

**LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLE: A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES IN GHANA**

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Abstract

This is a study on the leadership and management style of University Libraries in Ghana. It looks at the conflict situation in these libraries and how to manage them through succession planning. When vacancies for the post of Head Librarian occurred, persons appointed to act were never confirmed in preference to “outsiders” resulting in disagreements, and loss of some experienced professionals. University Libraries, therefore, need a succession plan, and a conflict resolution mechanism to select qualified candidates and deal with conflict situations in the libraries. The social survey method and purposeful sampling were used for the study. Opinions were gathered through a structured, open-ended questionnaire distributed to 160 senior members and senior staff of four public university libraries in Ghana. After analyzing the data gathered from respondents, and related literature, it was found out that, a healthy competition based on qualification, competence and cooperation amongst core staff, could produce an acceptable and capable candidate to lead and manage the libraries. It is, therefore, recommended that, University Libraries must develop a well-crafted and tested succession planning programme to select and groom potential staff to fill existing vacancies to implement the agenda of the library.

Key words: Leadership, Management, Succession planning, Conflict management

Introduction

There have been instances of simmering conflict situations in some university libraries due to either leadership failure, or the absence of a substantive Head Librarian or the non-acceptance of the appointment of the Head Librarian by some Senior Staff of the Library. This situation could have been avoided if university libraries had succession plans and select their librarians through a rigorous implementation of their succession plans and mentoring.

Whilst some conflict situations are unavoidable, they can be managed effectively or contained if there is an effective conflict management mechanism in the university libraries system. Also, the leadership style of the substantive or acting University Librarian would determine the level of conflicts and how effectively they can be handled. It has therefore been advocated that university libraries need succession plans and good leadership to train eligible, potential candidates to fill existing vacancies for senior positions in order to minimize the conflict situations in their libraries. To a large extent, most staff may not doubt the academic and professional qualifications and competence of a Head Librarian; some may have issues with the choice and leadership skills of the person appointed to be the University Librarian.

When there are misgivings about the choice of the librarian, confusion, inertia and mistrust could occur and affect the smooth management of the library. Invariably, some competent, seasoned staff exit the library for losing out or they exit to avoid personal animosity, vendetta and internal bickering.

The current practice of appointing a University Librarian is credible, but a succession plan would ensure transparency in the appointment of substantive University Librarians, reinforce acceptance and elicit greater support and cooperation for whoever emerges as the Head Librarian. The implementation of a well-defined succession plan would create the opportunity for nurturing potential candidates in leadership and managerial skills. The succession plan must be made known to all staff and the criteria for the choice of potential candidates specified in an unambiguous and comprehensible language.

Notwithstanding the vital role planning plays in the success of organizations, some of the public University Libraries in Ghana do not have a strategic plan. For example, the Balme Library which is the oldest university library does not have its own strategic plan (Dadzie, 2003). However, universities such as KNUST and UDS have strategic plans. Badu (1997; 2001) in his studies of the African corporate culture and also the strategy for information provision in Ghanaian universities respectively, outlines the following factors hindering effective strategic planning in Ghanaian universities: socio-cultural, technological and financial. But without a strategic plan and a succession plan, it would be extremely difficult to carry out change management effectively.

Every change often comes in its wake with some undertones of conflict which must be taken care of. Therefore, in order to mitigate any emerging conflict situations, planned change which is an essential managerial function, must be pursued by university libraries. In fact, university libraries as a matter of necessity, must embark upon succession planning in order to minimize conflict situations or reduce conflict ramifications and the ripple effects especially whenever there is a change in the headship. Succession planning backed by good leadership styles and relevant training will produce a suitable candidate. In an earlier study on Ghanaian traditional leadership and succession planning, Hayford (as cited by Arthur and Nsiah, 2010), explains that, succession planning is being practiced in Ghanaian traditional societies and that a person could assume the mantle of leadership only through laid down, elaborate criteria coupled with certain sterling leadership qualities. There are, according to Hayford, (as cited by Arthur and Nsiah, 2010) clearly defined rules of succession and titles for their officeholders.

The procedures include: ascription to lineage relationship, sacredness of the office and religion – secular nature of the office bearer; age of the leader regarded as being linked to the level of accumulated wisdom; social acceptability of the candidate and his/her capability of attracting goodwill and ensuring social cohesion. From the foregoing considerations for the appointment of a leader, one cannot, therefore, rule out the fact that socio-cultural factors weigh heavily in the appointment of leaders to head institutions not excluding university libraries.

