

UNFETTERED RESILIENCE OF SCHOOL ARCHIVISTS IN MAINTAINING THE VALUE OF RECORDS TO SUPPORT THE NEW ZEALAND SCHOOL CURRICULUM

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<https://doi.org/10.34074/proc.2205016>

Resilience in the workplace and community



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This publication may be cited as:

Boamah, E. (2022). Unfettered Resilience of School Archivists in Maintaining the Value of Records to Support the New Zealand School Curriculum. In E. Papoutsaki and M. Shannon (Eds.), *Proceedings: 2021 ITP Research Symposium, 25 and 26 November* (pp. 206–221). Auckland: ePress, Unitec, Te Pūkenga. <https://doi.org/10.34074/proc.2205016>

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ISBN 978-0-473-59389-6



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the key function of school archives and to highlight the important roles school archivists play in maintaining the value of records to support the curriculum. Although school archives play an important role in the school, little has been researched in New Zealand about the challenges school archivists face and their unfettered resilience to push through those obstacles to maintain the value of school records to support the curriculum. This article is part of a study in progress that employs an interpretive qualitative approach to understand the perspectives of school archivists on their purpose. The perspectives of seven school archivists from four regions of New Zealand are presented. The findings reveal the core functions of the school archive as a source of information for researchers, family members of past students, and corporate entities. The archive supports teaching and learning by providing teachers with useful and unique teaching aids from the collection. It also serves to preserve the identity and memory of the school. Specific tasks of the school archivist include collecting items for the archive, organising the collection, reporting, and displaying the materials for easy access and use by those who need them. Certain resources enable the archivist to achieve their purposes, but their passion is a key enabler. The main challenges school archivists face relate to issues with training and skills development, resourcing, recognition and awareness, inadequate facilities and collaboration. The study has useful implications for archival research in New Zealand as it discusses an area that has not been explored before. This article is limited to the perspectives of only seven school archivists, meaning it can be difficult to form a generalisation of school archivists in the whole of New Zealand. However, the study is still in progress and the author hopes to gather more perspectives in order to make a comprehensive generalisation.

KEYWORDS

School archives, archivists, school records, archival research, information management

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is twofold. Firstly, to explore the key functions of the school archive and the main challenges school archivists face in performing their role. Secondly, to highlight the unfettered resilience of New Zealand school archivists to effectively maintain the value of school records and relevant school heritage materials despite the many challenges they face. The term 'resilience' has been applied in many disciplines and it has been defined as people's capacity to maintain psychological and physical wellbeing in the face of adversities (Zhao et al., 2021). In this study, 'unfettered resilience' is defined as the unrestrained capabilities of people to push through obstacles and difficulties to achieve their purpose and value. In this context, school archivists' resistance to challenges as they maintain the value of school records is examined.

One of the key industry areas of interest to Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) in New Zealand is information management. The information management industry comprises galleries, libraries, archives, museums, and information and records management (GLAMiR). A key component of information management is archives and records management. Analysis of relevant literature suggests that the archivist's role is central to information management functions within the GLAMiR sector, yet it is one of the least recognised by key stakeholders and is inadequately resourced (Chawner, 2015; Corbett, 2019). For example, it has been emphasised that the limited permitted exceptions for archives in the Copyright Act 1994 are an obstacle to archives and museums

attaining efficient information management (Corbett, 2019). Also, it has been found that courses in archives and recordkeeping qualifications have traditionally too few student numbers to justify separate programmes for bachelor and master degrees (Chawner, 2015, p. 18). The inadequate attention received by the archives sector, and the challenges archivists face in New Zealand, affect all types of archives. But it appears the school archives sector is the most hard-hit. Thus, because of the interest shown by the ITPs in information management, this author is motivated to share some of the issues affecting school archives management with the ITP community. The school archives aspect of the whole archives and records management field appears to have received little attention in the New Zealand archives and records management literature. This study is an attempt to fill that gap.

