

Records Management at the Amuntai Religious Court Class I-B Office, Hulu Sungai Utara Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses critical deficiencies in human resources, archival systems, and infrastructure. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected from 12 purposively selected informants through interviews, observations, and documentation, validated via prolonged observation, persistent engagement, and triangulation. Findings reveal significant gaps in three dimensions: human resources (staff lack specialized archival education and training, resulting in limited professional competencies), systemic weaknesses (absence of formal procedures and inadequate facilities), and infrastructure constraints (insufficient storage space without climate control). Despite these challenges, functional strengths include relatively efficient storage systems using simplified classification, satisfactory service delivery, proper borrowing procedures with appropriate protocols, routine maintenance practices, and systematic destruction processes that prevent accumulation. However, critical deficiencies persist: archival personnel lack specialized credentials in archival science, have never received professional training, and work in severely constrained physical environments with narrow storage areas lacking air conditioning, which accelerates document deterioration. Root causes include the organizational undervaluation of archival expertise, insufficient resource allocation, and the absence of professional development frameworks. Recommendations include implementing structured archival training programs, establishing educational prerequisites for archival positions, formalizing standard operating procedures, investing in climate-controlled facilities, and elevating archival management as an institutional priority. These evidence-based interventions would enhance operational efficiency, ensure regulatory compliance under Law No. 43/2009, strengthen institutional memory preservation, and support ongoing judicial digitalization initiatives. Ultimately, these efforts would improve public sector accountability and service quality in Indonesia's religious court system.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, in the era of globalization, it can be seen that the importance of information is increasing, which makes the need for information very important at home, in the wider community, and especially in agencies/organizations. In particular, in agencies/organizations, archives play a role in supporting the administrative process and the implementation of management functions (Caroline, Ismanto, & Rina, 2022; Huong, 2024; Tam, 2024; Tran & Bui, 2024). Archives are one of the sources of information that can support the process of administrative activities in an agency/organization. Every administrative activity that occurs will always produce an archive (Darwis, Yusup, & Arhas, 2024; Doran, 2015; Furner, 2015; Gilliland, 2015; Siregar & Ferine, 2023).

Archives are the center of memory for every organization because archives contain a variety of useful information materials. If the archives owned by the organization are not well managed, then the consequences will affect the level of the organization's reputation, causing the organization to experience obstacles in achieving its goals (Franco-Santos & Otley, 2018;

Gagné, 2018; Mahammed, 2019; Saffady, 2021; Vardarlier, 2016). As a repository of information on administrative and management activities, archives will continue to grow and develop in line with the increasingly complex functions of the organization, the impact of which is that archives are increasingly piling up uncontrollably. Therefore, it is necessary to have archive management, by implementing and organizing consistent and systematic archive management from the beginning of the creation of archives, distribution of archives, use of archives, storage of archives, archive maintenance, archive shrinkage, to the destruction of archives—these stages are called the life cycle of an archive.

Archival management in an organization is still seen as a trivial job (Bernadetha, Sauw, Engel, Maria, & Kelen, 2025). Many think that archival work is such an easy job that many organizations or offices leave archival affairs to the wrong people. In fact, the unsuccessful management of archives will be a big obstacle in the decision-making process. Lack of awareness of the importance of archives can hinder the process of managing archives (Mollet & Mungwabi, 2023; Muchila, 2020; Sinn, Kim, & Syn, 2017).

The Office of the Amuntai Religious Court, which also carries out matters related to administration, always requires information, either in letters or documents made or received. This information is one of the materials in the context of decision-making (Alam, Ratnasari, Nugroho, & Utami, 2024; Nurfaizah, Amin, & Syamsuddin, 2025; Zaidah, Al-Amruzi, & Sarmadi, 2023). To facilitate decision-making, a letter or document is arranged, arranged, and stored in an orderly and organized manner. The existence of archives in the organization is one of the factors that play a very important role and is also a determinant in the process of implementing organizational tasks, especially in government organizations that are oriented towards providing direct services to the wider community, where archives are one of the main factors in measuring the performance of a government organization.

