



Method of arranging correspondence records in village offices in Jatilawang District, Banyumas Regency

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to determine the kinds of correspondence records that are managed by village offices, how to store them, how to handle them, and the means used to store them so that the records retrieval is easy so as allowing the data contained in the records as a source of information. Through surveys and observations, the research took place in all village offices in Jatilawang sub-district, Banyumas district, Central Java province. From the results of the survey and observation, the researchers concluded that there are differences from one village office to another in the management of correspondence records. However, there are similarities in the handling of the correspondence records, namely every incoming letter and outgoing letter are recorded first in the agenda book, the village head knows every incoming and outgoing letters because every letter received by the office should be transferred first to the Village Head to be assigned to a certain village staff to execute the purpose of the letter. All records are principally managed by Kaur (kepala Urusan) or staff for mail handling and administration affairs, but Kaur or staff for Kesejahteraan or welfare affairs and Kepala Dusun or staff for human empowerment still retain some correspondence records. Some of the differences in the handling of the correspondence records, namely in the format agenda book, the means used to manage the records, and records arrangement method.

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INTRODUCTION

Based on the Law Number 6 of 2014 about Villages mandates that the village, as the smallest administration unit within the government institution, must effectively manage village administration and records governance. Through the Banyumas Regent Regulation Number 41 of 2009, the government established guidelines for handling correspondence records; through Banyumas Regent Regulation Number 190 of 2005 established guidelines for the pattern of records classification; and through Banyumas Regent Regulation Number 42 of 2009 for file arrangement patterns. Later, through Banyumas Regent Regulation Number 33 of 2023, the Banyumas Regency government specified how records should be managed within the village administration under the Banyumas regency government.

In their research, Abriani et al. (2018) found that although there was sufficient support and attention from the village office leadership towards records management, the archival activities and conditions in villages within Sumbang Subdistrict are still not organized according to archival standards. The budget allocated for records management activities, such as procurement of records facilities and infrastructure, remains insufficient and very limited. Additionally, the understanding, skills, and knowledge of human resources are lacking, so that they should be frequently sent to follow socialization activities, workshops, and training sessions to ensure records governance can be implemented according to archival standards (Denhardt et al., 2018; Franks, 2013; McNabb, 2015; Millar, 2017; Puhakainen & Siponen, 2010).

Issue of insufficient archiving budget was also raised by Suliyati (2020), Rusmawati et al. (2019), and Qurahman (2017). In her research, Suliyati (2020) found that the infrastructure and facilities for archives are basically available but in limited conditions and quantities. These limitations are due to the financial constraints of the village office. Rusmawati discovered that archives are stored in a single cabinet, which is also used for

purposes other than archive storage. Taufiqurrohman stated that additional equipment is needed to optimize archive management. As a result, the archives are not systematically organized and often fall to the floor, posing a risk of loss.

Regarding the lack of skills and knowledge of human resources in records handling, resulting in the proposal for dedicated personnel to handle records and archives were also revealed by Rusmawati et al. (2019), Hapsari & Suharso (2021), Evany et al. (2023), and Sari (2022). In handling records and archives, the available village personnels only continued records handling practices previously implemented. In fact, the most important factor in good records and archival governance is the people; although Kuswanto & Hartati (2019) also stated that infrastructure, budget, and leader's concern in good records keeping were also important. Therefore, several community service programs from various universities in Indonesia had provided training to village staff on the importance of archiving and training in village records and archive management in order to improve public services and create orderly administration (Akib, 2023; Badu & Lahada, 2023; Rusdiyanto et al., 2022).

Jatilawang District, located in Banyumas Regency, Central Java, is strategically positioned along the southern national road of Java. A preliminary survey in several village offices revealed significant discrepancies in records management, with some villages using 'rink-cartons' while others store documents haphazardly in plastic containers. When a financial audit is required, teams are formed to gather the necessary records. Although computerization could solve these issues, the low computer literacy of village staff, exacerbated by their age and the lack of local training institutions, poses a challenge. Additionally, the limited availability of computers, with only 2-5 per office for 8-16 staff members, makes computerization an impractical solution for improving records management.

