

## MANAGING NEWSPAPER COLLECTIONS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA

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### Abstract

*This study was to find out how state-owned or public universities in Ghana are managing their newspaper collections, from acquisition, processing, preservation to dissemination of newspaper information. The study was also to find out challenges encountered and offer recommendations. Data was collected from the eight public university libraries in Ghana using a questionnaire. Copies of the questionnaire were e-mailed to the libraries outside Accra whilst those in Accra were hand delivered. The study found that the numbers of newspapers acquired by the libraries vary but activities concerning their management were similar. The only method of preserving the collection was by binding. None of the libraries was digitizing their collection and it was only one library that adopted electronic means of indexing the newspaper information. All the activities undertaken by the libraries in managing their newspaper collections (except indexing done by one library electronically) were done manually. It is hoped that the findings will inform and encourage the libraries to pool together their efforts and resources to adopt modern methods of preservation (for example digitizing) and managing the newspaper information for easy accessibility.*

**Keywords:** NEWSPAPER MANAGEMENT, ACADEMIC LIBRARIES, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT, COLLECTION MANAGEMENT.

### Introduction

Newspapers are still among the most important often unique historical source of information because they carry primary record of events that shape communities they represent. Their importance as a source of information cannot be disputed. They are known to contain articles of research value and intelligent views and could be a source for current affairs, for reference information and for historical purpose. According to Fadiran (1998) since newspapers record events and activities that take place in a country, they are rich sources of research materials for the humanities and social sciences. Newspapers help students, researchers and faculty to be well-informed about current events (Olorunsola, 1997). Though not everything published is of importance to research, some

historians contend that the most insignificant occurrence today is part of our history tomorrow (Kufa, 2000). Many libraries and other organizations therefore acquire/collect and keep both local and internationally published newspapers in order to make these available to their clientele as supplementary sources of information.

Stoker (1999) cited in Nakiganda (2008) stated that newspapers were never intended by their producers to be permanent means of storing textual information even though they are recognised to contain a mass of valuable information not available elsewhere. The main reason was that poor quality paper was used in publishing newspapers. Even though newspapers are a very good source of primary information, they are not liked by a large number of librarians and archivists because they are bulky, difficult to assemble as full sets, hard to catalogue because of different editions and frequent title changes and sizes, awkward to collate and to preserve. Their management is laborious and staff intensive, and that means cost intensive. They also take a lot of shelf space, and they need special treatment for preservation. According to Coates (2006), without proper preservation and management such as indexing services, information from newspapers is difficult to access and is in effect under-utilised. For these reasons, many studies have been undertaken to look at preservation of newspapers and managing the information they contain for easy access and dissemination.

A preliminary search revealed that much had not been done to investigate management of newspapers in the country. This study, therefore, was undertaken to fill in the gap in newspaper management in public universities in Ghana. The paper examines management of newspaper collections of the following university libraries – the Balme Library, University of Ghana (UG), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi, University of Cape Coast (UCC), University of Education, Winneba (UEW), University for Development Studies (UDS), Tamale, University College of Mines and Technology (UMAT), Tarkwa, Institute of Professional Studies (IPS), Accra, and School of Journalism, Accra.

The objectives of the study, thus, are:

- To identify the newspapers that the libraries collect/acquire;
- To report their newspaper management practices;
- To identify the challenges encountered in the management process; and
- To offer recommendations for future direction of newspaper collection projects that might have been going on in Ghana.

The paper therefore examined how the newspapers were acquired, the ways in which the newspaper information was organised and the preservation strategies adopted.

### **Background Information**

Newspaper collection in Ghana and in the universities in the country have a long history since 1822 in the then Gold Coast. Jones-Quartey (1975) provided a very vivid and detailed account of the history and the press in Ghana. He related that the first newspaper, *Royal Gold Coast Gazette & Commercial Intelligence*, and the second *West Africa Herald*, were first published in 1822 and 1857 respectively. He reported that these papers covered two major subject areas – economics and education matters and also news from Europe, America, West Indies and Asia.

