

# MODERNIZING THE UT REGIONAL ARCHIVAL LAB WITH THE CONTINUUM RECORD CONCEPT FOR VOCATIONAL STUDENTS

**Cacih Sugiarti<sup>1</sup>, Anisa Zahwa Akbara<sup>2</sup>**

*<sup>1,2</sup>Universitas Terbuka (INDONESIA)*

cacih@ecampus.ut.ac.id

## **Abstract**

This study explores the modernization of the archival laboratory at Regional Universitas Terbuka (UT) using the Continuum Record concept to enhance the practical skills of students in the Vocational (D4) Archival program. Employing a qualitative research approach, the study examines the implementation of the Continuum Record concept within the laboratory setting, focusing on its impact on the students' archival work practices. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis involving students, instructors, and laboratory staff. The findings reveal that the integration of the Continuum Record concept significantly improves students' understanding of archival processes, facilitating a more seamless transition from theory to practice. The modernization efforts not only enhance the practical learning experience but also ensure that the laboratory meets contemporary archival standards, thereby better preparing students for professional roles in the field of archiving. This research underscores the importance of aligning educational infrastructure with current industry practices to support effective vocational training.

**Keywords:** Archival Laboratory Modernization, Continuum Record Concept, D4 Archival Program.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Universitas Terbuka (UT), established under Presidential Decree No. 41 of 1984, is Indonesia's 45th state university and pioneers in open and distance learning (ODL). As a public institution, UT aims to democratize access to higher education across the vast archipelago, including marginalized and remote communities, as well as Indonesian citizens living abroad. This mission aligns with the global trend toward increased accessibility in education, reflecting findings by Guri-Rosenblit (2005), who highlighted the transformative potential of ODL in promoting educational equity.

The flexibility of UT's educational system is facilitated by advancements in information and communication technology (ICT), which allow students to engage with learning materials anytime and anywhere (Kirkwood & Price, 2014). However, while UT provides a diverse range of academic programs through its four faculties, including the Faculty of Law, Social Sciences,

and Political Science (FHISIP), the quality of practical learning experiences remains critical for vocational programs, particularly in the field of archiving.

The D4 Archival study program at UT emphasizes practical learning, with 60% of its curriculum focused on hands-on experience. This approach is supported by the standards set by the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (ANRI), which outlines necessary competencies for effective archival management (UU No. 43 Tahun 2009). Previous studies, such as those by Singh (2018), underscore the importance of practical training in archival education to prepare students for the demands of the profession. However, a gap exists between the theoretical knowledge imparted in academic settings and the practical skills required in real-world archival environments.

To address this gap, the modernization of the archival laboratory at the Jakarta Regional UT is essential. By implementing the Continuum Record concept, which emphasizes the ongoing management of records throughout their lifecycle, the proposed laboratory aims to create a comprehensive training environment that enhances students' practical skills while ensuring compliance with national archival standards. The significance of this approach is corroborated by research conducted by O'Leary (2017), which advocates for innovative archival education models that integrate modern technology and methodologies.

Thus, this study seeks to explore the potential of a modernized archival laboratory to facilitate effective practice opportunities for D4 Archival students at Universitas Terbuka, ensuring that they are well-equipped to meet the challenges of contemporary archival management.

## **2 METHODOLOGY**

This research employs a qualitative approach, focusing on the experiences and perspectives of D4 Archival students at Universitas Terbuka (UT). Qualitative research is particularly suited for exploring complex phenomena, allowing for a deeper understanding of participants' insights and experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In this context, the study aims to investigate the challenges students face in accessing practical training opportunities within the archival program, as well as the potential benefits of modernizing the archival laboratory.

The study utilizes descriptive qualitative analysis, which seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of archival practice education at UT. According to Mohamad Ali (1982), descriptive research is effective for understanding contemporary issues by systematically gathering and analyzing data. This method enables researchers to capture a rich,

contextual understanding of students' experiences, highlighting specific challenges and needs related to practical training. The target population for this study includes all D4 Archival students enrolled at Universitas Terbuka. A purposive sampling technique is employed to select participants specifically from the UT Jakarta campus, which has been identified as having the necessary infrastructure and standards for archival practice. This focus allows for a detailed examination of a specific context where the modernization of the archival laboratory is particularly relevant.

