

## Readiness of the Religious Affairs Office, Sambeng District, Lamongan Regency to Manage Dynamic Archives: What are the Implications for Office Management?

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Ineffective archive management affects employee performance, emphasizing the need for proper facilities and skills. This study examines archive management practices, challenges, and solutions at the Religious Affairs Office, Sambeng District, Lamongan Regency. This study used descriptive qualitative approach. Subjects were two administrative staff and one general functional staff member. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. Data were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions using data validation techniques in the form of triangulation. Data showed that the archives management at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office could have been more optimal, because there was no recording of incoming letters in the agenda book. There are no archivists, so all employees have the task of managing archives. There were obstacles in carrying out administrative activities because the storage process was carried out by different people, resulting in difficulties when rediscovering archives. Infrequent shrinkage results in documents piling up, resulting in inadequate storage space. However, the employees consistently serve the community well and as fully as possible. Apart from that, employees also try to overcome the obstacles to create more optimal service, namely public satisfaction with the services provided.

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## INTRODUCTION

As time goes by, information is essential for people's lives. Good service will make it easier for people to get information. As expressed by (Irwani & Ika, 2017), public service involves actions aimed at meeting community needs through effective service delivery. Besides

electronic media, information is also accessible through archives, which can be utilized effectively and efficiently when appropriately managed. Proper archive management including recording, usage, maintenance, and disposal requires adherence to established procedures, supported by a robust records management system, skilled personnel, and adequate facilities to ensure orderly and efficient archival practices.

According to (Amsyah, 1991) every activity or work in an organization requires data; one source of information and data is archives because archives are evidence and records of a transaction, from initial activities to decision-making activities. Research (Saputra, 2018) conducted at the Agam Regency DPRD secretariat stated that inadequate archive management could result in archive damage and the required archives not being found. This can make it difficult for employees to perform when they need archives.

However, some still do not care about the usefulness, role, and importance of archives in everyday life, thinking that archives are documents that only need to be stored in a warehouse without a special archive room or care for these documents. Also, human resources must be considered, which need to be more competent in archives. Because this can hinder archival activities, according to (Muhidin, 2019) problems in archive management activities can hamper office activities. This can have a negative influence on overall office activities. Archives play a significant role as information providers that organizations need for decision-making. Handling archives is very important when the need to provide timely, complete, fast, and accurate information for the organization's needs is increasing. Research (Buang, 2019) showed that archives are not explicitly created. However, archives are created directly as evidence of the implementation of administrative activities or a transaction to account for the truth.

The Religious Affairs Office at Sambeng District is an institution that depends heavily on effective archive management to ensure quality service, which is key to public satisfaction and comfort. Employees prioritize accessible administration processes, assist with issues, and provide responsive services. The administrative workflow involves document management, including archiving and proper sorting before disposal. However, archive management faces challenges, such as a lack of dedicated storage space and the absence of archivists responsible for managing archives, leading to inefficiencies like extended retrieval times (1–2 days). This delay, often inconvenient for users needing same-day access, aligns with findings by Harsini & Nasution (2017) who highlighted that poor archive management prolongs retrieval and may

necessitate repeating processes. Stuchel (2020), further emphasizes that organized and classified archives facilitate faster rediscovery.

The Religious Affairs Office of Sambeng District, part of the Ministry of Religion in Lamongan Regency, oversees marriage registration, reconciliation, and the management of mosques, endowments, and zakat for 22 villages. Effective archive management is critical due to the hereditary use of these records. Documents are part of archive management. Lack of attention to archive management, such as cleanliness, condition, handling, security, and facilities, can cause a short archive storage period. This is supported by (weru & Mnjama (2016) state that poor environmental conditions such as temperature and pollution, poor handling, inadequate archive security, inadequate facilities, and no archivists or exceptional employees to handle archives can hinder long-term accessibility that archives could be considered repositories with several specific requirements and constraints, for example, the need to ensure that the stored data can be used in the long term. This study aims to examine the implementation of archive management activities at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office, identify common obstacles encountered during these activities, and explore the efforts made by employees to address these challenges. Theoretically, this study is expected to assist employees in resolving issues related to archive management practices. Practically, it is hoped that the findings will serve as a reference for developing policies to ensure orderly archive management. In addition, this study bridges theoretical knowledge acquired during academic studies with practical insights from real-world archive management practices.

## METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach where the researcher describes an event on an object and then analyzes it so that the researcher can find out the problems at the research location, then put what has been observed into words as a description of what happened. on the research object. The subjects of this research is the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office at Jl. Raya Sambeng No. 150 Sambeng District, Lamongan Regency, East Java. The data sources were administrative and general functional employees, who are among the primary data sources.

The subjects were selected using a purposive sampling technique based on standards and other considerations such as direct links to archiving and activities on the research object. The subjects were three informants consisting of one key informant, namely Resource Person 1 (Administrative Operator staff), and two supporting informants, namely Resource Person 2



(Administrative Staff) and Resource Person 3 (General Functional).

The data were collected using semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation and analyzed using Miles and Huberman model namely; data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Researchers use data validation techniques, such as triangulation, to support testing data resulting from research by comparing the results of interviews with one informant with those conducted with other informants (Sugiyono, 2019) .