Consensus in the choice of a leader, an individual candidate's personal qualities and attributes and his/her level of knowledge and wisdom, are critical factors in the selection of a leader. Hence, succession planning is a sine qua non.

Dr. Myles Munroe, a motivational speaker and business development consultant, strongly advocates for succession planning to ensure that the right leadership choices are made and to minimize conflicts and execute change management effectively. Speaking in an interview (Good Evening Ghana – Metro TV Show 22/03/2012), on leadership, Dr. Munroe aptly asserted that, leadership change should not bring about conflicts, and that leadership is measured by who you produce but not what you built. Dr. Munroe summarizes the importance of succession planning by saying that, a “successful successor is a success”. It, therefore, means that, effective planned

change management and succession planning would result in the appointment of good leaders; good leadership would in turn manage change effectively without breeding conflicts.

Taking a cue from Munroe's injunction, university libraries must introduce succession planning and practice participative management in order to reduce conflict situations especially in the event of the appointment of a new Head Librarian.

Objectives of the Study

This paper focuses on management and leadership styles in university libraries in Ghana. The main objectives are to:

1. find out whether the selection of a university librarian brings about conflict situations in university libraries;
2. find out whether succession planning is practiced in Ghanaian university libraries, and
3. make recommendations for good leadership and management practices in university libraries in Ghana.

The Significance of the Study

This paper will serve as a guide to succession planning in university libraries. Examining the views of senior members and senior staff of university libraries will provide them with the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on succession management in libraries. It will equip the appointing authorities with the essential information to choose a successor when the incumbent librarian retires or resigns. The study can also stimulate research in good management practices in the area of succession planning in university libraries.

Research Gap

Libraries in the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia have seriously discussed succession plans, however, a review of the literature turned up only one article about succession planning in university libraries in the United States "Your library's future" a 2004 article published in *Library Journal* (Singer, 2004). There is however nothing in the literature on succession

planning in university libraries in Ghana. This paper will therefore add to the literature available on succession planning.

Leadership

Metz (2001) discussing the leadership role in academic libraries notes that today effective library leadership requires an extraordinary ability to maintain a delicate and constantly shifting balance in the management of technical, financial, and human resources to serve the academic mission of our colleges and universities. Leaders must make judicious decisions that blend the strengths of the past, the demands of the present, and the uncertainty of the future, and they must do so continually—often within an organizational environment designed to support the past. Clearly, successful library leaders will need to demonstrate a blend of bold leadership, informed risk-taking, widespread consultation, and consensus building.

Metz (2001) proceeded to posit that leaders need keen analytical powers, abundant common sense, vibrant creativity, reasoned judgment, and a passionate commitment to the mission and goals of higher education. He then concludes that to develop this new leader is an enormous challenge

Leadership, Management and Mentoring Experts in leadership studies still do not agree on exactly what leadership is (Swansburg, 2002). However, leadership is defined as the process of influencing others towards a goal (Samson, 2009). In other words, leadership is organizing a group of people to achieve a common goal. A leader is an influential person who has the ability to lead a group or department with or without formal appointment. A leader is one, others follow willingly and voluntarily.

According to Cronin (1995), leaders are individuals who can help create options and opportunities; clarify problems and choices; build morale and coalition; inspire others and provide a vision of the possibilities and promise of a better community. He asserts that the most significant breakthroughs are made by leaders who anticipate complexities but refuse to be overwhelmed and paralyzed by doubt.

Management

Every organization, regardless of its size, has developed and implemented management concepts in order for it to run smoothly and accomplish the vision, goals and objectives it has set forth. As such the basic functions of management, broken down into four different areas allow for it to handle the strategic, tactical, and operational decisions for the organization (Rane, 2007)

