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Librarian Performance in Circulation Services: An Examination of Management Practices and Challenges of the Manual System at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service

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Abstract

Libraries play a critical role in supporting education, research, and community literacy; however, the effectiveness of their services depends substantially on librarian performance and circulation management. At the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service, circulation activities remain manually administered during the transition toward digitalization, creating administrative and operational constraints. This study aimed to examine circulation service management, identify its principal challenges, and assess librarian performance. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, involving five purposively selected informants: the Head of the Library Division, one circulation service officer, and three library users. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. Circulation service management was analyzed using George R. Terry's framework of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. The findings indicate that all four management functions have been implemented but remain suboptimal, particularly regarding the dissemination of service plans, staff scheduling, workload distribution, and follow-up on evaluation results. The principal challenges include limited resources, reliance on manual transaction

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records, and difficulties in locating library collections. Although librarians demonstrate satisfactory interpersonal performance when assisting users, their technical and administrative performance requires improvement. The study concludes that strengthening management practices and accelerating the digitalization of circulation services are essential to improving operational efficiency and service quality. These findings provide practical guidance for library administrators seeking to optimize librarian performance and modernize circulation management in resource-constrained public libraries.

Keywords: Circulation Management; Circulation Services; Digital Transformation; Librarian Performance; Public Libraries

INTRODUCTION

Libraries occupy a strategic position as information institutions that support education, research, lifelong learning, and literacy development within society. Their role extends beyond providing collections to managing resources and delivering services that enable users to access and utilize information effectively. This role is particularly important in public libraries because they serve communities with diverse backgrounds and information needs. Juniadi & Heriyanto (2021) describe public libraries as government-managed institutions that provide information access to all segments of society. Public libraries also perform educational, informational, research, preservation, recreational, and cultural functions that should be translated into services responsive to community needs (Hartono, 2016).

The quality of library services is influenced not only by the availability of collections and facilities but also by the effectiveness of organizational management and the performance of personnel responsible for service delivery. Library services require adequate resources, clear procedures, and competent human resources to ensure that users receive accurate and satisfactory services. Fatmawati (2013) explains that library service quality can be reflected through collection adequacy, service accuracy, and the quality of personnel in serving users. This perspective places librarians in a central position because they directly interact with users while carrying out the operational activities that sustain library services. Therefore, librarian performance becomes an important component in maintaining the quality and continuity of library services.

The demand for librarian professionalism is increasingly important as libraries face changes in their working environments and the development of information technology. Professional development has been supported through policies governing librarian positions and professional responsibilities. Subrata (2009) argues that librarian policies are intended to develop competent and professional librarians who are able to provide transparent and quality-oriented services to the public. Librarian performance should consequently be understood not merely as the completion of administrative duties but as the ability to perform professional responsibilities according to organizational standards and service requirements.

One of the most important areas for observing librarian performance is circulation service. Circulation is a core library service because it directly connects librarians, users, collections, and administrative processes. Rahma (2018) defines circulation as a service concerned with the distribution of library collections and the recording of their use to fulfill users' information needs effectively and promptly. Circulation activities include borrowing, returning, renewing, monitoring overdue materials, and recording transactions. Hartini and Hartini & Hanum (2018) explain that circulation also involves overdue collection follow-up, fine administration, library clearance documentation, and the recording of visitor and borrower data. These activities require librarians to demonstrate accuracy, timeliness, responsibility, and administrative competence.

Technological development provides opportunities to improve circulation services through integrated library automation systems. Automation can simplify collection management, user administration, circulation transactions, and reporting through an integrated technological environment. Bugis et al. (2021) explain that INLISLite is an integrated library management application that supports collection development, material processing, library services, and reporting. The implementation of such systems can reduce dependence on handwritten records and potentially improve the efficiency and accuracy of circulation transactions. However, the availability of an automation system does not automatically guarantee that library services will become fully automated because implementation depends on human resources, infrastructure, technical support, and organizational readiness.

This condition can be observed at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service, which has attempted to implement INLISLite to support library management and circulation

services. However, its implementation has not yet reached an optimal level, resulting in several circulation activities continuing to rely on registration books, membership cards, and other handwritten records. Hartini & Hanum (2018) characterize manual library systems as conventional management practices that rely on physical records and human labor without optimal technological support. In circulation services involving frequent transactions, such dependence can increase administrative workloads and create greater risks of recording errors.

