

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES: OPTIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR INTERFACING LIVING LIBRARY TRADITIONS AND ACADEMIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the results of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere:

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to those who are pillars in my life:

Almighty God;

who is my sustainer, protector and provider.

My late father, Mr. Godwill Dedzoe-Dzokotoe;

who stood against all odds and sent me to school.

My mother, Ms. Dora Gyamfuah;

who tenderly brought me to this world.

My husband and child, Kingsley and Emmanuel Plockey;

who were always there for me.

Mr. and Mrs. Agordoh.



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ABSTRACT

Knowledge production is pivotal to the growth and development of people. As society has evolved so have knowledge production systems. Traditionally, ethnic communities have preserved and transmitted knowledge generated from their beliefs, institutions and customs from one generation to another. With the introduction of Western systems, such communities have also participated in the formalized knowledge system preserved and transmitted through formal institutions of learning such as schools, colleges and universities. This dissertation has focused on knowledge production in Ghana with the view to understanding how traditional and academic systems can inspire each one in mutually beneficial ways. It examines the living knowledge traditions of the people of Dagbon alongside academic library systems in Ghana with the view to unveiling possibilities for bridging the two in the interest of sharing and enriching knowledge generation. The Dagbon living knowledge tradition, as held by the various indigenous experts collectively called the *baansi* and expressed in various performative arts, is distinct from the academic library system, which is a highly formalized knowledge production regime; yet, the two traditions have co-existed and are upheld as legitimate learning spaces. This study thus sought to assess the knowledge production processes of both systems, as well as evaluate the gaps and opportunities for determining possible ways for integrating the knowledge management mechanisms of indigenous living libraries and academic library systems. Using a descriptive case study design, the study employed a multi-site approach involving in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, storytelling, phased assertion, historical profiling and acoustic appreciation, among others, to elicit responses.



The data were analyzed using qualitative techniques. The study confirmed the generally held assertion that there were evident differences in the two knowledge systems albeit several often overlooked similarities existed too. The study also recommends a model for creating synergy between *Baansi* and Academic Libraries which emphasizes learning together and mutual respect for the co-existence and co-evolution of their knowledge systems.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Linden (1991) narrated how 1,600 years ago the wisdom of many centuries went up in flames when the great Alexandria Library burned down. He said, “today with little notice, vast archives of knowledge and expertise are being lost, leaving humanity in danger of losing its past and perhaps endangering its future as well.” He was referring to the knowledge stored in the memories of elders, healers, midwives, farmers, fishermen and hunters throughout the world. This knowledge base is unrecorded, and includes: many technologies, arts, ways to farm deserts without irrigations, produce from the rain forest without destroying the delicate ecosystem, and navigate seas using knowledge of currents and stars. These ancient cultures had explored the medical properties of plants and learned how to farm in mountainous regions without allowing the best soil to be washed away (Mchombu et al., 2004: 35).

These varieties of knowledge identified by Linden form critical resources that must be valued, managed and shared by academic libraries as the basis for the evidence-driven sustainable development of Africa. This becomes necessary because of the pressures of globalization, ecological change, socio-economic progress and human wellbeing. These pressures have implications for African cultures and especially social and knowledge traditions. The persistent bombardment of African peoples with new knowledges and traditions, some of which are radically different from our own, have had serious repercussions regarding the sustenance of our systems which have tended to depend on slow but sure natural change processes. The consequent losses to indigenous knowledge (IK) is causing cultural gaps between generations and denying the continent the rich and powerful heritage of knowledge traditions formed by past generations (Mchombu et al., 2004).

IK, also known as “local,” “traditional” or rural people’s knowledge, is not easily





www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh defined (Rouse, 1999). Ngulube (2002) indicates that though scholars do not agree on the preferred definition of IK, they have used terms like indigenous technical knowledge, entho-ecology, local knowledge, rural people's knowledge, and traditional knowledge to capture its various forms and aspects. That is also indicative of its several and diverse meanings and connotations.

According to Kargbo (2006), IK is vital information that is sadly diminishing at an alarming rate; as such there is an urgent need to collect it before much of it is completely lost. There is therefore the growing need to preserve IK as indigenous communities around the world are facing a great challenge to the survival of their cultural heritage and knowledge traditions (Stevens, 2008).

According to the World Bank (1998), IK faces extinction unless it is properly documented and disseminated. IK is an underutilized resource in the development process. However, according to the World Bank (1998) learning from IK, by investigating what local communities know and have, can improve understanding of local conditions and provide a productive context for activities designed to help those communities. Understanding IK can increase responsiveness to clients. Adapting international practices to the local setting can help improve the impact and sustainability of development assistance.

However, there have been a number of efforts to reclaim and promote IK. For example, in September 2002, during the first World Public Meeting on Culture, held in Porto Alegre in Brazil, there emerged the idea of drawing up a document as guidelines for local cultural policies, a document comparable to what the Agenda 21 meant in 1992 for Environment.



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Dei (2012) advocates for development based on African contexts and the use of development approaches that nurture indigenous creativity and resourcefulness. He argues that there is a fierce struggle to negotiate the balance of existing power relations in the production, transmission and application of knowledge about social development within the academics.

IK is considered the basis for self-sufficiency and self-determination, providing effective alternatives to western technologies. It has been argued that development efforts that ignore IK generally fail to achieve their desired objectives (Grenier, 1998; Sillitoe, 1998). Every society needs to insure the existence of viable indigenous knowledge systems; for example, local institutions, structures, and cadres which, in combination, are able to access knowledge from all sources—external and home-grown, traditional and modern—synthesize, adapt and make usable by local communities and agencies under local conditions. The inadequacy of such systems in Africa is both cause and effect of the continent's knowledge, poverty and deepening material deprivation.

Through the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) libraries can provide channels for the dissemination of the IK of local communities to global audiences. This will ultimately secure the preservation of IK in addition to changing perceptions of local communities as mere consumers to critical producers of information/knowledge (Tjiek, 2006). Preserving our IK and looking forward to its wider availability has never been more important than it is today in the information society. Information system research, which recognizes, supports and enables access and presence of diverse knowledge communities online, has become a major concern recently. These issues are especially important for indigenous groups who are creating or intend to create digital resources which support and preserve local identities and

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attempt to invoke grassroots involvement in sustainable development (Boast, et.al., 2007). ICT can play major roles in improving the availability of IK systems and enhancing its blending with modern, scientific and/or technical knowledge.

In the view of Moahi (2003), the digital era has provided many opportunities for African libraries to make available local (IK) and relevant content knowledge on the web. However, libraries in Africa have largely restricted their mindset by solely concentrating on their traditional role of providing access to information by essentially building up book and periodical collections, which have served largely the lettered class, formal learners and institutionalized audiences. Ultimately, this leaves a wide and unfilled gap, especially in Africa, of communities which depend on and use non-literary sources. It is the case that many indigenous communities have evolved intelligible media of communication, some of which are literal but there are also aspects that are not literal and need to be stored and made accessible to diverse audiences. Many libraries in Africa are yet to overcome this challenge even in an era where multimedia technologies are available. This is an obligation with social implications such as cultural rights, livelihoods improvement, personal/human empowerment and community development.



The development of libraries in Africa date back to several centuries as those in Timbuktu from the 12th to the early 20th century (Russo & Bondarev, 2015). However, this library collapsed after the end of the Songhay Empire. There was also the library of Alexandria, Egypt which was burned down; thus, erasing a long rich historical knowledge tradition. After the colonialization of African countries, libraries were built initially for people whose knowledge was imported from colonial countries. The existing library system in Africa has been designed to serve the interest of the colonialist and the library's stock has primarily been foreign in content, communicating

knowledge using electronic and print media to serve the colonial interest instead of serving our indigenous community. This means that majority of Africans cannot have access to these libraries. After many years of independence, many African states have not transformed the content of their libraries. They have remained largely foreign as their development has been either ignored by governments or that the information professionals have not been dynamic enough to go beyond their traditional functions. To buttress this view, Nyana (2009) has posited that the idea of delivering library services to rural Africa is well-intentioned, but as it is based on a Western model, such services do not meet the needs of African communities. Arguments about the state of libraries in Africa and calls for ways of improving existing libraries and their services are not new. However, recommendations and solutions suggested by library scholars so far have been based on the Western model, emphasizing literacy and print collections, ignoring the importance of the oral traditions of Africa. However, in the view of Entsua-Mensah (2006) providing information in response to and in anticipation of the needs of users so that information received becomes more relevant is a basic attribute of professional efficiency.

Greyling (2007) and Sillitoe et al. (2006) both discuss libraries in the Western world that have incorporated IK into their systems but the situation is however different with African libraries. The perception of IK from the point of view of colonial authorities, missionaries, and Eurocentric intellectuals has created the impression of IK as inferior, primitive, heathen, barbaric and unworthy of preservation (Senah et al., 2001). A study by Plockey (2011) revealed that 73.3% of the respondents admitted that IK was overlooked in academic libraries in Ghana and that library practitioners in Ghana did not consider IK in academic libraries as they considered it to be primitive.



Furthermore, researchers concentrate attention on theories especially from the Western world. Coombs and Ahmed (1974) buttress this point by advocating the need for research on the identification of indigenous learning systems. Yet, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), which is the parent body for Library Associations in the world, has recognised IK and has made statements that urge all libraries in the world to recognise AIK and as such to collect, preserve, and make it available to the public. The following are some of the declarations of IFLA (2003):

- That human beings have a fundamental right to access to expressions of knowledge, create thought and intellectual activity, and to express their views publicly.
- That IFLA acknowledges the intrinsic value and importance of indigenous traditional knowledge and local community knowledge, and the need to consider it holistically in spite of contested conceptual definitions and use.

IFLA (2003) furthermore notes the need:

- To recognize the significance, relevance and value of integrating both indigenous traditional knowledge and local community knowledge in providing solutions to some of the most difficult modern issues and encourages its use in project planning and implementation;
- To protect indigenous traditional knowledge and local traditional knowledge for the benefit of indigenous peoples as well as for the benefit of the rest of the world. It is vulnerable both because it is exploitable and has been exploited, and because of the loss of Elders and the significant decline in emphasis on transmission of this knowledge to younger generations in the face of pressures for modernization;
- To implement effective mechanisms for technology transfer, capacity building, and protection against exploitation in accordance with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the ILO Convention 169 and other conventions relating to sustainable development and the interests of indigenous peoples.
- IFLA recognizes that the character of indigenous traditional knowledge does not lend itself to print, electronic or audio-visual means of recording.



However, in order to ensure its continuing preservation, access and elaboration the IFLA recommends that libraries and archives:

1. Implement programs to collect, preserve and disseminate indigenous and local traditional knowledge resources;
2. Make available and promote information resources which support research and learning about indigenous and local traditional knowledge, its importance and use in modern society;
3. Publicize the value, contribution, and importance of indigenous and local traditional knowledge to both non indigenous and indigenous peoples;
4. And involve elders and communities in the production of resources and teaching children to understand and appreciate the traditional knowledge background and sense identity that is associated with indigenous knowledge (IFLA, 2003: 5)

Access to relevant information is crucial to the economic, political, and social well-being of any community (Nyana, 2009). Wakelin and Simelane (1995) point to the importance of information provision in capacity building and empowering communities, and argue that the lack of access to information is one of the structural causes of poverty.

Academic libraries should debunk the myth that knowledge exists only in print, tapes or in brick and mortar edifices like modern libraries. In simple definition, libraries are “repositories of knowledge.” This definition qualifies the *baansi* of Dagbon, an indigenous community of knowledge, to be regarded as a vast pool of knowledge to be explored for academic use. Unlike prints and tapes which are non-living objects, the *baansi*, as living libraries, exist in the form of living objects- people. Millar et al. (2012) point out that IKS in our communities do not have libraries with books and computers, but they have their own way to produce, codify, store and retrieve knowledge and information. Incorporating living libraries in the academic library system, according to





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Sherk (1995), can provide a systemic framework and vehicle for environmental and educational transformation.

Agrawal (1995) argues that there is a need to move beyond the differences between scientific and IK in order to focus attention on building bridges across the indigenous and scientific divide. This requires parity and integration between traditional and scientific knowledge systems, demanding a mutual understanding of the cultural, material and epistemological basis of each. Achieving such a feat is the challenge of this study. How might academic libraries, endowed with diverse resources, apply their resources to the benefit of indigenous people towards the co-evolution of indigenous and Western knowledge tradition? How might academic libraries, as pedals of learning, also transform themselves to the service of indigenous communities for sustainable development?

1.2 Research Problem

Libraries have emancipated and transformed themselves from traditional resources of the written and printed word to incorporate other media communication and digital technologies. While for many years, attempts have been made by various institutions such as governments, university libraries, church libraries, museums, public libraries, private libraries, historical research institutions, literary societies and national archives elsewhere to maintain and preserve their cultural knowledge traditions, according to Sillitoe et al. (2006), the situation has been different with African libraries.

In Ghana, academic libraries are solely based on Western models of librarianship where borrowed knowledge and culture are propagated as the dominant forms thus sustaining the colonial heritage. In addition, they have been primarily transmitted through print

media and to some extent electronic media; a reflection here again of its colonial heritage. Against the backdrop of the rich and enduring oral (i.e., word of mouth through proverbs, riddles, stories.), corporeal (i.e., sound, patterns, motifs, colours) and visceral (i.e., instinctive, intuitive, gutty) tradition of African cultural knowledge and sciences, the Western model of librarianship leaves out the vast majority of these traditions in their knowledge productions. As such, rural populations who are generally unable to read and write and are unaccustomed to print and/or electronic media have limited or no access to them. More importantly, the challenges of documenting African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) traditions could serve as an important propeller of innovative forms of documentation where the complex nature of indigenous traditions could be duly registered, stored and shared. Libraries will have to find creative and decolonizing ways of capturing and disseminating the strong transdisciplinary roots and form of IK systems. This remains a great challenge.

Critical to this study is that there has been a failure to recognize the importance of the oral culture, which has been traditionally used to transmit information and knowledge in much of Africa from generation to generation. Yet, the literature of libraries in Africa have tended to focus on changing from that oral culture to a written one (Amadi, 1981; Newke, 1995; UNESCO, 1954). Alemna (1996) posits that the insinuation that a strong oral tradition is detrimental to library service reflects the dormant (indeed colonial) nature of librarianship in Africa. African libraries are still acquiring, organizing, and providing services based mainly on printed materials, ignoring the oral tradition predominant in rural areas. Alemna (1996) further notes that African libraries are trying to replace oral culture with reading culture, rather than focusing on providing relevant skills and information necessary for rural communities.





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Again, academic libraries in Ghana are shadows of modern libraries elsewhere. For example, the Bulawayo Public Library, National Museum and Harare City Libraries experimented on utilizing storytellers to attract young readers to the library. Similarly, in the USA, important personalities have been used to promote reading. Also, novelists often organize public reading of sections of their books, which are well attended. These are important models of knowledge sharing and building a knowledge society that academic libraries could emulate. Academic libraries in Ghana have inadequate requisite human and material resources. As a result, they are unable to fulfil their social function of promoting the culture of the society. The irony of the situation is that, the only Library School in Ghana, the Department of Information Studies of the University of Ghana, Legon, that trains librarians, concentrates on providing knowledge and skills on western theories of information management and provision. Therefore, librarians who graduate from that Library School tend to lack the skills necessary for the collection and organisation of non-literal traditions. Consequently, librarians in Ghana are not able to respond to the challenges of documenting and disseminating IK and sciences or even analyse, collect, organise and disseminate information in forms responsive to local peoples' knowledge production needs. It is important to note that archivists/librarians who tend to be weak in responding to the living traditions of the majority of the people who are guided by their cultural traditions are strong as far as their archival roles are concerned. For institutions such as the University for Development Studies, which have a direct mandate of serving national development needs through education that enable graduates to respond to and tackle the socioeconomic challenges of local constituencies (i.e., communities and people), there is even the greater challenge of not merely promoting research and documenting local



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experiences but also contextualizing the traditions of the people in forms that are meaningful to them.

How might academic libraries transform their current situation in response to the challenges identified above? What bridge(s) needs to be built to connect IK and academic libraries for the effective production of knowledge to the benefit of local people and their development? These questions underpin this study.

From the rationalization above, it becomes clear that there is therefore a great lacuna between the living libraries of indigenous peoples and the Western-modeled academic libraries, especially so in the case of Ghana. This is attributable to the fact that academic libraries in Africa specifically those in Ghana have not accepted IK as an authentic knowledge that can be utilized by people in academia. Academic libraries place themselves in an elite category by projecting themselves as the ‘ivory towers’ that serve only those in the academy. Due to this colonial, elite posturing, even in this era of multimedia communications, academic libraries have not been able to apply themselves to connecting effectively with IKS. As such they work to maintain rather than transcend the colonial borders/barriers.

For indigenous communities of knowledge, traditionally multiple media platforms have been used to capture, transmit and conserve knowledge. However, these have not always been effective as they continue to face the threat of annihilation and extinction. Faced with the further challenge of globalization and its antecedents, academic libraries who claim superior and professional status in knowledge management ought to be stepping out and taking up the challenge of recreating themselves to support such efforts to protect indigenous traditions.

These concerns throw up the subject of integration. The possibilities that both academic and living libraries throw up in the service of communities and people challenge researchers to explore strategic ways of tapping into their individual offerings for building synergies that are mutually beneficial.

The challenge for this study is to better understand the knowledge production disjuncture with the view to exploring avenues for transforming academic libraries to recreate their knowledge production mechanism in ways that **effectively integrate indigenous traditions and westernized libraries**. The goal is to propose ways of endogenizing academic libraries to serve both local and academic communities.

1.3 Research Questions

This study is not driven by a hypothesis; it is based on research questions carefully formulated to tease out the nuances of context and process as well as the problematization of the issue of integration of indigenous and academic libraries. The major question is:

How can the knowledge production/management mechanisms of indigenous communities (living libraries) and academic library systems be synergized?

The main research question is supported by four specific questions:

- i. *Which processes are involved in the knowledge production and management system of the indigenous community (i.e., living libraries)?*
- ii. *How have academic libraries managed their knowledge production and management process?*
- iii. *What gaps, opportunities and prospects exist for forging synergies between living and academic libraries?*



- iv. Learning from www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh question 3 above, how might academic libraries be endogenized?

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of the study is:

To explore possible ways to forge synergy between the knowledge management mechanisms of indigenous knowledge communities (living libraries) and academic library systems.

The specific research objectives are to:

- i. *examine the processes involved in the knowledge Production and management system of the indigenous community (i.e., living libraries);*
- ii. *assess the knowledge production and management process in the academic library system;*
- iii. *evaluate the gaps, opportunities and prospects existing for forging synergies between living and academic libraries?*
- iv. *seek possible ways of endogenising academic library systems in Ghana or formalizing IK systems*



1.5 The Area of Study

1.5.1 Land and People

The traditional state of Dagbon¹ covers an area of about eight thousand square kilometers of the Northern Region of Ghana. It lies in Ghana's savannah woodland, watered by the White Volta River and its tributaries to the west and the Oti and its

¹ Land of the Dagbamba. The Dagbamba are also called Dagomba. Their language is Dagbanli, wrongly called Dagbanini.

tributaries to the east. It is located between Latitude 9 and 10 degrees. (See Fig.1. 1).

Mahama (2004) indicates that it stretches from Kubalem in the south east in the Zabzugu District to Zantani in the northwest in Tolon District. University of Ghana Library and University of Cape Coast Library are in the southern part of Ghana.

Figure 1. 1 Ghana map showing its physical features



(Source: <https://www.google.com.gh> , 2011)

Oppong (1971) describes the Dagbon State as the *amalgam of autochthones and an immigrant ruling class*. Dagbon is populated by a diverse collection of ethnic groups



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including the invading Dagbamba and the aboriginal Konkomba, Chokosi (Anufo), Baari (Chamba), Bimoba, Kotokoli, Kabre, and Zantansi (Oppong, 1971). The main Dagomba or Dagbama towns are Yendi, Tamale, Karaga, Gushiegu, Zabzugu, Sang, Mion, Savelugu, Nyankpala, Kumbungu, Diari, Tolon, Nanton and Savelugu. The biggest town is Tamale which is metropolitan in status and the modern administrative capital of the Northern Region with a population figure of 371,351 (GSS, 2013). However, Yendi is the traditional capital of the Dagbon State with a population of 199,592 (GSS, 2013). The people of Dagbon are called Dagbamba (also Dagomba) and the language is Dagbani or Dagbanli of the Mole-Dagbani sub-group of Gur language group (Mahama, 2004; Oppong, 1971). Fig 1.2 depicts the Dagbamba among their Gur neighbors and Fig. 1.3 shows the district and their capitals in Dagbonhe .

Figure 1. 2 Map of Northern Ghana showing its major ethnic group.



(Source: Internet, 2011)

Figure 1. 3 The Map of Dagbon showing the current capitals in dagbon state.



(Source: <https://sites.google.com/site/ghanaplacenames/database>, 2018)

1.5.2 Social Institution

The people of Dagbon combine both patrilineal and matrilineal forms of inheritance. However, the more prominent form practiced is the patrilineal. The Dagbamba have a well-established form of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). Their IKS comprises a well set out organizational structure, with the family as its starting point and then society. The socialisation agents of the Dagbamba include the family such as elders, parents and peers; music, such as by the *gonje and linsi*; dance, such as *damba, simpa* and *tonwaa* and ceremonies around farming, outdooring, funerals and enskinment.

Social stratification in Dagbon is based on age and sex. The social groups are:

1. The aged/royals/title holders;
2. The middle aged (men);
3. The youth (male); and
4. Women and children (regardless of age).

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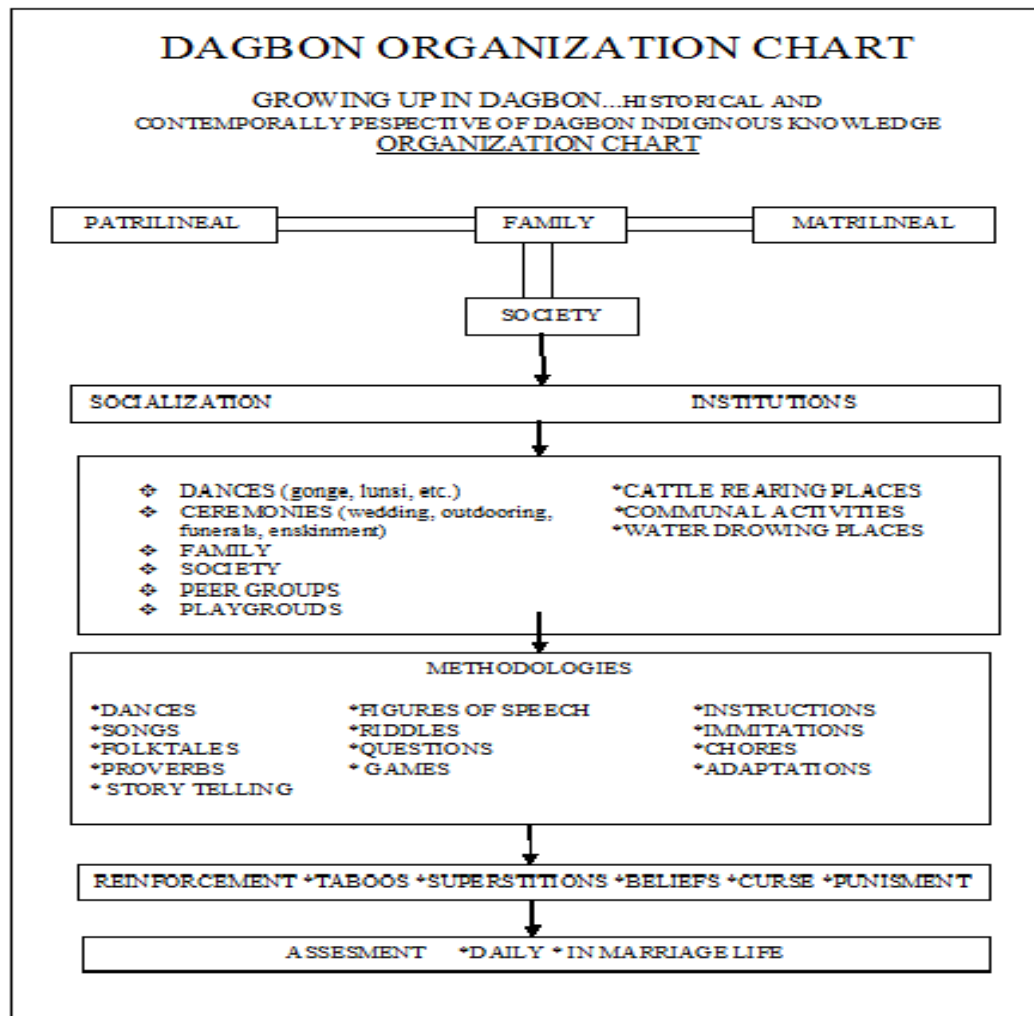
In Dagbon society, the aged and the royals/title holders are regarded as the final determinants in any decision-making process. Hence efforts are made to consult them first in any matter for their verdict. The middle-aged men are consulted in the absence of the aged, followed by the youth. The women and the children are not consulted because the elderly believed that women and children are expected to be seen but not to be heard contributing to issues. However, they also have roles to be play in relation to the dissemination of information.

Inherent in this complex social structure is a carefully devised knowledge transfer system that ensures that the traditions and customs are passed on from one generation to the next deliberately ensuring that the younger generation learn the ropes on how to create, share and use the resources available to the society through active observation and practice.

Figure 1.4 describes how knowledge has been passed from generation to generation among the Dagbon people:



Figure 1. 2 Dagbon Organizational Chart.



Source: Adapted from, Banda (2008:110).

Just like every society, the Dagbamba express their socio-economic environment, political system and any other aspect of life in diverse ways. Generally, songs, folktales, proverbs, riddles, figures of speech and oral literature are used to convey ideas. Other means of acquiring ideas and experience and knowledge in Dagbamba culture are imitation, play and participation in adult activities such as agriculture, flooding, cattle rearing and housekeeping.

Dagbon folktales are told by the elders for entertainment, and to teach the younger generations about life. Spider or *Kpatinariga*, stories (known as Ananse stories by the Akans) are very popular in Dagbon. *Kpatinariga*, as spider is known in Dagbon, has





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numerous stories of his cunning exploits which normally end with spider being caught or exposed. These stories are used to encourage the young to be honest, hardworking, law – abiding, among others. Other ways of passing on knowledge to the younger generations are by learning, imitation, observation, practice and through oral history.

The Dagbamba celebrate five different festivals which are spread out in a year. Each of the festivals is different from the other. These festivals are *Bugum*, popularly called the fire festival; *Damba*, that is celebrated to mark the birth and naming of the Prophet Muhammad, but whose actual content is a glorification of chieftaincy; *Kpini*, also called the guinea-fowl festival; *Konyuri Chugu* that is Eid ul fitr, and *Chimsi Chugu* Eid ul Adha and based on the Islamic faith.

1.5.3 Economic Institution

Economically, the people of Dagbon are farmers. The traditional crops cultivated are yam, maize, guinea corn, millet, rice, and groundnuts. Rice, yam and groundnuts are often cultivated in commercial quantities. Indeed, Dagbon but also Nanung² are the hub of yam cultivation in Ghana. The people also keep livestock: horses, sheep, goats, and cattle. Traditionally, cattle are considered as the wealth indicator of the people. The more cattle one has the more people consider one rich. Cotton, shea, dawadawa, and baobab are among the traditional cash crops of the Dagbon State. There are a few exotic fruits trees and timber in Dagbon. They include citrus, guava, cashew, mango, teak and neem.

Migration is prevalent in the Dagbon state. The incidence of out-migration to southern Ghana is high among the economically active population. Most of the girls who migrate

² Land of the Nanumba

to the south engage in street vending while others work as head porters (kayayo) and chop bar (restaurant) attendants.

1.5.4 Religious Institution

Prior to the advent of Islam and Christianity, the *Dagbamba* practiced a forum of traditional African religion. At the apex of their belief system or paradigm is “*Naawuni*” or the Supreme Deity (i.e., God). The *Dagbamba* use many appellations for God, including *Kpean–Lana*, (Owner of strength), *Natitam Lana*, (Owner of Chief Authority), *Zugu –Saanitilala* (Owner of heaven and earth) and *Yaakam Lana* (Owner of All Power). In their everyday life, the people of Dagbon sought the spiritual help of *Nawuni*. For example, before a diviner practices his or her trade, he or she asks *Naawumi* for help and to aid the practice. The herbalist will first seek *Naawuni*’s involvement in finding a cure for the sick patient. Some of the sayings in *Dagbanli* acknowledgement of God are:

- i) *Naawuninisuong* – May God help you
- ii) *Naawunitishaha* – May God grant you success
- iii) *Naawunikusagi*- God forbid
- iv) *Nawunitishie* – May God ensure your safe arrival
- v) *Nawunitilgiimti* –May God protect you.



Mahama (2004) explains that before the royal historians of Dagbon begin their account of the great deeds of former Ya Na’s, overlords of the Dagbon kingdom, they recite the attributes of God and what God alone can do. Below is an example of such recitations:

It is only God who can make a prince of one country a slave of another country.

It is only God who can make a man with ten wives a bachelor.

It is only God who can turn the “have into the have-not” and the “have not into the have.”



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Whosoever says God is not the King let him identify the good side and bad side of a single strip (locally woven) cloth. If it is not God, who is the king who can do that? (Mahama, 2004: 179).

The *Dagbamba* also believe in deities which are considered mediators between humans and the God Almighty. These deities may be found in different places and forms. It is believed that there are three tiers of deities. Mahama (2004) has classified them as: individual, family and community deities. A deity of an individual may end with the individual after his/her death, or it may grow to become a family deity. These deities are usually in the form of an object that is an animal, a reptile animated by a spirit, and they are sometimes called *buguduguwiri* or *buguli*. The head of the family is usually the custodian and chief priest of the family deity, who makes sacrifices and propitiation, pacification and thanksgiving to it. Next is a community deity (*buguli*) which belongs to the members of the community or village. They are in the form of animals, reptiles, birds, stones, grove, streams, rivers, spirits, or thunder. The *Tindana*, the fetish priests, are in charge of the community deities. They perform the necessary rituals and sacrifices, which ensure the prosperity of the land and the people, crops and livestock. Dagbon has a number of community deities and they include *Jaagboo* in Tolon, *Tambi* in Sang, *Kpala* in Galwei, *Salaa* in Gushiegu and *Kpung* in Pong – Tamale (Mahama, 2004: 180). An interview with a resident indigene of Tamale indicates that a typical Dagban³ will fear the wrath of the deity of her or his village more than God. There was a case of a man who was asked to swear by God and he did it so quickly and easily. When asked to swear by “*Jaagbo*” he refused to do so.

³ one person, singular

Below the deities are ancestors in the hierarchy of the belief system of the Dagbamba. Spiritualists and fortune-tellers of all sorts exist in Dagbon. The Dagbamba believe that diviners and soothsayers have answers to all of life's questions. They again believe in charms in the form of amulets, waist-bands or rings which they keep for all sorts of uses including to attract wealth, expel evil forces, and to bring good luck.

Majority of the people of Dagbon are Muslims. The invasion of the Dagbon state by Muslim Wangara traders of what is now Burkina Faso took place before the seventeenth century. Hence, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the then King of Dagbon, *Naa Zangina*, had been converted to Islam. However, the main factor that accounted for the increased number of converts to the Islamic faith has been the high value and prestige placed on Muslim insignia, clothes, names, rituals and learning (Oppong, 1971). About seventy- five percent of the people profess the Muslim faith and these people mostly live in the urban centres (Mahama, 2004). Christianity and traditional religion constitute the minor religions.

1.5.5 Political Power and Class

Dagbon has a well-defined system of chieftaincy. The kingdom is divided and subdivided into a number of hierarchically ranked chiefdom or divisions, each composed of a number of villages and political units. A royal chiefdom is held by the royal chiefs, sons or grandsons of the previous holders or kings. Others are held by commoners loyal to the king and appointed by him. According to Mahama (2004), Dagbamba society is divided into identifiable social classes. These classes are: *Nabihi* (persons of the royal blood); *Kpamba* (the Nobility); the *Baansi* (the eulogists and drummers), *Worizohanima* (the Equestrian Order); *Namogola* (the elders who were formerly eunuchs), *Alphrranima* (the Muslim), *Kambonsi* or *Sapashinnima* (the warrior class), *Wonzamanima* (the barbers); *Tindaamba* (the fetish priests); *Tarimba* or





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Dagbandabba (the commoners); *Nakohenima* (the butchers) and *Machelnima* (the blacksmiths).

The *Nabihi* – *Kpamba* and *worizohanima* have the power to appoint sub-chiefs and title holders and the *Baansi* (the eulogists and drummers), key participants of this work.

The *Baansi* are not mere entertainers but also holders of cultural wisdom and history. In fact, they live and relive the history of the Dagbamba. It is in view of this that this study seeks to draw from the *Baansi* for the analysis of the living knowledge traditions of Dagbon and for comparison with the conventional knowledge traditions of academic libraries.

In the Dagbon state, the palace is the center of the universe, and it has the drummers, who educate, inform, entertain, and record history, playing a key role in the everyday life of the people especially that of the upper class. They are the custodians of oral history in Dagbon and their importance in the Dagbon State cannot be over emphasized.

The history of the Dagbamba is based on their living traditions with *baansi* as professional historians, a major source of information. Oppong (1971) is of the view that the *Baansi* are the court historians and musicians. They are recorders of historical and present events. This means that the history of the Dagbon nation has been kept by the drummers, who recount it at important ceremonies such as rituals performed at the installation of chief, naming of babies, funeral ceremonies and during festivals. Salifu (2008) re-echoes Oppong's assertion by emphasizing that the drummers act as family historians, royal advisors, cultural specialists and entertainers and in the view of Chisita and Abdullahi (2015) they are "walking libraries."



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As far back as 1930, a conference of the chiefs of Dagbon was held in Yendi to enquire into and record the constitution of Dagbon. The conference was attended by the Acting Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories and a large gathering of Africans and Europeans. The third item on the agenda was “*History of the growth of Dagbon and its ruling dynasty from as far back as it was possible to go up to the present time.*” The District Commissioner of the then Northern Territories⁴ made a short introductory speech, explaining how the history of Dagbon had been preserved through the medium of the drum chant, which was solemnly and liturgically recited from time to time. This was demonstrated as a section of the drum history was chanted, punctuated with drums beaten together to mark the different periods and passages of recitals (See *Constitution of the State of Dagbon* 1930). These narratives have been shown to be founded on facts (Salifu, 2008). Thus, drummers act as a bridge between past, present and future generations. Their importance in the survival of the cultural traditions of Dagbon cannot be overemphasized. Mahama (2004) has emphasized that the history of Dagbon is firmly locked up in the minds of the drummers. The historical narratives of the Dagbon; everything from Tohazie, the wandering Red Hunter, to Na Gbewa, the founding father of ancient Dagbon (i.e. Mamprugu, Dagbon and Nanung); from Na Nyagsi to Na Luro; and from Na Zangina, the wise King, to Na Andani II, the last Ya-Na before the advent of the European, are all recorded in the minds of the *lunsi*.

Mahama (2004) records how many drummers have aptly defined their roles in performance, as reported by Belcher (1999: 8) who quotes the griot, Mamadou Kouaté, from Djibril Tamsir Niane’s *Soundiata*,

⁴ North of Asante during the colonial rule. The Northern Territories were proclaimed a British protectorate in 1902 and were placed under the authority of a resident commissioner who was responsible to the governor of the Gold Coast. (<http://countrystudies.us/ghana/8.htm>)

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... we are vessels of speech, we are the repositories which harbor secrets many centuries old. The art of eloquence has no secrets for us; without us the names of kings would vanish into oblivion, we are the memory of mankind; by the spoken word we bring to life the deeds and exploits of kings for younger generations.

Again Salifu (2008: 31) reports that at an evening of epic poetry, the luŋa Issah Zɔhi of Yendi said:

We speak of events that have come to pass. The fact is an event that has not occurred we do not even know it. My father has asked that I publicize what the world hides. My father told me that if a thing happens once, I should announce it ten times; there is no problem about that! But what has not happened, I should never say it has.

This living wisdom reflects not just an ideological base but also forms an important source of knowledge for everyday practice. It encapsulates the history and philosophy of the people. Yet, this rich tradition and cultural knowledge suffers the danger of annihilation if no efforts are made to store, preserve and share among and across cultures. Undoubtedly, the *Baansi* are knowledgeable in the history and wisdom of Dagbon. They remain a major source of preserving that rich and living tradition. However, as an old English proverb states: *When a knowledgeable person dies, a whole library disappears.*



1.6 Conceptual Framework

A concept may be defined as an abstraction from observed events or a shorthand representation of a variety of facts. Its purpose is to simplify thinking by subsuming a number of events under one general heading (Powell & Connaway, 2004). The conceptual framework guides research to determine the variables to be measured, and statistical relationships to be established.

This study is informed by the three inter-connected discourses of postcoloniality, transdisciplinarity and transformativity. It is argued that a dialogue or complementation of the *baansi* or living libraries and academic libraries is necessary for holistic storage and availability of information for public use.

1.6.1 Post-colonial Theory

The term post- colonial, according to Chilisa (2012), is highly contested and at the same time popular. According to her, it is highly contested because to some people post-colonial means that colonialism has ended. However, she:

is of the view that, “post- colonialism is used in research context to denote the continuous struggle of non-Western societies that suffered European colonization, indigenous way of knowing and historically marginalized groups to resist suppression of their ways of knowing and the globalization of knowledge, reaffirming that Western knowledge is the only legitimate knowledge.” (Chilisa, 2012: 12).

Loomba et al. (2005) agree with Chilisa that post-colonialism analyzes contemporary cultural processes without any consideration of the history of colonialism. The global society of today is economically, politically and culturally different from the colonial era, but it is still characterized by the colonisation, which is usually called neo-colonialism.

Post-colonial theory, on the other hand, according to Andreotti (2009) is the name given to a set of debates about North-South relations arising from various disciplines and ‘movements’ as follows:

- De-colonisation struggles and Southern responses and social movements challenging European domination (like those of Fanon, Freire and Gandhi);
- Literary studies concerned with the representations of the ‘First’ and ‘Third’ worlds in literary and non-literary texts (like that of Edward Said); and



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- Recent debates in the fields of sociology, political theory, international relations and development and cultural studies triggered by new trends of discussion related to knowledge and power (e.g. Foucault, Derrida, Spivak and Bhabha) (Andreotti, 2009: 1)

Post-colonial theories discuss the role of imperialism, colonization, globalization and their literature of language in the construction of knowledge and people's resistance to impose framework of knowing. It also pays attention to how race and ethnicity interact with class, gender and age in interlocking forms of oppression (Chilisa, 2012).

Wiik (2008) argues that one view of postcolonial theory puts globalisation as the fact that we live in a postcolonial world. He further argues that 'colonialism is not about the past but something that still characterizes the world, economically and culturally. Normally, the prefix "post" means after, but in this case there is no rupture with the colonial'.

Amadi (1981: ix) notes that:

It is impossible to study any aspect of Africa without some understanding of the history of colonialism. He states that colonialism remains and that it is only one among other phenomena that have shaped and still continue to influence the history of Africa. Further, he mentions that, impact of any culture upon another like political, social, moral, and similar wisdom are not grounded in any geography except that of the mind. The coming together of the African and European worlds was the meeting of two cultures in which one was programmed to absorb, swallow, or mutilate the other and there were changes in social, psychological, political and cultural dimensions.

In recent years, post-colonial theory has posed some of the most far-reaching questions for literary scholars and students alike. By focusing on subjectivity, identity, power, and knowledge, post-colonial theory enables readers to ask questions about who speaks, for whom, under what conditions, and to what ends. Since the widespread collapse of formal colonialism, cultures that were former European colonies have been working to define and understand themselves outside the boundaries.





Sturges and Neill (1998) www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh posit that, the main problem of colonisation of African libraries is that the implantation of public libraries in African countries is not adapted to the needs in its context. This, according to Issak (2000), is because the libraries were built for few users, those with access to formal education. In his view, the peculiar nature of libraries in Africa at that time was because knowledge of the needs and composition of African library clientele did not exist. According to Sturges and Neill, there is the need to urgently break with the global North as the dependency of northern values continues to retard the development in Africa. As they put it: *'To be poor is bad, but to be locked into relationships that limit the opinions for breaking out of that poverty is worse'* (p.4).

There is now a need for a new paradigm. Sturges and Neill (1998) in Wiik (2008) propose information based on the following conceptions:

- **Financial Realism**

Wiik (2008) posits that poverty is a central preoccupation in Africa. It is not only about the financial poverty in institutions but poverty is in a great majority of potential and actual beneficiaries of services. It is also about poverty in information skills. Sturges and Neill (1998) argue that there is no point in designing services that do not reflect the circumstances of the people and of the national budget.

- **Self-Reliance**

Suitable services for Africa's needs have to emerge from Africa's own intellectual and physical resources. Lack of economic, cultural and political self-reliance of nations makes them victims of other more powerful ones. There is no gain saying that ideas and forms of library services in Africa are imported from northern industrialized countries. However, it is important that information specialists be concerned with the



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interests of their clients and their country (Wiik, 2008). Sturges (1998) argues that it could be good for the donors if they pay because of the exploitation of Africa. On the contrary, it is not good for Africa that donors pay as it distorts the decision-making process and gives the control back to the donors.

- **Sustainability**

Real sustainability arises from the needs, opinions and actions of a community of users themselves. Sturges (1998) suggests that the user demand-driven involvement in decision making and implementation ensures a sense of ownership that disposes the user community to seek to keep and maintain the project even beyond the project phase. An institution that starts from demand may have the dynamism that enables it to struggle; which gives it a chance of true survival.

- **Democracy**

Democracy is the principle that all citizens should have the information that will enable them to accept the full responsibility of political participation (Sturges and Neill, 1998). This creates a requirement for service to the whole of the people, rather than minorities that are literate, articulate, influential, geographically accessible and able to pay. They state therefore that a truly democratic information service has to build on the assumption that while not every citizen is either literate or computer literate, all have some skills which enable them to function in society. For example, services in an isolated rural community might be provided by oral communication.

- **Responsiveness**

Responsiveness is when information is provided according to what people want, when and where they want it. It is vital to listen to what people say about their needs and the services they obtain and to give feedback to the system. A service can be provided



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which is rooted in clear ideas about users and potential users of information. The totality of information has to be taken out to the public, wherever they are and offering a full range of opportunities that can be taken up by those who have specific needs.

- **Communication**

It is crucial that there should be dialogue or opportunity for dialogue, to deliver the response in an oral environment or to contextualize, interpret and maybe modify or substitute some form of information package in a computer environment. It is the mix and balance between documentary and communication which is important.

Both Chilisa (2012) and Vizenor (1994) call for inclusion of ‘survivance’ in post-colonial theory. Chilisa (2012) posits that the concept of “survivance” goes beyond the survival, endurance, and resistance to colonial domination, and calls for the coloniser and the colonized to learn from each other.

Since the colonial era, there have been several indications of institutional or structural reforms that have emphasized the westernized information management systems while demonizing the indigenous one. The concepts of survival and sustainability of both systems have been challenged by several complexes perpetuated by the very actors in both these systems – indicative of the presence of possible barriers to integration between the indigenous sciences and the western science stemming from the colonial history between the two systems. The motivation for this study, therefore, is to identify common grounds for both sciences and to see how best both living libraries and academic libraries can learn from each other. It participates in the decolonization project of exploring ways in which academic libraries can be recreated to address the knowledge production needs of local people and communities while serving their traditional clientele.

1.6.2 Transdisciplinarity

In transdisciplinary studies, knowledge integration is a first step towards the unity of knowledge. New modes of knowledge, discourse, and institutional frameworks are needed across all sectors of academic, private, and public life. Gaps between Western and non-Western traditions must be bridged, as well as esoteric and organic knowledges.

Transdisciplinarity is a postmodern perspective. The term transdisciplinary was introduced by Piaget (1972) in his awareness and acknowledgement of and thus attempts to understand the current world with an imperative overarching unity of knowledge. According to Hyun (2011), transdisciplinarity is a principle for the unity of knowledge beyond disciplines, and its approach implies full interaction between, among, and beyond disciplines from a real-life problem-based perspective. A transdisciplinary vision is also transcultural and transnational, encompassing ethics, spirituality, and creativity. Infusion of transdisciplinary into the curriculum requires the following: (a) single disciplinary scientific knowledge to be deepened by the individual; at the same time the knowledge needs to be deconstructed and reconstructed in relationship with other disciplines in order for knowledge of complexity to be contextualized, practically reflecting on the organic reality of human living and its phenomena; and (b) borderless concepts to be generated collectively among the disciplines to play the role of “linking operators” (Hyun, 2011).