According to Wikipedia (2012), management is the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives using available resources effectively and efficiently. Management comprises planning, organizing, staffing, leading or directing, and controlling an organization (a group of people or entities) or effort for the purpose of accomplishing a goal. Management is defined as the process of influencing others with specific intentions of getting them perform effectively and contributing to meet organizational needs (Samson, 2002). Samson (2002) asserts that throughout management literature the original functions of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling as defined by Fayol, Urwick and others have been accepted as the principal functions of a manager. He further stressed that managers must ensure that the available resources are well organized and applied to produce the best results. In the resource constrained and difficult environments of many low – to middle-income countries, a manager must also be a leader to achieve optimum results. The manager's job is to plan, organize and coordinate. The leader's job is to inspire and motivate. Therefore, managers should be leaders. Germill and Oakley (1992) argue that, in this era of high technological innovation, a successful library leader must exercise creative leadership and management of the library's programs, services and resources. Murray (2010) therefore postulates that leadership and management must go hand in hand, though not the same thing, he thinks they are necessarily linked, and complementary. Leadership and management are subjects that have attracted considerable interest in the library field.

Succession planning

Management is responsible for ensuring that the organization continually has high-quality operation and employees. One of the most important practices to meet this responsibility is to conduct succession planning. In fact, succession planning should be a part of every company's

strategic plan. But very often people think of succession planning as having application only in family owned companies or in large conglomerates. The reasons for succession planning processes in organizations are to develop and nurture its human capital, to ensure a continuing sequence of qualified people to move up and take over when the current generation of managers and key people retire or move on, and to plan for the future of the company in order for key posts to be filled. (Baldwin,2011). Charan, Drotter, Noel, (2001) also defined succession planning broadly as a process of identifying and developing potential future leaders or senior managers, as well as individuals to fill other business-critical positions, either in the short- or the long-term. In addition to training and development activities, succession planning programmes typically include the provision of practical, tailored work experience that will be relevant for future senior or key roles

Succession planning is the preemptive process of identifying significant leadership positions that could put the organization at risk if left unfulfilled, and targeting current employees that could move into such roles and grooming them for succession. Therefore, organizations that fail to plan for the timely and effective filling of such leadership roles can be caught off guard, with its ramifications. Managing leadership succession effectively requires a structured approach that is agreed, understood and followed by everyone involved in the planning process. To develop the employees you need for your succession plan, practices such as lateral moves assignment to special projects, team leadership roles, and both internal and external training and development opportunities are used.

The succession planning process, affords the retention of superior employees because they appreciate the time, attention, and development that the organizations are investing in them. Employees are motivated and engaged when they can see a career path for their continued growth and development. To effectively do succession planning in an organization, superior staff must be hired and the organization's long term goals identified

You need to identify and understand the developmental needs of your employees. You must ensure that all key employees understand their career paths and the roles they are being developed to fill. You need to focus resources on key employee retention. You need to be aware of employment trends in your area to know the roles you will have difficulty in filling externally.

Fundamental to the succession-management process is an underlying philosophy that argues that top talent in the corporation must be managed for the greater good of the enterprise. Merck and other companies argue that a "talent mindset" must be part of the leadership culture for these practices to be effective.

According to Rothwell (2005), organizations such as Dow Chemical, Eli Lilly, Sonoco, and Dell Computers when anticipating changes in leadership, assess the skills and knowledge of their employees, identify those that possess the potential to be effective leaders, and provide training, mentoring, and experience so that when the moment happens the plan is in place. Succession planning thus becomes workplace planning.

Baldwin (2011) states that succession must be planned years in advance of expected needs and to properly train a successor, the firm needs sufficient time to expose the people to the full spectrum of opportunities within the firm, as well as any desired or required outside education/experience expected. For example, if someone is expected to be a general manager, the number of departments; the types and ranges of technologies and processes, and the level of knowledge about the company's procedures and policies, markets and customers, suppliers, employees, contractors, etc., will determine the time and depth of involvement. He adds that additional factors, such as past experience and current knowledge that the individual brings to the process, will also affect the succession time frame. He concludes that when succession planning is skillfully done, it will bring the peace of mind that senior management should have, based on the understanding and expectations of its future leadership.

Nixon (2008) asserts that succession planning, as a strategy for developing leaders from within the company or organization, is a technique that could be useful to libraries. In the opinion of Singer (2010) succession planning is a systematic effort by the library to ensure continuity in key positions to retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future, and encourage individual advancement. It is designed to be ongoing, owned by leadership and encourages a focus on aligning staff and leadership with the library's strategic goals and objectives. She states that succession planning will lead to the right people in the right place at the right time to do the right things.