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Archive Creation**

The archive creation process is the foundational step in managing an active dynamic archive, ensuring the production of valid and accountable documents. At the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office, archive creation primarily involves handling community-related documents, such as marriage registration letters and includes many documents for processing waqf, conversion pledges to Islam, mahram letters for Hajj, and recommendation letters. The office does not have specific provisions for receiving documents; instead, it conducts inspections, allowing any incomplete requirements to be immediately completed.

You can control letters at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office by looking at the agenda book. However, the agenda book only records outgoing letters, whereas incoming letters are not recorded in the agenda book because once they are received, they are just put there.

### **Archives Management**

Archival management is an archival control activity that ensures the existence of archives to support organizational activities as evidence for which information can be accounted for. Archive management at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office is carried out by all employees on a conditional basis, adhering to practical workflows and procedures but lacking a strong theoretical foundation. The absence of qualified archivists requires all staff members to participate in archive management, highlighting the need for specialized personnel to ensure a more efficient and systematic approach.

At the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office, the procedure for managing archives in the form of marriage documents is as follows: when the document is entered into the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office, then the data is entered, then printed and checked when the data is valid, then the filing is carried out.

## Archive Storage

Archive storage involves the management of archives through their creation and receipt. The organization creates Archives internally or receives from external parties (Sedarmayanti, 2018) . The archive storage system at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office uses a mixed system, namely year, code, and issue. This system was chosen for implementation because it is easier to manage and physically inspect, as there are fewer items to organize. However, employees have noted a drawback: discrepancies in codes and dates occasionally arise, leading to confusion when storing records. At the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office, the responsibility for archiving rests with the Head of the Office and all employees. The archival storage follows the principle of centralization, where all records are managed and stored in a unified, centralized system.

The archive storage procedure at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office is that files for marriages are filed monthly, while registration files are carried out annually with the following flow:

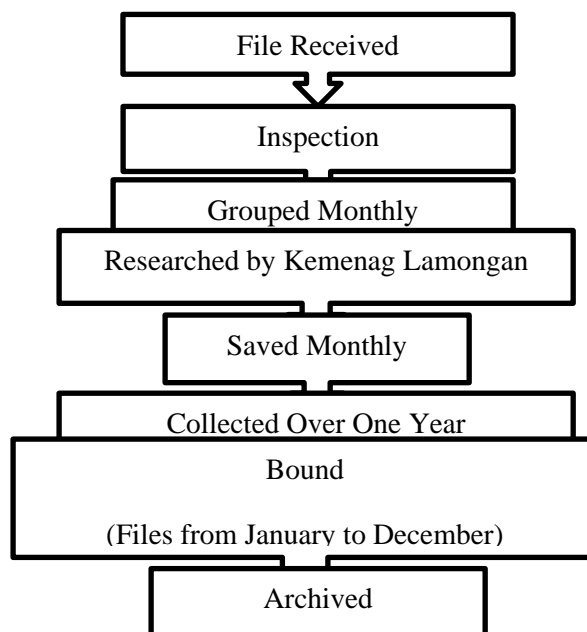


Figure 1. Archive Storage Flow

## Use of Archives

The use of archives is utilizing and providing archives for the benefit of entitled archive utilization, in the sense that archives are provided for those who need archives as an essential data source (Zulfitriani et al., 2019) . Archives at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office are only permitted within the internal environment; prior approval is required if an external

source requires the archives and was done to protect public data stored at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office. Besides, the data stored has also been used for generations, so it is necessary to maintain the authenticity and integrity of the documents.

### **Archive Maintenance**

The archive maintenance stage is an activity carried out to maintain the continuity of the archive life cycle. According to sources, maintenance is performed only four times a month using a broom and feather duster. furthermore, the condition of the archives is checked periodically. However, field observations revealed a lack of proper document organization in the warehouse, resulting in significant changes to the physical condition, color, and shape of the documents over time.

### **Archive Rediscovery**

Archive rediscovery identifies the identifying archives stored and need to be used as sources of information or data sources. Rediscover archives at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office by identifying archives based on the year in the folder in the archive cupboard or shelf. Meanwhile, the time required to rediscover archives is relative, depending on the year the archive was created and stored. Therefore, there are no standard rules for rediscovering archives at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office.

### **Archive Shrinkage**

Archive depreciation refers to the process of reducing archives by destroying records that are no longer of value or are inactive. At the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office, depreciation is seldom performed. This is primarily because most stored archives are active documents with long-term or generational significance. However, inactive records, such as incoming letters with no remaining value or documents that are only 20% physically intact (reduced to small fragments), are disposed of through burning.

### **Discussion**

According to law no. 43 of 2009 in (Muhidin, 2019), Archives are records of activities or events in various forms and media, created and received by institutions, organizations, or individuals in the course of social, national, or state affairs, influenced by developments in information and communication technology. According to Gie (2012), an archive is a

collection of documents stored systematically because they have helpful value and can be found again quickly and efficiently when needed. Meanwhile, according to Sedarmayanti (2018) archives are the memory center of an organization. If records management is carried out poorly, it will affect the value of an organization. So, those involved may experience obstacles in achieving their goals. It can be concluded that archives are evidence that can be used to obtain data and information that can be used to support the activities of an organization.