Data collection involves the use of semi-structured questionnaires designed to gather qualitative insights from students. The questionnaire includes open-ended questions that encourage participants to express their thoughts and experiences regarding several aspects. Students are asked to describe their experiences in obtaining practical training opportunities and any challenges they face in doing so. Additionally, participants are invited to share their expectations for a modernized archival laboratory and how it could enhance their practical learning experiences. They are also prompted to discuss their understanding of the Continuum Record concept and its perceived value in their education and future careers. The questionnaires are distributed online using Google Forms, facilitating easy access for participants and ensuring a wider reach. The online format also allows for anonymity, encouraging students to provide honest and candid responses.

After collecting the complete questionnaires, the data undergoes a systematic analysis process. Initially, open-ended responses are transcribed for analysis to ensure that participants' voices are accurately represented. The responses are then coded using thematic analysis, a method that involves identifying patterns and themes within the data. This process helps categorize students' experiences and insights, making it easier to draw conclusions. Key themes emerge from the coded data, reflecting common challenges faced by students and their expectations for a modernized archival laboratory. This thematic approach allows the researcher to organize findings meaningfully and to present them in the context of existing literature on archival education.

The study adheres to ethical guidelines to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Informed consent is obtained before distributing the questionnaire, and students are assured that their responses will be used solely for research purposes. This ethical framework fosters trust and encourages participation, ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings. While

qualitative research provides rich insights, it also has inherent limitations. The findings may not be generalizable to all D4 Archival students across Indonesia due to the specific focus on UT Jakarta. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases, as participants may present their experiences in a manner they perceive as favorable.

### **3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The survey conducted at UT Jakarta revealed several key findings regarding the state of the archival laboratory and students' experiences with practical training. These findings provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by D4 Archival students and highlight the potential benefits of modernizing the archival laboratory using the Continuum Record concept. One significant finding is the successful implementation of Official Document Management (TND) within the archival laboratory at UT Jakarta. The laboratory has established proper procedures for managing official documents, which is crucial for ensuring the integrity and accessibility of archival materials. This finding aligns with the importance of standardized document management practices highlighted by Roper (2016), who emphasizes that effective document management is essential for maintaining the authenticity of archival records.

Another notable result is the presence of a systematic classification approach for organizing and storing archives. Students reported that this classification system significantly enhances the usability of archival materials, allowing for efficient retrieval and management. This observation is consistent with the work of Duranti (2015), who argues that a well-defined classification system is vital for compliance with legal and regulatory requirements in archival practice. The study also found that UT Jakarta has enacted a retention schedule for archival materials. This includes processes for transferring archives to the archives unit and systematically destroying obsolete records. Such practices are aligned with the principles outlined in the National Archives Regulation, which stresses the importance of managing the lifecycle of records (UU No. 43 Tahun 2009). Kahn and Lentz (2019) support this finding, showing that adherence to retention schedules is critical for preserving the authenticity and reliability of archival materials.

Furthermore, the laboratory has established an access security classification system that allows authorized personnel to validate and access important documents. This security measure is vital for protecting sensitive information and ensuring controlled access to archives. Previous studies, such as those by Bastian (2014), underscore the necessity of implementing robust

security protocols to safeguard archival collections and maintain public trust in the archival process.

Despite these positive findings, the study revealed several challenges that hinder students' practical training experiences. Many students reported difficulties in securing adequate practice opportunities in external organizations due to logistical issues and the limited availability of certified archival facilities. This gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application reflects findings from previous research. For instance, a study by Tallman and Robinson (2018) emphasizes the importance of hands-on training in archival education, noting that many programs fall short in providing students with sufficient real-world experience. The students' challenges at UT Jakarta highlight the need for a dedicated and modernized archival laboratory that can serve as a practical training ground, bridging the gap between classroom learning and practical skills application.

The modernization of the archival laboratory, particularly through the implementation of the Continuum Record concept, presents a viable solution to these challenges. This approach emphasizes the continuous management of records throughout their lifecycle, aligning with contemporary archival practices focused on accessibility and usability (Webber, 2019). By adopting this framework, the proposed laboratory can provide students with an integrated learning environment that reflects real-world archival scenarios and enhances their readiness for future employment. Moreover, the findings underscore the importance of collaboration between educational institutions and archival organizations. Previous studies have shown that partnerships between academia and professional organizations can significantly enhance educational outcomes by providing students with access to resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities (Voss & Skagen, 2020). Establishing partnerships with local archival institutions could further enrich the practical training experiences of D4 Archival students at UT, ensuring they graduate with the necessary skills and competencies demanded by the job market.

