

**A FRAMEWORK FOR ACCESS AND USE OF DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE AT THE  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE**

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements for

the degree of

**Doctor of Literature and Philosophy**

in the subject

**Information Science**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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July 2017

## SUMMARY

The study sought to develop a framework for access and use of documentary heritage at the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ). This followed the realization that access and use is the *raison d'être* for national archival institutions yet the level of utilization has for a long time been lamented to be low. The researcher therefore took a holistic approach and investigated the issues of bibliographic, intellectual and physical access to archives. Using a grounded theory research approach framed within the constructivism ontology and the interpretivism epistemological research paradigm, this study employed the observation technique, interviews and content analysis to collect the empirical evidence that was needed to develop a framework for access and use of the documentary heritage in the custody of NAZ. The study extensively discussed the methodological issues involved in the study as grounded theory is a rarely used approach in Information Science studies. An extensive discussion was therefore offered to enable readers to follow and appreciate how the not so common approach was actually employed. The findings of the study showed that the position of NAZ as a public information resource centre was threatened by many obstacles that were compromising the accessibility and use of the documentary heritage in its custody. Such hindrances included the absence of a national policy on access to public archives, the absence of an institutional access policy, the absence of a standing committee on access and use of archives, lack of a budget, increasing backlogs of unprocessed archives, misconstrued public perception, the absence of special facilities for the physically challenged, centralised access to archives, access restrictions placed by legal instruments as well as limited use of digital technology, no use of the print media and Web 2.0 technologies. Using the findings of the study, the researcher offered a framework for enhanced access and use of archives to serve as a baseline on which archivists may reflect and improve on their practices.

**Key terms: Access, Archives, Documentary heritage, Finding aids, Processing, Public programming, Reference services, Web 2.0 technologies**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Teamwork makes the dream work, but a vision becomes a nightmare if you have a bad team (Maxwell nd). Indeed this work was not going to be successful without the many players who greatly assisted in the production of this thesis. Special commendation goes to my supervisor, Professor Patrick Ngulube, who did not tire in giving me all the support I needed to pull through the research journey. No volume or type of words may adequately convey the amount of gratitude I have for the intellectual prowess and unwavering support that I received from my supervisor. A very special thanks goes to my co-supervisor, Dr Antonio Rodrigues, for his patience in illustrating how to get things right. He was a pillar of support on which I would rely whenever I felt as if I could not go any further.

The study was not going to be successful without the data that was needed to answer the research question and meet the objectives. I therefore wish to extend my sincere gratitude to Mr I. Murambiwa, the Director of NAZ and Mr. D. Maboreke, the Deputy Director of NAZ for giving me their support to conduct research at their institution. I also wish to thank the Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National Culture and Heritage for giving me the permission to conduct a study at NAZ. My appreciation goes to NAZ practitioners working in the Public Archives and Research Section, Oral History Unit, Records Services, Audiovisual Unit and Information Communication Technology Section. The study was not going to be successful without the data obtained from these offices. I feel greatly indebted to the University of South Africa for awarding me a Postgraduate Bursary. The funds made life easier and allowed me to focus on my studies. I also wish to thank the National University of Science and Technology for granting me study leave, despite me being a relatively new employee in their institution, as well as for the financial support particularly for data collection.

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Gerald, and children, Geraldine, Gerald and Gerilyn

## DECLARATION

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### **A FRAMEWORK FOR ACCESS AND USE OF DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE**

I declare that the above dissertation/thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(MS. F. CHATERERA)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIPPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
APF	Access Policy Framework
AUEF	Access and Use Enhancement Framework
CAF	Central African Federation
ESARBICA	East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives
GZU	Great Zimbabwe University
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
ICA	International Council of Archives
LAC	Library Archives Canada
MSU	Midlands State University
NAJ	National Archives of Japan
NARSSA	National Archives and Records Service of South Africa
NAZ	National Archives of Zimbabwe
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
OSA	Official Secrets Act
PAIA	Promotion of Access to Information Act
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNISA	University of South Africa
UZ	University of Zimbabwe

VCR	Video Cassette Recorder
ZITF	Zimbabwe International Trade Fair
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS TO ACCESS AND USE OF ARCHIVES

*“Democracy depends on a knowledgeable citizenry whose access to a broad range of information enables them to participate fully in public life, help determine priorities for public spending, receive equal access to justice, and hold their public officials accountable” (Neuman 2002:5).*

#### **1.1 Introduction**

National archival institutions have a critical obligation to make available their archival holdings to members of the public. Failure to meet this obligation renders an archival institution irrelevant and meaningless to society. Jimerson (2003:13) indicates that “the purpose of selecting, acquiring, and preserving manuscripts and archives is to make them available for use.” In that regard, the current study emphasises the need by archival institutions to justify their existence by ensuring that public archival materials are readily available and accessible to the populace.

The availability of public archival material not only serves to justify the existence of national archival institutions but also promotes democracy, transparency and accountability in a nation. Neuman (2002:5) notes that “Knowledge is power, and transparency is the remedy to the darkness under which corruption and abuse thrives. Democracy depends on a knowledgeable citizenry whose access to a broad range of information enables them to participate fully in public life, help determine priorities for public spending, receive equal access to justice, and hold their public officials accountable.”

In recognition of access and use of the archives as tools that support democracy, transparency and accountability, this research project deemed it prudent to develop a framework for access and use of the documentary heritage held at the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ). The broader matters investigated to develop the framework include the issues surrounding the bibliographic, intellectual and physical access to archival materials. The specificities of the issues examined in the current study relate to the issues of legal instruments, public programming, digital technologies, public perception and archival reference services in enhancing or downplaying access and use of the archives by the people. With particular reference to the needs of the physically challenged, the study also investigated the issues that surround the physical access to the archives at NAZ.

## **1.2 Discussion of key terms and concepts**

Sections 1.2.1 up to 1.2.9 provide a discourse and definitions of key terms that were used in this study. The discussion is imperative as it leads to a better understanding of the thesis both for those who are new and familiar with the issues that were under investigation. The keyterms and concepts identified in this research include access, archives, documentary heritage, finding aids, reference services, processing, public programming and Web 2.0 technologies. Defining key terms and concepts also form the basis for describing and explaining phenomena in a field of study. A variety of meanings can be attached to most concepts, hence the need to explain words and terms in the context in which they were used.

### **1.2.1 Access**

Administering access is an essential archival function that continues to be ranked as the highest demand for both researchers and archivists. Access may be defined as “the ability and opportunity

to discover, use, and understand” the nation’s documentary heritage (Loewen 2008:164). Access to documentary heritage entails the need by archival institutions to align their services to the needs of their users (Kilasi, Maseko & Abankwah 2011). It is critical for archivists to make available public archives as it is regarded a fundamental human right (Onyancha & Ngoepe 2011). Similarly, Smart (2011) notes that the right to access government information can be seen as a public right that must not be restricted by administrative barriers, geography, ability to pay or format. Guided by such advocacy, access in the current study refers to the availability of records for consultation as a result of both legal authorization and the existence of finding aids (Pearce-Moses 2013). It is essentially the right, opportunity, or means of finding, using or retrieving information.

### **1.2.2 Archives**

The term archives has extensively been used and documented in the field of information science. Consultation with extant literature has shown that the term archives has over the years been relatively consistent to either mean a place or contents. For-instance, in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century Leavit (1961) defined archives as written documents, drawings, printed matter as well as a document that is subsequently permanently preserved for its own information. In the same vein, Ketelaar (2001) argued that the archive is an infinite activation of the record. Similarly, the National Archives of Australia (2016) defined archives as collections of documents or records which have been selected for permanent preservation because of their value as evidence or as a source for historical or other research.

Elsewhere, an archive is explained as a place where records or ancient writings are kept (Johnson 1827). The same explanation was supplied by Jimerson (n.d) who explained archives as places of knowledge, memory, nourishment, and power. To this end, Jimerson (n.d) further explained that

archives at once protect and preserve records; legitimize and sanctify certain documents while negating and destroying others and provide access to selected sources while controlling the researchers and conditions under which they may examine the archival record. Further consolidating this argument is Cook and Schwartz (2002) who described archives as institutions that are powered to control the past and where social power is negotiated, contested and confirmed. Perceiving archives as a place is also Ketelaar (2001) and Schmidt (2011) who both respectively noted that archives are repositories of historical sources and places to preserve historic materials and to make them available for use.

In the context of this study, the meaning of the term archives is twofold. Depending on how the term is used in a sentence, archives can either mean a place where people go to find information and it can also mean a collection of material that records important events.

### **1.2.3 Documentary heritage**

Documentary heritage refers to recorded history, from papyrus scrolls or clay tablets to film, sound recordings or digital files (Edmondson 2002). It the product of a deliberate documenting process and can further be explicitly defined as comprising items which are:

- moveable
- made up of signs/codes, sounds and/or images
- preservable
- reproducible and
- migratable.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2016) indicated that documentary heritage normally excludes items which are part of a fixed fabric such

as a building or a natural site, objects on which the signs/codes are incidental to their purpose, or items which were designed as non-reproducible originals such as paintings, three dimensional artefacts or art objects. An item of documentary heritage can be a single document of any kind or it can be a group of documents such as a collection. In the context of this work, documentary heritage refers to all media on which information is recorded, regardless of the nature of the medium or the method or circumstances of records.

A unique characteristic of the human race is its ability to build and transmit a collective memory and its desire to have access to memory. This can happen in three ways. The first is oral transmission which is the passing of knowledge and customs from one generation to the next by speech, song and ceremony. The second is the reshaping of the physical world by altering landforms and erecting buildings which are the heritage of succeeding generations. The third is by the recording of information in a documentary form, such as the written word, photography and sound recording. It is this third form of documentary heritage that is the focus of this study.

#### **1.2.4 Finding aids**

Various ways and descriptions have been used to explain the term finding aids. The common thinking shared by schools of thought and researchers is that finding aids are usually compiled by archivists during archival processing in efforts to provide basic access to the records in an archival collection. It has generally been agreed that well prepared finding aids facilitate the retrieval and exchange of information about archival material. Greene (2010) indicates that finding aids assist users to identify the series and items they need to consult. The examples of finding aids include but not limited to guides, calendars, group-level descriptions, item lists, inventories and indexes. The finding aids could be in either electronic or print format. A finding aid can also be understood

as a document containing detailed information about archival holdings including the history of the creator.

Finding aids provide a description of the scope of the collection, biographical and historical information related to the collection. They may also include subject headings. Such information assist researchers to determine whether the information within a collection is relevant to their research. Greene (2010) and Prom (2010) indicate that a finding aid is the product of archival processing that seeks to offer a certain level of intellectual control of a collection. In light of the various ways in which finding aids have been explained, this study defines a finding aid as the broadest term to cover any description or means of reference made or received by an archives service in the course of establishing administrative or intellectual control over archival material. Finding aids in the current study refer to tools that facilitates discovery of information within a collection of archival material.

### **1.2.5 Reference services**

Coles (1988) defines reference services as all the tasks and processes involved in assisting patrons to get the information they want from the archives. Proper reference services help researchers to find answers to their questions. Coles (1988) reminds archivists that reference services should not be treated as an after-thought but as a vital process central to the fulfilment of the national archives' mission. Singh (2004) notes that reference services provide personalized guidance to users in accessing appropriate information resources to meet their needs. The ever growing information technologies have led to the production, availability and accessibility of complex information. This has made reference services even more important as users need help to differentiate useful information from misinformation. Singh (2004) indicates that reference services emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in response to an increase in the number and variety of

information resources available and an increase in the complexity of those information resources. The increases made it difficult for people to find the resources they required, thereby leading to a wider range of information needs in the search for information (Janes, 2002). In that light, reference services can be described as mechanisms by which people submit their questions and have them answered by an archivist or any other responsible personnel. If appropriately done, reference services can add value to archival institutions and encourage users to keep on consulting the archives.

The current research explains reference services as actions and strategies that are employed to help users in finding or searching for information. Reference services are all the functions performed by archivists to meet the information needs of clients in person, by telephone or electronically. Reference services include but not restricted to answering substantive questions, instructing users in the selection of appropriate tools and techniques for finding information, conducting searches on behalf of the patron, directing users to the location of archives resources and assisting in the evaluation of information. Reference services help archivists meet user's information needs and making sure that the client's needs have been met.

Trace and Ovalle (2012) indicate that references service is a broader term given to the facilities and services given to researchers and users of the archives and its records once access to them has been approved. Jeremy, Woodley and Kupke (2008:351) emphasized that providing reference and access services needs an understanding of the use and users of archives. In the same vein, Pugh (2005) observed that effective reference services would require archivists to engage with the intellectual, interpersonal and technological aspects of the reference process as well as the creation of access policies and procedures.



### **1.2.6 Processing**

Processing is an archival term that has been constantly used to refer to the act of arranging and describing the archival collection. Greene and Meissner (2005) observed that the national archives receive semi-organized or even unorganized records from depositing departments. The tasks of describing and organizing the material by archivists are referred to as archival processing or arrangement and description. Processing in the discipline of archival science is also understood to be a process of arranging and describing archival records so that they become usable and accessible to members of the public (Archer, Hartten, King, Knies, McAllister, Schallow & Schimada 2011, Prom 2010 and Hodges & McClurkin 2011). An intensive and proper process of arrangement and description results in the production of comprehensive finding aid. It may therefore be justified to consider processing as the heart of archival work.

Prom (2010) indicates that what an archivist takes or fails to take with regards to processing will either facilitate or impede physical and intellectual control over the nation's documentary heritage. Similarly Greene and Meissner (2005) observed that lack of processing results in massive backlogs of inaccessible collections in repositories, hence compromising the access and use of archives. Archival processing is therefore a very critical practice as it encourages or discourages the use of a nation's documentary heritage.

Bachli, Eason, Light, McAnaney, Morrison and Seubert (2012) are of the view that archival processing should become the baseline approach to arranging and describing an archival collection. The appropriate processing of archival material makes the collection easy to retrieve and usable. Archival processing is a task meant to sufficiently describe materials to promote use. In the context of the current study, 'processing' refers to the arrangement, description and housing of archival materials for improved storage and use by patrons.

### **1.2.7 Archival public programming**

The urge to improve on the accessibility and use of public archives is ever growing among archivists. Kamatula (2011) indicates that public programming is an essential means for increasing the utilization of archival materials. Public programming is a strategy that archivists may exploit to become visible to the society. Blais and Enns (1990-1991) indicated that public programming was once limited to the preparation of research guides and assistance to historians as they performed their research. This perception dominated the management of archives for most of the twentieth century. Although public programming is now regarded to be a crucial activity, Kamatula (2011) argues that public programming primarily continues to be viewed as a luxury. Blais and Enns (1990-1991) note that public programming embraces four key concepts which include image, awareness, education and use. In this respect, public programming can be regarded as an outreach programme aimed at enhancing the realization of archives' mission and function in society. The current study sought to salvage the concept of public programming from the periphery of the archival tradition and amalgamate it into core archival functions. Public programming can therefore be referred to as those activities that result in direct interaction with the public to promote the participation and support needed to achieve an archival repository's mission and mandate.

Harris (2002) stated that public programming is arguably the clearest demonstration of archivists having embraced the view that use is surely the ultimate goal of all their activities. Within the context of this study, public programming refers to those activities that are meant to draw the attention of people and encourage the use of archives. It refers to the means pursued by archivists in an effort to increase the awareness and utilization of archival materials by members of the public.

### **1.2.8 Web 2.0 technologies**

The term Web 2.0 technology is also known as social media (Thorman 2012 & O'Reilly 2005). Web 2.0 has a high level of interactivity and connectedness among users. It has become a key component of the Web, allowing the exchange of information across the globe through a variety of social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Wikipedia, Hi5, LinkedIn, MySpace, Google+, Flickr, Blogster and Tumblr. Web 2.0 technologies are designed to enable and encourage participation among members of the community (Daines, Gordon & Nimer, 2009). Through the use of Web 2.0 technologies, public information centres are afforded an opportunity to communicate with the public, inform them of their activities and solicit their ideas to enhance their service delivery.

In view of the above explanation(s), Web 2.0 in this study implies computer applications that allow archivists and members of the public to interact and share the information or material they have created online.

### **1.3 Background to the study**

National archival institutions have an obligation to make their services known, available, accessible and usable to members of the public. To that effect, Ngoepe and Ngulube (2011:5) argue that archives serve no purpose unless they are used. Research on access and use of public archival material conducted in Africa revealed that public archival institutions are underutilised and they need to adopt more aggressive strategies for them to become known, accessible and used by the people (Mnjama 2008; Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011; Ngoepe & Ngulube 2011; Smart 2011). The current research focused on issues that have an influence on access and use of public archival material. As communicated in the introduction, the issues that were under the spotlight in this

research included public programming, digital technologies, policies on access and use of the archives, processing of archival material, legal instruments affecting access and use of archives, infrastructural facilities at NAZ, finding aids and reference services. “The availability of materials for consultation, the existence or non-existence of policies, rules and regulations may also impact on the physical access to records and archives” (Mnjama 2008:59). With reference to finding aids Hicks (2005:202) indicates that “indexing archival records is a challenge, but one that has a variety of rewards”, hence the need for archivists, records managers and other information management professionals to take indexing seriously. Similarly, Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011:99) emphasise the need to develop an improved tool that can assist archivists to collect meaningful and usable data on how much progress they are making in taking archives to the people. In that regard, the current research examined indexing at NAZ and other finding aids such as guides, calendars and item lists to establish the extent to which NAZ has gone in promoting access and use of its services and products.

Public archival materials in most African countries appear to be underutilized. Many governments have not been able to grant access to public records yet it is the mandate of national archival institutions to provide access to their collections (Mnjama 2008; Kilasi, Maseko & Abankwah 2011). “The low level of usage could also be attributed to the fact that archival advocacy programmes may not be aggressive enough to reach potential users” (Kilasi, Maseko & Abankwah 2011:110). In that respect, the third principle developed by the International Council on Archives (2011) calls for institutions holding archives to adopt a pro-active approach in making available their archives.

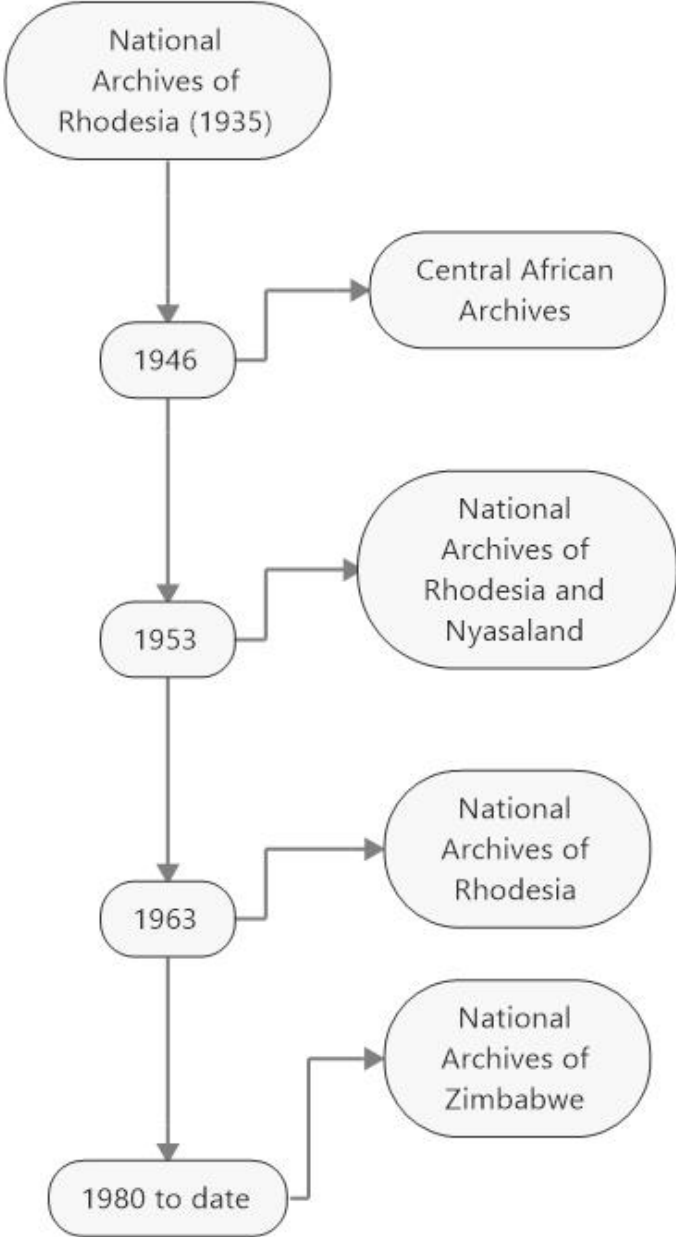
Contrary to the situation in Africa, there are success stories being recorded elsewhere across the globe. An example is that of the National Archives of Singapore which managed to create a one-

stop portal to access cultural and heritage information dating back to the 17th century. The portal presents access to various databases, photographs, maps and plans, oral history audio files and other audiovisual recordings in multiple ways (Beasley & Kail 2009:149). Apart from the need to adopt the digital technologies in making the archives known and available to members of the public, the records and information management professionals have also been challenged to capitalize on the media to cover activities of their profession so as to increase public awareness on their existence and subsequently improve on access and use of archival material by members of the public (Onyanha & Ngoepe 2011:211). In view of this notion, this research also examined the use of print media at NAZ to promote the visibility and use of their archival holdings.

#### **1.4 Historical setting of the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ)**

NAZ has its roots in the coming of the colonial administration of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) in the 1890s which saw the country moving from oral record keeping to formal record keeping (Tough 2009; Tough & Lihoma 2012; Murambiwa, Ngulube, Masuku & Sigauke 2012; Matangira 2014; 2016). In 1935, the National Archives of Rhodesia (now the National Archives of Zimbabwe) was established through an Act of parliament. The establishment of the National Archives in Southern Rhodesia in 1935 was a first in British colonial Africa (Matangira 2016). A major development was witnessed in 1946 when the National Archives of Rhodesia changed its name to the Central African Archives after it had taken responsibility for the government archives in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi) (Matangira 2014; 2016). In 1953, three southern African territories namely Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi) came together to form a federation that became known as the Central African Federation (CAF). The federation resulted in the Central African Archives changing its name to the National Archives of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The name was changed back to the

National Archives of Rhodesia after the federation was dissolved in 1963. After Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980, the archives assumed its current name, thus the National Archives of Zimbabwe (Matangira 2014; Matangira 2016; Chaterera 2016). Figure 1 illustrates the historical development of NAZ.



(Chaterera 2016:120)

## **Figure 1: Historical development of NAZ**

Today, NAZ is made up of seven sections, namely:

1. Public Archives and Research
2. Records Services
3. Film and Sound Archives
  - i. Audiovisual Unit
  - ii. Oral History Unit
  - iii. Reprography
  - iv. Conservation
4. Library
5. Human Resources Management
6. Finance and Administration
7. Information Communication Technology (ICT)

(National Archives of Zimbabwe 2016).

The seven sections listed above have different functions but they all work towards making NAZ the leading custodian and provider of the documentary heritage of Zimbabwe. The current study, however, focuses on those sections that have a direct influence on the issues surrounding access and use of public archival material at NAZ. These are the public archives and research section, records services, ICT and film and sound archives.

The film and sound archives section has four units which are reprographic, conservation, oral history and audio visual. The reprographic unit is responsible for photographic enlargement prints, photocopying and scanning, processing of negatives and microfilming. The conservation unit supports preservation efforts by repairing and restoring physically and chemically damaged archival material to a usable state. In the conservation unit is machinery for binding, flattening,

tissuing, cleaning and de-acidifying documents, and protective enclosures for valuable documents are provided. The film and sound archives section also includes the oral history unit whose primary obligation is to collect and preserve oral interviews from a wide diversity of people. The interviews are done in English as well as all local vernaculars and are recorded in audio and video formats. Subjects that are covered in the interviews include but are not limited to culture, chieftainship, education, economics, liberation struggle and politics. The oral history unit endeavors to provide missing links in the country's documented history. In the technical services section is also the audio visual unit which looks after films, videos, audio cassettes, compact diskettes, gramophone records and slides on or about Zimbabwe. The audio visual unit is driven by the need to promote the national development of sound and moving image archiving (National Archives of Zimbabwe 2016).

The public archives and research section is responsible for processing and managing public archives and historical manuscripts. The collection in the public and research section includes records of deceased estates, family history, criminal and civil records, census records, marriage and baptism certificates and records of service of uniformed forces. The size of the collection is approximately 22 000 cubic feet and it dates back to 1890. The public archives and research section is also responsible for access provision. Another section that exists at NAZ is the library which is the legal depository of all printed publications in Zimbabwe. The library produces a comprehensive record of Zimbabwe's publishing output and it also administers the international standard book numbering system. The other section is the records service section which offers records and information management advice to public institutions on the professional creation of records, filing systems, maintenance, utilization, storage and disposal of records (National Archives of Zimbabwe 2016). It is mainly from the public archives and research section that the



study collected data to develop a possible framework for access and use at NAZ. The other four sections and their respective units were also consulted as they share a common goal of making NAZ a leading repository of public knowledge in service of the society.

### **1.5 Research problem**

Providing access and use of the archives to members of the public is the chief reason for NAZ's existence, yet this assignment has for a long time remained unfulfilled (Mazikana 1999; Mutiti 1999; Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011). The accessibility and use of public archival material held at NAZ is a challenge because of backlogs of unprocessed archives, reading room fees, opening hours, size of the reading rooms, dysfunctional equipment (Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011:92) and inadequate use of Web 2.0 technologies to increase the awareness and subsequent access and use of the archives (Chaterera 2015a:24).

The problem of access to archival material is not peculiar to Zimbabwe as Mnjama (2008:60) attested to the situation that many public archival institutions are struggling to provide access to their nation's documentary heritage. Kemoni, Wamukoya and Kiplang'at (2003) cited the lack of meaningful access and use of archival material in Kenya's public archival institutions due to outdated archival legislations. Similarly, Dube (2011:279) questioned the rules and regulations governing the management of archival material in Zimbabwe arguing that the National Archives of Zimbabwe Act of 1986 be amended in the direction of managing records and archives as a nation's heritage.

The International Council on Archives (ICA), an international body to which NAZ subscribes also supports the need for respective countries to review their archival legislations in line with promoting access and use of archival material. In that respect, the research project took a holistic

approach in coming up with a framework for access and use of public archival material at NAZ. This study employed a grounded theory approach to investigate the issues of bibliographic, intellectual, legal and physical access and use of the archives at NAZ. The end result of this approach is a framework for access and use of archives that is grounded in empirical evidence. The proposed framework was fundamentally built on empirical issues that were found to be hindering increased access and use of archives at NAZ. As such, the researcher believes that if the framework is adopted and implemented, it can lead to considerable increase in the access and use levels of the documentary heritage at NAZ.

## **1.6 Research aim**

The overarching aim of this research was to develop a framework for ‘access and use’ of the documentary heritage at NAZ with the view to improving the visibility and public image of the institution, thereby increasing the access to and use level of the archival material in the custody of NAZ. Improved access to and use of public archival material promotes the socio-economic transformation and development of a people. To achieve this, the study employed a grounded theory research approach which is not yet popular in social science research, particularly information science. In this respect, the researcher deemed it prudent to extensively discuss the methodological issues. (See Chapters Three and Four.)

## **1.7 Research objectives**

This project sought to investigate access and use of the archival material held at NAZ with the view to developing a framework for access to and use of the archives. The objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the influence of legal instruments on access to and use of the public archives in Zimbabwe;

2. Ascertain the use of public programming strategies by NAZ in promoting access to and use of the archives at NAZ;
3. Establish the use of print media and the internet to increase their visibility;
4. Ascertain the public perception of NAZ;
5. Evaluate the reference services on offer at NAZ; and
6. Examine the barriers to physical access at NAZ.
7. Propose a framework for effective access and use at NAZ

## 1.8 Research questions

In view of the research objectives, this research was designed to answer the questions and sub-questions depicted in Table 1.

**Table 1: Research questions and sub-questions**

Main question	Sub-questions
1. How do archival legislation, rules and policies together with other legal instruments promote or restrict access to and use of public archival material in Zimbabwe?	a) Are there rules at NAZ that restrict the accessibility of certain archival material? b) Are there policies at NAZ that compromise access to and use of archives? c) Which clauses in which pieces of legal instruments affect access to and use of public archival material?

- 2) What public programming and outreach strategies has NAZ employed to reach out to the society?
- a) How often are outreach activities done?
  - b) Is there a prescribed schedule for outreach programmes?
  - c) Does NAZ have a budget specifically set aside for public programming activities?
  - d) Is there a specific section, unit or office that handles public programming issues?
  - e) Which historical and national events have NAZ participated in and what was the nature and level of participation?
  - f) What kind of audience does NAZ mainly target?
  - g) Has NAZ entered into any partnerships or collaborative work to enhance its visibility and the subsequent use of its collections?
  - h) Do archivists at NAZ have the requisite skills to conduct public programming?

- 3) Are the print media and digital technologies used by NAZ to enhance its visibility?
- a) Has NAZ made use of Web 2.0 technologies and the print media to make its services known and available to members of the public?
  - b) Does NAZ have a functional website?
  - c) What kind of information is available on the website?
  - d) Which social media platform(s) has NAZ used to reach out to the audience?

- 4) What is the public's perception of NAZ?
- a) Are people aware of the existence of NAZ?
  - b) Do they know its functionalities?
  - c) Do members of the public regard NAZ as an information resource centre?

- |                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5) How efficient and effective are NAZ's reference services? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) What type of finding aids are there at NAZ to help researchers in identifying the materials they need for their enquiries?</li> <li>b) Are the findings aids self-sufficient?</li> <li>c) Are users able to use the finding aids without the help of the archivist(s)?</li> <li>d) Are the findings aids available online?</li> <li>e) Does NAZ conduct initial or exit interviews to establish if the users' expectations and needs are being met?</li> </ul> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6) What are the physical barriers to access and use of archival material held at NAZ? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Is there a damaged collection that is no longer accessible to researchers?</li> <li>b) In which language(s) is/are the archival material available?</li> <li>c) Are there facilities to cater for the physically challenged?</li> <li>d) Are there unprocessed materials at NAZ?</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## **1.9 Justification and originality of the study**

Access and use is the ultimate goal of all archival institutions. The ability of an archival institution to provide access and use of its holdings gives it meaning and relevance to the society. The availability of archives for use provides people with a platform to exercise their rights, thereby promoting accountability, transparency and good governance (Mnjama 2008; Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011). Similarly, Smart (2011:1) indicates that government information is an important resource for the nature of a country's society, the debates and decisions that impact on its social and economic policies and the development of political priorities for the citizenry. However, despite the certainty of archival institutions' need to provide access to their collections, Mazikana (1999) notes that many national archives are still unable to grant access to public records and

archives. In support of this argument, Hicks (2005) indicates that archivists tend to privilege preservation while access has always been a sticky door. In that respect, the current research deemed it essential and justifiable to investigate the issues of access to and use of public archival material at NAZ with the view to developing a framework that would enhance the utilization of the documentary heritage at NAZ.

The current research gathered empirical evidence regarding matters relating to access and use of documentary heritage at NAZ. The project was driven by the need to help archival institutions become or remain relevant to the people and also to promote the socio-economic and political development of the nation. The results and recommendations produced in this research benefit other archival institutions which need to improve their visibility, public image and utilization of their holdings. With the exception of Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) who made efforts to measure access at NAZ, very little has been done to establish if members of the public are accessing and using the archival material held at NAZ. The current research project went beyond establishing the level of access to documentary heritage at NAZ and investigated the effectiveness of public programming strategies in the use and the public perception of NAZ, and technological, intellectual, physical, bibliographic and legal issues that influence access to archival material. The departure point for this research is that it took a holistic approach to matters concerning the accessibility, availability and visibility of the archives with the view of producing a framework for access to and use of public archival material. The research was worth conducting as it contributes to the existing body of literature and helps national archival institutions to justify their existence through improved access to and use of the national documentary heritage.

The study encourages archivists, records managers and information management professionals to develop the spirit of making the public documentary heritage available to the people. The collected,

presented, analysed and interpreted data, the conclusions drawn, the access framework and the subsequent model proposed as well as the recommendations made provide new insights and thoughts that can prompt records managers and archivists to act on the issues that improve access to and use of public archival material. The information generated in this study provides a foundation on which NAZ and other national archival institutions across the globe can develop a meaningful and better presence in the society. This study has already yielded two publications in the Journal of the South African Society of Archivists and the East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) Journal. The articles are respectively titled, 'Heading for a better understanding of outreach in the digital age: a look into the use of Web 2.0 as a communication tool by Zimbabwe's public information centres (Chaterera 2015a) and 'Promoting the inter-generational equity principle through archival reference services' (Chaterera 2015b). A series of other research papers are envisaged from the current study, thus advancing scholarship in the discipline of archival science.

To avoid reproducing similar work, saying what has been said and doing what has been done, a research project should be able to demonstrate its originality. The originality of a research includes one or more of the elements outlined below (Phillips & Pugh 2005). It can range from the ability by a research to:

- Use available notions to a new area of research
- Provide a significant amount of new data for the first time
- Make new conclusions and interpretations about an existing theory probably in a different context
- Verify existing ideas in previous studies
- Come up with a framework based on the collected data
- Employ a distinct research methodology to address a research problem

- Carry out a research on an area that appears to have been under-researched
- Re-do a research in different contexts such as a different country
- Corroborate, present and analyse data in a different way
- Perform empirical work that has not been previously done
- Take a particular technique and apply it in a new area
- Build a new research technique
- Propose a new phenomenon or consolidate the existing one
- Contribute to the existing body of literature in a manner that has not been done before
- Provide a new interpretation using existing information
- Provide a critical discourse of a concept that has not been previously examined
- Confirm, approve or disapprove an existing piece of work

Originality involves the exploration of the unexplored and the unanticipated (Mavodza 2010). The current research acknowledged that several studies on access to and the use of public archival materials have been undertaken in Zimbabwe, Africa and beyond.

**Table 2: Studies on access and use of public archival materials**

<b>Study</b>	<b>Context</b>
Blais & Enns (1990)	Canada
Mazikana (1999), Moyo (2012), Ngulube (2006), Murambiwa & Ngulube (2011), Ngulube, Sibanda, Makoni (2013).	Zimbabwe
Ayoo & Otike (2000), Mnjama (2008)	Kenya
Jimerson (2003), Prelinger (2007)	United States of America



Hicks (2005), Jeremy, Woodley & Kupke (2008)	Australia
Beasley and Kail (2009)	Singapore
Ngoepe & Ngulube (2011)	South Africa

With the exception of Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011), the studies identified above are not specific to the National Archives of Zimbabwe and some of them are dated. The studies were not done in the context of NAZ and they have not adequately addressed issues relating to public programming, the public perception, physical access and legal issues as aspects that have a strong bearing on access to and use of the public archives, hence creating a point of departure for the current research. Moreover, although the studies cited may have the same *modus operandi* with the current research, it is unjust to assume that the results yielded from other archival institutions can equally apply to NAZ. That amongst other factors renders this research original. While NAZ may surely benefit from research projects that have been done elsewhere regarding access to and use of archival material, it is, however, academically advisable to gather empirical evidence that is specific to a chosen research site at a specified period of time. This helps in coming up with a relevant, appropriate and applicable framework for enhancing access and use of the nation’s documentary heritage at NAZ. In that regard, this research is declared original and critical to the success of NAZ as an information resource centre in service of the public.

**1.10 Assumptions of the study**

Items a) to g) highlight the presuppositions regarding this research. The presuppositions are most likely to be true but it is crucial to highlight that the assumptions are beyond the researcher’s control; hence they may not all turn out to be true.

- a) Informants of the study honestly responded to the questions.
- b) Public archival institutions are willing to gain visibility in the society and therefore provided the required data needed to carry out the research project.
- c) The National Archives uses Web 2.0 technologies to enhance the accessibility of archives to the people.
- d) Archivists, records managers and personnel working in the National Archives are client oriented and can provide satisfactory reference services.
- e) Public archival materials held at NAZ are available on equal terms of access.
- f) The research methods used in this project are reliable and valid.
- g) The theoretical underpinnings informing the study are relevant to the research.

### **1.11 Scope and delimitations of the study**

Delimitations are characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of a study (Simon 2011). The boundaries of this research are defined in the formulated objectives, research questions and the conceptual framework that focuses on access to and use of public archival material. The scope of the research project is also explicit in the target population and the problem investigated in the research. The first delimitation was the choice of the problem itself. There are a lot of problems surrounding the issue of access to public archival material but this study chose to focus on issues to do with outreach programmes, the use of new technologies, the public perception of NAZ, reference services, physical access and the influence of legal instruments on access to and the use of public archives, thus setting clear parameters for the research. The research was limited to NAZ Head Office in Harare and the Zimbabwe populace. However, the results of the study can also benefit other archival institutions working towards improving access to and use of documentary heritage by the society.

## **1.12 Limitations of the study**

This study used a grounded theory approach in which the researcher sought to develop a framework for access and use of public archives. The inherent problems of grounded theory research are that the approach is extremely labour intensive, requiring the investment of considerable cognitive effort by the researcher (Lawrence & Tar 2013). Additionally, grounded theory is an exhaustive process that has a potential for methodological errors and also suffers from limited generalizability (Hussein, Hirst, Salyers & Osuji 2014). However, the purpose of constructivist interpretive studies is not to generalise but to explore the meanings placed on the issues under investigation (Rowlands 2005). The current study was not meant to be generalizable but rather transferrable (See Chapter Four Section 4.6 for a detailed discussion on this aspect).

Another perceived risk of grounded theory is that the researcher may not actually uncover a significant theory and the unorthodox nature of grounded theory is likely to alienate the potential recipients from the research findings (Jones & Alony 2011). In efforts to curb the perceived challenges associated with grounded theory, the current researcher took due diligence in following the guidelines of undertaking a grounded theory research provided by Glaser and Strauss (1967) who are the fathers of the research approach. Despite the perceived risks inherent in a grounded theory research, the current researcher maintains the view that the approach is suitable for the study, especially when a researcher needs to analyse large quantities of unstructured or semi-structured qualitative data for the purposes of developing a framework or a model.

In using the grounded theory research approach, the researcher was wary of and sensitive to the chances that are there for the researcher's bias and subjectivity to contaminate the conceptualization and interpretation of emerging issues. To guard against such potentially study weakening attributes of the grounded theory approach, the researcher engaged in constant

comparison, saturation and core relevance as advised by Villiers (2005). Furthermore, the researcher made sure that the data collection, analysis and presentation were linked to each step of the research process adjusting each stage to the emergent concept(s).

### **1.13 Methodology overview**

The current research aimed to develop a framework for access to and use of the documentary heritage held at NAZ. As such, an interpretive philosophical paradigm and a qualitative approach that uses a grounded research theory emerged as appropriate for the study. The approach allowed the researcher to develop higher level understanding grounded in a systematic analysis of data (Lingard, Albert & Levinson 2008). Grounded theory is used when a research seeks to develop a model or theory on an investigated matter using the empirical field evidence and not to verify an existing theory. In line with that understanding, the current researcher consulted the archival theory on access, the ICA principles on access and the Library Archives Canada Access Policy framework so as to come up with a framework for access and use of public archival material. The consultation of the conceptual frameworks pinpointed above followed the advice given by Lingard, Albert and Levinson (2008) who explained that researchers using a grounded theory should conduct the research with disciplinary interests, background assumptions and an acquaintance with the literature and existing theories in the discipline but should not use the collected data to either approve or disprove the existing theories. Instead, a theory is developed through an analysis of the data collected from the research. In that regard, the current research used the collected data to propound a framework of access to and use of the documented heritage at NAZ not to approve or disprove the theoretical frameworks that informed the study.

The key features of grounded theory are its iterative study design, theoretical sampling and system of analysis (Lingard, Albert & Levinson 2008). In that respect, the researcher conducted a series

of concurrent data collection and analysis. The data analysis informed the next cycle of data collection until a saturation point was reached where no new ideas emerged. Following the dictates of an iterative study design as prescribed in the grounded theory, the sample of the study was not set at the beginning of the research but was selected purposefully as the analysis of the data progressed. The informants of the research were chosen for their capability to supply the required data. Overall, the grounded theory method emerged as an approach of choice for the current research because it is detailed, rigorous, systematic, flexible and it permitted the researcher to go beyond the conventional thinking by allowing the emergence of new conceptual models, theories and framework(s) on the subject that was under investigation (Jones & Alony 2011).

It is imperative for the current study to highlight that there are two fundamental schools of grounded theory, namely the Glaserian school and the Straussian school. While the differences between these two schools are somewhat minor, it is essential to note that the current study mainly followed the Straussian school of grounded theory. The chief reason for using the Straussian school was that it allows researchers to have a general idea of where to begin, whereas the Glaserian school requires researchers to approach the field with a general wonderment where the mind would be blank (Onions 2006). An extensive discourse on the differences of the two schools of grounded theory and the associated criticisms for the method are provided in Chapter Four. Nevertheless, the mainly cited criticism is that the grounded theory method suffers from misalignment as it uses interpretivist and constructionist tools yet it belongs to the positivism philosophical paradigm (Bryant 2002).

The theoretical sampling strategy was used to determine the research concepts, sources of data collection and the relevant respondents. Interviews, observations and document review were the instruments used to collect data. Interviews were chosen because they are more appropriate for

gathering detailed data, observations were chosen because they provide first-hand information and document analysis is good for objective and thorough situational analysis (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight 2006; Creswell 2009). An elaborate presentation of the methodological issues is provided in Chapter Four.

#### **1.14 Outline of the chapters**

The research is organised in seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the study, provides the background to the study and communicates the research problem. Chapter One also outlines the research aim, objectives, questions, scope of the study, the significance of the research and the theoretical underpinnings, and provides a snapshot of the methodological issues. The chapter serves as the foundation from which the entire research is built. In the first chapter, the research is placed into context by way of providing the historical background of NAZ and the functions of its service departments. The chapter is highly significant in that it provides the departure point for the research and sets the direction in which the entire research project eventually flowed.

Chapter Two discusses the conceptual framework which formed the basis on which data for the current study was collected and interpreted. The conceptual framework discussed in this chapter played a pivotal role in developing the framework for access to and use of the documentary heritage at NAZ. The chapter offers a discourse on the archival theory, Library Archives Canada Access Policy Framework, the International Council on Archives' principles on access and the International-Generational Equity theory. These constitute the theoretical underpinnings that informed the current study.

Through the consultation of relevant literature, Chapter Three unpacked the concept of access to and use of archival materials in Zimbabwe, Africa and beyond. The chapter is the heart of the

research project as it acquaints readers of this work with the key aspects of the study, helping them to appreciate and understand the context in which the research was conducted. Chapter Three demonstrates efforts that have been made by previous researchers on issues to do with access to archival material in various countries. It also identifies areas of weakness and gaps targeted to be consolidated and filled by the current research.

Chapter Four provides an elaborate presentation on research methodology and methods of the research briefly presented in Chapter One. The methodological issues covered include the research design, research approach, philosophical paradigm, target population, data collection instruments, ethical considerations, sampling techniques as well as the validity and reliability of instruments used.

Chapter Five thematically presents and analyses qualitative data while tables and figures are used for statistical data. Chapter Six discusses and interprets the findings of the research in accordance with the research problem, objectives and questions. Chapter Seven sums up the research and concludes on issues that were under investigation, provides a model for access to archival material, makes the necessary recommendations and raise issues that need further research.

### **1.15 Summary**

Chapter One set the scene for the study by providing introductory and background information to the access to and use of archives in national archival institutions. The chapter placed emphasis on issues related to physical, bibliographic and intellectual access to archival material. In efforts to ensure an understanding of the study's research site, Chapter One supplied comprehensive information on the historical setting of NAZ. The struggle by NAZ to provide full access to Zimbabwe's documentary heritage was cited as the core research problem. In that respect,

developing a framework for access to and use of the archives emerged as the aim of the current study. In light of the research aim, the chapter proceeded by offering the purpose and objectives of the study. The objectives were guided by the need to develop a framework for access and use of public archival material. As such, research questions and sub questions in congruent with the objectives were also communicated.

The chapter also justified the need to conduct the current research placing emphasis on the originality of the study. To this end, a number of studies that were done relating to access to and use of archives were identified and acknowledged. Prior to communicating the scope and delimitations of the study, the chapter supplied the pre-suppositions of the study and proceeded to highlight some issues that have the potential to compromise the strength and stability of the study. In that respect, the chapter had to communicate the efforts that were put in place by the researcher to arrest the perceived risks inherent in a grounded theory research. In efforts to offer a clear picture on how the research was going to proceed, Chapter One supplied an overview of the methodology that was used to gather the information that was needed to address the research problem and to meet the research objectives. Overall, Chapter One offered a snapshot to the study and ended by outlining the chapters of the entire thesis.



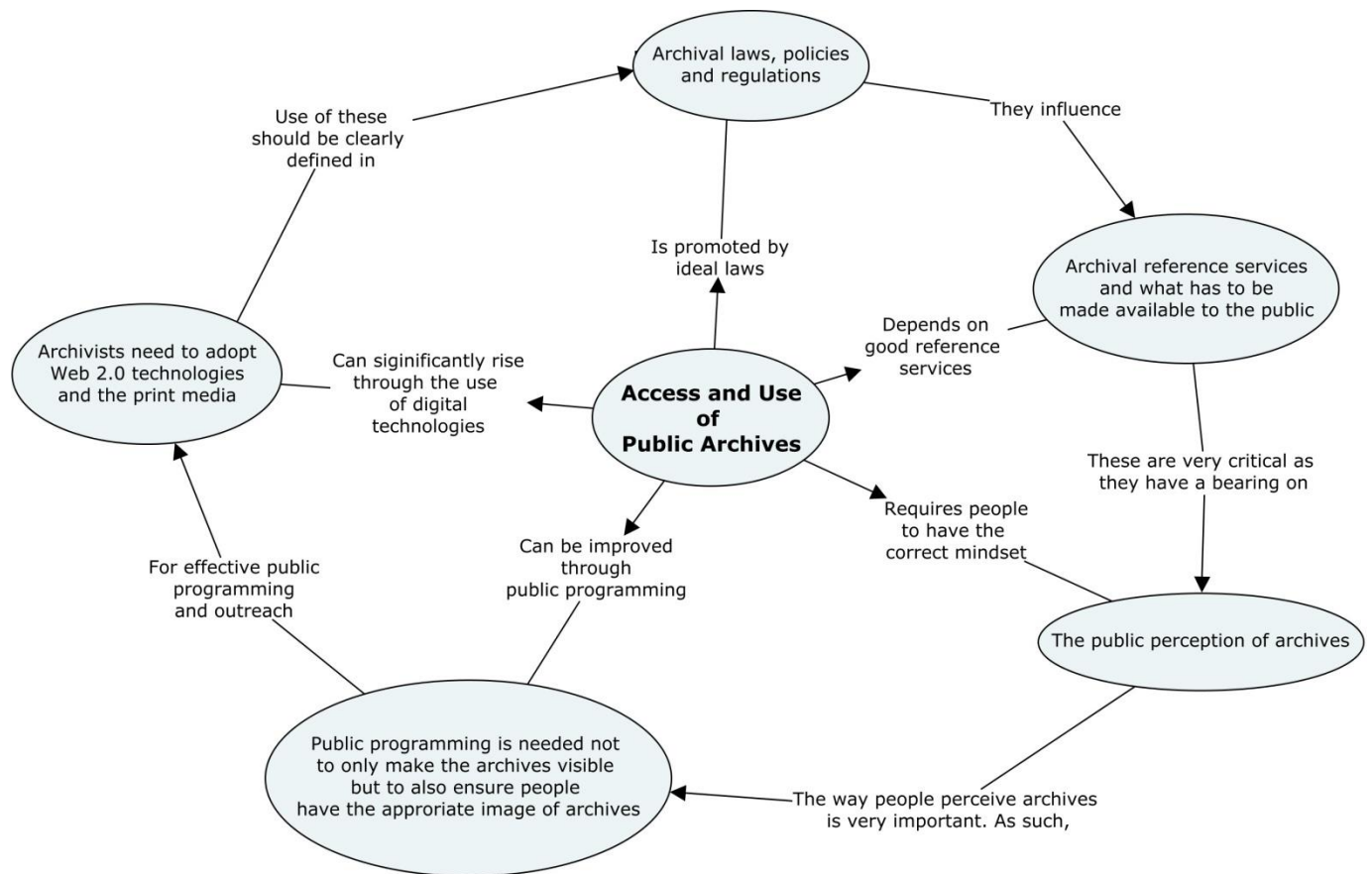
## CHAPTER TWO

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

*Concepts become theoretical structures as they are the building blocks of a theory  
(Ngulube, Mathipa & Gumbo 2015).*

#### **2.1 Introduction**

A conceptual framework serves as an analytical tool for understanding, explaining and making predictions and conclusions about a phenomenon or subject under study (Eastwood 1994). It gives researchers the ability to reach informed conclusions and formulate improved theories (Kemoni 2008) and provides the basis for a research project (Creswell 2003; Kemoni 2007). In this study, the conceptual framework adopted was meant to establish coherence in the research and to enable readers to be clear about what the research sought to accomplish and how it was accomplished as underscored by Ngulube, Mathipa and Gumbo (2015). The conceptual framework adopted in this study was largely guided by the subject matters embedded in the research objectives. The matters that were under investigation all share a common goal of enhancing access and use of archives. As such, the researcher was enabled to settle on a conceptual framework that addressed the different issues that were under spotlight in the study. Using the research objectives of this study, Figure 2 illustrates the conceptual relationships amongst the issues that were under investigation.



