

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CHALLENGES IN ACCESSING PUBLIC ARCHIVES AT THE
NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE IN HARARE.**

BY

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

The research project assessed the challenges in accessing public archives at the National Archives of Zimbabwe, Harare. The purpose was to identify the volumes of public archives in backlogs, the institution's advocacy programmes and the level of archival awareness among researchers. The study used a case study research design as a preferred method for its ability to scale down the research by focusing on a single entity. Data gathering tools involved questionnaires, interviews and document review and the respondents included the NAZ directorate, chief archivists, archivists and the researchers. The study revealed that huge amount of research material was lying in backlogs. NAZ took a passive approach to engaging in advocacy programmes and many researchers were unaware of public archives. Inadequate resources and high staff turnover contributed to the hindrances in clearing backlogs. Generally, the NAZ staff lacked knowledge concerning advocacy. The study recommended that NAZ should draft procedures and policies to clear backlogs. Archivists should market the profession to attract funding to engage in advocacy programmes. The study recommended the assessment of legislation in governing archival endeavors as the area of further research.