The limitations of manual circulation become more apparent when borrowing and returning transactions must be processed continuously. Librarians are required to record transactions, verify user information, check collection status, and retrieve transaction histories manually. Zulfia (2023) found that manual circulation systems can reduce service effectiveness because transactions must be recorded in writing. Preliminary observations at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service similarly indicate that circulation records may contain unclear handwriting, irregular entries, and corrections in registration books. These conditions can make transaction data more difficult to interpret and potentially increase errors in recording borrowing and returning activities. The problem therefore concerns not only the absence of optimal technological support but also the additional demands placed on librarians to maintain service accuracy.

Under such conditions, librarian performance becomes a determining factor in maintaining the continuity of circulation services. Librarians must provide accurate and timely services even when administrative processes remain largely manual. Nurhayati (2019) defines optimal performance as performance that conforms to organizational standards and contributes to the achievement of organizational objectives. In circulation services, performance can be reflected through the accuracy of transaction recording, speed of service, responsibility, and the ability to complete administrative tasks effectively. Fitriyani & Pramusinto (2018) further conceptualize librarian performance through the quality and quantity of work as well as professional and social dimensions, including service excellence and effective communication.

Librarian performance is also related to the professional conditions supporting the execution of their duties. Education, work experience, and professional development can influence the ability of library personnel to perform their responsibilities. Diniaty & Fairus (2014) identify education, work experience, and training as important factors affecting

human resource performance. Relevant educational backgrounds can help librarians understand collection management, circulation procedures, and information services. Professional competence is particularly important when librarians must manage manual administrative processes that require consistency and accuracy. Restanti (2015) emphasizes that professional librarians need competencies in information management, user services, and information technology utilization.

In addition to competence, the availability of human resources can influence the effectiveness of circulation services. Limited staffing may require librarians to handle several responsibilities simultaneously, increasing their workload and reducing the time available for individual service activities. Insufficient staffing can create excessive workloads and negatively affect the effectiveness of library services. This condition is particularly relevant to manual circulation because activities that could otherwise be supported by automation must be completed directly by library personnel. Librarian performance should therefore be viewed in relation to the organizational conditions, work procedures, facilities, and workload surrounding the service process.

From a management perspective, circulation services cannot be separated from the way library resources and work processes are organized. Library management involves the systematic utilization of human and informational resources to achieve organizational objectives. Rista et al. (2024) define library management as the optimal management of human and information resources based on organizational principles and professional expertise. This perspective is relevant for examining how circulation activities are planned, organized, implemented, and evaluated. The Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling framework provides a basis for understanding how organizational management shapes the implementation of circulation services.

Planning determines the objectives, strategies, work programs, and resources required to conduct library activities. Saputra et al. (2023) explain that library planning encompasses objectives, strategies, work programs, facilities, collections, and human resource development. Organizing is necessary to distribute tasks and establish effective working relationships among personnel. Baidhawi et al. (2022) emphasize that organizing clarifies responsibilities and facilitates coordination among library staff. These functions become increasingly important when staffing and technological resources are limited because inappropriate task distribution may increase workload and reduce service efficiency.

The implementation of circulation services also requires direction and supervision. Hayati et al. (2019) explain that actuating involves directing and motivating library personnel to perform their responsibilities according to established roles and standards. Meanwhile, controlling ensures that activities are implemented according to plans and operational standards. Purnama et al. (2020) explain that library control includes monitoring librarian performance, evaluating activities against standard operating procedures, identifying errors, and implementing corrective actions. Through these managerial functions, circulation services can be understood as an organizational process rather than merely a series of transactions between librarians and users.

Another issue concerns the regulation of overdue collections. The absence of penalties for late returns may influence user compliance and the availability of collections for other users. Melianti & Priyadi (2021) explain that overdue fines generally function to encourage compliance with library regulations and maintain collection availability. In a manual circulation environment, monitoring overdue materials requires additional administrative effort because transaction information must be checked and followed up through available records. Consequently, service policies and administrative procedures may interact with librarian workload and the effectiveness of circulation management.

Previous research has examined librarian performance and circulation services from several perspectives. Deomedes et al. (2023) investigated users' perceptions of librarian performance in circulation services at the Boyolali Regional Public Library. Their study reported generally positive perceptions regarding librarians' responsiveness, communication, and speed in handling circulation transactions. However, the study primarily emphasized users' perceptions rather than the management of manual circulation services and the constraints experienced by librarians.

