

Teaching with the Archive: How University–Music Archive Collaboration Shapes Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy in Kenya

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Abstract

This paper examined the influence of university–music archive collaboration on lecturers' use of archival materials in culturally responsive music teaching in Kenyan public universities. Music archives hold culturally significant resources that can enrich university music teaching, yet lecturers' use of these materials may depend on the extent of collaboration between universities and music archives. A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was employed, combining questionnaire data from 91 music students across four public universities with semi-structured interviews involving seven purposively selected music lecturers. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, and multiple linear regression, while qualitative data were analysed thematically. Exploratory factor analysis identified institutional collaboration and student engagement as two dimensions of university–music archive collaboration. These dimensions explained 45.6 per cent of the variance in lecturers' use of archival materials, with student engagement showing a slightly stronger influence than institutional collaboration. Interview findings indicated that collaboration enhanced access to culturally relevant materials, specialist knowledge, and professional networks. However, collaboration was predominantly informal and dependent on individual lecturer initiative. The study demonstrates that access to archival resources alone does not produce culturally responsive teaching; pedagogical value emerges when institutional support is combined with lecturers' and students' active engagement. Universities and music archives should therefore formalise partnerships and integrate archival resources into curricula, teaching activities, and assessment.

Key terms: Archival pedagogy, culturally responsive music teaching, music archives, university–archive collaboration.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Although music archives preserve recordings and resources that could strengthen culturally responsive music teaching, little is known about how collaboration between universities and music archives shapes lecturers' pedagogical use of these resources in Kenya. Existing scholarship has largely examined archival preservation, digitisation, heritage management, and access, while giving comparatively limited attention to whether relationships between archives and universities translate archival holdings into sustained classroom practice. This leaves an important gap in understanding the institutional conditions through which culturally significant musical resources become pedagogically usable.

In this study, *music archives* refer to institutional or organised collections of recordings, documents, images, and related materials that preserve musical histories, practices, and knowledge. *University–music archive collaboration* refers to the formal and informal relationships through which universities, lecturers, students, archivists, and archival institutions facilitate awareness, access, resource sharing, and educational use of music collections. *Culturally responsive music pedagogy* refers to the broader orientation to teaching that draws on learners' cultural knowledge, musical identities, and lived experiences. In this study, culturally responsive music teaching refers to the practical enactment of this orientation in classroom practice.

These relationships are particularly important in African university music education, where institutions continue to negotiate the place of indigenous musical knowledge within curricula historically influenced by Western conservatoire traditions. Although African music is increasingly represented in university programmes, its teaching may still depend on commercial recordings or lecturers' personal collections. Such resources do not always provide the historical, social, and cultural contexts in which musical practices developed. Archival recordings and related materials can help address this limitation by connecting curriculum content to the communities and cultural settings from which it emerged.

Nevertheless, the existence of archival collections does not guarantee their pedagogical use. Lecturers' ability to locate, interpret, and incorporate archival materials may depend on institutional partnerships, access arrangements, professional relationships, curricular expectations, and opportunities for student engagement. Previous studies have not adequately explained how these collaborative and institutional conditions influence lecturers' use of archives for culturally responsive teaching in Kenyan public universities.

This paper therefore examines how university–music archive collaboration influences lecturers' use of archival materials in culturally responsive music teaching in selected Kenyan public universities. It combines students' reported experiences with lecturers' accounts to identify the dimensions of collaboration, determine their influence on archival use, and explain the institutional and pedagogical processes underlying that relationship. The study is guided by the question: How does university–music archive collaboration influence lecturers' use of archival materials in culturally responsive music teaching in Kenyan public universities?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Culturally Responsive Music Teaching (CRMT)

Culturally Responsive Music Teaching (CRMT) is grounded in Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay, 2018), both of which position learners' cultural knowledge and lived experiences as central to learning rather than peripheral. Within music education, CRMT extends this by treating music as a lived cultural practice, moving beyond repertoire diversification to encompass the ways of knowing and transmitting music rooted in cultural identity and community engagement (Gay, 2018; McKoy & Lind, 2022). In African contexts, this requires engaging indigenous epistemologies directly: Nzewi (2019) argues that African musical arts are grounded in a socially embedded "humanity consciousness," in which music functions as a system of knowledge transmission integrating social values and collective learning, not merely an artistic product.

