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Organization of Islamic Knowledge in Libraries: The Role of Classification Systems

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Abstract

Libraries deal with recorded knowledge. Classification systems play a fundamental role in the organization, display, retrieval and access of the knowledge and materials in libraries. During the last one and a half century, formal classification systems and standards have been developed to replace the previous generic categorization. Such the systems are very famous, known and used by the libraries internationally. Some of these international standard systems include: Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC); Charles Ammi Cutter's Expansive Classification (EC); The Subject Classification of James Duff Brown (SC); American Library of Congress Classification (LCC); Universal Decimal Classification (UDC): Henry E. Bliss' Bibliographic Classification (BC); and S. R. Ranganathan's Colon Classification (CC). These systems have served the purpose adequately in many of the knowledge areas and disciplines. Nevertheless, there are some of the areas which lack proper intention and treatment in these fit-for-all standard classification systems. The background and context of the devisers has been a strong reason behind this problem. Islamic knowledge is also among the areas, which has not been properly addressed by these systems. This paper examines this problem and presents a potential solution for the problem.

Introduction

Knowledge is a property that gives an immense distinction to the human being from other creatures. The beauty of human knowledge is its ever increasing and developing property. Developing a knowledge society is the ultimate goal of all the nations of today's world. Knowledge economies are evolving these days and a competition in this regard is cutting the edges. The human knowledge is divided into two main classes: a.) Explicit or recorded knowledge; and b.) Tacit or unrecorded knowledge. (Polanyi M., 1996). Knowledge management is a fashion word or terminology of our time. As a matter of fact, it is a philosophy, it is a discipline and it is a lifestyle, where efforts are being made to get maximum benefit from the whole human knowledge. Libraries have been places throughout the history that have played a vital role in *acquisition, development, access and management (ADAM)* of knowledge (refer to Figure-6). Libraries, of course, mainly deal with the explicit or recorded knowledge of human being. Classification systems play a fundamental role in the organization, display, retrieval and access of the knowledge and materials in libraries. During the last 150 years, formal classification systems and standards have been developed to replace the previous generic categorization. These systems are very famous, known and used by the libraries internationally. Some of these international standard systems include: Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC); Charles Ammi Cutter's Expansive Classification (EC); The Subject

Classification of James Duff Brown (SC); American Library of Congress Classification (LCC); Universal Decimal Classification (UDC): Henry E. Bliss' Bibliographic Classification (BC); and S. R. Ranganathan's Colon Classification (CC). These systems have served the purpose adequately in many areas of knowledge and disciplines. Nevertheless, some areas lack proper treatment in these fit-for-all standard classification systems. One of the primary explanations of this problem lies with the background and context of the originators of these systems (Idrees, 2010). Islamic knowledge is among the areas which have not been properly addressed by these systems. This paper examines this problem and presents a potential solution.

Problem Statement

The organization of Islamic knowledge in the libraries that have developed very rich collection of such knowledge has been a problem area. The reason of this problem is that the standard library classification systems that are used to organize the materials as per their thematic arrangement and value do not provide sufficient place, proper enumeration and logical expansion for resources on Islam. In response, such libraries have adopted very incoherent, inconsistent and non-uniform practices; sometimes employing locally developed non-standard systems, making expansions within given place by standard classification systems and sometimes devising expansions using alternative place (notations) within the standard systems.

Objectives

This paper has been compiled to achieve the following objectives:
1. To draw accurate picture of the classification problems being faced in organizing Islamic knowledge / materials in the libraries that have reasonably good collections on Islam.
2. To know classification practices of such libraries to overcome the problem.
3. To discover satisfaction level of the libraries with presently adopted classification systems.
4. To know the opinion of librarians of such libraries regarding the possible solution to the problem.
5. To seek and suggest the optimal solution of the problem.

Methods

Literature review: The literature available on the problem and its relevant aspects has been collected and reviewed. The standard classification systems and schemes have also been consulted for guidance.

Interviews: The problem in hand is of social nature and there are not much quantifiable variables involved in this study. The problem was also related to exploration of subjective aspects of human experience. People perception of the potential solution of the problem was also to be found. Therefore, qualitative methods were opted for this study as indicated by Powell & Connaway (2004, p. 59). Interviewing technique for data collection was selected, keeping in view its benefits and suitability as mentioned by Gorman & Clayton, i.e., 1.) immediacy, 2.) mutual exploration, 3.) investigation of causation, 4.) personal contact and 5.) speed. There are three types of interview: 1) structured, 2) semi structured and 3) non-structured (Gorman & Clayton, 2005, pp. 125-142). Semi structured interviewing was selected. Interviews of 12 subjects from the following countries have been included in this paper: Pakistan; India; Malaysia; Saudi Arabia; Iran and UK. These interviews have been conducted through direct meetings, telephones, interactive online sessions and audio / video conferences.

