Abstract

The dynamic nature of universe of knowledge however gives rise to new subjects at any point of time. Also, knowledge creation and gaining, technological developments and problem-solving, often necessitates these traditional subjects to interact by crossing their well demarcated disciplinary boundaries in form of shared theories, tools and techniques, expertise etc. What results from this is the emergence of a new area or field of study, which with time develops its own theories, principles, experts; and eventually gives rise to a distinct new interdisciplinary subject and sometimes even to a new discipline. This research aims to study of genesis of interdisciplinary subjects in science and their reflections in classificatory devices.

The subjects for the study were chosen following suitable methodology and after thorough document search. A total of 12 subjects have been studied.

To achieve the objectives of the study the landmark developments were identified and the major stages of developments were marked. The typology of relation in each of the stages were then identified. Then how these stages and the typology of relation have been reflected were studied in three selected classificatory devices viz Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme, Universal Classification Scheme and Colon Classification Scheme. Also, the coverage of the three classification schemes in the last editions have been compared. The growth of literary warrant has also been studied.

The research reveals that the genesis and development of interdisciplinary subjects vary from one another. The time period for the development is specific and the typology of relations vary for each of the subjects. Some of the subjects like Astrophysics, Biochemistry are much older and well developed as compared to other subjects like Astrobiology or Bioinformatics. The literary warrant shows that all the subjects have revealed literary growth. Among the selected interdisciplinary subjects DDC and UDC covers 10 where as Colon Classification covered 6 of them.

As this study identifies the significant developmental stages of the selected subjects and traces its corresponding reflection in classification schemes, this study will aid in the understanding of the concept of subject formation. Identifying the existing gaps in the process of incorporation will significantly help classificationists, those responsible for regular updation of classification schemes and anybody dealing with classification both in theory and practice.

Keywords: Classification Scheme, Interdisciplinary Subjects, Dewey Decimal Classification, Universal Decimal Classification, Colon Classification.