ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a model of leadership and management that would contribute to the development of a Library Association to promote a progressive library profession in Ghana.

The paper observes that The Ghana Library Association (GLA) plays very little or no role at all in the management of libraries in the country. The proposition for the present discussion is that, a well managed Ghana Library Association would be able to improve the state of library provision as well as the professional development of librarians. At the moment the association is chartered and should be the authority in matters dealing with all libraries in the country, especially in meeting the expectations of its membership. It should be able to exercise its authority to win recognition and respect for its members, enabling them to rub shoulders with the decision-making powers of the society, and thereby influence the allocation of resources in the development of libraries and librarians.

An exploratory study involving the compilation of data on the active membership, and management practices of GLA was conducted in Accra to generate a hypothesis on the performance of the association during 2003 – 2006. Analysis of the data provided a big picture of the present position of the library association in terms of performance and its relationship with government policies and politics. The situation was compared with the performance of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information

Professionals (CILIP) of the United Kingdom which provides leadership in all matters for the library and information profession.
A model of management derived from CILIP's governance structure and function is proposed based on the principle of : ' not re-inventing the wheel' for the development of a purposeful library association in Ghana.

Introduction
It has become common knowledge that library associations in Africa do not perform as productively as their counterparts in developed countries, notably, the United States of America, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Well established library associations exhibit "fit for purpose" governance structures that enable them to serve their members better (Governance Review Task Force Report to CILIP, 2006). These associations have very strong relations with their governments which allow them to pursue strategies that promote the interests and values of the library and information institutions at all government levels, especially at forums of policy formulation. On the other hand non-performing library associations as prevail in Africa have lost members, cannot generate enough revenue to sustain themselves, do not exercise any influence in the public forums and do not contribute adequately to assist the development of library and information provision in their countries. The problems facing African Library Associations derive from many factors which would not be discussed, however this paper makes the proposition that best management practices would enable the associations leapfrog in their efforts to become active players in the development of libraries and achievement of recognition for librarians. The paper, is therefore an attempt to propose a leadership and management model to respond to the managerial deficiencies of the associations. The model proposed in this presentation would ensure a progressively growing membership base, and a more member-driven association which would develop alternative funding sources as well as strive to sustain the associations' programmes. In order to realize this vision, the present governance structures of the associations need to be revised and it is appropriate to review the library association operating in Ghana at the moment, which is an eligible prototype of the situation in many African countries.

The Ghana Library Association
The Ghana Library Association (GLA), founded in 1962, is registered under the Professional Bodies Decree 143 of 1973, and therefore can be compared to associations like the Chartered Institute of Marketing Ghana, The Ghana Medical Association, Teachers and Educational Workers Union, which most of the time are featured in the media about their efforts at negotiating better conditions of service for their members or making proposals to government about achieving their organizational goals. However The Ghana Library Association presents itself as a small organization which rarely attracts public attention and in terms of its influence has no economic, social or political impact on the public and very little on the lives of its own members. Virtually it has no voice and many people do not even know of its existence. It is interesting to note that the objects of the constitution of GLA enjoins it "to promote and safeguard the interests of librarians and also to be instrumental in promoting the establishment of library and information services, bibliographical work, and library co-operation (GLA, 2006)."

According to the same constitution, the Council, which is the governing body, is empowered to act on behalf of the Association, and one would expect that, the

interests and needs of the membership, effective and comprehensive communication, on all matters of governance and responsibility, and transparency in all matters would be ensured by Council. Two examples out of many cases of lack of efficiency in the management of libraries would aptly illustrate the ineffectiveness of the GLA as a body responsible for promoting the establishment and development of libraries and information services. Firstly, the public libraries have been in a most deplorable state of development since the mid 1970's (General News [Ghana Web], 2003) but the GLA had never made any move to even comment on how to salvage the fortunes of the public libraries even in the cities, let alone present a proposal to the decision making authorities on how to improve the provision of public library and information services. Accra Public Library at the moment clearly demonstrates that libraries are not a priority for government development programmes. Secondly, Ghanaian libraries have not been able to form strong consortia to enable them pay for computerization projects and realize the full benefits of sharing common software and subscription costs of international comprehensive electronic databases and information services. The reality at present is that individual libraries have embarked on computerization programs at higher costs in the full knowledge that forming consortia could reduce costs considerably. The problem lies with the inability of librarians to form a strong national organization to provide leadership for determining automation priorities and the identification of suitable software for computerization of libraries in a consortium.