During the chequered history of the press in general and newspapers in particular in Ghana, many other newspapers followed, among them are *the Daily Graphic*, *the Ghanaian Times*, *the Spectator* and *the Mirror* which are national dailies and weeklies respectively and which are still being published. Some of these papers were established to champion the political agenda of its publishers. Many among these newspapers died off and some were erratic. There were times when the press and the newspapers were censored depending on the political climate of the country. As a result, newspapers of some particular periods in the history of the country could be difficult to come by. During those times some institutions and libraries were designated as depositories for these historic papers. Jones-Quartey (1975) listed those depositories and their newspaper holdings. Information about all these events needs to be organized and preserved for posterity. There are many newspapers published in the country now especially private ones because of the liberal environment. However, there is no complete directory of Ghanaian newspapers at present and it is difficult to determine the total number of newspapers published in the country. Despite this situation, as at 2007 there were 135 newspapers ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_newspapers\\_in\\_Ghana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_newspapers_in_Ghana)) and this source did not list all the 135 newspapers either. Also the newspapers listed on this site did not number up to the 135. This figure was however adopted in analysing the data for the paper.

### **Literature Review**

#### *General Information*

Many articles had been published on the various aspects of newspaper collection management. Walravens (2006) edited a publication that presented a comprehensive overview of management of newspaper collections in libraries. The papers described numerous newspaper projects that had been undertaken in various countries such as South

Africa, Namibia, France, China, among others, to improve access to newspaper information and to preserve the collection. Most of the papers also focused on digitization of newspapers to enhance preservation and to improve accessibility on the web by a wider community.

It had been acknowledged in the literature that newspaper collection management could be a challenge because of issues such as availability of proper reference tools; proper preservation and conservation of newspapers; indexing of newspapers and publishing of printed indexes; efficiency in provision of newspaper information and lack of automation among others (Mwiru, 1999 and Okorafor, 1991). They stated that in order to provide effective and efficient newspaper information dissemination service, action was required in the areas of staffing, equipment and technology, bibliographic control, preservation and storage, microfilming and accommodation. Okorafor (1991) for example, revealed that management of newspapers varied from institution to institution or from library to library depending on the institution's policies, standards or resources. As a result, some collections are managed better than others. He added that commitment of the library and its institution is also important. He recommended that newspaper collection in Nigeria for example, should be taken on as a national project and be given national direction. This recommendation agreed with Mwiru's assertion that librarians should form cooperatives so that they could share resources, ideas and experiences which would help them improve upon the management of their newspaper collections.

#### *Newspaper clipping*

News clippings are done to provide easy access to research information which would otherwise have been difficult to retrieve or access in the absence of indexing, (Kuffa, 2000). They bring together information on specific subjects from various newspapers. These cuttings or clippings are done on topical subjects and the bulk of the newspapers are then discarded. The methods of clipping differ from library to library. They may be a loose assemblage of clippings in ordered form or a disorganized jumble, pasted onto individual sheets of paper or pasted into scrapbooks (Hart 2006). Some libraries paste the cuttings on other sheets of paper and place them in files or folders. Some use glue to paste them on A3 paper, as others glue the clippings in large scrapbooks or in albums. It has been revealed in the literature that every article cannot be cut, or all subjects cannot be covered, thus, libraries limit the subject areas that they cut articles on. Kufa (2000), for example, noted that University of Botswana Library selected four subject areas – democracy, primary health care, education and employment in Botswana – as a start in their press cutting project.

Hart (2006), however, noted that even though subject clippings from newspapers provide an extremely useful source for researchers, they are fragile. The problem with newspaper clipping however is their lack of permanence due to the poor quality of paper used in printing. Continuous handling of the clippings could make them to become tatty and eventually deteriorate beyond use. He therefore suggested that as a beginning, the clippings could be photocopied, microfilmed and later digitized. He added that indexing from clippings proved easier than indexing from the original newspaper.

Libraries now offer bibliographic databases of news clippings which provide online access for users. This has facilitated wide circulation of the news clippings and better searching of the archives. Matoria et al (2003) related that they adopted electronic method of cutting and clipping of news items from newspapers onto their NewsNIC homepage which could then be accessed by researchers in their organizations and also making this news widely circulated.

