

**NAME-AUTHORITY FILE FOR NIGERIANA:
REAL OR MYTH IN BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL**

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ABSTRACT

"The purpose of ISBD on one hand is to ensure control of bibliographic information pertinent to publication in a given country and on the other hand to make such information interchangeable across the national and language barrier"¹. The above quotation is the essence of this paper. It postulates that the problem of controlling the publishing output of a country or on a topic is not only that of listing and recording the item but also that of making such listing conform with accepted standards enhance effective use of the item as well as facilitate interchange of bibliographic data among libraries. This paper discusses the problem of standardising access point to Nigeriana. It focuses attention on the problems of drawing a Name - Authority File for Nigeriana; the problem of establishing entry elements for Nigerian Names, both in foreign and local language or dialects; discusses the bibliographers' problem in establishing entry point to Nigerian official documents as well as serial publication. The paper suggests solutions to the problems identified after reviewing what has been done so far on Name - Authority File in Nigeria.

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The bibliographic control of any topic is not the direct use of the topic but concerns information bits that could facilitate access to its direct use. Bibliographic control in the context of the library has been variously defined and each definition tends to pivot round a set of bibliographic functions. Iwuji², Asthury³ and Amune⁴ look at bibliographic control as the listing of published and unpublished materials for the purpose of achieving comprehensive record of knowledge in an area or on a topic. Kumar⁵, views bibliographic control from the receiving end and describes it as "a means of effective access to published and unpublished records through bibliography". According to Wilson⁶ "bibliographers search the world and organise information about what they have found that others will not have to search so far". Aguolu⁷ sees bibliographic control as that which calls for "industry, accuracy, knowledge of relevant sources; a critical ability and sound judgement based upon the understanding of users.... and must conform to a set of generally accepted criteria". Wijasuriya⁸ once remarked that the effectiveness of bibliographic control irrespective of scope and form depends on the "maximum standardisation of the form and content of the bibliographic description".

The concept of standardisation in describing an item for the purpose of accessibility should be seen, without any bias, as cornerstone of effective bibliographic control. Nigerian bibliographers have for several years chosen their popular sources of authority for establishing names both

personal and corporate ~~from~~

1. The cumulative Book Index
2. The National Union Catalogue
3. The British National Bibliography
4. The North Western University Library
5. Catalogue of African Collection
6. Harvard University Library.

A close investigation at the practice of rendering African authors, or African corporate names or African Subject Heading in these publications has indicated that, there exists great inconsistencies in the form of Headings. Using these sources, therefore, and of course options limited, as authorities by Nigerian bibliographer results in bibliographic confusion for Nigeriana as there is bound to be a bewildering array of name-heading for Nigeriana.

Nigerian names have been derived from three sources: English Style, Local Language Style and Islamic-Hausa Style.

English Style Names: This does not create any problem for the bibliographer as the Sur-name, i.e. family name, for entry purpose is clear e.g.

Daniel O. Oboro
Stephen M. Lawani
Anthony Okojie
Augustus Aikhomu.

The last elements in these names serve as the access point to their work. I hasten here to mention that some English Style names from the Southern part of the country particularly South Eastern part are compound or hyphenated surnames:

Rufus Ada-George
Tam David-West
Louis Johnson-Omotayo
William Udo-Udoma
Atanda Fatai-William.

The first elements of the hyphenated name is taken as the entry element. Married women who prefer to include their maiden names should have their works entered under the first element of the compound name irrespective of which comes first.

Christiana Esien-Igbokwe
Florence Ita-Giwa.

Names in Nigerian Local Languages:

Many names in Nigerian Local Languages have meanings attached to them. Most of these names especially from the southern parts clearly indicate the part of the name, usually the last element, that functions as Surname. The bibliographer would probably not expect any problem per se in determining the entry elements.

In determining the entry elements for names in local languages from the Northern part of the country particular care must be taken, as some of these names do not include family or surnames. Four categories of such names have been identified.

a) Given personal names with name of place added:

Mohammed Kotangora (Literarily meaning Mohammed from Kotangora).

Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (Abubakar from Tafawa Balewa).

Aminu Kano (Aminu from Kano).

Shehu Shagari (Shehu from Shagari).

