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African Journals: An Evaluation of their Use in African Universities

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Abstract

The use of African published journals in two African universities was surveyed through the use of questionnaire, interviews, journal usage count and citation analysis. The survey reveals that African published journals are not popular with academics because of lack of bibliographic and physical access. For conclusion to be more reliable and any trends in journal use to be determined, identical surveys were carried out over a three-year period. Recommendations are made towards maximising the use of journals published in Africa.

Introduction

It is a well-known fact that current journals are very difficult to find in most libraries in Africa. In fact, very few libraries can boast of any quantity of new titles for the past ten years. Many have had no new journals at all for the past five years. This situation is even worse with African published journals. It is with the aim of correcting this paucity in journal subscriptions that schemes like the *African Journals Online* and the *African Journals Distribution Programme* were established. The *International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP)* supports *African Journals Online*. It aims to promote the awareness and use of African-published journals in science, technology and medicine. It recently included non-science journals such as the *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* and *Ife Psychologia*. It also offers access, via

the Internet, to the tables of contents or the full text of journals published since 1997.

African Journals Distribution Programme (AJDP), on the other hand, is a scheme through which scholarly journals published in African countries are made available to scholars and academics in other African countries by purchasing the titles on behalf of university libraries. APEX (African Periodicals Exhibit), which annually exhibits African periodicals in the various disciplines, was launched by AJDP at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair in 1993. In the 1997 edition, 135 titles published in 22 African countries were included. The catalogue of the exhibit is widely distributed.

In spite of the generous effort of AJDP, no comprehensive studies have been undertaken to evaluate the use of these journals in African university libraries. In order to fill this gap, this study aims at evaluating two of the beneficiaries of the AJDP. The two universities selected are the University of Ghana Library and the University of Zambia Library. The study involves the evaluation of the use made of African-published journals as well as comparing their use with those published elsewhere.

Background Information of the Two Universities and their Libraries

In order to appreciate the use of African published journals in the two universities, it is important to understand the situation of the two universities and their libraries in terms of the faculties, staffing and facilities.

University of Ghana (UGL)

The oldest of Ghana's five universities, UGL was founded in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast and became an autonomous university in 1961. Its main campus lies 13 kilometres north-east of Accra at Legon. Only the Medical School, is sited on a separate campus.

The academic life of the University is centred on seven faculties: Agriculture, Arts, Law, Medicine, Science, Social Studies and Administration. Teaching is at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, including doctoral programmes.

Over the three years of the research, the student population rose from around 6,500 in 1996 to 10,000 in 1998 while academic staff numbers rose from 500 to 650.

The Balme Library (named after the first Principal of the University) is the Central Library of the University. There are also a number of affiliated libraries for example, the libraries at the School of Administration and the Institute of African Studies which were

included in the library count of journal use. The buildings of the library were opened in 1959 and designed to accommodate 350 readers. The present estimated stock of the library is 585,075. New accessions, however, were less than 2,000 in 1998, and averaged less than 3,000 over the last three years.

The library held a total of 8,894 journal titles (97,428 volumes) (excluding newspapers, annual reports, yearbooks, pamphlet series, etc, but including newsletters and bulletins) during the study period. Of these, 8222 are now closed files. Of the closed files, 407 titles were published in Africa and, of these, 158 in Ghana. Most of the closed files were published between the 1950s and the late 1970s, and are representative of the whole of Africa including Francophone and North Africa. A glance through the titles reveals that, in the period immediately after independence, most countries in Africa published scholarly journals in each main academic area of study.

The numbers of current journals did not change over the period of the research. The library expected to receive about 670 journal titles, out of which 60 were published in Africa. Of this 60, 35 were published in Ghana. Between 1995 and 1998, the library received aid from the World Bank which enabled the library to subscribe to between 100 and 200 international journals. Now that the support has ended, there will be a sharp decrease in current journals. The AAAS CD-ROM project provided six databases on CD-ROM between 1994 and 1996. None of the subscriptions have since been renewed. Most of the current non-Ghanaian African-published journals are donated to the library through AJDP, starting in 1994.

Since 1996, the library has offered an e-mail service to staff and students. The library staff sends and receives the messages. Users pay about the equivalent of 20 USA cents per e-mail. More recently, the library has established e-mail nodes in some departments, if so requested, for which the departments pay a fixed rate to the library. One service the library continues to offer is inter-library loan which is supported by the IFLA/Danida project where document delivery within and outside of Ghana is being facilitated.

University of Zambia (UNZA)

The University of Zambia was founded in 1965. It remained the only public university in Zambia until the Copperbelt University (previously a campus of UNZA from 1978) was established in 1987. The main campus of the university is in Lusaka on the Great East Road. Only the School of Medicine is separately sited at the Teaching Hospital on Nationalist Road in Lusaka.

There are nine schools in the university: Agricultural Sciences, Education, Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences, Law, Medicine, Mines, Natural Science and Veterinary Medicine. In 1998, students numbered 4,306. This was an increase of almost 800 on the 1996 figures. There were about 470 academic staff. The majority of students were full-time (as opposed to part-time or distance) and under 1000 were studying at postgraduate level. In 1998, there were 221 students studying agriculture and 299 studying medicine. The library, during the period held, a total of 2725 titles.

In 1998, the library was receiving 398 titles, 58 which were published in Africa. E-mail was introduced to UNZA in 1991 and Internet access in 1994. A full campus network has been installed, which allows common access from all locations. Donor agencies have been particularly active in providing computers at departmental level and there is a computer laboratory adjacent to (although not part of) the university library for students. The main university library is fully automated and is connected to e-mail and the Internet through the campus network. It has five workstations for CD-ROM. Access to e-mail and the Internet is free of charge.

Methodology

In order to attain the stated objectives of this study, two faculties were selected in each university. At the UGL, The Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences were selected; while the Faculties of Agriculture and Medicine were selected at UNZA.

Data were collected each year for three years (1996, 1997, 1998) by interview/questionnaire with the academic staff in the two faculties/schools of each university, by an analysis of journals cited in projects, theses and academic staff publications from the faculties/schools and by a count of journals used in the university libraries. Additionally in 1998, staff were asked specifically about their use of ICT in identifying and obtaining journal articles and whether their perception of journals had changed over the three-year period of the research. This aspect of the data collection was however limited to only one faculty as a case study.

At the UGL, research took place in the Faculties of Arts and Social Studies. Arts has nine departments: Classics, Drama and Theatre Arts, English, Language Centre, Linguistics, Modern Languages, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy and Study of Religions. Social Studies has ten departments: Archaeology, Economics, Geography and Resource Development, History, Library and Archival Studies, Mathematics, Nursing, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology. There are also five research institutes and three schools: African Studies, Adult Education, Statistical, Social and Economic Research, Medical Research, Population Studies, Public Health, Communication Studies

and Performing Arts. Some 200 titles relate directly to the arts and social sciences and 28 of these were published in Africa.

Research at the University of Zambia was carried out in the Schools of Agricultural Sciences and Medicine. The School of Agricultural Sciences has six departments: Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Engineering, Agriculture, Animal Science, Crop Science, and Soil Science. That of Medicine has eight: Community Medicine, Medicine, Nursing, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Pathology, Physiological Sciences, Psychiatry and Surgery. Teaching is at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Of the 58 journals published in Africa, 10 were published in Zambia and 12 of the 58 were directly related to agriculture and medicine. The majority (33 out of 48) of the current non-Zambian African-published journals are donated to the library through AJDP. The remainder are mostly from South Africa.

The total population of each Faculty or School was targeted. However, as the staff in the two UGL faculties numbered well over 50, it was decided to interview or send questionnaires to only 50, with these randomly selected but so as to represent all departments. The study was conducted between 1995 and 1998.

Response rate over the three years were as follows:

Faculty of Arts: 40% (1996); 44% (1997); 44% (1998).

Faculty of Social Studies: 66% (1996); 82% (1997); 70% (1998).

Faculty of Agricultural Sciences: 75% (1996); 47% (1997); 30% (1998).

School of Medicine: 30% (1996); 59% (1997); 32% (1998).

Problems and Limitations

The main data collection problem faced in both universities was the lack of co-operation from academic staff. Many claimed that they had no time for interviews or for the completion of the questionnaire. At UNZA, the researchers found it difficult to find some staff in their offices, particularly those from the Faculty of Medicine who had clinical duties; others were on long leave or secondment. At UGL, staff complained at being asked to give information over a period of three years saying that nothing had changed. The lack of co-operation explains the low response rates, even though in 1997 and 1998 a full six months was allowed for the data collection process. This is a pity, as end-user reactions, collected during the research, would have provided much important data about the use of African-published journals that is not available elsewhere.

Local researchers had difficulty supplying accurate information on journal titles, both current and back files, held by the university libraries. Lack of accurate local record keeping was the problem. It was also difficult to differentiate African-published journals from those with an African content, but published elsewhere, without actually inspecting the title, as this information was not included in the records.

Findings

In spite of the limitations, some useful findings were obtained which could enable one to make the following conclusions with respect to the use of African published journals.

Use made of African-published journals

African-published journals are considered important to academic work, both in teaching and research. This finding is more positive than the views expressed by academics in interviews in a study undertaken by Rosenberg in 1997 which concluded that academics did not show any special interest in African material nor a recognition of the value of locally generated information and South-South information transfer.

The majority of staff (about 70%) at both universities considered African-published journals equally and more important than journals published elsewhere, with (49%) rating them equally important. The reasons given were that journals published in Africa are contextual, and the results presented and discussed are relevant to the African environment and conditions. Over 80% of staff consulted at least one African-published title regularly, with over half consulting two or three titles.

African-published journals were heavily used to assist research, both ongoing research and in the identification of future research topics (73% at UGL and 78% at UNZA). At both universities, research was given by 61% of the staff in 1998 as the primary reason for using African-published journals. As far as teaching was concerned, the journals were mostly used to update lecture notes and, to a lesser extent, as recommended reading for students and as a basis for a lecture. The exception was that staff in the School of Medicine at UNZA did not use journals, whether from Africa or elsewhere, a great deal in teaching.

These conclusions on the importance of African-published journals to the work of academic staff, and in particular to their research, applied equally to the humanities, social sciences and applied sciences. The staff interviewed or returning questionnaires indicated that the importance of African-published journal to their work was limited by the lack of knowledge of the journals, lack of access to African published journals and

shortcomings in the journals produced. This probably explains why between 25% and 30% of the respondents expressed that African-published journals were less important to their work than journals published elsewhere, and which led some to state that their comments were made in the context of the *potential* rather actual importance of African-published journals. Other expressed views are highlighted below.

- *Lack of knowledge*

Staff admitted not knowing what titles were published in Africa and whether there were any that were relevant to their subject interests. When listing African-published titles, which they consulted regularly, they often included titles published elsewhere with the word 'African' in the title. Some, who considered African-published journals as important, had difficulties naming any titles which they consulted regularly. Only a minority (in 1998, 23% at UGL and 30% at UNZA) could name titles which they had wanted to consult but failed; even then many of the titles named either did not exist, had long ceased publication, or were published elsewhere. "I hardly consult any African-published journals, because they are virtually non-existent" was typical of the comments made.

Locally published journals figured prominently in the titles regularly consulted. At UGL, 49% included one or more Ghanaian titles and at UNZA, 53% included one or more Zambian titles. Of the African-published journals cited in UGL projects, theses and papers, 67% were published in Ghana. As one Ghanaian said "Apart from those published in Ghana, I do not even know what is available." It is little wonder that better marketing figured prominently in the improvements suggested to make African-published journals more useful as 49% at UGL and 60% at UNZA included better marketing and distribution among the most wanted improvements. At UNZA, this was considered to be the improvement most needed "African journals need to be highly promoted."

The ways in which staff used to identify relevant journal articles were also unlikely to systematically increase their knowledge of what is published in Africa. Recommendation from a colleague featured high on the list, as did references in other publications and browsing the current issue. Personal recommendation (33%) was the primary method used at both universities, followed by browsing the current issue (22%). At UGL, 14% of staff said that they had no way of identifying journal articles. Although current contents/indexing/abstracting services were used, their rating was comparatively low. Even though used, it was pointed out that articles from African-published journals were rarely found in such services. Amongst the improvements (albeit not the most popular) suggested was the inclusion of African-published journals in international bibliographical databases and the establishment of a separate current contents, indexing or abstracting

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service for African-published journals. The latter was more favoured at UNZA where 20% of staff considered it to be the most needed improvement. It is interesting to note that the Africana Librarians' Council of the USA has also recognised this as a need and is considering consolidating indexes of Africana and, in particular, articles published in African journals, to create a 'virtual catalogue' of African indexes.

- *Lack of access*

As one member of staff in the Department of Soil Science at UNZA said, "access and availability are the problems". Most staff felt that their access to African-published journals was very limited. Many different methods - university and departmental libraries, personal contacts, other libraries and subject networks - had to be used to acquire journal articles, with no one method appearing to be more successful than others. There was a considerable reliance on personal contacts to supply needed articles: this method was used by 46% of staff at both universities. In 1998, it was ranked highest at UGL (32%) and second highest at UNZA (20%). Such a method of access is not very reliable as a long-term solution. Significantly, 12% at UGL and 16% at UNZA said that they had no method at all through which to obtain articles from African-published journals.

Some staff (32% at UGL and 14% at UNZA) claimed that they acquired African-published journals through personal subscriptions. Better and more targeted marketing by journals might well increase access and at the same time augment publishers' subscription base and financial viability.

- *Shortcomings in the journals*

Some staff were also highly critical of the journals that were published in Africa, making comments like "they need to be more regular"; "their coverage of subject matter is insufficient"; "the quality of some of the research is below standard"; "some are not very well edited". These opinions were reflected in the improvements that were suggested.

More regular publication was mentioned as one of the most needed improvements by 40% of those at UGL and 52% of those at UNZA; at UGL it was ranked the improvement favoured by most staff (30%). The need for better researched articles was cited by 16% of those at UGL and 35% of those at UNZA, whilst the need for better refereeing and editorial control was mentioned by 13% of those at UGL and 39% of those at UNZA. However, it should be said that some three staff insisted that "availability and not quality was the problem." Such findings are supported by those of Rosenberg (1997). There it

was concluded that only a quantum leap in African publishing and distribution could reverse attitudes to local and African-published material.

Impact of African-Published Journals on Research

One of the findings made is that African-published journals are valued most of all for their research potential. In particular, they are used to assist in ongoing research, to identify possible topics of future research and to publish the results of completed research. An indication of how much these journals are actually used can be found in the citations given in undergraduate projects, postgraduate theses and academic staff publications.

At UGL, in Arts and Social Studies, between 20% and 37% of journal citations came from African-published journals. At UNZA, figures were lower - between 5% and 24%. In Medicine, 24% of the citations in undergraduate projects and 18% in postgraduate theses came from African-published journals but only 7% in staff papers. In Agricultural Sciences, the figures were 21% in undergraduate projects, but only 5% in postgraduate projects and 7% in staff papers. Compared to the relative number of African-published journals available in the university libraries, their research usage is very high. At UGL only 5% of back files are African and only 9% of current titles. At UNZA, 5% of back files are African and 15% of current titles, are African.

It has already been pointed out that locally produced journals featured highly in the citations, especially at UGL where between 57% and 82% were from Ghana. In Zambia, local journals only amounted to between 1% and 27%. However, the figures do relate to the stocks in the libraries. At UGL 39% of African-published back files are Ghanaian and 58% of current titles; at UNZA the corresponding figures are 23% and 17%. Staff and students, therefore, use what is available.

An average of about a third (actual percentages ranging from 0% to 100%) of all the African citations came from journals published from 1990 onwards. In Medicine the percentage was highest, as was to be expected from a discipline relying on up to date information, and lower in the Arts where more reliance is placed on historical data. One would have expected figures from Social Sciences and Agricultural Sciences to be more similar to those from Medicine, whereas they were comparable to those of Arts.

African-published journals obviously play a significant part in research, but much less so in Agriculture and Medicine than in the Arts and Social Studies. This is surprising, in that all four subjects are contextual in nature; and given that approximately the same

percentages of staff said that they considered African-published journals to be important to research.

The results of the citation analysis must also be viewed in the context that the amount of research being undertaken at African universities is now minimal and not often based on literature review. This can explain some of the low numbers of journal citations per publication. At undergraduate level, very few departments demand a research project as part of the degree. Where it is optional, as in many departments at UGL, very few undergraduates choose to submit. Academic staff at both universities stated that they could not undertake much research because it was difficult to get funding, teaching loads were too heavy and salaries so low that it was necessary to take other paid work, like consultancies, leaving little time for research. The use of journals is therefore lower than it might be, were the climate of research to improve.

Use of journals in general compared to African-published journals

The greater importance of non-African journals to teaching and research remains undisputed. As previously indicated, between 26% and 30% of academic staff deemed African-published journals to be less important. In their lists of most used journals, between 70% and 77% named journals not published in Africa. Moreover, staff placed more importance on the role of non-African journals in their teaching and research, e.g. for ongoing and future research (at UGL, 89% compared to 73%; at UNZA, 95% compared to 78%); for updating lecture notes (at UGL, 90% compared to 61%; at UNZA, 88% compared to 72%); for recommended students reading (at UGL, 80% compared to 59%; at UNZA, 43% compared to 41%).

This finding is backed by evidence from the study by Rosenberg (1997). Academics, whilst wanting to see more African-published material, did not, however, consider it vital for teaching and research.

In the libraries, the use was predominantly of non-African journals (85% at UGL, 92% at UNZA Main Library and 78% at UNZA Medical Library. However, this usage is roughly in proportion to the numbers of non-African and African journals held by the libraries.

One reason for the lesser use of African-published journals may be that staff found it much easier to identify and acquire articles from non-African journals. Although the same methods were used, all were less effective for those published in Africa. For identification of the articles, the use of systematic methods like current contents, indexing and abstracting services were far more productive for non-African journals and much

favoured by staff in Social Studies and Medicine. Where African journals were concerned, staff were more reliant on the more haphazard method of waiting for a recommendation from a colleague. Articles from African-published journals were also much harder to obtain. Many more staff (14%) said that they had no way at all of obtaining articles from African-published journals compared to those published outside Africa (4%).

