

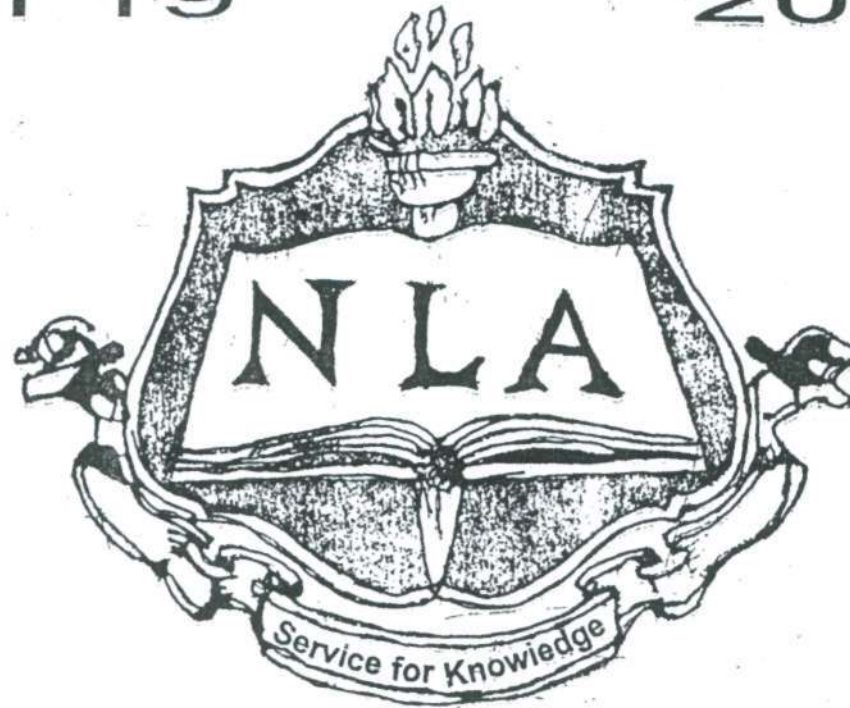
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AN INDEX TO, AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THE
JOURNAL OF LIBRARY FOCUS: 1983 - 1999

BY

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Abstract

The paper discusses the importance of indexes, especially to long and fast growing journals like the library focus. An index to all articles published since inception to date is provided. Further more, an analysis of the index was conducted with the view to finding out the nature of the articles published, author-ship/author affiliation, subject groups and the type of research. The paper concludes that the result of researches in librarianship as published in the journal of library focus for the period under study has on the whole been rather theoretical and individualistic. The paper suggests a more strategic approach to publishing in the journal. Vision and mission statements were suggested and the need to emphasis more on research based articles was advocated.

Introduction

The British Standards Institution (BSI) (1971) has defined an index as a systematic guide to the text of any reading materials or to the contents of the collected documentary material, comprising a series of entries with headings arranged in alphabetical or other chosen order and with references to show where each item indexed is located. Similarly, the American Standards Association (ASA) defined an index as a guide to the contents of any reading materials or other documentary material, which provides a systematic sustained subject analysis of the contents of such material headings arranged according to alphabetical, chronological, numerical or other chosen order. Each entry is followed by a page number, paragraph number or other indicator showing the exact location of the reference.

Index is broadly categorized into two types; back of the book index and an index to articles from one or more than one sources. Whether back of the book index or the general index, the aim of an index is to serve as a reference tool. It is also to facilitate the use of the text by providing an alphabetical list of the key terms that appeared in the book or document with page references to subjects, persons and places dealt with in a particular book.

The efficiency of an index is in the ability to enable the reader of a text or someone consulting a publication briefly, to find information in it quickly easily and reliably, if not under one heading, then under an alternative through the use of 'see' and 'see also' cross references, and to find references to the specific information the publication contains.

The index facilitates reference to information in the body of the text just as a map reference is the key to the position on an atlas. So the index should permit one to pin point required information in a book. Similarly, Roley (1982) observed that the objective of any index is to be able to retrieve the records or documents that have been stored and organized by the indexing process. Hence, the continued use of any book or document as a reference source of information is dependent upon the adequacy of its index. Efficient literature searching is dependent upon indexes. Therefore, indexes contribute an essential part to a work of knowledge or imagination, and have made it immeasurably more useful and easier to use.