Zulfia (2023) examined the effectiveness of circulation services in relation to users' visiting interest at the Solok Public Library. The study found that manual circulation services were less effective because borrowing and returning activities depended on handwritten records, while other limitations involved facilities, collections, human resources, and financial support. Nevertheless, the study focused primarily on service effectiveness and visiting interest rather than the detailed relationship between manual service management, operational constraints, and librarian performance.

Sari (2024) examined librarian performance in circulation services at the West Kalimantan Provincial Library and Archives Service. The study found that librarian performance was generally good in terms of work quality and commitment, although limited skilled personnel contributed to excessive workloads and affected work quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and independence. The study focused mainly on performance indicators and strategies for improving librarian performance.

The research gap in the present study lies in the limited examination of librarian performance within a manual circulation environment in a regional public library that has already attempted to implement an automation system but has not yet achieved optimal implementation. Previous studies have tended to emphasize users' perceptions, service effectiveness, or librarian performance indicators, while less attention has been given to the interaction between manual circulation procedures, organizational management, technological limitations, human resource constraints, and librarian performance. This gap is important because a partially automated library represents a transitional condition that differs from both fully manual and fully automated service environments.

The novelty of this study lies in its contextual analysis of librarian performance within a manual circulation system operating alongside an incomplete transition toward library automation. Rather than assessing librarian performance solely as an individual characteristic, this study examines performance in relation to circulation management, operational procedures, technological limitations, available facilities, human resources, and service policies. This perspective allows librarian performance to be understood as part of a broader organizational service system rather than as an isolated outcome of individual competence.

The theoretical foundation of this study combines the library management perspective with the concept of librarian performance. The Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling framework is used to examine the management of circulation activities, while librarian performance is assessed through work quality, work quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, independence, and work commitment. Sari (2024) identifies these dimensions as relevant indicators for evaluating librarian performance in circulation services. The combination of these perspectives enables the study to connect organizational management with the actual performance of librarians working within a manual circulation environment.

The issue is also closely related to the broader purpose of library services, namely connecting users with the information resources they require. Rahayu (2014) explains that

library services function as a bridge between users and the collections or information resources they need. In circulation services, this function requires an orderly system that allows collections to circulate efficiently and remain available to users. Yati & Saman (2018) emphasize that circulation services aim to optimize collection utilization while providing convenience for users. Therefore, delays, recording errors, and administrative inefficiencies within manual circulation should not be viewed merely as technical problems because they may influence the library's ability to fulfill its service objectives.

Based on this context, the present study focuses on the performance of librarians in managing manual circulation services at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service. The study aims to describe the management of manual circulation services, identify the constraints encountered during implementation, and analyze librarian performance in providing circulation services. Specifically, the study examines how librarians conduct circulation activities manually, how circulation procedures are managed, and what factors constrain the implementation of their responsibilities. The findings are expected to contribute empirically to library and information science by providing an understanding of librarian performance within a partially automated service environment. Practically, the findings may support the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service in evaluating circulation procedures, improving human resource capacity, optimizing supporting facilities, and strengthening the implementation of library automation.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design to develop an in-depth understanding of librarian performance in managing manual circulation services at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study examined a naturally occurring service phenomenon through information obtained directly from the research setting. Jaya (2020) states that qualitative research investigates an object or phenomenon comprehensively by positioning the researcher as the primary instrument in collecting and interpreting data. The descriptive design was adopted to portray the actual conditions of circulation services without manipulating the research setting. Yuliani (2018) explains that qualitative descriptive research seeks to portray social phenomena as they naturally occur through narrative data and detailed descriptions. Accordingly, the research design was directed toward describing

the implementation of manual circulation services, service management practices, librarian performance, and the constraints encountered during service delivery.

The research design focused substantively on the relationship between manual circulation management and librarian performance within the context of a public library service institution. Service management was examined through the Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC) framework, which was used to examine how circulation services were planned, how responsibilities were distributed, how services were implemented, and how service activities and performance were monitored. Librarian performance was examined through the indicators of work quality, work quantity, timeliness, work effectiveness, independence, and work commitment. Sari (2024) identifies these dimensions as relevant indicators for assessing librarian performance in circulation services. These indicators were connected to the research focus to examine librarians' ability to conduct borrowing and returning transactions, manage circulation administration, serve users, and perform their responsibilities under predominantly manual operating conditions. The design also enabled the study to identify constraints associated with manual procedures, facilities, human resources, and administrative practices.

