

# **KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY: EVOLUTION AND CHALLENGES IN MANAGING POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH REPORTS**

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# **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- **Founded in 1967 as Kabwe Teachers Training College**
- **Renamed Nkrumah Teachers College in honor of Ghana's founding President, Kwame Nkrumah**
- **Elevated to university status in 2014 through the Higher Education Act No. 4 of 2013.**
- **Reflects steady transformation and commitment to educational excellence**

# GROWTH AND EXPANSION

- Early enrolment : ~600 students
- Current enrolment (2024) : 10,000+ students
- Offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across:
  - ✓ Natural Sciences
  - ✓ Education
  - ✓ Health Sciences
  - ✓ Business Studies
  - ✓ Humanities & Social Sciences

Illustrates KNU's commitment to improving accessibility and delivering quality education

# **POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STORAGE CHALLENGES**

- **Traditional system: physical storage of postgraduate research reports in the university library**
- **Method increasingly unsustainable because of multiple issues:**
  - ✓ **Space limitation**
  - ✓ **Accessibility problems**
  - ✓ **Preservation risks**
  - ✓ **Logistical and financial burdens**

# SPECIFIC ISSUES

- **Space limitations:** Library capacity cannot keep up with growing volume; competition for space with books and journals
- **Accessibility:** Retrieval is time-consuming due to inadequate indexing; physical formats restrict access to on-site users; remote users left out
- **Preservation:** Physical reports degrade over time from environmental factors like humidity and pests; frequent handling etc.
- **Operational costs:** Maintaining physical archives – staffing, pest control, climate regulation, expanding infrastructure is costly and impractical
- **Low usage & discoverability:** Without digitization, many reports go underutilised; only one person can access a physical copy at a time

# **SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

- Physical storage increases carbon footprint and uses natural resources (paper, shelving, energy)**
- Conflicts with global sustainability goals**
- Digitisation aligns with greener practices and reduces dependence on physical infrastructure**

# **DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES**

**Key initiatives:**

- ✓ **Digitisation of postgraduate research reports**
- ✓ **Archiving editions of the University Journal - Kwame Nkrumah University Journal of Education (NKRUJO) and uploading to open-access repository.**

**These steps have enhanced accessibility, searchability of research, and have enhanced long-term preservation of research materials.**

# **INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY DEVELOPMENT**

- **Establishment of a centralized institutional digital repository**
- **Enables secure digital storage and easier access for students, researchers, and the public**
- **Promotes collaboration and wider dissemination of academic work**
- **Hybrid model adopted: physical copies retained for archival purpose while digital formats prioritised for everyday use**

# **FUTURE OUTLOOK**

- **Collaboration with other public universities to establish a shared cloud-based repository**
- **Expected benefits:**
  - ✓ **Cost reduction**
  - ✓ **Increased storage efficiency**
  - ✓ **Improved disaster recovery through distributed backups**
  - ✓ **Unified platform for researchers, policymakers and the public**

# CONCLUSION

- **KNU's journey from a training college to a forward-thinking university underscores its dedication to innovation and sustainability**
- **Through digitisation and institutional repository development, the university is ensuring that valuable academic research is preserved, accessible and impactful for generations to come**