Meanwhile, based on Banyumas Regent Regulation No. 16 of 2016 concerning the organizational structure and work procedures of village government, recruiting new village officials is hindered by village finances. The number of village officials in each village office is generally the same, that is 7 people consisting of 1 secretary, 3 heads of hamlet or 'kampong' affairs (Kaur), and 3 heads of administrative sections (kasie). The only difference in the number of village officials is the number of hamlet heads, who assist the village head in community empowerment, ranging from 2-4 people. Recruitment that does not adhere to this regulation is not permitted. In other words, recruiting young workers is particularly hindered by financial factors.

The study specifically examines the records arrangement in village offices in Jatilawang subdistrict, Banyumas regency. Problems raised in this study include the types of correspondence records in village offices and the arrangement system in correspondence records. On the bases of this study, the writers offer models for records management in village offices. The research contribution of this study lies in its examination of records arrangement in village offices in Jatilawang subdistrict, Banyumas regency, addressing key issues such as the types of correspondence records and the arrangement systems used. The study contributes by offering models for improved records management in village offices, which can serve as a framework for enhancing administrative efficiency and standardizing record-keeping practices in similar rural settings.

METHOD

The method used in this research was qualitative, with data obtained through surveys, observations, and interviews with village secretaries, heads of administrative affairs, and heads of hamlet affairs. The interviews focused on understanding how records were managed, including the organization of incoming and outgoing correspondence and the facilities used for storing these records. After the interviews, researchers conducted observations to examine the placement and organization of incoming records, the management of outgoing records, and the facilities used for storage. Additionally, they observed the format of the incoming and outgoing mail agenda books and the arrangement of inactive records, along with the storage facilities used. The data analysis technique employed was thematic analysis, which involved transcribing and coding the data to identify recurring themes related to record management and storage practices. This method allowed the researchers to uncover patterns in the data, such as challenges in organization and storage, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of current record management systems.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Types of Correspondence Records in Village Offices

Based on interviews with the village secretary, the number of incoming correspondence records per year ranges from 200 to 400, while the number of outgoing correspondence records is lower than the incoming ones. Based on data from 2020, various types of outgoing correspondence records include notification letters, application letters, invitation letters, assignment letters, cover letters, and reply letters. According to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), '*pemberitahuan*' (notification) means the process, manner, or act of informing. Various types of notification letters found in village offices include letters regarding

acceptance/receipt/distribution of aid or people rewards, socialization notification of exemption letters, appointment notification letters, fees distribution notification letters, fogging implementation notification letters, verification implementation notification letters, Pancasila Sanctity Day ceremony notification letters, village gathering notification letters, and celebration notification letters.

The term '*permohonan*' according to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI) means a request to someone in a higher position, authority, or office. Various types of request letters found in village offices include letters requesting fund disbursement, letters requesting equipment usage, letters requesting account transfer, evaluation request letters, and assistance request letters.

Invitation letters generally relate to meetings or deliberations, such as meetings for discussions or deliberations on formation, implementation, or follow-up actions. Various types of invitation letters found in village offices include letters inviting for socialization meetings, coordination meetings, introductory meetings, women empowerment meetings, outreach meetings, follow-up discussion meetings, formation meetings, preparation meetings related to rice planting season, regulation establishment meetings related to village regulations; deliberation meetings, training invitations, inauguration invitations, identification invitations, activity invitations or "*posyandu*", awareness group formation invitations, and invitations for the formation of the Indonesian Independence Day celebration committee.

A cover letter is a letter that accompanies data, facts, or information (usually included in attachments). The recipient will evaluate or assess the accuracy of the data, facts, or information stated. Various types of cover letters found in village offices include cover letters for the evaluation of draft village regulations, cover letters for orphan and poor community data (for requesting assistance such as food packages), and cover letters for proposing land subject/object applications.

A reply letter is a letter that contains a response to a request from another party to the village office. Various types of reply letters include reply letters for internship practice permits. Assignment letters typically relate to tasks that need to be carried out by individuals assigned to them. Various types of assignment letters include implementation assignment letters (related to covid 19 preventive actions).

Various types of incoming correspondence records found in village offices include notification letters, request/appeal/directive letters, and invitation letters. The contents of incoming notification letters may include new information notifications from the district or regency offices or the Health Department (possibly including health centers), such as notifications of national holidays, coordination meeting results in new notifications; notifications of changes or updates to existing information such as registration code corrections; notifications of activity implementation such as aid distribution. Types of request/appeal/directive letters include joint activity directives on Friday events, requests for data from unelectrified areas, inventory data ownership requests, and requests for verification and validation of PSM data.