Literature Review

An effort has been made to include all the possibly available printed and non-printed literature on the topic. The literature shows that there is a dissatisfaction regarding the classification of Islamic literature, not only in the Indian subcontinent and Muslim countries, but also in other countries, for which the example of Smith classification at McGill University, and the comments by Morgan and Chan can be referred to. This is summarized and brief review. For a detailed one, the author's paper appeared in *OCLC Systems and Services* can be seen (Idrees, 2011).

Expansion of knowledge and Literature being Published on Islam: The Muslims have developed, saved, transmitted and preserved knowledge, which led them to produce literature, even in the times when it was very difficult to produce multiple volumes. This has also steered the Muslims towards establishing libraries. The library of Al-Sahib Ibn Ibad during the 4th century of Islamic calendar (10th century AD), had a collection of 6,200 books, of which a ten volume catalogue was compiled. Al-Aziz Fatimid had a collection of 1.6 million books in his library (Dohaish, 1986). Reservoirs of knowledge were created from the early history of the Muslims. The establishment of historic Darulhikma library during the Abbasid caliph Mamoon ur Rasheed's era, Khazainulqusoor during Fatimid period with a collection of 1.6 million books and Hakam II's library with a collection of 400,000 books in Spain are remarkable examples. This trend of public and many private libraries can be seen throughout the Muslim history (Siddiqui, 1986, p. 36).

A steady publishing trend and emergence of new topics in the Islamic studies' body of knowledge has been evidenced during the recent times too. When a search on the books available on Islam with one of the leading online bookseller, Amazon was made, it came with the following results: Book titles published since year 2000 to date were 17,726; between 2001and 2002 are 2897, between years 2003 and 2004 were 3515, between 2005 and 2006weare 3361, during 2007 and 2008 were 4050 and the titles published since year 2009 to date were 1,286. (Amazon, 2010). Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah. (2009) is a book publisher based in Beirut, Lebanon. This publisher has more than 4400 running titles that are recently available on more than 100 main topics of Islam. Brill (2010) is currently publishing 29 journals, 50 book series, 175 reference works, including world fame *Encyclopedia of Islam* & *Encyclopedia of Quran* and 23 yearbooks on Islam. Currently available are 840 titles on Islam that have been published after 2001. This is noteworthy that all Brill publications are thought to be research oriented. A search of books available on Islam at Barnes & Noble (2010) resulted in 12,212 titles. Many publishers and booksellers in Arab and other Muslim countries' wide ranging publications on Islam are other than these examples. This data demonstrates an extensive demand and supply of books on Islam.

Classification of Islamic Literature: The compilers of classification schemes were all from western countries, except Ranganathan. These schemes were created with a given context in mind and omissions of categories of information were discovered afterwards. Only one notation in DDC at the third level, i.e., 1/1000 has been allocated for literature on Islam, which is insufficient. As a result of this shortcoming, expansions have been made in DDC and the notations, originally given to Christianity have also been alternatively used for Islam (Riazuddin, 1993).

Qaisar (1974) has mentioned shortcomings of DDC that are being faced by Asian libraries. He has proposed some expansions and deviations in notations specified for Islam. A reasonable amount of expansion has also been proposed. Khurshid (1977) has commented on the efforts made by Shafi for the expansion in DDC classes for Islam. The summary of classes along with subclasses, devised by Shafi (1962) has been included in this source. These recommendations were sent for the incorporation in DDC 18th edition, but were not added although this misconception / rumor was spread in Indo-Pak subcontinent that the recommendations had been included. Sardar (1979) has devised a classification scheme for Islam. Two objectives have been served as mentioned by the author: "to encourage debate or discussion on the acute need for contemporary classification schemes on Islam; and to present a model, albeit a primitive one, for consideration and criticism." The author has invented his scheme, which was divided into four main parts: 1. Pre-main class; 2. Main class; 3. Post main class; and 4. Auxiliary schedules. The author used capital letters for main classes and small letters for subclasses. Pre-main classes include the pre Islamic religions. The auxiliary schedules include: a. Time; b. Geographical subdivisions; c. Languages; and d. Bibliographic form division. Chishti (1978, pp. 510-555) has gone through the works of Farabi, Kawarzami Ikhwan-Al-Safa, Ibn Sena, Ibn Hazam, Ibn Abdul Birr , Raghib Asfahani, Ghazali, Ibn Al-Nadeem and Ibn Abi Al-Rabie have been quoted. Razi's system, the author has mentioned 60 main classes and many subclasses have also been mentioned. According to Chishti, the theory and practice of classification was historically developed as mentioned in Figure 1. Labhu Ram (n.d.) compiled a classification scheme for the oriental languages collections on Islam in the central library of Punjab University, Lahore. In this scheme, Ar for Arabic, P for Persian and U for Urdu collections have been used as notation prefixes respectively. Bajwa (1969) in a master's thesis, included the contributions made by ancient Muslim scholars in the field of classification of knowledge like Al-Farabi, Ibn Al-Nadeem, Ibn

