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Faculty of Communication and Information Science

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**AN EVALUATION OF INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SKILLS OF STUDENTS AT THE
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF ZIMBABWE**

BY

INOCK SIZIBA

(N0112450G)

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF
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ABSTRACT

The study evaluated information retrieval skills of students at the Theological College of Zimbabwe. The study was important in order to ascertain students' information retrieval skills, as students are often required to retrieve relevant information from electronic databases to meet their academic demands. Questionnaires, interviews and observations were conducted among students and library staff. The findings revealed that, most students lacked information retrieval skills necessary to effectively search from the library licensed databases. The findings also indicated that, the lack of adequate information retrieval skills led to the under utilisation of licensed databases compared to search engines such as Google. Information retrieval skills which students lacked included: knowing how to precisely express information needs; knowing which databases to search; knowing how to write a good search statement; and being able to evaluate retrieved search results in order to determine the relevance of information. To improve information retrieval skills among students, the study recommended that, library user education programmes needed to be college-wide, as well as credit bearing programmes. In order to inculcate a culture of information retrieval skills development among students, the study also recommended collaboration among the faculty and librarians.