### *Indexing*

Newspaper collections are often underutilized for lack of proper organization especially indexing. Indexing helps in effective searching. Okorafor (1989) noted that lack of indexes at some libraries in Nigeria drove away potential patrons and some had to travel long distances just to use other libraries' indexes. In spite of the usefulness of indexes, compiling one is not easy. Coates (2006) pointed out that thinking that indexing could be done quickly even automatically by computer was a mirage. He added that true indexing was a painstaking, precise, monotonous task demanding a high degree of insight, skill and broad general knowledge.

In Okorafor's (1989) survey, he proposed that an indexer should have some essential characteristics to be able to do effective indexing. For example, an indexer should have a good general education preferably a degree, should have a sustained interest in the trends of newspaper publication, should have a thorough mastery of users' characteristics which will enable him/her anticipate their needs with reasonable accuracy, should be familiar with Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), should have a good command of English and be proficient in at least one major Nigerian language.

He also discussed indexing aids, techniques and processes to be adopted to enhance the work. He advocated for LCSH as the basic indexing language tool to use because it adequately provides for subjects of international application and for subjects relating to the United States and the European countries. He, however, suggested a compilation of local subject headings to take care of new emerging terms/phrases/names evolved as a result of new policies introduced by every Nigerian government and international

relations and such terms and phrases had different meanings in the Nigerian context. This suggestion corroborates Coates' (2006) view when he maintained that he favoured user-friendly headings such as those in an encyclopaedia, rather than the pedantic LCSH.

Okorafor (1989) recommended that libraries should not delay indexing and create backlogs since this habit frustrates users and humiliates the librarian. Delayed filing is as bad as delayed indexing, so libraries must avoid massive accumulations of unfiled cards. In addition, index should be mimeographed quarterly with annual cumulations.

#### *Microfilming*

One method of tackling preservation and access of newspapers is through microfilming. Microfilm newspapers are made because it is a better way of preserving originals for future reference and research. It is considered as an intermediary preservation method which can later be scanned and digitized. According to Nakiganda (2008) microfilming may have its limitations but it is the appropriate solution in low income countries because it is cost effective. Nakiganda (2008) cited Tabb (2000) to have reported that, though microfilming is not a perfect medium, it had proven to be an effective technology for rescuing brittle paper and for facilitating access to endangered research materials. In addition, microfilming when created according to international standards succeeds in preserving millions of newspaper pages from deterioration, and provides many readers in distant locations to gain access.

#### *Digitization*

Digital newspaper projects are a hot topic in Europe and around the world. Walravens (2008) edited a number of IFLA publications – which focused on management of newspaper collections. Key issues discussed in the publication were on access, preservation and digitisation of newspaper collections. Bremer-Lamaanen (2005) stated that digitizing has become the most demanding, important and growing area in the future of library work. He stated that, “digitizing means new native materials for education and research, digitizing creates new collection, does not double the old ones, digitizing is not an option, it is a necessity”. It has further been pointed out in the literature that digitization brings rare materials to the public eye; unites collections which are separated geographically; makes newspaper collections more readily accessible through the world wide web; reduces space needed for storage and allows remote access and simultaneous access by many users, (Mieczkowska and Pryor, 2002), (Brown and Fenton, 2006). One major problem faced in digitizing, however, is the heterogeneous nature of newspapers which makes the process difficult. As a result, projects often focus on digitizing major or selective articles instead of the entire newspaper.

Limb (2006) warned that digitization does not come without costs. He mentioned some of the costs as start up cost, processing and digital preservation costs, and technical problems. He said African countries will still face the age old problem of scarce resources in the digital age but recommends that they should form partnerships in solving the problem.

The literature reviewed indicated that some libraries are making every effort to organize and preserve their newspaper collections to enhance access to newspaper information. Most of these were in the areas of organization such as indexing, clipping, microfilming, digitizing among others. The literature indicated what had been done in some African countries but much was not said about Ghana. This survey therefore is to find out how public university libraries in Ghana are organizing their newspaper collection to enhance access to newspaper information and preserve their collections.