Conflicts and Conflict Management

While no single definition of conflict exists, most definitions seem to involve the following factors, that there are at least two independent groups, the groups perceive some incompatibility between themselves and the group interact with each other in some way (Putnam and Poole, 1987). According to Wall and Callister, (1995), a conflict is a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party. Rahim (1992) defines conflict as an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or dissonance within or between social entities.

In the context of this paper, conflict situations may be defined as the non acceptance, disagreement or disputes over the appointment and leadership of a university librarian amongst the library staff for various personal or group reasons and interests which create an un-conducive work environment, and does not lend support to the appointee.

Identifying the cause or source of the conflict is a major measure to conflict management. Usually, conflict situations arise because the disputing factions suspect or perceive discrimination, cheating or unfairness against either of them. When one party feels threatened, or its rights are being violated, there could be conflicts. Each one of the conflicting parties believes strongly that it is being cheated, threatened or deserves better treatment or should be recognized as the rightful owner of a property or the rightful occupant of a position and hence, the struggle or “fight “to claim that which “rightfully” belongs to it. The conflict could be about or over sharing of scarce resources, ownership of property, status or leadership position. Conflict situations arise as a result of economic, cultural, tribal, political, personal, and religious or some other differences. According to Machlowitz (1995), today’s successful leader must be a mediator, and conciliator, bringing together disparate viewpoints to move the organization forward because conflicts can destroy a good working relationship as issues give way to personalities, parties become polarized, and problems get hazy.

Awedoba (2009), in an ethnographic study of the Northern Ghanaian conflict succinctly explains conflict and its sources as follows: “Conflict arguably stems from competition for scarce but valued resources...” He describes conflict as a relationship between two or more parties that centers on differences, disagreement on some issue of common interest or concern, divergence,

incompatibilities, clash of wills and the like; it may involve antagonism and opposition. The parties to a conflict may be individuals or groups or collective entities that may be in contact physically or notionally or that may share space. Conflicts do not happen without cause. The sources are myriad, some remote, some immediate.

In some cases the causes can be said to be scripted into the social arrangements. There are political, social, economic, ethnic, religious, and ideological conflicts. Envy and jealousy may also be the sources of conflict too, where it implies invidious comparison between competitors, and egos can be wounded or deflated. He observed that conflicts occur when people (or parties) perceive that, as a consequence of a disagreement, there is a threat to their needs, prospects, interests or concerns. Thus, the solution to a specific conflict would depend on the nature of that conflict, the parties involved, what those parties seek to gain by the conflict, and also the situation and context.

Rahim (2000) notes also that when conflicts happen, they must be managed for industrial peace and harmony. Conflict management therefore should aim at minimizing conflicts at all levels, attain and maintain a moderate amount of substantive conflict, and use the appropriate conflict management strategies to effectively bring about serenity, and also to match the status and concerns of the two parties in conflict. He asserts that conflict management involves implementing strategies to limit the negative aspects of conflict and increase the positive aspects at a level equal to or higher than where the conflict is taking place. Furthermore, the aim of conflict management is to enhance learning and group outcomes. It is not concerned with eliminating all conflict or avoiding conflict because they can be valuable to groups and organizations. It has been shown to increase group outcomes when managed properly, (Alper, Tjosvold, & Law, 2000; Bodtker & Jameson, 2001; Khun & Poole, 2000; DeChurch & Marks, 2001).

Methodology

The study adopted the social survey method.

Population

The population for the study was the six (6) public universities' libraries which are strategically located in the northern savanna zone, the middle forest zone, the eastern, southern and western coastal belts respectively. Indeed, these six (6) public universities' scope of coverage is in all the ten regions of Ghana. The study covers the libraries of the following public universities: University for Development Studies (UDS) which has campuses in all the three Northern Regions of Ghana (i.e. Northern Region, Upper West Region and Upper East Region); Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi, University of Education Winneba (UEW) with Campuses in the Central and Ashanti Regions; University of Cape Coast (UCC) in the Central Region, University of Mines and Technology (UMaT), Tarkwa in the Western Region, and the University of Ghana (UG) Legon in the Greater Accra Region.