Schools produce rich historical records such as yearbooks; photographs of past school events; letters; school magazines and newspapers; and sports, drama and other cultural paraphernalia. The records that have archival value are kept and maintained in the school archives. The records in the school archives are different from the schools' official records, such as students' personal information, admission and enrolment records, progress records, results and staff records (details on the different types of school records are provided in the literature review section). School archives not only document the history and culture of the school, but sometimes also reflect the history of the community in which the school is located, the region, and the nation. Experts in school archives identify that learning about school records and archives can benefit students in many ways and can have a direct connection to their lives (Tilley, 2008). Teachers can also understand how to effectively use some of the materials in the archives as teaching aids; however, school archivists do not appear to receive the necessary recognition and aren't well supported to effectively maintain these records. The literature discussing the state of archives in New Zealand examines many types of archives but fails to mention school archives (Sanderson, 2014), which indicates that even archival researchers may have forgotten about them. That is one reason why this study is important – to create awareness of the importance of the functions of school archives and the role of the school archivist in maintaining the value of the school's historical records to support the delivery of the curriculum. Initial engagement with school archivist groups reveals some of the challenges they face. For instance, some do not receive much support from key stakeholders, including principals and tumuaki, boards, and proprietors of training and professional-development courses. Most school archivists are not given full-time positions because their roles are usually not considered as important as others in the school. This study seeks to examine the key roles archives play in maintaining the value of school records, and how their function supports the school's activities, including curriculum delivery. The overarching aim of this study is to highlight the importance of the school archives and the usefulness of the role of the school archivist. A key objective is to emphasise that the school archives and the role the archivists play in the school can be harnessed to support the effective delivery of the curriculum. This paper is part of research in progress that explores the perspectives of archivists on the key challenges they are facing in the performance of their task. The study is guided by the following research questions:

- What are the core functions of the school archive?
- What are the main challenges school archivists face in performing their roles?
- What enables a school archivist to be resilient to achieve their purpose?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature analysis in this paper hinges on two key concepts – school archives and resilience. As indicated in the introductory section, there do not appear to be any studies discussing the functions of school archives, the roles of the school archivist, and the issues they face in New Zealand. The Society of American Archivists identifies seven specific types:

- College and university archives preserve the materials relating to a specific university or college and make the materials accessible to the institution, its alumni, and the public.

- Corporate archives are an archival department within a company or corporate body. They preserve the records of the business of the company and materials of archival value in that corporation. They usually exist to serve the needs of staff. The level of public access depends on the type of corporation.
- Government archives are repositories that collect materials relating to local, state, or national government entities. Examples of this group of archives include the National Archives, City Archives, etc.
- Religious archives are collections relating to the traditions or institutions of a major faith, denomination within a faith, or individual places of worship. Depending on the type of religious group, the materials kept in such archives may or may not be available to the public.
- Special collections consist of materials from or about specific individuals, families and organisations deemed to have significant historical value.
- Museums are a type of archive that collects items of historical significance with greater emphasis on exhibiting those items. Such collections are usually diverse artefacts or artworks rather than books and paper records, etc. (Society of American Archivists, 2021).

The main resource of archival literature in New Zealand is *Informing New Zealand*, published by the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, in which experts discuss several information management topics, including archival concepts and issues. One of the main chapters is dedicated to discussing the different types of archival organisations in New Zealand (Sanderson, 2014). The specific types of archives identified by Sanderson include:

- Local authority archives, including archives of the central government, which are usually associated with the local councils of various cities. They are regulated by the Public Records Act (2005).
- Collecting archives which largely house private archives accessible to the New Zealand public. Specific examples of this type of archives in New Zealand include the Alexander Turnbull Library, Hocken Library, and other university archives.
- Religious archives, similar to what is defined in the list of the Society of American archivist, specific examples of this type of archives in New Zealand include the Society of Mary archive, the Home of Compassion in Wellington, Sisters of Mercy in Auckland, the archives of the Methodist Church, the archives of the Presbyterian Church, the archives of the Salvation Army, New Zealand Jewish Archives and the Rātana Archives.
- Business archives in New Zealand are similar to what the Society of American Archivists identifies as corporate archives. Specific examples in New Zealand include the Fletcher Trust Archive, Challenge Corporation Limited, Tasman Pulp and Paper Company Limited, etc.
- Media-specific archives are a type of archive established in New Zealand to deal with records created in formats that require specific care. Specific examples include the New Zealand Sound Archives, the New Zealand Film Archive, etc.
- Iwi archives focus on Māori documents (Sanderson, 2014).

As can be observed from the examples above, there are detailed descriptions of several types of archives except school archives. This study, therefore, seeks to focus on school archives and highlight the importance of the school archivist's role not only to the schools they serve but also to the communities and regions the schools are located.