Usman Katsina (Usman from Katsina).

b) Given name with the second name depicting circumstances at birth:

Inua Jatao (Inua, the light skin)

Ladan Baki (Ladan, the black)

Shehu Dan Azumi (Shehu, Born at Fasting)

Mohammed Huseini (Mohammed, the twins).

c) Given name with second name depicting physical traits:

Sani Gurgu (Sani, the lame)

Usman Gajere (Usman, the short man)

Suleiman Mai Ido Daya (Suleiman, the one eyed man)

Shehu Dongo Yaro (Shehu, the tall boy).

d) Given name with the second name depicting occupation:

Suleiman Dan Commissar (Suleiman, the commission agent)

Seidu Mai Jaki (Seidu, the donkey seller)

Audu Mai Tomator (Audu, the tomato seller).

The phrases or places added to these sets of names have become so popular with the bearer that the father's or family names are usually ignored in their address.

The most discussed and most controversial name among the Nigeriana Cataloguers is entry for Aminu Kano or Shehu Shagari.

Heading for Aminu Kano has variously been rendered in bibliographic sources.

The National Library of Nigeria or the Nigerian Publication⁹ has it as:

Aminu Kano, Alhaji.

The National Union Catalogue of the Library of Congress

enters it as:

Kano, Aminu
While Okpa - Iroha¹⁰ will prefer it as
Kano, Alhaji Aminu.

Seriki¹¹ has argued that Aminu Kano is not a compound name as National Library of Nigeria portrays it nor is Kano the Surname as shown by Library of Congress. He further argues that Malam alone is synonymous to Aminu Kano in his home state. To him Rule 22.8 of AACR2 should be applied in choosing his entry element thus:

Aminu, Kano Malam.

Entry for a particular name so inconsistently entered is a threat to bibliographic control as such works will be scattered in reference sources. A National Name Authority for Nigeriana can regulate this inconsistency.

3. Islamic Hausa Style Names

Another group of Nigerian names which may lack family or surname for entry purpose is the Islamic Hausa name. Some Islamic names in Nigeria have been associated with the name of Prophet Mohammed and even some with the name of Allah. Parents may religiously want to link the names of their children with the Prophet excluding the parents names.

Mohammed Anwal (meaning Mohammed the first)
Mohammed Sani (meaning Mohammed the second)
Mohammed Salisu (meaning Mohammed the third)
and so on for all the children of the same family in that chronology.

Islamic parents may on the other hand want to exult Allah by associating the names of their children with the various names of Allah. (There are 99 names by which Allah

is addressed in the Holy Koran) such names may be:

Abdul Salaam (meaning slave or servant of peace).
Abdul Aziz (meaning slave or servant of the greatest).
Abdul Rahman (meaning slave or servant of the merciful).

In reality Isa Abdulsalaam means Isa, the servant of peace, depicting the absence of surname in his name, which the uninformed bibliographer may not understand.

As Bozimo¹² rightly observed, bibliographic confusion stems from the fact that no "study has proved beyond reasonable doubt that all Islamic Hausa names do not include surnames as some of these given names in the recent past are being used as surnames".

Title of Royalty, Honour, Nobility

The title of honour, and nobility recognised in bibliographic control in U.K. are Duke, Duchess, Marguess, Marchoness, Earl, Countess, Viscountess, Barchoness, Lady, Lord, Dame, Sir. There is no generally accepted equivalents of these titles of honour or nobility in bibliographic description in Nigeria. Nigeria speaks 394 Languages and each of these has various translations of title of Royalty, thus:

The Sultan of Sokoto;

The Oba of Benin;

Emir of Kano;

The Ooni of Ife; the Igwe of Onisha; the Ikemba of Nnewi;

The Obong of Calabar; the Gwom Ghom of Jos; Shehu of Bornu;

The King of Lagos; The Bashorun of Yoruba Land; the Magaji of

Fika;

The Tor Tiv.

Incumbent in respect of the above titles could thus be entered:

Gajimasu, King of Kano
Bayero, Emir of Kano
Bot, Gwom Gbom of Jos
Elkanemi, Shehu of Borno
Dosumu, King of Lagos
Aderemi, Ooni of Ife
Akenzua II, Oba of Benin.

