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MAKING HISTORY A COMPULSORY SCHOOL SUBJECT – OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMORY INSTITUTIONS

Abstract

In an article in the Mail & Guardian, Ra'eesa Pather reported that a ministerial task team established by the Department of Basic Education has recommended that history should be a compulsory subject in South African schools from 2023.¹ According to this report, this will apply to children Grades 10 to 12. This development provides the country's memory institutions with ideal incentives to re-position their collections as valuable tools in the school pedagogy experience and embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

This article explores archive facilities around the world and demonstrates how these institutions provide educational opportunities to schoolchildren and the youth. Many archival institutions have digitised collections that are relevant to the school curriculum programmes. This provides incentives for attracting new users to view and use the archival collections that are connected to the school syllabus. This article explores different websites and social media pages of archives around the world and similar facilities in South Africa that may assist in strengthening the proposal for history becoming a compulsory school subject.

Data was collected by means of searches on websites and social media sites of archives facilities in Australia, Chile, the United Kingdom and the United States. In addition, on-site visits were undertaken to archive facilities and heritage sites in the United States and South Africa.

Keywords: school pedagogy, memory institutions, digital collections, history pedagogy, millennials

¹ R Pather, Education task team – History should be a compulsory school subject from 2023. *Mail & Guardian*, 31 May 2018. Retrieved from <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-05-31-education-task-team-history-should-be-a-compulsory-school-subject-from-2023> (accessed 1 July 2019).

Slutelwoorde: skoolopvoeding; herinnering instellings; digitale versamelings; historiese opvoedkunde; millenials

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The 21st century is characterised by easier access to information, promotion of multiculturalism and opportunities for tracing histories through various platforms. Digital technology allows individuals in all regions to uncover narratives from collections captured digitally and made available online. Modern technology provides widespread access, regular marketing and public awareness campaigns, which can ensure the sustainability of memory institutions and generate interest amongst new users. This paper explores the effective use of technology to showcase archival collections and their relationship with the educational curriculum, as demonstrated by countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and Chile. The paper also discusses ways of generating new interest in the archival holdings and suggests ways of making access to archival collections easier.

In South Africa, most children take history as a compulsory school subject until the end of Grade 9. However, from Grades 10 to 12, history was an elective subject. In recent months, the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE) has established a ministerial task team to investigate the feasibility of history becoming a compulsory subject for all schoolchildren wanting to complete their matriculation qualification. The task team has been given guidelines to ensure that the content of the history curriculum is not based solely on Westernised history but includes an Afrocentric approach. In order for an Afrocentric approach to be feasible, teachers of history will need to become familiar with viewing historical events from an Africa-centred approach. This Afrocentric approach would mean that more use of narratives held in South African public archives and heritage organisations should enable the public archives to re-position themselves and become an important feature of the educational landscape.

South African memory institutions, such as museums, archival facilities and libraries that house archival collections, are memory custodians. Many of these institutions that have or are considering embarking on digital preservation projects, need to collaborate with the educational sector to ensure that collections are more broadly accessible. Freedom Park in Tshwane and the Luthuli Museum in KwaDuduza have undertaken such endeavours.² Freedom

2 See more about Freedom Park and the Luthuli Museum at their websites: <https://freedompark.co.za/> and <https://luthulimuseum.org.za/>. Freedom Park also have a Facebook page, which is quite informative.

Park has embarked on an initiative with the DBE to include information related to indigenous knowledge and insights from the community elders in the school curriculum and teachers are being encouraged to include such material in their curriculum development and teaching activities.³ The need to include decolonisation into the school pedagogy will ensure that the millennials learn to appreciate the importance of the sustainable utilisation of the environment, and start to truly appreciate the country's multicultural diversity.

It is the author's contention that a well-executed digitisation of collections (such as is evident at Freedom Park), and broader accessibility and improved protection of managed collections by memory institutions, would enable the promotion of multiculturalism amongst the youth and inspire the millennials to become involved with studies and careers associated with different memory institutions. Archivists and museum curators would encourage broader interest in matters of general concern, particularly concerning the facilitation of education. Projects undertaken by memory institutions, which provide easier access to more users and facilitate teaching and learning of learners, may provide the key to ensuring the longevity of collections held by the memory institutions and the services offered by such institutions. Effective access and sharing of information is crucial to the sustainability of archival and museum collections. Facilitating the educational process and effectively utilising available technology to highlight and draw attention to collections that facilitate the education process would ensure that archival and museum facilities and their holdings avoid the 'proverbial financial shoestring' (Cox, 2005:37).