The archive creation process is the starting point for establishing an active dynamic archive. These archives are directly related to the organization's duties and roles. Effective records management requires organizations to classify archives systematically to ensure efficiency and effectiveness (Febriyanti et al., 2019). Creating archives relate to other institutions or organizations at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office. This is because archives are created based on the community's interests. So, the existing documents have several needs and information. The imperfect use of agenda books in archival control can result in problems when incoming letters are needed for office purposes because there is no record of when the letters were received. This could hamper administrative activities in the office.

Archives management with few employees who are competent in archives or archivists can be an obstacle to rediscovering archives. This is because different people carry out archive management activities. If there is no archivist, it should be managed by more than one person who can be trusted or responsible for handling archive management. This is expected to minimize misinformation or incorrect data. The same thing was also found in research conducted by (Kuswantoro, 2017) where different employee backgrounds can be an obstacle in providing excellent service for creating and using archives because employees are not equipped with archival knowledge. It revealed that in at least one organization, one person is competent in the field of archives so that the archive retrieval process can take place optimally. Another thing stated (Huaiming, 2017) is that many archive collection and management units need to pay more attention to archive management, so archives are disorganized, and warehouses cannot contain many archives.

Archive storage is centralized by storing files from all work units, which are stored together in an archive storage facility. The system used in archival storage is mixed. This system was implemented because it is easy to see physically, making it easier to find archives. However, implementing this system cannot be separated from obstacles. Technical errors in writing codes and dates make employees need clarification about storing documents. Apart from that, only some archives are stored in cupboards or archive shelves, but some still need



to be piled up on the table. The situation in the warehouse where there are archive storage shelves needs to be more organized because the volume of archives is too large. The same thing was also found by (Suharti et al., 2020) in their research; it was found that the storage system could not be said to be good because the lack of equipment meant that some files had to be piled up on the table. Meanwhile, according to (Andayani, 2018) archive storage should ideally be collected in one room so that it is easily accessed by employees and users who need information.

Archive use is the activity of using archives as a source of information or evidence of activities that have been carried out. The use of archives at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office, which has a procedure that is only permitted for office administration purposes. So that public data stored will be protected and the authenticity and integrity of documents will always be ensured. Considering the usefulness of documents that are hereditary, this can be achieved if the procedures that have been established are implemented correctly and appropriately. According to (Zulfitriani et al., 2019) the use of archives is the activity of utilizing and providing archives for the benefit of authorized archive utilization, in the sense that archives are provided for those who really need archives as an essential data source.

Archive maintenance is suboptimal, conducted infrequently, leading to deterioration in documents' physical condition, color, and shape. Poor temperature control and disorganization in storage further hinder document retrieval, disrupting administrative processes. According to (Erliyana & Rozanti, 2019) Regular maintenance, including periodic cleaning to remove dust and dirt, is essential to prevent damage and ensure the longevity of archives.

Recovering archives is carried out by identifying the documents to be searched. The time required to find these documents depends on how long the archives have been stored. Sometimes, documents are not found on the same day. This can disrupt office activities, hampering administrative processes and document needs in urgent or important office activities.

Archive shrinkage reduces the volume of records with no use value, optimizing storage space for essential archives. Before extermination, approval is sought from the Head of the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office, as all office activities comply with their responsibility. However, the depreciation of inactive archives at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office does not follow the archive depreciation procedures because archive shrinkage is rarely carried out, increasing the volume of archives so that storage space is full. (Junawan, 2020) said the same thing every year: archives will increase, and storing archives



for too long will increase the volume of archives in storage warehouses. Meanwhile, according to (Airlangga et al., 2018) archives that have no use value when stored will result in a buildup of archives that will take up much space to avoid accumulation. So, a solution that can be used to overcome this problem is to shrink the archives.

Existing obstacles in the form of facilities and human resources can result in problems with office administration activities. This can affect the services provided to the community to be less than optimal. So, the public's assessment of the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office could be wrong due to dissatisfaction and the need for documents to be met. The efforts made to overcome existing obstacles are less than optimal, but considering the conditions and situations that do not allow the efforts made to be good and a solution. According to (Wang, 2015), management in archives can achieve better systematic and integrated knowledge management, can improve the integrity of an organization or institution, and can create more value for society.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings presented in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that managing dynamic archives at the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office encompasses processes from creation to reduction. However, the creation process remains suboptimal due to the absence of an incoming letter agenda book. Additionally, archives processing, maintenance, retrieval, and storage are hindered by a lack of dedicated personnel and inadequate facilities. Despite these challenges, the Sambeng District Religious Affairs Office employees consistently strive to serve the community and seek effective solutions to address these limitations. The Ministry of Religion should provide training and education regarding archives to employees of the Office of Religious Affairs so that effective and efficient archive management can be created. Apart from that, because the volume of archives continues to increase yearly, special attention is needed to add broader and safer archive storage space so the archive management process can run well.

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