There might be many factors influencing the performance of the association with regard to discharging its statutory responsibilities but it would not be far from the truth to say that its governing body has more to account for its low image. At the moment its membership stands at about 200, a figure which is unacceptably low, considering the age of the association and the fact that one of its statutory obligations is to unite all librarians and institutions in Ghana interested in libraries and librarianship. The population of librarians in Accra alone would surely be more than 200 and one wonders what the reason for the low membership could be. It is conceivable that the membership would grow larger due to an on-going exercise to enroll more members (Asamoah-Hassan, 2007), however, the responses of a non-probability sample of librarians to a questionnaire administered in a study in April 2007 to distil some information for this paper indicated that the membership drive in question might not achieve the desired results. The study described below was essentially exploratory and designed to generate a hypothesis on the performance of the Ghana Library Association during 2003 – 2006.

Performance of the GLA during the past four years- An Exploratory Study
A convenient sample of librarians and information workers mainly in the University of Ghana and GIMPA was used in the survey. Convenience sampling was used because time was very restricted, and the sampling frame (the entire population of librarians in the country) was not available. Twenty-six questionnaires (copy in appendix 1) were administered by personal contact whilst six were sent by electronic mail.
As at 24 April 2007 only eight responses had been received from those who were contacted personally, and two from those who were sent electronic mails. It was assumed that those contacted personally could complete the questionnaire on the spot because there were only nine questions which any body should be able to answer in at most ten minutes. However only one respondent completed the questionnaire on the

spot and it took the rest two days to one week to complete. This observation implied that apathy towards the GLA on the part of librarians especially those without degrees (Bachelor nor higher) was very widespread. A possible explanation for this attitude relates to the organizational structure of the association, which portrays it as only the Council to which the rest of the membership relate loosely.

Presentation and Discussion of Questionnaire
The first question asked respondents about their dues payment status for the period 2003 - 2004. The results are presented in the table below:

Year	No.of Respondents	No. of Paid-up Res.	% of Paid-up Res.
2003	10	7	70
2004	10	8	80
2005	10	7	70
2006	10	7	70

Considering the fact that the response rate to the survey was very low, and also the respondents are in the city where information flow is better compared to the towns and rural areas, dues payment is not encouraging.
For an organization which thrives on membership dues, there is surely a problem when it comes to executing business which involves money. The apathy towards dues payment could be attributed to many factors, however, *a hypothesis that inefficient administration of dues collection* has led to the present situation could be valid for two main reasons. In the first place, the Council, which takes the responsibility to collect the dues, consists of senior librarians who have volunteered to serve the association which has no permanent salaried staff at the secretariat. It is even a wonder that they are able to combine their schedules with the administrative procedures of collecting dues from members nationwide. The second administrative inefficiency relates to the location of the GLA Secretariat at Accra with no branches and representatives in the regions. It is conceivable that librarians in the rural outposts would not know about the physical or postal address of the association and therefore could not communicate with the governing body. Surely people would be reluctant to pay monies to somebody they cannot communicate with.

The second question asked respondents to indicate which of four kinds of meetings of GLA they took part in during the period 2003 – 2004. The results are given in the table below.