In a study, Helena Robinson (2012) noted that in the United Kingdom, United States, Canada and New Zealand, many museums have formed partnerships with local libraries, galleries and archives. This article will show that this practice is not confined to these countries but is also evident in South Africa. Two prominent examples are Freedom Park and the Luthuli Museum. These institutions can be regarded as memory institutions that have converged to take advantage of the internet and databases, which generally enable easy access to information. Memory institutions highlight the association from evolving computer technology and the prospect of converged collection databases. According to Robinson, the convergence of archives, libraries and museums is only a recent development and is largely due to the digital context of information. These institutions share commonalities around the concepts of collective national and social memory to create environments conducive to facilitating learning and research and to support cultural engagements related to contemporary times (Robinson 2012:415).

3 Julius Ledwaba, Freedom Park educational officer, and Lesego Mlambo, Freedom Park curriculum developer, personal communication, 20 September 2017.

According to Waibel and Erway, collections held by libraries, archives and museums remain largely fragmented in the real world, but potential users of such collections want to experience the collections from a single online search. Libraries, archives and museums and their online cultural collections should be leveraged off social media platforms such as Google, Amazon and Facebook (Waibel & Erway 2009:323–324). In order for these cultural institutions to exist on the web and to attract potential users, they need to be uniquely positioned to provide a richer user experience in terms of content by, for example, using smaller pockets of information on scattered websites. Currently, in South Africa, digital collections are only available to visitors that visit the memory institutions. Studies conducted by Green (2006) and Harley (2007) show that even academic users value the just-in-time access to online search engines over the authoritative sources and colour-accurate images potentially available on such institutions' websites. It is generally recommended that all searches should start from Google rather than from the institution's website.

Disclosures of collections through online information hubs, social networking sites and search engines on an institution-by-institution basis is less efficient than collective mechanisms for disclosing the content held by cultural institutions and how these can be incorporated into the teaching and learning of the millennials (Waibel & Erway 2009:324). Such undertakings can only be effectively achieved if these institutions agree to collectively harness the power and work together to enhance collections and incorporate them into the teaching and learning experience. Waibel and Erway (2009:324) contend that the idea of an information environment in which the entire world of knowledge is within the user's grasp is as old as the very urge to collect. The very existence of these cultural institutions has been based on the holistic premise to make collections available and interesting. Democratic dispensations also tend to propagate the importance of how information should be collected, managed and shared.

Traditionally libraries, archives and museums were institutions dedicated to their own domain. However, new institutions – the economic solutions for managing and safekeeping the massive onslaught of the cultural production of modern nations to the citizens of a democracy – need to respond by being transparent and opening up public access to their information. According to Waibel and Erway (2009:325), an internet search is the 'present-day equivalent of entering a cabinet of curiosities.' The networked environment provides opportunities to recreate the interconnected world of knowledge held by libraries, museums and archives.

There is a need for these institutions to gain more prominence in the South African cultural landscape. There is, however, a greater need to encourage teachers to include such collections into their teaching and learning endeavours. Cultural institutions and institutions contain the memory of the country and

of communities. It is, therefore, essential that such collections should not be relegated to the dusty basement areas but should rather have more prominence as valuable resources for teaching and learning. For such institutions to remain relevant, it is crucial that they are showcased to the millennials and that these collections are opened up for better access and transparency. Only by doing so, will these institutions be regarded as assets to the country and encourage interest from future users of such institutions.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THE USE OF ARCHIVAL SOURCES FOR PEDAGOGY EXPERIENCES AMONGST SCHOOLCHILDREN

This article has suggested ways to rectify the problems of the underutilisation of archival sources encountered by many African countries and specifically the lack of interest in archival holdings in South Africa. The intention of the ministerial task team to investigate the feasibility of the history becoming a compulsory subject for learners provides archivists with incentives to re-position themselves and participate in the decolonising of the school curriculum to contain narratives that are more encompassing of the broader South African population. It is suggested that the narratives of the colonial and apartheid dispensations include the history of resistance politics, and other themes such as environmental history, indigenous knowledge, history on architecture. These narratives could also include themes (other than purely the socio-political narratives) that are uniquely South African in nature.

According to the 2018 *Mail & Guardian* article referred to earlier, history is a compulsory school subject in Zimbabwe, Russia and Rwanda. However, it seems that this has not influenced the position of the national archives in these countries. According to scholars such as Mnjama (2008) and Kilasi, Maseko and Abankwah (2011), public archival facilities in most African countries are underutilised and limited access is granted to public records.