School archives

The Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga provides schools with guidelines to learn about the management of school records and access. Under those guidelines, administration staff, librarians, archivists, principals, tumuaki, boards and proprietors are all required to learn about the archiving and disposing of school records under the Public Records Act 2005 (Ministry of Education, 2022a). The Public Records Act 2005 does not specifically make provision for the management of school records, but it allows Archives New Zealand to actively care for documents that are identified as important for New Zealand history, covering all records, which also include school records. Under this provision, every public office and the local authority must create and maintain full and

accurate records of its affairs, in accordance with normal, prudent business practices, including the records of any matter that is contracted out to an independent contractor (Public Records Act, 2005). Based on this provision, the Ministry of Education has developed an information pack for schools to guide them on the types of records they must create, maintain and archive. This record schedule comprises six record categories:

- *Student records.* Includes enrolment records, attendance records, admission and withdrawal records, progress records relating to individual students, punishment records, and students' work.
- *Governance.* Board minutes and agenda, charters, strategic plans and goals documents, annual reports, school policies, Board of Trustee (BOT) election administration records, and Board of Trustees (BOT) correspondence.
- *Personnel.* Personnel records of staff and principals, payroll, salaries, leave, staff attendance, staff grievances and disputes, general recruitment administration, training, and development correspondence, and accident register.
- *Finance.* Routine accounting records, loans and investments, budgeting and financial reporting, funding, insurance policies, claims, audit records, and records of fraud and theft.
- *Property and administration.* Land ownership, leases, occupancy licenses, equipment leases, building plans, property maintenance, disposal of major capital assets, stores, supplies, asset register, vehicle records, contracts, tender reports and documentation, routine administration, and teaching materials.
- *Historical.* Photographs, major school publications, newsletters and circulars, newspaper clippings, documentation of significant school events, former Department of Education filmstrips, memorabilia, and records related to a school's special character (integrated schools) or designated character (schools established under Section 156 of the Education Act 1989) (Ministry of Education, 2022b).

Although not all schools may create or keep records in all the categories above, and the examples provided may not be exhaustive, schools should still be able to fit their records into a relevant category. The Ministry of Education's School Records Fact Sheet defines a clear process and authority on how long these types of records can be kept, why they have to be kept, and what needs to happen to them when they are of no further use to the school. The records that are of long-term value are identified and kept as the school's archives (Ministry of Education, 2016). Records that are considered to have broader archival value (particularly examples from the first five categories) are eventually required to be sent to Archives New Zealand to be kept for the long term. A careful look at the Ministry of Education Fact Sheet on school records retention and disposal schedule reveals:

1. Admission and withdrawal registers, punishment records, minutes and agenda of the BOT meetings, strategic plans, annual reports, significant school policies, national or internal awards, accident forms, etc., are sent to Archives New Zealand after they are kept in the school for a period between 10–25 years.
2. Other records such as enrolment records, daily attendance registers, student progress records, students' work, operational correspondence, lease agreements, occupancy licenses, equipment leases, and all other staff personnel records, including payrolls, salaries, leave, etc., can be destroyed by the school after a period between 7–12 years.
3. The school's historical records including; photographs of classes, staff, sports teams, cadets, educational activities, class trips, social events, musical/staged productions, reunions, annual yearbooks, magazines, newsletters, recorded oral histories, ceremonial occasions, routine correspondence, advertising, ministry circular/gazettes, training brochures, etc., are kept by the school for as long as needed (Ministry of Education, 2022b).

This distinction between records retention and disposal shows that establishing a school archive is different from keeping and maintaining official school records. The materials kept in the school archives basically comprise those in the third category. A school archive is, therefore, the historical collection of the school and its associated backstories. According to Tilley (2008), the primary purposes of a school archive can be defined as:

- A repository for the collection and preservation of historically valuable documents relating to the history of the school or the community, which otherwise would be lost.
- Constituting an element of a programme for teaching research-related skills to students.

The core function of the archive is to collect and maintain records of enduring value (Society of American Archivists, 2022). Thus, obtaining records of value to the school, and preserving them for as long as needed by the school, is its key function. Fernekes and Rosenberg emphasise that collecting and documenting school history helps to build an important memory programme, however highlighting and promoting the importance and functions of the archives to the school's community can be a daunting challenge (2008, p. 154). The school archives provide tangible evidence that can exist for a long time to demonstrate memories and meanings of significant events in the lives of participants, especially alumni (Mackey, 2012). Human tendency to project emotions onto artifacts as a means of managing inexpressible feelings and triggered memories offers some explanation for reactions to such objects (Mackey, 2012). School archives reveal how an institution's legacy is cultivated and preserved and how all the 'stuff' the school collects over time can reveal the culture of the place (St Germain, 2016).

Resilience

There are numerous studies on the demonstration or application of resilience, in various disciplines including psychology (Knutson et al., 2021; D'Costa et al., 2021;), healthcare (Fu et al., 2021; Giri & Maurya, 2021), social and community groups (West et al., 2021; Shikimoto, et al., 2021; Shevell & Denov, 2021) and library and information studies (Swanson, 2021). A common element in these studies is that a significant change presented critical challenges that the professionals in the situations discussed did not shrink from. Instead they rose to the challenges, adapted to the changes, and their capacity to adapt at different levels within a system enabled them to maintain high-quality care and make significant differences. School archivists in New Zealand appear to be making similar adaptations to the challenges they face. That may explain why they show unfettered resilience and achieve progress in their role of maintaining the value of records to support the curriculum. The study seeks a deeper understanding of this resilience.