The study was conducted at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service, located in Kampung Gadang Village, Pariaman Timur District, on Wolter Monginsidi Street. The site was selected because it represents the institutional setting in which the circulation services under investigation are implemented. The research concentrated on circulation activities, particularly membership registration, borrowing, returning, transaction recording, and other librarian activities related to service management. The research manuscript provided does not specify the exact month, year, or duration of the fieldwork. Therefore, these temporal details should be inserted according to the actual research records before the manuscript is submitted for publication rather than being inferred or fabricated.

The study involved five informants selected through purposive sampling. The informants consisted of one head of the library division, one circulation service staff member, and three library users. Participants were selected because they possessed relevant knowledge, experience, or direct involvement with the phenomenon under investigation. The head of the library division was selected because of their understanding of library policies and overall service management. The circulation staff member was selected because of direct involvement in borrowing and returning procedures. The three library users were included

to provide first-hand accounts of their experiences when using circulation services. This composition allowed the study to incorporate managerial, operational, and user perspectives, thereby providing a broader understanding of the implementation and performance of manual circulation services.

In accordance with the qualitative research design, the researcher served as the primary research instrument and was directly involved in observing, collecting, interpreting, and analyzing field data. Supporting instruments included an interview guide, an audio recorder, and observation notes. The interview guide helped maintain consistency between the interview process and the research focus, while the audio recorder supported accurate documentation of information provided by participants. Observation sheets were used to record the physical setting and service activities observed during fieldwork. Because the study employed a qualitative design in which the researcher functioned as the principal instrument, statistical validity and reliability testing of the instruments was not conducted as would normally be required in quantitative research. Instead, the credibility of the findings was strengthened through source and methodological triangulation.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Direct observation was conducted during circulation activities, particularly membership registration, borrowing, returning, transaction recording, and other activities associated with the implementation of the manual system. Observation enabled the researcher to document service practices and constraints as they occurred in their natural setting. Interviews were subsequently conducted with the five selected informants using a semi-structured interview guide based on the research focus. Roosinda et al. (2021) describe interviews as a data collection technique in which questions are directly addressed to informants who are relevant to the research subject. The interviews explored the planning, organization, implementation, and supervision of circulation services, as well as librarians' and users' experiences with the manual circulation system.

Documentation was used to complement and corroborate information obtained through observation and interviews. The documented materials included library membership data, borrowing and returning records, membership cards, circulation service reports, and records of circulation activities. Putri & Murhayati (2025) explain that documentation can obtain information from written documents, images, photographs, and archives and can complement interviews and observations while strengthening the validity of research data.

In this study, documentary evidence was used to support the interpretation of administrative practices and circulation activities observed during fieldwork.

Data credibility was established through source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from the head of the library division, circulation staff, and library users. This comparison was intended to determine the consistency of information concerning librarian performance, circulation management, and operational constraints. Methodological triangulation was conducted by comparing interview findings with evidence obtained through observation and documentation. Malik et al. (2025) explain that triangulation in qualitative research can involve comparing information obtained from different sources, methods, or researchers to strengthen data credibility and trustworthiness. Through this procedure, findings were not based solely on statements from individual informants but were examined against information obtained through other data collection techniques.

Data analysis employed the interactive Miles and Huberman model, which was conducted systematically throughout the research process. The first stage was data reduction, involving the selection, focusing, simplification, and abstraction of information relevant to the research objectives. Data concerning librarian performance, circulation management, and constraints within the manual system were identified and organized, while information outside the research focus was excluded from the main analytical process. The second stage was data display, in which the reduced data were organized into descriptive narratives to facilitate the identification of patterns, relationships, and recurring findings. The final stage involved conclusion drawing and verification, through which the researcher interpreted emerging patterns and examined whether the conclusions were adequately supported by the empirical evidence collected in the field. The three analytical stages were treated as interconnected processes, allowing the researcher to move continuously between data collection, reduction, display, interpretation, and verification. This analytical procedure was used to produce a contextual understanding of librarian performance, manual circulation management, and the constraints affecting service implementation at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service.

RESULTS

The findings on librarians' performance in circulation services at the Department of Library and Archives of Pariaman City indicate that circulation service management has implemented the four management functions proposed by George R. Terry: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. The data were obtained through interviews with five informants consisting of a head of the library division, a circulation service staff member, and three library users. The findings demonstrate that all four management functions have been implemented, although their application remains suboptimal due to limitations in funding, human resources, and the continued dominance of manual procedures in circulation services.