Even so, comments such as "most of the important articles about Africa appear in the known international journals" and therefore it is not necessary to consult African-published journals were rare (made by just three respondents). Most staff considered that journals published in Africa were complementary to those published in the West and that each had a role to play. International journals were strong on theory and methodology, but only those from Africa could provide the coverage of subjects relevant to the continent and offer appropriate solutions to problems. Over the three years of the research, increasing numbers of staff included one or more African-published journals in their lists of the three journals most consulted on regular basis (34% at UGL compared to 18% in 1997 and 35% at UNZA compared to 11% in 1997). Some African-published journals appeared on almost everybody's list within specific subject areas - for the Department of Library and Archival Studies it was the *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science*; for the Department of Psychology it was *Ife Psychologia*; for the Department of Soil Science it was the *South African Journal of Plants and Soil*; for the Faculty of Medicine it was the *East African Medical Journal*. This shows that African-published journals, if directed towards a niche in the market, can successfully compete with those produced in the West.

A point made in 1998, and not in the previous years, was that the attitude of university authorities to African-published journals which can affect their use *vis-à-vis* other journals. The University of Ghana has official reservations about journals published in Africa and does not rate articles published in them as high as those published in overseas journals for the purposes of promotion. This has led to an acceptance by staff that African-published journals are not so important. The opposite is true at UNZA, where the authorities give equal recognition and senior staff promote their use. Their attitude has encouraged staff to read such journals and publish their work in them.

Libraries and their Role in Journal Provision

Both libraries have extensive back files of journals and, in recent years (thanks to donor support), have much improved their holdings of current titles (670, out of which 60 are African-published at UGL and 398, out of which 58 are African-published at UNZA).

Given that over 90% of academic staff considered journal literature in general to be of key importance to their work, over half considered journals to be more important than other types of literature and only some 5% considered journals to be less important. Hence, one would have expected journal usage in the university libraries to be high but in contrast, personal contacts were used almost as much. Departmental libraries were preferred to the university library where available and subject networks were also used by staff in Social Studies and Agricultural Sciences. At UGL, the trend was to use sources other than the university library increasingly. Making journals available in the university library did not appear high on the list of ways to improve the usefulness of African-published journals.

The university library was not ranked as the primary method of journal acquisition. In 1998, at UGL, 37% gave personal contacts as their primary method and only 19% named the university library. Staff in Agriculture (78%) preferred to use departmental libraries. Only in Medicine did staff (82%) continue to use the university library as their main method of access (and this library was a branch one and therefore somewhat similar to a departmental library).

The university library has always been just one of several sources of information available to the academic community. And the growth of information and communications technology (ICT) has opened up many more pathways of information flow. But comments made by staff at the end of the questionnaire indicate that they felt let down by their university libraries and that it is the failure of the libraries to obtain and make the journals they need available that has led them to seek other ways of access. They still hope that their libraries will be able to order more journals, both general and African. At the same time, the point was made that just one copy in the library of an essential journal like *British Medical Journal (BMJ)* or *Lancet* was not enough; copies also need to be available at departmental level. The marginalisation of the university library in Africa, the growth of departmental libraries and the increasing adoption by academics of alternative ways to obtain information were some of the main conclusions of Rosenberg (1997). University libraries need to re-define their role in journal provision.

As has been indicated, staff felt that their lack of adequate knowledge about African journals is crucial to their being unable to make more use of this resource. The university library could play a role. One means of promotion would be the circulation of new issues or tables of contents. Overall, over 40% of staff favoured this and those in Social Studies ranked it as the second most important improvement. In fact, libraries could do much more to make academics aware of what titles are published in Africa by publicising the various indexing tools that are available and the titles which the library holds.

Academics did not seem aware of the indexing tools for African-published journals that exist, e.g. the *APEX Catalogue*, *Index of South African Periodicals* (now available on CD-ROM and the Internet), *Quarterly Index to Periodical Literature, Eastern and Southern Africa*, *African Journals Online*. They were also not aware of what titles were held by their own library. The failure of librarians to recognise the importance of African-published material and to promote its use was also pointed out by Rosenberg (1997).

Librarians have a duty to ensure that the money spent on journals, whether by their own institutions or by donors, is reflected in journal use. This means that they need to organise their collections more efficiently and effectively and promote use through exhibitions and publicity. Holdings lists need to be maintained and easily accessible to users. Subscriptions provided at departmental level need to be catalogued so that they are more widely known throughout the university and are coordinated with holdings at university level. Journal usage needs to be monitored. For example, the finding that only 25% of the journal usage at UGL is of pre-1990 journals questions the need to hold so many long runs of back files.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Journal Provision

Introduction of ICT has followed different timing and patterns at UGL and UNZA. In the latter university, e-mail was introduced in 1993, followed by Internet connectivity in 1994. There is a university-wide network. CD-ROM searches have been available in the libraries only at both UNZA and UGL since 1994. At UGL, ICT has been a later introduction and much more limited. E-mail services have been offered since 1996 through the Balme Library. The library has extended e-mail to some, but not all, departments at their request. Internet connectivity did not arrive until a branch of the World Bank's Virtual University was set up in 1998. This is a restricted service at the moment.

Journal articles can be identified and acquired quickly through these means. The data gathered in 1996 and 1997 revealed a low (but increasing) usage of ICT, especially at UGL. Only in the School of Medicine did staff make regular use of the new technologies. In 1998, it was decided to ask separate questions on the use of ICT in the identification and acquisition of journal articles, so as to provide a more complete picture.

Although usage again increased in 1998 (there was an increase of about 10% between the 1996 and 1998 figures), it was still low especially for African-published journal articles. At UGL, 64% of staff never used ICT for the identification of journal articles and 77% never used ICT for their acquisition. For African-published journals, the figures were

lower 91% in both categories. And the figures from UGL would have been even lower, without the inclusion of staff from the Department of Library and Archival Studies, where all except one used ICT. At UNZA the figures were higher, particularly for staff in Medicine. Only between 20% and 25% did not use ICT; although for African-published journals, the figure rose to between 60% and 65%.

At UGL, CD-ROM was the most popular tool for the identification of journal articles and e-mail for obtaining free copies of desired articles: "I use e-mail to obtain free copies of articles from their authors, if they will oblige"; "I simply send e-mails to friends in America or Europe to send me photocopies of articles desired." The Internet was not much used and often only when outside of Ghana: "I use Internet as and when opportunities arise for travelling overseas." In comparison, at UNZA, where there had been connectivity since 1994, the Internet and the Web were the most used of the electronic media, by between 50% and 55%. Medical staff regularly consulted *MEDLINE*, *PubMed* and *BMJ* in this way. A soil scientist subscribed to *SoilChem*. E-mail was used to acquire articles through subject networks (like ICRAF), through professional bodies (like the Royal College of Psychiatrists) and through personal contacts. Staff would have liked to be able to find more full text services on the Internet. The evidence is that once the Internet becomes available, it is used more than other electronic means for journal access.

At both universities, staff pointed out that ICT was not a great deal of help for identifying and obtaining articles published in African journals. Staff made comments like: "I do not find African journal articles in the CD-ROM services", "it is rare to find an abstract of an African journal article", "no African articles are available on the Internet". One staff member in Medicine said that he now relied on the Internet and, therefore, would only use African-published journals if they were abstracted in *PubMed*. Those who used ICT favoured either a separate indexing service for African-published journals or their inclusion in international databases: "inclusion of African journals on the Internet will make it easier to access information"; "for someone who only uses the Internet, it is important for African journals to be included in international databases."

The reasons given by staff for not using ICT reveal that lack of know-how and lack of easy access remain the key problems. Some staff said that they were not yet computer literate and were not yet familiar with the new technologies. Just having facilities in the Library was not enough. What was wanted was access at departmental level, so that facilities were freely available whenever needed. Library facilities were criticised in that one had to queue to use them, hardware was frequently broken down, CD-ROMs were out of date and e-mail not reliable. Cost was also mentioned as a factor restricting use at UGL; their staff pay for e-mail and Internet services. Those at UNZA who used the

Internet and e-mail said that they used departmental or personal facilities. It was generally agreed that "access must be at office level." The researcher at UNZA confirmed that it was only when e-mail and the Internet became available at office level that it began to be widely used.

Although staff at UGL criticised the monopoly that the library seemed to have on ICT and thought that this limited its use, at the same time, they thought that libraries should have a training and facilitating role. In the past, the few hours that the library had offered on CD-ROM training had not been enough and had not been followed up. In future, librarians need to play much more of an active training role "going round departments to departments to educate the academic staff on how to access information on the facilities that were available". It goes without saying that hardware and software once introduced need to be maintained and updated.

Changes in the use and impact of African-published Journals

In 1997, the data showed an overall increase in journals used and, more significantly, a marked increase in the importance being placed on African-published journals.

The figures for 1998 did not show the same sort of increase. In some cases there were marginal increases, in some cases decreases, and in most cases they remained much the same, whether for journals in general or those published in Africa.

For example, 35% of staff, compared to 18% in 1997, considered African-published journals to be less important than journals in general and, in the libraries, only 12 African-published titles, were used compared to 33 in 1997. At the same time awareness of and use of such journals showed some increase as thirty five per cent of the staff included at least one African title amongst their most consulted journals compared to 23% in 1997 and 16% in 1996.

For most staff, the importance of African journals to their work and their use of them had not changed over the past three years. Where staff indicated that changes had taken place, these had to do with availability and access. The same problems were faced with all journals, but to a higher degree with those published in Africa.

Importance could increase in the future if access improved. Use depended on the ease with which journals could be identified and obtained and many staff found that this was getting harder, not easier. "They are less important, because there is less access"; "Having more African-published journals with African experiences would be beneficial

importance may increase if more are available"; "access is the problem - they are irregularly published, few copies are available and it is difficult to obtain individual copies"; "my research is focused on Africa and I need more information. But African journals are harder to identify and obtain". Some academics recognised the growing importance of the Internet in the identification and acquisition of journals; if African journals did not publish online, then they would be less used.

Recommendations

This study has shown that although useful and wanted, African-published journals will not attain their full impact on teaching and research in African universities unless they become more easily accessible and more readily available. African academics have to know what is being published in their subject areas. What is being published needs to be more regular and of better quality. There is a need for reliable and systematic channels for obtaining the required journals and journal articles. It is with these conclusions in mind that the following recommendations are made, all in the context of maximising journal use in African universities and, in particular, the use of journals published in Africa. In order to make African journals more increasingly available to academics, the recommendations will be made at two levels: African university librarians and African journal publishers.

To African University Librarians

- promote library holdings of African-published journals:
- take out subscriptions and ensure that there is a good balance between foreign and African titles and between those published locally and in other African countries;
- hold exhibitions of African-published journals;
- circulate tables of contents of new issues and offer selective dissemination of journal articles to academic staff;
- encourage the use of journal collections by providing publicly-available holdings lists of journals by title, subject and country of publication and by ensuring ease of access through the immediate display of new issues and the regular and accurate shelving of previous issues.
- promote knowledge of African-published journals:
- train academic staff and students in the tools which identify titles of journals and articles within the journals;
- for students, include such training in orientation programmes;
- for academic staff, offer training on a one-to-one basis.

- advise and assist in the creation of tools for the indexing and abstracting of African-published journals and assist in pressing for their inclusion in international indexing and abstracting databases.
- monitor usage of journals in the library so as to know which are used and which might be discontinued or withdrawn and in what areas further marketing is required.
- recognise that academic staff acquire journals and journal articles from many different sources, not just from the university library, and undertake coordination of these sources within the university so as to ensure maximum access and availability, e.g. by assisting in the organisation of departmental libraries; by including the holdings of departmental libraries in journal holding lists of the main university library.

To African Journal Publishers

- improve journal management and ensure that issues are produced regularly and on schedule so as to engender and retain confidence in the journal.
- improve marketing and promotion by:
 - targeting both institutional (libraries, faculties/schools, departments) and personal subscribers;
 - pressing for inclusion in all relevant current contents, indexing and abstracting tools, local as well as international;
 - following legal deposit regulations, so as to appear in national bibliographies;
 - taking advantage of cooperative marketing ventures, e.g. APEX, book fairs, etc.
- improve production quality (paper, print, design and binding).
- improve content quality by:
 - better editing and copy editing;
 - using peer review;
 - including only well-researched papers;
 - commissioning articles;
 - having an international circulation.
- recognise that journal publication world-wide is moving from print to online and that every journal should aim to have some presence on the Web, even if this is through the online services of a third party.
- recognise that journals which target a niche subject area previously not covered are the ones that are likely to succeed on an all-Africa basis.

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Information Technology Usage by Advertising Agencies in Lagos, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the usage of information technology (IT) by advertising agencies in Lagos, Nigeria. Thirty-four agencies were randomly sampled from a list of 76 registered advertising agencies. Each of these agencies had at least four basic departments. One professional was randomly selected from each of the departments. Questionnaire was administered to the chief executives of the agencies to obtain information on the availability and impact of IT on the agencies, while another type of questionnaire was administered to the selected professionals to obtain information on the use and impact of IT on the individuals. Twenty-one of the chief executives returned the questionnaire while 146 of the selected 166 professionals completed theirs. The results of the study show that all the agencies had computer systems and telephone facilities but a few of them did not have fax machines and about half of them had no e-mail/Internet connections. Computer use varied among the departments within the agencies but other IT resources were used basically for similar functions. IT use has led to increased productivity, customer satisfaction and increased profit level of the agencies, while the professionals have enjoyed significant improvement in their productivity, creativity and quality of output. As a result of this, it is recommended that the advertising agencies in other parts of the country should adopt the use of IT.

Introduction

The aim of advertising is to make information available to the consumers or prospective consumers of a particular product/service in order to facilitate the use or continued use of the product or service. However, advertising is not just concerned with giving

information, it must do so in such an interesting and persuasive manner that the consumer is urged to take action by buying the product, using the service or making enquiries about the advertised product or service. The information made available to consumers is usually presented in form of printed text, graphics, sound, animation or still pictures. This presentation can be enhanced by the use of IT, especially multimedia technology, which allows printed information, dynamic sound, music, graphics, animated photograph and video to be fed into an ordinary computer where they can be cut, changed, shaped, combined, manipulated, enhanced and reconstructed into all kinds of exciting information format (Chen, 1998).

Advertising can also be seen as a communication process between the producer/provider of product/service and the consumers, and the Internet has proven to be a vibrant medium of communication. The Internet is capable of performing more than the role of the traditional advertising media such as television, radio and newspaper. With Internet connectivity, one can do business all over the world without physical contact with the buyer or the need for a business intermediary (Angelides, 1997). This form of business transaction is referred to as electronic commerce.

With the above-mentioned potentials that IT holds for the advertising industry, it is surprising that there are not many studies investigating how well the industry is adopting the technology. It is especially imperative to conduct such studies in developing countries, where the adoption of new technology is often plagued with all kinds of problems (Odedra et.al, 1993). The outcome of such a study would contribute to the development of appropriate policies to facilitate the effective utilisation of IT by the industry.

The main objective of this study was to investigate the level of adoption and usage of IT by the advertising agencies in Nigeria, a developing country. There are over 100 advertising agencies in Nigeria but most of them are located in Lagos, the commercial capital, with some of them having subsidiaries in other parts of the country. Therefore, the focus of the study was the advertising agencies in Lagos and the specific objectives of the study were:

- to determine the various tasks being performed in the advertising agencies.
- to determine how IT is currently being used to implement these tasks.
- to find out the constraints hindering the use of IT.
- to find out the impact of IT on the industry in terms of productivity, quality of output, profit level and other variables.

Methodology

The regulatory body of the advertising industry in Nigeria is the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON). The body is charged with regulating the activities of all arms of the council. The advertising agencies belong to the Association of Advertising Practitioners of Nigeria (AAPN) and 76 of them are registered in Lagos with APCON (APCON, 1995).

One of the criteria for membership of APCON is that an agency must have a minimum of one permanent staff in the following departments: creative, client service, media and accounts.

The tasks performed by these departments are as follows :

- (i) Media - media research, planning and buying, i.e. buying space in different media - radio, television and print ;
- (ii) Client service - liaising with agency's client ;
- (iii) Creative/Studio - production of copies for adverts as well as production of still and animated visuals , illustration, artwork and graphics ;
- (iv) Accounts/Administration - general administration and management of company's funds.

However, some agencies do have other departments such as production, strategic planning, and marketing.

Thirty-four agencies were randomly selected from APCON's list of 76. Within each agency, a professional was randomly selected from each department. Overall, 34 agencies and 166 professionals were selected for the study.

The main instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. Two different types of questionnaires were administered. The first type of questionnaire, which sought information about the availability and impact of IT on the agency, was administered to the head/chief executive of the agencies while the second type, which sought information about the use and impact of IT on individuals within the agency, was administered to the selected employees. The questionnaires were hand-delivered to the respondents and with follow-ups to the agencies in order to collect the completed questionnaires.

The data collection exercise was characterised by transportation and other logistic problems. It was also difficult to locate some of the agencies due to the outdatedness

of the APCON manual as some of them had ceased to exist or changed their addresses.

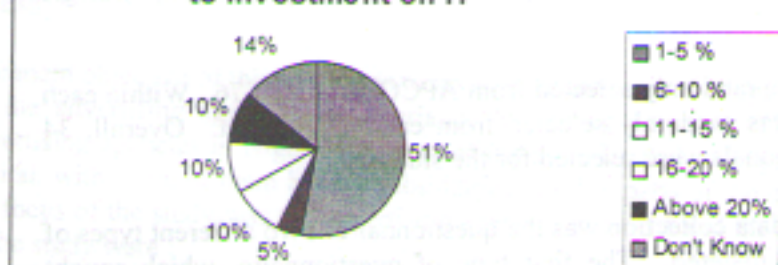
Results and Discussions

Out of the 34 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the chief executives of the agencies, 21 (i.e. 61.9% response rate) were returned while 146 of the professionals (i.e. 88% response rate) completed the questionnaire for professionals.

Investment in IT

Most of the agencies (76%) reported that they invested in IT so as to provide staff with the most efficient working tools. This is in agreement with Sadler (1980), who said that meeting the information needs of the organisation is one of the fundamental purposes of deploying information technology. On the other hand, Fletcher and Wright (1996) wrote that the organisation which is aware of the changing nature of competition and the use of IT by competitors is more likely to gain competitive advantage from IT investment. This applies to a few agencies (24%) which reported that they invested in IT because they wanted to keep up with competition.