APPROACH

An interpretive qualitative approach is employed for this study because little is known about the role of school archivists and the issues they are facing – a deeper understanding of the issues is required – thus a qualitative approach is suitable. The main concern of a qualitative approach is to find ways of making sense of a context and its subjective meanings (Walsham, 2006, p. 320). Such methods are exploratory, and researchers use them to explore a topic about which little is known (Creswell 2003, p. 74). They are helpful in leading to a specific outcome (Kaplan & Maxwell 2005, p. 33). The population for the study is school archivists. Data is collected through semi-structured interviews to gather perspectives from a sample of school archivists from high schools and colleges in various regions of New Zealand, including Wellington, Waikato, Christchurch and Auckland (Appendix 1).

Initial contacts with school archivists in the Wellington region were established and a snowball sampling technique was used to identify other interviewees, with the hope of achieving saturation after the 20th interview. The study is still in progress and seven interviews have been conducted to date. A thematic analysis technique is used to identify key ideas. All interviews are recorded using a digital voice-recorder and transcribed for ease of analysis. Emerging concepts and key ideas are grouped into relevant themes to fully understand the role of school archives and the issues school archivists are facing. (Interviewees are currently labelled Participant 1 to Participant 7.)

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

The findings presented (from the seven interviews conducted at the time of writing) for the conference proceedings are preliminary and therefore limited, but nevertheless necessary, to create awareness of this study and to attract

more interviewees. Future interviews may shed further light on these preliminary findings and reveal new themes that may more strongly represent the general perspectives of school archivists in New Zealand.

Types of records

Most of the records found in the school archives in this study are memorabilia of the schools' past, collected in an attempt to preserve heritage. These materials include photographs of major sports events; awards; visits from famous former staff and students; class photos; reunions; jerseys of past students playing in national sports teams; old school uniforms showing how they have changed over time, to mention just a few. Records relating to governance, personnel, finance and students' information were not found in the archives. Interviewees explained that these records are usually destroyed by the school administration when the scheduled disposal is due. For instance Participant 3 and Participant 2 described their perspectives as:

The school archivist is usually not involved in the decision to keep or destroy such records. They are not kept here. The administrators have a separate room to keep [these]. I only look after the materials you see here [pointing to some memorabilia of the school history]. (Participant 3)

When I [started working here], everything was scattered here [pointing to the historical materials]. I think they just dumped any material they are no longer using. But as you can see, I am arranging them gradually. There are other documents, but the administrators keep them in a separate room. I do not see those materials. The old magazines and newsletters are all kept here. The principal recently gave me some old correspondence, which I think are of good archival value. I've asked [the principal] to buy me more boxes to arrange those, and he has agreed, which is good. Then I'll use the glass cabinets for the trophies. I saw a colleague does that in their school and I'm trying to do something similar here. (Participant 2)

In other words, not every record of enduring value is kept in the school archive. Also, school archivists do not have much authority to determine what type of record goes in the school archive, although the Ministry of Education Fact Sheet mandates school archivists to collect and maintain all school records in accordance with the Public Records Act (2005) of New Zealand.

CORE FUNCTIONS OF THE ARCHIVES

Perspectives of the seven archivists engaged so far in this study reveal certain key functions archives perform in the school system, including those described in this section.

Sources of information

The school archive is an important source for researchers wanting information about the history of the school. According to the interviewees, such researchers are usually old students wanting some memories of their time in school to share. Sometimes families of old students, who have passed on, contact the archivist for information about the school life of their loved ones. There are also times when family members pull information from the school to surprise their loved ones on special events such as birthdays. For instance, Participant 5 explained that their archive had one major project recently where a mother was putting a book together with a professional photographer for her son's 50th birthday celebration. *"That was a lot of work for me. But I enjoyed it and felt fulfilled for helping them this way"* (Participant 5). The interview comments further reveal that the school archive is also a source of useful information for corporate entities who require certain facts about past staff members, particularly if they have gone on to great things. In this regard: *"One time, I was contacted by the literary executor of... [a named estate]. One of our teachers used to work with him and continued correspondence. But, alas, we don't hold the letters"* (Participant 6). Thus, the information provided by the school archives is useful not only to members of the school community but also to families and other entities external to the school.

