

Alphabetical Filing System for Facilitating the Retrieval of Correspondence at SD Negeri 38 Palembang

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Abstract

Effective archive management is an essential component of administrative services in educational institutions, particularly in ensuring the availability, accuracy, and accessibility of correspondence records. In practice, however, the management of incoming and outgoing letters in schools may still encounter difficulties, including irregular filing, prolonged retrieval processes, misplacement of documents, and limited consistency in archive classification. This study aims to analyze the implementation of an alphabetical-based filing system and its contribution to facilitating the retrieval of correspondence at SD Negeri 38 Palembang. The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the procedures, practices, and effectiveness of correspondence archive management. Data were collected through direct observation, semi-structured interviews with administrative personnel, and documentation of incoming and outgoing correspondence records. Data analysis involved data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, with data validity strengthened through source and technique triangulation. The findings indicate that the alphabetical filing system facilitates the systematic organization of correspondence by grouping documents according to the initial letters of relevant names or institutions. This classification enables administrative personnel to identify the location of documents more quickly and reduces the risk of misplaced or duplicated records. The system also contributes to greater consistency in filing procedures, improves the efficiency of archive retrieval, and supports the continuity of school administrative services. Nevertheless, its effectiveness depends on the consistency of classification, accurate labeling, regular maintenance, and the competence of administrative personnel in applying standardized filing procedures. The study concludes that an alphabetical filing system can serve as a practical and efficient archive management strategy for facilitating correspondence retrieval at SD Negeri 38 Palembang. Its implementation should be supported by standardized procedures, periodic evaluation, and gradual integration with digital archive management to strengthen administrative efficiency and records accessibility.

INTRODUCTION

Records management is an essential component of administrative governance in educational institutions because records function not only as documentation of organizational activities but also as sources of information for decision-making, accountability, service delivery, and institutional memory. Among various types of administrative records, incoming and outgoing correspondence represents a particularly important category because it records formal communication between schools and external or internal stakeholders. Effective correspondence management therefore requires a systematic filing mechanism that enables documents to be stored securely, organized consistently, and retrieved efficiently whenever needed. Inadequate records management may result in misplaced

documents, duplicated records, prolonged retrieval time, and difficulties in providing accurate administrative information. These problems can ultimately affect the efficiency and quality of school administration.

In the school environment, administrative personnel are responsible for ensuring that correspondence is properly recorded, classified, stored, maintained, and retrieved. Nevertheless, correspondence management in many educational institutions continues to rely on manual procedures, including agenda books, folders, cabinets, and conventional filing systems. Although manual filing remains relevant for institutions with limited technological infrastructure, its effectiveness depends heavily on the consistency of classification and the competence of administrative personnel. Research on records storage and retrieval in educational institutions has shown that manual systems may experience challenges related to limited storage facilities, inadequate procedures, insufficient personnel competence, and delays in document retrieval. These conditions demonstrate that the effectiveness of an archive system cannot be measured merely by whether documents are stored, but also by how easily and accurately documents can be located when required (Waibi, 2018).

One filing approach that can be applied to organize correspondence systematically is the alphabetical filing system. This system organizes documents according to alphabetical order based on predetermined filing units, such as the name of an individual, institution, organization, or other identifiable reference. Its fundamental advantage lies in its simplicity and accessibility. When filing procedures are consistently implemented, administrative personnel can identify the location of a particular document by following the alphabetical sequence without having to inspect every stored file. Consequently, alphabetical filing has considerable potential to improve the efficiency of correspondence retrieval, particularly in organizations that manage a substantial volume of documents.

Previous research has demonstrated the relevance of alphabetical filing in correspondence management. Septiani and Haitami developed a correspondence filing system using the Alphabetical Filing and Chronology System and reported that the approach was designed to improve the efficiency of retrieving incoming and outgoing letters. Their study emphasized that systematic classification can facilitate the management and retrieval of correspondence within an organization (Noer Azni Septiani, 2020). Similarly, research on the implementation of an e-office system at SMA Negeri 4 Tualang employed alphabetical and chronological filing to organize correspondence according to alphabetical categories and chronological information such as year, month, and date. The study demonstrates that filing principles can be incorporated into school administrative systems to improve the management and retrieval of correspondence (Afriansyah, 2022).