### **Methodology**

The survey method of research was employed in undertaking the study. The study was undertaken between September 2010 and January 2011. Copies of the questionnaire were sent to all the eight public university librarians in the country. These are the libraries of the University of Ghana (UG), Legon, the University of Cape Coast (UCC), Cape Coast, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi, the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), the University for Development Studies (UDS), Tamale. The following were recently accredited to become public universities – University of Mines and Technology (UMAT), Tarkwa, Institute of Professional Studies (IPS), Accra, and Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ), Accra. The libraries outside Accra were contacted via email, which were completed and returned through the email. However, copies of the questionnaire to those libraries in Accra were hand delivered by one of the authors of the paper, and collected back by the same person at a later date.

The four page questionnaire had five sections, namely, general information, indexing, press clipping, preservation and staffing. The general information section covered questions on selection of newspapers, mode of acquisition and types of newspapers. The section on indexing covered types of indexing, whether manual or electronic and the kind of software being used. The press clipping section covered types of clipping done whilst the section on preservation covered methods of preservation. The section on staffing covered type of staff engaged at the newspaper section, their qualification and training that was being given them. The questionnaire contained multiple choice as well as open ended responses.

### **Findings and discussions**

*Acquisition of newspapers*

Six out of the eight libraries returned the questionnaires, giving a response rate of 75%. The libraries that returned the completed questionnaires were – UG, KNUST, UEW, UDS, IPS and GIJ. For the purposes of anonymity the libraries have been randomly designated with these alphabets – A, B, C, D, E, F. All the six libraries indicated that they acquire newspapers as part of their collection. The period that they started receiving newspapers reflected the date of establishment of the institutions. The papers they acquired included both state-owned and privately owned dailies and weeklies. Three of the libraries started acquiring newspapers in the 1960s, one in the 1940s, one in the 1950s and the last in the 1990s. Clearly, the libraries would be having a lot of both old and current newspapers of immense historical value.

When the respondents were asked to give reasons why they acquired newspapers, all the six libraries (100%) acknowledged that newspapers have become an integral part of today's information sources and therefore worth collecting. Specifically, all of them indicated that they acquired the newspapers for the purpose of providing current information for their users. One library added that the newspapers were acquired because they were used as teaching aids in their institution. Apart from articles of research, newspapers contain up-to-date investigative, educational, occupational, social and business information, they indicated. Their reasons for acquiring newspapers re-emphasised the findings of other authors such as Kufa (2000); Clausen (2005); Okorafor (1991) and Mwiru (1999).

*Selection of newspapers*

In selection of newspapers to acquire, all but one involved the library. In five of the libraries either the Serials Librarian or the University Librarian was responsible for the selection. In the sixth case, it was the Public Relations Unit of the University that does the selection of the newspapers without involving the library. The implication here is that the library would not use its money to pay for the papers which was to their advantage. Whether the libraries would increase the titles they acquire, 50% indicated yes, 33% indicated no whilst 17% did not answer.

Concerning the number of copies of the papers acquired by the libraries, there were variations. The number of copies ranged between one and six. The highest number of copies acquired was six for *Daily Graphic* and four for the *Ghanaian Times* by one of the libraries. It was surprising that some of the libraries acquired a copy each of the *Weekly Spectator* and the *Mirror* which were both state owned weekend papers. For the private papers the number of copies ranged between one and four. In view of the large population of the university communities in the country, one could say that two copies



each of the state owned newspapers acquired by most of the libraries were grossly inadequate. This is because some copies of the newspapers have to be set aside for binding, otherwise the frequent handling and heavy usage of the few copies by large numbers may render the papers weak and binding would become difficult and costly.

*Mode of acquisition*

Two (33%) of the responding libraries indicated that they acquired newspapers both by subscription and legal deposit. One (17%) stated by direct purchasing and another two (33%) indicated subscription alone and the last library (17%) indicated by subscription and from gifts. The library that buys directly from the news stand indicated that it was the administration of the parent institution, which purchased the papers and passed them on to the library. According to Okorafor (1991) where newspapers are selected and bought by the Heads of institutions and passed on to the libraries, the likelihood is that the newspapers may be delivered late in the day or even the following day. Further, the newspapers may be intercepted or even get lost in transit. This could deny the library receiving some issues which may create gaps in their collection.

