CLASSIFICATION OF ISLAMIC LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

Billions of words and thousands of books and other written material are being printed and produced every minute in the world. The Librarian are directly involved in facing these challenges and helping their scholars and intellectuals to go along with the developments. They have to keep in eye on all the printed and non-printed materials. They have to acquire, organize and retrieve appropriate material and information for the persons doing research. To provide efficient and satisfactory service they have to organize this material on some fool proof system. The systems are numerous and they have to choose the best on which may help in enlightening, enriching and accelerating the educational and research activities of the people. The difficulties in the classification schemes prompted many Librarians in the East either to make certain adjustments and alterations OR to make expansions in the existing numbers provided for subjects of vital interest to their libraries. This has lead to many new expansions but almost all of them independent of each other in their approach.

INTRODUCTION

Not only human being but the creator of the Universe "Allah" himself has identified and classified things on it is revealed in Quran that He taught Prophet Adam (PBUH) the names of all the things and taught him their use. He classified certain things to be used while others not to used. The librarians and information scientists are facing different kind of problems all over the world particularly in Islamic countries. One of these problems is concerned with the organization of material. In small libraries the problem of classification is not very acute but in large libraries and information centers it is very confusing. The systems which are well known and commonly used in the small and big libraries are Dewey Decimal, Universal Decimal, Library of Congress and Colon Classification Schemes. There are some specialized systems also which are used for specialized libraries. None of these systems is capable of classification and organizing the material of Islamic Countries. There is a problem of physical limitations: most of these classifications do not give adequate detail for accurate subject classification. The scheme which claim to be universal suffer from the inherent influence of the ideology of the Christian West. Thus bibliographical classification of Islam using these schemes amounts to forcing Islamic literature into a shape and form that was designed for a different world view.

It is unfortunate that we have not been able to evolve our own system of classification suiting to our literature and library material. Some efforts have been made by individuals and institutions but these could not be published and circulated among the librarians of Islamic countries. These have never been joint efforts, coordination or consultation by librarians to tackle the situation and solve the problems. To solve the problems a joint forum of librarians of Islamic countries is urgently needed.

Classification Schemes

The following classification schemes are universally recognized and used in many libraries of the world:-

1. Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC)

DDC is very popular among al the small and big libraries of the world. It is revised and updated by the Editorial Committees