The author has identified two models that promote the use of archival sources for school pedagogy. These are the models from the National Archives of Australia and the United States model, which is supported by their National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). These two models will be discussed. The overarching themes that have been identified are: (1) the importance of educational programmes in memory institutions; (2) collaborative partnerships in the interest of literacy and memory institutions; and (3) the use of archival sources and digital technology to communicate with the youth.

2.1 The importance of educational programmes in memory institutions

From research conducted by Australian Professor Michael Gaffney, a report was compiled that provided insight into the factors that motivated teachers to incorporate and teach with digital resources (Gaffney, 2010). The following paragraphs consider the three factors that were identified.

The first factor was the focus of directing the use of technological tools and digital resources, coupled with the willingness of teachers to include these resources. According to the Gaffney report, the willingness of teachers to include technological tools and digital resources as part of their teaching and learning offerings may be determined by socioeconomic circumstances, personality and communication styles. These traits, coupled with the teachers' perceptions of tools and digital resources, influenced their decisions on whether to adopt or reject the implementation and usage of such resources (Gaffney, 2010:6). The study investigated the views of sceptics, like Rogers (1962) and Lee and Winzenried (2009) who downplayed the impact of radio, television, overhead projectors and personal computers, on whether indeed digital content could revolutionise school pedagogy. In the course of the study, Gaffney determined that schools that had successfully integrated technology were those that had 'pedagogically grounded' technological tools and resources (Gaffney, 2010:6). Additional factors were access to technology that bridged the teaching practices; sufficient technical support to assist the teachers; and leadership from schools and educational structures that focused on enhancing teaching more than the challenges of technology (Gaffney, 2010:6).

The second factor impacting on the success of digital content on school pedagogy is the willingness of necessary role-players in aligning and integrating such resources for the benefits of the teachers and to generate interest amongst scholars. Misha and Kochler (cited in Gaffney, 2010:39) and Groff and Mouza (cited in Gaffney, 2010:39) ascertained that the perceptions, interest and experiences of scholars concerning technology and digital content are the catalysts that determine whether digital content should be included in teaching and communication. The millennials' abilities to communicate and collaborate using emerging technology can no longer be denied. These platforms provide ideal opportunities for innovative and creative use of technologies.

The third factor relating to digital content in school pedagogy that was identified is the importance of developing awareness and shared understanding about the digital content (Gaffney, 2010:1). Gaffney's investigation disproved an assumption that persuading teachers to include digital content depended on the training they were provided with and their technological competency levels. The study contended that more complex factors come into play. For the teachers, self-motivation and willingness to learn continuously were determining factors.

Another factor was the buy-in and support from school leadership and education authorities in encouraging and permitting teachers to include digital content in their pedagogical offerings (Gaffney, 2010:8).

The study further postulated the successful inclusion of electronic technologies and digital content as a threat to attaining good academic results. Gaffney identified three links that determine the adoption of technology in teaching and learning being, 'the teacher, the resources and the school' (Gaffney, 2010:9). Collaborative partnerships between the teachers, educational authorities, technology developers, technical support from the schools and memory institutions housing digitised collections are essential in the pursuit of such endeavours. Australia's National Archives' virtual reading room (VRROOM) project and the United States' History Hub with digital collections relating to themes covered in the schools' curriculum are two examples of such initiatives. The paper discusses these two undertakings in more detail under the findings of programmes undertaken by memory institutions around the world. Africa needs similar programmes to reposition memory institutions and allow them to be part of the country's educational programmes.

2.2 Collaborative partnerships in the interest of literacy and memory institutions

Three interlocking factors affecting the adoption of digital content from memory institutions are the teacher, the school and the available resources. These themes have been investigated by South African scholars but only in the context of access to libraries and information technology centres by teachers, schoolchildren and the youth. No such investigation has been conducted into the utilisation of archival collections.

Wessels and Mnkeni-Saurombe (2012:45) propose that, 'poverty, political will, old apartheid inequalities, too many curriculum changes, poor administration and school leadership have compromised the significance of the school library and information literacy.' They further point out the need for comprehensive endeavours for capacity building amongst teachers, and the importance of the school library in improving literacy skills by encouraging reading for both pedagogy purposes and recreation. The observations reported on include teachers being unfamiliar with the operations of a library, and how to effectively utilise the library (Wessels & Mnkeni-Saurombe, 2012:47). Bearing in mind these challenges, the prospects of including digital content and understanding the arrangement of collections housed by memory institutions and the information that could be accessed will need to be effectively addressed. If digital content related to collections held by memory institutions is to be effectively incorporated into the teaching activities, as in the examples of Australia and the United States, these

hurdles need to be effectively overcome to ensure that public schools in peripheral areas also have access to collections and include them in their pedagogy.

