

Reasons given	Number of respondents	Percentages
It will bring competition	2	13.3%
We need one consortium of a national status	1	6.7%
CARLIGH must be improved first	5	33.3%
CARLIGH should be strengthened to make an impact	5	33.3%
More institutions should rather join CARLIGH	7	46.7%
New ones may face financial challenges	8	53.3%

Figure 9a: One library consortium (There were multiple answers to this question)w

Reasons given	Number of respondents	Percentages
To increase cooperative activities	6	40%
To have more advocacy groups	2	13.3%
To promote library cooperation at all levels	4	26.7%
To form a national one	1	6.7%
To provide services to other types of libraries	4	26.7%

Figure 9b: More than one library consortium (There were multiple answers to this question)

**More Library Consortia in the Country?**

Out of the 15 respondents, six (40%) indicated that they want other library consortia to be formed in the country, seven (46.7%) said they do not want other forms of consortia to be formed, one (6.7%) said both yes and no and one (6.7%) did not indicate any response. The above finding shows that the formation of other consortia could be a controversial issue since some people think more should be formed and others think only CARLIGH should be in operation for the mean time.

*Reasons why respondents want or do not want more library consortia to be formed*

Respondents who do not want other consortia to be formed (Figure 9a) gave the following reasons: two (13.3%) said it would bring competition; one (6.7%) said they need one consortium of national status; five (33.3%) indicated that CARLIGH must be improved first; five (33.3%) said CARLIGH should be strengthened for its impact to be felt countrywide before another one is formed; seven (46.7%) were of the view that more institutions should join CARLIGH for it to enjoy economies of scale; eight (53.3%) indicated that new ones may face financial challenges.

Respondents who want more library consortia to be formed (Figure 9b) gave the following reasons: six (40%) indicated that they need more consortia to have greater cooperative activities; two (13.3%) said they want to have more advocacy groups; four (26.7%) said they will promote library cooperation at all levels; one (6.7%) said it will help have more consortia to form a national one; four (26.7%) said new ones can be formed if they will provide different services to other types of libraries.

**Means by which problems encountered by members can be solved**

Figure 10 is a summary of how respondents suggest the problems they encounter should be solved. Seven (46.7%) said CARLIGH should subscribe to databases on behalf of all members to reduce difficulties members encounter in dealing with the publishers. Two (13.3%) said CARLIGH should provide facilities to promote virtual meetings to help in the deliberation of sub-committees instead of them meeting physically. Six (40%) said CARLIGH should help increase bandwidth and adequate supervision and provision of ICT services. Eight (53.3%) respondents indicated

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Reasons given	Number of respondents	Percentages
CARLIGH should subscribe to databases on behalf of members	7	46.7%
Should provide facilities to promote virtual meeting	2	13.3%
Should help increase bandwidth	6	40%
Members should not be charged for databases they do not use	8	53.3%
Members should unite	8	53.3%
More funds should be made available	12	80%
More education about CARLIGH should be given	8	53.3%
Education on how to access the databases should be given	5	33.3%

Figure 10: Solutions to problems (There were multiple responses to this question)

Reasons given	Number of respondents	Percentages
Difficulty in handling of records of members	13	86.7%
Problems with financial management	2	13.3%
Financial challenges	1	6.7%
Problems with foreign exchange	10	66.7%
Satisfying the needs of all members	6	40%
Increasing cost of databases	8	53.3%
Lack of stakeholders	2	13.3%
Problem with leadership	2	13.3%
Problem of transforming academic libraries	1	6.7%

Table 11: Future problems of CARLIGH (There were multiple answers to this question)

that since members do not make use of electronic resources not relevant to their needs, they should not be made to pay for such resources. Eight (53.3%) of the respondents stated that there should be understanding and unity among members to help in quick decision making. 12 (80%) of the respondents indicated that more funding is required to provide more electronic resources and to get full access to all articles in databases. Eight (53.3%) said that more education about CARLIGH should be done to encourage other members to join to help enjoy the economies of scale. Five (33.3%) of the respondents said that proper instruction should be given to members on how to access the electronic resources to help reduce the difficulties members encounter in attempts to subscribe to electronic resources.