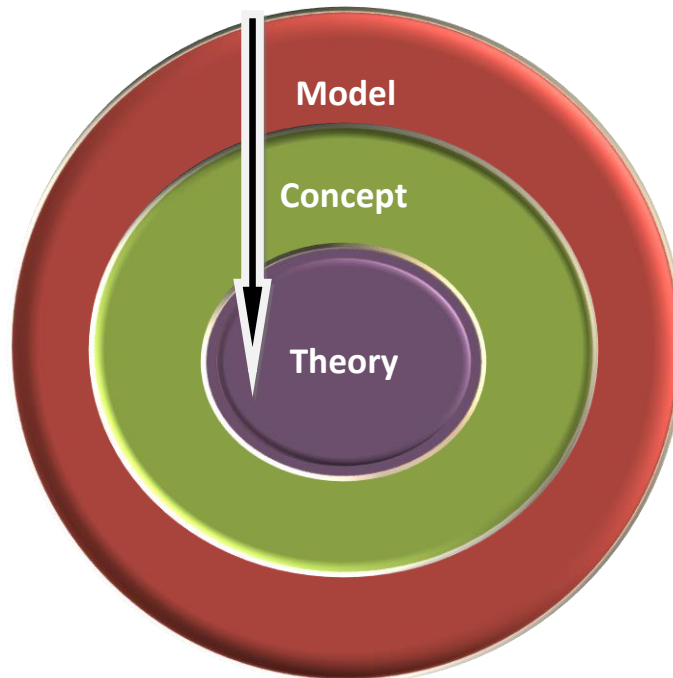
**Figure 2: Conceptual relationships**

It was essential for this study to be built on a clear conceptual framework as nothing can be studied empirically in the absence of a theory and no investigation can be successful without theory to guide its choice of questions and research methods (Bergman 2011; Ngulube, Mathipa & Gumbo 2015).

Some schools of thought have contended that a literature review is adequate to serve as a conceptual framework as long as it fuels the focus of the study and encompasses the key concepts in the domain under investigation (Ngulube, Mathipa & Gumbo 2015). Contrary to such thinking, the current study deemed it essential to distinguish between a literature review and a conceptual

framework as it might be difficult for readers to understand the theoretical foundation of the study unless it is explicitly communicated in isolation from the literature review.

The conceptual framework presented in this chapter provided a focus for the current study formed the basis on which the data collected was interpreted and it also enabled the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the subject under investigation. The current study used an inductive model-theory continuum as illustrated in Figure 3. Within the inductive model theory continuum, Ngulube, Mathipa and Gumbo (2015) explained that concepts become theoretical structures as they are the building blocks of a theory. In that regard, the current study used conceptual frameworks as a foundation and pillars on which a framework for access and use of the documentary heritage at NAZ was formed. In the inductive approach, theory is derived from the data, rather than being formed before data collection (Ngulube, Mathipa & Gumbo 2015). This means that the framework for access to and use of the archives developed in this study was informed by the data collected.



**Figure 3: Inductive model-theory continuum** (synthesized by the researcher)

To achieve ‘fidelity’ for the study, as Denzin (1978) cited in Ngulube, Mathipa and Gumbo (2015) would call it, this study adopted a theoretical triangulation in which ICA’s principles on access to the archives, the archival theory on the use of archives and the Library Archives Canada access policy were employed to serve as conceptual frameworks for the study. It is imperative to highlight that the triangulated frameworks are not at par as archival theory is the core from which principles are developed and subsequent policies are formulated. Given such weighting, this study was considerably informed by the archival theory, followed by the ICA principles on access and then institutional policies. Nevertheless, all the concepts played a crucial role in shaping the direction of the study. Triangulating concepts was essential as it improved the researcher’s understanding of the archival access and use issues while enhancing the validity of explanations offered in this study. This research also took heed of Cobb’s (2007) advice who noted that researchers should be able to build their research using theoretical perspectives from a range of theoretical sources to

suit their goals instead of using just one theoretical perspective. The use of a range of theoretical resources rendered the current study pragmatic. Contrary to quantitative studies in which theories are tested, confirmed or rejected, this study primarily adopted theories to serve as a preliminary understanding of the issue(s) that were under investigation (Flick 2002 cited in Ngulube, Mathipa & Gumbo 2015).

## **2.2 The International Council on Archives (ICA) Principles on access to the archives**

The principles of access to the archives developed by ICA were adopted as a conceptual framework for the current research. The ten principles listed below underscore the importance of access as an element of archival practice.

1. The public has the right of access to archives of public bodies. Both public and private entities should open their archives to the greatest extent possible.
2. Institutions holding archives make known the existence of the archives, including the existence of closed materials, and disclose the existence of restrictions that affect access to the archives.
3. Institutions holding archives adopt a pro-active approach to access.
4. Institutions holding archives ensure that restrictions on access are clear and of stated duration, are based on pertinent legislation, acknowledge the right of privacy and respect the rights of owners of private materials.
5. Archives are made available on equal and fair terms.

6. Institutions holding archives ensure that victims of serious crimes under international law have access to archives that provide evidence needed to assert their human rights and to document violations of them, even if those archives are closed to the general public.
7. Users have the right to appeal a denial of access.
8. Institutions holding archives ensure that operational constraints do not prevent access to archives.
9. Archivists have access to all closed archives and perform necessary archival work on them.
10. Archivists participate in the decision-making process on access.

Questions may, however, be raised as to whether ICA's principles may be used as a conceptual or theoretical framework in a scientific inquiry. To this question, the current researcher reiterates the argument by Ngulube, Mathipa and Gumbo (2015) who explained that concepts become theoretical structures as they are the building blocks of a theory. As such, a set of principles on which the practice of an activity is based fairly serves as either a theoretical or conceptual framework. Overall, ICA's principles on access to the archives provide an authoritative international baseline against which to measure existing access policy and practices and a framework to use when developing new or modifying existing access rules (ICA 2012). In that respect, this research used ICA's principles on access to inform the research in developing a framework for access to and the use of the documentary heritage at NAZ.

The first objective of the research was to examine the influence of legal instruments on access to and use of public archives. Meeting this objective was guided by ICA's fourth principle which

states that institutions holding archives must ensure that restrictions on access are clear and of stated duration, based on pertinent legislation, acknowledge the right of privacy and respect the rights of owners of private materials. In view of this principle, this research analysed some of the legal instruments that govern access and use of public information. These include the NAZ Act of 1986, the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act, of 2013, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, the Official Secrets Act, Data Protection Act, Protection of Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act and Access to Information.

Amongst the objectives of this research was to ascertain the use of public programming strategies and Web 2.0 technologies by NAZ to increase their visibility in the public domain as well as to find out what the public think about them. The second and third principles on access by ICA (2012) guided the current study in meeting the second and third objectives of the study. The need for national archival institutions to be more visible in the society is inherent in ICA's second and third principles which respectively call for institutions holding archives to make known the existence of their archives and for public archival institutions to adopt a pro-active approach to access.

Developing a framework for access and use of the archives at NAZ required the research to establish the barriers to physical access at NAZ and an evaluation of the reference services on offer. These issues are respectively underscored in the sixth and fifth research objectives of the current study. Research on those issues was informed and guided by the understanding that public archives should open their collection to the greatest extent possible, should be made available on equal and fair terms, and operational constraints should not prevent access to the archives (ICA 2012).

With reference to part of the research problem which indicates that the accessibility and use of public archival material held at NAZ is a challenge because of the backlogs of unprocessed archives, the research sought to establish the current status quo regarding the large amount of unprocessed materials that were reported in a study conducted by Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011). The examination by the current study of the status quo regarding unprocessed material at NAZ was largely influenced by ICA's eighth and ninth principles which indicate that archivists should have access to all closed archives and perform necessary archival work on them and should participate in the decision making process on access.

### **2.3 The archival theory on the use of archives**

Archival theory is a self-contained body of ideas about the nature of archival documents (Duranti 1994:331). It also described as the analysis of ideas about the nature of archives (MacNeil 2007:519). Similarly (Cook & Schwartz 2002:175) indicated that archival theory generalizes and codifies archival functionalities into universal concepts for continuing practice. In light of the meaning of archival theory, the current researcher observed that there is a paradigm shift that is taking place in the archival world due to societal, technological, and professional developments. These have affected the accessibility and use of archives amongst other archival functions. A similar observation was made by Cook (2005:161) who referred to the character of archival theory as always mutating. In view of archival theory as the whole of the ideas about what archival material (Duranti 1994:330), the current researcher examined the issues of access and use of documentary heritage and consulted the ideas about the nature of archival material at NAZ and how it affects access and use.

The archival theory on the use of archives is an essential framework that was used in this research to develop a framework for access to and use of the archives. The archival theory is rooted in



advancing research and scholarship by making available and encouraging the use of collections by the community at large. The theory indicates that use is central to the mission and purpose of all archives, hence becoming appropriate for the current study as the researcher mainly focused on the need by NAZ to facilitate and support the use of its holdings. The archival theory emphasises that the use of archives provides a tangible indication of the archives' purpose (Maher 2001). In that respect, the current study emphasises that failure by an archival institution to make its holdings available to the public renders the archives irrelevant and meaningless to the society (See section 1.1).

The archival theory on the use of archives highlights the need for a reference room large enough to comfortably house researchers and the archival material they are using. This is in line with the current research project as it addressed the challenge of the size of reading rooms and dysfunctional equipment at NAZ identified in a research conducted by (Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011). An examination of the issues relating to physical access was an integral component of this research (See objective six). The archival theory on access and use guided the current study in the examination of certain physical requirements expected of an archival institution. The theory indicates that the reference room area should have filtered artificial or natural light, access to a photocopy machine, controls on the handling of sensitive or fragile materials, and whatever equipment is needed to use archival holdings. Additionally, the archival theory on use indicates that there is far greater need for orientation and interviewing of users before placing them in contact with documents. In that regard, the current research sought to establish if NAZ conducted entry or initial interviews to acquaint the patron with the research environment and also to understand what the researcher would be looking for and be able to help.

The current research also looked into the efficiency and effectiveness of NAZ's reference services (See objective five). The archival theory was helpful in attaining this objective as it states that the efficient delivery of reference services requires explicit procedures. Thus, all archives should have printed user regulations and users should be requested to read the regulations before documents are provided (Maher 2001). The archival theory on use indicates the user regulations should address care in handling original documents; copyright regulations; procedures for obtaining copies and rules for citation of archival materials. The archival theory further indicates the need for archives to develop a general access policy to define the conditions of use and outline how restrictions should be handled when they are necessary. The theory stipulates that there should be a clearly defined restriction period and a means for researchers to apply for access before the end of the restricted period.

The archival theory on use calls for archivists to accept that the preeminent purpose of preservation is use. This implies that the archivists should be champions of researchers by being proponents of responsible use of the repository's holdings. Archivists are called to uphold the overriding goal that archives exist to be used. The current research operationalised this advocacy in that it evaluated the efforts that have been put in place to promote access to and use of the documentary heritage at NAZ with the view to developing a framework for access to and use of the archives.

#### **2.4 Access policies from other archival institutions**

Archival institutions across the globe have an obligation to ensure access and use of the documentary heritage in their custody. In that respect, many archival institutions, particularly those in the first world countries, have developed access policies that explicitly lay out the access principles, requirements and restrictions. The current study worked on developing an access to and use of archives framework at NAZ, hence rendering it vital to look into other archival institutions'

access policies. An internet search of access policy frameworks yielded relatively good results as a number of archival access policy frameworks were found to be in existence. These included but may not be limited to the Provincial Archives of Alberta Access Policy (2005), the Library and Archives Canada Access Policy Framework (2011), the Lancashire Archives County Council Access Policy (2014), the National Archives of the United Kingdom Access to Public Records (2015) and the City of Westminster Archives Centre Access Policy (2016). It is, however, disappointing to note that none of the found access policy frameworks were from the African continent. Nevertheless, the researcher managed to find some important components which contributed meaningfully towards the development of an access and use framework for NAZ.

The Provincial Archives of Alberta Access Policy (2005) was developed to provide members of staff, volunteers and the archives users with a detailed policy framework for accessing records in the custody and control of the Provincial Archives of Alberta. The policy was also meant to provide staff with a framework for developing best practice documents and statements on specific aspects of access to holdings. The access policy mainly stipulates the responsibilities of the provincial archivist, archivists, records managers, the retrieval aide and the conservator. The current researcher, however, did not employ the access policy to inform her study as she found the access policy framework inadequate and incomplete in terms of crucial access issues that were under the spotlight in the current study. The policy barely goes beyond prescribing the responsibilities of members of staff.

The Lancashire Archives County Council Access Policy (2014) was amongst the yielded results from a literature search on archives access policy. The policy was developed in pursuit of eliminating all forms of discrimination while promoting equality of opportunity in all aspects of their services. The policy clearly communicates the conditions regarding access to the archives

building, on-site and off-site access to the archive collections, access to copies of material from the archive collections, access for groups of people, access to archives containing personal information, access standards, search room regulations and access restrictions. The Lancashire Archives County Council Access Policy (2014) addresses the critical aspects pertaining to access to and use of archives. This access policy was, however, not selected to inform the current study as there were other more comprehensive and embracing access policy frameworks such as the Library Archives Canada Access Policy Framework (2016).

The National Archives of the United Kingdom Access to Public Records (2015) was also amongst the results generated from a literature search on existing archives access and policy frameworks. The major highlights of the document include a definition of public records, an outline of responsibilities, principles for determining access status of records on transfer and the laws governing access and use of public records. The National Archives of the United Kingdom Access to Public Records (2015) mainly serves as a toolkit to supplement advice regarding the transfer of public records to archives services. The policy is particularly relevant to those involved in the sensitivity review of records and the transfer of closed records. The policy framework is not explicit on the issues of access and use of archives. In that respect, the researcher did not opt to use this policy framework to inform her study because it falls short on some of the focal issues under spotlight in the current study.

The other archival access policy framework that was found to be in existence is the City of Westminster Archives Centre Access Policy (2016). A key objective of this policy was to improve access to the resources in its care to all communities. The policy highlights the legislation and standards to which the Westminster City Archives subscribes and sets out the statutory framework for access to information. In the policy are clear provisions regarding on-site access, remote access,

on-line access and restrictions to access. The current study did not find this policy framework fully embrative of the issues surrounding access and use of archives. This conclusion was made in comparison with the Library Archives Canada Access Policy Framework (2016) which subsequently emerged as the access policy framework of choice for the current study. As is going to be explained in the section that follows, the current study found the Library Archives Canada's Access Policy Framework more applicable to the current study as it clearly stipulates the principles that have to be followed to ensure the provision of access to and use of archival holdings in efficient and effective ways.

#### **2.4.1 Library Archives Canada (LAC) Access Policy Framework (APF)**

This research's endeavour was to develop an access and use framework for NAZ. In doing so, the Library Archives Canada (LAC) (2016) emerged appropriate to inform the study. LAC was established in 2004 as a result of the amalgamation of the National Library of Canada and the National Archives of Canada to become one institution (Loewen 2008). The two institutions were brought together by the quest to promote access as the primary driver for library and archives in Canada. In an effort to give a full voice to the new emphasis on access, LAC developed an access policy framework whose clauses were adopted to inform the current study. (See Appendix B for the full version of the policy framework). In the same vein as ICA's principles on access, LAC explicitly indicates that its mission is to facilitating access to Canada's Documentary Heritage and making that heritage known to Canadians and to anyone with an interest in Canada. Guided by this context in which the policy framework is premised, the current research worked towards identifying and eliminating the physical and intellectual barriers to access. In further pursuance of fair and equitable access to the archival collection at NAZ, the current research also worked

towards the development of service standards that are transparent and inclusive as well as the establishment of a wide range of access channels that recognise the diverse needs of users.

In its context, LAC's access policy framework reiterates that the institution aims to render all of its holdings discoverable, available and accessible to the greatest extent possible. In line with this endeavour, the current research examined the reference services, systems and tools at NAZ with the view of establishing if they support autonomous access to the archival collection. In accordance with the thrust of the access policy framework, the current research focused mainly on the adequacy of the finding aids at NAZ in allowing the archives users to direct their search with little or no help from the archivist. It is also indicated in the LAC's access policy framework that the institutions actively seeks to expand open and universal access to its holdings, notably through digital means and open data initiatives. In this respect the current research also assessed the extent to which NAZ has made use of Web 2.0 technologies and the print media to make its services known and available to members of the public (See objective three). Overall, LAC's access policy framework is hinged on taking measures proactively to provide maximum access to its holdings within its resources. The access policy framework explicitly indicates that LAC's the institution endeavors to provide and support client-centered programming and services as well as work cooperatively and collaboratively with stakeholders. Inspired by such a commitment, the current research deemed it prudent to examine if NAZ consults its broad spectrum of archives users and potential users to identify and mitigate the probable obstacles to access (see objective four).

LAC's access policy framework also indicates that the archives hold the responsibility to collaborate with others to promote and facilitate access to documentary heritage. Guided by this principle, the current research investigated the partnerships and collaborations that NAZ has entered into in efforts to enhance their visibility and promote access and use of the documentary

heritage in their custody (See research question 2g). Specific attention is given to collaborative work between NAZ and its communities of users, cultural heritage management institutions, government departments and international organisations. This research recognises the significant role played by collaborations and partnerships in improving the image and visibility of an institution, subsequently leading to increased access levels. In that regard, the current research investigates the participation of NAZ in national and international programmes and events. Such events include but may not be limited to the International Archives Day, Independence Day, Africa Day, Unit Day, Heroes Day, Defence Forces Day, Zimbabwe International Trade Fair and Sanganai/Hlanganani World Tourism Expo.

## **2.5 Summary**

The chapter focused on establishing coherence in the research and to enable readers to be clear about what the research sought to accomplish and how it was accomplished. The main thrust of the chapter was to communicate the conceptual framework that was adopted by the researcher in working towards developing an access and use framework for NAZ. The discussed concepts included the archival theory and the International Council on Archives principles on access. A number of other existing archives access policy frameworks were briefly communicated for the purposes of demonstrating why the researcher chose to settle for the Library Archives Canada Access Policy Framework amongst other existing archival institution's access policy frameworks.

## CHAPTER THREE

### LITERATURE REVIEW ON ACCESS TO AND USE OF ARCHIVES WITH A FOCUS ON ZIMBABWE

*“The open-mindedness of the researcher should not be mistaken for the empty mindedness of the researcher who is not adequately steeped in the research traditions of a discipline. It is after all not very clever to rediscover the wheel and the student or researcher who is ignorant of the relevant literature is always in danger of doing the equivalent” (Coffey & Atkinson 1996:157).*

#### **3.1 Introduction**

A literature review is an essential part of an academic research project that constitutes an integral component of the scientific process. In that respect, this chapter provides a careful examination of the existing body of literature on issues relating to access to and use of public archives. The chapter begins by debating the place of the literature review in a grounded theory research as the issue is complex and surrounded by many conflicting arguments. This literature review is guided by the research aim, objectives and the perceived research problem. Essentially, this chapter reviews literature on three fundamental types of access, namely bibliographic, intellectual and physical. The specificities of these three fundamental types of access are discussed under the issues of legal instruments that govern access to and use of archives, outreach and public programming, Web 2.0 and digital technologies, the public perception of archival institutions, reference services and the physical access to archival holdings. These issues were directly derived from the objectives of the current study and they constitute part of the subtopics presented in this chapter. Coverage of the three main pillars of access to and use of the archives gave this study a holistic approach, hence



strengthening the basis on which the current research developed a framework for access to and use of Zimbabwe's documentary heritage.

This study was focused on developing a framework for access and use of documentary heritage at NAZ. A review of extant literature helped the researcher to eliminate the difficulties associated with appreciating how the research subject is connected to other related areas. Through a review of literature provided in this chapter, the researcher became aware of how the current research fits into the broader context of access to public information and it also helped the researcher to appreciate the sequence and growth of knowledge on the issues of legal instruments governing access to and use of archives, outreach and public programming in archival institutions, the use of Web 2.0 and digital technologies to enhance the availability of archival holdings, the people's perception about the archives, reference services as a driver for improved access as well as physical access to archival holdings.

### **3.2 Debating the place of a literature review in a grounded research study**

There is so much debate surrounding the notion of reviewing the literature in a grounded theory research. The arguments propounded by various schools of thought are quite complex and at many times contrasting. Given the complexity of the role and the place of literature in a grounded theory research, the researcher deemed it essential to provide a justification on how and why previous work was reviewed in this grounded theory study.

The fathers of grounded research theory advised against a literature review before data collection (Glaser & Strauss 1967). They emphasised that as opposed to most research approaches that perceive a literature review as a foundation on which a research is built, a grounded research study should abstain from literature review to avoid the contamination of the data collection, analysis

and theory development. Glaser and Strauss (1967) believed that there is a danger in an early literature review as it almost inevitably leads the researcher to impose existing frameworks, hypotheses or other theoretical ideas upon the data, hence undermining the focus, authenticity and quality of the grounded theory research.

Owing to the critical role that a literature review plays in an academic research and the uneasiness of many concerning the postponement of a literature review, the position of Strauss began to shift (Wiener 2007). Strauss and Corbin (1994; 1998) supported an early review of relevant literature resulting in their split with Glaser (1992; 1998) who maintained the position that pure grounded theorists must learn not to know by avoiding a literature search prior to data collection. It is only after the sorting of data and writing up of the research is nearly complete that researchers can then do a literature search in the area of their study and weave the ideas in their own theory as more data for constant comparison.

The position against a literature review before data collection was also supported by Nathaniel (2006) and Holton (2007) who both asserted that grounded theorists must not enter the research field with neither a preconceived problem statement nor an extensive review of literature. In further support of abstinence from an early literature review are Glaser (1998) and McCallin (2003) who expressed the concern that a researcher's critical approach to a study may be side tracked by interpretations in extant literature that probably support taken-for-granted assumptions, which may not be applicable to their area of study. In that respect, Charmaz (2006) concurred that abstinence from an early literature review helps a researcher to avoid importing preconceived ideas and imposing them on his/her work. The other proponents against an early literature review are Locke (2001) and Dick (2007) who together with Glaser (1998) argued that a time consuming detailed literature review at an early stage of a grounded research study may be wasteful and inefficient

given that a grounded theory study is unpredictable and the relevant literature may not be known until some significant data has been gathered.

Despite the arguments that have been expressed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), Glasser (1992; 1998), Locke (2001), McCallin (2003), Charmaz (2006), Nathaniel (2006), Dick (2007), Holton (2007) and (Wiener 2007) over conducting a literature review before data collection, the current research upheld the idea that a literature review in a grounded theory research is vital for academic honesty, and demonstrates how the study builds on and contributes to the existing body of literature within the field (Stern 2007). The current grounded theory study took the path of performing an early literature review as it provides a coherent rationale for the study as well as a clear justification for the chosen research approach (Dunne 2011; McGhee, Marland, & Atkinson 2007; Coyne & Cowley 2006). Sharing the same sentiments are Chiovitti and Piran (2003) who explained that an early literature review in a grounded theory research ensures that a similar study has not been done and highlights critical issues as well as gaps in the extant literature (Hutchinson 1993; Creswell 1998).

It was therefore essential for this grounded theory research to perform an early literature review as it helped in contextualizing the study, a benefit that was confirmed by McCann & Clark (2003). Similarly, Coffey and Atkinson (1996), Strauss and Corbin (1998), Denzin (2002), Maijala, Paavilainen and Astedt-Kurki (2003), McCann and Clark (2003), Henwood and Pidgeon (2006), McMnamin (2006), Urquhart (2007) and McGhee, Marland, & Atkinson (2007) indicated that an early literature review orients the researcher to his/her field of study, shows how the subject has been studied over the years, sensitizes the researcher on essential elements and theoretical concepts, guard against methodological pitfalls and it promotes a clear frame of mind towards the development of a theory. In respect of such philosophies, this research considered it imperative to

perform a literature review such that the final work is protected from open criticism. In support of the stance taken in this research, Coffey and Atkinson (1996:157) emphasised that;

The open-mindedness of the researcher should not be mistaken for the empty mindedness of the researcher who is not adequately steeped in the research traditions of a discipline. It is after all not very clever to rediscover the wheel and the student or researcher who is ignorant of the relevant literature is always in danger of doing the equivalent.

In response to the fears that performing a literature review pollutes the research by imposing assumptions and preconceptions, the current study asserts that the thinking of any researcher carrying out a study without some level of previous work or ideas is unrealistic. The argument of contaminating a grounded theory research with preconceived ideas and interpretations in extant literature fails to recognise the ability of researchers to be mindful of how existing ideas may be used to inform their research. To that effect, Urquhart (2007) argued that a researcher's awareness and appreciation of other ideas and theories does not necessarily imply that they will impose the extant knowledge on their work. This research had to conduct a literature review at an early stage because the dangers of abstaining from extant literature are more dangerous and detrimental to a research than the fears of contaminating the data, something which can be monitored and avoided. For instance, there can be serious concerns over the researcher's familiarity and knowledge of their area of research and this early literature review serves to address such anxieties.

In further reduction of the fears that preconceived ideas might contaminate the data collected for this study, the researcher carried out the study with an open and critical mind that allowed new and even conflicting findings to emerge from the study, an approach that is supported by Strubing

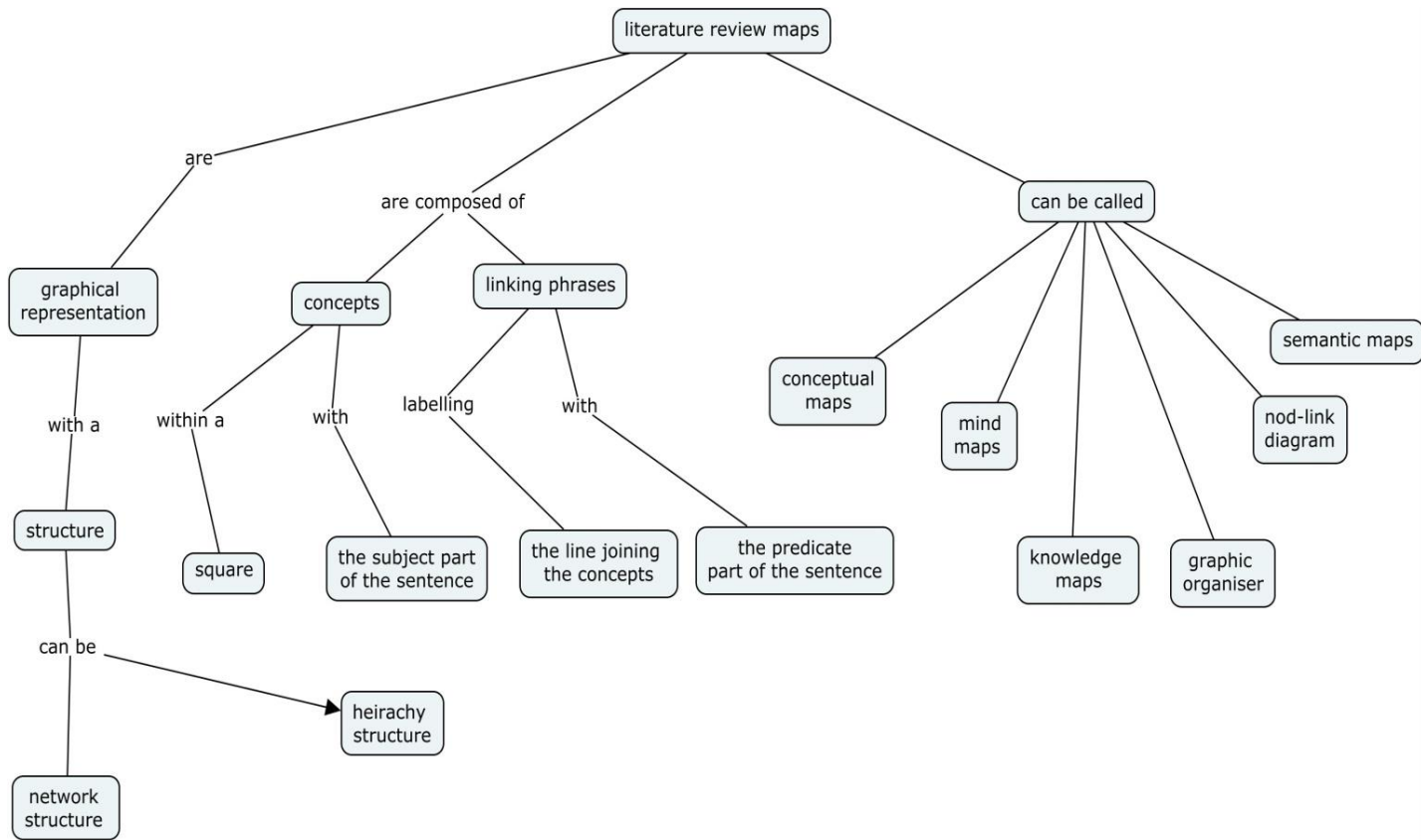
(2007) and Suddaby (2006) and technically referred to as reflexivity (Robson 2002; McGhee, Marland, & Atkinson 2007 & McCann and Clark 2003).

It is important for a researcher to interact and interrogate the relevant extant literature for his/her studies as it offers an adequate depth to understand the parameters of the discourse and helps the researcher to better appreciate the current theoretical conversation (Lempert 2007; McMenamin 2006). It is against such thinking that the current study went against the dicta of ‘pure grounded theorists’ who argue that grounded theory researchers should learn not to know and enter the field of study with blank and pure minds (Glaser & Strauss 1967). In actual fact, an abstinence from an early literature review ironically undermines the competence and quality of qualitative research work, yet these are part of the original reasons why grounded theory research was introduced.

### **3.3 Literature review map**

The idea of a literature review map was a result of the theories by Ausubel (1963; 1978; 2012) in his several works on meaningful learning. These works led to the development of a number of graphic tools aimed at facilitating learning. A number of terminologies have been used to refer to a literature review map. These terms include but are not limited to concept map, concept diagram, graphic organizer, node and link diagram, knowledge map, semantic map, semantic network, mind map and spider map (Dansereau 2005; Hay 2007; Novak 1990). While these terms share common ground in that they serve to represent the relationship between the ideas and concepts in a given study, it is imperative to note that the terms do not exactly mean the same. This means there is a relatively fair amount of confusion about the terminology used in scientific literature (Rovira 2015). By definition, a literature review map is a graphical illustration that depicts key concepts of a study and the relationship between and among those concepts. Using a free software product

called Cmap Tools, the researcher managed to construct a graphical depiction that defines a literature review map.

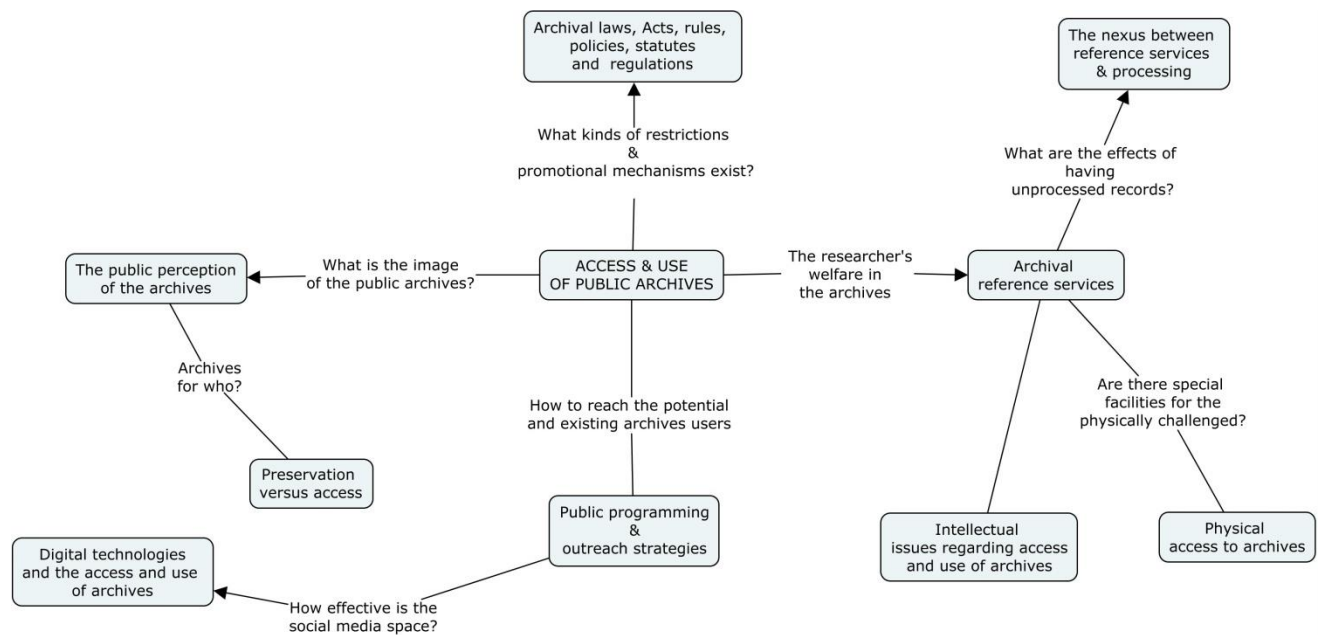


**Figure 4: Literature review map illustrated** (synthesized by the researcher)

The above graphical representation that defines a literature review map was developed using the ideas adopted from Dansereau (2005) and Rovira (2015). In respect of the definition depicted in Figure 4, this study provides a graphical representation of the key concepts that guided the review of the literature for the current study (See Figure 5). The formulation of the literature map provided in this study was guided by the objectives of the study presented in Chapter One and it was based on theoretical work in the field of information science.

There are a number of free and commercial software products that can be used to create concept maps. The examples of free software products obtained from a basic Google search include but

are not limited to CmapTools, Compendium, Docear, FreeMind, Freeplane, MindMup, Sciplore, Coggle, Edraw Mind Map, Qiqqa and Xmind. The current study used the CmapTools open source concept mapping software to create both the graphical definition of a literature review map (See Figure 5) and the literature review map for this study. The CmapTools software was particularly chosen for this study because the software effectively supports the construction and sharing of concept and knowledge models. The knowledge modelling kit was easy to learn yet powerful enough to depict the relationship between concepts covered by the study and the ideas that guided the overall literature search. The software is also available in many languages and permits users across the world to collaborate and share their knowledge models (Canas, Hill, Carff, Suri, Lott, Gomez, Eskridge, Arroyo & Carvajal 2004).



**Figure 5: Literature review map** (synthesized by the researcher)

It was imperative for the current study to develop a literature review map as it clearly depicts concepts and ideas in an easy way. The map created for this study provides a general and abstract

vision about the broader subject of access to and use of the public archives showing its connection to legislative issues, public programming, digital technologies, the public perception, archival reference services and some issues of physical access. As Rovira (2015) and Nesbit & Adesope (2006; 2013) attest, a literature review map enables a researcher to ascertain the pattern and trends of research and allows them to debate the objectives of the study and to later contextualize, analyse, discuss and interpret the obtained results.

Further arguing for the importance of a literature review map are Alias and Suradi (2008) who indicated that students undertaking research projects are often overwhelmed by the vast amount of information they find during their literature search. Rowley and Slack (2004) also observed that coming across the messy nature of knowledge when performing a literature review presents to most students a challenge of how to identify and organise the information needed in their research. As such, developing a concept map has since been suggested as an instrument that makes it easier for a researcher to make sense of the available information and to subsequently generate a literature review that is consistent with the research aim and objectives (Carnot 2006; Rowley & Slack 2004). A literature review map based on the key concepts of the study was therefore essential as it helped the current study in establishing coherence and a smooth flow of ideas in the actual writing of the literature review.

Using the literature review map provided in Figure 5, the researcher was able to:

- distinguish essential ideas from peripheral issues
- challenge certain ways of thinking
- identify key concepts on access and use from other disciplines such as cultural heritage studies
- easily discover the main themes of the research



- select the appropriate reading material for the literature review
- establish conceptual relationships of the issues under investigation
- adopt a holistic approach in discerning the issues of access to and use of archives (Weideman and Kritzinger 2003).

### **3.4 An overview of access to and use of archives**

Access is the nucleus of an archival institution. All the other archival functions such as acquisition, description, preservation and conservation are oriented to ensure the availability of archival holdings (Loewen 2008). To this effect, McClauseland (2007) argues that the reason for keeping archives is for them to be used. Recognising access as the *raison d'être* of archival institutions drove the current research to investigate issues that could see NAZ boosting its access level. The current study is premised on the understanding that access to the archival holdings is not done for mere access sake. Quite a number of studies are agreeable to the current study in that the archivist's primary purpose is to facilitate access and use of archival materials. However, there are some schools of thought who do not necessarily perceive access and use as the *raison d'être* for national archival institutions. For-instance, Jenkinson (1922:15) was of the view that the primary function of an archivist is to safeguard the archives and their essential qualities whilst their secondary duty is to provide access to the archival materials. To this end, Jenkinson (1922) emphasised that "the position of primary and secondary must not be reversed". Such thinking was perpetuated even to the 1940s by Brooks (1940:221) who emphasised on the selection of records for preservation arguing that the archivist's primary concern should be based on the question 'what records shall we preserve?'. There has been so much debate on whether collecting and preservation is much more important than the provision access. In a study conducted by Kaplan (2000:138) it was

revealed that some people believe that its adequate for an archival institution to simply focus on collecting and preservation while others objected that the preservation of documents alone would not make enough public statement, thus emphasising the need to be pro-active in providing access.

The current study fully subscribes to Schaeffer (1992:614) who reiterated that archivists are now the servants of society at large, called upon to ensure archival materials are accessible to a range of users. Further underscoring access and use as the primary function for national archival institutions is Cross (1997:5) who indicated that archivists have become less willing to accept access restrictions as they continue to perceive access as their traditional ties to reference. Similar sentiments were shared by Duff and Fox (2006:131) who argued on the critical need to equip archivists with the skills to deal with the unique demands of access and reference work. Additionally, Greene (2010:190) emphasised that serving users is the *sine qua non* of archives administration hence robust finding aids full of meticulous details should be in place to ensure the accessibility and use of archival materials.

The value contained in archival materials is of social, economic, educational, historic, political and informational value to members of the public. In that regard, Loewen (2008) indicated that a national documentary heritage has to be wholly accessible as it contributes to the advancement of the society.

The ability of an archive to provide access to its collection is the key that allows archival institutions to acquire a profile as service oriented, competent and professionally managed institutions. Ngulube (2006) underscored that archives are crucial entities where social scientists and researchers consult when conducting projects that contribute to the society's knowledge base and social development. The achievements that people make are largely dependent on access to

archival material. As such, the current research sought to address the extent to which NAZ has made its documentary heritage accessible and usable to members of the public. The information held in archival material plays a significant role in the socio, political and economic development of a people. Similar sentiments were shared by Mnjama (2008), Murambiwa & Ngulube (2011) and Thurston (2015) who indicated that access to public archives give people an opportunity to exercise their rights while promoting accountability, transparency and good governance.

Matangira and Lowry (2013) also shared the same sentiment when they noted that governments' honesty and integrity can only be supported by the citizens' ability to access and use its records. Similarly, Thurston (2015) emphasised that access to a government's records enables effective public oversight and the achievement of the international development goals rests with the ability to access reliable information. In the same vein, Smart (2011) indicated that the information held in the archives is an important resource for the country's society as it can significantly contribute to the current debates and decisions that impact on the country's social and economic policies as well as the development of political priorities for the citizenry. To that effect, access and use become the central goal for all archival institutions. Given the vital importance of the archives and the role they play in a people's life, the current research deemed it appropriate to examine the issues of access to archives from three different perspectives, namely, physical, bibliographic and intellectual. An examination of the three main pillars of access to the archives gave the current research project a broader and deeper base that subsequently permitted the development of an informed framework for access and use of the documentary heritage at NAZ.

The need for national archival institutions to make their archival collections available to the people is well documented. Guercio (2001) and Ngulube (2006) indicated that archival institutions exist to preserve and give access to the national documentary heritage and should therefore strive to

make their holdings accessible and knowable across time and space. There is remarkable advocacy from extant literature on the need for archival institutions to make themselves more relevant and worthy of existing by ensuring that access to their collection is promoted (Coles 1988; Greene 2007; Cook 2010; Daniels & Ombudsman 2010; Bacon 2014). It is, however, worrying to note that some archival institutions are struggling to make available their collection for use (Mazikana 1999; Mutiti 1999; Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011). Such findings from the previous studies prompted the current study to investigate the status quo regarding access to and the use of the archives at NAZ. The goal for doing this was to facilitate the production of a framework that enhances access to and use of the archives.

The current research was premised on the notion that archival institutions need to become more active in promoting access, not only to scholars and those engaged in intellectual activities but also to the general populace. The Code of Ethics adopted at the 13<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ICA emphasises that archivists should ensure the continuing accessibility and intelligibility of archival materials and also promote the widest possible access to archival material and provide an impartial service to all users (International Council on Archives 1996).

The significance of making available the archival material is well documented, yet the struggle to make archives available appears to be a daunting task for many archival institutions. To that effect, the current research project went beyond identifying and explaining the significance of making archives available and proposed a framework that can be used by archival institutions to promote access and use of their archives. The bulk of the existing literature on access focuses much on the importance of providing access to the archives and the associated challenges of doing so. Very little attention has been given to the development of a framework that would then help archival institutions to improve on accessibility and usability of their archives, particularly in Africa.

Access does not only concern the service given to the users by archivists, but also focuses on the service quality of the repositories. It is imperative to note that every archival function that includes but is not limited to processing, appraisal, preservation, conservation, arrangement and description, reprography, public programming, microfilming is essential in making the documentary heritage available to the people (Haritz 2001). Recognising the significance of every archival function in the provision of access, the current research investigated beyond what transpires in the Public Archives and Research Section of NAZ and examined the place and influence of the other three sections in providing access to the people's documentary heritage. The other three sections examined in this study are the Technical Services, Library and Records Services sections. Given the indisputable importance of access and use of archives, what then are the access and use levels at NAZ? This salient question was investigated and reported in Section 5.6.

### **3.5 Legal instruments and access and use of public archives**

Archival institutions are in certain instances not able to make materials available to members of the public due to copyright issues and other laws which they must abide by. This implies that archival institutions are in possession of some material whose restrictions on use are in the hands of another institution or an individual (Schmidt 2011). In some instances, there are donors who contribute to an archival collection and retain the powers to set a time limit or give certain stipulations on how the materials can be used. Such restrictions usually exist on sensitive material whose privacy needs to be firmly upheld. In that regard, the current research examined the influence of legal instruments that affect access and use of the archival material at NAZ. The laws examined in this research include the African Charter on Human and People's Rights of 1986, the National Archives of Zimbabwe Act of 1986, the constitution of Zimbabwe (Amendment No. 20) Act of 2013, the Official Secrets Act of 1970 and the rules, regulations and policies at NAZ.

Public bodies hold information not for themselves but as custodians of the public good and everyone has a right to access this information, subject only to clearly defined rules established by law. As such, this research deemed it prudent to examine the laws, Acts, decrees, rules and regulations that preside over the general populace's access to and use of the information held in public archival bodies. An overview of archival legislations in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana reflect the common position that access to the archives is a key responsibility for national archival institutions.

For instance, the National Archives of Zimbabwe Act of 1986 Section 9, item (a) stipulates that every person shall be entitled to inspect any public archive which is in the custody of the National Archives, with the consent of the Director. Similarly, the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa (NARSSA) Act of 1996 was enacted to provide for the proper management and care of the records of governmental bodies and the preservation and use of a national archival heritage. Section 12 of the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act of 1996 clearly provides for access to public archival material. The section stipulates that a public record in the custody of the National Archives shall be available for public access if a period of 20 years has elapsed since the end of the year in which the record came into existence. The National Archives of Botswana Act Chapter 59:04 Part IV Section 12 item (1) also specifies that subject to any written law prohibiting or limiting the disclosure of information obtained from members of the public and to the provisions of this section, public archives which have been in existence for a period of not less than 20 years may be made available for public inspection.

The provision of access to the archival material in national archival legislations indicates that documentary heritage is a key resource to the development of a people in many respects. Sharing similar sentiments is Carvalho (2015) which indicates that access to public information is the

touchstone of all freedoms. Such sentiments are a clear indication that access to information is recognised by many; hence the current study examined the laws that govern access to the archival collection at NAZ with the view to establishing how these can feed into the overall framework for access and use of archives.

It is, however, disappointing to note that although there are clear provisions in the archival legislations to ensure access to the archival material by members of the public, outdated archival legislation has for a long time been lamented as one of the factors hindering the effective utilization of information by archival institutions around the world (Kemoni, Wamukoya & Kiplang'at 2003). Dube (2011) questioned the rules and regulations governing the management of archival material in Zimbabwe arguing that the NAZ Act of 1986 be amended in the direction of managing records and archives as a nation's heritage.

The first right to information law was enacted in Sweden in the year 1766 (Mustonen 2006). On the African continent, South Africa was the first to pass the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) in 2000 and it went into effect in March 2001. The Act was intended to “foster a culture of transparency and accountability in public and private bodies by giving effect to the right of access to information and to actively promote a society in which the people of South Africa have effective access to information to enable them to fully exercise and protect all of their rights” (PAIA 2000:1). The Promotion of Access to Information Act of 2000 was, however, criticised by Sulej (2014) for hardly being used by the ordinary citizens as the process of requesting records usually involves seeking the intervention of the courts. Sulej (2014) also lamented that the very same Act is being used by interested authorities to deny access. In the same vein, Rodrigues (2008) lamented the bureaucratic cultures of secrecy and inconsistent legislation that appear to promote access while serving as instruments that can also be used to impose access restrictions.

Access to public records is a fundamental human right (Valge & Kibal 2007; Daniels & Ombudsman 2010). The call to make archives available to the people was made more than six decades ago yet archivists are still battling to fulfil the goal. In 1946, the United Nations General Assembly recognised that Freedom of Information is a basic human right and the cornerstone to all freedoms (Carvalho 2015). Following the enshrinement of the right to information in Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, more than eighty countries passed national legislation entrenching the right in domestic law. For instance, the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act, 2013, Chapter 4 Part II Section 62 item 1 stipulates that every Zimbabwean citizen or permanent resident has the right of access to any information held by the State or by any institution or agency of government at every level. Section 32 of the South African Constitution of 1996 states: ‘(1) everyone has the right of access to – (a) any information held by the state’. As argued by Rodrigues (2008), much as a law on access is important mere enactment is inadequate.

The enshrinement of a people’s right to public information in a country’s constitution is an acknowledgement that access to public information is critical to a people, yet the national archival institution’s endeavours to increase the access levels have for a long time been compromised by closure periods to some material and other restrictive regulations that are meant to protect the interests of the state, economy, individuals and the public. The many restrictions that are applied on archival material have not been enacted by archival legislation but by other legal Acts that are not always in support of the archival laws (Valge & Kibal 2007) and seem to over-ride the clauses in archival legislations that provide for access to public information by the populace. In Zimbabwe, the examples of such laws include but are not limited to the Official Secrets Act (OSA) of 1970, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) of 2002.



From the outset, AIPPA gives the impression that it is meant to promote access of public information by the people. The Act stipulates that public bodies hold information not for themselves but as custodians of the public good and everyone has a right to access this information. The bulk of the provisions in AIPPA have, however, been criticized for thwarting what appears to be its advocacy of 'the right to accessing public information'. The right to information as provided for is lamented to have been carefully over-ridden by the so many exclusions and exceptions that make access to public information too restrictive. The difficulties associated with accessing public information have been faced with much criticism from archival scientists who continue to denounce any restrictions on archival material, arguing that archives are of vital importance to historians and restrictions of any nature are negative and an obstacle to scientific creativity (Valge & Kibal 2007).

The laws that support access to public information by members of the public include the African Charter on Human and People's Rights which Zimbabwe ratified. Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights stipulates that every individual shall have the right to receive information and every individual shall have the right to express and disseminate opinions within the law. Mnjama (2008) highlighted that Kenya ratified this international legal framework and there was, therefore, need for the country to design policies that provide for increased access to information because lack of national policy on information is a major hindrance to access to information. The preceding discourse indicates that access to records and archives is determined by laws, policies and procedures that are established by governments and archival institutions. Such laws usually regulate the right of access to public records (Mnjama 2008). Some laws are enacted to uphold the people's rights to accessing public information while other legal instruments deter the call for access to information by the people.