Meeting	2003 Participation Nos. %		2004 Participation Nos. %		2005 Participation Nos. %		2006 Participation Nos. %	
AGM	3	30	6	60	6	60	6	60
Workshop	0	0	0	0	1	10	1	10
Education Forum	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Technical Meeting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The responses show that apart from the AGM, which had an average of 45% participation in meetings during the four-year period, only one workshop attracted 10% participation in 2005. There was 10% participation in an inaugural lecture but the date was not indicated. The AGM takes place only once a year and if there are no other meetings, the implication is that members are out of touch with each other as

well as the governing body for the greater part of the year. The absence of efficient communication in the association also contributes to apathy, simply because members do not know what is happening most of the time. The Council again cannot escape blame for the virtual absence of meetings and therefore inefficient communication in the GLA.

The third question asked respondents to briefly state how GLA has benefited them during the past four years of their membership. Eighty percent of the respondents said they have not received anything beneficial, and twenty per cent said the association journal has been useful for providing some information that was not known before, and also the AGM had brought together colleagues through whom there had been productive interaction, especially exchange of ideas. Indeed the apathy towards dues payment and the absence of events that would bring the membership together, means that the membership does not depend much on the association for direction, advice, nor assistance in their conduct of professional business. The leadership role of the Council to provide an inspiring vision and a strategic development plan is seriously in question. Without an appropriate vision, the association has been aimless and has not been pursuing any action plan for several years.

The fourth question asked respondents whether they found the present management structure of the GLA satisfactory for all members. Ninety per cent answered no with 10% saying yes. The responses to this question are to be expected on account of the fact that, the association is seen as comprising only the Council which does not offer any leadership direction to members nor a development agenda for the association itself.

In the fifth question respondents were asked to state whether they have ever thought of joining a professional association in a foreign country. This question was a probe at members' conception of library associations. If they found the library association an important body for their professional development there was the likelihood that they had read about popular ones in the USA or The United Kingdom and had wished to take advantage of their membership benefits. All respondents answered no to the question suggesting that joining a foreign association probably was not a solution to the problems they saw in the GLA. It is however to be noted that belonging to a professional library association contributes to the promotion of professional librarians, especially in the Universities.

In questions six and seven, respondents were asked to give the names of library and information professional bodies other than the GLA, to which they belonged and state the reasons for belonging to the associations in question. The Nigerian Library Association was named with the explanation that the respondent lived and worked in Nigeria during the period of membership. One respondent was a member of both The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals and the American Library Association with the explanation to keep abreast with current developments in the profession and also to receive publications which otherwise would not have been accessible. It is obvious that very few librarians in Ghana belong to foreign library associations showing that ignorance about the role of library associations is very widespread. The leadership of the association has not done enough advocacy to market themselves.

Question eight asked respondents to indicate the functions and roles they expected the GLA to perform. They were given five possible functions/roles to tick out which of them they preferred and also state other roles they envisioned. The results are presented in a table as follows:

Function / Role	Yes	
	Nos.	%
To be the voice of all libraries for Schools, Hospitals, Law firms, Businesses etc.	10	100
To provide education and career guidance	8	80
Grant scholarships	3	30
Grant accreditation to schools of library and information studies	6	60
Develop and provide tools for managing libraries (acquisitions, descriptive and subject cataloguing, collection development, etc. etc.)	9	90

One hundred per cent of respondents wanted the GLA to be the voice of all libraries and by implication all librarians. This response rate indicates clearly that the desire to have a body to represent libraries and librarians is very widespread, because of the low image in which the profession is held by the general public. Except in the Universities, libraries are not regarded as important areas for allocating development budgets. Only a few of the schools in the secondary and primary sectors have libraries which could best be described as few books in rooms without custody. In many instances those books in the school library had been donated by a philanthropist and not purchased by the school. Public library provision is even worse, to the extent that even the national library in Accra is nothing at all to talk about in terms of collections, building maintenance, and staff development. It is hoped that with a strong professional body providing responsible leadership, the image of libraries and librarians would be lifted up to the level of other respected professional associations in the country.

