerian Publications and changed its name to the National Bibliography of Nigeria in 1971. The NBN was usually published on monthly, quarterly and annual accumulation basis, but it is at present published annually.

The National Bibliography of Nigeria besides serving as a repository of what is published in Nigeria epitomizes standards of cataloguing and classification for other libraries to copy. As the concept of comprehensiveness of literary collections has been replaced by comprehensiveness of access, Adimorah (1995) asserted that the control efforts of national libraries will be to serve the role of the central vehicle in the international efforts to ensure that records and data are available and accessible. The National Bibliography of any country is considered and accepted internationally as the major instrument in the improvement of national bibliographic control. One of the requirements of the Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) is that the records so collected must be published within the shortest possible period in a form of national bibliography which should be produced regularly. In abiding by these requirements, the National Library of Nigeria has striven to make the NBN

current. It is, however remarkable that the NBN has been computerized using the MICRO CDS/ISIS windows version since 2001. Thus, the NBN is now available both in print and electronic formats. In the information age which we are today, NBN should constitute a national database that can be accessed online. Therefore, the National Bibliography of Nigeria should be geared towards computerizing and creating electronic files that can be accessed world-wide. Sources of Materials Listed in the NBN.

The major sources of acquisition are the Nigeriana materials received through the legal deposit. The acquisition and collection of legal deposit materials which form the contents of NBN are handled by the Legal Deposit Division of the Collection Development and Processing Department (CDPD) of the National Library of Nigeria. Publications received under the Legal Deposit obligations are recorded, stamped, and assigned legal deposit numbers before they are forwarded to the Bibliographic Services Division of the National Bibliographic Control Department (NBCD) which is responsible for processing of the materials and production of the NBN.

Scope and Coverage

The scope of the bibliography covers books, (both print and e-books) pamphlets, government publications, new serial titles, and first issues of periodicals published in Nigeria irrespective of size and language, in addition to those about Nigeria or by Nigerians published abroad. Lasisi (2005) asserted that the inclusion of materials of indigenous interest, published and acquired by the National Library of Nigeria arose from the desire to achieve complete coverage of all materials on Nigeria wherever they may be published.

OTHER BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL ACTIVITIES:

Other bibliographic control activities carried out by the National Library of Nigeria are the issuance of International Standard Book Number (ISBN), which helps to capture all the books about to be published in the country, issuance of International Standard Serial Number (ISSN), which also helps to capture all the serial published in the country and the preparation of cataloguing-in-publication (CIP) data, in which books yet to be published are catalogued immediately the ISBN is assigned. These activities are equally geared at maintaining standards of publishing. In addition, the library is charged with the responsibility of compiling National Union Catalogue (NUC) that shows the record of publications that exist in the country and the location, and also the production of National Union List of Serials (NULOS) that lists serials held by the cooperating libraries. NUC and NULOS are formidable tools for Library cooperation in national resource sharing. Preparation of Indexes and abstracts are also other forms of bibliographic control which National Library of Nigeria undertakes.

ISSUANCE OF ISBN

International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is a unique international identifier for monographic publications. It is a 13 - digit number given to a book to identify it. Prior to January, 2007, it was of 10 - digit structure. ISBN is an essential instrument in production, distribution, sales analysis, and a bibliographic data storage system in the book trade and is also of vital importance to library information management. ISBN is assigned to monographic publications such as printed books, e-books, pamphlets, and others. The Nigerian ISBN agency of the National Library of Nigeria assigns ISBN to printed books, e-books, and pamphlets. The ISBN as a bibliographic control tool helps to capture the books that are to be published. Issuance of ISBN helps to maintain publishing standards because at the point of collection, the publishers/authors are advised on the tenets of publishing. As publishers/authors request for assignment of ISBN to their books, the agency is given the opportunity to produce bibliographic data of publications before such publications even come to the library through legal deposit or purchase. Thus ISBN helps in: Building databases of publications both in and out of print; generating bibliographic products and catalogues from these databases of publications for the book trade; producing subject lists and catalogues; stock control; ordering services based on electronic communication systems, and preparation of publishers International ISBN data which is usually sent to the international agency for the production of Publishers' International ISBN Directory.

ISSUANCE OF ISSN:

International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) is a unique number assigned to serials. It is an eight-digit number which identifies periodical publications including electronic serials. It takes the form of the acronym ISSN followed by two groups of four digits, separated by a hyphen. Each ISSN assigned to a serial publication is registered in an international database, called the ISSN register. It is the most comprehensive and authoritative source for identification of serial publications world-wide. Thus ISSN register can be considered as the world catalogue of serials. The register is a bibliographic utility which may be used as major source of information about the world. The ISSN centre of the National Library of Nigeria registers serials published in the country and this helps to capture all these publications as serials are even registered after the maiden edition is published.

PROCESSING OF CATALOGUING-IN-PUBLICATION (CIP) DATA.