Khuldun and Tashkubrizada. A comparison of these four schemes has also been included in a tabular format. Hina Khan (1999), in her master's dissertation analyzed the coverage of Islam including changes and additions made in different indigenous expansions in DDC, e.g., Naqvi, Qaisar, Shafi and TEBROC. The researcher has suggested a comprehensive study on the topic by a committee of working librarians, LIS faculty and Islamic studies scholars.Adam Gacek (2008), Head Islamic Studies Library at McGill University, in reference to the classification system developed by Professor Smith, the founder head of the Institute, told the author in a personal communication:

The Smith classification system was developed by Prof. Smith, the first founder of the Institute. The system has not been used since 1982. It was abandoned in favor of the Library of Congress Classification. It is entirely on Islam (in its broad sense) and is divided into four main classes: A. Reference works; B. Extra-Islamic subjects; C. Classical Islam (until about 1800 A.D.); and M. Modern Islamic world (from about 1800 A.D.)

A project of King Abdul Aziz University (1977) translated DDC in Arabic, amended and expanded. Class of religion, 200 was the core of this project. Hassan (1973) translated DDC in Urdu with additions, while Dr. Shaniti (1960) of Egypt translated the abridged edition of DDC into Arabic and expanded the Islamic topics using the DDC classes 210-260 for Islam. International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM, n. d.) has also developed an expansion scheme in LCC to cover the areas of Islamic Law. Notations BP140-158 have been used for this purpose where more than 380 areas and subareas of Islamic Law have been covered. Usmani (1982) and Sabzwari (1982), mentioned shortcomings of standard systems and emphasized on need for a standard classification system for Islam. The Islamic Research Institute (n.d.) has developed its own scheme. Coverage of 152 subjects has been provided in this scheme. A list of subjects followed by Arabic numeral serial numbers has been made and every book of a particular subject that arrives in the library is given the next serial number of the subject. Quaid-e-Azam Library, Lahore (n.d.) developed an expansion with some alterations in the structure of DDC, 19th edition, using 220-280, seven classes for Islam. Soltani (1995) presented a paper on translations and expansions of classification systems in Arab countries and Iran. She has mentioned the translations and/or expansions made either in DDC and Library of Congress Classification (LCC). The Indian Institute of Islamic Studies (1974) found none of standard classification systems convenient for the proper organization of library materials. Subsequently, a classification system based on UDC was developed. Hundreds of topics and aspects of Islamic knowledge and literature were covered in this scheme. Mixed notation has been used in the scheme. IS (stands for Islam) has been used as a prefix in the notation. Usmani (1973) and Qudsi (1969) revealed that Shafi played a vital and leading role in developing an appropriate classification system for Islam, covering all gaps in the standard DDC system. According to Fatima (1981), central library of Karachi University was using Shafi expansions for their collection on Islam. Riazuddin (2002), suggested extensions in the DDC for Islam, within 297. As this was only an extension to one number, its scope is very limited and problems like lengthy notations and congestion are present in these extensions. Gondal (n.d.) devised a classification scheme for Islam, which is being used by the libraries of Mosques Department of Punjab University, Quran Academy, Lahore and partially in the Punjab University Central Library. Eraqi (1985) worked on an expansion of DDC 18th edition's class for Islam, i.e., 297. Tehran Book Processing Centre (TEBROC, 1975) has also devised an expansion; Both are in fact similar except that the first being in Persian and the second in English. Standard subdivisions have been provided with every class. Sabzwari (2007) has devised an expansion for Islam using the DDC 18th edition classes 210-260. Khan (2004) devised an expansion in DDC 21st edition for the life, family and companions of Muhammad (PBUH) using notations 297.63 and 297.64.