The same scholars further emphasise the urgent need to prioritise the pedagogy of information literacy amongst teachers (Wessels & Mnkeni-Saurombe, 2012:53); particularly with digital content needing to be incorporated into the teaching experience. Information literacy and digital literacy are not only important for the school librarian but should also be embraced by all teachers, particularly those that could utilise sources that are available online. South African children deserve to be equal partners in the world; access to technologies and digital content should not be denied. Thus, in the interest of the country's children and youth, more endeavours are needed to broaden the scope of information literacy practices. Training teachers to incorporate content from memory institutions will require that all relevant and concerned stakeholders ensure that such collections are viable sources that teachers could incorporate into learning. This applies to a broad spectrum of school subjects, and not solely for historical studies (Wessels & Mnkeni-Saurombe, 2012:50).

Access to information and information technology can play a vital role in upgrading the quality of education. In addition, if utilised effectively, technology could provide communities in remote areas of the country with access to digital content (Snyman & Snyman, 2003:95). The effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) should benefit the majority of the population. If projects providing free WiFi, such as Project Isizwe in the City of Tshwane, could be extended to other areas of the country, there would be more opportunities for more South Africans to have access to digital content.⁴ However, the sustainability of digital technology and access to digital content to educate South Africa's children is hampered in the outlying areas by factors such as poverty, electricity, ineffective ICT infrastructure, a lack of information literacy and technical ICT practical skills (Hulbert & Snyman, 2007:2).

Snyman and Snyman (2003) and Hulbert and Snyman (2007) identify three factors pertaining to South Africa.⁵ Firstly, the inclusion of technology and related content does not necessarily ensure a better quality of education. Secondly, capacity building and confidence required by teachers with backing from school authorities are essential if such ventures are to produce the required academic results. Thirdly, the South African government needs to embark on concrete plans that enable public schools in the peripheral areas to have effective access to the infrastructure, technology and teaching know-how on how to access, use and include digital content, including archival collections, into their teaching and learning offerings (Snyman & Snyman, 2001:105). There is a need for establishing

4 See more about Project Isizwe and their WiFi roll-out at <http://www.projectisizwe.org>

5 Similarly, Gaffney (2012) identified these factors as determinants related to embedded digital technology and digital content into the pedagogy of Australian schools.

and maintaining effective collaborative partnerships with different stakeholders from ICT service providers, education departments, schools, teachers and institutions with digital content, such as archives, museums and libraries, as factors determining the success of such ventures (Hulbert & Snyman, 2007:16).

2.3 Digitisation to renew interest in memory institutions

In an article, 'Access to Archives in South Africa in the First Twenty Years of Democracy', Zofia Sulej recommends that one of the effective ways of ensuring that the public archives are regarded as accessible institutions for all citizens is by means of comprehensive educational programmes, which would generate interest amongst the public and communities. She further believes that making the archives more accessible to all people would be beneficial in two ways. Firstly, this would enable these institutions to be regarded as sustainable entities. Secondly, by means of the educational programmes, such institutions would provide education and guidance on the rights of citizens to accessing information. However, hindrances, such as the low levels of education, remote communities and poor infrastructure, need to be considered (Sulej, 2014:4:19).

A significant reputational risk may arise where there appears to be little regard for current and recognised best practices (Brown, 2013:20). Failure to use digital technology for purposes of outreach and public programming by trusted custodians can curtail organisations such as archives and museums from maintaining cultural heritage and sustainability by not providing more audiences with effective access to collections. Sulej commends the undertakings of digitising projects of selected archival collections by the Historical Papers and Research Archive and the establishment of 'community walk-in centres' to remote communities (Sulej, 2014:28:29). According to Brown (2013), some of the misconceptions related to digital projects and the rationale for stalling such undertakings include the large budgets and deep technical knowledge required. However, the realities of such resources becoming embedded in the teaching and learning activities are dependent on teachers, resources and the schools. In addition, archival and museum facilities wishing to be regarded as relevant and sustainable can then no longer stall undertaking such endeavours.

