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# An assessment of the staffing structures of university libraries in Ghana

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## Keywords

Organizational structures, University libraries, United Kingdom, Ghana

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## Abstract

The nature of organisational structure is discussed. A survey is reported comparing the organisational structures of university libraries in Ghana with those of their counterparts in the UK. The discussion covers factors that make changes in present structures necessary and type of structural changes required. Problems are identified and current organisational processes and management style discussed.

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The purpose of this paper is to assess the current staffing structures of Ghana's five university libraries in relation to the development of the strategic planning process.

The link between strategy and organisational structure from the point of view of the classical theorists has been one of getting the organisational structure right for a particular strategy in order to achieve practical success. Chandler's (1962) maxim "structure follows strategy" dominates the theoretical field. This prescriptive approach to strategy advocates that structure must follow strategy, a sequence typical of the linear approach to classical strategy. A variety of failures, however, has made it clear that organisations differ, that, for example, long range planning systems or organisational development programmes are good for some but not others, so management theory has moved away from this "one best way" approach towards an "it all depends approach" formerly called the contingency theory (Mintzberg, 1979).

Mintzberg (1979) argues that the appropriate organisational form is contingent upon the state of certain variables: size, environmental dynamism and complexity, external power relationships and the technical system employed by the organisation. A third approach called the "configuration approach" has also emerged (Mintzberg *et al.*, 1995). This argument is that the structures should not be chosen independently, the way a shopper picks vegetables at the market, rather these and other elements of organisational design should logically configure into internally consistent groupings with an emphasis on sensitivity to context and concern for cultural specificity of form as of organisation.

The strategy-structure relationship addresses the issues of specialisation and co-ordination, each determines the type of organisational structure of a firm. The link between organisational structure and organisational performance, according to Porter (1980, 1985) is that an organisation that has a good structure performs better. He argues that a firm's competitive advantage stems from its ability to outperform competitors by its mode of specialisation to perform the basic tasks. This equates to either performing the tasks at lower cost or providing better quality than the competitors

or both. To have some chance of winning the firm must perform the tasks in an extraordinary way – it must transcend the average levels of performance in its industry by embedding new routines into existing structure or change the structure completely.

Environmental stability and dynamism also dictate the type of structure that suits a particular strategy. Studies by Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) showed that successful firms in a reasonably stable environment co-ordinate activities primarily through fairly centralised corporate hierarchies. Successful firms in a more dynamic environment co-ordinate activities through integrative departments and permanent cross-functional teams. Burns and Stalker (1961) had also identified two types of structures, the mechanistic (functional) structure and the organic, and concluded that a mechanistic structure, with its emphasis on a centralisation of decision-making and bureaucratic rules and procedures, appears to be well suited to organisations operating in a reasonably stable environment. In contrast, however, they found that successful firms operating in a constantly changing environment used a more organic structure with decentralised decision-making and flexible procedures.

The relevance of this concept of organisational structure-strategy to university libraries is that the staffing structure of a library must fit the strategy of that library; as Waterman (1980, p. 71) has argued, it is the “fittedness” between these two that turns a good strategic idea into a “lean, mean” programme for corporate success.

The determination of the efficiency and effectiveness of the staffing structures of the university libraries in Ghana is necessary if the kind of structure-strategy fit is to be achieved. A consideration of current perceptions to the strategy-structure debate in some UK university libraries is included in this paper. Lastly, the related concepts of organisational processes and management style of the Ghanaian university libraries are examined.

## Methodology

The methodology combines the qualitative and quantitative investigations and analysis of data. Triangulation (Denzin, 1970) was used in this study to achieve convergence of results.

To some extent, the qualitative method helped to inform the quantitative method.

Five university libraries in Ghana and five university libraries in the UK were selected for the study. Ghana at the time of the investigation had only five universities so all were found to be sociologically representative of the object of this study, while the five cases in the UK were a mix of “old” and “new” universities. For the UK study the heads and deputies of library services were interviewed while in the Ghanaian study 89 major stakeholders were selected. This was made up of deans of faculties, heads of department, registrars, finance officers, university librarians and their deputies, members of library boards, members of strategic planning committees and some top civil servants. The number that was actually interviewed was 63 (61 university stakeholders and two civil servants) giving a response rate of 70.8 per cent.