Expansions in the most widely used classification system DDC were started back during the year 1916 as Asa Don Dickinson's expansions were developed, followed by Indian Library Association, Yousufuddin Ahmad and Molvi (S. S. H. Rizwi, 1940, pp. 91-116 and S. J. A. Rizwi, 1996). Altaf Shaukat (1970) also devised an expansion for Islam in DDC, which is almost similar as Shafi expansion. Rizwi (1975) stated about the extensive collections in the libraries on Islam and improper classification schemes to classify them. Colon classification, Bliss classification, DDC and LCC were reviewed and found insufficient for the purpose. The author devised a schedule of Islamic topics, without provision of any notation. This schedule is based on Shafi's expansion with some amendments and additions. The classification scheme, coined by Rehman, Nizami and Shaikh (2003) is an effort to cover maximum aspects of Islam, but the order, concepts and format are many times illogical, confusing and irrational. Aabdi (1999) compiled a concise

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Arabic translation of DDC's 21st edition and made some amendments and expansions in the classes of Arabic language, literature, geography& history and the religion Islam. It is almost similar as the one made by King Abdul Aziz University in 1977. According to Idrees & Mahmood (2009 & 2010) DDC is the only standard classification system that is being used in the Pakistani libraries that have rich collections on Islam. Same is the case with other Muslim countries as mentioned by Sabzwari (1982). Keeping this fact in view, a brief comparison between indigenous expansions and DDC along with a picture of historical developments in different editions of DDC regarding Islam has been presented in figure-2. The figure, which has been adapted from Idrees &Mahmood (2010) shows that in the early editions of DDC (1951), until the 16th edition (1958), only one notation was given for Islam without any of its further extensions. This is also notable that the given heading was Mohammedanism until the 15th edition, rather than Islam. In the later editions, the heading of Islam was adopted and further extension, standard subdivisions and number building instructions were included. In the 21st (1996) and 22nd (2003) editions, some radical expansions within notation 297 were provided with, which made the notation too lengthy. The local expansions, which were mainly developed decades earlier of DDC 21st and 22nd editions, still provide with more options and place for materials on Islam.
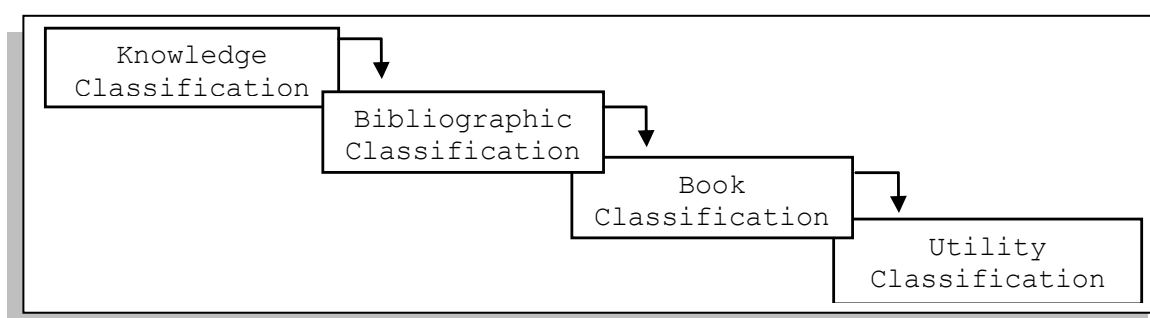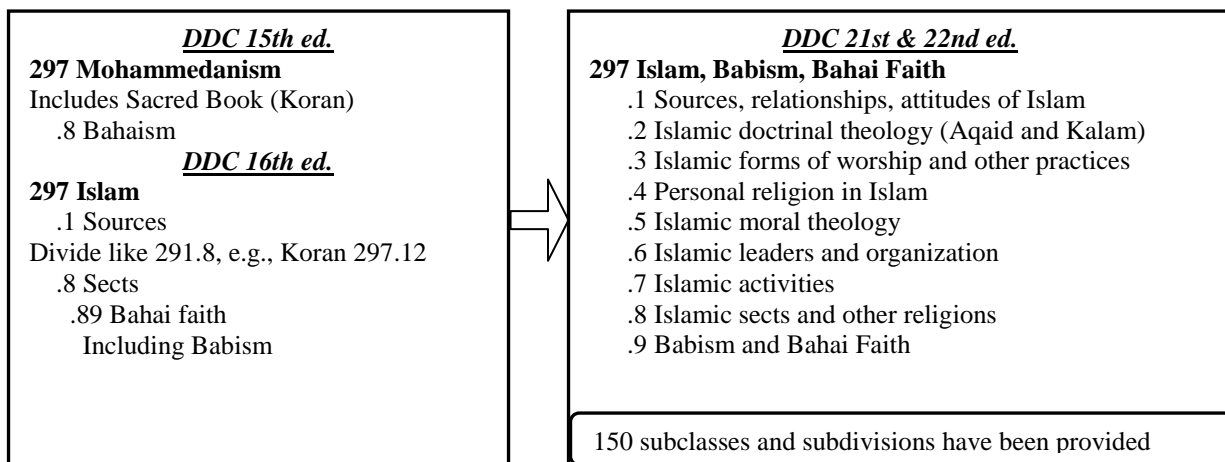

