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Foreword

Dr. Monica Mensah Danquah

Editor-in-Chief, Ghana Library Journal

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In 2024, the Department of Information Studies at the University of Ghana organized a landmark international conference under the theme “Fostering Research on Information Behaviour and Digital Literacy in Africa.” The conference provided a unique platform for scholars, practitioners, and policy experts to engage critically with emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in the evolving information landscape of the continent.

Following the success of the conference, the Department formally proposed that selected papers from the event be considered for publication as a special issue of the Ghana Library Journal (GLJ). Upon receiving approval from the Council of the Ghana Library Association, which serves as the publisher of the journal, the editorial process was set in motion.

The publication of this issue was spearheaded by Prof. Philip Kankam and Prof. Emmanuel Adjei, who served as Guest Editors. Together with the journal’s editorial management team, they commenced work in December 2024, overseeing a rigorous selection and review process. All submissions underwent double-blind peer review to ensure academic integrity, originality, and relevance to the journal’s mission.

The articles in this issue span critical areas of inquiry—from digital literacy initiatives and open science scholarship, to ethical dimensions of AI in archives and the protection of digital data. These contributions do not merely reflect the academic richness of the conference, but also highlight the diverse and evolving roles of information professionals across Africa.

As Editor-in-Chief, I am proud to present this special issue as part of our continuous commitment to nurturing research excellence, advancing LIS scholarship, and amplifying African perspectives in global conversations. I extend heartfelt appreciation to the Guest Editors, reviewers, editorial team, and all contributors whose dedication made this publication possible.

We trust that this volume will serve as a valuable resource for researchers, educators, and practitioners seeking to understand and shape the future of information access and management in Africa and beyond.



Editorial

By guest editors

Professor Emmanuel Adjei, Professor Philip Kwaku Kankam

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Fostering Research and Dialogue on Information Behaviour and Digital Literacy: Some Reflections on Africa's Evolving Information Landscape

This special edition of the Ghana Library Journal features six carefully selected papers from an international conference hosted by the Department of Information Studies, University of Ghana. Held from October 30 to 31, 2024, under the theme “Fostering Research on Information Behaviour and Digital Literacy in Africa,” the conference attracted a diverse community of scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. Organised in a hybrid format, the event welcomed participants from across Africa and beyond, reflecting the global relevance and reach of its core themes.

A highlight of the proceedings was the keynote address delivered by Professor Wole Michael Olatokun of the University of Ibadan, whose insights offered a foundation for the conference's central theme. The event also proudly welcomed Emeritus Professor Anaba A. Alemna of the University of Ghana as guest speaker, whose distinguished contributions to the field and ongoing mentorship were warmly acknowledged by participants. Throughout plenary sessions, breakout groups, and post-panel dialogues, the conference sparked rich conversations across a wide array of topics: from the rise of open access and AI-powered archives to the evolving role of libraries as digital learning spaces, and the practical challenges of data protection in public services. What emerged was a shared commitment to building inclusive, responsive, and ethically grounded information systems for the continent.

The six contributions presented in this volume reflect the breadth of insight exchanged during the conference, each examining how human experience, digital tools, and information environments intersect and evolve. We begin with the tide of open science rising across the continent. Through a bibliometric analysis of scholarly output, we see new partnerships being formed, new platforms embraced, and knowledge becoming increasingly shared and accessible. This is not just about access, it is about ownership. African voices are becoming more visible and valued in the global conversation, and the need to strengthen research infrastructure, funding, and inclusive publishing practices is more urgent than ever.

In tandem, our libraries have stepped into new roles. Far beyond book lending, they are now digital learning spaces and safe havens of reliable information. The review presented here showcases how libraries are delivering digital skills, training, compiling e-resources, and guiding communities through the noise of the information age. But they need recognition, support, and investment to truly thrive.

In a forward-looking proposal paper, we see how human-AI collaboration can revolutionise archival preservation. By ethically applying artificial intelligence to unlock so-called “dark archives,” this initiative aims to illuminate overlooked histories, stories that are vital to national identity and collective memory. A case study on Ghana's e-tax system follows, spotlighting the delicate balance between data protection, user trust, and digital literacy. The authors argue for a more people - centered approach to public engagement, positioning citizens not as passive users, but as active co-creators in their own digital futures.

We then turn to healthcare, where digital communication tools such as telemedicine and patient portals are improving service delivery at the Civil Service Clinic. The study celebrates these advances, while also cautioning against reduced personal connection and digital exclusion - particularly for vulnerable populations.

Finally, we encounter the photographic archive of Gerald Annan Forson, whose imagery captures Ghana's socio-political transformation over two pivotal decades. The paper explores how these photographs have

become powerful tools for civic education, cultural revival, and intergenerational learning.

As Africa navigates an increasingly digital and interconnected era, the insights presented in this volume remind us that lasting transformation is rooted not just in technology, but in community collaboration, and shared purpose. It is our hope that this edition informs ongoing research, inspires new partnerships, and strengthens the collective pursuit of knowledge as a tool for empowerment.

Acknowledgments

We extend our deepest gratitude to all contributors, with appreciation to those who presented scholarly papers. Your insights and research laid the foundation for rich discussions and continue to inspire thought and action well beyond the conference walls.

A special acknowledgment also goes to the engaged audience, who brought energy and depth to every plenary session, breakout group, and post-panel dialogue. Your thoughtful questions, reflections, and shared experiences enriched the proceedings and affirmed the spirit of intellectual exchange.

Further, we extend our sincere appreciation to Professor Wole Michael Olatokun, whose keynote address offered an insightful foundation for the conference's deliberations. We are equally grateful to Emeritus Professor Anaba A. Alemna, our distinguished guest speaker, whose enduring legacy continues to inspire the library and information science community in Ghana and beyond.



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Aim, Vision and Mission

Aim and scope: Ghana Library Journal is an open-access peer-reviewed journal intended for librarians, library administrators, information scientists, academics, educators and students from various backgrounds who are interested in all aspects of librarianship and information science to report their research findings.

Vision: Become one of the most sought after Journals by scholars and researchers in the field of Librarianship and Information Science in Ghana, Africa and the world.

Mission: Provide a forum for authors to present research findings, and practical applications that are increasingly relevant to Librarianship and Information Science profession globally.