Figure 1 : Percentage of Budget Allocated to Investment on IT



The level of investment in IT by the advertising agencies was still very low as reflected in Figure 1 which shows that majority (51%) of the agencies allocated only 1-5% of the total budget to purchase/maintenance of IT, 5% allocated 6-10% while an equal number of the firms (10%) allocated 11-15%, 16-20% and above 20% respectively. This corroborates the findings of Herling and Merskin (1995) who found out that the advertising agencies in the United States of America "are not fully investing in technology that is currently available and many are yet to take advantage of the information revolution that is already here." Some of the criteria being used by the

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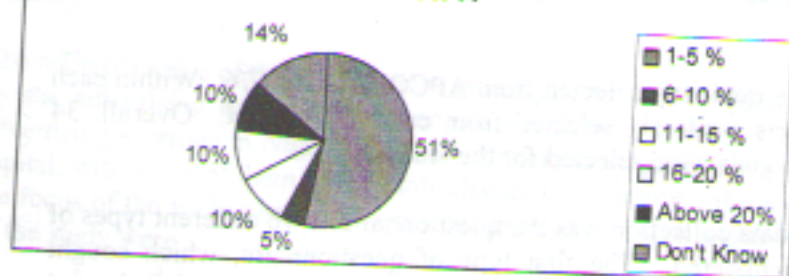
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agencies in determining the level of investment in IT include cash availability, business objectives, probability of achieving benefits, and budgeting criteria.

Implementation of a new technology does not end with the installation of the machinery (Goulet, 1971) and the technological competence of the firm is the sum of the technological competencies of its members (Dussauge et al, 1992). It is thus important for firms to train their members on the use of IT. Majority of the agencies (57.1%) understood the need to train/retrain their staff on IT use. 42.9%, however, reported that they did not sponsor staff for training/retraining on the use of IT. It was also found that a majority (57%) of the agencies did not have personnel solely responsible for information technology. The implication is that whenever they required technical expertise, they had to outsource. This may not be cost-effective and can also lead to loss of control of the agency's IT resources.

Availability and Usage of IT

Table 1 indicates that computer systems and telephone facilities were available in all the agencies but only 71.4% had multimedia computer systems. The multi-media computer system is still a relatively new technology in the country and it is mostly available in agencies that update their IT resources frequently. It is obvious that computer systems and telephone facilities are indispensable tools in the advertising agencies. However, only about 33.3 % of the agencies had computerised all their departments.

Table 1: Available IT Components in the Agencies (N= 21)

IT Components	Number of agencies
Computer system	21(100.0%)
Telephone facility	21(100.0%)
Fax machine	16(76.2%)
E-mail/Internet connections	11(52.4%)

A large number of the agencies (76.2%) had a functioning fax machine, 52.4% had E-mail connection while only 33.3 % had access to the Internet. The agencies that were not linked to the Internet indicated cost of connection to the Internet Service Provider, connectivity problems (such as poor telephone services) and lack of appropriate equipment as the constraining factors.

Table 2: Frequency of Use of IT Components (N = 146)

IT Components	Daily	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Computer system	79 (54.1%)	27 (18.5%)	13 (8.9%)	27 (18.5%)
Telephone facility	131 (89.7%)	8 (5.5%)	1 (0.7%)	-
Fax machine	20 (13.7%)	46 (31.5%)	34 (23.3%)	46 (31.5%)
E-mail connection	11 (7.5%)	12 (8.2%)	30 (20.5%)	93 (63.7%)

About 72.6 % of the professionals indicated that they made use of the computer either daily or occasionally (see Table 2). A further analysis shows that most of them used it for word processing. In addition, those in the accounting department used it for accounting. Those in the creative and production departments used graphics and desktop publishing packages to produce advert copies and artworks while the multimedia facilities were used mainly for presenting ideas/concepts to clients and management and in a few cases for in-house training of personnel. A few in the production department also used it for sound production and animation.

All the professionals indicated that they used the telephone, with about 89.7% using it on a daily basis. A high percentage of those that claimed to use it on a daily basis were found in the media and client service departments where it is necessary to keep in touch with clients and media houses on a regular basis. About 45.2 % reported using the fax machine at least occasionally and majority of those that had access to it were in the administrative department. The fax machine was used mainly for transmitting information, letters, advert copies, artworks and graphics from the agencies to clients and media houses.

Only a very few professionals (36.2%) indicated having ever used the E-mail and this might be due to the fact that only about 53.4 % of the organisations reported having E-mail connection. Even in the case of those having the connection, the usage was restricted to certain individuals while some of the personnel could not even operate it. However, those who used it did so for either communicating with clients and other organisations or communicating with the agency's affiliates/subsidiaries (none of the agencies is a subsidiary of another agency but few have subsidiaries). A very small percentage reported using the E-mail for communicating within the agency and they were those in agencies with local area networks.

In the case of the Internet, very few of the agencies were connected to it and so most of the professionals were not using it. In the few agencies where there was Internet connection, they used it mostly as a source of information on other agencies abroad. None of the agencies was using the Internet to advertise the products or services of its clients. This is due to the fact that almost all the potential and current customers of their clients did not have access to the Internet. So adverts were still basically on traditional media such as television and radio.

Table 3: Constraints Hindering Professionals from Using IT (N=146)

Constraints	Number of Employees
Inadequate knowledge of how to operate the equipment	94 (64.4%)
Constant breakdown of the equipment	32 (21.9%)
Access to equipment is restricted to certain individuals	70 (47.9%)
The equipment is obsolete	3 (2.1%)
Quality of output is low	2 (1.4%)
Too much control over the use of equipment	4 (2.7%)
Other reasons	7 (4.8%)

According to the professionals, the major constraints hindering the usage of IT available in their agencies were inadequate knowledge of how to operate the equipment, constant breakdown of the equipment, and access to equipment which is restricted to certain individuals (see Table 3). It is not surprising that a large percentage of the professionals (64.4%) complained of inadequate knowledge of how to operate the equipment, as it was only about 43% of the agencies that sent staff for training on IT.

Impact of IT on the Agencies

Generally, IT had highly or moderately improved all the performance parameters of the agencies (see Table 4). Specifically, majority (71.4%) claimed that IT had highly improved the profit level of the agency, 57.1% reported that it had had a moderate effect on the number of accounts held, and 95.2% indicated that IT had led to high improvement on the productivity level of the agency. These findings corroborate Miller's (1988) assertion that performance is a product not only of the match between environment and strategy, but also of the use of appropriate IT.

Table 4: Extent of Improvement in Performance Parameters of the Agencies (N = 21)

Parameters	High	Moderate	Low
Profit level	15(71.4%)	6(28.6%)	-
Number of accounts held	9(42.8%)	12(57.1%)	-
Productivity level	20(95.2%)	1(4.8%)	-
Quality of output	18(85.7%)	3 (14.3%)	-
Customer satisfaction	18(85.7%)	2 (9.5%)	1(4.8%)
Quality of decision making	15(71.4%)	6 (28.6%)	

Most respondents (85.7%) noted that the quality of output had been highly improved, as they claimed that their customers were highly satisfied with the quality and timely delivery of jobs since the introduction of IT, and 71.4 % indicated that the use of IT had resulted in high improvement in the quality of decision making. The improvement in the quality of decision-making could be linked to the fact that people communicate faster with IT, and past records, which were often reviewed when making current decisions, were easily accessed with IT.

Impact of IT on the Performance of the Professionals

In the case of the professionals, the use of IT had highly improved their productivity and creativity (see Table 5). Also, 76.7 % of them reported that with IT, output generated was highly accurate. This was reported mostly by those in accounts, media and few in client service that usually made use of the accounting and statistical packages. A majority (72.6%) indicated that the quality of output was highly enhanced with the use of IT while 60.2% reported that IT had enhanced to a high extent their capability for problem solving. The use of IT, especially computers, is known to generally reduce the time taken to implement a task and about 55.4% of the respondents were in agreement with this assertion. However, it should be noted that about 42.5% of the professionals did not answer this question possibly because the question was not clear to them.

Having a good communication system facilitates information transfer. However, the telecommunication system in the country is far from being efficient and this might explain why only about 43% of the professionals indicated that IT had enhanced to a high extent their ability to obtain strategic information. Ability to make informed decisions is also partly dependent on access to timely and accurate information. Hence, it is not surprising that only about 50% of the professionals indicated that the use of IT had enhanced to a high extent their ability to make informed decisions.

Table 5: Extent of Improvement in Job Performance Parameters of the Professionals
(N = 146)

Parameters	High	Moderate	Low	No Response
Productivity level	117(80.1%)	24(16.4%)	-	5(3.4%)
Creativity	85(58.2%)	13(8.9%)	3(2.1%)	45(30.8%)
Accuracy of output	112(76.7%)	15(10.3%)	1(0.7%)	18(12.3%)
Quality of output	106(72.6%)	12(8.2%)	1(0.7%)	27(18.5%)
Capability for problem solving	88(60.2%)	34(23.3%)	3(2.1%)	21(14.4%)
Time taken to implement a task	81(55.4%)	2 (1.4%)	1(0.7%)	62(42.5%)
Ability to obtain strategic information	63(43.2%)	57(39.0%)	7(4.8%)	19(13.0%)
Ability to make informed decisions	73(50.0%)	59(40.4%)	9(6.2%)	5(3.4%)

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study has shown that :

- In most of the agencies, IT resources were available and functioning. In fact, all of them had computers and telephone facilities. While all the agencies had computerised their creative departments (especially the studio) due to the indispensability of the visualiser, at least one of the other departments was yet to be computerised in some agencies.
- Majority of the agencies had fax machines, about half of them had E-mail connections while about a third of the agencies were linked to the Internet. Although the Internet is now widely used as an advertising medium abroad, it has not gained the same level of popularity here. This is due to several inhibiting factors such as high cost of connection to the super highway, inadequate and malfunctioning telecommunication system in the country and low level of awareness of IT among the majority of the populace.
- Most of the agencies invested only a small percentage of their total annual budget on IT. This explains why the majority of the agencies employ information technology personnel to manage their IT equipment and also why some of the agencies did not train their staff on the use of IT.
- The major factors hindering the use of IT by professionals in the agencies included: inadequate knowledge of how to operate the equipment; constant

breakdown of equipment and restricted access to IT equipment to only some individuals.

- In most of the agencies, IT use had led to increase in productivity, profit level and customer satisfaction. The professionals had also enjoyed significant improvement in their productivity, creativity, and quality of output.

In the light of the above, we recommend that :

- The agencies should ensure that all their departments are computerised as soon as possible as the computer is relevant in all aspects of their functions.
- In order to derive maximum benefits from their IT resources, the agencies should make it a policy to train all their professionals on the use of IT.
- Those agencies without IT personnel should employ at least one to maintain their system in order to minimise frequent breakdown and downtime of equipment.
- Advertising agencies in other parts of the country as well as those not surveyed in Lagos should adopt the use of IT as it has been shown that its use has increased the productivity of the professionals and the overall performance of the agencies surveyed.
- Future research should be conducted on the use and impact of IT on the other sectors of the advertising industry as this study has focused only on the general advertising agencies. The other sectors include the cinema advertising agencies and the outdoor advertising agencies.

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Preparing for the Management of Electronic Records at Moi University, Kenya: A Case Study

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Abstract

The study sought to determine the key issues that underpin the management of administrative and personnel records in electronic form at Moi University. The study population consisted of seven records clerks and three senior administrative officers involved with the management of records. Data were collected through the use of personal interviews and questionnaires. The results of the study indicate that all the seven records staff are not conversant with issues affecting the management of electronic records, and two of the three senior administrative officers do not know how electronic records should be managed. One important finding of the study is that the role of the registry and registry staff in an electronic records environment is ultimately changing. There is need therefore to transfer records management skills to records creators in an electronic records environment. To achieve this, the study recommends the establishment of a records management policy to address the management of electronic records, involvement of professional records managers in the ongoing university computerisation projects such as the Academic Register Information System (ARIS), and the provision of records management skills to records staff and other users through seminars and workshops.

Introduction

Effective records management systems provide information that is required for the proper functioning of organisations, including universities. Reid (1995) states that records management is central to the management of universities. A university community consists of students, teaching as well as

administrative staff. For a university to run its affairs in an open, democratic, transparent and accountable manner, it needs to put in place an efficient records management system especially since the rights, privileges and obligations of a university community are dependent upon good record keeping regimes. At the moment, most of the administrative and personnel records at Moi University are in paper form. However, with the growing use of computers and the ongoing computerisation projects at the university, administrative and personnel records in electronic form are already being generated. These are likely to present problems to the existing records management staff at the university in terms of how they should be managed. Wamukoya (1999) points out that the advent of new technologies and their growing adoption and use in organisations is rapidly changing the way organisations work, make decisions, communicate and even document their activities. Consequently, records staff must pay attention to records in electronic format. The management of electronic records is one of the main challenges currently facing records staff not only in universities, but also those of other public and private organisations. This view is supported by Holswich (1999) who points out that electronic records management has brought about new issues that records managers have to contend with. Shepherd (1993) further points out that electronic records are the greatest professional challenge to archivists and records managers in the 1990s. Last but not least, Katuu (1999) observes that electronic records present certain challenges to archivists and, in particular, the appraisal of electronic records.

Moi University, which was established in 1988, is already creating administrative and personnel records in electronic form as a result of the ongoing Moi University MHO project. According to the Moi University draft report on the MHO project (2000), MHO is a Dutch term standing for The Joint Financing Programme for Cooperation in Higher Education. It is managed by the Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC). Its programme objectives are: to develop and strengthen the general functioning of institutions of higher education in developing countries and to remedy quantitative and qualitative manpower deficiencies at the national level. The MHO programme at Moi University started in 1994 with three projects. To date, seven projects have been funded through the programme, namely:

- Strengthening of the School of Environmental Studies.
- Water Resource Engineering (Department of Civil and Structural Engineering).
- Community based health units at the Faculty of Health Sciences.

- Efficient management of central administrative services.
- Strengthening teaching and research at the Faculty of Agriculture.
- Strengthening teaching and research capacity in the Department of Tourism.
- Central administrative services II (Improvement of transport services and University garage).

Two other projects have been added to start from 2001, namely: Centre for Teaching and Learning and The Instrumentation project.

As a result of the MHO project, Moi University has derived certain benefits namely: training of staff, introduction and development of information and communication technology, transfer of knowledge between the partners within the project and the university as a whole, management exposure and project formulation.

The MHO central services project goal is to modernise the university's administrative and academic management systems through the establishment and application of state of the art information technology. This will see the university creating a lot more records in electronic formats than is the case at the moment, a development that will create new challenges of a professional, technical and policy nature for both records managers and administrators in the university.

This study therefore attempts to highlight the issues that records staff and policy makers at Moi University need to address in order to lay a basis for a sound records management system for administrative and personnel records in electronic formats.

Statement of the Problem

With the advent of computers, Moi University is beginning to generate administrative and personnel information in electronic formats. These records are expected from the various faculties, schools, university committees, senate, student welfare, council, planning and establishment committees as well as from staff and personnel departments. As this happens, a number of managerial, professional and technical issues are expected to arise with regard to the management of such records. Professional issues will most certainly impinge on decisions about the creation, storage, access, use, appraisal and disposition. Technical issues will focus on aspects such as selection of hardware and software, maintenance of systems, upgrading,

obsolescence, training, etc. Managerial (policy) issues will highlight the need for an information technology policy, training of staff and resource sharing. These issues call for various forms of sensitisation and awareness training on the part of the existing records management staff and senior administrators at the university so as to make them aware of their changing roles in a changing information environment.

This study attempted to determine how these challenges can be addressed. It examines the key professional, technical and managerial issues which need to be considered in order to establish an effective electronic records management programme for administrative and personnel records at Moi University.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the potential challenges associated with the management of electronic records for administrative and personnel records at Moi University. The specific objectives of the study were:

- (a) to find out the types of electronic records currently being generated and those likely to be generated in the future.
- (b) establish the levels of professional training among records staff.
- (c) establish the extent to which the existing records staff are conversant with ways in which electronic records should be managed.
- (d) determine the managerial (policy) issues that are necessary for an effective electronic records management programme.
- (e) establish the technical challenges associated with the creation and management of electronic records.
- (f) determine the critical success factors necessary for an electronic records programme.
- (g) provide recommendations on how an effective electronic records management programme can be established and sustained.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

Although all divisions of the University will ultimately be computerised, the study focused on the personnel and administrative division only and the measures that are required to be implemented to ensure the effective management of electronic records generated by these units. The study population was limited to only 14 respondents, because records management

being such a specialised subject, the research inquiry was restricted to only respondents who could adequately provide data relevant to the study.

Methodology

The main target population of the study consisted of seven registry clerks and three senior administrative officers (SAO) involved in the management of university administrative and personnel records. The list of registry clerks and senior administrative officers which served as the sampling frame, was obtained from the central registry. Four lecturers from the departments of Archives and Records Management (ARM) and Information and Media Technology (IMT) in the Faculty of Information Sciences (FIS) were interviewed as informants. They were assumed to be conversant with issues pertaining to the management of electronic records as they teach courses in records management. The list of lecturers in these departments was derived from the office of the Dean, FIS. Personal interviews were conducted with lecturers and senior administrative officers while questionnaires were administered on registry clerks.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Data has been analysed and presented under the following subheadings.

Types of Electronic Records Created

When asked if there were any electronic records being created, all the seven registry clerks, pointed out that there were no administrative and personnel records in electronic form which were being created at the moment. Furthermore, they were not conversant with what electronic records were as two out of the three senior administrative officers indicated that no electronic records of administrative and personnel nature were being created. However, the remaining senior administrative officer indicated that the existing MHO project was already generating electronic records as computerisation of the university's personnel as well as student records progressed.

All the four lecturers interviewed indicated that they were conversant with what electronic records were, and were well aware of the management challenges associated with these records. These findings therefore indicate that the existing registry staff were ill-prepared for the management of electronic records.

Levels of Professional Training

All the seven registry clerks indicated that they had no professional training in records management. Thus, they lacked the professional skills required to manage the existing paper based records let alone the competencies to manage electronic records.