Processing of CIP data is an important national and international bibliographic control device for the promotion of the book industry. CIP is a programme for the provision of short pre-publication cataloguing data to publishers for inclusion on the verso of the title pages of their publications at the time of printing. CIP data as a bibliographic tool enables the books to be

publicized before they are actually published. It helps to capture the forthcoming titles and create awareness of them. Ideally, when a CIP data is prepared for a forthcoming book, the knowledge about the title is made by the national agency by including it in the NBN as a forthcoming title so that book dealers, Libraries/Librarians and readers will be aware of it worldwide before it is finally published, thereby serving as a major information source for acquisition of new Nigerian publications. Other benefits of CIP are as follows:- (i) Its availability on a book makes for easy and quick cataloguing and classification by the Librarian(ii) As it helps the Librarian catalogue books quicker, the books get to the shelves faster and thus ensures a faster circulation of books. (lii) Through participation in CIP, publishers are advised and assisted with the layout of their publications to conform to international standards.

EMERGING ISSUES IN PUBLISHING AND BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL.

Administration of ISMN:-

Olowokere (2009) opines that the International Standard Music Number (ISMN) is a unique number for the identification of all printed music publications from all over the world, whether available for sale, hire, gratis or for copyright purposes and whether a part, a score, or an element of, in a multi-media kit. The International Standard Music Number (ISMN) started in 1993 with the International Issuing Agency located in Cojena Berlin, Germany. Fifty four (54) countries across the globe with Ghana being the only nation in Africa are now participating in the administration of this number. It will be ideal if Nigeria as the giant of Africa and being one of the African intellectual heavyweights join in the administration of this number as the rules of standard need to be properly applied so that ISBN that has for some time now been used for numbering sheet music shall be replaced with ISMN. The ISMN in Nigeria shall be for print, electronic, microforms or braille formats of music publication. However, ISMN shall not be used for stand alone sound or video recording or for publications about music because they have their own International numbering system.

Importance of ISMN system to publishers/libraries and music trade industry are as follows: Comprehensive and widely used tool for the book trade; Provides fast and unique identification; Enables quick and efficient ordering and tele-ordering; Speeds up distribution; Allows the creation of music trade directory; Support bar coding and electronic point-of-sale systems; A quick and valuable tool for identification.

The ISMN is desired in Nigeria to serve as a tool for the standardization and rationalization of music publishing and the music trade. It is also for the bibliographic control of music publications as National Library of Nigeria will

be able to track down all the music publications in the country. Music whether in print, electronic, microform or Braille is an intellectual property and when Nigeria cannot keep track of them, we cannot boast of complete and comprehensive bibliographic control of our intellectual output which is the ultimate goal of bibliographic control and universal availability of publications.

Electronic Resources:-

One of the current trends in publishing is e-resources. Electronic resources comprise e-books and e-journals. E-book can be defined as a digital version of a traditional print book designed to be read on a personal computer. While E-journal is a digital version of a print journal or a journal-like electronic publication with no print counterpart, which is made available through the web, or e-mail or other form of internet access. The ISBN Agency and ISSN Centre of National Library of Nigeria administer ISBN and ISSN to e-resources. The issue at this juncture is that some of these resources are not easily accessible to National Library after publication. Thus processing and maintaining bibliographic control of these resources becomes difficult. The impact of internet is most useful on the publication and distribution of these resources. National Library of Nigeria has started building her database; online public access catalogue (OPAC) with the aid of Liberty-3 software package. Data entry for NUC and digitization of library materials are equally in progress. It is hoped that by the time the digital library become fully functional, all these problems will be over.

CHALLENGES OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL IN NIGERIA

1. Publishing Without Bibliographic Details

Problems encountered in the processing of local publications arise from lack of important data elements needed for bibliographic description. There are many mushroom and small-scale publishing industries springing up daily. Majority of these are not yet aware of the international standards for book production. Consequently, their publications are deficient in bibliographic data required for the provision of full bibliographic description. The insufficient bibliographic data in most of the publications create problems for the application and use of international standards for bibliographic description. A lot of time and efforts are usually expended in the process of providing full bibliographic description for such publications.

2. Non-compliance of some of the Authors/Publishers with the Legal Deposit Law

Many publishers find it difficult to comply with the legal deposit law that stipulates three (3) copies, ten (10) copies and twenty-five (25) copies of each publication emanating from private

publishers/authors, state and federal government respectively. Comparing the number of ISBN issued to the number of legal deposits made, it is obvious that many publishers do not obey the legal deposit law. This being the case, the National Library of Nigeria is not able to achieve complete bibliographic control of the country's publications as it cannot acquire all the publications published.

3. **Shortage of Staff**

The National Library of Nigeria does not have adequate cataloguers for the cataloguing and classification of the materials. Thus, there is always a backlog of uncatalogued and unclassified materials every year. Also, there is inadequate experienced staff to check the already catalogued materials, and shortage of data entry clerks to key in the entries into the computer for NBN production.

