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NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

**INCORPORATING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES: A
FEASIBILITY STUDY OF THE BULAWAYO PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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ABSTRACT

IFLA (2009) recommends that public libraries should collect, preserve and disseminate IK, publicise the value, contribution and importance of indigenous knowledge to indigenous and non – indigenous people and involve elders and communities in doing so. This is not reflective of Bulawayo Public Library's collection as the library is largely stocked with foreign material. This study aimed at finding out how feasible it is for BPL to manage indigenous knowledge resources through ascertaining the attitude of librarians at BPL towards the acquisition of indigenous knowledge, the infrastructure needed for these resources organisation, demand made for these resources and establishing how BPL can promote use of these resources. Burk's (1999) knowledge management cycle was used for this study and it has four phases, namely find or create, organise, share and use or re – use. This cycle will also be used to show if BPL has the economic, political, social, technological and / or infrastructural means to manage IK in the phases mentioned above. This study used the pragmatic worldview as it allowed the researcher to choose methods, techniques and procedures to follow. The mixed methods design allowed the researcher to combine both the qualitative and quantitative data collection, analysis and presentation techniques. Questionnaires were used to collect data from ten library staff employees and seventy members whilst interviews were used for the librarian, deputy librarian, children's and study room librarians. The findings revealed that indigenous knowledge is important thus it should be acquired and included in the collection development policy of the library, these materials should be shelved in a separate room or have own space after they are classified and catalogued and promotion for use should be made by the library. They also show that the user respondents had been exposed to IK at school and school trips. The researcher concludes that library and information science professionals are dragging their feet in the management of indigenous knowledge and that they are not adequately trained to manage these resources. Recommendations made by the researcher include that public libraries should include acquisition of indigenous knowledge in their collection development policies and adequately promote and market these resources. Library and information professionals should collaborate with local indigenous knowledge elders, authors and researchers.