# THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN FACILITATING INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMMES: THE CASE OF TWO CONSTITUENT COLLEGES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

Patrick Mwakilama
University College of Lands and Architectural Studies and

Julita Nawe
University of Dar es Salaam

## Abstract

*This paper discusses the implications of the University of Dar es Salaam Institutional Transformation Programme (ITP) on information services provision at Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) and University College of Lands and Architectural Studies (UCLAS) libraries. The paper is based on a Master's dissertation whose objective was to determine the extent to which the two College libraries (MUCHS and UCLAS) were equipped to meet the challenges of Institutional Transformation Programme - UDSM 2000. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect data. The findings of the study established that ITP has raised new demands and challenges in terms of information services provision, including ICT facilities, information retrieval tools and the changing role of librarians. The study notes that the two libraries were not adequately equipped to meet the challenges. Problems noted include technological and resource based ones. The study recommends the colleges to clearly understand the implications of ITP to their libraries and give the necessary support. They should ensure that the library management is empowered to make decisions and implement their programmes on time.*

## Introduction

Academic libraries are established to accomplish a specific purpose of fulfilling the key mission of universities, that is, teaching, learning, research and service to the community. For years, academic libraries have been fulfilling this role with professionalism in the context of print based resources, which called for explicit collection development policies, user needs analysis, selection and acquisition of materials in order to satisfy real and potential needs of users. However, technological developments of the past three decades, have brought challenging and complex environment for libraries particularly those in less developed countries. This has been in terms of exercising their professionalism in the midst of critical financial

constraints and shifting paradigm in forms and modes of information provision as strongly influenced by developments in Information and Communication Technologies (Rowley and Black, 1996).

Working with these challenges calls for harmonized efforts between a university system and a library system. Any serious gap is likely to affect the University in its transformation process because quality information, which is one of the critical factors in decision making, is likely to affect the university mission adversely. This study examined the extent to which the two College libraries of the University of Dar es Salaam namely MUCHS and UCLAS were equipped to meet the challenges of its Institutional Transformation Programme (ITP) commonly known as UDSM 2000 in the context of changing information provision environment.

## Working Environment of Institutions of Higher Learning in Tanzania

In recent years, the working environments in which institutions of higher learning operate are changing (Nkunya, 2000, UDSM 2000, UDSM 1999). Trends in the political, social, economic, education, gender aspects, regional integration, science and technology etc have created opportunities as well as challenges to higher learning institutions in Tanzania (UCLAS 2001; UDSM 2000; MUCHS 1999). In addition, trends in national policies, employment of university graduates, funding of higher education, networking and partnerships are among the challenges facing higher learning institutions in Africa, including Tanzania (UCLAS 2001). Different scholars assert that trends in the strategic environment have created new demands and challenges to the higher education sector which include: expansion of student enrolments and training more effectively for the changing labour market, developing research capacities and programmes in strategic and priority national areas, committed to standards and ideals of creative and internationally recognized academic work sensitive to national needs, using technology and other means to ensure improved quality of outputs and efficiency and flexibility (Ishumi, 1994; Kundi and Chijoriga, 2000; Mkude, 2000; UDSM, 1999). In an effort to respond to the needs of the working environment, the higher education system in the country is being reformed.

## Background to the University of Dar es Salaam

The University of Dar es Salaam was born out of a decision taken on 25th March 1970 by the East African Authority to split the then University of East Africa into three independent universities for Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania (UDSM Prospectus 2001/2002). The Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) was established in July 1991 as a

Constituent College of the University of Dar es Salaam when the then Faculty of Medicine was upgraded to a University College. On the other hand, the University College of Lands and Architectural Studies (UCLAS) came into being after the upgrading of the former Ardhi Institute to a Constituent College of the University of Dar es Salaam on 1$^{st}$ July 1996.