In Zimbabwe, the laws that are restrictive to the public's access to information include the Official Secrets Act, Chapter 11:09 of 1970, and the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act, Chapter 26:05. The Acts respectively undertake to prohibit the disclosure of material which for any purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of Zimbabwe might be useful to an enemy and to protect original works of authorship. Indeed, the right of access cannot be without restrictions and government bodies hold the legitimate right to restrict access to certain information. However, the position taken in this research agrees with that of Harris and Merret (1994) who indicated that, in as much as governments have a legitimate right to restrict access to certain information, the restrictions need not be as wide as most governments make them. Official secrecy is amongst the chief legal weapons that are used to restrict access to certain information by governments. Secrecy has, however, been treated as a corrosive disease that forces a society to trip switch from one sterile era of conformity to another (Harris & Merret 1994). In that regard Schellenberg (1956) cited in Harris and Merret (1994) argued that records should be available for use to an extent that is consistent with the public interest. To this end, intellectual property has been criticized for promoting a monopoly over distribution thereby explicitly hindering access (Bacon 2014). Copyright decisions are not 'all or nothing' as they are a barrier to the many benefits that can be realized if information is made available to members of the public (Bacon 2014). The current research was particularly interested in establishing how the records managers and archivists at NAZ are handling the paradox of observing the right to information and upholding the right to privacy (Cook 2010). Recognising the role of legislations, statutes and policies in either promoting or thwarting the accessibility and use of archives, what then is the legal status in Zimbabwe? This matter was examined and reported in Section 5.4.

### **3.6 Public programming and outreach as drivers for improved access**

National archival institutions are in custody of rich informational materials that have a potential to transform the socio-economic and political development of a people. It therefore becomes a cause for concern if the level of archives utilisation is low (Ngulube 1999). To this effect, public programming emerges as a critical archival function performed by archivists in an endeavour to enhance the visibility and public image of an archival institution (Gregor 2001). Public programming strategies are synonymous with outreach programmes. They are both promotional activities that are meant to increase the visibility of an archival institution and public image (Jimerson 2003) through educating people about the existence, services, and documentary resources of archival institutions (Bance 2012). Archival institutions risk becoming meaningless and irrelevant to the society if the information materials in their custody are not accessible and used (Saurombe & Ngulube 2016b). As such, it is imperative for archivists to equip themselves with skills to retain existing archives users while attracting new clientele. In order to increase the consumption of their products and services, archival institutions should engage in programmes and activities that will make known their collections to the public (Mason 2011). The need for national archival institutions to increase their visibility and accessibility is not a newly conceived notion. Kamatula (2011), Ngoepe and Ngulube (2011), Onyancha, Mokwatlo and Mnkeni-Saurombe (2013) and Saurombe and Ngulube (2016b) reiterated the need by national archival institutions to improve on their visibility, public image and accessibility.

National archival institutions are obliged to make their products and services visible and accessible vis-a-vis the government's constituency (Blais & Enns 1990). As indicated in the second objective of the current study, the researcher sought to ascertain the use of public programming strategies by NAZ to increase their visibility and to redress the many misconceptions that people might have about the archives. The gist of this research was to develop a framework for access and use of the archives that reaches a true national audience. Outreach programmes provide a unique opportunity

to improve the awareness and use of archival holdings (Ngoepe & Ngulube 2011). Similarly, Kamatula (2011) indicated that public programming is an essential means for increasing the utilization of archival materials. Kamatula (2011) lamented the situation in Tanzania, however, indicating that the public programming activities are only concentrated in particular areas leaving the wider community unaware of the archival services. Consequently, the archivists are reaching out to the same people all the time at the expense of attracting new users. Amongst the major means of expanding usage of public records and archives is to hold exhibitions. The National Archives of Japan (NAJ) presented permanent and special exhibitions introducing its holdings. The bulk of these exhibitions are available online and they have provided NAJ with an excellent opportunity to highlight the significance of public records and its own functions, hence promoting access and use of its holdings. Given the potential role that can be played by public programming in making the people aware of the archives' services and products, this research deemed it essential to examine the nature of public programming activities in use at NAZ.

The need for NAZ to be visible in the public domain was a key issue under investigation by the current research. The access levels can be increased only if the people who are supposed to use the archival material are aware of where to find the archives, when and how to find the archives. As Bacon (2014) questioned, the door may be open but can people find it and, if they find it, will they understand what it is and what they might be interested in? The series of questions posed by Bacon (2014) reflect the need by archival institutions to up their game in as far making their products and services familiar to the larger community of existing and potential archives users.

Public programming and outreach programmes among other activities have the potential to aid archivists in taking archives to the people and drawing them to the physical and virtual habitat of the archives. It is disappointing to note, though, that archivists across the world tend to concentrate

more on acquisition, appraisal, arrangement and description at the expense of raising awareness about the documentary heritage in their custody (Saurombe & Ngulube 2016b). Archival institutions are challenged, therefore, to engage in ways that make them visible, relevant and meaningful to members of the public. Amongst the ways that can be employed by archival institutions are the various tools depicted in Table 3 (Saurombe & Ngulube 2016b; Bacon 2014; Onyancha, Mokwatlo and Mkeni-Saurombe 2013; Brett & Jones 2013; Ngoepe & Ngulube 2011; Kamatula 2011).

**Table 3: List of possible outreach activities and public programming tools**

<b>Outreach or public programming tool</b>	<b>Brief description</b>
Brochures	A type of small magazine that contains information on the products and services of the archival institution. It usually contains pictorial illustrations
Guides	A mini book that provides the most essential information about the archival holdings
News releases	A document released by the archives, the media or press for reporting or publication
Curricular exercises	Short practical training courses offered to the corporate world
Exhibitions	A public display of archival material of interest following a particular theme or subject
Expo system	An expo is similar to an exhibition. The only distinction is that an expo system is usually a global event that aims at educating the public, sharing innovation, promoting progress and fostering cooperation amongst the local, regional and international community of users
Workshops, seminars and conferences	Meetings, gatherings and platforms that bring together the participation of academics and practitioners from the archival science discipline and related fields
Participating in festivals and national events	An event that draws a national audience such as the International Archives Day, Independence Day, Africa Day, Unit day, Zimbabwe International Trade Fair, World Tourism Expo

Engaging in oral history programmes	The collection of historical information from different communities through interviews with people having personal knowledge of past events.
Clippings	An article cut from a newspaper release or a magazine
Magazine articles	A periodical publication containing articles and illustrations, often on a particular subject or aimed at a particular readership
Internet presence (Web 1.0; 2.0 and 3.0 technologies)	A global network that allows communication between and among people throughout the world
Leaflets and pamphlets	A freely distributed printed sheet of paper or booklet communicating a specific subject about the archives
Hand-outs and teaching kits	A piece of printed information provided free of charge, particularly accompanying a lesson
Internship	On job training for students undertaking studies in records and archives management and other related disciplines
Radio	Broadcasting issues on and about the archives for the public to listen and possibly contribute, depending on the nature of the programme
Television	Visual broadcasting on and about the archives for the public to view
Listervs	An application that distributes messages to subscribers on an electronic mailing list
Publications	Journal articles and textbooks on and about the national archives

It is not everyone amongst the larger populace who has knowledge on what a national archive is and its reason for existence (Bacon 2014; Saurombe & Ngulube 2016b). In that respect it would be futile for archives to ignore the potential clientele by not reaching out to the people and educating them on what a national archive is and what it does. In support of this argument, Bacon (2014) asserted that national archival institutions need to connect with a diversity of people through providing the people with a context and explanation of the archives. The issues of whether and how NAZ is reaching out to members of the public were central to the investigations of this study. This aspect was particularly important in that promoting access and use of archival holdings requires an active approach where both the existing and potential clientele are equipped with the full knowledge of how they stand to benefit from using the archives. As shown in Table 3, amongst

the many ways that archivists can use to improve their image and visibility in the larger society is by establishing an internet presence through the use of digital technologies that are discussed in the section that follows. The forgone discussion made it clear that public programming and outreach strategies hold the key to improved access and use of archives. To what extent is NAZ possibly using these strategies? This issue was given due attention and the obtained results are offered in Section 5.5.

### **3.7 The influence of digital technologies and the print media on access to the archives**

Digital technologies present unique and bigger opportunities for archivists to make their institutions known and subsequently boost the access and use level of the archives. Digital technologies refer to the electronic devices and systems that create, store and process data. They include social media, online applications, multimedia, cloud computing, interoperable systems and mobile devices. The focus of this study was, however, particularly on the use of the social media (Web 2.0 technologies) space by archivists to increase access to and use of the documentary heritage in their care. Web 2.0 technologies offer opportunities to archivists who wish to increase the levels of access and use of the material in their respective institutions. Nimer and Daines (2008) noted that archivists are exploring how Web 2.0 technologies can be used to better meet their clients' needs.

Similarly, Jimerson (2003) indicated that the internet offers an excellent means by which an archival institution can provide information about its products, services, repositories and collections. However, Evans (2007) feared that the promise hold by the internet to enhance the public awareness and use of the archives may never be realised because of the large volumes of unprocessed stacks of records that characterise many archival repositories. Given the many benefits that can be derived from using the social media platforms to increase the access levels,

the current study deemed it essential to investigate the use of Web 2.0 technologies at NAZ (See objective three).

Chaterera (2015a) revealed that, although practitioners in Zimbabwe's public information centres demonstrated an understanding of the benefits offered by engaging digital technologies, the utilisation of these technologies in Zimbabwe's state museums and archives is still in its infancy. The invisibility of archives has often been attributed to their failure to take advantage of the many benefits and possibilities presented by information communication technologies (Bradley 2005; Saurombe & Ngulube 2016b).

The need for archival institutions to make use of the new technologies need not be over emphasised. In his work about making access easier, Ferriero (2011) recalled with distaste how people used to elbow their way through the crowds to view historic documents and spend hours in the archives' reading rooms searching through boxes of old documents. Ferriero (2011) underscored the need by archival institutions to tap into the new technologies in providing access to their holdings. Ferriero (2011) argued that the social media space and the digital technologies have made the archives' mission of providing access to its holdings more efficient, effective, easier and even fun.

The social media space presents a plethora of opportunities for the archives' to boost their access levels. For instance, Flickr and Tumblr are social media platforms allow users to share photographs of their interest from the national archival holdings. Such a facility does not only enhance the access level but also seeks to improve the quality of the archival collection as users will have an open platform to air their views regarding an archival collection.



A study conducted in Kenya by Kemoni, Wamukoya and Kiplang'at (2003) revealed that the access level at an archival institution can be affected by the non-utilization of the digital technologies. Similar findings were reported by Ayoo and Otike (2000) who revealed the under-utilization of the digital technologies in national archival institutions as a major barrier to access of archives. The difficulties in identifying the suitable hardware and software, the inadequacy of the needed resources to purchase the hardware and software and the absence of archivists with the requisite skills and knowledge in the use of computer technology are some of the chief reasons for the non-utilization of digital technologies in developing countries (Kemoni, Wamukoya & Kiplang'at 2003). Guided by such findings, this research investigated the use of Web 2.0 technologies at NAZ as underscored in the third objective of the study.

The information landscape on which archival institutions operate are vulnerable to the many changes that have been brought by the information and communications technologies (ICT). There are fears that information communication technologies seek not only to dominate the archival profession and practice, but also pose threats to the old certainties with which information was acquired, processed, preserved and disseminated for public consumption (Currall & Moss 2008). The proliferation in the use of the information communication technologies does not imply that archivists are to delve into the digital space without exercising due diligence. As Currall and Moss (2008) stated, archivists are to interrogate the extent to which ICT represents an epistemological shift for it can be simply an extension of existing practices in a new order. The standpoint of the current research is that regardless of whether ICTs are presenting an epistemological shift or simply presenting an extension of existing practices, the use of ICTs by archivists cannot be avoided, hence the need for this study to ascertain the extent to which NAZ has gone in using Web 2.0 technologies to increase access to and use of their holdings.

The continued growth of digital technologies exerts pressure on archivists to embrace the digital technologies lest they become irrelevant, boring and dated places. The internet offers new and exciting ways of presenting archival materials to the public. Computers together with other devices such as mobile phones, iPads and tablets have become an indispensable means of daily communication amongst the population which archival institutions regard as their existing and potential clientele. These communication technologies have generated a third form of communication besides the oral speech and the written messages (Haritz 2001).

The third principle on access to archives highlights the need for institutions holding archives to adopt a pro-active approach to access (ICA 2012). This implies the need for archival institutions to think outside the box and consider engaging other means of ensuring access to and use of the archives is enhanced. Adopting the new technologies in making the archives available to the people is one of the ways that can be pursued to increase the access and use levels of the archives. In that respect, Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) indicated that Web 2.0 technologies have the potential to increase the number of users several times over as people may request for archival documents from wherever they would be if they know of their existence. Similarly, Chaterera (2015a) emphasised that the use of Web 2.0 technologies in public information centres has the potential of dramatically improving access, use and user satisfaction.

The need to adopt the new technologies is imminent and inevitable. Many governments around the world are generating vast quantities of information using digital technologies. Mnjama (2008) highlighted that the procedures through which members of the public can access electronic records are yet to be developed. Similarly, Kilasi, Maseko and Abankwah (2011:102) noted that archivists are not exploiting information technologies to meet user needs yet users require services at different hours and online services have a better chance to satisfy such needs. The use of Web 2.0

technologies therefore provides broad access to people who cannot easily visit the National Archives due to geographical restrictions. Supporting the adoption of the digital technologies with some reservations are Usherwood, Wilson and Bryson (2005) who observed that the electronic media can offer a level of immediate access to information but it can be at the expense of accuracy.

Quick Web searches are replacing deep archival research and most archival materials are not online mainly because of the perceived reluctance of archivists to embrace the digital technologies (Hicks 2005). Archivists need to reposition themselves by way of adopting the use of Web 2.0 technologies if they want to make their holdings more accessible and remain relevant to the society (Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011). It is essential for national archival institutions to use Web 2.0 technologies as they have the potential to address new audiences and build new constituencies. For instance, the National Archives of Singapore created a2o as a one stop portal for users to access documentary heritage information dating back to the 17th century (Beasley & Kail 2009). The name 'a2o' is meant to be an echo of H<sub>2</sub>O (water), an essential element for life. The portal presents access to the cultural heritage collection in the form of photographs, maps and plans, oral history audio files and other audio-visual recordings in multiple ways and several databases are offered that allow users to search through the online archives. The site is a wonderful way for the National Archives of Singapore to open Singapore's cultural repository to a new generation of Singaporeans, while providing current researchers with an easier way to explore their holdings.

Many archives in the East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) region, Zimbabwe included, are working towards automating some of the information about their collections and the finding aids in order to make them available online (Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011). En-route to coming up with a framework for access and use of the archives, this study gathers empirical evidence on how far NAZ has gone in automating

information about their collections and the finding aids so as to make them available online. It should be acknowledged, however, that Garaba and Ngulube (2010) have already observed that countries that have attempted the move experienced massive challenges with critics arguing that such developments are prone to information imperialism.

When used in innovative ways, new technologies permit archivists to better fulfil their archival obligations. The creative use of the social media space and other technologies provides archivists with a firm foundation to offer better reference services, hence increasing the probability of retaining the current clientele while attracting new potential users (Nimer & Daines 2008). The emergency of technologies has brought inevitable changes that archivists have to embrace and use to their own advantage for archival institutions to claim and maintain their relevance within the wider society. In today's information superhighway, people have become used to a prompt access to information through the Web search engines such as Yahoo!, Google, Surfmax, Bing, Ask, Webcrawler, Infospace and Dogpile amongst others. Considering the number of search engines that can be used by people to promptly access information, archivists can only remain truly relevant and abreast of the users' needs by responding to the call of the day and start considering supplying information and other services online (Nimer & Daines 2008). The increased growth of digital technologies presents archivists with an opportunity to broaden and deepen their public service and community ties while reducing the wear and tear on the original documents (Lyons 2002). In that respect, Nimer and Daines (2008) emphasised that it is important to allow users to interact virtually with finding aids and archival digital content. This is not to say, though, that archives should entirely go virtual as digital access deprives the user of the exciting tactile experience of how archival repositories look and feel. Contrary to a paper copy, a screen image cannot reproduce a document's smell, peculiarities of the material and details such as light pencil markings or a

document's size or texture may be obscured (Lyons 2002). When a document is selected for inclusion on a Website, there is an inevitable danger of distorting the context in which the document was created and maintained. In view of such arguments, the current research took the position that the archives must employ the digital technologies as complementary tools not as a replacement to physical access.

Apart from Web 2.0 technologies, archivists can also make use of the print media, national radio and television broadcasting services to communicate their services to the public as this potentially leads to an increased level of access to the archives (Ngoepe & Ngulube 2011; Jimerson 2003; Riehle 2008). Similarly, Onyanha and Ngoepe (2011) encourage the use of print media by archivists to increase the public awareness of the archives. In light of the discourse presented in this section, it is clear that the use of Web 2.0 technologies and the print media is not a luxury that archivists may consider to do without. In this respect, how far has NAZ gone in embracing the digital world to improve its visibility and the subsequent use of its holdings? Answers to this question are communicated in Section 5.7.

### **3.8 The public perception of national archival institutions**

The way people perceive an archival institution influences their decision to visit the archives. It is therefore crucial for archivists to be wary of the people's perceptions towards archives and be able to address them accordingly. Blais and Enns (1990) demonstrated that archivists seem to have been hesitant and uncomfortable with the image issue, hence the focus has been more on what they regard as the core archival functions such as acquisition, appraisal, arrangement and description. The public perception of the archives directly reflects how the archivists consciously or unconsciously portray themselves. As such, it was prudent to take on board the public perception

of the archives in developing a framework of access and use of the nation's documentary heritage (see objective four).

Today's archivists are faced with a serious challenge where many people have different views and thinking about public archival institutions. This research recognises the significance of a people's perception about the archives in developing a framework for access that would result in a perceived increase in the access levels at NAZ (See objective four). There are a lot of people who are not using the archives because they lack knowledge about the archives and they carry a misconstrued thinking about the institution and its services (Sulej 2014). There are people who are not aware that some of the information they seek is available at an archival institution and there are potential users who think that using the archives consumes a lot of time and the whole process is such a daunting task (Jimerson 2003). Similarly, Mason (2011) observed that it is only a small percentage of people who are aware that archives are open to the public; consequently, not so many people frequent the archives in search of information. A study conducted in South Africa by Sulej (2014) showed that archives are still considered inaccessible to ordinary citizens and they are often perceived by many people as foreign bodies isolated from the public.

Ramos and Ortega (2006) indicated that national archival institutions seem not to enjoy prominence in the public domain. This prompted the current research to gather empirical evidence regarding the thoughts, concerns and perceptions of members of the public towards NAZ. Some people barely know about the existence of national archival institutions and most people confuse archives with museums, libraries and even think of archives as old buildings full of ancient dusty boxes (Ngoepe and Ngulube 2011). Sharing the same sentiments is Haritz (2001) who indicated that most people perceive archival institutions as secret, dusty and chaotic, while a few regard them as open information centres that are transparent and clear. Guided by such findings and in

recognition of the power held by the public perception in influencing access and use of the archives, this study sought to establish;

- The prominence of NAZ in the public domain
- The views of the people about the institution
- If the general citizenry of Zimbabwe is aware of the existence and services offered by NAZ

(See objective four).

Gaining knowledge on the public perceptions about the archives was meant to give this research an insight into how best the public's thoughts, interests and perceptions can be addressed and incorporated into access policies so as to increase the access levels. The people's perception and their image of an archive may not be changed by outreach programmes, public programming, marketing strategies and exhibition of historical events or special precious objects amongst other means. This is so because archives are not needed as historical institutions, especially when historical research in the universities is reaching a level of professionalization with which they may not compete (Haritz 2001). Instead, national archival institutions are needed as providers of access to archival material so that everybody can investigate them for their own questions.

The primary task of a national archival institution is to select, acquire and preserve the documentary heritage and make it available for use by the public. For such a noble obligation to be fulfilled, archival institutions are to pay attention to the intellectual, physical and bibliographic components to accessibility. Overall, archival institutions need to identify and understand their potential and existing clientele with the view to coming up with strategies to attract new users while retaining the existing users. The issues of public perception can also be partially addressed through public programming and outreach programmes whose literature review was offered in

section 3.5. The importance of having people who have the correct perception of archival institutions is critical to increasing the access and use levels of archives. What then could be the perception of the Zimbabwe's populace about NAZ? This matter was looked into and the findings are reported in Section 5.8.

### **3.9 The nexus between reference services and processing in giving access to the archives**

Time is a critical resource that people cannot afford to waste. In that respect, Jimerson (2003) argued that archives users expect to obtain the information they want quickly and they are not amused by spending much time going through huge volumes of material. Access to public records can only be guaranteed where records are well arranged and finding aids are in place (Mazikana 1999). Mnjama (2008) highlighted that bibliographic access is very much dependent on the levels at which the holdings have been described in the form of finding aids or retrieval tools. In the same vein, Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) indicated that the ability of archival institutions to provide information about their holdings and making them available to users depends on having up-to-date finding aids and the absence of backlogs of archives without description. This research makes a follow up to the observation that was made by Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) on the large volumes of unprocessed archives at NAZ. The current research perceives processing as irrevocably tied to archival reference services since finding aids are a direct product of arrangement and description. Owing to the huge backlogs of unprocessed archives, the quest to enhance access to archival material has remained unfulfilled in the ESARBICA region, particularly in Zimbabwe where 11, 000 cubic feet of unprocessed records were identified (Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011).

Prom (2010) indicated that processing is at the heart of what archivists do yet it has been one of the most under analysed aspects of archival work particularly in its relationship to access. Ngulube (2006) also attested to the central role played by processing citing that backlogs of unprocessed



archives affect the bibliographic access to records. The current research therefore undertook to establish the progress that has so far been made by NAZ to eliminate or at least reduce the amount of unprocessed archives so as to allow bibliographic access to the material.

The challenge of unprocessed archives is obstructing the many efforts that are meant to ensure the availability of archival material to members of the public. In most archival institutions, unprocessed archives may not be made available to researchers unless very special arrangements have been made, some of which could be violating the laws that govern the care of a collection at an archival institution. Prom (2010) indicated that processing is a critical archival function that involves arranging and describing archival materials for use by patrons. The end products of processing are finding aids. These are the tools that are used by researchers to efficiently locate the archival material they need for their enquiries. Owing to the critical role that processing plays in making documentary heritage available to the people, several scholars have considered it to be at the heart of archival work (Prom 2010 & Ngulube 2006). Processing is a critical archival work because it establishes both the physical and intellectual control over an archival collection. The manner in which an archival collection is processed can encourage or discourage the use of an archival collection and affects the relationship of an archival institution with its donors, resource allocators and the users (Prom 2010).

The fifth objective of this study sought to evaluate the reference services on offer at NAZ and that includes assessing the adequacy of their finding aids in providing the bibliographic access to their archival materials. The inadequacy of finding aids affects access to information and their absence shows that access to the material is limited, difficult or even impossible (Ngulube 2006). A lot of blame regarding the barriers to accessing public archival material has been attributed to the lack of finding aids and this happens to be a major challenge affecting many archival institutions in

Africa (Mazikana 1999; Ayoo & Otike 2000; Ngulube 2002 & Mnjama 2008). In Kenya, new researchers are warned that they should be prepared to spend longer hours in locating and identifying sources at the National Archives of Kenya as the intricacies of the archive's cataloguing and holding systems are not easy to comprehend (Mnjama 2008). Several studies have attested to the situation that finding aids gives researchers an understanding of an archival collection in its entirety and enables the researcher to locate the portions of a collection pertinent to their research (Cole 1988; Roper & Millar 1999; Mazikana 1999; Ayoo & Otike 2000; Ngulube 2002; Jimerson 2003; Prom 2003 & 2010; Mnjama 2008; Onyancha & Ngoepe 2011; Schmidt 2011 & Senturk 2011). Given the critical role played by finding aids in providing access to the archives, the current study examined the existing finding aids at NAZ with the view to establishing their adequacy. Of particular interest to this research, amongst other aspects, was whether NAZ performed a system analysis in producing the finding aids and if the finding aids provide the narrative portions that describe the background of a collection, such as how and when it was formed, how the archival material was acquired and how the archival staff has arranged or ordered the materials in the collection.

Finding aids in most archival institutions have been criticised for lacking in system analysis (Cox 2008). Archivists have been allegedly accused of undertaking their descriptive work apart from and with a limited understanding of how researchers find and use archival materials. To this end, Cox (2008) questions the utility of archival finding aids and warns that finding aids developed without an adequate system analysis may not stand the test of time. Influenced by such observations, the current research was prompted to interrogate the process that NAZ follows in producing its finding aids so as to establish whether a system analysis was performed and if the users were also consulted.

The thrust of the current study was hinged on increasing the access and use levels of public archival holdings. To attain that noble obligation, archivists should solicit the people's information needs, their concerns and expectations, thus conducting user studies (Kim, Kang, Kim & Kim 2014; Saurombe & Ngulube 2016a). User studies are an effective way of gaining a better understanding of the expectations of information patrons and identifying the hindrances that could be preventing people from accessing and using the archives (Nimer & Daines 2008). Saurombe and Ngulube (2016a) explained that people will visit the archives only if they get to appreciate how archives may affect their socio-economic and political transformation. To that effect, user studies have been underscored as an effective mechanism that helps archivists to understand the reasons for use and non-use of their archival holdings, hence allowing them to improve on the perceived weaknesses (Duff, Dryden, Limkilde, Cherry & Bogomazova 2008; Yeo 2005; Saurombe & Ngulube 2016a). Archivists therefore need to identify their user clientele and come up with tailor made services that meet their needs and expectations (Jimerson 2003). In this regard, Saurombe and Ngulube (2016a) emphasised that users of the archives are the backbone of effective archival services, yet archivists seem to be preoccupied with records at the expense of the users. Possessing knowledge about users' interests provides a healthy ground on which archivists are enabled to make decisions. It is appreciated that most decisions to do with archival work are based on the institutional mission and its policies. However, some conception of users' interests is essential for coming up with archives' products and services that adequately serve the people while upholding the mission and values of the archival institution (Evans 2007). Archival literature falls short on user studies and user education, yet the knowledge about users is the nucleus of an archival institution in providing effective reference services (Eastwood 1997; Yakel & Torres 2003; Katuu 2015). User education

initiatives are essential in equipping the users with an improved ability to make use of the archival resources to satisfy their own information needs.

This research was premised on the need by archival institutions to look beyond their traditional and conventional patrons who usually include historians, college students, university lecturers and researchers as noted by Loewen (2008). To that effect, Loewen (2008) lamented the lack of interest by archivists in reaching out to the existing and potential patrons so as to understand their needs, concerns and expectations. However, the assumption of academics and historians dominating the archives' clientele was challenged by Jimerson (2003) who observed that archives have a much broader clientele than imagined.

As the current study works towards producing a framework for access and use of the archives, the researcher deemed it essential to investigate NAZ's efforts to engage, understand and respond to its audience. The ability to engage users, understand their concerns and accordingly respond to their needs holds the potential to retain the existing users while attracting new patrons. As underscored in the IGE theory explained in Section 2.2.4, the effective way to fulfil the access mandate of an archival institution is to understand the current clientele and anticipate the needs of the future patrons (Loewen 2008). Archivists are therefore called upon to invest their time and resources in user studies as they enable them to understand their clients' needs and therefore better serve them. Within the parameters of the fifth objective, the current research sought to ascertain the array of NAZ clientele and to establish if user education is offered to researchers and the results of the findings are supplied in Section 5.9

### **3.10 Preservation and access**

The need to preserve records of enduring value can be traced to as far back as the biblical times as Jeremiah (32:14) says “The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says take these documents, both the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in a clay jar so they will last a long time” (Ngoepe & Ngulube 2014). The primary function of a national archival institution is to preserve historic materials and make them available for use (Schmidt 2011). Similarly, Ceeney (2008) indicates that the fundamental role of an archives is premised on record-keeping and access. It should therefore be noted that preservation is done to enable access while access serves to justify the need for preservation. In that respect Moyo (2012) indicated that archives exist to be utilised, and preservation without access is meaningless. Ngulube, Sibanda and Makoni (2013) noted that there is a strong correlation between access and preservation as the two cannot be rationally divorced from each other. In addition, Schmidt (2011) and Ngulube, Sibanda & Makoni (2013) indicated that preservation initiatives are done to facilitate access to the information contained in archives for the present and future generations. As emphasised in the IGE theory, this implies that neither preservation nor use of the archival material should be compromised as the demands of the current generation of users should be met without compromising the ability of future generations to use the same archival material (Weiss 1992).

The custodial paradigm to the archival discourse has always led to the misconception that access and preservation are in conflict (Haritz 2001). Archivists have been known for prioritizing preservation at the expense of access (Hicks 2005). In this study, the researcher held the view that preservation is complementary to access in that the initiatives and activities of preservation are done to ensure that people have access to the archival material in an integral form. A lack of preservation of archival material might spell disaster for users in that information contained in the

archival material might be lost to the various forms of deterioration. Preservation and access are therefore mutually dependant practices existing in harmony for the benefit of the current users, future users and the archival institution. The ability by an archival institution to provide access gives it strong roots to stand in the present society, thereby eliminating the difficulties to explain why the present society should support and maintain the existence of archival institutions (Haritz 2001).

Most archival institutions have search room rules and guidelines that are meant to protect and ensure the survival of the archival materials for the future generations of users without compromising the current generation from using the same archival material (Schmidt 2011). Search room rules are good in that they serve to protect the archives and prevent people from misusing, damaging and even removing documents (Roper & Millar 1999). In that respect, the current research examined the search room rules at NAZ with the view to establishing their adequacy in serving the interests and needs of researchers while ensuring that the archival materials survive into the future. In the same vein, Dunlop (2009) emphasised that reading room rules are essential in making it clear to users how they are supposed to conduct themselves. Jimerson (2003) underscored that reading room rules and procedures provide both intellectual and physical access to archives as the rules seek to serve the interests of both the users and the rights of other interested parties. Using the experiential technique and document review, the current study examined the policies and procedures that guide the users in the search room at NAZ.

The commonly used way by archival institutions to ensure the safety of their holdings from users who are mostly inexpert people is through enforcing search room or reading room rules. As highlighted by Roper and Millar (1999), archivists must be prepared to enforce the search room rules even if it means placing some access restrictions to certain archival materials. The current

research concurs with the thinking that search room rules are meant to protect the archival material from damage and to enhance access to archival materials. If there are no rules in place to guide the use of archives, the archival material will be susceptible to damage. Once the physical fabric and the contents are lost to deterioration, the materials might become permanently inaccessible. As such, the current research challenges archivists to employ ways that ensure both preservation and access needs are met. The standpoint of the current research is that preservation at the expense of access and vice versa defeats the purpose for which NAZ was established, thus keeping and making available a people's documentary heritage. In view of the need to balance preservation and access, what could be the status quo at NAZ? This issue was investigated and reported in Section 5.10.

### **3.11 Physical access to public archival institutions**

The ability by an archival institution to provide physical access to its collections is the foundation upon which improved access to the archives can be built. The provision of physical access is clearly spelt in ICA's first principle on access which indicates that the public has the right of access to archives of public bodies, and both public and private entities should open their archives to the greatest extent possible. In that respect, Shepherd and Yeo (2003) indicated that regular and flexible operating hours are a necessity in archival institutions to maximize utilization of the collection. Similar sentiments were shared by Ngulube (2006) when he asserted that physical access to the archives is dependent on the hours of service and the availability of the archival materials for consultation.

In Zimbabwe, the national archives are open from Monday to Friday and closed on Saturdays and Sundays. This makes it difficult for the conventional Monday to Friday Zimbabwe workers to access the archives (Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011). Kilasi, Maseko and Abankwah (2011) indicated that Botswana National Archives and Records Services responded to the user demands

by opening on Saturdays from 9:00am -12:00 noon. Archive repositories with adequate reading rooms for researchers also play a crucial role in boosting the levels of access in an archival institution (Kemoni, Wamukoya & Kiplang'at 2003). In that respect, Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) observed that the NAZ reading room can accommodate only 25 researchers at a time.

Arrangement, condition and distance are some of the salient factors related to the physical access of archival material (Greene 2007). Distance is amongst the common types of physical barrier that affect the accessibility of archival materials by members of the public. Some archival institutions have tried to curb the challenge of distance by digitizing their material and making it available on the World-Wide-Web. However, many archival institutions particularly from developing countries have remained sceptical and uncertain regarding offering their collection online. As a result, the vast majority of the documentary heritage remains un-digitised and accessible only if researchers can physically visit the repository.

Mnjama (2008) explained that amongst major factors hindering access to records and archives in Kenya is that the search room is only available at the Kenya National Archives headquarters in Nairobi. Anyone who wishes to access the archives must travel to Nairobi and this implies an extra cost towards accessing the archives. The same scenario exists in Zimbabwe and Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) have since indicated that archives should be taken to the people by decentralising public archives to the regions and provinces. In that regard, the current research examines the barriers to physical access at NAZ paying particular attention to the factors relating to distance, infrastructural facilities and the condition of the archival materials at NAZ.

Other issues related to physical access that were under scrutiny in this study include reading room fees, opening hours, size of the reading rooms and the functionality of the reprographic equipment



at NAZ. These issues were identified by Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) to be amongst the common barriers affecting the physical access of archives at NAZ.

On matters regarding physical access, national archival institutions are obliged to cater for people with physical challenges (Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011; Kilasi, Maseko & Abankwah 2011). In Zimbabwe, Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) found that deaf people are a challenge to the control desk and most archival documents are inaccessible to blind people. They also revealed that people with limited mobility have problems with areas that do not have wheelchair access including reference room tables that cannot accommodate a wheelchair. In as much as it may not be feasible to cater for all types of disabilities as indicated by Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011), this research is of the view that considerable effort should be put in place to meet the special needs of people with disabilities.

A national archival institution is a public resource that should strive to make archives equally accessible to people with physical challenges. This is not only a legal obligation but also falls in line with ICA's fifth principle which stipulates that archives should be made available on equal and fair terms. In that respect, Serene (2008) emphasised specific aspects against which the current study assesses the physical accessibility of NAZ particularly to the physically challenged. These aspects as pinpointed by Serene (2008) include the availability of:

- wheelchair accommodation in parking facilities, public assembly areas and restrooms
- safety for people with vision impairments
  - i. access routes that are free of debris, protrusions and other obstructions
  - ii. floor to ceiling clearance of at least 80 inches
- properly constructed and displayed signage whose numbers and letters should be less than 3 inches high

- alarm systems that provide visual and audio warnings
- counter tops and aisles that accommodate or that can be adjusted to accommodate wheelchairs

This study agrees with the view that an archival institution should be prepared to meet and deal with a variety of physical challenges that may constitute barriers to people with restricted abilities for walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, perceiving or understanding. The current study undertook to perform a survey of the facilities at NAZ with the view to noting public areas that have physical barriers. The findings of the survey are communicated in Section 5.11. The ultimate goal for looking into the physical accessibility at NAZ was to come up with possible ways that could lead to improved access to the archives by people with special needs.

### **3.12 Summary**

This chapter reviewed extant literature on relevant issues relating to access and use of public archival material. The review was against the grounded theory research purists who believe that a grounded research project should not engage extant literature early in the study for fear of contaminating the results, analysis, discourse and interpretations. The literature review performed in this chapter is, however, deemed appropriate and essential as it helped the researcher to better appreciate the current theoretical conversations and gain an adequate depth of understanding on the parameters of the discourse. The literature surrounding the legal instruments generally shows that public bodies hold information not for themselves but as custodians of the public good and everyone has a right to access this information, subject only to clearly defined rules established by law. However, the same pieces of legislations can be used by authorities to deny members of the public access to information. The engaged literature on the public perception of the archives reflects that archivists are faced with a serious challenge where many people have different views

and thinking about public archival institutions, hence the need for them to understand their existing and potential clientele, so that they are able to respond accordingly.

Invisibility and isolation of archival institutions emerged to be amongst the chief reasons why the access and use level of archives is relatively low in many institutions. Public programming and outreach programmes were identified to be amongst the many ways that can be employed to take archives to the people, increase the visibility of the archival institution and to redress the many misconceptions that people might have about the archives. The literature also shows that the access level at an archival institution can be affected by the non-utilization of the digital technologies, backlogs of unprocessed archives, and inadequate finding aids that are produced without the input and consultation of the users.

While the custodial paradigm to the archival discourse has always led to the misconception that access and preservation are in conflict, the review of the extant literature indicates that preservation is actually complementary to access and the two practices should always exist in harmony. The chapter ended by discussing the issues of physical access where the bulk of the literature highlighted the issues of infrastructural accessibility, opening hours and the carrying capacity of the reading room. The chapter that follows communicates the research approach, design and the methodological issues of the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

*Grounded theory research approach guards against theoretical stagnation through theory development that is grounded in scientific data (Charmaz 2006; Phothongsunan 2010) and the theory will be of importance to people's lives (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978; Strauss & Corbin 1998; Mills, Bonner & Francis 2006).*

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Scientific research is built on certain philosophical assumptions about what constitutes a valid and reliable study. As such, this chapter discusses the philosophical assumptions, design strategies, instruments, data collection and analysis methods that were involved in gathering data to develop a framework for access to and use of archives at NAZ. This study is exploratory in nature and it explicitly lies under the qualitative research methodology as it was guided by the constructivism ontology, interpretivism epistemology and took the grounded theory research approach. The time dimension for the current study is longitudinal and the research falls under both the basic and applied categories of research. The methodological issues explained in this chapter are meant to show the entire research processes that were involved in this study so as to reduce the different threats to research claims as well as to promote the validity and trustworthiness of the study.

#### **4.2 Research design**

A research design refers to the logical structure to doing a research. It can also be described as the systematic plans and procedures that are put in place by a researcher to study a scientific problem (Kolbaek 2014). A research design links the research purpose and questions to the processes for

empirical data collection and analysis, thereby allowing the researcher to derive meaningful conclusions from the yielded data (Ponelis 2015). This component of research is very critical and holds the key to a successful data collection and analysis as it enables the researcher to make use of the obtained empirical data to address the research question and the research problem. The formulation of a research design in this study was influenced by the type of evidence and data needed to develop a framework that enhances access to and use of the documentary heritage at NAZ.

The research design formulation process was like a builder who can only order building material after having established the type of building required, its uses and the needs of occupants. Similarly, the researcher of this study was able to decide on the appropriate design strategies only after understanding the type of information that is needed to answer the research question and to solve the research problem. A research design is therefore the overall plan put in place to connect the research problem to the empirical research. It identifies the type of data that is required to address the research problem, and the methods that are going to be used to collect the data. Figure 6 illustrates the overall plan (research design) that was followed in this study to obtain the needed data to develop a framework for access and use of archives at NAZ.

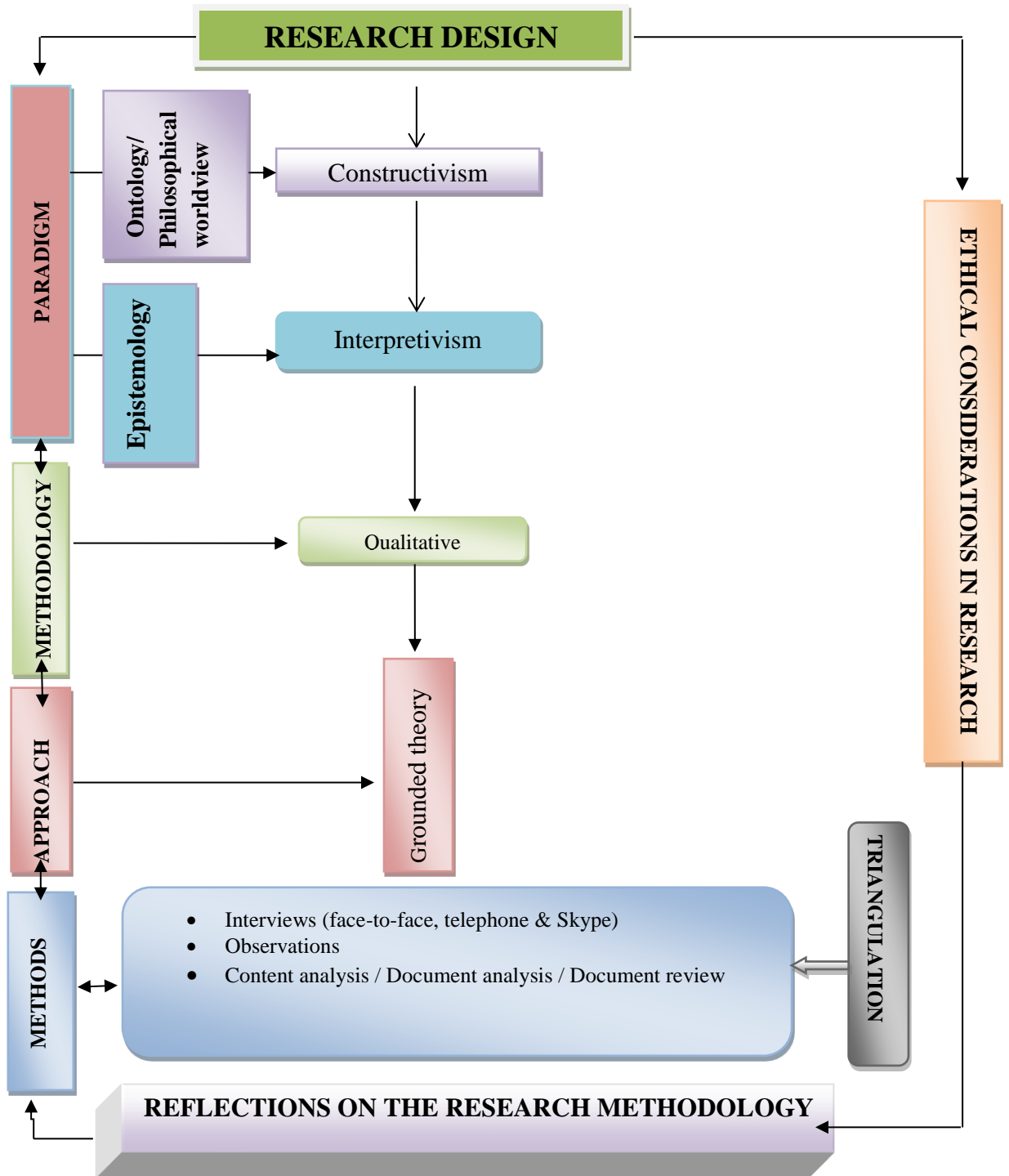


Figure 6: Research design

### 4.2.1 Time dimension

There are two ways that can be used by a researcher to approach time in a research study. The time dimensions are cross sectional and longitudinal. The cross sectional time dimension is used when a researcher seeks to examine elements or a situation at one point in time. This approach is relatively simple, cheap and it usually employs quantitative methods. On the other hand, the longitudinal time dimension shows the nature of growth, traces patterns of change, and possibly gives a true picture of cause and effect over time (Rajulton 2001). Table 4 serves to demonstrate the major differences between longitudinal and cross sectional time dimensions with the intention of making it clear why the researcher deemed the longitudinal time dimension appropriate for the current study.

**Table 4: The difference between longitudinal and cross-sectional time dimensions**

<b>Longitudinal</b>	<b>Cross-sectional</b>
Knowing about something over a period of time	Knowing about something at one point in time
Usually uses qualitative methods	Usually uses quantitative methods
Uses small samples	Uses larger samples
Exercises freedom in search of the unknown	Bound by predefined standards and existing theories
Involves more than one episode of data collection	Data collection is a once off exercise

Table 4 depicts the major differences of longitudinal and cross sectional time dimensions. The table was crafted using the ideas synthesized from Rajulton (2001), Epstein (2002), Ritchie and Lewis (2003), Corden and Millar (2007), Holland (2011) and Koro-Ljunberg & Bussing (2013). One of the reasons why the current study opted for the longitudinal time dimension is because of its flexibility and potential for continuous conceptual and theoretical development and innovation throughout the research process. This is also congruent with a study that uses a grounded theory research approach.

#### **4.2.2 Categories of research**

There are two main categories of research, namely basic and applied. Basic research is also referred to as fundamental research while applied research is referred to as practical research (Bentley, Gulbrandsen & Kyvik 2015). Basic research has been described as theoretical work that mainly seeks an understanding to a problem and producing a broad base of knowledge that forms the background to a solution yet offering no practical solution(s) (Kjelstrup 2001). Basic research allows the researcher to know the problem but does not know how to orient itself towards a solution. In that regard, basic research has often been explained as research that is driven by curiosity of the unknown and conducted without thinking of the practical ends.

Sherman (1988) and Palys (2008) refers to basic research as an esoteric academic pursuit that is no more than mental masturbation by ivory tower academics who conduct research with no intention to solve real societal problems. Contrary to basic research is applied research whose function is to offer practical solutions to the problem(s) identified. Applied research strives to do something practical about a relatively immediate problem (Palys 2008).



The current research is, however, not so overly rigid in this dichotomization of basic and applied research. Basic research provides the tools and raw materials for applied research. It is the needed raw material for application and a necessary and sufficient condition for developing applied research (Gersbach, Sorger & Amon 2009). Applied research may lead back to basic research and vice versa (Sherman 1988). In the same vein, Giacconi (2005) noted that basic research leads to the creation of new knowledge which will be the engine for future innovations. As such basic and applied research must be viewed as not mutually exclusive. The relationship of basic and applied research can actually be viewed as that of fish and water. This is so because applied research cannot just start from nowhere; it is actually built on basic research. Basic research leads to new knowledge, provides scientific capital and creates the pool from which the practical applications to problems are drawn. Basic research is therefore an investment which applied research bank upon for its success.

The current study thus combined basic and applied research in that the framework for access to and the use of archives offered in this study is within the context of application. It has, however, been argued that basic research continues to define academic researchers and remains central across all academic disciplines (Gulbrandsen & Langfeldt 2004; Bentley, Gulbrandsen & Kyvik 2015). True to these claims, the current research falls into both basic and applied research albeit with a more inclination to basic research. This inclination is rather natural than chosen as basic research and qualitative research are made for each other. The advantage of basic research is that it offers an inductive integrity.

#### **4.2.3 Research purpose**

There are three ways of research to address a research problem, namely exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Exploratory studies are usually done when there is limited knowledge about a

research issue. The objective of exploratory research is to ensure that a more conclusive future study will begin with an inadequate understanding of the nature of the problem at hand (Manerikar & Manerikar 2014). Descriptive research describes the characteristics or behaviours of a given population in a systematic and accurate fashion (Özgen nd). Explanatory studies try to understand the relationship between variables and therefore focuses on the why questions.

The type of questions sought to be answered in this research project renders the study exploratory. The researcher of the current study sought to develop a framework for access and use of archives. This required a thorough and good understanding of the problem that was resulting in the perceived underutilisation of the archives. Exploratory research provided in-depth insights into the research problem through a process that was flexible and involved small samples.

While the current study is heavily explorative, it should also be appreciated that some elements of both a descriptive and explanatory research are inherent in the study. For instance, the current study made efforts to describe the conditions, programmes and activities surrounding the issues of access to and use of archives, hence making the study partially descriptive. The current study also sought to understand the relationship between some archival concepts and practices and how they influence the accessibility and use of the archives, hence rendering the current study explanatory in some instances. The presence of the elements of exploratory, explanatory and descriptive study in the current study owes its prevalence to the use of the grounded theory approach which is highly flexible and allows a researcher to pursue line(s) of research that would enable them to accomplish the task for which the research is conducted. However flexible the current research was, its inclination is towards exploratory research.

#### **4.2.4 Ontology - Constructivism**

Ontology is a research paradigm (See Figure 6) that is also referred to as a philosophical world view or just world view. Gruniger and Uschold (1996), Smith (2003), Lawson (2004) and Aspers (2015) explained ontology as an explicit representation of a conceptualisation that embodies a world view. In simpler terms, ontology is one's view of reality (Villiers 2005), thus a study of what exists and what might exist. Woolgar and Lezaun (2015) are, however, of the thinking that ontology is an unstable term that does not have a precise meaning. To this end, Woolgar and Lezaun (2015) warn researchers that ontologies are derivative and researchers should in their scientific inquiries stand guided by the webs of practices that enact a particular reality. In this study, ontology was understood as interrogating the 'what-ness' of a reality so as to come up with a more assured reality about the reality. Thus the researcher looked into the issues of access to and use of archives at NAZ so as to understand the factors that both promote and hinder the accessibility to and use of the documentary heritage at the institution. The ultimate goal for doing this was to develop a framework that would enhance the visibility and public image of NAZ, hence promoting the utilisation of the institution's holdings.

