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AN EVALUATION OF THE US EMBASSY INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE ELECTRONIC RESOURCES TRAINING PROGRAMME: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF BISHOP GAUL THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

BY

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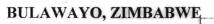
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ABSTRACT

An attempt has been made to evaluate the US Embassy IRC e-resources training programme targeting Bishop Gaul Theological College (BGTC) students. The evaluation is done through assessing the students' perceptions on e-resources, their awareness and level of usage, as well as the perceived impact of the electronic resources on the seminarians' academic productivity. The phenomenological study follows the concept of the role of the public library to provide answers and access to electronic resources, while also assuming an educational role whereby the public library becomes actively involved in the knowledge construction processes of its target groups in collaboration with other stakeholders.It was observed that a large number of respondents demonstrated their ability to utilise e-resources after undergoing the half-day long training. The respondents chosen for this study were BGTC current and graduates students. Data from qualitative interviews with the BGTC scholars and the IRC trainers suggest that the majority of the respondents use the electronic resources, but only a limited number of scholars were fully competent in their usage of these e-resources. In order to determine whether the scholars had some commonality towards electronic resources, respondents were brought together through focus discussion groups. The researcher recommends that academic librarians and independent information resource centres (IRCs) form collaborations in order to develop sustainable electronic resource training programmes. BGTC administrators are urged to put in place essential ICT infrastructure which will eventually support the training programmes offered by the US Embassy Information Resource Centre (IRC). Major recommendations for the US Embassy's staff include investing in more IT technologies in order to accommodate more researchers who utilise their facilities; as well as incorporating more practical e-resources training programmes that will equip the users and researchers with the relevant skills. The users' suggestions, captured through regular training evaluations ought to be implemented.