Knowledge of Management of Electronic Records

When asked if they were conversant with ways in which electronic records could be managed during their life cycle, all the seven registry clerks (100%) indicated that they were not. Two out of the three SAO indicated that they were not conversant with ways in which electronic records could be managed, while the remaining one indicated that he was conversant with certain aspects of managing electronic records such as storage and security. This was as a result of workshops he had attended as part of the MHO project. All the four lecturers indicated that they had knowledge about how electronic records could be managed. The above figures indicate that level of awareness among registry staff and SAO about how electronic records can be managed was poor. Lecturers were knowledgeable about how to manage electronic records as they were involved in teaching courses in records management. Furthermore, they had access to the most up to date literature in records management. They can be used as resource persons should the University decide to conduct training sessions for SAO and registry staff on electronic records.

Accessing Electronic Records

All the seven registry clerks indicated that they did not know how electronic records could be accessed while all the four lecturers indicated that they were conversant with ways of accessing electronic records. Some of the methods that could be used to access data in personal computers or in a centralised database are the use of record name by formulating a search strategy or use of a keyword.

Data Protection and Security Measures for Electronic Records

All the seven registry clerks indicated that they were not conversant with what ways to protect electronic records from loss while the four lecturers indicated

that they were conversant with how this could be done, although their proposals differed. One out of the four lecturers recommended the use of back-up copies (diskettes) and hard copies to be stored elsewhere. Two others recommended the use of antivirus software and the security of the rooms where computers are kept, while one recommended the use of passwords as a way of securing data against unauthorised access and security measures for hardware to prevent unauthorised interference with data. Electronic records are particularly vulnerable to manipulation and corruption. Once an administrative and personnel records database is created and networked, such security measures will be necessary to ensure that only authorised people have access to the records.

Appraisal and Disposition of Electronic Records

All the seven registry clerks indicated that they were not conversant with the records management concepts of appraisal and disposition. This derives from the fact that they had not received any basic training in records management. Furthermore, they did not know how these concepts could be applied to electronic records. One out of the four lecturers indicated that he lacked knowledge about how appraisal decisions could be applied to electronic records while the other three indicated knowledge about the application of appraisal decisions on electronic records although their views varied. One of the three SAO indicated that appraisal decisions had to involve the creators of records and that appraisal decisions should be made at the point of records creation. The other two recommended that decisions should be made early enough regarding the necessity to create certain records and for how long; retention and disposition schedules should be used to determine appraisal and disposition actions to be taken on electronic records based on records functionality and there is need to determine the standards that an archival version of an electronic record should meet. They further pointed out that there was need to transfer records management skills to creators of electronic information if they were to be able to effect decisions regarding appraisal and disposition. All the four lecturers indicated that disposition action could be effected through the delete key function.

Preservation Practices for Electronic Records

When asked if they knew how electronic records could be preserved, all the records clerks indicated that they did not know, while three out of the four lecturers indicated that they were conversant with how it could be done. They

further noted that electronic records could be destroyed through poor preservation practices if the medium in which they were recorded was fragile. Two out of the three senior administrative officers proposed the need to keep computer diskettes in the right environmental conditions whereas one recommended a continuing migration programme for electronic records.

The Effect of Electronic Records Environment on the Role of Registry Staff

In answer to the question whether an electronic records environment could affect their records management roles, two out of the seven record clerks indicated that this could lead to a reduced workload, some clerical work could be phased out and there was a possibility of being declared redundant. The rest of the clerks indicated that their roles were likely to change but did not know how.

One out of the three SAO indicated that he did not know how the role of registry and records staff could change in an electronic records environment while the other two indicated that the roles of registry staff and the registry in general could change because the information seeking behaviour among senior administrative officers could radically change in an electronic records environment. Furthermore, the calibre of records staff in terms of qualifications was likely to be higher than the existing records staff. One out of the three SAO pointed out that some of the existing records staff lacked the appropriate qualifications to enable them go for further training.

All the four lecturers indicated that the role of records staff and the registry was likely to change in an electronic records environment. One felt that registry clerks needed to acquire IT skills if they were to be relevant. Furthermore, they were likely to play more of an advisory role with creators of records. Another felt that some of the registry staff were likely to be declared redundant. The remaining two stated that the role of records clerks was likely to change and there was need for them to change their attitude, besides acquiring IT and records management skills. These results show that there is a need for registry staff to work closely with creators of records who must also acquire basic skills in records management and in particular, electronic records management. Some of the registry duties such as filing are likely to be phased out and these functions taken over by records creators. The study found that the existing registry staff lack the requisite skills and

training which are essential in managing both paper and electronic records efficiently and effectively.

Policy Issues that Underpin the Management of Electronic Records

All the four lecturers were aware of the policy issues that affect the management of electronic records, though their proposals differed. Two of the lecturers stated that there was need to raise awareness about issues relating to the management of electronic records, such as planning for the acquisition and implementation of automated information systems, training of records staff and users and the preparation of a plan of action to focus on electronic records. The other two felt that it was necessary to develop a university policy on records management regardless of whether such a policy was for paper or electronic records. The policy could contain procedures pertaining to the creation, use, security, appraisal, disposition and preservation of electronic records. Secondly, it was important to decide on the categories of administrative and personnel records to be computerised and provide financial resources for training of staff and users. Thirdly, a decision as to whether to have both paper and electronic systems had to be made. Two out of the three SAO specified that they were aware of policy issues that could affect the management of electronic records while the other was not aware. The policy issues mentioned relate to electronic records policy guidelines, availability of financial resources, training of records staff and users, and awareness-raising among university management regarding the challenges associated with the management of electronic records.

Technical Issues that Affect the Management of Electronic Records

All the four lecturers were aware of technical issues that could affect the management of electronic records, though their views were not similar. Two of them highlighted the following technical issues: unauthorised access to electronic records, hardware and software dependency, hardware and software failure, availability of up to date hardware and software, and inadequate IT skills among users and records staff. Technical issues mentioned by the other two included: conversion of records from one medium to another, obsolescence of technology, i.e. hardware and software, and machine dependency, i.e. electronic records could only be accessed with the aid of a machine, i.e. computer.

Preparing Records Staff and Users for an Electronic Records Environment

Two out of the three SAOs indicated that there was need to train both the registry clerks and other users. This could be done under the current MHO project which has a training component that focuses on records management. The other one felt that some of the existing records clerks did not possess the necessary qualifications, a factor which rendered them untrainable. All the four lecturers proposed the need to train both users and records staff. Such training, especially for SAOs could take the form of seminars, workshops, attachments and practical sessions. With regard to registry staff, formal training could be provided leading to formal qualifications in records management. They further proposed the use of resource persons who were already available in the Faculty of Information Sciences.

Problems of Registry Staff in Managing Electronic Records

All the seven registry staff cited lack of IT skills and professional education and training in records management as problems which affected them. All the four lecturers cited the following as major problems: the poorly structured paper systems for administrative and personnel records, the lack of adequate records management skills among registry staff, and the absence of a records management policy within the university to address issues relating to the management of both paper and electronic records. All the three SAOs interviewed indicated that the existing registry staff were likely to be affected by a number of factors namely: the lack of training in records management and the lack of IT skills which were vital in an electronic records environment. Registry staff therefore saw the advent of computers as a threat to their jobs.

The above results indicate that a possession of IT skills is crucial for records staff in an electronic records environment. Furthermore, records personnel need to be conversant with records management practices and techniques which they must strive to impart to creators of records in an electronic environment.

Critical Success Factors

When they were asked what they considered to be the critical success factors for an electronic records management programme, one out of the three SAO suggested the availability of hardware and software while the other two recommended the following: high commitment by the University management, embracing a records management culture at the university, provision of financial resources and the provision of training and retraining of records staff and users.

Two of the four lecturers felt that financial support and training for both records staff and users were critical success factors, while the remaining two felt that there was need to recruit records staff who already had formal training in records management. They further recommended the acquisition of up to date hardware and software, development of an IT policy to cover information systems management and maintenance, and the need to raise the profile of records management and records managers within the University by recruiting professional records staff in records and archives management. There was also the need for a clearly defined career path to assure their professional development.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The existing records staff are not prepared for an electronic records environment as they lack records management and IT skills. All records staff indicated that they had no formal training in records management and had no idea as to how electronic records could be managed. The role of the registry and registry staff is likely to change in an electronic records environment as information seeking patterns will change among users. This was corroborated by all the lecturers as well as all the SAO and the records staff. The changes could range from reduced workloads to being declared redundant. Finally, the success of an electronic records management programme is dependent upon certain key factors such as adequate training of records staff and users, availability of adequate financial resources and commitment by the university management to establish a records management programme within the University. Based on these findings, this study makes the following recommendations.

Enacting a Records Management Policy

There is a need for the University to enact a records management policy to cover both paper and electronic records. Such a policy, which is lacking at the moment, will address the existing problems inherent in the management of administrative and personnel records before their computerisation. It will also address some of the management aspects of electronic records such as creation, maintenance, access and use, security, appraisal, preservation and disposition.

Involving Professional Records Managers in University Records Computerisation Projects

There is need to involve professional records managers in the ongoing MHO project whose aim is to computerise university records including administrative and personnel records. While IT specialists provide the technical support, nevertheless they lack records management skills. Professional records managers will provide important information on records management functionality and practices.

Providing Education and Training to Records Staff and other Users

There is a need to provide training for the existing records staff to prepare them for an electronic records environment. It is evident that the existing records staff do not have records management skills to manage the existing paper systems which will be the basis for computerised record systems. The training will focus on acquisition of records management and IT skills. Such training can be conducted through in-house workshops and seminars or through formal training in records management schools locally or abroad.

Providing Records Management Skills to Creators of Electronic Records

In an electronic records environment, creators of electronic records will be required to possess records management skills. Such skills will enable them to make records management decisions such as those relating to appraisal and disposition, records security and preservation. Such training can be conducted through in-house seminars and workshops, attachments and short visits.

Changing the University Recruitment Policy on Records Staff

In order to foster an electronic records environment, all new records staff to be recruited should possess relevant qualifications in records management and information technology. A number of local training institutions such as the Kenya Polytechnic are now offering certificate and diploma qualifications in records management. Furthermore, professional records managers at graduate level should also be recruited to be in charge of records management services. It is ironical that while the Faculty of Information Sciences trains records managers, not even a single graduate has been recruited by the University. Records management services within the university can only be run efficiently and effectively if professionally trained records managers are recruited.

Provision of Adequate Financial Resources

Electronic records are hardware and software dependent. There will be a need for the provision of adequate financial resources to upgrade the systems, migrate electronic records and train staff and users. Since information technology is dynamic, the University management will need to provide adequate financial resources to cater for the needs identified above.

Organising Seminars and Workshops to Sensitise the University Community on Issues Relating to Electronic Records Management

Management of electronic records is a relatively new subject area in the records management profession. Many institutions such as Moi University are still struggling to organise and manage their paper systems. Therefore, not much concern is being raised on how records in electronic form should be managed. There is need for the University to organise records management seminars and workshops to sensitise records staff, administrators and other possible creators of electronic information on how these records could be managed and the challenges they must address in order to effectively manage electronic records.

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Staff Retention in the National Archives of Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Using the National Archives of Zimbabwe as a case study, this paper examines the concept of staff retention and makes recommendations that could be used with certain adjustments in similar institutions. The staff retention situation is examined within the human resources management framework, and ways on how to retain staff in an information management environment are suggested.

Introduction

This study recognises that there are other major players in the information management field in Africa in general, and Zimbabwe in particular, other than the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ). It is recognised that the librarians are in a much better position than the archivists who are still struggling to strengthen themselves in numerical terms. Orléans (1985) observed that in Africa there are two archivists for every six librarians. The situation is compounded by the fact that most countries in Africa lack archive schools and lack the funding to send staff for archival training elsewhere (Johnstone, 1997). Therefore, for these reasons, there is a greater need to seriously address the issues related to human resources management in archival institutions.

Human resources management involves five tasks, viz. recruitment and replacement; training and development; organisation and control; minimising or eliminating conflicts; and retaining of staff in an organisation (Chimutengwende, 1985). Many studies on the management of information institutions (International Council on Archives, 1988; Mnjama, 1996) and workshops (Hüttemann, 1991; Kukubo and Seabo, 1992; Johnstone, 1997; International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA, 1999) seem to have focused on training and development at the expense of the other human resources

management tasks. While the "major approach to human resource development in Africa is training" (Ojiambo, 1992)

Staff retention remains a serious problem militating against effective exploitation of human resources.

Due to time and resource constraints, this study adopted a case study approach. Lawler et al (1985) have argued that simple case studies are helpful in developing and refining generalisable concepts and frames of reference. The National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) is a typical representative of the larger category of information management institutions in Zimbabwe. This study, therefore, could be generalised to other institutions and used as a basis in formulating guidelines on human resources management.

An overview of the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ)

The National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) was established in 1935 by an Act of Parliament. It is a government department under the Ministry of Home Affairs. NAZ is composed of four professional sections, namely: public archives and research, records management, library and technical services. The mission of the institution is to acquire, preserve and provide access to documentation (in whatever format) which comprises a legal and historical record of Zimbabwe's past and present, in a cost-effective manner (National Archives of Zimbabwe 1998). This mission is achieved through:

- the promotion of a records management service for the government, local authorities and parastatal bodies;
- the care and custody of archives of the government, municipalities, institutions and private persons; and the necessary arrangement of such archives for the easier dissemination of knowledge to the users;
- the maintenance of a Research Library of Zimbabwe by which all publications regarding Zimbabwe wherever printed and published are preserved;
- the administration of the Printed Publications Act in the implementation of the legal deposit legislation; the collection and preservation of oral traditions and reminiscences.

For NAZ to achieve these objectives, it has to attract and retain trained and professional staff. People are the key to the effective functioning of any institution. In order to join NAZ at a professional level, a good first degree in the humanities is a prerequisite. The employer is the Public Service Commission of Zimbabwe. In line with the Public Service

Commission requirements, archivists on appointment are given in-house training at the NAZ before they can be advanced. The entry point for all archivists is Archivist II. Subject to good performance and having spent two years in the grade of Archivist II, in the case of an archivist without a post-graduate qualification, and one year for holders of postgraduate qualifications, an individual can be advanced to Archivist I grade.

The conditions of advancement to Archivist I also apply when one is being advanced from Archivist I to Senior Archivist II, then Senior Archivist I and finally Principal Archivist. It is mandatory for one to go through all these grades during the advancement process. Therefore, if one is a good performer it takes a minimum of five to ten years, depending on qualifications, for one to advance from Archivist II to Principal Archivist.

From principal archivist grade promotion and advancement is to chief archivist, then to deputy director and finally Director subject to the availability of posts in the establishment. These are senior managerial posts. In order to be eligible for promotion and advancement to these three grades, a principal archivist must have undergone professional training and obtained a relevant post-graduate qualification.

Professional training has been undertaken in countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, Canada and the United States of America. The periods of postgraduate training vary between one and two years depending on the institution. After completing the training one is bonded to the Public Service Commission for a period equal to one and a half times the duration of training abroad. Out of 28 professional staff sent for training between 1980 and 1999, only five are still with NAZ (Ngulube, 1999). This represents an 85% resignation rate.

Based on the Annual Reports of the Director of NAZ (National Archives of Zimbabwe 1980 - 1999) the resignation rate is summarised in the frequency distribution table 1.

Table 1.: Frequency Distribution of Resigned Employees by Duration, Sex and Service years

Years served	1-5yrs	6-10yrs	11-15yrs	16-20yrs	21-25yrs
Male	12	0	1	0	1
Female	7	1	0	0	0
Total	19	1	1	0	1
Percentage	86.4%	4.5%	4.5%	0	4.5%

Of the 86.4% of the resignations during the period of one to five years, 44% of them were within one year after completing further training. This means that the resignations were even before their completion of the bonding period despite the legal implications involved. Even if they paid back the money they would have used during their training, this has the net effect of wasting training resources which are, in any case, very difficult to come by.

Up until now, professional training has depended on the goodwill of the donor community. The Government had never set aside any funds for this kind of training. Recently, donor funding has become increasingly scarce. With the apparent donor fatigue the questions that arise are: Where is NAZ going to get funds to continue training people who, in any case, do not stay with the organisation for a significant amount of time? How does NAZ retain those few trained professionals still remaining on its establishment? How is NAZ going to guarantee staff retention even if it secures more funding for training?

The hypothesis advanced is that unsatisfactory working conditions and lack of job satisfaction has greatly contributed to the National Archives of Zimbabwe's failure to retain professionally trained staff. Consequently, a high staff turnover is plaguing the National Archives. Year after year, the annual reports of the Director of the National Archives lament over the massive resignations. In 1987 the problem was highlighted as follows:

Although new programs have been initiated and services expanded, the progress has been impeded by constant resignations and the repeated inductions of new recruits (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1987).

However, the problems of the brain drain and a high staff turnover are not peculiar to Zimbabwe. The National Archives of Kenya (Githaka, 1996) and the National Archives of Zambia (Mutiti and Kwamwana, 1990) have perennial problems of retaining trained staff. The problem of staff retention is still prevalent in East and Southern Africa. In their country reports at the Executive Board meeting of the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA), most directors of archival institutions in East and Southern Africa highlighted the problems caused by a high staff turnover at their institutions (ESARBICA, 1999). A great deal of manpower has been trained in the subregion over the years but, regrettably, this manpower has by and large been lost.

The thinking is that a high staff turnover is symptomatic of poor motivation and lack of job satisfaction. A high staff turnover can be detrimental to progress (Githaka, 1996). It is

expensive in terms of finance, time and staff morale. It involves economic costs such as severance pay; advertising for new personnel; recruiting; orientation and training; downtime for equipment; and lost output and low productivity until the new person gains the knowledge and skills of the previous incumbent.

In order to appreciate the extent to which job satisfaction can lead to reduced turnover of staff and increased loyalty to the organisation, a discussion of some motivation theories and their application to human resources management is in order.

Human Resources Management and the Motivation of Staff

Human resources management decisions should be based on some knowledge of motivation theories and their application to provide job satisfaction. Behavioural scientists like Frederick Herzberg (1966) and Abraham Maslow (1970) contributed a lot to the development of motivation theories. While motivation theories are neither a panacea nor a universal cure of all human resources management problems, they seem to give a framework for making human resources decisions. Maslow (1970) suggested that although it is difficult, if not impossible, to analyse individual needs, it is possible to develop a hierarchical picture of needs which can be split into five broad categories, viz. the physiological needs; the safety needs; the social needs; the needs for self esteem; and the need for fulfilling one's potential, that is, self-actualisation.