For this study, CRMT is understood through five interrelated markers (Shaw, 2012; Kelly-McHale, 2018): cultural validation of learners' musical heritages; contextual relevance to students' social realities; critical engagement that interrogates dominant musical canons; collaborative and experiential learning; and culturally sustaining creativity, through which students reinterpret archival-based materials within contemporary pedagogical spaces. These markers ground the study's examination of how university–music archive collaboration can enhance culturally responsive pedagogy in Kenyan public universities.

Building on CRP, culturally responsive music education scholarship examines how educators incorporate learners' cultural backgrounds into teaching and how curricula can represent diverse musical perspectives (Bond, 2017; Chang & Viesca, 2022; McKoy & Lind, 2022). Abril (2009, 2013) emphasises deliberate attention to students' cultural realities, while Hess (2017) cautions that superficial repertoire diversification can reproduce established racial and curricular hierarchies. Nzewi and Omolo-Ongati (2014) argue that Western pedagogical and assessment models inadequately capture the participatory and embodied nature of African musical arts. This scholarship also intersects with culturally sustaining pedagogy, which moves beyond responding to cultural difference towards sustaining cultural and linguistic pluralism (Paris, 2012). However, Savage et al. (2011) and Chang and Viesca (2022) caution that individual teacher initiative cannot sustain such transformation without continuing institutional support.

In African contexts, colonial-era conservatoire models privileged Western notation, theory, and repertoire, frequently marginalising Indigenous and popular musical expression and undervaluing students' musical identities (Herbst, 2019). Nzewi (2019) calls for curricular approaches that recognise the epistemological integrity of African musical heritage, while Agawu (2003) similarly demonstrates that African music embodies systems of cultural, philosophical, and social knowledge rather than aesthetic content alone. Isabirye (2021) and Lebaka (2019) show how storytelling, oral transmission, and communal performance can challenge Western pedagogical hierarchies when integrated into formal education. Comparable decolonial arguments concerning Māori and Aboriginal musics further demonstrate that cultural responsiveness requires engagement with Indigenous pedagogies and sociopolitical histories rather than repertoire inclusion alone (Locke & Prentice, 2016).

Within this discourse, the Kenyan case is both urgent and instructive. Owino and Akuno (2019) propose a framework for Africanising music education across pedagogical, institutional, and policy domains, including research on African musical idioms, educator preparation, and relationships between Indigenous custodians and academic institutions. Monte and Mochere (2019) similarly identify a mismatch between

formal curriculum and students' lived musical realities. Situated within the broader CRMT discourse, these Kenyan perspectives demonstrate the need for culturally grounded and historically conscious music education. Yet one silence persists: although pedagogy, repertoire, and curriculum reform have received considerable attention, little has been written about the institutional infrastructures—particularly music archives—that could support culturally responsive music teaching.

Archival-Based Music Resources in Music Pedagogy

Engagement with music archives extends beyond retrieving historical knowledge to encompass affective and relational dimensions of learning. Caswell and Cifor (2016) frame archives through a feminist ethics of care and “radical empathy,” positioning archivists as facilitators of relational meaning-making rather than custodians of static knowledge. Read through the lens of CRMT, this orientation resonates with culturally responsive teaching's emphasis on relational engagement, cultural validation, and situated knowledge.

Music archives are increasingly reimagined as active pedagogical partners rather than static repositories. Watkins et al. (2021) document how the International Library of African Music integrates archival recordings into curricula to challenge Eurocentric dominance in music education, while Harper and Opoku-Boateng (2019) describe a comparable model at the University of Ghana's J. H. Kwabena Nketia Archives, where recorded traditional music supports courses in African music and ethnomusicology. Lambrechts (2020), however, cautions that archives cannot be separated from their histories and that meaningful pedagogical use requires genuine co-production of knowledge with communities rather than mere repertoire insertion. Relatedly, Campbell and Roberts (2019) argue that repatriated recordings carry particular pedagogical value, proposing that field recordings can support culture-centred, cross-cultural, and heritage-based lessons that restore continuity between generations of musical knowledge.