Supporting teaching

When it comes to the school community, the archives support curriculum delivery by providing useful information for teachers to use in class. Some of the materials in the archives are used by teachers as teaching aids. Such teaching materials help students to understand some of the historical events of the school or the community where the school is located. This can assist their learning. Where necessary, some of the teachers invite the archivists into the classroom to talk about the backstories associated with the materials and the histories of the school. The interview comments reveal that this way of teaching history does not mean that archives can fully support the delivery of the new history curriculum for New Zealand schools. The New Zealand school history curriculum is a different form of history, with a broader narrative that goes beyond the history of the school. The history curriculum includes the narrative of the community and the whole country, but the history of the school focuses only on the narrative of the school. Participant 1, for instance, described this function of the archives:

Whereas I would love to think that the archivist would be involved in the new school history curriculum, I do sort of wonder in real terms. I guess it will be different for all schools. Yes, I do 'teach' the school history unit at ... [name of school] to Year 7s, but that is more to inculcate them into the ... [school] environment, traditions and history, than the school's place in New Zealand's history or local community – and [the person this school is named after] himself is/was a very complicated character for 11-year-olds to deal with. However, this is not a reason not to promote school archives.

In other words, even though the archives support teaching with materials in their collection, including the teaching of history, it can effectively only support the teaching of the history of the school, not the history of the whole country, as the narratives of history can be different from school to school and community to community.

Preserving identity and memory

Another function of the archives that came through in the participant interviews is the preservation of the schools' identity and memory for the future. The uniqueness of the school and its distinctive character, values and principles can be maintained over the year through the memorabilia, records and artefacts that are kept in the archives to remind students, staff and all stakeholders of what the school stands for. This helps the school to improve cherished values and do away with principles that are no longer relevant because of changes in their community. The archives, therefore, perform several tasks and roles to ensure that materials and their backstories are preserved for as long as needed.

KEY TASKS OF THE SCHOOL ARCHIVIST

The engagement with archivists reveals several specific tasks they perform, including both archive-related and non-archive-related tasks. Analysis of the comments shows the following archive-related tasks:

Collecting

The archivists collect materials and information relating to the school and after assessing their archival value, process them for long-term keeping. The materials can be anything that the school regards to have heritage significance, including those listed in the Ministry of Education's School Records Fact Sheet (discussed in Literature Review). These materials come in both physical and digital forms. The ability of the archivist to collect and retain any of these forms of archival materials depends on their skills and interest in the use of specific technologies. Participant 3, for instance, described the extent he goes to sometimes to collect archival information from some of the past students. He identifies elderly former students, preferably in their 70s, 80s and 90s, then he travels to their homes to listen to their stories about life in the school during their time as students. He will record these stories on video and keep them on the school's websites and social media platforms as digital archives. Other archivists stated that they do not trust digital platforms. They prefer print material, converting materials that come in digital forms

into print form for safe keeping. In describing some of the processes they follow to collect materials for the archives, Participant 4 said:

I take a proactive approach to history. That is a great deal of collecting items, particularly as I am trying to print some items like Covid emails. I don't trust the Cloud. We accession donations only now. But this is in a Word document, so they are searchable, and I am also creating finding aids for collection items and research I have done to date, so easy to check if we hold anything. Work in progress!

In other words, the archivist's discretion is instrumental in the collecting of items, and the form of the materials depends on their interest in specific types of technologies used in collecting and keeping the archive.

Organising

The archivists follow various processes to organise and maintain the collections of their schools. They apply different forms of cataloguing, listings, indexing processes, and techniques for adding metadata to order the school's historical information. These processes enable easy access and use of the collection by those who need it. Because of their level of skills and training, not all archivists can follow these tasks effectively under standard archival practices. But they find their own ways to ensure that materials are well organised and made as easily accessible as possible. Participant 7, for instance, was amazed other archivists find time to catalogue the materials in their collection:

I only try to keep up with filling and running a database, which means uploading all the photographs and adding metadata each year. But also trying to get previously digitised materials as well as historical items that have been scanned or are new donations. Big job.

Thus, organising archival materials improves access as it enables the archivist to provide swift and effective responses to requests. But school archivists do not follow the same pattern of organisational processes because of differences in their skill levels and knowledge of archive management.

Reporting

A key task performed by the school archivist is to write reports in various forms about their work and activities for different stakeholders including school heads and principals. Apart from writing formal reports to update principals and boards on the activities and the state of the archives, the archivists also write articles for school magazines, yearbooks and the school newsletters. These articles help students, staff, and other members of the school community as well as stakeholders to understand the nature and purpose of the archives, and the importance of keeping the materials for the school's heritage and memory. These reports and articles are important ways for the archivist to create awareness of the archives in the school community.

