

Examining the Cost of Care on Archives Professionals

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Abstract: Archivists are caregivers, taking care of dependents, loved ones, and relatives, young and old, healthy and sick. At the 2021 SAA Research Forum, the authors presented initial findings of their Cost of Care Survey to investigate the effect caregiving has on archivists: how they manage work responsibilities, professional engagement, and development opportunities, as well as the long-term effects that wages and the costs of care have on caregivers. The survey also collected data on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic stay-at-home orders on caregivers. This allowed for a timely examination of how caregiving roles and responsibilities have changed since March 1, 2020. This article elaborates on the methodology employed for drafting and disseminating the survey, the interpretation of over 700 data variables, and the discussion of preliminary findings and analysis of the survey results. The article also clarifies and corrects data that was misinterpreted and presented at the Forum in July 2021. Any visuals included here represent newly interpreted data.

Research Intention

The following statements are both true: 1) caregiving requires time and energy, and 2) it is an invaluable contribution within families, between friends, and among communities. Yet, what correlation exists between caregiving responsibilities and archivists' professional trajectories and engagement? What are the direct and indirect costs of providing care to others for members of our profession? During the Society of American Archivists' (SAA) Research Forum on July 21, 2021,¹ we presented initial findings from our continuing research that investigates the effect caregiving has on archivists: managing work responsibilities, professional engagement, and development opportunities, as well as the long-term effects on wages and the costs of care. The slides and visualized data from that presentation are publicly available² and this paper presents corrected and newly interpreted data. Our interest in this research

¹ 2021 SAA Research Forum Agenda, <https://www2.archivists.org/am2021/research-forum-2021/agenda> (last accessed April 19, 2022).

² Alexis Braun Marks, Rachael Dreyer, Jennifer Johnson, and Michelle Sweetser, "Examining the Cost of Care on Archives Professionals" (virtual presentation Session 1.2 at the 2021 SAA Research Forum, July 21, 2021),

emerged from two formal conversations we had at the Midwest Archives Conference (MAC) and SAA annual meetings in 2017. Our co-presenters³ helped to crystalize the questions that emerged from those conversations, which our research group later explored in the article “The Cost of Care and the Impact on the Archives Profession,” that appeared in a 2019 special issue on diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency in the *Journal of Western Archives*. The crux of our research intention was to examine the effects of caregiving responsibilities on multiple facets of archivists’ professional lives through quantitative data. When we began this process, there was some collected caregiving-related data specific to archivists, but little was formally addressed in our professional literature. Much of what we were able to analyze was previously published narrative descriptions of data in adjacent professional fields.⁴ Many of the archives-specific questions we raised in our paper could not be answered due to deficiencies in data previously collected, including questions related to earnings (the presence/absence of wage penalties for mothers or wage bonuses for fathers, for example), the impact of the cost of care on archivists’ professional careers (decisions to relocate, transition to a single-income household, or leave the profession, etc.), how employment status affects access to Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) benefits and employment benefits that create caregiving opportunities, how caregiving affects advancement and engagement in the profession (particularly with regard to promotion, professional development, and service activities), and many more.

In an attempt to fill the gaps in both the literature and the existing data variables, our research group entered into the process of survey development, deployment, and analysis. Caregiving as a topic of academic interest has an established body of work, but the attention given to issues surrounding caregiving in our collective consciousness has grown exponentially in the past 24 months with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and national, state, and local elections that ushered in a number of progressive voices advocating for universal daycare, paid parental leave, and other measures in support of caregivers. It is clear that issues surrounding caregiving, the pressures on caregivers, and the lack of formal and government-funded support systems have started to migrate from formal academic research forums into traditional mainstream media outlets. Our hope is that this research and data will allow others to examine the impacts of caregiving on archivists from different angles.

Research Methodology & Partnership

We went into this research with the intention to publish any findings generated by the survey and subsequent analysis. We did not go into this research with an extensive or deep understanding of research methodology or theories, other than having a firm grasp of the difference between quantitative and qualitative research. That said, we knew enough that Alexis Braun Marks began the process of obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval at Eastern Michigan University (EMU) to ensure that we

https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf (last accessed April 19, 2022).

³ We would like to thank Anne Kenne, Elizabeth Myers, JoAnna Russ, Lisa Sjoberg, and Stacie Williams for contributing to the conversation.

⁴ There is substantial literature on caregiving and the impacts of care on promotions, wages, mental and physical health, stress, etc. within a number of disciplines including gerontology, sociology, economics, marriage and family studies, business, and demography. Despite this, there is a deficit in the literature about how this applies to archivists and where these issues have been studied and addressed in existing literature; there is a particular deficit in the variables as it pertained to our research questions.

would be able to publish any of the data collected. To submit an application for review we drafted a mixed-method study that relied heavily on survey data and included one-on-one follow-up interviews. As part of the IRB application, we drafted survey questions and outlined proposed avenues for participant recruitment. Braun Marks hired statistical consultant Jim Pellerin, with Tri-Core Analytics, to help build the initial survey framework in Qualtrics, and to analyze findings post-survey completion. Our research team wanted to capture demographic information, but also detailed information on caregiving responsibilities (e.g., number of children or adults being cared for, relationship to the caregiver, and the age of the individual when caregiving began), benefits offered by employers as they pertain to caregiving (e.g., whether or not FMLA benefits were offered, and if so what percentage if any was paid), and how caregiving was or was not impacting professional participation. Once all the components of the survey were compiled, the final hurdle of ensuring that all members of the research team could be included on the IRB application as principal investigators (PI) was to complete Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program training and certification. Obtaining CITI certification is likely a seamless, no-cost process for most in academia, but Jennifer Johnson's corporate employer provided no CITI training; she would have had to acquire it at substantial personal cost. EMU's Office of Research, Development, and Administration (ORDA) made an exception for Johnson, allowing her to obtain her certification through EMU's Institutional License.

After each member of our team completed CITI training, we were able to submit our IRB application and received exempt status from ORDA. However, to remain in compliance, each modification to the survey questions meant another submission to the IRB. We worked with Pellerin throughout the summer of 2019 to clarify the questions and build the survey. Colleagues and friends helped test the survey that fall. A series of life events pushed the distribution of the survey from December 2019 to March 2020, and in the early days of the pandemic while Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania declared stay at home orders, we continued to meet online and discuss what, if any, changes should be made to the survey before distribution. These changes entailed including questions about the impact of the pandemic on caregivers (including caregiving support, pressure to return to onsite work, and workday interruptions related to caregiving) and removing questions about upcoming conference attendance and childcare needs at those conferences. By January 2021, the survey was ready for distribution.

Distribution & Preliminary Findings

We began by soliciting leaders of state, regional, and national professional organizations to promote the survey to their memberships. From there we distributed the survey nationally through more than 15 listservs of which we are members.⁵ Available for four weeks in January-February 2021, the survey took approximately 20 minutes to complete 40 primary questions. Over 500 individuals started the survey. We worked with Pellerin, who removed duplicate and/or incomplete surveys from the overall results, leaving us with 449 valid responses. We were given results that had been run through IBM SPSS Statistics and Stata Software, generating overall response rates for each question and no way to easily correlate or generate deeper analysis of the variables.

⁵ A list of outlets to which we requested distribution is included in Appendix I.