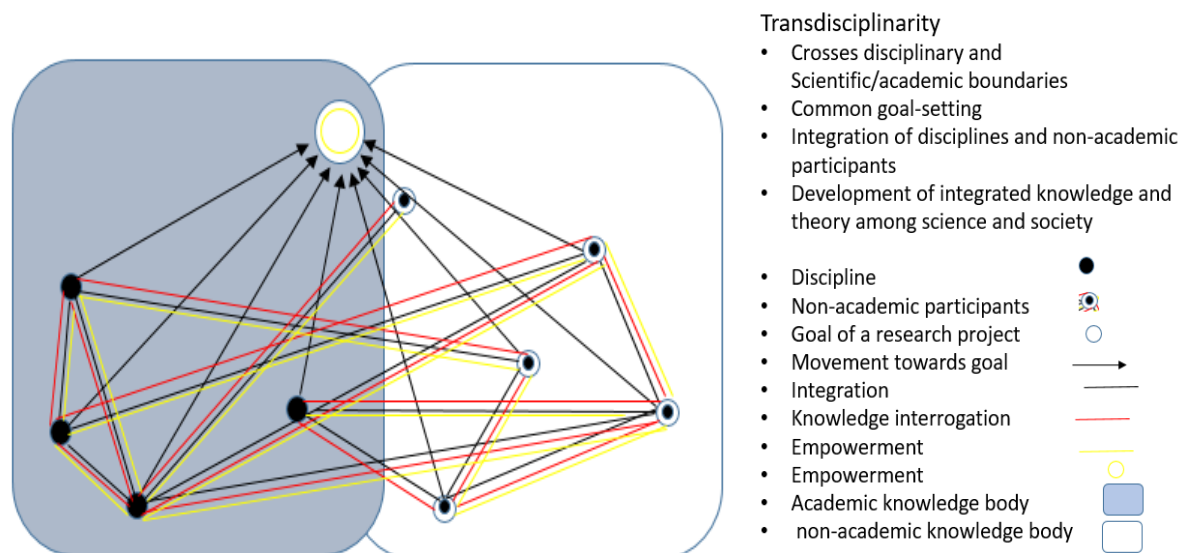
D’Ambrosio (1997), supporting Hyun’s (2011) definition, added that, transdisciplinary studies are related to a set of ideas such as interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and integrative studies. What sets transdisciplinary research apart from the others is a particular emphasis on engagement, investigation and participation in addressing present-day issues and problems in a manner that explicitly destabilizes disciplinary



boundaries while respecting disciplinary expertise. Wiesmann and associates (2008) define transdisciplinary studies as studies that include cooperation within the scientific community and a debate between research and the society at large. Transdisciplinary studies seek to accentuate those aspects of scholarly research which cut across today's learned disciplines in an effort to define new axiologies and forms of praxis.

Transdisciplinary research therefore transgresses boundaries within scientific disciplines, between science and other social fields and includes deliberation about facts, practices and values as represented in Figure 1.5. Tress et al. (2005) point out that transdisciplinary studies aim at integrating both academic researchers from different unrelated disciplines and non-academic participants, to research a common goal and create new knowledge and theory.

Figure 1. 3 Transdisciplinary Research emberded with transformativity and Post- colonility theories.



Source: Adapted from Tress et al. (2005: 16)

Two main groups of participants can be distinguished in integrative/ transdisciplinary research: academic and non-academic participants. Academic participants are researchers; nonacademic participants are societal actors such as policy makers,

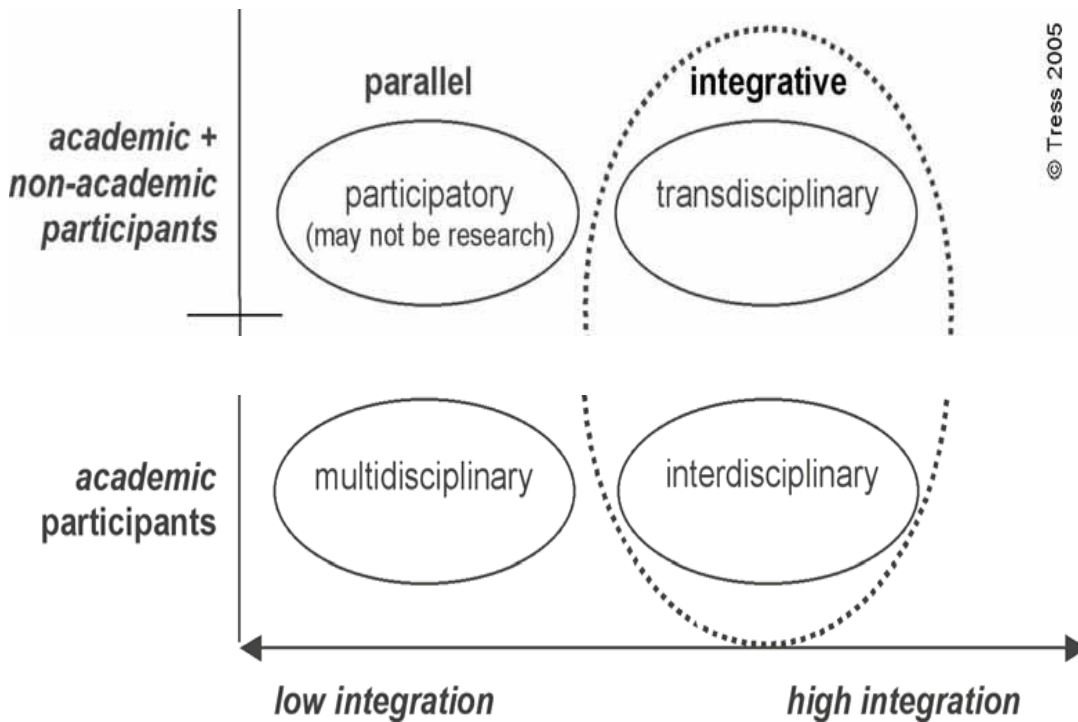


representatives of administration or interest groups, locals or the broader public. The expression, ‘nonacademic participants,’ does not mean that these societal actors may not have an academic education but their role in the project does not serve academic purposes in the way the role of the researchers’ does (Tress et al., 2005).

Tress et al. (2005) argue that, in integrative/transdisciplinary studies these two types of actors – researchers and non-academic participants – can cooperate in different ways: First, researchers from one discipline cooperate with researchers from other disciplines, which can be multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary, depending on whether integration is aimed at or not. Second, researchers from one discipline can cooperate with societal actors, which can be participatory. Also here, integration is not the aim but exchange. Third, which is the aim of this study, researchers from several disciplines can cooperate with societal actors, which can be either participatory or transdisciplinary, again depending on whether the project aims at integration of knowledge or exchange. This is represented in Figure 1.6.



Figure 1. 4 Degrees of integration and stakeholder involvement in integrative and non-integrative approaches



The assumptions are that these partners will work together in an effort to bridge the gap between the academic libraries and the indigenous community. The product of such efforts would likely produce a hybridized academic library and better linkage between academic libraries and that of the local communities (Brembeck & Thompson, 1973). This framework also takes into account the following observation made by Sillitoe et.al (2006:292).

Development program managers and project leaders who wish to incorporate an indigenous element into their work and are interested in a more long-term thorough Indigenous Knowledge (IK) other than seeking a quick and limited IK component need to seek a continuous spectrum of approaches and tools. They take cost, time and scope of objectives as the principal design issues. The guidelines must make reference to project cycle

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management in the context of natural resources, indigenous knowledge research, and present options for reducing conflict and more effectively including the views of all primary stakeholders.

According to Hyun (2011) several authors have argued that higher education curriculum clearly reveals a need to transform beyond the single/monodisciplinary, transgressing disciplinary boundaries and leading toward transdisciplinary, borderless engagement. If this can happen effectively, academic libraries should be an important starting point and also key player.

The academic library is viewed as a condition or capacity of academic affairs, representing collective epistemology, geopolitical agenda, or politically engineered socio-cultural and socio-economical intention to prepare the next generation to engage in work that may lead to socially responsive and humanly sound action for sustainable human community (Hyun, 2011). Academic library is a complicated cultural artifact that reflects emergent epistemologies, intents, interests, and values driven by history, geopolitical ideology, nationalism, globalization, transnationalism, and national social engineering. The contemporary phenomenon of transdisciplinary/integrative discourse in academic library is inevitably and paradoxically influenced by our colonial masters; thus, it could be a reactive cultural artifact. It is, however, also a socially responsive transformative movement that deserves our collective attention and that attention is overdue (Hyun, 2011).

The implication for this study is to engage people from academic and non-academic backgrounds to find ways and processes of bridging the gap between the two knowledge systems. According to Hyun (2011), transdisciplinary studies seeks to discover bridges, interconnectedness, and interdependence among different areas and layers of knowledge (hard, social, and applied sciences). The framework, which is utilized in





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this study, takes into consideration, as an endogenous knowledge-based research, a holistic approach by involving all the stakeholders in solving the perceived problems' in this case the integration of indigenous and conventional knowledge in the academic library system. Emembded in the transdisciplinarity theory is post-coloniality and transformativity which talks about interrogation of knowledge and empowerment.

1.6.3 Transformative Praxis

Transformative praxis, in this context, is about assisting people to accept the responsibility of empowering themselves for transforming their own existential conditions and subsequently removing themselves from the influence of the reproductive forces of the dominant society (academic worldview) (Smith, 2003). In this case, indigenous people will find direction in nurturing the development of their lives. According to Smith (2003), it is a shift in mindset of people away from waiting for things to be done to them, to doing things for themselves; a shift away from an emphasis on reactive to proactive politics; a shift from negative to positive motivation. These shifts can be described as a move away from talking simplistically about 'de-colonization' (which puts the colonizer at the center of attention) to talking about 'conscientization' or 'consciousness-raising' (which puts people at the center). These ways of thinking illustrate a reawakening of the people's imagination that had been stifled and diminished by colonization processes (Madhu, 2005; Smith, 2003). The transformative praxis leads to self-actualization.

In the view of Chilisa (2012), one of the influential theories behind transformative praxis is Marxism. According to Chilisa (2012) Marx believed that those who control the means of production, that is the ruling class (colonizers), also control the mental production of knowledge and ideas. He went on to say that knowledge produced in the process perpetuates the domination of other social classes by the ruling class. Freire



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(1970: 48), argues that for a transformative praxis to occur, education should foster critical reflection and action. He went on to say that the pedagogy of the oppressed, is the instrument for the oppressed's critical discovery that both they and their oppressors are manifestations of dehumanization. Freire (1970) further states that, the oppressed must see their reality as not closed, without exit, but as something that can be transformed.

The Transformation Praxis Intervention Method therefore aims at provoking members to unsettle their settled mindsets and to have a fresh look at the world around and intervene. For instance, academic libraries in Ghana may take a fresh critical look at their services. The intervention in this study is to negotiate a situation-specific approach (Pottier et al., 2003), which demands a dialogue between the different parties (academic libraries and librarians, lecturers and students and, an indigenous knowledge community, specifically the *Baansi* of Dagbon). The resultant is an academic library that has been "Africanised" to provide access to both indigenous and western knowledge. Nawe (1993) captures the ideal library model as: ... "adaptation is required in the creation of information structures and methodologies that would encompass Africa's traditional knowledge resources and modern knowledge resources".

His contention implies that libraries should be more open to serving multiple audiences, including indigenous communities.

1.7 Significant of the Study

The study is beneficial in the way that it incorporates indigenous knowledge into the academic library system for the better and dual access of indigenous and academic users. The contribution of this study may be summarized as follows:

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1. It provides valuable suggestions to librarians to seek ways to provide access to both indigenous knowledge and western knowledge;
2. It serves as a platform for indigenous communities,' such as the *baansi* of Dagbon to tell their own stories, in their own way. Smith (1999) posits that it is not about indigenous people giving an oral account or a genealogical naming of land and the events but to give testimony to and restore their spirit, and revitalize a world fragmented and dying;
3. It identifies and recommends appropriate areas of collaboration among indigenous communities, for example, the living libraries of Dagbon and academic libraries. (inter- science dialogue);
4. It leads to a self-sustaining local and regional exchange of knowledge and resources ;
5. It creates an entirely new knowledge for academic consumption.
6. Though a lot of research has been carried out on various aspects of academic libraries, nothing has been done so far in Ghana on the objectives of this research; this study will therefore be seen as a trail blazer;
7. Again, the outcome of the study is expected to contribute to theory building in the area of management of indigenous knowledge;



1.8 Operational Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions are made to facilitate the communications between the investigator and the participants in this study.

Academic Library

A library forming an integral part of a university, or post-secondary education such as polytechnics, and colleges of education.

Baansi

Baansi are the court historians and musicians. They are recorders of historical and present events. They are the repository of the history of the state and recount it at important ceremonies such as rituals concerning royals including those performed at installation, naming, and funeral ceremonies and during festivals.

Indigenous Knowledge

Indigenous or local knowledge refers to a complete body of knowledge, know-how and practices maintained and developed by peoples, generally in rural areas, who have extended histories of interaction with the natural environment.

Intercultural Dialogue

It is the exchange of experiences, ideas, and values by representatives of different cultures, with the aim of mutual learning and enhancing the co-evolution of diversity of cultures.



Inter - Science Dialogue

This refers to exchange of ideas, experiences and concepts related to scientific paradigms and knowledge generation, with the aim of joint learning and the co-evolution of a diversity of sciences.

Traditional

Traditional refers to the existing in or as part of a long-established practice in the indigenous and westernized knowledge system.

Oral Culture/Tradition

An oral tradition is the manner in which information is passed from one generation to the next in the absence of writing or a recording medium. In the days before near-universal literacy, bards would sing or chant their people's stories. They employed various (mnemonic) techniques to aid in their own memory and to help their listeners keep track of the story. This oral tradition was a way to keep the history or culture of the people alive, and since it was a form of story-telling, it was a popular entertainment.

1.9 Organization of Chapters

The thesis is thematically and carefully structured to ensure coherency and analyze knowledge. The thesis consists of seven chapters and this is broken down as follows:

Chapter one - Introduction: This chapter provides an overview of the study.

Chapter two - Conceptual and Contextual Perspectives: This chapter discusses the different conceptual frameworks on knowledge production, application and management.



Chapter three - Methodology: This chapter explains the methods utilized in gathering data for this study and how the data was analysed.

Chapter four - Knowledge Management System of the *Baansi* of Dagbon as forms of Living Library: Chapter four examines a multiplicity of issues such as overview of *baansi* of Dagbon as a form of living libraries, knowledge acquisition process and how knowledge is codified. Other issues discussed in this chapter include how knowledge is stored, disseminated and problems thereof.

Chapter five - Knowledge Management Systems of Academic Library: Beginning with an overview of an academic librarian, this chapter evaluates the process of acquiring, processing, storage and dissemination of library materials.

Chapter six- Endogenising the Academic Library Systems in Ghana: This chapter examines the similarities and dichotomies between the living libraries and academic libraries. Finally, the chapter discusses the point of convergence of living libraries and academic libraries.

Chapter seven - Conclusion and Recommendations: This chapter reiterates the major conclusion of the study. It also makes appropriate and relevant recommendations which could be utilized by librarians/ archivists, universities and policy makers to improve library systems in Ghana.



CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEXTUAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter surveys documented conceptual and contextual literature of relevance to the study. It identifies and examines literature relating to knowledge production and management. It poses the question what counts as knowledge? The chapter further explains the concept of indigenous knowledge, its weakness and strengths in comparison with conventional, mainstream or “Western Knowledge.”

Additionally, the Chapter focuses on the context of integration, issues of relevance for building synergies between indigenous and mainstream knowledges and sciences as well as debates and emerging issues of context relevance to indigenous knowledges and sciences. Furthermore, the Chapter explains postmodern science and specifically, advocates for a new model of academic libraries in Ghana.

2.2 Knowledge Production Systems

In today’s information and knowledge age, knowledge has become a key driver of progress in any field of endeavour. This realisation does not only occur in business organisations; it manifests in knowledge organizations such as academic libraries as well. This has given rise to a lot of debates across a wide spectrum of political persuasions and especially on the role of academic institutions in producing relevant knowledge.

The library is the site for producing and preservation of knowledge. For Makhubela (1990: 25) “...indeed, libraries and information centers have, without question, been regarded as the custodians of wealth of knowledge possessed by a given social group.



They are the mediators of texts, symbols and discourses and can also allow or deny voices the right to be heard.”

Information gathered at libraries speak of people’s subjectivities, identities, power, and knowledge. The questions asked by anti-colonial/post-colonial theorists are shared by this author: who speaks for whom, under what conditions, and to what extent when examining collections at libraries? According to Makhubela the processes whereby knowledge was produced in apartheid South Africa (and still is) was inextricably related to how economic and political power were exercised. This has been illustrated by Kidd (1908) cited by Cobley (1997: 56):

Academic education gave Africans an exaggerated sense of their own importance: an ‘educated native’ was a spoiled native’... the only education Africans needed was the inculcation of the proper humility towards superior White civilization and the acquisition of the ‘habits of industry’, so that they might become more effective workers.

The very nature of education as a social institution that plays a major role in the process of social reproduction of colonial policies, further facilitates the reproduction of institutions rooted in the tradition and history of former colonial powers whose control is perpetuated, and whose search for a permanent presence is actualised (Assie-Lumumba, 2006). While there is agreement about the importance of higher education, especially the universities, in the development of modern societies, the same cannot be said of the roles they have played. Have the types of institutions created in Africa during the colonial and post-colonial era not been at the convenience of our colonial masters? Have these education systems benefited us in the form of releasing our true identities? Or have they rather looked down on our culture?

Knowledge is recognized as power when acquired. It enables communities and societies to develop and advance themselves in whatever environment they find themselves. The



adage, knowledge is power, implies that whoever controls knowledge has power (Foucault, 1980). Dei (2000) defines education as varied options, strategies, and ways through which people come to learn, know and understand their world and act within it.

Western control over what constitutes valid knowledge has become increasingly and worryingly noticeable as schools have been structured and restructured to validate only Western knowledge (Adjei, 2007). This has rendered most of us, as an educated people, alien to our own culture. P'Bitek (1889: 19) in Nyamnjoh (2004: 141) had this to say:

The ways of your ancestors may be good and solid, that reach deep into the soil, their custom neither hallow, nor thin, nor easily breakable or blown away by the winds; but this does not deter the epistemology and its disciples from inviting you to despise these ancestral customs and world view, in favour of foreign customs you may not understand or admire.

This is given expression in Falola's (2012) assertion that even though knowledge is empowerment in an ideal milieu, in Africa an educated person is not necessarily empowered. This is because of the contending forces that confront intellectuals and make nonsense of the acquired knowledge.

2.2.1 Models of Knowledge Production

Gibbons et al. (1994) describe two models of knowledge production: Mode 1 and Mode 2 models, which are examined below.

2.2.1.1 Mode 1 Model

The Mode 1 of knowledge production is also known as the traditional model or the disciplinary model. It is characterised by the Newtonian three-phase ideal whereby simplistic basic science precedes applied science as the basis for technological development. Traditionally, the knowledge producing institutions are universities, government research departments and laboratories and corporate laboratories, among



others. A set of academics talk about these institutions and the institutionalised rules associated with the production of knowledge as “Mode 1” innovation activity (Gibbons et al., 1994). This refers to both the institutions and the philosophical question raised. The questions seek to interrogate the issues that count as significant problems to be studied, who can practise science and what constitutes good science. In “Mode 1,” as stipulated by Gibbons et al. (1994), knowledge is science, and knowledge producers are scientists. However, knowledge of the natural world is not confined to science. Human societies all across the globe have developed rich sets of experiences and explanations relating to their lived environments.

Mode 1 is hierarchical and tends to preserve its form (Gibbons et al., 1994). The convention of ‘science’ legitimizes all cognitive social norms. Knowledge was produced and shared within independent disciplines. Mode 1 has generated what we know as the disciplinary structure of science and this structure, in turn, has come to govern the management and organization of universities today (Musson, 2009; Shanbhag, 2006). As Gibbons et al. (1994: 2) stipulate:

Mode one is identical to what is meant as science. Its cognitive and social norms determine what shall count as significant problems, who shall be allowed to practice science and what constitutes good science. Forms of practice which adhere to these rules are by definition scientific while those that violate them are not.

The questions to ask are: what set of values are to be followed? Who prescribes these sets of values? Is it only intellectuals (whatever that means) who produce knowledge? Do other categorises of people or knowledge communities produce knowledge? Why would an argument that is so flawed persist in the minds of and continue to influence Western and African scholars alike? Why did Africans allow them selves to be manipulated by Eurocentric ideas without any significant criticism? As Metinhoue





(1997: 43) puts it, “in the name of written documents and absolute power conferred on it by Europeans, Africans or at any rate Black Africans were excluded from history.” Knowledge obtained from “natives” is repackaged. Over time, ideas in the original language may be lost, and the indigenous becomes colonized into the outsiders’ memory.

While main themes and methodologies in the library paint an exaggeratedly undesirable image of the continent, it also contains elements to support different conceptions and understandings of the several and changing realities that make the continent. These elements, which we might think of as the scratches of the system, allow us to question dominant themes in the library and the knowledge and modes of practice that they have continued to foster and sustain.

The main feature of Mode 1 is the scholar undergoing the process of peer-review in creating new knowledge. The scholar, identified as researcher, follows a set of ideas, values, methods and norms that define the research enterprise. After years of training in research practices, the researcher achieves adequate skills and expertise to participate in the creation of new knowledge. The mechanism of peer review, whereby other experts in the field judge if the researcher's work merits publication, acts as a filter or quality control tool to the existing scholarly knowledge base Clark (1983) cited in Musson (2009). Mode 1 therefore represents traditional university research. But one should not lose sight of the fact that indigenous communities also have experts and philosophers.

Mode 1 is based on the following core beliefs: First, the subject matter of disciplines transcends time and space and tends to reflect neutral categories. Secondly, knowledge advances in a linear fashion and is continue, with scientists building on the work of



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predecessors. Thirdly, scientists undertake basic research in similar ways and provide similar responses to questions (Musson, 2009).

Also, in this model, the connection between the university and the community is not coordinated. This means that Mode 1 knowledge production is operationalized, likely to be conducted in the absence of a real-world situation or application, determined by persons and bounded by disciplinary boundaries in the knowledge scenery. However, in recent years, there are some on going effort to connect universities with community and innovative research. According to Menand (1996b:19), disciplinarity is “philosophically weak” and “deserves to be replaced.”

Model 1 has several short falls. In Mode 1 knowledge production models, knowledge produced by academicians is initiated by their own interests and inquisitiveness. The model's centrality in academia entails that "problems are set and solved within the context governed by the largely academic interests of a specific community" (Gibbons et al., 1994:3). Also, it is the intellectual who controls the production of knowledge and provides solutions to the problems from which she or he is not associated (Bensimon et al., 2004). This means that there is no or little coordination between the researcher and those who are supposed to benefit from the research. Again, social scientists reject the notion that the world is knowable objectively. Instead, they contend that knowledge is generated out of complex processes involving social, political and cultural factors (Kingdon, 1995; Schön, 1990; Kempner & Tierney, 1996; Musson, 2009). This presupposes that knowledge production is not exclusive to only one segment of society but it is a collective process. According to Gibbons (2001), knowledge production is a negotiation between different stakeholders in time and space with its production contingent on the fulfilment of the interests of various actors. This has also been acknowledged by Labelle (1997: 251) who says “just as the world needs genetic



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diversity of species, it needs diversity of knowledge systems.”

We cannot always follow the reductionist path of explaining continuing, unoriginal, misconceived and negative depictions and understandings of the continent simply in terms of the African Colonial Library. We have to raise the question of how we engage with a library that can often act as the basis of quite contrasting understandings of the continent. Shanbhag (2006) alludes to the fact that not only does the participation of various societies, peoples and agencies outside of academia and outside the western world stay unacknowledged, the traditional model's close association to science and scientific knowledge, in fact, invalidates it.

The intellectual enterprise of producing knowledge, based on a Western epistemological order in which both educated Africans and non-Africans are engaged is in crisis. Nonetheless, these difficulties should not in any way discourage scholars from confronting the issue. To overcome the crisis or difficulties, African scholars must pursue what we need to do by pursuing programmes with the view to decolonize all areas of knowledge productions. Africanist scholars in particular must not only expose the wrongs but also seek alternatives that will make it right.

According to Gibbons et al. (1994), the socio-cognitive norms followed in the production, legitimation and diffusion of disciplinary knowledge relate to a distinct form of knowledge termed "scientific." These norms determine what constitute significant problems, who shall be allowed to practice science and what constitutes good science. Furthermore, they note that the "forms of practice which adhere to these rules are by definition 'scientific' while those that violate them are not" (p. 3). This, to me, is untenable because, science is not just a mere way of knowing. It also encapsulates the body of knowledge so generated.



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To sum up, Mode 1 is a closed system leading academic institutions to have monopoly of knowledge production. There are many more alternatives to this mode of knowledge production which offer insights to newer meanings of research, information and, knowledge. Scholars need to actively seek them out and incorporate them in order to balance the depth of knowledge produced. As a matter of fact, how knowledge gets constructed and utilized in different situations and contexts is the main thrust of this thesis and this to some extent has been addressed in the Mode 2 of the knowledge production and others theories of knowledge production discussed in the next section.

2.2.1.2 Mode 2

Mode 2 knowledge production is also known as the cultural approach. In this mode, knowledge is created in broader, transdisciplinary social and economic contexts (Gibbons et al., 1994). Knowledge production is no longer dependent on formal research structures, but is also present in public spaces of individual scientific creativity, professional and lay knowledge, the market, and public discourse (Nowotny, 1993). Mode 2 model of knowledge production reflects the changes in research practices in the domains of science. It also accommodates the commodification of research, commercial stakeholder interests, and the involvement of social movements, activists and NGOs in various disciplines as well as shows the flexibility of communication patterns and organizational structures in the context of globalization and the internationalization of research.

The modern academy needs to reconsider its underlying values toward professionalism. As argued by Nixon (2001: 183), academicians need to go beyond their “old values” and explore a “‘new’ academic professionalism that has the capacity to be outward-looking, inclusive, and morally courageous”. This means that academic professionals need to go beyond their boundaries and embrace other people (non-academic) in their



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quest to produce knowledge which is socially acceptable.

Similarly, Barnett (2000) calls for the development of “*an epistemology for uncertainty*” in an age of increasingly super complex relationships that build capacities for revolutionary framing, critical interrogation of all claimants for knowledge and understanding, enabling individuals to feel at ease in an uncertain world and developing power of critical action. Thereby effectively indicating that it is about time for all knowledge managers to attempt to develop radical frameworks that build bridges across the uncertain (ill-understood) terrains of knowledge so that each person (whether trained by the western system or the indigenous system) will be free enough to exercise their intellects.

The cultural perspective of knowledge production accepts that knowledge is socially constructed and that individuals and groups define knowledge not merely through an objectively situated context such as a research project but also through the historical and social situations in which they find themselves. This view accepts that knowledge is socially constructed, approached from a localized viewpoint and of participants. It is a dynamic process that is defined by the world in which it is situated, an ideological construct that organizes belief, actions and expectations (Musson, 2009; Tierney, 1991). The main purpose of Mode 2 then is to serve as a bridge that links scientific basic research at universities with the general interest of economy and society for knowledge-based problem solving.

The Mode 2 model has the following characteristics: knowledge is produced in the context of application, transdisciplinarity, heterogeneity and organizational diversity. It reflects enhanced social accountability and broad based system of control. Thus, the contextualization of knowledge in Mode 2 affects the epistemology of science and the

question of what counts as valid knowledge. Mode 2 knowledge production places import on partnership, interaction and collaboration in knowledge production process and outcome. Gibbons et al. (1994) argue that given the nature of Mode 2 knowledge production, universities have to organize themselves to become more open, more aggressive in seeking partnerships and alliances than they currently do. There must be an emphasis on the interaction of multiple disciplines. Modern science is becoming increasingly specialized. This has made the interdisciplinary approach a must in scientific research. Even though many universities are now open and into partnerships, they need to do more. Specifically, there is the need for universities to be more open to indigenous communities as partners of knowledge production.

According to Scott (1997: 21), “contrary to conventional wisdom in pre-modern cultures, traditional knowledge was rich, varied and well-adapted to local milieus.” The study of Moravec (2007) on Minnesota Higher Education using a Delphi model, revealed that collaboration is not limited to cooperation among higher education institutions, but also with the communities they serve, primary and secondary education, businesses, government and international institutions. In response to this, Gibbons et al. (1994) are of the view that the curricula of universities must focus on problem-solving skills, interpersonal communication, and learning to learn. This requires the ability of learning to know different ways of learning. However, the growth of cultural production is usually little noticed and is certainly not given attention equal to that accorded innovation and growth in scientific and technological areas.

Again, Settee’s (2007) study involving the use of critical enquiry and storytelling revealed that in South Africa knowledge transfer is fundamentally a social process. The power of increased interaction between academics and practitioners for generating new knowledge should not be underestimated. This shows that the quest to have Indigenous



Knowledge Systems respected and integrated within higher learning and public policy is well on its way to recognition and integration in that landscape.

2.2.2 Knowledge Produced in the Context of Application

Taken together, the Mode 1 and Mode 2 regimes are distinct from each other in the following ways: Mode 1 represents the traditional core university while Mode 2 expands into the society but also penetrates university research. However, Mode 2 does not replace Mode 1. Rather, it complements and extends Mode 1 in order to operationalize a pattern of co-evolution between them. While not dismissing the Mode 1 model, the Mode 2 model has appeal for this study due to its functionality and utilizability in our current ever-changing world where knowledge is core for reducing poverty, growing wealth, participating in a globalizing world and empowering people for self-reliance and sustainable living.

In many respects, Mode 2 is knowledge produced in the context of application to solve problems as discussed above. This means Mode 2 is problem-focused and interdisciplinary. As Limoges (1996: 14-15) explains: “we now speak of 'context-driven' research, meaning 'research carried out in a context of application, arising from the very work of problem solving and not governed by the paradigms of traditional disciplines of knowledge.’” In the Model1, the context is defined in relation to the cognitive and social norms that govern basic research or academic science. In recent times, this has tended to imply knowledge production carried out in the absence of some practical goal. In the case of Mode 2, by contrast, knowledge results from a broader range of considerations. Such knowledge is intended to be useful to industry, government, or society more generally and this imperative is present right from the beginning. Knowledge thus produced is by continuous negotiation. It will not be produced unless and until the interests of the various actors are included. It therefore





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means that basic research, applied research, and experimental development are positioned and reframed into an application context. Application feeds back and supports the further development of theories. This is important for innovation.

2.2.2.1 Transdisciplinarity

Mode 2 as a transdisciplinary model, refers to the mobilisation of a range of theoretical perspectives and practical methodologies to solve problems. Transdisciplinarity goes beyond interdisciplinary in the sense that the interaction of scientific disciplines is much more dynamic. Once theoretical consensus is attained, it cannot easily be reduced to disciplinary parts. In addition, research results are diffused (to problem contexts and practitioners) during the process of knowledge production (Hessels & Van Lente, 2008).

In “Mode 2,” solving practical problems requires the integration of different skills and knowledge. It develops its own evolving framework for solving problems. It develops its own methods, theories, and practices. Its knowledge is diffused through practitioner networks, rather than through professional journals and conferences. Its knowledge production is closely and dynamically linked with a link to problem contexts rather than with the building of disciplinary knowledge. While some authors cite cases of government “interference” in education (Gellert, 1999), others note the development of healthier connections between institutions and thus recognize the interconnectedness of the university, industry and governments (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997).

2.2.2.2 Heterogeneity

Mode 2 is associated with a “wider temporary and heterogeneous set of practitioners, collaboration on a problem defined in a specific and localised context” (Gibbons et al., 1994: 6). Knowledge production is not so tightly bounded by academia. It is widely

diffused, and socially distributed in a global web of strategic alliances; collaborative agreements are supported through informal networks and good communication systems. There is a wider range of practitioners (knowledge producers) linked together in temporary teams and communication networks, reconfiguring and combining specialist knowledge into useful knowledge.

The range of potential sites for knowledge generation includes not only the traditional universities, institutes and industrial laboratories but also research centres, government agencies, think-tanks, high-tech spin-off companies and consultancies. These sites are linked through networks of communication and research is conducted in mutual interaction (Hessels & Van Lente, 2008).

Often, heterogeneous group of knowledge producers and knowledge users come together to form networks, partnerships or collaborations. Communication and continuous renegotiation between the different groups are essential. A successful achievement of a problem solution might imply that the processes of knowledge production are being carried farther into society. Knowledge production becomes more socially distributed, and values and norms of society influence knowledge production. Communication between knowledge (science) and society mutually influences are fostered, with a tendency for the increasing complexity of society to correlate with an increasing complexity of sciences (Gibbons et al., 1994). Such institutional collaboration will lead to an increase in the quality of education provided.

The need to acquire specialized knowledge of all kinds impels the growth of partnerships and networks. Kraak (2001) is of the view that the production of new knowledge is increasingly happening within new forms of social and institutional arrangements which build relationships and cooperation between academic institutions and the local communities.



Harloe and Perry (2004: 215) describe the Mode 2 model in academic institutions as:

- 1) “being closer to government and the market and is more directly responsive to national and regional needs in teaching, research and specific enterprise activities”;
- 2) taking an interdisciplinary approach to research based on applicable relevance;
- 3) being innovative, networked and a “key player” in governance; and,
- 4) “changes in mission and practice are accompanied by internal turmoil, reorganization and restructuring.”

Students from local communities have their own knowledge and skills. These students may enter the universities and bring their own knowledge to bear on a wide range of ideas and situations.

2.2.2.3 Social Accountability

Social accountability relates to researchers becoming more aware of the societal consequences of their work (‘social accountability’). Sensitivity to the impact of the research is built in from the start (Hessels & Van Lente, 2008). Mode 2 knowledge is rather a dialogic process, and has the capacity to incorporate multiple views. The generation of knowledge in a context of application leads to greater sensitivity about its effects and impacts. This means there is greater reflexivity on the part of practitioners and because of the diversity of players in the knowledge production site, there is greater call for social accountability.

Nowotny, Scott, and Gibbons (2001), in a book titled, *“Rethinking of Science: Knowledge and the Public in an Age of Uncertainty,”* describe changes they observe in various organizations involved in knowledge production: industrial and governmental research institutes, research councils and universities. In particular, they introduce the concept of ‘contextualised science’ which means that ‘society now “speaks back” to science’. This refers to the demand for innovation, to new regulatory regimes, and to





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the multiplication of user–producer inter-faces. Depending on the degree of importance, one can speak of weak, middle range, or strong contextualisation. This development affects scientific activity not only on the organisational level, but also ‘in its epistemological core’ (Nowotny et al., 2001: 94). The authors assert that Mode 2 (or contextualised) research yields ‘socially robust knowledge,’ which has a different epistemological status than Mode 1 science. Perhaps surprisingly, the participation of a wider range of non-scientific actors in the knowledge production process enhances its reliability.

2.2.2.4 *Quality Control*

According Musson (2009) in Mode 2, quality control is guided by a good deal of practical, societal, policy related concern, so that whatever knowledge is produced, the very specific environment consisting of relevant stakeholders will have to be taken into account.

Quality control in “Mode 1” is based on peer review (e.g. through academic journals) usually within disciplinary boundaries. “Mode 2” quality control is broad-based and multi-dimensional, embracing social as well as technical criteria. The implications for government technology policy are to make traditional research institutions more permeable and collaborative; to support networks and alliances, to broker collaborations and to integrate educational, research and industrial/business policies.

2.2.3 Knowledge Management

The work of Gibbons et al. (1994) has led to the emergence of a new perspective with associated theories that come together as knowledge management (KM). This perspective emphasises the importance of knowledge creation, transfer and use in competitive (and collaborative) organisations, and in particular on innovative processes

and associated aspects of technology policy.

A knowledge production system includes a broad range of social systems that produce explicit and tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is informal knowledge that is embedded in mental processes, obtained through experience and work practices and can be transferred by observing and applying it (Choi & Lee, 2003). Tacit knowledge is personal and embedded in a person's daily work practice. This knowledge exists in people's minds and is quite difficult to transfer. Most of our indigenous knowledge is tacit in nature even though there are some forms of codifications, as already discussed, which employ visual representations such as pictographs (e.g., paintings on rocks), and indigenous writing/communicative forms such as petroglyphs (for example, carvings or inscriptions on rocks). Nonaka and Konno (1998: 42) corroborate this assertion when they say:

there are two dimensions to tacit knowledge. The first is the technical dimension, which include the kind of informal personal skills or crafts often referred to as "know how". The second is the cognitive dimension. It consists of beliefs, ideas, values, schemata, and mental models which are deeply ingrained in us and which we often take for granted. While difficult to articulate, this cognitive dimension of tacit knowledge shape the way we perceive the world.



One example of a contemporary challenge of bringing indigenous knowledges into the academic institution is the question of how best to convey spoken words (as narrated in stories, fables, myths and oral accounts of life histories) from one culture or system to another.

Polanyi (1967) defines explicit knowledge as knowledge that is formal, systematic, and can be codified into records such as databases and libraries. Barth (2000) echoes this definition and adds that it can be processed by information systems, codified or recorded, archived and protected by organizations. Explicit knowledge is therefore

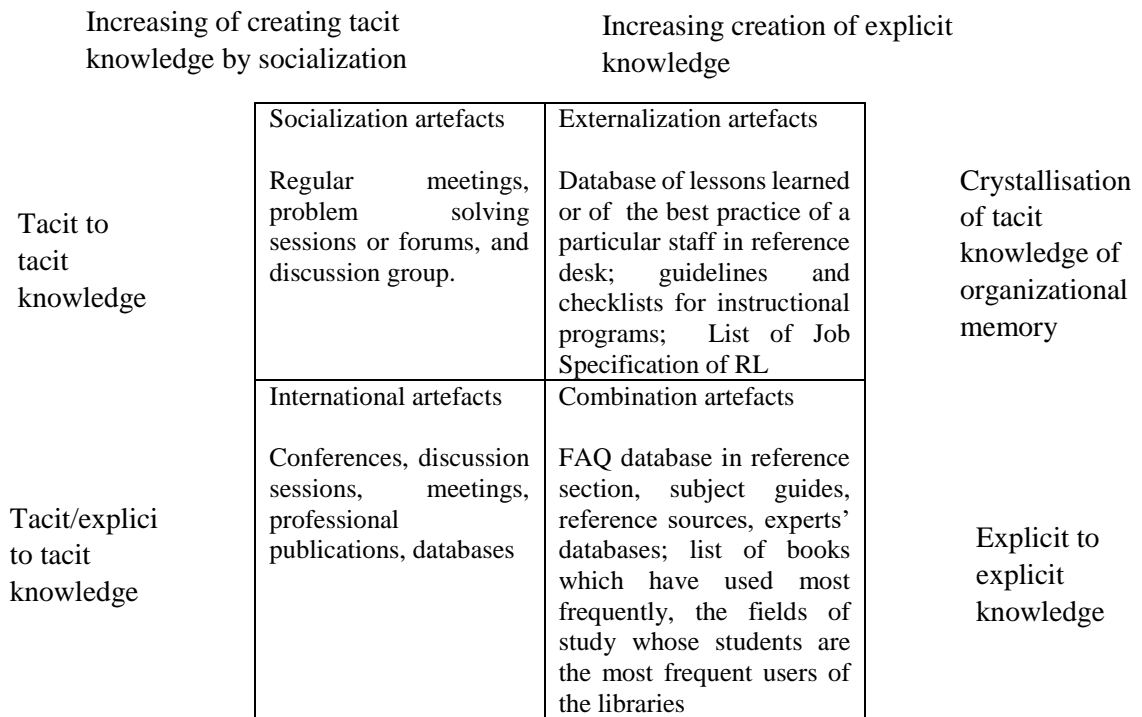
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knowledge that can be documented, created, written down, and transferred verbally or through some medium of communication such as e-mails and telephones. Explicit knowledge is mostly tangible; it is fixed on some kind of medium such as a book, scientific journal, CD, video and/or a web site. As a consequence, it is brought into the wider context of the public domain.

Nonaka (1994) first introduced a model that considers KM as a knowledge creation process. The KM process is a cycle of find or create, organize, share, use and reuse knowledge. According to Nonaka (1994), knowledge production is regarded as a social process that involves various types of knowledge conversions corresponding to four independent modes namely Socialisation, Externalisation, Combination and Internalisation (SECI). Each of the four transformations of SECI, results in some kind of learning or creation of new knowledge (Plockey & Alemna, 2009). Jashapara (2004) has illustrated SECI as indicated below:



Figure 2. 1 Organizational Learning in Academic Libraries



Source: Nonaka, 2004: 19

SECI can also be used to manage indigenous knowledge (Lwoga et al., 2010; Ngulube, 2003).

2.2.3.1 Socialisation

In Fig. 2.1 above, the first knowledge conversion mode is called “Socialisation.” Socialisation is where there is a passage among individuals of tacit knowledge to tacit knowledge, through a process of collective sharing of knowledge (Lwoga et al., 2010; Ngulube, 2003; Belussi & Pilotti, 2002). This usually happens through face to face conversations, social interaction, storytelling, music and dance. Socialisation was the major medium used to convey knowledge by pre-colonial societies. Education and socialization take place through living together and among others, imitating existing activities and skills of adults. Dialogue and collaboration were important methods in





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the process of knowledge productions. In order to acquire knowledge, a learner must become directly and actively involved or socially participate in community. According to Lauzon (1999) learning from this perspective is a process of social interaction that takes place within a framework of participation whereby the learner acquires the necessary skills, tools, knowledge, belief and values to actively participate in the community. Undoubtedly, oral transmission was a major means of preserving knowledge before the advent of modern tools of codifying knowledge. Things that society wanted to remember were composed into songs, proverbs, myths, poetic forms, and oral prose narratives including folktales and riddles. Also, the processes of learning and membership in a social environment are inseparable.

In a study on the indigenous knowledge systems of northern Ghana, specifically in the Dagara community of Upper West Region, Millar (2012) identifies four forms of learning by this community as: “the knowing environments”; the “learning distance” the “apprenticeship” and the “organized learning.” His study can be applied to the case of Dagbon since the people of northern Ghana have related traditions and origins.

The people of Dagbon use socialisation agents such as dance: Gonje and Linsi ceremonies which include wedding, outdoorings, funerals and enskinment (Oppong, 1971). Ngulube (2003) is of the view that using socialization processes like dance, music, storytelling and the development of technologies to manage and communicate IK may preserve IK without taking it away from the people.

In Africa, a society’s socialization is its foundation for creating, transforming and sharing knowledge. This centres on how a community is able to observe things, narrate events to others, and imitate experiment, compare and jointly execute tasks. Knowledge is inseparable from practice as posited in the endogenous development (ED) tradition.

Learning within the ED tradition implies that the learning processes of the rural or urban people and of NGO development staff or scientists from outside the community have to go hand in hand. The learning of local people and that of outside supporters are complementary. Outsiders can learn from and or with local people about their worldviews, local resources and concepts and practices. Similarly, local people can learn with and from outsiders to improve their own ways of learning, experimenting and also to assess and possibly use relevant information from outside (Haverkort, 2009).

By extension, librarians can create knowledge when they consult with reference librarians, subject librarians, collection development librarians, or other instructional librarians and even with the teaching staff and the local community. Through discussions, they can share their ideas (tacit-to-tacit conversion). According to Daneshgar & Parirokh (2007), the adoption of such approaches will enable all the above people to expand their personal knowledge bases.

2.2.3.2 Externalization

The second knowledge conversion mode is called “Externalisation” and is based on the conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. In this process, tacit knowledge is codified, sorted, categorised and held in a database or document in order to be reused by others, for example, printed materials, rock paintings, or clay pot and others. According to Ngulube (2003), externalization is evident in the indigenous technologies and artefacts. This is evident in Ghanaian adinkra symbols that are used as media for both aesthetic and linguistic expression. Additionally, explicit knowledge may be object-based or rule-based and/or serve as indigenous codes or symbols. This may include the following:



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The looms, textiles, jewellery and brass-work manufacture; exploring indigenous technological knowledge in agriculture, fishing, forest resources exploitation, atmospheric and climatological knowledge and management techniques, indigenous learning and knowledge transmission systems, architecture, medicine and pharmacology, and recasting the potentialities they present in the context of ...nation and global development (Odora-Hoppers, 2002).

The externalization aspect of the model gives room to those who would like to preserve IK ex-situ in databases, libraries and archives. However, the collection and preservation of IK ex-situ tends to disempower the indigenous people (Agrawal, 1995; Ngulube, 2003). This assertion is debatable. Even though, to some extent, it may be true, in the case where a researcher goes to the indigenous community to conduct a study without engaging in dialogue and seeking consent from the community involved. For example, a rare recording of an endangered culture may be of great value to a university library (by increasing research opportunities and the institution's prestige), but the value of this "document" to the group which is in danger of losing their culture would be much greater. It is when libraries see themselves as caretakers of these materials that they can dialogue with knowledge communities that can be mutually benefiting to library professionals and indigenous communities. In that case knowledge production and management become a collaboratory process. Two main approaches to collaboration are: (1) working with indigenous communities to develop policies for preservation and access of materials (especially sensitive materials) and (2) using indigenous community participation to inform the development of the documentation and preservation of materials. Scholars may also guide themselves with the following questions as they tend to preserve indigenous knowledge ex-suite: How does one get control over the preservation of IK without marginalizing its indigenous people? Who controls the dissemination of IK once it has been archived? We need to find a middle





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way between the desire to preserve IK and the necessity of alienating indigenous peoples from their knowledge.

This research does not support the isolation of different types of knowledges and knowledge sources. Careful and sensitive approaches are needed, based on dialogue and participation, and leaving decisions on sharing and adoption of knowledge to the local communities. This should reduce the perceived risk of dis-empowerment of communities, without compromising the principle of a global knowledge partnership for the benefit of all communities.

According to Ngulube (2003), the SECI model ‘gives the window’ of codifying IK, and keeping it in databases. The model also offers the possibility of the collectors to renew the knowledge by going back to the community to promote its preservation through artefacts and technology, music, dance and storytelling. This, to me, is knowledge recycle.

A practical example may illustrate the above explanations. Within the library are particular staff at the reference desk who document transactions and the results of problem-solving or brainstorming meetings, which form a combination of ideas exchanged in face-to-face interactions in socialisation mode that are converted into guidelines and checklists for future use. Guidelines for planning and running instructional programmes are also a crystallised form of the experience of librarians in the information service activity (ISA) process. These guidelines are structured tacit knowledge that are documented and have become available for all librarians including the new and inexperienced library staff. Additional examples are the job specification of reference librarians, list of hints to teach effectively, and keys for reference interviews. The tacit-to-explicit knowledge conversion is referred to by Jennex,



Olfman, and Addo (2003) www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh as the “organizational memory.”