Arrangement System in Correspondence Records

Based on interviews and observations, all incoming and outgoing correspondence records have been recorded in the incoming mail agenda book and outgoing mail agenda book. All incoming correspondence records are recorded in the incoming mail agenda book (though the entries are incomplete, only "Incoming Mail" (Figure 1), and all outgoing correspondence archives are recorded in the outgoing mail agenda book which is written with "Outgoing Mail". Incoming correspondence records that are still in process (unfinished) or still in use are placed on the officials' desks, with the oldest received correspondence records placed at the bottom and the newly received ones on top. After use, the officials will then hand them over to the general affairs and administration staff for storage.

Records numbering both incoming and outgoing correspondence records begins from January and ends in December each year. Entries are made based on the order of receipt or creation of the letter. Small numbers like 1, 2, 3 indicate that the correspondence records were received or created in January. In other words, when the year changes, numbering starts from number 1.



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Figure 1. Sample of Incoming Mail Agenda Book*Source: Karang Lewas Village Office*

Based on observation, the format of the Incoming Mail Agenda Book varies from one village office to another. When asked about the creation of the Incoming Mail Agenda format, a staff member responded that the format was based on their experience during school or college. three types of format samples of incoming mail agenda book can be seen below.

Table 1. Format Incoming Mail Agenda Book ‘Type A’

No	Letter Nos	Institution	Date received	Details	Contain
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Source: Gunung Wetan Village Office

The following is the format from Bantar Village Office:

Table 2. Format Incoming Mail Agenda Book ‘Type B’

No	Date received	Letter Nos	Code	Contain	From	Letter Nos	Date of the letter	Staff	Receipt	Details
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Source: Bantar Village Office

The following format is from Tinggarjaya Village Office:

Table 3. Format Incoming Mail Agenda Book ‘Type C’

No	Date received	Date in the incoming letter	Types of letters	Sender	Details
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Source: Tinggarjaya Village Office

After being recorded in the Incoming Mail Agenda Book, incoming correspondence records are delivered by the head of administration and public services (Kaur TU) to the head of the village, accompanied by a disposition sheet. Subsequently, the head of the village will mark or tick-off on the disposition sheet, indicating to whom (a section head, Kaur, or village secretary) the responsibility falls for following up on the incoming correspondence records. According to interviews, this process is intended to ensure that the designated village staff are the ones who should handle and follow-up the contain of the records and is intended to address the issue of responsibility among village staff in carrying out their duties. Without such designation, staff members often pass the responsibility back and forth. For instance, if the correspondence concerns direct cash assistance (BLT), it would be directed to the welfare section head for disposition.

Every outgoing correspondence record is known to the head of the village. Typically, the record typist is the general affairs and administration staff—although occasionally, the government affair section staff also types his own outgoing correspondence records. After being typed, the outgoing correspondence records will be delivered to the head of the village using a paper file-folder to be signed. Once signed, the outgoing correspondence records is then recorded in the outgoing mail agenda book. However, the format of the outgoing mail agenda varies from one village office to another. Three samples of outgoing mail agenda book formats are shown in the table below:

Table 4. Format of Outgoing Mail Agenda Book “Type A”

No	Date of the Letters	Letter Nos	Contain/Subject	Enclosures	Sent to	Issuing Unit
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*Source: Pekuncen Village Office***Table 5.** Format Outgoing Mail Agenda Book “Type B”

No	Date of the Letters	Date of Outgoing Letters	Letter Nos	Issuing Unit	Subject	Details
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Source: KedungWringin village Office

Table 6. Format Outgoing Mail Agenda Book “Type C”

No	Code	Index	Date of the letters	Date of sending	Subject	Enclosures	Issuing unit	Details	Filing Cabinet Identity
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Source: Adisara Village Office

After both incoming and outgoing correspondence records are recorded in the agenda book, the correspondence records in the village offices in Jatilawang District are generally grouped based on incoming correspondence records and outgoing correspondence records. Both incoming and outgoing correspondence records are arranged according to the date or number of the receipt of the records in the incoming mail agenda book for incoming correspondence records and the date or number a letter was created for outgoing correspondence records. This means that correspondence records received in January, or numbered 1, 2, 3, will be at the back compared to correspondence records received in May or June, which are already numbered 40, 50, or 60. Within the same month, correspondence records received on May 1, for example, will be placed behind correspondence records received on May 4 or 5. Uniquely, after one month, incoming and outgoing correspondence records at the Margasana village office are bound and arranged by month as shown in figure 2 below.