Structural barriers, however, persist. Saurombe and Ngulube (2018) observe that the potential of archives in East and Southern Africa often remains unrealised because of limited visibility and weak collaboration with universities. Emerging digital and distributed-authority models offer partial solutions: Dobreski et al. (2019) and Hawkins (2022) point to linked-data approaches for improving discoverability, while Olliff and Dill (2021) propose a distributed archives model in which communities retain custody of materials while partnering with institutions on preservation, thereby rebalancing archival authority. Nevertheless, expanded discoverability and access do not necessarily result in the pedagogical integration of archival resources.

Within Kenya, Kemoni (2002) identifies limited awareness, accessibility, and regulatory constraints as impediments to archival use. Without intentional collaboration among universities, archives, and communities, Kenyan institutions risk reproducing patterns of archival underutilisation documented elsewhere in the region.

This demonstrates that culturally responsive music teaching requires more than the inclusion of diverse repertoire; it depends on pedagogical practices and institutional structures that enable students to engage meaningfully with culturally situated musical knowledge. Research on music archives similarly shows that archival collections can support contextual and experiential learning, but their educational use is frequently constrained by limited visibility, restricted access, and a lack of sustained institutional collaboration. Existing scholarship has therefore established the pedagogical potential of culturally grounded resources and documented structural challenges affecting archival access. It has not, however, adequately examined

whether and how collaboration between universities and music archives influences lecturers' integration of archival materials into culturally responsive music teaching in Kenyan public universities. This unresolved relationship provides the basis for the present study.

Theoretical Framework

This study draws on two complementary perspectives: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) and Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). CRP provides the normative rationale for why archival engagement matters pedagogically; CHAT supplies the analytical lens for how such engagement is produced or constrained within institutional settings. This way, they address both the what and the how of university–music archive collaboration.

CRP (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2018) positions learners' cultural knowledge and lived experiences as central resources for learning. Within music education, this translates into Culturally Responsive Music Teaching, which affirms students' musical worlds, validates indigenous and community musical knowledge, and encourages critical engagement with dominant musical canons (McKoy & Lind, 2022; Shaw, 2012; Kelly-McHale, 2018). In this study, CRP is used to interpret the pedagogical significance of lecturers' use of archival materials, distinguishing genuine cultural validation from token inclusion.

CHAT, developed from Vygotskian sociocultural theory and elaborated by Engeström (2001), conceptualises activity as mediated, socially organised, and historically situated, occurring within an activity system comprising a subject, an object, mediating artefacts, a community, rules, and a division of labour. CHAT treats collaboration not as an individual initiative but as an emergent property of this wider system. Applied here, lecturers and students are the subjects; culturally responsive music teaching is the object; archival materials and access platforms are the mediating artefacts; universities and archives form the community; institutional policies and agreements constitute the rules; and the distribution of responsibility for sourcing and curating materials constitutes the division of labour. Where rules, community, and division of labour remain underdeveloped, as in the informal collaboration this study documents, the burden of mediating between archives and classroom practice falls disproportionately on individual lecturers.

In a nutshell, CRP explains why culturally grounded archival use matters for students' learning and identity affirmation, while CHAT explains how such practice is enabled or constrained structurally. This dual framing maps directly onto the study's two empirically derived variables: Institutional Collaboration corresponds to CHAT's rules, community, and division of labour, while Student Engagement corresponds to the activation of mediating artefacts by subjects in pursuit of the pedagogical object defined by CRP. The study's central argument, that collaboration must be formalised and embedded within institutional structures to sustain culturally responsive outcomes, is thus grounded in both CRP's account of good practice and CHAT's account of the systemic conditions needed to produce it.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a pragmatic paradigm and a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently, analysed separately, and integrated during interpretation. The four participating institutions—Kenyatta University, Maseno University, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, and the Technical University of Kenya—constituted the Kenyan public universities offering music programmes through established music departments at the time of the study. The target

