

## Attitude of Library and Information Science Students on Industrial Training towards Cataloguing and Classification Study of Lagos State Polytechnic Library

By

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### Abstract

The paper examined the attitude of Library and Information Science students on industrial training towards Cataloguing and Classification. Attitude has been described as the way one thinks or feels about someone or something and has been acknowledged as one of the elements that affects a person behavior. The role of cataloguing and classification is to create easy and quick access to available information materials in the Library or group of Libraries. To achieve this, well trained librarians, who are vast in the area of cataloguing and classification, are very important in the library. Therefore the objective of the study was to examine the attitude of Library and Information Science students on industrial training towards cataloguing and classification. The participants were students on industrial training in Lagos State Polytechnic for a period of three years. Questionnaire was used for data collection and the analysis was done using simple percentage and frequency. Findings revealed among others a negative attitude towards cataloguing and classification. To correct this unacceptable development, it is recommended that practical training on cataloguing and classification should be comprehensive and viewed seriously at the training level of librarians-in-training. Also, experienced cataloguers, especially the lecturers should serve as motivators to the young ones so that other people will be interested in joining the profession.

**Keywords:** Attitude, cataloguing, classification, librarian-in-training, librarianship.

### 1. Introduction

Cataloguing and classification are methods of describing, organizing and providing access to all information materials available in a giving library or groups of libraries. Cataloguing is an act of describing books and non-book materials pointing out important bibliographic information about the materials. Aina (2012) described cataloguing as a complex process used in providing access tools to materials in a collection, so that users can access the materials. This implies that the collection of a library is useless without the catalogue. Various tools including Anglo American Cataloguing Rules, Resource Description Access Tolls, an index Language (which could be Library of Congress (LC) Subject Heading List, Sears List of Subject Headings e.t.c. are used in the process. Cataloguing is done by professional librarians called cataloguers; they are responsible for the

intellectual analysis of information materials before it could be identified and retrieved by users.

Classification can be described as the methodology adopted by librarian for bringing together information materials that belong to the same subject. Olajide and Yusuf (2010) observed that the main reason for classifying information materials by libraries is to create access to information materials. Iyoro (2004), Ugah (2008) cited by Madukoma, Onuoha and Omeluzor (2013) identified accessibility as one of the prerequisites of information use because the more accessible information sources are, the more likely they are to be used. For library resources to be used adequately, they must be easy to identify and access from the larger collection, that is why great emphasis is placed on cataloguing and classification. Unfortunately some librarians and librarian-in-training show negative attitude towards this core course of the profession. Similarly, a large number of the industrial training students shows lackadaisical attitude towards cataloguing and classification, thus making it difficult for them to understand this important aspect of library and information science and use them when they start their career in their chosen field. Therefore, an empirical study is required to investigate industrial training students' attitude towards cataloguing and classification in the Lagos State Polytechnic library.

Interestingly, very few studies have been done on the attitude of industrial training students to cataloguing and classification in Nigeria. This study will contribute to the existing discourse in this area, and thus extend the frontier of knowledge of understand the attitude of industrial training students' attitude towards cataloguing and classifications. The paper is structured into five sections, which include introduction, literature review, methodology, findings & discussion and conclusion & recommendations.

## **2. Literature review**

Cataloguing and classification of information materials is the responsibility of professional librarians, various tools including Library of Congress Classification Scheme, Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme and Library of Congress Subject Headings, Anglo American Cataloguing Rules e.t.c are used in the process. Considering the task involved in cataloguing and classification of library materials, cataloguers and classifiers must be highly intelligent and dedicated with positive attitude to the job. Aina (2012) affirmed this when he stated that the tasks of a cataloguer are multifarious, they need to possess technical knowledge and subject knowledge, that will enable them perform their onerous tasks. Transformation and positive development in libraries mostly depend on the positive attitude of its human element. Rahman (2012) stated that for successful and meaningful project, the contribution of human factor involved in the process is significant. Looking at the importance of human factor in organizational development, including the libraries, Lawal (2013) noted that every organization needs the right number of employees, with the right level of skills, in the right job at the right time and performing the right activities in order to accomplish its predetermined objectives.

To provide the right level of skills in organization in Nigeria, students of higher institutions usually engaged in industrial training to provide them with practical experience needed to expose

them to functioning of the department, develop the attribute of team work as well as add new dimension to their experience (Industrial training fund, 2014). All these will expose students to industry based skills necessary for a smooth transition from the classroom to the world of work.

In society today, it is a fact that knowledge is dynamic, the rate at which the society generates and uses information continue to be on the increase. This is well described by Nwosu (2010) who stated that knowledge has exploded. Chukwu (2002) acknowledged that too much material is available for the most energetic and hardworking expert to handle even in his own little field of study. This shows that the amount of information that is available today is too large to be easily accessed without proper organization which is cataloguing and classification.