Eighty per cent of the respondents expected the GLA to provide career guidance which, needless to say would assist librarians to exploit the opportunities offered by the impact of Information Communication Technologies and the information society on libraries. The horizon of the library profession has expanded bringing in its wake so many areas of new learning and competencies librarians can employ to better themselves. It is expected that the leadership of the GLA would use effective communication channels to inform and educate their members about the new opportunities available to make them compete effectively in the global market of libraries and information services.

Only thirty per cent of respondents thought the GLA should financially assist students reading librarianship to complete their courses. Perhaps, looking at the performance of the association over the years they cannot imagine how it can financially assist anybody. This speculation has grounding because the leadership has never organized any advocacy programmes to bring the profession into the limelight of public attention to enable it request for funding from the government or make an appeal to funding agencies to sponsor its students.

On the issue of the GLA granting accreditation to schools of librarianship the sixty percent 'yes' response is probably due to the fact that some people see the National

Accreditation Board as the right body to undertake that responsibility. Indeed one response thought the suggestion was too ambitious! If the leadership has been doing its work efficiently, members would have agreed that the competent body to grant accreditation to courses in librarianship would consist of the members of the profession.

There was ninety percent 'yes' response for the GLA to develop and provide tools for managing libraries. This response rate at least signifies the acceptance of the GLA as the competent body for this assignment, implying that the Council somehow portrays itself as an eligible professional mentor for the members.

Question nine drew eighty per cent responses for personal comments on the GLA. Some respondents thought the association was trying its best in an environment of apathetic members and tight budgets. There was also the issue of the GLA not addressing the gap between professionals and para-professionals (without explanation of the 'gap'), and demanding dues payment from the time new members left school instead of the time they join the association. Other comments observed the good performance of the GLA in general but its inability to project the image of the association in the international forum, as well as its lack of effective channels of communication to inform members about pertinent issues. It is worth noting that this respondent wrote "locating their office is an issue". Comments on the inability of GLA to assist in the improvement of the working conditions of public librarians and not organizing more meetings and workshops came to light with the advice that members 'should be up and doing'.

Document Searches
The exploratory study included visits to a few libraries in Accra to search for documents containing information about the GLA governance. Documents like agendas, minutes, action lists, reports to committees/Council, annual reports, constitution, byelaws, rules terms of reference AGM papers, etc are forms of communication which reflect governance practices in organizations. A visit to the Secretariat yielded no useful documents and disappointedly not even one issue including back runs of the Ghana Library Journal which is published by the GLA could be found. Other libraries searched were the GIMPA Library, The Balme Library, and The Library of the Department of Information Studies of the University of Ghana where again no documents on the association were available. The question as to why GIMPA library which is an institutional member of the GLA does not even have a copy of the association's constitution, does not subscribe to the Ghana Library Journal, nor holds any documents as evidence of its membership can only be explained in the context of the lackadaisical attitude of the librarians at GIMPA, towards the GLA, a problem which is very widespread. A copy of the GLA Constitution was made available by the immediate past president who also kindly gave out some papers read at the West African Library Association Workshop on Making National Library Associations Functional held in Abuja, Nigeria. Some useful information relating to guidelines for accreditation and certification of members, and the size of membership were distilled from these documents. The lack of documents on the association pointedly suggest that not much have been achieved by way of publications and that the majority of members receive very little or no news from newsletters, flyers, or any such brief communications media. In the absence of substantial documentary evidence on how the GLA functions, it was important to

distil some information from the executive members who remain the only source of information.

Evidence from GLA Executive on Performance of the Association
Indeed it was not even necessary to interview any of the executives to ascertain the problems they face in managing the association. There is abundant evidence everywhere that there is a non-cooperation attitude of members who should know better, the difficulty in obtaining information about all libraries and librarians in the country, the absence of a reading culture resulting in the low level of recognition accorded to libraries by the public, the unreasonably small budget allocation to libraries. Against this backdrop of library development infrastructure, visions, programmes, promises, and opportunities of the GLA executive have faced serious challenges and it is probably due to the intervention of friendly international organizations that the association now survives.