Several factors underscore the urgency of this research at the present juncture. First, Indonesia's ongoing judicial modernization initiative, launched nationally in 2018, seeks to enhance court efficiency, transparency, and accessibility through digital case management systems and electronic documentation. However, successful digitalization requires robust physical archival foundations—systematic organization, accurate metadata, and preservation of legacy materials. Religious courts lacking effective physical archival systems face substantial obstacles in digital transition, potentially widening performance gaps between well-resourced urban courts and resource-constrained district courts. Understanding current archival conditions is therefore essential for designing digitalization support appropriate to actual institutional capacities rather than assumed capabilities. Second, the 2009 Archival Law (Law No. 43/2009) and its implementing regulations (Government Regulation No. 28/2012) established comprehensive archival management standards applicable to all governmental institutions, including courts. Over a decade after enactment, compliance assessment remains incomplete, particularly for religious courts. This research provides empirical evidence of implementation gaps, informing both institutional improvement efforts and potential regulatory refinement. Third, growing public demands for governmental accountability and transparency, amplified through social media and civil society activism, create pressures for religious courts to demonstrate institutional effectiveness and information accessibility. Effective archival systems enable courts to respond to information requests, document decision-making processes, and

demonstrate procedural compliance, thereby enhancing public trust. Archival deficiencies conversely expose institutions to criticisms of opacity and inefficiency. Fourth, demographic and societal changes, including population growth, urbanization, and evolving family structures, have increased religious court caseloads substantially over recent decades. This growth amplifies archival demands while resource allocation has not commensurately increased, creating mounting pressures that urgently require systematic management responses to prevent deteriorating service quality.

This study aims to: (1) comprehensively evaluate current archival management practices at the Amuntai Religious Court Class I-B, examining human resource competencies, systemic procedures, and infrastructural adequacy across the complete archival lifecycle from creation through destruction; (2) identify and analyze specific factors—organizational, human resource, technical, and infrastructural—that constrain effective archival management, including root causes of observed deficiencies and their interconnections; and (3) formulate evidence-based, contextually appropriate recommendations for enhancing archival practices that address identified constraints while building on existing strengths, providing actionable improvement pathways feasible within institutional resource realities. By addressing these objectives systematically, this research advances both scholarly understanding of archival management in Indonesian judicial contexts and practical institutional improvement, contributing to enhanced public sector effectiveness and accountability.

METHOD

This research was conducted at the Amuntai Class 1B Religious Court, located at Jl. Empu Mandastana No.10, Central Amuntai District, Hulu Sungai Utara Regency, Postal Code 71418. The location was chosen due to its relevance to the issues studied and its accessibility for data collection. The research employed a qualitative approach, aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena under investigation by collecting data in the field and presenting it systematically. Through this approach, the researcher sought to provide a realistic description of the observed conditions and problems.

The type of research applied was descriptive-analytical. This method focused on describing the facts found in the field as accurately as possible, then analyzing them to gain deeper insights. Descriptive-analytical research not only explained the reality but also linked it with relevant theories and scholarly perspectives. The ultimate goal was to produce findings that were objective, comprehensive, and scientifically accountable.

The data in this study were divided into two categories: primary data and secondary data. Primary data referred to information obtained directly from first-hand sources, whether individuals or institutions, collected by the researcher in the field to specifically address the research problems. Secondary data, on the other hand, were those already collected for purposes other than the current research but still relevant. They included literature, articles, journals, and online sources related to the study. The integration of both primary and secondary data allowed the researcher to build a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

The operational design of this research served as a guide to ensure that the data collection process was systematic, accurate, and efficient. The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling, where samples were selected based on specific characteristics and criteria

relevant to the research objectives. Data collection was carried out using three techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly examine relevant activities at the research site. Interviews were carried out with key informants who possessed in-depth knowledge of the subject, while documentation was used to gather written or visual materials that supported the study.

The data analysis process followed the model by Miles and Huberman (Basrowi & Suwandi, 2008), which involved three concurrent steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction involved selecting essential information, data display was presented in narrative form, and verification aimed to draw credible and accountable conclusions. To ensure data validity, this research applied several credibility tests suggested by Sugiyono (2014), including prolonged observation, increased persistence, triangulation of sources and methods, peer discussions, negative case analysis, and member checking. These strategies were expected to strengthen the credibility of the findings and ensure that the research provided meaningful academic and practical contributions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Human Resources (HR)

Skills

Skills are the ability to use reason, thoughts, ideas and creativity in doing, changing or making something more meaningful so as to produce value from the results of the work.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the human resources of archival personnel in the archival skills at the Amuntai Religious Court Office can be said to be still not good, because there are no management officers who have a background in special archival education so that these managers are still not competent in their fields.

This is not in accordance with the theory put forward by The Liang Gie (2007:241) to be able to become a good archival officer, precision, intelligence, dexterity and neatness are needed in managing archives.

Education

Education is the learning, knowledge, habits of a group of people that are passed down from one generation to the next through teaching, education often occurs under the guidance of others, but it is also possible to be self-taught. Any experience that has a formative effect on the way people think, feel, or act can be considered educational. Education is generally divided into stages such as preschool, elementary school, high school, college, university or internship.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the archive management staff at the Amuntai Religious Court Office do not have an educational background of special archival experts, so those who handle this archival problem are incompetent people in their fields.