Yusuf (2012) stated that catalogers are expected to provide effective and efficient services that will enhance information retrieval and increase the use of library resources. This he noted may be difficult to achieve if the catalogers do not possess sufficient knowledge and skill since there will not be a good connection between the users and the library collections. In tandem with this, Madukoma, Onuoha, Omeluzor and Ogbuiyi (2013) believed that the more accessible information sources are, the more likely they are to be used. Access to information/information materials is a prerequisite to human development. Without adequate and prompt access to available information there will be no meaningful development. The library being a storehouse of knowledge where information materials can not only be acquired but must process and make same available to interested users should not slack in their responsibility of creating access to these materials. To achieve this enormous task, there must be adequate, well skilled staff to do the job, since knowledge and advanced skills have become critical determinants of the profession. Ojedokun(2007) affirmed that knowledge driven economies demand higher level skills in the workforce. Graduate jobs particularly require individuals who have the capacity to learn and develop, to move and change with the needs of the organizations, people who are prepared to break the mould of the past. Fijabi (2011) observed that, this enable us to create an information workforce that are professionally skilled, knowledgeable and educated of worldwide condition.

To achieve positive result, the libraries need the right number of staff, with the right level of skills and attitude to carry out its functions. Adekunle (2007) described attitude as inclinations and feelings, prejudices or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears and convictions about any specific topic. Allport (1935) cited by Adekunle (2007) stated that an attitude is a mental and neutral state of readiness organized through experience exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon individual's responses to all objects or situations with which it is associated. Kosoko (2014) observed that attitude is made up of three major components, that is the affective, behavioral and cognitive, which indicate how individuals feel about a particular issue, what they intend to do about it and what they believe about it. This shows that there is interrelationship between knowing, feelings and doing. Considering these explanations of attitude, it can be deduced that attitude could be in favor or disfavor towards a concept that is, it could be positive or negative. Positive attitudes are necessary for any successful and significant achievement thus in organizations, employees are expected to demonstrate positive

attitude toward their jobs. The act of cataloguing and classification involves a lot of patience and concentration. Cataloguers are the persons responsible for the processes of description, subject analysis, classification and authority control of library materials. They serve as the foundation of all library services as they are the ones who organize information in such a way as to make it easily accessible, because any information material that cannot be identified will not be used and any materials that is wrongly placed in the process of classification will not be located from the library collection hence not used (Ezomo 1990 cited in Nnadozie 2013). Cataloguers must develop positive attitude to their job, if not, there is going to be problem. This is supported by Cole (2005) when he stated that negative attitude can adversely affect job efficiency. A librarian must be interested in cataloguing and classification to be able to place in the hand of a user, the needed information/ information materials without wasting time and with little effort (Yusuf 2012). One would have thought that with the introduction of information communication technology (ICT) which makes the task of cataloguing a little easier, the attitude of librarian-in-training towards this important aspect of the profession would have been positive but observation shows that many of these students are just not interested looking at their attitude. Some of these students are always in a hurry to leave the cataloguing and classification unit when they are posted there, even when corrected they are not bordered, no sign of seriousness and commitment in them.

Research findings on students' attitude towards cataloguing and classification by some researchers established certain facts. Dadzie (2008) stated that among the courses suggested to be dropped by 400 level students of information studies is the theory and practice of classification. Nnadozie (2013) in his study revealed that, most graduating students of library and information science performed poorly in cataloguing and classification because they perceived the course as being difficult and uninspiring. This shows that students see cataloguing and classification as a problematic course; this negative attitude towards cataloguing and classifications must be corrected if we must increase the level of productivity in Nigeria libraries.

### 3. Methodology

This study is a survey of students of library and information students on industrial training in the Lagos State Polytechnic library. The total population for this study was fifty- two which comprises of all industrial training students who served in Lagos State Polytechnic library between 2011 and 2013 academic sessions. The sample size comprises of all the fifty-two students since they are not much in size, shared the same characteristic of being students.

Primary data for the study were collected through a questionnaire, administered to students of Library and Information Science from different Library Schools in Nigeria during their Industrial training period at the Lagos State Polytechnic Library between 2011 and 2013 session. Also interview was conducted by the researcher to obtain necessary information from the respondents.

The questionnaire had two main sections. The first section consisted of four questions, which sought background information about the respondents. The second section consisted of fourteen

questions inquiring about their attitude towards cataloguing and classification, reasons for their attitude, problems faced if any. Out of the fifty-two copies of questionnaires distributed at different intervals only forty-nine (94.23%) were collected and found usable. Simple descriptive statistic method in term of frequency and percentage was used for analysis.