Title of honour such as, Chief, Igwe, Malam, Alhaji, Alhaja, Hajia, are common additions to some Nigerian Names. More especially some writers are persistent in using these as additions to their names. Could these be likened to British Title of Honour, Sir and so be agreed to in Nigeria?

A name that sends waves of strains into bibliographer's decisions are:

Alhaji Alhaji
Alhaji Usman Alhaji
Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

It is always a dead luck among bibliographer as to whether Alhaji, or Chief or Malam which are popular additions to Nigerian names be accepted as synonyms to Sir and be so treated.

The bibliographer gets trapped when an individual is a multi-title holder and makes official statements behind his separate title masks. The abbreviations aka (also known as) is becoming popular with some Nigerian title holders.

Abiola, Bashorun of Yoruba Land, aka, Are Ona - Kakanfo. The bibliographer has to choose that title by which the

holder is predominantly addressed or make contact with him to determine his preference.

Entry Elements for Official Documents

Names for Corporate Bodies in Nigeria have undergone various changes in nomenclature. A change in Governmental or Political leadership heralds changes in name of some ministries, its agencies or parastatals. Such changes compound the problem of the bibliographer. It is common to find official publication under the following corporate names in the same collection.

Nigeria. Benue - Plateau State. Ministry of Finance.

Plateau State. Ministry of Finance.

Supreme Military Council. Nigeria.

Armed Forces Ruling Council, Nigeria.

Operation Feed the Nation. Nigeria.

Green Revolution, Nigeria.

Mass Mobilization for social Justice & Economic Recoery.

Nigerian Security Organisation.

State Security Service, Nigeria.

Changes in nomenclature does not in most cases change the functions of the Organisation. The use of linking devices to corroborate the retrospective bibliography with the current bibliography, will alleviate the bibliographer's dilemma.

Publication in Nigerian Local Languages

It is interesting to know that Nigeria speaks 394 languages, 106 (30%) have been written and out of this 61 (16%) have been represented in the National Bibliography of Nigeria¹³.

The problem of bibliographic control of publication in Nigerian Local Languages is not only how to locate the scripts but how to record them for the purpose of retrieval. There are two problems here:

1. The problem of identifying and translating the language of publication to determine the entry element vis-a-vis the subject description.
2. Certain Nigerian languages use letter or symbols, other than the regular alphabet. C. E. O. K are variously written in Local Languages. Some are turned down-side-up or up-side down or even written in the reverse form denoting characteristics. The bibliographer lacks the typographic or transliterational facilities for this unique form of the letters. Such materials are either left out or transcribed wrongly.

Substandard Indigenous Publishing Houses

Characteristic of developing countries, Nigerian indigenous publishing industry is still in its infancy. Consequently, International Publication Standard has been elusive. Bibliographers recognise inadequate bibliographic data in publications emanating from them. Some publishers do not realise the importance of bibliographic data expected on the title page or its verso. Data such as, the title proper, the parallel title or statement of responsibility are all essential to the bibliographer and should not be guessed.

Subject Heading for Nigeriana

Subject bibliographies or subject catalogues are intellectual channels to recorded knowledge. This important channel has been jeopardised with the adoption of foreign classification schemes or subject headings for Nigeriana. Most Nigeriana bibliographers depend squarely on these

Subject Authorities which are grossly inadequate for Nigeria. This inadequacy has been subject to serious discussion and debate among Nigerian bibliographers, who are yet to adopt common criteria in choosing or creating subject heading for them.

Entry Elements for Serials

Another area in which control in nomenclature is or may be troublesome to bibliographer is the access point for Serials. Codes preceding AACR2 direct that entry for serial be under name of the authority from which it emanates. AACR2 prescribes entry of serials under the title irrespective of the "prominence" of the name of Authority from which the serial emanates. This seems too fundamental in reconciling retrospective bibliography with current bibliographic control on serial publication in Nigeria.

AACR2 further states "if the title changes, make a separate main entry for each title". A bibliographer may be twisted out of imagining that the title in hand has undergone various changes, while others may be aware of it. Such changed titles are likely to be scattered in bibliographic control tools.

What has been done so far

Wijasuriya¹⁴ once observed that "bibliographic control based on individuals has so far proved not successful. Bibliographic control should be based on the sum total of individuals and national effort".

With the introduction of Universal Bibliographic Control

(UBC) International bibliographic control is being progressively realised. IFLA has played a leading role by formulating bibliographic standards for description and advising national agency of individual country to enforce the standards.