population comprised 150 third-year music students and 25 lecturers. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample-size table, 108 students were selected and proportionately allocated to Kenyatta University (58), Maseno University (28), the Technical University of Kenya (15), and Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (7). Simple random sampling was applied within each university stratum. Seven lecturers were purposively selected, and interviews continued until thematic saturation was achieved. A piloted questionnaire measured students' perceptions of university–music archive collaboration and lecturers' use of archival materials in culturally responsive music teaching. Semi-structured interviews explored lecturers' experiences of archival access, collaboration, and pedagogical use. We analysed questionnaire data using descriptive statistics, principal component analysis, and multiple linear regression. Normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were assessed before regression. Interview data were analysed manually through familiarisation, initial coding, categorisation, theme development, review, and interpretation, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic-analysis procedures. Ethical approval, institutional permission, informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were observed.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Of the 108 questionnaires administered to sampled students, 91 were returned complete and usable, yielding a response rate of 84.3 per cent. Subsequent analyses, including descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, and regression, were conducted on this valid sample ($N = 91$). Students indicated their level of agreement with their lecturers' use of archival materials in culturally responsive music teaching. Responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Table 1 presents the results.

Table 1: Students Perceptions of Lecturers' Use of Archival Materials in Culturally Responsive Music Teaching

Item Code	Statement	Strongly Disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly Agree n (%)	Mean	SD
UAM1	My lecturers use recordings or examples from music archives in their teaching	3 (3.3)	1 (1.1)	9 (9.9)	44 (48.4)	34 (37.4)	4.15	0.89
UAM2	Archive-based materials are regularly incorporated into class content	3 (3.3)	6 (6.6)	22 (24.2)	44 (48.4)	16 (17.6)	3.70	0.95
UAM3	I have learned about local or indigenous music through materials sourced from archives	4 (4.4)	6 (6.6)	14 (15.4)	50 (54.9)	17 (18.7)	3.77	0.98
UAM4	Archived musical	3 (3.3)	3 (3.3)	2 (2.2)	56 (61.5)	27 (29.7)	4.11	0.86

	content helps me understand the cultural context of the music I study							
UAM5	Lecturers often relate archival materials to our diverse cultural backgrounds	3 (3.3)	3 (3.3)	17 (18.7)	47 (51.6)	21 (23.1)	3.88	0.92
UAM6	I feel that the use of archive-based materials makes music lessons more relevant	2 (2.2)	2 (2.2)	3 (3.3)	41 (45.1)	43 (47.3)	4.33	0.83
UAM7	The use of archival resources has helped me appreciate my own musical heritage	1 (1.1)	1 (1.1)	11 (12.1)	51 (56.0)	27 (29.7)	4.12	0.74
UAM8	Archive-based materials support an inclusive learning environment in music education	3 (3.3)	1 (1.1)	8 (8.8)	46 (50.5)	33 (36.3)	4.15	0.88
UAM9	Archive resources have been used to compare global and local music traditions in class	2 (2.2)	6 (6.6)	20 (22.0)	44 (48.4)	19 (20.9)	3.79	0.93
UAM10	I can better relate to music lessons that incorporate culturally grounded archival materials	1 (1.1)	1 (1.1)	15 (16.5)	46 (50.5)	28 (30.8)	4.09	0.78
Valid N=91								
Grand Mean							4.009	0.876

Archival Materials Enhanced Cultural Relevance and Experiential Learning

As shown in Table 1, students generally reported positive experiences of lecturers' use of archival materials in culturally responsive music teaching. The item means ranged from 3.70 to 4.33, with a grand mean of 4.01 (SD = 0.88). The highest-rated item concerned the relevance of lessons incorporating archive-based materials (M = 4.33, SD = 0.83). Students also reported that archival resources helped them appreciate their musical heritage (M = 4.12, SD = 0.74), understand the cultural contexts of the music studied (M = 4.11, SD = 0.86), and relate more effectively to culturally grounded lessons (M = 4.09, SD = 0.78). These results indicate that the value of archival materials extended beyond exposure to recordings; students associated their use with contextual understanding, cultural identification, and lesson relevance.

The interview findings explained how this pedagogical value was produced. Lecturers used recordings and videos to connect theoretical content with performance practices and students' cultural experiences. One lecturer explained:

They can see a nyatiti being played or hear a lullaby from western Kenya. That bridges theory and practice (Participant 1).

Another described the inclusive potential of culturally familiar materials:

If I'm teaching Luo students, and I use nyatiti or orutu samples, they feel included (Participant 3).

Archival materials were also incorporated into active learning through listening, notation, reconstruction, and performance. As one lecturer observed:

We would show a video of a folk dance, then ask students to recreate or notate it (Participant 1).