The analysis of the interviews was accomplished by using some aspects of the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Some of the categories that emerged from the qualitative investigation were used as a basis for a quantitative investigation involving a sample of the library staff in the Ghanaian university libraries. A total of 120 library staff were selected and 98 of them completed the questionnaires, giving a response rate of 81.7 per cent. The quantitative responses were analysed using the Social Science Statistical Package (Nie *et al.*, 1970). The results are presented in a cross-case format. Each section is devoted to a separate cross-case and information from the individual cases is dispersed throughout each section discussed below. Qualitative responses are presented verbatim.

The results are presented as follows.

## Type of organisational structure

In the interviews with the key stakeholders in universities in Ghana three main questions were concerned with the assessment of the kinds of university library management structures currently being used.

One question asked whether the organisational structure was “hierarchical” (i.e. with the university librarian at the apex of the library service and a deputy, heads of departments and several levels of professional

and para-professional librarians forming a clear hierarchy below), or “organic” (i.e. with fewer levels, the use of team management and project groups that run across rather than down the organisation), or neither of these. Out of 61 major stakeholders who responded, 54 (88.5 per cent) reported that the libraries worked with hierarchical structures. Six (9.8 per cent) of them did not provide any answers and only one respondent reported that he worked with elements of both hierarchical and organic structures in the library. With the exception of the University of UnivC, the single respondent who placed his library in both hierarchical and organic structures, it can be concluded from this evidence that the university libraries’ staffing structure in Ghana is of an overwhelmingly centrally directed hierarchical nature.

A second question asked about any recent changes to the existing internal organisational structure and how long the current structure had actually been in existence. The pattern of responses was identical to that for the first question. Most of the respondents (54 out of 61, 88.5 per cent) across all the five cases indicated that there had been no significant changes to the structures since the inception of the libraries. The one respondent who claimed his library had both structures commented on some recent changes:

As I said earlier the structure is both. Two years ago we had to use a group of senior assistant librarians to work on some projects. So that was some changes we did.

This finding also shows that no significant changes in the staffing structures in the university libraries have occurred since the libraries were established. The structures of the libraries have existed despite significant changes in the contingency variables such as size of student population over the last few decades, a situation which requires a considerable shift in structure to achieve a better strategy-structure alignment.

The same questions were asked of the university librarians in the UK study. Out of the five case institutions, two of the libraries maintained hierarchical structures. Three still had hierarchical structures but were moving towards a project based organic approach. The following are some of the comments from the UK librarians:

Yes, it is hierarchical but is going through a period of change. It is moving towards a

consultative structure of teams and groups. For example, we have cataloguing teams . . .

Elements of both. The structure is basically hierarchical, but as the service is very small, extensive use is made of project groups.

It is basically a hierarchical structure. It is a line management structure. Having said that we do have project working groups and standing groups who bring people together from different levels to discuss issues. So, in addition to the line we have project management for specific pieces of work.

As the comments of the UK librarians show, though hierarchical structures exist, use is also made of organic models and team management to influence the ways in which services are developed and delivered when the need arises.

The third question which was fully qualitative tried to find out the effects the major stakeholders thought their strategic visions might have on their staffing structures. There was detailed probing into other issues as they emerged. The results have been grouped under: factors that make changes in present structures necessary; type of structural changes required; and problems that may affect any possible changes.

### **Factors that make changes in present structures necessary**

The need for changes in the present staffing structure in the university libraries in Ghana were mentioned in only one particular context in all the universities with the exception of one where all the interviewees believed their present staffing structure did not need any change despite imminent strategic decisions. A statement made by one stakeholder at UnivE illustrates this point:

We have our own framework here. Our faculties have their own requirements so we will have to work with our existing structures. The tasks will not affect our structures.

