

Background

Cataloguing deals with the description of documents in a logical manner. Catalogue codes are the manifestations of rules and examples of practical cataloguing. Like other “sciences” a well-defined terminology is needed to communicate ideas as well as correct practice in the field of library cataloguing.

Objective

The objective of this research was to assess the evolution of cataloguing terminologies by studying various catalogue codes over time.

In order to achieve the aforesaid objective, attempts were made:

- (i) to show the evolution and occurrences of cataloguing terms in terminology sections of various catalogue codes, along with their synonyms and homonyms, and rank them according to their frequency of occurrences,
- (ii) to show the changes of terms and their definitions over time in different catalogue codes, and
- (iii) to evaluate the changes in cataloguing terminologies, i.e., the changes in terms and their definitions, in the light of the canons/guiding principles prescribed by the cataloguing authorities.

Methodology

To achieve the objective of the study, thirteen catalogue codes, spanning the years 1876 to 2016, were chosen to collect the necessary data. A systematically developed data sheet

was used to record the terms, their definitions, synonyms, and homonyms. The evolution of cataloguing terminology across time was measured using a scale.

Results

Cataloguing terms are evolving over time. Old terms become outdated and are no longer used in later times, whereas new ones are created in the new era. There are very few terms with a high frequency of occurrence (greater than fifty percent as per the study). Some terms have their homonyms and synonyms. The definitions of the same term have occasionally changed and occasionally remained constant. The evaluation study of terms and definitions demonstrates that the majority of cataloguing terms were created using linguistic concepts. As a result, library cataloguing has developed a systematic approach to coin and define terminology in a variety of contexts. Creation of new terms, the disappearance of useless terminology in later eras, or the change of the designations of the same concept in contemporary days demonstrate the dynamism of the subject cataloguing.

Keywords

Cataloguing, Terminology, Canons of Cataloguing, Catalogue Codes, Evolution of Cataloguing Terms, Evolution of Definitions, Evaluation of Cataloguing Terminologies, ISO704:2000, Synonyms, Homonyms, Transparency, Concreteness, Native Language Preference, Non-Circularity