Displaying

Another key task of archivists is to create awareness of the archives in the school through displays. The archivists periodically display materials to the school community and the public. Most of the archivists interviewed explain that they plan to continue mounting such exhibitions as they not only remind the school community of the existence of the archives but also help people to know what they can request from the archives, how they can search for those materials, and how the information can be of importance to them. The displays also help the archivists to understand which of the materials are most popular and how best they can be preserved for as long as possible.

ENABLERS

The interview data revealed certain elements that enable archivists to perform their tasks and help the archive to achieve its functions. Some of the enablers identified include key resources provided to the archivists by their schools. The resources include tablets and computers to help perform not only their archival work, but also other necessary work that the school sometimes calls upon them to do when needed. Most archivists are also provided with comfortable workstations and storage spaces. Although some of these spaces are challenging to work in, they still enable the archivists to achieve their purpose.

Most of the schools have specific pages on their websites that are dedicated to their online archives. Such online spaces help with the display of some of the archival materials and provide a useful opportunity to share information about the archives and the work the archivists do. In addition to the websites, most of the schools have dedicated social media platforms which also enable connections between the archivist and users of the archives. Such social media platforms, mostly Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, are used by the archivists to initiate discussions about some of the materials in the archives and attract contributions of ideas from users and stakeholders on their value and how to preserve them. Furthermore, some of the archives receive support in terms of funds and aid from past students' associations to augment what the archivist receives from their schools. The archivists also explained that communities such as archivist groups, student associations and school boards have been very instrumental in enabling them to achieve progress in their management of the archives. Above all, the passion of the archivists has been the key enabler to pushing them through all the challenging situations they face in maintaining the archives.

CHALLENGES

From the perspectives of archivists interviewed in this study, the main challenges they face in the performance of their tasks relate to expertise, or lack of professional training and skills development, resourcing, time, space, recognition, and the lack of awareness of the existence of the archives on the part of key stakeholders. These issues affect the effective maintenance and preservation of the collection.

Training and skills development

Most of the archivists in this study do not have professional qualifications in archives administration. There is a serious lack of skilled archivists in the school sector. According to the interviewees, most of the schools they know shared the same professional archivist for a while, who used to visit to offer advice. Most school archivists learn archiving skills on the job by taking advantage of training opportunities through professional-development workshops and conferences to develop their knowledge. In describing how they receive training and skills development Participant 1 said:

I have attended several ARANZ conferences, especially when they dealt with education matters ... used to be every second year ... I am not a member. I have also attended several workshops days up in Auckland with the school archivist there and I learned a lot. But somehow, the archiving of school history has been subsumed into school records management and the last Auckland session was totally on that ... the retention and disposal schedule. The line between the role of school administration and archiving is not always a clear one.

Thus, school archivists need to be supported with resources to develop their skills and expertise to enable them to effectively manage their archives.

Resourcing

Resources are key to the success of any venture, and they came in many different forms including time, space, funds and collaboration. The archivists reveal that they can see a lot of training opportunities but require financial support from the school. However, not every school has enough finances to support its archivists to attend professional-

development programmes. The archivists emphasised that funding is one of the major issues, as most schools are expected to pay their archivists from the schools' operational grants. Participant 4, for instance, stated:

Having also been a school librarian for many years, I know that funds for the archives have been one that has been cut back significantly in schools' operational grants. Some schools get support from the pupils' associations. But not all schools have wealthy past pupils' associations to make up the difference, and there will always be the issue of succession planning, which continues to affect funding.

Other archivists also commented that their principals have explained that the school budget is inadequate to fully cover maintaining the archives. They receive promises every year that the school archives would be included in the following year's budget, but it never happens. Due to limited support, some archivists use their own resources to attend training workshops and conferences to develop skills in managing the archives. Using personal funds to support training and development is a gesture that needs to be recognised and commended. Archivists believe they have issues with how their efforts are recognised in the school community.

Recognition

The archivists interviewed in this study perceive that they need recognition for the task they are performing. Most of them complain that they are usually not involved in decision-making processes by the school, especially when it comes to what records to keep in the archive, or to destroy. This issue also affects the collecting of materials and their value for the archives. In some schools, the administrators or other staff members keep what they want in separate places. The archivist only looks after school memorabilia that has been given to them, and does not have access to other forms of records, which they could collect for the archive. Participant 2, for instance, stated:

Without my two volunteers, it would be a lonely job since there is not a great deal of engagement and appreciation from the school. Nobody recognises that we are here. Fortunately, I get some support from the Old Boys' Association. They come here most of the time for different types of information to enable the organisation of their events. Apart from them, it does not look like other people in the school know that we are here. Things may change with a new Headmaster.