The convergence between the student questionnaire and lecturer interviews shows that archival materials became culturally responsive when they were pedagogically activated. Their significance did not lie merely in representing African or Kenyan repertoire, but in enabling students to listen critically, examine performance contexts, connect musical concepts with familiar cultural traditions, and reinterpret archived practices through practical activities. This supports culturally responsive pedagogy's emphasis on using learners' cultural knowledge as a resource for meaningful learning (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995). It also reflects Nzewi's (2019) argument that African musical knowledge is participatory and socially situated rather than adequately transmitted through abstract description alone.

Nevertheless, students' exposure to these practices was uneven. Regular incorporation of archive-based materials received the lowest mean, although it remained positive (M = 3.70, SD = 0.95), and almost one quarter of respondents selected the neutral response. Similarly, the use of archives to compare local and global musical traditions recorded a comparatively lower mean (M = 3.79, SD = 0.93). These variations suggest that archival materials were valued when used, but had not yet become a consistently embedded element of music teaching across the participating institutions.

Dimensions of University–Music Archive Collaboration

Exploratory factor analysis identified the underlying dimensions of university–music archive collaboration. The data were suitable for factor analysis, as demonstrated by a Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin value of .875 and a statistically significant Bartlett’s test of sphericity, $\chi^2(45)=523.52, p<.001$, $\chi^2(45)=523.52, p<.001$. Principal component analysis with Varimax rotation produced two components that jointly explained 67.37 per cent of the variance.

Table 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis for University- Archive Collaboration

		Component 1	Component 2	
Item Code	Statement	Institutional Collaboration	Student Engagement	Cronbach’s Alpha (α)
UMAC 2	My lecturers have informed us about partnerships with music archives.	0.862		0.875
UMAC 5	The university encourages students to use music archives for research or learning	0.824		
UMAC 6	I have received guidance from lecturers on how to access music archive materials	0.740		
UMAC 1	I am aware that my university collaborates with music archives or cultural institutions	0.737		
UMAC 4	I have attended a class activity (e.g., field trip, guest lecture) linked to a music archive	0.682		
UMAC 3	Our course outlines include activities involving music archives	0.649		
UMAC 8	I know where to find music archives related to Kenyan music traditions.		0.880	0.836
UMAC 9	My coursework includes assignments that requires use of archival music content		0.848	
UMAC 7	Archive materials were made available through the university’s learning platforms or library		0.620	
UMAC 10	I have independently accessed music archive materials because of university encouragement or support		0.614	
Eigenvalues	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	
1	3.924	39.245	39.245	
2	2.812	28.121	67.366	

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy: .875

Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity: Approx. $\chi^2(45) = 523.52, p < .001$

Note. Extraction method = Principal Component Analysis. Rotation method = Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation. Two components were extracted and explained 67.37 per cent of the variance.

The first component, Institutional Collaboration, explained 39.25 per cent of the variance and comprised indicators of institutional support, including awareness of university partnerships with archives, university encouragement, lecturer guidance, archive-linked learning activities, and inclusion of archival work in course outlines. The component demonstrated high internal consistency ($\alpha=.875$). The second component, Student Engagement, explained 28.12 per cent of the variance and comprised knowledge of archive locations, archive-based assignments, access through university platforms, and students' independent use of archival materials. This component also demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency ($\alpha=.836$).

These findings show that university–music archive collaboration operated through two related but distinct processes. Institutional Collaboration represented the structures through which universities and lecturers created opportunities for archival use, whereas Student Engagement represented students' practical interaction with archival resources. Collaboration was therefore not limited to formal agreements between institutions. It also included the pedagogical and learner-facing practices through which archival materials became visible, accessible, and usable.

The study also conducted exploratory factor analysis on the items measuring lecturers' use of archival materials in culturally responsive music teaching. The analysis produced a single factor comprising eight items, with loadings ranging from .648 to .778. The factor explained 47.42 per cent of the variance and demonstrated high internal consistency ($\alpha=.867$). It captured related teaching practices such as incorporating archival recordings into lessons, contextualising musical traditions, connecting content with students' cultural backgrounds, supporting inclusion, and strengthening appreciation of musical heritage. Items concerning comparison of global and local musical traditions and students' general ability to relate to culturally grounded lessons were excluded because their loadings did not meet the retention criterion.