The analysis of demographic information presented at the Research Forum was based on $n = 449$. Although accurate, for future reporting our group decided that we would move forward using a more conservative data set that removed any responses where individuals did not complete a majority of the survey. For a complete analysis of those who answered questions from the beginning to the end of the survey, a conservative sample ($n = 386$) was settled on for further analysis. Additionally, we had reported there were 700 variables for analysis when the exact number was 761. This is one area in which our lack of experience with quantitative research and data analysis led to clarification of what we presented at the Research Forum.

While the valid number of responses has changed, the story told did not.⁶ Our demographic data mirror other data collected from archival surveys.⁷ In discussion with Pellerin, he encouraged us to remove majority percentages from our visualizations in order to give a clearer picture of who else responded to the survey. For example, Figure 1 presents results about race, excluding white respondents 91.2% ($n = 386$) from the visualization, this way:

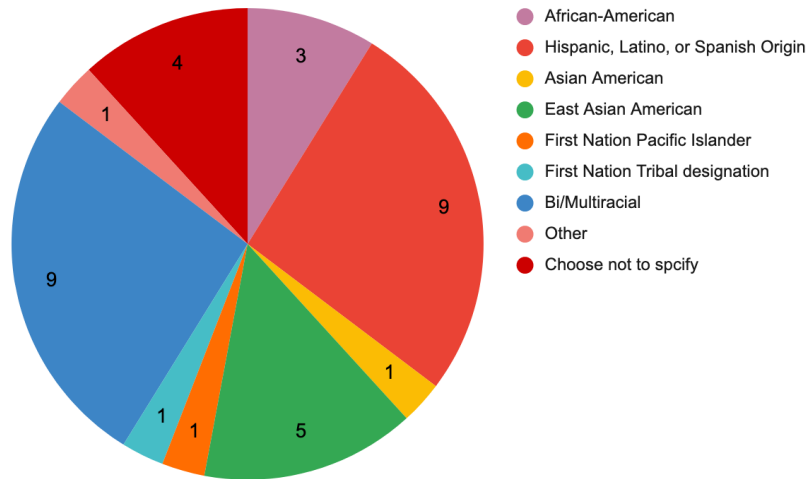


Figure 1. Excluding “White” respondents who represented 91.2% of responses, the figure above illustrates respondents who selected non-white racial, ethnic, or national origins in response to the demographic survey ethnicity question.

Seeing the small numbers for each response other than “White” helps to clarify how far we were from having the diverse representation we had aimed to get by targeting certain listservs and promoting the survey in geographic areas where white people are not the majority population. Overall, the response rates

⁶ Reported July 21, 2021, women made up 82.9% of respondents. When corrected to $n = 325$, women made up 84.2%. Reported July 21, 2021, academic archivists accounted for 56.4% of respondents. When corrected to $n = 328$, academic archivists made up 48.4%. Reported July 21, 2021, white respondents represented 90.6%. When corrected to $n = 386$, white respondents was 91.2%

⁷ Robin H. Israel and Jodi R. Eyre, “The 2017 WArS/SAA Salary Survey: Initial Results and Analysis” (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, Women Archivists Section, 2017), 8, <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/WArS-SAA-Salary-Survey-Report.pdf> (last accessed April 19, 2022), and Society of American Archivists, “2015 SAA Employment Survey: Full Results” (Chicago, June 16, 2015), 17. http://files.archivists.org/membership/surveys/employment2015/SAA-EmploymentSurvey2015-full-results_0615.pdf (last accessed April 19, 2022).

for non-white respondents did not leave us with anything that could be considered generalizable to the archival community.

Two other areas in which demographic information was illustrated without using the more conservative $n = 386$ were for respondents' institution type, and caregiving responsibilities. The statement "Academic archivists accounted for 56.4% of responses" presented at the Research Forum is visually still the same story with the conservative $n = 187$ out of 328 yielding a 48.4% response rate--far more academic archivists answered the survey than any other category.

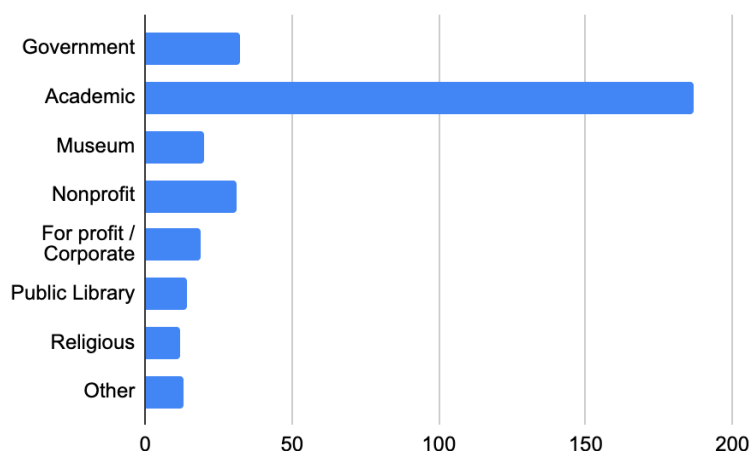


Figure 2. Institutional Representation with a conservative ($n = 386$). For Institutional Representation presented at the July 21, 2021 Research Forum, see slide 6.⁸

Our initial conference presentations leaned heavily on the experiences of those caring for dependents under 18 years old, and we expanded the scope for our article to include those caring for adult children, spouses, extended family members, and parents. We hypothesized that responses would reflect the findings from our initial research - a growing sandwich generation caring for both dependents under 18 and parents, in-laws, and extended family over 18. The survey data showed that this trend is present, but not prevalent in the archives profession. Forty-five percent of respondents indicated caring for only dependents; 20.47% were caring for extended family, parents, etc.; and 11.4% were caring for both. Similar to institution type, the story told by the more conservative sample of those who responded that they have caregiving responsibilities is nearly identical to the visual presented in July at the Research Forum, where in both cases respondents who indicated they had "No Caregiving Responsibility" were removed. When asked about caregiving responsibilities, 56.7% of the sample stated that they cared for at least one child ($n = 219$), 21% said that they cared for parent(s) and/or In-Law(s) ($n = 81$), 9.3% said that they cared for their spouse/partner ($n = 36$), 5.4% said that they cared for extended family members ($n = 21$), and 21% said that they had no caregiving responsibilities ($n = 81$). Regarding those that identified as responsible for caregiving of children, the majority of the sample ($n = 202$, 92.2%) reported caring for no

⁸ View data at https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf, slide 6.

more than two children. Of the respondents that reported caring for parents or in-laws ($n = 80$), 94% said that they were caring for no more than two.⁹