Those who acquired by legal deposit complained that they had not been receiving all the locally published newspapers because the publishers flouted the Legal Deposit Law or were ignorant about the law. They added that the law enforcing agencies did not do any better since they do not enforce the law. This revelation corroborates the assertion of Kufa (2000) that “although legal deposit legislation exists in many African countries, including Botswana, it has not always been easy to enforce it on behalf of legal deposit libraries.”

*Types of newspapers acquired*

All the libraries (100%) acquired both public or state-owned and private newspapers. The number of papers acquired varied from library to library. All the libraries together acquired 24 titles, (16 private and 8 public newspapers). Library C acquired 13 titles in all (four public and nine private papers). Library A acquired eight titles (six public and two private). Library B acquired seven titles (six public and one private) and Library D acquired 11 titles (five public and six private). Library E acquired nine titles (two public and seven private) whilst Library F acquired nine titles (five public and four private). Two libraries – C and D -acquired more private newspapers than the public papers, (nine private and four public by C and six private and five public by D). The reason for this could be that more private newspapers are published in the country than the public or the state owned ones and those libraries might have wanted to acquire as many titles as they could afford.

*Public Newspapers*

The state-owned or the public newspapers that the individual libraries acquired are presented in Table I. They were listed as *the Daily Graphic, The Ghanaian Times, The Mirror, Weekly Spectator, Junior Graphic, Graphic Business, Graphic Showbiz and Graphic Sports*. None of the libraries acquired all the eight newspapers compiled from the data collected. However, all (100%) the libraries acquired the *Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times*, which are public or state-owned dailies and five (71%) of the libraries acquired *The Weekly Spectator and the Mirror* which are public or state-owned weeklies. Hammond (2000) in her survey of newspaper readership patterns among members of Parliament found that 100% of the MPs read Daily Graphic and 81.3% read the Ghanaian Times because they claimed it was the most credible and most widely circulated paper. It was therefore not surprising that all the libraries acquired the Daily Graphic and 71% acquired the Ghanaian Times.

**Table I: Public Newspapers acquired by the Libraries.**

Newspaper	Libraries					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Daily Graphic	x	x	x	x	X	x
Ghanaian Times	x	x	x	x	X	x
Weekly Spectator	x	x	x	x	O	x
The Mirror	x	x	x	x	O	x
Junior Graphic	x	o	o	o	O	o
Graphic Business	o	x	o	x	O	o
Graphic Showbiz	x	o	o	o	O	o
Graphic Sports	o	x	o	o	O	o

Source: Field Survey, 2011

x = Acquired

o = Not acquired

As indicated in Table I, Library A and Library B acquired six papers each, Libraries C and F acquired four each, D five, and E acquired two. It is surprising that one of the libraries did not acquire any of the two public weeklies. This outcome is difficult to explain since no reasons were given.

*Private newspapers*

The private newspapers acquired by the libraries numbered 16. They include the *Democrat, the Mail, Public Agenda, Daily Guide, Business and Financial Times, Crusading Guide, Palaver, Ghanaian Observer, the Enquirer, the Pioneer, the Chronicle, the Heritage, Daily Searchlight, Daily Post, Daily Dispatch and Resource Watch Agenda*.

Table II depicts the individual titles acquired by the libraries.