### Challenges members foresee CARLIGH will encounter in the future

As shown in Figure 11, thirteen (86.7%) of the respondents indicated that CARLIGH has no permanent staff in the office and this poses difficulties in the handling of documents of members. Two (13.3%) said they will be faced with problems of finance management. One (6.7%) of the respondents said it will face financial challenges when the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) withdraws its support; 10 (66.7%) of the respondents indicated that due to inflation rates CARLIGH will be confronted with foreign exchange problems. Six (40%) of the respondents think that satisfying the individual needs of members may become a challenge as the needs of members tend to vary. Eight of the respondents

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representing 53.3% foresee an increase in the cost of databases. Two (13.3%) of the respondents said it might lack stakeholders. Two (13.3%) of the respondents indicated leadership challenges. One respondent representing 6.7% said the consortium will face the challenge of transforming academic libraries.

### Means by which members want CARLIGH to improve its services

Respondents enumerated means by which CARLIGH should improve its services to them. All the responses are listed below:

1. Advertise services to other libraries for them to join;
2. Budget and cost allocations should be made available to members on time;
3. Establish a technical team that will assist individual members;
4. Increased access to resources and training;
5. More libraries should be convinced to join to sustain it;
6. Employ permanent staff to reduce workload on voluntary staff;
7. Establish well-functioning working groups;
8. Members should feed the CARLIGH website with data regularly;
9. Standard data input to the website;
10. Seek ideas from members on training programmes;
11. Professional development;
12. Sensitization of policy makers;
13. Subscribe to more useful databases;
14. Provide resources that will benefit all members in a way;
15. Vibrant website;
16. Working groups should function well;
17. Technical support for software installation.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. CARLIGH should employ a permanent administrative staff who will be in charge of all administrative matters and will be the first

point of contact for members. This will help improve service provision to members.

2. CARLIGH should create some means of generating extra funds from extra activities such as organization of seminars for other organizations at a fee. This will help strengthen the financial base of CARLIGH.
3. More education should be given to library representatives on the CARLIGH board on the cooperative nature of CARLIGH; therefore decisions should be taken based on this fact. This will encourage unity and will quicken the decision making process.
4. CARLIGH should endeavor to subscribe to databases that will meet the user needs of all member libraries especially libraries with special subject backgrounds.
5. CARLIGH should undertake a nationwide library consortia education exercise to educate other academic and research libraries to join the consortium so as to enjoy greater economy of scale.
6. CARLIGH should liaise with the telecommunication service providers in the country to provide high broadband Internet services and other telecommunication infrastructure to CARLIGH members as one body. This will help members enjoy high discount rates from the service providers, thus helping to ease the frequent Internet failures members encounter.
7. CARLIGH members should be well-educated on interlibrary lending. CARLIGH should also provide a means of transferring resources from one library to the other. This will aid quick and easy transfer of print information resources from one member library to the other.
8. All member libraries should be encouraged to employ qualified ICT personnel who should again be given special training by CARLIGH in the download and use of the online databases. This will help solve the difficulties members encounter in accessing the databases.
9. Finally, all employees in the member libraries who are directly involved in library services should be told of the 'good news' of CARLIGH in order to publicize the consortium.

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### CONCLUSION

The findings of this study unfold the fact that member libraries want CARLIGH to continue with its activities and believe that CARLIGH provides a platform for libraries to share ideas and knowledge to help improve library services in Ghana.

CARLIGH as a young consortium in a developing country can be said to be on track. However, it needs a lot of support from its members and the management of the various institutions in order to reduce the number of challenges so as to attract more libraries and to improve upon its services.

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# Appendix

## QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire seeks to solicit your view for a research to be carried out at the Department of Information Studies, Legon on the topic, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF CONSORTIA: A CASE STUDY OF THE CONSORTIUM OF ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES IN GHANA (CARLIGH).

You are assured that all responses will be strictly used for academic purposes and your responses will be treated with all confidentiality.

Thank you for your cooperation.

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### Section One

- 1. Kindly indicate your gender. Male / Female
- 2. Which library do you work with?

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- 3. How long have you worked with your current library?

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- 4. What is your qualification?

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- 5. What is your job position?

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- 6. How long have you worked in your current position?

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- 7. How long have you worked as a librarian?

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- 8. Apart from CARLIGH, which other consortia do you know of?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

### Section Two

- 9. Is your library part of CARLIGH? Yes / No
- 10. If yes, how long has it been part of it?

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33. Please feel free to provide any other comments .....  
relating to CARLIGH. ....  
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### ABSTRACT

This study sought to find out the prospects and challenges of the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH). Questionnaires were sent to 18 members of the consortium and 15 were retrieved, giving a response rate of 83%. The results indicated that members enjoy access to electronic resources at reduced cost, free training workshops and seminars, and technical support in the use of electronic resources. However, there were challenges such as foreign exchange problems, inability to obtain full access to some databases, and difficulties in dealing with publishers. Some recommendations have been made to enhance the prospects of the consortium.

