

**AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF RESOURCE DESCRIPTION AND  
ACCESS (RDA) AMONG CATALOGUERS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN  
NIGER STATE**

**By**

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**Abstract**

The study focused on the awareness and perception of RDA among cataloguers in academic libraries in Niger State. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. A total of 21 cataloguers from academic libraries in Niger State formed the population of the study. However, since the population was not large and manageable, the researchers used the whole population for the study. Questionnaire and observation were the instruments used for data collection. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentages and mean. The findings of the study revealed that most cataloguers in academic libraries in Niger State are aware of RDA as a new cataloguing rule. The medium of awareness of cataloguers about RDA is through their personal effort, Internet search and through friends that have attended conferences/seminars and workshops. The study also revealed that lack of funding, lack of technical knowhow and lack of policy statement on RDA were the major factors militating against the implementation of RDA in academic libraries in Niger State. The study recommended that Federal and state government should provide adequate funding, policy statement and create more awareness on RDA while library management should also provide adequate ICT facilities and staff training in order to address the issues of Internet connectivity and the technical knowhow of staff.

**Keyword:** Academic libraries, Anglo American cataloguing rules, Cataloguers, Resource Description and Access

**Introduction**

Library resources have since been organized in some definite order right from the ancient period. However, with the introduction of Anglo American Cataloguing Rules

(AACR2) which serves as an international cataloguing standard rules that guide cataloguers in organization of information resources have been enhanced in the description of library resources for easy access and retrieval of the resources by users. At this period, card catalogue is being used by many libraries to retrieve information by users. Haliru, Bello and Furfuri (2016) were of the view that AACR2 is one of the early cataloguing rules and card catalogue usually seems to be the primary retrieval source. The introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into library services has changed this phenomenon and led to an era where the preference of the library users is mostly online and consequently paved way for the agitation by librarians for a web based friendly cataloguing rule. This necessitated the adoption of Resource Descriptive Access (RDA) by some libraries to further ease access to their collections.

RDA is an upgrade of AACR2 to meet up with the high demand of digital environment where most of the resources are expected to be accessed by users. It is an international cataloguing standard that give room for more features and acknowledge every single bibliographic details. Oguntayo and Adeleke (2016) described RDA as a new cataloguing standard in the digital environment that replaces the AACR2 to provide guidelines for listing bibliographic resources more functionally, defining information resources in all formats. Similarly, Ottong (2016) defined RDA as a web product providing a standard for resources description and access that is responsive to the digital environment which the libraries now operate. It is important to note that, RDA has come

to stay and there is need for librarians to get themselves acquainted with the new trends of cataloguing standard provided by the RDA.

It is a worrisome situation in Nigeria, especially in Niger State that many librarians in academic libraries are not aware of RDA. Several researches have shown that many librarians in Nigeria are ignorant of what RDA is all about and even its emergence (Onuoha and Aina, 2016). It is important for libraries to make sure that librarians are use to the new trends so as to pave a smooth way of implementation of RDA. Sokari, Bello and Joel (2016) explained that the negative perception on RDA among Nigerian librarians will affect its implementation. However, it is important for a study of this kind to be carried out so as to avoid any obstacle at the point of RDA implementation. It is at this backdrop that these researchers decided to look at the awareness and perception of RDA among cataloguers in academic libraries in Niger State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Cataloguers in libraries have basically been responsible in carrying out the bibliographical description of library resources using Anglo American Cataloguing Rules 2 (AACR2). However, with the coming of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), the AACR2 can no longer fully assist in retrieving information in the digital environment and thus it becomes necessary to adopt a rule that can enhance access to digital resources. This necessitated the adoption of RDA to suit their demand.

Preliminary observation carried out by the researchers revealed that years have gone by and nothing has been done in the area of adopting RDA by academic libraries in Niger State. Could it be that they are not aware of RDA? It is based on this that these researchers decided to investigate about the awareness and perception of RDA among cataloguers in academic libraries in Niger State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were postulated to carry out the study;

1. To what extent are the cataloguers in academic libraries in Niger State aware of the existence of RDA as a modern means of cataloguing library materials?
2. What are the medium of their awareness of RDA by the cataloguers in academic libraries in Niger State?
3. What are the perceptions of cataloguers on RDA in the libraries studied?
4. What are the challenges facing implementation of RDA in academic libraries in Niger State?

### **Literature Review**

In April 2005, when feedbacks were gotten from the draft of AACR3 part 1 led to the change in direction of RDA and RDA was initiated by the Joint Steering Committee of AACR2. RDA is a new cataloguing rules that replaces the AACR2 due to adoption of digital or electronic resources in libraries all over the world. It was developed so that

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cataloguers could describe and provide access to different resources. Therefore, RDA is a set of rules governing the formulation of data to support resources discovery.