There were some interviewees from UnivC and UnivD who also did not see the need for change despite their new strategic ambitions. The majority of the respondents from UnivA, UnivB, UnivC and UnivD reported that the recent introduction of computers in the libraries and the vision they have for their libraries of complete automation were the only compelling factors for changes in their staffing structures. The following statement

made by one stakeholder at UnivA illustrates this point:

I think the only way that the structure will be affected is the computer side of things. The computer science will have to be strengthened. That is the only need I see anyway.

In contrast, among the UK librarians interviewed, the need for changes in their staffing structure, which three out of five institutions had already effected, was expressed in many more contexts than their Ghanaian counterparts. The respondents cited the age of the structures as a factor for change. They also identified changes in the internal environments of their universities in the recent past, most particularly the increase in student numbers and the diverse needs of the students which had placed new demands on their libraries' administrative and operational structures. For example, one librarian at a UK library said this in support of this point:

The staffing structure had been in existence for too long. It was old, the university had changed in terms of population, course structure and so forth. This had affected the work of the librarians and I believe we had to make some changes.

Similar to the pattern of responses in the universities in Ghana, automation in the libraries was a contributing factor for effecting changes in their organisational structures. All the interviewees expressed the view that the introduction of computers changed some of the operations of their libraries. Machines, not people, had to be regulated, so some staff in supervisory roles lost some of their control over library operatives as machines did not need to be watched over as frequently as humans. Automation, in their view, had reduced certain strata of staff with traditional library knowledge in favour of computer experts; thus, the reliance on standardisation in certain areas in the libraries had reduced. The following statement which was made by one of the deputy librarians of the UK case studies illustrates this point:

Library automation presented new groups of experts, some of the old librarians had to give way, transferred, services of some were no more required so their contracts were not renewed. We did not need many people in supervisory roles because as I have explained already we were dealing with new technology and did not have to use many supervisors.

Internal reorganisation had occurred at some point in all the UK libraries as a result of staff

shortages, a consequence of expenditure cuts. According to the interviewees, insufficient staffing in some areas required changes in job responsibilities of some of the existing staff. There were economies in the use of staff in response to dwindling resources. The following statement which was made by one of the librarians in the UK illustrates this:

We had to use our staff economically. Certain staff had to take on more work, a sort of sharing the extra responsibilities.

In three of the UK university libraries, the low staffing levels had also encouraged a team atmosphere in which positions were not set or stagnant; such a dynamic atmosphere permitted flexibility and innovation. The following is a comment by one of the respondents about how the library had changed its organisational structure in accordance with changing internal and external pressures:

We had had to make changes for the same reasons. We had expanded our clerical duties and have released some of our professional staff to further reader services duties.

### **Type of structural changes required**

As to the type of changes in structures that would be required by the interviewees in the Ghanaian university libraries, two opposing views were expressed by the majority of them. Nearly half the respondents in UnivA, UnivB, UnivD and about three-quarters from UnivC felt that more staff would be required to strengthen the existing structure especially in computing and the related fields. For example, one stakeholder at UnivC made this statement:

The new skills in computing will obviously call for an expanded organisational structure. The universities must make room for this. I mean our system cannot continue to be static and run on the same old structures. There must be expansion to cater for these if the vision is to be realised. As at now I don't see that happening.

The remainder, with the exception of the respondents at UnivC, also pointed to a reduction in staff because they hoped the reliance on computers would make certain positions redundant. The following statement made by a respondent at UnivB explains this issue:

The tasks involved with my vision will affect the structure. If everyone was to become computer

literate we may not need the present secretarial system we have now. If people can access for themselves in the library some people will have nothing to do.

In the UK study the respondents from two of the libraries expressed the need for more commitment from staff in the face of reductions. In their view, this problem required the libraries to reorganise in an effort to meet new job demands. The decrease in or already inadequate staffing levels has led to changes in services and everyone has had to work harder to make up for lost positions. For example, one respondent from the UK library remarked as follows:

Well, I must say a lot has gone on in that area too. We had to reorganise our staffing structure and then make changes in services. For example, in user instruction a lot more effort was put in by the small number of staff at hand.

