

PROJECTIONS ON COMPUTERIZATION OF CATALOGUING SECTION OF NIGER STATE LIBRARY, MINNA

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Abstract

This study is carried out to ascertain the projections of computerization of the cataloguing section in Niger State library, Minna as the manual system being used is laborious, tiring and energy-sapping, thus leading to inefficiency in the library system. The research method used is survey, and the population of the study is the staff of the library of Niger State library. Questionnaire was used to gather the data used to carry out the study. The findings revealed that the existing manual system is laborious, leads to waste of effort and is time-consuming. Computerization brings efficient and speedy access to information, reduction of boredom and inaccuracies in cataloguing process, large storage and speedy processing of data. That ICT facilities are available in the section of the library that all the staff of the library are computer literate, that cataloguing section is an integral part of library system, that computerization can bring about improvement in performance of duties by library staff; and that lack of adequate funds, inadequate skill manpower and lack of management support are the factors militating against the computerization of library section in the library of Niger State Library.

Introduction

The objective of library computerization is to make the services of a library more effective and efficient. Library computerization has many advantages in that it reduces the number of repetitive routine tasks, it is more efficient than manual services, it generates library statistics easily, and more importantly, it speeds up library services.

The catalogue is a list of all the items (i.e. books, journals, records, photographs, microforms etc) in a library. Cataloguing is a process of producing a catalogue. The process involves describing each item of the collection such that a user can identify them without necessarily requiring the assistance of a library staff. The information on each of the items are extracted and recorded in a particular format following some standard rules. The information is the bibliographic description of items. Cataloguing is the process of providing bibliographic descriptions of library materials for the purpose of creating a comprehensive list/index for the library collection, According to Chopra (1990), "cataloguing refers to

the process of compiling a catalogue, or constructing entries for insertion into a catalogue". The process entails the preparation and maintenance of a catalogue including classification, assigning subject headings, and subject indexing. A cataloguer determines the kinds of heading, entries, bibliographic descriptions and the references required to be made in a catalogue.

Review of Related Literature

Ugojt (2005) said that computerization of cataloguing process has become fashionable in order to enhance efficient and effective service delivery. Giving the rationale why cataloguing section of library should be computerized, Abolaji (2005) reasoned that "cataloguing processes have been described as those activities that occur from the time a book enters the cataloguing department until the time it is sent to the shelf and the final catalogue product, whether cards, machine-readable records, or some form of printed catalogue, has been made. One of the earliest applications of the computer to library operations is the production of library catalogue in book form. The advantages of a book catalogue over the conventional card catalogue, especially in a large university library system are well known. In addition to space saving, a book, catalogue makes the resource of the library widely and easily known to library users in several locations not only in the institution where the library is located but throughout the world; however, the production of such book catalogue by conventional methods has always posed serious problems, particularly the problem of updating. This major problem is easily solved by the use of computer".

Regarding computerized cataloguing procedure, the format of printing the catalogue cards have to be determined and designed by the database creator, for instance, in the case of the CDs/ISIS, there is the provision for the creation of display format, soft worksheet and print format. In creating these formats appropriate literals and parameters specified for the punctuations. All these are intended to ensure uniformity and eliminate original cataloguing since the cataloguing rules have already been embedded in the print format. It also eliminates typographical mistakes and errors associated with manual and typewriter production of cataloguing cards. Appropriate number of unit entry cards are easily and speedily printed. Drudgery is also eliminated.

The level of bibliographic description provided and the depth of access to materials in computer-generated catalogues hardly depart from the established practices of card catalogues.

Computerization in cataloguing has enhanced productivity and produced new assignment for cataloguers. Rider (1996) argues that cataloguers are not defined solely on the basis of their traditional tasks. Today they are seen more as managers and computerization experts who assume a larger role in planning and directing cataloguing operations, including the creation and maintenance of bibliographic database. In agreement with Rider, Oketunji (1998) opined that the impact of computerization on cataloguing has been beneficial to the staff of cataloguing departments. On the mangers of cataloguing departments, there have

been new demands requiring considerable ability to understand technical processes, new radical demands for training programs etc.

Statement of the Problem

It is quite apparent that manual system being employed in cataloguing process is very laborious and tasking, as the repetitive nature of cataloguing job normally leads to slipshod execution of jobs on the part of librarians. The librarians are saddled with the duties of performing similar tasks (cataloguing works) all the time. They tend to overlook the details of the tasks because of their arduous nature.

This normally leads to loss of productive man-hour, which culminates in inefficiency in library system. Therefore, manual system hinders librarians' productivity and effective execution of works in the library. Thus, application of computer to cataloguing work is geared towards mitigating of obvious inadequacies inherent in manual system.

Research Questions

1. Is manual system laborious and tasking in the cataloguing process in the library under study?
2. What are the prospects of computerization of cataloguing section in Niger State Library?
3. What are the available facilities in the cataloguing section in the library under study?
4. What is the degree of ICT skills possessed by personnel in the library under study?
5. What are the factors militating against computerization of cataloguing section in the library under study?

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will be much useful to those organizations seeking to computerize the cataloguing sections of their libraries, as the findings will afford them the opportunity to know the issues involved and benefits inherent in computerization.