Figure 1. Historical Development of classification.

Criticism on Classification Schemes: Many authors have criticized standard and worldwide used classification schemes due to their shortcomings regarding eastern and oriental topics and their western bias. Dickinson (1916, pp. 29-35), Rizwi (1975), Khurshid (1980), Chan (1981), Elazar (2000), Broughton (2000), Sabzwari (1981), Morgan (1996), Ibrahim (1982), Usmani (1982), Eraqi (1985) Soltani (1995) Rehman, Nizami and Shaikh (2003) and Sadiq (2006) are among those who have criticized the standard classification systems that include DDC, LCC and UDC. These three are the ones that have provided some reasonable space. Rest of the systems, e.g., CC, EC and BC have not been discussed frequently because they have provided such a minimal place, which is not significant.

297 Mohammedanism
Includes Sacred Book (Koran)
  .8 Bahaism
DDC 16th ed.
297 Islam
  .1 Sources
Divide like 291.8, e.g., Koran 297.12
  .8 Sects
   .89 Bahai faith
    Including Babism

DDC 21st & 22nd ed.
297 Islam, Babism, Bahai Faith
  .1 Sources, relationships, attitudes of Islam
  .2 Islamic doctrinal theology (Aqaid and Kalam)
  .3 Islamic forms of worship and other practices
  .4 Personal religion in Islam
  .5 Islamic moral theology
  .6 Islamic leaders and organization
  .7 Islamic activities
  .8 Islamic sects and other religions
  .9 Babism and Bahai Faith

150 subclasses and subdivisions have been provided

Quaid-e-Azam Library Expansions for Islam in DDC XIX

220	Islam, general topics
230	Quran & Quranic studies
240	Hadith
250	Jurisprudence
260	Islamic theology and beliefs
270	Sufism
280	Miscellaneous topics
290	Other and comparative religions

More than 400 subclasses and subdivisions have been provided for Islam

Shafi's Expansions for Islam in DDC XVIII

297	**Islam: general topics**
297.1	Quran
297.2	Hadith and the life of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)
297.3	Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence)
297.4	Islamic theology and beliefs
297.5	Islamic sects
297.6	Worship
297.7	Islamic Morality
297.8	Sufism
297.9	Islamic history and geography

More than 300 subclasses and subdivisions have been provided for Islam

Qaisar's proposed classes for Islam in DDC XVI

297	**Islam**	9 subdivisions
297.1	Sources of Islam	99 sub and sub of subclasses
297.2	Kalam	18 sub and sub of subclasses
297.3	Devotional and practical theology	14 sub and sub of subclasses
297.4	Sufism	20 sub and sub of subclasses
297.5	Moral exhortations	3 sub and sub of subclasses
297.6	Muslim movements	5 sub and sub of subclasses
297.7	Activities inspired by religious motives	53 sub and sub of subclasses
297.8	Sects	17 sub and sub of subclasses
297.9	History of Islam and Muslim empires	30 sub and sub of subclasses

Figure 2. A Brief Comparison of DDC and Indigenous Expansions for Treatment of Islam, <u>Source</u>*: Idrees,H.* (2011). Classification of Library Materials on Islam: A Literature Survey. OCLC Systems & Service, 27:2, 124-145.

Joan S. Mitchel (2003 & 2005), editor in-chief of Dewey Decimal Classification has admitted the presence of Christian bias and improper place for Islam in DDC as mentioned:

> In DDC 22, we have completed the two-edition plan that was initiated in DDC 21 (Dewey 1996) to reduce Christian bias in the 200 Religion schedule. In DDC 21, we moved comprehensive works on Christianity from 200 to 230, and relocated the standard subdivisions for Christianity from 201–209 to specific numbers in 230–270. We integrated the standard subdivisions of comparative religion with those for religion in general in 200.1–.9. We also revised and expanded the schedules for two major religions, 296 Judaism and 297 Islam.