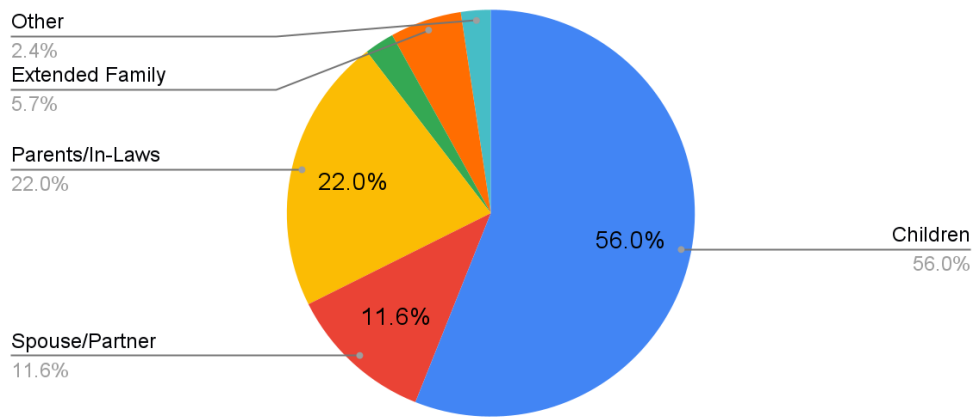


Figure 3. Caregiving Responsibilities with a conservative $n = 386$. For Caregiving Responsibilities Presented at the July 21, 2021 Research Forum, see slide 7.¹⁰

Time Shifting

“Overall, the idea of having a flexible schedule is seen as a positive motivating factor that can lead to increased happiness and overall well-being,”¹¹ one that can be particularly important in allowing women to stay in the workforce while concurrently serving in a caregiving role. As such, we were curious about the number of archivists who had flexible schedules available to them both before and during the pandemic. One form that flexibility might take is time-shifting, or the ability to shift some assigned work to alternate hours. Over half of respondents reported such practices in their lives. Amongst the 55.9%¹² of respondents who reported time-shifting ($n = 143$), we asked follow-up questions to learn about the frequency and patterns with which they shifted work before and during the pandemic. The number of individuals shifting their time increased significantly after March 1, 2020, with a corresponding increase in the number of hours being shifted. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 24 respondents stated that they shifted work on a daily basis. This is compared with 92 respondents who said that they shifted work on a daily basis after March 1, 2020. Similar ranges were found when comparing weekly and monthly work-shifting before and during the pandemic. There were 40 respondents who shifted work weekly and 53 respondents that shifted work monthly before COVID-19. After March 1, 2020, 106 respondents stated that they were shifting work weekly and 97 were shifting work monthly. For those that responded that they shifted work prior to the pandemic, the average amount of hours of work shifted was between 1-5

⁹ At the Research Forum we reported $n = 519$: Children 237 | Spouse/Partner 49 | Parents/In-laws 93 | Friends or Non-Relatives 10 | Extended Family 24 | Other 10 | No Caregiving Responsibilities 96.

¹⁰ View data at https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf, slide 7.

¹¹ Courtney White and Balasundram Maniam, "Flexible Working Arrangements, Worklife Balance, and Working Women," *Journal of Business and Accounting* 13, no. 1 (2020): 62.

¹² Numbers throughout this paragraph were originally reported with slight differences, as the author of this section utilized an uncleaned version of the data set. View originally presented data at https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf, slides 8-9.

hours (see Figures 6-8 below). After March 1, 2020, over 59% of responses ($n = 175$) indicate shifting more than five hours of work across all three categories (i.e., daily, weekly, and monthly).

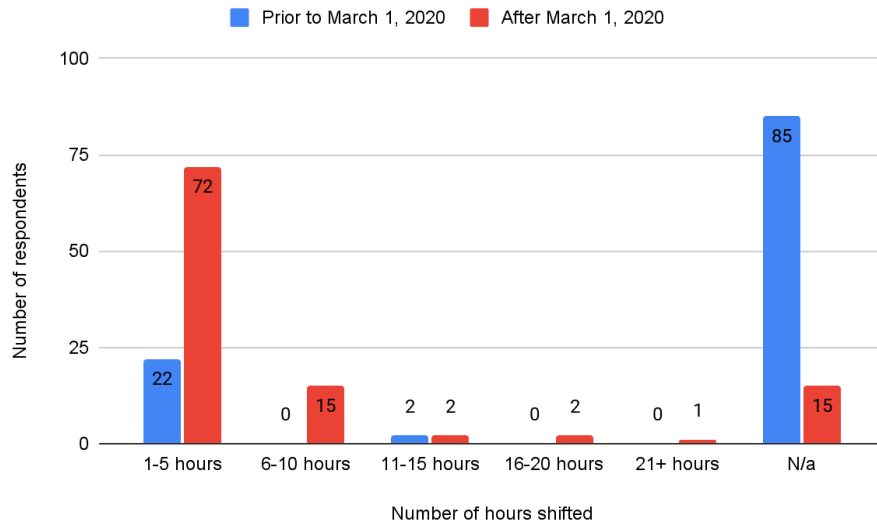


Figure 4. Number of respondents who reported shifting work on a daily basis, both prior to and after March 1, 2020.

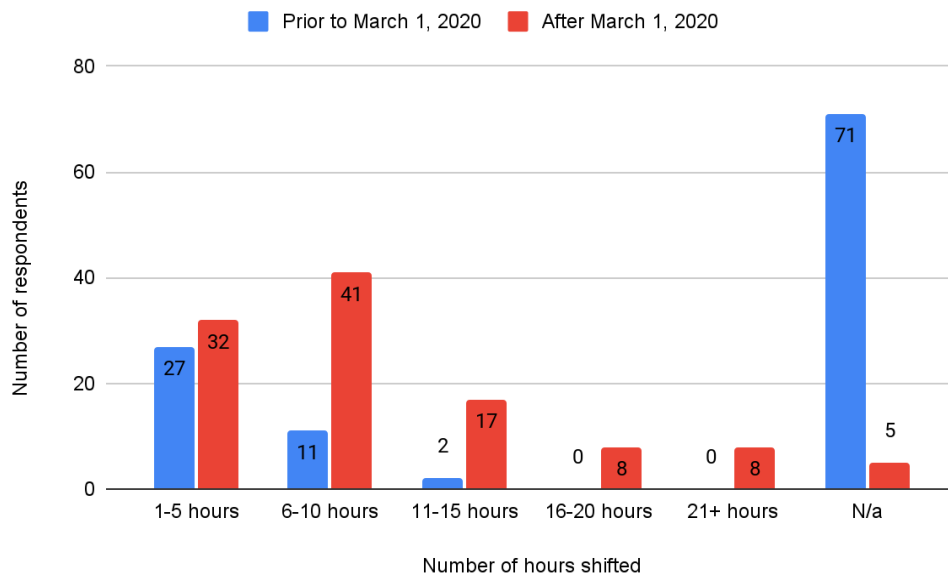


Figure 5. Number of respondents who reported shifting work on a weekly basis, both prior to and after March 1, 2020.

