

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT

**ROLE OF ARCHIVES IN THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS: A CASE OF THE
NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE.**

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ABSTRACT

Archives have diverse roles in society. Archives guarantee human rights by providing verifiable documentary evidence that document human rights and citizens entitlements. The attainment of these roles depends on how archival practices such as acquisition, appraisal and access are carried out as well as the operating environment in which the Archives exists that is legal social political and economic among others. The study focused on investigating the role of archives in the protection of human rights with reference to the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) in Harare. The study examined the role of archives in the protection of human rights, the link that exists between archives and human rights protection, the perception of archivists on the role of archives and the protection of human rights. It also looked at the effects of the unavailability of archives on the protection of human rights as well as the factors that affect the role of archives in the protection of human rights. The study made use of a case study research design which restricted the entity of analysis to one that is the National archives of Zimbabwe. The respondents included the Director of the NAZ, Chief Archivists and Archivists. The data gathering tools were questionnaires and interviews. The study revealed that archives have a great role to play in the protection of human rights. It was also revealed that the NAZ's role in the protection of human rights was adversely affected by issues like legislation and power relations. The study also revealed that there is awareness on the role of archives in the protection of human rights. The study concluded that there was need to create an enabling environment and broaden the scope of the NAZ to represent a wider spectrum of society in its acquisition. In summary the NAZ should strive to create an enabling environment and be proactive in acquisition as well as reaching out to the people.