## Institutional Transformation at the University of Dar es Salaam

The University of Dar es Salaam being a subsystem of the higher education sector has been challenged to readjust to meet the needs of the higher education in the country. To participate fully in higher education reforms, the University of Dar es Salaam embarked on Institutional Transformation Programme (ITP). According to UDSM Five Year Rolling Strategic Plan 2000/2001-2004/05, the University of Dar es Salaam with the help of ITP strives to become more responsible and responsive to the needs of the economy and national development. It provides wide access to its services so that a greater proportion of the population is able to benefit from a university education, and build a new identity with its own distinctive characteristics in an effort to achieve and maintain a reputable national, regional and international position in terms of the relevance and quality of teaching, research and consultancy services. The Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) and the University College of Lands and Architectural Studies (UCLAS) being part of the University of Dar es Salaam have also embarked on Institutional Transformation Programme to cope with the needs of the new working environment. In the process of establishing themselves as constituent colleges of UDSM and realizing their mission of teaching, research and delivery of public services that is in line with higher education policy as well as UDSM ITP 2000, the two Colleges formulated their own Strategic Plans in order to address the needs of ITP. MUCHS and UCLAS have both increased student enrolment, introduced new academic programmes, new methods of teaching, reviewed their curriculum and adopted ICTs in teaching, research and administration. However, the on-going MUCHS and UCLAS programmes have raised new demands and challenges on library resources and information services delivery at the libraries. According to UCLAS Library Strategic Plan 2001/02 to 2005/06, the environment in which the two college libraries operate has always been changing. The UCLAS Library Strategic Plan 2003/4 to 2006/7 reiterates that due to Institutional Transformation Programme, the new status and organisation structure of the two colleges call for improved and expanded library services in this new environment.

Many scholars agree with the views pointed out in the UCLAS Library Strategic Plan 2001/02 to 2005/06 that the ongoing UDSM Institutional

Transformation Programme poses new demands and challenges to the old institutional setup which need to be addressed (Ishumi et al. 2000; Kundi and Chijoriga 2000; Nkunya, 2000; Mkude 2000). These scholars maintain that issues of human resources, funding and physical infrastructure need to be addressed seriously before the implementation of institutional strategic objectives is done (Ishumi, Maghimbi and Kalembo 2000; Kundi and Chijoriga 2000; Nkunya, 2000; Mkude 2000). On the other hand, scholars advocating systems approach to transformation programme argue that although Institutional Transformation Programme is for the entire system, there are new demands and challenges unique to a particular subsystem (Bhatacharya, 1998; Morgan, 1995; Underwood, 1990). They maintain that the implications of Institutional Transformation Programme to different units forming the system must be understood and the new demands and challenges facing these subsystems must be addressed rather than generalization (Bhatacharya, 1998; Morgan, 1995; Underwood, 1990).

## Implications of UDSM Transformation Programme to MUCHS and UCLAS Libraries

College Libraries being subsystems within the College setting are established to support the overall objectives of the parent institutions, that is, to support teaching, learning, research and consultancy services. Following UDSM 2000 Transformation Programme, MUCHS and UCLAS libraries are faced with new work environment. The two College libraries are expected to respond positively to new demands and challenges that emerged as a result of new working environment to fully support the objectives of their parent institutions.

According to UCLAS Library Five-Year Rolling Plan 2001/02 to 2005/06, Institutional Transformation Programme (ITP) has raised new demands and challenges to the College library services. UCLAS Library Strategic Plan maintains that there is a need to strengthen college library services by expanding the physical facilities, increasing book titles and journals and reviewing the quantity and quality of staff to be in line with the emerging challenges to the library. MUCHS Five-Year Rolling Strategic Plan 1999/2000-2003/4 asserts that MUCHS Library being one of the units forming the College is faced with challenging task of responding to strategic issues addressed by UDSM Institutional Transformation Programme. Mangla (1994) argues that in institutions of higher learning, teachers are the heads, students are the body and the library its heart. Mangla (1994) maintains that if the head and the body are to perform their functions properly and effectively, the heart must be well developed and strong in its functioning.

## Curriculum Changes Versus Provision of Library Services

The academic library supports the curriculum through the provision of relevant information resources both print and non-print. Changes in the curriculum have implications for the library that must be addressed before they become a serious problem. Kumar (1994) explains that for the library to fully support the curriculum, it must be able to provide appropriate and adequate resources both print and non-print for both the staff and students.

