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THE TRAINING OF CATALOGUERS IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

by

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SUMMARY

Academic libraries play an important role in the teaching and research activities of an university. Cataloguers are usually responsible for organizing information and making it available to users. The environment in which cataloguers have to work, have changed significantly in the last number of years. The changes are, among others, due to the influence of technology, the increase in the amount of information available, the emergence of new formats and the increased availability of electronic resources.

Cataloguing tasks have also changed from the traditional bibliographic description and allocating access points, subject cataloguing, MARC coding and authority work.

Membership of bibliographic networks and consortia has a meaningful impact on what cataloguers do. Cataloguers have been de-professionalized to a large extent. Cataloguing activities are often decentralized and even outsourced. This study looks at the position of cataloguers at university libraries, establishing if they are well equipped for their task.

From a study of the literature, it has also become clear that the education of cataloguers, in South Africa as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom, does not prepare students adequately to do cataloguing effectively in the workplace. In this study, an attempt is made to establish which tasks cataloguers in South African University libraries are currently performing and what their training needs are. Recommendations of a feasible training model to improve cataloguer training in South African university libraries is made. The recommendations are based on a study of available literature, as well as a questionnaire survey done among 120 cataloguers in South African University libraries.

Staff training is an important process in the improvement of job performance and organizations are increasingly becoming aware of the importance of training to develop their most important asset, namely human resources. Training however has to meet both organizational and individual development goals. Libraries have always practised staff training but the status of training provided needs to be continuously evaluated to



remain relevant and meet existing needs. The present training of cataloguers needs to be improved on to match the challenges brought about by recent trends in this field.

Index terms

academic libraries

authority control

bibliographic description

cataloguing in university libraries

cataloguing

cataloguing tasks

continuous education

copy cataloguing

education of cataloguers

MARC21 coding

Nonprofessional cataloguing tasks

on-the-job training

original cataloguing

professional cataloguing tasks

subject cataloguing

training of cataloguers

Opsomming

Akademiese biblioteke speel 'n belangrike rol in die onderrig- en navorsingsaktiwiteite van universiteite. Katalogiseerders is ook verantwoordelik vir die organisering van inligting en beskikbaarstelling daarvan aan gebruikers. Die omgewing waarin katalogiseerders moet werk, het egter beduidend verander in die laaste aantal jare. Hierdie verandering is te wegebring deur onder meer, die invloed van tegnologie, die toename in beskikbare inligting, die ontstaan van nuwe formate en die toename in elektroniese bronne.

Katalogiseringstake het ook verander van die tradisionele bibliografiese beskrywing, toekenning van soekpunte en onderwerpshoofde, MARC-kodering en gesagswerk en sluit ook nou ander vaardighede in. Lidmaatskap van bibliografiese netwerke en konsortia het ook 'n beduidende invloed op wat katalogiseerders doen. Katalogiseerders word bowendien toenemend gedeprofessionaliseer. Katalogiseringsaktiwiteite word dikwels gedentraliseer en selfs uitgekontraakteer. Hierdie studie kyk na die posisie van katalogiseerders in universiteitsbiblioteke en poog omvas te stel of hulle behoorlik toegerus is vir hulle taak.

'n Studie van die literatuur het aan die lig gebring dat die onderrig van katalogiseerders in Suid-Afrika, sowel as in die Verenigde State en die Verenigde Koninkryk, studente nie goed voorberei om goeie katalogiseerders te wees in die praktyk nie. In hierdie studie word gepoog om vas te stel watter take katalogiseerders in Suid-Afrikaanse universiteitsbiblioteke tans verrig en wat hulle opleidingbehoefte is. Aanbevelings word gemaak vir 'n opleidingsmodel om opleiding van katalogiseerders te verbeter. Die aanbevelings is gegrond op die literatuur, sowel as 'n vraelys wat deur 120 katalogiseerders werksaam in universiteitsbiblioteke, voltooi is.

Opleiding van personeel is belangrik om werkverrigting te verbeter. Biblioteke doen ook opleiding, maar dit moet voortdurend aangepas word om tred te hou met verandering.

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