Nonaka’s (1994) third knowledge creation mode is called “combination” and refers to the conversion of explicit to explicit knowledge. Here, where explicit knowledge is systemised and refined, for example, by utilising information and communication technologies and existing databases. Computer files such as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) databases created by reference staff, subject guides, list of reference sources and experts’ databases (a database that consists of details of experts that have agreed to be contacted) are some examples of explicit knowledge that can be created in externalisation mode but need to be revised constantly; hence, the term “combination”. The result of the evaluation of instructional programme might suggest some changes in the guidelines for designing and running the programmes.

The revised guidelines are also another example of the “combination” knowledge conversion mode that produces a new tangible and structured knowledge. A typical example is the result from various data mining operations in libraries. Over a long period of time, most libraries have produced vast amounts of facts, figures and databases such as user profiles, academic profiles, loans and library collections. These data can be further analysed using advanced data mining methods.

Results from such analyses would still be explicit knowledge, and as a result, can be demonstrated in figures, tables, databases, or reports. Some of these products are a list of most frequently used books, fields of studies whose students are the most frequent users of the libraries, list of publishers who provide most needed books in a specific subject area and many more. This new knowledge, according to Daneshgar and Parirokh (2007), is a valuable source for decision making and planning.

2.2.3.3 www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh *Internalisation*

Internalisation is where explicit knowledge is transferred to tacit knowledge, for example, learning by doing or translating theory into practice. This occurs when external knowledge from documents, database and artefacts is used to create knowledge inside a person that can also be transferred to others. Tacit knowledge feeds into explicit knowledge resulting in innovation and the creation of new knowledge (Ngulube, 2003). Learning will only occur when this acquired knowledge differs in some respects from the learner's previous knowledge. In this sense, previous knowledge will be corrected or modified and new knowledge is created within the learners' mind. Conferences, workshops, seminars, discussion sessions, meetings, professional publications are some examples that provide opportunities for the librarians to analyse and assess their knowledge, increase their thinking abilities to create new knowledge (Jashapara, 2004).

Alemna (1996) has stated that librarians have entered a new dimension of librarianship that transcends the traditional trinity of acquisition, selection and dissemination. They have moved into the creation and generation of information. As such, libraries need to be centres for knowledge production and preservation. This study proposes that more and more emphasis should be put on research providing information as part of their task. In other words the library has to become a global knowledge gateway. New research forms appear – one example being the increase in interdisciplinary research. Research now tends to be done as cooperative projects that work in groups or teams, and new differentiated demands for information appear. With the development of the modern university system, the modern research library also developed as a mediator in the processes of knowledge creation and knowledge use.

The learning of indigenous people and that of outside supporters are complementary. Outsiders can learn from indigenous people about their worldviews, local resources and





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concepts and practices. Similarly, indigenous people can learn with and from outsiders to improve their own ways of learning, experimenting and also to assess and possibly use relevant information from outside (Haverkort, 2009). There is therefore the need to look at indigenous knowledge. The next section discusses indigenous knowledge.

2.3 Indigenous Knowledge

Claxton (2010) states that the term, ‘indigenous,’ means local or native to the country, the people or the society concerned. Indigenous thus refers to people or things originating from a particular place and native to the place. For example, we may have indigenous Africans, Americans or Australians who originally came from these places. Hunter (2005), corroborating Claxton’s definition, explains that the term “indigenous” is used in international discourse to refer to the original people of a particular territory, namely, the traditional ethnic grouping who are self-conscious of their pre-colonial use and occupation of the land. Clearly, Hunter introduces a time dimension to the definition and that is the use of the term “pre-colonial,” which is very critical to this study. It upholds that before the colonial contact and encounter with the territories now dominated by colonizers such as the Europeans, the indigenous people had their own ways of learning and perceptions of their world and the things in and around them. Above all, this definition affirms the originator conditions, systems, values and ways of indigenous group without any pejorative underpinnings.

However, according to Claxton (2010), the term ‘indigenous’ gradually assumed a derogatory connotation shortly after the beginning of the European colonial adventure. In the view of Senah et al. (2001: 1), the main objective of colonial contact and eventual domination of Africa is to:



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“win territories, Convert ‘heathens’ to Christendom and to trade in spices and precious metals. In the pursuit of these objectives, they found some aspects of traditional practices to be obstacles. Indigenous knowledge was viewed as ‘inefficient, inferior, and an absolute impediment to development.’”

What started as adventure and personal search for resources from the Far East was immediately turned into a mission of conversion, conquest and domination ideologically, economically and spiritually.

Also, over some time, the term ‘indigenous’ has been applied solely to non-European peoples, considered inferior to those of European origins. This has been supported by Maison (2007), who asserts that one cannot read or hear of an ‘indigenous Englishman.’ This assertion is very true of the English, who like other European stocks, are considered cultured and not of nature. Rather, it is common to find categorizations and classifications of indigenous people in terms that highlight their so-called primitivity such as the Australian aborigines, Canadian Indians and American natives.

Hence, the possession of an original quality or indigeneity immediately places one in a position of inferiority. Being indigenous thus denotes a backward people from Africa or elsewhere in the Third World or even marginalized group of the First World such as the Roma of Europe and the Natives of the Americas and the Aborigines of Australia, considered under-developed by modernist or Western standards. This distorted usage of the term indigenous has been so systematic and persistent that most peoples in the South have subconsciously come to associate ‘indigenous’ with ‘inferior’. Unfortunately, this cunning association of the term indigenous appears to have influenced our attitudes, our life styles and, more importantly, our choice of development techniques, policies, models, and strategies (Claxton, 2010).

The colonialists see indigenous people as a social and cultural identity distinct from the dominant society that makes them vulnerable by the development process. This



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perception of indigenous by the colonialists, missionaries and Eurocentric intellectuals has created the impression that IK is inferior, primitive, heathen, barbaric and not worthy of preserving. Senah et al. (2001) give examples of two European missionaries who as late as 1851 and 1852 made these comments about the people of Ghana formerly Gold Coast as shown in Box 2 below.

Box 2:

“They serve the fetish like all Negros in this area. The only remarkable thing about them is that on this mountain there are also a number of cheap harlots who cannot marry. The fetish, they say, has initiated them into this sinful life. The religion of the people is really nothing less than a devil’s institution, a cover for all evil and sin...” (by a German Missionary).

“Oh, what a pitiful life is such a negro life. And could a healthy moral life unfold itself there? Here, the soul has no living, holy and merciful God to hold on to. There she (the native) has to go down in all the depth of sin. That’s how it is with the Negro race. It is a pool of immorality and wickedness into which the Negro people are immersed. Especially the devil of animal lust holds captured and not just men, women, young men, and young women but children of six till eight years old suffer in these chains...’ (by Johannes Zimmerman).

These early negative perceptions of IK persist even among educated African elite and Islamic/Christian converts who have tended to look down on their own cultural heritage. Kobina Sekyi’s “The Blinkards” succinctly captures this fatality of the so-called educated or elite Gold Coaster, now Ghanaian. They have been called several names such as the detribalized, alienated and Europeanized Africans. Such elites have tended to accept, heartily, anything Westernized to the detriment of their own value systems. African ways of dressing, eating, worshiping, celebrating and even living as well as political, social, economic, and educational systems have been disparaged.

The mission of denigration has been made possible through an alienation-re/acculturation process that has been designed to brainwash and create an ideological

distance between so-called elite Africans and their indigenous roots. Thus, African worldviews and knowledge systems, which form the core of cultural identity, have been vilified and denigrated. In particular, the systems and process for socializing to preserve and renew African culture especially the educational system, have been most targeted (Dei, 2000) (see box 3). Through the process of systematic re/engineering, African values and knowledge systems have been dissipated and replaced largely by Western systems leading to the denigration of everything indigenous.

Box 3:

The formal school system in Ghana inherited from our colonial past was as culturally esoteric in cultural content as it was exogenous in origin. Spatially segregated from indigenous cultures of the people for whose cultivation it was designed, it created from the very beginning a culture space for the promotion of foreign values, beliefs, language and modes of behavior.....

The space had many segments. The first segment was the classroom. The second segment was the social space of the school as corporate entity. The third space was the physical environment. And the fourth space was the framework of cultural institutions – churches, theatres, art galleries, museums, **libraries** and entertainment hall within the community in which the school was located.

Busia (1951) cited by Otu (2003) argues that the attitude of the educated African toward indigenous culture was a result of missionary education. Busia complains that by becoming Christians, they put themselves under a new authority. Their disputes were settled by catechists, the leaders of the congregation, and the priests or pastors. Church law and discipline regulated their conduct. For example, Busia (1951) cited by Otu (2003) posit that, the educated African, instead of holding on to his local values strives to leave them behind and hold on to new western beliefs and practices without giving his actions a deeper thought.



Undoubtedly, unless Africans get rid of the stigma associated with the term “indigenous”, only then will it be possible to consider ‘indigenous’ cultures as a development resource rather than an obstacle and, a possible source of solutions for problems of sustainable development. As argued by Settee (2007), Africans must acknowledge and speak about the sources of empowerment and disempowerment in the past and its cultural traditions. They must also acknowledge the indigenous capacity to exercise intellectual agency and to engage in self-reflexive knowledge production. In this context, exercising intellectual agency means engaging in a process of recuperation, revitalization and reclamation of African “Indigenous” as a necessary exercise in the empowerment of African people (Dei, 2000; Odora-Hoppers, 2002).

Knowledge is an intangible resource that exists within the mind of the individual (Sveiby, 1997). Knowledge is based on data and information but unlike these, it is always bound to persons. It is constructed by individuals or groups to represent their benefit about causal relationships or fact or condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association. Ngulube (2003) is of the view that the concept of knowledge is rooted in western traditions. This means that knowledge is defined and shaped by dominant Euro-American cultures.

A long time ago, Polanyi (1966), an anthropologist, defined knowledge as the ‘process of knowing.’ By that, Polanyi meant, all that it took for one to acquire knowledge. There are diverse ways of knowing and thus knowledge is not a prerogative to the West. There is a proverb in Ewe, an ethnic group in Ghana, which states: “it is only the child who has not travelled that thinks that it is only his mother’s soup that is sweet.” All these attest to the fact that the process of knowing includes all the procedures/methods of learning. However, Africa’s know-how, as posited by Metinhoue (1997), has been



rarely discussed and textbooks of African history hardly talk about ways in which past generations of Africans coped with the practical problems of daily life.

A growing awareness has developed of the wealth of Africa's knowledge base. Historical research, as reflected in UNESCO's eight volume "General History of Africa" has shown that the African past is not anywhere near as dark and featureless as had been assumed. Centres of learning have been rediscovered such as those of Jenna and Timbuktu, which rival their contemporaries in medieval Europe. We have been made aware of the contributions of ancient African thinkers and scholars to "classical antiquity" and "western science", or more correctly, to the shared knowledge of humankind. In recent years, an appreciation has been developing of Africa's indigenous knowledge (Lor & Britz, 2005).

It is preferable to regard all forms of knowledge as forms of relevant knowledge because each depicts and informs a slice of reality. Different forms of knowledge are often created by different producers, each having unique strengths and limits, and even different methods for creating knowledge. Labelle (1997) states that, just as the world needs genetic diversity of species, it needs diversity of knowledge systems.

Later, Probst, Raub, and Ramhardt (1998: 24) expanded on Polanyi's definition in the following assertion:

Knowledge is the whole body of cognition and skills which individual use to solve problems. It includes theories and practices, everyday rules and instructions for action. Knowledge is based on data and information but unlike these, it is always bound to persons. It is constructed by individuals, and represents their benefit about causal relationships.

This means that knowledge is a product of human thought, action and experience. Each culture contains a knowledge base from which its members receive understanding of the world. Knowledge is neither the exclusive domain of rich countries, nor of the rich in poor countries.



As noted earlier in chapter one, it is difficult to give a clear-cut definition of indigenous knowledge (IK). It would appear, however, that from the various sources above, there are common threads that run through the various meanings offered. This view is also shared by Ngulube (2002) who explains that there is a consensus that IK is experimental, unique and embedded in the head, activities and practices of communities with long histories of close interactions with the natural environment across cultures and geographical spaces. The same view is also shared by Grenier (1998) and Ellen and Harris (2000). In addition, researchers have identified common features of indigenous knowledge across cultures and created working definitions such as this one provided by UNESCO:

Indigenous or local knowledge refers to a complete body of knowledge, know-how and practices maintained and developed by peoples, generally in rural areas, who have extended histories of interaction with the natural environment. These sets of understandings, interpretations and meanings are part of a cultural complex that encompasses language, naming and classification systems, practices for using resources, ritual, spirituality and worldview. It provides the basis for local-level decision-making about many fundamental aspects of day-to-day life: for example hunting, fishing, gathering, agriculture and husbandry; food production; water; health; and adaptation to environmental or social change. Non-formal knowledge – in contrast to formal knowledge – is handed over orally, from generation to generation, and is therefore seldom documented. (Cited in Stevens, 2008: 26)

The above definition encompasses all forms of knowledge in various fields including agriculture and health. It also includes practices such as knowledge transfer and dissemination and beliefs systems - rituals and spiritual world views – that enable the communities to achieve stable livelihoods and survival in their environment. It also takes a step further to identify threats to this knowledge or the forces of domination that undermine it; that is, formal or western knowledge.





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Advocates of indigenous systems of knowledge highlight its transformative potential. For instance, Settee (2007) asserts that indigenous traditional knowledge systems offer an important resource that can develop solutions that take into account detailed local knowledge of the particular environment and people and their unique characteristics. This increased use of indigenous traditional knowledge practices could positively transform social and political developmental models. Imagine the transformation that could take place if IK assumed a valued and integral role in community development strategies.

According to Ermine (2000), IKS are also about indigenous people claiming their ethical space; having their knowledge recognized as legitimate and making important contributions to world philosophies. IKS challenges the notion that only Western knowledge is legitimate (Deloria, 1995). It goes further in pushing us to think about our situation as a struggle against Western hegemonic practices.

IK is part of the cultural heritage and histories of peoples. Indigenous people are always conscious of a holistic way of life that encompasses spirituality, social governance, and collective community memory. This knowledge is protected by taboos and rituals and it is transmitted from generation to generation. It includes concepts, beliefs and perceptions, and experiences of local peoples and their natural and human-built environments.

Kargbo (2006: 73) has grouped IK into a number of categories to include the following:

- Learning system: This is made up of traditional methods of counting and quantifying, indigenous games, approaches to innovation and experimentation and methods of imparting knowledge;
- Control measures: These are traditional laws, taboos, rituals, environmental management, decision making process, conflict resolution and common property practices.

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- Culture: This is exhibited in songs, values, stories, belief, secret societies, local languages, dance and proverbs;
- Traditional knowledge: This is in the form of textiles and local craft, building and building materials, indigenous tools and energy conservation;
- Agriculture: This covers traditional knowledge of the seasons for planting and harvesting, land preparation and propagation of plants, seed storage and traditional methods in the use of manure as fertilizers. Others include: knowledge of sowing, plant protection methods, pest control measures, food processing and marketing, use of forest plants, soil fertility and improved crop yields, soil conservation practices, fallow methods, soil species, animal diseases, traditional fodder and forage species, animal breeding and production, classification of animal diseases, water management, conservation, traditional irrigation methods, fresh and salt water fisheries and aquatic resource management. Farmers are able to predict the onset of rain by the temperature fluctuation, changes in leaf color of some trees, shift in the wind direction, clouds formation, seasonal migration of birds and bird songs;
- Medicine: Traditional medicine covers a wide and heterogeneous field of medicinal practices with traditional healers divided into herbalist, spiritualist, and ritualist. Indigenous people possess knowledge of bone setting, anti-snake venom production, active immunization practices and the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorders.

The distinguishing features of indigenous knowledge are:

- It is acquired through observation and hands- on training;
- It is communicated orally;
- Explanation of the environmental phenomena is spiritual and based on cumulative and collative experience;
- It is holistic, with all elements of matter viewed as interconnected which cannot be understood in isolation;
- It is spiritually inclined with all parts of the natural world infused with spirits;
- It is at the heart of local people's culture identity, remaining a viable aspect of their way of life (Kargbo, 2006: 73).

IK has been handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. Sillitoe et.al (2006) indicated that IK is tacit in nature and is embedded in the practices and



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experience of its holder. Traditionally, IK is preserved and disseminated through folklore, plays, drama, theatre, taboos, symbols, myths/legends, rituals, dance, proverbs and family histories.

However, Africa Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) is marginalised and this is evident in those African intellectual systems and productions which are firmly rooted in a Western epistemological order.

2.3.1 The Benefits of Indigenous Knowledge

Nyumba (2006: 6) posits:

...that no one can argue that the expertise that matters from Third World development must come from the West, from universities, from multinational corporations, from international banks, from foreign and local professionals, but not from the farmer in Ghana or the healer in Botswana or the village teacher in Bolivia. Before the advent of colonialism, African communities were able to manage their own affairs.

For instance, they were able to protect their environments through the institution of sacred groves, address their health problems through herbal medication and ritual healing, sound build moral/ethical behaviour through rituals, taboos and rites of passage. These were developed modes for addressing community development needs.

Sillitoe et al (2006) attest to the fact that IK is cheap and accessible to community members and social groups. IK is socially desirable, economically affordable, a sustainable resource and involves minimum risk to rural farmers. Ngulube (2002) also asserts that indigenous technologies and practices are often cheaper than Western ones. They rely on locally available skills and materials and often require little or no cash outlay. The use of IK is considered one of the cornerstones that can guarantee the survival of the economies of the developing world in the wake of scarce resources and reduced donor funding.



This underscores the fact that the use of IK improves understanding of local conditions and provides a productive context for activities designed to help communities. In addition, the use of IK assures that the end users of specific agricultural development projects are involved in developing technologies appropriate to their needs.

AIK provides effective alternatives to western technologies. It gives local people and development workers extra options when designing development projects. Instead of searching only among Western technologies for feasible solutions, they can choose from IK or combine indigenous and western technology. For example, when building a house, one does not need to import expensive equipment but can equally get cheap and durable materials locally to use.

IK provides the basis for local-level decision-making about many fundamental aspects of day-to-day life: for example, hunting; fishing; gathering; agriculture and husbandry; food production; water; health; and adaptation to environmental or social change.

Some 80% of the world's population depend on IK to meet their medicinal needs, and at least half rely on IK and crops for food supplies (Nyumba, 2006). The annual world market value for medicines derived from medicinal plants by indigenous people is US \$ 43 billion. Also, in the Himalayan range (Pakistan) at least 70% of medicinal plants and animal species consist of wild species with 70-80% of the population depending on them for healthcare (Lodhi & Mikulecky, 2010). From introspection, Africa and in particular Ghana, is very much resourced in medicinal plant species and knowledge on their uses. Medicinal plants used in the region are as effective as the imported "Western" prescription medicine. Indigenous medicine is holistic and tends to treat patients in their totality by also giving answers to the 'why' question often asked by indigenous Africans. Darko (2009) has added that many Africans especially, those in



the rural areas, rely on herbs not only for their medicinal value and promotion of good health and fortune but also for their spiritual well-being.

IK has been globally recognized to be of great value for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, whose contribution for meeting the medicinal requirements of indigenous and local communities and also in food and fibre has been well documented.

Another significance of IK is its capacity to empower the community. Communities, including the most vulnerable and disadvantage groups, are much more able to take action instead of relying on external help only. And a cornerstone for building one's own identity and coherence of social structures within communities.

2.3.2 Challenges of IK

Mchombu et al. (2004) have identified some of the challenges for the destruction of the indigenous knowledge base which include:

- a) Young people turning away from their elders and breaking an ancient chain of orally communicated knowledge;
- b) An education system which is de-linked from the indigenous knowledge base and aimed at proving that external information is better than indigenous knowledge;
- c) The destruction of the homes of indigenous populations by urbanization, farming and commercial activities, such as logging and mining;
- d) Propaganda from the "modernization-oriented" mass media and political elite that traditional ways of doing things are never as good as external ways of doing things and should be rejected (p.34)

Eyong (2007) has also indicated that colonialism, economic, globalization and modernization, human displacements, social exclusion by governments, and intellectual property rights are among some of the challenges facing indigenous people in their quest to produced knowledge.



2.3.3 Weaknesses and Challenges of IK

Even though IK is crucial to the development of a people, there is no point over glorifying it. IK also has its weaknesses and challenges or even controversies as highlighted below. In Ghana, one can talk about female circumcision, widowhood rite, which are largely against human rights. We can also mention the social exclusion of women from developmental interventions as a result of our indigenous knowledge systems. Insensitivity to gender and generational voices and interests has long been identified with AKS. Even though, many of these things are changing due to persistent mobilization and advocacy.

Nyumba (2006) in her studies revealed that IK may not be appropriate and accurate in all circumstances. Nyumba explains that, it may be unwise to accept all IK as good practice. Indigenous peoples have at times mismanaged resources. For example, according to Gadgil, Berkes, and Folke (1993), nomadic hunters and gathers who are not tied to any specific resource base may not have a conservation ethic. Some IK practices are less efficient than modern technologies. Indigenous people's experiments may be poorly designed and therefore incomplete or incorrect (McCorkle, 1989; Wickham, 1993). Indigenous practices are sometimes not very spectacular. AIK is often overlooked because it seems "messy" and is not obvious to outsiders (Nyumba, 2006).

There is also the problem of perpetuation of some aspects of African/Ghanaian customs that are outmoded and have outlived their usefulness. It was in light of this that chief Kuoru Limann IV, then president of the Upper West Regional House of Chiefs, gave the directive that henceforth no community member should force a brother of a deceased person into marrying the widow, pointing out that the practice had been a major source of the spread of sexual infections among the people (GNA, 2008).



Kings in Africa are known to have had large numbers of wives as mark of their exalted positions (Welch III & Glick, 1981: 110). Like King Solomon, King Sobhuza II of Swaziland was so well endowed. Although, accounts widely differ, it is estimated that he married as many as over 60 wives (Hansungule, 2003: 9). He left hundreds of children, some accounts put it at 600, at his death (Hansungule, 2003). Legendary King Shaka of the Zulu in South Africa is believed to have been keeping over hundred concubines and wives (Hansungule, 2003). From the early years, polygamy existed throughout Africa as an integral feature of family life, with culture or religion or both as its basis. Less than two decades ago, it was estimated that some 35% of all men in traditional cultures in Africa practiced polygamy (Dorjahn, 1959). Today, King Mswati of Swaziland keeps several wives and on an annual basis makes an addition by picking from a select group of girls, some under-aged.

Another outmoded custom is gerontocracy; a political system and form of oligarchic rule whereby a small group of elderly individuals are in control of power. These individuals are usually old men. It has been said that a gerontocracy is a society where “very old men are replaced by old men,” which is a rather apt description. Many gerontocracies have political and social systems where power increases with age, as in Communist societies, creating a situation where younger people cannot leapfrog into positions of power. This tends to discourage innovation and visionaries, who are thoroughly steeped in bureaucracy by the time they actually come to power (Smith, 2011).

In Kenya, the Samburu society is said to be gerontocratic. The power of elders is linked to the belief in their curse, underpinning their monopoly over arranging marriages and taking on further wives. This is at the expense of unmarried younger men, whose development up to the age of thirty is in a state of social suspension, prolonging their

adolescent status. The paradox of Samburu gerontocracy is that popular attention focuses on the glamour and deviant activities of these footloose bachelors, which extend to a form of gang warfare, widespread suspicions of adultery with the wives of older men and theft of their stock (Spencer, 1965).

According to Mills (1995) in Africa, custom and tradition decreed that only a member of the royal clan could be chief so no outsider could supplant a chief. According to Mills (1995: 4) the chief was an autocrat with total power over his people:

- he controlled the court system and his court was the highest and final court of appeal;
- as chief judge he could ‘eat people up’ (i.e., confiscate their property, especially cattle) and even had the power of life and death;
- he was the national religious leader;
- he was the wealthiest man and had the most wives in his society.

In the traditional African society, political power or authority has been derived from the possession or control of the vital force of a given political unit (which may be the family, clan, tribe, or nation). The vital force of a community is the source of vitality of such a community as a corporate body as well as the ultimate source of vitality of its individual members. It may be taken as the genus (or genii, as the case may be, of a community); it is essentially a spiritual (non-physical) force, which can exert its influence on both physical and non-physical nature. The rules by which people determine that a given person or persons are legitimately in possession of the vital force of a political community differ. However, once a person or persons are deemed to be in proper possession of the vital force of a political unit, the basis of limiting this power from below (that is, by those it is supposed to govern) ceases to exist. This is because those below derive their vital force from above (that is, that which controlled the ruler controls) and, therefore, cannot limit it. In other words, they have no power (vitality) over and above that which the ruler controls, with which to control him/her (Agbakoba,





2010). Mbiti's (1970: 7) www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh observation about the principles that underlie morality in traditional Africa generally applies to political morality and action. He points out that:

The principle of hierarchy is most helpful here. As a rule, a person of a lower rank, status or age commits an offence against another person or being of a higher rank or age. One may also offend against a person of the same status. Never or rarely does a person of higher status do what constitutes an offence against a person of lower status? What is considered evil or offence are functions from a low level to a higher level... the king or ruler does not offend against his subjects, the elder in the village does not offend those who are younger or under him, and parents do not offend against their children.

These accounts reveal that IK does not completely address the fundamental issues and changing needs of indigenous people. Grenier (1998) buttresses this assertion by stating that, all knowledge systems have their limitations and weaknesses, and IK is no exception. Neither IK nor Western science will be appropriate and accurate in all circumstances. In the same way that it has proven unwise to uncritically accept Western science (for example, green-revolution technology), it would be equally inappropriate to accept all traditional knowledge as good practice or as sustainable practice.

The motivation for this study is to find a balance between indigenous and Western science for building complementarities and co-evolution of their sciences. Both extreme positions that good things can only come from the West, and the alternative Afrocentric view that nothing from the West is good for Africa are roadblocks to development.

Rouse (1999) therefore suggests that we need to integrate IK and Western science in terms of knowledge and practice as well as in internationally accessible knowledge pools. It is certainly useful to find out and draw from the strengths on each system for building synergies while strategizing to redress the weak ends for the extension of each form of science.

2.3.4 AIKS as Science?

The workings of science have been studied mostly by philosophers and anthropologists, and more recently by sociologists. Scientists claim that science cannot be learned through textbooks, but requires extensive training in the laboratory or in the field for practitioners to become even faintly acquainted with the scientific method. These differences in outlook provide different conclusions. According to Musson (2009), the history of knowledge production since the eighteenth century is written as an attempt to distinguish scientific knowledge from non-scientific knowledge. In the discourses of knowledge production, Western culture is mostly used interchangeably with scientific knowledge. The origins of Western science is traced back to the ancient Greeks. Socrates, Plato, Pythagoras and especially Aristotle laid the foundations of ways of knowing that is based on common sense and logical reasoning. By such reasoning process, science attempts to develop the broad laws that become part of our understanding of natural and social world.

Science is defined as the epistemology that subordinates theory to empirical data and experimental results (Jaffe, 2010). Davies (1968: 8) in his book, *On the Scientific Method* said “Science is a structure built upon facts.” In other words, scientific knowledge is knowledge that has been tested and tried. Scientific knowledge is said to be verifiable, demonstrable, objectively proven and reliable. Scientific method of knowledge production is also based on induction, deduction, and rational thought.

Even though scientific knowledge is said to be universal and objective, it is nevertheless only partial and subject to change. Apart from this lack of permanence, the knowledge inherent in science is also partial in that it leaves many questions unanswered such as:





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- How do I find meaning in my life? How do I deal with the loss of a loved one?
- How do I face the prospect of my own death?
- Does God exist?

The Nobel laureate David Gross has said that “the most important product of science is ignorance”, by which he is referring to new questions that are raised by important scientific results. Another expression upholding the same idea is the statement from Bondi, quoted in Morris (2008: 7) that “the power of science is the ability to say something without having to say “everything”. Similarly, Feynman (1969) describes science as the belief in the ignorance of experts.

The question arose whether science could not also further knowledge of the society, a question that led to the immense development of social science throughout the nineteenth century. The evolution in the natural sciences confirmed, spurred on and complemented the progress in the social sciences with the Newtonian tradition becoming diffused to more and more fields of enquiry to ensure its compliance with what was considered sound scientific practice. The new science of the scientific revolution in the seventeenth century not only grew out of the old but has also bequeathed its very own language to the new. The knowledge produced either way has scientific merit and value (Musson, 2009). This has led to a post-modern conception of science. This advocates that science does not assume to know the truth but rather it must discover and create knowledge as science is not sufficient to discover new dimensions in our world (Jaffe, 2010). We need a healthy dose of creativity and imagination. These features are also part of science, but are not exclusive to it. Consequently, knowledge that is produced must be socially robust. It is against this backdrop that the contest over AIK or IKS arises.

African traditional wisdom or the IKS of Africa has been challenged for its scientific basis. It has been challenged for its ability to meet the scientific criteria of conventional science. Attempts to address the issue have yielded two schools of thought.

One school of thought believes that AIKS is science. That view which defines science, using the principles and methods of science, argues that AIKS meets the criteria of science. Higgins' (2000) definition of science is useful. He explains that science is:

- 1) Knowledge acquired by study, mastery, trained skill;
- 2) A body of knowledge, laws or principles; and
- 3) The state of fact of knowing; knowledge in the sense as opposed to belief or opinion.

According to Higgins (2000), all of these definitions are applicable to AIK. Indigenous knowledge is a disciplined approach to knowing and understanding the nature of reality, systems of relationships, and the processes of the universe. However, it cannot be separated from other aspects of daily existence, such as ethics and spirituality (Higgins, 2000; Peat, 1994). Searching for the truth and understanding requires the study of cycles, relationships, and connections between things (Augustine, 1997; Higgins, 2000). The inference drawn from the above arguments is that indigenous knowledge tends to be holistic. That include the natural, social and the spiritual world. These are considered to be interconnected and inseparable.

According to Higgins (2000), African knowledge of medicines provides an example of how indigenous wisdom can be applied in a Western scientific context. For example, knowledge of medicines requires precise information about the environment, the seasonal patterns of plants and their ecological requirements. Thus, the acquisition of this knowledge and the use of these medicines by indigenous people demonstrate the use of their knowledge in a scientific context. This example highlights the non-random





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and precise nature of indigenous knowledge. The use of fire, farming methods, hunting methodologies, and knowledge of the natural ecology and biology of wildlife are other examples of indigenous knowledge as a basis of expertise associated with observation, classification, and comparison (Augustine, 1997; Higgins, 2000). For these reasons, indigenous knowledge must be classified as a science.

One cannot but agree with the proponents of the first school of thought that holds the view that IK is science. Even though the proponent of the second school of thought that holds that IK is not science uses written literature as basis of disqualifying IK as science. It is significant to note, however, that IK is not entirely only oral; it has written forms. For example, there are artefacts that depict African thoughts, values and emotions such as the *adinkra* symbols of the Akan of Ghana. A study by Conteh (2007) revealed that prior to European colonisation, traditional African societies such as the Dabgon had invented their own systems for reading and writing which clearly show IK also has written form.

Furthermore, IK is methodological. It takes an apprentice several years to acquire knowledge. For example, training to become a drummer requires long period of patience and practice (Oppong, 1971). It usually takes between two to ten years depending on the ability of the individual to absorb whatever is being taught. And no one disputes the fact that this is methodological.

A discussion of the scientific basis of IK cannot conclude without explaining the argument of the second school of thought which holds that IKS cannot be a science. For them, IK is often contrasted with ‘Scientific’ ‘Western’, ‘International’ or ‘Modern’ knowledge. Whithead (1932) cited in Ngulube (2003), posits that scientific knowledge is methodological, exclusive and intolerant as opposed to AIK. Dossou (1997) cited by

Ngulube (2003: 23) also associates scientific knowledge with written documents that can be preserved. Dossou continues that...

It seems hard for me to imagine scientific civilization which would not also be a literate civilization. It is equally difficult for me to conceive of a history of science, a scientific tradition in a society using only oral methods for the transmission of knowledge. It seems therefore difficult to imagine African civilizations becoming an integral part of what we now call the world of scientific learning, which might more accurately be called the world of scientific practice and activity, unless African societies first accomplish the basic, prerequisite transformation from oral to literate civilizations. The point, I think, is clear enough to make further comments.

The exclusiveness of western science' argument of the second school of thought is untenable. It begs the question, who made Western science superior to other sciences? Also, the intolerant nature of western science does not make it more scientific than the other. If possible, the tolerant nature of IK makes it superior and appealing to Western science and therefore IK cannot, in any way, be disqualified as science. What we must bear in mind is that the two, that is IK and western science, have something to offer and they both have their weaknesses. The appreciation of the two sciences will be helpful in gaining a deeper understanding for promoting synergies. In our quest for information as scholars, we must not shy away from seeking information from the indigenous people and vice versa.

The inability to consider other older forms of knowledge such as IKS as science appears to be purely an academic problem which has played a central role in its domination of knowledge systems within higher learning and its eventual marginalization as a legitimate form of knowledge and/or science.

One cannot but agree with Agrawal (1995) who observes that the attempt to create two categories of knowledge – indigenous/traditional vs. Western/scientific—ultimately rests on the possibility that a small and finite number of characteristics can define the



elements contained within the categories. He shows that the attempt fails on each of the three counts: substantive, methodological and contextual. He posits that “in examining specific forms of investigation and knowledge creation in different countries and different groups of people, we can allow for the existence of diversity within what is commonly seen as Western or as indigenous”. Hence, instead of trying to conflate all non-Western knowledge into a category termed 'indigenous', and all Western knowledge into another category, it may be more appropriate to accept differences within these categories and perhaps find similarities across them (p.3).

There is no doubt that dichotomies exist in interpretations of worldviews by both sciences, Western and non-western. Nonetheless, there are points of commonalities and congregation where commonalities occur. The thrust of this study, therefore, is to investigate the differences and the similarities of each of the knowledge systems of western science and IKS in order to determine the possibility of synergy between both knowledge systems. This study therefore seeks opportunities and possibilities for co-evolution.

Nyumba (2006) has clearly defined the distinction between the two as presented in Table 2.1 below.



Table 2. 1 Organizational learning in academic libraries

Area of comparison	Indigenous Science	Conventional Science
Relationship	Subordinate	Dominant
Dominant mode of thinking	Intuitive Holistic	Analytical Reductionist
Communication	Oral, storytelling, singing, dancing Subjective	Literate Objective
Instruction	Learned through observation or hands on experience	Got taught and learned in a situation usually separated from the applied contest
Effectiveness	Slow Inconclusive	Fast Conclusive
Data creation	Based on personal observations, trial and error, and synthesis of facts	Based on experimentation and systematic, deliberate accumulation of facts
	Data generated by resources users	Data generated by a specialized cadre of researchers
Data type	Qualitative Historical (long time series one locality)	Quantitative Statistical (short time series over a large area)
Explanation	Spiritual Moral	Hypothesis, laws Mechanistic Value free
Classification	Ecological	Generic and hierarchical

Source: Adapted from Nyumba (2006: 5)



2.4 CONTEXT FOR INTEGRATION

2.4.1 Paradigm Shift in Modes of Knowledge Production

According to Pressley (2005) many scholars are interested in the social aspects of knowledge production, discovery and creation. These scholars fall into the school of "social epistemology." This field is still new enough that there is not one general stance from which all social epistemologists work. Generally, social epistemology is the study of the relevance of social relations, interests, and institutions to knowledge. These things have traditionally been viewed as secondary in philosophy, but social



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epistemologists give them attention as important factors in the understanding of knowledge. These new perspectives, also owe their origins to the critiques of the postmodern movement. As postmodern critiques have emerged in literature, history, and art, they have also been vociferous in philosophy as well. These assessments generally do not place the high authority on "objectivity" and "neutrality" that traditional epistemology possesses since these new studies of epistemology question the achievability of such perspectives. Instead, postmodern critiques of epistemology consider context and power as key to seeing through to the truth about knowledge (Pressley, 2005).

The recognition that knowledge is gained in a social learning process has brought the attention to the role of ordinary people in knowledge accumulation. The notion of social learning indicates that if knowledge is created by independent and highly diverse people, decentralized cognitive processes can be aggregated, combining knowledge and insights from different actors, social categories and interest groups (Haverkort et al., 2012). These so-called communities of practice learn about how to deal with a practical reality from a specific goal or interest. They employ common practices, work with the same tools and express themselves in common language. Through common activities they build up common experience and thus learn together. Griffin (1997) adds that postmodern science celebrates difference, multiplicity, variety, diversity within and between human beings and the social practices they engage in. Furthermore, as a result of urbanization and industrial revolution, governments and societies are increasingly expecting science to come down from its ivory tower to address economic and social issues and serve the needs of industry and society (Haverkort et. al., 2012)

These changes of knowledge production have brought about an emerging tradition where people from different cultures or traditions have realised that the integration of

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both systems will go a long way in solving problems. This integrated model has two systems which incorporate both modern and traditional systems. This, according to Darko (2009), is practiced in China and Nepal. Anfom (1986) recounts that after the establishment of the Peoples Republic of China in the post Second World War era, the official government policy regarding health care was to unite the modern and the traditional. It was important to the new government to ensure that everyone had access to health care. This has meant that traditional doctors with their herbals, acupuncture and moxibustion must be used to serve the people. By uniting with Western medicine, the strategy has been to cull out those elements of ancient Chinese healing which are effective and discard what is not.

Also, Yeboah (2000) describes the Danfa Project in Ghana as entailing centres of research into traditional medicine which operate as information centres where indigenous and western knowledge systems are linked to create new knowledge. These information professionals would work with modern medical research specialists, herbal pharmacists, medicine men, community elders and the common people, to exchange ideas and identify, extract and develop useful health care knowledge. However, this is only one sector of the economy; there are other sectors which also need inclusive approach to problem solving.

Adedipe (2004) compares IKS farming practices vis-à-vis modern technology in sustainable crop production in Nigeria. In his findings, Adedipe (2004) acknowledges that IKS cannot on its own meet current and future demands of crop production. The conclusion of the study was that the benefits of the modern technology should gainfully and sustainably rub on IK to achieve the human wellbeing. This study proposes a



systematic hybridization strategy. Vital to this research is the realization in Adedipe's (2004) framework of hybridization that the formal scientific base of modern technologies cannot on its own produce food; but it can do so with strong recognition of the benefits of IK.

The results of the paradigm shift in knowledge production have led to the emergence of popular culture. "Popular culture" in Africa means that which is produced and consumed by "the people". This is quite significant, as it means that art and culture are not created and enforced "from above" (like the notion of "high art" in the Western world which we might align with art forms such as opera and symphony orchestras), but art and culture that are created by ordinary people. In an African context, it is particularly significant because many "ordinary" people in Africa have no voice and seemingly little opportunity to participate in the production, dissemination and consumption of art and culture (centreofafricanstudies, 2012).

2.4.2 Policy Context

This section discusses at various policies on culture.

2.4.2.1 *Ghana National Policy on Culture*

Ghana, after attaining independence in 1957, developed a Cultural Policy document. This policy was adopted by UNESCO and since then successive governments have used it as a reference point. In 1983, the policy was reviewed and expanded. It was later revised in 1990. This draft Policy was discussed at Cabinet level but it was not approved.

In the year 2001, the current national policy on culture was developed with the aim of enabling Ghanaians to respect, preserve, harness and use their cultural heritage and



resources to develop a united, vibrant and prosperous national community with a distinctive African identity and personality and a collective confidence and pride of place among the comity of Nations ((National Commission on Culture, 2004).

The Fourth Republican Constitution (1992) recognizes culture as a necessary tool for national integration and development. The Directive Principles of State Policy (Article 39) of the constitution declares as follows:

“(1) *Subject to clause (2) of this article,*

the State shall take steps to encourage integration of appropriate customary values into the fabric of national life through formal and informal education and the conscious Introduction of cultural dimensions to relevant aspect of national planning.

(2) *The State shall ensure that appropriate*

customary and cultural values are adapted and developed as an integral part of the growing needs of the society as a whole; and in particular, that traditional practices which are injurious to the health and wellbeing of the person are abolished.

(3) *The State shall foster the development of Ghanaian languages and pride in Ghanaian culture.*

(4) *The State shall endeavour to preserve and protect places of historical interest and artifacts.”*

The main objectives of Ghana’s Cultural Policy are three-fold:

- (i) to document and promote Ghana’s traditional cultural values, such as those enshrined in;
 - a. concepts of human dignity,
 - b. attitudes to nature and the environment,
 - c. law and order,
 - d. honesty and truthfulness,
 - e. unity and peace,
 - f. self-reliance and dignity of labour,
 - g. family, community and national solidarity



- (ii) To ensure the growth and development of our cultural institutions and make them relevant to human development, democratic governance and national integration.
- (iii) To enhance Ghanaian cultural life and develop cultural programmes to contribute to the nation's human development and material progress through heritage preservation, conservation, promotion and the use of traditional modern arts and crafts to create wealth and alleviate poverty.

These objectives have been further categorized into specific objectives and among the specific objectives are:

- To Create awareness of the traditional values and generate pride and respect for the nation's heritage
- To identify and disseminate local knowledge of the environment and support communities to sustain positive traditional concepts and practices to protect nature and bio-diversity for the benefit of the nation.
- To create an institutional framework for the collection, preservation and conservation of tangible and intangible assets.
- To Undertake and promote research to create a data base on culture for policy makers, academics, administrators, artists and artistes, embassies, foreign visitors and all other interested persons
- To create positive linkages between all cultural institutions thereby ensuring synergy in all cultural activities and maximise the benefits of the limited resources available to the cultural sector.

In the implementation of this Policy, it has been stated that schools, colleges and universities have a major role to play. Also, among the key players in the promotion of our culture are libraries and archives. Libraries are expected to be stocked with books, films, records and tapes, CD Rom, Compact disc and other multimedia materials on African arts and culture, and indigenous science and technology. The policy also stresses the need to integrate culture studies into our educational curriculum.



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Though the policy, as applied to schools and their libraries, is good, problems of implementation have militated against it. The result is that the policy is vigorously implemented at the basic educational level; it is not so in the other levels of education. This lapse is due to the fact that there is no agency to enforce the law. Even though there is some re-awakening, academic libraries in Ghana on the other hand do not have any framework or policy that mandates them to collect and preserve IK.

2.4.2.3 *The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)*

NEPAD is a socio-economic development strategy of the African Union (AU) to take the continent of Africa out of poverty. The NEPAD (2006) defines NEPAD as a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path to sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy and body politics.

According to the National Commission on Culture (2004), NEPAD resulted from the mandate given to the Heads of State and Government of Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa by the then Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU) to design an integrated as well as a comprehensive framework that will constitute a blueprint for Africa's renewal and development.

Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Olusengun Obasanjo of Nigeria and Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria acted to develop the Millennium Plan for African Recovery (MAP) in 2000. The MAP underscores the importance of fundamentals of good governance to the development drive of the African continent, such as multiparty democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights, freedom of the press and freedom of expression (Apusigah, 2009).



The National Commission on Culture (2004) posits that within the NEPAD development framework, the resources of Africa are broken down into four (4) components as follows:

- The rich complex of mineral, oil and gas deposits, its flora and fauna, and its wide unspoiled natural habitat, which provides the basis for mining, agriculture, tourism and industrial development.
- The ecological lung provided by the continents rain forests and the minimal presence of emissions and effluents that are harmful to the environment – a global public good that benefits all humankind.
- The paleontological and archaeological sites containing evidence of the evolution of the earth life and the human species. The natural habitats containing a wide variety of flora and fauna, unique animal species and the open uninhabited spaces that are a feature of the continent.
- The richness of Africa's Culture and its contribution to the variety of the cultures of the global community.

Culture as a sectorial priority in the NEPAD document has been briefly summarized as follows:

- Culture is an integral part of development efforts on the continent. Consequently, it is essential to protect and effectively utilize indigenous knowledge that represents a major dimension of the continent's culture, and to share this knowledge for the benefit of humankind. The New Partnership for Africa's Development will give special attention to the protection and nurturing of indigenous knowledge, which includes tradition – based literacy, artistic, and scientific works, inventions, scientific discoveries, designs, marks, names and symbols, undisclosed information and all other tradition based innovation and creations resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary or artistic fields. The term also includes genetic resources and associated knowledge.
- The New Partnership for Africa's Development leaders will take urgent steps to ensure that indigenous knowledge in Africa is protected through appropriate legislation. They will also promote its protection at the international level, by working closely with the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

Important as indigenous knowledge is, NEPAD needs to recognize and discover how culture can contribute to good governance, wealth creation, peace and justice (National Commission on Culture, 2004). The National Commission on Culture has highlighted



the fourth component of NEPAD development framework which recognises the creativity of the African people, which in many important ways, remains under-exploited and under-developed, as an important force for African development. The culture component of the NEPAD should be integrated into all sectors of the economy including academic libraries.

2.4.2.4 UNESCO Policy on Culture

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is the only United Nations institution with a mandate to create cultural policies in accordance with its constitution. The National Commission on Culture (2004) affirms that UNESCO recognises culture as crucial to development and good governance in countries around the world. More importantly, it is now recognised that culture can facilitate the realization of the Millennium Development Goals in African countries.

The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), met in Paris for its fourteenth session, this fourth day of November 1966, being the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the Organization, and the discussions centered on culture as a tool to promote peace and unity. The Article 2 of policy the document states:

Nations shall endeavour to develop the various branches of culture side by side and, as far as possible, simultaneously, so as to establish a harmonious balance between technical progress and the intellectual and moral advancement of mankind.

The Article 2 in the UNESCO supports my view of making IK side by side with indigenous knowledge in the library. This will be my guide in discussing the subject under study.





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During the sixteenth session of the UNESCO policy in 1970, it was resolved among others that need to strengthen the Regional Documentation Centers in Africa for Africa Oral Traditions (Alemna, 1993). This means that UNESCO has recognized the importance of African traditional knowledge and it is in support of its integration in the development projects in Africa.