They further reported that their libraries were organised on subject basis. Within each of the subject divisions a team of staff was created whose duty it was to interact with users. This structural change in their opinion had increased the sensitivity and responsiveness to users' needs among the staff. The following statement made by a UK deputy librarian illustrates this point:

We have organised our staff into subject division, humanities, social sciences, physical sciences and so on. We have a team of staff: though small they are not locked away in offices but are out there listening, being confronted and consulted by the public. In a way users have been satisfied and their needs are easily picked up by our staff.

All the interviewees in the UK also reported that because library automation cut swathes through traditional library methods and staffing structures, the number of qualified libraries at some states in their restructuring had to be reduced in favour of technical and support staff. The following statement made by a UK librarian illustrates this issue:

Staff restructuring after our automation was inevitable. The changes had to come. Let me give you an example. Cataloguing: before our automation, cataloguing individual titles was separately done by individual cataloguers. A staggering waste of time and human effort. If you think about it in retrospect. The new system has depleted professional numbers in cataloguing. Where once we had six professionals we now find ourselves having only two or even just one. What has increased is the ancillary staff, the technical team and clerks.

These findings from the point of view of the UK respondents suggest that the libraries in the UK now have a much smaller number of professional staff than of other categories of staff.

The few professional staff are presently engaged in true library work such as book selection, reference work, supervision, management and innovation. These senior staff working in reference like their junior staff are not cut off from the users of the libraries, as was observed in Ghana. There is, therefore, a lot of contact between professional staff and users of the libraries. It also appears that the old system of rigid arrangement by function which meant that users had little sight or contact with the very senior staff is loosening up in the libraries studies in the UK.

### Problems that may affect possible changes

A number of problems that may affect changes in current staffing structures in Ghanaian university libraries emerged.

At UnivA, UnivC and UnivD several of the respondents reported that any changes to current library structures might be blocked by university authorities because of the great external control of the libraries at corporate levels and sometimes at the macro levels. The following remark was made by one of the stakeholders at UnivA:

We are under the Ministry of Education and controlled by the registry too. The university librarian has to report everything to the authorities. Look at the situation where the Ministry did our book selection and acquisition. The university librarian's hands are tied in so many ways. Even to employ new people we have to seek permission. We can't change structures without approval of somebody up there initiating it.

This sort of control in the university systems is somewhat consistent with the organisational processes typical of centralised structures because the greater the external control of an organisation the more centralised and formalised its structure (Mintzberg *et al.*, 1995). Much power is usually centralised at the strategic apex and other staff routines are formalised.

Another problem that was expressed by most interviewees at all sites but particularly strongly expressed by respondents from

UnivA, UnivB, UnivC and UnivD was the effect current resourcing constraints might have on any proposed new structural changes. The following remark made by one stakeholder at UnivC illustrates this point:

As I said earlier, we need to set up a separate unit to handle information technology but there is no money for this. Any development in that direction will seriously be hampered by this problem.

Consistent with all the responses in all the libraries in Ghana some respondents who were not librarians but were closely linked with the libraries' activities blamed the libraries for difficulties in changing the present structures. In their view, the librarians had not come up with any analysis of their existing staff tasks and duties with costing for library board discussions but continued to maintain structures with tasks that might be no longer relevant in modern librarianship. The following comment that was made by one member of the library board of UnivA illustrates this view:

The librarians themselves have not raised the issue at any board meetings. They have not presented to the board any new tasks or necessary tasks. What do you expect us to do? They still continue to do what they have been doing before though I don't think their methods are still relevant.

Several subjects in UnivD and more than a third from UnivA, UnivB and UnivC perceived that any structural changes in the libraries should be made by university policy makers but not the libraries.