Though awareness of RDA varies from one institution to another. To buttress this point, Mansor and Ramzdan (2014) reports that majority of cataloguers in Klang Valley, Malaysia are aware of RDA. Also, Sanchez (2007) found that the results of attending conferences, seminars and workshops had made library staff to be aware of RDA. Oehlschläger (2012), stated that professionals at the British and Chartered Institute Library are working together to create awareness on RDA even though, in Canada, awareness on RDA started as early as 2008 as report by (Oliver, 2009). As the awareness increased in developed institutions of the world, cataloguing staff at OCLC were able to identify the difference between AACR2 and RDA (Kottman, 2012).

These cannot be said in developing countries of the world institutions most especially in some Nigerian institutions. Investigation by Sokari, Bello and Joel (2015) revealed that librarians in North-Western Zone of Nigeria are not aware of RDA. In support of Sokari, Bello and Joel (2015), Ahonsi (2014) found that awareness on RDA is low among cataloguers in some Nigerian academic libraries surveyed. On the other hand, Oguntayo and Adeleke (2015) revealed that majority of academic librarians in Nigeria are aware of RDA through attending conferences, workshops and seminars within the country. However, as the awareness of RDA gradually increases in Nigeria, different librarians are

beginning to be more curious about this cataloguing standard as revealed by (Sokari, Bello and Joel, 2015).

In other parts of the world, there was a high anticipation about RDA. The nature of this anticipation as stated by Hart (2010) is summed up as “Macheviallian Intrigue” suggesting RDA as being a revolutionary and subversive tool being introduced in order to completely create a new way of doing things. Adamich (2008) agrees with this school of thought and questions the originality of RDA in his article where he said RDA and AACR2 have the same purpose and in many ways have a great deal of continuity. The reason for these similarities are best summed up by Hawkins, Nguyen and Smith-Griffin (2014) who argue that RDA holds the same philosophical steps as AACR2. But in the opinion Cooke (2015) grouped the perception of RDA on three schools namely the negatives, the neutrals and the positives.

### **Research Method**

For the purpose of this study, descriptive survey research design was adopted. A total of 24 cataloguers from the academic libraries in Niger State formed the target population of the study. However, since the population is not large and manageable, the researchers used the whole population for the study. Bernard (2012) supported this by asserting that if a population of a study is less than two hundred (200) the entire population should be used for the study. Questionnaire and observation were the instruments used for data collection. A total of 24 copies of questionnaire were drafted

and distributed out of which 21 were returned and found usable. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages and mean in tables.

## Results

**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents**

Institution	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Federal University of Technology Minna (FUTM)	7	32
Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University Lapai( IBBUL)	4	19
Federal Polytechnic Bida (BIDAPOLY)	2	10
Niger State Polytechnic Zungeru (Nigerpoly)	4	19
Federal Collage of Education Kontagora (FCKONTAGORA)	2	10
Collage of Education Minna (COEMX)	2	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Qualification</b>		
PHD	-	-
MLIS	7	33
BLIS	6	29
DIPLOMA	8	38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 shows that 7 (32%) of the respondents were from Federal University of Technology Minna Library, while 4 (19%) of the respondents were from Ibrahim

Badamasi Babagida University Lapai and Niger State Polytechnic Zungeru Library respectively. The table further revealed that 2 (10%) of the respondents were from Federal Polytechnic Bida, Federal Collage of Education Kontagora and Niger State Collage of Education Minna, respectively.

In terms of Qualification, 8 (38%) of the respondents were Diploma holders in Library Science, 7(33%) were Master Degree holders (MLIS), while 6 (29%) were holders of Bachelors Degree in Library and Information Science (BLIS).None (0%) of the respondents had a PhD

**Table 2: Awareness of RDA by Cataloguers in academic libraries in Niger Sate**

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	13	62
No	8	38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 reveals that 13 (62%) of the respondents were aware of RDA as a new cataloguing rule, while 8 (38%) of them were not aware. This shows that cataloguers in the academic libraries under study are aware of RDA as a new cataloguing standard. This could be attributed to the fact that Cataloguing and Classification Section of Nigeria Library Association (NLA) has embarked on creating awareness through organizing workshops/ seminars on Resource Descriptive Access (RDA) for cataloguers. This finding corroborates with that of Mansor and Ramzdan (2014) who discovered that in



general, though Malaysian cataloguers were aware of the RDA, they were only familiar with the basics of RDA and its related topics. Similarly, Ahonsi (2014) found out that in Kenya, 75% of the respondents have heard about RDA. However, in the case of using RDA rules the percentage was tremendously low.

**Table 3: Medium of awareness of RDA by cataloguers in the studied academic libraries**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Through conference attendance	1	3	2	7	1.84	Disagreed
2	Through Friends	4	4	2	3	2.69	Agreed
3	Through Internet search	3	6	2	2	2.76	Agreed
4	Through online forum	1	2	4	6	1.84	Disagreed
5	Through personal effort	6	5	1	1	3.23	Agreed
6	Through in house training	-	-	4	9	1.30	Disagreed

**Key: SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; D=Disagree; SD= Strongly Disagree,  $\bar{x}$  = Mean**

Table 3 reveals that out of the 6 items listed as medium of awareness of RDA by cataloguers in the libraries studied 3 had high mean scores above 2.50 mark on the 4 - point likert scale. These items are: through personal effort  $\bar{x}$ =3.23, Internet search  $\bar{x}$ =2.76 and friends  $\bar{x}$ =2.69. The other three (3) items that produced low values include: through in house training  $\bar{x}$ =1.30, through conference attendance and through online forum  $\bar{x}$ =1.84 respectively.