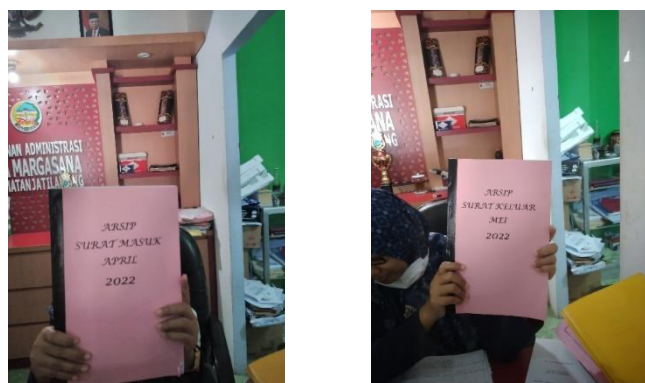


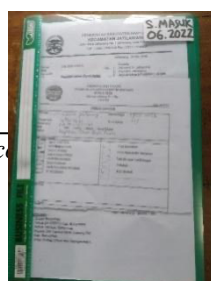
Figure 2. Arrangement of Active Correspondence Records in Margasana Village Office

However, in Adisara village office, both incoming and outgoing correspondence records are grouped based on subject of the records, such as invitations and health, and are organized by date, not by number as recorded in the agenda book. Invitation correspondence records are collected together. Likewise, appointment letters are also collected together. However, the village office does not have guidelines yet for grouping correspondence records. This means that the general affairs and administration staff may add new subjects if they encounter correspondence records without a previous subject reference.

The same applies to outgoing correspondence records. Outgoing correspondence records that have been signed by the head of the village are kept by the general affairs and administration staff. The arrangement is the same, where active correspondence records received in January are placed at the bottom or back, while active correspondence records received in February are placed above or in front of them. Outgoing correspondence records created in January are also placed below or behind outgoing correspondence records created in February. However, the arrangement and storage of incoming correspondence records are separate from the arrangement and storage of outgoing correspondence records.

Infrastructures Used for Correspondence Records Storage in Village Offices

Based on interviews and observation, in general, incoming correspondence records are delivered to the head of the village by punching the letter and placing it in a plastic snelhecter (Figure 3), except in the villages of Adisara and Tinggarjaya. According to observations, active correspondence records are usually stored in plastic snelhecter folders so that the subject of the letter is clearly visible to facilitate identification. In other words, active dynamic records are stored in paper file folder and plastic snelhecters.



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Figure 3. Infrastructure for Active Correspondence Records Storage

Source: Tunjung and Gentawangi Village Offices

Only a few village offices placed their active correspondence records in paper file-folders (Figure 4) before followed up for process.



Figure 4. Paper File Folder for Active Correspondence Records Storage

Source: Adisara and Tinggarjaya Village Offices

Each village staff keeps correspondence records related to their duties, such as the welfare section head who still keeps correspondence records on the distribution of government aid. Inactive correspondence records are partially kept in shellecters by village staff, while others are stored in plastic containers, glass cabinets, and file folders. Correspondence records that are still in the follow-up process are stored in glass cabinets behind the related village staff. The correspondence records around a village staff are those of the current year.

However; after a year active correspondence records are moved to plastic containers, glass cabinets, wooden cabinets, or bundled and stored in used cartons and transferred to the 'storage room' as shown in Figure 5. Only a small number of village offices store inactive correspondence records in filing cabinets. In other words, the organization of inactive correspondence records is the same as the organization of active correspondence records. The difference is that inactive correspondence records are bundled together and placed in the 'storage room'.