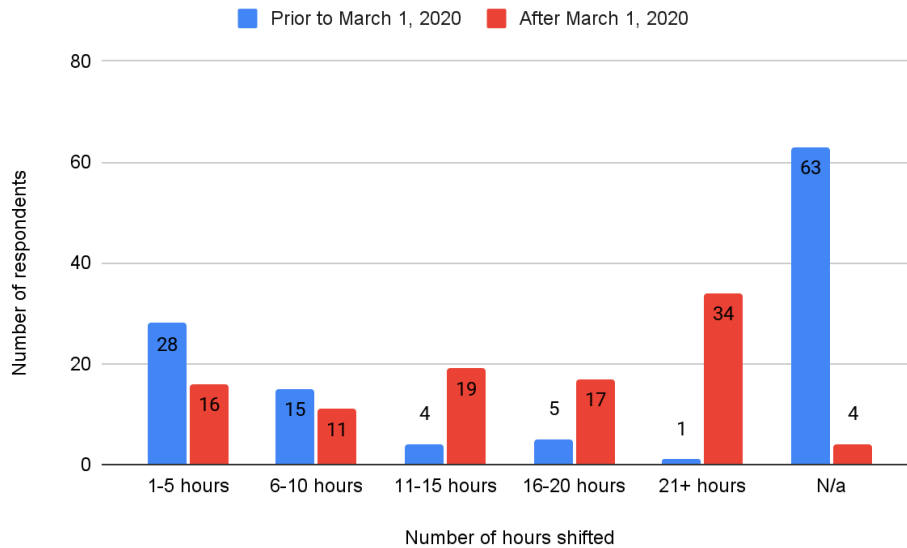


Figure 6. Number of respondents who reported shifting work on a monthly basis, both prior to and after March 1, 2020.

Work Location

As American society moved through the pandemic, many businesses closed their doors and set up employees with remote work situations. Some archival professionals worked remotely for a brief period, returning to their offices full-time just weeks or months into the pandemic; others continued to work remotely for over a year after the pandemic set in. While some employees had no choice about their work location, others had choices about or input into schedules and location for work. As schooling and external care options were limited and evolving throughout the pandemic, we were curious about the degree to which the caregiving role influenced decisions about work location (when applicable, and for those who remained in the workforce), and whether managers in particular felt pressure to return to the office. Remote work and flexible schedules have typically been gendered and stigmatized historically and employees who utilize these options are often perceived as disengaged and are susceptible to bias and discrimination.¹³

Respondents ($n = 318$) were almost equally divided when asked whether they had a choice about work location after the pandemic set in, with 51.9% reporting they did not have a choice and 48.1% reporting that they had a choice about work location.¹⁴ For those who did have a choice in work location, we inquired about the influence of certain roles in their decision-making - their roles as a caregiver and as a manager (if they were one) - with 32.4% of 148 respondents indicating that they strongly agreed with the statement, “my role as a caregiver influenced my choice of work location” and 20.8% of 72 managers

¹³ Stephanie Bornstein, “The Legal and Policy Implications of the ‘Flexibility Stigma,’” *Journal of Social Issues* 69 (2013): 389-405.

¹⁴ Numbers throughout this paragraph were originally reported with slight differences, as the author of this section utilized an uncleaned version of the data set. View originally presented data at https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf, slides 10-11.

reporting that they strongly agreed with the statement that “my role as manager influenced my choice of work location.” See Figures 7 and 8.

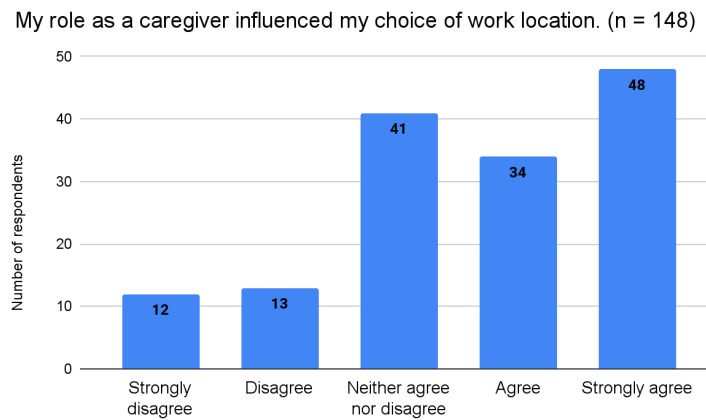


Figure 7. Likert-scale responses reflecting the number and degree to which respondents agreed with the statement “My role as a caregiver influenced my choice of work location.”

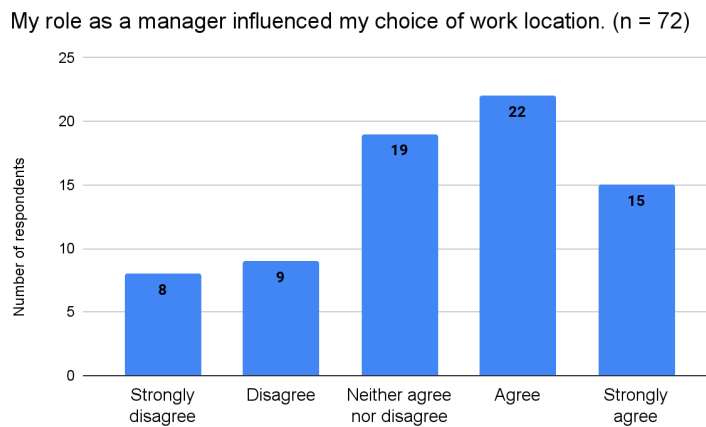


Figure 8. Likert-scale responses reflecting the number and degree to which respondents agreed with the statement “My role as a manager influenced my choice of work location.”

Also playing into the decision about whether to return to the office was the real or perceived pressure from others about one’s choice of work location. Research has shown that “most workplaces that offer supports related to work hours, scheduling, and flexibility base these on the informal discretion of supervisors who directly influence employees’ workload and work-related stressors.”¹⁵ It is useful, then, to understand the influence of a variety of external pressures, real or perceived, in addition to personal roles, upon decisions to return to an in-person work environment. Over half (58.3%) of respondents who answered this question did not experience pressure to return to the in-person location. However, roughly

¹⁵ Leslie B. Hammer, Ellen Ernst Kossek, Nanette L. Yragui, Todd E. Bodner, and Ginger C. Hanson, “Development and Validation of a Multidimensional Measure of Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSB),” *Journal of Management* 35, no. 4 (August 2009): 838. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308328510> (last accessed April 19, 2022).

one-third (30.9%) of respondents indicated pressure to return to the office from someone above them in the institutional hierarchy (supervisors and organization administration).¹⁶ Figure 9, below, shows overall responses, by source of pressure. We did not ask respondents to detail the forms of pressure that they experienced, which could have ranged from direct statements from supervisors to a broader organizational climate centered around the ideal worker.

Did you experience pressure to return to an in-person work environment? (Select all that apply.)

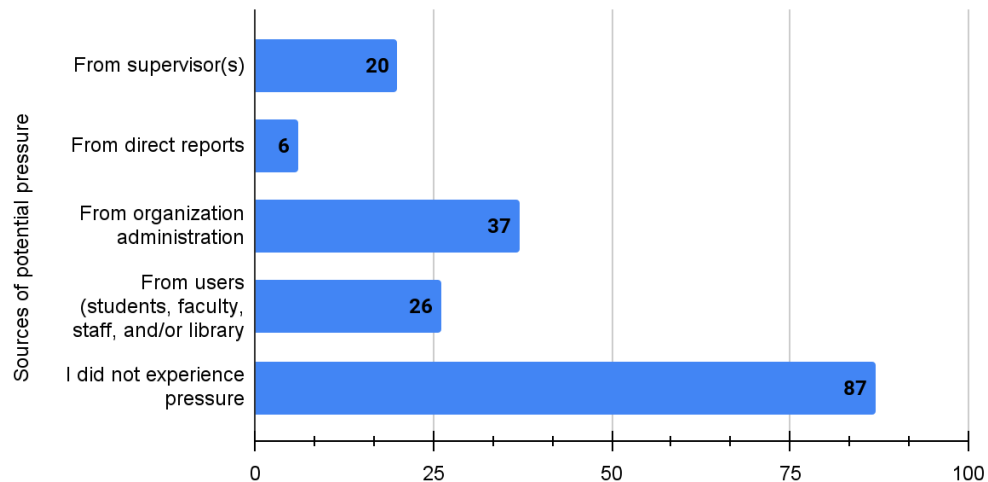


Figure 9. Responses to a question about sources of pressure to return to an in-person work environment, by source of pressure. Respondents were allowed to “Select All That Apply.”