Gollins and Bayne (2015:129-148) describe how the archival environment in the National Archives in London has evolved over 500 year. Generations of archivists have been involved in the compilation of comprehensive catalogues and related finding aids. In the 1980s, the printed inventories and lists were converted to an electronic catalogue. In 2011, the catalogue was then made available on-line. Thomas and Johnson (2015:189) note that a clear distinction exists between the traditional archival researcher and the Google-generation. They observe that compared to the Google generation, the traditional researcher

sits in 'cold and silent research room, ordering documents via paper slips and copying them out in long-hand' (Thomas & Johnson, 2015:189).

On the other hand, the millennials are not confined to conducting research in a venue or at a specific time. Their digital space and the enabling technologies are no longer contained by prescriptive and authoritative approaches and interpretations of information. Ketalaar, McKemish and Gilliland-Swetlund (2005) propose that in order to provide adequate services to the millennials, information professionals, such as archivists, need to develop and enhance processes that enable different communities and cultures equal access to gather and interpret information. According to Thomas and Johnson, digitisation, discoveries in research collections, fostering of digital skills and more digital preservation should enable not only the 'libraries without walls', but also archival facilities without walls (Thomas & Johnson, 2015:197). By embracing the digital world, these memory institutions will be able to fulfil their mandates (Larsen, 2013).

Digital curation is a relatively new, yet costly, domain emerging as a result of changes in the creation, distribution and use of data. The technology involved in digital curation makes it possible to implement a set of processes that make digital research data available over time. Digital curation requires repository managers and administrators to group the material into nine categories, namely, management, software, metadata, storage and preservation, content, advocacy, training and support, internal and external liaison, current awareness and professional development (Madrid, 2013). It is important that digital curators have skills and knowledge of their field and not only the knowledge, skills and abilities of science professionals.

There is a pressing need for digital convergence between libraries, museums and archives. Such convergence will show the similarities in the traditional distinction among digital integration of libraries, museums and archives. The commonalities of such institutions should also serve as a theme for different conferences. In order to strive for this integration, these institutions first need to identify the internal and external needs of the information age. Second, these institutions should determine the roles and responsibilities of the information professionals in the information age. Finally, it is important that these memory institutions align themselves with the educational programmes that they encounter when assisting others (Marty, 2010).

3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The South African DBE announced that it is considering making history a compulsory subject for schoolchildren needing to obtain a Grade 12 matriculation

certificate. In Africa, the archival facilities are battling to justify their existence and relevance in society. Incentives need to be found to attract more users to the archival facilities. It is also becoming increasingly important for archival facilities to justify their existence and manage their collections in ways that increase the audience and their usefulness to society. Public archival facilities are dependent on funding from the state coffers and every effort should be made to enhance the perceptions of the general use of the archival facilities. It is becoming increasingly important for archival facilities to have a presence on the internet and to be active on social media sites. Access to digitised collections is becoming increasingly important, as the Google generation is interested in having access to information online. African countries, in general, and South Africa, in particular, need models that they can adapt and accommodate into their offerings to the general public. African countries need to not only look at Westernised models of the United States, United Kingdom and Australia but should also look at examples from countries in South America who have undergone similar socio-political experiences as have been encountered on the African continent.

4. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

This article is an interpretive qualitative study exploring the availability of archival collections and the incorporation of these archival collections into offerings by public archival facilities to schoolchildren. This exploratory article investigated the archives held by Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Chile. The investigation uncovered how these countries have been involved in making collections accessible to schoolchildren and how these collections have been embedded into school curriculum activities. On-site visits were paid to the United States National Archives, public archives facilities and memory institutions in South Africa. Websites of these public institutions as well as existing programmes were explored to ensure collections can be accessed by the millennials.

5. FINDINGS

National archives around the world are realising that they need to increase the consumption of their products and services through programmes and activities that enable the general public to have more knowledge and interest in their collections. Although it would appear from the available literature that many of Africa's national archives are aware of the importance of public programming and outreach, the majority of these institutions fail to provide online access to collections. Scholars such as Kamatula (2011), Mnkeni-Saurombe and Ngulube (2016), Ngoepe and Ngulube (2011), Ngulube (1999) and Onyanha,

Mokwatlo and Mnkeni-Saurombe (2013) have conducted studies on public programming in eastern and southern Africa. From these studies, it would appear that the utilisation of archival collections for educational purposes has not yet been considered by the archival institutions. Collections are only highlighted if schools conduct on-site visits to these archival institutions. None of the national archives located in eastern and southern Africa has content that is digitally available on the websites or on social media sites. This finding is based on an investigation of the national archives and public entities to which regular citizens should be afforded access.