Table 3: Exploratory Factor Analysis for Students Perceptions on Lecturers' use of Archives in Culturally Responsive Music Teaching

Item Code	Statement	Factor loadings	Cronbach's Alpha(α)
UAM1	My lecturers use recordings or examples from music archives in their teaching	0.778	0.867
UAM4	Archived musical content helps me understand the cultural context of the music I study	0.756	
UAM6	I feel that the use of archive-based materials makes music lessons more relevant	0.746	
UAM3	I have learned about local or indigenous music through materials sourced from archives.	0.700	
UAM7	The use of archival resources has helped me appreciate my own musical heritage	0.694	
UAM2	Archive-based materials are regularly incorporated into class content.	0.680	
UAM8	Archive-based materials support an inclusive learning environment in music education	0.677	
UAM5	Lecturers often relate archival materials to our diverse cultural backgrounds	0.648	
Eigenvalues		4.742	
% of Variance		47.417	
Cumulative %		47.417	

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy: .830

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: Approx. $\chi^2(45) = 393.45$, $p < .001$

Note. Extraction method = Principal Component Analysis. One component was extracted. Items UAM9 and UAM10 were excluded because their loadings were below .60.

These results indicate that lecturers' archival use functioned as a coherent pedagogical construct, whereas collaboration had both structural and participatory dimensions. This distinction is important because institutional provision does not necessarily result in classroom use. Universities may create awareness or access opportunities, but the pedagogical value of archival resources is realised when lecturers incorporate them into learning activities and students actively engage with them.

Collaboration Significantly Predicted Lecturers' Archival Use

To determine whether Institutional Collaboration and Student Engagement predicted lecturers' use of archival materials in culturally responsive music teaching, Multiple linear regression was conducted. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(2,88)=36.87$, $p<.001$, $F(2,88)=36.87$, $p<.001$, and explained 45.6 per cent of the variance in lecturers' archival use ($R^2=.456$, $R^2=.456$, adjusted $R^2=.444$, $R^2=.444$).

Table 4: Influence of University- Archive Collaboration on Music Lecturers' use of Archives for Culturally Responsive Music Teaching

Model	B	SE	β	t	p	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	F (2, 88)	Sig.
Constant	2.254	0.213	—	10.599	.000	0.675	0.456	0.444	36.867	.000
Institutional Collaboration	0.238	0.077	0.338	3.097	.003					
Student Engagement	0.279	0.077	0.396	3.631	.000					

Note. N = 91; p < .05 = significant.

Both predictors made statistically significant positive contributions. Institutional Collaboration significantly predicted lecturers' use of archival materials ($\beta=.338, p=.003$ \beta=.338, p=.003), while Student Engagement made a slightly stronger contribution ($\beta=.396, p<.001$ \beta=.396, p<.001). The null hypothesis that university–music archive collaboration had no significant influence on lecturers' use of archival materials was therefore rejected.

The findings suggest that lecturers' archival use increased where universities provided guidance, awareness, curricular opportunities, and access to archival resources. However, Student Engagement emerged as the stronger predictor, indicating that institutional provision became educationally consequential when students actively accessed and used archival materials. Collaboration should therefore be understood not merely as an administrative relationship between a university and an archive, but as a process that connects institutional arrangements to classroom activities and student learning.

The lecturer interviews helped explain this relationship. Although participants used archival recordings and other materials in their teaching, access did not always arise from formal institutional relationships. Instead, archival engagement frequently depended on lecturers' personal initiative, prior institutional exposure, individual enquiries, professional contacts, online platforms, and personal collections. Lecturers could therefore incorporate archival materials into teaching without participating in sustained university–archive partnerships. Consequently, positive reports of archival use should not be interpreted as evidence that formal collaboration, established communication channels, and shared institutional responsibilities were consistently present across the participating universities.

The stronger contribution of Student Engagement can therefore be interpreted as evidence of pedagogical activation rather than proof that institutional collaboration was unimportant. Students' participation through listening, analysis, assignments, performance, and creative reconstruction transformed archival materials from available resources into teaching tools. Institutional Collaboration created the conditions for use, while Student Engagement reflected the enactment of those opportunities in teaching and learning.

