

# DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my independent investigations except where I have indicated my indebtedness to other sources.

It has not already been accepted in substance for any other degree, and it is not being submitted concurrently for any other degree.

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# ABSTRACT

This study aimed at assessing the effects of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) on the accessibility of medical research information by medical research personnel in Zambia. It was an exploratory study drawing both quantitative and qualitative data from 9 medical research institutions in Zambia using a self administered questionnaire. From literature the study revealed that medical research being a dynamic field requires the assimilation of new technologies and skills in order to develop and contribute to the quality of human life. From primary sources this study has revealed some of the dynamics of how ICTs have affected the generation, processing, storage and dissemination of medical research information. More specifically, the study has assessed the effects, both negative and positive, that the introduction of ICTs has brought to the scientists, who study biological systems to understand the causes of disease and other health problems in Zambia.

The study has also revealed that medical research institutions in Zambia do use ICTs in accessing medical research information and that there has been an effect of ICTs on the accessibility of medical research information by medical research personnel in Zambia. It further reveals that ICTs are utilized in accessing medical research information by medical research personnel and that medical research information is more accessible to medical research personnel with the introduction of ICTs. On further analysis of the research findings, the study revealed an above average satisfaction level of medical research personnel in Zambia with their use of ICTs in accessing medical research information.

The study showed a disparity in the trends of use of “Traditional ICTs” “modern ICTs” and “emerging ICTs” The study therefore concludes that ICTs being tools that facilitate the production, processing, transmission and storage of information have the potential and have in effect brought about complimentary and wider access to information that covers a wide range of issues including copyright, open source, privacy and security. To this effect the study made recommendations to improve utilization of ICTs in terms of ICT procurement and acquisition strategy, ICT use and application in health/medicine policy and ICT training policy and medical training.

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# CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This Dissertation, of Edward Chanda Mwalimu, is approved in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Masters degree in Library and Information Studies (MLIS).

Signed..... Date.....

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Signed..... Date.....

## **DEDICATION**

To my father Edward Chisenga Mwalimu and my mother Ester Mwalimu whose interests in education will forever remain an inspiration. To my elder sister Mrs Lillian Mwalimu Banda, Marian Mwalimu, Mavis Kazembe and to all my nephews and nieces.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

In my submission to the Lord, God Almighty, I thank and praise Him for all his graces in the knowledge I have acquired in my studies. “Wait patiently for the Lord. Hope is trust God to act in his good timing”.

My deepest appreciation go to my supervisor Dr Vitalicy Chifwepa for his leadership and proficient ideas, encouragement, suggestions and support without which this study would not have been possible or indeed taken a completely different dimension. Exploratory research was the last thing on my mind.

Special thanks go to Mr. Brian Chileshe and Ms. Gertrude Mwewa who helped with data collection, editing and organisation of my work.

Thanks to all the members of staff in the Department of Library and Information Studies. You are a good team.

My heartfelt thanks go to all those who helped me during my data collection especially to all the respondents. Thank you for sparing some time out of your busy schedules to talk to me. Finally thanks to everyone who helped me during my study in one way or the other as the list is endless.

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## **ACRONYMS**

ACASI – Audio Computer Assisted Self Interview

CHCHS – Chainama Hills College Hospital of Health Sciences

CIDRZ – Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia

CVRI – Central Veterinary Research Institute

GPS – Global Positioning System

GRZ – Government Republic of Zambia

HIMS – Health Management Information System

HIS – Health Information Systems

HIT – Health Information Technologies

ICTs – Information Communication Technologies

IP – Internet Protocol

ISPs – Internet Service Providers

ITU – International Telecommunication Union

LIMS – Laboratory Information Management System

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

MRC – Malaria Research Centre

NGOs – Non Governmental Organisations

NISIR – National Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research

NMCC – National Malaria Control Centre

PC – Personal Computer

PDA – Personal Digital Assistant

SSI – Sustainable Science Institute

TDRC – Tropical Disease Research Centre

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UTH – University Teaching Hospital

ZEHRPH – Zambia Emory HIV/AIDS Research Project