Many of the African public archives have collections that could be showcased to decolonise the archives and provide space for narratives that are truly African in nature. The South African National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NFVSA) has been involved in many outstanding oral history collection projects capturing narratives from communities that were side-lined by the apartheid and colonial dispensations.⁶ Unfortunately, these collections can only be accessed by visiting the NFVSA premises of the National Film, Video and Sound Archives. Also, the National Archives of South Africa (NASA) and the provincial archives have no presence on social media sites as compared to their counterparts in different areas around the world.

The proposal of the South African government to make history a compulsory school subject provides an ideal platform for the South African public archives to play a more prominent role and showcase collections that can be integrated into the school pedagogy. NASA could look at the examples of such projects undertaken by countries like Australia, the United States, United Kingdom and Chile and devise a model that is suited to the South African landscape.

The findings have been divided into two broad themes. The first theme considers a few international examples where archival material has been integrated and digital collections have been composed to facilitate school pedagogy. These allow millennials opportunities to discover the heritage that the countries have in their archival holdings. The second theme investigates two institutions in South Africa that have undertaken initiatives to include schools and the neighbouring community in appreciating the information and knowledge held by memory institutions.

6 Brenda Kotze, archivist at the NFVSA, personal communication, 19 April 2018.

5.1 International examples of archival collections in school pedagogy and school curriculum activities

This section gives examples of archival collections in school pedagogy and school curriculum activities in four countries, namely Chile, Northern Ireland, Australia and the United States.

Archival collections in Chile

In 2008, the *Archivo Nacional de Chileno* (National Archive of Chile) acknowledged the need to have a more prominent societal role to ensure its sustainability (Archivo Nacional de Chileno, 2013:3). Access to archival collections and effective public programming are essential to ensuring memory institutions, such as archives, are supported. More effort is required to ensure that millennials engage with the collections retrieved from archives. Like South Africa, Chile has a turbulent history characterised by social unrest, political upheavals, revolutions and military juntas (Schellnack, 1998). In spite of its past, Chile is a country that is determined to operate within a fully functional democratic model. The importance of their democratic dispensations has not shunned the country's historical context. The historical context and the country's social dynamics are vitally important in encouraging discussion and debate. The National Archive of Chile regards its role in preserving and providing access to archival collections as crucial in showing the country's progression from a Spanish colony through the personalities, institutions and events that have contributed to the country's history, and thus fulfils its obligations in identifying and preserving the memory of the country (Archivo Nacional de Chileno, 2013:4).

Embarking on the inclusion of archival collections for educational purposes, the National Archive of Chile sought to identify collections. Four broad themes were identified, namely, genealogy or family history, local histories relating to urban and rural areas, themes of national significance, and Chile's interaction on the global stage. These themes encapsulate different dimensions relating to Chile and have been included in age-appropriate instruments for teachers and scholars (Archivo Nacional de Chileno, 2013:4). Similar to the Australian model discussed later, the National Archive of Chile has developed worksheets to provide context and analysis of the archival sources, which correspond with the school history curriculum (Archivo Nacional de Chileno, 2013:24).

Archival collections in Northern Ireland

In 2012, the National Archives of Northern Ireland released an archival collection to commemorate the centenary of the sinking of the *Titanic*. The digital collections are available to interested researchers and include video footage, stories, podcasts, statistics, manuscripts, photographs, artefacts and

memorabilia related to the fateful, inaugural voyage of this ship (The National Archives, n.d.). All these materials are digitally available and can be sourced from anywhere around the world, with technology. The use of technology ensures that interested researchers and educators can access these collections and artefacts. The collection caters for a wide range of interests, from the statisticians to engineering and social history. They provide valuable sources for generating interest in events and create an interest in researching and preserving such collections.

Archival collections in Australia

The National Archives of Australia (NAA) is an active collaborator in the country's initiative, known as the National Digital Learning Resources Network (NDLRN).⁷ According to Education Services Australia (ESA), this initiative consists of 'resources collections, delivery infrastructure and meta-standards', and is primarily focused on providing educational portals for the entire country (ESA website, 2019). The portal comprises of 16 000 digital resources, including resources from the NAA. No fees are charged to the schools using these resources. The NDLRN is assigned the responsibility of fostering an enabling environment by adhering to determined educational standards for digital resources, technical infrastructure, metadata and the management of intellectual property and licensing protocols (ESA, 2019).