Plastic Container



Source: Margasana village office

Glass Storage



Source: Kedung Wringin and Margasana village offices

Wood Storage



Source: Gentawangi village office

Filing cabinet

Used cartons

File folder



Source: Karanganyar village office



Source: Gentawangi village office



Source: Karanganyar village office

Figure 5. Infrastructure for inactive correspondence records storage

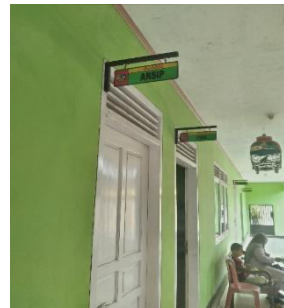
However, in the village offices of Karanglewas and Kedungwringin, each office provides a special room for storing inactive records, but only in Kedungwringin it is named the archive room or 'ruang arsip' (Figure 6). Generally, the village office staff refer to it as the storage room.

'Gudang Arsip' or Storage room



Source: Karanglewas Village Office

Archive Room



Source: Kedungwringin Village Office

Figure 6. 'GUDANG ARSIP' or storage room for storing inactive records

Discussion

Based on reserach findings by Abriani, et. al. (Khasanah, 2018) even though there are records classification guidelines and a Retention Schedule (JRA) from the Banyumas District Archives and Library Office and regulations from the Banyumas Regent, not all village offices use these guidelines due to the limited knowledge of personnel about records management. Research conducted by Kuswanto & Hartati (2019) also shows that there is a correlation between records facilities and infrastructure on the management of active records, in this case, correspondence records. This is consistent with the findings of the researcher based on surveys and observations conducted in all village offices in Jatilawang District, showing that there are differences from one village office to another in the management of correspondence records.

The similarities in the management of correspondence records can be summarized by the researcher as follows:

- 1) The types of incoming correspondence records managed by village officials include notification letters, request/appeal letters, and invitation letters, while the types of outgoing correspondence records managed by village officials are notification letters, request letters, invitation letters, assignment letters, cover letters, and response letters.
- 2) The management of incoming and outgoing correspondence records is essentially the same from one village office to another. This might be what Abriani et al. (2018) meant by stating that 'the management of records in village offices in the Sumbang Subdistrict adheres to archiving standards.' However, when the researcher observed more closely, there were differences among the village offices in Jatilawang District. The adherence to records management rules is as follows:
 - A) Every incoming and outgoing correspondence records is first recorded in the incoming mail agenda book and outgoing mail agenda book, although the writing formats may differ. Numbering applies annually starting from January and ending in December.
 - B) The head of the village is aware of every incoming correspondence records because each records is delivered to the village chief. Correspondence records delivered to the head of the village are accompanied by a Disposition Sheet. Subsequently, the head of the village designates the staff that should be responsible for following-up on the contents of the incoming

- correspondence records. Similarly, the head of the village is aware of every outgoing correspondence records by placing their signature on each outgoing correspondence records.
- C) Correspondence records are grouped into two categories: incoming correspondence records and outgoing correspondence records, and both are arranged based on the order of receipt or dispatch, except in the village of Adisara where they are arranged by subject or content of the letter and based on the order of receipt of the correspondence records.
 - D) Although correspondence records are primarily managed by the general affairs and administration staff, welfare section heads and the head of the village often still keep inactive correspondence records.
 - E) Although every village office has some filing cabinets, their use for storing correspondence records is not fully optimized. The filing cabinets lack tabs, dividers/guides, and hanging folders. As a result, filing cabinets are used to store non-archival items.
- 3) The number of village staff in each village office is generally the same, around 6 or 7 people (excluding the head of the village), except for the number of hamlet heads or 'kadus', which vary between 2 and 3 people. Each village office also has female village staff ranging from 1 to 4 individuals. Several differences among village offices include Writing format of incoming mail agenda and outgoing mail agenda books, facilities and infrastructures used for managing active correspondence records, arrangement method for active correspondence records, facilities and infrastructures used for storing inactive correspondence records, arrangement method for inactive correspondence records, and storage method for inactive correspondence archives.