Other studies have approached alphabetical filing primarily from the perspective of information-system development. Rully, Sokibi, and Adam developed an archive management information system using the alphabetical filing method to facilitate the management of institutional collaboration records. Their findings illustrate the potential of alphabetical classification to support systematic archive organization, although the study focused on an information-system application rather than the practical implementation of correspondence filing in a primary school administrative setting (Rully, 2020). More recently, Koten, Ishak, and Deta developed a web-based correspondence archiving system using an alphabetical filing approach. The system was intended to address problems associated with manual archiving, including difficulties in document retrieval and limited management of correspondence. Their study indicates that alphabetical classification remains relevant even within digital archive environments (A. M. K. Koten, 2025).

Research specifically situated in school environments further confirms that correspondence retrieval is a significant administrative issue. Fabrianne's study at Vocational High School 8 Semarang examined the effectiveness of the Sistem Informasi Pengelolaan Arsip Surat (SIPAS) for retrieving incoming and outgoing letters. The study reported 100% retrieval accuracy and a retrieval time of approximately 8–10 seconds after implementation of the information system (Fabrianne, 2021). Another study conducted at a public elementary school identified problems associated with manual correspondence management, particularly the limited detail of records and difficulties in retrieving incoming and outgoing correspondence (Sari, 2023). These findings suggest that retrieval efficiency should become an important indicator in evaluating the quality of school archive management.

The development of digital archive systems has increasingly attracted scholarly attention. For example, recent research at SMK Pariwisata Imelda Medan developed a web-based correspondence filing system using the Alphabetic Filing method and reported improvements in the organization and

management of incoming and outgoing correspondence. The study used a descriptive qualitative approach and emphasized the ability of alphabetical classification to make correspondence data more orderly and accessible (Hutagalung, 2026). Likewise, research on school administration in South Sumatra has emphasized the importance of organized archive management because manual storage of incoming and outgoing letters may prolong retrieval and increase the risk of document damage (Oktarina, 2026). These studies indicate a broader movement toward integrating systematic filing principles with digital technologies.

However, the existing literature reveals an important research gap. First, many previous studies have focused predominantly on designing and developing computerized or web-based archive applications, rather than examining how an alphabetical filing system operates as a practical administrative procedure in a school (A. M. K. Koten, 2025). Second, previous research has frequently combined alphabetical filing with chronological or numerical classification, making it difficult to isolate the practical contribution of alphabetical arrangement to correspondence retrieval (Afriansyah, 2022). Third, although several studies have investigated archive management in secondary schools and other government institutions, relatively limited attention has been given to the implementation of a straightforward alphabetical filing system specifically for correspondence management at the public elementary-school level. Fourth, previous studies have tended to emphasize technological solutions, while the organizational dimensions of filing such as classification consistency, labeling, storage arrangement, administrative staff practices, and retrieval procedures have received comparatively less attention.

This gap is particularly relevant because not every school has the same level of technological readiness, financial resources, infrastructure, or administrative capacity. A technologically advanced archive system may provide substantial benefits, but a simple and well-organized manual filing system can remain highly relevant for schools where digital transformation is gradual. Therefore, research on alphabetical filing should not be limited to the development of software. It is also necessary to examine whether a systematic, standardized, and consistently implemented alphabetical filing procedure can directly facilitate the retrieval of correspondence in a real school administrative environment.

Based on this gap, the present study focuses on SD Negeri 38 Palembang and examines the implementation of an alphabetical-based correspondence filing system in facilitating the retrieval of school letters. The study considers not only the classification of documents but also the processes of storing, organizing, labeling, maintaining, and retrieving correspondence. This approach allows the research to examine archive management as an administrative practice rather than merely as a technological system. The focus on an elementary school in Palembang also provides a contextual contribution because administrative practices are strongly influenced by institutional characteristics, available resources, staff competence, and the volume and characteristics of correspondence managed by the school.

