

BLIS semester II  
(paper – 5)  
Reference Sources & Services  
Topic – Bibliography  
e-content

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## **Bibliographies**

A bibliography is a list of documents arranged in systematic order. Each entry provides the bibliographical details of the document. An entry in a bibliography provides information about the authors, title, edition, collaborators, imprint collection etc. of a book. Similarly required information is included for all types of documents included in the bibliography.

Several categories of bibliography are encountered in the world such as Universal bibliography, National bibliography, Trade bibliography, Selective bibliography, Subject bibliography and Author bibliography.

**Universal bibliography** – A universal bibliography is that ‘which lists all documents of all kinds of materials, produced in all countries, in every language, at any time, and on all themes’. From 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, various attempts have been made towards the compilation of universal bibliographies. No doubt, all attempts resulted in

some bibliographies, but none of which was a universal bibliography in the true sense of the term. It has, so far, remained a distant dream there is little possibility that such a bibliography will be compiled in near future.

**National bibliography** – A national bibliography lists the publications produced from a nation. They may appear in the form of a book or a periodical. It does not, however, list all sorts of publications. For example, Indian National Bibliography does not cover maps, musical scores, periodicals (except the first issue), keys and guides to textbooks, ephemeral publications, etc.

Examples:

i) Indian National Bibliography. Kolkata: Central Reference Library, 1957-. Print.

ii) National Bibliography of Indian Literature, 1901-1953. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1962-1974. Print.

**Trade bibliography** – Trade bibliographies are brought out by commercial publishers, booksellers, distributors, printers and others. Normally these bibliographies list books which are meant for sale. Theses, reports, patents, standards, etc. are excluded. Limited bibliographical details are provided in the entries along with the price. The scope of these bibliographies is generally national. Some of them are also international. Usually they cover all subjects and are arranged alphabetically subject-wise. They are mostly used as book selection tools.

Examples:

i) Cumulative Book Index: A World List of Books in the English Language. New York: Wilson, 1898-. Print.

ii) Books in Print. New York: Bowker, 1948-. Print.

iii) Indian Books in Print: A Select Bibliography of English Books Published in India. Delhi: Indian Bureau of Bibliographies, 1969-. Print.

**Selective bibliography** – A selective bibliography does not cover all the documents on the topic. They are selected on the basis of some criteria. These bibliographies may appear in the form of a book, or a periodical.

Examples:

i) Dickinson, Asa Don. World's Best Books, Homer to Hemingway, 3000 Books of 3000 Years, 1050 B.C. to 1950 A.D. Selected on the basis of a Consensus of Expert Opinion. New York: Wilson, 1953. Print.

ii) Aslib Booklist: A Monthly List of Selected Books Published in the Fields of Science, Technology, Medicine and Social Sciences. London: Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, 1935-. Print.

**Subject bibliography** – A subject bibliography lists the documents on a given subject. The subject may be a place, person or any other topic. The arrangement of the entries may be date-wise, author-wise, or classified. It may be in the form of a book or a periodical.

Examples of some of the types are given below:

i) Asian Social Science Bibliography. Delhi: Vikas, 1967-. Print.

ii) Griffith, Dudley David. Bibliography of Chaucer, 1908-1953. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1955. Print.

iii) McGraw-Hill Basic Bibliography on Science and Technology, Recent Titles on more than 7000 Subjects. New York: McGraw, 1966. Print.

**Author bibliography** – An author bibliography is also known as Biobibliography or individual bibliography. It lists the works of a single author. It is to be noted that a bibliography of the works on a particular author is a subject bibliography, and by a particular author is author bibliography. Sometimes an author bibliography includes the works by the author as well as on the author, e.g. see the 2nd example given below:

Examples:

- i) Freeman, R. B. Works of Charles Darwin: An Annotated Bibliographical Handlist. London: Dawson, 1965. Print.
- ii) Das Gupta, A. K. Essay in Personal Bibliography: A Bibliography of the Writings on and by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan. Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1967. Print.

## **FUNCTIONS AND USE**

The chief function of a bibliography is to help the users in locating the required information source in the fastest possible manner. Some of the functions of a bibliography are listed below:

- It is a systematic guide to the literature of the subject;
- It locates a title on a given subject and identifies the bibliographical details on it (author, publisher, date and place of publication, etc.);
- It serves as a selection tool in acquiring materials for the library;
- It helps in obtaining information on complete works, and about an individual author;
- It saves the time and efforts of researchers as it helps in selecting relevant and specific documents from the large universe of documents;
- It provides direction to researcher by indicating the areas where total research in a subject areas stands and its progress;

- It is useful for carrying out retrospective search for the purposes of research;
- It promotes application of existing knowledge and activates the creation of new knowledge; and
- It helps a librarian to be selective, in case the budget is rather limited.

The above mentioned functions of the bibliography indicate that the researchers cannot function without compiling or consulting a bibliography as it provides a guide to the literature of their study.

Bibliography has several other uses such as:

- Helps the users in locating documents of their interest;
- Helps in identifying and verifying bibliographic information of documents;
- Aids in locating information (materials) through the publishers or other libraries;
- Useful materials can be selected for building a sound library collection.
- Further helps in tracing the development of a subject;
- Duplication in research can be avoided and access to materials of interest can be provided especially to researchers;
- The bibliographies also perform the function of bibliographic control over the existing literature;