UNESCO has since organized a number of conferences all in the bid to promote culture. These include: The *Intergovernmental Conference on Institutional, Administrative and Financial Aspects of Cultural Policies* (Venice, 1970) and the *Conference on Cultural Policies* (Bogota, 1978). These conferences reaffirmed the importance of indigenous development and introduced the idea of “culture de métissage” or melting-pot culture, calling into question the traditional idea of culturally monolithic states. The *World Conference on Cultural Policies* (Mondiacult, Mexico City, 1982) stressed the importance of the growing interdependence of culture and development; The *World Decade for Cultural Development*, launched in 1988, pursued the issue, resulting in the publication of the report “Our Creative Diversity” (1995) and the *Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development* (Stockholm, 1998), the latter devoted to the interaction between cultural policies and development. The *UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* (2001) marked a new phase in the creation and implementation of cultural policies. This was also taken up by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg 2002) where it was underlined that in addition to the three pillars – economic, environmental and social – of development, there is a fourth, the cultural pillar, and diversity today is considered a “collective strength.”

UNESCO recently adopted two important conventions on indigenous peoples’ education and culture on 13 September 2007. The Declaration from all the conventions establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, well-



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being and rights of the world's indigenous peoples. The Declaration addresses both individual and collective rights. It outlaws discrimination against indigenous peoples and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them (IFAD, 2012).

2.4.3 Integrating IK into the Academic Libraries of Africa

A lot of work has already been done on the integration of IK into the conventional library system of Africa. However, these works have sought to build functional library systems that serve the needs of African knowledge communities. For instance, Mostert (2001), Ngulube (2002) and Witbooi (2006) and Nyana (2009), who work from Southern Africa, have in their works advocated for paradigm shifts in librarianship in Africa. They are of the view that new library services need to be developed and existing services enhanced. This should aim at preserving IK.

Focusing on their study on Uganda, Dent and Yannotta (2005) and Nyumba (2006) have both highlighted the need to establish centres that will serve both as community library and school library at the same time. They also think there is the need to promote the application of IK in development projects. Also, Sillitoe and associates. (2006) and Chisita and Abdullahi (2015) whose case study focused on Zimbabwe, show that there are challenges confronting libraries in documenting and communicating IK. As a result they call on Library and Information Science (LIS) educators to include in the LIS curricula the skills to organize and integrate the oral and written knowledge in the library for the benefit of the society. Other studies situated within the Nigeria context such as the works of Amadi (1981), Ndiaye (1988), Iwhiwhu (2008), and Okore, Ekere, and Eke (2009), argue that the concept of the “barefoot librarian” could be another solution to addressing rural information needs. In this model, a professional with training or knowledge of, the oral tradition, and competent in the use of Western

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technology to enhance oral tradition, would be able to serve both oral and print consumers. Furthermore, Wiik (2008), whose work focused on Mali, observe that obstacles facing public libraries today are rooted in the effects of colonialism and hinder development. These authors advocating for the adoption of a new library model suitable for our indigenous communities do so because the current library model in Africa does not benefit the majority of the population who cannot read and write. For instance, Amadi (1981) is skeptical that African libraries are incapable of playing the role of information providers or storehouses of African cultures and traditions grounded in oral traditions.

However, many of these authors proposing the synergies are only looking at the public library as a vehicle to carry this task. This study focuses on academic libraries as critical contributors to knowledge generation. The study also proposes a collaboration with repositories of indigenous knowledge, dubbed living libraries. Academic libraries should be able to do this by ensuring that users are able to access relevant information irrespective of the heterogeneity of sources and formats, including indigenous knowledge. This will ensure that, educational and cultural institution remains part of the peoples' ways of life.

There is a paucity of research work in Ghana on how to promote synergies between academic libraries and IK. Alemna (1994) is the only Ghanaian librarian who has continually advocated on this issue. In his book, *Libraries and information provision in Ghana*, Alemna contends that most of our libraries lack indigenous materials. He again added that the current model of librarianship and library education is out of touch with local reality.



Furthermore, Alemna (1996: 14) posit that,:

As Africans continue to modernize, the barriers between the old and the new are being torn down. The isolated village, which preserves the traditional ways, is searching out new methods of communication such as radio and the printed word. The city dweller, too, often isolated for several generations from the traditional ways of life, is searching out new ways of life which challenges the modern African who can recognize the values of both life styles. It is also this situation that the library is expected to play a major role.

Alemna advocates for synergies between traditionality and modernity and between indigenous and conventional knowledge and for that matter sciences. The academic library cannot afford to lose out, it should lead the way.

The major challenges to the integration of IK into the academic library system identified by this study are Validation, Documentation, National Policy, and Intellectual Property Rights.

2.4.3.1 Validation

Validation or affirmation of IK is by identifying its significance, relevance, reliability, functionality, effectiveness and transferability. This signifies an ability to support problem solving. For Shiva (2000) the argument that the validity of one knowledge system must be confirmed by another, raises an equity question. Many theorists accept the utility of indigenous knowledge in itself, and most writings first propose the validation of indigenous knowledge by means of scientific criteria (Rajan & Sethuramm, 1993; Richards, 1979).

Grenier (1998) also argued that anthropologists validate models of IK through intensive interviews and through observation of those who hold those beliefs. This, for me, is appropriate since these are indigenous methods of data collection. Also, IK forms part of the global knowledge and as such it has a value and relevance in itself.





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Nyumba (2006) had added another dimension to the debate stating that each type of IK practice, technology, organizational structure and human resource should be assessed based on the efficacy of IK, its cost-effectiveness, availability, understandability, cultural appropriateness, effect on different groups of communities, environmental soundness, and constraints plus whether and how they can be overcome. Such criteria would help establish the value of IK and the ease with which it can be applied in development projects. He added that standards should be developed to accommodate the special nature of IK. Libraries and all concerned parties must also identify criteria and standards by which local people judge IK. Though this may be difficult, it is important to find out what people value most in a specific IK, why they choose it, what they see as its strengths and weaknesses, what they think would happen if the IK were not available, who would be most affected if the IK were not available and what features people look for when they test a technology.

The inference drawn from the above argument is that scholars need to study the people's opinion of IK and in doing this we need to combine both insiders' and outsiders' valuation as this will help us to recognize and better appreciate the value and usefulness of IK in development. In other words, the valuation should not be conducted through the perspective of Western researchers but with collaboration from indigenous community.

2.4.3.2 Documentation

Documentation is fundamental to preserving indigenous knowledge for current and future generations, as well as protecting intellectual property rights (Hansen & VanFleet, 2003). This assertion is not wholly true because documentation does not protect the intellectual rights of the indigenous community but rather the opposite unless the documentation activities are as a result of consensus-building and converging

interests between the involved organizations and the indigenous communities. Paudel (2004) with a different view observes that documentation refers to an act or instance of authenticating with documents. This definition is baseless. As already discussed, IK is authentic in its own right and it has been in existence over centuries.

Briet, Day, Martinet and Anghelescu (2006) view documentation as a “cultural technique” that addresses the needs of contemporary culture at large and, most importantly, the needs of individual cultures of scientific disciplines and scholarly production, for the rapid and efficient delivery of documents toward scientific (and scholarly) advancement.

What is profound in this definition is the latter role; the documentalist is in concurrence to particular cultures of research and production and to “prospecting” at the edge of and beyond those cultures for the benefit of researchers. What are important are the social networks and cultural forms that construct the meaning and value of documents. Within these networks and forms the documentalist “orients” him- or herself, though also in relation to neighbouring networks and forms and in tune with the demands of culture as a whole at a given time. But the result of documentation does not only benefit Western science but also led to revitalization/enhancement of IK.

Documenting IK is a major challenge because of its tacit nature and is embedded in the minds of the holder and it is difficult to capture even though there are artefacts. Thus, while scholars would want to understand and capture a more comprehensive view of knowledge with all its ramifications, a practitioner might be satisfied with an answer to the question “How did they do that?” The recording may require audio-visual technology, taped narration, drawings, or other forms of codifiable information.

The World Bank (1998) stipulates that the tacit nature of IK does not lend itself to such





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recording and indicating information about locations, individuals or organizations. The failures to capture IK have also been raised by several authors. However, this study argues that with consensus-building and converging interests between the researcher and the indigenous communities, the researcher will be able to capture most of these things. Box 5 shows an example of how a documentation exercise carried out in Lakewood, Colorado, USA, developed creative ways of documenting oral ethnobotanical knowledge while protecting the intellectual property rights of the community using techniques like the multidisciplinary, participatory, and how they were able to document culturally sensitive materials.

The ethnobotanical documentation exercise carried out in Lakewood, in 2003-2004

Box 5

Multidisciplinary documentation

The documentation team tapped the expertise of the following: (i) tribal plant experts, as the source of ethno botanical knowledge; (ii) an agronomist from the University of the Philippines at Los Baños, for training and advice on the documentation of rice morphology; (iii) a forester and a botanist from Central Mindanao University for training and guidance on plant specimen collection, preservation and scientific identification; (iv) a legal expert to provide guidance on the issue of protecting community intellectual property rights; (v) a natural resource management specialist; and (vi) anthropologists/multimedia specialists to provide facilitation and packaging of various knowledge products.

Participatory documentation

The documentation activities were the result of consensus-building and converging interests between the involved organizations and the indigenous communities. The organizations empowered the communities by transferring technical documentation skills to both men and women team members to ensure that the Subanen community undertake as much of the documentation as possible with the organizations in the role of facilitator. The Subanen community members were involved participating throughout the documentation process from setting research priorities to data-

Source: Suminguit, 2006: 3

A number of governmental, non-governmental organizations and country like COMPAS, CAPTURED, CECIK, UN, UNESCO, CIKOD and the Republic of South Africa, among others, have come up with various strategies to document and share in the bid to revitalize IK. The overall effectiveness of databases and registers as a means for protection of IK for the benefit of indigenous peoples will depend upon varying factors, including:

- a) the extent to which any database is linked to local and indigenous communities in a manner which respects and responds to the dynamic nature of IK and ensures that compilation and classification of data do not atrophy IK;
- b) the capacity of a database to compile, maintain and provide access to IK or local communities in a usable form;
- c) their capacity to control access to and use of IK by third parties;
- d) and the extent to which any database may serve as an effective means to secure recognition of community rights over IK and as a source of evidence of prior art (Haverkort, 2009).

After documentation, there is the need to disseminate the information. Warren, et al (1993) explain that the collection and storage of IK should be supplemented with adequate dissemination and exchange among interested parties using newsletters, journals and other media such as audio, video, and others.

As more studies of IK become available, it should be archived in national and international centres in the form of databases, the information in which could be systematically classified. Hence, the need to share and to celebrate the uniqueness of cultures in Africa. The dissemination activities should include both in situ and ex suite methods. All these should not marginalize the rights of the indigenes but project the image of the indigenous people.



2.4.3.3 *Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Communities*

While systematic documentation captures and preserves orally transmitted knowledge for present and future generations, it exposes indigenous communities to the risk of losing their intellectual property rights (IPR). Hansen and VanFleet (2003), asserts that IPRs are the legal protections given to persons over their creative endeavours and usually give the creator an exclusive right over the use of his/her creation or discovery for a certain period of time.

There is a discussion on how to protect the IPR of IK practices. In this respect, the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples emphasizes the fact that indigenous peoples have the right to own and control their cultural and intellectual property (IP) pertaining to their sciences, technologies, seeds, medicines, knowledge of flora and fauna, oral traditions, designs, art and performances (United Nations, 2001). In the same vein, the Economic Commission for Africa recommends that oral tradition and IK in African communities should be exploited in all their forms of expression, giving cognizance to the protection of IPR (United Nations, 2001).

IPR should guarantee both an individual's and a group's right to protect and benefit from its own cultural discoveries, creations, and products. An important purpose of recognizing private proprietary rights is to enable individuals to benefit from the products of their intellect by rewarding creativity. However, in many indigenous worldviews, any such property rights, if they are recognized at all, should be extended to the entire community. They are a means of maintaining and developing group identity as well as group survival, rather than promoting or encouraging individual economic gain. See example in Box 6.



Box 6

Examples of Patents Provided to Misappropriation

The Turmeric Case: Turmeric is a plant of the ginger family yielding saffron-colored rhizomes. It has been used as a dye, medicine and flavoring since 600 B.C. In 1280, Marco Polo described Turmeric as ‘a vegetable with the properties of saffron, yet it is not really saffron.’ Turmeric has been used medicinally throughout Asia to treat stomach and liver ailments. It is also used externally to heal sores and as cosmetic.

In 1995, two Indian nationals at the University of Mississippi Medical Center were granted a U.S. patent on ‘use of turmeric in wound healing.’ The Indian Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) requested the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to re-examine the patent.

The CSIR argued that turmeric has been used for thousands of years for healing wounds and rashes and therefore its medicinal use was not novel. Their claim was supported by documentary evidence of TK, including an ancient Sanskrit text and a paper published in 1953 in the Journal of the Indian Medical Association. The USPTO upheld the CSIR’s objections and revoked the patent in August 2002.

The processes that the two systems can adopt to promote the synergies have not been critically analysed. These are necessary prerequisites to any intervention strategies. Recognition of the diversity of knowledge systems, whether scientific or indigenous, each with their distinct histories, ontologies, epistemologies, modes of transmission and communication, value systems and worldviews, is critical for a productive engagement amongst knowledge holders that may generate innovative solutions to complex sustainable development problems.

2.5 Synthesis

The analyses above have focused on knowledge production and management. Specifically, the chapter has examined existing sources on the knowledge production industry, its traditions and emerging forms that forge complementarities as basis for informing this study on the integration of living and academic libraries. To be able to



effectively integrate IK knowledge into the academic library system, there is the need to seek common grounds but also the uncommon ones. Indeed, Woodley (2004) has stated emphatically that a bridge between epistemologies is not possible or not desirable because it produces invasion and domination.

Wary of the challenges, it is important to forge an integration that is mutually benefiting. That will require taking an approach that allows for dialogue. It is important to do this consciously; sit down at a table, of dialogue, where many worlds (or epistemologies) are welcome, where we can talk among ourselves, and also talk with modern science. But at this table as cautioned by Woodley (2004), we need to put aside arrogance and the wish or attitude to dominate. We have to come with the humility of disciples, with eagerness to learn, with openness and respect for others. In this neutral space of encounter, what can everyone contribute? What is our gift? What is the gift of the scientist? Is the scientist prepared for a dialogue? Is he or she able to support us? Do they have the means to talk with us? Can they enter an alliance and commitment overcoming the limitations of their worldviews?



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Methodology is a framework for a research study. It comprises the methods, procedure and tools for collecting and analyzing data in order to find answers or solutions to the research problem (Kumekpor, 2002). Frey, Botan and Kreps (2000, p. 15) have stated that “conducting careful research demands understanding and adhering to the specific assumptions and requirements of the methodology chosen.” These methods tell researchers what evidence to look for and how to look for it. Therefore, the use of a particular method must be guided by the nature of the topic and the research questions. Hence, my choice of research approach is guided by these factors.

3.2 Qualitative Research

According to Audet and d'Amboise (2001), qualitative research approaches have traditionally been favored when the main research objective is to improve our understanding of a phenomenon, especially when this phenomenon is complex and deeply embedded in its context. Qualitative research therefore is concerned with what goes on in social settings. Its goal is “to understand the social phenomenon” (Banda 2008). The epistemological assumption underpinning qualitative research is that, the researcher interacts with what is being studied, thus creating a cooperative inquiry.

Qualitative study is a particular tradition in social science that depends on watching people in their own territory (Kirk & Miller, 1986). It is based on the recognition of the importance of subjective experiential ‘lifeworld’ of human beings. According to Osuala (1982), qualitative research stresses on the validity of multiple meanings,



structures and holistic analysis as opposed to the criteria of reliability and statistical analysis of quantitative research. He further says that qualitative methods tend to be characterized by being context specific, collaborative and interventionist. This researcher uses qualitative research because it allows for the use of various interactive processes and methods that allow for cross-learning during the research process and the generation of the kind of data required transcending boundaries. Specifically, it is appropriate to indigenous knowledge (IK) research as it emphasizes words, listening and learning from people, where the notion of knowledge transfer remains, not as a top-down imposition from the researchers, but a search for jointly negotiated advances among all the stakeholders (Sillitoe et al., 2006).

3.2.1 Research Design

According to Creswell (2008), research designs are plans and procedures for research. This thesis used case study design. Case study is a specific field or qualitative research method. It is an investigation of phenomena as they occur without any significant intervention of the investigators (Fidel, 1986). The case study seems to be appropriate for investigating phenomena when:

1. a large variety of factors and relationships are included;
2. no basic law exists to determine which factors and relationships are important;
3. when the factors and relationships can be directly observed.

Yin (1994) defines case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context. It is used when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and when multiple sources of evidence are used. Case studies are good methods for investigating organizational structure and management studies. They allow the investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful





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characteristics of real-life events and organizational and managerial processes. They are also suitable for exploring fairly new and complex subject areas (Dadzie, 2003).

Yin (1994) further states that the four distinctive roles of case studies in any research are that they:

- explain the causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies to explain;
- describe the real-life context in which an intervention has occurred;
- provide a descriptive mode from an illustrative case-study– even a journalistic account – of the intervention itself;
- explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcome.

In this study, due to the nature of the problem and questions, the case study design was found to be the most appropriate for diving into the processes for integration of living and academic libraries. These goals required an in-depth understanding of the knowledge production/management process of the *baansi* for the purpose of comparison with the academic library system. This informed the employment of the case study design in this work.

3.2.2 Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative inquiry is viewed by Kalaian (2003) as a method to change focused research approach which is guided by affirmative assumptions about the researched people or communities. Appreciative inquiries focus on the theoretical frameworks of positive psychology which emphasize the strengths and positive images of the researched (Chilisa, 2012). It is guided by affirmative assumptions about the researched people or communities. According to Chilisa (2012: 244), there are four phases to the research approach and they are as follows:

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- The first phase is known as “discovery.” During this phase, participants talk, discover and learn the best of the moments in the history of an organization or community. Participants tell stories of exceptional accomplishments and discuss the aspects of their history that they most value and want to enhance.
- The term “dreaming” is used as the designate name for the second phase. During this phase, participants envision and imaging other possibilities for their organization or communities. They may for instance, use positive stories to create portrait of an organization or community’s potential. Positive images grounded on extraordinary moments of a community’s or organization’s history are used to envision possibilities and suggest plans for the future.
- Known as “design” the third phase involves a situation whereby participants dialogue on strategies to implement their dreams.
- The final stage, “destiny”, involves delivery of new images of the future. During this stage, everyone realigns their activities with the positive image or ideal in a community or organization, and co-create the future.

Chilisa (2012) posits that an appreciative action research inquiry approach propels researchers to address the following questions: How are research objectives phrased? And how are questionnaire and/or interview guide questions framed? Some of the advantages of appreciative inquiry, according to Michell (2005) cited in Chilisa (2012) respondents are eager to tell their stories and speak more openly, with less defensiveness.

The researcher, using appreciative inquiry in this study, works with all participants especially the *Baansi* of Dagbon as knowers and communities of knowledge.



3.3 The Study Population

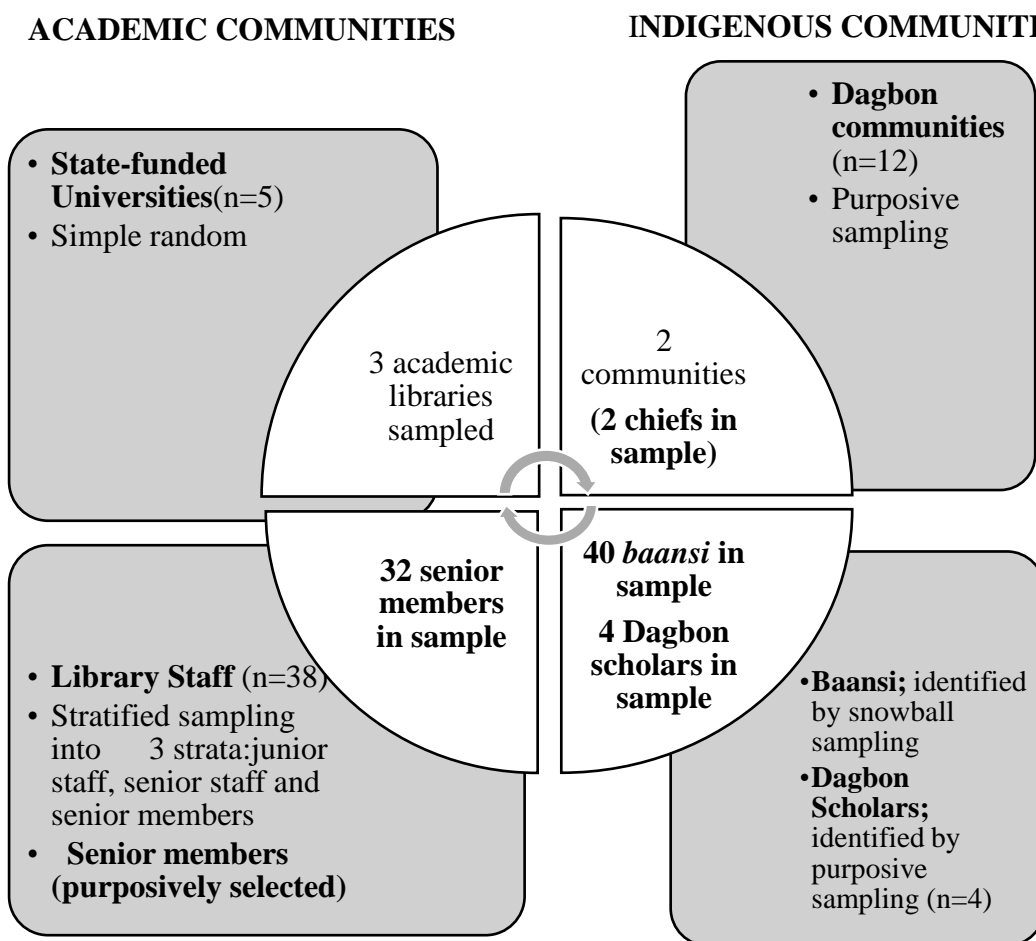
A research population is the total of all cases that conform to a prescribed criterion or set of criteria. It can be defined as all the units for which information is required. Kumekpor (2002) defined population as the total number of all units of the phenomenon to be investigated that exist in the area of investigation. The target population of this study included all library staff in the academic libraries in Ghana and identifiable people such as lecturers and authors who are knowledgeable in the cultural traditions of Dagbon as well as the *Baansi* of Dagbon.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

According to Yin (1994), in research, the rationale is to draw inferences is based on samples about the parameters of a population from which the sample was taken. Therefore, the researcher only needs to select only a few items from the universe for his study (Miller, 1991). Even though Miller (1991) posits that the selection of the sample should be representative, Karma (1999) is of the view that it should be at the discretion of the researcher. Therefore, the sample techniques that were used for the study included both probability and non-probability approaches (Figure 3.1).



Figure 3. 1 A summary chart of the sample sizes and sampling techniques of the study



Source: Field Work, 2013.

3.4.1 Selection of the Academic Library Institutions

The state-funded academic libraries in Ghana, including University of Ghana (UG) (Legon), University of Cape Coast (UCC), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), University of Education, Winneba (UEW), University of Mines and Technology (UMAT), University for Development Studies (UDS) and University of Professional Studies, Accra, (UPSA). The names of these libraries were written on pieces of paper and 3 names were randomly selected.

3.4.2 Selection of Library Staff

The staff in the three institutions were stratified into the categories of Senior Members, Senior Staff and Junior Staff. The stratified sampling involved dividing the population into homogenous groups, and then conducting a simple random sampling in each group. Stratified sampling was chosen because according to Babbie (2005: 212) in a stratified sampling, the sample error would be equal to zero. Babbie (2005) further argues that stratified sampling is more representative. Stratifying the library staff enable the researcher to group the staff into homogenous groups.

Only senior members were purposely selected for this study. Senior members usually are more knowledgeable in the operations in the libraries and respond to the issues under study. Purposive sampling is where the sample units for a study are chosen by the intuition of the researchers to achieve a specified purpose (Kumar, 1997). A major advantage of this technique is that it is a way to assure that the researcher will get at least some information from respondents who are crucial to the study.

3.4.3 Selection of the Case Site

There are about twelve main towns in Dagbon which comprise Yendi, the capital of the Dagbon State, and other main towns such as Tamale (the capital town of Northern Region), Karaga, Gushiegu, Zabzugu, Song, Savelugu, Nyanpkala, Kumbugu, Diale, Tolon and Nanton. The study was not extended to cover all the fourteen main towns; it was limited to Tamale and Yendi. These two towns were purposefully chosen because Yendi is the traditional headquarters of the Dagbamba and the seat of the “Yaa Naa”, the King and overlord of Dagbon. Tamale, on the other hand, is the capital of the Northern Region of Ghana and a metropolitan area. Also, there are many towns and suburbs under Tamale that are not far from each other and could easily be reached. Each of these suburbs has its own chief and chief drummers with other categories of *baansi*.



3.4.4 Selection of the Baansi and Chiefs

The researcher made use of snowball sampling. In this study, the researcher began by identifying a *baansi*. The researcher, later, asks them to recommend others who they may know who also meet the criteria. According to Yin (1994), snowball sampling is useful for hard to reach or hard to identify populations for which there is no sampling frame but the members are interconnected. Snowball sampling is therefore suitable for selecting this group of respondents.

3.4.5 Selection of the Authors and Lecturers

In this case, extreme case sampling was used. Patton (1990: 169) describes extreme sampling as one type of purposeful sampling where the researcher selects “cases that are rich in information because they are unusual or special in some way or highly enlightened.” A researcher used extreme case sampling to seek cases that differed from the dominate pattern or that differed from the predominant characteristics of the other cases (Kreuger & Neuman, 2006). Even though these people did not fit the main groups of the respondents they had so much that was very useful to the study. Respondents for this study included four scholars on Dagbon history and society. These people were purposively selected through scanning of literature.



3.5 Methods of Data Collection

3.5.1 In-depth Interview

The researcher used the in-depth interview technique to interview the library staff in order to elicit information on how best the academic library can integrate indigenous knowledge into the academic library system. This covered objectives two and three of this study. In the case of the indigenous communities, specifically the *baansi* who could

not read and write and opinion leaders and chief drummers, unstructured and semi-structured interviews were used. These gave them the voice to express themselves freely and provide information on the process of the knowledge production of the *Baansi* in Dagbon. Furthermore, in the case of identified scholars on Dagbon history and society, unstructured and semi-structured interviews were used to gain more in-depth knowledge on the processes involved on the knowledge production of Dagbon.

In a situation where in-depth data is required like this study, interview is the preferred method of data collection. Also for most of the respondents who cannot read and write, interviews are the most appropriate method to use. Moreover, unstructured and semi-structured interviews are most commonly used with indigenous knowledge research like this one, which is about human affairs (Banda, 2008; Sillitoe et al., 2006; Yin, 1994).

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

To be able to deepen the analysis, the researcher engaged some selected *baansi* on FGD.

In all, four focus group sessions were held which included:

- the chief and elders of Burylana's Naa palace (a total of 10 participants)
- *baansi* from Yendi palace (a total of 8 participants)
- *baansi* from Dakpema Palace in Tamale (a total of 5 participants)
- *baansi* from Gbalkurani community in Tamale (a total of 7 participants - mainly youth).

The FGDs were conducted using an unstructured guide based on objective two of the study with the aid of field assistants who served as translators and multimedia assistants. Other field assistants were designated to take down field notes while the FGDs were in process. All FGDs were conducted at a previously agreed time and venue with participants and were all video recorded with the prior informed consent of the





participants. The resultant www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh videos were subsequently transcribed into English after each session. The transcribed outputs were further compared with the field notes to ensure internal validity.

3.5.3 Story Telling

Stories also reflect the values of a society. As the researcher used interviews and focus group discussion to get information from the respondents, especially the *Baansi* of Dagbons on the processes involved in their knowledge production, the researcher was also told stories about their experiences as *Baansi* from childhood through their youth to adulthood. This included the processes, rituals, challenges and “sweet” memories from the past. According to Chilisa (2012) in qualitative research, the researcher can focus on the interview as a form of narrative or focus on stories that appear spontaneously in the course of the interviews.

3.5.4 Phased Assertion

According to Collings (2009), the most effective method of interview is the probing technique called “baiting” (Agar, 1980: 93) or “phased assertion” (Kirk & Miller, 1986: 48). The basic premise of the technique is that the interviewer acts as if she or he already has some knowledge about a topic. By hinting at the possession of some specialized knowledge, the informant is motivated to provide more information.

The study employed this method of data collection, mainly with the *Baansi* on the processes of the knowledge production in Dagbon. As an outsider, it would have been very difficult for the *Baansi* to give a researcher all the information at a go. The custodians of the drum language had very good reasons for trying to hide most of the secrets behind the dissemination of the information. This method was very helpful for the *baansi* to open up since the assertion of prior knowledge led to acquisition of a bit



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more knowledge, which, in turn, led to more detailed knowledge, until a more complete understanding of a particular domain was achieved. Before the study the researcher got some prior knowledge about the *baansi* from people and from books.

3.5.5 Observation

Basically, the purpose of the observations was to see at firsthand how the information collected in the FGDs and interviews were actually enacted within the culture as well as to corroborate the data that were previously captured in the in-depth interviews and the FGDs. It also offered the opportunity to ask further questions to clarify and/or learn new concepts that hitherto were not mentioned in previous engagements.

A cultural guide (himself a *baansi*) usually invited the researcher to the events and offered explanations to the researcher on what was going on during each activity and what to expect next. The cultural guide's influence allowed the researcher close access to the scene where the activities of the *baansi* were staged so that researcher was able to take notes as well as directly ask question to clarify any observations made.

The researcher observed a total of one (1) Damba festival, four (4) prominent funerals, and two (2) naming ceremonies as well visited the Yendi, Dapkema, and Buylana Naas' palaces to observe the performances and activities of the *baansi*. These visits entailed talking to the participants informally while observing their demeanors, decorum, body language, murmurs and mumbles of various respondents were captured during the interrogation processes. These signals were useful as a basis for further discussions on the subject matter.

3.5.6 Historical Profiling

A profile is a type of feature story and usually focuses on a person. Profile is a somewhat specific term for a story about a person and, usually, focuses on what is important or

interesting about that person now. Profile articles are often a reporter's interpretation of a person. Popular magazines may use question-and-answer sessions to paint a better portrait of the profiled person. Additional sources such as family members and friends may also be quoted in these stories to show how others feel about the individual. According to Sorenson (2009) a feature article is a creative article that deals with real events, issues, and trends. However, unlike straight news articles, it places emphasis on the people involved rather than on the facts of the news.

For this study, a very prominent and famous chief *Baansi* was identified and contacted. Three two-hour meetings were scheduled with him during which the researcher (supported by an indigenous Dagbanli translator with a journalistic background) had enriching interactions. Thereafter, information gathered through the questions and answers during these interactions were used to write a life story with emphasis on his life as a *baansi* as well as describe the processes involved in becoming a great *Baansi*. This profile broadened my understanding and appreciation of the issues of knowledge production/management of the *baansi*.

3.5.7 Acoustic Appreciation

Acoustics is the study of the physical characteristics of sound. It deals with things like the frequency, amplitude and complexity of sound waves and how sound waves interact with various environments. Musical acoustic is the study of how music is made, travels and is heard. Music is composed of harmonic (periodical) sounds; it changes in time, in level, in pitch but there is a harmony among the way these changes happen. One having musical ear can determine the pitch (frequency) of a harmonic sound.

The researcher in observing events during naming ceremony, funerals, enskinment of chiefs, and other festivals listened keenly as performances were ongoing and also





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watched audiences express their appreciation of the music and drums by responding with the making of the Ooooh...!! sound, clapping to the performance and/or dancing to the tune of the music.

3.5.8 Documentary Review

Documents have a place in the search for answers (Banda (2008: 155). Yin (1994) holds that the researcher cannot relive the experiences of the past, but he can re-construct those experiences through written evidences left by others in the form of documents and through other evidence like art works, buildings, ruins and oral history. Existing documents help the researcher to review literature on the topic he wants to research. Again, Yin (1994) is of the view that documents can take the central role as the actual thing being investigated and can be treated as a source of data in their own right. In this sense, documents are alternatives to questionnaire, interviewing or observation.

This researcher reviewed documents. The documents reviewed consisted of research works on Dagbon, library and information profession, academic library, indigenous knowledge, oral tradition and any other useful sources. The main documents used were magazines, newspapers, archival materials, journals, books and internet sources on the subject matter.

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation Techniques

During the fieldwork, information obtained from interviews, focus group discussions, storytelling, phased assertion, historical profiling, acoustic appreciation were analyzed qualitatively. After the main fieldwork, the primary data were subjected to careful analysis. All responses were carefully edited to ensure that they were in line with the



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study's set objectives and were also scrutinized for errors and omissions. This enabled the researcher to evaluate the responses from the respondents.

The audio recordings were also transcribed immediately after the interviews were completed by field assistants and compared with the field notes. The findings were analyzed using coding which involved categorizing ideas and concepts from the stories and interviews and using constant comparative analysis of the issues and emerging issues trends. Key phrases with similar meanings were grouped together into themes and sub- themes using descriptive narratives to reflect the collective world views of all the stakeholders. All data were analyzed manually and quotations from respondents were presented in italics.

Consistent with Denzin (2000), the researcher went back to the field to re-ask participants the same questions to check for validity and reliability in the data. According to Denzin (2000) that is the best way to check for reliability and validity.

3.7 Ethical Questions/Procedures/Requirements

When conducting research there are ethical issues to consider in order to protect the researcher and the respondents. As such, the University for Development Studies as an institution has developed a policy framework to guide researchers from this institution. This included completing the requisite forms and submitting them for assessment. The study was submitted to such assessment and passed.

Also, some of the principles of this policy are to ensure that confidentiality of information and anonymity of respondents shall be respected and observed; research participants shall participate in a voluntary way, free and from any coercion. My full identity and the purpose of the research were revealed and explained to the respondents.

I also complied with Banda's (2008) recommendation that access to delicate cultural information that has not been explicitly authorized for general distribution, as determined by members of the local community or elders in the community would be controlled (Banda, 2008). Again, all works/publications consulted and cited were duly acknowledged. As already stated, the consent of the participants were sought before audio recording their stories as they narrated them. To achieve this, the researcher gave accurate and complete information as to the nature and purpose of the study and the part the subject would play. Furthermore, in order to handle confidentiality, participants' identities were not revealed instead were coded using letters of the alphabets.

To be able to carry the analysis forward, the researcher examined in-depth the next two chapters' separately in order to determine the differences and similarities to forge the synergy.



KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AMONG THE *BAANSI*

4.1 Introduction

The production of knowledge is a natural human process (Mchombu et al., 2004). Each culture contains a knowledge base from which their members receive understanding and an interpretation of the world. According to Ngulube, (2003) IK can be managed through storytelling, dance and music, with the combination of scientific knowledge for sustainable development.

The perception of people about the *baansi* is that they are mere praise singers who just entertained the chiefs and the general public. But they go beyond that and this is what the chapter established. Other people also see the *baansi* as diversionary. They think it takes our minds away from present reality, to bask in the glory of a fantastic past, or give us the illusion of being able to achieve an unachievable future goal (Salifu, 2008). On the contrary, the performance of the *baansi* are a window through which the Dagbamba have access to the way the people perceive their universe.

This chapter discusses the knowledge production and management of the *baansi* of Dagbon. It presents and analyses data collected from community-based interactions with the *Baansi*, chiefs, and some key scholars of Dagbon cultural traditions. A thematic approach has been used in reporting the findings. Main and sub - themes have been generated from the data collected, using various instruments such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observations, storytelling, phased assertion, documents' analysis, field notes, historical profiling, and acoustic appreciation. These themes are in line with the main and sub-research questions that have guided this research. The major thrust of the questions asked during the interviews and focus group



discussions has been to interrogate the *baansi* tradition as repository of Dagbon history; their knowledge acquisition (the learning process) and ways of collecting, storing and disseminating knowledge. The questions also sought to examine the weaknesses and strengths of the *baansi* as a repository of knowledge of Dagbon history. The analysis has been framed and guided by literature drawn mostly from chapter two.

4.2 Categories of *Baansi*

Baansi is a generic name given to court musicians of Dagbon (Salifu, 2000). According to the “Dagbani-English Dictionary,” *baansi* is a collective name for musicians. It implies that the term *baansi* means court musicians who engage in the art of praise singing. However, the concept of *baansi*, as already discussed in Chapter One, is more than about the makers of music or mere entertainers. The *baansi* are also the holders of cultural wisdom and the socio-political history of the people. In fact, they live and relive the history of the *Dagbamba*. They are therefore knowledge custodians, producers and managers.

The skills of the *baansi* are exhibited in their performance on the instruments; the musical sounds and cultural meanings produced. Their performances are sources of communication, entertainment, knowledge and training. They form an important source of knowledge and training in the customs and tradition, political economy, history and literature of Dagbon. For instance, the use of praise names to serenade royals serves as an important source of teaching for the people.

This study found that there were various forms of court musicians but most of the categories are now extinct. However, the most recognized and important ones were the *lunsi*, *akarima* and *goonje*. This assertion is based on community level interactions with



the *baansi* and chiefs of Yendi, specifically the palace of the Yaa-Naa, the overlord of Dagbon as well as the palaces of Dakpema and Buylana.

4.2.1 The Akarima

The interactions revealed that the *akarima* is a knowledge producer who uses the drum to communicate with the chief and the community. In ordinary everyday use of *akarima*, which is a corruption of *okyerema*, an Akan term, which means, read or learn. Hence one can say that the *akarima* are well-read or learned men; they are learned in the traditions and history of their people. The message of the *akarima* is not written down, but entails the use of sound as a code to disseminate information. According to Yona (2012), in its simple term, a code is a rule for converting a piece of information into another - usually shortened or covert - form or representation, not necessarily of the same type. A code could be a sound, proverb or other sign that has no meaning by itself.

The *Akarima* literally means the one who beats the drum. According to Locke (2009), he plays the timpani (*timpana* Pl) drum, also called the talking drum (see Figure 4.1). According to my research collaborators (participants), *the Akarima is the one who plays the timpani drum. The drums are the symbol of authority at the palace; they elevate the status of a chief* (Akarima, Interview, 2014).

The *Akarima* is also the chief warrior of the king in the kingdom. As such, he belongs to the warrior class known as *Kambonsi* or *Sapahiinnin*. According to Mahama (2004), the word *Kambonsi* means “Akan.” The term is generally used to refer to people of southern Ghana origin. Mahama (2004) also points out that the term *Sapasine* is a corrupted version of the Akan word *Safohen*, meaning the chief warrior. In the Akan political structure, the *safohene* is the leader of the warrior class, the Asafo. Locke





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(2009) also confirms that the institution of the *kambonsi* is said to have originated from Ashanti's to the people of Dagbon, most likely at the time of the forging of diplomatic relations between the two kingdoms around the middle of the 18th century (Wilks, 1975).

The *Akarima* usually goes to the chief's court in the company of the *kambonsi* to pay homage. But when it is a matter relating to musicians in the chief palace, he moves with the *baansi* (Mahama, 2004). Thus, by virtue of his roles, the *Akarima* occupies a dual position. As a warrior and leader of the *kambonsi*, he occupies and leads his group or class while at the same time, his specialized role in the royal court places him in another class, that of the *baansi*.

During the community level interactions, an informant explained that the *Akarima* originated from Asante. As such, there is an Asante influence evident in the drum language through the instrumentation of the ensemble which includes an iron double-bell called *dawule*, (a corruption of "dawuro" in Akan), the *timpiana* which is the large side-by-side drums referred to as "talking drums," and the usage of Asante proverbs and praise names by the various drums and bells of the ensemble (Locke, 2009). According to an informant, it was Naa Zanjina who went to the Asante Kingdom and befriended the Asante. Out of that friendship the Asante gave him the *timpiana* and people to teach him how to play the drum. This explains why most of the *Akarima* have Ashanti names such as Kojo, Kofi, Kwame and Attah.

The *timpiana* or the "talking drums" constitute a pair of drums, each of which is anchored on a pair of stands as shown in Figure. 4.1 and is usually placed at the entrance of the chief's or king's palace. The use of the term talking drums has a special meaning here, hence the language of the drums. The *timpiana* are not just meant to entertain but

to speak on issues in the process of which it fulfills many roles, such as communicating and teaching. By extension, the *timpana* are foremost communication media of the royal courts.

Figure 4. 1 *Timpana*



(Source: Fieldwork, September, 2013)

During the interactions, it came to light that the set of drums forming the *timpana* were categorised by sex, male and female, according to the tone/pitch and role. Further interrogation revealed that in any communication in Dagbon, there should be high and low pitch as in normal circumstances communication between two people have different tones; one is always higher than the other. The drum with the low pitch is the male drum and that with high pitch is the female. Therefore, the communication is between male and female. The mixture of the two was said to make the communication



produced very interesting. This confirms Haas (2007) assertion that the... "talking drums" are played as a pair with one drum pitched higher than the other.

The talking drums are not portable and thus cannot be readily carried about (see Figure. 4.1.). As a result, when they go out with the chief, the *Akarima* uses the *dawule* to replicate the message of the *timpana*. The *dawule* is a side-by-side double bell, called a *gongon* by the Akan of the South of Ghana. One bell is pitched lower than the other, generally by about a major third. It is played with a tip of a bull's horn, usually about 15 cm long (Locke, 2009).

The *timpana* are generally called the talking drums because they are used to communicate information to people who understand the drum language. The appellations that are produced by the drum are often proverbial. This suggests that drum language may be meaningless to those who do not understand it. One must have some background information, or be knowledgeable in the drum language in order to decode some of the messages communicated. One must be trained, drum literate and enlightened in the language and culture of the *baansi* in order to be able to decode their drum message. This has been confirmed by Salifu (2008: 23.).

The *Akarima*, as a communicator, is first to send messages to the king. Hence, he is a very important person in the royal court of Dagbon. Contrary to Salifu's (2000) claim that the two most important symbols of royalty are the *goonge* instrument and the *lunsi* drum, the *timpani* was found, during the community interactions, to be the most important. As a chief warrior of the Dagbon State, the *Akarima* plays a very important role.

Figure 4. 2 The researcher and Assistant with the Akarima and the Chief Assistant in front of Dakpema Palace, Tamale



(Source: *Community Interactions*, August 2013)

The *Akarima* do not sing. When asked why the *akarima* do not sing when playing the *timpana*, was met with the statement: *the drum is talking; why should I talk again?* The logic is relatively simple and straightforward – there was no need for the *akarima* to be superfluous with words especially when their very actions were doing the needed communication and every trained ear understood their “language” already. Hence, the *akarima* only use the sound beat of the drums to communicate. For example, during a visit to the Dakpema’s Palace in Tamale in June 2013, as soon as the *Akarima* saw us he started drumming. The following conversation ensued as captured in Box 4.1



Box 4.1: In conversation with the *Akarima*

Researcher: Why did you drum upon seeing us?

Akarima: Announcing your presence to the chief.

Researcher: How will the chief know that we are the people visiting?

The *Akarima* took this opportunity to brief us on how names are important as well as understanding the drum language. He gave an example of one of the Presidential aspirants of the 2012 general elections when he came to Tamale. He visited the palace. As he the *Akarima* drummed, the presidential aspirant understood the language and he explained it to his entourage. The presidential aspirant was so happy that he gave the *Akarima* some money.

The interactions also revealed that specific drum beats have particular meanings. They are addressed to particular offices or personalities. When drummed, they signal that such persons are around, or are being addressed. The royal class king, elders, chiefs, princes, and princesses, or prominent people have “drum names.” For example, the sound *pam’pam’bi`li`*, which has no independent meaning of its own, has been used as a sign by the drummers to refer to the King of the Dagbamba, the Yaa Naa, and cannot be drummed for any other person (Salifu, 2008).

Every knowledge producer in the community has a role to play in the community and the *akarima* as a knowledge producer is no exception. During interviews held with the *akarima* of the *Dapkema* and *Buylana* palaces, it was revealed that the *akarima* uses the drum name to praise the people of Dagbon or invite them to the chief’s palace. The *akarima* also performs the following specific roles in his line of duty:

- i. The *akarima* drums at the chief’s palace on every Monday and Friday morning and as a chief warrior, he is in-charge of the drums;
- ii. He monitors the activities of the chief and attends to the chief’s emergencies;
- iii. He communicates between the chief and the general public;
- iv. He disseminates disaster information and announces festive occasions.

(Mahama, 2004; Salifu, 2000).



These roles make them important people in the society. It also shows that before the colonization of African societies, Africans had and still have ways of managing their affairs. In other words, Africans have a system of governance, communication, rules and regulations for managing and ensuring the betterment of the African society. Indeed, before the colonial contact and encounter in Africa, Africans had their own ways of learning and perceptions of their world and the things in and around them.

A visit to the palaces and interactions with some of the *akarima* revealed that apart from the Ya-Naa's palace, where there were two state drummers, with each drummer having a set of drums, every other chief may engage the services of only one state drummer. Some palaces do not have *akarima*. A state drummer may have an assistant but the assistant by Dagbon traditions and customs, does not have his own set of drums. This is how an informant expressed it: *Some chiefs do not have the status of akarima for that matter they cannot use akarima*. This confirms what was said earlier by some research collaborators that the *akarima* elevate the status of the chief and symbolize his stature.

The office of the *Akarima*, is not hereditary as in the case of other classes of *baansi* (Mahama, 2004). The study revealed that anyone of the commoner group of Dagbon society could become an *Akarima* if interested and trained. However, Mahama (2004) also explains that usually people of the *kambonsi* commoner class can become *Akarima*. The community-level interactions show the *Akarima* had fathers who were *Akarima*. One of the informants said *akarima* is: *an inherited profession (Akarima, Interview, July, 2013)*. Basically, what this means is that you can become *Akarima* only when you belong to the *Akarima* family. This is a bit of a contradiction, as fathers have to pass on their trade to their sons. Chernoff (2006) attests to this fact by stating that only a child born into this profession can practice the vocation.