This collaboration is aligned with Gaffney's 2010 study and its recommendations by incorporating technological tools and digital content into Australia's school pedagogy.

This provides teachers with resources that can inspire and challenge scholars and gives teachers links to resources that can add value to lessons as well as provide possible activities for school projects. The NAA coordinate a virtual reading room. This online classroom is referred to as 'VRROOM'. This educational resource allows access to over 800 primary sources, including photographs and audio-visual materials (NAA, 2016). The range of themes varies from Australian exploration and environmental impact on Antarctica to introducing the country's constitution. The collection also includes a broad representation of individuals who contributed to Australia from diverse fields such as politics, arts, science and sport. Collections relating to the involvements of Australia in the two world wars are also available. In essence, the digital collections have been specifically selected to cater for children aged 5 to 12 years old (NAA, 2016).

7 You can find out more about the NDLRN at their website, http://www.ndlrn.edu.au/about/about_landing_page.html

Archival collections in the United States

The United States' National Archives have also embarked on projects to attract more users and to ensure that the archives and the different collections generate interest amongst the millennials. The projects that the National Archives has undertaken include the establishment of a History Hub, which was launched in January 2016. This History Hub provides access to information and a wide range of sources. The purpose of the History Hub is to provide audiences with access to archival sources held by the United States National Archives (Ferriero, 2018). The History Hub was launched as a crowdsourcing platform for people interested in research history. This Hub offers tools such as discussion boards, blogs and community pages to bring together experts and researchers focusing on American history (National Archives of the United States, 2018). This History Hub has obtained a steady increase in traffic and activity since its launch and enables the continued growth of the knowledge base. This project is a collaboration across the National Archives, with assistance provided by the National Archives' Research Services staff, Office of Innovation and Information Technology divisions. The History Hub has attracted the interest of citizens, historians, scholars and experts from cultural organisations. A collaborative effort between the National Archives and the Library of Congress has enabled the project to provide answers to questions about important collections such as 1894 Atlanta Exposition, the Revolutionary War and Thomas Jefferson's papers (National Archives of the United States, 2018).

5.2 Collections and digitisation projects in South Africa

Many cultural institutions or memory institutions use social networking technologies such as Facebook and Twitter to invite communities and participants into dialogues and sharing. This is certainly the case with the Freedom Park Museum, in Tshwane, and on a smaller scale the Luthuli Museum, in KwaDukuza. The Freedom Park Museum strives to address visitor participation on multiple fronts and is involved with many activities that contribute, collaborate and co-create the material on exhibition and that can be found within their archives. The intention of Freedom Park and the Luthuli Museum is to encourage interaction between human and non-human media (materials). The institutions also aim to educate visitors on the use of mobile phones for social activity (using social media)⁸

According to Mlambo and Ledwaba (in personal communication), the South African DBE has been working with Freedom Park and other heritage institutions to develop programmes with South African schools that involve

8 Personal communication with Ledwaba, Mlambo and Taylor. See details given earlier.

activities with teaching and learning activities. Freedom Park has assembled a collection of materials consisting of archival material, as well as formal and non-formal learning materials aimed at marketing the institution to the schools. Freedom Park has started an initiative to roll out programmes for schoolchildren that will involve outreach projects to ensure children in outlying areas can also be exposed to the rich diversity of material that has been collected at the institution. Freedom Park and the DBE did a trial run in 2016, which consisted of ten programmes involving learners from as young as ten years old. The aim of the exercise was to integrate indigenous knowledge into the school curriculum under the subject of Life Orientation. According to Ledwaba (personal communication), Freedom Park has also found ways to include elders into the pedagogy offerings as these individuals can share their life experiences, which are invaluable to help children understand their own heritage and to ensure that this heritage is not lost amongst all the appeal of the internet and the digital age (Ledwaba, personal com2017).

The Luthuli Museum in KwaDukuza has also undertaken numerous community initiatives consisting of programmes aimed at sharing their resources and knowledge with the immediate community within which the museum is located. The surrounding community is not affluent. To assist, the museum provides opportunities for local women to sell their arts and crafts and encourages the local community to have music festivals to celebrate their culture and heritage.⁹ Such activities occur during September, which in South Africa is regarded as Heritage Month, but could also be utilised to encourage learners to have an interest in the collections held by memory institutions.

