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**Research support by Zimbabwe academic librarians: redressing the imbalance**

Academic Librarians acknowledge that research support is not well developed as the teaching and learning support. Ostensibly, researchers also believe that librarians are too focused on providing resource services for teaching and learning. It becomes axiomatic and safe to conclude that librarians have not been balancing their service to all the constituencies they serve. This imbalance can easily be attributed to the lack of relevant skills to support research activities beyond the traditional service of collecting and organising resources. Against this backdrop, a study was carried out in four Zimbabwe State Universities to establish how subject librarians and the subject teams are redressing the imbalance.

The study focused on how the librarians are gaining skills and knowledge required to serve this constituency; activities they undertake for the purpose of enhancing research support services; skills required to support research services and challenges they faced. A survey was done and results show that librarians gained skills through workshops, conferences, seminars and colloquiums on research, personal development, partnerships, and through conducting research. Teaching information literacy, development of institutional repositories and awareness campaigns were some of the activities done by subject librarians in support of researchers and research activities. However, in trying to support researchers, academic librarians face a number of challenges, among them big sizes of the student body, lack of support from the parent institution, financial constraints to purchase materials required by researchers and lack of subject knowledge in the supported area. It was recommended that academic librarians should strive to balance their services to all constituencies through acquisition of new skills and roles. Having an in-depth understanding of the subject area one is supporting was also encouraged so as to build confidence.

**Keywords:** Research Support; Academic Librarians; Zimbabwe