It is crucial to identify and communicate the philosophical world view adopted in a research as it brings clarity and direction to the study (Lawson 2004). Following the arguments presented by Mills, Bonner and Francis (2006), the choice of the ontology in this study was influenced by the researcher's belief about the nature of reality when it comes to the issues of access and use of the archives. The overarching aim of this study was to develop a framework for access to and use of the archives. In that respect, the constructivism world view was deemed appropriate for the study as it is based on theory generation and understanding, social and historical construction (Kolbaek 2014). In addition, the current study chose to employ the constructivist philosophical view because

it allows critical thinking over issues and enhances intellectual development. For instance, using the constructivism world view, the researcher was able to move away from the common approach in social science research where most researchers perform certain studies in order to test the validity and applicability of certain theories. The researcher critically reflected on the gathered data and managed to build a framework for use by archival institutions that envisage enhancing the accessibility and use of their archives.

The issues surrounding access and use of archives are multifaceted, complex and conflicting in some areas. There are several dimensions and paths that can be followed to enhance access and use of the archives and some of the dimensions can be conflicting. The constructivist grounded theory ontology emerged congruent with the study as constructivism is rooted in the view that reality is influenced by context and not in one truth (Mills, Bonner & Francis 2006). Indeed, there can never be a single truth on the issues affecting access to and use of the archives.

Constructivism is, however, not without criticism. Fiaz (2014) criticised constructivism for its multi-explanatory dimension citing that it is theoretically inconsistent because it assumes a middle position between rationalist concerns and a reflective focus, hence falling short in both quarters. Paradoxically, the current study perceived the multi-dimensionality of constructivism as a strength rather than a weakness as it permitted the researcher to reflect on the several truths surrounding access and use of the archives, thereby leading to the production of a framework that is all inclusive and real to the status quo.

#### **4.2.5 Epistemology: Interpretivism**

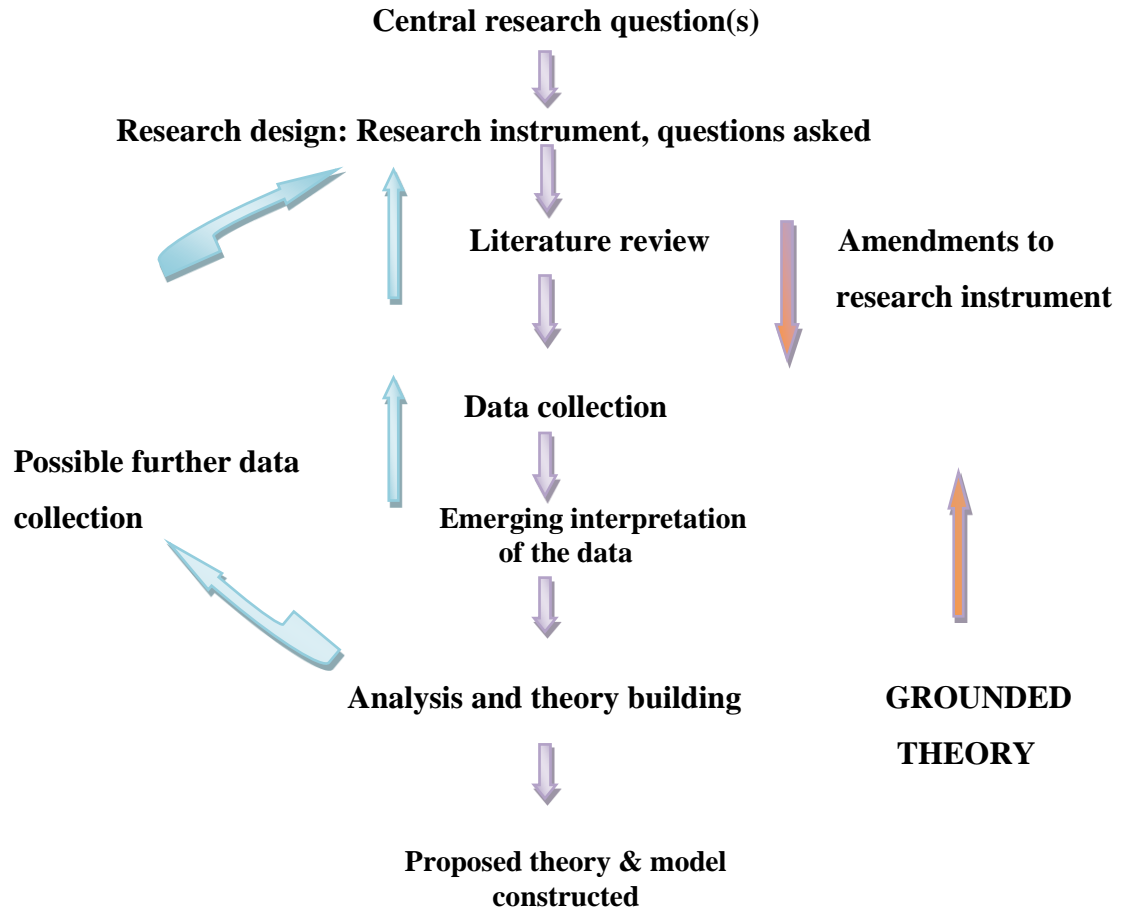
An epistemology is a comprehensive belief system and the underlying philosophy and assumptions that guide research and practice in the field (Villiers 2005; Willis 2007; Phothongsunan 2010).

There are three major epistemological beliefs followed in scientific research, namely positivism, critical theory and interpretivism. The current researcher's epistemological orientation was largely influenced by the nature of the research problem, the theoretical lens adopted in the study and the degree of uncertainty surrounding the phenomenon under study as advised by Rowlands (2005). The current study found interpretivism to be the most appropriate for the current study as it seeks to come up with new interpretations and underlying meanings paying attention to the ontological assumption of multiple realities which are time and context dependent (Villiers 2005; Leitch, Hill, & Harrison 2010; Scotland 2012; Levers 2013; Thanh & Thanh 2015).

The interpretivism epistemology is naturalistic as it is done in a natural setting and not in a laboratory (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000). Interpretive researchers do not seek answers for their studies in rigid ways (Thanh & Thanh 2015). This helped the researcher to understand the sentiments of the general populace, archives users and the information management practitioners on issues relating to access to and use of the nation's documentary heritage held at the National Archives of Zimbabwe. Interpretivism emerged a suitable epistemological belief for this study considering the complexity and differences found in the behaviour, concerns, perceptions and expectations of the people who are users and potential users of the archives. In that regard, this research was operationalised using the qualitative methodology to be discussed in section 4.1.3. Unlike positivism that seeks to test hypotheses, this research used the interpretive paradigm where research questions were investigated and the entire research focused on understanding the issues related to access to and use of archives so as to come up with a relevant framework that would help archivists to improve the access levels of the archival holdings.

Raddon (n.d.) indicates that in as much as data collection in an interpretive study can be complex, challenging and time consuming, it facilitates the understanding of how and why situations are the

way they are. Using the interpretivist epistemological approach to research, the current study followed the research process depicted in Figure 7.



**Figure 7: The interpretivist research process** (synthesized by the researcher)

Interpretivism is more concerned with relevance than rigor and it centres on the way a researcher makes sense of the data to establish the reality and attach meaning to it (Ponelis 2015). The interpretive paradigm is therefore dependent on the constructivist ontology (Goldkuhl 2012) hence its perfect applicability to the current study. Interpretive studies are inductive and directed at understanding phenomena from an individual or natural setting perspective. They are therefore rooted in a grounded research approach (Scotland 2012). As opposed to positivist researchers who

begin their research with a hypothesis, interpretivists do not set out to test a hypothesis but use open ended research questions and tend to use small numbers of participants because the purpose is not to generalize but to explore the meanings placed on the issue(s) under investigation (Rowlands 2005).

The current research focused on improving access to and use of the archives at NAZ and therefore sees the levels of access and use as a product of interpretations, interventions and individual decisions. The degree of uncertainty surrounding the issues of access to and use of archives also influenced the current researcher to take a qualitative, inductive and interpretive stance. There is little previous research that investigated access to and use of the archives at NAZ as a nation's documentary heritage. (Refer to Chapter One section 1.7 for justification to this claim). The degree of uncertainty surrounding the issues of access and use of archives and the limitations of the literature that addresses the phenomenon prompted the researcher to take an interpretive paradigmatic stance that used an inductive approach and grounded theory techniques. It is generally agreed that interpretive studies are built on constructive ontologies and predominantly uses qualitative methods (Silverman 2000; McQueen 2002; Thomas 2003; Willis 2007; Nind & Todd 2011). To that effect, the section that follows discusses the qualitative methodology as it was used in the current study.

### **4.3 Methodology: Qualitative**

All research involves an explicit and systematic approach to finding things out using the appropriate methodology in relation to the research question and problem (Hancock, Windridge & Ockleford 2007). There are two major branches of methodology, namely qualitative and quantitative. Owing to the several reasons to be shortly communicated in this section, the current study chose to employ the qualitative research methodology.

Qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things (Berg 2001, 2007; Caelli, Ray & Mill 2003) that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency (Denzin & Lincoln 2000). It is concerned with developing explanations for a phenomenon (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott & Davidson 2002; Hancock, Windridge & Ockleford 2007) and it employs different philosophical assumptions, strategies of inquiry, and methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation (Creswell 2009). Put in simpler terms, qualitative research is concerned with the what, how, when and where of a phenomenon under study.

There is a perceived delusion that if you can't measure it, that ain't it (Berg 2001). There is a general misconception from many people as they think that scientific research that involves numbers is more powerful and it implies precision (Berg 2001). Much as this study would have liked to go into detail addressing this misconception, it is not its purpose to argue against quantitative procedures. Instead, this section underscores the in-depth understanding of a research problem that can be realised from a qualitative study. The current study employed the qualitative research methodology because it offers a highly rewarding experience that engages the researcher with the things that matter and in ways that matter (Mason 2002).

The purpose of the current research was not only to amass data but to discover answers to questions through the application of systematic procedures. The current study did not opt for quantitative procedures because understanding the issues of access to and use of the archives may not be reduced to a statistical fashion of study that yields arithmetically precise conclusions that neither explain nor provide insights into the reality. The qualitative research methodology was chosen for this study because it is premised on the notion of quality which is essential to understanding the nature of things (Richards 2006). Table 5 serves to highlight how qualitative and quantitative



research methodologies differ and to clearly depict the justification for this research opting for qualitative procedures and not quantitative methodology. The table was created using the arguments and ideas presented in the following: Ramos & Ortega 2006; Berg 2001; 2007; Mason 2002; Leedy & Ormond 2005; Caelli, Ray & Mill 2003; Richards 2006; Hancock, Windridge & Ockleford 2007; Creswell 2006; 2009; Harrison & Reilly 2011; Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011.

**Table 5: The distinction between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies**

Qualitative	Quantitative
Seek to explore phenomena	Seek to confirm hypotheses about phenomena
Instruments use more flexible and iterative style of eliciting responses	Instruments use more rigid style of eliciting and categorizing responses
Uses unstructured and semi structured methods such as in-depth interviews, focus-groups and participant observation	Uses highly structured methods such as questionnaires, surveys and structured observation
Describes variation	Quantifies variation
Describe and explains relationships	Predicts causal relationships
Question format is open-ended	Question format is close-ended
Data format is textual	Data format is numerical
Holistic	Reductionist

Phenomenological	Scientific
Descriptive	Experimental
Naturalistic	Contrived
Inductive	Deductive
Constructivist	Positivist

As shown in Table 5, the major distinction between quantitative and qualitative methodology is their flexibility. Generally, qualitative methodology is fairly flexible as compared to quantitative methods that tend to use close ended questions asking all participants identical questions in the same order. The flexibility of the qualitative research methodology resulted in the current study opting for its use. Qualitative research procedures were chosen for this study because they allow greater spontaneity as respondents are given the opportunity to respond more elaborately and in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do (Patton & Cochran 2002; Krauss 2005).

Although flexibility does not necessarily signify scientific rigour, it is imperative to note that flexibility gives rich reports for interpretive studies to fully understand contexts and the research problem (Ritchie & Lewis 2003; Willis 2007). Qualitative research is based on a relativistic, constructivist ontology that posits that there is no objective reality (Krauss 2005), hence making it naturally congruent with the current study.

Typical of all methodological issues, qualitative research has its perceived deficiencies. For instance, Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2012) argued that for all its richness and potential for

discovery, qualitative research lacks scholarly rigour. More often than not, qualitative researchers have been asked the question: how do we know that you really know what you are claiming to know? The question is unmistakably meant to query the rigor and genuineness of qualitative work. To address such concerns, the current researcher used both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order analysis. 1<sup>st</sup> order analysis is when a researcher uses the respondents' centric terms as they were obtained during data collection (verbatim transcription - see section 5.8) while 2<sup>nd</sup> order analysis is when a researcher uses his/her own centric concepts, themes and dimensions derived from the research question and problem (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton 2012). The current researcher deemed it necessary to use both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order analysis since reporting both the voices of the respondents and the researcher allows for a qualitatively rigorous demonstration of the relationship between the data and the concepts. It also defines a hallmark of qualitative research (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton 2012).

The current study is of the position, though, that not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted. As such, qualitative research procedures were adopted in this study as they create rich opportunities for discovery of new concepts rather than affirmation of existing concepts (Moriarty 2011). Qualitative research was also chosen as it attempts to increase an understanding of why things are the way they are in a given context (Hancock 2002), thus why access to and the use of archives at NAZ are the way they are. This provides a sound basis on which improvements can be subsequently made.

#### **4.4 Research approach: Grounded theory**

Unlike a plethora of social science studies that have been done with the intention of testing existing theories, this study deemed it crucial to generate a theory rather than testing and verifying existing theories. The reason for taking this approach was that a theory generated out of empirical evidence

is much closer to the truth and reality than trying to suit research findings to a particular theory (Rennie 1998; Bryant & Charmaz 2011). Moreover, a study that develops a theory presents the much needed bridge between practice and research (Southern & Devlin 2010). Grounded theory is an essential research approach that presents possibilities for the development of theoretical frameworks from the data gathered and analysed (Egan 2002; Payne 2016). It gives a researcher the tools to answer why questions from an interpretive paradigmatic stance (Charmaz 2012).

As argued by Walsh, Holton, Bailyn, Fernandez, Levina and Glaser (2015), the grounded theory research approach takes researchers from 0 to 100. This implies that the grounded theory research approach allows researchers to discern what is happening in their data that is different from what has already been said (Locke 2015) and to explain phenomena through an inductive reasoning process (Villiers 2005; Hussein, Hirst, Salyers & Osuji 2014). Grounded theory research approach serves to guard against theoretical stagnation through theory development that is grounded in scientific data (Charmaz 2006; Phothongsunan 2010) and the theory will be of importance to people's lives (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978; Strauss & Corbin 1998; Mills, Bonner & Francis 2006).

Using the grounded theory research approach, the current researcher was able to exploit the collected data and build a framework that can be used by NAZ to enhance access to and use of the documentary heritage in their custody. The framework is new and unique in that it is context specific to NAZ as it was solely developed from the empirical field evidence collected from the research site. The framework has its hypotheses and conceptualisation derived from the data that were simultaneously collected, coded and analysed. The insights obtained from each data analysis informed the next cycle of data collection as concurred by Lingard, Albert and Levinson (2008). Constant comparison of the gathered data is critical as it serves to control the conceptual level and

scope of the emerging theory (Lawrence & Tar 2013). The use of the grounded theory approach in this study took heed of Corley's advice (2015) that says researchers using grounded theory are not cramped to follow a sequential lockstep of techniques as they should be creative in the implementation of the approach since each study is unique.

There are two core categories of grounded theory research, namely the Glaserian approach and the Straussian approach. These two approaches are theoretically, philosophically and practically distinct from each other. As highlighted in the discourse presented in Chapter Three, section 3.1, the Glaserian school of grounded theory functions within the positivist ontological assumptions while the Straussian school of grounded theory operates within the constructivist philosophical world view. From this major distinction of the two categories of the grounded theory research approach, it is apparent that the Straussian school of grounded theory works well with the current study. In relation to the need for a researcher to choose an approach that is appropriate to his/her study, the current researcher concurs with Charmaz (2014) who indicated that grounded theory is not a rigid approach that can only be implemented in one strict formula. As such, Charmaz (2014) invited researchers to adopt and adapt the approach under specific conditions of inquiry and the circumstances shaping the research process. In that respect, the current study chose to rely upon a Straussian grounded theory approach.

Unlike Glaser's view on realism where the research findings are deemed to be revealed from within the data, this study followed Strauss' approach which holds that findings are constructed by inter-subjective understandings of the phenomenon being investigated. The Straussian approach to grounded theory that has been adopted in this study directed the researcher to be personally engaged with the research in an attempt to better describe and understand the issues surrounding access to and use of the archives as the participants perceive them to be. This is in contrast to

Glaser’s approach to grounded theory who assumes a realist epistemology that positions researchers to embody the role of an objectively detached observer so as to maintain a neutral stance towards the data in respect of objectivity as is understood by the post-positivist perspective (Payne 2016).

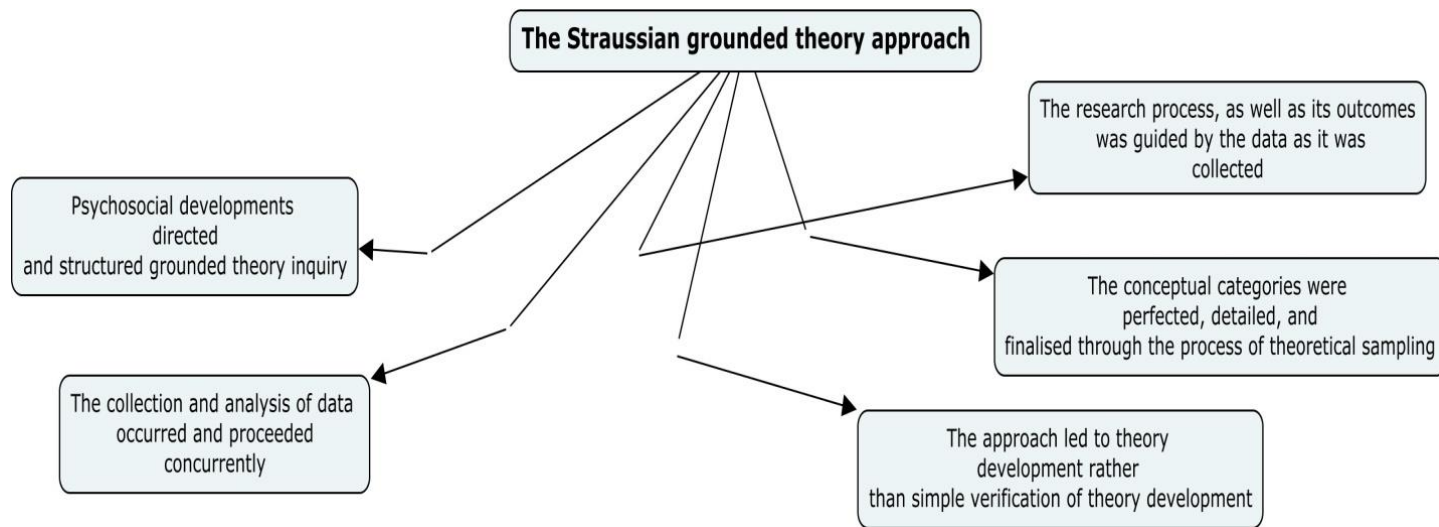
The other notable difference between Glaser and Strauss’s approach to grounded theory is on formulating the research question(s). Glaser’s position prohibits researchers from entering the research field with pre-research questions. On the contrary, Strauss, whose approach has been used in this study, argues that the researcher can enter the research field with a predetermined research question which arises from a partial perusal of the existing literature. Depicted in Table 6 is the summary of the differences between the Glaserian and the Straussian schools of grounded theory.

**Table 6: Glaserian school of grounded theory versus Straussian school of grounded theory**

<b>Glaserian school of grounded theory</b>	<b>Straussian school of grounded theory</b>
Operates within a post-positivist paradigm.	Operates within a constructivist paradigm.
Adopts an ontological position of critical realism.	Adopts an ontological position of pragmatic relativism.
The researcher embodies the role of an objectively detached observer. There should be independence between the researcher and the method to allow the researcher to maintain a neutral stance towards the data.	The researcher personally engages with the research to better describe and understand the phenomenon under study as the participants perceive it to be.
A review of the literature is conducted only post data analysis.	A partial review of the literature should be conducted prior to data collection.

Prohibits the researcher from entering the research field with any pre-set research questions.	The researcher can (and should) initiate the research enquiry with a predetermined research question in mind which arises from a partial perusal of the existing literature.
Promotes initial coding through the comparison of occurrences with each other to reveal broad patterns and trends that will emerge as categories.	Embraces the open coding practice, which includes the conceptualisation of even solitary occurrences.
Theory verification can be performed only via subsequent quantitative analyses that encapsulate the 'truth'.	Theory verification can be performed only through constant comparison and the capturing of multiple perspectives.

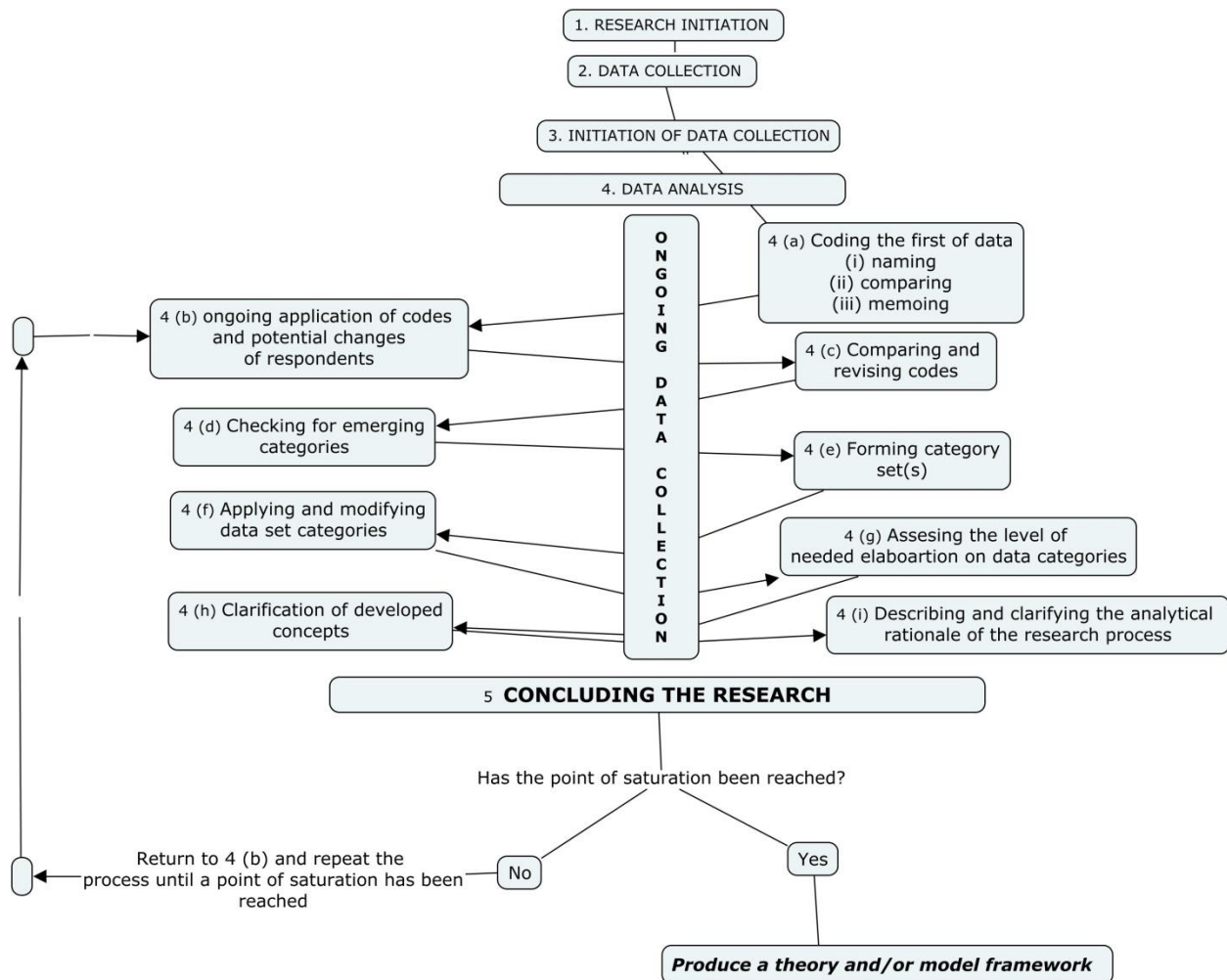
Despite the differences between the founders of grounded theory on what procedures should be followed, they both maintain the argument that researchers employing the grounded theory approach should do constant comparative analysis; initial coding and categorisation of data; intermediate coding; selecting a core category; advanced coding; theoretical integration; theoretical sampling, theoretical saturation; theoretical sensitivity and memoing (Rennie 1998; Birks & Mills 2011; Lawrence & Tar 2013; Salaun, Mills & Usher 2013). Based on the qualities of the Straussian school of grounded theory research approach as depicted in Table 6, the current study deemed it appropriate to follow its dictates. Figure 8 demonstrates how the Straussian grounded theory approach was employed in the current study.



**Figure 8: The Straussian grounded theory as used in the current study** (synthesized by researcher)

Unlike most other naturalistic modes of inquiry, theory development from grounded theory research has been identified as having the capacity to predict. Using the grounded theory research approach, the research process for this study included initiating the research, data selection initiation and on-going data collection, constant comparison data analysis and concluding the research. These research procedures appear to be typical of any other research process, yet the interchange between data collection and analysis is unique in a grounded theory research approach. Figure 9 demonstrates the grounded theory research steps that were followed in this study.





**Figure 9: Grounded theory research steps followed in the current study** (synthesized by researcher)

The discourse offered in this chapter is premised on the understanding that a grounded theory research approach allows a researcher to inductively generate theory and models from the analysis of the gathered data. Using the grounded theory research approach, the current study used empirical data to develop a framework for access and use of archives at NAZ. In grounded theory research, there is no testing or replication of existing theories. As such, the theories that were presented and discussed in Chapter Two of this study were meant to acquaint the researcher with the discourse and pertinent issues regarding access and use of archives. The framework that was

subsequently developed from this study, however, entirely rests on the empirical data yielded from the study and certainly is not confined nor influenced by the theories discussed in Chapter Two.

A grounded research approach emerged appropriate for this study as it offered a conceptual grasp of substantive issues surrounding access to and use of public archives. Following some of the fundamental principles of grounded theory, data for this study was not collected in a once off session. The researcher engaged in back and forth mobility in which data collection and analysis were constantly and repeatedly done with analysis guiding the kind of data to be collected next. During this phase of back and forth mobility which was done from January 2014 to November 2016, the researcher identified and conceptualized patterns through the process of constant comparative coding in which the researcher systematically coded, compared, analysed and recorded data. The framework for access to and use of archives provided in the last chapter of this study was modified several times before the researcher was satisfied it was the appropriate model. The researcher kept collecting more and new data, integrating newly found concepts into the emerging theory until a saturation point was reached to then present what the researcher believes to be a fitting, working, relevant and modifiable framework for access to and use of the archives at NAZ.

There were instances when the researcher obtained contradicting evidence and revisions were done as part of the back and forth mobility way of collecting data. This was imperative as it enabled the researcher to produce a framework that is inductively discovered, bounded and confirmed. In developing the framework for access and use of the archives at NAZ, the researcher paid attention to the four criteria that underpin a well-grounded theory. The four criteria are “fit, work, relevance and modifiability” (Villiers 2005:23). ‘Fit’ refers to the need by a developed framework, theory or model to match the realities of the matters that were investigated. ‘Work’ implies that the

framework should be able to explain any variables of the issues that emerged from the study. 'Relevance' is when the developed framework 'fits' and 'works'. 'Modifiability' means that the framework that has been generated should be open to adaptation as new data and variations are integrated.

#### **4.5 Research population and sampling**

It is odd to address the issues of sampling in a qualitative grounded theory study given that the focus of data generation in qualitative research is on the process rather than an end point of numbers (Edwards & Holland 2013). In that respect, the sample for the current study was arrived at through a theory-driven process that was aimed at obtaining the data needed to provide answers to the research questions. In other words, the current researcher was not worried about the sample size but rather the coverage of the concepts relevant to developing an acceptable framework for access to and use of public archives at NAZ.

The stance taken in this study can best be described as theoretical sampling. The current researcher is of the same view with some of the pioneers of grounded theory research (Corbin & Strauss 2008) who highlighted that sampling in a grounded theory study does not proceed in terms of drawing samples of specific groups of individuals or units of time but in terms of concepts, their properties, dimensions and variations. Sampling in the current study was therefore theoretically driven. The term 'theoretical sampling' was coined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in the context of the development of grounded theory.

Theoretical sampling in this study was done on the basis of relevance for the framework which the researcher sought to develop. The chosen sample was selected on the basis of its ability to yield the theoretical ideas that were needed to come up with a sound framework for access to and use of

public archival material at NAZ. This means that the current researcher did not begin by setting the sample from which the data was going to be solicited. Instead, the researcher identified sources of data collection in light of the on-going data analysis and the theoretical development emerging from the simultaneous data collection and analysis procedures. Results from one phase of data analysis informed where the researcher would go next for her data collection and how she should collect it. From this explanation, it is apparent that theoretical sampling goes hand in glove with snowballing. As such, the sample size for this research was not predetermined as it was built as the research was progressing. Table 7 depicts the research population from which data for the study was obtained.

It is crucial to reiterate the point that the current researcher did not begin by setting the sample from which the data was eventually collected. Instead, the researcher identified respondents and other sources of data collection in light of the on-going data analysis and the theoretical development emerging from the simultaneous data collection and analysis procedures. Table 7 therefore depicts the total population from which data for the study was drawn through the interview research technique.

**Table 7: Study population**

<b>Section/Department/Unit of the participant(s)</b>	<b>Participants and their designation</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>
Public Archives and Research	2 Archivists and the Deputy Director of the Public Archives and Research Section	3
Records Services	2 Records Management Officers and the Deputy Director Records Services	3
Audio-visual Unit	2 Archivists	2
Oral History Unit	1 Oral historian	1
Reprography	1 Illustrations officer	1
Conservation	1 Conservator	1

Information Communication Technology (ICT)	1 ICT specialist	1
The Editor National Archives of Zimbabwe		1
The Director National Archives of Zimbabwe		1
Archives users (visitors who were found at NAZ during the period of research)		15
Members of the general public were conveniently selected from the registrar general's birth certificate offices in Harare (This particular place was targeted because it receives people from all the corners of the country).		25
<b>Total number of participants</b>		<b>54</b>

#### 4.6 Sample size

Determining sample sizes is a major problem for many researchers (Ngulube 2005). In the context of this study, the current researcher assumes the position that there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what the researcher wants to know, what will be useful, what will have credibility, what is at stake and what can be done with the available time and resources (Patton 2015:311). However, Creswell (2014:231) argues that it is typical for a qualitative researcher to study a few individuals or a few cases ranging from 1 to 40 as it enables a researcher to provide an in-depth picture of a studied phenomenon. In that respect, Creswell (2014) further argues that the use of large numbers in qualitative research may result in superficial perspectives. The same sentiments were echoed by Stake (2006) who indicated that small samples that are truly in-depth have resulted in many of the most significant breakthroughs in understanding the phenomenon under study.

Contrary to the above communicated perspectives and to which the current researcher subscribes is Patton (2015:313) who argued that the validity, meaningfulness and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size. In that respect, the current researcher is of the view that researchers who should worry about sample size are those that seek to generalise

their results from a sample to a population of which it is a part. This means that the researcher of the current study was not worried about the sample size but rather the coverage of the concepts relevant to developing an acceptable framework for access to and use of public archives at NAZ. The stance taken by the current researcher was supported by Mason (2010:139) who argued that sample size is a matter of intellectual judgement based on the logic of making meaningful comparisons, developing and testing your explanations. Similarly, Corbin and Strauss (2008) as well as Manzano (2016) argued that sample sizes in qualitative research are not based on sampling fractions, representativeness and bias elimination but on the concepts of data completeness and saturation.

Interestingly, adding on to the debate is Patton (2015) who likens the question of sample size to the problem that students usually have when they are given an essay to write. Below is the conversation extracted from Patton (2015:314):

“Student:       How long does the paper have to be?  
Instructor:     Long enough to cover the assignment.  
Student:        But how many pages?  
Instructor:     Enough pages to do justice to the question-no more, no less.”

In light of the above conversation, the current researcher concedes to the notion that sample size is an intellectual validation and judgement. The sample size depicted in Table 7 is therefore neither too big nor too small as it provided adequate data that was needed to comprehend the issues surrounding access to and use of archives at NAZ, thereby enabling the development of a relevant and meaningful framework that is empirically trusted to enhance the visibility and utilisation of NAZ’s public holdings.

In relation to sample size(s), Edwards and Holland (2013) noted that researchers are often preoccupied with the question of how many interviews should be done when conducting qualitative research. In light of this concern, the current study did not have a specific number of interviews to conduct as the concept of data saturation determined when to end the interviews and other data collection ventures. The researcher sampled, collected data and analysed it simultaneously, hence making it impossible to specify in advance how many interviews are necessary. This was appropriate for this study as it followed a grounded theory approach. The researcher continued sampling and identifying cases until the interviewees were not revealing anything that they had not said before. In that respect, the number of interviewees was determined by the range of meanings and not a sample that is representative as is the case with quantitative research.

Morse (1995) noted that there is no set number of interviews that can be assumed to achieve saturation. Morse (1994), however, recommended 30-50 interviews for grounded studies while Guest, Bunch and Johnson (2006) argued that data theme saturation is achieved after twelve interviews. Closer to the recommendation of Morse (1994) of 30-50 interviews, Mason (2010) indicated that, despite the conceptual impossibility of establishing a power calculation, common professional practice situates the acceptable number of interviews between 20 and 30. The current study did not subscribe to this rule of thumb as it focused on relevance and rigour in obtaining the data that was needed to build the framework of access to and use of archives at NAZ. It is also imperative for the current researcher to highlight that the process of theory generation in this study was not necessarily consolidated in the next interview but through mining information using other techniques such as observations and document review. Manzano (2016) indicated that qualitative research advocates a small number of interviews although the precise number cannot be decided a

priori. These variations on the recommended sample size show that the answer ‘it depends on the type of study’ is the most appropriate to answer those who are concerned with how many interviews should be held in a qualitative enquiry and how big should be the sample size.

## **4.7 Research methods**

Research methods are the means which researchers use to obtain the data needed to address the research question, objectives and the research problem. These methods are also commonly referred to as ‘instruments, tools and techniques’. As communicated in section 4.3.1, the current study is exploratory in nature. As such, the qualitative research methods emerged appropriate in obtaining the data required to develop a framework for access to and use of the archives at NAZ. The methods employed were document review, in-depth interviews and observations.

### **4.7.1 Document review and analysis**

Document review is a data collection technique that involves the consultation of the content in documents so as to get the meaning(s), context(s) and the message(s) (Elo & Kyngas 2008). The method is also referred to as ‘content analysis’, hence their interchangeable use in this study. It is imperative to highlight, though, that the term ‘content analysis’ appears to be problematic as it has contested meanings. Sharing similar sentiments is Patton (2015) who argues that no consensus exists about the term ‘content analysis’. For-instance, Flick (2011) indicates that content analysis is a quantitative analysis of qualitative data that involves counting the frequencies and sequencing. On the other hand, Bortz and Döring (2006) regard content analysis as a purely data gathering technique. The current researcher agrees with Ngulube (2015a) who argued that content analysis is a mixture of both a data collection procedure and an analytic technique.



Amongst the objectives of the current study was to examine the influence of legal instruments on access to and use of the public archives in Zimbabwe. As such the content of the relevant pieces of legislation pertaining to access to and use of archival material in Zimbabwe was analysed.

Table 8 illustrates the pieces of legislation that were consulted in this study.

**Table 8: Legal instruments analysed in the study**

<b>Type of legal instrument</b>	<b>Description of the instrument</b>
Constitution	Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act of 2013.
National Archives Act	National Archives of Zimbabwe Acts 8/1986, 22/2001.
Freedom of Information Act	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) CHAPTER 10:27 of 2002 Official Secrets Acts 16/1970, 27/1975 (s. 8), 22/2001, 5/2002; R.G.N. 1308/1973 Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act [Chapter 26:05] (No. 11 of 2000)
Privacy/Data Protection Act	Data Protection Bill of 2013
Charter(s)	African Charter on Human and People's Rights (1986)

The legal instruments depicted in Table 8 were analysed in light of the current study's first objective that sought to examine the influence of legal instruments on access to and use of the public archives in Zimbabwe. As shown in Table 8 some of the analysed instruments are not directly tied to NAZ but affect the transmittal of informational material to NAZ and also have implications for the public's ability to access and use their documentary heritage. The current study focused on developing a framework that would enhance the public's ability to access and use public archival material. As such, looking into the various pieces of legislation that affect the

public's access and use of information was deemed essential by the current researcher. This was meant to obtain a composite picture of the laws of the country and how they affect access and use of public information by the populace. Other documents whose content was analysed included NAZ's director's annual reports, the visitor comment book, NAZ's Web content, reading room rules, circulars, guides, directives and pamphlets. The documents reviewed were useful in gauging access and use enhancement readiness of NAZ.

Document review was used in this study because it is a versatile data gathering tool that enabled the researcher to make replicable and valid inferences from data to their context with the purpose of providing knowledge, new insights and a practical guide to action. Document review is also known for its ability to produce a condensed and broad description of a practice and concepts that would subsequently be used to build up a model, conceptual system or theory (White & Marsh 2006; Elo & Kyngas 2008). Document review was therefore chosen for the current study because it has been widely and successfully applied to many problems in information studies (White & Marsh 2006).

Using qualitative content analysis, the researcher read through the available documents and scrutinized them closely to identify concepts and patterns. The researcher performed an inductive qualitative analysis that was mainly guided by the research questions. The analysis procedure was not rigid as the researcher accommodated potential themes and other relevant questions that were arising from systematically and carefully reading the data contained in the texts. The orientation to the content analysis was mainly naturalistic and humanistic. The objective of content analysis in this study was to capture the meanings, emphasis and themes of message and to understand the issues that were happening at NAZ and how they were directly and indirectly affecting access and

use of NAZ's holdings. The selection of what to read was purposively done to allow the researcher to obtain complete, reliable and relatively accurate answers to research questions.

The current study was not meant to be generalizable but rather transferable. As such, in sampling of what to read the researcher was not worried about making sure that all texts being analysed had an equal probability of being included in the sample. Instead, the sampling was judgemental. Data yielded from content analysis was coded into themes and sub-themes so as to identify significant concepts and patterns. The coding process was inductive and it was specifically guided by the research questions and problem. Key phrases and text segments that correspond to the research questions were tagged as the researcher read through the documents. Concept memos that logically focused on emerging concepts were used to document perceptions and ideas deduced from analysed texts. The concept memos focused on relationships among the concepts and gradually integrated the concepts into a workable model. This was done in efforts to enhance the credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability of the findings.

The researcher qualitatively analysed and coded the data using a constant comparison approach until no new patterns and findings were apparent. Constant comparison (new data compared with old data) allowed the researcher to continually refine emerging data sets and emerging models. The result of the qualitative content analysis performed in this study was a composite picture of the issues surrounding access and use of Zimbabwe's documentary heritage.

#### **4.7.2 Observation**

The observation research method is a data collection tool that involves the systematic recording of observable phenomena, features, events or behaviour in a natural setting of the study (Baker 2006; Kaluwich 2005). Observations enable the researcher to develop a holistic understanding of the

context and phenomenon under study (Kaluwich 2005). The observation technique was particularly employed in this study to gather data on the physical environment at NAZ and how it affects access and use of their collections. As such, the main areas of focus under this method were the exterior and interior setting and infrastructural facilities at NAZ as well as the reference services. The researcher also visited NAZ's technical services units, namely the Reprographic, Conservation, Automation, Oral History and the Audio Visual units. The intention was to gain an understanding of the units' functionalities and how they directly or indirectly contribute to access and use of the archival material at NAZ. In the Public Archives and Research Section, the researcher was particularly interested in observing the archival reference services at NAZ as well as their reading room facilities and services.

The techniques for collecting data through observation used in this study included written descriptions and taking photographs. The researcher particularly observed the physical environment of NAZ's public areas making notes of the observations. In efforts to eliminate and minimise the risk of missing out on observations because of writing about the last thing observed, the researcher made sure that all observations made were recorded at the point of observation. In an attempt to curb another perceived risk of over focusing on a particular feature at the expense of other features and aspects, the researcher was guided by semi-structured observation checklists for the physical environment at NAZ and as well as their reference services. The observation checklists were crafted with reference to the research problem and question (See Appendices D and E). The observation checklist was important for the researcher as it helped in making sure that aspects which are equally important are not missed out.

The other strategy that was used to collect data through observation was taking photographs. The researcher used this strategy in instances where she had limited time to make notes at the point of

observation(s). The photographs enabled the researcher to make some notes away from the research site and to effectively collect data particularly on the infrastructural facilities at NAZ. Single shots and series of shots were captured depending on what was appropriate for the feature(s) observed.

The observation data gathering technique was chosen for the current study because of its potential to enable researchers to understand the context within which activities and events occur (Hancock 2002; Clark, Holland, Hatz & Peace 2009) and its potential for theory construction (Kaluwich 2005). The technique offered a first-hand experience of archival reference services at NAZ and enabled the current researcher to perform an inductive inquiry rather than relying on prior conceptualisations. The observation research method was also adopted in the current study because of its potential to reveal the mundane, routine activities that collectively make up those practices of everyday life that may escape the discursive attention of participants (Clark, Holland, Hatz & Peace 2009). Additionally, the observation method makes it possible to understand what people may be unwilling or unable to discuss through other methods such as interviews and questionnaires, thereby giving the researcher a better understanding of what is happening. The method makes it possible to collect different types of data, hence allowing for richly detailed description that improves the quality of data collection and facilitates the development of new research questions (Kaluwich 2005).

### **4.7.3 Interviews**

Interviews are one of the key research tools in interpretive research (Phothongsunan 2010). They are the most widely used method in qualitative research (Edwards & Holland 2013) and they have become more relevant than ever (Manzano 2016). The reason why interviews have gained popularity in scientific studies is because the method allows for more thoughtful and accurate

responses and it also possesses an interactive power that makes it effective to deal with complex issues (Singleton & Straits 2010). Interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Cresswell 2006). The structured interview is associated with positivist studies, mostly used in survey approaches and it belongs to the quantitative end of the scale. Semi-structured and unstructured interviews constitute the area occupied by qualitative researchers, with the interviews characterised by increasing levels of flexibility and lack of structure (Edwards & Holland 2013). Lack of structure does not however imply lack of focus. The current study used the semi-structured interview technique. When conducting the interviews, the researcher was guided by the research topic, problem and themes, but following a fluid and flexible structure. Using semi-structured interviews, the current researcher identified the aspects and areas that needed to be addressed but remained open and receptive to unexpected information from the interviewee(s).

The data supplied by the interviewees was captured by way of recording and notes were later made from the play backs. The reason for choosing the recording technique was to allow the researcher to concentrate on listening and responding to the interviewee and not be distracted by trying to write down what was said which led to a smooth flow of discussion. The researcher also settled for recording the interviews because in note taking there is an increased risk of interviewer bias because the interviewer is likely to make notes of the comments which make immediate sense or are perceived as being directly relevant or particularly interesting (Manzano 2016). In that regard, the researcher employed the recording technique as it ensured that the whole interview was captured, hence providing complete data for analysis. Furthermore, hints and arguments missed by the researcher the first time were picked up as the researcher played back the recordings several times. The other reason the researcher opted for interview recording was because interviewees may feel inhibited if the interviewer suddenly starts to scribble (Hancock 2002). They may wonder

if what they have just said was of particular interest. In relation to this issue, the researcher was also aware of the fact that the interviewees may feel equally inhibited if the recording gadget is too obtrusive. To that effect, the researcher used a relatively small and unobtrusive good quality recording iPhone. This helped in making the interviewees less self-conscious, thereby creating a relaxed communication environment. Transcriptions were done to written versions of the interviews. The transcription process was done through a technique called recording analysis in which the researcher took notes from the play backs of the recorded interviews.

Edwards and Holland (2013) indicated that when people are in conversation only a small proportion of the message is communicated in the actual words used as the larger proportion is transmitted in the way people speak. In cognisance of this fact, the researcher ensured good quality transcribing by not merely transferring words from the recording to the page. The researcher paid attention to tone and inflection as they are good indicators of the whole range of feelings and meanings (Hancock 2002; Edwards & Holland 2013). Words, phrases and statements can be very ambiguous and assume different meanings depending on how, where and when they are said. In that respect, the researcher had to find ways to capture the feelings and meanings embedded in interviewee responses. Techniques such as upper case lettering, underlining, boldening and punctuation marks were used during the transcription process to communicate the feelings, sentiments and meanings echoed by the interviewees. It was imperative for the researcher to pay attention to the interviewees' voice as it allowed the study to detect positive or negative continuum, certainty or uncertainty and enthusiasm or reluctance, amongst other things.

Guided by the fact that the current study followed the grounded theory research approach, the researcher did not wait until all the interviews were done to perform the transcription process. Constant comparative analysis of the interviews was employed. This means that the researcher

collected data and did the analysis simultaneously. The researcher conducted the initial interview and transcribed and analysed the data before the next interview. The nature of the data gathered from the initial interview together with the demands of research problem is what influenced the formulation of the questions that had to be asked in the interview(s) that followed. A series of interviews were conducted based on this procedure and process until the researcher reached a point of saturation where questions and responses started to repeat themselves.

#### **4.8 Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability**

Contrary to positivistic and quantitative researchers who believe in a single reality regardless of what people do, believe or think (Coll & Kalnins 2009) and where the value of the research results is judged against the extent to which the findings can be generalised to a wider population, the current study is interpretivistic and therefore focused more on the ability of the research results to work with the perspectives of the study. The current study was conducted on a purely constructive and interpretive methodological framework. The researcher therefore raises objections to the suitability of judging the quality of this research using the validity, reliability and objectivity criteria. To that effect, the quality of the current study can best be judged against what Coll and Kalnins (2009) call the trustworthiness of a study. As such, the current study deemed it appropriate to replace internal validity with credibility, external validity with transferability, reliability with dependability and objectivity with confirmability. Agreeing to the use of the terms ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, ‘dependability’ and ‘confirmability’ in interpretive research to respectively replace ‘internal validity’, ‘external validity’, ‘reliability’ and ‘validity’ are Ritchie and Lewis (2003), Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) and Ponelis (2015) amongst many other scholars.



#### **4.8.1 Credibility**

Credibility calls for identifying all important factors in the research question and accurately and completely describing the ways in which these factors are reflected in the data gathered (White & Marsh 2006; Bryant & Charmaz 2011). Credibility of the current study was enhanced by the researcher's prolonged engagement at the research site and with the research participants as well as persistent observation, member checks and progressive subjectivity. The researcher started making visits to NAZ in 2014 when the research proposal for the current study had just been approved by the higher degrees committee of the University of South Africa (UNISA). The data collection visits were continued until December of the academic year 2016 when the researcher reached a point of saturation in data collection. The intention for prolonged engagement at the research site and with the research participants was meant to provide the researcher with an opportunity to establish good rapport and trust with participants. This also allowed the researcher to overcome the Hawthorn effect, thus the pretentious behaviour by the study participants due to their awareness of being observed. Persistent observation of the aspects that were under the spotlight in the study allowed the researcher to identify the concepts and features that were most relevant to access and use of archives. A member check was also employed to attain credibility for the current study. The researcher gave the informants an opportunity to read transcriptions of their interviews so as to confirm the contents as an accurate picture of their views. Progressive subjectivity was another way that was used by the researcher to give credibility to the current study. The researcher carefully monitored her own ideas, constantly reminding herself that in interpretive inquiry the researcher's views should not be afforded a higher status than that of the participants. In that regard, the researcher made sure that the participants' views are clearly

communicated in data presentation through employing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order analysis as explained in section 4.1.3.