**Table 2: Private Newspapers acquired by the Libraries**

Newspaper	Libraries					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
The Mail	o	o	x	o	o	o
Public Agenda	o	o	x	o	o	x
Daily Guide	o	o	x	x	x	x
Business Times	o	o	x	x	x	x
Crusading Guide	o	o	x	x	o	o
Palaver	o	o	x	o	o	o
Ghanaian Observer	o	o	x	o	x	o
The Enquirer	o	o	x	o	o	o
The Pioneer	x	x	o	o	o	o
The Chronicle	x	o	o	x	x	o
Daily Post	o	o	o	o	x	o
Daily Searchlight	o	o	o	o	x	o
The Heritage	o	o	o	x	x	o
Resource Watch	o	o	o	o	o	x
Daily Dispatch	o	o	o	x	o	o
Democrat	o	o	x	o	o	o

Source: Field Survey, 2011

x = Acquired

o =Not acquired

Library C acquired majority of the private newspapers followed by E and D. Out of the 16 papers, C acquired nine (56.25%), E had seven (43.75%) D acquired six (37.5%), F acquired four (25%), Library A acquired two (12.5%) and B one (6.25%).

The private newspapers acquired by most of the libraries were *Daily Guide*, *Business Times* and *Chronicle*. Four (66.7%) libraries each acquired *Daily Guide* and *Business Times* and three (50%) acquired the *Chronicle*. The rest of the papers listed were acquired by either one or two libraries. Those acquired by most of the libraries might have contained information of high value. Afanasieva (2005) pointed out that the information value of a newspaper should be important, and must reflect both official and opposite points of view for it to be worth acquiring.

*Total of all the newspapers acquired by the libraries*

The total number of newspaper titles acquired by all the libraries amounted to 24. Library A acquired 33.3% out of the 24, Library B 29.2%, Library C 54.2%, Library D 45.8%, Library E and Library F acquired 37.5% each.

This overall figure of 24 newspapers acquired by all the libraries was rather on the low side. This is because as at 2007, 135 newspapers were being published in the country (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List-of-newspapers-in-Ghana>) (accessed on 16/12/10.) Twenty-four represents only 17.8% of the 135 newspaper titles published in the country. This finding is in sharp contrast with Clausen's (2005) results where he found out that since 1990 all the 275 different newspapers published in Norway had been legally deposited at the National Library.

We could only speculate that the libraries acquired the number of titles they could afford since the publishing companies also did not obey the legal deposit law. Another reason could be that the libraries were not interested in the private newspapers for reasons best known to them. We could only speculate based on Hammond's (2000) observation that some private newspapers had been criticised for being sensational and containing unbelievable stories. Afanasieva (2005) also observed that domestic newly published papers in Russia were of low information value, full of adverts and sometimes impossible to define the type of publication.

In view of the observations of Hammond and Afanasieva stated above, Kufa (2000) cited Curtins (1969) to have recommended that, "every relevant source must be taken into account, but no source must be taken uncritically. In regard to any kind of evidence, the rule is, if it exists, it must be consulted". He added that, if any source has to be used it must be examined to see whether they can yield evidence to help solve the problem at hand.

*Staff*

The libraries did not have dedicated staff responsible for the management of the newspapers except two. There were four staff responsible for the newspapers in one library and none of those staff had library education. They all, however, had Senior High School Certificates. They were trained on the job, for example, how to conduct reference interview and provide customer care. In the second library, two staff were responsible for the newspaper collection. These two had education in Library Studies. One had a first degree in Information Studies and the other a Diploma in Library Studies.

Those libraries that did not have staff solely for the newspapers had them as part of the serials section and they perform other duties such as information search, retrieval of

information from journals, dissemination of information and general assistance to users. In one library, six staff were in the serials unit and their qualification ranged from postgraduate level to Senior High School Certificate. They were trained to update their skills in record entry, digitizing and document imaging.

#### *Organisation of the Newspapers*

In response to the question if the libraries had a newspaper section, four (66.6%) indicated that they had newspaper sections in their libraries where the newspapers were processed, whilst two (33.3%) indicated they did not have a newspaper section in the library. This could mean that the newspapers were located together with some other collections. All said and done, all the libraries recorded the newspapers whenever they were received. Three of the libraries indicated they recorded information about the newspaper when received into a notebook, whilst two indicated they recorded on cards.

The activities the libraries undertook in the organisation of the newspaper collection, thus, include receiving and recording of issues into a notebook, stamping and filing, monitoring circulation, display of current issues, indexing and preparing of back issues for binding. This is illustrated in Table III.