The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on the practical and organizational effectiveness of alphabetical filing for correspondence retrieval at the elementary-school level. Rather than developing a new software application, the study investigates how a relatively simple filing principle can be systematically implemented to improve the accessibility and retrieval of physical correspondence. The novelty also lies in connecting the filing process with specific retrieval dimensions, including the clarity of classification, ease of locating documents, consistency of filing, accuracy of retrieval, and efficiency of administrative work. In this way, the study contributes a practical perspective that complements previous research dominated by digital archive-system development.

Furthermore, this study positions archive retrieval as an important indicator of administrative effectiveness. An archive system should not merely preserve documents but should enable users to locate the required information accurately and efficiently. From this perspective, the quality of an alphabetical filing system is determined by the extent to which its classification structure corresponds to actual administrative needs. Consistent alphabetical arrangement can reduce unnecessary searching, minimize the possibility of misplaced documents, and support faster access to information required for school operations. The findings can therefore provide practical implications for administrative personnel and school leaders seeking to strengthen records management without immediately requiring sophisticated technological infrastructure.

The study is also significant in the context of contemporary school administration, where administrative efficiency, accountability, and accessibility of information are increasingly important. Although digitalization continues to transform records management, systematic filing principles remain fundamental because digital systems themselves require clear classification and metadata structures. Recent research on school archive innovation demonstrates that technological development does not eliminate the importance of effective categorization and retrieval principles; rather, systematic classification provides the foundation for both manual and digital records management (Sitaviana, 2025). Therefore, examining alphabetical filing at the operational level can provide a useful foundation for future digital transformation.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the implementation of the alphabetical filing system in managing correspondence and to examine how the system facilitates the retrieval of letters at SD Negeri 38 Palembang. The study specifically investigates the procedures used to classify and store correspondence, the mechanisms employed by administrative personnel to retrieve documents, the factors supporting and hindering implementation, and the contribution of alphabetical organization to administrative efficiency. By addressing these aspects, the research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the field of educational administration and records management. Theoretically, it expands the discussion of filing systems by emphasizing the relationship between classification and retrieval efficiency in elementary-school administration. Practically, it provides an applicable model of systematic correspondence management that can be adopted or adapted by schools with similar administrative conditions.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the implementation of an alphabetical filing system in facilitating correspondence retrieval at SD Negeri 38 Palembang. The qualitative design was selected because the study aimed to explore the actual practices, procedures, and experiences of administrative personnel in managing incoming and outgoing correspondence rather than testing a statistical hypothesis. The research was conducted at SD Negeri 38 Palembang, with administrative staff directly responsible for correspondence and archive management serving as the primary informants.

Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation focused on the processes of receiving, recording, classifying, arranging, storing, maintaining, and retrieving correspondence. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to identify the procedures used in alphabetical classification, the perceived ease of locating documents, and the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting archive management. Documentation was used to examine filing folders, archive cabinets, correspondence registers, classification labels, and samples of incoming and outgoing letters. The combination of these techniques enabled the researcher to obtain complementary evidence concerning actual filing practices.

Data were analyzed interactively through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The analysis focused on four dimensions: (1) alphabetical classification, (2) physical organization and storage, (3) correspondence retrieval, and (4) supporting and inhibiting factors. Data credibility was established through source and technique triangulation by comparing interview findings with observations and documentary evidence. This methodological framework is consistent with previous correspondence-archive research in elementary schools, which identified manual filing and retrieval as important administrative issues.

DISCUSSION

Implementation of the Alphabetical Filing System in Correspondence Management

The management of correspondence archives is an important component of administrative governance in educational institutions. Incoming and outgoing letters constitute formal records that document communication, administrative decisions, institutional activities, and relationships between schools and various stakeholders. Therefore, the effectiveness of correspondence management cannot be separated from the availability of an appropriate filing system. In the context of SD Negeri 38 Palembang, the implementation of an alphabetical filing system provides a practical mechanism for organizing correspondence systematically according to predetermined alphabetical classifications.

The findings indicate that alphabetical arrangement facilitates the organization of correspondence by providing a clear structure for the placement of documents. Instead of storing letters without a consistent classification pattern, documents are arranged according to identifiable filing units, particularly the names of institutions, individuals, or other relevant references. Such an arrangement enables administrative personnel to establish a predictable relationship between the identity of a document and its physical storage location. This predictability is fundamental to effective retrieval because the user does not need to examine the entire archive collection when searching for a particular letter.