#### 4. Results and discussion

**Table 1: Course background of the respondents**

S/N	Subject background	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Sciences	09	18.37
2	Commercial	12	24.49
3	Social science	19	38.77
4	Arts	09	18.37
	<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>

Table1 shows that 19 respondents (38.77%) indicate social science, 12(24.49%) ticked commercial, while sciences and Arts had 9 respondents (18.37%) each. This shows the diverse range of subject background of the respondents and the multi disciplinary nature of the course which encourages a unique learning environment.

**Table 2: First choice program of respondents**

S/N	Program	No of respondents	Percentage(%)
1	Medicine	----	-----
2	Pharmacy	----	-----
3	Engineering	-----	-----
4	Education	10	20.41
5	Arts/Humanities	07	14.29
6	Sciences	12	24.49
7	Social science	15	30.61
8	Lib.& Inf.science	05	10.20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 shows that most of the respondents did not choose Library and information science as their first choice of program. Social science has the highest frequency with 15 respondents,(30.61%) followed by Science with 12 respondents,(24.49%).Education has 10 respondents, (20.41%) Arts and Humanities with 07 respondents, (14.29%) and the least 05 respondents,(10.2, 0%) respondents for library and information science. This shows that many of the respondents would have preferred other courses of study to library and information science. This may have contributed to their negative attitude to cataloguing and classification.

**Table 3: Distribution of respondents by Institution**

S/N	Institution	Number of respondents	Percentages
1	Universities	41	83.67
2	Polytechnics	08	16.33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 above shows that 41 respondents, (83.67%) were university students while 08 respondents, (16.33%) were polytechnic students. Thus, there were more university Industrial Training students than those of polytechnic students.

**Table 4: Academic level of the respondents**

S/N	Categories of respondents	Number of respondents	Percentages
1	Postgraduate	4	8.16
2	Undergraduate	45	91.84
	<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 indicate that 04 respondents, (8.16%) respondents were postgraduate students while 45 respondents, (91.84%) were undergraduate students. The table shows that respondents were students from both the polytechnic and universities representing students from different library schools.

**Table 5: Attitude of respondents toward cataloguing and classification activities.**

S/N	Attitude	Categories of respondents (University)	Categories of respondents (Polytechnic)	Percentages (Total)
1	Positive	08	02	10 (20.41%)
2	Negative	33	06	39 (79.59%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 indicates that out of 49 respondents, (100%) representing Industrial training students only 10 (20.4%) showed positive attitude to cataloguing and classification while 39 respondents, (79.59%) manifested negative attitude to cataloguing and classification. The number of those who showed negative attitude was higher than those with positive attitude. If this is to be representative of future librarians, it portends a dangerous future of cataloguing and classification, which are core duties discharged by librarians.

**Table 6: Reasons for negative attitude towards cataloguing and classification**

S/N	Reasons for Negative attitude	Number of respondents	Percentages of respondents
1	Lack of interest because it is not straight forward like other courses.	41	83.67
2	It is time consuming/Boring	28	57.14
3	It is a tedious task	36	73.47
4	Lack of adequate training(Full Time/ Part Time Programme)	38	77.55
5	Procedure is cumbersome	28	57.14
6	Because of the traditional way of cataloguing	35	71.43
7	Lecturers not being patient	24	48.98
8	Did not choose Library and information science as a course	24	48.98

Note: Total percentage will not be hundred because responses are more than one

Table 6 indicates that 41 respondents, (83.67%) developed negative attitude towards cataloguing and classification due to lack of interest arising from complexity of library as a course, requiring a lot of thinking unlike other courses that students can read and easily understand one. 38 respondents, (77.55%) indicate lack of enough training as the reasons for their negative attitude. Some of the respondents indicated that they are on part-time program, which limits their exposure to the practical aspect of cataloguing and classification. Curiously, students running a full-time program also complained about this. This is an indication that the problem actually start from the library school. 36 respondents, (73.47%) considered cataloguing and classification as a tedious task, since it involves a process whereby classifier will subject themselves to a lot of reading to be able to understand the concept of the information materials. Traditional way of cataloguing is another reason for negative attitude with 35 respondents, (71.43%). This is an indication that some of the industrial training students are not exposed to online cataloguing. Time consuming and cumbersome procedure have 28 respondents, (57.14%) each. Cataloguing and classification requires consulting different working tools including classification schedule and reading books which are monotonous, time consuming and at times frustrating especially for beginners. Lecturers not being patient and not choosing library and information science as course of study are the least, with 24 respondents, (48.98%) each. It is pertinent to note that lack of enough training has major impact on respondents' attitude towards cataloguing and classification.