A participatory model of memory institutions that allows visitors to interact in multiple levels seems to be taking shape in South Africa. This is similar to models used by institutions in Australia. Freedom Park is attempting to find ways of including indigenous knowledge into the school pedagogy. The institution is also trying to foster interaction between learners, teachers and the educational programme coordinators. These efforts aimed at making their collections more accessible to a wider audience are to be commended and bring Freedom Park in line with similar institutions in countries such as Australia and United States. Unfortunately, in South Africa, teachers fail to take an interest in the collections available from heritage institutions and few seem to embed such information and experiences into their school pedagogy.¹⁰ More interventions are needed from South African's heritage institutions to encourage teachers to embrace available collections and include them in their pedagogy offerings.

9 Clinton Taylor, educational officer at the Luthuli Museum in Groutville, personal communication during a site visit, 20 July 2017.

10 Taron MacCarron, primary school teacher in Ekurhuleni, Gauteng Province, personal communication, 5 October 2017.

6. CONCLUSION

An article by James Ball on *The Heritage Portal*, which is news and information platform for the South African Heritage Sector that encourages the country's youth to embrace the country's history and heritage. The article supports the deployment of 'technological innovations' to establish platforms for South African millennials to become heritage enthusiasts. Access to items such as maps, charts, sketches, artwork slides and stories are ideal tools for children to develop an interest in the country's memory institutions (Ball, 2016:2-3; Gordon, 2016). Like Ball, this article contends that access to such tools, which are the experiences encountered in memory institutions, could well encourage interest and contribute to both more effective utilisation of memory institutions and provide such institutions with incentives to safeguard and preserve the country's archival heritage.

Openly available digitally captured collections enable interested researchers, formal and informal, to investigate narratives of economic, social and political themes. This includes exploration of individuals and communities affected by economic prosperity, political upheavals, social injustices, wars and conflicts, and the early years of democracy. Digital collections relating to South Africa's industrialisation can also provide information on many areas of research. These themes could include: technological changes; transformations of urban space; integration of mining and commerce; intersections of social, economic and labour themes; histories related to the South African environment; and related ecological histories relating to all areas of South Africa. These themes should be better facilitated through access to collections by means of technology and better awareness and utilisation of collections stored by memory institutions.

According to Steudahl and Smørdal (2011), collections should be assembled so that they enhance visitor's creative and collaborative practices to compose meaningful narratives. In this way, archival collections become a manner of finding concepts that constitute the social interaction, cooperation and composition that are featured by social media as part of the collection assembly. In order to ensure that young users are engaged, it is important that the heritage institutions encourage involvement and find ways to share and compare information. Young people's participatory culture challenges memory institutions to have collections that encourage visitors to participate in interpretations, doubts and choices during their construction of knowledge. In this regard, Steudahl and Smørdal (2011:216) suggest that 'Collecting, reflecting and sharing are co-compositional activities' involving the youth in exhibition assembly.

The reconstruction process, assisted by archival materials, can provide a practical contribution to present-day discussions on the reflexivity in cultural history. The reconstruction builds on negotiations between the ethnologist

responsible for the reconstruction and the community, as well as the politics of cultural-historical research and the writing of national heritage (Steudahl & Smørdal, 2011:217).

For memory institutions to remain relevant to the millennials, these institutions need to consider the effective use of social media platforms and mobile telephones. The use of such technology can then catapult the virtual and physical domains and provide opportunities for interpretation and interaction that visitors bring to such institutions. There is little doubt that media types, images, narratives and interactions shape the real-life experiences of young visitors – and such activities should be extended to the individual and all social levels (Steudahl & Smørdal, 2011:217). Collecting, reflecting and sharing are concepts developed to define visitor's co-compositional activities by means of the perceived affordance of social media and mobile telephones. Cultural conventions can further media literacy and give young visitors an opportunity to participate in activities relating to the assembly of collections.

Former South African president Nelson Mandela maintained that technology should not exclude communities. The use of digitisation should be a way to bridge the divide and enable communities in remote areas to gain access to information (Paquette, Jaeger & Wilson, 2010). Access to digital collections relating to the dynamics of South Africa's historical landscape should be enhanced to facilitate openness and encourage better dialogue amongst the inheritors of a democratic dispensation. Literacy is a great gift to the free thinker and should never be underestimated. The ability to read, write and communicate develops confidence. Literacy allows us to read in private, make up their own minds, cross-reference our findings and discover new worlds. Access to information and literacy abilities enabled by memory institutions can invigorate imagination and empathy with past events and extend users' horizons. In essence, these attributes are the cornerstone of modern education.

7. REFERENCES

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