Sampling

A mix of stratified, cluster sampling was used to select the libraries for the study. Out of these six public universities' libraries, four (i.e. UDS, KNUST, UCC, and UG) constituted the sample population. These four universities are not only found in strategic geographical locations in Ghana covering the northern zone, middle belt and coastal zones respectively, but are also older and well established public universities' libraries. Apart from the strategic location of the four (4) public universities, they also have seasoned and knowledgeable library staff hence their selection for the study. Also, they constitute over 50% of the existing public universities' libraries in Ghana and this makes the sample quite representative (Opoku, 2005; Tagoe, 2009). Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents (ie the senior staff and senior members of the libraries). The senior members and senior staff of the selected public universities libraries were chosen as respondents because they, invariably, are the potential Heads of Department of their respective libraries. Furthermore, the senior members qualify to be Head Librarians and or are in management positions carrying out management functions. They are the leaders and decision makers can therefore, influence policies and affect the management, leadership and succession in their respective libraries.

The total population for the study was 534 senior staff and senior members of the four (4) public university libraries in Ghana. A sample size of 160 respondents was chosen from the 534 using

purposive sampling method. To solicit information from the respondents, a total of 160 well-designed, printed structured, open-ended questionnaires were given to the respondents. The questionnaires comprised 43 questions under the following major thematic areas; leadership and management, conflicts and conflict management, and succession planning. Out of the 160 questionnaires distributed, 100 were duly completed and returned thus recording a response-rate of 62.5%. The researcher gathered the opinion of respondents on the topic being researched into. The consensus of the respondents provided the basis for proffering possible solutions to the management and leadership challenges in areas of succession planning and conflict management in university libraries in Ghana. Relevant documents and literature were examined and information extracted for the study. For purposes of confidentiality and anonymity, the alphabetical letters A, B, C, D are used to represent each of the four public universities libraries in the data gathering, analysis and presentation. The questionnaire was administered in February 2011. The data gathered was analyzed, and form the basis for the conclusion and recommendations

Findings

Leadership and Management

With regards to the headship of academic libraries, 97% of respondents said their university libraries had a substantive librarian, two percent said they did not know whether their library had a substantive librarian whilst one respondent claimed there was no librarian. Also, 73% respondents were satisfied with the choice and appointment of the University Librarian, 16% refused to answer the question, 6% said, “no comment” and 5% responded in the negative on the choice and/or appointment of the Head Librarian.

On the qualification and professional competence of the Librarian, 64% of the respondents said the Librarian was very experienced and highly competent whilst 35% of them said the Librarian was quite experienced and competent and one per cent blank.

Table 1. Experience and Professional Competence of Head Librarians

Rating	A	B	C	D	TOTAL%
Very experienced and highly competent	12	10	23	19	64
Quite experienced and competent	3	9	2	21	35
Inexperienced and incompetent	0	0	0	0	0
Blank	0	1	0	0	1
Total	15	20	25	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

With regards to the Librarian’s job performance/work output, the ratings out of the 100 respondents were: excellent 25%, very satisfactory 46%, satisfactory 23%, fairly satisfactory 5% and one per cent unsatisfactory

On the librarian’s leadership and managerial skills, 37% of the respondents rated him/her excellent, 27% as very good, 22% good, 10% fair, three per cent as poor and one per cent as very poor.

Responding to the leadership style of the librarian, 64% of respondents described it as democratic, 19% said the librarian was dictatorial, 10% claimed he/she was autocratic and 7% indicated that the librarian practiced the laissez-faire style of leadership. Respondents rated the librarian’s attitude towards staff as follows: very good 33%, good 30%, excellent 19%, fairly good 15% with only two and one respondents rating the librarian’s human relations and attitude towards staff as poor and very poor respectively.

Table 2. Leadership Style of the Head Librarian

Leadership style	A	B	C	D	TOTAL %
Autocratic	2	1	2	5	10
Dictatorial	3	1	3	12	19
Democratic	9	13	20	22	64
Laissez-faire	1	5	0	1	7
Total	15	20	25	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Again 12% of respondents rated the librarian’s knowledge of the job as non-satisfactory, 33% as satisfactory, 30% said it was very satisfactory, and 25% rated it as outstanding.

Assessing the librarian’s capability to manage the affairs of the Library, respondents said he/she was highly capable 48%, capable 50%, while two declined to respond.

Conflicts, Communication and Conflict Management

Information was solicited from respondents on the acceptance of the Head Librarian, conflicts due to the appointment of the Head Librarian, freedom of expression on the Librarian, effective communication between the Librarian and the staff, and grievance procedures.