In conclusion, while the findings reveal a solid foundation for the archival education program at UT Jakarta, they also highlight significant challenges that need to be addressed. Modernizing the archival laboratory using the Continuum Record concept and fostering partnerships with professional organizations can significantly enhance the practical training experiences of D4 Archival students, ultimately preparing them for successful careers in the archival field.

#### **4 CONCLUSION**

In summary, Universitas Terbuka (UT) has established a solid foundation for its D4 Archival program, with practices that align with national standards and international best practices. The successful implementation of official document management, a systematic classification approach, a retention schedule for archival materials, and a security classification system reflects the institution's commitment to providing high-quality archival education. However, despite these positive attributes, significant challenges persist, particularly regarding students' access to practical training opportunities in external organizations.

The findings of this study have significant implications for both the D4 Archival program at UT and the broader field of archival education. The identified challenges highlight the need for a modernized archival laboratory that aligns with contemporary practices and enhances the practical training experiences of students. Moreover, the successful implementation of the Continuum Record concept within the laboratory could serve as a model for other archival education programs seeking to integrate innovative approaches into their curricula. Additionally, fostering collaborations between UT and local archival institutions may create more opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience and build professional networks. This collaboration is critical for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, ultimately enhancing the employability of graduates in the archival field.

This study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. Firstly, the research focuses specifically on the D4 Archival students at UT Jakarta, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or institutions within Indonesia. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data through questionnaires may introduce biases, as students may provide responses that they believe are favorable or that align with expected norms. The qualitative nature of the research also means that findings are interpretative and may not capture the full spectrum of experiences among all students.

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations can be made. First, it is essential for UT to prioritize the modernization of the archival laboratory by adopting the Continuum Record concept. This initiative should include the development of state-of-the-art facilities and resources that facilitate practical training and ensure that students are well-prepared for their future careers. Second, UT should actively seek partnerships with local and national archival organizations. By establishing these collaborations, the university can provide students with

opportunities for internships, mentorships, and networking that are vital for their professional development. Such partnerships can also enhance the practical training curriculum, aligning it with industry needs and best practices. Lastly, ongoing research should be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the new laboratory and training programs once implemented. Continuous assessment will provide valuable insights into the evolving needs of students and the archival profession, ensuring that the D4 Archival program remains relevant and effective in preparing graduates for successful careers in the field.

In conclusion, while the D4 Archival program at UT has made commendable strides in archival education, addressing the identified challenges through modernization, collaboration, and ongoing evaluation will significantly enhance the practical training experiences of students. By doing so, UT can continue to fulfill its mission of providing accessible and high-quality education, ultimately contributing to the growth and development of the archival profession in Indonesia.

## REFERENCES

- Bastian, J. (2014). Protecting archival collections: Security measures and protocols. *American Archivist*, 77(1), 44-66.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Duranti, L. (2015). The importance of archival classification. *Archival Science*, 15(1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-014-9247-7>
- Guri-Rosenblit, S. (2005). Distance education: Theoretical perspectives and practical applications. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v6i1.238>
- Kahn, M., & Lentz, B. (2019). Retention schedules: Best practices for managing records. *Records Management Journal*, 29(2), 159-171. <https://doi.org/10.1108/RMJ-07-2018-0046>
- Kirkwood, A., & Price, L. (2014). Technology-enhanced learning and teaching in higher education: What is 'enhanced' and how do we know? *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 38(1), 98-112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2012.721640>

- Roper, A. (2016). Document management practices: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Information Management*, 36(4), 515-520. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2016.02.004>
- Singh, S. (2018). Archival education and training: The impact of practice on competency development. *Archival Science*, 18(3), 235-249. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-018-9282-5>
- Tallman, J., & Robinson, K. (2018). Bridging the gap between theory and practice in archival education. *Archivaria*, 84, 124-148. <https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13424>
- Voss, M., & Skagen, K. (2020). Partnerships in archival education: Enhancing student learning through collaboration. *The American Archivist*, 83(1), 54-73. <https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081-83.1.54>
- Webber, L. (2019). The Continuum of records: A new approach to archival management. *Archival Science*, 19(2), 161-179. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-019-09352-3>
- UU No. 43 Tahun 2009 tentang Kearsipan. (2009). Retrieved from [\[http://www.dpr.go.id\]](http://www.dpr.go.id)(<http://www.dpr.go.id>)