This finding is consistent with culturally responsive pedagogy, which positions students as active participants whose cultural knowledge and experiences contribute to the learning process (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995). It also aligns with studies showing that archival and culturally grounded resources have greater educational value when incorporated into structured inquiry, interpretation, and creative practice rather than presented as supplementary content (Campbell & Roberts, 2019; Watkins et al., 2021).

From a Cultural-Historical Activity Theory perspective, archival materials functioned as mediating artefacts connecting lecturers and students to the object of culturally responsive music teaching. Institutional Collaboration corresponded to the rules, community relationships, and division of labour supporting archival use, while Student Engagement reflected the active use of archival materials within the teaching activity. The significance of both predictors supports the proposition that pedagogical outcomes emerge through interaction between institutional structures, human agency, and mediating resources.

However, the qualitative findings also indicated that this activity system remained unevenly developed. Much of the reported archival engagement depended on lecturers' awareness, personal initiative, and professional networks. Limited digitisation, weak institutional agreements, insufficient curricular integration, and limited awareness of available collections constrained more systematic use. These conditions help explain why archive-based materials were regarded positively but were not consistently incorporated across all learning experiences.

The findings therefore demonstrate both convergence and qualification between the two strands. Students generally reported that archival materials enhanced the relevance and cultural grounding of music teaching, while lecturers confirmed their usefulness for contextual listening, analysis, notation, and performance. At the same time, lecturers' accounts qualified the apparent strength of collaboration by revealing that much archival use occurred through informal and individually sustained arrangements. The quantitative relationship was therefore evident, but the qualitative findings showed that it had not yet been fully institutionalised.

Overall, university–music archive collaboration significantly predicted lecturers' use of archival materials, but its pedagogical influence depended on the interaction between institutional support and active engagement. Formal access arrangements created possibilities for archival use; lecturer and student participation translated those possibilities into culturally responsive teaching. Sustainable practice consequently requires both stronger institutional partnerships and systematic integration of archival resources into curricula, assignments, and classroom activities.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: This study found that university–music archive collaboration significantly predicted lecturers' use of archival materials in culturally responsive music teaching. Institutional Collaboration and Student Engagement jointly explained 45.6 per cent of the variation in archival use, with Student Engagement making a slightly stronger contribution. The qualitative findings clarified that archival recordings and related materials supported contextual listening, analysis, performance, cultural identification, and connections between theory and practice. However, much of this use depended on individual lecturers' initiative, awareness, and professional networks rather than sustained institutional partnerships.

The study contributes to culturally responsive music education by demonstrating that the presence or accessibility of archival resources is insufficient on its own. Their pedagogical value emerges when institutional support is combined with lecturers' curricular decisions and students' active engagement. It also extends the application of Cultural-Historical Activity Theory to archive-based music education by

showing how archival materials operate as mediating artefacts within an activity system shaped by institutional rules, relationships, responsibilities, and learner agency.

The findings consequently distinguish archival access from meaningful university–archive collaboration. Whereas access enables lecturers to obtain materials, collaboration creates the institutional and pedagogical conditions necessary for their sustained use. Therefore, strengthening culturally responsive music teaching requires universities and music archives to formalise their relationships while embedding archival engagement in curricula, teaching activities, and assessment. Through such integration, music archives can function not only as repositories of cultural memory but also as active educational resources through which students critically encounter, interpret, and sustain diverse musical knowledge.

Recommendations: This study recommends that universities and music archives formalise their collaboration through documented agreements, such as memoranda of understanding, that specify access protocols, resource-sharing responsibilities, and mechanisms for sustaining the partnership beyond individual lecturers or archivists. These agreements should include a clear digitisation plan for culturally significant collections and a defined means of making lecturers and students aware of available materials, such as shared catalogues or induction sessions.

Universities should also integrate archival materials directly into music curricula and assessment, rather than leaving their use to individual lecturers. Concrete steps include: specifying archive-based content in course outlines, including archival listening or analysis tasks in assessment, and training lecturers to locate and use archival resources in teaching.

This two-part approach reflects the study's core finding: institutional collaboration creates access, but curricular integration determines use. Formal partnerships without curricular integration are unlikely to change classroom practice; curricular reform without reliable institutional access is equally unlikely to succeed. Both must be pursued together.

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