It is in the light of the above that this researchers set out to index articles from the Journal of Library Focus knowing fully that the content analysis of articles that appeared in the Journal conducted by Momoh (1998) and an attempt to discuss the quality of articles therein by Otim (1998) have not given total view of the contents and other characteristics of the journal. Therefore, in addition to indexing, the researchers also carried out an analysis of the index entries with the view of finding out:

- (a) Nature of publication
- (b) Authorship/author affiliation
- (c) Subject group
- (d) Type of research
- (e) Data/quantitative representation

The index is very necessary not only because the journal has accumulated for quite some time now but because indexes have been compiled from many journal of Librarianship such as Bulus (2001). Therefore, this one will not only add to but will also supplement and argument.

The study is significant in the sense that it will provide useful information in determining the scope of the subject field-Librarianship. It

will also reveal the developing and declining areas of weaknesses in coverage and of possible improvement. These and the identifications of subject interrelations, trends and fashions would greatly help contributors, editors and librarians.

METHODOLOGY

The method adopted is documentary. All the journals from 1983 - 1999 were physically analyzed with a view to collecting data that will help in achieving the objectives of the study. For each article, seven types of information were collected:

- (i) Bibliographical information such as title, author(s) and their addresses, date, .c
- (ii) Nature of publication, ie articles or book/article review, and in case of articles, description of articles;
- (iii) research trends;
- (iv) Quantitative representation, ie length of articles and number of references,
- (v) Data representation, ie type of statistics and illustrations use
- (vi) Subject group, and
- (vii) Authorship/author affiliation

7.5 cm by 5.5 cm cards were used to collect the above information and later sorted out accordingly to index and obtain data necessary to analyze and discuss each of the above stated objectives.

THE INDEX

ABDULLAHI MUSA IBRAHIM

Information system for marking decision support Vol. 17&18, 1999/2000 pp19-26

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The treatment of Annual Husbandry in the universal Decimal Classification: A start communication. Vol. 10 & 11 (1 & 2) 1993 pp 35-38

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Acquisition of information handling skill
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Teachers and Teaching Methods in the
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ANALYSIS OF THE INDEX ENTRIES

All the data derived from the journal for the period under review were quantified, processed and analysed for each of the objectives. Generally only descriptive statistics, such as percentages of distributions, tables, etc. was used for analyzing data and discussing the findings of the study. However, this analysis does not include the entries of 3 volumes (1991, 1994 and 1995/96). This is due to the fact that the issues could not be located after much search in libraries and other relevant places.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Nature Of Publications

The nature of publications discussed here covers the ways in which the subject of librarianship was presented in the journal. Either as an articles, newsletter, book/article review, forth coming events or advertisement. Sadly, the content of Journal of Library Focus reveals that only one nature of publication is found, which is articles. It is unfortunate that other types of publication such as book/articles reviews, short communication, advertisement, announcement, etc are never found in the Journal. Although Aiyepetu (1979:12) has noted earlier conclusions by scholars who have written on content analysis that in a learned journal reporting original investigations, research papers account for a predominant proportion, the 100% articles recorded by Journal of Library Focus is no doubt not a well come idea.

Volume of research could be assessed in terms of size of articles and number of volumes of Journal Publication. Table I below shows the Journal of Library Focus carried as many as 11 and as low as 4 entries per volume.

Table 1: Distribution Of Articles By Volume And Year

VOLUME	YEAR	NO. OF ARTICLES	PERCENTAGE %
1	1983	4	5.97
2	1984	5	7.46
3	1985	7	10.45
5	1987	8	11.94
6 & 7	1988/89	7	10.45
8	1990	10	14.93
9	1991	-	-
10 & 11	1992/93	7	10.45
12	1994	-	-
13 & 14	1995/96	-	-
15 & 16	1997/98	9	13.43
17 & 18	1999/2000	10	14.93
	TOTAL	67	100.00

Table II: Distribution Of Articles By Form Or Authorship

FORM OF AUTHORSHIP	NO. OF ARTICLES	PERCENTAGE %
Single	64	95.52
Joints (2 authors)	3	4.48
TOTAL	67	100.00

Authorship/Authors Affiliations

The total numbers of authors who have contributed to articles in Journal of Library Focus under the period of this study are found to be 70 as indicated in Table II below, single authors characterize the journal articles. This group accounts for 67 (95.71%) entries, articles by two authors account for 3 (4.29%). The highest number of papers contributed by any single author is 4.

Highly experienced scholars researchers and managers have contributed articles to

Journal of Library Focus. Unfortunately most of the earlier volumes do not indicate the rank of the authors. Instead only their positions were mentioned.

In terms of organizational affiliation of contributing authors, the study shows that authors from different spare of life have contributed articles to Journal of Library Focus. However, from Table III below it is glaringly clear that most of the articles 234(82.39%) came from the Universities.