## Increased Student Enrolment Versus Provision of Library Services

Increased student enrolment poses new demands and challenges to the current library space as well as information resources provision in the two colleges. According to Kaula (1994), there is a minimum standard of library building required to support college status even though internal management decisions determine its implementation. Kaula (1994) maintains that the internal management decisions need to act according to the international minimum standards of library building proposed to support the college status.

## Implications of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) on Library Services Provision

The application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for teaching, research and learning in institutions of higher learning and the increased availability of information resources in electronic formats, largely determines how institutions of higher learning are changing their traditional ways of doing things. Different scholars argue that ICTs application in higher learning institutions offers a number of opportunities such as enabling distance education, networking, and collaborative research activities (Barker, 1998; UDSM 2000). Realizing ICTs opportunities in transforming higher education in Africa, institutions of higher learning are steadily adopting ICT. Academic libraries in these institutions have also been challenged to adopt ICTs in order to remain relevant and fully support the changing dimension of their parent body (Nyerembe, 2000). Baker (1998) asserts that ICTs application for libraries must be developed to provide new tools and systems in order to improve and expand networked libraries. On the other hand, Kiondo (2001) argues that although advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have created enormous opportunities for African University libraries and librarians, they have equally presented challenges which need to be addressed in a scientific and professional manner in order for libraries in Africa, including Tanzania to fully use these technologies. Otto (1998) subscribes that access to electronic information resources products

is completely different from the traditional methods of administration and distribution of paper based information and maintains that new media means new products, new technical condition, and new innovative and adaptable administrative and operational structures. Katundu (1998; 2001) on the other hand emphasizes on the strategies needed in academic and research libraries in Tanzania to sustain ICT resources acquired through donor funding.

Based on the background to the problem, the question raised was that following Institutional Transformation Programme (ITP), does the two College Libraries have the capacity to meet challenges and demands in terms of needed resources, services, equipment, materials and management? This general question was raised based on the fact that little was known regarding the extent to which the two College libraries have responded to the changing demands and challenges. As a result, a study was conducted to examine the extent to which current college library resources/information services provision at MUCHS and UCLAS meet new demands and challenges that emerged as a result of UDSM 2000 Transformation Programme.

**Methodology**

This research was carried out at MUCHS and UCLAS in 2002/2003. Various published and unpublished documents were consulted for secondary data. Primary data was collected using open ended and closed questionnaires, interview, observation and focus group discussions. The sample included 50 respondents, that is 32 academic staff and 18 library staff. Twenty out of 32 academic staff were from MUCHS and 12 were from UCLAS. Ten out of the 18 library staff were from MUCHS and eight were from UCLAS.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- What new demands and challenges does UDSM ITP poses on library and information services provision in the Constituent Colleges of UDSM?

- To what extent are the College library facilities, resources and services able to meet new demands and challenges?

- What problems and obstacles are experienced by the College libraries in coping with the new demands and challenges?

- What is the best ways to respond to the new demands and challenges?

## Results and Discussion

### New Demands and Challenges Facing College Libraries

Findings revealed that measures taken to implement several strategic objectives set by ITP have affected the old set-up of MUCHS and UCLAS libraries. Increased student enrolments raised new demands on space and library budgeting. New academic programmes (both undergraduate and postgraduate) also raised new demands and challenges on resources/information services provision. Out of the challenges raised by new academic programmes, a need to purchase new types of information materials suited to new programmes was identified. On the other hand, the application of ICTs for teaching, research and learning, raised the need to use ICT facilities in the provision of library services and information resources to fully support teaching, research and learning in an electronic environment.