Responding to the question, “Would you have preferred someone else to the current university Librarian/Head Librarian? 52% of the respondents answered in the negative and 32% in the affirmative, with 16% saying, “No comment”.

Table 3. Nature of the Conflict Situation in the Library

Nature of conflict	A	B	C	D	Total %
Interpersonal/Relationship conflicts	12	11	12	16	51
Task conflicts	3	4	8	7	22
Process conflicts	0	1	1	4	6
Others(state) No conflict	0	0	0	0	0
Blank	0	4	4	13	21
Total	15	20	25	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Also, out of the 100 respondents, 44% of them said the appointment of the current University Librarian did not create any conflict situations amongst staff, however, 32% said the appointment created a conflict situation amongst staff of the library, whilst 8% said, “No comment”, 16% said they did not know whether the appointment created any conflict situations or not.

Indeed, in response to the question, “Is there any conflict situation in the library, 34% answered “Yes”, 40% said “No”, 20% don’t know and 6% said, “No comment”. Asked to express their opinion on the nature of the conflict situation in the library, 51% said the conflict was interpersonal relationship, 22% described it as task conflicts and 6% ascribing it to process conflicts, and blank 21%. In response to the question, “Can you openly express your opinion against the leadership style or management of the library?”, 37% said ‘Yes’, 29% answered ‘No’ and 34% said, “No comment”.

With regards to the availability of grievance procedures in the library to address staff’s complaints, 56% indicated there is no procedure, 20% said there is a procedure and 24% refused to answer the question. While 80% of respondents refused to give reasons for the resistance against the appointment of the University Librarian, 19% alleged that the Librarian was an unpopular choice and one respondent claimed that the appointing procedure was violated.

Succession planning

Whilst 70% of the respondents claimed to know succession planning, 21% had no knowledge of it and 9% would not say whether they knew succession planning or not. In fact 60% of respondents did not know whether their university library had a succession plan. 18% said the library has not got a succession plan, 12% said the library had a succession plan but 10% said, “No comment”, to the question, “Has your library got a succession plan?”

Meanwhile, 62% of the respondents did not know whether succession planning was being practiced in their library, 25% said it was not being practiced with 13% claiming that succession planning was being practiced in their university libraries. Again, 70% of respondents agreed that succession planning is relevant in the appointment of the university librarian. Only 5% said it was not relevant and 25% did not know whether succession planning was relevant in the appointment of the University Librarian.

Table 4. The Relevance of Succession Planning

Relevance of succession planning	A	B	C	D	Total%
Prepares the successor for the job	3	10	2	3	52
Can serve as motivation for staff to work hard	3	1	2	2	8
Ensures smooth transition and health cooperation	7	5	7	25	20
No knowledge about succession planning	2	4	14	10	20
Total	15	20	25	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

When asked to give reasons for the relevance of succession planning in the appointment of the University Librarian, 52% said that it prepares the successor for the job and 8% said that it can serve as a motivation for staff to work hard, 20% respondent believe that succession planning ensures smooth transition and healthy cooperation amongst staff of the library and 20% said they do not have any knowledge about succession planning.

Responding to the need to advocate for succession planning, 78% of respondents indicated they would advocate for succession planning in university libraries but 5% were against succession planning in academic libraries, 17% did not know whether succession planning should be advocated in university libraries. Respondents also said that if there is a succession plan the following category of staff should be the target: Senior members, 62%, Senior Staff, two per cent, everybody six per cent and 30% of the respondents refused to indicate which category of staff a succession plan must aim at.

Also, 53% said they do not have access to the library’s succession plan, 37% would not comment on whether or not they have access to the library’s succession plan and 10% said they have access to the plan. Respondents also indicated that the following category of staff should have access to the succession plan: only senior members 18%, only senior staff 11%, Senior Members and Senior Staff only 15%, only heads of unit/department of the library 11%, all staff 22% and 23% refused to answer the question. Responding to the question, “Will succession planning avert or minimize conflict situations in academic libraries when a Head/University Librarian is appointed?”, 67% of the respondents answered ‘Yes’, 14% said ‘No’ and 19 % Don’t know .