The alphabetical filing principle is particularly appropriate when documents are frequently accessed according to names. Records management guidance similarly recognizes that correspondence or records retrieved by name can appropriately be organized alphabetically, while the choice of filing system should reflect how users actually retrieve information. This, the effectiveness of an alphabetical filing system depends not only on the alphabetical order itself but also on whether the classification corresponds to the actual retrieval behavior of administrative personnel.

Previous studies support this finding. Rully, Sokibi, and Adam (2020), for example, applied an alphabetical filing system to archive management and emphasized its contribution to facilitating the organization and management of institutional records. Their study demonstrates that alphabetical classification can provide a systematic structure for storing information, although their research was conducted in a higher-education context and incorporated an information-system approach (Rully, 2020). The present study extends this discussion by examining alphabetical filing as an operational administrative practice in an elementary school rather than focusing primarily on software development.

The implementation of alphabetical filing at SD Negeri 38 Palembang can therefore be understood as a form of administrative standardization. Standardization is important because archive management involves repetitive activities that require consistency. When every letter is stored according to a common classification rule, different administrative personnel can understand the location and organization of the records. Conversely, when each staff member applies a different filing logic, the archive system becomes dependent on individual memory and experience. Such dependence creates a risk that documents may become difficult to retrieve when the responsible staff member is absent or when administrative responsibilities change.

Alphabetical Classification and the Ease of Correspondence Retrieval

The primary contribution of an archive system is not merely the ability to store documents but the ability to retrieve information efficiently when it is needed. An archive that is well preserved but difficult to locate has limited administrative value. Therefore, the ease of correspondence retrieval becomes an important indicator of filing-system effectiveness.

The findings suggest that alphabetical classification simplifies the retrieval process because it narrows the search area. When documents have been arranged according to alphabetical categories, administrative personnel can determine the probable location of a particular document before opening the relevant folder or cabinet. This reduces unnecessary searching and creates a more direct relationship between the search query and the physical location of the archive.

This finding is consistent with previous research on correspondence filing. Septiani and Haitami reported that the combination of alphabetical filing and chronological classification was intended to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of correspondence management and facilitate the process of searching for data (Noer Azni Septiani, 2020). Similarly, Afriansyah et al. examined an e-office system at SMA Negeri 4 Tualang and used alphabetical and chronological filing to organize incoming and outgoing correspondence. Their study emphasized the potential of systematic filing to facilitate both reporting and data retrieval (Afriansyah, 2022).

However, the present study places greater emphasis on the role of alphabetical arrangement itself. The distinction is important because the retrieval mechanism should be understood from the perspective of how users identify documents. If the main retrieval key is the name of an institution or sender, alphabetical classification can be particularly useful. If the main retrieval key is the date of correspondence, a chronological system may be more appropriate. Consequently, an effective filing system must be aligned with the characteristics of the records and the information needs of users.

At SD Negeri 38 Palembang, the application of alphabetical filing can therefore reduce the cognitive burden associated with archive retrieval. Administrative personnel do not need to remember

the exact physical position of every letter. Instead, they need to understand the classification rules and identify the appropriate alphabetical category. This transforms archive retrieval from a process based primarily on personal memory into a process based on an established organizational structure.

Relationship Between Filing Consistency and Retrieval Effectiveness

One of the most important findings from the discussion of alphabetical filing is that the effectiveness of the system depends heavily on consistency. Alphabetical filing does not automatically produce efficient retrieval simply because documents are arranged from A to Z. The classification must be applied consistently across all documents.

Consistency includes several elements: the determination of the filing unit, the arrangement of names, labeling of folders, placement of documents, and maintenance of the established alphabetical sequence. If one letter is classified according to the sender while another is classified according to the recipient, the retrieval process may become unpredictable. Similarly, inconsistent abbreviations, spelling variations, or folder labels can create difficulties in locating documents.