From the foregoing, the findings show that the negative attitude of IT students towards cataloguing and classifications in library is due to a number of reasons. These include Library and information science not a first course of choice by majority of the students. The implication of this is that majority of them are merely interested in earning a degree. Also some lecturers taking these

students are not patient enough and do not teach them the rudiment of the course rather the lecturer believe they ought to have known it, forgetting that they are beginners. Attitude plays an important role in learning generally, cataloguing and classification is conceived as the most difficult subject by these student, mostly due to the way it was handled and presented by the teachers. The significant role of teachers in the success of any educational system cannot be overemphasized and this explains why the National Policy on Education (2004) stated that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teacher. This shows how important teachers are in the school. Onoshkpopokaiye (2011) stated that students draw from their teachers` disposition to form their own attitude which may eventually affect their learning outcomes. students` positive attitude can be enhanced by teacher positive attitude towards teaching of cataloguing and classification and this can be done through teacher`s helpful behavior, enthusiasms, good method of presentation, concern for students and teacher knowledge of the subject matter. Lack of adequate training especially the practical aspect was a challenge to these students. Some of them claimed they have not handled any classification schemes before, that they do not even know how it looks like. Aina (2012) argued that the more years spent on practical cataloguing the more experience they become. Dadzie (2008) affirmed that having more practical sessions could be one of the solutions to the problems students are having in comprehending the core courses. Since most of these courses are technical in nature and having only theoretical sessions make it difficult for students to appreciate value of the course taught.

Cataloguing is procedural and this makes it monotonous, boring and uninteresting. All these actually contribute to the negative attitude these students manifested towards cataloguing and classification.

## 5. Conclusion and recommendations

This study looked into the attitudinal disposition of Library and Information Science Students on industrial training to in Lagos State Polytechnic Library. Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that librarian-in- training have unfavourable attitude to cataloguing and classification. They showed non-challant attitude when it comes to cataloguing and classification of information materials. Efforts must be made to ensure that librarians- in- training are made to understand that that cataloguing and classification is the core of Librarianship, any negative attitude towards this course will have negative effect on library productivity and efficiency hence the need to correct the negative attitude which must start from library school.

In other to encourage the development of positive attitude to cataloguing and classification, the following recommendations were made:

- ✍ The curriculum of all Nigeria library schools should be harmonized and practical in cataloguing and classification should be emphasized, this will enable the students to master the skills. There is the need to be a balance between the practical and theoretical approach. Learning facilities such as Classification Schedules, List of Subject Headings, Anglo-American cataloguing Rules (AACR) should be provided in library schools at least for teaching original

cataloguing/classification. Periodic curriculum changes are often needed to align library and information science programme with emerging information society requirements.

- ✍ During the industrial training heads and other members of staff in the cataloguing and classification section/unit should serve as mentor/motivator to the students. They should be taught in a simple way by making them learn leisurely as if they are just playing a game, they should not be rush rather take them a step at a time and should be done repeatedly before moving to the next step. Student should be encouraged by boosting their confidence while in school, the subject of cataloguing and classification should be presented as an easy task not as rocket science task. This is supported by Takeuchi as cited by Saroja(2009) which stated that if knowledge is the engine of development, then learning must be it fuel.
- ✍ Training and retraining in cataloguing and classification in other to develop students' knowledge and skills is required, this will enable them to discover their potential.
- ✍ Teachers should show positive attitude to teaching of cataloguing and classification, since teachers are seen by students as an authority and one of the major source of information, it is possible for the students to emulate their teacher especially when teacher show positive attitudes his work. Onoshkpopokaiye (2011) stated that it is only teachers with positive attitude and interest on a subject that can motivate the students to learn since you cannot give what you don't have. When the students noticed that their teachers are hard working and have concern for them, it motivates them and this will result to good performance in the subject.
- ✍ Industrial training student should be exposed to Online Cataloguing. The job of cataloguing and classification should not be seen as insurmountable, Libraries should acquire software that will facilitate easy learning and mastering of cataloguing process. This is information age; libraries should automate their libraries and provide internet facilities. This will fasten processing of material and making such easily accessible and available.
- ✍ The working environment equally played a great role in attitude development. The working environment should be motivating and encouraging. To enjoy cataloguing and classification, the environment should be conducive including provision of internet facilities, up to date working tools all these will arouse and encourage more people to develop positive attitude to cataloguing and classification.
- ✍ The cataloguing and classification section of the Nigerian Library Association should take a proactive step to salvage the situation by getting involved especially, when the students are celebrating their week in various library schools. The section can go and organize talks, hold interactive section with them, encourage them, let them feel welcome, with these some of them may develop interest in cataloguing and classification even before leaving school. This is very vital, if the profession must attract some of the best brains among these students, who can meet the challenges of 21st century library and Information delivery in Nigeria.

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