Suggestion

Because records are evidence of activities that must be well kept and also easily retrievable, based on observations of village offices in Jatilawang District, the researchers propose the following model for correspondence records handling:

1. The format for the incoming mail agenda book should be as used in the Tinggarjaya village office with some changes as follows:

Table 7. Format for Incoming Mail Agenda Book

No	Date of Letters	Date of Letter Received	Subject	Origin of Letter	Details
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The format for outgoing mail agenda book is like Table 8 as used in Karanglewas village office with some changes as follows:

Table 8. Format for Outgoing Mail Agenda Book

No	Date of letters	No of the Letter	Subject	Enclosure	Receiver	Details
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2. All incoming correspondence records should not be punched with a puncher but placed in a paper file folder (see Figure 4) before being delivered to the head of the village for disposition.
3. Meanwhile, the method for managing active correspondence records is:
 - a) All incoming correspondence records that have been disposed of should be placed in a letter tray or mail tray for follow-up by the designated staff (A letter tray should ideally be on the desk of each village staff)
 - b) If there are some correspondence records with a village staff, the active correspondence records should be arranged based on the order of receipt. Correspondence records received several days earlier should be placed beneath the most recently received correspondence records.
 - c) When an incoming correspondence records has been followed-up by the relevant staff, it should be delivered to the general affairs and administrative staff for storage.
 - d) The general affairs and administrative staff then organize them by binding them monthly, as it was done in the Margasana village office (see Figure 5), or by storing them in a filing cabinet according to the classification of the letter's content, as done in the Adisara village office. The most recently received correspondence records should be placed at the 'front.'

Facilities and infrastructure used for storing active correspondence records are paper file folders, letter trays, and filing cabinets. The filing cabinets are then equipped with tabs, dividers/guides, hanging folders, paper file folders, and file tickler or file separator.

- 1) When the general affairs and administrative staff (or any officer or section head who stores inactive correspondence records) wants to reduce the volume of records in their desk, the following steps should be taken:
 - a) If correspondence records are grouped based on incoming and outgoing correspondence records, then: 1) Sort the incoming correspondence records according to the number listed in the incoming mail agenda book (meaning, January should be placed at the bottom compared to May, which should be placed above April); 2) Combine all incoming correspondence records for one year; 3) Place the incoming mail agenda book on top of the files; 4) Bind and place them in a cardboard box, as done in the Gentawangi village office (see Figure 5); and 5) Label the box with information such as: "INCOMING MAIL 2018," for example. (The boxes should ideally be of the same size).
 - b) Treat the outgoing correspondence records the same way. Subsequently, in the arrangement, separate the incoming correspondence records from the outgoing correspondence records.
- 2) Correspondence records stored in filing cabinets are placed in hanging folders based on the content (subject) of the letter. However, the filing cabinet for incoming correspondence records should be differentiated from the filing cabinet for outgoing correspondence records, as done in the Adisara village office. However, if incoming correspondence requires a response, the response (outgoing correspondence records) should be placed together with the incoming correspondence records in the same paper folder. (In one hanging folder, several paper folders containing the same subject but with different years can be included.) For example, if the incoming correspondence records requests a report on households that is still using 450 Watt electricity connections, the response correspondence records should be placed in the same paper folder. The hanging folder label should read "Household Data with 450 Watt Electricity Connections.
- 3) Therefore, if incoming and outgoing correspondence records are stored in filing cabinets, when reducing the volume of correspondence records from the filing cabinet for disposal, first determine which year's inactive correspondence records will be reduced (e.g., correspondence records from 2018-2020). After that:
 - a) Retrieve all correspondence records to be disposed of according to the predetermined years.
 - b) Differentiate between incoming correspondence records and outgoing correspondence records.
 - c) Use blank paper dividers to separate correspondence records based on their subject.
 - d) Write the subject of the disposed correspondence records on the blank dividers (point no. 3). This can also be done by listing all the subjects of the disposed correspondence records.
 - e) Place the list of subjects of the disposed correspondence records on top.
 - f) Bind and place them in archive boxes (file boxes) as shown in the picture below, or place them in boxes of the same size (not file boxes).
 - g) Transfer them to the archive room.
- 4) The equipment used to store inactive correspondence records (disposed correspondence records) should be as shown in the picture below.



Figure 7. Facility Used to Store Inactive Correspondence Record

- 5) Research on community perceptions toward village staff public service is necessary to test their hospitality.

CONCLUSION

The researcher concluded that the management practices of correspondence records handling in village offices in Jatilawang District require standardization in several areas, including the naming and formatting of agenda books for both incoming and outgoing mail, the storage and arrangement of active and inactive correspondence records, and the facilities and infrastructure used for their storage. Additionally, there is a need for standardized procedures for the disposal of inactive records. For future research, it is suggested to explore

the implementation of digital record-keeping systems in village offices, assessing their feasibility and potential to streamline correspondence management while overcoming the limitations of current manual systems.

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