Result revealed that the medium of awareness of cataloguers about RDA was through their personal effort, Internet search and through friends that attended

conferences/seminar. This could be because Cataloguers in the studied libraries are ICT inclined and also have friends that have attended workshop/seminars organized by the CAT/Class Section of the Nigeria Library Association. This Finding corroborates with the findings of Oguntayo and Adeleke (2016) who studied the awareness, knowledge and Implementation of RDA in Nigeria. Their study revealed that the major medium of awareness of RDA by cataloguers was through the attendance of Workshops/Seminars and the ability of cataloguers to search the Internet.

**Table 4: Perception of cataloguers about RDA as the new cataloguing rules**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	I am scared of RDA	4	2	6	9	2.04	Disagreed
2	RDA is difficult to use	6	9	3	3	2.85	Agreed
3	RDA is time consuming	5	6	6	4	2.57	Agreed
4	The coming of RDA will bring improvement in cataloguing	6	6	5	4	2.67	Agreed
5	RDA will increase my skills on cataloguing	6	9	2	4	2.80	Agreed
6	RDA is more detailed than AACR2	9	7	2	3	3.04	Agreed

**Key: SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; D=Disagree; SD= Strongly Disagree,  $\bar{x}$  = Mean**

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents agreed with 5 out of the 6 items listed to ascertain the level of perception of cataloguers in the academic libraries in Niger State. These include RDA is more detailed than AACR2  $\bar{x}$  =3.04, RDA is difficult to use  $\bar{x}$  =2.85, RDA will increase my skills on cataloguing  $\bar{x}$  =2.80. Others are the coming of

RDA will bring improvement in cataloguing  $\bar{x}=2.67$  and RDA is time consuming  $\bar{x}=2.57$ . However, only one item was disagreed by the respondents, which is I am scared of RDA with a low mean score of  $\bar{x}=2.04$ .

Table 4 showed that cataloguers' perceptions about RDA in the studied libraries reveals that RDA is more detailed than AACR2; the coming of RDA will improve cataloguing practice and cataloguers' skills. This could be because cataloguers find it difficult to catalogue electronic materials. This finding concurs with that of Sokari, Bello and Joel (2016) in their study titled perception of RDA in university libraries which revealed that librarians' believe that the coming of RDA will improve on the cataloguing practice and catalogers' skills.

**Table 5: Challenges facing implementation of RDA in the academic libraries in Niger State.**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Funding	11	10	-	-	3.52	Agreed
2	Lack of Technical Know how	9	7	4	2	3.00	Agreed
3	Lack of adequate ICT Facilities	10	1	3	7	2.66	Agreed
4	Lack of Familiarity with RDA	9	6	2	4	2.95	Agreed
5	Lack of Training	8	6	2	5	2.80	Agreed
6	Lack of policy statement to implement RDA	9	4	7	1	3.00	Agreed

**Key: SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; D=Disagree; SD= Strongly Disagree,  $\bar{x}$  = Mean**

Table 5 reveals that some factors militate against implementation of RDA in academic libraries in Niger State. These include lack of funding  $\bar{x}=3.52$ , lack of technical knowhow and lack of policy statement to implement RDA  $\bar{x}=3.00$  are the major factors militating against implementation of RDA as a new cataloguing standard. Other statements agreed by the respondents are lack of familiarity with RDA  $\bar{x}=2.95$ , lack of training  $\bar{x}=2.80$  and lack of adequate ICT facilities  $\bar{x}=2.66$

The result revealed that lack of funding, lack of technical knowhow and lack of policy statement on RDA were the major factors militating against the implementation of RDA in academic libraries in Niger State. This finding agrees with that of Onuoha and Aina (2016) when they identified some difficulties libraries are facing that inhibit the implementation of RDA to include lack of funding and policy statement on RDA

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

1. Federal and State government should provide adequate funds for the implementation of RDA in academic libraries in Niger State.
2. Federal government should also endeavor to draft a policy statement through the National Library of Nigeria for the effective implementation of RDA in academic libraries

3. Provision of adequate ICT facilities and staff training in academic libraries should be paramount in order to address the issue of Internet connectivity and the technical knowhow of staff.
4. Government at all level and other organizations should create more awareness about RDA in order for its implementation to see the light of the day.
5. Library Management should endeavor to sponsor its staff for local/ international conference/seminars in order for them to be acquainted with latest trends in cataloguing (RDA)

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it is important that Federal and State government should provide adequate funding while university library management should also provide adequate ICT facilities and staff training in order to address the issue of Internet connectivity and the technical knowhow of staff. There is need to provide a policy statement on RDA and create more awareness about it. Once these issues are adequately addressed, it is expected that the awareness and perception of cataloguers about RDA in academic libraries in Niger State will tremendously improve.

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