Caregiving Arrangements

In addition to understanding who respondents provide care for, we wanted to better understand the care arrangements respondents are using, particularly as studies have shown that communities of color tend to rely more heavily on unpaid or subsidized childcare arrangements¹⁷ and FMLA coverage is restricted to certain kinds of family relationships, excluding participation by unmarried partners, daughters- and sons-in-law, step-children, grandchildren, and others who frequently take on roles in caring for older adults.¹⁸ We split questions by age, dependents 17 years old and under and dependents older than 18, and by type of arrangements, those we defined as formal or informal. By formal we referred to the primary external care arrangements the respondents used, and by informal we referred to who provided backup care for the

¹⁶ View originally presented data at https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf, slides 11-12.

¹⁷ For example, a Boston College School of Social Work study finds that “families with unpaid childcare arrangements (including Head Start, family members and friends and/or the family received a subsidy so that there was no cost) were more likely to be African American (39%) or Hispanic (34%) than White (28%).” Summer Hawkins, Tiziana C. Dearing, and David T. Takeuchi. *Race and Income Equity in Childcare: Examining Time, Cost and Parental Work Hours* (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, School of Social Work, 2017), 8, <http://hdl.handle.net/2345/bc-ir:107335> (accessed April 19, 2022).

¹⁸ Richard Schulz and Jill Eden, eds., National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, *Families Caring for an Aging America* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2016), 266.

respondents when they needed help in an emergency. Given the timing of our survey, we were also able to explore how these arrangements changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the pandemic is still an ongoing challenge for many, our survey addressed the initial phase of the pandemic, from March 2020 to January 2021.

Formal Arrangements

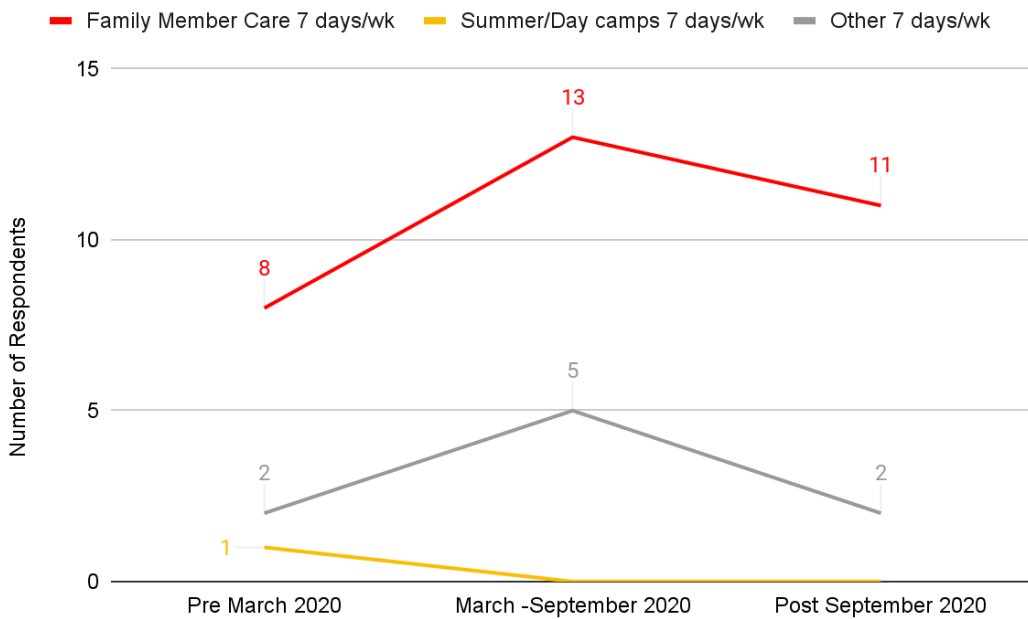
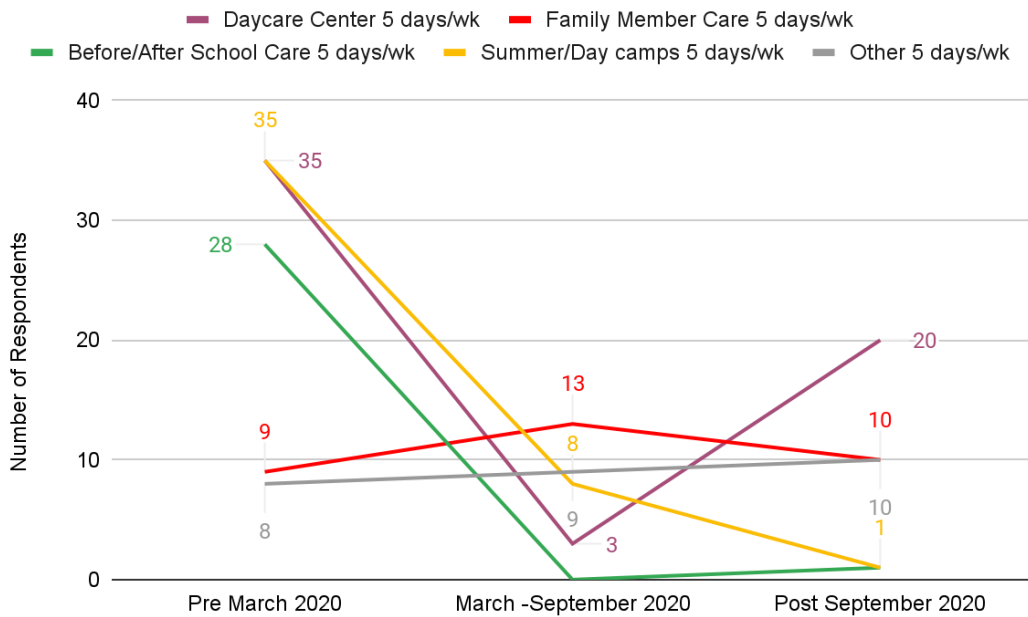
In regards to formal care arrangements, we primarily received data on dependents ages 17 and under; for those 18 years and older only “Assisted Living” and “Other” were selected as primary arrangements. For all choices that received responses, the data¹⁹ shows what many of us experienced - that most care arrangements significantly changed at the beginning of COVID-19 in March 2020, and most of these had not returned to pre-COVID-19 levels by September 2020. One exception was the reliance on family members to provide care. The “Other” choice provided an additional variation to this trend. Those responding to “Other” often used combinations of care options, relied on immediate family to provide care, or had children old enough to stay home by themselves. What is clear is that family members helped pick up the slack when care arrangements changed, and remained elevated post-September 2020. This may be significant for archivists, particularly for those with dependents 17 and under, having family nearby may be an important care alternative, and may affect professional and relocation decisions. We have not yet determined if there is a correlation between those who returned to work during the pandemic and which formal care arrangements were available to use: as previously mentioned, not all archivists were able to work off-site or online.