4.2.2 The Lunsi

The term “*luntali*” means the art or the knowledge of beating the drum (Locke & Lunna, 1990). The *lunsi* are drummers with royal prestige. They are part of a royal lineage in Dagbon. To be a *lunga* at least one parent must come from that lineage (Locke & Lunna, 1990; Mahama, 2004; Oppong, 1973). This was attested to by most of the informants I interviewed.

The *Lunsi* of Dagbon, as I was told during the data collection process, trace their genealogy to a royal ancestor, Prince Bizung. Prince Bizung was the son of Naa Nyagsi, the Ya-Naa who established the physical boundary of Dagbon (Mahama, 2004). In Dagbon legend, Prince Bizung became an orphan at a tender age as a result of the death of his mother. He was neglected and oftentimes left hungry. In his misery, he found comfort in beating a broken calabash to attract attention and to get food to eat. This latter evolved into drumming as we know it today. Bizung eventually became the then Ya-Naa’s favorite as he developed the habit of praising his father, using his drum beat. On becoming an adult, Bizung taught his children to also play the drum. According to Mahama (2004) by the time he died, the work of *lunsi* had not only become a profession but also a cultural heritage. By this rendition, the *lunsi* art originated from the royal palace and as such has close affinity to the Dagbon royalty. No doubt that the *lunsi* are popular in the royal courts. Over time the *lunsi* thus developed around the royalty (Mahama, 2004; Zablong, 2010).

All those I interviewed confirmed that either their mother or father was of the *lunsi* lineage. It therefore means that membership is solely by blood relation. According to the informants they are all descendants of Bizung. This has also been confirmed by Oppong (1973), Locke and Lunna (1990) Mahama (2004) and Zablong (2010).



The *lunsi* retinue is made of women and men. However, in Dagbon tradition, while the men drum, the women sing praises. Although such women are called *lung paga*, literally meaning drum woman, they do not really drum (Zablong, 2010). This has some semblance in English language where the drum major commands the drum corps while the drum majorette only leads (marches with) the drum corps in a march.

In Dagbanli, the marker is the coding *paga*. The *lung paga* is the female drummer who does not drum in reality. The women performers, however, lose their coding when lumped with the rest in the retinue; as a category or group, they are all called *lunsi*, without discrimination. In various interviews and observation at various functions during the performances of the *lunsi*, it was confirmed that indeed the women were praise singers but they do not drum. According to Zablong (2010) in Dagbon, it is forbidden for a woman to drum.

The *lunsi* as knowledge producers use speech, song and drumming to tell the story of the kingdom of Dagbon as well as the genealogy of the royal families. The *lunsi* are cultural commentators and historians; they also act as tradition bearers in keeping with the oral histories of the Dagbon people (Salifu, 2008). The *lunsi* are known for their knowledge of the Dagbon history which is expressed in their music and drum. All research collaborators of the *lunsi* family corroborated that assertion. They boasted that insofar as the history of Dagbon was concerned, they were more knowledgeable than the other classes of *baansi*. Chernoff (2006) also attested to that claim. This implies that the *lunsi* are knowledgeable in the knowledge they produced. This fact defeats the theorem that Africans do not produce knowledge. As Metinhoue (1997: 43) puts it, “In the name of written documents and absolute power conferred on it by Europeans, Africans or at any rate Black Africans were excluded from history”. Before the arrival



of the Europeans in Africa, Africans had their own knowledge and this knowledge had contributed significantly to their way of life, history and culture.

The *lunsi* are considered the most important of all the drummers in Dagbon. They therefore constitute the major source of communication at the chief's palace. This might be due to the wealth of knowledge they produce and manage. As already discussed in Chapter Two, knowledge production is not the monopoly of the global North or West. Africans, and for that matter the drummers of Dagbon, also produce vast knowledge that enables communities and societies to develop and advance themselves in whatever environment they find themselves.

Furthermore, a major aspect of the *lunsi* is their praise work. They use praise songs and praise names to celebrate people and their achievements. Praise poetry should uplift a people's spirits, and motivate them to achieve higher laurels. Indeed, it is in the place of the *Lunsi* to bestow praise names on public figures. Due to their repertoire of knowledge they are quick to determine appropriately and place persons in their rightful categories according to their position in society. They spend time learning their culture and people to depths unmatched by most ordinary people. This view has been noted by Salifu (2008: 56) as...

when one says *luŋa ni salim ma* it sets off the meanings, "a drummer will eulogize me", "a drummer will sing for me", "a drummer will tell my story for me." This "story" is the story of my life; one that started with my forebears and becomes a never ending story, because I will live it and pass the torch on to my progeny.

At social functions such as durbars, funerals, and festivals the *lunsi* play a third party function, by announcing the presence of people. They 'introduce' each person to others in much the same way as a third-party mutually known to two strangers needs to introduce them.





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The *lunsi* are the most popular and represent about ninety percent of the *baansi* class (Mahama, 2004). I observed during the investigations that in a big gathering, one may find eighty percent of *lunsi*; ten percent of *goonje* and the rest of the *baansi* in attendance. This confirms Mahama's (2004) claim and that is much earlier by Kinney (1970). The *lunsi* drum is carved out of hard wood in the form of an hourglass with opens at either end. Animal skin membranes are then used to cover the opens at both ends as shown in figure 4.4.

Figure 4. 3 Lunsi



(Source: Fieldwork, September, 2013)

4.2.3 The Goonje

The *goonje* are another group of knowledge producers from the *baansi* class of Dagbon who use the violin, also known as *goonje* in Hausa, to communicate their message to an audience. The *goonje* were said to have originated from the Muslim Arabs of North

Africa. However, the art spread to West Africa as a result of the Trans-Saharan Trade.

In the case of the Dagbon *goonje*, as I learned through this study, their ancestry was traced specifically to Burkina Faso through the Mamprusi, an ethnic group to the north of Dagbon, as a result of intermarriage. *Goonje* songs are often in Hausa or a mixture of Hausa and Dagbanli.

According to Mahama (2004) only members of the *goonje* family may practice the profession. However, Chernoff (2006) stipulates that anyone who has interest in the profession can practice it. Contrary to Chernoff's (2006) assertion, in the case of Dagbon, as my research collaborators asserted, one has to come from the *goonje* family. It would appear then that through socialization, parents pass on their trades to the children. This also makes sense in the context of Dagbon where there are clear social classes by profession and trade.

The *goonje*, as I was informed during an interaction with some community members, are made up of an ensemble of men, women and children. My observation during the 2014 Damba Festival also revealed that some of the men played the *goonje* while the rest of them including children and women supported the process by playing gourd rattle known as *Zaabia* (Figure 4.3). This assertion has also been corroborated by Mahama (2004).



Figure 4. 4 Ensemble of Goonje and Zaabia players performing during Damba Festival



Source: Community Interactions, April, 2014

This study also revealed that the *goonje* are the latest to join the *baansi* class and are very popular. According to Mahama (2004), the *goonje* became members of the royal court of musicians in the late 19th century during the reign of Naa Yakubu I.

The *goonje* instrument is made from half of a gourd calabash covered with animal skin. The strings on the bow are made from horse tail (Figure. 4.4). This is held horizontally and hung over the shoulder with a scarf.



Figure 4. 5 Goonje and Zaabia



(Source: Community Interactions, September 2013)

The role of the *goonje* complements that of the *lunsi*. They sing as well as praise the chief and his ancestors. The *goonje* do not sing historical songs for the chief although their songs have historical citations. Their main role is to sing praise songs. I observed during the community interactions that the *goonje* joined the procession of the chief. This role as I observed is perfectly coordinated by members of the three *baansi* groups under discussion; *lunsi*, *akarima* and *goonje*. This shows that there is order in the performance of the entire *baansi* class under study. The order in their performances cannot be said to happen in just a spur of the moment but rather is something that has been mastered over the years. By virtue of their coordinated and cohesive manner, their actions can be qualified as scientific. Higgins (2000) explains that science is knowledge acquired by study, mastery, training and skill.



The *goonje* also perform during social functions such as weddings, funerals, naming ceremonies, festivals and in market places. This is supported by Mahama (2004) and Chernoff (2006).

Taken together, the *akarima*, *goonje* and *lunsi*, are part and perhaps the most active and vibrant group of Dagbon cultural knowledge, history and musical art. Hence, they form the community of knowledge producers and managers. In the next section, I take a close look at their roles as a collective of knowledge producers. Noteworthy of this selection of *baansi* is that while the *akarima*'s title is different from the instrument played, *timpani*, in the case of the *lunsi* and *goonje* the performer and instrument bear the same name. Also, while the *akarima* act is individualized, the *goonje* and *lunsi* perform in groups. In addition, the *akarima* act is essentially instrumental while the *goonje* and *lunsi* combine instrument (sound) and voice.

4.3 The Role of the *Baansi* in the Knowledge Production of Dagbon

The *baansi* of Dagbon play a major role in preserving and sustaining the culture and the history of Dagbon. I therefore sought to examine their specific roles as a knowledge community. The results are presented under themes, analysed and discussed below:

4.3.1 *Baansi* as Historians

History arouses people's curiosity about the past. It enables the young to see the diversity of human experience and understand more about themselves as individuals and as members of society (Bamber, 2014). History thus is understood as a single, coherent, evolutionary process, when taking into account the experience of all peoples in all times, Fukuyama (1992).



In African traditional society, the oral tradition has been the main source of the peoples' histories (Salifu, 2008). Such societies depend extensively on oral traditions, where practitioners use important language to tell or recount the histories of legendary traditional heroes. In Dagbon, the oral tradition places much premium on history. With the *baansi* acting as keepers of Dagbon history, they keep the past of Dagbon in view and in memory. In other words, the *baansi* are the recorders and articulators of historical and present events. For instance, the primary task of the *baansi* is to preserve the history, which is stored in musical form through drum and song. The *baansi* know and understand the relationships between and among the people who live and those living in their society.

I gathered from the *baansi* during my interactions that the history of the Dagbon has been kept by the *baansi*, who recount it at important ceremonies such as the rituals performed during the installation of chiefs, naming of babies and funeral ceremonies. The *baansi* are important in many respects in the entire existence of members of their communities. Their performances span the entire range of human existence and hence can be considered the 'rite of passage' of the Dagomba people, from birth to death as well as the observance rituals and during festivals. This is especially so during *Samban Luŋa*.

Samban Luŋa, as the researcher observed, is an occasion where drummers gather in the forecourt of the chief's palace in the evening of the eve of major festivals in performances that recount the histories of legendary renowned personalities of Dagbon. The histories of such personalities are inadvertently those of the Dagbon state. The narratives are often of celebrated kings, warlords and other legendary figures. By virtue of this role, the *Baansi* assert themselves as the community of knowers and constitute the living libraries and moving encyclopedias of their time. They are called living



libraries because they are regarded as the custodians of the wealth of knowledge. As posited by Nowotny (1993), knowledge production is no longer dependent on formal research structures only; knowledge is also present in public spaces of individual scientific creativity, professional and lay knowledge, the market and public discourse.

During the community-based interactions I had with various *baansi* the following was revealed:

You call them the moving encyclopedias (Referring to me). It is proper because of the following: they carry the chieftaincy institution; they have memorized the library transmitted from generation to generation; they memorize knowledge not only about the chieftaincy institution but all the social life of the people; they are the walking encyclopedia of society, far back as 100 or 200 year ago; they know you more than you know yourself. (*Lunsi*, Interview, 12/4/2013).

Another informant also had this to say:

but for them we would have forgotten who we are; but for them society will be tensed and explode; they are tradition bearers and but for them there would be no group identity. (*Lunsi*, Interview, 12/6/2013)

In a focus group discussion, the group members were of the opinion that:

the *baansi* promote respect for chieftaincy; preserve tradition; prevent adulteration of the people's culture; display or exhibit what the Dagbon people are and what they represent (*Lunsi/Akairma/Goonjee*, Focus group discussion/18/6/2013);

The *Baansi* are therefore, recognized for their knowledge of history of the kingdom and of their local communities. This knowledge is expressed through their chants, songs, dances and drumming's. Their role as historians is by far their most important function (Mahama, 2004). The *baansi* in updating us on what went on in previous eras also serve as living archives and the collective memory of the public.

Drawing reference from Belcher (1999: 8), Salifu (2008: 30) records how many drummers have aptly defined their roles in performance as illustrated with a quote from Djibril Tamsir's Niane's *Soundiata* about the griot Mamadou Kouaté,





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... we are vessels of speech, we are the repositories which harbor secrets many centuries old. The art of eloquence has no secrets for us; without us the names of kings would vanish into oblivion, we are the memory of mankind; by the spoken word we bring to life the deeds and exploits of kings for younger generations.

Histories define people and communities, and show the relations between geographic regions

The *Baansi* as knowledge producers of *Dagbon* are very important as far as the history of the *Dagbamba* is concerned. They act as a bridge between the past, present and future generations so their importance in the survival of the cultural traditions of *Dagbon* cannot be overemphasized. Oral traditions are thus invaluable in their role as a tool for the capture and reconstruction of group history.

4.3.2 *Baansi* as Communicators

According to Morrison (2004) communication means “to share”. This implies that communication ought to promote exchange and should be in the form of a two-way exchange, involving the origin and the receiver described in communication literature as the communicator and communicatee. In simple terms, communication is a kind of “a give and take affair” whereby both or all parties to the processes are affected. Indeed, for communication to be effective there must be shared meaning between the communicator and the communicatee. In other words, whatever is communicated must be understood between the two. The *baansi* as communicators affect their audience especially the royalty they celebrate and people in attendance.

Lasswell (1948: 102) describes the act of communication as one that answers the questions: who says what, in which channel; to whom and with what effect. Successful communication occurs when the receiver appreciates a message from a sender because they believe it was meant for them and not another, and then act in a particular way in



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order to fulfill the sender's communicative intention. For example, when the *Baansi* perform, listeners responded to their musical language with an assent, smile, nod, sway, dance or mimic, depending on what meaning is communicated and/or appreciated in the communication and what their mood is at the time of the delivery of the communication. When humans communicate they provide as well as gather information.

The *baansi* of Dagbon use their musical instruments to communicate to and with their patrons or audiences. The drum is treated as an extension of the drummer. Whatever they say, sing, or play on their instruments is intended to affect the people in a certain way (Salifu, 2008). Dagbon praise poetry is the preserve of the *baansi*, which is the medium as well as the channel of communicating history, praise names and songs. My interactions show that the *baansi* are communicators and they communicate through their instruments or drums, song or signs. However, when *baansi* try to impress their audience with praise names that are unknown to them or direct drum messages to target audience who cannot decode, it tends to be a miscommunication. In so long as the epithet has been directed to the particular audience, it is the duty of the target persons to appreciate their performance even if the message is unclear. Hence, sometimes receivers 'pay' the *baansi* even when it is clear to all that they have misapplied the praise epithets. This shows that the knowledge and not the performance of the *lunsi* is limited. Yet, because it is the duty of a recipient of praise to reward the artist, one has to honor that. It is a dishonor not to acknowledge the drummers' efforts (Salifu, 2008).

Indeed, certain messages can only be delivered to the chief through drumming. For example, the study revealed that the *lunsi* and the *akarima* use the drum to wake up the chief and to sing praises to him on Mondays and Fridays. This task is called

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Biɛyunaayo, meaning ... *the day is breaking...wake up*. This allows the chief to prepare to receive the elders, chiefs and visitors who pay him homage.

According to Zablong (2010), the *baansi* are transmitters of information in the sense that whenever a dignitary is to pay a visit to a particular town or village, the chief, on receiving the information, gives it to the *baansi* to pass the message to the entire community. I found out during an interaction with some of the respondents that when someone close to the chief dies, the *lunsi* or the *akarima* are informed to drum to send the message to the elders and other chiefs. Every other public announcement is carried out by the *lunsi* while the *akarima* uses his drum to announce visitors and also summon the people to assemble in times of conflict or war. Here there is clear definition of role among the knowledge community. According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2009) the beats and sounds of the drum are used in communication as well as in cultural expression.

Salifu (2008: 52) had this to say: “the drum is the principal communicative tool used by the *baansi* to drum appellations, send messages and to assist in recounting the exploits of their patrons’ forebears.” For instance, during my visit to a chief’s palace as discussed in Box 3.1, the *Akarima* announced my presence to the chief by way of drumming.

According to Salifu (2008: 41), “communicating with the chief involves a process of surrogation either through a musical instrument (drum, fiddle or flute) or an elder ... [and] some messages can only be passed on to the Yaa -Naa by way of drumming.” Surrogation communication systems replace the use of speech (Marsh, 2013). In Dagbon, as it is in Akan political system, one cannot communicate directly to the chief. However, one can communicate with the chief using musical instruments as an



intermediary or through an elder. The drum and other musical instruments are therefore the major communication instrument of the people of Dagbon.

4.3.3 *Baansi* as Consultants/Advisors

A consultant is usually an expert or a professional in a specific field who has in-depth knowledge of the subject matter (Tordoir, 1995). The *baansi* are experts in the history and genealogy of *Dagbon* (Zablong, 2010). As consultants, all the kings, princes and princesses consult the *baansi* for advice. One of my informants said: “They hold the key to Dagbon knowledge” because they know the history of all Dagbamba. In the Dagbon tradition, it is only the *lunsi* as members of the *baansi* who have the license to lay bare any form of message to the chief without risking sanction.

The Yaa–Naa, the King of Dagbon, is expected to consult this inner cycle of drum elders on matters of utmost significance. This means that the *baansi* are special advisors to the chief. They are the only ones who could reprimand the Yaa- Naa when he is going wrong. According to Locke and Lunna (1990), they exercise sensible judgment. One of my respondents explained that the chief seeks advice from the *baansi*, especially the *lunsi* because they know the history and genealogy of every Dagban.

The *baansi* of Dagbon serve as advisors to chiefs and the general populace. Among the populace their appreciation of the drum message serves as important source of advice on their traditions. The message serves as the source of reference in their discussions and tracing of their traditions and culture. According to some of the respondents the chiefs take their advice seriously and many family conflict have been resolved using the *baansi*.

Visitors to the community are painstakingly guided to appreciate the people and their values and history when they attend the performances of the *baansi*. As an elder of the





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chief's or king's court, the master drummer is also a member and elder in the society and thus also offers advice to his people. In times of doubt and conflict, this elder is consulted to explain issues and to help place things right. In our quest for information as scholars, as discussed in Chapter Two, we must not shy away from seeking information from the indigenous people as they can help us to solve some of the social, political and economic issues we face in our country today.

4.3.4 *Baansi* as Social Critics

Societies have evolved ways of regulating their members and instituting measures for implementing and enforcing controls. Such measures are called social control. Social control, according to Deflem (2007) refers, generally, to societal and political mechanisms or processes that regulate individual and group behavior, leading to conformity and compliance to the rules of a given society, state, or social group. Schaefer (2009) also states that the term social control refers to the techniques and strategies for preventing deviant human behavior in society.

Social control occurs at all levels of society. Human beings have to observe certain standards which include folkways, values, rules and regulations of the group to satisfy their wants, needs and desires without any problems. These rules act as means of social control. Thus, for the communal society some kinds of control that are inner as well as external, i.e., social control are very necessity.

Social control is mainly done through socialization in which people come to identify with a social system and its values and norms, thereby acquiring a stake in maintaining those values and norms (Crossman, 2011). While the *baansi* as a social institution serve such role, they also have established themselves particularly as social critics. It is their job to be aware of people who are behaving in ways outside of accepted social norms



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and through the use of talk, music and proverbs to remind such persons of what constitutes proper behavior or remind them of the consequences of improper behaviour by referring to the experiences of some other person in the past who behaved in a similar way. This in a way makes ‘the *baansi* social critics as well.

“Social criticism” is a term used to refer to the areas that deal with the exposure of faults in various aspects of society. It analyzes social structures which are seen as flawed and aims at practical solutions by applying some specific measures to reform. According to Mondal et al. (2014) functionalists contend that people must respect social norms if any group or society is to survive. They stress that order is necessary for effective social life. In their view, societies literally could not function if people defied standards of appropriate conduct. To maintain unity, stability, continuity and the balance in the group or the society, some kinds of social control are needed. Social critics therefore help to maintain the stability in the society and force persons to obey social decisions.

The women members of *lunsi*, often the praise singers and composers, *lung-pagsi*, are noted for spontaneously composing songs either to praise somebody or to rebuke a social miscreant. By so doing, they serve as social critics in the society. Social control is a general method of regulating the behavior of individuals in a society through accepted social norms. According to Cohen-Khani (2010) the cliché that, examining the past allows us to navigate the present and predict the future, pertains to the role of drummers in Dagbon, who serve as advisors to chiefs and the general populace. According to Nyumba (2006) again IK provides the basis for local-level decision-making about many fundamental aspects of day-to-day life and adaptation to environmental or social change.

In addition, I realized from the study that the *Baansi* are the “conscience of the society.” They put the people right when they are going wrong. According to the respondents, they do this better than the journalist because they do not take sides. It is their calling to remain impartial on such matters and “tell it as it is.” Locke and Lunna (1990) point out that, *the baansi* are the chief’s favorites. Such knowledgeable men are under their chief’s command, but the chiefs are in the position to receive their intimacies and advice.

4.3.5 *Baansi* as Teachers and Educators

The role of a teacher in society is both significant and valuable. It has far-reaching influence on the society we live in, and no other personality can have an influence more profound than that of a teacher (Raina, 2007) cited by Amoah (2012). Many educationists have described the teacher in different ways. Some describe him as a dispenser of knowledge, while others see him as a leader, counsel or coach, facilitator and a role model. Whatever description one would want to use, the underlying issue still remains that the teacher plays a lead role in determining the future of students and society. According to the European Commission (1996) education and training will increasingly become the main vehicles for self-awareness, belonging, advancement and self-fulfillment. Education and training, whether acquired in the formal education system, on the job or in a more informal way, is the key for everyone in controlling their future and their personal development.

Before the arrival of Western formal education in Dagbon, at the turn of the twentieth century, children had the bulk of their education via “informal” means by observing the ways of adults, through stories, proverbs, riddles and mentorship/apprenticeship of older family members. The *baansi*, as keepers of the oral tradition, served as both the





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instructors of etiquette and practitioners of the performative arts (Salifu, 2008). Thus the *Baansi* are “educators”.

Further discussion I had with the research collaborators showed that the *Baansi* were responsible for teaching the young the details of the profession. In this context, the *baansi* become master tradesmen or skills men responsible for training their apprentices in their art and performance. They train them in not just the performance but also the methods of recording their histories, ways of recording the histories and communicating that history and culture as well as values and principles of their trade.

The *baansi* are the living libraries of the society. They are consulted of issues pertaining to the right and wrong of the society as well as issues about the culture of the people. It is the duty of the *Baansi* to educate the public with nothing but the truth. Here, their role is one of moral education or ethical training. They *baansi* believe that their ancestors are watching them as such they are very conscious when performing not to forment trouble.

As argued by Zablong (2010) some of them have compromised their stance due to economic and political pressures. In the past, the chief took care of the *baansi*. But the trend has changed, so they have to feed, clothe and provide shelter for themselves. Again the chieftaincy institution in Dagbon has two gates; Andani and Abudu gates. Some of the *baansi* have associated themselves to a faction and they are only loyal to that faction to the detriment of the whole chieftaincy institution.

4.3.6 *Baansi* as Entertainers

Entertainment builds community and forges identities (Flattum, 2011). Oral traditions have been sources of invaluable education as well as entertainment in our traditional rural societies, and they hold the essence of our unique culture and traditions (Dorji,



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2009). The role of the storyteller is that of a central source of entertainment, knowledge, and evocation of a communal togetherness, sometimes referred to as “Ubuntu” Nguni language from South Africa meaning (humanity/brotherhood). These communal sittings are reflective of a type of patriotism to the communities in which Africans exist, a sense of the community being greater than any one individual (Avery, 1970).

As storytellers the *baansi* in Dagbon are central to the knowledge production and dissemination process. Through their stories, the *baansi* entertain and teach, what has come to be known as “edutainment”. Edutainment, according to Nĕmec and Trna (2007), is a distinctive form of entertainment that enables the participants to be educated (e.g. get new information from various fields of our life) or even brought up (their postures, values and behavioral patterns could be influenced).

The *baansi* provide solemn music when elderly persons or important personalities are recently deceased, and yet to be buried. The rhythms of the praise names that are sung or beaten on the drum are the basis of the social dances that are performed at community gatherings. I also observed that during performances, the *baansi* entertained with their music, chants and dance, wearing big smocks and togas. The music serves as the magnet that attracts people to events, private and public, sacred or secular, royal or common; and also provides social commentary. For this reason, the music is said to be holistic. Each tune celebrates a certain element of the society: rites de passage, success, spurring members on to victory, praise-singing, or venerating nature. One of the basic characteristics of African music, and indeed music in general, is that it is a metaphor of life. Whatever they say, sing, or play on their musical instrument is intended to affect the people in a certain way. Music, in general, is a symbol of life, and it reflects what is going on in the society (Salifu, 2014).

4.4 The *Baansi* Knowledge Acquisition Process

The focus of socialization and development is learning the gathering of knowledge about how the world works. Such knowledge equips people to manage their existences: to enhance their acquisition of rewards; to minimize their experience of punishment; and in the extreme, to ensure their survival. But learning is not only of instrumental value it also enlightens. Enlightenment has been viewed by many scholars and philosophers as a source of intrinsic psychological satisfaction and fulfillment, rewarding in and of itself, regardless of whether it is used to manipulate day-to-day experiences (Holbrook et. al 2005).

Maslow (2013: 74-75) stipulates that “acquiring knowledge makes the person bigger, wiser, richer, stronger, more evolved, and more mature. It represents the actualization of human potentiality, the fulfillment of that human destiny foreshadowed by human possibilities” (Holbrook et al., 2005). Knowledge acquisition therefore plays an important role for society. Knowledge acquisition is the process of absorbing and storing new information in memory, the success of which is often gauged by how well the information can later be remembered and retrieved from memory.

The *Baansi* are indispensable in traditional discourse management among the Dagbamba (Salifu, 2008). They have been a major repository of the history of Dagbon. For example, the Dagbon royal family depends on them for guidance when picking suitable appellations when they ascend the skin. Drumming, an indigenous source of wisdom and knowledge is an institutionalized occupation with professional drummers well trained to perform using oratory, instrumentation and sign. As already noted above, one is nominally a *Baanga* by virtue of being born into the drum caste and starts receiving instructions immediately after one has been weaned from the mother. Meaning, the training starts from childhood. See Figure 4.6.



Figure 4. 3 Young children under training



Source: (Fieldwork, October, 2011).

The study also revealed that the training is virtually practical. African knowledge, and its method of acquisition, are practical, collective and social or interpersonal. Mpofu (2002) and Nsamenang (2006) indicate that indigenous conceptions of intelligence, for example, emphasize the practical, interpersonal and social domains of functioning and are quite differentiated from the cognitive ‘academic’ intelligence that dominates Western concepts of the construct.

In order to acquire knowledge, a learner must become directly and actively involved or socially participate in a community. The student practices what she or he has been taught orally and learns to decode it on the drum. In other words, the learner imitates the drum beats. A respondent indicated that: *learning is tradition and a way of life*. As you practice and interact with society you acquire knowledge. According to Lauzon (1999), learning from this perspective is a process of social interaction that takes place

within a framework of participation whereby the learner acquires the necessary skills, tools, knowledge, beliefs and values to actively participate in the community. The student drummer practices his lessons on market days by drumming the stock phrase *dakoli n nyɛ bia* “the bachelor is inferior” at the market.

Again, community level interactions have shown that the process of knowledge acquisition is lifelong; learning is continuous and takes a lifetime. In African society, learning is continuous. For example, learning takes place throughout the various stages in life. That is from birth to death or in the other words it is rite of passage. This also apply to the *baansi* of Dagbon.

Below are some of the views from my respondents numbered in serial order in Box 4.2.

Box 4.2: Lifelong Learning

1. Once you enter till you die.
2. As long as life.
3. It has no end; it also depends on your competencies, position, and role in the society.
4. It's a school of life.
5. The student cannot be complacent to say that I now know what to do; you must be a learner all the time.

Source: (Field work, 2013)

All these views from some respondents attest to the fact that being a *baanga* is a lifelong learning situation. Once you are born into it, you continue learning till you die. Chernoff (1979: 101) confirms that, “drumming has no end.” Training to become a drummer requires a long period of practice. Christine Oppong (1973) explains the processes the *baansi* go through to become drummers. According to her “the tasks of learning this massive oral body of historical material is an arduous and painstaking one, requiring



long hours of patience and applications and practice on the part of the teacher as well as the pupil.” (Oppong, 1973: 40)

When I asked my informants how long they took to learn the trade, one of them said:

As early as two I was given immature drum where I learnt how to drum. Then at about age ten, I and others gathered around the compound with our teacher every evening after supper. We were thought the appellations of Dagbon kings and we recite them, starting from our family, the overlord of Dagbon, extending it to other kings till we were able to commit them to memory. This went on for some time, while followed others to social gatherings till I became a master of my own and was appointed “Luna” that is the chief drummer. Even that I am still learning (Lunsi, Interview, 7 June, 2011)

Currently, the informant has a lot of drummers under him by virtue of his status as a chief drummer. He also works with the Centre for National Culture at Tamale. Even though he is illiterate, his superior at the Centre considers him a professor of *baansi* in his own right. The superior at the Centre recognizes him probably because he is also a native of Dagbon and understands the role of the *baansi* in the society. Shanbhag (2006) alludes to the fact that the participation of various societies, peoples and agencies outside of academia and outside the western world stay unacknowledged.

Another informant spoke along the same lines as follows:

To be a baanga, as early as four years improvisation period the child begins to play. At that age he makes for himself a smaller drum from tins or wood. Nobody cares what beat he makes but improvisation of the drumming acts. As the child grows he is introduced to the fundamentals of the trade by moving along with the elders. Response and support drumming, as he makes the wrong beat he is called to order. The performance is always within specific context. They are then introduced to the Dagbon prince hood. The teacher sits the child down as a father, grandfather etc. The teacher utters the words and the student follows the words. This continues till the child understands. These are accompanied with punishments; it is normally in the evening after supper. The learning continues until one becomes



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 perfect. The student cannot be complacent to say that I now know what to do (Lunsi, Interview, 4/7/2013).

In response to the content of the knowledge, I was informed by a respondent that one begins with one's ancestral praise poetry and progresses to the next stage if his/her performance is deemed good by the teacher. In other words, a trainee moves from the *be kpiimba* (old ancestral praise) to the *Nam* (chieftaincy institution) stage. The chieftaincy institution comprises of: the Yendi Skin; past Ya - Naa (Kings of Dagbon) and their siblings; those who ascended the skin before their demise; gate systems and the birth name, children, and prince-hood; Particular kings; Praise names; Chiefs who went to war or their representatives and Success of the battle as well as the cases of the wars or their origins.

These statements underscore the fact that the training of the *Baansi* takes a lot of time and this fits into Higgins (2000: 145) definition of science as, as stated in Chapter Two of this dissertation. Higgins explains that science is: "Knowledge acquired by study, mastery, trained skill".

The training is holistic, a type of training which makes each person to find identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace (Miller, 2000). According to Kargbo (2006), indigenous knowledge is holistic, with all elements of matter viewed as interconnected which cannot be understood in isolation. The study revealed that acquiring knowledge to be a *baansi* involves other knowledge not only from your own family but the entire Dagbon social, economic, political and spiritual knowledge.

The discussions furthermore revealed that the work of the *Baansi* entails a diverse range of skills and great reservoir of knowledge. One can specialize as a singer with the knowledge in the proverbs, history and the genealogy or a player of the drum.





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According to Locke and Lunna (1990), the quality such men possess include gifted musicianship, expert understanding of the history, and sensible judgment.

4.5 Storage of Dagbon Oral Traditions

African nations are going through many changes under globalization; economically, politically, socially and ecologically. These changes, which are affecting African societies, have had implications for African cultures and especially social and knowledge traditions (Mchombu et al., 2004). The persistent bombardment of African peoples with new knowledges and traditions, some of which have been radically different from their own, have had serious repercussions regarding the sustenance of their systems which have tended to depend on slow but sure natural change processes. The consequent losses to indigenous knowledge is causing cultural gaps between generations and denying the continent the rich and powerful heritage of indigenous knowledge traditions formed by past generations (Mchombu et al., 2004).

According to the World Bank (1998), IK faces extinction unless it is properly documented and disseminated. IK is an underutilized resource in the development process. However, the World Bank (1998) asserts that by investigating first what local communities know and have one can improve understanding of local conditions and provide a productive context for activities designed to help the communities. Understanding IK can increase responsiveness to clients. Adapting international practices to the local setting can help improve the impact and sustainability of development assistance. I therefore interrogated the respondents on how they store the knowledge they produced. The responses have been grouped under the following headings. Social Immersion, Constant Practice, Memorization and Symbolization.

4.5.1 Social Immersion

Social immersion is regarded as an essential design element for any interactive application and represents in itself an important tool for dispensing certain types of educational materials in an effective manner (Louchart et al., n.d). This often consists of user interaction and user experience from a content - driven approach. Education and socialization take place through living together and among others, imitating existing activities and skills of adults. Dialogue and collaboration are important methods in the process of knowledge productions. In order to acquire knowledge, a learner must become directly and actively involved or socially participate in a community. According to Lauzon (1999), learning from this perspective is a process of social interaction that takes place within a framework of participation whereby the learner acquires the necessary skills, tools, knowledge, beliefs and values to actively participate in the community.

An informant had this to say: *as you interact with society you always learn. The whole society helps in my education* (Baansi, interview, 2014). It is said that when the *baansi* from different communities in *Dagbon* meet, it is an occasion for socialisation as well as a platform for learning from one other. Learners also learn from others through the following: interactions among themselves at social gathering; debate, consultation, discussions, and through visits to different kingdoms.

According to Faust (2010), cited in Yona (2012), the conversion of tacit knowledge can be done with two approaches socialization and externalization. Socialization entails activities for transferring the tacit knowledge from one individual to others; in this case, the knowledge was transferred from elders to those who do the preservation. The transfer can be done through direct interaction with the elders, the imitation of all actions and activities performed by the elder in relation to oral tradition, and personal





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experience. The series of activities can be done through job-shadowing. Externalization is the transfer of activities of tacit knowledge that have been owned by individuals who do preservation into explicit knowledge.

Oral transmission was a major means of preserving knowledge before the advent of modern tools of codifying knowledge. Things that society wanted to remember were composed into songs, proverbs, myths, poetic forms, and oral prose narratives including folktales and riddles. Also, the processes of learning and membership in a social environment are inseparable (Ngulube, 2003). It fosters collective memory and taps on social capital.

4.5.2 Constant Practice

Constant practice is similar to the concept of procedural knowledge. According to Echabe and Castro (1993), procedural knowledge is knowledge of knowing “how to do or how to act”. This is basically learning by practice. Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005) added that learning is an interactive process of participating in various cultural practices and shared learning activities that structure and shape cognitive activity in many ways, rather than something that happens inside individuals’ minds. Accordingly, learning is seen as a process of becoming a member of a community and acquiring the skills to communicate and act according to its socially negotiated norms. This means that as one practices, the knowledge becomes part of that person and it is difficult to forget. The axiom “practice makes perfect” illustrates the fact that repetition is crucial for learning. According to Banda (2008) the methods of learning and storing of knowledge include, among other things, songs, folktales, proverbs, riddles, figures of speech and oral literature. In addition, imitation, play and participation in adult activities such as agriculture, flooding, cattle rearing and housekeeping were also important.

Young and even adult *baansi* of Dagbon acquire and store knowledge by participating in the activities of the adult people. Zablong (2010: 20) recount how he was able to store this knowledge.

At age six, I was introduced to the drum poetry an introduction which I term as the ABC, known as *Dakol nnye bii ba*. The teaching was in portions. Whenever I was taught a portion my trainer made sure I could recite that portion, “by heart” without mistakes before more was added. I graduated at the primary level including tenses and word formation. I moved on to the construction of sentences. This is mainly the drum names. ...Anytime my teacher travelled, I practiced on my own till he returned. I also performed on market days to keep me on track and also to refresh my memory. I also sang whenever I was on my way to farm or on farm working. It was after I was able to recite everything from A.B.C. to Z that I moved on to another stage.....During the weekends when I returned from farm, my teacher and I will take a drum each. Whatever he plays on the drum he instructs me to do the same.

This narration shows how the knowledge is stored as they continue to recite and practice both orally and the playing of the drum. This has kept the knowledge intact from generation to generation. According to Haverkort (2009), knowledge is inseparable from practice as posited in the endogenous development (ED) tradition.

Some of my informants acknowledged that constant practice at home, markets, and other social functions like weddings, funerals, outdoorings and festivals helped them to easily store and remember the knowledge they produced. Echabe and Castro (1993) stipulate that knowledge produced through constant practice is very important in the process of development of social identities.

4.5.3 Memorization

Memorization in the forms of songs, chants, and recitations is an effective teaching tool. This pedagogical approach involved all students of varying ages and advancements in recitation at the same time. Both recitation and memorization were viewed as primary





tools of learning (McKey, www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh, 2009). This method of teaching and learning is also adopted by the *baansi* of Dagbon to commit the history, social and the political knowledge of Dagbon to memory. Platt et al. (1992) define memorization as the concepts of learning mechanically, repeating material many times over and giving little attention to understanding or meaning.

The act of memorizing is often a deliberate mental process undertaken in order to store in memory for later recall items such as experiences, names, appointments, addresses, telephone numbers, lists, stories, poems, pictures, maps, diagrams, facts, music or other visual, auditory, or tactical information. Memorization may also refer to the process of storing particular data in the memory of a device.

I learned from the study that the history of Dagbon has been recorded dating back to 700 years and this is mainly from oral information. This has been corroborated by Chernoff (2006: 3) when she said that, the Dagbamba assert that the *baansi* have the “facts” about historical and social realities and have through their art preserved over five hundred years of folk history. But this knowledge has been transmitted from the older generation to date and it is mainly kept in memory. However, according to Oliver and Utermohlen (1995), educators have lamented the fact that often students were trained to be passive receptors of information instead of being taught to critically analyze information. Clearly, memorization does not foster understanding, analysis or retention of information. Gattegno (1976) proposed that the purpose of teaching is to serve the learning process and not to dominate it (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). This guiding principle affects the way the teacher approaches his or her work in the classroom. The teacher does not dominate the classroom in the traditional sense, i.e., by simply giving students information. Instead, the teacher uses teaching techniques and strategies that create real learning situations which leave students with the time and space for actual



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learning to take place. In these classrooms, there is less teacher talk and more student talk (Stevick, 1996).

Millar et al. (2012) point out that indigenous knowledge systems in our communities do not have library with books and computers, but they have their own ways to produce, codify, store and retrieve knowledge and information. Again, Ngulube's (2003) assertion that oral transmission was a major means of preserving knowledge before the advent of modern tools of codifying knowledge was instructive. Essentially, the *baansi* are walking history books, preserving their ancient stories and traditions through song. Nyumba (2006) also revealed that despite limited documentation, people have managed to transmit knowledge efficiently from generation and conserving wisdom for centuries. Social and technical skills are shared and used throughout communities, and in the process, passed to children. However, Ngulube (2002) is of the view that indigenous knowledge, which has generally been passed from generation to generation by word of mouth, is in danger of being lost unless it is formally documented and preserved.

Follow up discussions revealed that the *Baansi* were able to keep so much text in memory. They explained by implication that practice made one perfect. They intimated that continuous practice helped them to master their text very well. The *Baansi* admitted that they were given herbal charms or concoction to improve their memory. They also confirmed that they seek spiritual fortification to protect themselves and to compete among the various groups of *baansi*.

The *baansi* cherish the power to have a good retentive memory, and will go to any length to improve their capacity to investigate deep into their mental faculties to retrieve their knowledge. My investigations revealed that the *Baansi* have their own mnemonic devices that aid them during performances. Things that society would want to



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remember are composed into songs, proverbs, myths, poetics forms, and oral prose narratives including folktales and riddles. According to Ngulube (2003) using socialization processes like dance, music, storytelling and the development of technologies to manage and communicate IK, may be preserved without taking it away from the people.

4.5.4 Symbolization

Symbolization is the use of symbols to convey meaning. Symbols are a means of complex communication that often can have multiple levels of meaning. Human cultures use symbols to express specific ideologies and social structures and to represent aspects of their specific culture. Thus, symbols carry meanings that depend upon one's cultural background; in other words, the meaning of a symbol is not inherent in the symbol itself but is culturally learned (Womack, 2005). Symbols take the form of words, sounds, gestures, or visual images and are used to convey ideas and beliefs.

The *baansi* of Dagbon use sound as a symbol or code to communicate with their audience. Codification entails activities and processes for converting tacit data and information which is possessed by the elders as part of their oral tradition through meaning-making mechanisms that turn them into the knowledge which allows for the transfer into explicit form.

According to Yona (2012) in its simple term, a code is a rule for converting a piece of information into another - usually shortened or covert - form or representation, not necessarily of the same type. Hence, before any data or information becomes knowledge (meaningful), it should have been coded. Such coding takes various forms. Sometimes they are coded in easy or simple language that is readily accessible to all. In other times, the codes are complex formats that require specialized expertise.

Proverbs, for instance, are complex codes of traditional knowledge. It is often those who are educated in the art that are able to understand and use them effectively. By and large, the *Baansi* of Dagbon use such complex codes that often require their audiences to decipher the message by decoding their pithy statements.

The *Baansi* of Dagbon have ways of codifying the oral tradition. The drum language is basically a special beat played on the drum (including other instrument of communication in Dagbon) which is given a particular meaning. For instance, *Namogyilli mal kpiong pam*, a beat on the drum means, *Namongu* is very powerful.

4.6 Media and Forms of Dissemination of Information

Dissemination of IK provides an effective tool for research and innovation (Abioye, Zaid & Egberongbe, 2014). Lodhi and Mikulecky (2010) add that the dissemination of indigenous knowledge to a wider community adds the developmental dimension to the exchange of knowledge and could promote a wider and deeper ripple impact of the knowledge transfer. The question is how do the *baansi* of Dagbon disseminate their information?

Etebu (2009) says that, in Africa, information is viewed as a vital resource for the upliftment and development of the people both in rural and urban dwellings. Lack of information may inhibit development (Boon, 1992). Traditional indicators are still widely used as modes of forecasting and land use management. The indicators are mostly local and are well understood in communities (Okoola, 1996). These traditional indicators include plants, birds, insects (bees, butterfly, red ants, and termites), stars, hill shadows, moon, winds (direction, strength, and time of starting and ending), clouds



(position and movement), lightning (location and pattern), springs and swamps, cowries, and so on.

Etebu (2009) posits that apart from the traditional indicators, there are other ways in which information is provided. The common one is the oral communication. In most rural communities, town criers use wooden or metal gongs or drums to stir up the people and deliver their messages orally. Another means of oral provision of information is organizing meetings. Most villages and towns have squares or centres where the people meet to discuss issues and make decisions. Through this means the leaders provide information for their wellbeing and development. This oral exchange of information indicates that rural dwellers may be able to relate to information exchanged in the way they are accustomed to (Meyer, 2005). Inferred from the above, indigenous means for disseminating information to the public include; drums or *gongon* used by the town carrier and social or political meetings by the chief and elders of the community or by the people.

Omogor (2013) also identified other forms and media for information dissemination in rural Africa similar to the one above which include interpersonal or face to face communication, socio-political meetings, town carrier and performances comprising of song, dance, drama, and role play.

During the field work, I gathered from the various interactions I had with some of the respondents and also observed that songs, drum and dance were used by the *baansi* to disseminate information. Fayose (1990) opined that singing is usually associated with work, hunting, warfare, funeral, title taking, birth and nursing, moonlight plays and many forms of ceremonies. Songs deal with all types of social events and life in the



community at large. Some songs ridicule undutiful fathers, lazy mothers, wayward children and some encourage the well behaved to keep it up.

Fiofori (1975) in Omogor (2013) stated that the traditional networks exist as speech surrogates. Speech surrogates are defined as ‘communication systems which replace the use of speech’ (Marsh, 2013). According to Omogor (2013), surrogate speech played on musical instruments is widespread in many Sub-Saharan African cultures such as the Ga, Dagomba and Akan of Ghana, the Ewé of Ghana, Benin (Formerly Dahomey), and Togo, the Fon of Benin, and the Yorùbá of South-Western Nigeria and Benin. These are talking drums, gongs, oral narratives, stories, songs, incantations, drama, body movement- dances, games and expressive play activities. An informant had this to say about how the *baansi* disseminate their knowledge: *The sound of the drum tells the type of event that is taking place. Different rhythms and different types of music carry different messages (Lunsi, interview, 13/4/2014)*. Suad (2011) stipulates that the people of different African tribes relied on the use of drums to express themselves and important messaging was done through series of drum beats along the length of the jungle.

Festivals are integral parts of *Dagbon* communities. During festivals, there is a musical dance ensemble at various places across the breadth and length of the Dagbon Kingdom. The *baansi* narrate, recall historical events, important scenarios, heroic events and titles of the past chiefs or kings and bitter experiences of the past events. It is evident from these acts that the public is updated as to the history of the people. Twice in the year, drummers in major towns gather outside the house of the chief to sing selected parts of Dagbamba history. These occasions are known as *Sanban’ Luna*, discussed above. This performance begins in the evening and lasts until dawn. As they perform, they review and disseminate the Dagbon history to the general populace.



There are various societal activities that take place in the rural environment and the rural people go to the market to share information from one society to another (Omogor, 2013). Awa (1988) observes that many issues, persons and village events are discussed in market places more than elsewhere. In Dagbon, there is what is called *Daa Lung* literally meaning ‘market drum.’ *Daa Lung* cuts across all the life cycle events of the Dagamba from birth to death all performances that take place except *Sanban’ Lunja* (performance at the palace, a night preceding Damba festival). *Daa Lung* are all types of performances of the *baansi* outside the palaces. These are performed at market places and even in drinking bars. These types of performances employ praises and genealogies and provide music for all occasions including naming ceremonies, weddings, funerals, and all social gatherings. These performances are aimed at disseminating knowledge to the public. Individuals who need any information concerning the Dagbon people can consult them. During the study, it came to light that the young *baansi* practice their lessons on market days where they disseminate information by singing and praising the people they come across.