Another archivist indicated that when they started their job, everything was scattered. The staff of the school found an unused space in the attic and dumped material they were no longer using there, without telling the archivist. It took the archivist a lot of time to arrange the materials as the dumping continues. The staff did not seem to recognise that a lot of work was being done to put some order in the arrangement of the materials.

In other words, not every record of enduring value in the school finds its way into the archives because some schools do not recognise the importance of involving the archivist in the effective collecting of materials. Also, archivists do not have much authority in the school to determine what type of record goes into the archive, although the Ministry of Education Fact Sheet mandates school archivists to collect and maintain all school records, following the Public Records Act (2005) of New Zealand.

Inadequate facilities

Because the majority of the materials in the archives are memorabilia that do not require strict conservation conditions, most archivists believe that they do not require sophisticated facilities to maintain their collections. Yet the facilities available are mostly woefully inadequate. There are inadequate storage rooms and spaces, limited or no storage cabinets, poor temperature control and poor storage conditions, causing the fast deterioration of the materials. Most of the schools visited have had their archival storage constantly moved from various rooms, chambers, parts of buildings, disused toilet/bathroom spaces – none of which are conducive for keeping archives.

Inadequate collaboration

Working together with other key stakeholders is essential for archivists as most of them are new to the archiving profession. Some of those that archivists want to collaborate with include teachers, school administration staff, school librarians, principals, tumuaki, board members, proprietors, and other archivists' groups. But most stakeholders do not even know that their schools have an archive to think of collaborating with. Most of the archivists engaged so far are working in secondary schools. Some of them were not sure whether other levels – primary and intermediate schools – had archives. They collaborate best with archivists from other secondary schools because they understand the issues they face. Some of the archivists indicated that they have attended workshops where the presenters were archivists from other school levels; the issues discussed were completely different from what they are facing in the secondary school and it was difficult for them to understand.

Lack of awareness of the archivist role

From the perspectives of the archivists interviewed so far, there is a lack of awareness on the part of stakeholders about the importance of the role of the archives in school. Archivists believe their work is very significant in supporting the successful delivery of the curriculum. This belief stems from seeing some teachers making use of archival material to support teaching and learning in the classroom. However they observe that most school stakeholders do not appear to rate the importance of the archives; some school leaders believe that anybody can manage the school archives and do not see the need to spend more resources to equip the archivist. Because the archives are not considered very important, school leaders are not willing to give them a lot of working time. Most archivists are allocated four hours twice a week. The Ministry of Education Fact Sheet stipulates that it is at the discretion of the archivist to determine which materials should be stored in the archive. It is not appropriate for other staff members to decide what should and should not be kept. But in most schools, the archivist is just given a list of what records to keep and what not to keep. In most cases, the school leader decides or delegates other staff such as ICT staff, librarians, or school administrators to make that decision, not the school archivist. School archivists believe that they should at least be contacted for their opinion or be involved in the decision making. Sometimes archivists arrive at work to find materials have been dumped at random. When they ask, they are told a teacher or staff member came to drop off the materials; sometimes it is difficult to locate who brought them or to find out their backstories.

DISCUSSION

School archives perform useful core functions that support the delivery of the curriculum; interview data has also revealed key tasks school archivists perform to help them achieve their functions. At the start of this study, the impression was that school archives can play an important role in the delivery of the recently developed school history curriculum in New Zealand. But the perspectives coming through the interview data suggest that this will be difficult; interviewees revealed that the history of the school is different from the history that will be taught in the new curriculum (see Participant 1's comment in the subsection 'Supporting Teaching').

This revelation in the findings has significant implications for discussions of cultural narratives of the ways of archiving in the school context. This is because schools have different histories of their own, and subcultures within their social system. Such school cultures are not only different from school to school, but they may be different from the history and cultural narrative of the community in which they are located. Within the wider community and national discussion on archives, it may be easier to discuss Māori narratives of the different ways of archiving, but in the context of school archives, it can be difficult if the culture does not centre on Māori cultural narratives. Nevertheless, an effective understanding of the school's culture and history is likely to position the students and prepare them for an in-depth understanding of the history curriculum. Although the schools in this study were observed to be making efforts to apply certain bicultural principles in their activities, Māori cultural narratives on the different ways of archiving the school history did not seem to be considered by the archivist. As this study is

still in progress, efforts will be made to keep exploring Māori cultural narratives of archiving the past in the school context.