Though with some limitations, the National Library of Nigeria has been a source of pride with regards to International Bibliographic Standards. Since 1970¹⁵ the National Library has been applying, in cataloguing and in all its bibliographies, the International Standard Bibliographic Description (monographs) ISBD (M) and has since 1974 been applying the ISBN on its publications. All these are aimed at standardising bibliographic description in Nigeria.

It has been on record that documentation on forms of Nigerian names was sent to British editor for AACR2 in 1975¹⁶. This was probably for cognisance in the proposed changes of AACR. Painful to note that the Descriptive Cataloguing Committee of the ALA Resource and Technical Service which was responsible for the revision of AACR, did not incorporate Nigerian names in its final edition.

"A guide to African Documentation" published by the Library of Congress has been of great importance with regards to general references to National names.

The Cataloguing and Classification Section of the NLA started a reasonable job in 1974 by setting up a Sub-Committee on the modification of the Library of Congress scheme which has now developed to engulf all other major

classification schemes used in Nigeria. One would expect that by this time the committee must have wound up its activities on this project and prescribed a final adaptation of the modified scheme. The committee should not only modify the scheme but also publish a "Subject Heading for Nigeriana, akin to that of Sears List of Subject Headings or the Library of Congress Subject Headings.

The Cataloguing and Classification Section of the NLA, in collaboration with the Bayero University, Kano organised a workshop on Name Authority File for Nigerian Names, in July, 1985. The resolution at the end of the workshop emphasised among others, the need for a name authority file that is Nigerian bias. Like any other resolution at the end of workshop, it ended up in rhetorics.

It was also on record that in 1975, the National Library of Nigeria in collaboration with Nigerian Publishers Association distributed to Publishers, International Publication Standards. The National Library held meetings with publishers representatives to drive home the use of the International Standards in their publications. The question is how representative were the said publishers representatives and what impact has the meeting made, in view of the growing number of substandard publishers in Nigeria?

The publication of an index to Nigerian languages by Keir Hansfer, *et al*¹⁷, can be said to be part solution to the language problems in bibliographic descriptions in Nigeria but for its obsolescence as more Nigerian languages are

becoming written after the said publication.

The Igbira names compiled by Ajayi¹⁸ is a quick reference tool for bibliographer. This is of course about a small ethnic group in Nigeria.

Recommendation

It is pertinent at this point to emphasise the importance of a national guide for Nigerian names. Such guide should be able to show at a glance the national names which are currently in use. Form of entry in this File will be able to lay down entry form with an assured consistency. Towards this, the National Library should sponsor research into names in local languages similar to that compiled by Ajayi, mentioned above with a view to establishing a Name Authority File for Nigeriana.

A list of about 4,000 personal names drawn from the 1950-1970 cumulative Nigerian publication is now obsolete. A revision of such publication is long overdue.

Most of our bibliographers are too much in haste while some are probably not aware of the significance of the bibliographic data necessary for effective identification of materials. The bibliographer should be aware that the convenience of the users takes precedence over bibliographers' ease. The whole exercise calls for industry and accuracy in understanding relevant bibliographic tools as printers and publishers do not have regard for bibliographers in the use of bibliographic data in their publications. He should be current with any innovation in bibliographic style.

He should be able to show clearly national, corporate, or personal names that have undergone changes. Bankole¹⁹ had once suggested that whenever a bibliographer is in doubt as to what an author will prefer his name to be entered the bibliographer should contact the author to establish name entry for such author.

The objectives of the Nigerian Library Association like any other professional bodies is the promotion and protection of the profession. This has been aptly shown in most of its activities. More is however still expected. The modification of the popular schemes used in Nigerian Libraries with a view to indigenising or Nigerianising the schemes is a good intention but for its footdrag in coming up with blue print. The modification of the UT. of the Library of Congress started since 1984 cannot be said to have received the final blessing of the Association. I hasten to suggest that in addition to these modifications when finally adopted, an indigenous Subject Headings which can favourably be compared to that of the Library of Congress and sears List of Subject Headings should be published.

Seminar/workshop on International Bibliographic Standard could be organised for Nigerian publishers. This is the quickest, and surest way of introducing ISBD to the infant publishers.

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