Once physical, safety and social needs are satisfied, the employee wants to be recognised as a performer and to be accorded prestige for what he is doing. In other words, if these conditions are fulfilled the individual becomes satisfied with the job and becomes motivated to do it and, perhaps, stay in the same job for a significant amount of time. On the other hand, Herzberg (1966) developed the motivation hygiene theory to explain behaviour in the work situation. Accordingly, hygiene factors of money, organisational policy, status, security, fringe benefits and human relations can positively lead to staff motivation. Hygiene factors should be complemented by job enrichment as it can result in significant increases in staff motivation, performance and satisfaction.

Motivating the staff depends on management knowing what the employees need from their work. Over and above the basic needs and the hygiene factors, the job itself must offer opportunities for achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement and growth.

To further place this study in a context related to existing research and theory relating to human resources management in the information field, the following section focuses on the literature review. Literature review recognises that every theory is related to at least one other theory through sharing concepts or propositions (Kuhn, 1962).

Literature Review

Building upon previous studies, this section is going to focus on the importance of human resources management and demonstrate that it is a neglected factor in the management of information institutions in Africa. Competent and qualified staff are the basis for the establishment of an effective and efficient information service. The human factor is the backbone of a successful information system. In recognition of the importance of human resources management in socio-economic development, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Conference of Ministers responsible for human resources planning, development and utilisation (ECA, 1984) emphasised the need to retain trained staff in all sectors of the economy in order to achieve sustainable development.

The ability to retain and motivate trained staff depends on the application of human resources management skills. However, human resources management skills are lacking among library and information personnel in Africa (Hüttemann 1991; Ojiambo 1992). Human resources development and utilisation is a neglected factor in many African countries (Inganji, 1995). A workshop of experienced people from institutions in Africa dealing with the management of information and documentation centres held in Harare in December 1990 observed that some institutions have failed to retain trained staff due to unsatisfactory working conditions (Inganji, 1995). Participants at the workshop concluded that the neglect of human resources management principles have reduced the effectiveness of information institutions. They also lamented over the paucity of human resources management literature in the profession. This study seeks to contribute towards bridging this gap which was identified in the library and information field literature.

Methodology

Since the population under study is small the census approach was used. The population comprised of the 22 people who resigned after receiving professional training between 1980 and 1999. Had one of the staff members not been deceased, the total number would have been 23. A thirty-item questionnaire designed to get information on the reasons why professionally trained personnel left NAZ prematurely was distributed through the postal mail to a total of 22 staff members that left NAZ between 1980 and 1999 through resignations. Interviews were also carried out with four members of staff still employed at NAZ. Statistical techniques were used to code, tabulate and analyse the data.

The support staff and the professionals who resigned before undergoing formal professional training were not considered in this paper. The study was limited to professional staff who resigned after undergoing further training. By and large, this

category of staff is critical to the fulfilment of the National Archives of Zimbabwe's mission.

Analysis of Results

Out of the 22 copies of the questionnaire sent 19 (86%) responses were received. Structured interviews were conducted with four of the employees still at NAZ. The survey questionnaire asked the respondents about their attitude towards the number of attributes listed in table 2. According to table 2, two to four of the respondents indicated that the job attributes listed are somewhat important. The same attributes are very important to between 15(79%) and 19 (100%) of the respondents. In addition to measuring the number of frequencies for each attribute, the Likert type scale was applied to rate the respondents' attitudes towards each attribute. The Likert type scale is commonly used for measuring attitudes. Score number one represented the least degree of importance and number five represented the maximum degree of importance. The score of 1 was awarded for the response of *not at all important*; 2 for *somewhat unimportant*; 3 for *neither important nor unimportant*; 4 for *somewhat important* and 5 for *very important*. The raw scores were computed as presented in table 3.

Table 2: Respondents' Perception to Attributes of a job.

Attribute	Number of respondents	
	Somewhat important	Very important
1. Good remuneration	2	17
2. Good office furniture	0	19
3. Provision of accommodation and transport	0	19
4. The need to be appreciated for work done	0	19
5. Interesting and varied job	4	15
6. Opportunity to be creative	0	19
7. A degree of independence	0	19
8. Being given responsibility	4	15
9. Application of new skills	0	19
10. Chances of promotion and growth	0	19
11. Recognition by society	0	19

Table 3: Perception of the Respondents towards the importance they attach to the Attributes of a Job.

Attribute	S C O R E				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Good remuneration	-	-	-	8	85
2. Good office furniture	-	-	-	-	95
3. Provision of accommodation and transport	-	-	-	-	95
4. The need to be appreciated for work done	-	-	-	-	95
5. Interesting and varied job	-	-	-	16	75
6. Opportunity to be creative	-	-	-	-	95
7. A degree of independence	-	-	-	-	95
8. Being given responsibility	-	-	-	16	75
9. Application of new skills	-	-	-	-	95
10. Chances of promotion and growth	-	-	-	-	95
11. Recognition by society	-	-	-	-	95

With a total of 19 respondents the following score values should reveal their attitude levels: (1) $19 \times 5 = 95$ very important; (2) $19 \times 3 = 57$ neither important nor unimportant and (3) $19 \times 1 = 19$ not at all important. This means the cumulative score for any attribute would fall between 19 and 95. If the score happens to be above 57 it shows that the attribute is important and a score of below 57 shows that it is not at all important while a score of exactly 57 would be suggestive of a neutral attitude.

The highest computed score for each attribute in table 3 is more than 57, suggesting that all the attributes are important to the respondents. Attributes 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 have a score of 95 showing that they are very important to all the respondents. Despite the fact that the respondents considered them as very important, subsequent questions revealed that all these attributes were missing in the various jobs that they held at NAZ. This led to job dissatisfaction which in turn led to constant resignations.

Based on the survey results, the reasons why the respondents left NAZ are summarised in table 4.

Table 4: Reasons for Leaving the National Archives of Zimbabwe

Reasons for Leaving NAZ	Number of Respondents	
	Frequency	Percentage
1 responsibilities and salary not positively adjusted after training	18	95%
2. attracted by better salaries and congenial working conditions	17	89%
3. frustration arising from failing to put into practice newly acquired skills and knowledge	17	89%
4. Lack of a clearly defined career path	12	63%

Most of the respondents (89%) left NAZ because they were attracted by better salaries and congenial working conditions. In other words, they wanted to fulfil the basic needs implied in Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs; and to get Herzberg's (1966) hygiene factors. Poor salaries can be partly explained by the government's tight fiscal policies.

As a result of these policies, salaries offered by NAZ are far much below those offered by the private sector in Zimbabwe which also desperately needs information specialists. Consequently, NAZ has become the training ground for the private sector. All the respondents said that for as long as prospects are better elsewhere, NAZ will continue to lose trained staff and only those who cannot make it elsewhere will be the ones that will remain.

A large number (63%) resigned because of lack of a clearly defined career path at NAZ. Chances of promotion and personal growth were not considered when people were being sent for training. To 18 of the respondents, responsibilities and salaries did not change significantly after training.

Some respondents (89%) expressed that there was need to give a chance to newly trained people to put into practice what they would have learnt, as there was too little room at

NAZ for exercising subject knowledge and professional skills acquired during postgraduate training. This avenue led to many frustrations resulting in their leaving the organisation.

Furthermore, all the respondents expressed that feedback from attendance at conferences should not only end with report writing. Rather, the staff member concerned should be given a chance to suggest areas where the newly acquired ideas and skills can be applied.

The survey results also revealed that (95%) of the respondents joined the private sector in Zimbabwe after resigning from the National Archives of Zimbabwe. Only one (5%) left the country for greener pastures in a neighbouring country. From the interviews, it became apparent that out of the 28 archivists who resigned only one of them went to a neighbouring country immediately after leaving NAZ. Three of the respondents later went to neighbouring countries after first working in the private sector in Zimbabwe.

According to 79% of the respondents, the guarantee of going overseas after two years of working at NAZ motivated them to join NAZ. For all of them, the NAZ was not their first place of employment after graduating from college. As a matter of policy, going for further training was guaranteed after two years of service at NAZ. This was the only criterion used for sending people for postgraduate training. The first come first served approach was the norm. It seems obvious that people who joined and got trained this way did not have any commitment to NAZ and they left at their earliest opportunity after getting trained.

Most of the respondents (89%) were motivated by pay and they believed that they were being paid less than they thought they deserved so they looked for other jobs. The other significant factors to two (11%) of the respondents are job title, recognition and responsibility. Quoting from the American writer Studs Terkel's book, *Working*, one of the two respondents said, work,

is about a search for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as for cash, for astonishment rather than torpor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying.

The sentiments expressed in this quotation underpin the relevance to the working environment of the motivation theories advanced by Maslow (1970) and Herzberg (1966). It is evident that people are not only motivated by pay. Monetary rewards should be matched with other factors which are intrinsically linked to the job. Based on the results of the findings, the following general conclusions and recommendations can be made.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The analysis of findings show that NAZ is failing to retain its professionally trained staff because it is failing to provide motivators such as high pay and good working conditions. As long as these problems that cause staff to go to greener pastures are not addressed, NAZ is going to continue to face the problems of massive resignations.

These problems should be addressed in the context of known and tested human resources management theories. The theories of Maslow (1970) and Herzberg (1966) seem to provide a reasonable framework. The work environment at NAZ should be planned so as to allow the fulfilment of basic human needs and hygiene factors as depicted by Maslow (1970) and Herzberg (1966) respectively. A salary that is commensurate with the job and qualifications of the incumbent is the basis of creating such a work environment. Staff should be rewarded according to their qualifications and contribution to national development rather than according to a salary scale that is arbitrarily arrived at by the Public Service Commission without any consultation with all the stakeholders.

After addressing the question of pay there is a need to look at the job itself. The job holders should be made to feel that their job is important. This can be achieved by, for example, providing them with decent accommodation in suburbs that are consistent with their positions; providing spacious and beautiful offices; giving the officers prestigious titles; and providing them with transport.

While most of the staff at NAZ work in cramped offices, other people of the same grade in the civil service enjoy the comforts of spacious, well-furnished and air-conditioned offices. This imbalance can be addressed easily by the management of NAZ as expenditure on office furniture and equipment can be provided for in the annual budget. It should be appreciated that an individual spends the most part of the day in the office, so issues associated with ergonomics at the workplace should be seriously viewed.

Staff performance and appraisal should be used as the basis for identifying training and development needs. Training should not be done in an *ad hoc* manner, as is the case now. Rather, it should be appropriate to the individual staff member's position and the needs of NAZ. There should be a more imaginative training policy that balances the needs of the organisation and the capabilities of the individual. Such a policy should strive to achieve a good organisational "fit" for the prospective trainee. This will ensure that after training the individual will be able to apply his knowledge and skills. This will greatly reduce the level of frustration that is presently being experienced by trained members of staff.

It is also important to grant salary increments and increase the level of responsibility of the individual after attaining further qualifications. Other than serving as an incentive, it also shows the importance that the Department attaches to the relevant postgraduate training.

Furthermore, the management should utilise exit interviews to determine sources of dissatisfaction. The exit interview would offer a valuable opportunity to gain information about NAZ and the management from the employee's point of view. At this point, when the employee is leaving, the employee may at last feel free to discuss matters which may have either been of concern or sources of grievances to himself and others.

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Management of Public Sector Financial Records in Ghana: Implications for Good Government

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Abstract

The paper examines the relationship between public sector recorded financial information and good government. The paper argues that public finance is a major instrument of constitutional, political and administrative control and that it provides the basis for decision making and the implementation of programmes. When effectively managed, recorded financial information provides a key resource for securing the evidence base of public financial management. The relationship between good government and effective management of public financial records is illustrated with a study of the budgetary processes of Ghana and how inadequate management of the records has been hindering public accountability.

Introduction

Over the past few years, there has been a radical transformation in the role of government and in the philosophy associated with it. Few governments have remained untouched by the wave of reform that has swept through the public sector since the 1980s. The necessity for public sector reform in most countries of the developing world is the critical need for increased economic growth as basis for sustainable human development and as a means of improving governance. The reform aims at creating institutions that are flexible and adaptable and a state machinery which is efficient and accountable.

In tandem with reform initiatives is the concept of good government. Good government has come to represent a rethinking of development management strategies. The accumulated negative experiences of bilateral agencies in Africa, economic distortions and administrative controls have led to the view that good government is the essential institutional environment necessary to eliminate obstacles to effective systems for

guidance and decision making at the centre, accountability and transparency, a supportive legal environment and effective and efficient systems for the management of human, natural and financial resources (World Bank, 1996).

Experiences within the last quarter century suggest that many of the serious obstacles to successful implementation of programmes of development management are non-economic in nature. Against this background, the objective of this paper is to demonstrate that good government and its dimensions are fundamental to development performance and should occupy centre stage in development thinking. In particular, the management of recorded information, which is the cornerstone of any government's ability to formulate and evaluate policy, preserve the rule of law, provide services to its citizens and safeguard their rights as individuals has been largely ignored. Furthermore, this paper demonstrates the critical importance of managing financial records, paper and electronic, by defining its relationship with accountability and good government. This paper argues that it is essential to reinforce the advantages of paper-based financial records, even as computerised systems are introduced. Paper records are a critical source of verifiable evidence, which is essential to accountability and transparency.

Good Government

In a study intended to provide a long-term perspective, the World Bank noted that: "Underlying the litany of Africa's development problems is a crisis of governance" (World Bank, 1989). The study linked good government to leadership, authority, legitimacy, official accountability, the control of information and the failure to observe the rule of law. It has held the view that the political environment has been the fundamental barrier to effective policy responses. The building blocks of good government include accountability, legitimacy, political pluralism and participation, transparency and the rule of law. The two dimensions of good government are the political commitment to development management, and the technical efficiency of public sector management. Thus, the failure of accountability can lead to the loss of legitimacy which is the bedrock of good government, accountability and the rule of law.

As a key component of good government, accountability reflects a close correlation between stated intentions or goals, and the actions and services rendered to the public. It should also reflect the efficient and effective use of public resources. The absence of accountability results in the misuse of resources, which leads to incompetence and corruption. When competence underpins legitimacy and accountability, a favourable institutional environment for development and growth is created. An emphasis on accountability and transparency alone cannot in itself control corruption. However,

provided that there is reliable information, transparency can expose or reduce corruption. Transparent systems provide the means for public policy and its implementation.

Efficient and effective management of information is essential to improving economic efficiency and for creating transparency as a means of preventing corruption. The absence of information leads to closed decision making, which increases the risk of government error and the negative reactions from the public. If decisions on the economy are made without adequate information and in isolation from the private sector, the likelihood of costly mistakes increases. Thus, if the objectives of good government are to be achieved, government information management systems must be strengthened in tandem with reform of public sector management.

Public Financial Management

Public finance is the lifeblood of any state, developed and developing. While it must raise public funds, government must also have an effective and efficient institutional mechanism for controlling and administering those funds and in translating government policy into effective action. Public financial management is thus one of the most fundamental responsibilities of governments. In an era of economic policy reform, it has become that critical element determining the overall ability of the government to manage the economy (Asselin, 1995). This study aims to explore how public financial records are managed in Ghana.

Management of Financial Records in Ghana

The institutions which play a significant role in planning, coordinating and controlling public finance are the Ministry of Finance, the Accountant General's Department, the Auditor General's Department and the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC). They form the core of the financial mechanism and all other public agencies and sectors of the national economy have a financial relationship with them. The Ministry of Finance and the Controller and Accountant General's Department (CAGD) are responsible for the operational side of financial matters and are described as executive agencies. The Auditor General's Department has traditionally been associated with accountability and efficiency, reviewing and commenting on the financial activities of government. NDPC co-ordinates district and sector development plans which form the basis of the national development policy proposals.

Arrangements for managing public finance in countries under the Commonwealth were traditionally associated with the Treasury. The work of this institution falls into two broad categories. The first is summed up as policy, deciding what financial resources are

necessary and how to distribute the resources. This responsibility brings the Treasury into close contact with the political sphere. The second is the physical handling of the funds, regulating their receipt and disbursement. Physical handling of funds involves accounting and accounting provides the institutional memory of past financial transactions.

In Ghana, the Treasury function is divided among three agencies: The Ministry of Finance, CAGD and NDPC. The fact that central control is split up in this particular way is due to historical circumstances. The NDPC was created under the Fourth Republican Constitution (1992) through the official separation of the finance and economic planning functions within the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. The Ministry of Finance and CAGD owe their institutional origins to Treasury reorganisation during the 1930s when there were reforms with far reaching consequences to the financial bureaucracy (Priestley, 1974).

In the collection of revenue and its disbursement as expenditure, together with the linked activities of public borrowing and lending, all public agencies create financial records, which are held in financial branches or individual operating units. The core public financial management agencies, however, carry out specific tasks in the management of the Consolidated Fund and their activities must be effectively balanced and interlocked by an efficient records management system.

Records provide the evidence of transactions. Accounting documents such as invoices and vouchers provide evidence that the transaction has taken place. A receipt is prepared whenever any sum of money is paid to any public agency and a payment voucher, recording details of the transaction, is prepared whenever public money is disbursed. Financially significant details from these source documents are entered into books of accounts that serve as a means of registering and locating documents like any register or index. Because transactions reflect monetary values, it is also possible to list amounts and derive financially significant totals according to the way transactions are listed. Thus the process of storing and indexing financial records produces new information, a distillation or summary.

Well-managed financial and accounting records provide a sound basis for financial and accounting control and hence accountability. They also provide the basis for financial reporting. Financial reporting has several broad objectives, which include stewardship and compliance, providing the evidence base upon which financial management decisions are made. The financial management business processes are the context in which transactions are carried out, with financial records generated as by-product. To effectively support business processes, financial records must be well managed. The

systems in which they are maintained must be secure and implemented consistently. They may be created on any physical form or medium. The evidential qualities financial records possess derive from the origin of the records as part of the business process and from the preservation of their informational content, structure and context as part of a record keeping system. In addition, financial records need to be both accessible and usable.

The ability of the state to create, sustain and promote development depends on many factors; the ability of the state to manage recorded evidence of the conduct of government financial business is perhaps the most basic of all. Without a records management programme in place, records that provide the evidence of financial management activities clog offices and are disorganised and lost. Records management allows for the systematic control and authorised storage and disposal of financial records. In the budget system for example, the control system relies for its effectiveness on monitoring the flows of expenditure and revenues. When budget records are not effectively structured, information cannot be obtained easily. All too often the objectives of the monitoring system are not achieved and the control mechanism fails to inform. Thus, records management is a control function that underpins the financial management process and provides the means by which government makes meaningful social and economic decisions and demonstrates its commitment to state accountability.