In addition to the types of formal care arrangements that were used, we also asked questions to understand the number of days care arrangements were needed. Most respondents required care arrangements five days a week pre-COVID-19.²⁰ There was a lot of change from pre-COVID-19 to the early months of the pandemic, but most arrangements had not rebounded to pre-pandemic levels by September 2020. There was also some shifting from five days a week for care to fewer days a week throughout COVID-19. Again the two exceptions were family care and “Other.” Both choices saw increases on the days care was required during and post-September 2020, notably for five and seven days per week. As mentioned above this indicates a reliance on family members for care arrangements, and the complex nature of arrangements that respondents determined fit best under “Other.”

Portraying this data proved to be a challenge and our first attempt produced a complicated graph. In an attempt to focus on the most important information and simplify data representation, our new graphs focus solely on which care arrangements were used five and seven days a week, since this is where the increases for care needs occurred. *See Figures 10 and 11.* In revisiting the data, we also discovered that we had previously misreported the number of respondents using summer or day camps pre-March 2020. We had reported eight respondents, when the correct number was thirty-five. Not only are we learning important lessons on portraying and simplifying information, but also on double-checking our data and our work.

¹⁹ View data at https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf, slide 13.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, slide 14.



Figures 10 and 11. Shifts in caregiving arrangements that were used by individuals 0-17 years old pre and during the COVID-19 pandemic five and seven days a week. This new representation of data excluded Certified Home Care, Nanny full-time, Nanny share, Au pair, and In-Home Babysitter responses due to fewer than ten respondents for each option.

As with the number of days a week care arrangements were used, we also sought to understand how many hours a day care arrangements were used.²¹ Again, for most care arrangements we see a dip in the number of hours of care used prior to March 2020, compared to during COVID-19, with the exception of care provided by family and “Other.” Daycare centers had some rebound in the number of care hours used in September 2020, while certified before and after care, and summer or day camps, both declined in use. This may have been because these options were no longer offered, or due to the timing of our survey one would expect that summer/day camps were not in use because of the season of the year. For the most part the reliance on family care and “Other,” and the number of hours dependents were cared for, remained steady or increased. Presenting this data in a coherent manner remains a challenge, illustrating different care options, at different points in time, with shifting responses in regards to hours per day, is complicated. Figure 12, depicts a chart reduced to respondents utilizing daycare, family, and “Other” as sources of care--the categories where the greatest shifts occurred in regards to hours a day care arrangements were used. During the pandemic it is obvious that formal caregiving arrangements, and the days and hours these arrangements were needed, changed drastically from prior to March 2020 due to the onset of COVID-19. What the data also shows is that family members and combination solutions as noted by “Other,” became the caregiving arrangements respondents relied upon.

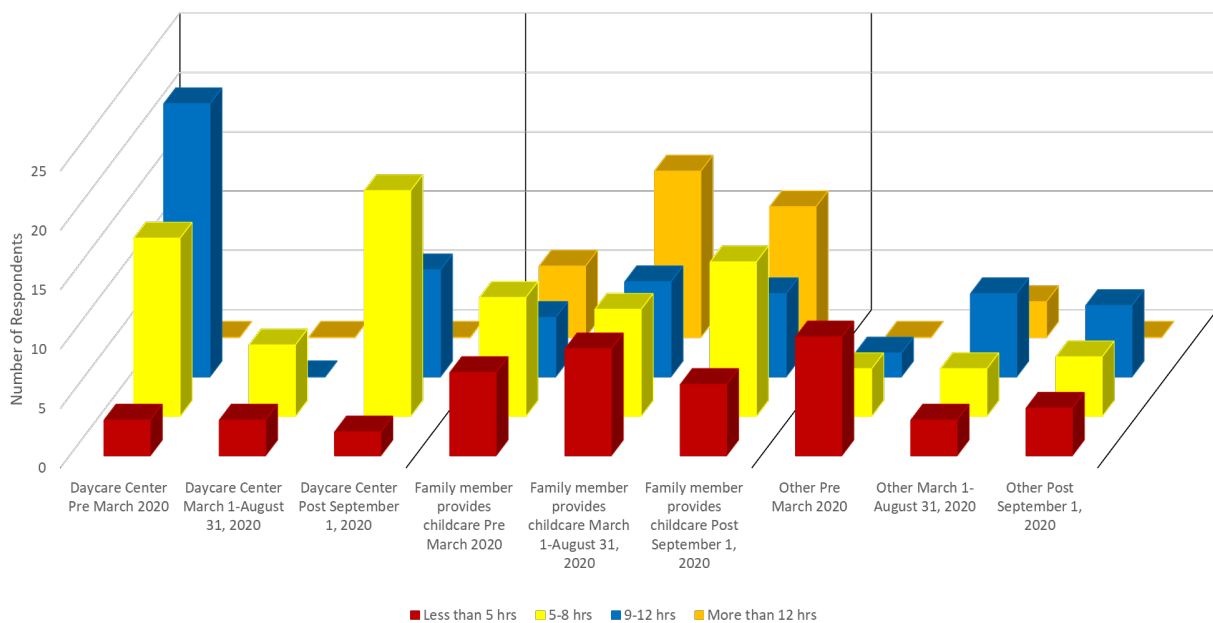


Figure 12. How Many Hours a Day Daycare Center, Family, and Other Care Arrangements Were Used for Individuals 0-18 Years Old Pre and During Covid-19 Pandemic. New representation of data.

Informal Arrangements

In addition to the formal caregiving arrangements that respondents establish for typical working hours, it was important for us to understand the caregiving situations that respondents utilize for unexpected events. One of our survey questions asked specifically about the care sources that respondents used for

²¹ View data at https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf, slide 15.

emergencies. What constituted an emergency was defined by the respondents, and could have included events such as a medical crisis, an unexpected change or immediate demand from work projects or schedules, an illness, or a sudden loss of an established care arrangement.

Nearly 46% of all respondents ($n = 386$) indicated that they themselves always provided backup care in an emergency before the pandemic. Just over 28% of all respondents indicated that partners always provided backup care prior to March 2020, with 10% of all respondents always relying on family members for backup care in that same period. See *Figure 13*.