Table 5. Criteria for the Appointment of Librarian/Head

Criteria	A	B	C	D	Total%
Professional qualification and competence	3	13	10	10	45
Long service and professional qualification	2	1	3	4	10
Working experience and competency	0	1	1	2	4
Academic qualification and working experience	1	2	4	8	16
All of the above criteria	9	3	7	16	25
None of these	0	0	0	0	0
Total	15	20	25	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

In the opinion of respondents, the following should constitute the criteria for the appointment of a Head Librarian: professional qualification and competence, 45%, long service and professional qualification, 10%, working experience and competency, four per cent, academic qualification and working experience, 16%, all of the above cited criteria 25%.

As to what should be included in a succession plan, 24% suggested academic writings and publications, 18% competency and academic qualification, 16% said staff should be groomed from within, equal opportunity for all eight per cent; long and dedicated service, eight per cent and 26% did not answer this question.

Recommendations include succession planning be introduced in all academic libraries, the current five year tenure of office of the librarian is too long and should be shortened to three years in the first term and two years in case of renewal. It was also recommended that the objectives and the scope of the succession plan as well as the strategy to achieve the stated objectives of the succession plan should be identified, and finally the draft plan should be discussed and adopted by the entire staff of the library and then approved by the Library Board of the University.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that majority of the public universities in Ghana have substantive Librarians with the requisite qualification and competencies. When a librarian is confirmed as the substantive head, he/she is capable and takes bold decisions and high risks, and does widespread consultation. This affirms Metz's (2001) belief that, today, effective library leadership requires an extraordinary ability to maintain a delicate and constantly shifting balance in the management of technical, financial, and human resources to serve the academic mission of our colleges and universities.

From the findings, it can be deduced that, majority of the respondents stated that democratic rule is the most dominant management style in the surveyed libraries. The findings corroborate Ibrahim's (2009) assertion that participatory style management, turns to work out well in academic libraries. He warns that though most libraries practice participatory style of management, decision making does not make for effective leadership because the ultimate

responsibility for decisions taken rests with the Librarian and so he/she must put his/her managerial abilities and competencies into play.

On succession planning, the general consensus is that it is very useful in the selection of the University Librarian. This process brings about transparency and it also grooms and prepares potential candidates to take over the position when it becomes vacant. This corroborates the assertion that succession planning is a good tool for the selection of Librarians to head the University libraries and when skillfully done would bring about the peace of mind that senior management should have, based on the understanding and expectations of its future leadership (Baldwin, 2011). Singer (2010) also notes that when succession planning is introduced into university libraries, the right people will be in the right place at the right time to pursue the objectives and the goals of the library. It is, therefore, imperative that all public university libraries introduce and, or implement succession plans effectively.

The study further revealed that conflicts arise as a dispute or disagreement between individual persons or group of people over matters of importance and value or interest; therefore, there would always be conflicts. Brewer et al (2002) explains that conflicts are frequent occurrences in the workplace, and conflict management skills are necessary for individuals to function effectively at each level in the organization. Interpersonal and task conflicts for example, could be dealt with effectively if conflict management processes are put into place. Rahim (2009), further stressed the point that, conflict management could bring about serenity and harmony at the work place. Conflicts that could arise out of a fall out in the appointment of a University Librarian could be avoided if a succession plan is in place. As Baldwin (2011) rightly observed, when succession planning is skillfully done, it brings about peace and cooperation. One would, therefore, hope that, well - designed, acceptable and comprehensive conflict resolution mechanism (other than the existing laws, conditions of service and grievance procedures), would be rigorously executed and sustained. It is uncertain whether public university libraries, can point to such conflict management mechanisms.

Conclusion

A healthy competition based on qualification and performance amidst understanding and cooperation among core staff could produce an acceptable University Librarian to the majority of

the staff. A candidate selected by consensus will bring about reduction in conflict situations, promote team-building and receive maximum cooperation and support from the staff.

Recommendations

1. University libraries must develop a well-crafted, tested and implementable succession planning and mentoring programme.
2. The universities must make sure that, the selection process for filling vacancies at the top echelon is rigorous and competitive enough to pick the right and qualified people for the job.
3. University libraries must ensure that potential staff are identified, nurtured, trained, motivated and prepared to take up the mantle of leadership when the position is vacant.
4. University libraries must develop a leadership culture that provide opportunities for movement, development and challenging assignments in which individuals could demonstrate high levels of performance and ability.
5. All university libraries must ensure that, there is a well crafted, tested and implementable conflict management mechanism to manage and reduce conflicts in their libraries

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