#### **4.8.2 Transferability**

Transferability is more or less the same as external validity or generalisability in that it is a judgment about the applicability of findings from one context to another (Strauss & Corbin 1994). The norm for most social scientist researchers is to try and fit their findings within an existing theoretical framework. Researchers operating within the qualitative research methodology often find themselves battling to justify the applicability of their findings to other comparable contexts. As such, the usual way for researchers with such a mind-set is to try and collect data on the same questions from multiple sources believing that findings obtained from such sources can be transferred with greater confidence (White & Marsh 2006). The researcher made efforts to make the current study transferrable by collecting, analysing and cross-checking a variety of data on a single aspect from multiple sources. Unlike in positivistic studies where similar questions have to be repeated on a large number of respondents, the current researcher did not repeat the same questions but rather pursued emerging issues and perspectives as did Buchwald (2000). By the end of the study, the researcher had asked NAZ practitioners the questions that are depicted in Appendix G, the archives users who were met at NAZ during the course of the research had been asked the questions shown in Appendix H and the members of the public randomly picked from the registrar general's offices had been asked the questions that are depicted in Appendix I. The registrar general's birth certificate offices were chosen as the research site to gather information regarding the public's perception of NAZ because the place receives people from around the country. It is important for this study to emphasise the point that the questions depicted in appendices F, G and H were not necessarily pre-determined or repeated on all the respondents.

The questions were mainly guided by the research problem and objectives and most of them were arose from the emerging issues and perspectives.

In quantitative and positivistic research, external validity relies on particularly random sample selection or stratified random sampling. In interpretive work, as was the case with the current study, theoretical sampling procedures were employed. For the purposes of transferability, the current study offers the readers a context in which the study was conducted (refer to Chapter One, section 1.2). This study also offers comprehensive descriptions of methodology and how the data was analysed and interpreted. This enables the readers to decide whether the findings and conclusions of the study apply to their own situations or not.

#### **4.8.3 Dependability**

Reliability has in this study been replaced with dependability. Dependability refers to the stability of data over time (Ponelis 2015). It is this criteria of dependability that presents a sharp contrast with what positivist researchers believe to be reliability. For instance, interpretive researchers believe that relevant methodological alterations and changes in research design form the basis of a strong research while positivist and quantitative proponents believe that such changes exposes a particular study to unreliability (White & Marsh 2006). Interpretive studies perceive any changes in the methods and methodology as an integral part of the research process that increases the maturity of the study and not as a flaw in methodology as positivists may want to believe (White & Marsh 2006; Ponelis 2015). What is crucial, however, is for such changes to be clearly identified and described to an extent that they can be easily tracked.

Although the paradigm in which the current study was conducted permitted alterations in methods and methodology, the current researcher did not make any major changes that affected the

orientation of the methodological issues for the study. Dropping the questionnaire data collection technique was the only change that was made to this research. At the inception of this study, the researcher had proposed the use of questionnaires but later realised that the instrument was irrelevant and not conforming to the principles of a grounded theory study.

Dependability for the current study was obtained through clear and comprehensive explanations about the systematic procedures that were followed in gathering, analysing and interpreting the data that was used to develop a framework for access to and use of archives.

#### **4.8.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability has been used in this study to mirror what researchers in the positivist paradigm refer to as objectivity. Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that the findings of a study have not been influenced by the researcher. In quantitative and positivism research, objectivity is mainly achieved through a strict adherence to a method of inquiry that is determined in advance (Ponelis 2015). However, in interpretive studies such as the current study, confirmability entirely rests on the collected data. The research findings are confirmed by looking at the data to determine if the data support the conclusions (White & Marsh 2006). This is why the current researcher deemed it prudent to supply the raw data and communicate the process that was used to analyse and code the data. To achieve confirmability for this study, the researcher described how the interviews were done (refer to section 4.4.1), how observations were made (refer to section 4.4.1) and how document review was performed (refer to section 4.4.1). The researcher also makes available to the readers the actual questions that were asked, the observations that were made. Some portions of the interview transcriptions have also been provided as evidence that the interviews were actually conducted. This research acknowledges that confirmability (objectivity) can be very difficult to achieve given that in interpretive research the researcher is the interpreter and personal

bias based on previous experiences is almost certain to creep in. The researcher of the current study was wary of such dangers and therefore made attempts to reduce and eliminate personal biases by declaring the assumptions of the study in Chapter One, Section 1.8.

#### **4.9 Data analysis and processing**

Data analysis entails categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising data to find answers to the research question (Ngulube 2005). The process involves transforming data into research results through making succinct statements out of huge piles of data (LeCompte 2010). Data analysis is therefore critical to the successful completion of a research inquiry as Ngulube (2005) argues that a researcher may fail to interpret research data or to draw conclusions and make recommendations if s/he does not understand how to analyse data. Similar arguments were highlighted by Flick (2014) who argued that, whatever the data are, it is their analysis that forms the outcomes of the research. One of the founders of grounded theory research (Strauss 1987), also underscored the importance of research when he argued that the excellence of research rests in large part on the excellence of coding. Similar sentiments were shared by Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) as well as Patton (2015) who indicated that, if data are poorly coded, it can limit further analytic tasks. To that effect, the current researcher was provoked to perceive and liken data analysis to an exciting and challenging process of reassembling a puzzle.

It is common knowledge that one cannot complete a puzzle if some pieces are missing, warped or broken. A juxtaposition of this analogy in the context of scientific research implies that if data are incomplete or biased, research objectives cannot be met and the research problem may not be solved. Guided by this philosophy, the current researcher thought it prudent to always begin the data analysis process by identifying possible areas of bias. Please note that the current researcher is using the word 'always' because data analysis for this study was not a once off exercise (See

Figure 9 for a detailed explanation) but rather a constant comparison process. Identifying possible areas of bias was an essential procedure as LeCompte (2010) posits that, because researchers are human beings, they tend to collect data that intrigue or make sense to them. While selectivity is inevitable in people, the current researcher remained aware of how it can affect the overall outcome of the research and therefore chose to always begin the data analysis process by identifying possible areas of bias and accordingly attended to them. This was done through identifying tacit theories as advised by LeCompte (2010).

In preparation for an effective data analysis process, the current researcher did a verbatim transcription of the interviews that were conducted. The transcriptions produced are a word-for-word replica of everything that was said in the interviews. Verbatim transcription emerged appropriate in this study as it captures information in participants' own words, phrases and expressions, thereby allowing the researcher to uncover deeper and hidden meanings (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011). Transcription has been argued to be an inevitable and problematic step in the qualitative analysis of data that consists of spoken discourse (Kawal & O'Connell 2014). In respect of that argument, transcription can be regarded as an indispensable step in data analysis as all qualitative researchers are compelled to carefully attend to the phase of setting down the verbal research material in writing by means of transcription. After the current researcher was done with verbatim transcriptions, she then worked on anonymising data. This was done through removing any identifiers from the transcript to protect the participants' anonymity.

As illustrated in Figure 9, data analysis for this study was a constant comparative process that involved identifying and merging information categories and paying attention to the emerging theory. Kanuka (2010) underscored that the constant comparative method of data analysis has been hailed for enabling researchers to create categories that reflect the research purpose in a mutually

exclusive and conceptually congruent manner. The current researcher sorted and re-sorted data from the beginning to the end of the research.

Essentially, the first step taken by the current researcher in data analysis was code development. Codes are issues, topics and ideas identified by the researcher through reading data (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011). During code development, the current researcher identified issues pertaining to:

- i) Access policies, guides and procedures
- ii) Legal instruments and the access and use of public archives
- iii) Access and use of documentary heritage at NAZ by the people
- iv) Processing
- v) Archival reference services and user studies
- vi) Preservation and access
- vii) The public perception of national archival institutions
- viii) Physical access and other restrictions to accessing and using the archives
- ix) Public programming and outreach activities
- x) The use of print media and the internet in promoting the access to and use of archives

Identifying codes was helpful in that the codes enabled the researcher to identify the range of issues in the large volumes of data. This helped the researcher to conduct a focused analysis of a specific issue in the data. It also enabled the researcher to understand the meanings attached to these issues by the informants. In this study, code development ended when the researcher had reached a point of saturation; thus when no more new issues or topics were identified in the data.

After the codes were developed, the researcher then proceeded to coding the data. It is imperative to highlight that coding is distinct from code development in that code development only seeks to identify a range of codes (topics, issues and concepts) discussed while coding uses the identified codes to label the entire data set and segment the data set into smaller meaningful parts for analysis (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011). Flick (2011) describes coding as the process in which data are broken down, conceptualised and put back together for the purposes of developing a theory. Ngulube (2015a) describes coding as a procedure that helps researchers to move data to a high level of abstraction as it plays a key role in category identification. Coding can therefore be identified as the central process by which theories are built from data. The process of coding in this grounded theory research occurred during data collection so as to enable the researcher to determine what data to collect next as underscored by Creswell (2014).

The current researcher began by open coding whereby data were expressed in the form of concepts. Creswell (2014) describes open coding as a process in which the researcher makes sense out of the text data, divides it into text segments, labels the segments and examines codes for overlap or redundancy. Open coding in the current study involved segmenting the data in units of meaning in order to attach concepts (codes) to them. To achieve this, the current researcher mainly asked questions such as:

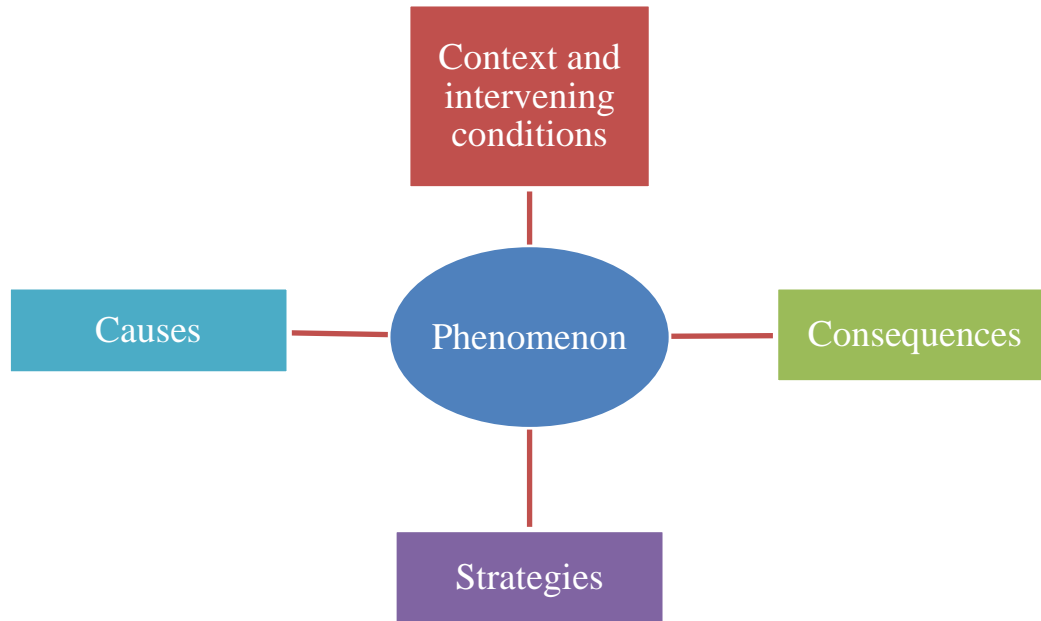
- i) What is the issue here?
- ii) Which aspects of the phenomenon are being mentioned?
- iii) When, how long and where?
- iv) How much or how strong?
- v) Which reasons are given?
- vi) What for?



vii) By which means?

The above basic questions and the entire process of open coding helped in opening up the text, hence allowing the researcher to achieve a deeper understanding of the text. It is crucial to indicate that the current researcher did not apply the open coding procedure to the whole text of the interviews or observation data. The procedure was only performed on particularly instructive and unclear passages as recommended by Flick (2011).

After opening coding, the researcher then proceeded to axial coding which is a more formal procedure of analysis. Flick (2011) describes axial coding as an analysis procedure that involves identifying and classifying links between substantive categories. Similarly, Creswell (2014) describes axial coding as when grounded theorists select one open coding category, positions it at the centre of the process explored and then relates other categories to it. Axial coding therefore serves to elaborate the relations between categories. In order to formulate such relations, the current researcher used a coding paradigm model depicted in Figure 10 suggested by the founders and advocates of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin 1998).



**Figure 10: Axial coding paradigm model**

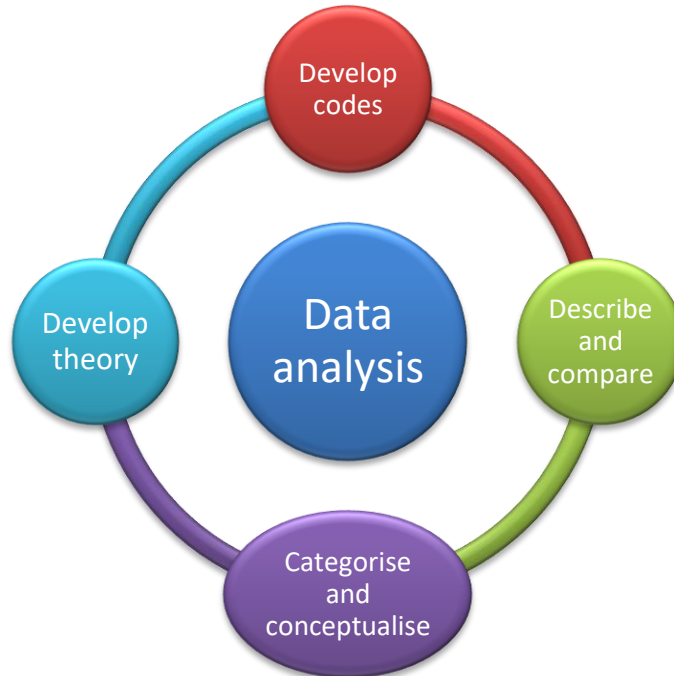
Using the above depicted model that basically outlines the relations between phenomena and concepts, the researcher was able to clarify the relations between a phenomenon, its causes, context and the strategies involved. The axial coding paradigm model has been attested for facilitating the discovery of structures of relations between phenomena, concepts and categories (Flick 2011). During the process of axial coding, the current researcher used the same questions that she asked during open coding in a complementary way.

The difference in the use of the questions was that during axial coding the researcher continuously moved back and forth between inductive thinking, hence permitting the researcher to test the concepts, categories and relations against the data. The researcher constantly compared and revised codes checking for emerging new data sets, forming further categories and modifying them as more data were collected. Data analysis for this study was therefore performed in response to the

on-going data collection and comparison. This enabled the researcher to go deeper into the data as underscored by Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011).

Upon completing the axial coding process, the researcher moved to selective coding whereby the researcher focused on elaborating the core concepts. Creswell (2014) indicates that selective coding is the final process of analysis in which the researcher develops his/her theory. Similarly, Flick (2011) describes selective coding as when a researcher is able to say under these conditions this happens, whereas under these conditions this is what occurs. Selective coding is therefore an essential analysis procedure as it leads to the formulation of the story of the case. It is during the selective coding process that the current researcher managed to develop the core categories and formulate the theory in greater detail, checking it against the data.

Overall, data were coded into themes and sub-themes so as to identify significant concepts and patterns. The coding process was inductive and it was specifically guided by the research questions and problem. Analytic and reflexive concept memos were used to capture emerging concepts, perceptions and ideas. Memos are notes written down by the researcher to elaborate on ideas about the data and the coded categories (Creswell 2014). Memo writing is a crucial component of data analysis as it provides transparency of the research process and a trail of analytic decisions (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011). The concept memos focused on relationships among the concepts and gradually integrated the concepts to develop a framework for access to and use of archives. The data analysis employed in this study is summarised diagrammatically in the analytic circle depicted in Figure 11.



**Figure 11: Data analysis circle** (synthesized by the researcher)

The analytic circle depicted in Figure 11 shows that the researcher simultaneously analysed data in a circular manner that involved repeating tasks until a point of saturation was reached. The analytic circle illustrates that the researcher employed an inductive conceptual process whereby the process of analysis led to inductively derived concepts and theory. The data analysis process used in this research followed the principles of grounded theory which is based on an inductive approach.

#### **4.10 Ethical considerations**

Ethics is the branch of philosophy that deals with morality when carrying out a study. The principles for the ethical conduct of research rest on issues pertaining to informed consent, self-determination, minimisation of harm, anonymity and confidentiality (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011). It is particularly important to uphold the rights of the informants as this promotes integrity and objectivity, and guards against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their

organisations (Cozby 2001; Creswell 2003; Kemoni 2007; Chaterera 2013). In that respect, the current researcher ensured the research participants' rights to self-determination, confidentiality, anonymity and privacy. It was crucial for the current researcher to explicitly respect the rights, needs and concerns of the people who were involved in the study as it went a long way in fostering trust and good relations between the researcher and the participants.

The right to self-determination is hinged on the principle of respect (Polit & Beck 2004). As a way of respecting the participants, the researcher made sure that respondents were given clear and comprehensive information regarding the research before their consent to participate in the research was obtained. Appendix D depicts the letter that was used to seek individual's consent to participate in the study. Appendix C is the letter that was wrote to the NAZ director requesting to conduct a research project at the institution. The letter was referred to the Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National Culture and Heritage for approval and the letter of approval was supplied (see Appendix 1). Nachmias and Nachmias (2005) emphasise the need to obtain a signed consent from research participants prior to the research project.

Similarly, Kumar (2005) indicates that it is unethical to collect data without the knowledge of participants as well as their informed consent. To this end, the researcher briefed the informants on the objectives and purpose of the research during the pre-interview discussion meeting when the appointments for the interviews were being made. In light of Creswell (2003), Bryman (2004) and Neuman (2006) who noted that respondents have a right to withdraw at any time and should therefore not be forced to participate, the current researcher gave the research participants a choice to consent voluntarily to participate or decline participation. It was also made clear to the respondents that they had a choice to withdraw from the study should they feel like doing so.

Researchers are also called upon to ensure the participants' right to confidentiality (Burns & Grove 2001). The current researcher ensured the participants' right to confidentiality by not sharing the information provided by them without their authorisation. Anonymity is another way that was employed in the current study to ensure the participants' right to confidentiality is upheld. Respondents were not asked to reveal their names during the process of data collection. This helped in guarding against unnecessary disclosure of the participants' identity. The researcher also ensured confidentiality and upheld the participants' right to privacy by protecting raw data from unauthorised persons and no names were linked to any data.

Apart from ensuring the participants' rights to self-determination, confidentiality, anonymity and privacy, the current study also observed other moralities required of scientific researchers. For instance, Mavodza (2010) indicates that it is unethical to conduct secret and classified research. In that respect, the research proposal for this study was submitted to the University of South Africa's Higher Degrees Committee and it was approved. The researcher also strictly adhered to the stipulations that scientific inquirers should not manipulate their data collection, analysis and interpretation procedures in a way that contradicts the scientific method or advances their personal agenda (Bhattacharjee 2012). The current researcher did not plagiarize, falsify, conceal or exaggerate the results of the study. The sources of information consulted in writing this thesis are all acknowledged. This is in line with the University of South Africa's (UNISA) Policy on Research Ethics (2007) which stipulates that "researchers may not commit plagiarism, piracy, falsification or the fabrication of results at any stage of the research".

The researcher also exercised due diligence in making sure not to import her own assumptions, thinking and expectations into data analysis. The aim of doing that was to ensure the development of a theoretical framework that lies within the parameters of the collected data.

#### **4.11 Judging the quality and rigour of a grounded theory study**

The success of a research project is judged by its products. Ngulube (2015a:151) argues that rigour is fundamental to any research enterprise because it addresses matters of the quality of the research. Different modes of research require different methods and criteria of evaluation. When judging qualitative research, it is not appropriate to apply criteria ordinarily used to judge quantitative studies. The grounded theory approach accepts the usual scientific rules, but redefines them carefully to fit its specific procedures (Coll & Kalnins 2009). The researcher used Strauss and Corbin's (1998) seven criteria of evaluating a grounded theory study.

The basic building blocks of any scientific theory are a set of concepts grounded in the data. As such, the first criterion under which a grounded study is judged is whether concepts were generated or at least used. Using the myriad forms of data collected through the interview, observation and document analysis research techniques, the researcher was able to generate a number of concepts that are tied to the issues of access and use of archives at NAZ.

Criterion two of judging the quality of a grounded theory study states that the concepts generated must be systematically related. To this end, the concepts generated in this study are indeed related as will be demonstrated in the chapters that follow. It is particularly important for grounded theory studies to generate concepts that are systematically related because the key to scientific research is systematic conceptualization through explicit conceptual linkages (Corbin & Strauss 2008; Coll & Kalnins 2009). The linkages of the concepts generated and used in this study are grounded in the data that were collected.

The third criterion under which a grounded theory study is evaluated is whether there are many conceptual linkages, categories well developed and if the categories have conceptual density. In

addition to systematically generating concepts that are grounded in data, the current study managed to meet the third criterion by engaging in rigorous, constant and simultaneous data collection, comparison and analysis until a point of data saturation was reached. This enabled the researcher to identify categories that are theoretically dense. The researcher was also enabled to bring related categories and sub categories together. It was imperative for the researcher to exercise due diligence in bringing related categories together because it has been attested that linkages give a theory explanatory power (Strauss & Corbin 1998). Failure to show linkages between and among categories renders the theory developed weak and unsatisfactory.

The fourth criterion stipulates that a grounded theory study must show evidence of much variation built into the theory. In efforts to meet this criterion, the current research was not dogmatic in its approach towards access and use of the archives at NAZ. Several factors that directly and indirectly affect access and use of the archives at NAZ were interrogated. All the factors included were analysed with specificity in terms of their relationship and influence in accessing and using the archives.

Criterion five states that a good quality grounded study should be able to build into its explanation the broader conditions that affect the phenomenon under study. In that respect, the researcher was careful not to restrict the study to those issues that are relatively obvious and immediately linked to the issues of access and archives. Several aspects with even the smallest possibility of affecting access and use of the archives were examined. This was meant to give the study a strong empirical grounding.

Criterion six speaks to the need by a grounded researcher to follow the process. The criterion emphasises the need by a researcher to identify and specify change in the form of process and to



clearly link any change(s) to the conditions that gave rise to it. With reference to criterion six, the current study did not experience any changes as the focus solely remained on access and use of the archives. Several dimensions and concepts were emerging as the data were collected, analysed and compared but these dimensions did not result in change of focus or direction of the study as the emerging dimensions were linked to the research problem and question.

The seventh criterion stipulates that the theoretical findings of a good grounded theory study should be significant to a relatively larger extent. The significance of theoretical findings is usually judged by its ability to offer explanations for a range of phenomena and to stimulate further research. In that respect, the researcher employed creative thinking and exhibited analytic ability as well as theoretical sensitivity and subtlety that led into plausible explanations on issues surrounding access to and use of the archives. These explanations will be communicated in the sixth chapter of this thesis where a discourse and interpretation of the research findings is offered. The explanations supplied in the fifth chapter show that the theory developed in this study fits with reality and is useful in both practical and theoretical terms. Paying attention to criterion seven of evaluating a grounded theory study, the researcher also identified the possible areas for further research and these are communicated in the last chapter of this thesis.

#### **4.12 Evaluation of research methods**

All research methods are prone to some challenges and imperfections (Ngulube 2005; Leedy & Ormord 2010). Evaluation of the research methodology serves to explicate the errors, biases and difficulties that would have affected the gathering of data as well as its analysis (Ngulube 2005). Evaluating research methodology therefore entails questioning the appropriateness and adequacy of the methodology used to conduct a study against the available options as well as highlighting the limitations of the methodology used (Ngulube 2015b). Reflecting on the research methodology

used is essential in that it enlightens the reader(s) as to what information was needed and how it was collected and analysed; including the advantages and pitfalls of using the research procedures (Ngulube 2005). Failure by a researcher to communicate errors and difficulties encountered during the research process constitutes a serious defect in the data and may create false impressions about the data. In that regard, it becomes vital to evaluate the procedures that were followed in collecting and analysing the data. The study employed a methodological triangulation of qualitative research techniques, namely interviews, content analysis and observations. The approach was very helpful in creating a dense theoretical base as data from the three techniques were complementing and supplementing each other, thereby allowing verification, clarity and elaboration of the issues that were under investigation.

The use of the observation technique in which photographs had to be taken was, however, not an easy process. Owing to some security reasons, the researcher's request to inspect the physical facilities and taking photographs was referred to the Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National Culture and Heritage for approval. Given the bureaucratic nature that characterises most governments, it took three solid months for the authority to be granted. This slowed down the data collection process on particular issues to do with the physical access that needed observations through a physical inspection of the NAZ environment. Some interviews also had to wait as some questions were to emanate from the observations. Pertaining to interviews, the researcher is glad to communicate that the process was relatively smooth as the identified interviewees were willing to participate in the study. The researcher believes that this was due to the good rapport that she managed to establish during her long engagement with the institution.

However, there were also challenges in accessing some of the documents needed for content analysis. In pursuit of gaining a better appreciation of the trends and patterns of NAZ's operations

over the years and how these relate to the issues of access to and use of archives, the researcher deemed it prudent to consult the director's annual reports from the past twenty years (1996-2015). This was meant to help the researcher identify perennial challenges about access to and use of the archives in the custody of NAZ. Some of the reports could not be located, hence creating gaps in the data. The researcher made efforts to find the missing reports by asking for them from NAZ's provincial records centres and a few copies were made available.

Overall, the entire data collection and analysis process was highly taxing! Owing to the nature of a grounded theory study that calls for data collection to proceed with data analysis until a point of data saturation is reached, the researcher recorded a total of twelve visits to the research site. These visits were spread over three years (2014-2016) with each visit recording an average of five days. Travelling, subsistence and accommodation were a burden for the researcher. There were instances where the researcher was unable to travel to the research site and she would resort to telephone and Skype interviews. While the required information was obtained through the telephone interviews, the researcher is of the view that face-to-face interviews are richer as they also offer body language communication. In addition, the duration of telephone interviews was restricted to the available airtime, hence denying the researcher the time to probe deep into issues. Similar challenges were faced with Skype interviews as these were subject to a good network performance on both ends of the communication (a condition that was rare).

#### **4.13 Summary**

This chapter discussed the methodological issues that were involved in developing the framework for access and use of archives. The chapter began by communicating the research design, thus the logical structure that was followed in doing this research. The chapter then proceeded to communicate and justify the ontology, paradigm, methodology and research approach adopted in

carrying out this study. Overall, the logical structure that was followed in conducting the current research is distinct from the many social science studies in that the current study sought not to test existing theories but to develop a framework that is grounded in empirical field evidence. The chapter also indicated that the current study falls into the basic category of research with an explorative research purpose that made use of the longitudinal time dimension. The chapter communicated and argued for the reasons why interviews, observations and content analysis emerged the appropriate data collection methods in this study. A discourse on research population and sampling was also offered. The issues of reliability, validity and objectivity are critical to the acceptance of scientific research. As such, the chapter explained how these issues are dealt with in the context of grounded theory studies, emphasising the point that it is not appropriate to judge interpretive qualitative research using the criteria ordinarily used to judge positivistic quantitative research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

*A researcher may fail to interpret research data or to draw conclusions and make recommendations if s/he does not understand how to present and analyse data (Ngulube 2005:138)*

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents and analyses the data that was obtained to provide the building blocks for the framework for access to and use of archives. As mentioned in the previous chapter under section 4.6.4 on confirmability, it is crucial for a grounded theory researcher to demonstrate beyond doubt that the findings of a study have not been influenced by the researcher. This implies that the confirmability of a grounded theory research relies exclusively on the collected data. In that respect, the researcher began by supplying the raw data that were collected during the research process, and later provided the analysis and interpretation of the data. Lawrence and Tar (2013) refer to the provision of raw data for the readers' consumption as a pre-analytic step which is essential in the successful generation of a model or theoretical framework.

#### **5.2 Response rate and participants' profile**

Many social science researchers are concerned with the need for their findings to be generalizable to a wider population. They often find themselves battling to justify the applicability of their findings to other comparable contexts. As such the current researcher was compelled to address the issues of response. While there is no consensus regarding what should be considered an adequate percentage of return (Girden 2001), most scholars are of the view that the higher the

response rate, the more representative the sample (Babbie & Mouton 2001; Tripathi 2003; Kothari 2004). As underscored in preceding chapters, the current study does not, however, subscribe to the notion of generalizability as it focused more on transferability. (See section 4.7.2 for the detailed discussion).

The respondents and the sample size for the current research were not predetermined, but rather built as the research was progressing. There is therefore no response rate to talk about. The number of respondents was determined by the range of meanings that were being obtained and not a sample that is representative as is the case in quantitative research. Owing to the nature and dictates of a grounded theory research, the current researcher was not worried about the number of respondents but rather the coverage of the concepts relevant to developing an acceptable framework for access and use of public archives (Refer to section 4.5).

At the point of reaching data saturation, the researcher had obtained responses from the research participants whose profiles are depicted in Table 7 presented in the previous chapter under section 4.5. The table depicts a relatively smaller study population. To that effect, the current researcher wishes to emphasise the point that her study was purely interpretive and therefore did not set out to test a hypothesis or to generalize the results but to explore the meanings placed on the issue(s) under investigation. As such, a small number of participants was appropriate because the purpose of the study was not to generalize.

### **5.3 Presentation of findings**

More often than not, qualitative researchers have been asked the question: how do we know that you really know what you are claiming to know? The question is unmistakably meant to query the rigor and genuineness of qualitative work. To address such concerns, the current researcher

used both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order analysis as they are spelt out in Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2012). For 1<sup>st</sup> order analysis, the researcher made use of the respondents' centric terms as they were obtained during data collection. For 2<sup>nd</sup> order analysis, the current researcher used her centric concepts, themes and dimensions derived from the research question and problem. Reporting both the voices of the respondents and the researcher allows for a qualitatively rigorous demonstration of the relationship between the data and the concepts.

The methods of data presentation employed in this study include prose, figures and tables. Qualitative data particularly from the interviews are presented in prose form; photographs are presented in figures while statistical data are presented both in tables and figures. The presentation structure of the findings was guided by the thematic issues that stemmed from the research objectives that are communicated in Chapter One. The aim of the research was to come up with a framework for access to and use of the documentary heritage at NAZ with the view of improving the visibility and public image of the institution, thereby increasing the access and use level of the archival material in the custody of NAZ. The specific objectives were therefore to:

1. Examine the influence of legal instruments on access to and use of the public archives in Zimbabwe
2. Ascertain the use of public programming strategies by NAZ in promoting access and use of the archives at NAZ
3. Establish the use of print media and Web 2.0 technologies to increase the visibility of NAZ
4. Ascertain the public perception of NAZ
5. Evaluate the reference services on offer at NAZ
6. Examine the barriers to physical access at NAZ

#### 5.4 Access policies, guides and legal instruments

The first objective of this study sought to examine the influence that legal instruments have on access to and use of public archives in Zimbabwe. The main research question in light of this objective sought to establish how archival legislation, rules and policies together with other legal instruments promote or restrict access to and use of public archival material. The chief informants on this aspect were mainly NAZ practitioners who through interviews responded to questions on the existence of rules and policies at NAZ that may be restricting, compromising or promoting access and use of archives by members of the public.

The researcher also consulted various pieces of legal instruments to ascertain clauses that either promote or restrict the accessibility to and use of public archival material. In pursuance of the first objective, the initial question that was posed to one of the senior archivists pertained to the existence and availability of a written access policy that guides NAZ personnel in providing access to archival materials. The following response was obtained:

*“An access policy used to be there back in the days but it can no longer be found. No-one knows where the general copy of access copy is located”.*

The interviewee however further indicated that:

*“even if the access policy may not be there in black and white, archivists at NAZ are well conversant and experienced with what is required of them to do when serving researchers. Providing access to researchers has since become a deeply rooted culture in the archivists of NAZ, the access procedures are at our fingertips as experienced archivists who have long served the institution”.*



When asked how new incumbents will get to know of what procedures to follow when providing access to the users, the interviewed archivist responded that:

*“the new incumbents are inducted and taken through the procedures until they also become acquainted with the procedures”.*

The interviewee further indicated that:

*“an access policy can be indirectly argued to be in existence for the reason that each section at NAZ has written guidelines which they are supposed to follow. The sections include the Audio-Visual Unit, the Public Archives and Research Section and the Illustrations Section. These guidelines can be brought together to produce a consolidated access policy for NAZ”.*

In further pursuance of the research questions in relation to the first objective, the researcher sought to establish if NAZ archivists had a written guide that helps them to decide on whether access to the requested material should be granted or denied. A senior archivist from the Public Archives and Research section who responded to this matter indicated that:

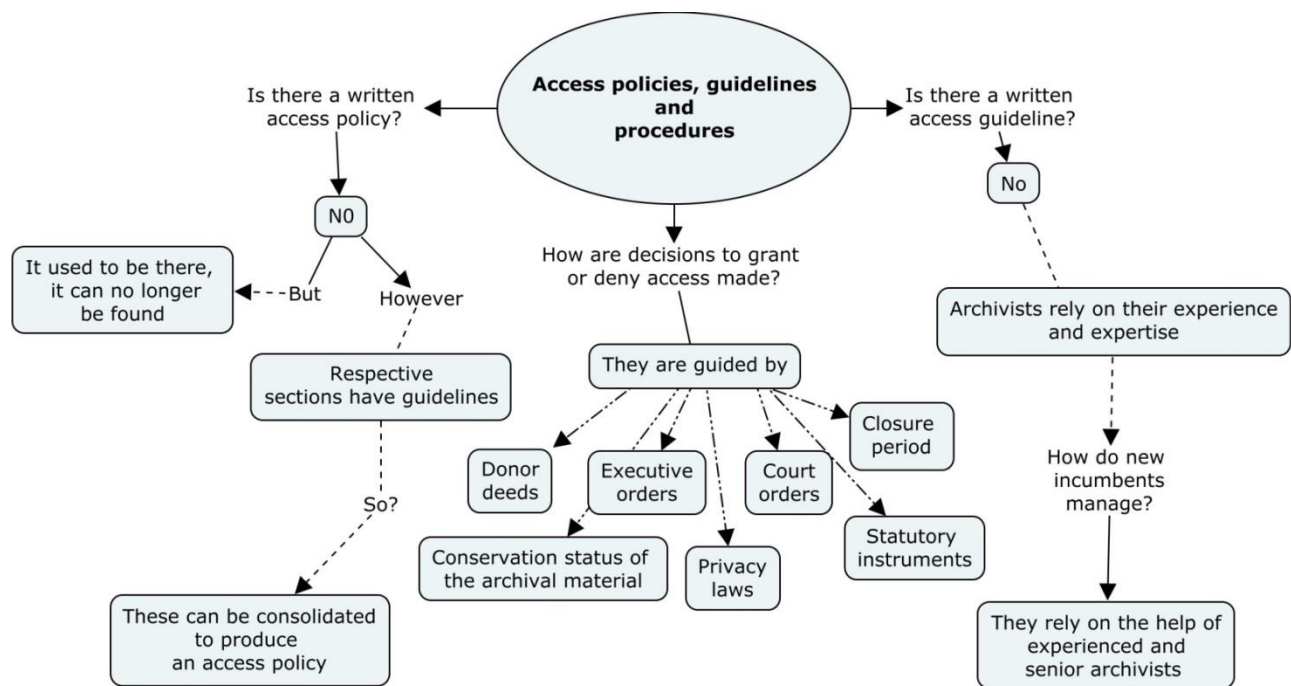
*“There isn’t a consolidated document or guideline. We are guided by statutory instruments, donor deeds, executive orders, court orders, legislation and right of privacy laws”.*

The interviewee also indicated that:

*“records whose closure period have not yet elapsed cannot be made available to researchers” and “the preservation status of a material can also contribute to a decision on whether access to the requested material can be granted or denied. In cases where the*

*requested material is in a bad conservation status, access to such materials may be denied until the appropriate conservation procedures have been performed”.*

In line with the first objective that sought to examine the influence of legal instruments, rules and policies on access to and use of public archives, the researcher was prompted to investigate whether NAZ is in custody of restricted materials that cannot be accessed by members of the public. A solid ‘yes’ was obtained to this enquiry. The archivists who were interviewed on this matter indicated that there are plenty of materials whose closure periods have not yet elapsed, thus they cannot be made available to researchers. Although the materials were not quantified, it was also reported that there are some records that cannot be made available because of executive orders, certain statutes, donor deed restrictions and privacy laws amongst other legislations. Figure 12 illustrates the results of the study that were obtained pertaining to access to policies, guidelines and procedures.



**Figure 12: Access policies, guidelines and procedures**

In respect of the response(s) depicted in Figure 12 and in pursuance of the first objective of the study, the researcher examined the various laws that have implications for access to and use of public information. Table 9 provides a list of the pieces of legislation that were examined in this study. The specific clauses that have a bearing on access to and use of public information are captured in the second column of the table.

**Table 9: Legal instruments with implications for access to and use of public information in Zimbabwe**

Instrument title	Clauses with a bearing on access to and use of public information
Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act of 2013.	<p><b>Chapter 4 Part 2:</b> Every citizen or permanent resident has a right of access to any information held by the State or by any agency of government where the information is required in the interests of public accountability.</p> <p>Every person has a right of access to any information held by any person in so far as the information is required for the protection of a right.</p> <p><b>Chapter 5 Part 2:</b> The commission should ensure fair access by the public to information</p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Part 1:</b> The State must, through legislation or other measures, ensure that- political parties and candidates have reasonable access to all material and information to enable them to participate effectively; -political parties and candidates have fair and equal access to electronic and print media, both private and public;</p>
National Archives of Zimbabwe Acts 8/1986, 22/2001.	<p>The Act serves to provide for the storage and preservation of public archives and public records</p> <p><b>Section 9:</b> <b>Inspection of public archives and public records</b> Every person shall be entitled to inspect any public archive— (a) which is in the custody of the National Archives, with the consent of the Director; (b) which is in the custody of any Ministry, with the written consent of the Secretary of the Ministry concerned or any person authorized by him; subject to such terms and conditions as may be imposed by the Director or the Secretary, as the case may be.</p> <p><b>Section 10:</b> <b>Reproduction of public archives and public records</b></p>

	<p>(1) No person shall publish or reproduce the whole or any part of the contents of any public archive or public record—</p> <p>(a) which is in the custody of the National Archives, without the written consent of the Director;</p> <p>(b) which is in the custody of any Ministry, without the written consent of the Secretary of the Ministry concerned.</p> <p><b>Section 13:</b>  <b>Protection and preservation of protected historical records</b></p> <p>(1) No person shall, without the consent of the Minister in writing—</p> <p>(a) destroy, deface, alter, mutilate or in any way damage records.</p> <p>(b) remove a protected historical record out of Zimbabwe.</p>
<p>Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) CHAPTER 10:27 of 2002</p>	<p>The Act serves to provide members of the public with a right of access to records and information held by public bodies;</p> <p><b>PART 1 Section 3</b>  AIPPA prevails over any other law that may be in conflict with it</p> <p><b>PART II Section 5</b>  Every person shall have a right of access to any record, including a record containing personal information that is in the custody or under the control of a public body: Provided that such access shall not extend to excluded information.</p> <p>(3) Nothing contained in this Act shall confer any rights to information or to a record to—(a) a person who is not a citizen of Zimbabwe, or is not regarded as permanently resident in Zimbabwe by virtue of the Immigration Act [<i>Chapter 4:02</i>], or is not the holder of a temporary employment or residence permit or students permit issued in terms of that Act</p> <p><b>PART II Section 7</b>  An applicant shall be required to pay such fee as may be so prescribed for</p> <p>(a) obtaining access to any record; and</p> <p>(b) any service rendered in connection with the provision of access to any record by the public body concerned.</p> <p><b>PART II Section 8</b>  (1) Response to record requests should be in less than thirty days</p> <p><b>PART II Section 9</b>  (1) Where access to a requested record is declined, responsible authorities should inform the record requester of the decision and the reasons for the outcome</p> <p>(4) Access to a record may be refused if such a record will result in the disclosure of personal information pertaining to a third party that is protected from disclosure in terms of Part III; or is not in the public interest.</p> <p><b>PART II Section 10- Access to information</b>  (1) Where an applicant is granted access to a record an opportunity may be given for the record user to reproduce copies, and where the record be reproduced, notes may be taken from such a record</p> <p><b>PART II Section 17</b>  Information whose disclosure would prejudice the law enforcement process in any way may not be made available to members of the public</p>
<p>Official Secrets Acts 16/1970, 27/1975 (s. 8), 22/2001, 5/2002; R.G.N. 1308/1973</p>	<p>The Act prohibits the disclosure of information that compromises particularly the national security Zimbabwe.</p>

Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act [Chapter 26:05] (No. 11 of 2000)	<b>PART III Section 24(1)</b> The copyright in a work shall not be infringed by any fair dealing for the purposes of research <b>Section 26(1)</b> The copyright in a work in the permanent collection of an archive shall not be infringed by an archivist who makes a copy of the work
Data Protection Bill of 2013	Governs the processing of personal information by private and public bodies, to prevent unauthorised and arbitrary use, collection, processing, transmission and storage of data of identifiable persons.  It applies to matters relating to access to information, protection of privacy of information and processing of personal data
African Charter on Human and People’s Rights of 1986	<i>Article 9 Section (1).</i> Every individual shall have the right to receive information.

Having learned that NAZ is in custody of information materials that are restricted for access, the researcher was keen to find out if members of the public are notified in advance of the closed materials. One of the archivists interviewed on this aspect responded that:

*“Notifications as to which materials are closed are given to researchers who would have requested for such material(s). There isn’t a pre-compiled or displayed list that shows researchers the restricted materials”.*

Archivists in the Public Archives and Research Section provided a ‘Yes’ response when they were asked if NAZ has received requests for records that are restricted to members of the public. The researcher probed further to find out if there are any exemptions for closed records that may be regularly requested. The response obtained from one of the senior archivist was that:

*“NAZ doesn’t have the powers to waive any form of restrictions imposed on records. All restrictions just have to be respected, lest we be faced with serious litigation charges that we may not be able to deal with”.*

In relation to the issue of restricted materials, the researcher sought to establish if NAZ practitioners have the privilege to access restricted materials for personal use and an archivist from the audio-visual unit offered the following response:

*“It is against the professional ethics for archivists to abuse their positions as people working with the archives. Access can only be when the archivist is performing their prescribed duties on the restricted materials; otherwise access to all restricted materials for research is closed to everyone including the archivists and even top government officials”.*

Where access to the requested records is denied, the researcher sought to establish if NAZ issues an official statement explaining the decision to the information requester. The interviewee supplied the following response:

*“Yes, but not necessarily a written statement. The methods of communicating the decision vary from one case to another. Onsite researchers are verbally informed when their request has been denied and the reason(s) as to why their request cannot be met are cited. Those who request via the email are notified through the email and those who make enquiries over the telephone are informed through their own method of enquiry”.*

The interviewee also indicated that:

*“even if it is not a policy for NAZ to issue a written official statement explaining the decision to the information requester, such a statement can always be issued if the researcher requests for it”.*

In relation to the issue of barriers to accessing archival material, interviews held with archivists revealed that Zimbabwe has records of enduring value that are scattered around the world which cannot be repatriated because the legislation has allowed other countries to keep Zimbabwe's records. The interviewees indicated that NAZ is not in custody of cabinet records from 1962 to 1979. Other important original papers that were reported missing include those of Welensky, Godfrey Huggins, Ian Smith and the Rhodesia military intelligence records.

### **5.5 Public programming and outreach activities**

Driven by the objective to enhance access to and use of archives, the current research strived to develop a framework for access to and use of archives at NAZ. In this endeavour, the researcher sought to ascertain the use of public programming strategies by NAZ to increase their visibility and the subsequent consumption of their products and services (See objective two in section 1.6). The initial question asked pertaining to the issue of public programming and outreach sought to establish if NAZ conducts outreach programmes and if there is a public relations office, marketing department, team or section. The archivist from the public archives and research section provided the following response:

*“Yes we do outreach activities. However, there is no permanent fixed office, department or team that deals with outreach activities. The office of the editor usually presides over the issues of publicity and the editor works with the IT department”.*

In pursuance of the above response, the researcher sought to establish if NAZ archivists had the knowledge, skills and expertise needed to conduct public programming. The interviewed archivists were boldly confident that they possessed the requisite skills to do public programming. With the

above response, the researcher asked the editor for NAZ if there was a planned schedule for outreach programmes and the following response was obtained:

*“Outreach activities are done as and when the need arises and if the required resources are available. It is crucial to note that NAZ does not do commercial marketing. It usually takes advantage of on-going national events and other festival events to make its existence, programmes and products known to the larger members of the society. Although there are events which NAZ is almost certain to take part in, the overall outreach programmes do not have a specific calendar that has to be followed. Participation is usually by response to national and provincial gatherings happening in the country. The national events which NAZ has consistently participated in are the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF, the Harare Agricultural Show, Sanganai / Hlanganani World Travel and Tourism Africa Fair. Other national events which NAZ has participated in include the Independence Day celebrations, Africa day, Heroes day and Unit day”.*

The editor also cited that:

*“There are once off events which NAZ can take advantage of to enhance their visibility in the society. For-instance, NAZ gained much publicity and fair media coverage in 2015 when the institution was hosting the ESARBICA conference. NAZ managed to have airtime both on local radio stations and national television. The appearance of NAZ on national radio and television for ESARBICA was however primarily to market the conference and not to promote access and use of archives at NAZ. It was all the same good as it helped NAZ to be known to some people who otherwise did not know of the existence of the institution”.*



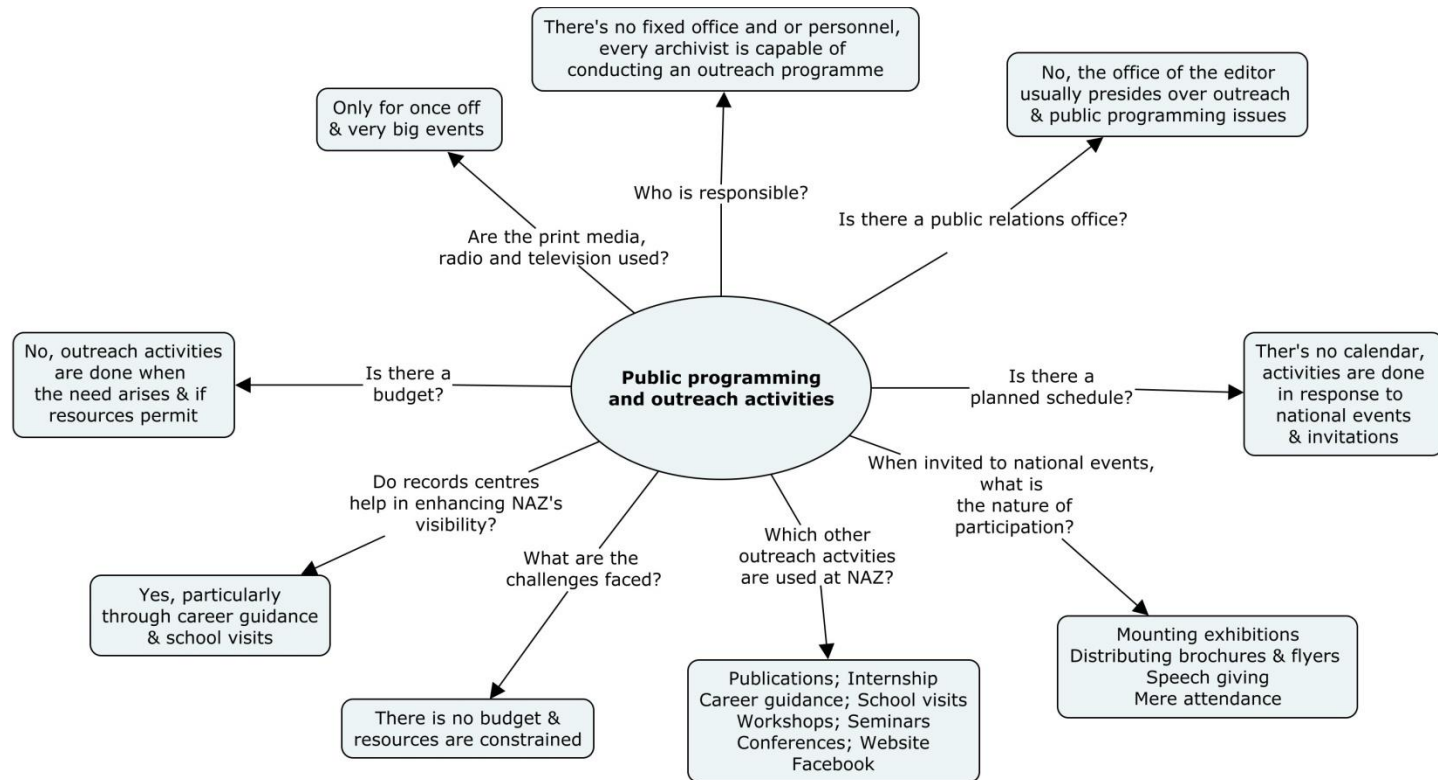
When probed on the nature of participation, the editor revealed that participation during the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF) and the Harare Agricultural Show is by way of mounting exhibitions, distributing brochures and flyers. It was also revealed that for most of the national historic events, participation by NAZ is usually by mere attendance and at times giving a speech that talks to the event. Apart from participating in the national events, the editor also reported that NAZ uses publications, the internship programme and carrier guidance and college and schools visits to enhance its visibility.