Impact of Government on Library Development
The assessment of how government policies, politics, and socio–cultural influences impact on development of libraries could not be adequately undertaken due to lack of logistics and the time available for the exploratory study. It would have been necessary to compare the budgets of some government departments with library budgets or the working conditions, of for example, bank employees to librarians to ascertain the importance accorded libraries. Mr Kosi Kedem, Member of Paliament sums up the whole story of government policies and socio-cultural influences on library development in the country by describing the Ghana Library Board as a national embarrassment, where there were only five professional staff instead of the minimum staff requirement of 62. According to Mr. Kedem, the Board and its 62 branches are in a state of decay, and so bad is the situation that the Board could not fulfil the barest minimum condition needed to receive donor funding from the Carnegie Corporation of the United States (General News [Ghana Web], 2003) .

Hypotheses from the Exploratory Study
The hypotheses generated from the exploratory study are that it is only the librarians who can turn the fortunes of the library profession around and they can only do that by forming a strong national professional association. Further, the management structure of the Ghana Library Association as it stands at the moment cannot promote the interests of the members nor contribute meaningfully to development of efficient and effective library and information provision in the country.

Leadership and Management Model for the Ghana Library Association
Deriving from the above two hypothesis, the model of management to address the management deficiencies in the GLA is presented based on governance structure of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals., United Kingdom.
There should be three distinct entities to handle all aspects of control, direction, and responsibility for GLA matters.
1. A Board of Trustees.
   - The Board of Trustees shall be the governing body of the GLA and shall formulate policies for the association.
   - The Board shall exercise oversight functions over the management and policies of the association.

- Members of the Board shall be elected from all the ten administrative regions of the country.
- A Chairperson of the Board shall be elected from among the members of the Board. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board. In his absence members present may choose anyone of them to chair the meeting.

2. The President
   - The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the association and shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees, and shall not attend meetings of the Board of Trustees.
   - The President shall hold office for a maximum of two terms each of two year duration.
   - The President shall be assisted by the Vice-President to be elected from the Professional Committee members. The Vice-President shall chair meetings of the Professional Committee and attend Board of Trustees meetings acting as communication channel between the Professional Committee and The Board of Trustees.
   - There shall be four Panels reporting to the Office of the President
   Audit
   Disciplinary
   Elections
   Ethics

3. Professionals Committee
The Professional Committee shall be the policy forum representing :
- Branches
- Special Interest Groups
- Regional Associations, etc. etc.

As a Policy Forum, the Committee will determine the mission and direction of the association with respect to the roles and functions to be performed.

The above three entities are to replace the present council of the GLA and with a broad outline of their responsibilities, as given, the details of the roles and functions would be defined by the members. Two philosophies should guide the detail definition of roles. The first is the Friedman's "Cupped Hands" approach which persuaded the Governance Review Task Force of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals of the United Kingdom (Governance Review Task Force Report to CILIP, 2006). Friedman's Cupped Hands Model separates policy formulation from but embraces the strategic management of the organization in such a way that there is a clear separation of the tasks of each individual or group. The "left hands" design and develop goals and plans for the "inner" actors to pursue. The "right hands" monitor and evaluate the performance of the "inner" actor contingent on those goals and plans. The result is a logical stream of activities and communication.(Purtschert and von Schnurbein, 2005).

The second philosophy is the "Inverted management Structure" model which guided the Canadian Library Association's Revitalization Strategy. In the Inverted Management Structure members have considerably more influence over what happens to their association. Members drive the agenda and hold their respective Councils accountable. (Canadian Library Association Workshop, 2003).

<u>Conclusion</u>

It is hoped that the GLA with the above management structure would be able to legitimize its existence and pursue the following initiatives in order to turn its fortunes around.

First of all, members should belong more to the profession rather than to institutions in which libraries are located. For example, in the Universities at the moment, the library profession is completely subordinated to teaching faculty which exercises control over the activities of libraries. Important decisions concerning libraries are not made by librarians but by Committees which might have limited or no knowledge about the contending issues. The only way members can exercise their professional authority is through a strong association which can provide the leadership and required direction in such matters.