Traditional mass media serve both utilitarian and aesthetic purposes. They form the vehicle for acquisition and dissemination of information to rural people. Ngwaimbi (1995) has noted that the traditional media is the live theatre of rural people. Town criers, marketplace conversations, and word of mouth are popular among African rural people in terms of their longevity of use and their effectiveness in transmitting messages. He explained that in many rural areas town criers are village messengers who go from street to street delivering messages. Occasionally striking a bell or drum, they report the news to attendant villagers. He gives the news headlines thereby arousing the village interest. As already stated, the *akarima* and the *lunsi* are message carries. They use their instrument to communicate messages to the chief and people of Dagbon. There



are different methods used by town criers to communicate information. The choice of method depends on the type of message he has to deliver (Omogor, 2013).

Social and political meetings are part of life of the rural people. Yazidu (1975) identified social meetings, traditional meetings such as weddings, naming and funeral ceremonies and harvest festivals as occasions for interpersonal communication. These meeting places serve as fora where the *baansi* communicate with their patrons and audiences.

I also learned from this study that when the need arises sacrifices must be performed when long portions of the oral history are to be performed. It is believed that sickness or death will befall any drummer who recites too much of this history to outsiders. According to Oppong (1971), this tradition is managed and kept intact by sanctions and taboos such as sickness and death against any drummer from reciting the whole history at any one time.

4.7 Contribution of the *Baansi* in the Knowledge Production Process

The production of knowledge is a natural human process. The ongoing production of knowledge is a critical element in the use of information and knowledge. A cultural perspective of knowledge production suggests that knowledge is socially constructed, approached from a localized participants view point, dynamic process that is defined by the world in which it is situated and an ideological construct that organizes belief and actions and expectations (Gibbons et al., 1994).

The investigation by the researcher points to the fact that the *baansi* are the living archives for Dagbon. They *use* this knowledge to remind the Dagbamba of who they are (identity and ancestry), and where they are come from (migratory tradition). There is no doubt that the *baansi* are very important in the Dagbon society. This is in line with



Salifu (2014) statement that, Ghana is a multilingual state (which has about sixty languages), a market place where each person should look out for kith and kin. The drummer is the one to remind us of where we come from, and also show us the way forward and if the importance of history cannot be overemphasized, it goes without saying that the *banga* is very vital to the survival of Dagbon's culture. Also, according to Salifu (2008) our experience of the present very largely depends upon our knowledge of the past. We experience our present world in a context which is causally connected with past events and objects. We will experience our present differently in accordance with the different pasts to which we are able to connect to that present.

The results also indicate that the social life of the Dagbamba depends on the *baansi* and this draws on the Locke and Lunna (1990) assertion that work associated with rites of passage remains vital, the important calendric sacred and secular festivals are still celebrated, and despite the popularity of mass media, the traditional social dance is still enjoyed. This shows how the *baansi* are the link to every social fibre of the Dagbon society. Above all they warn and guide the society, and they reconcile the people.

4.8 Challenges to *Baansi* Knowledge Production and Management

Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS) had suffered for decades from several strategies of misinformation embedded in Eurocentric, colonial and post-colonial education and Western religion, science and technology. Today, these systems form a bulk of the selective omission of non-European achievements, inventions and technologies in academic works. Often, data on IKS are distorted to confirm the hypothesis of non-Africanist scholars. Surreptitious naming and several other strategies of all forms of colonization accompany these. Consequently, what we know about Africa today stems





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from the ideologically colored glasses of ‘prejudiced’ colonial anthropologists who documented African cultures as raw, uncooked, primitive and uncivilized in a bid to justify the high-handed colonization scramble (Eyong, 2007; Eyong, Mufuaya & Foy, 2004).

Mchombu et al (2004) have identified some of the challenges for the destruction of the indigenous knowledge base which include:

- e) Young people turning away from their elders and breaking an ancient chain of orally communicated knowledge;
- f) An education system which is de-linked from the indigenous knowledge base and aimed at proving that external information is better than indigenous knowledge;
- g) The destruction of the homes of indigenous populations by urbanization, farming and commercial activities, such as logging and mining;
- h) Propaganda from the “modernization-oriented” mass media and political elite that traditional ways of doing things are never as good as external ways of doing things and should be rejected (p.34)

Eyong (2007) has also indicated that colonialism, economic, globalization and modernization, human displacements, social exclusion by governments, and intellectual property rights are among some of the challenges facing indigenous people in their quest to produced knowledge. When asked about some of the challenges they faced in performing their tasks, some of the respondents indicated that, the traditions have been ignored because of modernity with its social agents such as Western education and Islam, poverty, and ignorance. In a group discussion, members were of the opinion that:

Formal education is taking over the baansi system; the young ones are not enthused about baansi; some do not care about the history of the ancestors; some educated people are also running away from the tradition.

(Baansi, Focus Group Discussion, 12 July 2013).



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This statement confirms Zablong (2010) study that, people in Dagbon, as a result of Western education, shy away or look down on these traditional practices and they do not want to touch a drum or play it. Zablong (2010) further states that those drummers who are Moslems and have studied some Koranic verses do not want to associate themselves with drumming. Locke (1990) adds that changes in life style among the young Dagbamba threaten the rote transmission of knowledge upon which the continuity of the *baansi* depends.

The youth are no more interested in the profession because of Western education. The very nature of education, as a social institution that plays a major role in the process of social reproduction of colonial policies, further facilitates the reproduction of institutions rooted in the tradition and history of former colonial powers whose control is perpetuated, and whose search for a permanent present is actualised (Assie-Lumumba, 2006). As a result of this, values and models are often uncritically copied. Today, the level of imitating of these values is unbelievable that anyone practicing IK as a means to solve problems is looked down as outmoded and considered primitive. The African culture is gradually dying out especially among the youth. As discussed earlier in Chapter One, today, with little notice, vast archives of knowledge and expertise are being lost, leaving humanity in danger of losing its past and perhaps endangering its future as well. This knowledge base is unrecorded (Mchombu et al., 2004: 35). As noted earlier, “*When a knowledgeable person dies, a whole library disappears.*”

A follow-up discussion I had with some of the informants on the challenges they faced in performing their duties revealed that:

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There is no support from government; no marketing; no promotion of tourism. It was again revealed that apart from our first President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah who was passionate about our culture and projected it, no other president in Ghana has been keen on projecting it (Respondent, interview, April, 2013).

Due to the fact that most of the *baansi* cannot read or write, the government does not consult them on cases that are in their domain. Presently, there is a dispute over the chieftaincy of Dagbon, with it associated conflict. My opinion is that the *baansi* of Dagbon could help resolve the problem since they know the history and the requirements of succession of the people.

Again, it is clear from the interactions that ignorance about and disregard of the *baansi* and their act and language makes it difficult for the people to value the role of the *baansi* and to accept them as knowledge holders. For instance, Locke (1990) is of the view that the number of the people including the *baansi*, royalty, commoners who understand the language is reducing. It usually happens that some of the young drummers play music without meaning and some listeners do not know the difference.

The study also revealed that weak economic background is one of the challenges facing them in their quest to produce knowledge. Nketia (1963: 5) describes the difficulty of Akan drummers as follows:

The difficulty of his (drummer) work lies not only in the physical exertion, knowledge and skill involved, but also in the fact that at all levels he must work in cooperation with others to whom he is bound by casual acts of kindness. Whereas in the past he gave freely of his time and indeed considered it a privilege to be associated with the chief, now he is torn between his own economic interests and security and his loyalty to the chief whose power and prestige is changing.



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The same is applied to the *baansi* of Dagbon. Zablong (2010) has revealed that the *baansi* are no longer taken care of as was done during the olden days. In the olden days the chief took care of the *baansi*. But the trend has changed, so they have to feed, clothe and provide shelter for themselves. This has forced some of them to seek employment or greener pasture somewhere.

Security has been identified as one of the threats to the *baansi*. One of the respondents confirmed that he was once shot and this is what he said:

I was once shot when performing for one of the powerful chiefs in the Region though it was a nearly nasty fatal experience it never stopped me from contributing to the traditional heritage which I owe to the people of my land

(Baansi, interview, 12 July, 2014).

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter examined the knowledge management system of the *baansi* of Dagbon. Other works relevant to the study have been examined, and major questions have been answered. The study shows that the *baansi*, as knowledge producers, have a lot of knowledge that can be embedded into the Academic Library system in Ghana. This calls for collaboration between the two. As noted by Francoeur (2001) as depositories, collectors, organisers, distributors and mediators of information, librarians play an enabling role to those who produce or who want to use indigenous knowledge and sources of information, hence, there is the need to integrate the two systems to serve the needs of diverse users. The study then looks at the knowledge management systems of the academic libraries in Ghana in the next chapter.



**KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT IN
ACADEMIC LIBRARIES**

5.1 Introduction

Supported and guided largely by literature from the conceptual chapter, this chapter discusses the findings on knowledge management in academic libraries in Ghana. This will enable the researcher to draw inference between the *baansi* and the academic library for possible co-existence. The findings presented here are based on empirical studies on academic libraries that sought to understand the knowledge management process in the academic library system. The investigation at this level was based mainly on a survey using interview techniques. The interviews were conducted in three Ghanaian Public University Libraries from January 2014 to March 2015. The Universities are the University of Ghana, Legon (UG) in Accra; University of Cape Coast (UCC) in Cape Coast; and University for Development Studies in Tamale. For the sake of anonymity, these universities were randomly named as University A, B and C. In addition to the interviews, the researcher's own experience as a practicing Librarian in a university library, having worked in an academic library for seventeen years and having some insights into the knowledge management process in academic libraries in Ghana, has also influenced the analysis here. The experience of the researcher did not bias the results as she put herself aside and focus on what was on the ground and responses from the respondents.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section examines the role of Academic Libraries in Ghana in knowledge production and management of information resources in their parent institutions. This raised the questions of who is an Academic Librarian and the role of Academic Librarians in managing information/knowledge.



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The second section looks at how academic libraries acquire their materials and the challenges involved in acquiring these materials. This acts as a window to the next section which dwells on the mechanism of codifying materials after the materials have been acquired. What happens after the materials are codified? The fourth section assesses the storage procedures of the library materials. The concluding section analyses the media and forms of dissemination of information.

5.2 The Academic Librarian

According to the Reitz (1996), an academic library is a type of library forming an integral part of a university or post-secondary education such as Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. By this definition, academic libraries are the libraries of tertiary institutions. The core mandate of tertiary institutions is to teach, research and offer outreach and extension sources and are supported by the libraries where various resources, textual and electronic, acquired and/or produced for or from are managed to the benefit of the academia. Yet, this definition is narrow in the sense that there are pre-tertiary and research institutions which also hold libraries for student and staff research. In this study however, academic libraries refer to university libraries.

Aina (2004) defines the librarian as the professional who is concerned with the collection, storage, processing and dissemination of recorded knowledge in a library. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2008: 287), “Librarians are classified according to the type of library in which they work”: a public library; school library; media center; college, university or academic library; or special library. This presupposes that an academic librarian is anyone who supports members of an academic community, such as students, researchers and lecturers by providing,



managing, organizing, evaluating and disseminating information. AGCAS (2013) adds that, academic librarians work in libraries of higher education, further education and research institutes attached to academic institutions. This definition does not take cognizance of academic qualifications but only place of work. It also broadens the place to work to include research institutions but not pre-tertiary libraries. According to Sewa (1992) the minimum qualification for an academic librarian is a Master's Degree in Library/Information Studies or Library Science. This presupposes that, an academic librarian is anyone who specializes in Library Studies/Information or Library Science at the postgraduate level and who works in a library of an academic institution.

The study revealed various views from library professionals on this subject. One respondent believed that an academic librarian is the Head of an academic library. If this is the case, then Ghana has only a few academic librarians. The head of an academic library is usually referred to as the "University Librarian" and is equivalent in status to a Professor in the university, thus confirming Singh (2009) assertion that academic librarians are considered faculty and hold similar academic ranks as Professors. In essence, for academic librarians to be able to provide direction and support academic work effectively, they must understand the process by having undergone and qualified at postgraduate level and form of study.

Other respondents were of the view that any library professional with post-graduate qualification in Library Studies and who works in an academic institution is an academic librarian. This corroborates Singh's view. Like Singh, this definition does not consider anyone with a first degree or Diploma in Librarianship working in an academic institution as an academic librarian. In this case, only those with Master's degrees or better in Library Studies are considered as academic librarians.



The academic librarian therefore goes beyond a mere qualification. The academic librarian must constantly publish to add to the frontiers of knowledge and must be involved in some form of teaching to guide users. According to Kumar and Kumar (2008), there is no doubt that without an academic librarian the quality of teaching and research will suffer considerably. He is a product of a high degree of academic and professional training. He must be recognized as a motivator in student resources' and teaching.

The three different views on academic librarians, as discussed above, are not different with any particular university. The views transcend the libraries of the three public universities which provided the response or the study. The researcher is however aware that in Ghana, the National Council for Tertiary Education has outlined the qualification of an academic librarian, indicating that an academic librarian must be one with a minimum of two years research degree preferably, a Master of Philosophy degree in Library Studies. As a result of this, in recent times all those with Master of Arts degrees in Library Studies are not being recognized as Academic Librarians. This confirms Kumar and Kumar (2008) assertion that, the University Librarian should possess higher degrees in Library and Information Science such as Master or Doctor of Philosophy but the question is how many academic librarians in Ghana have doctoral degrees? Aside the academic qualification, the academic librarian also has to publish in refereed journals to get his or her contract renewed by the University.



5.3 Role of an Academic Library

Libraries are service organizations where individuals, institutions and societies are provided unhindered access to substantial information (Adu, 2008). Academic libraries exist to support the academic community; hence their development is always tied to the development of the institution. Libraries contribute in protecting intellectual outputs by increasing access to this knowledge/information through acquiring, processing, storage and dissemination. According to Alemna (2012) the world's intellectual outputs would be useless or even constitute a nuisance if libraries were not there to gather, analyse, classify, catalogue and provide access to them. This underlines the management of information and knowledge resources. Mabawonku (2002) adds that the functions of librarians include selection, collection, production, documentation, organization, preservation, dissemination and exchange. As information professionals, librarians search for and find information, collect and organize information and, implement systems and vehicles that make information easy to access from long or short-range locations.

To ensure optimum utilization of academic library resources, the materials are organized and arranged in a manner which does not only conform to standards but is understood by users. These include collection development, cataloguing, user education, information literacy course or bibliographic instructions, marketing of the library's resource, reference services and library publications (Mabawonku, 2002).

Ifijeh (2010) posits that to fulfill their mission of supporting the educational objectives of their parent bodies, university libraries carry out the following functions:

- Selection and acquisition of learning resources (both print and non-print)
- Organization of acquired resources (cataloguing and classification)
- Reference and information services
- Documentation and bibliographical services



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- User education programs, including Readers' Advisory Service
- Orientation courses and lectures
- Research support
- Consultancy service
- Administration and management

The empirical study confirmed the above. Specifically, all the thirty (32) respondents across the three public universities agreed with the following:

5.3.1 Identification, Selection and Acquisition of Relevant Materials

All the respondents from the three public university libraries responded that the university libraries identify, select, and acquire relevant materials to support the teaching and learning objectives of their parent institutions. The above confirms the position of Saskatchewan Libraries (2007) that librarians are trained to find and collect all types of information - books, newspapers, magazines, databases, websites, CDs, videos, government publications and any other type of publicly available data. Selection is the core of the collection development process. This function builds the library's collection for a particular community. Aina (2004) stipulates that proper collection must be developed based on the characteristics of the particular user community.

Libraries and librarians have exemplified the ideal of a higher education that combines in depth knowledge with contextualized understanding of different fields and domains. The very fact of developing and managing a collection conferred on librarians a degree of authority and influence in shaping the process of research and education. Faculties have understood well-built collections as a means to enhance their own productivity in teaching and research (ACRL, 2007).

5.3.2 Organisation of Materials for Easy Access

The university library expresses a purpose not just to collect, but also to organize, preserve, and make knowledge accessible. As higher education in Africa evolved





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through recent decades, college and university libraries also have forged pathways to serve faculty and students more effectively (ACRL, 2007). The invention of printing in the mid-15th century, the wide distribution of books by the 16th century, the growth of literacy among the middle classes in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the 19th century's mass education movement increased both the amount and the demand for information. The invention of electronic media especially the Internet has contributed immensely to the information explosion (Ifijeh, 2010). Data from the top 15 producing countries reveals that book production increased by 50% between 1985 and 1996 (Ifijeh, 2010). These have had ripple effects on university libraries collections.

The university libraries usually have large collections and users often times get lost, confused and perplexed when using the library resource. The role of academic librarians is to organize the collections in such a way that users would easily get what they want at the right time. As shall be seen latter, this study has established that all the three public university libraries catalogued and classified their collections using the Library of Congress Subject Headings and Library of Congress Classification Scheme. The list of subject headings allows cataloguers to assign key words within control vocabulary and enable users to know if a document on a name subject is available in the library. Library of Congress Classification Scheme is used to arrange and retrieve the document on the shelves. The two complement each other.

Below is a comment by one of the respondents:

In my area of expertise (cataloguing), it is important to understand the whole library structure as much as possible. A lot of my work involves using judgment to connect resources in the best way possible so that patrons and library workers can find them. (Assistant Librarian, University A, 8 May, 2015).

Part of a library's function has always been to guide users to information (ACRL, 2007).

5.3.3 User Education Programmes

User education is defined as various formal and informal programmes of instruction, education and exploration provided by libraries to users to guide and instruct users and enable them make more effective, efficient and independent use of the information resources and services that libraries provide (Suleiman, 2012). The above definition is anachronistic but still relevant today. Therefore it has been adopted in this study.

Students especially those from developing countries enter university with little or no knowledge on basic library tools, procedures or terminology. Suleiman (2012), cited Prorak (1994) who examined user education for music students, found a significant relationship between user education and students' grade. To help students effectively use the library, the researcher made an enquiry about various programs academic libraries offer to help students in the use of the library.

The study revealed that all the universities have various programs that they provide to introduce the library and its resources to the students. This is called Library orientation. At the beginning of every academic year, the three public university libraries, as the study revealed, organize library orientation for all new students, in the form of lectures followed by demonstrations and guided tours. The main lecture is given by the University Librarian or his or her representative at the Fresh Students Orientation at the beginning of the academic year. The Librarian highlights the importance of the library in the university setting and discusses different information formats and how they are organized in the library. The Librarian explains library rules and regulations, opening hours, borrowing privileges and procedures, and gives a brief introduction to the classification scheme. After the lecture, senior members of the library take the new students on a guided tour of the library. During the guided tour, library staff introduce the students to the various service points in groups in conformity with the view of





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Agyen-Gyasi (2008) and Sam (2007). As part of the orientation University B, and C, Libraries, have a short documentary on the library; its resources and how to use them.

The investigations also revealed problems with this type of user education that most of the students do not participate because either they report late or are not aware of such programs; the orientation is poorly coordinated or the student population has increased making the orientation unwieldy, a view which is in tandem with the findings of Sam (2007) and Agyen-Gyasi (2008). Again, the students do not pay attention and easily forget whatever information they have been given. Similar to the view of Shrestha (2008), this study has established that during library orientation, students are overloaded with so much information within such a short period of time that the chances of retention and internalization of the new information is quite slim.

During the interviews it came to light that in all the universities, continuing students and other groups of users were given special orientation by the library on request from their Heads of Department.

5.3.4 Information Literacy (IL)

The field work has shown that apart from the library orientations, most university libraries have adopted a more effective method for students and faculty members to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. This goes beyond the information needed for academic work. This method is called Information Literacy (IL). According to the ACRL (2007: 2):

An information literate individual is able to: determine the extent of information needed; access the needed information effectively and efficiently; evaluate information and its sources critically; incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base; use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information; and access and use information ethically and legally.



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Dadzie (2003: 1), the President of the Ghana Library Association in her Inaugural Lecture, posited that:

Today's world requires individuals to be information literate, possessing the skills and abilities to locate, evaluate, use and communicate information in an ethical manner in order to participate in societal affairs and to have an informed opinion about problems occurring locally, nationally or internationally.

Life-long learning encompasses all forms of learning through formal, non-formal and informal settings. Life-long learning can instil creativity, initiative and responsiveness in people enabling them to manage uncertainty, communicate across and within cultures, families and communities. The emphasis on life-long learning is on learning to learn and the ability to keep learning for a lifetime (Dadzie, 2003). IL services and instructions ensure that users are effective in seeking and using information throughout their life time.

The study revealed that the libraries of one of the participating public universities, University C, have embedded IL in their curriculum. The IL course is taught by the library staff. In University C, however, IL is a two credit course, which is compulsory for all Level 100 students in all the faculties. This will help the students to be information literate. An information literate person is able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information.

In the case of University A, IL has not been introduced into its curriculum. It used to be part of communication skills but over time it has been dropped. However, in an emergency meeting of University A's Executive Committee of the Academic Board held on Tuesday 26th August, 2014, approval was granted to set up a Sub-Committee to examine some curriculum issues including the introduction of Information Retrieval



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as a course. For the latter reason, the University Librarian was made a member of that Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee recommended that Information Retrieval course should be taught as a full course with the new name “Information Literacy” (IL). This will be three credit hours. The IL Course will be serviced by the University Library as compulsory for all Level 100 students in all the various faculties/campuses in the 2015/2016 academic year. Subsequently, University A Library has finalized a draft IL curriculum. The curriculum will be presented to Faculty of Faculty of Agribusniss and Communucation Sciences (FACS) for the ratification by the Academic Board. The researcher hopes that this will not be a mirage, considering the importance of IL.

In the case of University B, there are no plans at the moment to introduce IL into their curriculum. According to an informant, the authorities of the institution are of the view that, ‘Academic Writing’, a course for all level 100 students, is enough to fill the IL program. However, the course content of the academic writing has no content for the IL program. The researcher learned from a faculty member from an academic department of University B that IL is a required program for all Level 100 science students. This course is taught by lecturers from the Department. Probably this is the reason why the staff of the library are not aware of it. Bruce’s (1997) research on university students concluded that the students were too inefficient at handling information at their disposal. Thus, she recommended that libraries should launch and design teaching and guidance programs for students in order to increase their information literacy skills. Also, the Library of University B has a Research Commons for its graduate students, where the staff of the library organize information literacy for the students. This is not compulsory but interested students usually avail themselves of this opportunity.

5.3.5 Indexing and Abstracting

According to American National Standards Institute (1984), the American Standard Institution defines an index as a systematic guide to items contained in or concepts derived from a collection; that is documents, or groups of documents, or sets of objects. It is arranged in a known or stated order usually different from that of the items or concepts within the collection itself. *The British Indexing Standard* also defines an index as a systematic arrangement of entries designed to enable the location of information in a document. The above definitions indicate that an index is an information retrieval tool, which helps in the location of information in the quickest possible time. The process of creating an index is called Indexing. There are different types of indexing which include: Book or Back of the Book Index; Author Index, and Subject Index among others. It tells the library user exactly where materials meeting their specific needs can be found with the call number of the book corresponding to the page number in an index.

Respondents from all the three participating public University Libraries confirmed that they use subject indexing to index academic related articles from the newspapers. As a conceptual analysis of the contents of the document, subject indexing involves identifying concepts or ideas and using them to represent topics or subjects in the documents (Tackie, 2010). Indexing allows people to retrieve information easily at the shortest possible time. Usually, it involves the use of abstracts.

An abstract is a concise and accurate representation of the content of a document in a style similar to that of the original document (American National Standards Institute, 1984). Derntl (2014), is of the view that, everything of relevance to potential readers should be in the abstract, everything else not.



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Findings from the study indicate that at the moment, university libraries receive soft copies of theses and dissertations and these come along with the abstracts. As a result, the university libraries no longer do the abstracting themselves. These abstracts are entered into the database system of the library and users are able to access them. American National Standards Institute (1984) posits that abstracts serve as vital tools in document selections and information gathering.

On the whole, the investigations on role of academic libraries in the knowledge production and management revealed that all the three participating academic libraries contribute to knowledge production and management by way of selecting and acquiring relevant materials to support teaching and learning, and assisting users to navigate in the pool of information. Furthermore, the Libraries manage and store collections in various formats; preserve the information in those collections for present and future generations. A librarian once said “a librarian is a signpost in the information jungle, technology jungle and media jungle.” His or her duty is to organize and provide access to information for easy retrieval.

5.4 Information Acquisition Mechanism of Academic Libraries

An academic library book collection should have both depth and breadth because it needs to address a wide range of subjects, and it needs a sufficient number to give those subjects the coverage they deserve (Ishola, 2014). According to Ishola (2014), the primary purpose of university libraries is to support teaching, learning, and research in ways consistent with, and supportive of, the institution's mission and goals. In addition, library resources and services should be sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, and





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currency to support the institution's curriculum. This section looks at how information is acquired in the libraries.

Prytherch (2005) defines acquisition as “the process of obtaining books and other items for a library.” Aina (2004), stipulates that acquisition of library materials can be done in a number of ways. These include purchases, gifts, and donations, and legal deposits. Evans (2000) added that the process of securing materials for the library collection is either by purchase, gifts, or through exchange programs. Acquisition of library materials therefore is the process of locating and obtaining library materials identified as appropriate for collection development. During interviews, respondents said that they get their library materials through purchases, donations, gifts from individuals or organizations and legal deposits. The results are discussed below:

5.4.1 Legal Deposit

Legal deposit is a statutory and government provision which obliges publishers to deposit copies of their publications in certain libraries, usually in the country in which they are published (Tibane, 2010). The aim of legal deposit is to ensure the preservation of and access to a nation's intellectual and cultural heritage over time as well as the holistic assemblage of all published materials from a country in the national library for the use of all the people of that country (Muir, 2001; Lor , 2004). It is the most effective means of ensuring that as much as possible of a country's published output is collected, bibliographically recorded, preserved, and made available for use to serve education, scholarship, research, cultural and economic development, and sound administration, now and in the future.

IFLA (2008: 2) listed a number of benefits a country derives from legal deposit to include:

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- i) Ensuring that copies of all national publications in every kind of media are provided to trusted custodians, legal deposit enables and ensures the comprehensive collection of a nation's documentary heritage;
 - ii) Legal deposit permits comprehensive, standardised cataloguing and recording of publications, to the benefit of libraries, booksellers, publishers, scholars and the general public; and it enables the custodian to serve as the national reference and information centre for study and research on all facets of its national documentary heritage;
 - iii) Legal deposit supports preservation, contributing to the long-term survival of a nation's documentary heritage;
 - iv) Ultimately, legal deposit is fundamental to freedom of information and to the perpetuation of an informed citizenry.

According to Kedem (2012), Ghana's Book and Newspaper Registration Act (1961) requires the registration and deposit of every book, "pamphlet, sheet of letterpress, newspaper, sheet of music, map, chart, or plan." Producers are required to send deposit copies within one month of issue to the Ghana Library Board, now Ghana Library Authority, the University College of the Gold Coast (now University of Ghana), and the Registrar –General. A 1963 amendment increased the number of depositories to include the libraries of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, University of Science and Technology and University of Cape Coast. The deposit must be accompanied by a memorandum containing particulars such as the title of the book, names of the author, translator, editor and the subject matter of the book as well as the name and residence of the proprietor of the copyright or a portion of the copyright. Currently, it is the George Padmore Research Library on Africa Affairs of Ghana Library Authority, which acts as the National Agency for the registration of published books. In Ghana.

It was realized from the study that almost all the university libraries should have been legal deposit centres. However, they hardly or virtually do not receive any publications as such. The three public University Libraries understudy, complained that because



there is no enforcement of the legal deposit law, they are not in the position to arrest publishers who offend the law. This means that the nation will not be in a position to collect and preserve its literary output. A robust and effective system of legal deposit law should exist in every country. Furthermore, there must be a strong cooperation between libraries and other agencies concerned to enforce the law in Ghana. IFLA (2008) posits that Libraries Legal Deposit is most successful when there is close cooperation between the designated national custodians (usually libraries) and those responsible for the deposits (usually publishers or creators). The legal deposit law should also be reviewed to enforce strict sanctions against those who offend the law.

5.4.2 Gifts and Donations

Gifts and donations represent an important component of the collection-building activities of libraries (Cassell, Johnson, Mansfield, & Zhang, 2008). According to Johnson (2009), most support for academic libraries' in America collections comes from gifts of books or donations in United States. Alemna (1996) also opines that due to economic constraints, most of the library materials in Africa come in as donations. For example, the university libraries have been receiving the lowest share of the universities' grants (Alemna, 1996; Bani, 2003; Manuh, Gariba, & Budu, 2007). During the discussion, all the respondents from the three libraries affirmed that they received donations of all kinds from individuals, organisations and corporate entities. Further interactions revealed that most of these donations are junks.

Donations are “two sharp edges”, even though they have contributed in the development of libraries; they have also resulted in a ‘cast off collections’ in our libraries. Pitcher (1976) in a book titled *Knot of Wisdom*, which recounts the history of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology attests to the fact that the University received gifts to commemorate Ghana's independence from a number of





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bodies and some of the books portray the American way of life. Alemna (1996), added that, the results of external aid and acquisition of books through donations have led to a situation whereby collection of books, whatever their merit, have found their way into our libraries'. Some of these collections, he added are out of touch with our local reality. This trend has changed in recent times. All the universities affirmed that for some time now, they purchase more than what they receive as donations.

Follow up discussions revealed that the universities are now able to purchase more as a result of the introduction and the increase of the "library user fees", an amount of money per unit of goods or service produced or provided by the government which is collected from the recipient. Revenues from user fees are usually allocated to a specific fund that goes back into funding the good or service, as opposed to being allocated to general revenue (Farish, 2012). As a result of inadequate funding in most of the University Libraries over the years (Alemna, 1996; Bani, 2003; Ishola, 2014; Manuh et al., 2007). University libraries have been compelled to introduce fee based library services to provide and sustain quality library services to library users (Ishola, 2014).

The investigations for this study revealed that all the three public universities charge "Library user fees" at the beginning of each academic year, which ranges between fifty to one hundred Ghana cedis. These monies are given to the libraries and as a result they have been able to increase their purchasing power. The libraries are able to buy more library material, particularly books instead of mainly depending on donations. Latimer (1996) stipulates that library user fees bring the library useful amount of extra income that is ploughed back into the library service wherever it is needed.

5.4.3 Purchase

Aina (2004) states that a major source of acquisition in libraries is through purchases. Acquiring library materials through purchases is a complex activity in which book vendors and suppliers and subscription agents are involved. According to Plockey and Alemna (2009), direct purchase comes in two modes. The first entails ordering books and other publications through jobbers, vendors, or agents. The investigations revealed that ordering from vendors was better than through the publishers because vendors provide services like electronic ordering, placing standing orders and sometimes do the selection. The second type of direct purchase is purchasing materials at retail bookshops. It is faster and more convenient to purchase from the bookshop even though the price may be higher.

The study revealed that all the libraries use either one of the modes or both modes to acquire their materials. For instance, respondents from University B Library revealed that they have permanent vendors. Many of their purchases are made from recognized sources. Competitive bidding is generally not possible, but vendors providing best services with strong financial background are selected. The *Procurement Act 2003, (Act 633)* of Ghana stipulates that public procurement can be organized either through competition or negotiation. University B has opted for Negotiation Tender.

The procurement Act 663 (2003) of Ghana indicates that a tender may be negotiated with only one supplier/ contractor so that competition is eliminated. Such contracts are usually known as sole sourcing or proprietary. This is subject to specific approval being granted by the Public Procurement Board (PPB), and may be appropriate when: the purchase is for urgently needed products, provided this is restricted to the minimum quantity to meet the urgent need until a purchase by other method can be fulfilled. This





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mode of acquisition is preferred when ordering directly from a publisher for its own publications.

According to the respondents from the University B Library, the acquisition is patron driven therefore they rely on lecturers, students and other recognized patrons to make requests. The theory behind patron driven acquisition is that academic library users are specialists in their fields. Since users are specialists, this model proposes that they are able to decide for themselves which books meet the information needs of practitioners in their respective disciplines (Hussong-Christian & Goergen-Doll, 2010) cited in Smith (2011). The library compiles these lists and when approved by the Vice-Chancellor, the suppliers are charged to supply the books. According to the respondents, because the acquisition is patron driven they have value for money. This implies that whatever they buy in the library is valuable to the library collection. A study by Anderson et al. (2002) revealed that the books ordered under Patron Driven Acquisition seemed to be as valuable to the collection as books acquired through standard channels.

University C, on its part, purchases its materials directly from bookshops on Campus and also through vendors. According to the respondents, they buy directly from bookshops on Campus. They also stated that they buy books whenever there are conferences and where vendors come to display their books. According to the respondents, the purchase is also based on Patron - Driven Acquisitions This is also referred to as Demand – Driven – Acquisitions as already discussed is a method of offering library users a wide range of resources in various formats (e.g., monographs, e-books, journals articles, etc.). This is where the library procures library resources on request to avoid the problem of purchasing items which would never be patronized.

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In all the universities, it was realized that the purchase of library materials largely depends on the recommendation from teaching staff, the library staff and other patrons taking into consideration the various programmes and courses being pursued in the university. The study revealed that the University “A” Library uses the Traditional Collection Development Paradigm whereby librarians frequently remain open to patron input and actively seek out patron opinions about the library collection. According to Smith (2011), one-way library collect this information is by asking faculty what materials they want in the library. Selectors then consider the user input as well as information about the library’s existing materials, collection standards, and the selectors’ own impressions of the collection when choosing new books for the library. By allowing librarians to refer to user interests as well as other collection development mechanisms when purchasing materials, this method ensures that the immediate needs of users will not endanger the long-term balance of the collection Hodges, Preston, and Hamilton (2010). At the same time, by asking library selectors to obtain user opinions, this method allows librarians to tailor the collection to suit local interests (Evans & Saponaro, 2005).

This study further revealed that all the three university libraries under study subscribe to databases through the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH). CARLIGH is the only library consortium in Ghana. It seeks to bring libraries from academic and research institutions together to help harness resources to achieve a common goal of providing adequate information to their users (Dzandza & Alemna, 2011). A Consortium therefore can be equated to communal living in Africa where members of the community live and care for each member in the society. The mission of CARLIGH is to employ collective information resources, available technology, and staff capabilities to improve teaching, learning and research including





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lifelong learning, in member institutions and by extension in Ghana. CARLIGH has successfully negotiated licensing agreements for selected databases and e-journals for users of some academic and research institutes in Ghana including the universities, polytechnics, and research libraries (Agyen-Gyasi, Lamptey, & Frimpong, 2010).

This has been confirmed by University C Library as it has been stated in its Acquisition Policy that the library subscribes to electronic materials and makes them available to faculty, staff and students. Currently, as a member of CARLIGH, the Library subscribes to electronic databases such as Emerald, Ebsco Complete, Wiley, Taylor and Francis, Sage, Sage Knowledge, Sage Research Methods, TEEAL and Cambridge University Press. Subscribing to databases through a Consortium helps the libraries to spend less and get more. According to Dzandza and Alemna (2011), one of the primary purposes of Consortia is the leveraging of library budgets to purchase more resources (mainly digital resources) than could be purchased by any one-member institution.

5.4.4 Other Ways of Knowledge Acquisition in the Library

Academic libraries, apart from buying or receiving library materials as gifts, also, in one way or the other, generate knowledge in the library. Academic libraries through the various activities in the library correspond to the modes in the knowledge management model by Nonaka (1991) namely, Socialisation, Externalisation, Combination and Internalisation (SECI) to generate knowledge (see Chapter Two of this work).

5.4.4.1 Socialisation

During the interactions, it was revealed that all academic libraries used socialisation as an agent to produce and acquire knowledge. Librarians create knowledge when they consult with reference librarians, subject librarians, collection development librarians, or other instructional librarians and even with the teaching staff, students, researchers



and the local community. www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh Through discussions, they share their ideas (i.e., tacit-to-tacit conversion).

Furthermore, the study also revealed that all the libraries organise library seminars, workshops and conferences. These are fora where ideas are shared. For example, according to the respondents from University C Library, any time somebody attends a workshop or seminar outside the institution, the person is obliged to share whatever he/she has learned with colleagues who did not get the opportunity. The same applies to the University A, and B, Libraries. Each library also organises meetings, durbars and end of year parties, among others. These are all forums of socialisation.

Sharing of ideas among members in an organisation is a social norm, which is helpful in making the organizational environment friendlier. Sharing of ideas among members of the community is a useful way for members to learn from one another. According to Daneshgar and Parirokh (2007) the adoption of such approaches will enable all the above people to expand their personal knowledge bases.

5.4.4.2 Externalization

Externalization refers to the transfer of knowledge from the minds of its holders into an external repository in the most efficient way possible. The function of externalization is to provide the sharing of knowledge. Externalisation is based on the conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. In this process, tacit knowledge is codified, sorted, categorised and held in a database or document in order to be reused by others and according to Nonaka (1991) this is known as organisational memory. Organisational memory is a valuable asset for the continuation of an organisation's existence.

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Members from each library acknowledge that they take minutes of meetings, and at times document oral information in a form of research output that becomes available to all librarians. Again each library has written down policies including *Library Annual Reports; Library Guides; and Collection Development Policy*. These are referred to as Externalization. This knowledge is used by others for the development of society as a whole.

5.4.4.3 Combination

Combination refers to the conversion of explicit to explicit knowledge. That is where explicit knowledge is systemised and refined, “combination” knowledge conversion mode produces a new tangible and structured knowledge (Nonaka, 1991)

All the participating libraries generate reports, and users’ statistics. They also prepare Library Guides and Manuals, among others. These are revised at times to create new knowledge. Librarians, according to my respondents from the various institutions, attend conferences, workshops, seminars, discussion sessions, meetings and also come out with professional publications. These enable them to get opportunities to analyse and assess their knowledge, increase their thinking abilities to create new knowledge. They are able to internalise whatever knowledge they acquire in their mind and put it into practice.

All forms of knowledge are critical for business growth and decision making capabilities of the organization. The knowledge can be tacit (in minds of individuals) or explicit (example in electronic form in databases and repositories or print). It is important to consolidate and integrate the knowledge (in whatever form) in the organization so that people can use it to take appropriate actions.



Makhubela (1990) has stated that the library is the site of knowledge production. As such libraries need to be centers for knowledge production not just knowledge management and consumption. Knowledge production is one of the best solutions to maintain the library profession in this digital age. This has also been collaborated by Alemna (1993), when he stated that librarians have entered a new dimension of librarianship that transcends the traditional trinity of acquisition, selection and dissemination. They have moved into the creation and generation of information. Example coming out with publications and manuals for the library.

5.4.5 Challenges of Acquiring Library Materials

Acquisition of library materials operates within the constraints of certain conditions that vary from one place to the other and from time to time. According to Magrill and Hickey (1984), the key challenges of acquiring library materials include: community of institution, poor communication and inadequate funding. Agyen-Gyasi and et al. (2010) further indicate that academic libraries in Ghana face several challenges including increasing costs of materials and limited budget (that reduce the amount of materials to be acquired). However, the respondents from all the four university libraries lamented on the delay in the procurement process due to the Ghana Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 633). For example, one respondent from University B Library laments that:

The Act does not favor the university at all. At the moment some departments are not buying. The reason being that, a big university like, the University C, with many Colleges and Departments; it is only the Vice – Chancellor who can give approval for the purchase of books. This delays the procurement process (Assistant Librarian, Interview, 10 May 2015).

This sentiment corroborates Agyen-Gyasi, et al. (2010) assertion that the procurement processes are cumbersome. In the big universities the librarian should be allowed to purchase some amount of books.



Similar sentiments are shared by the respondents from University A, and C Libraries. They called for a review in the Procurement Law to allow other Key Officers like the Provost, and Deans to give approval for the library to purchase books on their behalf. Event though some of the key officers have threshold to spend, it can be increased when it comes to purchasing of books for the library.

Another challenge to the acquisition of materials in the library identified by this study is inadequate funding. Academic libraries in Ghana over the years have received the lowest share of the university budget. Alemna (1996), Bani (2003) and Manuh, Gariba and Budu (2007) support this view, attributing it to the economic recession of most African countries and especially in Ghana in recent times. While establishing these financial inadequacies, the study revealed that the libraries are able to purchase more materials due to the introduction of the Library User Fees. The respondents from University B Library also complained about the difficulty in the clearing of books from the port. According to the respondents the clearing process is frustrating as it can take months to clear a container of books from the port.

5.5 Codification of Library Materials

Chan (2007) defines codes as numbers, letters and other symbols used to represent the main and subordinate divisions of a classification scheme. Aina (2004) states that a code is a short hand way of representing the various subject headings used in describing the subject content of information resources. Codes are symbols which stand for the divisions in a scheme of classification. Codes are important in offering an ordering and also act as the vital link between the schedules in the classification schemes, the printed and published index to the schedules of classification, the classified sequence in a





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catalogue or index, and the classified order adopted for document arrangement (Plockey & Alemna, 2009).

Maltby (1978) posits that classification is the systematic arrangement by subject of books and other materials on shelves or of catalogue and index entries in a manner which is most useful to those who read or who seek a definite piece of information. Classification according to Prytherch (2005), is the arrangement of things in logical order according to their degree of likeness, especially the arrangement of books in their proper places in the scheme of book classification. Classification plays a crucial role in the organisation of information materials. Classification or applying a code to library materials serves as the key to knowledge.

Classification therefore provides a controlled order of academic disciplines. A classification system uses letters and/or numbers (call numbers) to arrange the books so that books on the same topic are together. Plockey & Alemna (2009), posits that, classification fosters direct and efficient searching at either the catalogue because of the classified order of the records or at the shelf where the materials are stored.

There are several classification schemes in use including Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC), Universal Decimal Classification (UDC), Colon Classification, (CC) and Bibliographic Classification (BC). However, this study revealed that all the academic libraries in Ghana use the Library of Congress Classification (LCC) and Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). However, the respondents attested to the fact that due to the large collections of the university libraries it was very convenient to use Library of Congress Classification scheme. The following statement by a respondent from the University B Library illustrates the above point. The respondent said: *The Library of Congress Classification Scheme is used in classifying the books and their*



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 arrangements on the shelves. Thus, the books have class numbers which are alphanumeric (Assistant Librarian, Interview, 2015). This confirms the assertion of Plockey and Alemna (2009) and Oyeniran (2010) that the Library of Congress Classification scheme was designed for the Library of Congress in America to organise their materials during 1899 and 1939. Nevertheless, other libraries have adopted the scheme. This is because the scheme is well suited for large general libraries, especially those that have been established for research purposes including university libraries. In addition, it is a fact that the Library of Congress Classification is the preferred classification system for many academic libraries.

The Library of Congress Classification Scheme (LC) divides the field of knowledge into twenty large classes with an additional class on general works. The Scheme uses a mixture of English Alphabets (Upper case) and Arabic Numerals as class numbers. An example is: HB71. Each Library of Congress classification is represented by a set of capital letters and numbers. The first letter in the set indicates one of 21 major areas of knowledge and this is presented below:

- A -- General Works
- B -- Philosophy, psychology, and religion
- C -- History: Auxiliary Sciences
- D -- History: General and Old World
- E -- History: America and U.S., general
- F -- History: America and U.S., local
- G -- Geography, Anthropology, Folklore, etc.
- H -- Social Sciences, Economics, Business, Sociology
- J -- Political Sciences
- K -- Law
- L -- Education
- M -- Music
- N -- Fine arts
- P -- Philology, Linguistics, Language, and Literature
- Q -- Science
- R -- Medicine
- S -- Agriculture
- T -- Technology

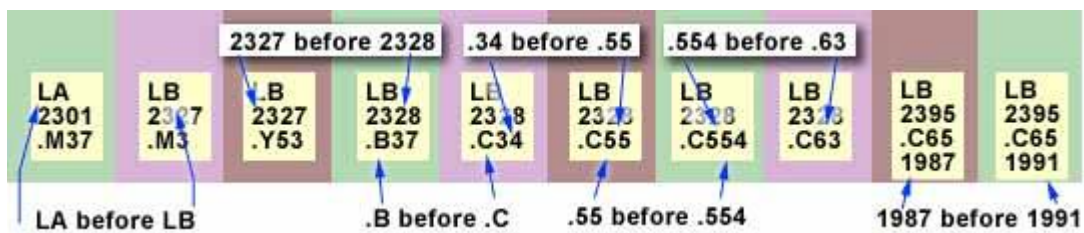
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U -- Military Science
V -- Naval science
Z -- Bibliography and Library Science
I, O, X, and Y are not used

(Source: <http://www.library.illinois.edu/learn/intro/organization.html>)

The HB71 is thus Economics.

Every item in the library has a specific label with a call number that is unique to that item. Below is an example of LC classification and how it appears on the shelf.



(Source: <http://www.library.illinois.edu/learn/intro/organization.html>)

Classification is done in two ways, original classification and copying. Original classification refers to in-house and step by step classification. Copy classification refers to the adoption of class number from database for classification.

The study revealed that all the universities do both original and copy classification. According to all the respondents from the three public universities, they subscribe to Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) catalogue through the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH). The OCLC's WorldCat Database functions as a collective catalog of thousands of libraries around the world. A subscription version of WorldCat is available at some public libraries and many academic libraries, while a free version is available on the Web at <http://www.worldcat.org>. It is estimated that more than eighty per cent of any library's classification requirements can be found to a large extent in the WorldCat thus reducing the task of producing original catalogue.





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The respondents explained that to locate a book's Library of Congress classification number or call number when using OCLC, the subscription version of WorldCat will often provide the Library of Congress classification number for that particular book. Both the subscription and free versions list libraries known to hold copies of a book. Search the catalogs of the academic libraries that WorldCat lists as holding a copy of a book to see if any has assigned the book an LCC number. The numbers may vary slightly from one library to another based on local guidelines and standards, but they will give you an idea of the LC classification numbers (and LC call numbers) that libraries have assigned to a specific book. If you are classifying a book, you can use or adapt one of these numbers to suit your local needs.