### New Demands on Information Services and Resources

The findings revealed a need for a variety of information services at MUCHS and UCLAS libraries. For example, more than 60% of the respondents from MUCHS and UCLAS needed library services such as borrowing documents, reference services, indexing and abstracting services. Other services were information retrieval, CD-ROM, Internet and electronic document delivery services. Others were information literacy programmes, orientation programmes and photocopying services. Findings on information retrieval tools revealed that library users at MUCHS and UCLAS libraries needed both manual and computer-aided information retrieval tools. Popular retrieval tools needed were catalogues for MUCHS (80%) and UCLAS (50%); OPAC for MUCHS (70%) and UCLAS (83.3%). This was followed by indexes and abstracts. Indexes and abstracts were more popular at MUCHS (75%) than UCLAS (25%). It can be seen that unlike in the past where card catalogues maintained popularity, electronic bibliographic tools are steadily gaining popularity. Popularity of both methods can be explained by their position in retrieving information. Wema (2000) observed that library users need access to different information retrieval tools because the preference in using these tools differ among users. However, the present study suggests that the extent of user's familiarity with the tool could be the motive behind user preference. Additionally, the strengths and weaknesses inherent in all information retrieval tools led users to demand access to a variety of information retrieval tools.

Findings on need for information resources uncovered that College library users needed access to both print and non-print information resources. For example, all the respondents from MUCHS and UCLAS needed information resources such as annual reviews, printed journals, electronic journals, electronic books, electronic reference materials, scholarly database resources, hybrid digital collection and CD-ROM to be availed in the respective College libraries. The findings also revealed that all the respondents from MUCHS and 91.7% from UCLAS needed textbooks from their College libraries whereas 80% of respondents from MUCHS and 66.7% from UCLAS needed manuals and handbooks respectively.

In view of these findings, the results suggest that both manual and computer-aided library services have value to the library users. In addition, the findings also suggest that both print and non-print information resources are useful to the library users.

**New Demands on Library Space**

The findings revealed a need for additional reading space among university community, and that the provision of adequate library space is still essential. The respondents from both colleges generally revealed that space was inadequate. The shortage of space is more apparent at UCLAS than MUCHS. The seating capacity of UCLAS is 70 readers at a time as compared to 260 readers at MUCHS. It was also observed that shortage of space hinders not only provision of reading space but also storage space to accommodate computers, networks, staff offices and photocopying machines.

Library users revealed interest to visit the library and use it for reading and other activities. The staff equally demanded increased library space to accommodate their users. The increasing number of library staff and students, ICT facilities and information materials could be attributed to the demands of the ongoing Institutional Transformation Programme.

**New Demands on Computers and Other ICT Facilities**

All the respondents from MUCHS and UCLAS indicated that they needed computers and other ICT facilities to be available in their respective College libraries. This raised new demands and challenges to College libraries. The result suggests that electronic information resources being accessed via computer networks and the need for electronic communication among scholars compel the two College libraries to put in place ICT infrastructure.

**Challenges Facing Library Staff in Meeting New Demands**

The challenges facing the libraries as identified by both MUCHS and UCLAS librarians include securing adequate library funding, provision of adequate resources (both print and non-print), and provision of short and long-term training for library staff. The number of library staff at the two college libraries was not adequate and some lacked the necessary skills needed to cope with new demands and challenges raised by both internal and external pressure. They also cited provision of computer-aided library services, resource mobilisation, adequate human resources, and provision of adequate space.

The results suggest a changing role for librarians. They also suggest a changing library organization structure. The findings revealed that unlike in the past where librarians were mainly concerned with the custody of their information resources, librarians nowadays need to be well informed about institutional strategic objectives and its implications to their respective college library policies, processes and procedures. Information professional skills, management practices, leadership, administration, project management, need analysis skills, teaching skills and technical know-how are always needed to equip library staff as managers who can cope with new challenges.

Several measures taken by librarians to solve the cited problems included introduction of ITC projects unique to their respective libraries, soliciting donor support, employing additional library staff and training of library staff. Other measures included establishment of links and co-operation with other institutions, interlibrary loan and resources sharing, provision of photocopying services and conducting orientation programmes. However, the findings revealed that despite measures taken by Institutional and Library Management to solve problems facing the two college libraries, the extent to which the two college libraries have met new demands and challenges raised by USDM ITP was inadequate. It could be that either wrong measures were identified and employed or real problems were not scanned or the cited measures were partially implemented since most of what was/is done is based mainly on the experiences of the main campus library.

**Information Resources Offered**

The responses given by library users and library staff revealed that their respective College Libraries offered print-based information resources. However, these were inadequate to meet their needs. All the respondents from MUCHS and UCLAS indicated that their respective College libraries

did not offer scholarly databases, electronic books, hybrid digital collections and other electronic databases. CD-ROM and Audiovisual resources were also not offered.