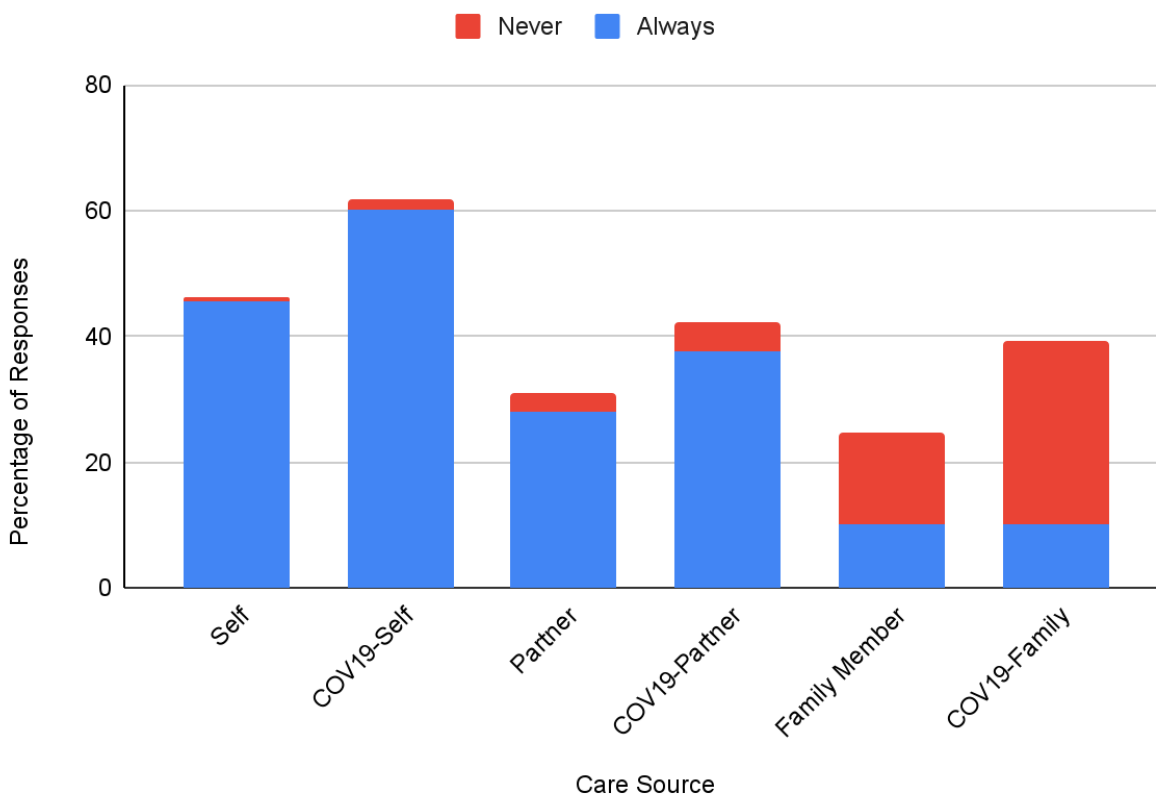


Figure 13. Frequency of Informal Care Arrangements during the Pre- and Pandemic Period.

Of the respondents, 45.8% of female respondents indicated that they always provided backup care before the pandemic, with 24.1% always relying on a partner for backup care; for male respondents, these numbers shift to 45.9% (self) and 44.7% (partner). Men more frequently rely on their partners to provide backup care, whereas women less frequently rely on partners for backup care. This means that women more frequently fill this gap, or cobble together a number of other care sources. Bear in mind, even though the responses for “Always, self” appear to be fairly even among both men and women, the large majority of respondents to the survey identified as female, which impacts these percentages (190 women answered this question, compared to 17 men, for example).

During the pandemic, respondents indicated that they or their partners provided the majority of backup care, bearing out the reality that family and social support systems constricted during this time. In response to questions that asked about backup care arrangements during the pandemic, respondents

answered that they (60.1%), partners (37.6%), or close family members (14.8%) always provided backup care in an emergency. For women specifically, these numbers revealed that 61.2% always covered their own backup care, with 34.2% of respondents indicating that their partners always covered backup care needs. For men, 54.3% indicated that they always provided emergency backup care, with 52.8% of male respondents indicating that their partners always covered backup care.²²

The data from this question illustrates that archivists rely on very few caregiving supports outside of immediate family members, even prior to the pandemic. Individuals, partners, and close family are the most common sources of back-up care, with self and partners being the two largest sources of informal care. Respondents indicated that they themselves provided the single largest source of care, both before and during the pandemic.

When other care options are not available, our survey results reflect findings from previous scholarship,²³ that caregiving responsibility impacts women in disproportionate numbers. For women, the options available for backup care shifts to self and partner. With the demographic information that we received, this starkly depicts the limited options that women archivists utilize for informal care arrangements. Although we were not able to assess how many women left the profession as a result of caregiving demands in the current survey, this would be an area for further research.

The reliance on self, partner, and close family member for backup care affects the choice to relocate, and by limiting opportunities for advancement that require relocation, reducing the geographic range that an archivist may consider when searching for positions, and tying archivists to current positions because of the proximity to family members who provide backup care.

Relocation

We posed questions about whether respondents have relocated either for a professional position or to be closer to caregivers. We sought data to refute or support the notion that to advance in the profession one must relocate; we also wanted to better understand if caregiving concerns affect decisions to relocate.

Slightly more than 59% of respondents indicated that they have relocated for a job.²⁴ At the Research Forum, we presented data on the number of times respondents had relocated. At the time, while it did seem odd that no respondents had relocated once, this appeared to be what the data were saying. Figure 14 shows the corrected data. The results were coded in a way that was difficult to understand. Qualtrics,

²² For additional analysis of the frequency and array of care sources utilized for backup care and the number of respondents, please visit https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf, slides 18-19.

²³ Josephine C. Jacobs, Courtney H. Van Houtven, Audrey Laporte, and Peter C. Coyte, "The Impact of Informal Caregiving Intensity on Women's Retirement in the United States," *Journal of Population Ageing* 10, no. 2 (2016-2017): 159-180; Joan R. Kahn, Javier García-Manglano, and Suzanne M. Bianchi, "The Motherhood Penalty at Midlife: Long-Term Effects of Children on Women's Careers," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 76, 1 (2014): 56-72; Leslie E. Tower and Melissa Latimer, "Cumulative Disadvantage: Effects of Early Career Childcare Issues on Faculty Research Travel," *Affilia* 31, 3 (2016): 317-330.

²⁴ View originally presented data at https://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2021/Platform/1-2-1_Marks_Dreyer_Johnson_Sweetser.pdf, slides 16-17.

one of the tools our statistician used to analyze our data, assigns codes to answers within a question. These codes do not necessarily match up with numeric responses as they were initially written in our survey. We have learned that we will need to develop a code book that explains these differences, and how the codes are used to represent the data we collected. We asked our statistician to clarify the data and we are now able to present accurate results. A significant number of respondents have relocated once or twice, with 12.87% responding that they have relocated four or more times.

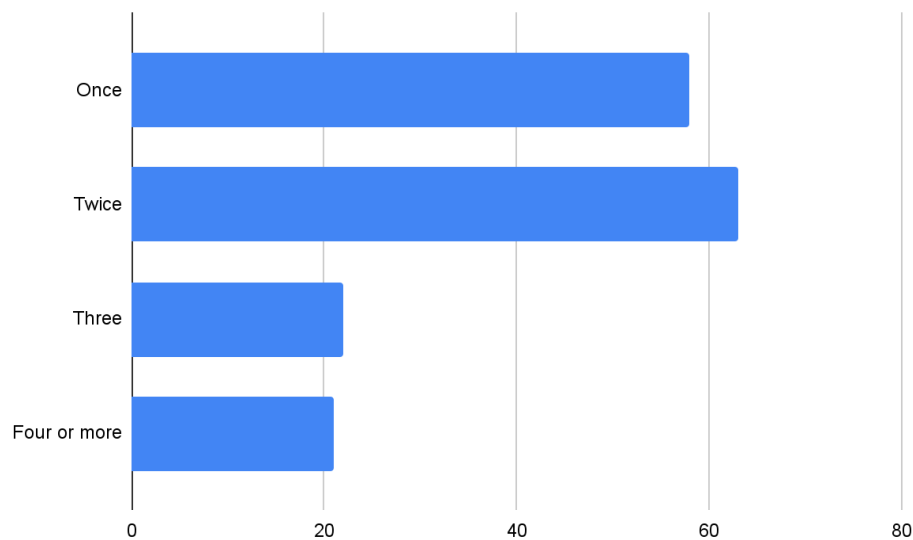


Figure 14. Number of Times Respondents Have Relocated. Corrected data.