The respondents further testified that apart from the use of OCLC to classify the library materials; they also make use of Cataloguing in Publication (CIP). A Cataloging in Publication record (CIP) is a bibliographic record prepared by publishers for a book that has not yet been published. When the book is published, the publisher includes the CIP data on the copyright page thereby facilitating book processing for libraries and book dealers. This helps libraries a lot because the class number or the code comes with the book and there is no searching for the class number. However, the classifier must be very careful when copying the class number. He must modify the cutter number to suit local situation.

Original classification involves classifying materials in-house from scratch using the LC subject headings. This is where the material to be classified has not been classified by any other contributing library in the OCLC. The respondents opined that most often, local based or indigenous materials are those that they do not have any records in the WorldCat. All libraries as already discussed, use both copy and original classification and this is confirmed by Chan (2007) who stipulates that, in a given library with general



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collections, it is typical to find a mix of either copy or original classification, with fully original classification restricted to items for which no outside record is available.

The researcher observed that even though the academic libraries in Ghana may differ in physical size, they all use the same basic principles in assigning a code or class number to a book. With this, a user can locate materials in any of these libraries if he understands these principles.

Cataloguing takes precedence over classification of books. It is significant to note that cataloguing and classification go hand in hand. In the view Luther (1949) cataloging and classification are the core of librarianship. As bibliographic description of a document, cataloging provides information such as creator names, titles, and subject terms that describe resources, typically through the creation of bibliographic records. The records serve as surrogates for the stored information resources. The study indicates that the three University libraries use Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). This also follows the same process as the classification. LCSH consist of all the headings established for the documents in the Library. The list of subject headings allows cataloguers to assign key words within control vocabulary and enable users to know if a document on a name subject is available in the library. Library of Congress Classification Scheme is used to retrieve the document on the shelves. The two complement each (Haruna & Oyelekan, 2010).

The information contained in the cataloging record provides the many access points needed by the patron looking for information in the library. Traditionally, the library card catalog provided access by the author's name, the title of an item, and the subject(s) covered in the item. Other points of access were additional authors, and editors' names of series, illustrators, and sometimes the titles of contents.

5.6 Storage of Library Materials

The *Collins Dictionary* defines storage as keeping something in a special place until it is needed. Storage can also be defined as the action or method of storing something for future use. Academic libraries in Ghana store their materials manually or in computer systems depending on the types of materials. Library materials come in different formats. Libraries have books, periodicals, multi-media, and electronic materials. Some are in print or electronic form, or on storage material such as microfilm and tapes. Materials acquired by the library are in the following formats: Books, Serials, Manuscripts, Cartographical materials, Graphic materials, Sound recordings, Motion pictures and video recordings, Microforms and Digital materials. These materials can further be grouped as print and non- print materials. The types of materials available and how they are stored are analysed and discussed below.

5.6.1 Print Media

The print materials are a set of printed sheets of paper bound together along one edge, which are separately published and have a physical existence. They are made up of monographs such as books, pamphlets, serials and theses.

5.6.1.1 Books

According to Aina (2004), a book is defined as any document that has a collection of 49 pages or more that are bound together with a distinctive title. Prytherch (2005) also stipulates that a book is a collection of manuscripts or printed leaves fastened together to form a volume or volumes forming a bibliographic unit. It is distinct from periodicals, and other forms of materials, such as films and print maps.

The study revealed that the bulk of the library materials in all the libraries under study are books. This is in confirmation of the assertion of Agyen-Gyasi et al.(2010) that



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currently, the bulk of the collections in academic libraries in Ghana, in recent times are in print format such as encyclopedias, handbooks, textbooks, journals etc. Both the printed and electronic sources have their usefulness. The print format is convenient to a majority of users Africa because they are easy to use or access. It is a convenient mode of information since it can be moved around and also serves as a very useful backup. University Library C Acquisition Policy indicates that though the University Library is a hybrid library, the majority of its collections are in paper format. The print sources are more comprehensive.

From the investigations, all the universities under study store their books on open shelves and close stacks. Open stack, is a system of library management in which patrons have direct access to stacks or the shelves for browsing (Dictionary. Com). A closed stack library contains books and other items that are not available for viewing or browsing .The user needs to request a book by means of a call number through a library staff (Agyen-Gyasi et al., 2010). Materials at the closed stacks are strictly out of bounds to users and materials requested by readers are therefore retrieved for them by members of staff. Such documents should be used in the reference reading room by readers, who are required to submit their identity cards, as security guarantees to the library staff.

Shelves are manual systems of storage made of wood or steel. Books are stored on their spines and guides and tabs are used to hold the books together. Storing the material on open shelves allows users to have direct access to the materials. Krishan (1987), indicated that books stored on open shelves encourage browsing leading to greater use of such publications.



5.6.1.2 Serials

Serials are any publication issued in successive parts appearing at intervals, and as a rule, intended to be continued indefinitely. The term includes periodicals, journals and magazines, among others. (Prytherch, 2005). These categories of serials are further described by Aina (2004: 77) as:

A periodical is any publication that comes out at regular intervals. It could be weekly, monthly, quarterly, twice a year, or annually. It can be a medium for reporting scholarly research as in journals, or as a news medium such as magazines and newspapers.

A journal is a medium for communicating research findings by scholars. It reports the latest development in the field. It is usually produced by a specialist society, professional association, research institutions or higher advanced institutions.

Magazines generally contain written articles, photographs and advertisements. They are usually popular publications. They also provide information on topical issues.

Academic libraries are required to provide the latest journal titles in all the subjects/courses covered by their parent institutions. Also the staff and students are expected to make use of the serials section of the library to get current information in their chosen fields of study (Ogunniyi et. al., 2011).

Visits to the three libraries under study revealed that all the universities house their serials in a separate room stored on shelves and on racks for those bigger than the size of the shelves. The newspapers, after sometime, are bound together yearly. University B Library stores its bound newspapers in the basement under air-condition.

Serials contain valuable and current information on various disciplines. Serials play an important role in research. According to Nutsukpui (2015) they form the backbone of any academic library because of their nature of informational value. It is therefore not surprising that they are separated from the main collections of the library so as to pay





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special attention to them. Majority of them are in closed stack and one needs an identification to have access to them. Conversely, the ALA (2007), speaks against such restrictions since it is against the Library Bill of Rights. However, if the close access policy is to protect the materials from theft or mutilation, or because of Statutory Authority or Institutional Mandates, then this must be carefully formulated and administered to ensure that they do not violate established principles of accessibility.

Books would seem easy to store and simple to preserve. However, most collections present challenges based simply on their size and the number of items they contain. When combined with considerations about storage space, storage methods, and shelving, the challenges of storing one item among many become complex. Storage and handling methods have a direct impact on the useful life of collections and the accessibility of information.

Aside the use of shelves as storage places, the libraries also use pamphlet boxes, metal cabinets and book cases to store printed materials and documents that cannot stand on the shelves. Groups of pamphlets that are the same size and title can be housed together in custom boxes or wrappers. This strategy is economical and practical for pamphlets that are physically and chemically stable, and for titles that are accessed infrequently.

5.6.2 Non-Print Materials

One of the outcomes of growth of information has been the growing importance of non-book materials as a major storage system. This has been discussed below.

5.6.2.1 Graphic Materials

Graphic materials are non-textual materials. Examples are diagrams, drawings, photographs and graphs. Aina (2004) stipulates that graphic materials are common in the library and they include: photographs, drawings, charts, filmstrips, slides and



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transparencies, realia or real objects like toys, games, puzzles and specimens like animals and coins among others.

All participating university libraries confirmed that they have photographs, maps and drawings. However, a critical observation revealed different things and these are discussed below. University C Library has a special place where it stores its graphic materials called the Gallery. These materials are displayed in the gallery on the shelves and in glass cases. The materials include photographs, drawings, building plans; cloths, caps, cups and exercise books. These materials depict things from various halls, departments and faculties of the parent institutions. Users are allowed to go there with no restrictions. So far, it is the only Library among the three academic libraries understudied that had an organised place for its graphic materials.

Respondents from University B Library gave diverse views regarding the types of graphic materials available in that Library. For example, while some said they had photographs as part of the collections, others said there are no photographs. A close examination of the collections, at the Library confirmed that the Library did not have photographs. This inconsistency tends to show that the staff do not know their collections very well. How well a university library is able to render effective information services has functional relation with the awareness of resources available at its disposal. The observation also revealed that University B library has “busts” which are bronze statutes, of famous people. These are also stored in the basement under air-condition.

University “A” Library, on its part, had photographs and maps as graphic materials. The maps were stored in the open shelves, while the photographs were stored in an album. Unfortunately, the photographs were not catalogued as such it was not

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accessible to the general public. The reason given was that they did not consider the pictures as part of the library collections. According to Balloffet, Hille, and Reed (2005) albums, pamphlet boxes, envelopes and folders are used to store library and archival materials.

5.6.2.2 Electronic Resources

Advances in computer applications during the past few decades have brought radical changes in the way information is gathered, stored, organized, accessed, retrieved and consumed. The application of computers in information processing has brought several products and services to the scene (Sharma, 2009). An “electronic resource ” is defined as any work encoded and made available for access through the use of a computer. It includes electronic data available by (1) remote access and (2) direct access (fixed media). In other words: Remote access (electronic resources) refers to the use of electronic resources via computer networks (Library of Congress, 2008). Direct Access (electronic resources) refers to the use of electronic resources via carriers (e.g., discs/disks, cassettes, cartridges) designed to be inserted into a computerized device or its auxiliary equipment (Library of Congress, 2008). An electronic resource is therefore any information source that the library provides access to in an electronic format. The major advantages as highlighted by Sharma (2009: 1) are indicated below:

The Internet and the Web are constantly influencing the development of new modes of scholarly communication; their potential for delivering goods is quite vast, as they overcome successfully the geographical limitations associated with the print media. Further, the distribution time between product publication and its delivery has been drastically reduced. The Internet can be used for efficient retrieval and meeting information needs. This is very important for university libraries since most of them call for more and more research work. This important fact is convincing many libraries to move towards digital e-resources, which are found to be less expensive and more useful for easy access. This is especially helpful to distant learners who have limited time to access the libraries from



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outside by dial-up access to commonly available electronic resources, mainly CD-ROM, OPACs and Internet, which are replacing the print media

The study established that all the University Libraries under study have e-resources. This is in line with Sharma (2009) study which indicates that, the availability of e-resources in a university library is very common. In all the study sites, there are special units for the e-resource materials called the Electronic Support Unit. This Unit, in all the universities, is responsible for the e-resources. The e-resources storage materials include sound tapes, and electronic stored information such as CD ROMs and computer discs. The problem with these storage devices is that they face many threats including technological obsolescence and the deterioration of digital storage media. According to Yuan and Meghan (2011), the irony, is that, as libraries' capacity to record information has increased exponentially over time, the longevity of the media used to store the information has also decreased exponentially. For example, illuminated manuscripts have lasted for over 1000 years, but a CD will degrade in as little as 15 years.

Further investigations revealed that all the libraries have or are in the process of digitizing or reformatting some of their library materials which include theses, seminar proceedings, and publications from lecturers. This is in conformity with University C Library's policy that as the use of digital collections in higher education increases, the library will need to digitize more materials in order to support the mission of the University and the Library.



5.7 Media and Forms of Dissemination

According to Harmsworth, Turpin, Rees, and Pell (2000: 3) the term dissemination can be described as the “delivering and receiving of a message”, “the engagement of an individual in a process” and “the transfer of a process or product.” Libraries and information centres are important agents for information dissemination (Olaifa & Oyeniyi, 2014). The duties of academic libraries are integrally tied to the world of scholarly research. By organizing, disseminating and providing access to information, libraries act as gatekeepers of knowledge for countless students, researchers and professors (Sugimoto et. al., 2014). Oluwaseun (2012), shared similar sentiments when he stipulates that, the function of a library or information centre is to identify, select, acquire, organize, and provide information resources in the right formats for prompt dissemination at all times to the various stakeholders for the purpose of educating, empowering and taking decisions. ACRL (2007) adds that part of academic and research libraries’ role is to help library users to access information and also to provide members of an academic community with tools for critical thinking. The conceptual tools libraries provide could lead seekers of knowledge to resources both within and beyond the library’s own walls (ACRL, 2007).

Harmsworth and associates (2000) posit that one will need to adopt a multi-strand approach to dissemination to ensure one’s efforts are effective and this may include: Mailing lists, Newsletters, Briefings, Conferences, E-mail, Reports, Workshops, One-to-one, Websites, Roadshows and Media. Agyen-Gyasi and associates. (2010) also stipulate that Library publications such as “Readers Guides,” “Library Bulletin’s,” “Accessions lists”, “User education” and ICT can be used as tools to disseminate information to library users.





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Academic libraries play a major role in disseminating information to educate and inform focused groups of users on social, economic and educational issues, problems, and opportunities of interest to them. The results from the study on the media used by the academic libraries to disseminate information to their users have been grouped into themes, analyzed and presented below:

5.7.1 Library Publications

According to Agyen-Gyasi et al. (2010), library publications are an effective means through which the libraries can market their resources to users. Among such publications are *Readers Guide*, *Library Bulletin* and *Accessions Lists*.

Among all the three libraries under studied, newly registered users were given copies of their *Readers Guide*. This has been corroborated by Agyen-Gyasi et. al. (2010), assertion that, University libraries in Ghana give their newly registered users copies of their *Readers Guide*. *Readers Guide* includes information on the layout of the library, opening and closing hours, names and designations of the professional staff, organization of the library, rules and regulations, registration procedures, borrowing privileges and procedures and how to use the catalogue. The *Library Guide* is an important document because it introduces the new user to the library resources and most importantly, it makes the user aware of the library rules and regulations. According to Agyen-Gyasi et. al. (2010) *Readers Guide* is a very important publication because no library's service is complete without its guide that provides information about its resources and the way to make optimal use of them.

The *Library Bulletin* is a publication that reports on the policies, programs and events of the Library. The *Library Bulletin* includes new services and staff matters like promotions and resignations, and becomes useful and relevant if it is timely and



regularly published. www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh Agyen-Gyasi et al. (2010) stated that all the public university libraries with the exception of the University “A” Library had suspended or infrequently published their bulletins mainly due to financial constraints. However, my interactions with members of the library staff indicated that the University “A” Library had also suspended the publication of this very important document thereby contradicting Agyen-Gyasi et al. (2010) findings.

An *Accessions List* keeps track of a library’s recently cataloged titles, and produces complete lists of volumes of a given library. Agyen-Gyasi et al. (2010), state that, the *Accession List* gives details of the materials that have been processed and added to a library’s stock over a defined period. It is a way of marketing the resources in a particular library which could be either print or electronic.

The study revealed that, all the libraries under study produce accessions lists. The accessions lists can provide a number of books available in a library. This is a good way of knowing how many volumes a particular library has.

5.7.2 Websites

A website is a group of World Wide Web pages usually containing hyperlinks to each other and made available online by an individual, company, educational institution, government, or organization. Beal and Dissanayake (1986) contends that a website is a site (location) on the World Wide Web. Each Website contains a home page, which is the first document users see when they enter the site. The site might also contain additional documents and files. Each site is owned and managed by an individual, company or organization.

Bhattacharya (2010) stipulates that in recent time websites of organizations have become one of the most important vehicles for information dissemination. This is



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because the web is a highly cost effective medium of dissemination from the point of view of an organization. From the users perspective also, access to the information in the web is quick and simultaneous. Especially, when quick interaction with the information provider is necessary, the web is one of the best media.

However, your target audiences need to know it is there and have to be interested enough to visit the site in the first place. Once you have attracted them to the site you then have to find ways of ensuring they visit the site regularly from thereon. Your website can be publicized via your newsletter, briefings, brochures and mail base lists. Make sure your site merits return visits by keeping it updated and by flagging up interesting items on the home page so that the user can see immediately that there is something new for him to look at. Be aware that keeping records of hits to your website is only useful if you can be sure that users are actively searching and using the website (Harmsworth et al., 2000).

A search on the Internet shows that, all the libraries under study have websites. However, the extent and the degree of information differ. For example, University Libraries B and C had websites with extensive information about the library, rules and regulations, services, collections, Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC); and other information resources as well as “New Arrivals.” This is very important since most academic libraries allow users to access their online holdings around the clock and remotely, whether they are in their halls, laboratory, offices or at home. As these resources continue to grow, patrons will spend less time making trips to the physical libraries, giving them time to do other things. This is in line with Harmsworth et al. (2000) assertion that, your target audiences need to know that the websites are there and have to be interested enough to visit the site, in the first place. Once you have attracted them to the site you then have to find ways of ensuring they visit the site

regularly from thereon. www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh Website notifies audience about the resources and services which the libraries offer, in a preferential fashion to the university community. The news and bibliographic novelty sections aim to keep the users informed.

University B Library, according to one interviewee, contended that, it has a platform on the website titled “Ask the Librarian.” This is an interactive service where users interact with the Librarian from any location and the users get answers to their questions. This is in line with Bhattacharya (2010), statement that, access to the information on the web is quick and simultaneous. Especially, when quick interaction with the information provider is necessary, the web is one of the best media.

University “A” Library website is unfortunately nothing to write home about. It is not interesting to warrant visits by users since there is not enough information about the Library’s activities and services.

5.7.3 Institutional Repository (IR)

ACRL (2007) defines Institutional Repository (IR) as an electronic archive of the scientific and scholarly output of an institution, stored in digital format, where search and recovery are allowed for its subsequent national or international use. Lynch (2003) cited in Bailey (2008:2), expand the definition of IR as...

University-based institutional repository is a set of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members. It is most essentially an organizational commitment to the stewardship of these digital materials, including long-term preservation where appropriate, as well as organization and access or distribution.

IR is therefore an electronic information system that collects, preserves, disseminates and provides access to the intellectual and academic output of the university



www.udsspace.uds.edu.gh community. IR repository contains mechanisms to import, identify, store, preserve, recover and export a set of digital objects, usually from a web portal. IR is a means of scientific communication, but it cannot be understood as a publication channel; it must be understood as a complement to the process of scientific publication formalized with peer review (ACRL, 2007).

The numerous benefits of IR, as enumerated by Jain, Sandhu, and Sidhu (2007, p. 4), include:

- i) Increasing visibility and prestige. IR may be used to support marketing activities to attract high quality staff, students and funding.
- ii) Centralisation and storage of all types of institutional output, including unpublished literature.
- iii) Support for learning and teaching. Links may be made with virtual teaching environments and library catalogue.
- iv) Standardisation of institutional records. The compilation of institutional “CV” and individual dossiers online linked to the full text of articles becomes possible.
- v) Promotion of the philosophy of wider communication.

These benefits and many more prompted the researcher to find if academic libraries in Ghana have IR as a study conducted by Agyen-Gyasi et al. (2010) concluded that at the time of the study there was no academic library in Ghana with exception of University B that has an open access institutional repository. However, this study shows that all the university libraries under study have IR. This presupposes that within five years of the study by Agyen-Gyasi et al. (2010), other universities have recognized the importance of IR and have all established one. IR is an effective means of sharing research information/output with the world, since it is mostly on open access and so institutions that have limited funding and cannot maintain library collection can also have access to critical information.

5.7.4 Mailing List

A mailing list is a group of e-mail addresses identified by a single name or single ID. When an e-mail message is sent on this ID/name, it is automatically forwarded to all the addresses on the list (Pujar et al., 2003). Pujar and associates (2003) acknowledge that mailing lists, which are the by-products of the internet, serve as important tools for collaborating research and professional activities among faculty, scientists, researchers and students. These provide means for a group of users to establish an e-mail forum on any topic of common interest. Mailing lists enable members to exchange information or make queries about specific topics with all the other members of the group. According to Harmsworth et al. (2000), the vast majority of people involved in learning and teaching within higher education are members of at least one mailbase discussion list and this can be a very effective way of communicating with your target audiences. Depending on the nature of your group, you may be able to engage people in lively, active discussions around topics that you have introduced relating to the work of your project.

Mailing lists help librarians in information dissemination to their members and professionals alike. The information could be about library services, products, newsletter, events and placements. These also help to a greater extent in knowledge and resource sharing activities among librarians (Pujar et al., 2003). Agyen-Gyasi et al (2010) added that electronic mails (e-mails) could also be used in Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) and other alerting services where a large proportion of the users are on e-mail since it is an easy way of reaching them, quickly and cheaply.

The study indicated that all the libraries under study use mailing lists to communicate with their users. This is in confirmation to Plockey and Alemna (2009) and Agyen-Gyasi et al. (2010), assertion that, University “B” Library and University “A” Library





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for example, use e-mails to transmit information to students and lecturers. However, the reality is that, most of the users do not check their mail on time. Also, the unreliable supply of electricity and Internet connectivity make it difficult for users to check their mails frequently.

5.7.5 User Education and Information Literacy (IL)

The library also disseminates information during orientations and the teaching of IL programs in their respective institutions (see Section 4.2). User education and IL are essential. They help publicize library services and improve the image of the library. During orientation and the teaching of IL, students are exposed to the arrangement of the library, the location of the various collections and service points, the nature of the classification scheme used and the catalogues. The various library products are also explained. Other relevant information on the library including the membership, registration procedure, borrowing privileges and the rules and regulations governing the use of the various libraries are also highlighted.

5.7.6 Face to Face Communication

Zeldin (1998) defined conversation in the creation of knowledge as:

a meeting of minds with different memories and habits. When minds meet, they do not just exchange facts: they transform them, reshape them, draw different implications from them, and engage in new traits of thought. Conversation does not just reshuffle the cards; it creates new cards.

According to Chaudhry (2005) and Parirokh et al. (2006) the most commonly used channels of communication are face-to-face communication. It therefore means that people are willing to spend more time in knowledge sharing through face-to-face medium.

Interaction with all the respondents from all the four university libraries indicates that the most commonly used method of information sharing is personal conversations with the users and among staff. However, according to Parirokh et al. (2006) the problem with this method of communication is that it is generally considered as a less valid source for capturing knowledge about information needs of users.

5.7.7 Other Media of Information Dissemination

Other information dissemination media employed in the library (as mentioned by the respondents) included socialization and internalization artefacts such as: periodic seminars; reports; conferences; trainer of trainees' workshops; manuals; magazines; and notice boards as well as staff meetings and durbars (fora). The availability of these other channels was confirmed through an interview with the University Librarians and other respondents from the libraries. According to Shanhong (2002) information in academic libraries can be shared through:

- Establishing knowledge links or networking with other libraries and institutions of all kinds;
- attending training programmes, conferences, seminars and workshops;
- subscribing to listserv online or virtual communities of practice; and
- buying knowledge products or resources in the form of manuals, blueprints, reports and research reports.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has revealed the complex systems, strategies and media used in the knowledge management processes of academic libraries. It also shows trends of increasing sophistication as complied by an age of digitization offered by information and communication technology. Compared to chapter five, which focused on the living



libraries of Dagbon, which also exhibited their complexities and sophistications in their own right, one can see clear disparities in their knowledge management systems and processes. However, what is also glaring, as argued in earlier analysis, is the need for the two to benefit from each other. The challenge for this study, which is taken up in the next chapter, is how to integrate the two systems for the greater good. Hence, the next Chapter explores possibilities and opportunities for cross-learning for development.



ENDOGENISING THE GHANAIAN ACADEMIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

6.1 Introduction

As a sequel of empirical studies captured in the previous chapters, this chapter makes proposals for endogenising Ghanaian Academic Library Systems. The chapter is divided into three sections. This first section examines the divergences between the Living Libraries (*baansi*) and the Academic Libraries while the second and third delineate the commonalities between the Living Libraries and Academic Libraries as points of convergence. In effect, this chapter provides a synthesis of the immediate preceding two chapters as a way of seeking out possibilities and options for the fostering of the co-evolution of the two knowledge production systems: the living libraries (*baansi*) of Dagbon and the academic libraries in Ghana.

6.2 Divergences between the Living Libraries and the Academic Libraries

Indigenous knowledge is different from Western or conventional knowledge (CK) in many ways. As Nyamnjoh (2004) has intimated, indigenous knowledge creates room for why questions and for magical interpretation where there is no obvious reality. The basis of such IK will be unacceptable in conventional knowledge. This study has been interested in examining the differences between the IK-based Living Libraries of Dagbon (*baansi*) and the CK-based Academic Libraries. Some of the main difference found are examined below.

6.2.1 Structure

The *baansi*, traditional historians and knowledge producers and holders of Dagbon, who are often referred to as ‘walking libraries’ (living libraries) and academic libraries





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are both storehouses of knowledge. Whereas the latter is a building containing prints and electronic materials, the former takes the form of human beings who commit the knowledge of their community into memory. According to Heng (2013) a library is influenced by its environment and so it defines itself through the collection of knowledge for education, research and politics. If the library is not a mere collection of books and other reading materials, it should include other forms of storing information which if not consulted may not provide a holistic picture of the history of a people. Human libraries such as the living libraries of Dagbon symbolize consciousness. They represent knowledge that is directly embodied in real time interactions rather than that disembodied and aggregated in fixed print or electronics as exhibited by academic libraries.

Human libraries show us a way to deconstruct the legitimacy of power and status manifested in static containers “in the stacks” by academic libraries. The interplay between people in conversation is truly a subjective event. Proponents of IK do not propose to replace recorded information with human libraries, but to complement it with voices that have not yet been recorded. Libraries must find ways to let students interact with traditional leaders (elders) under the same roof (mental and physical) along with books and traditional academic sources (Shannon & Bossaller, 2015). Wise (1985), as cited in Nyana (2009), challenged African libraries/librarians to stop thinking of the library as a building with books and rather to try to borrow from the reading culture what is relevant for oral culture.

6.2.2 Qualification

The *baansi* as professionals acquire their status by birth encumbered with hands-on training while the qualification to become an academic librarian is solely by training, an academic proviso. Becoming a drummer in Dagbon, for instance is not by choice

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but a social obligation. This means that the *baansi* do not have the luxury of choice and no matter inherent gift, they must stay in the practice as a family tradition. On the other hand, academic librarians are highly educated and technology savvy professionals with many holding postgraduate degrees.

Unlike the *baansi*, academic librarianship is not hereditary or mandatory but by choice. People choose to become academic librarians through either self-interest or recommendations. However, regardless of the differences in the mode and means of qualification of the *baansi* or academic librarians, they are both knowledgeable in their chosen profession. As such, they could work together with mutual respect. This will help to demystify the myth that professors are only found in universities because oral communities also are fertile grounds for cultural professors and also ethno-philosophers.

6.2.3 Boundaries

The knowledge realm of the *baansi* is some how boundless while academic libraries are confined to demarcated spaces in their parent institutions. Academic libraries exist in academic institutions for academic work while the *baansi* exist in society and for social living. For instance, academic libraries provide information to only those in the academic institution and this is confirmed by Shannon and Bossaller (2015), when he stated that librarians work within boundaries. However, the *baansi* provide information to the general public and also to those who may be interested. For example, the music and performances of the *baansi* serve as the magnet that attracts people to events, private and public, sacred or secular, royal or common as well as provides social commentary. In other words, the *baansi* serve diverse manner of people of varying persuasions, both the lettered and unlettered. However, the academic libraries serve only the lettered class thereby leaving those who are unlettered.



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Again, the *baansi* are able to perform everywhere and every time. They are mobile, unlike the academic libraries which are confined to the academic institutions. That is to say the *baansi* are able to bring their services to the doorsteps of their clients. That is why they are also referred to as *walking librarians' or moving encyclopedias*. For example, the *baansi* are able to travel to different places to perform whereas the academic libraries are restricted in their movement. A user will have to travel to the Academic Library or have access to a password before he/she can have access to the materials in the libraries.

Furthermore, one of the differences which clearly stand out in the study is that while the *baansi* are relatively flexible, adaptive to the local needs and responsive to social circumstances, academic libraries are restricted to only those in the academy. The *baansi*, as communicators, affect their audiences, especially the royalty as they celebrate and present in ceremonies where they perform. For example, when the *baansi* perform, their emotional impact on the listeners often takes the form of assent, smile, nod, sway, dance or mimic, depending on what meaning is communicated and/or appreciated in the community.

Despite these differences discussed, the *baansi* and the academic libraries can still work together. Academic libraries can transcend their boundaries and reach out to the unlettered class. The services of the academic library can be designed in a way to accommodate both lettered and unlettered. In an earlier study by Plockey (2012), academic libraries were found to be critical contributors to knowledge generation for serving a wide variety of information seekers. They do this by ensuring that users are able to access relevant information irrespective of the heterogeneity of sources and formats including indigenous knowledge.



Amadi (1981), cited in Alemna (1993), advocates for 'barefoot librarians.' A barefoot librarian would be a trained professional, also with adequate formal instruction in AIK, who would go out to targeted locations in rural areas to solicit for and make their knowledge available in the repositories of traditional information. In this way, librarians will be generating much needed research materials of interest to scholars of ethno and indigenous studies. They would also assist greatly in the reconstruction and dissemination of our cultural and ethnic histories by helping to put them in forms that would make them more accessible and available.

6.2.4 Training

Training in the case of *baansi* is open while that of academic library is time-bound. Open learning is a system where there are variety of ways to learning opportunities to a diverse range of learners. In open learning, the method of teaching is flexible and there are no time bounds. Open learning is associated with lifelong learning.

The *baansi* traditional learning is a lifelong learning. Once you are born into it, you continue learning till you die. Chernoff (1979: 101) confirms that "drumming has no end." This is contrary to that of the academic library which is time-bound. The training of librarians is for a period depending on the level of qualification beyond which they might only be improving themselves and work.

One other difference is that the training of the *baansi* starts is lifelong whereas, that of the academic librarians starts from adulthood. The *baansi* retinue often comprises of performers of a wide age range. Indeed, the training of those who can truly call themselves academic librarian is from the postgraduate level. In the case of the latter, one must be an adult to decide to be trained to become an academic librarian. This means that for Academic Libraries training does not start from childhood as is the case





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of the *baansi*. That is *baansi* training is a lifelong process while that of academic librarianship starts from adulthood and may continue through life or not.

The training method of the *baansi* is holistic whereas that of the academic libraries is reductionist. Holistic education is based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace (Miller, 2000). The reductionist approach focus on logic and objectivity with on regards to spirituality. The study revealed that the knowledge acquisition of the *baansi* involves other knowledge not only from their own family but the entire Dagbon social, economic, political and spiritual knowledge. This is confirmed by Nyamnjoh (2004), when he posits that indigenous knowledge builds bridges between the natural and the supernatural, physical and the metaphysical, rational and irrational, real and unreal, explainable and inexplicable, making it impossible for anything to be one without also being the other.

According to Østreng (2005), the challenge is to find the entry points from where to address the particulars of the system. Consequently, breaking complex systems down into their individual components by the method of reductionism is only a first approximation of the truth, which affords many useful insights. This is the case of the training given to the academic librarians. The training is purely academic and it does not take care of the other social aspects of life contrary to that of the training of *baansi*.

Training in academia is designed to prepare people for the world of work; to give them the skill sets that would help them climb up the ladder of material success (Mayes & Forbes, 2005). In other words, it involves breaking the components in parts and



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studying some aspects of the component leaving other important aspects such as health and emotions.

Irrespective of the training differences, the two systems can benefit from each other and this is demonstrated in figure 6.2. According to Woodley (2004), the dichotomy of absolute versus culturally-constructed knowledge is broken down by the understanding of knowledge as effective action in a world that is constituted by engagement within the ecosystem. This approach, based on an awareness of the complexity and variability of epistemology, places all knowledge systems within a common conceptual framework for understanding.

6.2.5 Mandate

The *baansi* serve as the “watch dog” of the society as a whole. However, academic libraries are purely established to serve the interest of the academic institutions such as providing access to information for teaching, learning and research. It is the duty of the *baansi* to look out for those who behave in ways outside of accepted social norms and through the use of talk, music and proverbs to remind such persons of what constitutes proper and improper behavior and/or the consequences of improper behaviour by referring to the experiences of some other persons in the past who had behaved in a similar way. On the contrary, academic libraries are information providers and they do not really care about people’s behaviors in the society.

According to Mabawonku (2002), the functions of librarians include selection, collection, production, documentation, organization, preservation, dissemination and exchange of library materials. As information professionals, librarians search for and find information, collect and organize information and, implement systems and vehicles that make information easy to access from long or short-range locations.

6.2.6 Documentations/Collections

The *baansi* deal with unrecorded and unpublished documents, whereas, academic libraries are concerned generally with books and published documents. Academic libraries focus on print collections and on the development of collections of materials that have been published, which means the documents have gone through some kind of review or vetting process. This is supported by Lor (2004) assertion that librarians are generally more comfortable dealing with publications than with unrecorded and unpublished knowledge and library theories and systems are geared mainly to dealing with published documents (also see Shannon and Bossaller, 2015). On the other hand, unrecorded or unpublished documents are not available in print. The *baansi* generate the knowledge themselves and they store it orally and through drum beat, song and gesture.

According to Shannon and Bossaller (2015), collections of textual and visual documents are the physical components of “normal library practice” (with texts being most usual). This leads us to the conclusion that normal library practice, by definition, marginalizes some kinds of information, such as communication between people. Academic libraries also do not typically organize unrecorded communication. Shannon and Bossaller (2015) added that there is a lot of wisdom that is not found in the library stacks. Finding a way to include this into the library’s collection is not only a way to connect library users to the information that they are seeking, but also an act of ‘guerilla librarianship’; a kind of librarianship that liberates knowledge and can connect users to indigenous knowledge.

By making it possible for the seeker of information to interact personally with the person who holds that information, academic libraries can be seen as contributing to increasing understanding and knowledge, and helping people find what they seek.



6.2.7 Scope of Knowledge

The *baansi* are focused on the people of Dagbon, but academic libraries direct their attention to serve the mission and vision of their parent institutions. While the *baansi* are the recorders of history (social, political and economic history) of Dagbon, the role of academic libraries is broader and covers all fields of knowledge. It covers all facets of life and discipline from archeology to zoology (A-Z), depending on the mission and vision of the academic institution.

Complementing the two systems will enrich library collections in general as well as the understanding the concept of the *baansi* for the benefits of the general public in particular. Rouse (1999) posits that, it is valuable to leverage limited resources of partners to obtain greater impact on the ground. Indigenous knowledge presents a calling for librarians to expand the information ecosphere and somehow recognize the value of wisdom and experience (Shannon & Bossaller, 2015).

6.2.8 Methods of Acquisition of Materials

The methods of acquiring materials for the academic library and the *baansi* are different. While knowledge acquisition of the *baansi* is socially constructed, that of the academic library is mechanically constructed. According to *dictionary.com*, social construct is a social mechanism, phenomenon, or category created and developed by society; a perception of an individual, group, or idea that is 'constructed' through cultural or social practice. This makes the knowledge subjective, communal and holistic. For example, the living librarians of Dagbon (*baansi*) acquire their knowledge through oral transmission from one generation to the other. This confirms Moahi (2003) assertion that the daily interaction in life and world is the most basic means of experiencing, teaching and learning.



On the contrary, a mechanical construct is similar to relativist perspectives where knowledge is created and not constructed. Knowledge is considered to be more precise and hence more reliable. Compared to a social construct (as in living libraries), mechanical construct (as in academic libraries) is based on the scientific method of proof and validation, objectivity, individualistic; being able to see something for what it is without personal bias. Academic libraries acquire their materials through purchases, donations, gifts, legal deposits in some few cases, loans, and knowledge sharing. These processes of acquiring materials/information/knowledge in the library have already been discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

Gibbons et al. (1994) acknowledge that knowledge is science, and knowledge producers are scientific but knowledge of the natural world is not confined to science. Human societies all across the globe have developed rich sets of experiences and explanations relating to the environments in which they live. What we need to do is to pursue programmes: creating awareness about the value of IK with the view to decolonize all areas of knowledge productions. As Africanists, we must not only expose the wrongs but also seek alternatives that will make them right. That is, academic professionals need to go beyond their boundaries and embrace other people (non-academic) in their quest to produce knowledge which is socially acceptable.

6.2.9 Storage of Information/Materials

Storage is traditionally soft human media for the *baansi* while academic libraries store in hard and technological media. The *baansi* basically store most of their knowledge in the human memory. Thus, the *baansi* storage system is human dependent. This is contrary to academic libraries where information/knowledge is mostly in text.





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According to Shannon & Bossaller (2015: 219), storage practices “raise issues of secrecy, memory, prestige, and knowledge” and provide insight into what a society values. Storage practices might manifest in a variety of ways. For example, accumulation of certain material objects such as cows and lands might represent status. Physical location of material objects might have social significance. An actual person might also be a container of knowledge and, in such a case, might be spatially or materially identified. The question is, is there a way to house oral knowledge, as well, in the academic library?

Studying sources of knowledge and integrating traditional storage values into the library’s collection provide a bridge between indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge and creates possibilities for a richer and deeper ethic of storage. It validates a wider range of knowledge and potentially gives students a way to conceive other paths of knowing. Shannon and Bossaller (2015: 218) succinctly, put it as:

Their expression of “truth” relates to the idea that what we know, or what we respect, is found in books – that there is a definite way of knowing that can be found “in the stacks” through the lens of positivism. While this is not inherently problematic, their education would be enriched by looking toward grandparents and others who are outside of the center of these institutionalized paths to knowledge. However, such inclusion forces librarians, as well as students, to rethink authority – to expand their conception of truth, to provide academic legitimacy to that wisdom of lived experience.

The differences between the *baansi* and the academic libraries are summarized below in Table 6:1 below.

Table 6. 1 The differences between the *Baansi* and the Academic Libraries

<i>Baansi</i>	Academic Libraries
Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human being 	Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings
Qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hereditary • Mandatory 	Qualification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic qualification • By choice
Boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundless • Movable 	Boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confined to Parent institutions
Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifelong • Starts from Childhood • Method is holistic 	Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time bound • Starts from Adulthood • Method is Reductionist
Mandate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watchdog of the society 	Mandate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support teaching, learning and research
Documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with unpublished and unrecorded documents (oral, signs, drums beats, sound, etc) 	Documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals largely with published documents
Scope of knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social, political and economic history of Dagbon. 	Scope of Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Archeology to Zoology (A-Z) Depending on the mission of the Library
Storage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft and human media 	Storage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard and technological media

(Source: Field Work, 2015)

The analyses so far clearly show that there are divergences between the two library systems: the living (*baansi*) and academic libraries. However, in spite of their differences, they have things in common. These commonalities of convergences are discussed in the next section.



6.3 Convergences between the Living Libraries and Academic Libraries

Mbembe (1997) argues that:

...understanding the visible is hardly complete without investigating the invisible. We misunderstand the world if we consider the obverse and the reverse of the world as two opposite sides, with the former partaking of a 'being there' (real presence) and the latter as 'being elsewhere' or a 'non-being' (irremediable absence) or, worse, of the order of unreality. The obverse and its reverse are also linked by similarities which do not make them mere copies of each other, but which unite and at the same time distinguish themselves according to the 'principle of simultaneous multiplicities' (Nyamnjoh, 2004: 167).

This means that no matter the differences, there are certain things that bind the two knowledge systems together. This has been confirmed by Abah et al (2015: 672) when they state that:

In their nature and structure, both indigenous knowledge and the Western and scientific systems are fundamentally alike. They both consist of complex webs of propositions and interpretations drawn and agreed upon by groups of scientists. Both require some sort of faith, or acceptance of a particular picture of the world and both are socially negotiated pictures of the universe which inform the ongoing life of the society. Each of the knowledge system bears with it certain strengths and limitations. Therefore, it is impossible to say that one system is more suitable to the present educational needs than the other because each system develops certain dimensions of truth at the expense of others.

Agrawal (2009) has added that instead of trying to conflate all non-Western knowledge into a category termed "indigenous", and all Western knowledge into another category, it may be more sensible to accept differences within these categories and also find similarities across them. Thus, this section examines the similarities between academic libraries and the *baansi* as points of convergence which offer opportunities for cross learning and co-evolution.



6.3.1 Knowledge Producers

As already intimated, the *baansi*, like academic libraries, are knowledge producers. The *baansi* according to this study, are holders of cultural wisdom and the socio-political history of the people of Dagbon. Similarly, the academic library is the site of knowledge. As academic libraries support the interest of the parent institution, knowledge produced in the library is geared toward supporting teaching, learning and research in the tertiary educational institutions.

The story, music, drumming and the dance of the *baansi* are central to the knowledge production and dissemination process. Through their stories and teaching the *baansi* produce knowledge. This is very important since generally in Africa, and particularly in Ghana, the transmission of oral culture has been the anchor for sustaining, perpetuating and disseminating information; a means that helps to sustain the collective memory of society from generation to generation (Chisita & Abdullahi, 2015). This also applies to the role of academic libraries relating user education, information literacy, indexing, research and publication, which are processes used to produce knowledge (see Chapter Four). According to Alemna (1993), libraries need to be centers for knowledge production not just knowledge consumption. Knowledge production means the cluster of related activities in the institution such as a University that has to do with producing new knowledge (Bunting & Cloete, 2012).

6.3.2 Knowledge Managers

Both academic libraries and *baansi* are managers of the knowledge they produce. Knowledge Management (KM) is a term which includes deliberate efforts to maximize an organization's performance through creating, sharing and leveraging knowledge and





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The academic libraries are the collectors and stewards of our heritage; they organize the knowledge in the books they collect, adding value by cataloguing, classifying and describing them; they take the knowledge of the past and present, and lay it down for both present and the future. According to Alemna (2012) the world's intellectual outputs would be useless or even constitute a nuisance if libraries were not there to gather, analyse, classify, catalogue and provide access to them. This underpins the management of information and knowledge resources in libraries.

Like academic libraries, *baansi* also organize their knowledge, in the form of ancestral praise poetry. The organisation of the knowledge helps make recall very easy. This has been confirmed by Ngulube (2003), in his position that, using socialization processes and the development of technologies to manage and communicate IK may preserve it without taking it away from the people.

6.3.3 Knowledge/Information Providers

The study revealed that both the academic libraries and the *baansi* of Dagbon are information providers. Knowledge /information providers provide access to knowledge /information to users. Cragan et al. (2008) acknowledge that information providers have research skills and expert knowledge in addition to providing accurate information.



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They also exhibit leadership and communication skills of combing ideas and critically evaluating ideas that are not sound in the database.

The *baansi* of Dagbon use their musical instruments to provide information to their patrons or audiences. In other words, they use their instruments to communicate to and with their patrons/audience. Similarly, one of the core mandates of academic libraries is to provide information to their users. The various activities in the library such as identification, selection and acquisition of relevant materials; organisation of materials for easy access; user education programmes; information literacy; indexing and abstracting; reference and information services (see Chapter 4) are all geared towards providing information to library users.

The question is: is it possible for the *baansi* to become academic library staff? Why not? We need to give voice through our collections. Nakata and Langton (2005) posit that the restoration and maintenance of indigenous knowledge is recognized as a vital ingredient for restoring and maintaining the health and wellbeing of indigenous communities worldwide. The diversity of human knowledge, the utilization of this knowledge by different societies, and the advances of knowledge that comes from scientific endeavor and inquiry will help build a more complete picture of human engagement. Indeed, as part of efforts to promote a literate society and a reading culture, many public libraries today use famous personalities as readers but these are not permanent arrangement. By that action, public libraries realize the need for social interaction, personal touch to promote the usage of their stacks.

6.3.4 Gateway to Knowledge

The study revealed that both the academic library and the *baansi* of Dagbon are gateways to knowledge. Libraries are gateways to knowledge and culture; libraries play

a fundamental role in society. The resources and services they offer create opportunities for learning, supporting literacy and education, and helping shape the new ideas and perspectives that are central to a creative and innovative society. They also help ensure authentic records of knowledge created and accumulated by past generations are preserved and for use. In a world without libraries, it would be difficult to advance research and human knowledge or preserve the world's cumulative knowledge and heritage for future generations (White, 2004). Academic libraries are responsible for preserving and providing access to the scholarly records. For example, academic libraries, in cataloguing and classifying their materials, are able to provide access to countless information that would have been difficult to access by users. The collections that they hold over a period take on cultures on their own as genre. Thus, academic libraries provide access to and promote the discovery and use of local and external information resources. It is not surprising that cataloguing and classification are considered as “key” to unlock information in the library.

Similarly, the *baansi* also act as holder of Dagbon histories. They keep the past of Dagbon in view and in memory. Through drumming, singing, and dancing the *baansi* provide access to information. This shows that both the *baansi* and the academic libraries hold knowledge and provide access to knowledge for their respective users.

6.3.5 Knowledge Expertise

The *baansi* and the academic libraries both exhibit deep knowledge and skills in order to produce, store and share knowledge. Academic libraries are known in their professional knowledge to select, acquire, organize, store and disseminate information to support teaching and learning in the institution and also to provide information literacy to their users. According to Abdulsalami et al. (2013) libraries also engage the services of librarians who are experts at finding and organizing information and at



interpreting information needs. Similarly, the *baansi* are experts in their field. Below is the story of a drummer.

When the researcher asked Yahaya Ziblim, ‘Kpanvo Luna’ (Chief drummer) of Kpanvo how he learned the trade, his response was:

As early as two, I was given an immature drum where I learned how to drum. Then from about age ten, I and others gathered around the compound with our teacher every evening after supper. We were thought the appellations of Dagbon kings and we recited them, starting from our family, the overlord of Dagbon, extending it to other kings till we were able to commit them to memory. This went on for some time, while followed others to social gatherings till I became a master of my own and was appointed “Luna” that is the chief drummer (Lunsi/interview/ 2013).

Currently, he has a lot of drummers under him by virtue of his status as a chief drummer.

He also works with the Centre for National Culture in Tamale. Even though he is illiterate, his boss at the Centre considers him as a professor in his own right. A *baansi* being considered as a professor by his boss means that he is learned and has a lot of knowledge and skills in doing his job.