The findings also revealed enablers and challenges. However, notwithstanding the challenges, most school archivists show great resilience in maintaining the value of school records. Most of them use their own resources to attend workshops and training programmes for self-development. They pay for workshops, training materials, and sometimes buy boxes to organise the materials, from their own funds. School archivists who have been interviewed in this study explained that they believe supporting the school archives this way is the best contribution they can make to keeping the heritage and memory of their school, and adding to the narrative of the community's heritage stories. The school archivists' resilience in effectively maintaining the value of records to support the school's activities was shown in various ways. Because of the fulfillment school archivists get from their work they are not daunted by the challenges they face.

A key enabler of their resilience is their passion. But their passion is more about their school than the archival work – which they see as a thankless task – and about their belief in the important role its history can play in the identity and image of the school. When you are passionate about something, you set clear goals to achieve progress in it. Once your goals are clear, it does not matter how few resources you have or how huge the challenge is, you will surely achieve the progress you need. I believe that where there is a will, there is a way, and that is what is motivating most school archivists. School archivists believe that without passion they wouldn't have the resilience required to make the difference they have been making in the schools through the functions of the archive.

CONCLUSION

The core functions of the school archives are to preserve the school's history and future memory through proper maintenance of the heritage materials and artefacts that define the identity and culture of the school. The school archive also supports teaching and learning and other relevant activities of the school. When records in the school archive are properly maintained they reflect the historical narrative of the school and that can help prepare students to fully understand the narrative of the history of the community in which the school is located. School archivists are also a useful source of information for researchers, families of former students, and corporate bodies who want information about key members of the school. The archives also play a significant role in ensuring materials of archival value to the school are effectively kept for as long as the school needs them. They ensure that the materials are effectively and ethically collected, properly arranged, and well described for easy access. The archivists also develop effective access procedures to the materials for teachers to use as teaching aids and reference purposes; preserve and protect the materials from deterioration; promote the archives to the students, staff, and school authorities; and develop useful programmes to enable students and alumni to enjoy the history of their school. The school archives and the backstories of the materials can help with the effective delivery of curriculum in schools.

Despite the important functions of the archives and the useful roles of the school archivists, most of them are not usually supported by key stakeholders to mitigate the challenges they face. Although most of them receive their training on the job, school budgets do not usually cater to their needs such as training support through workshops and conferences. Where budgetary needs are met, some secondary-school archivists are able to effectively collaborate with other school archivist groups. There is a lack of awareness and recognition of the archivist's role in the school system and they often have inadequate storage facilities and resources to enable them to effectively preserve the materials. Even though these challenges can be overwhelming for any archivist group, the passion and belief of the school archivist enables them to exhibit unfettered resilience in the face of all these issues. They adapt to the challenges and achieve their purpose of maintaining the value of school records to support the effective delivery of the school's curriculum. They have their will, and the way is opening for them to achieve their purposes for the school archives. This is the key resilience factor that drives most school archivists interviewed in this study. Nevertheless, as mentioned previously, interviewees emphasised that their passion is more for their schools than the archiving, which they see as a thankless task.

When school archivists are well supported, and given attention by school principals and key stakeholders, they will be fully equipped to maintain the value of the records. School archivists interviewed believe that they can be more effective if school authorities and other staff support them to attend workshops, and conferences and take up training opportunities both online and through other means. They also believe that being involved in school decision-making processes would provide useful perspectives that could contribute to the effective development of the school. This study encourages school archivists in the work they are doing and initiates a conversation that will bring all New Zealand school archivists together and inspire a collaboration between them and their stakeholders to address issues of common interest. The study is still in progress.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Participant	Description
Participant 1	The archivist at a private secondary school of about 500 students established over 200 years ago in the Wellington region. The school has an online display of some of its archival materials.
Participant 2	The archivist at a college in the Wellington region. The college was established nearly 200 years ago and currently has almost 2,000 students. The school has digitised some of its archival materials and made them available on their website.
Participant 3	The archivist at a high school within the greater Wellington region. This school has nearly 200 years of history with a current student roll of about 1,500. There is a specific space in the school for its archival materials, a dedicated website for the school archive, and a place on the school's website to share some of its history and heritage materials.
Participant 4	The archivist at a high school in the Waikato region, founded in the 1950s with over 2,000 students. The school has an excellent physical archive with an effective dedicated website.
Participant 5	The archivist at a college in the greater Wellington region founded in the early 1900s with a current student roll of about 1,000. The school has an effective archive with a dedicated website.
Participant 6	The archivist of a mission college in the Christchurch region. The college has a little over 100 years of history. The current student population stands around 1,600. It has a good collection of historical materials, with some of these displayed on the school's website.
Participant 7	The archivist at a college in the Auckland region. The college was founded in the 1940s with a current student population of nearly 2,700. It has a good collection of historical materials although there is no dedicated website for its archives.