Career guidance and school visits were reported to be particularly very active in NAZ's provincial records centres. For instance, it was reported that Harare Records Centre hosted four groups of records management students from Harare Polytechnic and another group from the Zimbabwe army staff college in Bulawayo. Masvingo Records Centre hosted Great Zimbabwe University students from the Department of History and Development Studies. Gweru, Mutare and Chinhoyi Records Centres were reported to be very active in career guidance and counselling programmes in their respective provinces, hence placing NAZ on the map. The editor indicated that of interest to note is that in 2010 the Gweru archivist was invited twice to serve as a resource person on training workshops by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC).

When asked if NAZ faces any challenges in executing outreach programmes, the editor for NAZ supplied the following response:

*“There is no budget for public programming. NAZ usually has to wait for invitations from Ministries holding particular events. During the event(s) NAZ representative(s) will mount exhibitions, give a speech or just attend, depending on how the inviting ministry or department would want them to participate in their event”.*

Figure 13 serves to illustrate the various responses that were obtained in pursuance of the 2<sup>nd</sup> objective that sought to ascertain the use of public programming strategies by NAZ in promoting access to and use of the archives at NAZ.



**Figure 13: Public programming and outreach results**

In line with the second objective that sought to ascertain the use of public programming strategies by NAZ in promoting access to and use of the archives at NAZ, the researcher deemed it necessary to also include the audio visual unit in the investigations. This was in consideration of the fact that audio-visual archives are a unique type of archives that may require a distinct way of making their collection known and used by members of the public. The audio visual archivist who was

interviewed on this matter indicated that the unit successfully launched a mobile archive campaign in 2016 and a single tour to a rural place called Magunje had since been done.

The researcher also found that NAZ uses exhibitions as a way of reaching out to the public. NAZ has a permanent display in the Beit Trust Gallery which is designed to illustrate the country's history from the earliest times by means of objects, pictures, documents and paintings. This is supplemented by a series of special displays that are changed from time to time to mark outstanding occasions and subjects. The interviewees together with the content analysis of the director's annual reports revealed that NAZ employs exhibitions as a means to increase its visibility and the use of its holdings. Table 10 demonstrates the exhibitions that have been mounted by NAZ.

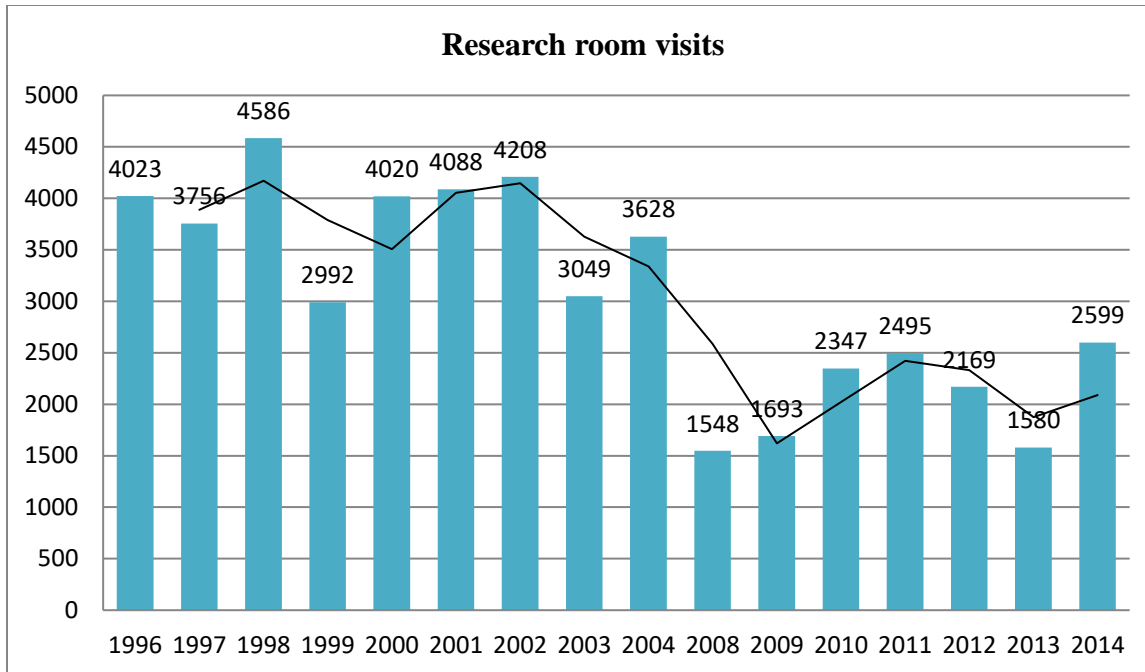
**Table 10: Exhibitions by NAZ**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Exhibition title and comments</b>	
1996	The first Chimurenga exhibition was mounted	
	The exhibition was to commemorate the passing of 100 years after the outbreak of the Chimurenga struggle in 1896	
	The exhibition drew a lot of attention from members of the public (See Figure 16)	
1998	An exhibition was mounted to commemorate the passing of 100 years after the execution of Nehanda and Kaguvi	
	The exhibition was an extension of the 1996 Chimurenga exhibition	
2010	NAZ mounted a display for the soccer legends exhibition	
2010	75@30: Moments from the people's history	Exhibition was in collaboration with the Spanish Embassy and the National Art Gallery
		The photo exhibition was so successful that NAZ decided to take it to ZITF
2013	The audio-visual unit mounted an exhibition at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) intellectual expo. The exhibition was named 'History of the archives'.	

## **5.6 Access and use levels of the documentary heritage at NAZ**

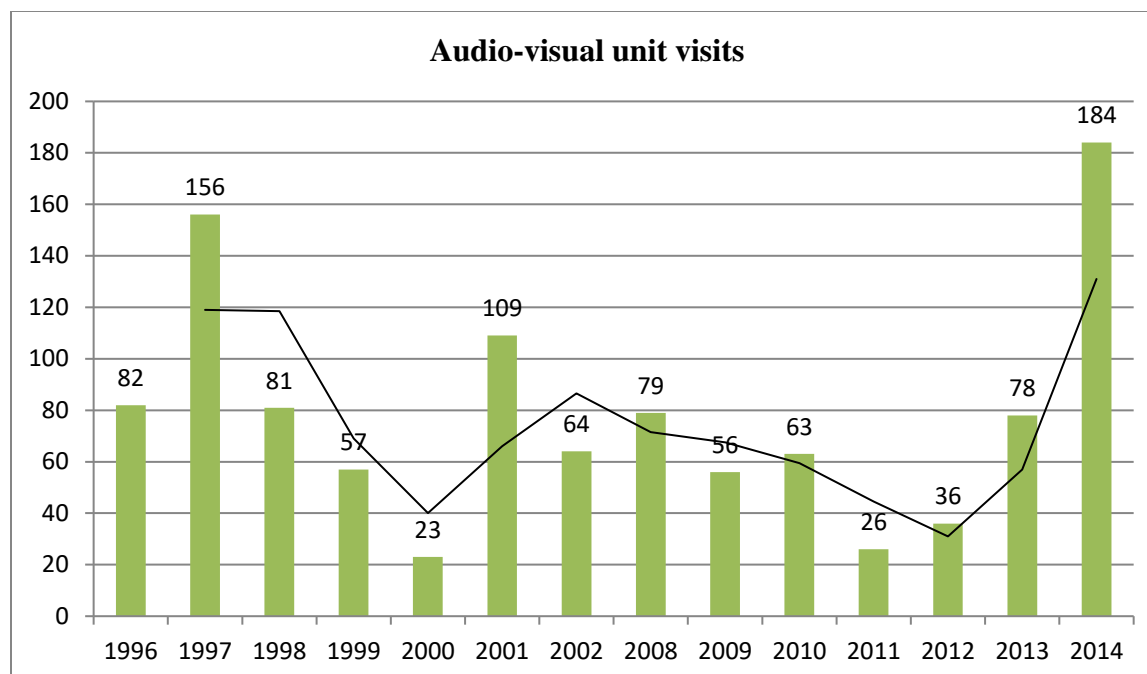
Amongst the goals of the current study was to enhance the visibility of NAZ, thereby promoting the subsequent use of its holdings. As such, the second objective of the study sought to establish the outreach strategies that NAZ has employed to enhance its visibility. The current researcher believes that there is a correlation between an archival institution's visibility and the amount of visitor-ship that is subsequently received by an institution. In that regard, the researcher deemed it essential to trace the visitor-ship statistics of NAZ over the years. Data on this aspect was mainly gathered through the analysis of the director's annual reports.

The content analysis yielded the statistical results of visitor-ship supplied in Figures 14 to 17. The results on visitor-ship statistics range between the years 1996 to 2014. The wide range of coverage was meant to allow the researcher to observe the trends and patterns in visitor-ship at NAZ. Of importance to note is that the reports for the years 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 were not available. The researcher was informed by the NAZ editor that the reports could not be printed because of the harsh economic conditions that hit the country starting from the early 2000s.



**Figure 14: Research room visits**

Figure 14 depicts the visits that were received in the Public Archives and Research section from 1996 to 2014. The statistics for the years 2005, 2006 and 2007 are missing because the reports were not available. The figure shows a downward trend in visits to the research room. The highest number of visits was recorded in 1998 with the reading room receiving 4 586 visits. The year 2008 received the lowest visits of 1 548. The figures depicted in Figure 14 show that the research room at NAZ receives an average of 3 049 visits per year ( $4\ 023 + 3\ 756 + 4\ 586 + 2\ 992 + 4\ 020 + 4\ 088 + 4\ 208 + 3\ 049 + 3\ 628 + 1\ 548 + 1\ 693 + 2\ 347 + 2\ 495 + 2\ 169 + 1\ 580 + 2\ 599 = 48\ 781/16 = 3\ 049$ ).



**Figure 15: Audio-visual unit visits**

Figure 15 depicts the number of visits that were recorded in the audio-visual unit from 1996 to 2014. The 2003 and 2004 reports were available but nothing was reported regarding visits to the audio-visual unit. As indicated in earlier sections, the reports for 2005, 2006 and 2007 were neither compiled nor printed. Figure 15 shows that the highest number of visits to the audio-visual unit was 184 and this was recorded in the year 2014. The year 2000 received the lowest visits of 23. The figures depicted in Figure 15 show that the audio-visual unit at NAZ receives an average of 78 visits per year ( $82 + 156 + 81 + 57 + 23 + 109 + 64 + 79 + 56 + 63 + 26 + 36 + 78 + 184 = 1094 / 14 = 78$ ).

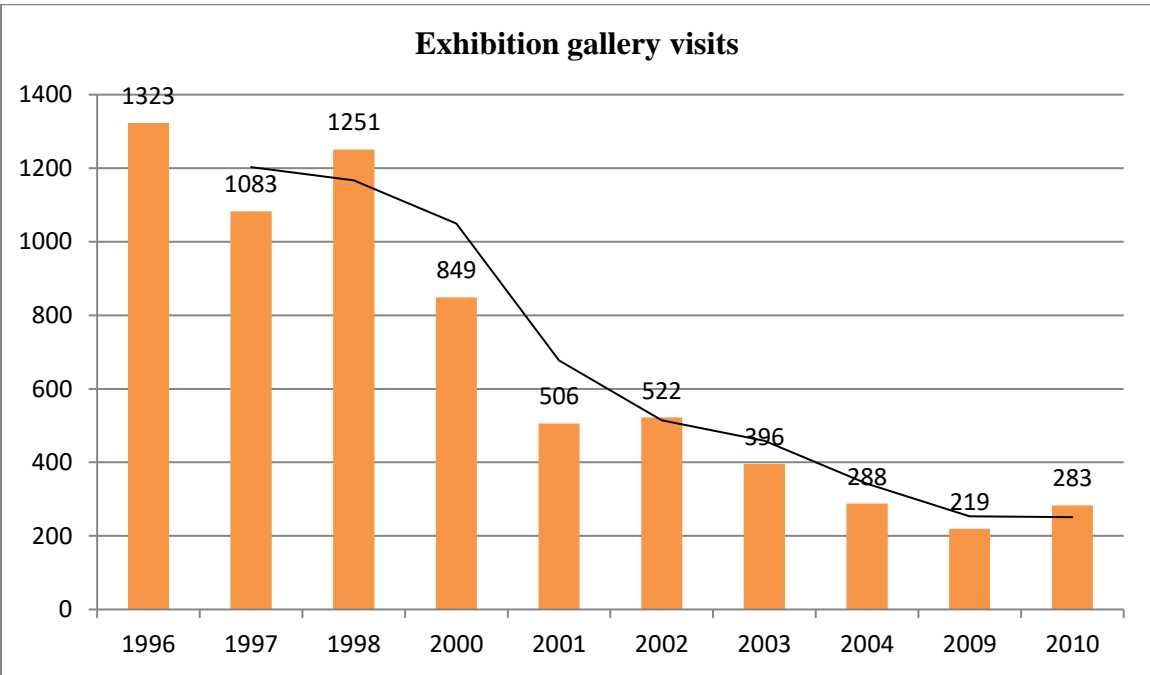
The statistics demonstrated in Figure 15 on visits to the audio-visual unit prompted the researcher to launch enquiries surrounding access to and use of public archival material held in the audio-visual unit. The researcher paid a physical visit to the audio-visual unit and found that the unit is in custody of audio-tapes, cassettes, audio-tape reels, gramophone, VHS, u-matic, films, DVDs

and CDs. The two interviewees from the audio-visual unit informed the study that all materials in the custody of the unit are open for viewing to the public. It was reported, however, that some materials cannot be viewed because of broken down equipment. In relation to that, the respondents indicated that there are a few audio-visual materials that have not been processed because of broken equipment. As a result, the unprocessed material cannot be viewed. The method of processing audio-visual archives, as explained by one of the interviewees, involves watching the whole film to create metadata and that requires playing back equipment which was reported to be down most of the time. Considering that the functionality of the equipment influences the accessibility of the audio-visual materials and the subsequent number of visits to the unit, the researcher thought it prudent to trace the equipment breakdown history in the audio-visual unit. The data supplied in Table 11 was obtained through a content analysis of the director's annual reports.

**Table 11: Equipment breakdown history in the audio-visual unit (2009-2014)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Audio-visual archives equipment status</b>
2009	Cold room 1 and 2 which broke down in 2006 were still down.
	Telecine 16mm projector and the 16mm editing table which broke down in 2004 and 2006 respectively were still not repaired. This meant that 16mm films which account for the bulk of the collection could not be viewed.
	The ultrasonic cleaning machine used for cleaning the 16mm and 25mm films which has not been working for a number of years had not yet been repaired by the end of 2009.
	Revox deck tape recorder, revox speakers and slides were not working.
2010	The telecine equipment was repaired in the second quarter of the year and went down in the final quarter of the year together with the 35mm projector.
	The 16mm projector and television went down in the third quarter of the year.
	The ultrasonic machine needed to clean the films of the mould that was posing a serious threat to the film collection could not be repaired.
	The unit acquired a DVD recorder to transfer film and video format to digital formats but could however not be used as the complementary machine to be used with it had broken down.

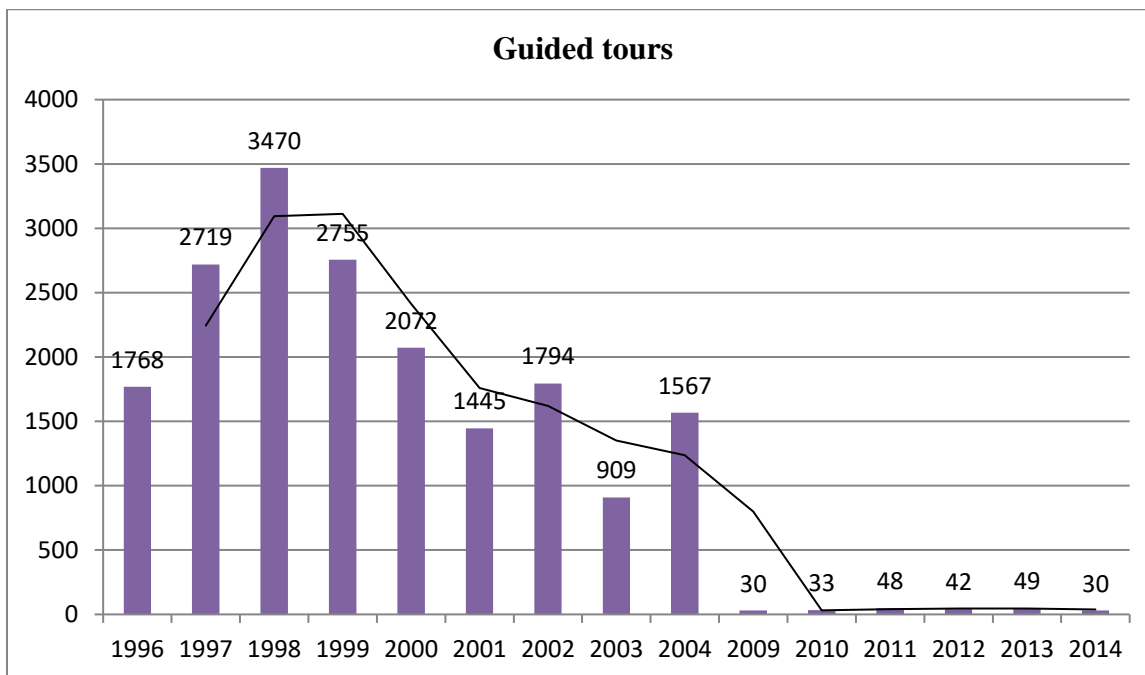
2011	The telecine kit (2 VCRs, Projectors (16mm & 25mm), editing table, only television set and VCR) which went down towards the end of 2010 were not working in the first half of the year but were repaired in the third quarter of 2011.
	A new computer projector was acquired in the third quarter of 2011.
2012	Cold rooms 1, 2 and 3 broke down.
	123 items tested positive for vinegar syndrome.
	104 films were cleaned with isopropyl alcohol in efforts to curb rust, moulds and other damaging agents.
2013	All cold rooms were not functioning, hence exposing more than 2700 national films to high risk of deterioration.
	The unit doubled the rate of film collection in attempts to curb the problem of rust and moulds.
	140 films were cleaned with isopropyl alcohol and re-packaged in plastic cans.
2014	Equipment reported down in the previous year was still not functioning except for the cold rooms that were repaired.
	The cold rooms were refurbished using the USD10 000.00 grant from the culture fund.



**Figure 16: Exhibition gallery visits**

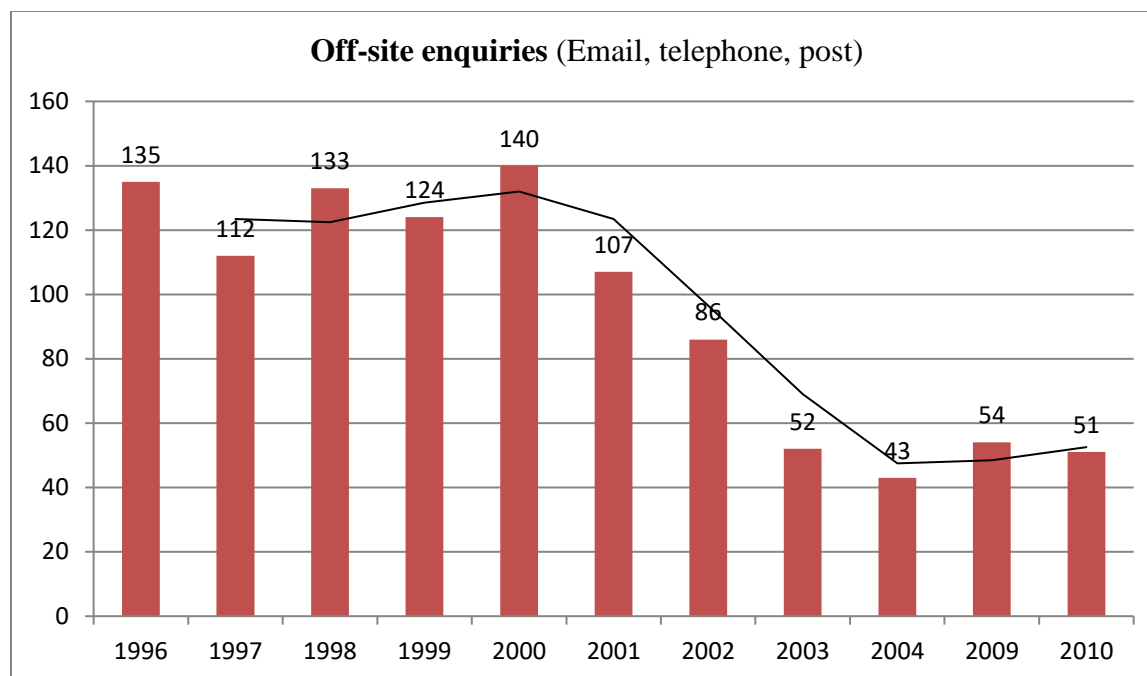


Figure 16 depicts the visitor-ship statistics that were received in the Exhibitions and Beit Trust Gallery from 1996 to 2010. The statistics from 2010 to date were not recorded. The exhibition gallery has a permanent display that shows Zimbabwe’s history from the earliest times. The displays are in the form of objects, illustrations, documents and paintings. A series of temporary exhibitions are mounted from time to time to mark outstanding occasions and subjects. As depicted in Figure 16, visitor-ship to the exhibition gallery has been drastically dwindling.



**Figure 17: Guided tours**

In service to members of the public, NAZ also receives group visits from both junior and senior school children. The statistics depicted in Figure 17 indicate a severe decrease in the number of guided tours with the lowest number of 30 being recorded in 2009 and 2014. A quick look at Figure 17 shows that guided tours are no longer popular at NAZ.



**Figure 18: Off-site enquiries**

Apart from physical visits to NAZ, the institution also has a provision for off-site enquiries. Figure 18 shows the amount of off-site enquiries received at NAZ from 1996 to 2010. The statistics from 2011 onwards were not recorded. The available statistics show that NAZ used to receive an average of 94 off-site enquiries per year ( $135 + 112 + 133 + 124 + 140 + 107 + 86 + 52 + 43 + 54 + 51 = 1\ 037/11 = 94$ ).

### **5.7 The use of print media and digital technologies in promoting access and use of archives**

The use of print media and digital technologies presents unique opportunities for practitioners in archival institutions to make visible their existence, products and services. In light of this notion, the researcher sought to establish the use of print media and Web 2.0 technologies in promoting access to and use of the archives at NAZ. When asked whether NAZ uses news releases as an outreach strategy, the following response was offered:

*“News releases, radio and television are normally used when NAZ is marketing once off and bigger events such as the conference it held in 2015 (ESARBICA). Newspaper releases, radio and television airtime require money and NAZ does not do commercial marketing”.*

The NAZ editor even questioned the idea of marketing national archives indicating that:

*“there is no need to market archives as archives by their sheer importance market themselves. Those who are in need and hungry for information know that NAZ is the only authentic and rich information resource from where their information needs can be met”.*

Regarding the issue of internet presence, the researcher found that NAZ has a satisfactorily functioning website. The researcher managed to access the NAZ Web page and found that it offers quick links to the technical services of NAZ, the research section, library, records service, publications, and the Ministry of Justice and Registrar general. The Website offers people the opportunity to receive newsletters and emails with NAZ’s latest offerings and news. All that people have to do is to complete an online form and they will start receiving the updates. Conventionally available are NAZ’s contact details (Physical address, email address and telephone numbers).

The Website also offers links to the online databases, quick reference services and allows researchers to prepare for their physical visits to NAZ. The Website has important information for intending visitors which they should take note of prior to visiting NAZ. The information offered is particularly for foreign researchers and the general rules and regulations that govern access and use archival materials at NAZ. Furthermore, the Website allows people to make online control desk enquiries and bookings to visit the archives.

Also available on NAZ's Website home page is a visitors' counter that shows the number of people who would have consulted their site the previous day, the current day, week, month and all the days. The demonstration offered in Figure 19 is a caption of NAZ's visitors' counter as at 12 January 2017:

Today	93
Yesterday	71
This Week	389
This Month	1 386
All Days	33 507

**Figure 19: Visitors' counter as at 12 January 2017 (18:38)**

NAZ Website also offers comprehensive information about the history of the institution, its vision, mission and values.

Regarding the use of the social media space to communicate with members of the public, interviewees from the automation section indicated that NAZ has a Facebook page and a Skype account. The respondent was quick to note that very few people use Skype. As a result NAZ relies on Facebook to engage with members of the public. The current researcher made an interactive visit to the site and observed a significant number of likes and followers on the Facebook page. As at 12 April 2017 NAZ Facebook page had 660 likes and followers.

## **5.8 The public perception**

The way people perceive an archival institution influences their decision to visit the archives. As such the current research thought it essential to gather data pertaining to the people's knowledge and perceptions towards NAZ (see objective four). A total of 25 mini-intercept interviews were held with members of the public from various parts of Zimbabwe who had come to seek services from the registrar general's birth and death certificate offices. Nine out of the 25 interviewees indicated that they had absolutely no idea of the existence of NAZ, three vaguely indicated that NAZ are central government offices and the remaining 13 proved to be at least knowledgeable on the existence of the institution.

The 13 respondents who had displayed knowledge on the existence of NAZ were asked if they knew the institution's functionalities. Three of the 13 alluded to NAZ as a museum, two indicated that NAZ keeps government records that are no longer wanted in their creating offices and the remaining eight generally cited that NAZ keeps records that are eventually used by researchers from various disciplines particularly historians. All the 13 respondents who had initially displayed some knowledge on the existence of NAZ were asked if they had been to NAZ and only four indicated a 'yes' to this question. The four interviewees were asked how often they visited NAZ. Three responded that they had been to NAZ only once during a school trip while the remaining respondent indicated that he had been to NAZ a number of times. The single respondent who indicated several visits to NAZ explained that he used to visit the place quite often when he was still a student at the University of Zimbabwe in the late 1990s. Further interaction with the respondent yielded the following response:

*“The truth is that NAZ is only known and used by college students and a few individuals who are into research otherwise the generality of the people are not even aware of the existence of such institutions”.*

## **5.9 Archival reference services and user studies**

The current study sought to develop a framework for access to and use of archives with the goal of increasing the utilisation of the archival holdings. As such, it became essential for the researcher not to think only of NAZ reaching out to a new clientele but also to consider the need to retain existing users. The researcher found that NAZ has finding aids to help researchers identify the materials they need. The finding aids at NAZ include catalogues, indexes and inventories. Using the experiential method of research and the responses obtained from the researchers, the finding aids at NAZ were found to be useful in helping researchers to identify the materials needed to address their research inquiries. Intercept interviews held with the archives users who were found at NAZ during the course of the research, however, revealed a general dissatisfaction over the finding aids. The common disgruntlement was that the finding aids are such that the intervention of an archivist is always needed. The archives users lamented the inadequacy of a contextual introduction to the records to facilitate self-directed research.

When asked if the findings aids are automated, the archivist who was at the control desk responded that all the index cards in the public archives and research section are computerised and are all available online. An interviewee from the IT department informed the researcher that the online database was generated using a 100% open source software called KOHA. The database offers finding aids from the public archives and research section, the audio-visual unit and the library. The researcher made a follow up to the online database and made the following observations:

The online finding aids are offered in the following major categories:

- ✓ Death notices
- ✓ Death register
- ✓ Electronic database
- ✓ Photo collection
- ✓ Electronic inventory
- ✓ Library collections
- ✓ Fascinating collections
- ✓ Useful links

Under ‘death notices’, an online visitor is enabled to search for their deceased ancestor(s) and the notices available are from 1904 to 1976. The link enables researchers to search the catalogue of genealogical materials made available by FamilySearch. Searches are done by entering the first and last names or a life event. The finding aids site for death notices also has a collection of 328 546 images which are arranged in the alphabetical order of the districts that are found in Zimbabwe. The death registers link offers researchers death indexes arranged in alphabetical order covering from 1892 to 1977.

Regarding the issue of automating finding aids, the respondent from the IT department further noted that all the inventories in the public archives and research section have not yet been computerised. Plans were, however, reported to be in place to have the inventories digitised. In that respect, the interviewee indicated that an archival description software called Iaca ATM was said to have been installed in preparation for the computerisation of the inventories. The respondent also indicated that in the library section the computerisation of the index cards started

in 2010. There is therefore a backlog of index cards from 2009 going backwards. Meanwhile, it was reported that indexing in the library section was now being done electronically. The interviewee indicated that it means that, once the 2009 going backwards index cards have been computerised, the library section can be asserted to have gone completely digital.

In relation to the issue of archival reference services, the researcher sought to establish if NAZ conducts user studies. Interviews were held with five archivists who form part of the team that circulates at the control desk in the research room. When asked if they conduct initial interviews to find out about researchers' specific needs and goals, the response was that they do initial interviews particularly for first time visitors who are not familiar with the intricacies of the research room. The respondents further indicated that they even help new patrons to go through the finding aids, thus conducting searches on their behalf. With this response, the researcher became curious to know if archivists assist researchers to evaluate the information they get and the following response was supplied by one of the archivists:

*“It depends with the research control desk archivist on duty. Some take an interest in the area of research and offer their help. There are times when researchers approach archivists for such assistance”.*

In relation to this matter, the researcher observed a notice displayed at the back of the reading room door indicating that researchers are welcome to approach the chief research officer to discuss their research topics.

In general, the interviewed archivists reported that regular researchers know what they want and how to use the finding aids to identify and request for the material(s) which they need. As such,



neither initial nor exit interviews are done with regular researchers. A notably interesting response was obtained from the audio-visual unit with the respondent indicating that:

*“we do our job very well. If a researcher has anything to share or say, they are free to communicate. we do not do probe into the visitors’ concerns as we are sure that if there is anything more that a visitor wants they can always ask us. We are always available and at the service of our clients”.*

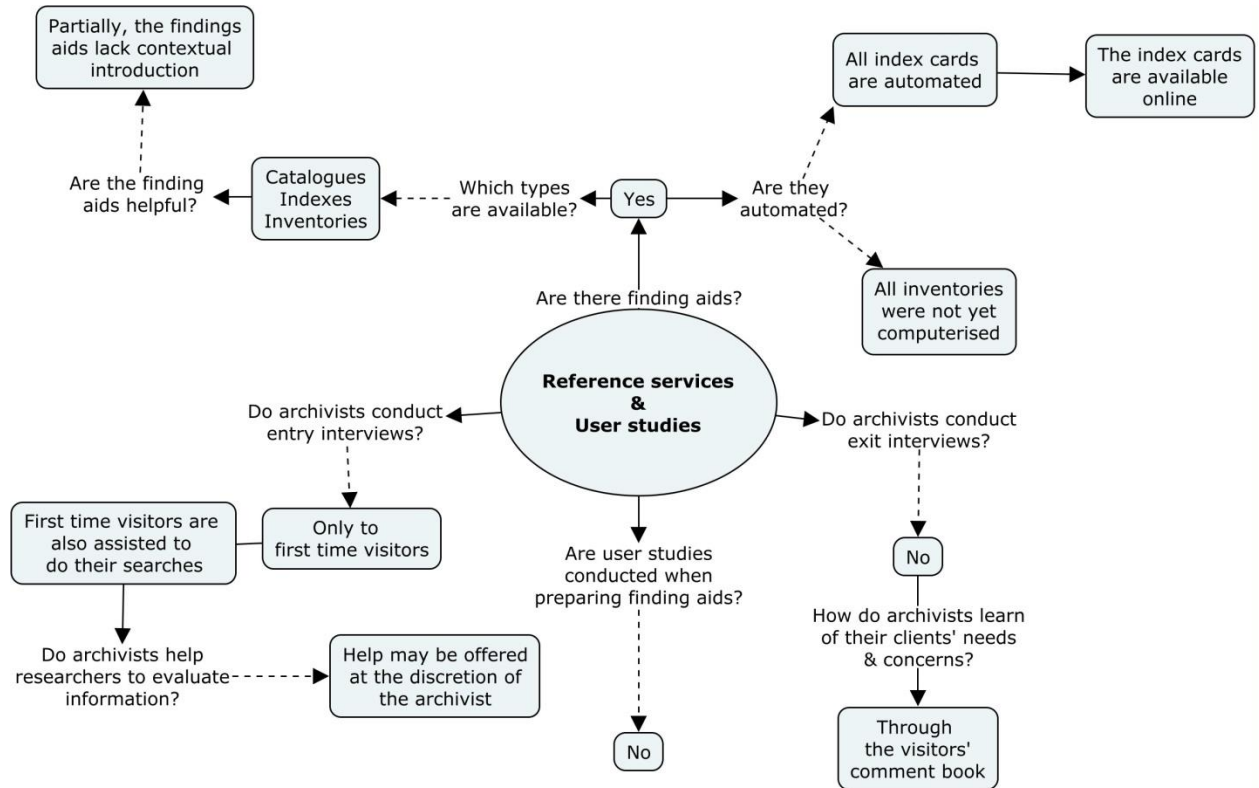
One of the control desk officers was asked if archivists continue to interact with researchers during their research and the following response was given:

*“Here and there, to find out if there is anything else they may need. Otherwise, too much interaction might disturb the researcher(s). The control desk officer is however always available should a researcher need assistance”.*

When asked how they get to understand the needs, expectations and concerns of their users, the archivists reported that they make use of the visitor’s register and the comment book. The researcher did a content analysis of the visitor’s register in the search room and found that the information categories recorded in the register include the name, address, affiliation and the area of research. In pursuance of the need to establish the efforts that are in place at NAZ to understand the type of existing archives users, the researcher was keen to find out if apart from the visitors’ register a record of first time visits was kept. The response obtained from one of the interviewed archivist was that:

*“In a way we do keep a record of first time visitors because only first time visitors complete research enquiry sheets which we will then keep, thus serving a record of a first time visit”.*

Figure 20 depicts the core categories of data that were obtained regarding the fifth objective of the study which sought to evaluate the reference services on offer at NAZ.



**Figure 20: Reference services and user studies results**

### 5.10 Preservation and access

Preservation is done to enable access while access serves to justify the need for preservation. The primary function of an archival institution is therefore to preserve records of enduring value and make them available to the people (see section 3.10). Given this primary importance, the current research deemed it essential to gather relevant information surrounding the issues of preservation versus access to archival materials at NAZ. The study found that NAZ has reading room regulations that are meant to preserve archival materials from deteriorating. In the Public Archives

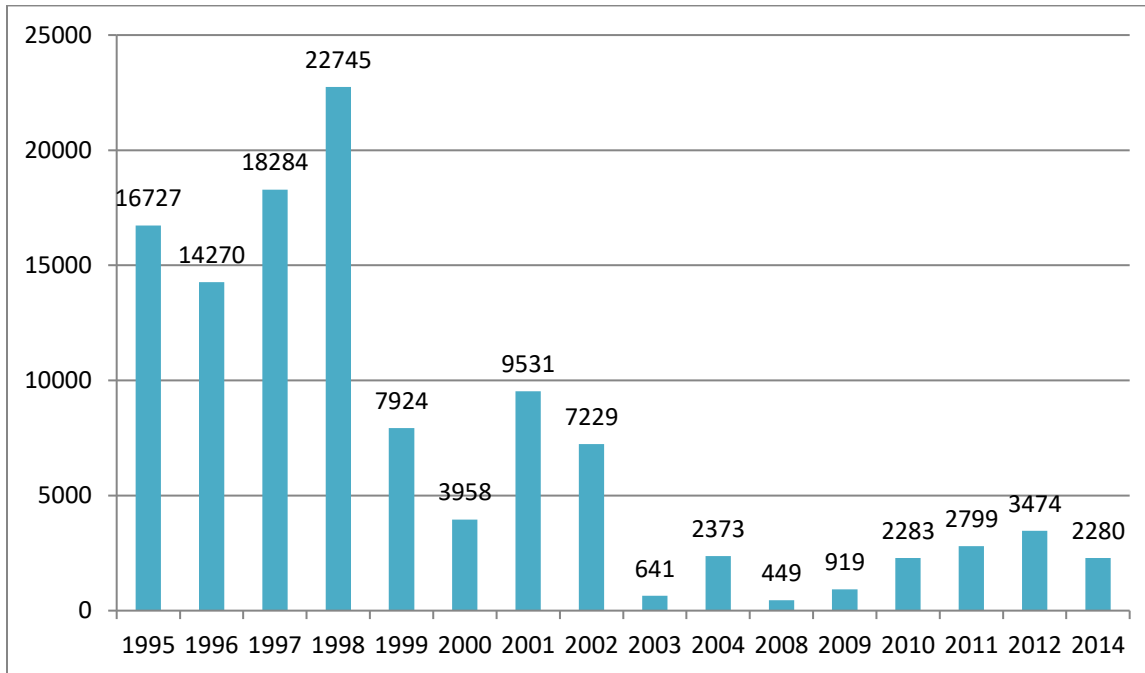
and Research Section, reading room rules are displayed on each researcher's desk and they read as follows:

- i. Ink bottles, food or drink are not allowed in the reading and search rooms*
- ii. Ensure hands are not dirty, greasy or sweaty as they leave marks on the documents*
- iii. Only pencils may be used. The use of ink is strictly prohibited as it puts permanent marks on documents*
- iv. Only four items are allowed to a researcher at a time*
- v. Do not mark or dog ear papers. You may mark the relevant pages by inserting loose slips of paper*
- vi. To photocopy, take the complete item to the reference desk officer who will then direct you to the photocopying office. It normally takes three days before something taken for photocopying is ready*
- vii. Containers such as bags and briefcases may not be taken into the reading room*
- viii. Always return the items to the reference desk officer after using them*

The interviewed control desk officer indicated that they monitor the use of requested records and make sure that the researchers do not take materials out of the reading room.

Archival materials that are not in a good conservation status cannot be made available for use to researchers. It therefore became essential for the current study to gather some relevant information from the conservation unit of NAZ. The unit is responsible for the physical well-being of the archive collections; thus cleaning, mending, binding, de-acidifying and tissing. An analysis of

the amount of work which the conservation unit is doing in order to ensure the accessibility and usability of the archival materials in a good conservation state yielded the statistical results depicted in Figure 21.



**Figure 21: Statistical reflection of the conservation of the archival materials**


In interviews held with the practitioners working in the conservation unit, it was revealed that conservation work used to be a challenge because of the guillotine's regular breakdowns. The machine was reported to have since been repaired with the assistance of the Germany embassy.

### **5.11 Physical access and other restrictions to accessing and using the archives**

The provision of physical access by a national archival institution is essential towards improving access to and use of its archives. In that respect, the sixth objective of the current study sought to examine the barriers to physical access at NAZ. The interviewed archivists informed the researcher that they do not recall receiving any physically challenged visitor at NAZ. The respondents also indicated that there are neither facilities to assist physically challenged visitors nor are there laid

down procedures for responding to disability needs. The interviewees noted that the institution does not have braille and they also cited that no employee is able to properly converse in sign language. When asked if NAZ has ever received visitors who exceeded the carrying capacity of the reading room, the respondents gave a 'no' response. In relation to this question, respondents from the audio-visual unit reported that their section does not have a proper viewing area. The respondents were quick, however, to mention that when large numbers are received they make use of the auditorium which has a capacity to accommodate 400 people.

Using the observation technique, the researcher examined the physical space at NAZ with the intention of finding out if the visitors' (particularly the physically challenged) access to the public premises was appropriate. Attention was paid to the doorways and halls, the level of tables and chairs in the research room, the nature of surfaces, parking spaces, entrances and restrooms. Overall, the researcher found that NAZ does not have the slightest provision of access to the physically challenged. Nowhere in the interior and exterior of public spaces at NAZ is there the

international symbol of accessibility () to identify the facilities, elements and spaces to be used by the physically challenged. There is no wheel chair accommodation in parking facilities, public assembly areas and restrooms. There are no alarm systems that provide visual and audio warnings to the deaf and the visually impaired.

Figures 22, 23 and 24 depict the only three available access routes from the car park to the main building that houses the public archives and the exhibition gallery amongst other offices.



**Figure 22: The closest access route to the main building from the parking area**



**Figure 23: The second closest access route from the parking area to the main archives building**



**Figure 24: The third access route from the parking area to the main archives building**



**Figure 25: Entrance to the main archives building**





**Figure 26: Entrance to the exhibition gallery (left/red arrow) and entrance to the reading room (right/blue arrow)**

The entrance to the reading room depicted in Figure 26 in a blue arrow is small for a wheel chair to pass through. Respondents in the audio-visual unit were pleased to report that, even though they do not have special facilities to cater for the needs of the physically challenged, at least those who are blind can hear and those who are deaf can see their films when they are played.

In relation to the issue of barriers to accessing and using public archival material, one of the interviewed archivists was asked if researchers are allowed to reproduce copyrighted material for the purpose of their studies and the following response was obtained:

*“In the interest to protect intellectual property which is a right to authors, researchers are not allowed to reproduce copy-righted material. There are however measures to ensure that genuine researchers do not suffer while the intellectual property rights of authors are*



*also not violated. As such, the rules for photocopying are that an individual is only allowed to photocopy 25 pages per week. Further restrictions to ensure that a researcher does not eventually reproduce the whole copyrighted material are that a researcher is only allowed to photocopy a third of a document. This implies that a researcher will not be permitted to photocopy the earlier mentioned 25 pages if they happen to exceed a third of a document being photocopied. In further efforts to discourage the violation of copyrights, NAZ has relatively expensive photocopying rates. One USD is charged for 5 copies. This is relatively expensive compared to photocopying and printing commercial rates which charge an average of one USD for 30 copies. For pamphlets, researchers are allowed to photocopy only a tenth of the pamphlet”.*

The other matter that was under the spotlight was the issue of restrictions to accessing the archives which pertains to geographical barriers and access fees. Public access to archival materials is available only at Harare and Bulawayo National Archives. Archival materials relating to the Matabeleland region are available from Bulawayo Archives while materials relating to the rest of the country are available from the Harare Archives. Apart from the geographical barrier, the other restriction to accessing the archives is relates to access and service fees which are charged as follows:

1. To tour the exhibition gallery, a researcher is charged USD2.00
2. The reading room fee is 1USD per day regardless of one’s nationality or citizenship
3. In the audio-visual unit, the fees depicted in Table 12 are charged:

**Table 12: Audio-visual unit service charges**

<b>Viewing fees</b>	
Organisations per hour	USD10.00
Individuals per hour	USD10.00
Bona fide foreign students per hour	USD2.00
Foreign academics per hour	USD5.00
Local students per hour	USD2.00
Local academics per hour	USD3.00
<b>Sound recordings studio time listening</b>	
Locals per hour	USD2.00
Foreigners per hour	USD10.00
<b>Copying</b>	
Films per minute	USD10.00
Sound per minute	USD2.00

Apart from access and other service fees, access to archival materials is restricted to citizens of Zimbabwe over the age of 18 years. As such, researchers are requested to produce a positive identification. This could be a national ID, passport or driver's licence. A copy of the rules for access to and use of national archives material available at the front desk office stipulates that:

*“Access may be refused to students or scholars all primarily wanting to use a similar range of Library materials which their own and other libraries are available for this. Non-citizens are only admitted if they can produce the following:*

- a) *Temporary employment permit*
- b) *Student permit*
- c) *Residence permit*
- d) *Research permit*

*If non-citizens with the above three documents intend to work for projects outside publication they are required to get a research permit from the research council of Zimbabwe. Non-citizens may also be interviewed in order for authorities to determine/ assess on why they require continued access in absence of a research permit. Non-citizens who are visiting Zimbabwe and require temporary access will be granted 3 days only at the discretion of the Director of National Archives”.*

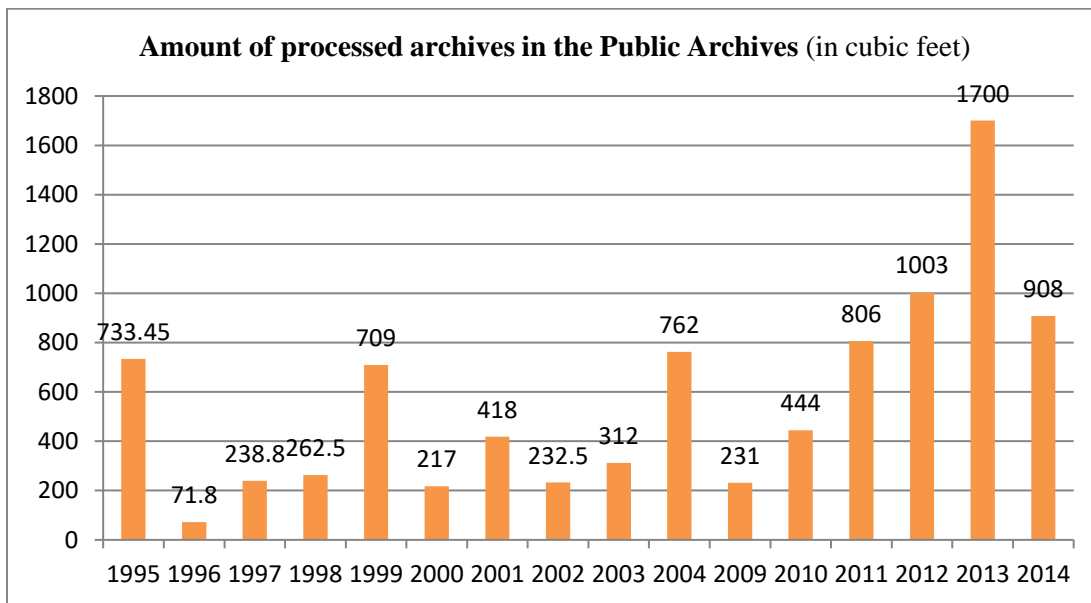
## **5.12 Processing**

As underscored in Chapter Three under section 3.8, processing plays a critical role in the provision of access to and use of the documentary heritage. The sixth objective of this study sought to establish the barriers to accessing the archival material held at NAZ. As such, one of the research sub-questions to this objective sought to establish if NAZ was in custody of unprocessed archival materials. The researcher deemed it essential to investigate the issue of processing as it has a profound bearing on the accessibility and use of archives. Processing in this study was looked at from four dimensions, which are processing of archival materials in the public archives research section, processing of records at the records centre(s), processing of historical manuscripts and processing of oral history interviews.

In the Public Archives Research Section the director’s annual report of 2009 indicated that there were over 17 000 cubic feet of unprocessed records. The 2009 directors’ report further noted that

it will take NAZ a minimum of 48 years to clear the backlog if drastic measures are not put in place. An interview held with the deputy director of the public archives and research section indicated that the situation continued to worsen as there were over 35 000 cubic feet of unprocessed archives by December 2016. Interviews held with archivists revealed that NAZ does not have a list of what has been processed. As such, researchers are not aware of what may be accessible to them.

Driven by this alarming figure, the researcher made a follow up on how much processing has been going on in the public archives and research section. The director’s annual reports were consulted and the statistics demonstrated in Figure 27 were obtained.



**Figure 27: Processing in the public archives and research section**

The interviewees from the public archives and research section revealed that in 2010 a group of students from the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) (Records and Archives Management Department) came to assist with the processing of archives. A total of 205 cubic feet of records were processed during this initiative. In 2011 NUST students came in again to assist

with processing under the practicum arrangements. Similar arrangements were made in 2012 and a total of 234 cubic feet of records were processed.

An interview held with the deputy director of public archives and the research section revealed that the volume of unprocessed archives was going up every year because records from the records centres mature annually and they are transferred to the public archives and research section. Consequently, the public archives and research section has run out of space and has since stopped the records centres from sending in records.

The deputy director of records services indicated that the challenge of space was prevalent in all NAZ records centres. The interviewee further indicated that the situation has forced the records centres to stop accepting records from creating entities as they no longer have the space to accommodate the records. In the words of a respondent at Harare Records Centre:

*“There is massive production from creating departments. Patient case records are amongst the records that have taken too much space because they are all marked preserve. The standing instructions for health records are currently being revised to correct this anomaly. The other challenge is that creating departments don’t have standing instructions so they send everything to NAZ. The old system is that standing instructions are with NAZ”.*

The challenge of space in records centres was overly emphasised. This prompted the researcher to trace the challenge from way back and to dig for more information regarding the issue of storage in records centres. As depicted in Table 13, the challenge of storage space started in the mid-1990s.