The above analysis shows that the *baansi* like academic librarians are knowledgeable.

This means they can work together and learn from each other.

6.3.6 Hands-on Experience

The library equally gathers and stores knowledge through constant practice and memorization, which is the same as what the *baansi* do. Constant practice basically means learning by practice. This means that as one practices, the knowledge becomes part of that person and it is difficult to forget. According to Mcknight (n.d), a library skill is a performance art that all library professionals can and must learn, both in principle and in practice. For example, librarians learn the principles of reference interviews in school and develop their skills in practice. Similarly, the study also



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revealed that young and even adult *baansi* of Dagbon acquire and store knowledge by participating in the activities of the adult people. Knowledge is inseparable from practice. This supports the dictum that “practice makes one perfect”

The act of memorization is often a deliberate mental process undertaken in order to store in the memory for a recall. The study indicated that the *baansi* commit their knowledge to memory and transmit it through songs and appellations to the public.

The similarities discussed should make it possible for the academic libraries and the *baansi* to work together and learn from each other. The learning of local people and that of outside supporters are complementary. Outsiders can learn from local people about their worldviews, local resources and concepts and practices, and equally, local people can learn with and from outsiders to improve their own ways of learning, experimenting and also to assess and possibly use relevant information from outside (Haverkort, 2009).

6.3.7 Codification

Like the *baansi* academic libraries also use codes to convey meaning. In the library systems, applying codes to library materials serves as the key to knowledge. This also applies to the *baansi*.

The academic libraries, using Library of Congress Classification Scheme as an example, use a mixture of English alphabets (upper case) and Arabic numerals as class numbers as code to divide the field of knowledge into twenty large classes. Every item in the library has a specific code with a call number that is unique to that item and this helps in arrangement and easy retrieval of the materials in the library. The *baansi* equally use codes. The drum language is basically a special beat played on the drum (including other instrument of communication in Dagbon) which is given a particular



meaning. The dance, gestures, and drum beats are all codes employed by the *baansi* to communicate with their audience. The codes used by the *baansi* entail activities and processes for converting tacit data and information which is possessed by the elders as part of their oral tradition through meaning-making mechanisms that turn them into the knowledge which allows for the transfer into explicit form.

This presupposes that academic libraries and the *baansi* have things in common and they can work together for mutual benefits. Higher education must be made relevant to the material, historical and social realities of the communities. This can be done by drawing on the philosophical traditions and discourses in these communities for relevant concepts and theories (Letsekha, 2013).

6.3.8 Social Growth

Academic libraries like the *baansi* help promote the social wellbeing of the communities they serve. Social development according to Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (2009), is about improving the wellbeing of every individual in society so they can reach their full potential. The primary role of the academic library is to acquire, process, preserve, and disseminate recorded information. Academic libraries inform users and other members of the community they serve by presenting them with accurate information that guides their actions and help make good decisions that promote development. In like manner, *baansi* also provide useful information to their audience, chiefs and elders to make informed decisions about the genealogy and successions of the Dagbon kingship. The *baansi* also preserve this information for future generations. Abdulsalami et al. (2013) stipulate that, the availability and free flow of information bring about knowledge which has great potentials to provide impetus for





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the social, cultural, spiritual, political, economic, scientific and technological advancement of a nation as well as individual growth.

According to Abdulsalami et al. (2013), the library architecture acts as not only a surrounding framework, but also as a healthy “space” where ideas can flourish, live, grow and even be protected. This is evidenced in all the three libraries understudied for this analysis. All their books and other informational resources are ideas from people, some of which date back many centuries but still live on in the collections. Even after the death of great authors their ideas still flourish in books and other information sources. Family members and also entire communities are often proud and share in the joy and satisfaction derived from their books. The *baansi* like the academic libraries preserve the deeds and exploits of the chiefs of Dagbon. Even though some of these chiefs passed away many years ago, the *baansi* through their performances make the chiefs live on in memories of many generations. These examples encourage other chiefs and people to attain certain standards worthy of emulation, thereby promoting social and economic development which enables them to contribute positive ways in the community.

Additionally, academic libraries like the *baansi* provide systems for the regeneration of knowledge. For instance, the three academic libraries understudied for this analysis provide space for students to study and interact. The spaces are enough for individuals and groups to work either independently or in groups and this helps to promote socialization among the users. According to Boakye (2010) this space enhances learning, provides an environment that is both academic and social for students and thereby fostering a sense of community on the university campus. Using the public space around the library as well as inside introduces innovative skills of reuse, regeneration and resiliency (Brawer, 2014). Similarly, the *baansi* also provide space

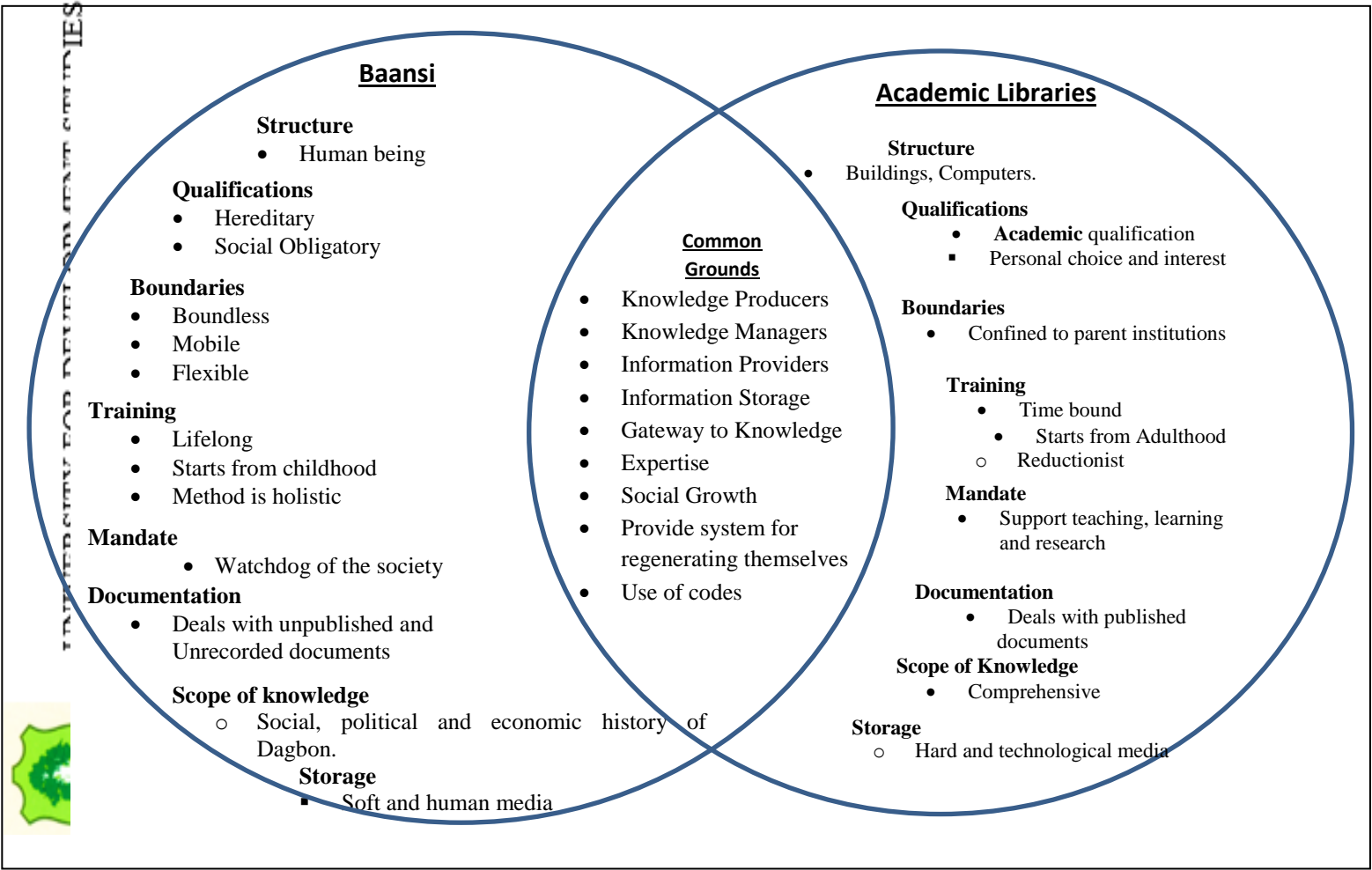
and systems for socialization. For instance, during *Samban Lũa*, and other occasions such as the installation of chiefs and celebration of weddings, they create situations for socialization and exchange of knowledge among members of the *baansi* and the community at large. These systems present new expertise of knowledge and rejuvenation of the community and the individual.

6.4 Synergies for Co-existence?

Both Western and Indigenous knowledge systems represent national resources. Indigenous knowledge frames can complement some of the mechanical and technical precision capabilities of the Western knowledge systems and generate forms of creativity that will benefit and empower everyone (Odora-Hoppers, 2002). According to Mazzocchi (2006), by acknowledging the uniqueness of each knowledge system, we can go well beyond a mere pluralist approach to knowledge. Undoubtedly, there are some unique elements of the *baansi* and academic libraries but there are also points of intersection as shown in Fig.5.3 below, which as already discussed above.



Figure 6. 1 Differences and Similarities between Academic Library and Baansi



(Source: Fieldwork, 2015)

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The commonality between the two systems, living (*baansi*) and academic libraries provides a window possible for synergies between the two systems. Kawagley and Barnhardt (2005) posit that, there are ways to develop linkages that connect different worldviews. Banda (2008) add that, there are multiple linkages among indigenous knowledge, formal, informal and non-formal education systems. These linkages can form the basis for the mainstreaming of indigenous knowledge into the formal and non-formal curricula.

However, before this linkage between the academic libraries and the *baansi* can be successful, there is the need to address the following issues:

6.4.1 Technical Training

One of the most effective ways to empower local communities is to help enhance their capacity to exchange and apply indigenous practices, either directly or in combination with other practices (Woytek, Shroff-Mehta & Mohan, 2004). Librarians should be trained in local environments so that they can get used to the needs of the local people and can actually appreciate the value of IK in those communities and how to manage with it.

The dominant information management model has been based on acquiring, organizing and preserving recorded and codified knowledge, which is largely generated by teachers, researchers, laboratories, research stations and universities. Such a model has little room for IK, which is not formally codified and resides, wholly in the minds of local people (Ngulube, 2002). Library practitioners in academic libraries should be enlightened on the need to do more research or be fieldworkers, or ‘barefoot librarian’ (Amadi in Alemna (1993). He/she should be that person who is a trained professional, with adequate formal instruction in AIK, who will go out to targeted locations in rural areas to take oral evidence from the repositories of traditional information. In this way,





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librarians will be generating much needed research materials of interest to scholars, and also assisting greatly in the reconstruction of our history rather than being mere passive acquirers of packed information.

Decolonizing librarianship will allow academic libraries to reflect on their services, and their training institution could also reflect on their curricula to include indigenous and western concepts, philosophy, ethics, values, and social norms. For example, academic libraries can learn from other indigenous sources (*baansi*) of information. Learning about IK enables an interdisciplinary approach to development that helps to empower local communities and builds their capacity to effect change (Woytek et al., 2004).

6.4.2 Knowledge Platforms

The concept of local/indigenous knowledge as a system and deconstructing that system to understand how knowledge is known, influenced and constructed establishes common ground for bridging the epistemological gap that occurs when people with different worldviews are working together on a common issue (Woodley, 2004). To make effective use of information/knowledge, it has to be shared and distributed, and its transmission through learning is essential (Sen, 2005).

Academic libraries and the *baansi* must collaborate to promote access to indigenous knowledge by creating an environment which permits face-to-face fora and network formation to discuss and debate on issues that might be useful to members of the communities, for example, the use of talk shows promoting inter-generational dialogue between the young and the old. Libraries should also use other sources of indigenous knowledge, including indigenous experts, opinion leaders and village elders to complement other informational sources in the library. This can be done through the creation of database of experts, who can be consulted when the need arise.

6.4.3 Storage Media

African libraries' role in the preservation of culture and tradition is critical with the advancement of technology. Documentation of oral literature and local technology (farming, weaving, brewing, pottery, etc.) is necessary because most of the knowledge and skills are being lost through the death of traditional leaders, elders, and griots West Africa. This can be achieved through the collaboration of existing African national libraries and museums, and national governments (Nyana, 2009). In this context, academic libraries and the *baansi* need to come together and learn from each other in order to build their capacity to exchange expertise in the collection and documentation of information.

According to Ngulube (2002), the storage of IK is not limited to text documents or electronic formats; it could include tapes, films, stories, and poetry and gene banks. I believe that, whatever paradigm is used to store indigenous knowledge, it is important that IK should be preserved and integrated into the existing knowledge management systems for the benefit of society.

6.5 Options and Prospects for the fostering of the co-existence of the two knowledge production systems: the living libraries (*baansi*) of Dagbon and the academic libraries in Ghana

Based on the literature review and the findings from the study, this thesis proposes a model for a dialogue between *baansi* and academic libraries as shown in Figure 6.2.



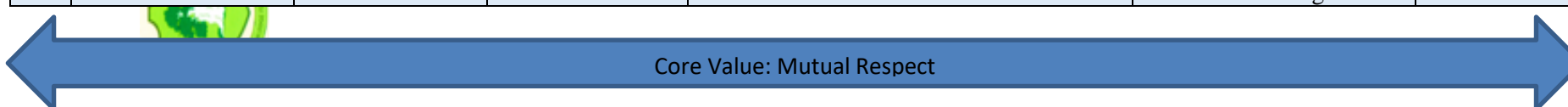
Figure 6.2 Options of creating synergy between Baansi and Academic Libraries

STORIES

Learning together

No.	VARIABLE	BAANSI	ACADEMIC LIBRARIES	OPTIONS (Academic Libraries should initiate this)	PROSPECTS	Initiator(s)
1.	Structure	Human	Buildings	-Provision of space for programs (Workshops, Seminars, Events) to promote IK (<i>Baansi</i>); -Storage of oral --documents and other artefacts. -providing Space for “human books”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnership• Engagement• Empowerment• Interrogation of knowledge	Academic Libraries
2.	Boundaries	Boundless Movable	Confined to parent institutions	Extend boundaries to cater for indigenous communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnership• Engagement• Empowerment• Interrogation of knowledge	Academic Libraries
3.	Documentation	Oral, gestures, dance, song, recitals etc.	Books E-resources Artifacts	Capture and codify oral information; Accommodate “human books”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnership• Engagement• Empowerment• Interrogation of knowledge	Academic Libraries

4.	Recognition		Valid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual respect • Education/Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership • Engagement • Empowerment • Interrogation of knowledge 	Academic Libraries
5.	Policy	No Policy	Yes/No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Policy on culture; -Enforcement of Policy on culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership • Engagement • Empowerment • Interrogation of knowledge 	Academic Libraries
6	Partner ship	No Partnership	No partnership	Partnership between library and <i>baansi</i> as the basis for reclaiming African knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership • Engagement • Interrogation of knowledge. 	Academic Libraries
7	Spirituality	Spiritually based	Secularism	De-emphasize secularism in favour of spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership • Engagement • Interrogation of knowledge 	Bansi
8	Decolonization of library system	Local	Imported	Decolonized library system to suit African context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership • Engagement • Interrogation of knowledge 	Academic Libraries
9.	“Africanization of the” curriculum	Local	Imported	Library school curriculum must be made relevant to African conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership • Engagement • Interrogation of knowledge 	Academic Libraries



Source (Field work, 2016)

6.5.1 Explanation of the Proposed Model

The model recognizes divergences and proposes a synergy for *baansi* and academic libraries as explained below:

6.5.1.1 Provision of Library Space

The entire library architecture acts as a healthy “space” where ideas can flourish, live, grow and even be protected. Librarians are bounded by space, scope of the collection (what is available and desirable), and limitations on form (i.e. books, periodicals, audio-visual items). For successful synergy between the academic libraries and the *baansi*, there should be collaboration between academic librarians and indigenous knowledge communities (*akarima*, *goojie* and *lunsi*) as well as the larger society (elders, community leaders and/or government officials) to organize workshops, and meetings, where relevant information can be passed orally.

Academic libraries can provide a space for indigenous programs/knowledge to be expressed, shared, and continued by serving both as the venue for their study and as a space for holding programs and events.

Furthermore, academic libraries can provide space for documentation and storage of indigenous materials and recordings such as audio and video recordings and, artifacts. African’s indigenous knowledge needs to be codified into print and electronic formats for both audio and video to make it widely accessible on the global information infrastructure.



6.5.1.2 Providing Access to Living Libraries (Baansi)

Living libraries symbolize knowledge that is interactive rather than documented in print. Collaborating, cooperating and sharing of experiences help remove prejudice, promote unity and development. In recent times, the concept of human library has been introduced in many countries like Hungary, Norway, Iceland, Sweden, Finland, America, Asia and South Africa. According to Shannon and Bossaller (2015) the concept of human library is a way of stimulating and enlivening academic libraries. In the Living Library, the concept of a book is extended to include human being, usually a person with a particular story to tell or exemplifying a social stigma. A patron checks out a human book in a similar fashion to other documents. This concept will facilitate important discussion in areas with diverse populations where stereotypes and prejudices prevent cohesion in order to extend the opportunity for people to interact with others with whom they may not otherwise interact (Shannon & Bossaller, 2015).

This can be adopted by the academic libraries in Ghana where programs that can connect students with Living Libraries (*baansi*) can be organized. In this way, students will be able to bring traditional knowledge into their own studies and at the same time legitimize the values of traditional social systems in the educational setting.

The aim of a living library is to make it possible for the academic library and the *baansi* to coexist. The engagement of the *baansi* by the academic library is aimed at integration, where both of them respect each other's values. Integrating human libraries, storytelling, and personal interaction within the walls of the academic library is a way to bring human experiences into the stacks. This could be used to increase an understanding of diverse voices, especially in the post-colonial world.



6.5.1.3 Documentation

Oral communities are losing their ‘living *libraries*’ and if nothing is done to manage the knowledge the *baansi* possess it may be distorted or lost. The traditional historians of Dagbon are human memories of the deeds and exploits of kings as they are told and displayed to younger generations; hence, the archiving of such rich oral traditions such as those of Dagbon and such others nationwide cannot be over emphasized. The life span of these living libraries as we have now is short because sooner or later the entire generation will die. Additionally, the *baansi* deal with unrecorded and unpublished documents which exist in their minds. When the holders die, their knowledge dies with them, unless passed on to another. Learning from and using academic library print and electronic media will help conserve indigenous knowledge for generations, However, it is the duty of academic libraries and librarians who are charged with the responsibility of collecting, managing and disseminating information that are available in different sources, to research and make this kind information available to academic scholars and the entire society as a whole.

Academic libraries can take advantage of the highly sophisticated systems of knowledge production, accumulation and dissemination of the Western system to the advantage of the indigenous system. Technologies like radio and television can also be an effective tool to provide relevant information to our rural communities. The academic libraries can add value by cataloguing, classifying and describing them. They should take the knowledge of the past and present, and lay it down for both present and the future. This exercise of documentation must be done according to the rules and regulations of the community and also in collaboration with the drummers. Before the documentation, there must be consensus-building and converging interests between the academic libraries and the



baansi. The relationship between the library and communities should go beyond consultation and collaboration to explore new ways of working that asks for partnership rather than superficial involvement, in which both parties share power.

6.5.1.4 Training / Recognition

It is important for academic libraries to recognize the significance, relevance and value of integrating both indigenous traditional knowledge and local community knowledge in providing comprehensive information to the users/audience. There are negative perceptions of IK even among the educated African elite and also many Africans who were converted to either Christianity or Islam. As a result, many Africans look down on their own cultural heritage. This has affected their worldviews and definitely the kind of knowledge we provide to support teaching and learning in our various universities in Ghana.

For the successful co-existence between the *baansi* and academic libraries for joint learning and co-evolution of knowledge, academic libraries have to de-school and re-school themselves on the importance of African culture. Training of library professionals must not only be based on Western theories but also there is the need to integrate indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge so that library professionals can comprehend the complementary nature of the two as useful resources in tackling the problems of contemporary society. This calls for the redefinition of education so that libraries through the use of community profiles can make or create room for experts in oral culture to come and share their experiences with readers. This will help to demystify the parable that professors are only found in universities because oral communities also are fertile grounds for professors.





Furthermore, there should be concerted effort to develop leaders that appreciate and accept the crucial role that IK plays in development. This appreciation will lead to the change of mindset. This change from negative perception to positive perception can lead to 'de-colonization' (which puts the colonized at the center of attention) to talking about 'conscientization' or 'consciousness-raising' (which puts people at the center). These ways of thinking illustrate a reawakening of the people's imagination that had been stifled and diminished by colonization processes (Madhu, 2005; Smith, 2003) leading to self-actualizing. The *baansi* are calling for librarians to expand the information ecosphere and somehow recognize the value of wisdom and experience. It therefore behooves on all academic library staff, librarians as well as their educators, to be open to acquiring training on understanding indigenous ways and working with Indigenous cultural views. These changes involve critically challenging professional values, in order to ensure that the Library profession no longer reflects Western colonial views but based on interactions with indigenous peoples. Librarians must also embrace a new protocol and worldview that value the records of the past through the eyes of their creators.

In the year 2001, the current Ghana national policy on culture was developed with the aim of enabling Ghanaians to respect, preserve, harness and use their cultural heritage and resources to develop a united, vibrant and prosperous national community with a distinctive African identity and personality and a collective confidence and pride of place among the comity of Nations (National Commission on Culture, 2004).

6.5.1.5 Enforcement of International/National/Institutional Policy on Culture

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) which is the parent body for Library Associations in the world has recognised IK and has made

statements that urge all libraries in the world to recognise AIK and as such to collect, preserve, and make it available to the public. IFLA further states that, libraries should involve elders and communities in the production of resources and teaching children to understand and appreciate the traditional knowledge background and sense of identity that is associated with indigenous knowledge (IFLA, 2003).

The Ghana National Policy on Culture states that schools, colleges and universities have a major role to play in ensuring that culture is taught at all levels of education. Also, among the key players in the promotion of our culture are libraries and archives. The policy provides that Libraries stock books, films, records and tapes, CD Rom, Compact disc and other multimedia materials on African arts and culture, and indigenous science and technology. The Policy also stresses the need to integrate culture studies into the educational curriculum.

The University of Ghana Act, 1961 among other things, says:

So far as practicable, students should be given an understanding of world affairs and in particular of the histories, institutions and cultures of African civilizations; research should be undertaken in all subjects which are taught in the University, but with special attention to subjects which relate to the social, cultural, economic, scientific, technical and other problems which exist in Ghana or elsewhere in Africa.

The question is: are the Ghanaian universities and their libraries abiding by these policies? Hence, academic libraries need to do more to promote IK. Academic libraries can set goals that take into account the needs of rural populations. Also, librarians can tap into the knowledge base of local and national experts to provide periodic workshops on relevant information and skills that impact a particular community. There must be a much stronger



national policy with a regulatory framework on issues pertaining to indigenous knowledge. I recommend that before accreditation of any academic institutions both National Council on Tertiary Education (NCTE) and National Accreditation Board (NAB) should ensure that there are projects, courses and activities that will link the institution to the indigenous community. This will make the institution meaningful to the people the local/community level.

6.5.1.6 Partnership

Hyun (2011) posits that several authors have argued that the higher education curriculum clearly reveals a need to transform beyond the single/mono-disciplinary, transgressing disciplinary boundaries and leading toward transdisciplinary, borderless engagement. Academic libraries have to partner with the *baansi* to bridge that knowledge gap. This framework also takes into consideration that indigenous knowledge research takes a holistic approach by involving all the stakeholders in solving the perceived problems in order to integrate indigenous knowledge into the academic library system.

We need to discover bridges, interconnectedness, and interdependence among different areas of knowledge (hard, social, and applied sciences) (Hyun, 2011).

6.5.1.7 Decolonization of Library System

Colonial powers introduced libraries to Africa. Dei (2012) stipulates that, education systems and processes, as well as ideas about what counts as education, have been entrenched in the reproduction of colonial ways of knowing which concomitantly limit possibilities for many learners.





Africans need to decolonize their library system to suit the Africa context. African scholars must promote their own “home grown indigenous perspectives steeped in culture-specific paradigms” in the Western academy (Dei, 2012). In other words, libraries are not only blocks and mortar edifices but indigenous communities have their own libraries.

Libraries are defined as “repositories of knowledge”, and the *baansi* of Dagbon is the living libraries of the indigenous knowledge community, are not left out because they have a vast pool of knowledge to be tapped. As living libraries, the only difference is that, books in the living libraries are people. The Living Library concept seeks to challenge prejudice and discrimination. Living libraries comprised of living books representing a range of backgrounds who might give themselves ‘book titles’. After reading, they return the book to the library and, if they want, borrow another. Examples of this concept strated in Lismore, on the far - north coast of New South Wales, Australia in November 2006, Malmö library , Sweden and Halifax library model. These model make a strong case for possible adoption in the case of academic libraries in Ghana.

If the library, according to Heng (2013), is not merely a collection of books then it includes other forms of storing information which if not consulted may not provide a holistic picture of the history of a people. This explains why Chisita (2011: 7): cited in Heng (2013) suggests that there is need for a return to the concept of “libraries without shelves or “oral librarianship” as a way of decolonizing and demystifying library services in Africa. Oral librarianship is akin to living librarians, where books are in the form of human beings, where indigenous communities can relate with. This will demystify current concept of librarianship. And libraries will be seen as sites of conscience" and decolonization because knowledge produced will not only be Eurocentric but also include indigenous traditions.

Gibbons et al. (1994) acknowledge that, knowledge is science, and knowledge producers are scientists but knowledge of the natural world is not confined to science. Human societies all across the globe have developed rich sets of experiences and explanations relating to the environments in which they live. What we need to do is to pursue programmes with the view to decolonize all areas of knowledge productions.

6.5.1.8 “Africanization” of the Library School Curriculum

Proper curriculum planning by African library schools and breaking away from irrelevant training are crucial (Mostert, 2001). Library school curriculum should be related to African situations and open to changes in library services. That is the curriculum should be guided by African cultural traditions which are based on oral traditions and artefacts.

As an educational method, the inclusion of indigenous ways of knowing, learning, instructing, teaching and training, has been viewed by many postmodern scholars as important for ensuring that students/learners and lecturers/researchers (whether indigenous or non-indigenous) are able to benefit from education in a culturally sensitive manner that draws upon, utilizes, promotes and enhances awareness of indigenous tradition. In terms of educational content, the inclusion of indigenous knowledge, traditions, perspectives, worldviews and conceptions within curricula, instructional materials, textbooks and course books will largely have the same effects as the inclusion of indigenous methods in education.

Afrocentric curriculum inspires students to develop and become critical thinkers, capable of making sound judgments and provide solutions to social problems rather than merely accepted what has been passed on them. It should make students critical and active learners



who seek knowledge that has functional applications to their lives and that of their community and society.

Mostert (2001: 10) posits that:

Curriculum of the library school should instil consciousness of the African information environment and develop an in-depth program of specialization, including the repackaging of information, indigenous knowledge resources, and literacy teaching skills, the design and production of audio-visual materials, training in oral literature, processing eyewitness information, and applying new information for the development and improvement of life in rural areas.



CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The thesis explored possible ways to integrate the knowledge management mechanisms of indigenous knowledge communities with special reference to court musicians known as the *baansi* (i.e. *akarima*, *goonje* and *lunsi*) as living libraries and institutional libraries as academic library with the view to enhance the responsiveness and benefits of Ghanaian library services.

The study also sought to provide a platform for the indigenous knowledge community of Dagbon to tell their own stories in their own ways. This is in line with Smith (1999), who posits that it is not about indigenous people giving an oral account or a genealogical naming of land and the events but to give testimony to and restore their spirit, and revitalize a world that is fragmented and dying. Most importantly, this study provides valuable recommendation to librarians to seek ways to provide access to both indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge in order to benefit from both the lettered and unlettered in their efforts to produce and share knowledge.

More importantly, this study sought to identify and recommend appropriate areas of collaboration between the living libraries of Dagbon and academic libraries of Ghanaian universities with the view to promote inter-science dialogue that could lead to mutually sustaining local and regional exchanges for sustainable development.



The study addressed the following research questions:

1. Which processes are involved in the knowledge production system of the indigenous knowledge communities (living libraries) of Dagbon?
2. What are the knowledge management processes in the academic library system in Ghana?
3. How and where might synergies be drawn from academic libraries and living libraries to enrich and complete the library experience of Ghana?

As a study on Endogenous Development, this study has been framed on the following: Transdisciplinarity studies, aimed at integrating both academic researchers and non-academic participants, to research a common goal and create new knowledge and theory (Tress et al., 2005); Post-colonial theory, this allows people to define knowledge from diverse perspectives (Dei & Kempf, 2006) and Transformative praxis that talks about empowerment (Madhu, 2005; Smith, 2003).

Methodically, the study adopted a descriptive qualitative approach. Data was generated through interviews, focus group discussions, observations, storytelling, phased assertion, and acoustic appreciation. Three public university libraries were randomly selected and senior members of these libraries were purposely selected for interview. Also, an extreme case sampling was used to select a prolific writer and lawyer, who has written extensively about the people of Dagbon. The work has also benefited extensively from the work of two renowned scholars of living and academic libraries. Furthermore, the researcher used snowball sampling to select the chiefs and the *baansi* of Dagbon to obtain data for the study.





Extensive literature has been reviewed to interrogate knowledge production in Africa. The study shows that post/colonial control over what constitutes valid knowledge has become increasingly and worryingly noticeable as schools have been structured and restructured to validate only Western knowledge. Yet, knowledge production is not the preserve of any particular science, culture or people. Before the arrival of the Europeans in Africa, Africans had their own knowledge and this knowledge contributed significantly to their way of life.

The study also indicates that indigenous knowledge (IK) and conventional knowledge (CK) have something to offer although they both have their weaknesses. The appreciation of the two sciences will be helpful in gaining a deeper understanding for promoting synergies. These changes of knowledge production have brought about an emerging tradition where persons from different cultures or traditions have come to the realisation that the integration of the two systems will go a long way in solving problems in society.

7.2 Revisiting the Specific Research Questions

This section provides a summarized report of findings on the three specific research questions as noted above. It shows also the extent to which the specific research objectives have been met.

7.2.1 Knowledge Production of the *Baansi* of Dagbon

The investigations point to the fact that the *baansi* are the living libraries for Dagbon. This is in accordance with the research findings of Oppong (1973), Mahama (2004) and Zablong (2010). The study revealed that the *baansi* in their many roles in the royal courts and society produce and share knowledge. The knowledge so produced is based on the history

and culture of the people. Hence, in their performances, the *Baansi* remind the *Dagbamba* of their history, identity and ancestry as pointed out by (Salifu, 2008a). Through their performances, they warn and guide the Dagbon society, as well as reconcile the people in time of disputes. Also, they act as bridge between the past, present and future generations as corroborated by (Cohen-Khani, 2010).

The study revealed that the *baansi* use drums, song, dance, recitals or signs to produce and communicate with their audiences. They are quick to pick up events and issues, probe them and draw from their experiences and training to decode and encode them for use. The study also indicates that because of their privileged knowledge, skills and experiences, the *baansi* serve as the “conscience of the society.” Their probing nature makes them serve as moral watchdogs of society and especially traditional leaders. Their performances are sometimes replete with moral lessons and admonitions. Their skill in interpreting and adding meaning to issues is reflected in their creative productions, which are based on events of the past, present and future. As keepers of the oral tradition, the *baansi* serve as both the instructors of etiquette even as practitioners of the performative arts. This has been corroborated by Salifu (2008b) and Zablong (2010). Through their stories, the *baansi* also entertain and teach, what has come to be known as “edutainment”.

The study also shows that their process of knowledge acquisition is lifelong, learning is continuous and takes a lifetime. In their training, which starts very early in life they learn of the history and culture of the people as well as the art and science of their profession. However, throughout their profession they continue to learn, create and recreate knowledge. They draw from the past to interpret the present and forecast the future. As they interact with society, the *baansi* continue to learn from it and apply their learning to



their productions. Both young and adult *baansi* acquire and store knowledge by participating in the activities of the community. However, due to their special creative abilities and skills they are able to apply their learning in ways that generate unique knowledge for their people.

7.2.2 Knowledge Production and Management in Academic Libraries

The findings revealed that academic libraries contribute to knowledge production and management by way of selecting and acquiring relevant materials to support teaching and learning, bringing order out of the chaos as a result of information explosion and assisting users to navigate the pool of information beneficially. This is corroborated by both Mabawonku (2002) and Alemna (2012). Academic libraries also manage and store collections in various formats as well as preserve the information in those collections for present and future generations.

The study shows that the major source of acquisition of library materials is through purchase. This is as a result of the introduction of “academic user fees” in public universities. This confirms Aina (2004) assertion that ninety per cent or more of information materials are acquired through purchases. The study also discovered that publishers were not abiding by the Legal Deposit Law. The study again indicated that donations, another source of acquisition, might be expensive since most of the materials donated were “junk”, thus confirming Pitcher (1976) and Alemna (1996) studies. After materials have been acquired, the libraries organise them for easy retrieval and access. The tools for organising these materials are the *Library of Congress Classification Scheme* and the *Library of Congress Subject Headings*. The materials are then stored on open shelves,



closed stacks and basements, filing cabinets, albums and pamphlet boxes depending on the nature of the material.

The study also found that academic libraries used a multi-strand approach to disseminate information to ensure wide coverage. Some of the media employed included: Mailing Lists, Newsletters, Briefs, Conferences, E-mail, Reports, Workshops, One-to-one contacts and Websites. These media are not available for the living libraries of Dagbon.

7.2.3 Possibility for Endogenising the Ghanaian Academic Library

The divergences and convergences between the Living Libraries (*baansi*) and the Academic Libraries were examined as a way of exploring the possibilities for endogenising the academic library system.

The differences between the *baansi* of *Dagbon* and the academic libraries in Ghana were found to include the following:

Whereas the academic libraries are made of buildings, computers and vans containing print and electronic materials, the *baansi* are human beings who commit knowledge of the community into memory;

Academic librarians are highly educated and techno-savvy professionals with most holding postgraduate degrees. Their positions are also neither by hereditary nor social obligation as in the case of the *baansi*, but by choice. The *baansi* generate the knowledge themselves and store it orally and through sounds and moves such as drum beat, song and gesture. Academic librarians on the other hand, generally deal with codified materials. This is consistent with the claim of Lor (2004) that academic libraries deal with already documented materials.



Furthermore, the training method of the *baansi* is holistic while that of the academic libraries is reductionist. The study indicates that the *baansi* serve as “watch dog” in the society. Academic libraries on the other hand are purely established to serve the interest of the academic institutions and hardly concern themselves with social norms or morals.

The study revealed further that the *baansi* store information in memory, codes and social practices. However, information/knowledge in academic libraries are mostly documented in books, tapes such as CDs, computers, pamphlets, journals and other graphic materials such as busts, maps, drawings, plans and photographs. These documents, depending on their nature, are processed and stored in different sections of a library.

In contrast, the study also showed that there were some similarities between the two library systems. The academic libraries and the *baansi* both generate knowledge and also provide information to their respective users/audience. Again, academic libraries are gatekeepers of knowledge for countless students, researchers, professors and the public. The *baansi* of Dagbon are also gatekeepers of the Dagbon culture. This means they all provide access to knowledge. The *baansi* and the academic libraries are experts in their respective fields. They both exhibit deep knowledge and skills in order to produce, store and share knowledge.

The academic libraries, like the *baansi*, use codes to convey meaning. The academic libraries as well as the *baansi* help promote the social wellbeing of the communities they serve. Academic libraries inform users and other members of the community they serve by presenting them with information that guides their actions and help make good decisions that promote economic and social development. In like manner, the *baansi* also provide useful information to their audience such as chiefs and elders to make informed decisions.



Additionally, the study shows that academic libraries, like the *baansi*, provide systems for the regeneration of knowledge. For instance, the three academic libraries understudied for this thesis provide space for students, researchers and teachers to study and interact. The spaces are enough for individuals and groups to work either independently or in groups and this helps to promote socialization among the users. The *baansi* also provide space and systems for socialization.

The divergences and the commonalities between the Living Libraries and the Academic Libraries are summarized in Figure 6.1.

The commonality between the two systems, living libraries (*baansi*) and academic libraries provides a window of possibility for the promotion of synergy between the two systems.

7.3 Conclusion

From the study, it can be concluded that in spite of the availability of rich knowledge that has direct benefit to the living realities of an entire culture, academic libraries remain interested in preserving only conventional forms of knowledge and sciences as if they were the only ones in existence. The reason is that, in Ghana, academic libraries are solely based on Western models of librarianship where knowledge and culture have been primarily transmitted through print media and also through electronic means, a reflection of its colonial heritage. Against the backdrop of rich and enduring oral (word of mouth, proverbs, riddles, stories, etc.), corporeal (sound, patterns, motifs, colours, etc.) and visceral (instinctive, intuitive, gutty, etc.) tradition of African cultural knowledge and sciences, the Western model of librarianship leaves out the vast majority of knowledge productions and



the rural population who are generally unable to read and write and unaccustomed to print and/or have limited or no access to electronic media.

The study also revealed that there has been a failure by the academic libraries to recognize the importance of oral culture, which has been used to transmit information and knowledge in Africa from generation to generation. Academic libraries are still acquiring, organizing, and providing services based on printed materials, ignoring the oral tradition predominant in rural areas. Academic libraries have replaced oral culture with reading culture, rather than focusing on providing relevant skills and information necessary for rural communities. Furthermore, the study showed that academic libraries in Ghana have inadequate requisite human and material resources therefore they cannot fulfil their social function of promoting the culture of the society. There are the challenges of not merely promoting research and documentation of local experiences but also the traditions of the people in forms that are meaningful to them.

The study also revealed that, training provided for librarians is based on providing knowledge and skills on western theories of information management and provision. Therefore, librarians lack the skills necessary for the collection and organisation of non-literal traditions. As a result, librarians in Ghana are not able to respond to the challenges of documenting and disseminating indigenous knowledges and sciences or even analysing, collecting, organising and disseminating information in forms responsive of local peoples knowledge production needs.

Above all, academic libraries in Ghana, strong on their archival roles, have tended to be weak in responding to the living traditions of the majority of the people who are guided by their cultural traditions. The purpose of this study has been to explore ways of integrating



the knowledge management mechanisms of indigenous knowledge communities (living libraries) and academic library system for the benefit of both.

In order to benefit from the rich traditions of cultural knowledge and meet the diverse knowledge needs of society, Ghanaian Academic Libraries will have to find creative ways of capturing and disseminating the strong trans-disciplinary roots and form of indigenous knowledge systems. The Bulawayo Public Library, National Museum and Harare City Libraries have experimented on utilizing storytellers to attract young readers to the library. Also, novelists often organize public reading of sections of their books, which are well attended. These are important models of knowledge sharing and building a knowledge society that Ghanaian academic libraries could emulate.

For indigenous communities, multiple media have been used to capture, transmit and conserve knowledge. Yet, faced with the challenge of globalization and the possible annihilation of these living traditions of the indigenous knowledge communities, academic libraries ought to be taking the challenge of recreating themselves to support indigenous traditions. This will go a long way to aid in revitalization of our indigenous knowledge. Above all, there is the need to initiate and sustain dialogue between the two systems to the greater good.



7.4 Recommendations

Based on the literature review and the findings from the study, this thesis proposed the following:

1. Given the purposes of academic libraries as producers and managers of knowledge for society and its development and not just for mere academic consumption, proactive efforts have to be put in place to ensure a shift from their current colonial service delivery modes to a post-colonial space where Ghanaian society and culture are foremost in its activities. This should entail consistent efforts to increase their African cultural knowledge base and indigenous scientific research in their collections and holdings.
2. Academic Libraries in Ghana should see themselves as Ghanaians and Africans and be proud of indigenous knowledge and be willing to consider it as authentic knowledge that can be used by those in the academic institutions. This calls for:
 - i. Re - orientation and CAPUTRED, CULD, CARLIGH, Ghana Library Association (GLA) can take this challenge.
 - ii. Introducing AIK into library school curriculum such as storytelling and the use of information equipment to enhance AIK.
3. There should be collaboration between *Baansi* and Academic Libraries through the organization of seminars, workshops and meetings where relevant information can be shared and learned.
4. For effective synergy, the proposed model, Fig. 6.2 should be considered by all the stakeholders.



7.5 Limitations

This study, like any other doctoral study, has some limitations such as the following:

- Due to the limits of part-time doctoral study and full-time work, there were some difficulty and challenges such as what I encountered in combining the two roles. As a result, the work delayed unduly.
- Another limitation was the language barrier because the researcher is not a native speaker of Dagbanli, the language of the *baansi*. However, the resort to interpreters to translate from Dagbanli to English helped to some extent. Yet, it sometimes felt like vital data/information was being missed especially when translations did not go far enough. However, most of the information was triangulated by other respondents, who could speak English.
- Again the possibility of bias existed as engagement with academic libraries excluded private universities.

7.6 Suggestions for Further Research

The following areas are worth considering:

- University faculty perceptions about indigenous knowledge and its integration in the educational curriculum ;
- Social responsibility of academic libraries to their communities;
- Practical skills embedded in the training of *baansi* could generate meaningful economic benefit to the community and how the low status attached to these skills by the general public can be changed;
- The role female *baansi* could play in gender education and women's development.



7.7 Personal Reflections

The journey through this research has been an invaluable learning experience. I have gained some understanding of the nature of research. I have learned, for example, that research can be frustrating and sometimes tedious, yet at other times very rewarding.

This study has also provided some key ideas which have helped me examine my own professional values, and guidelines for possible changes to my own future practice. More importantly, I have come to treasure and value our local knowledge which I had once looked down on as a result of my educational orientation.

This study has also made me realize that qualitative research is more suitable for unearthing multiple realities. The journey through this research has also taken me through the process of critical thinking through reflecting, interrogating and dissecting debates, which have been invaluable lessons I will cherish forever.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

Identification Number:

TITLE OF RESEARCH:

**TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES: OPTIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR
INTERFACING LIVING LIBRARY TRADITIONS AND ACADEMIC LIBRARY
SYSTEMS**

Name of Researcher: Florence Plockey

Please initial Box

1. I confirm that I have read, or have had explained verbally, and had understood the research and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary. ☐
3. I give permission for quotations to be recorded. ☐
4. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Name

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature



APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS

Role of Academic Libraries

- Who is an academic librarian
- What role do academic libraries play in Knowledge Production and Management in the university?
- Which categories of Library staff are involved in the knowledge production and management in the library? And what specific role do they play in the Knowledge Production in Ghana?

Acquisition

- How do you identify various stakeholders in the knowledge production industry?
- How do you acquire your materials in the Library?
- What are the challenges involved in acquiring your library materials?
- Do you also generate knowledge in the library?
- What types of knowledge are of interest?
- In which ways does the library generate knowledge?
- Is IKS or its holders part of the process and how?
- And for what purpose?

Codification

- What mechanisms do you use to codify materials in the library?
- Explained how the system works.
- What are the challenges you encounter when codifying materials in the library?
- How do you intend addressing such challenges?
- How does this coding system apply to IKS?
- Do you see future in working with IK holders? Explained.

Storage

- What types of materials are available in the library?
- Do you have any materials on IK
- How do you store them?



Dissemination Process

- What do you do to make information and materials in the library available to the public?
- Is this materials made available to only members in the academy and or to the general public?
- How do you factor in IKS and IK producers?

General

- Any other comment?

Thank you.



APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE BAANSI OF DAGBON

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE BAANSI OF DAGBON

INTRODUCTION

This study is aimed at exploring options and possibilities and/or otherwise for integrating indigenous knowledge into the academic library system. The focus is on the living libraries of Dagbon, (i.e., baansi) and the academic libraries in Ghana.

This study is for PhD thesis.

All information provided will be treated as confidential and your co-operation would therefore, be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Florence Plockey

(0242141166)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of interviewee

Date of interview.....

Time started..... Time Ended.....

Age.....

Education.....

Community.....

General Overview of Baansi of Dagbon as a Form of Living Libraries

- Who are the *baansi* (living libraries)? Types, categories, forms of practice
- What role do the *baansi* (living libraries) play in the society?
- Has the change affected the knowledge system?



Knowledge Acquisition (The Learning Process)

- How did you become a drummer?
- How do the *baansi* (living libraries) educate their young ones?
- Which of your parents belong to the drumming clan?
- How and when did you start to learn the trade?
- How long did it take you to learn the trade?
- What processes did you go through in your training
- What specific knowledge and skills must the *baansi* hold?

How the Knowledge Is Collected

- How do you collect this knowledge?
- What form does it take?
- Who is responsible in the collection process?

Storage

- How is this knowledge stored?
- How do you retrieve this knowledge?
- Have you tried storing this knowledge in any other form?
- What are the other forms?

Dissemination Process

- How do you share this knowledge?
- When and on what occasion(s) do you share this knowledge?
- Is this knowledge made available to members of the community only, or is it available to strangers/ foreigners?
- How?
- Are there any taboos associated with the sharing of this knowledge?
- Do you think this knowledge has been ignored in the development process?
- Why do you think so?

Integration Issues

- Is it possible to collaborate with other knowledge institutions like the library?
- What form do you think the collaboration should take?
- What do you expect from the other partners?
- Do you foresee any problem with regards to the collaboration process?
- What are some of the problem you foresee in the collaboration process?



- Is there a way out of some of these problems?

Strengths/Challenges

- What will you say about this knowledge system?
- Can you say that people value this knowledge?
- Do you think this knowledge will be of benefit to the society at large?
- Can you share with me some of the strengths and challenges of this knowledge system?
- Any other comment about the process involved in the management of this knowledge system? Are there any proposed collaboration with development agent likes the academic libraries?

Thank you.