The GLA should also lobby government institutions of influence with the aim of bringing itself to the limelight of public attention, to the extent that before any policy change affecting libraries are discussed librarians would be the first to be consulted. This is very necessary to ensure the basic infrastructure development of the library profession to enable libraries attract donor support. Charitable organizations expect some basic infrastructure establishment before donating monies to libraries, and in fact do not give monies to individual libraries but associations.

The GLA should pursue its role as an accrediting organization as enshrined in its constitution to assist members portray themselves as professionals with their own identity. This should encourage more members to join and thus accelerate an effective membership growth strategy which could transform the association into a member-driven organization.

References

Asamoah-Hassan, **Helena** (2007) *Transforming Anglophone Library Associations in West Africa.* Paper presented at the workshop on making National Library Associations in Anglophone West Africa functional, held at Abuja, Nigeria from 14 – 16 March 2007.

Canadian Library Association (2003) *The road ahead :Revitalization Strategy.* Results of strategic planning workshop, September 20-21, 2003. Toronto. Retrieved: 24 April 2007 from: http://www.cla.ca/about/report_sept03_workshop.pdf

General News (of Tuesday, 9 December 2003). *Parliament deplores bad state of public libraries.* Retrieved :27 April 2007, from:
http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=48043

Ghana Library Association (2006) *Constitution and guidelines for accreditation and certification of members*

Governance Review Task Force (2006). *Report* to Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals Council. Retrieved: 27 April, 2007 From:
http://www.cilip.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/881977E8-82E3-489C-9CF1-8592FF5F5080/0/Appendix2.pdf

Purtschert Robert and Schnurbein Georg von (2003).   Nonprofit Governance in Member-oriented Associations (Work in Progress). Retrieved: 24 April 2007 from:
http://www.crida-r.org/03_actualites/streams/stream%206/1%20-%20ISTR-EMES_Schnurbein.rtf

APPENDIX 1

PERFORMANCE OF GHANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS

I am conducting research on the performance of the Ghana Library Association to assess its benefits to members as well as the role it plays in the management of library and information provision in the country during the past four years. The aims of the research are to identify the problems confronting the association and propose a model of leadership and management for an association that would be responsive to the needs of members.

Please assist me to obtain information for the study by answering the following questions. Needless to say your responses would be treated with the confidentiality it deserves.

Please Note:
To click in the boxes, first exit design mode by clicking off the box at the lower right corner of this page.

1. Have you paid your dues during the past four years.

YEAR	YES	NO
2003	☐	☐
2004	☐	☐
2005	☐	☐
2006	☐	☐

2. Which meetings of the GLA have you attended during the past four years?

MEETINGS

YEAR	AGM	WORKSHOP	EDUCATION FORUM	TECHNICAL MEETING
2003	☐	☐	☐	☐
2004	☐	☐	☐	☐
2005	☐	☐	☐	☐
2006	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other please specify………………………………………………….

3. State briefly how you have benefited during the past four years for being a member of GLA.

…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
………………

4. Do you find the present management structure of GLA satisfactory for all members?

…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
……………

5. Have you ever thought of joining a library professional association in a foreign country?

…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
………

6. Please state the name of a library and information professional body to which you belong other than the GLA.

…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
…….

7. Why did you join the association you stated in Q.6.

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………

8. Please indicate the function(s)/ Role(s) you would expect GLA to perform.   Please tick

☐ To be the voice of all libraries in Ghana(Schools, Hospitals
    Law firms, Businesses etc)

☐ Provide education and career guidance

☐ Grant Scholarships

☐ Grant accreditation to schools of library of information
    studies.

☐ Develop and provide tools for managing libraries
(Acquisitions,
    Cataloguing, Classification, Collection Development etc.)

9. Please briefly state your own sentiments about the performance of the Ghana Library Association.

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………....

Thank you so much for your cooperation