Failure to strengthen the link between financial management business processes and recorded information leads to the inability of government to:

- improve the effectiveness of public expenditure programmes by developing and implementing mechanisms for fiscal planning, budgeting and evaluation.
- manage external resources
- mobilise domestic resources
- manage the size and efficiency of the public sector
- disseminate information within government and to the private sector
- adjust to changing macro-economic conditions
- strengthen controls

Above all, without reliable, authentic documentary evidence government cannot demonstrate to society that it has used public resources responsibly and that it has fulfilled its mandate to the people. Economic efficiency requires that information about policies and plans are made available and that there is accountability in the major processes of economic policy making.

Case Study

At the centre of Ghana's public financial management is the government's budget. The functional requirements for financial record keeping ought therefore to address the business applications of the budgetary process through its four interlinked stages:

- preparation
- enactment
- execution
- accountability and audit

Stage 1 to stage 4 is about two years. The cycles overlap; three different stages can occur at the same moment of time: execution of the current budget (stage 3), preparation of the next budget (stage 1) and accountability and audit of the previous budget (stage 4). Functionally, the various business processes at any moment are engaged in the task of dealing with the present, looking to the future and looking back to the past, with records generated as by-product. Thus, the financial records provide information for managing the national economy and support the evidence base of financial accountability. Some, like the Budget Statement and the Final Accounts, are published officially. Others are documentary sources created in public offices, cabinet and the legislature.

Detailed guidelines on financial record keeping are provided by the Financial Administration Regulations. Part XV is devoted to financial record keeping functional requirements. It emphasises the importance of recorded information as a key resource and record keeping as an integral part of the financial management system. To this end, public officers vested with financial management responsibilities are obliged to keep "proper records" and ensure that such records are available on request.

The Regulations provide that:

... the documents and records pertaining to the public and trust moneys received into, held in and paid from the Consolidated Fund shall be termed the public accounts and shall be kept by the Controller and Accountant General ... (Government of Ghana, 1979).

Furthermore, the Regulations state:

The documents and records pertaining to the collection of revenue, the control of expenditure, the administration of trust funds, the management of public stores and such other financial business as may be made the responsibility of government departments shall be termed

other government accounts and shall be kept by the head of departments... (Government of Ghana, 1979)

On the strength of these provisions, agency heads are specifically required to develop sound management systems for financial record keeping to meet the requirements of:

- accountability in public financial management
- efficient discharge of financial transactions.

Public financial records are classified under six headings, as follows:

- publications such as financial reports and statements
- legal documents including title and trust deeds, agreements and contracts
- accounts including records and supporting vouchers
- correspondence and policy files arising from financial and accounting work
- working papers arising from the accounting process
- archival records relating to the location or destruction of records (Government of Ghana, 1979).

Financial records are financial policies and programme records covering the budget processes. These include planning, revenue and expenditure records, case papers and legal documents such as agreements relating to contracts, loans, advances; trust deeds in connection with any fund, account or property; title documents conferring or recording ownership of any property including title deeds, bonds, stocks and share certificates. Other financial records are accounting documents such as books, ledger sheets, ledger cards, computer printouts and electronic computer files. Also included are value books comprising accounting source documents such as receipts, cheques, bank statements, local purchase orders, vouchers, requisition and bill books, etc.

There are two main categories of financial records, namely:

- subject and topical files
- transactional, such as invoices, vouchers, etc.

Subject files are filed on the basis of hierarchical arrangements reflecting the function and activities of the agencies of the central administration of finance. Transactional records are held by all public agencies and the treasuries. Because of their volume, transactional records present the greatest handling, processing and storing problems. They are classified according to type and function. Each class is further subdivided, either by specific accounts or general sub classes of accounts. The classification scheme ought to be the building block of the financial record keeping system.

There is little doubt that increases in the volumes and arrangement of public financial business since the 1960s have led to serious difficulties in the agencies of the central administration of finance and other public agencies. Colonial Financial Orders did not adequately define the statutory arrangements required for managing financial records. They made scattered references to the retention of certain documents for specified minimum periods, but there was no clearly defined policy on records control. Partly because of the limited scale of government activity and partly because, in practice, clerical functions relating to the management of records had a higher status than they do now, the sketchy arrangements inherited from the colonial era were satisfactory. Presently, records are buried and inaccessible. The financial record keeping systems have not been well structured and therefore do not meet present-day information requirements.

Despite the vital importance of financial records, the accountability for their management is poorly defined. Heads of agencies, as pointed out, are theoretically responsible for maintaining agency financial record systems. Part of this responsibility entails the issuance of a code of agency instructions, which should build upon a national framework for records keeping. However, neither the instructions nor structured systems for financial records exist throughout the government. This, taken together with the decline in accounting standards, has resulted in loss of financial control. During most of the period 1981-1985, no one was officially confirmed in the post of Controller and Accountant General. Even in the 1994 total staff of 4,500, fewer than 0.44 per cent were qualified professional accountants and fewer than 5 per cent had intermediate formal qualification in accountancy (Government of Ghana, 1995). This situation is manifested in inordinate delays in producing accounts, financial reports and even recourse to "incomplete" records in order to report the Final Accounts.

Except in the Auditor General's Department, the management of financial records in the central administration of finance is decentralised. In the Ministry of Finance, financial records are managed in units described as secretariats. In both the CAGD and NDPC they are managed as part of the accounting or development planning responsibilities. On the other hand, the Auditor General's Department operates a centralised system combining the management of administrative files with that of the financial records. The records are organised in series.

The benefits derived from well-structured records systems can again be illustrated by examining the records management units in the agencies concerned with the central administration of finance. Serious weaknesses exist in file classification and file plans lack flexibility. There is no control and files are created at random. In the

Correspondence Branch in the Auditor General's Department, all five registry personnel are audit staff; none has had the benefit of consulting a procedural manual and, without exception, none has had formal training in records management. Any of the five could be posted out of the unit on audit fieldwork at any time. The maximum length of time spent on registry duties for audit personnel on secondment to the unit is three years. When an officer is posted to the unit, he has to learn from his supervisor who is usually the longest serving in the unit.

The problem is also illustrated by the registry in NDPC, which is too rudimentary to support the coordination of the national development planning system. NDPC coordinates the grassroots development plans and integrates the economic, spatial and sector plans of ministries and sectoral agencies. It is responsible also for the preparation and monitoring of the national development budget. The state of its registry is at variance with its public mandate. Storage conditions are unsuitable and there is little planned records disposal. Two huge cupboards in the Budget Division Secretariat in the Ministry of Finance are full to the brim with financial records. Nobody in the Secretariat remembers when there was ever a planned transfer of records out of the Division and yet the records date back to the early 1970s. Thus, vast quantities of inactive records clog up every valuable space making it impossible to retrieve any documents.

The consensus view is that the more complicated a procedure and the more documents created and maintained the greater the security against fraud. On the contrary, the clogged filing cabinets in the central administration of finance are highly conducive to irregularity of every kind. Poor practices for managing financial records are widespread. One of such practices is the creation of an unnecessarily large number of multiple copies. Top management acknowledges this but explain that it is due to the necessity for tight controls in public financial management. Some even suggest that duplication provides an insurance that "the record may be located elsewhere when you misplace yours". Not much thought is given in these practices to the implications for space, storage equipment and staff time during a period of dwindling financial resources. Defining and simplifying procedures, reducing the paper generated and planning the records systems with an end result clearly in mind will provide substantial economies, lead to fewer but better records and promote accountability. If effectively managed as an integral part of the business processes, financial records will provide a meaningful resource not the least as verifiable evidence.

The loss of control of the official evidence base in public financial management is one of the greatest but least recognised threats to accountability and good government in Ghana. The relationship between the citizen and the state will continue to break down because of

the lack of integrity and authenticity in the public financial records due to their management.

Key Problems in Financial Record Keeping

Financial reporting in public financial management is a product of well-structured financial records management systems, a critical element in the accountability of government. The key objective of financial reporting has always been to provide the legislature and the public with the assurance that there has been conformity with legal and other mandatory requirements in the government's management of resources. It provides the basis for accountability, planning and authorisation information. The machinery of government should itself use financial and accounting information to evaluate current performance so as to:

- establish whether public policy objectives are being realised
- assess the contribution that alternative decisions are likely to make towards reaching these objectives
- monitor the progress of previous decisions

Moreover, public accounts are not only a measure of past events but are also important for what they reveal about the future. The results and trends identified by financial statements and fiscal reports can be interpreted in relation to the government's changing circumstances to give a useful forecast of the future.

At present the parties charged by law to prepare and submit accurate and timely expenditure data are in breach of this requirement. For example, s.38 of the Financial Administration Decree requires the CAG to publish for the purposes of expenditure management the Monthly Financial Statement. The last time such a statement was published was in 1987. That year's report was in respect of the month ending 30 June 1980. The report was signed by the CAG on 28 October 1986, six years from the date of the report. The report was subsequently published in the Gazette on 10 March 1987, seven years from the date of the report (Government of Ghana, 1995).

Since 1989, the Ministry of Finance has complained, in the annual budget circular notes, of the continuing lack of compliance with expenditure reporting requirements. Yet public agencies are not able to provide the information required largely because systems are not in place to manage financial records. Government often overlooks this basic fact. Until there is a review of the effectiveness of financial records systems and well-structured systems installed, non-compliance with directives, irregularities and fraud will continue to characterise the financial bureaucracy.

Treasury officers are expected to provide item level expenditure reports to the CAG within fifteen days after the end of the month. Moreover, under Financial Administration Regulation 69, heads of public agencies are to submit returns of actual expenditure on a monthly basis to the Budget Division of the Ministry of Finance not later than ten days after the end of the month. The poor quality of financial records systems has impeded regular compilation of monthly expenditure returns and reports. None have been produced for over fifteen years. Nonetheless, monthly reports are essential sources of information for budget implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Regular monthly expenditure reports are not only for fulfilling statutory requirements but also as mechanism to gain control over the budget.

The lack of effective structures for managing financial records is illustrated in the practice of submitting multi-year financial reports for audit when statutory financial reporting is an annual function of CAG. The public accounts for the ten-year period, 1979-1989, was submitted as one report for certification in 1992. The "incomplete records" technique was adopted to arrive at approximate figures for the final accounts. In complaining about the circumstances surrounding the late submission of the report, the fact that it was multi-year and the accounting method applied, the Auditor General pointed out that the financial statements for the ten-year period ending 31 December 1989 were not derived from authorised source documents (Government of Ghana, 1992). The late submission of the multi-year Financial Statement had a nationwide effect. A number of issues were raised by Ghanaians not least were the moral and legal implications of submitting the Financial Accounts whose source documents could not be verified or traced.

Conclusion

The lack of accountability for the management of financial records has implications for government efficiency. Similarly, without records to provide the evidence that lends form and substance to financial management, accountability initiatives cannot succeed. Strengthening the regulatory role of the Records Service and improving records management systems should be included in the wider context of institutional and economic policy reforms. The instrument of good government is the "record", and the means by which records are created, captured and maintained to serve as evidence of good government is "record keeping". Without records there can be no demonstration of accountability. Without evidence of accountability, society cannot trust in the public institutions. The relationship between financial records and accountability is a crucial building block for good government.

The way forward lies in forging effective partnerships among accountable officials, information technology specialists, record keeping professionals and educators to develop a robust and sustainable documentary evidence infrastructure, linking traditional and virtual systems into an integrated whole. The key, undoubtedly, is commitment to education and training to provide baseline record keeping literacy for public officials and to achieve particular record keeping mastery for those with management and specialist responsibilities for record keeping.

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Venturing into Academic Journal Publishing: Some Issues and Guidelines for New Authors

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Abstract

Publishing in academic journals is important for those who wish to communicate their ideas and the results of research to their professional communities. This paper shares insights derived from the literature and from some recent Southern African initiatives. A checklist to guide new authors is provided.

Introduction

Through journals, researchers access important information about recent developments in their fields. Journal publications are also used to assess the productivity and contribution of academics and practitioners. Publishing in academic journals is therefore an important activity for those who wish to communicate their ideas and the results of research to colleagues in their disciplines. For some, however, venturing into publishing in academic journals remains a daunting prospect. This paper aims to share insights derived from the literature and from some recent Southern African initiatives and to provide some guidelines for new authors.

The Importance of Academic Journal Publishing

In publishing one is publicly documenting, making known or sharing some important information with a wider audience and testing those ideas or findings by laying them open to peer scrutiny both in the refereeing process and in the wider reading of the journal. For universities, as Budd (1999) points out, research is a principal factor in assessing their undergraduate and graduate reputations. While the efficacy of reward systems that perpetuate the production of numerous publications has been questioned (Budd, 1999) this system is likely to remain an important yardstick in the immediate future. Joswick (1999) notes, for example, that library and information services (LIS) journals remain the primary outlet for the communication of research findings among

academic librarians in Illinois and by generalisation in the United States (US). She notes, too, that investigating a discipline's individualised characteristics of scholarly communication through bibliometric measures is a recognised means of "defining and charting the vigour of a profession." Ideally that knowledge is finally translated into practice to improve the discipline's theory and service (Joswick, 1999).

It is common cause that researchers in Africa need to boost research productivity and improve methods of communicating research results to their intended audiences, particularly on a South/South basis. Librarians and information workers are at the heart of the means of addressing this need. They conduct research, have a working knowledge of what is being produced in research, of how it is reviewed and received and of how it relates to other disciplines. Inter-disciplinary linkages are increasingly important in an age when environmental fit and action are priorities. Librarians and information workers manage research output from respective areas of expertise but how well are they, themselves, doing?

At the 12th Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Librarians (SCECSAL) in 1996, participants expressed concern about a general lack of writing skills which prevents librarians from writing research proposals, reports and articles based on the outcomes of the research and this emerged as an issue in a 1997 workshop proposal of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the Institute for Southern African Studies (CTA/ISAS 1997).

Initiatives from southern Africa that sought to address some of these disparities were academic publishing workshops planned for the region. The initiatives were the South African Human Sciences Research Council workshop (Durban) 1996; SCECSAL's proposed workshop (Harare) 1997 (which did not take place because of funding problems), and the CTA/ISAS workshop (Maseru) 1997. These are described in detail in Stilwell (1999). The paper discusses the rationale for the initiatives, which took the form of workshops, against the background of publication patterns for scholarly journals in the region and a review of crucial access to information issues. The target groups, participants and methods used in the workshops are described and the efficacy of the latter critiqued. A table of the participants' expectations from the final workshop revealed that the highest scoring expectations were the acquisition of skills for publishing, for writing up research and for addressing national development issues through research. Some useful observations drawn from the participants are included in this paper under the heading *Guidelines Which Emerged From the Various Initiatives*.

Some Issues in Academic Journal Publishing in Southern Africa

Most professional associations in Africa provide avenues for publishing research findings in the form of journals and conference proceedings. Journals of librarianship and archives have existed in Africa since 1933, for example, the *South African Journal of Library and Information Science* (1933), *West African Library Association News* (1954) and *S.A. Archives Journal* (1959) (Aina, 1997). The latter was prepared as a proposal for the Harare workshop. A strong argument for the proposed workshop was that in spite of the recognition of the importance of published research, research productivity in Africa was low (Aina, 1997). One indication of a problem with the publication of research from Africa (and a factor that compounds it) is the high rate of rejection of manuscripts submitted by African authors. Cronin and McKenzie (1992), for instance, found that all 21 papers from Africa submitted to the *Journal of Documentation* between 1981 and 1989 were rejected. The SCESCAL participants tried to identify probable reasons for the poor publishing productivity in southern Africa and identified lack of adequate knowledge of research and the writing skills required to produce research papers, low recognition by employers and the inability to attract funds from funding bodies. The main problem is, however, the lack of adequate research and writing skills, hence the importance of the training workshops in the region (Aina, 1997).

Aina (1991) carried out a study on the research directions of the information profession in Africa between 1985 and 1989. Using three international journals published outside Africa (*International Library Review*, *Libri* and *Information Development*) which African information professionals regularly used for publishing their research findings, it was found that the proportion of research from southern Africa (Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe) was very low and yet these countries constituted 65% of the Anglophone African countries. In a related 1996 study by Aina and Mabawonku (1996) it was found that 145 (61.44%) of the 236 papers submitted to the *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* were rejected. This was the case in spite of assistance to new authors.

Another issue is that journals published in Africa generally have a short lifespan (Aina and Mabawonku, 1996; Zell 1996:). There are also very few other avenues for reporting research findings. Alemna (1998) provides a sobering note in a table depicting the status of African library and information journals from 1954 to 1994. Of the 17 journals which he lists (and not all are listed) 14 have ceased publication, two are irregular and only one, the *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* is regular. South Africa was often excluded from such reviews because of its apartheid status and then more

recently because it was perceived as being better off than its neighbours. But in South Africa too the problem pertains with the *South African Journal of Library and Information Science*, which Aina and Mooko (1999) list as a top vehicle for publishing in the region, and which is presently experiencing an uncertain future in terms of funding.

The problem of sustainability of journals was the main theme of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) workshop for editors of journals of library and information studies in Africa in Kano (Nigeria) in January 1992 (Wise 1994). It was considered imperative to have research findings reported in local journals rather than those published abroad in order to make the findings more accessible to local researchers than if they were sent to journals abroad.

Summary of the HSRC and CTA/ISAS Workshops

While these workshops broadly addressed the issues contained in the checklist below, their foci differed in that the Human Sciences Resources Council (HSRC) workshop aimed at redressive action in the South African situation immediately post apartheid and at academics from any discipline who had not published. The CTA/ISAS workshop targeted agricultural librarians and researchers specifically and had a gender bias in that it expressed the desired outcome of accelerating the number and increasing the visibility of women in agricultural research, information and the publishing area (CTA/ISAS 1997: 6).

HSRC participants raised issues such as devising enticing but specific titles and writing interesting abstracts and introductions, and selecting an appropriate journal, including deciding whether to submit a particular paper to a local or international journal. Difficult issues were papers which challenged the canon or established consensus particularly in the sciences; what constituted originality and the speed with which original research became dated. Others were more methodological: setting research briefly within its historical context, the need for expert statistical backup and the tensions between doing quantitative and qualitative research.

