

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
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**AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROVISION OF ACCESS TO AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES
AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE (NAZ) WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO ORAL HISTORY SOUND AND VIDEO ARCHIVES**

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ABSTRACT

The National Archives of Zimbabwe houses oral history collections mostly from people whose contribution to Zimbabwe's history and development has been significant but either undocumented or under document. Such collections are recorded on audio and video tapes which are maintained in the audiovisual unit. Access refers to the availability of these oral history audiovisual archives for consultation by researchers as a result of legal authorization. An analysis of the provision of access to audiovisual archives at the National Archives of Zimbabwe with special reference to oral history sound and video archives, sought to gather, present and analyse information pertaining to the provision of access to oral history archives at the audiovisual unit. The research was incited to exhume the problems faced by the unit and put fourth suggestions for improvement. Literature related to the provision of access to oral history sound and video archives was reviewed and the researcher accounted how different schools of thoughts argued and agree on the issues pertaining to the provision of access to audiovisual archives. To asset that in relation to the study, the researcher used a case study methodology where the main focus of the research was at the NAZ's Audiovisual Unit. Questionnaires and interviews were used as data collection instruments. The research comprised of seven staff members from the unit, which was a sample taken from the whole population of the institution because the researcher used judgemental sampling. The results of the research were also analysed using tables, graphs and pie charts. The results showed that the Audiovisual Unit was facing challenges of retaining staff members as they left for greener pastures. The unit is also facing challenges of obsolescence of replay equipment, thus rendering audiovisual archives material inaccessible. There is also shortage of equipment for recording and replay of oral histories which makes it difficult to provide access to researchers. Absence of access copies is also limiting the Audiovisual Unit's ability to provide access to oral history sound and video archives as the original copies have to be preserved.