The findings revealed that library users had interest in having both formats in their libraries. The findings furthermore showed that electronic information resources were not adequately offered in the two college Libraries due to a number of reasons ranging from inadequate financial resources, poor connectivity, inadequate ICT facilities, and lack of appropriate library software to access electronic resources. This implies that both college and library management need to oversee issues of finances and policies as far as modernizing their respective libraries is concerned.

**Information Retrieval Tools Offered**

The findings revealed that all respondents from MUCHS and UCLAS used card catalogues for information retrieval. Although the UDSM library OPAC is web-based, it was observed that no computers were specifically set aside for OPACs. Their libraries' functions are yet to be automated. Sixty percent of the respondents said that MUCHS also had indexes and abstracts, bibliographies (25%) and guides to literature (40%). None of the respondents from UCLAS were satisfied with information retrieval tools. Forty percent of the respondents from MUCHS were satisfied with information retrieval tools.

**Computers and Other ICT Facilities Offered**

All the respondents from both colleges indicated that computers and other ICT facilities were offered in their respective College libraries. Although ICT use in the two College libraries is gaining popularity, ICT provision at MUCHS and UCLAS libraries had shortfalls as a result computer-aided library services were not fully implemented. Networked computers were mainly used for Internet access and word processing. Library operations were not automated. However, the two College libraries were in transition to fully adopt ICT technologies. Library automation projects were underway to promote ICT use for the delivery of library services.

**Conclusion**

The findings of the study established that ITP has raised new demands and challenges in terms of information services provision, resources including ICT facilities provision, information retrieval tools and the changing role of librarians.

The extent of the two college libraries in meeting the new demands and challenges was inadequate and as a result users did not have access to computer-aided library services, ICT facilities and information literacy education.

The study showed that the two College libraries had technical or technology-related problems, resources related constraints as well as policy and management related problems which needed to be addressed. As a result the two college libraries could not cope with the identified ITP strategic objectives.

## Recommendations

All the subsystems forming the University/College system must be prepared to understand the implications of Institutional Transformation Programme to their own situations. This will enable the subsystems to efficiently respond to the new demands and challenges raised when parent institutions implement institutional strategic objectives. Thus, MUCHS and UCLAS libraries should develop a library policy for their respective colleges. This will facilitate planned information services provision reflecting the needs of new college set-up.

The college libraries need to increase the ability to acquire information resources both print and non-print, ICT infrastructure and provision of modern information services. Strategies need to be developed in order to increase the ability of college libraries. Strategies such as soliciting donor funding, establishing more links and co-operation with other libraries, increasing budget to reflect both print and non-print information needs, resource mobilisation, and advocacy should be developed. In addition, library management should mobilise the support of all stakeholders, particularly the parent organisations/institutional management for capacity building in terms human and other resources. Institutional management should be ready to provide support as far as library development is concerned. They should ensure that the library management is empowered to decide upon and implement their programmes on time.

## References

Bhatacharya, G. 1994. "Structural planning for the development of manpower for secondary information and service". **In: Restructuring of library and information science curriculum**. New Delhi: Concept Publishing, 13-33.

Barker, P. 1998. "The role of digital libraries in future education systems." **In: Proceedings of the 22nd International Online Information**

**Meeting 8-10 Dec., National Hall & Olympia2**, London: Learned Information Europe Ltd, 301-310.

Ishumi, A.G.M. 1994. **30 Years of learning: Education development in Eastern and Southern Africa from independence to 1990**. Ottawa: International Research Centre.

Ishumi, A.G.M et al. 2000. "Proposals for measures leading to further expansion of Student Enrolment at UDSM". **In: University of Dar es Salaam: Institutional Transformation Programme PMU/UDSM-2000 Final Report,** Dar es Salaam. Dar es Salaam University Press, 7-12.

Katundu, D.R.M. 1998. Sustainability of Information Technology in Academic and Research libraries in Tanzania. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Natal, Pietrmaritzburg, Department of Information Studies.