There was a general lack of understanding of organisational processes and evidence of gross ignorance of staffing structural issues among the majority of respondents in the Ghanaian libraries, particularly staff at UnivE. This was evident from some of the answers they provided to questions on staffing issues. The following are some of the answers:

What decision will affect who? It will not affect our structure. The organisational structure and processes are part of our objectives they will not have to change.

These structures have no problems. They work perfectly well. We have no problems with them. What we need is money to buy more computers and more computer staff.

Our organisational structure is very clear; it does not require changes.

## Current organisational processes and management style

The results of an exploration of the organisational processes and their implication for strategy which was accomplished by using a questionnaire survey is presented here. The major stakeholders at the Ghanaian universities were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with particular statements presented to them on some aspects of the libraries' organisational processes. This process was then repeated using the larger population of library staff.

The statements sought responses to specific views on decision-making processes, communication among staff, supervision and description of duties as a way of determining the co-ordinating mechanism in the libraries' organisational structures. The statements to which the major stakeholders were asked to respond were:

- Decisions in the library are taken by all staff at all levels.
- In the library, library assistants have to go through the proper channel if they have suggestions pertaining to work.
- Supervision in the library entails setting guidelines for subordinates who take responsibility for their actions.
- Jobs in the library are properly described and logically structured.

The results of the survey for all the four statements from the major stakeholder perspectives are presented in Table I. This shows the overall responses for the combined establishments but not the individual establishments because there were no major differences between the responses across the case studies.

Table I indicates that for the first statement – “Decisions in the library are taken by staff at all levels”, a significant percentage of the major stakeholders disagreed with the statement (49.2 per cent disagreed and 34.4 per cent strongly disagreed). This result shows that in the view of the major stakeholders, decisions in libraries are not taken by staff at all levels.

For the second statement – “In the library, library assistants have to go through the proper channel if they have suggestions pertaining to work”, the responses indicate overwhelming support for this statement as 83.6 per cent of the respondents agree and 6.6 per cent of them strongly agree. There

**Table I** Responses to statements on organisational processes – major stakeholder perspective

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Not certain		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1	1	1.6	8	13.1	1	1.6	30	49.2	21	34.4
2	4	6.6	51	83.6	6	6.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	6	9.8	41	67.2	7	11.5	4	6.6	1	1.6
4	14	23.0	29	47.5	12	19.7	0	0.0	0	0.0

Note: *n* = 61

were no disagreements, with just 9.9 per cent being uncertain. This result suggests a vertical mode of communication in the libraries.

Predictably, for the third statement, the majority of the respondents agree to the assertion that supervision in the libraries is setting guidelines for subordinates who take responsibility for their actions. Over 60 per cent (67.2 per cent) agreed and 9.8 per cent strongly agreed, with only 6.6 per cent and 1.6 per cent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing respectively.

The results of the fourth statement, which also probed the co-ordination mechanism in staffing structures, were consistent with those for the first statement. Over 70 per cent (70.5 per cent) of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that jobs in the libraries are properly described and logically structured, with 10 per cent disagreeing and 19.7 per cent being uncertain.

Table II also shows the results of the library staff reactions to the statements.

Table II shows that for all four statements, the responses of the library staff substantiate the findings in Table I. In a similar vein, Table II shows that as far as the library staff are concerned, decisions in the library are not taken by all staff at all levels and that library assistants have to go through the proper channel if they have suggestions pertaining to work. For the third and fourth statements which investigated co-ordinating mechanisms, the results also confirm the

supervision in the libraries is setting guidelines for subordinates who take responsibility for their actions. An overwhelming number of respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that jobs in the libraries are properly described and logically structured which suggests that the work processes in the university libraries in Ghana are standardised, fitting that of a bureaucratic organisation with a programmed set of activities (Riggs, 1987). The results in Tables I and II speak volumes about the organisational processes whereby only a few people at the apex of the organisational structure, mostly the professional librarians, make decisions for the rest of the staff to carry out without any major participation at lower levels. The decision-making processing is centralised. The structures, as the results also indicate, rely on standardisation for co-ordination and the library staff have to perform library duties in accordance with properly described sets of instructions. Jobs are highly specialised with limited amounts of horizontal decentralisation. The library assistants lack control of tasks they perform as they are expected to follow a set of guidelines for which they are held accountable. The results also point to the fact that direct supervision is used to achieve co-ordination as the majority of interviewees indicated (Statement 3).

