

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

AN EVALUATION OF DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE PRESERVATION PRACTICES AT  
GWERU RECORDS CENTRE.

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## ABSTRACT

This study was done at Gweru Records Centre as a sample out of a population of six National Archives of Zimbabwe's records centres. The research evaluated the documentary heritage preservation practices at Gweru Records Centre. Preservation aims to prolong the record life and to maintain its integrity and usability. In light of the possible threats the research sought to find out to what extent the Gweru Records Centre preservation practices were protecting records from threats in order to maintain records integrity and usability. The rationale behind undertaking this study was that the researcher had witnessed record deterioration in the repositories with some records having been soiled by termites. The ageing building was giving in and cracks could be seen emerging from the floors, roof leaks leading to soaking of records while automobiles and industries adjacent emitted smoke and gases that were dangerous to records. The research employed the survey design in order to gather large amounts of data within a short space of time. The researcher physically collected the data through the use of questionnaires, interviews, observations and document analysis in order to validate the findings, and analysed manually using pie charts, bar graphs and tables. The major findings of this study were that records were at risk as a result of the site and location of Gweru Records Centre, lack of funding, poor resource allocation, and staff skills in preservation, utilisation of adapted buildings, among a host of findings. To improve on the preservation, funds should be channeled to the organisation for the purposes of resource purchasing; construction of a purpose-built records centre, adequate training and retaining staff.