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NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

**WEB INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF PART-TIME STUDENTS AT
BULAWAYO POLYTECHNIC**

LIBRARY NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BULAWAYO		
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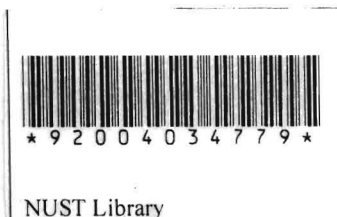
A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF
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ABSTRACT

Information seeking behaviour remains an important research area for libraries and other information providers as they strive to understand users' information needs and how they try to fulfil these needs. The survey was conducted to examine web information seeking behaviour among part-time students at Bulawayo Polytechnic College in order to determine the human and behavioural processes through which information is enacted or sought so as to facilitate the designing of user needs based library and information services. The quantitative approach was used through the distribution of questionnaires and interviews which fall under quantitative and qualitative methods. Thus the study used a mixed methods approach by combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The population composed of part-time students in all levels and divisions of study who were 810 and 7 library staff members. The researcher used proportionate stratified sampling where each stratum was properly represented so that the sample drawn from it was proportionate to the stratum's share of the total population. The survey also made use of judgemental sampling for library staff on the assumption that the researcher was able to select elements which represented a typical sample from the appropriate target population and the sample size was 263 where 3 were library staff members. The findings of the study revealed that the web was increasingly dictating the activities of part-time students as revealed by various purposes for which it is consulted. The results shed light on the general difficulties students faced as a result of library opening times which disadvantaged them. Some of the constraints seemed to stem from lack of skills and training. However, most part-time students appeared to be familiar with how web technology functions although they did not use the technology to gather adequate and relevant information. The study recommends that the library should design comprehensive training programmes that deal with the lack of skills and that the Bulawayo Polytechnic College should enhance the existing services through extending opening times to include Sundays as well as subscriptions to electronic database that will help to diversify the library services. The college should have a designated Librarian to specifically handle part-time students' library issues. The study ends with the recommendations for further research.