Table III: Organizational Affiliation Of Contributing Authors

Name of Organization	No. of contributors	% of contribution
Kashim Ibrahim Library, A.B.U. Zaria	30	44.78
Dept. of Lib. & Info. Sc. ABU, Zaria	13	19.40
Ogun State University Library	1	1.49
NARICT	2	2.99
Kaduna Polytechnic	3	4.48
Usman Danfodio University	1	1.49

Library Board of Kaduna	3	4.48
I.O.E. ABU, Zaria	5	7.46
NAPRI	1	1.49
President Kennedy Library	1	1.49
Dept of Library & Info. Sc. BUK	1	1.49
University of Ilorin	2	2.99
University of Port Harcourt	2	2.99
Continuing Educ Centre, Abeokuta	1	1.49
Bendel State University	1	1.49
TOTAL	67	100.00

Table IV: Distribution Of Articles By Subject Group

S/NO	SUBJECT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Library	6	8.96
2	Library education	4	5.97
3	Classification, library of Congress	3	4.48
4	Information services	3	4.48
5	Library automation	3	4.48
6	Library employees	3	4.48
7	National Policy on Education	3	4.48
8	Bibliometrics	2	2.99
9	Collection development (libraries)	2	2.99
10	Information storage and retrieval devices	2	2.99
11	Library cooperation	2	2.99
12	Rural information services	2	2.99
13	Agricultural Extension Workers	2	2.99
14	Library administration	2	2.99
15	Library finance	2	2.99
16	Serial publication	2	2.99
17	Africa literature	1	1.49
18	Archives	1	1.49
19	Audio-visual materials	1	1.49
20	Bibliography-Methodology	1	1.49
21	Books and reading	1	1.49
22	Books conservation & restoration	1	1.49
23	Citation analysis	1	1.49
24	Classification (universal decimal)	1	1.49
25	Folklore, manners & Customs (African)	1	1.49
26	Government publications	1	1.49
27	Information needs	1	1.49
28	Legal deposit (of books, etc.)	1	1.49
29	Library – gifts	1	1.49
30	Libraries – security measures	1	1.49
31	Libraries – stock taking	1	1.49
32	Library science-societies	1	1.49
33	Library fines and fees	1	1.49
34	Library statistics	1	1.49
35	Photocopying services in libraries	1	1.49
36	Public relationship – libraries	1	1.49
37	Teacher – librarian	1	1.49
38	Technical officers	1	1.49
39	Thesauri	1	1.49
40	Women-Nigeria	1	1.49
	Total	67	100.00

In terms of distribution of articles by subject group, Table IV above shows that, except two subject group, library service and library Education, no other subject group was discussed more than 5 times in the 16 years of the journal publication.

Study has on the whole been rather theoretical and individualistic. This trend is rather unfortunate because, apart from the fact that it is a measure of lack of team work, the contributions are devoid of practical and scientific solutions.

Type Of Research

It is unfortunate to note that in the history of journal of library focus, no experimental research was reported. All the articles published in the journal were opinion and theoretical in perspective.

Dated/Quantitative Representation

Data/Quantitative representation in subject literature is becoming more and more important because they also demonstrate the nature/volume of information traffic, hence can be employed to determine the percentage of all information traffic conducted. Analysis of Data/Quantitative representation can also be conducted in order to determine the kinds and appropriateness of data, illustrations, etc, and the use and appropriateness of statistical methods used in the articles.

A close examinations of the articles in Library Focus shows that all the articles are largely descriptive and carried no statistics at all. The few articles that employed illustrations used only tables and no more. On the number of pages as one of the bibliographical parameters which offer potentially valuable information, the journal articles carried a lowest of 3 pages and a highest of 27 pages with a mode of 20 pages.

Conclusion And Recommendation

In this study attempt was made to index articles from journal of Library Focus for the period of 16 years. The study further analyzed the characteristics of articles published in this journal within the stated period. The analysis revealed the conceptual, subject group coverage, theoretical and methodological limitations

of articles in Library Focus. Like the findings in Ibrahim's (1999) study, the analysis shows that research in librarianship as published in the journal of Library Focus for the period under study.

In view of the above, this study suggests that the journal of library focus should be revolutionize to reflect the modern trends in journal publication. This means that the journal should try to incorporate book/article reviews, announcement of forthcoming events, etc. Research based articles should be given preference over opinion and theoretical articles. Editorial policy should be strengthen with a vision and mission statements.

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