The participants at the CTA/ISAS workshop voiced the expectation of forging links across the library and information work and agricultural research sectors. Sessions aimed at this expectation fostered exchanges on problem and solution sharing and these became a highlight of the workshop. The participants shared their experiences with enthusiasm and it became evident that some of them had found their own solutions. Feedback from the workshop revealed that problems lay deeper than technical skills in research reporting and publishing and was linked to fear of rejection, time management problems, lack of tangible rewards, and apathy. These were discussed and fruitful coping mechanisms

suggested. Based on these workshops the following guidelines that could help emerging budding authors are outlined below.

Guidelines from the Various Initiatives

The various initiatives of the HSRC, SCECSAL and CTA/ISAS were interesting in terms of the broad trends, suggesting useful guidelines that emerged. These are summarised below.

De-personalising rejection

The discussions at the HSRC and CTA/ISAS workshops raised and addressed many of the deeper problems and made these seem less of a personal concern. Most researchers could be shown to have experienced rejection at some time but the need to try again, even submitting to a second journal, was stressed with practical examples from the group's own experience.

Participants were also encouraged by Gans and Shepherd's (1994) statement that their survey revealed that many papers which have become classics in the field of economics were initially rejected by at least one journal. They also relate the story of Orwell's *Animal farm* being rejected because "it's impossible to sell animal stories in the USA." Further they observe that most Nobel Laureates and Clark Medalists (the John Bates Clark Medal) have had papers rejected: only three of the 20 winners who responded to their survey did not admit at least one rejection.

Infrastructure

Weller, Hurd and Wiberley (1999) reporting on the publication patterns of librarians in the US, draw on research by Pettigrew and Nicholls (1994) which revealed that the productivity of teaching staff appears to be influenced by the presence of doctoral programmes, with publication output higher in schools with PhD programmes than in those with Masters programmes only. Another factor appeared to be a link between library resources and productivity, with Krausse and Sieburth (1985) reporting that the most prolific authors came from institutions with library holdings of more than one million volumes (Weller, Hurd and Wiberley, 1999). Hence these authors conclude that the relationship between the characteristics of an institution and the publishing productivity of its librarians deserves further investigation. The size of the library and the

prestige of the parent institution appear to be important factors: "An overall institutional climate that supports research probably fosters it among librarians as well" (Weller, Hurd and Wiberley 1999).

Supporting local journals locally and abroad

African journals need foreign subscriptions in order to survive and the author's own experiences on the editorial collective of the journal *Innovation* bear this out. Aina and Mooko (1999) urge that "the need for the information community to support their local journals becomes imperative in view of the fact that substantial findings are published abroad" and then unfavourable currency exchange rates make their purchase prohibitive in the country of origin.

Guiding emerging local researchers

A checklist of basic items for an academic paper, which could be useful in guiding new authors, was developed for the HSRC workshop. The checklist was influenced by Maxwell and Cole's (1995) paper and drawn from materials prepared for the HSRC workshop by Radebe and Stilwell, the presenters, who hired Leach's services to draw up the checklist for them because of constraints regarding the time available for preparing the workshop materials. The author has subsequently modified the list further.

The following are some of the considerations when writing a research paper. The questions below are based on the quantitative results-interpretation-conclusion research pattern but form a base, which could be adapted for reporting research of a more qualitative nature.

- Does the research make an original contribution to the field and add significantly to the existing body of knowledge? Originality can be seen in different ways - an element of "freshness" is required.
- Is the paper directed at a specific journal that is read by the people the author wants to communicate with? Journals have different styles and rules of presentation for the articles they publish.
- Is the topic of the research appropriate in terms of its scope (sufficiently narrow), relevance to the field in question, of interest to the researcher, and amount of information available?
- Is the title adequate? Does it indicate what the paper is about, that is, provide

keywords for the paper? Is it brief? It is the title (and then the abstract) that will attract readers first.

- Does the abstract provide, in brief, the objective/s of the research, a description of the method/s used, the main results and an interpretation of the main results?
- Does the introduction explain why the researcher did the research and what the author wanted to find out by providing, briefly, background information, the problem statement and objectives of the research, and a review of the relevant literature?
- Has the researcher considered whether the results could be generalised or not? A provocative or paradoxical statement or quotation may heighten interest.
- Does the review of the related literature indicate, if applicable, the different views, agreements, disagreements, trends of thought on the topic of the research?
- Has this literature been accurately portrayed and acknowledged in the text? This section is crucial when interpreting/discussing the findings.
- Has the researcher explained adequately why a particular research method was adopted and implemented? Is it the "best" method for the particular problem? If applicable, does the researcher have support from a statistician for the methodological approach chosen? Are the limitations stated? Have assumptions been made?
- Has the researcher presented all the relevant results, including the negative?
- Does the discussion include the meaning and implications of the results as they relate, in particular, to other relevant research (literature review)? Results and their interpretation (discussion) can be treated together or separated but that clarity is often achieved if the latter is done.
- Is the conclusion a brief, clear and pointed summary and discussion of what has been said?
- Does the list of references contain all the works cited in the paper? Methods of referencing vary from one journal to another. Are the references, both in the text and in the list, in the correct format for that specific journal?
- Is the writing systematic and logically ordered, and are the various components of

the paper in the correct proportions? It is helpful to have a colleague to read and edit the paper.

- Have the necessary acknowledgements to individuals or organisations that the author is indebted to been made?

Answering these questions in the affirmative will not guarantee publication. The presentation of the article will assist in getting it read and enable understanding of the contents, but the bottom line will always be the quality of the author's ideas and their ultimate relevance to the field of research covered by the journal.

Conclusion

While the workshop initiatives described above require harder evaluation and creative follow-up, they do suggest ways of providing access to the mainstream of the academy for those currently on its peripheries. The checklist could assist new authors in ensuring that they have covered the basics and this could foster confidence. The paper as a whole offers ways as Reddiar (1996:5) suggests to develop the skills to "occupy that space" in the academic community comfortably.

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Subject Catalogue Use at the Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

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Abstract

A survey of the subject catalogue use at the Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife was carried out for a period of six weeks using questionnaire. The focus of the study was to find out the extent to which the subject catalogue in the library, met the users needs, the level of use and the effectiveness of subject classification. The data was analysed using percentages. Results showed 88% usage level of the subject catalogue as well as 85% success rate of searches.

Introduction

Subject catalogue is regarded as the most invaluable key to the total collection of a library. It opens wide to the reader the resources of a library by subject, irrespective of the authors, form or format, medium or language of presentation. The subject catalogue thus becomes an essential tool in the hands of a sophisticated user who wishes to beat the antisocial antics of his colleagues who take the recommended text to other reading rooms. He discovers that, quite often, the subject catalogue presents to him a list of alternative texts, which may even be better than the ones suggested by his lecturer. It is therefore extremely important that the subject headings, which represent the subject, content or analysis of materials in a library, be precise and adequate to meet the retrieval needs of library users.

There are various standard lists of subject headings which a library might adopt and maintain for consistency. The most widely used by libraries are the *Sears List of Subject Headings* (SLSH) and the *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (LCSH) with the latter being preferred by academic libraries. The structure of subjects in LCSH, their specificity and terminology are the attributes that have made it a useful reference tool of librarians in academic settings. Cataloguers of Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife have adopted this listing because of its acceptability and universality.

Over the years, the adequacy or otherwise of LCSH has been examined by different authors. Every attribute of that list has been examined and reappraised generally but a survey of the subject catalogue use as a scientific means of finding out the adequacy of subject headings in use in libraries has not been addressed. Ezomo (1988) underscores the benefits of such endeavours and affirms that utilisation studies of library catalogues are very important and imperative in any library in order to assist the library managers in offering efficient service to the users. It is further stressed that since so much money and time go into the preparation and maintenance of library catalogues, it is essential that they are used maximally. Any study in this area would therefore be worth the trouble and would be considered relevant to the needs of the academic society.

In cataloguing, the application of the standard cataloguing rules and classification schemes have been known to create some communication gaps especially between the cataloguers and the users. The cataloguer professionally abides by the standard way of making entries, particularly subject entries in the catalogues, while the users, unaware of the standards, make searches using the general terms they think or know about. To bridge this gap, cataloguers make conscious effort to provide additional guides without necessarily sacrificing the standards. In many libraries, an ample use is made of *see* and *see also* references in the subject catalogue. Where this is not done, the *L. C. Subject Headings* are provided to help users identify the used terms. By tradition, the Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library makes use of these references sparingly and does not make available its subject headings to the users. It was assumed and observed over the years that the users of this catalogue have difficulties in hitting the right terms that are used. Hence this study set out to find out the extent of use of subject catalogue by users, the problems facing the users of this catalogue, as well as propose possible solutions.

Literature Review

Antonov (1985) asserts that librarians have the privilege and the duty to disclose to readers, through catalogues and bibliographic resources, the wealth of ideas included in books. It is important that the catalogue, especially the subject catalogue, be truly representative of the wealth of ideas in the books. With user surveys, librarians measure the level of effectiveness of the services they render. While the literature is replete with the results of user surveys, catalogue use surveys are fewer especially the card catalogues in these days of online catalogues. Subject searches, however, still find relevance both in online catalogues and card catalogues.

Tillotson (1995) sought to know whether keyword searching could provide a better option to subject searching in OPAC. It was found that, given an easy choice, people

would choose to use both keyword and controlled vocabulary (subject) searching. It was therefore concluded that both keyword and controlled vocabulary searching ought to be easily available in an OPAC and that explanations and help needed to be offered to subject searchers. Recent catalogue use studies have revealed an increase in the use of subject searching since the introduction of online catalogues. Matthews *et al* (1983) contend that while card catalogue use studies have led to the assumption that subject access was of relatively little value to users, online catalogue use has shown that a majority of searches are for subject-related information. It is also believed that subject searching is often unsuccessful in library catalogues. Peters (1993) confirms studies of success rates ranging from 12 per cent to 75 per cent.

Studies on known-item searches reveal that an appreciable number of the searches are subject searches. Akeroyd (1990) claims that searches performed solely to identify items on a particular subject may account for as much as 24 per cent of all author/title searches. Agnew *et al* (1986) found that of fifty searches, 10 per cent were actually subject searches. A study based on researcher specified queries found that 27 per cent of the card catalogue searches for the *Warren Report* began with a subject search (Krikelas, 1980). In an earlier study, it was found that 6 per cent of known-item search in a card catalogue began with a search for a subject heading (Tagliacozzo *et al*, 1970). Wildemuth and O'Neill (1995) in their study on known-item searches also found that subject searches is about 25 per cent while title searches is 94 per cent.

An interdisciplinary team of computer and behavioural scientists with library management led by Mercy Murphy carried out a user survey at the U. S. Air Force Academy Library (Murphy, 1979). The objectives of the survey were to obtain overall user evaluation of library effectiveness, pinpoint areas of indifference or ignorance and obtain distinctive usage profiles of the special clientele. Findings revealed a high opinion rating of known services and identified numerous little-known resources and services. Differences in usage patterns were observed especially evidenced in the information-seeking behaviour of freshmen and seniors and of historians and mathematicians.

The study by Groves and Davis (1980) revealed little use of the card catalogue in meeting clientele requests though books were substantially used. This discrepancy between catalogue and book use was attributed in part to the small size of the collection and the familiarity of the library staff with the collection. They therefore tend to browse the shelf rather than search for the items through the catalogue. The Maternal and Child Health / Population Dynamics Library saw the need to improve its subject catalogue (Leibtag, 1982). After making decisions involving heading sources and revision methodology, the improvement was implemented through weeding, correcting and integrating headings, keeping in mind the orientation of the majority of library users.

In the work of Ronai (1985), the state of subject catalogues at 16 county libraries were surveyed covering general users' catalogues as well as the retrieving facilities for local history and sound materials. It was found that subject-retrieving systems vary both in their compilation and outputs. There were catalogues based on the UDC and applying no structure within main groups (of cards); some followed strictly the hierarchy of UDC; others were with mixed structure. There was however a variety in the usage of references and in following the modifications of UDC in the old card catalogues. The indexing depth of the catalogues were found to be poor. The survey on catalogue use in the Latunde Odeku Medical Library by Ezomo (1988) revealed a poor use of the catalogues as only 33% of the respondents claimed to have used them. The study also revealed that subject access was 11% while title access (25%) and author access (21%) were preferred. This revealed a poor usage of the subject catalogue. The survey however revealed that the users were not given any user education programme as over 67% indicated their willingness to attend any such programme if organised for them.

Methodology

The Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife serves about twenty thousand students and two thousand senior and academic staff who are users of its resources. Obtaining information on the use of the catalogue could be achieved in a number of ways such as: (a) indirect observation method; (b) administering questionnaire on a selected random sample of readers from registered list of students and staff; (c) interviewing and administering questionnaire on readers at the port of entry into the library; and (d) administering questionnaire to actual users of the catalogue.

In the Indirect Observation method, field observers are expected to be located in the vicinity of the catalogue area. The main task will be to identify a user and place him under full observation throughout the user's stay at the catalogue. This method is highly subjective as the respondent's personal feeling cannot be easily obtained. At peak hours, the number of users may be too large for an observer to study in detail. The variability and coverage will be highly restricted as a result of the bias of the observer. Using the second method entails getting a random sample of readers from the library's list of registered users, sending questionnaires to them and asking them to return to the researcher or the library. The main shortcoming of this method is low response as most respondents may fail to return the completed questionnaires. Consequently, drawing conclusions from such may not be truly representative of the total population. Respondents may not be able to get explanations to questions they do not understand.

Administering questionnaires on users as they come in or go out of the library also has

the disadvantage of low return. If the users are interviewed, it will be difficult to get an in-depth response as many respondents may be hurrying to lectures or having a short time to spend in the library; therefore unable to settle down with the interviewer. In order to overcome these deficiencies, this study adopted the method of administering the questionnaire by research assistants to current users of the catalogue facilities, who then returned the questionnaire and return them before leaving the catalogue area. Respondents who had filled in the questionnaire once were not served on another visit to avoid duplication. Five undergraduates who were former library assistants were used as research assistants to administer the questionnaire covering library operational hours (07:30hrs. - 21:30 hrs.) for six weeks. The research assistants assisted in clarifying some of the questions raised by the respondents. This method enabled a high turnover of completed questionnaire within a short time and with minimum difficulty. It also enabled respondents to react to the catalogue facilities at a fixed point when the research was carried out without any appreciable change in the quality of the facilities. In all, 1000 copies of questionnaire designed were administered.

Analysis of Data

From a total of 1,000 questionnaire copies administered, 995 were found on closer examination, to be analysable. This represented a 99.5% return spanning all categories of users, viz. students (97.4%) and staff (2.6%) involving all faculties, departments and various levels of study. Responses on the use of the catalogues revealed that 93.1% of the respondents actually used the library's catalogues while 81.1% claimed that the catalogues were their first port of call in the quest to identify appropriate library books for their use.

Table 1: Familiarity with the Catalogues

Catalogue	No of Users	Percentage
Author/Title	615	61.8
Subject	738	74.2
Serials	90	9.0
Shelf List	99	9.9
Documents	69	6.9

Table 1 shows users' familiarity with the various catalogues. The result revealed that 74.2% of respondents were familiar with the subject catalogue while author / title was 61.8%. Serials, shelf list and documents catalogues were altogether 25.8%. The low usage of the serials catalogue could be due to the fact that postgraduate students and staff have direct access to the journals room and therefore preferred to browse the shelves while undergraduates go there with specific requests probably given by lecturers or obtained from books.

On the actual use of the subject catalogue, 88.4% of the respondents used the catalogue. Out of these, 45% use it more than once a week. A satisfaction rate of 89.4% was obtained as the respondents found it easy to use and understand. This revealed that the subject catalogue was highly used and of great value. This finding is contrary to the assumption that subject access was of relatively little value to users and poorly used (Matthews, 1983; Ezomo, 1988).

Those who found the subject catalogue difficult to use and understand (10.6%) were asked to give their reasons. The following were their reasons:

Arrangement is complex	45%
Related subjects not properly linked	20%
Terms used are unfamiliar	6%
Alternative terms are not linked to the terms used	1%
Others	7%
No response	21%

In some libraries, *see* and *see also* reference cards to link alternative terms and related terms, respectively, are copiously used. One major disadvantage of this is that it leads to the clogging of the catalogue. They were sparingly used in the Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library. Table 2 below shows the success rate for those who find the catalogue easy to use and understand. The study found that 85.4% were either highly successful, very successful or fairly successful. Only 14.6% were hardly successful or not successful.

Table 2: Success Rate of Subject Catalogue Searches.

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cum Per cent
Highly Successful	173	17.4	17.4
Very Successful	374	37.6	55.0
Fairly Successful	302	30.4	85.4
Hardly Successful	37	3.7	89.1
Not Successful	109	10.9	100
Total	995	100.0	

On the number of search terms used before users' needs were met, responses showed that 76.3% of the subject catalogue users searched either less than or equal to three terms before they hit the target. This response and the high level of success rate as shown in Table 2 revealed that the subject catalogue of Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library was very effective and met most users' needs. Those who were hardly successful or not successful in their searches (14.6%) were probed further on what they did or how they solved this problem. Their reactions were as follows:

Go on searching under related terms	43.4%
Seek help from fellow users	24.0%
Seek help from any library staff	17.7%
Seek help at the Reference desk	12.3%
Just go away	11.6%
Seek help from Circulation desk	8.2%
Find direction from a guide card	5.2%

The above responses showed that only 11.6% just go away while the rest seek help one way or the other. It is noteworthy that 43.4% persist in their search and are finally successful. Those that make use of guide cards like *see* and *see also* cards were only 5.2

per cent. It may therefore not be worthwhile for the library to invest on a copious use of these cards.

Table 3: Success Rate of Searches After Receiving Help

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Highly successful	95	9.5	9.5
Very Successful	312	31.4	40.9
Fairly Successful	299	30.1	71.0
Hardly Successful	49	4.9	75.9
Not Successful	19	1.9	77.8
No Response	221	22.2	100.0
Total	995	100.0	

The success rate after receiving help showed that 71% were successful while a negligible 6.8% were hardly or not successful. "No response" accounted for those who had been earlier successful in their searches.