**Table 13: Records centre storage space overview in the 1990s**

		Harare	Bulawayo	Mutare	Gweru	Masvingo
1996	Shelving capacity	157080	19899	4992	3942	3974
	Used space	73132	21899	4083	5239	6304
	Transfers to public archives	612	-	-	-	-
	Remaining space	83948	-	909	-	-
1997	Shelving capacity	158400	19899	4992	5130	3974
	Used space	81731	22483	4605	4480	6791
	Transfers to public archives	446	-	-	-	-
	Remaining space	76669	-	-	-	-
1998	Shelving capacity	158400	19899	4992	6450	3974
	Used space	87509	22507	4991	6617	7015
	Transfers to public archives	438	-	-	-	-
	Remaining space	70891	-	-	-	-
1999	Shelving capacity	161306	19899	4992	6450	3974
	Used space	96476	22507	4952	6906	7578
	Transfers to public archives	74	-	-	-	-
	Remaining space	-	-	-	-	-

The findings depicted in Table 13 were compiled from the director's annual reports. Further discussion with the deputy director records services revealed that provincial records centres had run out of storage space by 2013. The current situation as revealed by both the deputy director

records services and the deputy director public archives and research is that records are only transferred to the public archives on request.

Apart from the challenge of shelving space being a hindrance to the processing of records in the public archives and research section, it was also reported that processing was done at a slower pace because of inadequate human capital. The situation compelled NAZ to hire an external contractor in 2004 who managed to process 317 cubic feet of records. The staff shortage continued to be lamented. The directors' annual report of 2013 indicated that instead of a staff complement of 116, NAZ had only 78. The 2014 report indicated that NAZ had 86 employees instead of 119.

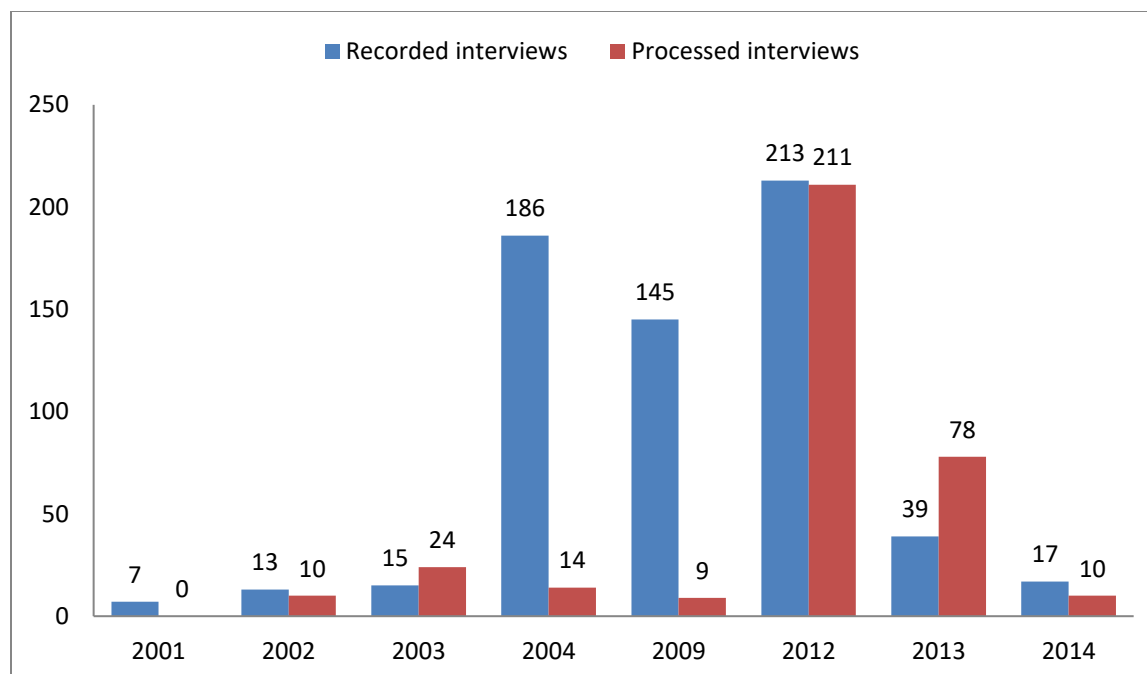
Meanwhile, the records centre staff in Harare were proud to report on a strategy which they came up with in an effort to ensure that researchers' information needs are met. For records that have reached 25 years and above but have not yet been transferred to the public archives because of the storage shortages, the records centre staff indicated that they can make available the master file and the transmittal list(s) to the researcher(s) for them to identify a possible description that may contain the information they need for their research enquiry. This development was reported to have come into effect in 2014 after a certain researcher had written to the Director of NAZ indicating that they knew the Ministry that created the records they wanted to use and they were also aware that the closure period for the records had long passed. Deliberations were done with archivists and records managers at NAZ. A decision was reached to give access to such records.

With regards to the processing of historical manuscripts, one of the interviewed archivists noted that the processing of historical manuscripts was temporarily suspended to concentrate more on public archives where the backlog is still considerable.

The other dimension of processing covered in this research is that of processing interviews recorded by the oral history section. The oral history section has a prime responsibility of collecting and preserving oral interviews from a wide diversity of people within the cross section of the society. The work involves collecting oral tradition and recording undocumented or under-documented history of the country. These items are recorded on tape or camera. The oral history section yields information that is of great interest to the citizenry. It holds the potential to attract new patrons to the archives while retaining the existing researchers. The current study found that the popular topics that are usually consulted by researchers from the oral history interviews include land issues, chieftainship, the liberation war history, women in politics, traditional beliefs, sacred places, labour movements, minority groups and the Rhodesia native bureau interviews.

Similar to the other conventional records held in the public archives and research section, the accessibility and use of the information contained in the interviews relies on their processing. As such, it became essential for the current researcher to investigate the pace at which the interviews were being processed at NAZ. Figure 28 depicts the number of interviews recorded against the number of processed interviews per year.





**Figure 28: Oral history interviews processing**

A huge backlog of unprocessed interviews was reported in 2001. NAZ then made a resolution to temporarily suspend new interviews to allow members of staff to concentrate on processing the existing interviews. The measure was put in place after realising that there was no need to keep interviews without making them available for research. In current interviews that were held with the chief oral historian, it was revealed that the processing of oral history interviews was a hassle because the unit was not given due attention. The respondent from the oral history unit indicated that before 2015 no students on industrial attachment were placed to assist in the unit as other sections were considered to be in more urgent need of additional workforce. Transcribing of interviews was reported to have been temporarily suspended until 2015. The resumption was reported to have been made possible by the new development of placing some students on attachment in the oral history section. The respondent further revealed that the backlog of unprocessed oral history interviews owed its existence to the centralised system that NAZ had on transcribing interviews. It was indicated that only one oral historian was trained to transcribe the

interviews. Moreover, the provincial offices of NAZ did not have the required equipment to process the interviews and the members of staff were not trained to transcribe interviews. The other challenge that was reported to have hampered the progress of processing oral history interviews was that the executive assistants and typists who used to help with some of the work were phased out, hence creating more workload on one person. The respondent notably indicated that people are now contesting and questioning the concept of transcribing since the world is going digital. To this remark, the respondent noted that the oral history section has considered the use of computers but NAZ does not have the capacity and the needed resources.

### **5.13 Summary**

Chapter Five was a presentation of the data that were obtained to facilitate the construction of a framework on access to and use of archives that is grounded in empirical evidence. The chapter offers the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order analysis as a means to prepare for an adequate interpretation of the data. The results communicated in this chapter were presented in prose, figures and tables. The nature of the data largely influenced the manner of presentation. Direct responses from the study informants were indented and written in italics. The data presentation was on thematic issues derived from the research problem and objectives. These included issues relating to the access policies, guides and procedures, archival reference services and user studies. Other salient aspects reported on pertain to the issues of preservation and access, processing of archival materials, the use of print media and digital technologies, public programming and outreach activities, physical access and other restrictions to accessing the archives. The chapter that follows provides a comprehensive discourse of the results and the interpretation thereof.

## CHAPTER SIX

### INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

*A researcher needs to step back and use their personal view and comparisons with past studies to form some larger meaning about the phenomenon that was under study*

*(Creswell 2014).*

#### 6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher interprets or makes sense of the data that was presented in the previous chapter. Interpretation is an essential research activity that enables both the researcher and the reader(s) to understand the issue(s) that were under spotlight in the research. Creswell (2014) explains interpretation as the stage when the researcher steps back and forms some larger meaning about the phenomenon based on personal view, comparisons with past studies or both. In that regard, this chapter serves to provide a review of the findings and how the research questions were answered. As advised by Creswell (2014), the current researcher made personal reflections on the data and compared her views with relevant extant literature. The question ‘what does this mean?’ mainly assisted the researcher to interpret the research results. Of importance to note is that interpretation is underpinned by assumptions which the researcher make about what is important and what is worth paying attention to (Flick 2014). As such, the interpretation(s) generated in this study largely depend on the constructivist ontological position and interpretivist epistemological perspective adopted at the inception of this study.

## **6.2 Access policies, guides and procedures**

An access policy is a critical document that should ideally communicate the laws, regulations, orders, judicial decisions, internal rules and donor agreements that affect access and use of archives (Peterson, Choy, Domarkas, Moura & Shapley 2014). The second principle of ICA's principles on access to archives encourages national archival institutions to write and publish an access policy that is founded on a presumption of openness. Similarly, the archival theory indicates the need for archives to develop a general access policy that defines the conditions of use and outlines how restrictions should be handled when they are unavoidable. In relation to this matter, the current study found that NAZ did not have a written access policy.

The lack of an access policy is a serious barrier that has hindered NAZ from attaining full access. Moyo (2012) lamented the absence of a clear cut access policy at NAZ indicating that the absence of the document has been detrimental to archival access. As indicated in the results of the study presented in the previous chapter, control desk archivists rely on their experience and in-house training which they received from fellow archivists whom they found at NAZ when they joined the institution. There is no clear-cut access policy to guide the archivist on the provisions of access to the archives.

As indicated in the findings presented in the previous chapter, the provision of access to the archival material largely depends on the archivist's experience, skills and capabilities as an individual. The absence of a written and published access policy at NAZ makes it difficult for members of the public to understand the institution and to know some specific aspects of and conditions regarding access to the archives. The fourth principle of ICA's principles on access to archives indicates that an access policy should distinguish between general restrictions and specific

restrictions. The absence of an access policy at NAZ implies that the people's understanding of which materials are accessible or inaccessible is limited.

Owing to the lack of an access policy at NAZ, members of the public are denied knowledge on exceptions to general restrictions such as when a person may be granted special access to records about themselves or which they have created. Members of the public are also denied knowledge on how to challenge an unfavourable access decision. Furthermore, service delivery standards such as the expected time period for a response to a request are not known. An access policy primarily sets out the basis on which access decisions are made. Its absence at NAZ suggests that the institution's consistency in its application of access and use of archival materials is compromised.

### **6.3 Legal instruments and access to and use of public archives**

Access to archival materials is inevitably affected by restrictions as required by laws and other authorities, ethics or donor requirements. To that effect, the current study found that the accessibility to archives at NAZ is indeed affected by the various pieces of legislation, rules and regulations displayed in Table 9. These laws place certain restrictions and closure on public archival material. For instance, the closure period of public archives in Zimbabwe is 25 years. This implies that no archival material below 25 years after its active use by the creating entity can be made available to the people.

As argued by Moyo (2012), a long closure period defeats the whole process of information dissemination. Owing to certain clauses stipulated in Acts, legislations and policies, some national archival institutions have archives that are described in their finding aids but are not physically available. For instance, NAZ has finding aids of confidential and sensitive archival materials such as adoption cases, personal files and health records. These records have remained 'closed' beyond

the 25 year closure period. This implies that the archival material would be physically inaccessible to members of the public who may wish to use the material.

As similarly observed by Valge & Kibal (2007), the findings of the current study indicate that the many restrictions that affect the accessibility and use of archival material are not imposed by the archival legislation but by other legal Acts and restrictions beyond the control of NAZ. The existence of restrictions by statutory instruments, donor deeds, executive orders, court orders and privacy laws imply that NAZ is in custody of archival materials whose access requirements are in the hands of another institution or an individual.

The researcher of this study upholds the view that public archival institutions such as NAZ preserve recorded information as custodians of the public good and members of the public have a right to access the information. Much as the right to accessing public information is hailed, the current study concedes to the fact that archival institutions may at times have little or no power over some records whose accessibility are affected by clearly defined rules that are established by law. Government bodies hold the legitimate right to restrict access to certain information.

The current study laments, however, the many exclusions and restrictions as they make access to public archival material overly restrictive. As argued by Moyo (2012:78), “NAZ has devoted its energies to giving access to archival holdings for 75 years but full access has been hindered by inhibitive legislation”. Sharing similar sentiments are Harris and Merret (1994) who noted that in as much as governments have a legitimate right to restrict access to certain information, the restrictions need not be as wide as most governments make it. In the same vein, Valge and Kibal (2007) criticised restrictions of any nature on archival material as they are a hindrance and drawback to scientific advancement.

The findings of the study presented in Table 9 under section 5.3 indicate that official secrecy is one of the major legal weapons used to restrict access to certain information by governments. The Act prohibits the disclosure of information that compromises the interests of Zimbabwe. Secrecy has always been viewed as a corrosive ideology that coerces people to be frog marched from one sterile era of conformity to another (Harris & Merret 1994). As way back as six decades ago, Schellenberg (1956) argued that records should be available for use to an extent that is consistent with the public interest. Sadly, the results of the current study particularly on the restrictions to accessing archival material seem to be stifling the public's interests in accessing their documentary heritage.

Apart from the Official Secrets Act, the study also established that access to the archival material at NAZ is affected by the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act [Chapter 26:05] (No. 11 of 2000). The Act stipulates that the copyright in a work shall not be infringed by any unfair dealing for the purposes of research. It also stipulates that the copyright in a work in the permanent collection of an archive shall not be infringed by an archivist who makes a copy of the work. The conflict to observe the right to privacy while upholding the right to information access presents a complex dilemma for records managers and archivists (Cook 2010).

The current researcher, however, subscribes to the argument by Bacon (2014) who indicated that copyright decisions are a barrier to the many benefits that can be realized if information is made available to members of the public. The current researcher would therefore wish to denounce the issue of intellectual property as it promotes monopoly over distribution of information, hence explicitly hindering access.

The issue of legal instruments versus the accessibility of archival materials is not all gloomy, though. The study established that the Constitution of Zimbabwe gives a right to every citizen or permanent resident to access any information held by the state or by any agency of government. The provision of a people's right to public information in the Constitution of Zimbabwe implies that access to and use of public information is critical and highly regarded. Content analysis of the National Archives of Zimbabwe Act of 1986 revealed that members of the public retain the rights to access and use records in the custody of NAZ.

It is nevertheless disturbing to note that even if there are explicit provisions in NAZ's legislation, the need to amend the Act so as to address the current issues in the profession is long overdue. In a study that was conducted in Kenya by Kemoni, Wamukoya and Kiplang'at (2003) it was revealed that outdated archival legislation is hindering the effective utilization of archival material across the globe. The current study is not the first one in Zimbabwe to lament the inadequacy of the archival legislation. Dube (2011) argued that the National Archives of Zimbabwe's Act of 1986 does not adequately address the management of records and archives as a nation's heritage. Advancing the argument further is Moyo (2012) and Chaterera (2013) who indicated that the National Archives of Zimbabwe's Act of 1986 falls short on records generated in the electronic environment.

Another seemingly positive establishment by the current study towards the promotion of access to archival materials is the enshrinement of a people's right to public information in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act of 2013 as well as the existence of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), Chapter 10:27 of 2002. Chapter 4 Part 2 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe indicates that every citizen or permanent resident has a right of access to any information held by the state or by any agency of government where the information



is required in the interests of public accountability. Furthermore, Chapter 5 Part 2 stipulates that the commission should ensure fair access by the public to information. The enshrinement of a people's right to public information in the Constitution of Zimbabwe implies that information is recognized as an essential need for the socio-economic and political development of a people.

A general look at AIPPA gives the impression that the Act serves to provide members of the public with a right of access to records and information held by public institutions. In its preamble, AIPPA indicates that the Act serves to provide members of the public with a right of access to records and information held in public bodies. A critical analysis of the Act, however, shows that AIPPA actually makes the right to accessing public information difficult. There are so many clauses within the Act that make access to public information too restrictive. For instance, Part II Section 17 of AIPPA stipulates that information whose disclosure would prejudice the law enforcement process in any way may not be made available to members of the public. Part II Section 7 indicates that an applicant shall be required to pay such fee as may be so prescribed for obtaining access to any record and any service rendered in connection with the provision of access to any record by the public body concerned.

The provision of such clauses in AIPPA cripples the chance of access to archival materials to be as open as they should be. Instead of promoting access and use of public archival material, AIPPA can actually be manipulated to deny access. To that effect, the current researcher shares the same sentiments with Rodrigues (2008) who lamented and denounced the bureaucratic culture of secrecy and inconsistent legislation that appears to promote access while serving as instruments that can also be used to impose access restrictions.

#### **6.4 Access and use of documentary heritage at NAZ by the people**

Access to and use of archives is the sole basis on which national archival institutions are able to justify their existence. Loewen (2008) and Ceeney (2008) emphasised that all archival functions such as acquisition, arrangement and description, preservation and conservation are meant to ensure the availability of archival holdings. In that regard, Guercio (2001) and Ngulube (2006) indicated that archival institutions exist to preserve and give access to the national documentary heritage and should therefore strive to make their holdings accessible and knowable across time and space. Wilson (2005) expressed the sentiment that archival holdings are a gift passed from one generation to another. As such, the ability by a national archival institution to attract visitor-ship is indisputably significant.

The current study established that NAZ is relatively experiencing a downward trend in its visitor-ship statistics. A look at the research room visitor-ship statistics depicted in Figure 14 shows that the highest numbers of visits were recorded between the years 1996 to 2004. A similar pattern was detected on exhibition gallery visits where considerable numbers were last received between the years 1996 and 2000 (See Figure 16). A drastic decline in guided tours was also observed from an average of 2 055 between the years 1996 to 2004 to an average of 39 between 2009 and 2014. The number of off-site enquiries also dropped from an average of 120 between the years 1996 and 2002 to an average of 50 between the years 2003 and 2010. The low utilisation of archives is not only peculiar to Zimbabwe as Kamatula, Saurombe & Mosweu (2013) indicated that the underutilisation of archives has been a burden for ESARBICA. This is probably why NAZ chose the theme ‘archives, uses, abuses and underutilisation’ when it hosted the xxiii biennial ESARBICA conference in 2015 (Saurombe & Ngulube 2016b).

The continued decrease in the number of visits to NAZ is a serious cause for concern as it threatens the institution's existence and relevance to the society. The perceived struggle by NAZ to attract relatively large visitor-ship places the institution in a precarious position that may eventually make it difficult to justify its need for continued financial support from a government that is reportedly hard hit by financial shortages and operating on a shoe string budget. In the same vein, Ngulube (1999) argued that the underutilisation of an archival institution affects the long term survival of the archives in terms of funding. Dwindling numbers in archival visitor-ship is a recurring challenge that has been detected in the public archives of the member states of ESARBICA, namely Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Kenya, Mozambique, Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana, Angola, Zambia, Tanzania and Namibia (Kamatula 2011; Ngoepe & Ngulube 2011; Ngulube, Sibanda & Makoni 2013; Saurombe & Ngulube 2016a).

## **6.5 Processing**

The ability of an archival institution to provide information about its holdings and making them available to users depends on up to date findings aids that are produced from the processing of archives (Prom 2010; Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011). In that respect, processing is recognised as a critical archival function that helps in establishing both the physical and intellectual control over an archival collection (Prom 2010 & Ngulube 2006). The current study found that the amount of unprocessed archives at NAZ is growing at an alarming rate. In 2011, it was reported that there were 11 000 cubic feet of unprocessed records at NAZ (Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011). The current study established that the volume of unprocessed archives had escalated to 35 000 cubic feet by December 2016. This implies that the volume of unprocessed archives is increasing at an average of 4 800 cubic feet per year. As such, if no action is taken to rescue the status quo it means that in the next five years NAZ might be having approximately 59,000 cubic feet of unprocessed archives.

The continued increase in the volume of unprocessed archives at NAZ confirms the concern that was expressed by Prom (2010) who indicated that processing is at the heart of what archivists do yet it has been given little attention and less priority. The huge volume of unprocessed archives at NAZ negatively affects the bibliographic access to records as attested by Ngulube (2006). The many efforts by NAZ to enhance access and use of archival materials in its custody are being thwarted and compromised by the large volumes of unprocessed archives that disturbingly continue to grow. The issue of unprocessed archives has been lamented by many scholars as a major challenge affecting many archival institutions in Africa (Mazikana 1999, Ayoo & Otike 2000; Ngulube 2002 & Mnjama 2008). What makes the situation more precarious at NAZ is that it does not provide information about what has been processed and can therefore be made available to researchers.

## **6.6 Archival reference services and user studies**

Archival reference services are a cornerstone in enhancing access to and use of archival materials. Ayoo and Otike (2000), Ngulube (2002), Mnjama (2008), Prom (2010), Onyanha & Ngoepe (2011), Schmidt (2011) and Senturk (2011) have conceded to the reality that finding aids form the basis on which archives users develop an understanding of an archival collection thereby enabling them to identify the portions of a collection pertinent to their research inquiries. The current study found that NAZ has the fundamental finding aids to assist researchers identify the materials needed for their research inquiries. Furthermore, all the index cards in the public archives and research section are computerised and available online. The presence of finding aids and retrieval tools at NAZ positively implies that bibliographic access to the archival collection is at least guaranteed. As noted by Mazikana (1999), access to public records can only be assured where finding aids are in place.

The full potential and benefits of the finding aids at NAZ are, however, negatively affected by the lack of user studies in producing the retrieval tools. The finding aids at NAZ do not provide the narrative portions that describe the background of a collection, such as how and when it was formed. The finding aids are also silent on how the archival material was acquired and how the archival staff has arranged the materials in the collection. In this light, the archivists at NAZ are exposed to allegations of undertaking their descriptive work with a limited understanding on how researchers find and use archival materials. The utility of the finding aids at NAZ is thus questionable as Cox (2008) warned that finding aids developed without adequate user studies may not stand the test of time.

Apart from enabling the production of adequate finding aids, user studies are essential in learning the needs of archives users (Nimer & Daines 2008) thereby allowing archivists to develop tailor made services that meet their expectations (Jimerson 2003 & Katuu 2015). It is important to meet the expectations of the archives users as this will help in retaining their visits and even in attracting new visitor-ships. Loewen (2008) underscores the argument that an effective way to fulfil the access mandate of an archival institution is to understand the current clientele and anticipate the needs of the future patrons. To that effect, the current study established that NAZ does not conduct proper user studies and thereby risks losing its existing clientele while compromising its ability to lure new archives users. Lack of user studies by NAZ implies that the institution neither has a good understanding of its current users nor its potential clientele (Yeo 2005). Furthermore, the dangers of not conducting user studies are that the archives will become invisible in the communities that they are meant to serve (Saurombe & Ngulube 2016a) and it becomes difficult for archivists to justify the budgets required to run their institutions (Reid 2010).

Besides completing the research enquiry forms and the visitors' register, NAZ does not do any other entry interview to gain knowledge on the researchers' needs and expectations. Similarly, with the exception of the visitors' comment book no other efforts are in place to perform exit interviews so as to obtain the views and comments of researchers. Overall, the current study established that NAZ is falling short on user studies, hence denying itself a health ground on which archivists are enabled to make decisions concerning access to and use of archives.

Lack of user studies also implies that the ability by NAZ to come up with archives products and services that adequately serve the people is severely compromised. Such a scenario naturally discourages potential patrons from visiting the archives as people tend to seek services that are embrative of their needs and expectations (Evans 2007). The reluctance by an archival institution to conduct user studies suggests that the institution is prioritizing record keeping at the expense of facilitating access to archival records (Ceeney 2008; Ngulube & Tafor 2006; Battley & Wright 2012; Kim, Kang, Kim & Kim 2014).

### **6.7 Preservation and access**

National archival institutions primarily exist to preserve a nation's documentary heritage and ensure its availability to the populace (Schimdt 2011). Preservation and access are therefore mutually dependent archival activities that rely on each other for relevance. Put differently, preservation is done to enable access while access serves to justify the need for preservation. As spelt out in Chapter Two, neither Preservation (P) nor Use (U) should be greater than the other ( $P < > U$ ) as the two should always be equal ( $P = U$ ) (Chaterera 2015b).

The current study established that NAZ takes both reactionary (conservation) and proactive (preservation) approaches in ensuring that its archival collection is in good condition. Some of the

proactive approaches includes the availability of reading room rules that are primarily meant to protect archival records from damage by researchers. The reading room rules are a preservative mechanism meant to keep the archival materials in a good condition, hence making them usable by members of the public.

With regards to conservation, the current study found that NAZ has a conservation unit that is relatively active in cleaning, mending, binding and de-acidifying archival materials. As depicted in Figure 21, the number of conservation activities has significantly dropped from an average of 12 584 items between the years 1995 and 2002 to an average of 1 902 items between the years 2003 and 2014. The on-going preservation and conservation activities (however low they may be) are an indication that the institution is determined to fulfil its mandate of preserving and making available archival materials. In that regard, it is worth reiterating that archival materials that are not in good condition cannot be made available for use to researchers, hence all preservation and conservation endeavours can be perceived as efforts to enhance access and use of archives. Similarly, Ngulube, Sibanda and Makoni (2013) noted that there is a strong correlation between access and preservation as the two cannot be rationally divorced from each other.

## **6.8 The public perception of NAZ**

Developing a framework on access to and use of archives compelled the researcher to investigate the different views and perceptions that members of the general public have about NAZ. It was imperative for the current study to look into the perception of the people towards the archives because a person's perception towards an archival institution largely informs their decision on whether to visit or not to visit the archives. The results of the current study revealed that while a considerable number of people proved to at least know of the existence of NAZ, there are many people who are not even aware of NAZ's existence (See section 5.4 for the statistics). Some

thought NAZ is a central government office that keeps unwanted government records while others confused it with a museum. What was mostly disturbing in the findings was that the few people who had indicated knowledge of the existence of NAZ were not clear on the institution's functionalities. Further disturbing was the finding that most of the respondents had not visited the archives except for school trips that were done during their school days.

The findings on the public perception towards NAZ show that the institution is relatively invisible to the wider society. This is probably due to the fact that NAZ's outreach and public programming activities are for most of the time limited to the same crowd (See section 6.10 for a discourse on this issue). It could also be a result of the institution's reluctance to employ wider reaching tools such as the print media, radio and television as discussed in section 6.10. The results of the current study pertaining to the public perception of NAZ support the argument by Blais and Enns (1990) who observed that archivists seem to be hesitant and uncomfortable with the image and visibility issue. As such, archivists tend to deliberately give a blind eye to increasing their visibility in the public domain and resort to what they regard as the core archival functions, thus acquisition, appraisal, arrangement and description.

Overall, the results of the current study indicate that NAZ is faced with a serious challenge where people have different views about the institution while others are ignorant of its existence. This implies that NAZ has a lot of work to do in order to improve its visibility, public image and to correct the misconceptions that people have about the institution. The lack of knowledge amongst members of the public on the existence of NAZ affects the level of access to and usage of the institution's holdings. As argued by Sulej (2014), there are a lot of people who are not using the archives because they either do not know about its existence or they have a misconstrued thinking about the institution and its services.



Echoing similar sentiments is Jimerson (2003) who advanced the argument that there are a lot of people who are not aware that some of the information they seek is available at an archival institution. Mason (2011), Ngoepe and Ngulube (2011) and Saurombe and Ngulube (2016b) consolidates the argument by highlighting that only a small percentage of people know that archives are public information resource centres. Consequently, very few people frequent the archives in search of information, hence negatively affecting the access and use levels of archival holdings.

The findings of the current study regarding the public perception of NAZ sadly confirms the observation by Sulej (2014) who indicated that national archival institutions are often perceived by many people as foreign bodies isolated from the populace. Similarly, Haritz (2001) as well as Ngoepe and Ngulube (2011) observed that public archival institutions seem not to enjoy prominence in the public domain as most people confuse archives with museums and even think of archives as old buildings full of ancient dusty boxes. In view of the results obtained regarding the public's perception of NAZ, the current study pays particular attention to embedding the component into the proposed framework on access and use of archives presented in Chapter Seven.

### **6.9 Physical access and other restrictions to accessing and using the archives**

The ability by an archival institution to provide physical access is essential towards improving access to and use of the documentary heritage in its custody. This explains why ICA's first principle on access and use of archives emphasised that the public has the right of access to archives of public bodies and the archives should therefore be open to the greatest extent possible. In relation to this matter, the current study was particularly concerned with the provision of facilities that cater for the physically challenged. The results of the study clearly showed that NAZ had neither facilities to assist the physically challenged nor laid down procedures for responding

to disability needs. Such a situation exposes NAZ to litigation of violating the rights of a particular group in society to accessing and using public information. The provision of facilities to cater for the physically challenged is required by law.

The Zimbabwe Disabled Persons Act of 1992 Chapter 8 Section 1 Items (a) and (b) stipulate that no disabled person shall on the ground of his ability be denied admission into any premises to which members of the public are ordinarily admitted. The provision of any service or amenity ordinarily provided to members of the public must also be provided to persons with physical challenges. In support of the law, Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) as well as Kilasi, Maseko and Abankwah (2011) opined that national archival institutions are obliged to cater for people with physical challenges.

It is disturbing to note that these issues are known but they are not given due attention. Five years ago, a study that was done at NAZ by Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) revealed that deaf people are a challenge to the control desk and most archival documents are inaccessible to blind people. They also revealed that people with limited mobility have problems with areas that do not have wheelchair access including reference room tables that cannot accommodate a wheelchair. The results of the current study show that the situation has not changed, hence raising concerns as to why known issues are not accordingly addressed and if they are ever going to be attended to.

The researcher acknowledges that it may not be within the capacity of NAZ to cater for all types of physical challenges; however, efforts should be seen to be put in place to meet some of the special needs of people with disabilities. Apart from violating the law, the failure by NAZ to make provisions for the physically challenged negatively affects the visitor-ship numbers minimal as they may be.

Other findings regarding physical access to Zimbabwe's documentary heritage indicated that people in need of consulting the archival collection relating to Matabeleland region should visit the national archives in Bulawayo while those who wish to consult the archival collection relating to the rest of the country should visit the national archives in Harare. In light of this finding, it is indisputable that geographical barrier is one of the major factors hindering access to and the subsequent use of the archives in Zimbabwe. Limiting access and use of archives to physically visiting Harare or Bulawayo implies an extra cost towards accessing the archives. To that effect, a study that was done by Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) on access to and use of archives in Zimbabwe suggested that the archives should be taken to the people by decentralising public archives to the regions and provinces. It is disappointing, however, to indicate that the results of the current study showed no signs of decentralising or efforts to decentralise the archives as suggested by Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011).

Other issues that were revealed to be hindering access to Zimbabwe's documentary heritage include the issue of migrated archives. The findings of the study revealed that owing to a presumably weak legislation, NAZ has not been able to repatriate crucial records of Zimbabwe that are scattered around the world. In respect of this issue, Moyo (2012) argued that the legislation is supposed to protect its archives because archives are inalienable and imprescriptible and are subject to replevin. The inability by NAZ to get back Zimbabwe's archives that are in other countries implies that the people of Zimbabwe are denied access to information that is critical to their history, hence reducing their potential to political, social and even economic transformation.

In pursuance of other issues that are possibly hindering the physical access to archives, the current research found that NAZ is open to the public from Monday to Friday between 09:00 to 16:00 hours. This makes it difficult for the working class to access the archives as underscored in the

research of Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011). Additionally, researchers and visitors are expected to pay reading room fees of USD1.00 and USD2.00 for those who wish to tour the exhibition gallery. The charges are relatively high in the audio-visual unit where USD10.00 is charged to view the films (See Table 12 for all the audio-visual unit service charges). The payment of access fees is a hindrance to those who may wish to consult the archives but do not have the money. This challenge has become more realistic particularly in the current Zimbabwe where a serious cash shortage is no longer news but the order of the day.

#### **6.10 Public programming and outreach activities**

The existence of a national archival institution can only be justified if its holdings are being accessed and used by the populace. It is the duty of an archival institution to make people aware of where to find the archives, and when and how to find the archives (Bacon 2014; Saurombe & Ngulube 2016b). As indicated in the third principle of the ICA's principles of access to archives, institutions in custody of archival materials are expected to employ pro-active approaches that will help ensure that a broad section of the general public receives information about the archival institution and its holdings. Although the current study found that NAZ does not have a permanent or fixed office, department or team that deals with outreach activities, it was a positive establishment to find that the institution undertakes outreach activities particularly through the office of the editor in conjunction with the IT department.

The results of the study indicated that NAZ practitioners are confident that they have the required knowledge and skills to do public programming. Although public programming was reported as not so frequent an activity, it is crucial to highlight the confidence in NAZ archivists that they possess the fundamental skills to do public programming which implies that the programmes are effectively done on the few occasions which they are done. As argued by Saurombe and Ngulube

(2016b), the knowledge and skills of archivists in public programming is essential in making sure that the quality of programmes provided is not compromised.

The ways that have been used by NAZ to enhance its visibility and the subsequent use of its holdings include participating in national and historical events, publications, broadcasts, the internship programme, permanent and temporary exhibitions, career guidance, college and school visits. Brochures and flyers are also available. It was further established that NAZ archivists not participate only in local and international conferences, but have also organised and hosted conferences, workshops and seminars. Further efforts were reported from the audio visual unit that has managed to launch a mobile archives campaign. The existence of outreach activities at NAZ implies and that members of the public have an increased chance of learning about the existence of NAZ and its services. The probability of NAZ boosting its access and use levels is therefore relatively high. This is so because outreach programmes provide a unique opportunity to improve the awareness and use of archival holdings (Ngoepe & Ngulube 2011) and they are an essential means for increasing the utilization of archival materials (Kamatula 2011). If properly done, the end result of outreach and public programming strategies is improved access and use of the archival holdings.

It is disturbing to note, though, that NAZ has neither a budget for public programming nor a planned schedule for outreach activities. The activities are done as and when the need arises and if the resources are available. The responses obtained by the current study show that the participation by NAZ is usually in response to national and provincial gatherings that would be happening in the country. While this is obviously a commendable effort, the danger of concentrating on particular events is that NAZ will be reaching out to nearly the same crowd all the time. Thus they will be preaching to the already converted, hence denying themselves a chance

to reach out to a new audience. In relation to this finding, Kamatula (2011) indicated that public programming activities are only concentrated in particular areas leaving the wider community unaware of the archival services. To that effect Chaterera (2016) challenges archival institutions to widen their targets by not limiting their outreach activities to the same audience all the time and seek to reach a new clientele. Sharing the same sentiments is Bacon (2014) who asserted that national archival institutions need to connect with a diversity of people. The same argument was echoed by Blais and Enns (1990) who argued that national archival institutions need to increase their visibility and accessibility by reaching out beyond specialized groups such as historians and genealogists.

#### **6.11 The use of print media and digital technologies in promoting access to and use of archives**

The primary function of national archival institutions is to serve people. As such, it is critical for people to stay updated and be involved in archival functionalities. To this end, Huvila (2008:20) urged archival institutions to be participatory by engaging its community of users through Web 2.0 applications and other digital technologies. The potential for Web 2.0 technologies in increasing the access and use levels of documentary heritage has been attested by many. Sinclair (2012) made it clear that archival attention should be turned towards the ways in which new digital new media can be used to enable greater access to archives. The need to ensure greater access is critical because information in an archival institution means very little if it is not accessible and used. To this end, Sinclair (2012) highlighted that the 2.0 world holds new hope for expanding the number of users and uses of archives and thus increases the value of archives to society.

The use of digital technologies, the internet and print media in national archival institutions presents a unique opportunity for archival institutions to make visible their existence, products and

services, hence increasing the access and use levels of their holdings (Murambiwa & Ngulube 2011; Ngoepe & Ngulube 2011; Onyancha & Ngoepe 2011; Ferriero 2011; Chaterera 2015a). In that respect, Ayoo & Otike (2000), Kemoni, Wamukoya and Kiplang'at (2003) argued that the access level at an archival institution can be affected by the non-utilization of the digital technologies. In relation to this matter, the current study established that NAZ has a relatively functioning website that offers an online database, quick reference services and links to the various sections of the institution.

Essentially, the information that is available on NAZ's website enables researchers to prepare for their physical visit to NAZ. The availability of a website at NAZ implies that the institution has one of the excellent means by which an archival institution can provide information about its products, services, repositories and collections (Jimerson 2003). This increases the opportunity of boosting the access and use levels at NAZ.

Of importance to note is that while NAZ's website offers virtual finding aids, the actual archival collection is not digitalised and therefore not available online. Archives users have to physically visit NAZ if they wish to consult the archival collection. While offering archival digital collection minimises the wear and tear on the original documents, the current researcher supports the idea of NAZ not going absolutely virtual with its archival collection. This stance follows arguments by Lyons (2002) who criticised digital access for depriving the user of the exciting tactile experience of how archival repositories look and feel. Lyons (2002) further argues that unlike a conventional paper copy, a document offered online cannot emit a document's scent and details such as light pencil markings, and a document's size or texture may be obscured. It is therefore worthwhile to highlight that NAZ is using digital technologies as complementary tools not as replacement to physical access.

Amongst the objectives of the study was to establish the internet presence of NAZ, particularly the use of the social media space. Theimer (2011a) and Dudareva (2014) indicate that the social media space has become popular with public information centres working towards reaching out to a new clientele while strengthening relations with the existing audience. In the same vein Garaba (2012) observed that many archival institutions have opened Facebook accounts to interact with the public. On this matter, the current study established that NAZ has a Facebook page and it also has a Skype account.

It was a positive result to establish that NAZ is on Facebook and it actually has a page and not a group. Unlike a group, a page is authoritative, authentic and represents a real organisation as it may only be created by an official representation of the institution (Chaterera 2015a). Nevertheless, it is not adequate for an institution to merely create a Facebook page and fail to engage the audience and make continual updates. In that respect, the current study found that NAZ is putting remarkable efforts in regularly updating its page. The results of the study also indicate that NAZ has considerably publicized its Facebook page. This is evidenced by the relatively high number of likes and followers on the page. As indicated in the previous chapter, as at 12 April 2017 NAZ Facebook page had 660 likes and 648 followers. This was a sharp increase compared to 192 likes that were observed on 15 June 2014 (Chaterera 2015a). A random calculation of the figures implies that the number of NAZ Facebook followers is growing at an average of 156 people per year ( $660 - 192 / 3 = 156$ ). If the trend continues at the same rate, NAZ can boast of 1 440 followers by 2022 ( $156 \times 5 + 660 = 1\ 440$ ). The presence of NAZ on the social media network and its ability to attract a large following presents a unique opportunity for the institution to dramatically improve access, use and user satisfaction.



Much as the use Web 2.0 applications holds the potential to increase the utilisation of archives, Theimer (2011b) argues that it is high time archivists move beyond Web 2.0 applications and begin to seriously think of a broader strategy dubbed archive 2.0. The concept includes a comprehensive shift in archival thinking and practice that is related to, but not dependent on the use Web 2.0 tools such as Twitter, Facebook, Blogs and Flickr. “Archives 2.0 is an approach to archival practice that promotes openness and flexibility. It argues that archivists must be user centered and embrace opportunities to use technology to share collections, interact with users and improve internal efficiency” (Theimer 2011b:60). Similar sentiments were echoed by Eveleigh (2015:20) who noted that Archives 2.0 is important in that it takes this idea of a new generation of practice facilitated by technology and applies it to the professional archival workflow. In the same vein, Huntsha (2015) argued that archivists must be more engaged with assisting users in interpreting collections and must be cognizant of the new ways users are finding and using information. In essence archives 2.0 imply that it is not enough to just put records into an online database and hope that users find them. Instead, archivists need to provide ways for users to interact with and use collections on the web.

The use of the print media, national radio and television by archivists has been attested to hold the potential to increase the public awareness and subsequent use of the archives (Jimerson 2003; Riehle 2008; Onyancha & Ngoepe 2011; Ngoepe & Ngulube 2011). In that regard, the current study established that NAZ only uses news releases, radio and the television when there is a big event. It was emphasised that NAZ does not usually use these platforms because they require money and using them would also appear as if the institution is now into commercial marketing. The sentiments gathered in this study were that there is no need to market the archives as archives by their sheer importance market themselves. Such findings reflect reluctance by NAZ to employ

the print media and broadcasting services. This means that the institution is limiting its potential to enhance the level of access to the archives.

## **6.12 Summary**

This chapter offered a discourse and interpretation of the empirical evidence presented in Chapter Five. The discussions provided in the chapter are in congruence with the research objectives as well the research problem. The key issues that were discussed pertain to access policies, guides and procedures. It was underscored that a lack of such crucial documents at NAZ was crippling the ability of the institution to realise its full potential to provide access and use of the archival collection. The issues of how legal instruments are used as both tools to promote and restrict access to archival material were also debated. The chapter also discussed the current access to and use levels of the archival holdings at NAZ. Particular attention was given to the visitor-ship statistics and their implications for NAZ's relevance to the society. Processing of archival material was amongst the critical issues that were discussed and exposed as one of the chief challenges affecting the access levels at NAZ and other national archival institutions in the region. The issue of finding aids and how they are falling short in terms of background information to a collection was also discussed. Tied to the issue of finding aids was a discourse on user studies and how their absence was compromising the ability of NAZ to retain existing users while attracting a new clientele. Nevertheless, the presence of finding aids at NAZ was acknowledged as something positive as it helps researchers to identify the archival material needed for their inquiries.

Preservation and access issues were also under the spotlight in this chapter's discussions. The contention of the discourse was that preservation and access are done in support of each other. As such, neither preservation nor access should be prioritised over the other. Of importance to discuss was the public's perception of NAZ since their views affect the decision on whether to visit or not

to visit the archives. The chapter also discussed the barriers and restrictions to accessing and using the archives at NAZ.

The issues discussed were to do with the provision of facilities for the physically challenged, the centralisation of the archives, the non-existence of virtual archives, migrated archives and the failure by NAZ to repatriate them, opening hours and access fees. National archival institutions have an obligation to make people aware of where, when and how to find them. As such, Chapter Six discussed public programming and outreach activities. The chapter also discussed the status quo at NAZ regarding the use of print media and the social media space in promoting access to and use of archives. Overall, Chapter Six erected the pillars that support the proposed framework of access to and use of archives supplied in the subsequent chapter.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FRAMEWORK FOR ACCESS AND USE OF ARCHIVES

*The goal is use. We need to continually remind ourselves of this fact. Identification, acquisition, description and all the rest are simply the means we use to achieve this goal. They are tools. We may employ all these tools skillfully; but if, after we brilliantly and meticulously appraise, arrange, describe and converse our records, nobody comes to use them, then we have wasted our time (Ericson 1991:117).*

#### **7.1 Introduction**

Using the results of the study that were presented in Chapter Five and the subsequent discussion that was done in Chapter Six, this chapter forms a concise summary of the entire study, concludes on subject matters embedded in the research objectives and provides possible solutions to overcome the many challenges that are hindering public archival institutions from attaining full use of their holdings. Ultimately, Chapter Seven presents an empirically grounded theoretical framework on access to and use of public archival material. This closing chapter is critical as it summarises the study in a more concise and easily comprehensible form and gives the researcher an opportunity to demonstrate her understanding of the research problem and to succinctly answer the ‘so what?’ question that is usually asked by the readers of scientific enquiries. In this regard, the structuring of this chapter was largely guided by the research objectives and the research problem. This was done to help the readers and consumers of this work to logically follow the

issues that were under study and subsequently appreciate how the framework for access to and use of archives was built.

## **7.2 Summary of research findings**

The study sought to develop a holistic framework on access and use of documentary heritage at NAZ. As such the issues of policies, guides, procedures and legal instruments were considered salient to the success of this study. It was established that there are many pieces of legislation that serve to either promote or restrict access to and use of public archival material. The issue of legislations was found to be complex and going in endless circles as some of the legal instruments appear to be playing a double role of both promoting and restricting access. Regarding the existence of an access policy, the study found that NAZ did not have a written access policy and neither did it have a written guide that helps archivists to decide on whether access to the requested material should be granted or denied. The information management practitioners at NAZ largely rely on their experience while new incumbents in the organisation count on induction from their senior colleagues. The various sections at NAZ, however, have some written guidelines that can possibly be brought together and harmonised to form the institution's access policy.

At the centre of the current study was the issue of how public programming and outreach activities can be fully exploited to improve the access and use levels of public archival material. The study established that NAZ performs a plethora of public programming and outreach activities to improve the visibility of the institution in the public domain. Archivists expressed confidence in their ability to conduct public programming and they indicated that they possess the requisite skills and knowledge needed to execute tasks related to public programming and outreach activities. The potential of public programming activities to improve the utilisation of the archives at NAZ was, however, found wanting as the institution lacked a planned schedule of outreach activities, a clearly

defined or permanent office to spearhead the activities and a budget for outreach programmes. This probably explains why the research room visits were dwindling since public programming and outreach are a cornerstone in bringing people to the archives. Owing to the constant breakdown of equipment, access and use of audio-visual archives were also found to be negatively affected as the number of visitors to the audio-visual unit hardly increased. In a related issue, the study also found that visits to the permanent exhibition gallery, guided tours and off-site enquiries were going down.

With regards to the use of print media and digital technologies in promoting access and use of archives, it was revealed that NAZ scarcely makes use of news releases, radio and television to reach out to the people. Owing to the financial implications that are associated with using such media facilities, the study found that NAZ uses only news releases, the radio and television to publicise big and rare events. Apart from the shoe string budget that NAZ was reportedly operating in, the study also found that the archivists are reluctant to use the print media and other technologies as they believe that archives naturally market themselves by their vital importance and uncontested role in the socio-economic transformation of societies. On a positive note, the study established a relatively satisfactory internet presence by NAZ as it has a functioning Website, an active Facebook page and a Skype account.

Owing to the understanding that the way people perceive an archival institution influences their decision to visit the archives, the study deemed it essential to gather peoples' views towards and knowledge about NAZ. The findings of the study on this matter were dismal as they indicated that the generality of the populace is hardly aware of NAZ's existence.

Regarding the issue of archival reference services, the study found that NAZ has finding aids to help archives users identify the material(s) they need for their respective enquiries. Some researchers, though, lamented the inadequacy of the tools indicating that the finding aids were crafted in such a way that the archivists' assistance is almost always needed. The finding aids in the public archives and research sections are all available online and people are able to search for the availability of the material they need prior to their physical visits to NAZ, but the inventories were reported to be still in hard copies awaiting computerisation. Similar results were obtained from the library section where a backlog of un-computerised index cards from 2009 going backwards were reported to be in existence. Efforts to clear the backlog in the library section were reported to be in progress.

Tied to the aspect of reference services was the issue of user studies. The study found that user studies were partially done by way of initial interviews to first time visitors who are assumed not to be familiar with the complexities of the search room; otherwise NAZ does not do any formal user studies. Neither initial nor exist interviews were reported to be done at NAZ. Further probes on how archivists get to know and understand their visitors' needs and concerns yielded the results that archivists relied on the visitors' register and the comment book. In a related issue, the study found that depending on the archivist at the control desk, a researcher may or may not be assisted in evaluating the information s/he gets.

Access issues are inseparable from aspects of preservation as access to archival materials is given to justify the need to preserve and conserve the archival materials while preservation and conservation makes access possible. Several efforts to ensure the longevity of archival materials at NAZ were found to be in place. Such efforts included the existence of strictly enforced reading room rules and the presence of a relatively active conservation unit.

In pursuit of developing a holistic framework on access and use of archives, the study investigated the issues of physical access and other restrictions to accessing and using the archives. The study found that there are neither laid down procedures nor facilities to cater for physically challenged visitors. On other possible restrictions to accessing and using the archives, the study found that NAZ's reading room in the public archives and research section has a carrying capacity of twenty-five people while a proper viewing area was not available in the audio-visual unit. An auditorium with a capacity to accommodate 400 people was reported to be available should the audio-visual unit receive large numbers.

Other restrictions to accessing and using archival materials included strict measures that were put in place against reproducing copyrighted material. The issue of geographical barriers and access fees were found to be amongst the other possible barriers to the access to and use levels of the archival materials at NAZ. Members of the public who wish to consult their documentary heritage are compelled to visit NAZ in Harare or NAZ in Bulawayo for those who need archival materials relating to Matabeleland. Access and service fees were charged from a minimum of USD2 to a maximum of USD10 depending on a number of factors that include a person's nationality, type of service required and in which section of NAZ. Table 12 is available for clarifications on charges at NAZ.