**Table II** Responses to statements on organisational processes – library staff perspectives

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Not certain		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1	6	6.3	7	7.3	4	4.3	57	59.4	22	22.9
2	11	11.2	64	65.3	14	14.3	9	9.2	0	0.0
3	25	25.5	55	55.1	14	14.3	4	4.41	0	0.0
4	17	17.3	63	64.3	13	13.3	5	5.1	0	0.0

Note: *n* = 61

## Discussions and conclusions

Chandler (1962) in his classic study on strategy-structure, showed how changes in strategy – namely product market diversification – required subsequent alterations in structure, particularly diversification, hence the maxim “structure follows strategy” i.e. fitting the structure to strategy. A legion of replicators have followed with empirical studies across wide geographical areas largely confirming Chandler’s conclusion. The thesis that structure followed strategy has been tested and confirmed in the UK (Channon, 1973), France (Pooley-Dias, 1972) and Germany (Thanheiser, 1972).

Rumelt (1974) also showed how the match between strategy and structure influences performance and this was supported by Galbraith (1973) and Whittington (1993). Though the classical concept has been found over the years to be basically sound, other authors have described it as too simplistic and have developed other dimensions to the concept, for example, Miles and Snow (1978), Mintzberg’s (1979) adaptive strategies and their structural environmental correlates. They looked at strategy and structure from a multidimensional point of view. They identified entrepreneurial planning and adaptive models of strategy-making and related these to the organisation and environmental contexts in which they occur. Other authors, such as Porter (1980) and Hambrick (1983) have derived extremely suggestive conceptual typologies and empirical taxonomies of strategy, focusing on variables that have enjoyed much attention from industrial economists – variables that have been shown repeatedly to influence performance and those that can often be manipulated by managers. These include external power relations, leadership, environmental dynamism and extent of technology application.

The underlying theme of these recent developments is the unification of strategy-structure; that, given a particular strategy, there are only a limited number of suitable structures and vice versa. Specifically, the sophisticated concepts of some strategic theorists – particularly Miles and Snow (1978) and Porter (1980) – have been related to those of the major structural theorists, notably Lawrence and Lorsch (1969), Burns

and Stalker (1961) and Mintzberg (1979), to produce a philosophy of integration of particular elements of strategy and organisational variable. In effect, the current view is that elements of structure cohere within common configurations, as do those of strategy. Furthermore, these configurations are themselves interlinked in that there are natural congruencies between particular strategic, structural and indeed environmental configurations.

Thompson (1991), writing on library structure and strategy and in support of the configuration theory, states that:

Organising for change means establishing an appropriate, tailor-made staffing structure where every task has been agreed to be necessary and still relevant and fitting well with other environmental constructs.

Past studies in academic and public libraries, particularly from the USA and the UK (such as Evans, 1991; Hayes, 1993; Johnson, 1994; Moore, 1995), have concluded that modern information systems, automation methods and cultural changes that have occurred in many library services call for a structural configuration that permits a much flatter structure and the reduction in the number of middle managers. They recommend the organic type of structure to respond to the strategic environment.

The findings of this study on staffing structure in the Ghanaian case study libraries differ markedly from the theories described so far. First, the results do not support the classical theory that structure follows strategy. Second, the present structures also defy the configuration approach and also ignore any relationship with environmental dynamism. The organisational structure of the university libraries in Ghana was introduced in the early 1950s and 1960s. They were created to the colonial librarianship standards of the traditional concepts of span of control, which result in a pyramid or hierarchical structure. Regardless of the deficiencies within these structures and the advent of information technology as well as changes in other environmental variables such as size of readership, they have not been altered, resulting in superfluity (overgrowth) of organisation structures across all given case studies. At UnivA, UnivB and UnivC there were as many professional librarians as para-professionals, all being supervisors controlling various departments, sections,

branch libraries and so on. This dispersion of library tasks is a considerable setback to effective management, dissemination of information and performance of special tasks, and finally, it can cause the dispersion of professional competence and authority and hamper the monitoring of task performance (Jazdon and Olszewski, 1994).