It is noteworthy that 89.2% of the respondents had taken the Library Instruction Course (LIB 001) which could have contributed to a large extent in the effective usage of the catalogues, especially the subject catalogue, and the success in the searches. Asked what improvement or innovations they would have liked to see in the Subject Catalogue, the following suggestions were given by the respondents:

Placement of book lists showing the subject terms used	42.4%
More coloured cards to demarcate subjects	30.7%
More cross -references in the subject catalogue	29.1%
Others	13.0%

Book lists would enhance searches and enable those having problems with their searches to discover used terms while the coloured cards would also facilitate and hasten searches. Most of those who indicated "Others" suggested computerisation of the library's services and removal of cards that are without books on the shelves. The call for computerisation and removal of cards without books revealed that the users wanted modernisation of library services, and were well informed on the contents of the catalogue and the shelf.

Conclusion

The survey revealed that users of the Hezekiah Okuwasanmi Library were well informed and versatile in the use of library catalogues especially the subject catalogue. Most respondents hit their target or got information on their desired subject within a short time. The high success rate of users' searches could also probably be attributed to the respondents' knowledge of the use of Libraries gained from the Library Instruction course (LIB 001) normally taught to all new students. But this study did not do a comparison of the two groups of those who did LIB 001 and others who did not. Nevertheless, this study is indicative of the crucial importance of subject catalogue in a university library.

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Short Communication

Use of Micro CDS/ISIS in Libraries and Information Centres in Ghana

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Abstract

The paper examines the extent to which the CDS/ISIS software is used in Ghana, its impact on library and information work, and the role of a user group. The study indicates that majority of the respondents use the software for information retrieval, apparently due to lack of in-depth knowledge about the capabilities of the software. The future of the software in Ghana looks very bright. The recommendations made are aimed at ensuring the continued use and fuller utilisation of the capabilities of the software.

Introduction

Computer technology has been on the increase in library and information work in the last decade and it has had considerable effect on library and information work. Its effect has been felt strongly in reference departments of libraries primarily through the availability of a variety of electronic reference sources. Automation or mechanisation of libraries dates back to the 1960s. It is however, a relatively new phenomenon on the Ghanaian library scene. The first library to acquire the software CDS/ISIS in Ghana was the Ghana Standards Board Library in 1988. Incidentally, the Ghana Standards Board is the national distributor of CDS/ISIS in Ghana.

CDS/ISIS is bibliographic information management software produced by UNESCO's Division for General Information Programme (PGI) since 1976. It is a menu-driven system and has been developed for bibliographic information, that is, information about documents such as books, journal articles or conference proceedings. Usually, each

record in the database contains information about one document. It is being used to create databases as well as for other housekeeping jobs. The software has a facility for producing flexible displays and the production of printed outputs.

There are a number of factors that facilitate or enhance the potential of the package in African libraries. The package is readily available. It is easy to use and is distributed by UNESCO to non-commercial library and information centres. It is however protected by copyright and users have to license its usage. The licence is not as restrictive as some commercially available programs, in that multiple copying is permitted within an organisation that is a licence holder. Perhaps, this might have accounted for its popularity in most of the developing areas of Africa and South America. Although UNESCO is solely responsible for the development of the package, the organisation has appointed distributors throughout the world to assist in supplying it to those who wish to use it. The German Foundation for International Development (DSE) has collaborated with UNESCO concerning the utilisation of the package in Africa since 1988. A series of seminars of training the trainers' courses on CDS/ISIS have been implemented for ISIS users in various regions and Anglophone African countries between 1988 and 1996. (Ornager, 1993). Perhaps the single most important factor that holds potential for the usage of the package in African libraries is the ability of CDS/ISIS to do almost anything one wants it to do. The package includes a Pascal compiler and facilities to write a program and interface it to the existing system. This programming facility is unusual in an information retrieval package since it allows users to adapt the program to whatever extent they require. There are currently programs and facilities available from UNESCO and other agencies and individuals, especially in India and Pakistan, that allow the user to explore the package to an unlimited extent. There is need, however, for most African libraries to invest in the training of personnel who can write programs in Pascal and integrate with the CDS/ISIS. This way, African libraries will reap the full benefits of the capabilities of the package.

A Survey of CDS/ISIS Use in Ghana

There are at the moment a number of libraries and information centres which have installed CDS/ISIS in Ghana, but there has not been any survey on their activities so far. A thorough search through the literature did not reveal any study that has been done. At the same time, a number of libraries and information centres are contemplating installing the software in the near future. This study is therefore the first of its kind in Ghana. The findings of the study, it is hoped will help not only those who have already installed the software in Ghana but others in the process of doing so. On a global scale, it is envisaged that the experiences of Ghana will be beneficial to other countries especially those in the developing areas.

In a questionnaire survey administered to ten libraries and information centres identified as having installed CDS/ISIS software, an attempt was made to find out the extent to which the software is used, its impact on library and information work, the role of a user group and the resolution of problems encountered. The ten libraries comprised one academic library and nine special libraries, all located in Accra, Ghana.

Background

All the ten respondents had used CDS/ISIS software for a period ranging from three years to nine years. A majority of the respondents (six out of ten) were using Version 3.07 at the time of the survey. The purposes for which respondents used CDS/ISIS have been summarised in table 1

Table 1: Use of CDS/ISIS

Purpose of Use	Absolute Frequency	Per cent
Information retrieval	9	90
Database creation	8	80
Cataloguing	6	60
Circulation control	1	10
Acquisition	1	10
Others	4	40

It is clear from Table 1 that a large proportion of the respondents (90%) used CDS/ISIS for information retrieval, followed closely by database creation (80%). This result is not surprising as most of the respondents considered information retrieval as the strongest point of the software and also an aspect they were comfortable with. It may also be attributed to the fact that respondents had not had in-depth training into the uses of the software. Respondents were given the option to indicate other purposes for which they used the software. Four (40%) indicated that they used the software for networking, printing and production of products such as accession bulletins and as a teaching tool for students in data management.

Continued Use of CDS/ISIS

The respondents were further asked whether they would continue to use the software

against the background that there was a lack of adequate training and technical support. All the ten respondents indicated that they did not have any intention of discontinuing with the use of the software. The reason was that though the software was relatively new to them and they were encountering some problems with usage, they were of the view that with time and additional training these problems would be overcome. Only one respondent had ever used another software but had to discontinue with its use because it was not appropriate for the library's purpose.

CDS/ISIS Utilities

The respondents were asked to indicate some of the CDS/ISIS applications they used. From table 2, the indications are that most of the respondents used the search and data entry utilities (80%) more than the Pascal utilities (10%). Again this could be due to lack of training or inadequate training programmes for the respondents.

Table 2: CDS/ISIS Utilities Used

Utilities Used	Absolute Frequency	Per cent
Searching Utilities	8	80
Data Entry Utilities	8	80
Pascal Utilities	1	10
Others	-	-

Training

All the respondents indicated having had training in the use of the software, both locally and abroad but they indicated that they needed additional training to enable them to become more conversant with the software. The areas in which they required training include: writing programs using Pascal utilities, database creation and management techniques and formatting, sorting, printing, importing and exporting of data in ISO 2709 format.

User Group

Given that the software is distributed free of charge, the support given by UNESCO tends to be limited, unlike the commercial software. To provide a measure of security in times of crises, most users worldwide have formed user groups. Such groups facilitate

access to some of the utilities that have been developed and also lead to sharing of expertise and knowledge in the use of the software. Respondents were asked to comment on the formation of such a group and its usefulness in the Ghanaian context. The following are some of the responses:

- Members who are less endowed in the workings of the software will become conversant with it. It is necessary for such a group to meet regularly at least on a quarterly basis to discuss user problems and appropriate solutions found.
- There is the need for the user group to monitor and promote the use of the software and share experiences on latest developments in Ghana and worldwide.
- There is the need to effectively coordinate the activities of an ISIS User Group so as to enhance uniformity and standardisation of practice leading to smooth interchange of information. It is essential that the User Group Coordinating Centre (Institute for Scientific and Technological Information (INSTI)) be up and doing.

Conclusion

Very few libraries and information centres in Ghana are using the CDS/ISIS software at the moment, but the conditions are favourable for a wider usage of the software. This could become a reality if the user group is effective and the training of more librarians and information specialists in the use of the software. The future looks bright for the continued use of the software in Ghana.

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Book Reviews

Mazruiana Collection: A Comprehensive Bibliography of the Published Works of Ali A. Mazrui 1962-1997 compiled by Abdul Samed Bernath. Jos: Aha Publishing House, 1999. Forward by Dr. Yakubu Gowon. 348p. ISBN 978-30738-3-4.

Professor Ali Mazrui is indeed a rising African intellectual of the horizon, considering his intellectual contributions as contained in *The Mazruiana Collection*. He has also been described as controversial and thrilling even though this does not come as a surprise, as he is said to have been born into a family characterised by a "tradition of debate". For Ali Mazrui who has such a "fertile mind" and who has contributed immensely to African political history, it would be unfair not to have a record of all his writings for all those who would like to consult them. The idea of such a book is well-founded, as Mazrui has published in almost all the continents of the world. The compilation of the bibliography introduces another name, MAZRUIANA, to library collections all over the world.

The book is a compilation of five hundred and fourteen entries of Ali Mazrui's writings with some contributions from three others. The bibliography is divided into five sections. Section one contains information on all the twenty books Mazrui has written. The author has painstakingly summarised the content of each book as well as give information on the ones that have been reviewed. Some of his major books listed include: (1) *Africa since 1935*, (2) *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (a book based on his award-winning television series), (3) *Towards a Pax Africana: A study of Ideology and Ambition*.

Section two lists out six pamphlets authored by Mazrui which include:

- (1) *The Black Woman and the Problem of Gender*, (2) *The Barrel of the Gun and the Barrel of Oil in North-South Equation*.

Section three contains entries and abstracts of the three hundred and twelve major academic articles while section four has one hundred and fifty seven magazine articles which Mazrui has written. This section is very significant and it is the one that has made Ali Mazrui very popular.

Section five contains a list of entries of eleven video cassettes and three audio recordings on different subjects. They include: *The Nature of a continent*; *The Dialogue of the deaf between poor and rich countries*; *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*.

All five hundred and fourteen entries are arranged according to number sequence and in reverse chronological order from 1997 to 1962. There are detailed author and subject indexes which refer to bibliographical entry only and a comprehensive list of all journals cited as well as an acronyms list.

In addition to the bibliography, the book features contributions from three people who have known Mazrui at one point in time. The first contribution is an academic introduction to the Mazruiana collection written by J. Isawa Eaigwu of the Institute of Governance and Social Research, Jos, Nigeria. This contributor sees the Mazruiana as "the enlightenment of the dark continent of the cradle of human life". The second contributor, Sulayman S. Nyang of Howard University, USA, describes Mazrui as a "public writer" whose writings have not only been more sensitive to events affecting Muslims in their world, but which have "drawn our attention to the paradoxes of recent African political history".

The conclusion was written by Omari H. Kokele who described Mazrui's essays as humorous and playful and he compared them to the works of James Thurber, Dorothy Parker and Montaigne.

The book is written in clear, simple and concise language and is an ideal book for social scientists and versatile readers. It should form a part of the reference collection of every academic and research library.

Yemisi Dina

Adeola Odutola Law Library

University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

Nigeria: Index to Law Reports (1880 - 1990) 4 v. Lagos: Florence & Lambard (Nig.) Ltd., 202/204 Ikorodu Road, Palmgroove, Lagos, Nigeria.

This book is simply unique in that it is the only index of Law Reports in Nigeria that covers the past hundred years of judicial decisions spanning all the courts of record from the various state high courts to the Federal High Court, Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court. Moreover, it covers a wide range of legal topics spanning admiralty law,

constitutional law, law of contract, criminal law, practice and procedure, arbitration law, taxation law, oil and gas law and last, but not least, intellectual property.

I say it is "unique" with due respect to the pioneering and invaluable work of Gani Fewehinmi and Deji Sasegbon whose contributions to our jurisprudence are widely acknowledged; but the strength of Mr. Olaitan's work lies in its wider scope and greater range.

The work is beautifully bound in four volumes and is very user-friendly. It employs particularly meticulous references, thereby providing a reliable guide to the most obscure points of law. This attribute endears the work to the essential challenge of law practice. To this end, whether you are a lawyer in practice, in academia or in the boardroom you would find it not only desirable but necessary.

For members of the public, it is worthy of note that the power of a lawyer is generated by access to case law without which the quality of legal work rendered to the public is ineffective. Indeed, the role of a lawyer with regard to case law is akin to history - that master of experience that teaches us the past with a view to understanding the present and making provisions for the future. Therefore, this work touches and concerns non-lawyers alike.

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Akinrele and Akinrele Chambers
Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria.

New Publication

Public Libraries in Africa: A Report and Annotated Bibliography. Compiled by Aissa Issak. Oxford: INSAP, 2000, 199p. ISBN 1 902928 00 8

The bibliography is in four sections: Public libraries in Africa: A synthesis report of the literature cited in the bibliography and the country reports by Aissa Issak; Annotated Bibliography, 1994-1999 by Aissa Issak with Carol Priestly and Roger Stringer; Review of some books and articles published on public libraries in Africa by Cheryl Stringer; and Country reports. The four sections concentrated mainly on nine anglophone African countries. These are Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The first section provides an analysis of public libraries in Africa from the literature review. The next section provides a list of annotated entries in ten areas. The first area covers Africa as a whole while the next nine areas are devoted to the countries selected. The third section provides a comprehensive review of 10 books and articles on public libraries in Africa and the last section is country report devoted to each of the countries selected. The reports were written by distinguished librarians.

Department of the ...
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Mrs. Ousaleye has a wide ...
Ousaleye has contributed ...
Ousaleye congratulates Mrs. Ousaleye ...

... F Director Appointed ...
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Mr. Sanjiv Sanjiv is the new Director of ...
... Mr. Sanjiv ...
... and South Africa.

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Professional News and Events

AJLAIS included in African Journals Online (AJOL)

The *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* (AJLAIS) has recently been included in AJOL which provides access to the table of contents (TOC) and abstracts of articles in select journals published in Africa on the Internet. (<http://www.inasp.org.uk/AJOL>). The project is supported by INASP (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications). It normally covers only science journals but two non-science journals *Ife Psychologia* (Nigeria) and *AJLAIS* (Nigeria) have recently been included. Some of the criteria used in selecting journals are regularity of publication of journals and scholarly and academic content. Fifteen journals are currently included in the project.

A New National Librarian for Nigeria

Mrs. O.O. Omolayole has recently been appointed the National Librarian of Nigeria. She was until her appointment, the Director of the Collection Development and Processing Department of the National Library of Nigeria. Mrs. Omolayole obtained BA (Hons) English from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria in 1964 and postgraduate diploma in librarianship from the Ealing Technical College London in 1970. She was admitted to the Associateship of Library Association (ALA) in 1976. She also holds an L.L.B. degree. Mrs. Omolayole has a wide experience in librarianship both in UK and Nigeria. Mrs. Omolayole has contributed immensely to the profession in Nigeria. The Board of AJLAIS congratulates Mrs. Omolayole on her well-deserved position.

New ZIBF Director Appointed

Mr. Moses Samkange is the new Director of Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF). He succeeds Trish Mbanga, the founder Executive Director of ZIBF who retired recently after nearly 10 years of service. Mr. Samkange is well known in the publishing industry in Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Editor joins African Skies Library Foundation Advisory Board

The editor-in-chief of the *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science*, Prof. L.O. Aina is one of the eight persons appointed to the International Advisory Board

of the African Skies Library Foundation. Other well-known persons in the Board include Chinua Achebe, Mandla Langa, Chairperson of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, South Africa and Margaret Ling co-chair person of ZIBF. The foundation, based in the United States of America hopes to establish free public libraries in Africa by building libraries and stocking them with books in both African and European languages.

A New Associate Editor -in-Chief and Business Manager for AJLAIS

Dr. Muta Tihamiyu has been appointed the new associate editor -in- chief of the *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* (AJLAIS) with effect from January 2001. He succeeds Dr. Iyabo Mabawonku who recently stepped down, after a successful tenure of 10 years. Dr. Tihamiyu is currently the Director of the Africa Regional Centre for Information Science, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He holds B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in Economics from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria and the MLIS and Ph.D information science from the University of Western Ontario, Canada. His area of specialisation is information science. Until his appointment, he was on the editorial board of AJLAIS. Dr. Tihamiyu has published widely. We wish him a successful tenure. Meanwhile, Dr. (Mrs) Mabawonku has been appointed Business Manager (Domestic Services) for the journal with effect from January 2001.

Editorial Member becomes full Professor

Dr. Benson E. Edoka, Head of the Department of Library Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka has been promoted to the rank of full professor. Prof. Edoka is a member of the editorial board of AJLAIS. He was educated at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the University of Ibadan, and Loughborough University, United Kingdom. He holds BA, PGDL, MA and Ph.D degrees.

WALA Resuscitated

The West African Library Association (WALA) which was established in 1953 and was dissolved after member nations of the association gained independence in the 1960s has been resuscitated. The ceremony was performed in Ibadan, Nigeria in October 1999. The new WALA is made up of library associations in both the Anglophone and Francophone countries unlike the old WALA which consisted mainly of the Anglophone countries of Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Gambia. Prof. (Mrs.) Christine Kisiedu of Ghana is the new president.

SCAULWA has been revived

The Standing Conference of African University Libraries- Western Area (SCAULWA) has been resuscitated after almost 10 years of being dormant. This was achieved at a meeting held at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration in Accra, Ghana. Librarians from Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo were represented. A representative of the Standing Conference of National and University Libraries- Eastern, Central and Southern (SCANUL-ECS) was in attendance. The meeting elected Mr. I. K. Antwi, the University Librarian, University for Development Studies, Ghana, as the Chairman.

Report of a Conference

Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Librarians (SCECSAL 2000) 10-15 April, 2000, Windhoek, Namibia

Two hundred and thirty-five participants from over 24 countries attended the conference. Thirty papers on various topics were presented during the conference. Some of the resolutions at the meeting include the setting up of a web site and the appointment of a web master to coordinate all activities relating to SCESAL web site, as well as working out appropriate national marketing programmes for library and information services in member countries. Participants also resolved to hold the next conference in South Africa in 2002.

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AIMS AND SCOPE

African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science is established mainly to provide a forum for librarians, archivists, documentalists, information scientists and other information related professionals in Africa to report their research findings but with emphasis on African setting. The Journal is refereed by distinguished scholars. Emphasis is on empirical research; however manuscripts of high quality on theoretical aspects of the three information related disciplines will be considered for publication.

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