When asked if they had relocated for a professional position or to be geographically close to caregiving supports, such as family or friends, 44% responded they had relocated for a job, and 32% responded they had relocated to be geographically closer to caregiving supports. While employment is a strong motivator for relocation, the importance of caregiving support cannot be ignored.

Research Limitations

In acknowledging the work still to be done, we have found some gaps in the responses we collected. There is a lack of racial diversity in our survey results, as well as a gender imbalance. While this largely reflects the existing demographics of the archival profession, we had hoped to collect data from a more diverse group that is involved in archival work. Our aim was to gather data that could be applied to better advocate for new initiatives and supports to retain professionals who would otherwise be forced out of positions due to the demands of caregiving. While the data that we did collect can be used for this advocacy work, we were disappointed by the lack of racial diversity in our responses. This points to additional survey recruitment that could have been done, but it also presents a picture of a systemic lack of diversity in the profession at large.

Another area in which we acknowledge that our data are limited is that of institutional diversity. Academic institutions were disproportionately represented, so there are colleagues that we missed; we are unsure if our distribution methods (local, regional, and national listservs) contributed to this result.

However, during the pandemic period, many of our academic colleagues were able to continue working whereas colleagues in other work environments may have experienced job precarity, being more susceptible to economic impacts of the pandemic. Other likely barriers to participation may have included increased pandemic-related job responsibilities, job loss as a result of the pandemic, leaving the profession as a result of the extra labor of caregiving responsibilities, or a lack of time or energy to devote to surveys and work not critical to day-to-day responsibilities. There is also the potential that this survey did not reach those who *do* have caregiving responsibilities, or those who did not feel that the term applied to their situation. As the four of us are balancing our full-time professional and caregiving roles we can understand why those with caregiving responsibilities might opt not to participate. Our own caregiving experiences certainly presented a challenge when attempting to find time to engage with this work.

Next Steps and Future Research

Our initial analysis focused on questions related to the impact of the pandemic because these provided direct insights into how archivists were affected, but there are other data facets that we are prioritizing in our next data analysis phase. These include income, relationship and employment status, the paid or unpaid employment benefits that respondents receive or for which they are eligible, professional advancement, as well as participation in professional development and service activities, family planning and fertility decisions, and the direct and indirect costs of care.

Our next step is to concentrate on significance testing for three key outcome variables: managers versus non-managers, institution type, and years served in the profession. Predictor variables will include key areas which are salient to the archivist profession, born out by respondents' answers in this survey. We will also seek to create scales by use of Factor Analysis for the purpose of identifying themes within the survey.²⁵ Initial analysis has focused on comparing responses from those who identified as managers and non-managers. Using SPSS and Stata, Pellerin has identified responses that are statistically significant. We have been able to look at this information and discuss where we would like more detail, and where the data does not provide enough information to draw a conclusion. Given the non-binary nature of many of the survey questions, completing this process collaboratively with Pellerin has proven time-consuming, particularly because we are inexperienced at navigating statistical software. Additionally, we continue to learn the basics of statistical analysis with this survey and data set. As non-statisticians conducting this work, we have identified particular skills that would aid data interpretation, such as aptitude with statistical analysis software and familiarity with statistical terminology.²⁶

Now that we have an idea of what data is proving to be significant, we are eager to investigate and identify additional relevant literature from archival publications and disciplines related to our data. We look forward to publishing our findings, recognizing that the data we have collected is robust enough to support several articles, each focused on different aspects of the caregiving experience and its intersection

²⁵ Brown, Timothy A. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Applied Research* (New York: Guilford Press, 2006).

²⁶ We explore these challenges in our recent article, Alexis Braun Marks, Rachael Dreyer, Jennifer Johnson, and Michelle Sweetser., "Learning What the Data Means: A First-Time Journey into Quantitative Research," *Archival Outlook*, September/October 2021: 4-5, 28-29. <https://www2.archivists.org/archival-outlook> (last accessed April 19, 2022).

with the archival profession. Taking the quantitative data we collected and revisiting our initial intention to conduct qualitative interviews may allow for a deeper understanding of particular issues that would benefit from a mixed methods approach. However, several things are clear: caregiving significantly impacts the geographic region in which archivists opt to work, the hours during which they engage in their work, and how archivists arrange their schedules to accommodate caregiving responsibilities. In reviewing our survey results, we remain convinced that there is a better, more equitable way to offer caregiving supports to colleagues in our profession. Aside from robust social support programs (universal childcare subsidies and eldercare programs, for example), our survey data point to the need for the archival profession to establish expectations and standards for flexible work arrangements, family leave, and hybrid conference formats to encourage diverse participation in national and regional professional associations. We must also ensure that our profession crafts positions that are sustainable and allow our colleagues to thrive while serving the needs of the communities and organizations for which we work.

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Appendix I: Lists of Outlets the Authors Contacted About Survey Distribution or to which They Distributed Invitations

National
Society of American Archivists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Announcements list ● Archives Management Section ● Archivists & Archives of Color Section ● Business Archives Section ● College and University Archives Section ● Lone Arrangers Section ● SNAP Section ● Women Archivists Section
National Digital Stewardship Alliance
Regional
Big Ten Academic Alliance
Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists
Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference
Midwest Archives Conference
New England Archivists
Northwest Archivists, Inc
Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists
Society of Southwest Archivists
State
Arizona Archives Alliance
Association of Hawaii Archivists
Consortium of Iowa Archivists
Kentucky Council on Archives
Louisiana Archives and Manuscripts Association
Maine Archives and Museums
Michigan Archival Association
New Hampshire Archives Group
New York Archives Conference
Society of Alabama Archivists
Society of California Archivists
Society of Florida Archivists
Society of Georgia Archivists
Society of Indiana Archivists
Society of Mississippi Archivists

Society of North Carolina Archivists
Society of Ohio Archivists
Society of Tennessee Archivists
South Carolina Archival Association
City/Region
Archivists of the Houston Area
Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York, Inc
Association of St. Louis Area Archivists
Capital Area Archivists of New York
Charleston Archives, Libraries and Museum Council
Chicago Area Archivists
Cleveland Archival Roundtable
Delaware Valley Archivists Group
Greater New Orleans Archivists
Kansas City Area Archivists
Los Angeles Archivists Collective
Seattle Area Archivists
Southeastern Wisconsin Archives Group
Three Rivers Archivists
Twin Cities Archives Round Table
Facebook Groups
Archivists Think Tank
Archives Leadership Institute
Metro Detroit Archivists League
Twitter