Results of Empirical data and Discussion

The results of empirical data collected through the interviews are presented and discussed in this section.

Basic Information: The population was very versatile and spread in different parts of the globe. A sample of 12 libraries from the following six countries was selected: Pakistan; India; Malaysia; Saudi Arabia; Iran and UK. Chief librarians, heads of technical sections and section heads of Islamic collections were included for interviews (one person per library). An effort has been made to take in the most appropriate persons who are aware of and in touch with the problem in hand. These interviews were conducted through direct meetings, telephones, interactive online sessions and audio / video conferences. The libraries represent of almost all types of libraries, i.e., academic, special, public and national libraries; although majority consists of academic libraries of universities. Out of twelve libraries seven are university libraries, two special (court and specific research institute), one public and a national library are among the sample. Collection on Islam in these libraries ranges from 15,000 to 170,000 volumes.

Classification Systems in Use: No uniform practice regarding the usage of classification systems has been found among libraries. 10 out of 12 libraries are using multiple systems, i.e., standard systems for general materials and indigenous systems or expansions made in standard systems for materials on Islam because standard systems do not fulfill their classification needs. Six libraries use DDC+ indigenous expansions / systems; four libraries use LCC+ indigenous expansions / systems. Two libraries use single system, i.e., DDC for all library materials. A summary of the classification systems in use of sampled libraries can be seen in figure 3.

Suitability of Classification Systems: In response to the question whether the classification systems were suitable for the organization of Islamic knowledge being acquired in the libraries, the participants provided with the following responses: No Library was found satisfied with standard systems, except one which is using standard system along with the additions for Islam made at their own. Two libraries were found satisfied with indigenous systems / expansions, while three libraries were found partially satisfies with indigenous systems / expansions. Level of satisfaction of the libraries with systems, currently in use has been shown in figure 4.

Problems being faced by the Libraries--Shortcomings of the Systems: Participants shared the presence of following problems or shortcomings in the available standard cum local systems: 1.) Allocated notation is too limited to cover the maximum Islamic subjects minutely. 2.) New and emerging topics are not found in systems. 3.) One participant told that no standard was followed in developing the indigenous system being used in their library. Only a list of subject terms has been developed. 4.) Ineffective and non-comprehensive classification systems are creating a result in form of improper organization and inefficient browsing of library materials. 5.) No uniformity with other libraries of same kind as different and dissimilar classification systems being used.

Solution to the Problems: When the participants were asked for an optimal solution to the problem in hand, they recommended the following solutions:

- 10 participants (six exclusively and four partially) agreed that there was a need to develop a new, independent and comprehensive classification system for materials on Islam.

- 3 participants suggested amendments and expansions in standard classification systems as their first preference if the same could be incorporated in the original systems. They mentioned

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a new, independent and comprehensive classification system for materials on Islam as the 2nd Priority, if amendments and expansions are not incorporated in the original systems.

- One participant suggested for exclusive amendments and expansions

- One participant suggested for both amendments & expansions and a new, independent and comprehensive classification system for materials on Islam.

- One participant was indifferent and felt that the things are fine when you append the standard systems by yourself as per indigenous requirements.

Opinions regarding the solution have been summarized in figure 5.

A New, Independent and Comprehensive System for Islam: Regarding the questions on new, independent and comprehensive classification system for materials on Islam, the responses were as follows:

- 10 respondents agreed that variety, depth and capacity in Islamic topics and volume of literature being published indicate a real need and significance for developing an independent and comprehensive classification system for materials on Islam.

- 10 respondents agreed that developing an independent and comprehensive classification system exclusively for Islamic materials was technically possible.

- Nine respondents agreed that guiding literature for developing an independent system for Islam was available in the form of previously developed standard and indigenous classification systems.

