

The Compilation of the Complete Library in Four Branches of Literature Vol.2



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Classification of Islamic literature in Pakistani libraries

A survey

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Islamic literature

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Received 17 August 2009
Reviewed 20 September 2009
Revised 20 September 2009
Accepted 11 December 2009

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to draw an exact and accurate picture of classification problems being faced by libraries having a reasonable amount of collections on Islam. Different classification systems have been developed during the last two centuries to organize library materials. Where these systems provided libraries with better solution for organization of materials, the systems have also some limitations. Religious materials are one of the areas where these systems could not satisfy a reasonable number of libraries. The libraries that have rich collections on Islam are also facing such problems. This study has been conducted with the aim of addressing this problem.

Design/methodology/approach – The study comprises a precise review of literature relevant to this problem, along with the collection and analysis of data from such libraries from all the main cities of Pakistan. The data have been collected using the interview technique.

Findings – The review of literature and empirical data collected for this study show that the libraries are facing problems regarding the classification of materials where there are rich collections on Islam. The standard classification systems have not provided proper place and enumeration to Islamic topics in their schemes. There is no standard or uniform practice among the libraries to classify materials on Islam. Different libraries are using different systems, which has resulted placement of same materials at different locations. There is no coordination among libraries having rich collections on Islam for some common plan of action to resolve the problem in hand. No work on automated classification has been done in Pakistan so far and this is the area that needs working on in the future.

Research limitations/implications – The paper focusses on materials in libraries in one country only, however highlights issues relevant to other Islamic countries in organizing such materials.

Originality/value – The paper discusses an area of professional concern that has been discussed widely in Islamic countries, but only in a limited fashion outside of Islamic countries. Thus the paper should be of interest to researchers and practitioners interested in cataloging theory.

Keywords Cataloging, Classification schemes, Islam, Pakistan

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The library is an organization that has played a vital role in the preservation and transmission of human knowledge from one race to another race and from one community to another. Libraries acquire different types of materials, process them, arrange them and make them available to the library users at their ease. Classification plays a significant role in the organization, physical arrangement, access and retrieval of the library materials. Different standard classification systems, e.g. DDC, LCC, UDC, CC and BC have been developed for this purpose. Most of these systems have been developed by western authors. The authors were of such a background that they provided sufficient provisions to the fields of western knowledge, but these schemes lack adequate room for eastern/oriental fields of knowledge, languages and literature.



Library Review
Vol. 59 No. 3, 2010
pp. 148-164
© Emerald Group Publishing Limited
0024-2535
DOI 10.1108/00242531011031142

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