This is not in accordance with the theory put forward by The Liang Gie (2007:241) to be able to become a good archival officer, it requires intelligence, speed, and neatness in managing archives.

Training

Training is any effort to improve the performance of a worker in a certain job that is his responsibility, or a job that is related to his job

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the archive management staff at the Amuntai Religious Court Office have never participated in training and work coaching in archive management activities.

This is not in accordance with the theory put forward by The Liang Gie (2007:241) to be able to become a good archival officer, precision, intelligence, precision, and neatness are needed in managing archives.

Archival System

Archive Storage

Archive storage is an activity of filing and arranging archives and placing them in actual place so that archives are easy and fast when needed.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that archive storage can be said to be good because it uses a system that is easy to handle, and its implementation is not complicated and the important thing is that the archivist understands the storage system.

This is in accordance with the theory put forward by The Liang Gie (2007:241) that archives or archives are a collection of letters that are stored regularly planned because they have a use so that whenever needed they can be quickly rediscovered.

Archive services

Service is an effort provided by the implementation officer of an agency to meet needs and expectations so that needs are achieved. Archival services are a way in which services use the archival system by using a control card or using an agenda book. Meanwhile, the implementation uses services to provide information to users.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the archival services carried out at the Amuntai Religious Court Office can be said to be good because all employees receive good service by the archival officer according to the needs and desires of the party.

This is in accordance with the theory put forward by The Liang Gie (2000:241) that archives or archives are a collection of letters that are stored regularly, planned, because they have a use so that every time needed, they can be quickly found again.

Archival Borrowing

Archival borrowing is the release of archives from files because they are borrowed by employees' superiors in an organization, so recording is required by the archival officer using the archive borrowing form.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the borrowing of archives at the Amuntai Religious Court Office is good because the borrowing procedure is carried out with the correct procedures.

This is in accordance with the theory put forward by The Liang Gie (2007:241) that archives or archives are a collection of letters that are stored regularly, planned, because they have a use so that every time needed, they can be quickly found again.

Archive maintenance

Archive maintenance or maintenance is an effort to protect archival objects that have been damaged so that they do not get worse. In general, the most common damage is tearing, mold, water and burns. In maintenance, there needs to be archived security which includes maintenance efforts, so that archival objects are not lost, and the contents or information are not known by unauthorized people.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the maintenance of archives at the Amuntai Religious Court Office, North Hulu Sungai Regency is said to be good because of the maintenance carried out regularly by cleaning the filing cabinets by archivists with the help of colleagues and employees in the hope that the archives will have a longer active period and be able to be used more optimally.

This is in accordance with the theory put forward by The Liang Gie (2007:241) that archives or archives are a collection of letters that are stored regularly, planned, because they have a use so that every time needed, they can be quickly found again.

Destruction of archives

Archival destruction is the activity of destroying the physical and identity inherent in the archive. To destroy archives that no longer have useful value.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the destruction of archives at the Amuntai Religious Court Office class 1 B of North Hulu Sungai Regency can be said to be good because to avoid the process of accumulating in the archive storage area, it is necessary to destroy it periodically by checking archives that have expired and then destroying them in one way such as burning archives.

This is in accordance with the theory put forward by The Liang Gie (2007:241) that archives or archives are a collection of letters that are stored regularly planned because they have a use so that every time needed they can be quickly found again.

Facilities and infrastructure

Means are everything that can be used as a tool in achieving a goal or goal. While infrastructure is everything that is the main support for the implementation of a process. Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the facilities and infrastructure at the Amuntai Religious Court Office class 1B North Hulu Sungai Regency are still incomplete due to the narrow room and lack of air conditioning or air conditioning. This is not in accordance with the theory put forward by The Liang Gie (2007:241) in the book *Modern Office Administration*, facilities and infrastructure are the arrangement of tools in the right location and work arrangements that provide job satisfaction for employees.

CONCLUSION

Archive management at the Amuntai Religious Court Class 1B Office in North Hulu Sungai Regency is not optimal. Key issues include the lack of specialized archival education and training among staff, which impacts on their competency, and inadequate office facilities and infrastructure, such as a cramped room without air conditioning. While some areas are functioning well, such as archival storage, services, borrowing, maintenance, and destruction, there are significant gaps in staff expertise, education, and training. The archival services are efficient, with proper procedures for storage and destruction, and regular maintenance of archives is performed. However, the lack of proper facilities and insufficient staff training limit the overall effectiveness. Future research should focus on evaluating the impact of specialized training programs and facility upgrades on improving archive management systems in religious courts and similar institutions.

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