The data analysis also revealed that the management style of the university libraries was the autocratic type as the responses indicated a top down strategic decision-making process with an obsession for control and discipline. Pao and Warner (1989) have observed that autocracy is good for business but when it comes to implementing strategic planning there are important differences between business and libraries and that as far as libraries are concerned, strategic planning must be done in a participatory manner. Brownen and Burton (1988) found that the fairly centralised and formalised structure of the library imposed rigidity and inhibitions on the library's ability to innovate and respond more closely to users' needs. Manning (1991), Corral (1994) and many other authors have suggested a consultative style of management with an emphasis on team building for university libraries. Manning (1991) has observed further that the consultative process has also been recognised by many as the key element in Japanese business superiority over American business.

## Conclusion

The libraries in Ghana were found to conform to the professional bureaucratic model of organisations, a model designed to maximise the benefits of mass production: its technical proficiency stems from standardisation of the work process and outputs. It can be criticised for failing to accord with the more complex realities of organisations and for its assumption of passivity on the part of the workforce when in fact the workforce can be motivated, will seek recognition and achievement and can actively contribute to the objectives of the organisation. While it is an efficient form of organisation in certain contexts its principal failing in the contemporary world is its inability to cope with an unstable environment. Post-industrial organisations operate in turbulent and

dynamic environments for which they require more fluid structures.

The appropriateness of alternative structural forms to uncertain environments ought to be considered by libraries; the matter of the integration of different organisational activities or sections of the libraries is also of importance. A number of mechanisms and conditions are appropriate for encouraging internal organisational co-ordination and therefore related to issues of innovativeness and flexibility. These include matrix structures, team working, broad job definitions, empowerment and employment security supported by open communication channels (Kanter, 1983). Writers such as Kanter (1983) and Galbraith and Kazanjian (1986), for example, assert that there is a role for matrix structures in developing collaboration between the parts of an organisation. Having matrix structures implies that the university authorities will have to loosen their control over libraries to help ease the formalities the library staff have to go through, a characteristic of centralised structures.

Mintzberg *et al.* (1995) have argued that the greater external control of an organisation, the more centralised and formalised its structures are. New staffing structures based on a fresh analysis of tasks and duties resulting in new job descriptions and reassignment of goals are essential. This may help reduce the degree of waste in the use of over-qualified staff for routine jobs as was found to be the practice in some of the UK case study libraries.

Another way for the libraries to achieve a better internal organisational co-ordination is the development of team concepts. If the matrix design is implemented, team building will help to legitimise integration between different units of the libraries. This will also secure employee commitment to the tasks in hand. The development of the team concept is applied to the workplace results in enhanced productivity (Moore, 1995). Team building is seen as an aid to integration in organisation and a central focus of the work of the "organisational development" movement (Child, 1984). Taking a cue from the libraries studied in the UK, the Ghanaian university libraries could also organise on a subject basis with each of these subject divisions having a team of staff who must be out there being confronted and consulted by its public.

The move towards the enhancement of flexibility through organisational restructuring, new patterns of human resource management and the implementation of process innovations call for the development of a new management style. The move to an organic adhocracy as has been recommended may require a consultative and more informal management style. It calls for the adoption of informal strategic control – the need for library management to monitor and improve performance without imposing undue rigidity about the setting of objectives and reporting mechanisms.

Goold and Quinn (1990) state that this issue is especially relevant where organisations operate within uncertain environmental conditions in which flexibility is still vital. Quinn (1980) found that informal control processes appear to offer a better hope of achieving an effective control system in uncertain environments. The practice of informal strategic control accords well with behavioural models of the process of strategic management in general. Research evidence shows that strategy evolves on the basis of tentative and broad commitments.

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