Recognising the essential role that is played by processing in enabling the accessibility and use of archival materials, the current study deemed it crucial to establish the status quo at NAZ regarding this archival function. As at December 2016, over 35 000 cubic feet of unprocessed archives were reported to be in place. The situation was feared to grow worse due to the challenge of inadequate storage space that was apparently prevalent in all NAZ's records centres as well as the public archives and research section. Inadequate human capital was also reported to be one of the chief



reasons processing was progressing at a very slow pace. Backlog in unprocessed archives was admitted to have affected other archival functionalities. For instance, the processing of historical manuscripts had to be temporarily suspended to concentrate more on public archives. Out of approximately 635 interviews that were recorded between the years 2001 to 2014 only 356 were reported to have been processed (see Figure 28).

Efforts to clear the backlog of unprocessed archives were demonstrated as the institution at times made arrangements with NUST to donate their students in the Records and Archives Department for assistance. In further efforts to avert researchers from being short-changed, it was revealed that master files and transmittal lists can be made available to researchers so that they identify a possible description that may contain the information they need.

### **7.3 Conclusions on research objectives**

Sections 7.3.1 up to 7.3.6 provides conclusions on the research objectives that were set at the outset of this study (See section 1.6 in Chapter One). It is important for a scientific study to offer conclusions on matters that were under study as this helps in ascertaining whether the objectives of the study were satisfactorily met and if the research problem was fairly addressed.

#### **7.3.1 Conclusions on the influence of legal instruments on access and use of the public archives in Zimbabwe**

Access and use of public archival materials is inevitably controlled by various pieces of legal instruments, institutional policies, and ethical and donor requirements. NAZ does not have power over the many restrictions that have been placed on some archival materials by other legal Acts. There have been increased calls of encouragement to ensure the enhancement of access and use levels of public archival institutions. The archivists' response and efforts to meet the demands of this call are weakened by the opposing forces

embedded in legal instruments, some of which appear to be advocating for the promotion of access to and use of public information. AIPPA is an example of one such double edged instrument that appears to be advocating for the public's right of access to information while bearing many other clauses in the Act that actually make access to public information difficult if not impossible. The placement of access restrictions has caused complexities in the work of archivists as they try to fulfil their national obligation of making available archives to the people while adhering to the relatively many restrictions placed on certain archival materials.

NAZ is the custodian of a people's documentary heritage; however, the decisions on access and use of the archives in its custody do not necessarily rest with the institution as some of the restrictions are beyond the institution's control. Some clauses in legal instruments such as the Official Secrets Act, the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act and AIPPA place access and use restrictions on archival materials that:

- stifles the chances by NAZ to increase the access and use levels of its holdings
- hinders scientific development
- denies the populace a possible socio-economic transformation that can be realized from using the information contained in archives.

The researcher is not rigidly concluding that legal instruments are an absolute drawback to access to and use of public archival material as there are notable provisions on the people's right to public information. Such provisions are found in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act of 2013, AIPPA Chapter 10:27 of 2002 as well as NAZ Act of 1986. While such provisions are celebrated towards the noble cause of enhancing access and use of archives, the current researcher is compelled by the evidence yielded in this study to conclude that the access restrictions are too wide and they surely cripple the need for access and use of public archival materials to be as open as they should be.

### **7.3.2 Conclusions on the use of public programming strategies by NAZ in promoting access and use of the archives**

Public programming and outreach activities are an indisputable means by which national archival institutions can make themselves known, visible and subsequently used by members of the public. The success of an archival institution in its public programming and outreach endeavours largely influences the ability of the institution to enhance its access and use levels, thereby giving itself a relevant and meaningful position in the society. From the findings of the current study, it can be concluded that NAZ has the potential to enhance the access and use levels of the documentary heritage in its custody.

The institution has employed several pro-active approaches in making itself visible to the public and it has archivists who are confident that they are competent in satisfactorily conducting public programming and outreach activities. Such positive findings were watered down nevertheless by the absence of a clearly defined team or section that presides over such crucial initiatives and the absence of a budget for outreach and public programming. This explains why NAZ did not even have a schedule or plan for outreach activities as the institution awaits either invitations from government ministries or the availability of funds and other needed resources to conduct outreach programmes. It is also the probable reason NAZ seemed to be reaching out to the same audiences for most of the time at the expense of other communities that are unaware of archival services. To this end, the current study concludes that the status quo regarding the issues of outreach lacks the vibrancy that is needed to boost the access and use levels of the archives at NAZ. As such the potential to increase the access levels at NAZ is compromised and in need of urgent of attention.

### **7.3.3 Conclusions on the use of print media and Web 2.0 technologies to increase the visibility of NAZ**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century world is characterized by digital technologies that have since created an information superhighway. The proliferation in the use of digital technologies and the social media space presents a plethora of opportunities and challenges to the archival practitioners who have to aggressively compete for people with the internet. The adoption of the digital technologies and the print media in promoting the visibility of the archives is undoubtedly an essential need rather than an alternative.

Regarding the use of digital and Web 2.0 technologies to promote access to and use of archives, the study findings are indicating that NAZ has made some efforts to improve its visibility and the public image. The institution has a running Website that offers virtual finding aids as well as a relatively active Facebook page and a Skype account. The Website, however, needs some renovations and it is not adequate for NAZ to use only Facebook when there are many other social media platforms that have equally become popular, particularly with young adults. NAZ's potential to expand its archives' usage through the use of digital technologies is therefore not fully exploited, hence thwarting the possibility of increased access to and use of the archives. The results regarding the use of the print media, national radio and television were discouraging as NAZ employs such tools only to cover big and rare events. This further threatens the potential by NAZ to increase the public awareness and subsequent use of its archives.

### **7.3.4 Conclusions on the public perception of NAZ**

Increased access and use of archives can only be achieved if people have knowledge of the existence of the archives and if they have the appropriate perceptions about the institution and its functionalities. There is a correlation between the people's knowledge and perception of national

archival institutions and the number of visitors or users who will eventually visit the archives. The relatively low numbers in visitor-ship that were revealed at NAZ relate to the findings on public perception of NAZ which showed that the populace has little knowledge of the institution's existence and its functions. The study perceived a note of ignorance and reluctance amongst members of the public to learn about the existence and functions of public archives as some of the respondents strongly felt that such institutions are for keeping old government records which are none of their business. To this end, the current study concludes that the public perception of NAZ is in a deplorable state and needs to be addressed.

The existence of public archival institutions can be justified only if the archives have meaning and relevance to the society. As such, national archival institutions cannot afford to ignore the misconceptions that people have of national archival institutions. The issue of public perception holds the key that is needed to unlock the potential of boosting the access to and use levels of archives. All the other efforts to improve access to and use of archives will be in vain if the people who are expected to use the archives are barely aware of the institution's existence. The overall conclusion to this matter is that members of the public lack knowledge on the existence of NAZ and their perception of NAZ's functionalities are misconstrued. Perhaps the situation owes its existences to lack of radio, television and the print media use by NAZ to make known its existence and service products.

#### **7.3.5 Conclusions on the reference services and user studies at NAZ**

Efficiency and effectiveness are the key indicators of good service delivery. The ability by an archival institution to render efficient and effective access to documentary heritage rests on the availability of well-crafted finding aids. This study concludes that bibliographic access to public archival material at NAZ is guaranteed as there are finding aids to assist researchers in identifying

the informational materials they need for their inquiries. The finding aids have, however, been criticized for lacking contextual background information, hence requiring the archivists' intervention. The inadequacies found in the finding aids are probably because NAZ did not consult the archives users when the tools were crafted.

Lack of interaction between NAZ and its archives users appeared to be an obstacle towards improved access to and use of archives. NAZ's chances to retain its existing clientele are threatened and its position as an information resource centre is compromised. This argument follows the findings that NAZ does not conduct user studies to establish its clients' concerns, needs and expectations. Relying on the research enquiry forms and the visitors' comment book as was reported in the study is not a very good way of getting to know and understand patrons. In this respect, it can be asserted that the relationship between NAZ and its current patrons is taken for granted. This places NAZ in a precarious position and is probably the reason visits to the public archives and research section were dwindling.

### **7.3.6 Conclusions on the barriers to physical access at NAZ**

All efforts to ensure intellectual and bibliographic access to archival materials would be in vain if in the end physical access is not guaranteed. The aspect of physical access at NAZ emerged as the weakest area among other aspects of the institution that were investigated in this study. The element of physical access at NAZ was found wanting from several angles. For instance, the centralization of the national archives in Harare makes it difficult for those who cannot afford travel expenses from their respective areas across the nation. The reading room fees may not be affordable to other people and the viewing and listening charges in the audio-visual unit are harsh to an ordinary citizen. The migrated archives which NAZ has not been able to bring back to the country and the escalating volumes of unprocessed archives are all barriers to physical access.

The physically challenged and the less privileged people in the society are the most affected by the status quo at NAZ. There are no basic facilities to cater for people with disabilities, there are no laid down procedures on how to handle such visitors and there isn't a single member of staff who can meaningfully converse in sign language. While it is appreciated that the probability of receiving visitors with special needs is very slim, it should not be used as an excuse not to have special facilities as the physically challenged people also have a right of access to archives in public bodies.

#### **7.4 Recommendations**

The recommendations offered from section 7.4.1 to section 7.4.6 are based on the findings of the study and are meant to improve the access and use levels of the documentary heritage at NAZ.

##### **7.4.1 Legislations, policies, rules and regulations on access and use of public archives**

The results of the study are clear on legislations being a large contributor in inhibiting open and wide access to public archival materials. Lack of clearly defined access policies and procedures is also amongst the factors affecting improved access to and use of the national archives. Following such results, it is recommended that NAZ works in collaboration with other government ministries and offices that are responsible for enacting the various other laws that have proved to be obstacles in the access and use of archives. The working relationship should be premised on sensitizing the powers that be on the detrimental effects that certain provisions have on access to and use of public archival material. It is possible that some of these Acts are enacted without full knowledge of how they may affect archival laws. A close working relationship between NAZ and these other institutions will help in eliminating some of the unnecessary inhibitive provisions that override the clauses in archival legislations.

It is understood that the right of access to public information cannot be without restrictions and indeed government bodies hold a legitimate right to restrict access to certain information. What the current researcher is recommending is for NAZ to engage these other government bodies and help them to understand that restrictions need not be as wide as they are. Public records should at least be accessible for use to an extent that is consistent with public interest.

Of importance to highlight is that it is commendable that Zimbabwe ratified the African Charter on Human and People's Rights. The Charter fundamentally serves to support access to public information by members of the public, but mere ratification without access implementation policies is not helpful in supporting improved access to public archival materials. NAZ is therefore encouraged to take the lead in designing national policies that provide for increased access to information.

Apart from leading in designing national policies on access to information, NAZ is also recommended to develop its own institutional access policy. The access policy should ideally communicate the laws, regulations, orders, judicial decisions, internal rules and donor agreements that affect access and use of archives. The policy should be based on the principles of openness and it should be published for the public's consumption. It is essential that the crafting of this critical document be treated as a priority if the dream to attain full access at NAZ is to be fulfilled. As reiterated in the previous chapters, the absence of a written and published access policy at NAZ makes it difficult for members of the public to understand the institution and to know some specific aspects of and conditions regarding access to the archives.

This study has also made it clear that the NAZ archival legislation has for a long time been lamented to be outdated and weak in particularly promoting access to and use of archives. The



urgency to amend the NAZ Act of 1986 in the direction of managing records and archives as a nation's heritage therefore need not be over emphasised.

#### **7.4.2 Public programming and outreach activities as drivers for enhanced access to and use of archives**

Public programming and outreach activities are the first things that come into archivists' minds when they seek to enhance the utilization of archives. The results and discourse presented in this study bear testimony to public programming and outreach activities as irrefutable drivers for improved access to archival holdings. It is also clear from the findings of the study that NAZ is aware of the need to improve its visibility, public image and accessibility through outreach and public programming activities. Given the huge potential that public programming and outreach activities have on increasing the awareness and use of archival holdings, this study recommends NAZ to consider setting a clearly designated office or at least a standing committee that meets regularly to discuss and plan for outreach and public programming activities. The committee must then be able to draft schedules of events and to even hunt for sponsorship from external sources since financial challenges were cited as one of the reasons NAZ was falling short on some of the archival functions.

Another recommendation on outreach and public programming is that the activities must be extended to other areas that have not been covered. It was indicated in the results of the study that NAZ tends to concentrate on particular events and areas at the expense of other potential archives users who are not aware of NAZ's existence and its functions. The status quo likely owes its existence to the absence of a budget, a planned schedule and an office or standing team to direct the initiatives. Efforts should be made to ensure that NAZ does not continue preaching to the same

crowd or the already converted. This is not to say that existing users must be ignored. It is imperative that existing users be retained while new patrons are sought.

#### **7.4.3 The internet and Web 2.0 technologies as tools for visibility enhancement in archival institutions**

The print media and Web 2.0 technologies are an effective means by which NAZ can consolidate its outreach endeavours. The internet in particular has the capacity to reach people across the globe, hence addressing the dangers of reaching out to the same people all the time. It should be noted, however, that digital technologies, the internet as well as the print media do not offer an absolute solution to reaching out to a diverse audience as some people, particularly in Zimbabwe, are not privileged to have the needed devices, internet connection or even electricity.

The current study positively established that NAZ has a Facebook page, a Skype account and a Website. However commendable these findings may be, the current researcher wishes to advise NAZ and other archival institutions in need of expanding their access levels that there are a lot of other social media platforms that have become popular particularly with young adults. Using just a single platform from over a 100 free social media platforms would be a disservice to the people. Popular platforms include but are not limited to YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Reddit, Vine, Ask.fm, Pinterest, Tumblr, Flickr, Google+, LinkedIn, Blogster, MySpace and Hi5. Signing up for these platforms is free and therefore saves archival institutions from the usual cry of financial constraints. This is however not to suggest that an archival institution should be present on all the Web 2.0 applications. An institution must exercise due diligence in deciding the platforms to ride on. Research must be done to have an idea of the platforms that are commonly used by the targeted clientele. The effective use of these platforms would require a designated office or team

responsible for the interactions, hence my earlier suggestion on the need by NAZ to set up a committee or even establish an office responsible for public programming and outreach activities.

The major concern established by the current study was the non-use of the print media, national radio and television. It was reported that NAZ uses these facilities only to make known big and rare events. In light of these results, NAZ is encouraged not to shun the use of these tools as they offer a unique opportunity to reach a much wider and diverse national audience. Archivists are challenged to come out of their comfort zones of assuming that archives are undeniably important information resources and thus people will naturally look for them. There are many other information providers such as libraries, museums, art galleries and the internet. These information resource centres provide stiff competition to the archives as they also need large visitor-ship to justify their existence. Archivists are warned not to relax and assume that those who are in need of information will find the archives. Employing the print media as well as the use of the national radio and television is one of the ways that NAZ can pursue to ensure that it is not overshadowed by other public information resource centres. This perceived danger is closer to reality as the current study established that some members of the public actually confuse the national archives with the national museums.

#### **7.4.4 The public perception on national archives: how can the situation be improved?**

The results of the study were clear that people have so many views and different thinking about the national archives while some are not even aware of their existence. For this reason, it is important for archivists to be conscious of what people exactly know and think about the archives. Gaining such knowledge will help archivists in correcting the misconceptions that have probably resulted in some people not connecting and visiting the archives. The researcher recommends audience research as a method that archivists can employ to gather information about the generality

of the public's perception on archives. Audience research is distinct from user studies in that it is not restricted to the archives users but includes both the current users and the non-users of the archives.

Audience research is recommended to gather the public's perceptions because the way people think of public archival institutions may not be changed by outreach activities, public programming or even marketing strategies. These strategies usually concentrate on communicating and selling the service products and do very little to solicit the people's views, thoughts, concerns and expectations. Audience research is therefore recommended as it is a strategy that is specifically aimed at gathering information about people's attitudes, knowledge, expectations, interests or concerns. Such information enables archivists to accordingly improve their services in an informed manner. The likely consequence would be improved access to and use of archives.

The methods that can be used to conduct audience research include but are not limited to focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires. Radio and television programmes can also be used to educate people about the archives and invite them to seek clarifications and sharing their thoughts. Crowd sourcing through the social media platforms also hold great potential in interacting with the people and seeking their views and contributions to make the public archives a better and attractive place to the masses. The choice of a method to be used depends on the type of target audience.

#### **7.4.5 Reference services and processing**

The study revealed that NAZ has finding aids that are used by researchers to identify the information they need. These finding aids are available online and researchers are enabled to

prepare for their visits to the national archives. There is, however, a cause for concern as the finding aids were reported to be lacking contextual background, hence the intervention of the archivists was reported to be always needed, particularly for non-frequent users of the archives. Another revealed challenge was the presence of a huge backlog of unprocessed archives that are rendering bibliographic access of the archives impossible as plenty of archival materials are without finding aids.

The perceived inadequacies of the finding aids at NAZ consolidate the need for user studies at NAZ. The study found that NAZ was lacking in user studies and the dangers of this situation include developing finding aids that fall short on the expectations of users. The absence of user studies at NAZ implies that archivists describe the archives with a limited understanding of how researchers find and use archival materials. The need for user studies is critical for NAZ as it enables the institution to perform archival work that can last the test of time. Additionally, NAZ is recommended to look into its retrieval tools and ensure the availability of fundamental information such as how and when a collection was formed, how the archival material was acquired and how the archival staff has arranged or ordered the materials in the collection.

Regarding the challenge of unprocessed archives, NAZ made commendable efforts in 2010, 2011 and 2012 when it sought the assistance of students from NUST. NAZ is encouraged to revive such initiatives and have them on a regular. This will help to stabilise or even clear the escalating volume of unprocessed archives. The institution is also encouraged to approach other local universities instead of NUST alone. Zimbabwe has quite a number of institutions of higher learning that are offering records and archives management courses. These include but may not be limited to the Midlands State University (MSU), Great Zimbabwe University (GZU), Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU), Harare, Gweru and Kwekwe Polytechnical Colleges.

In efforts to curb the consequences that unprocessed archives have on access and use of archives, the study found that NAZ had started to provide access to unprocessed archival materials held in the records centre. This was done through providing transmittal lists and master files to affected researchers so that they may identify the description of informational materials they were looking for. To this end, the researcher recommends NAZ to consider formalising access to unprocessed archival materials held in records centres and make known such developments to members of the public. The institution is advised to first verify if such arrangements are consistent with archival principles and ethics.

#### **7.4.6 Overcoming the barriers to physical access**

As reflected in the discussion of this study's findings, NAZ lags behind in the provision of physical access. The study established a number of challenges pertaining to physical access at NAZ. The challenges pertained to distance and special facilities for the physically challenged as well as operating hours.

Public archives should be prepared to meet and deal with a variety of disabilities that may involve restricted abilities for walking, seeing, hearing, speaking or physical coordination (Serene 2008). Overall, the study found that NAZ was not prepared to receive visitors with physical challenges. The general sentiment shared by NAZ practitioners was that it was not feasible for their institution to cater for all types of disabilities. The current researcher concurs with this position but would wish to encourage NAZ (as a starting point) to put in place some basic provisions that do not require a huge budget. Such provisions include wheel chair accommodation in public spaces such as the car park, emergency assembly areas and restrooms. The doorways should be wide enough for a wheelchair to pass through, at least 32 inches wide (Serene 2008) and all public areas must be connected by an accessible route.

Additionally, a few of the counter tops in the reading room should be adjusted to accommodate wheelchairs. In the long run NAZ should consider properly constructing and displaying signage whose numbers and letters should be less than 3 inches high. Installing alarm systems that provide visual and audio warnings would also be a remarkable improvement.

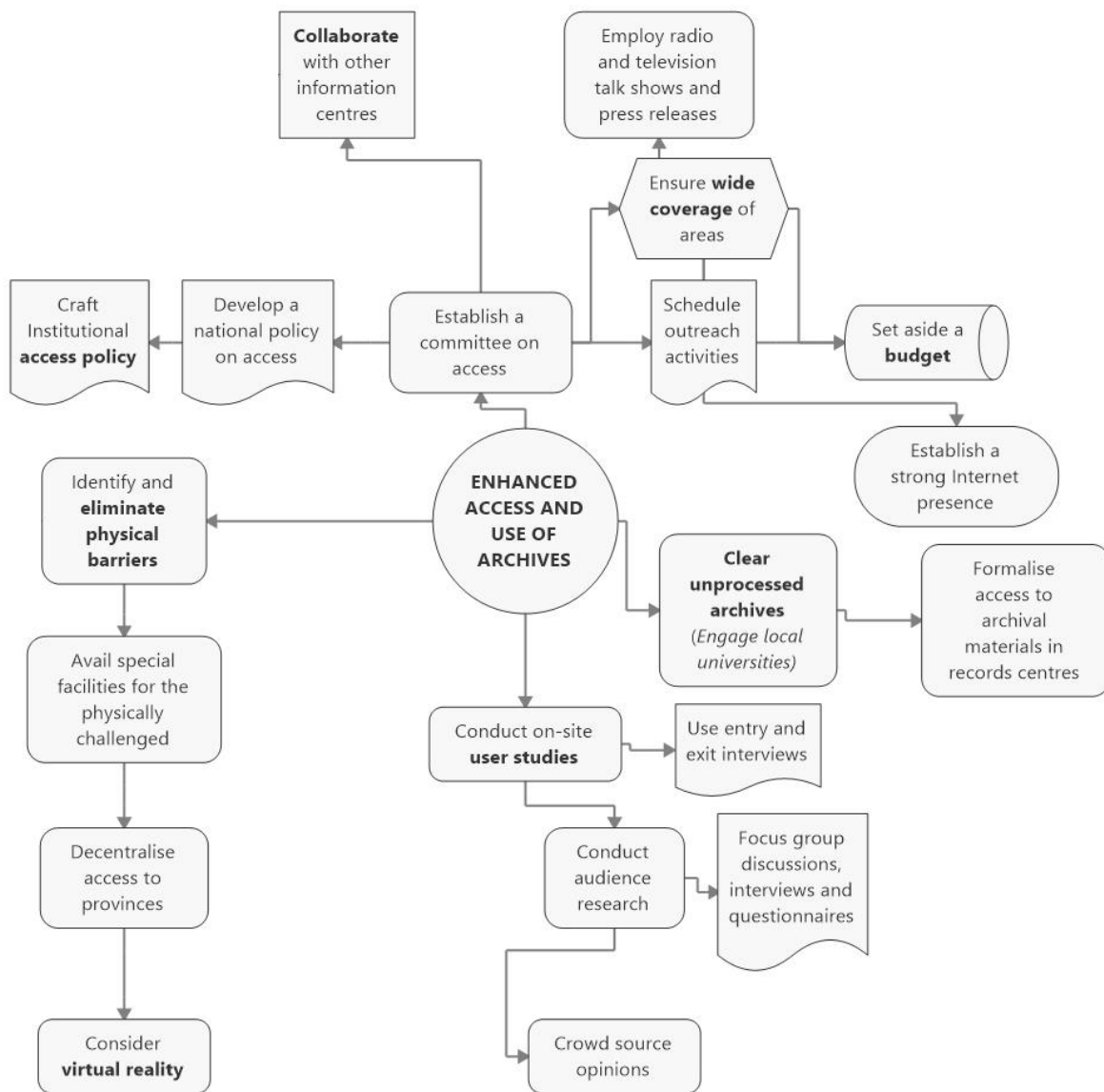
Distance was also cited as one of the challenges regarding physical access at NAZ. Those who wish to consult Zimbabwe's documentary heritage have to visit NAZ in Harare and those who wish to consult archival records related to Matabeleland province have to go to Bulawayo. To this effect, the institution is recommended to decentralize the public archives to the provinces. Additionally, NAZ is also recommended to consider going virtual, thus digitizing the archival collection and make it available online. Currently, NAZ only offers the finding aids online but the actual archival content has not been digitized. Although virtual reality has its own challenges, NAZ is recommended to consider the option and probably use its discretion and expertise to determine which materials may be offered online and which have to remain accessible only in the physical form. Selecting a few archival materials to put online may actually trigger curiosity in online visitors and encourage them to visit the holdings for more experiences.

Flexible operating hours are essential in enhancing the use of archives. In this respect, NAZ is recommended to extend its operating days to include half days on Saturday and Sunday, thus from 08:30 to 13:00. The hours of operation fundamentally establishes who can and cannot come to use the archives. For instance, NAZ is open to the public on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30 to 16:00 hours. This means that school going children cannot come unless it is a holiday or they are with a class of thirty others and that is not always beneficial for anyone. Those who are formally employed are also disadvantaged for they have limited chances of visiting the archives unless they take some leave days.

## **7.5 Proposed framework**

The current study was aimed at producing a framework for access to and use of archives. Guided by the principles of grounded theory, Figure 29 presents a framework that is based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. In developing this framework, the researcher paid attention to the four criteria that underpin a well-grounded theory research. The four criteria are fit, work, relevance and modifiability (Villiers, 2005). Fit implies that the developed framework matches the realities of the matters that were investigated. Work implies that the framework is able to explain any variables of the issues that emerged from the study. Relevance means that the developed framework fits and works well for the purposes of which it has been developed. Modifiability means that the framework is open to adaptation if further research is done and new data and variations are integrated. Overall, the proposed framework depicted in Figure 29 embeds the findings, conclusions and recommendations made in this study. The intention was to ensure that the framework speaks to the research objectives and addresses the research problem.





**Figure 29: Access and Use Enhancement Framework (AUEF)**

### 7.5.1 Framework explanation

Enhanced access and use of archives is the central goal of the framework depicted in Figure 29. The framework is simplistic and relatively easy to follow as it was constructed based on the empirical evidence yielded from the study. As illustrated in the framework, the first step that needs to be taken is to establish a committee on access to and use of archives. The committee should

preside over the issues that are aimed at increasing the access to and use levels of archives. For instance, the committee is expected to initiate the development of national and institutional policies on access to and use of public archival material. The committee should also schedule all the public programming and outreach initiatives, make an appropriate budget for the tasks and ensure a wide coverage of the nation. To this end, the framework illustrates the need to use the national radio and television as these platforms have a potential to reach a national audience. Owing to the inevitable way in which today's world has been penetrated by the use of digital technologies and the internet, the framework depicts the need by archivists to establish a strong internet presence as well as to foster partnerships and collaborations with other public information business centres.

The framework also illustrates that enhanced access and use of archives can be achieved through identifying and eliminating physical barriers. In this regard, it is highlighted that national institutions need to avail special facilities for the physically challenged, decentralize access to provinces and seriously consider virtual reality. The framework underscores the need for user studies, audience research and crowd sourcing ideas from the cyber space. This is essential in reaching out to the existing and potential clientele, gathering people's ideas, perceptions and expectations amongst other things. Depicted in the framework is also the need to clear the backlog of unprocessed archives by way of engaging local universities and other relevant partners for help. If properly followed and implemented, the ways that have been suggested in the enhanced access and use framework have the potential to take access to and use of archives to higher levels.

## **7.6 Framework justification and implication for theory, policy and practice**

Scientific studies must not be done for the sake of merely accumulating concepts and theories about a certain study. People must be able to connect with the findings and relate them to societal challenges and what they already know. In this regard, it is worth indicating that the

implementation of the recommendations supplied in this study holds a huge potential in enhancing the utilisation of public archives. The current study managed to reveal a number of challenges and areas of weakness that need to be addressed in order to improve the access and use levels of archival holdings. The concept of access to and use of archives have barely been approached from a holistic point of view in which all the dimensions with an influence on access to and use of archives were investigated. The current study is therefore coming in as an essential contribution to the existing body of knowledge on access to and use of archives. The framework developed in this study presents archivists with an opportunity to reflect on their current practices on the provision of access and offers several means by which the practices can be improved.

### **7.7 Recommendations for further research**

The current study attested to lack of scientific studies on access to and use of archives. The area has barely been covered, particularly in a holistic nature in which all the essential aspects on access and use of archives were investigated. As the current study employed a grounded theory approach, new ground was broken and a number of issues emerged that require in-depth studies. Furthermore, every research approach has some inherent weaknesses and limitations. Owing to such realities, the current research did not and could not absolutely exhaust every emerging concept, thereby leaving room for further research. The research areas which may therefore be pursued include but are not restricted to the following:

- Amongst the issues that emerged from the study includes the aspect of audience research. This aspect was not visible at the inception of the study but emerged to be an essential element that can lead to improved access to and use of archives. The aspect came to light as the current researcher established that archivists seem to focus much on what they perceive as core archival functions at the expense of getting to know the views of the people

for whom they purport to be keeping the archives. As highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, “if, after we brilliantly and meticulously appraise, arrange, describe and converse our records, nobody comes to use them, then we have wasted our time” (Ericson 1991:117). It is therefore crucial for archivists to have knowledge on the people for whom they keep the archives, hence the need for in-depth studies on audience research in public archival institutions. Such research may also include the issue of user studies as the two aspects are interrelated.

- The other potential area for further researcher is on access to archives in records centres. As the current study methodically searched for how access to and use of archives can be improved, it was revealed that the major hindrance was the shortage of storage space in the public archives sections. This amongst other factors affected the processing of archives, resulting in huge backlogs of unprocessed archives in the records centres. Driven by the need to promote access to and use of archives, the study established that NAZ had resorted to making available the master-file and transmittal lists of unprocessed archives held in the records centre. This is an interesting development that needs to be pursued. Future research is therefore recommended to look into the feasibility of such a development, its implications on archival ethics and principles and every other aspect that may arise therefrom.
- Physical barriers were found to be amongst the biggest contributors to the relatively low levels in access and use of archives. To this end emerged the need for public archival institutions to go virtual. The aspect of virtual reality appears to be shunned and treated with much scepticism by archivists particularly in developing countries. The results of the current study showed that there were no intentions by NAZ to digitize its archival

collection let alone make it available online, yet virtual reality holds the potential to significantly boost the access and use levels of archives. It is therefore apparent that there are a lot of issues and dimensions that need to be ascertained by way of further research on the subject. The issue of virtual reality and the scepticism with which it is treated suggests that there are a lot of other underlying issues that need to be unearthed and accordingly addressed.

- As the current study continued to look for ways that can be employed to promote access to and use of archives, the issue of collaborations and partnerships came to the fore. However, the current study did not dig deep into the issue to ascertain the collaborations and partnerships that NAZ has entered into. Such a topic may need an extensive and separate research instead of being embedded in another research. Given the potential of collaborative efforts in improving access to public information and the public image of archival institutions, the current researcher unreservedly encourages further research on collaborations and partnerships in public archival institutions

## **7.8 Conclusion of the study**

Using a grounded theory research approach, the study sought to develop a framework for access to and use of archives. A number of issues relating to intellectual, bibliographic and physical access to archives were investigated. The issues pertained to:

- The influence that legal instruments have on access and use of public archives
- The use of public programming in promoting access and use of archives
- The use of print media and the internet to increase the visibility of archives
- The public perception of national archival institutions

- Reference services in public archives
- The barriers to physical access

Data yielded on the above stated issues and other emerging ones showed that the obstacles to accessing archives outweigh the initiatives to promote their utilization. In light of the research findings, it can be concluded that the main obstacles hindering improved access to and use of archives at NAZ include but may not be limited to:

- Access restrictions from legal instruments
- Weak archival legislation
- Absence of a national policy on access to public archives
- Absence of an institutional policy on access to public archives
- Absence of a standing committee on access to and use of archives
- Lack of a budget for public programming and outreach activities
- Lack of a planned schedule for public programming and outreach activities
- Lack of user studies
- Lack of audience research
- Lack of awareness on the existence of archives by members of the public
- Misconstrued views of the national archives by members of the public
- The existence of an escalating backlog of unprocessed archives
- Non-use of the print media
- Limited use of the radio and television
- Limited use of the social media platforms

- Inadequate retrieval tools
- Lack of special facilities for the physically challenged
- Centralized access

The consequences of the obstacles pinpointed above are that the goal to attain full access to and use of archives at NAZ may not only fail to be reached but the levels of access could continue to dwindle if appropriate measures are not put in place. To this effect, a framework is offered as a baseline on which archivists may salvage the situation and start moving towards increased access to and use of archives.

While the results of the study are certainly not ideal for improved access to and use of archives, it should be appreciated that several efforts were put in place by NAZ to promote the utilization of their holdings. The institution conducted a number of public programming and outreach activities and the archivists are confident of their skills and knowledge in putting their institution in the limelight and subsequently enhance the access and use levels of the nation's documentary heritage. NAZ archivists have the potential to improve the status quo. As such, NAZ is encouraged to consider implementing the ideas presented in the Enhanced Access and Use Framework.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: List of ICA principles on access to archives

1. The public has the right of access to archives of public bodies. Both public and private entities should open their archives to the greatest extent possible.
2. Institutions holding archives make known the existence of the archives, including the existence of closed materials, and disclose the existence of restrictions that affect access to the archives.
3. Institutions holding archives adopt a pro-active approach to access.
4. Institutions holding archives ensure that restrictions on access are clear and of stated duration, are based on pertinent legislation, acknowledge the right of privacy and respect the rights of owners of private materials.
5. Archives are made available on equal and fair terms.
6. Institutions holding archives ensure that victims of serious crimes under international law have access to archives that provide evidence needed to assert their human rights and to document violations of them, even if those archives are closed to the general public.
7. Users have the right to appeal a denial of access.
8. Institutions holding archives ensure that operational constraints do not prevent access to archives.
9. Archivists have access to all closed archives and perform necessary archival work on them.
10. Archivists participate in the decision-making process on access.



## Appendix B: Library and Archives Canada Access Policy Framework

### Library and Archives Canada Access Policy Framework

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#### 1. Effective date

The *Access Policy Framework* has been approved by Library and Archives Canada (LAC) Management Board and takes effect on 12 September 2016.

#### 2. Application

The *Access Policy Framework* applies to all activities across LAC undertaken to facilitate access to holdings.

This framework supersedes the former *Access Policy Framework* (2011). The *Access Policy Framework*, and its related suite, are informed by, and must be applied in a manner consistent with other LAC policy frameworks and instruments.

#### 3. Context

As set out in the *Library and Archives of Canada Act* (LAC Act), the objects and powers of LAC include facilitating access to Canada's Documentary Heritage and making that heritage known to Canadians and to anyone with an interest in Canada. LAC is responsible for acquiring, processing, preserving, and facilitating access to Canadian documentary heritage, which includes analogue and digital holdings acquired since 1872. This large collection includes published and unpublished material, textual records, maps, photographs, audio records, audiovisual records, medals, musical scores, artifacts, and stamps. LAC aims to render all of its holdings discoverable, available, and accessible to the greatest extent possible.

As both a memory institution and a government institution, LAC must carefully apply national and international professional standards and practices of library and archival science in the context of applicable legislation, regulations, and policies of the Government of Canada. These include, but are not limited to: the *LAC Act*, the *Access to Information Act*, the *Privacy Act*, the *Copyright Act*, the *Official Languages Act*, the *Federal Accountability Act*, the *Policy on Communications and Federal Identity* and the *Directive on Open Government*.

Globally, governments – including the Government of Canada – are seeking ways to expand open and universal access to their holdings, notably through digital means and open data initiatives. In Canada, governments and institutions have increased commitments to provide affordable broadband access, especially in rural areas. Additionally, factors such as the adoption of new technologies (e.g., smartphones, tablets) and new digital formats (e.g., 3D printed files) are revolutionizing how Canadians access, discover, and use content online. These new avenues also improve access to analogue content. Operating in a rapidly evolving digital and networked environment, LAC seeks to leverage these opportunities to enhance access to its collection. Given the vast extent of its holdings – both analogue and digital – LAC must strategically choose access facilitation-related activities that will best serve its clients across Canada, which include government organizations, private donors, universities, researchers, historians, students, librarians, archivists, genealogists, and the general public.

LAC is committed to taking measures proactively to provide maximum access to its holdings within its resources. Within the Government of Canada environment and LAC’s policy-centred framework, LAC will continue to:

- Provide and support client-centred programming and services;
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with stakeholders; and
- Endeavour to remove as many legal and policy restrictions as well as technological, geographical, and physical barriers to make holdings discoverable, available, and accessible.

LAC will also explore innovative approaches to render holdings available, as well as leverage its digital presence, to further engage Canadians in viewing, enhancing, using and sharing documentary heritage.

#### **4. Purpose**

Under the *LAC Act*, LAC is mandated to facilitate access to Canada’s documentary heritage and make that heritage known to its community of clients. The *Access Policy Framework* articulates LAC’s principles to fulfil its mandate.

This framework promotes access as an institutional outcome and ensures that LAC's policy approach and the principles underlying access facilitation activities are clear; that those roles and responsibilities within LAC are understood; and that LAC access facilitation activities are consistent with the institution's mandate.

## **5. Principles**

LAC's policy approach is to work toward providing access to the entire documentary heritage in its collection. Access facilitation-related activities are undertaken in a coordinated fashion and in a manner consistent with a set of principles that ensures documentary heritage can be found, identified, viewed, obtained and used.

### **5.1 Discoverable**

LAC continues to work toward making its holdings and associated metadata discoverable, so that Canadians or those with an interest in Canada can view information about their existence, description, location, and availability.

### **5.2 Available**

LAC works, where feasible, toward making its holdings and associated metadata free of legal and policy constraints so that Canadians or those with an interest in Canada can consult and use them.

### **5.3 Accessible**

LAC works toward removing physical, technological and geographical barriers that limit accessibility to its discoverable and available holdings and associated metadata to allow improved access to all digital and analogue content.

### **5.4 Collaborative**

LAC, as part of a larger library and archival community, seeks meaningful collaboration with clients, government institutions, memory institutions, not-for-profit organizations, and/or the private sector, both nationally and internationally.

LAC works with stakeholders and users to find innovative approaches to increase access to documentary heritage, as well as to enhance the democratization of knowledge through effective engagement of citizens.

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

The *Librarian and Archivist of Canada* is accountable for facilitating access to holdings and providing corporate leadership for the coordination, alignment, and integration of policy frameworks.

The *Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Operating Officer (COO)* is responsible for the overall management of LAC's activities for facilitating access to its holdings. The COO also advises the Librarian and Archivist on access policies, strategies, and approaches.

The *Corporate Secretary* is responsible for ensuring the development of the policy instruments at the framework, policy and directive levels and for ensuring that access facilitation activities undertaken in his/her sector align with this framework.

The *Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer* works closely with other sector heads to ensure the successful implementation of this Framework, including through providing the appropriate technical and physical infrastructure to support access facilitation activities.

The *Director General, Communications Branch* is responsible for the communications aspects of access facilitation activities at LAC, and for ensuring adherence to the Treasury Board Secretariat's *Policy on Communications and Federal Identity*, and *Standard on Web Accessibility*. He/she works closely with other sector heads to ensure successful implementation of this Framework.

The *Director, Strategic Research and Policy* is responsible for providing advice to support corporate leadership on the coordination, alignment, integration and monitoring of strategic policy and planning directions at LAC, including access facilitation policies and plans.

*Managers* are responsible for raising awareness, developing and ensuring that procedures, guidelines, as well as processes, align with this *framework* and related instruments.

*Staff* influence, develop and implement access facilitation development activities and processes aligned with this *framework* and related instruments.

## **7. Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The Director, Corporate Planning and Accountability will examine or evaluate the *Access Policy Framework* to measure its compliance, progress, effectiveness and the attainment of its objectives.

The review and monitoring of the *Access Policy Framework* and related policy instruments is the responsibility of the Director, Strategic Research and Policy with support from the operational areas responsible for access facilitation activities at LAC.

## **8. Consequences**

Consequences for non-compliance with the *Access Policy Framework* may include corrective measures from the Librarian and Archivist of Canada, Management Board, or the Chief Operating Officer.

## **9. Information**

Please address any questions about the *Access Policy Framework* to:  
Director, Strategic Research and Policy  
Library and Archives Canada  
550 de la Cité Boulevard  
Gatineau, Québec  
K1A 0N4

## **Appendix C: Letter requesting permission to conduct research at NAZ**

**To:** The Director  
National Archives of Zimbabwe  
P.O. Bag 7729  
Causeway  
Harare

**Date:** 28 June 2015

**Re: Request for permission to conduct a study at the National Archives of Zimbabwe**

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Dear Sir,

I am writing to kindly ask for your permission to carry out a research on access to and use of archival material at the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ). I am a PhD student at the University of South Africa (Department of Information Science) and a lecturer at the National University of Science and Technology (Department of Records and Archives Management). The aim of my study is to develop a framework that would improve the access level at NAZ. The issues under spotlight in the study include public programming, user studies, the use of digital technologies, policies on access and use of the archives, processing of archival material, legal instruments affecting access and use of the archives, infrastructural facilities at NAZ, finding aids and reference services

I am therefore kindly requesting to conduct interviews with the Deputy Director, practitioners working in the Departments of Public Archives and Research, Records Services and Technical Services (*Reprographic, Conservation, Automation, Oral History and Audio Visual*). I am also requesting to capture images as I make observations of the infrastructural and physical facilities available at NAZ. Your assistance to make this study a success would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Forget Chaterera

## **Appendix D: Letter seeking consent from NAZ practitioners**

Dear Participant,

I am kindly inviting you to participate in a research project that is aimed at developing a framework of access to and use of the documentary heritage at the National Archives of Zimbabwe. I am a Doctor of Literature and Philosophy student in the department of Information Science with the University of South Africa under the supervision of Professor Ngulube and Dr Rodriguez. My research project focuses on the three main pillars of access to the archives, namely bibliographic, intellectual and physical.

As archival management professionals, your responses are critical to the development of a framework that is envisaged to enhance access to and use of the archives at NAZ. I wish to inform you that all your responses will be kept confidential, responses will not be attributed to specific respondents and the information supplied shall be used only for the purpose of this research.

Should you have any queries or seek further clarity about the study, please do not hesitate to contact:

**The student-**Ms. F. Chaterera [rumbieforget@gmail.com](mailto:rumbieforget@gmail.com),

**The promoter-** Prof. P. Ngulube [ngulup@unisa.ac.za](mailto:ngulup@unisa.ac.za)

**The co-promoter** Dr. ADS. Rodrigues [trodriqu@unisa.ac.za](mailto:trodriqu@unisa.ac.za)

Thank you.

F. Chaterera

## Appendix E: Observation checklist for NAZ physical facilities

1. Are the doorways and halls wide enough for a wheelchair or for wheelchairs to pass each other going in the opposite directions? (NB\* They should be at least 32 inches wide for one wheel chair 60 inches for two wheel chairs).
2. Are there wheel chair accommodations in parking facilities, public assembly areas and restrooms?
3. Safety for people with vision impairments:
  - i) Are access routes free of debris, protrusions and other obstructions?
  - ii) Is the floor to ceiling clearance at least 80 inches?
  - iii) Are there alarm systems that provide visual and audio warnings?
  - iv) Can the counter tops and aisles be adjusted to accommodate wheelchairs?
4. Is there elevator access if the archives is on multiple floors?
5. Is there space for a researcher using a wheelchair in the research room?
  - In research rooms a portion of the service counters or desks must be between 28 and 34 inches from the floor
6. Can tables and chairs be moved to accommodate a wheelchair?
7. Are the surfaces stable, firm, and slip resistant?
8. Is there a carpet? If yes, is it securely attached and has a firm cushion, pad or backing (*The pile thickness should not be more than 1/2 inch, space in gratings should not be more than 1/2 inch*).
9. Numbers and letters on signage should not be less than 3 inches high.
  - i) Their actual height is determined from the distance they are to be seen using a width to height ratio of 3:5 and 1:1.



- ii) Letters and numbers should be raised  $\frac{1}{32}$  of an inch and be accompanied by Grade 2 Braille
- iii) Raised characters should be at least  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch but no more than 2 inches high.
- iv) Signage background should be non-glare
- v) the symbols should contrast favourably with the background
- vi) The sign should be mounted so that its centre is 60 inches above the surface or finished floor
- vii) Signs should be mounted, free of obstructions, so a person can get as close as 3 inches to the sign

10. The international symbol of accessibility, a stick drawing of a person sitting in a wheelchair, should be used to identify accessible facilities, elements, and spaces such as parking spaces, loading zones, entrances, and restrooms.

## Appendix F: Observation checklist for NAZ reference services

1. Do Finding aids at NAZ offer subject access to users?
  - a) Which method(s) of subject access are offered:
    - (i) Provenance P-method (ii) Content Indexing method (CI)?
2. Finding aids at NAZ - are they adequate given the expected standards?
3. Checklist on the availability of the fundamentals of the search room and archival reference services. The researcher checks on whether NAZ;
  - i) Provide access on an equal basis
  - ii) Has standard reference material
  - iii) Make their visitors sign into a register
  - iv) Keep a count of all telephone, mail, reference or other queries
  - v) Explain the contents and organisation of their archives to all new visitors
  - vi) Do not allow researchers to retrieve or re-shelve archival materials themselves
  - vii) Allow researchers to use unprocessed material
  - viii) Has a photocopying policy
  - ix) Has other copying services other than photocopying
  - x) Has clear informational, regulatory and directional signs
4. Search room rules check list
  - i) issues researcher's or reader's cards
  - ii) requires users to complete an application for research
  - iii) requests researchers to produce their identity cards
  - iv) requires researchers to leave their bags outside the research area
  - v) prohibits the consumption of food or drink
  - vi) instructs users to strictly use pencils

## **Appendix G: Interview questions to NAZ practitioners**

*NB\* (The questions below were not necessarily pre-determined or repeated with all the respondents. Most of the questions were formed out of the emerging issues and perspectives).*

1. Is there a written policy that guides NAZ personnel in providing access to archival materials?
2. Is there a written guide that helps archivists to decide on whether access to the requested material should be granted or denied?
3. Is NAZ in custody of restricted records that cannot be accessed by members of the public?
4. What kind of restrictions are they?
5. Are members of the public notified of the closed materials?
6. Have you received requests for records that are not yet open to members of the public?
7. Are there any exemptions for closed records that may be regularly requested?
8. Do archivists have access to closed records?
9. Where access to the requested record(s) is denied, does NAZ issue an official statement explaining the decision to the information requester?
10. What is included in the statement?
11. Are there unprocessed archives at NAZ?
12. What is the approximate volume of the unprocessed archives in cubic metres?
13. Is there a list for researchers indicating processed materials?
14. Are there archives of Zimbabwe that are being kept in other countries?

15. Do you at times receive physically challenged visitors?
16. Are there laid down procedures for responding to disability needs?
17. What facilities are in place to assist the physically challenged visitors?
18. Are researchers allowed to reproduce copyrighted material for the purpose of a study?
19. Have you ever received visitors who exceeded the carrying capacity of the reading room?
20. Is there a marketing department or public relations office?
21. Do you conduct outreach programmes?
22. Is there a planned schedule for outreach programmes?
23. Is there a specific budget for outreach programmes?
24. How often do you conduct outreach programmes?
25. Which outreach strategies are used by NAZ?
26. Do you face any challenges in executing outreach programmes?
27. Did you receive training or education in public programming?
28. What kind of challenges do you normally face?
29. Is there a promotion of access to information manual at NAZ?
30. Apart from the visitors' register, do you keep a record of first time visits?
31. Does NAZ participate in historical and national celebrations?

32. Which events has NAZ participated in?
33. Are there finding aids to help researchers identify the materials which they need?
34. What kind finding aids are available?
35. Are the finding aids automated?
36. Are the automated finding aids available online?
37. Do you conduct initial interviews where archivists ask a researcher about the specifics of the user's needs and goals?
38. Do you conduct searches on behalf of the patrons?
39. Do you assist researchers to evaluate information?
40. Do you continue to interact with researchers during their research?
41. Do you conduct exit interviews with researchers?
42. Do you respond to researcher's offsite requests that are done through the telephone, mail or email?
43. Are there reading room rules for researchers?
44. What elements are covered in your reading room rules?
45. Do archivists monitor the use of requested records in the reading room?
46. Are researchers allowed to take materials out of the reading room?
47. Is there a reading room guide that provides general information for researchers?
48. What is included in the reading room guide?

49. Does NAZ have a Website?

50. Does NAZ use the social media space to communicate with members of the public?

51. Which social media platform(s) are used by NAZ?

52. Is there anything of relevance to access and use of the archives at NAZ that you may want to bring to the attention of this study?

**Appendix H: Intercept interviews guide for archives users who were met at NAZ during the research**

1. How often do you visit NAZ?
2. What kind of research are you conducting?
3. Were you able to make use of their finding aids?
4. Did you find the finding aids helpful?
5. Were you asked about your needs and expectations before getting into the reading room?
6. After doing your research, were you asked if your needs were met or any other questions to establish if you were satisfied with their services?
7. Did you get any assistance in evaluating the information for your research?
8. Have you ever made requests through the telephone or e-mail?
9. What is your general comment regarding the services you have received at NAZ?
10. Which areas would you wish improved?

**Thank you for your time**

## **Appendix I: Guide to intercept interviews with members of the public**

1. Do you know the National Archives of Zimbabwe?
2. What does it do?
3. Have you ever been to NAZ?
4. How often do you visit NAZ?
5. When was the last time you were at NAZ?
6. For what reason(s) did you visit NAZ?



**Appendix J: Approval letter to carry out research at NAZ**