Implementation of a New, Independent and Comprehensive System for Islam: Developing a new, independent and comprehensive classification system for Islam is one side of the problem; but, practically, its implementation in libraries is the other side. It has its own implications. The libraries have materials on the topics other than Islam. So, participants were asked about this aspect of the issue. Following was their response to this question:
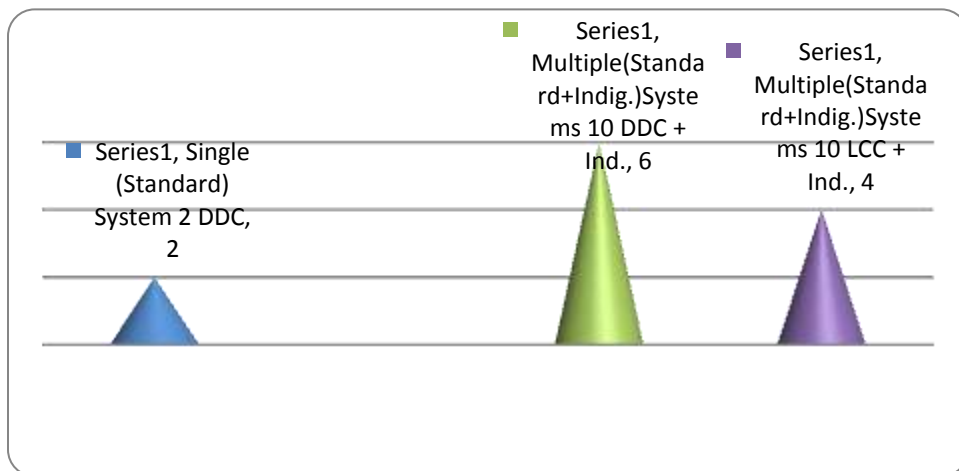

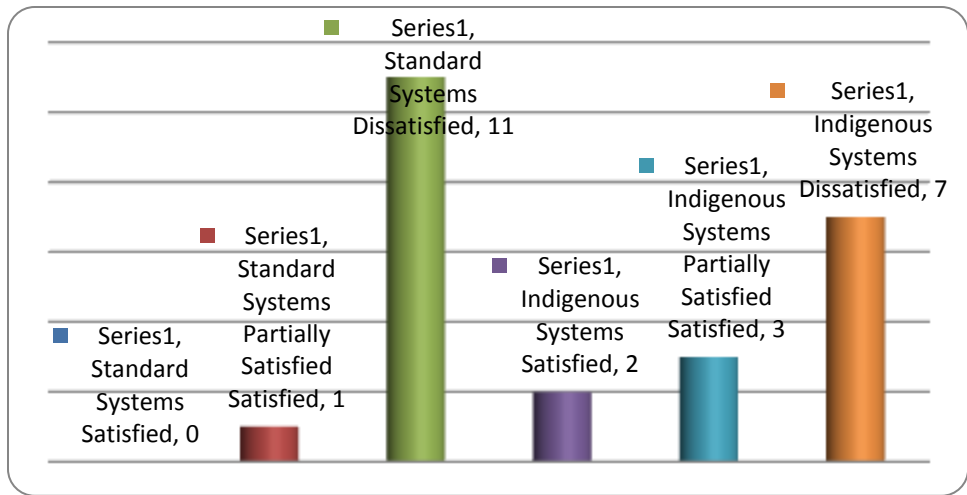*Figure 3: Classification Systems in Use*

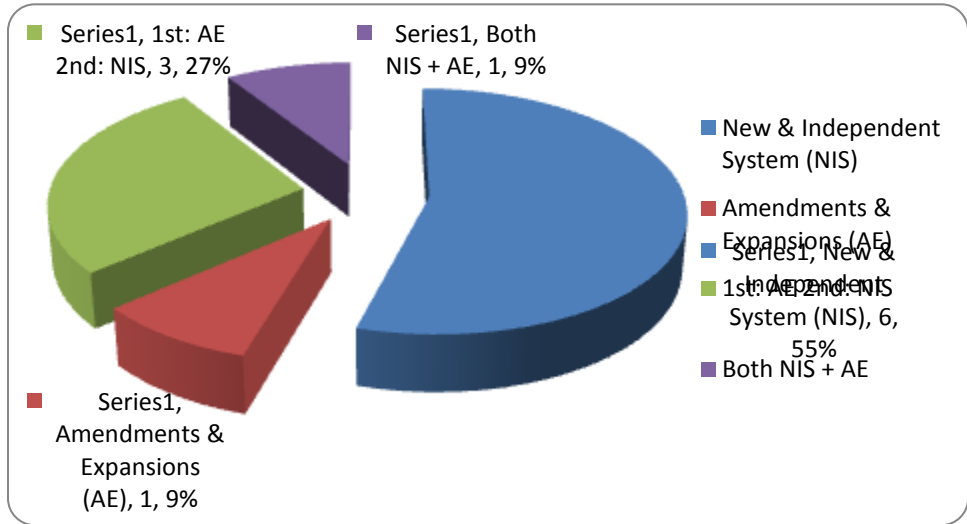*Figure 4: Level of Satisfaction with Current Systems*

Figure 5: Solution for the Problem

- Eight respondents agreed that implementing such a system would be possible, while their libraries had already been practicing multiple classification systems for collections of different natures. Therefore, they would adopt such (new) system for materials on Islam and could use the standard system for other materials, provided the new system meets the requirements of collections on Islam.