**Table 3: Activities at the Newspaper Sections**

Activities	Number of Libraries
Display of current issues	1
Preparation of back issues for binding.	2
Stamping and filing	2
Indexing	1
Monitoring circulation of the newspapers	2
Receiving and recording of issues into a notebook	2

*Source: Field Survey, 2011*

The activities undertaken at the various newspaper sections of the libraries varied. Some activities were undertaken by only one library while more than one were undertaken by some. This might have been influenced by the policies of the individual libraries.

#### *Storage and Preservation*

Concerning how the libraries stored and preserved their newspaper collections, all the four libraries stated that the newspapers were arranged by date, bound and stored away in a designated place. One library added that they filed their newspapers in addition to the binding. The indication here is that these libraries were still using the traditional methods

of preserving their back issue newspapers. Besides this traditional method of preservation, modern techniques such as digital archiving are now available to use in preserving the newspapers. It could be that these libraries were yet to convert their newspaper collections to digital formats.

#### *Newspaper Information*

For newspaper information to be easily accessed and used, it must be organised properly. For this reason the libraries were asked whether they practiced newspaper clipping or indexing. In response, only one library practiced newspaper clipping. Five (83%) of the libraries, however, indexed newspaper articles and one library did not answer the question. The subject areas of the articles indexed varied from library to library. While some indexed most news items including general ones, some restricted themselves to areas of their institutions' subject interests and publications on their institutions.

In answering the question how many papers they were indexing, three (50%) libraries responded. Two of those libraries were indexing two papers and one indexing six newspapers. One of them specifically mentioned the *Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times* as the newspapers they indexed. The one who mentioned that they indexed six papers actually subscribed to six papers which meant they indexed all the newspapers subscribed to.

Among the five libraries who undertook indexing, it was only one (20%) that did the indexing using a software (J-man software). The others did the indexing manually. This one library provided key words to facilitate retrieval of information from the newspaper database.

In performance of the indexing duties, the libraries acknowledged that they faced some challenges such as backlogs of newspapers to index. The manual process of indexing is slow and also does not facilitate easy access. Inadequate staffing, divided attention of staff since they had to perform other library duties and making entries at the same time, were also some of the problems. Some libraries found it difficult to even have continuous access to the papers to index since the library had to share the same copies with users. For the library that electronically indexed its articles, interruptions in internet connectivity was a problem. In addition obsolete computers and accessories did not help matters.

#### ***Recommendations***

Newspapers contain heritage information about communities/countries. Managing newspaper collection thus is no longer a rudimentary activity. It calls for advanced

technology in its management – from acquisition, its preservation and making information in the newspapers available. The following are recommended:

The libraries should take control of the selection and acquisition of newspapers. This should be based on information gathered from their users.

They should have newspaper collection sections with dedicated staff to be responsible for managing the collection. This will avoid back logs that are experienced in for example, indexing.

It is about time all the libraries employ ICT in managing newspaper collections. Appropriate software and modern computers and accessories and emerging new equipment should be acquired for managing the newspaper collection.

Other more effective and efficient methods of preservation and conservation, such as microfilming, and digitizing should be adapted instead of relying on only binding of the newspapers. The libraries should start subscribing to electronic newspapers if they are available.

The public universities should collaborate to manage and share newspaper information. After all, these university libraries are already collaborating in a number of areas, through the Committee of University Librarians and their Deputies (CULD), and the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH). They can pool together resources to seek their common interest. Further, they should also collaborate with newspaper publishers and with the National Archives since they all acquire almost the same newspapers.

The Ghana Library Association (GLA) should work towards the enforcement of the Legal Deposit of newspapers in the deposit libraries.

The libraries should start thinking of digitization of the newspaper collection. This is the trend now and they should not be left behind.

### ***Conclusion***

Findings from the study indicated that, each library was undertaking some activity to manage its newspaper collections, but most of these activities were rudimentary. The libraries should update their mode of operation to meet the expectation of the 21st century newspaper information seeker as they also preserve the nation's heritage. It is hoped that the outcome of this study will be translated into improving managing newspaper collection in the nation's public universities and all other institutions that acquire newspapers.

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