This issue highlights an important distinction between a filing method and a filing system. A method refers to the basic principle of arranging documents, whereas a system encompasses the rules, procedures, personnel, facilities, and controls required to implement that principle. Therefore, the alphabetical filing system at SD Negeri 38 Palembang should be understood as an integrated administrative practice rather than simply a physical arrangement of folders.

Research on records management has repeatedly indicated that problems in archive retrieval can emerge when filing procedures are not systematically implemented. In a study of a public elementary school, Sari, Rohman, and Firzatullah found that manual correspondence management could result in insufficiently detailed records and difficulties in retrieving incoming and outgoing correspondence, ultimately affecting operational efficiency (Sari, 2023). This finding is highly relevant to the present study because it demonstrates that archive retrieval is directly connected to the quality of the underlying filing procedure.

Therefore, the implementation of alphabetical filing should be accompanied by clear standard operating procedures. Administrative personnel need to understand which element determines the alphabetical classification, how folders should be labeled, how new correspondence should be inserted, and how retrieved documents should be returned to their original locations. Without such procedures, the advantages of alphabetical filing may gradually decline.

The Role of Administrative Personnel

The success of an archive system is also strongly influenced by the competence and discipline of administrative personnel. A well-designed filing system cannot function effectively if the individuals responsible for its implementation do not apply its procedures consistently. Consequently, the findings should not be interpreted as demonstrating that alphabetical filing alone solves all archive-management problems.

Administrative personnel play several interconnected roles. First, they are responsible for identifying the characteristics of each incoming and outgoing letter. Second, they determine the appropriate classification. Third, they place the document in the correct folder or storage location. Fourth, they maintain the order of the archive. Finally, they retrieve documents when requested and return them to the correct location after use.

These activities require accuracy and procedural discipline. A single incorrectly filed document may become difficult to locate even though the overall filing system is well organized. The problem is particularly significant when the volume of correspondence increases. Therefore, staff competence should be considered an integral part of the archive system.

The importance of personnel competence is also reflected in recent research on school correspondence management. Hutagalung and Lubis (2026), in their study of SMK Pariwisata Imelda Medan, found that the development of an alphabetical filing-based system could support administrative personnel in managing correspondence more efficiently and reduce the risk of losing correspondence data (Hutagalung, 2026). Although their study focused on a web-based system, its findings reinforce the argument that the filing structure must be accompanied by appropriate administrative practices.

For SD Negeri 38 Palembang, this means that improving the filing system should not focus exclusively on rearranging physical documents. Training and guidance for administrative personnel

are equally important. Personnel should understand not only *where* a document should be stored but also *why* it belongs in a particular classification.

Alphabetical Filing as a Practical Solution for School Administration

One significant implication of this study is that alphabetical filing can represent a practical solution for schools that have not yet fully implemented digital archive management. Digital transformation is increasingly important in administrative management, but technological implementation requires adequate infrastructure, financial resources, human-resource competence, and organizational readiness.

Previous studies have frequently approached correspondence management through the development of digital applications. For example, Fabrianne's study of Vocational High School 8 Semarang examined the effectiveness of a digital archive management system and found 100% retrieval accuracy with retrieval times of approximately 8–10 seconds (Fabrianne, 2021). These findings demonstrate the considerable potential of digital systems.

Nevertheless, the existence of digital solutions does not eliminate the relevance of systematic physical filing. Schools may continue to manage physical originals of official correspondence even when digital copies are available. Moreover, digitalization without appropriate classification principles may simply reproduce the same organizational problems in a different medium. A poorly classified digital archive can be just as difficult to retrieve as a poorly organized physical archive.

This argument is particularly important for educational institutions. A school may gradually move from manual to digital records management, but the basic principles of classification, identification, storage, and retrieval remain necessary. Alphabetical filing can therefore function as a foundational administrative practice that prepares the institution for future digital transformation.

The recent study by Hutagalung and Lubis (2026) illustrates this relationship. Their research combined the alphabetical filing concept with a web-based archive system and reported improvements in correspondence management, reduced risk of data loss, and more efficient administrative work (Hutagalung, 2026). This suggests that alphabetical classification is not inherently limited to physical archives; rather, it can serve as an organizational principle in both manual and digital environments.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The present study has both similarities and differences compared with previous research. First, it shares with Afriansyah et al. the use of alphabetical classification for correspondence management in an educational institution. However, Afriansyah et al. combined alphabetical and chronological filing within an e-office system, whereas the present study focuses specifically on the implementation of alphabetical filing as a practical mechanism for correspondence retrieval (Afriansyah, 2022).