- One participant mentioned that the issue is serious as reclassification is also involved, but the solution could be found after brain storming.

- One participant said that the solution could be found after publishing and widely spreading the new scheme and having detailed discussion.
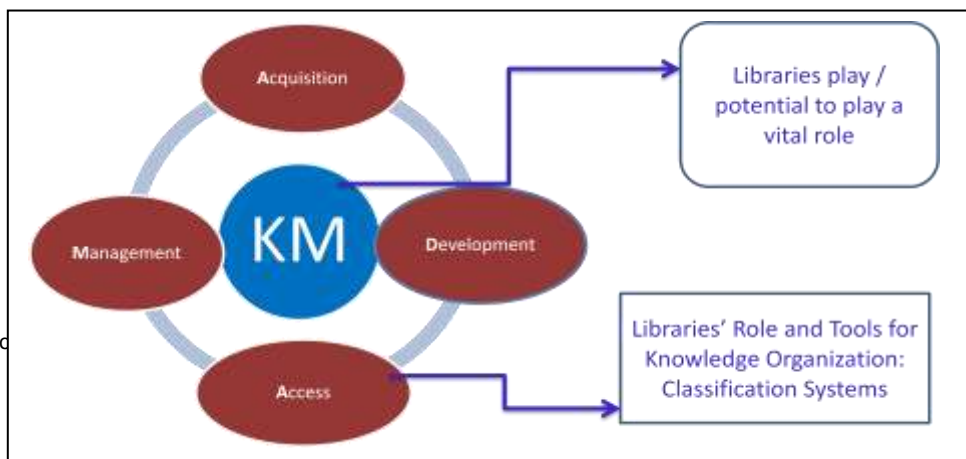
Figure 6: A proposed Library KM Model: ADAM

Format of New Classification System: As far as the format of the new classification system is concerned, all 10 respondents who voted for a new system suggested for developing an enumerative system. Nevertheless, there were some differences of opinion in the format of notation. Some of them were in favor of having a pure notation, some suggested for mixed notation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The review of literature and the empirical data taken through the interviews show that there is a gloomy situation regarding the organization of Islamic knowledge in libraries that have rich collections on Islam. Neither the standard classification systems, nor indigenous expansions or schemes are fulfilling the purpose optimally. The reasons behind this problem could be the background of the originators of the standard classification systems. Perhaps they were unaware of the length and breadth of the expansion of Islamic knowledge and the variety of topics and materials being produced. Secondly, perhaps, they did not have an idea in the start that their systems would spread around the globe and such a range of the libraries throughout the world would be using these schemes at some point of time. Hence, once, they had formed a basic structure of their schemes, it was very difficult to have drastic changes. Their personal interest and biasness can also be among the reasons. In response to this problem / shortcoming, different practices have been adopted. Sometimes, people have developed their own systems without following or developing any standards, e.g., IRI of International Islamic University, Islamabad, having a collection of 150,000 volumes on Islam (Idrees, 2007). Sometimes, folks have developed expansions in the standard systems. Efforts were made to get such expansions formally incorporated in the original schemes, but, such efforts could not succeed. Subsequently, there have been very different approaches in the expansions of even same standard systems and no uniformity is found in this regard. Thus, the same kind of knowledge is organized differently at different places. This study suggests the following parameters for the optimal solution of the problem:

- A new, independent and comprehensive system should be developed for materials on Islam. Comprehensive means the one that covers all the relevant and potential aspects of Islamic knowledge and the materials being produced on the associated topics.

- This system should be enumerative with opportunity of notation building by combining different overlapped topics / themes.

- This system should be sent to the relevant libraries that have developed very rich collections on Islam, scholars of Library and Information Science (LIS) and the scholars of Islamic studies for validation and verification.

- The input of libraries and scholars should be incorporated and suggested changes be made in the system.

- This system should be presented at international conferences and again feedback should be taken and incorporated.

- This system, then, should be marketed and be adopted by libraries.

- Finally, some organization, federation or association should adopt this system and make the necessary arrangements for updating the system with passage of time through formation and working of editorial board/s.

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