Methodology

The design used for this research was survey method. The population strength of five (5) librarians that are working in the National Hospital Library, Abuja was used.

Table 1: Laboriousness of manual system

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	5	100%
No	0	0
Total	5	100%

Table 1 above shows the laboriousness of the manual system of the Library under study and the entire staff 5(100%) indicates that existing manual system is laborious.

Table 2: Reasons why existing manual system is considered laborious

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	It is time- consuming	1	20%
2.	It is difficult using it to carryout library works	0	0
3.	It leads to waste of efforts	0	0
4.	All of the above reasons	4	80%
	Total	5	100%

Table 2 above shows that 1 (20%) of the respondents considered the use of manual system laborious because it is time-consuming; and 4(80%) opined that manual system is not only time-consuming, but it is difficult using it to carryout library works and it leads to waste of efforts.

Table 3: Benefits of Computerization

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Efficiency and speedy access to information.	1	20%
2.	Reduction of boredom and inaccuracies in cataloguing process.	1	20%
3.	Large storage and speedy processing of data.	0	0
4.	All of the above benefits.	3	60%
	Total	5	100%

Table 3 above reveals that 1(20%) of the respondents believed efficient and speedy access to information will be the benefits of computerization of their Library; 1(20%) said reduction of boredom and inaccuracies in cataloguing process will be the benefits; and 3(60%) of them said all the above benefits will be derived from computerization of their cataloguing section.

Table 4: Facilities Available in the Library

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Computer system	0	0
2.	Telephone line	0	0
3.	Fax machine	0	0
4.	Modem	0	0
5.	All of the above	5	100%
	Total	5	100%

Table 4 above indicates that the entire respondents 5(100%) said that ICT facilities such as computer system, telephone line, fax machine, and modem are non-existent in the cataloguing section of their library.

Table 5: Computer Literacy of Library Staff

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	5	100%
2.	No	0	0
	Total	5	100%

Table 5 above shows the degree of the respondents' computer literacy and the entire respondents 5(100%) said they are computer literate.

Table 6: Level of Computer Literacy of Library Staff

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Certificate	4	80%
2.	Diploma	0	0
3.	O.N.D	0	0
4.	H.N.D	1	20%
	Total	5	100%

Table 6 above reveals that 4(80%) of the respondents had certificate in computer; and 1 (20%) had H.N.D in computer science.

Table 7: Significance of Cataloguing Process to Library System

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Strongly agree	4	80%
2.	Agree	1	20%
3.	Disagree	0	0
	Total	5	100%

Table 7 above shows that 80% of the respondents strongly agree that cataloguing process is an integral part of library system; 20% agree that cataloguing process is not less important to library system; and none disagree that cataloguing process is vital in a library system.

Table 8: Enhancement of Library Staffs Performance through Computerization

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	5	100%
2.	No	0	0
	Total	5	100%

Table 8 above shows that all the respondents 5(100%) said computerization of cataloguing section of the Library will enhance their performance of duties.

Table 9: Factors militating against computerization of cataloguing section of the library

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Lack of adequate funds	1	20%
2	Inadequate skilled manpower	0	0
3.	Lack of management support	0	0
4.	All of the above factors	4	80%
	Total	5	100%

Table 9 above shows that (20%) of the respondents said that lack of funds is one of the factors hampering the computerization of cataloguing section of their library while 4(80%) of them said lack of funds, inadequate skilled manpower, and lack of management support are responsible for the inability of the Library to computerize its cataloguing section.

Summary of Findings

The findings of the study have revealed that the respondents considered the existing manual system laborious because it leads to waste of effort, it is time-consuming while the benefit of computerization are efficient and speedy access to information, reduction of boredom and inaccuracies in cataloguing process, large storage and speedy processing of data. That ICT facilities are available in the section of the library while all the staff of the library are computer literate. The cataloguing section is an integral part of library system, as computerization can bring about improvement in performance of duties by library staff. Lack of adequate funds, inadequate skilled manpower and lack of management support are the factors militating against the computerization of library section in the library of National Hospital, Abuja.

Conclusion

Computer application in human activities is the cutting edge of electronic revolution; and because of inherent benefits of computer application in library setting many libraries are now seeking to computerize their operation with a view to enhancing productivity and facilitating the accessibility of library collection to users, which are only achievable through computerization. Therefore, any manager of library who is worth his or her salt will be seeking ways to computerize his library operations, particularly the cataloguing section that is vital to library system by trying to impress it on the parent organization.

Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, the following are hereby recommended to facilitate the computerization of cataloguing section in the library of Niger State Library, Minna.

1. Government should allocate reasonable amount of money to the library to facilitate the computerization of the cataloguing section in other to serve it

better.

2. It is desirable to have the head of library as a member of the allocation committee of parent institution to ensure that the library does not suffer lack of funds once the computerization project has started to ensure its continuity.
3. In other to boost the prospects of computerization of its cataloguing section, the library should set aside a definite amount of money for its computerization project when ever it receives allocation of funds from the government.
4. Visits should be made to libraries that are currently carrying out such project or one that has already done so in other to understudy and observe the actual procedures, learn what the project entails and avoid pitfalls.

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