Katundu, D.R.M. 2001."Information and Communication Technologies (ICT): Sustainability issues in Academic and Research Libraries in Tanzania." **In: University of Dar es Salaam Library Journal Vol.3 No.1&2.** Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press, 13-24.

Kaula, P.N. 1994. "Guidelines for College Libraries." **In: Academic Libraries**. New Delhi: Anmol Publication, 109-121.

Kiondo, E. 2001. Application of Information Technology in library services to support teaching, learning and research in African Universities: Challenges and opportunities for the New Millennium. Paper Presented at the University of Dar es Salaam, Department of Information Studies.

Kundi, B.A.T and Chijoriga, M. 2000. "Five Year Rolling Strategic Plan 2000/2001-2004/2005". **In: University of Dar es Salaam: Institutional Transformation Programme PMU/UDSM-2000 Final Report.** Dar es Salaam. Dar es Salaam University Press, 148-156.

Kumar, K. 1994. "Role of a College Library." **In: Academic Libraries**. New Delhi: Anmol Publication, 67-75.

Mangla, P. B. 1994. "College libraries in India: Their problems and prospects." **In: Academic Libraries**. New Delhi: Anmol Publication, 33-50.

Mkude, D. J. 1999. "The role of the UDSM Transformation in the Next Millenium." **In: Proceedings of the 6th Annual Consultative Workshop on the UDSM Transfromation Programme Held at Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS)**, 16th-17th Sept. 1999. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. 111-115.

Mkude, D. J. 2000. "Highlights of the main unfinished business of the University of Dar es Salaam." **In: Proceedings of the 7th Annual Consultative Workshop on the UDSM Transfromation Programme** 7th-8th Sept. 2000. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. 139-147.

Morgan, S. 1995. **Performance assessment in academic libraries**. London: Mansell.

Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences: Implementation progress of the Five-Year Rolling Strategic Plan 1999/2000-2003/2004. Dar es Salaam, April, 2000.

Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences Library Strategic Plan 2001/2002.

Mwakilama, P. 2003. The University of Dar es Salaam Transformation Programme's implications on the resources and information services provision of it's two colleges. MA Dissertation, University of Dar es Salaam.

Nkunya, M. H. H. 2000. "Guidelines on clustering of faculties and institutes." **In: University of Dar es Salaam: Institutional Transformation Programme PMU/UDSM-2000 Final Report.** Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press, 160-174.

Nyerembe, M.P. 2001. "Information and Communication Technologies and the University of Dar es Salaam: Some logistical and managerial challenges." **In: University of Dar es Salaam Library Journal Vol. 3 No.1&2.** 1-12.

Otto, A. 1998. "New media need new strategies: the libraries of the Hermann Von Helmoholtz Association of National Research Centres as a library Consortium." **In: Proceedings of the 22nd**

**International Online Information Meeting 8-10 Dec., National Hall & Olympia2**, London: Learned Information Europe Ltd. 347-350.

Proceedings of the 6th Annual Consultative Workshop on the UDSM Transformation Programme (1999) held at Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS), 16th-17th Sept., 1999. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Rowley, G and W. K. Black (1996). Consequences of change: the evolution of collection development" **Collection Building**, Vol. 15(2): 22-30.

Underwood, P.G. 1990. **Managing change in libraries and information services: a systems approach**, London: Clive Bingley.

University College of Lands and Architectural Studies. Library Rolling Strategic Plan (CLRSP) for 2001/02 to 2005/06. July 2002.

University College of Lands and Architectural Studies. Library Rolling Strategic Plan (CLRSP) for 2003/4 to 2006/7. July 2003.

University College of Lands and Architectural Studies. Rolling Strategic Plan 2001/2-2005/06. December 2001.

University of Dar es Salaam: Institutional Transformation Programme PMU/UDSM-2000 Final Report. Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press, 2000.

University of Dar es Salaam Prospectus 2001/2002. Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press.

University of Dar es Salaam Prospectus 2002/2003. Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press.

Wema, E.F. 2000. The Impact of introducing computer in library services: the case of the University of Dar es Salaam library. MA Dissertation, University of Dar es Salaam.