4. **Back-log of Materials.**

Owing to the fact that many publications are not processed as they come to the library, it is difficult for the NBN to be true representation of the year it covers. Ideally, the NBN of every year should represent the legal deposits made for that year.

5. **Lack of Computers and Automation of Library Functions:** Owing to the fact that cataloguing and other library functions are not yet completely automated, it becomes difficult for cataloguers to work directly with the computer. Thus a cataloguer does the manual processing of the material and passes on to another officer to key into the computer. While another officer edits entries on-line. This has drastically delayed the production of NBN on yearly basis. Furthermore, the number of computers in the department is grossly inadequate as ideally each cataloguer should be able to catalogue online.

6. **Inadequate Supply of Tools**

Inadequate supply of cataloguing and classification tools for cataloguing and classification of materials is another challenge the cataloguers have to grapple with. For instance, a set of cataloguing and classification tool is usually shared by five cataloguers.

7. **Some Authors Publishing without Using ISBN**

Despite all the awareness created about ISBN, many authors still publish without using ISBN. Thus bibliographic control of such works cannot be captured.

8. **Use of CIP**

It is also observed that after processing CIP data, many authors/publishers do not put it on the copyright page. Even when they do, it is done wrongly and not as instructed. Moreover, some publishers and authors fabricate CIP data and even present it as if it is emanating from National Library of Nigeria.

9 **Administration of ISMN**

Administration of ISMN, which National Library of Nigeria is not yet carrying out is a big challenge to the country in the area of bibliographic control and standardization of music publications. At present, some music publications like hymn books are given ISBN and others are not given any international identifier at all as the awareness of this ISMN is not yet created.

10. **Bibliographic Control of Electronic Resources (E-resources)**

ISBN and ISSN are given to electronic resources in the ISBN Agency and ISSN centre of National Library of Nigeria but there is no bibliographic control of these e-resources, as after collecting ISBN\ISSN, National Library is not able to track 'down these resources as many of the publishers do not bother to make them available to us. Worse still, as National Library services/functions are not completely automated, processing and making them available becomes another obstacle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For National Library of Nigeria to achieve its goal of bibliographic control of the nation's intellectual heritage, the following issues must be given attention:

1. **Legal Deposit**

Legal deposit obligations should be vigorously enforced. This means that the National Library of Nigeria should revitalize its legal deposit drives. Presently, the State Branches are involved in the collection of legal deposit materials and this has helped to boost the legal deposit collections. If the State Branches are empowered in the area of logistics, they will be able to visit some authors/publishers in addition to those who bring materials periodically to the National Library branch nearest to them for deposit.

2. **NBN Production and Distribution**

The NBN production should be current. It should be timely made available for libraries in Nigeria and overseas for acquisition and cataloguing information. Distribution of the NBN should be prompt,

effective and more extensive and more libraries should be invited to subscribe to the editions of NBN. However, once the production is current, many libraries will be encouraged to use it. Wider publicity should also be given to the production of the NBN and other related bibliographic control services.

3. The National Library of Nigeria should not depend solely on deposited copies of any new titles. At least five copies of any new title should be purchased in addition to the legal deposit as soon it is published to serve as an incentive to the publishers and authors. In this way, new works would be listed in the national bibliography at the earliest possible time.
4. NBN production stages should be regulated and facilitated for processing and editing in order to avoid errors in the entries or unnecessary mistakes.
5. National Bibliography of Nigeria should be on the internet, for online subscription from libraries all over the world.
6. More effort should be made to ensure that serials are well represented in all the published NBN. Also, government publications and other non-book materials should equally be seen in the NBN, for they form part of our national intellectual heritage.
7. National Library of Nigeria should expedite action on full computerization of its activities to pave way so as to avoid delay and errors.
8. Adequate cataloguing and classification tools should be provided so as to enhance the timely processing of the materials and the production of the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN).
9. More awareness should be created on the importance of ISBN and CIP in book publishing, and ISSN in serial publishing.
10. As there must be internet facility for users to be able to access e-resources and users must be knowledgeable in internet usage, National Library should endeavour to complete its computerization exercise and equally strive to make her virtual library very functional.
11. National Library of Nigeria should commence the administration of ISMN soonest so as to maintain standardization and bibliographic control of the country's music publications.

CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed the various issues at stake. Major problems have also been highlighted and the modest achievements stated. The National Library of Nigeria has continued to contribute to the "world of recorded knowledge generated by humanity" through the compilation and production of NBN. Thus, more efforts should be made to remove the bottlenecks that hinder the compilation and production of NBN, so as to have a complete bibliographic control of our publications and thereby enable our users to benefit fully from the inherent advantages. The National library of Nigeria as the national bibliographic agency has equally strived to adopt and prepare authoritative and comprehensive bibliographic record for each publication issued in the country in accordance with accepted international standards, and should not relent in this effort, rather it should continue to perform its roles and functions in its efforts to achieve effective bibliographic control.

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