Second, the study shares with Sari et al. the context of elementary-school administration. Their research examined correspondence archive management in a public elementary school and identified problems associated with manual recording and retrieval (Sari, 2023). The present study complements that research by focusing more specifically on how systematic alphabetical organization can address the retrieval dimension of correspondence management.

Third, the study differs from Fabrianne's research in terms of technological orientation. Fabrianne investigated a computerized archive system and measured its retrieval effectiveness quantitatively, reporting high accuracy and rapid retrieval (Afriansyah, 2022). The present research instead examines the administrative value of a relatively simple filing structure. This distinction creates a useful complementary perspective: while digital systems can accelerate retrieval, effective retrieval still depends on an underlying classification logic.

Fourth, Rully et al. focused on the development of an information system incorporating alphabetical filing for university collaboration archives (Rully, 2020). The present study shifts the emphasis from information-system engineering toward administrative practice in an elementary-school environment.

These differences establish the specific contribution of the present study. The research does not attempt to claim that alphabetical filing is technologically superior to digital systems. Rather, it demonstrates that a systematic and consistently applied filing structure can provide an accessible administrative mechanism for improving correspondence retrieval in a school context.

Research Gap and Novel Contribution

The comparison with previous studies reveals a continuing gap in the literature. A substantial proportion of recent research on correspondence archives has emphasized the development of digital

applications, web-based systems, databases, or e-office platforms (A. M. K. Koten, 2025). While such studies are important, they do not fully explain how simple filing principles operate in everyday administrative practice, particularly in elementary schools.

Another gap concerns the relationship between classification and retrieval. Previous research often evaluates archive systems in terms of software functionality or general efficiency. The present study instead places retrieval at the center of the discussion by examining whether alphabetical organization makes it easier for administrative personnel to identify and locate correspondence.

The novelty of this study therefore lies in its practical and contextual orientation. It examines alphabetical filing not as a programming method but as an administrative management mechanism. The study further situates the filing system within the specific context of SD Negeri 38 Palembang, thereby providing empirical insight into archive management at the elementary-school level.

This novelty is important because the appropriate archive system is context-dependent. A filing method that works effectively in a large government office may not necessarily be the most practical solution for an elementary school. Schools require systems that are understandable, affordable, maintainable, and compatible with the competencies of administrative personnel. Alphabetical filing has the potential to satisfy these requirements when supported by clear procedures and consistent implementation.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The implementation of alphabetical filing is influenced by both supporting and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors include clear classification rules, adequate storage facilities, standardized labels, staff discipline, and regular monitoring. When these elements are available, the filing system can operate consistently and facilitate retrieval.

Conversely, inhibiting factors may include limited storage space, inconsistent filing practices, incomplete documentation, insufficient labeling, and lack of staff understanding. Physical archives can also be affected by environmental conditions and deterioration if storage facilities are inadequate. These factors demonstrate that archive management is multidimensional.

The experience of other institutions confirms that manual filing can create difficulties when procedures are not sufficiently standardized. Septiani and Haitami identified problems with the effectiveness and accuracy of correspondence management in a system that had not been computerized, leading them to propose alphabetical and chronological classification as a means of improving filing and retrieval. Similarly, research on school correspondence management has identified difficulties in retrieval when records are inadequately documented (Sari, 2023).

Accordingly, SD Negeri 38 Palembang should view the alphabetical filing system as a process requiring continuous maintenance. The system should be periodically evaluated to identify misplaced documents, unclear classifications, damaged folders, or inconsistencies in labeling. Periodic evaluation is essential because archive collections continuously grow and administrative personnel may change.

Implications for School Administrative Management

The findings have several implications for educational administration. First, school leaders should recognize correspondence archives as strategic administrative resources rather than merely collections of old documents. Letters may contain information concerning official decisions, cooperation, appointments, permissions, institutional activities, and other matters that may be required for future reference.

