NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

USER PREFERENCES FOR ACCESSING INTERNET THROUGH LAPTOPS AND HANDHELD DEVICES AT NKETA PUBLIC LIBRARY

BY
Antonetta Sipho Madziva
(N01415893Y)

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE

IN

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

Academic Supervisor   **Mrs E Maisiri**

BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE

YEAR: 2016

ABSTRACT

Technological advancement has changed the nature of user preferences in public libraries worldwide. These changes meant that the traditional concept of a library as a repository or search tool for physical collections has to be redefined because information is now accessible through various new media formats which should be of concern to librarians. In the study of "User Preferences for Accessing Internet Through Laptops and Handheld Devices at Nketa Public Library" the researcher aimed at establishing the extent to which information devices preferred by users met the information requirements of users and what gratified them in those devices. The researcher embarked on establishing what, why and how users preferred to use the type of new media which was Internet based and how they gratified their information need. Using uses and gratifications theory as a model, the researcher set objectives under content, process and social gratifications. The study employed the pragmatic research approach, in which the researcher used mixed methods methodology and applied purposive sampling to obtain data from the population of users who were members and staff of Nketa public Library. The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative data collected in the survey instruments and found that users at Nketa Library were deprived of access to various information formats preferred through the use of Internet which gratified their information needs with respect to content, process and social gratifications. The researcher concluded by suggesting that librarians and authorities consider embracing new media to meet the preferences of users who appeared desperate for Internet based information services.