Second, schools should establish standardized procedures for correspondence filing. These procedures should specify the classification basis, labeling format, storage sequence, retrieval process, and responsibilities of administrative personnel. Standardization can reduce individual variation and ensure continuity when personnel change.

Third, archive retrieval should become part of administrative performance evaluation. The quality of a filing system can be assessed through indicators such as ease of locating documents, accuracy of retrieval, consistency of classification, and the time required to locate requested correspondence. Fabrianne's research demonstrates the value of retrieval time and accuracy as measurable dimensions of archive effectiveness (Afriansyah, 2022).

Fourth, alphabetical filing can serve as a transitional foundation toward digital archive management. Once the school has established standardized classification rules for physical correspondence, the same categories can later be incorporated into a digital archive system. Thus, manual and digital filing should not necessarily be viewed as mutually exclusive alternatives.

Overall Interpretation

Overall, the discussion demonstrates that the alphabetical filing system provides a practical organizational structure for correspondence management at SD Negeri 38 Palembang. Its primary value lies in creating a predictable relationship between the identity of a document and its storage location. This predictability can facilitate retrieval, reduce unnecessary searching, and support administrative efficiency.

However, the effectiveness of the system depends on more than alphabetical ordering. It requires consistent classification, standardized procedures, appropriate storage facilities, competent administrative personnel, and continuous monitoring. Therefore, the alphabetical filing system should be understood as an integrated records-management practice rather than simply a method of arranging folders.

The findings also reinforce the broader literature showing that correspondence retrieval is a central concern in administrative records management. Studies involving schools, universities, government institutions, and other organizations have demonstrated the importance of systematic classification and increasingly of digital systems (A. M. K. Koten, 2025). The present study contributes to this literature by highlighting the continuing relevance of a simple alphabetical filing structure within an elementary-school setting.

From a managerial perspective, the most important lesson is that technological sophistication is not the only determinant of archive effectiveness. An institution can begin improving its records management through relatively simple organizational interventions. Establishing clear alphabetical classifications, maintaining consistent labels, organizing folders systematically, and training administrative personnel can create meaningful improvements in information accessibility. Once these foundations are established, the institution can subsequently develop more advanced digital archive systems without abandoning the classification principles that make retrieval possible.

Thus, the alphabetical filing system at SD Negeri 38 Palembang can be regarded as a practical and contextually appropriate strategy for facilitating correspondence retrieval. Its effectiveness is strengthened when the system is supported by standardized procedures, staff competence, adequate facilities, and periodic evaluation. The study consequently demonstrates that effective records management begins not merely with technology but with a clear organizational logic for classifying, storing, and retrieving information.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of an alphabetical filing system provides a practical and systematic approach to managing correspondence archives at SD Negeri 38 Palembang. By organizing incoming and outgoing letters according to predetermined alphabetical classifications, the filing system establishes a clear relationship between the identity of a document and its storage location. This arrangement facilitates the work of administrative personnel in identifying, locating, and retrieving correspondence when required. The findings reinforce the argument that effective archive management should prioritize not only document storage but also accessibility, accuracy, consistency, and ease of retrieval.

The study further demonstrates that the effectiveness of alphabetical filing depends on the consistent implementation of standardized procedures. Clear classification rules, appropriate folder labeling, orderly storage facilities, administrative staff competence, and regular monitoring are important supporting factors. Conversely, inconsistent classification, inadequate labeling, limited storage facilities, and insufficient staff understanding may reduce the effectiveness of the system. Therefore, alphabetical filing should be understood as an integrated records-management practice rather than merely a method of arranging documents.

The findings are consistent with previous research showing that systematic filing structures can improve correspondence management and facilitate document retrieval in educational institutions. Studies involving school-based archive systems have demonstrated that organized classification contributes to more efficient retrieval, while digital systems can further enhance retrieval accuracy and speed.

The practical implication of this study is that schools can strengthen correspondence management through relatively simple and affordable organizational improvements before moving toward more advanced digital systems. Future research should examine the effectiveness of alphabetical filing using

measurable indicators such as retrieval time, retrieval accuracy, document accessibility, and user satisfaction, while also investigating its integration with digital archive management.

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