Figure 1. Documentation of interviews with research informants

Figure 1. Documentation of interviews with research informants shows that the data collection process involved direct interviews with the research informants, including library management, circulation service staff, and library users. The interviews were conducted to obtain empirical information concerning circulation service management, librarians' performance, and the constraints associated with the implementation of the manual system.

In terms of planning, circulation services are planned by considering the library's current conditions, particularly limited funding, human resources, and the transitional nature of the service system from manual to digital procedures. Planning activities include the preparation of service schedules, distribution of responsibilities among librarians, temporary staff, and secretariat employees, and gradual development of digital services through the use of an Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC). The manual system is still maintained as an

alternative when digital services cannot operate optimally. The library has also planned a gradual transition toward full digitalization; however, budgetary limitations have constrained the realization of this plan. Human resource limitations are another important consideration. Circulation services are not handled exclusively by librarians but also involve temporary staff and employees from other units. From the staff perspective, however, participation in planning remains limited because most planning decisions are determined by management. This condition indicates a communication gap between managerial and operational levels. From the users' perspective, circulation services generally meet their basic needs, although improvements are still required, particularly in expanding collections, strengthening digital services, and improving borrowing administration.

Regarding organizing, responsibilities are distributed through monthly service schedules involving five librarians, temporary staff, and secretariat employees. This arrangement is intended to ensure service continuity during working days while allowing staff to assist with collection maintenance. Nevertheless, the implementation of the duty schedule is not fully consistent because staff attendance does not always correspond to the established schedule. Consequently, service responsibilities tend to be concentrated on certain staff members. Coordination between service staff and management is conducted when problems arise, including overdue materials. However, the absence of late-return penalties contributes to users' limited compliance with return deadlines. From the users' perspective, circulation rules are generally clear and easy to understand, and librarians provide adequate explanations regarding borrowing and returning procedures. Nevertheless, organizational aspects related to collection arrangement and administration remain problematic. Users still experience difficulties locating materials independently, while manual records are considered less organized and require additional time when previous borrowing data must be retrieved.

In terms of actuating, circulation services are implemented according to predetermined schedules and task assignments. Services are provided from Monday to Friday between 08:00 and 16:00, with a break from 12:00 to 13:00. Staff motivation and service consistency are supported through supervision, guidance, and coaching provided by library management. In practice, borrowing transactions are still primarily recorded manually in circulation registers, with users permitted to borrow a maximum of three books for one week. Several supporting activities, however, have adopted digital technology, including computerized data entry, digital visitor records, and collection searches through the OPAC. These findings indicate that circulation services are currently in a transitional phase between

manual and digital systems. Nevertheless, digitalization has not yet been implemented comprehensively, including in the production and distribution of library membership cards.

The users' experiences further demonstrate that librarians perform well in direct service interactions. All three users expressed positive perceptions of librarians' friendliness, politeness, willingness to assist, and ability to provide clear information. Librarians also actively assist users when they encounter difficulties locating materials. However, performance in technical and administrative aspects remains suboptimal. Manual recording of borrowing and returning transactions increases service time, particularly when staff need to retrieve previous borrowing records or process loan extensions. Thus, a distinction can be observed between the quality of interpersonal service and administrative efficiency: interpersonal performance is relatively strong, whereas technical efficiency remains constrained by the existing system.

Regarding controlling, the library conducts periodic monitoring of staff performance, collection conditions, facilities, and service activities. Supervision is conducted through monthly reviews and examination of service reports containing information on visitors, members, borrowers, and mobile library activities. Evaluation is also conducted based on established Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), with librarians involved in providing guidance to temporary staff regarding circulation procedures. In addition, a suggestion box is provided to obtain direct feedback from library users. Although monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are already available, their outcomes have not been fully implemented. Some recommendations have been realized, while others remain in the implementation process. This finding indicates that the controlling function has been established at the monitoring and evaluation level, but its effectiveness requires stronger and more consistent follow-up.

Overall, the findings reveal that librarians' performance in circulation services differs between interpersonal service and administrative performance. Librarians demonstrate positive performance in providing friendly, courteous, informative, and responsive services to users. In contrast, administrative performance remains suboptimal because of continued dependence on manual records, limited human resources, and incomplete digital implementation. These limitations are further associated with budget constraints, inconsistent duty schedules, difficulties in collection organization and retrieval, the absence of late-return sanctions, and incomplete membership card administration. The findings suggest that weaknesses in administrative performance are primarily influenced by systemic

and supporting-resource limitations rather than a lack of librarians' commitment or work ethic. Therefore, improving circulation services requires comprehensive organizational strengthening, particularly through service digitalization, human resource development, improved collection organization, consistent task allocation, and systematic follow-up of evaluation results.

DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that circulation services at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service are managed through a relatively clear managerial structure based on George R. Terry's four management functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Although all four functions have been formally implemented, their effectiveness at the operational level varies considerably. The central finding is that a gap exists between the formal availability of managerial mechanisms and their practical implementation. This gap is primarily associated with limitations in human resources, budgetary capacity, coordination, work discipline, and the continued reliance on manual circulation procedures. Consequently, librarians' performance cannot be adequately assessed solely from individual competence or work attitudes. Rather, it must be understood within the broader organizational and technological system in which circulation services are delivered.

The findings concerning planning indicate that the library has established several strategic directions for circulation services. These include monthly service scheduling, task allocation, requests for additional librarians, and a plan to achieve full service digitalization within approximately two to three years. Such practices indicate that library management has recognized both the limitations of the existing manual system and the need for gradual service transformation. This finding is consistent with Terry (2021), who conceptualizes planning as a managerial process involving the establishment of objectives, formulation of programs and strategies, and identification of resources required to achieve organizational goals. From this perspective, the planned transition toward digital services represents an important strategic response to the limitations identified in the existing circulation system.

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal that planning remains predominantly top-down. Circulation staff reported that they were not directly involved in formulating service plans and generally became aware of planning decisions through policies established by management or administrative personnel. This finding is significant because frontline staff

possess direct knowledge of operational problems and user needs. When their experiences are not sufficiently incorporated into planning, the resulting policies may not fully correspond to practical service conditions. Thus, the principal weakness in the planning function does not concern the absence of planning, but rather the limited communication and participation surrounding the planning process.

This issue is particularly evident in human-resource planning. The study found that the number of available staff remains limited and that not all personnel assigned to circulation services possess formal educational backgrounds in librarianship. Such circumstances suggest that human-resource planning has not yet fully aligned staff competencies with service requirements. This finding supports Restanti (2015), who identified limitations in human-resource competence as one of the challenges affecting library service management. In the context of the present study, the problem extends beyond individual competency because inadequate staffing and competency mismatches also affect workload distribution and organizational capacity. Human-resource planning, therefore, needs to consider not only the number of personnel available but also the relevance of their competencies to the responsibilities assigned to them.

User perspectives further demonstrate a gap between planned service development and actual user expectations. Library users reported difficulties locating materials, expressed the need for additional titles and collections, and expected faster and digitally supported borrowing services. These findings suggest that effective planning should not be evaluated merely by the existence of schedules and development programs. It should also be assessed according to the extent to which user needs are incorporated into service priorities. This finding is consistent with Zulfia (2023), who found that manually managed circulation services are affected by limitations in facilities, collections, human resources, and budgets. The present study extends this perspective by demonstrating that these limitations are also related to the extent to which users' needs are incorporated into service planning.

With regard to organizing, the library has established a formal work-allocation mechanism through monthly duty schedules involving librarians, honorary staff, and secretariat personnel. Structurally, this arrangement demonstrates an effort by management to allocate human resources according to service requirements. Terry (2021) explains organizing as the arrangement of work, relationships, and resources so that organizational members can perform their responsibilities effectively. Similarly, Baidhawi et al. (2022)

emphasize that organizing provides clarity concerning lines of authority, work division, and individual responsibilities.

However, the study indicates that the formal organizational structure is not consistently implemented. Some personnel do not consistently attend according to the assigned schedule, resulting in circulation services becoming dependent on particular staff members. Consequently, workloads are not distributed evenly. This finding illustrates a distinction between formal organizational arrangements and actual organizational practice. The problem is therefore not the absence of a work structure but the lack of mechanisms to ensure consistent implementation. The absence of firm administrative mechanisms for non-compliance further limits the effectiveness of the organizing function.

Organizing in library management also extends beyond human resources. Rista et al. (2024) argue that library management encompasses the organization of collections, facilities, and other supporting resources in addition to personnel. The present study found that collection arrangement still creates difficulties for some users, who occasionally require assistance from librarians to locate materials. Manual transaction records also make circulation administration less efficient. These findings indicate that organizational effectiveness depends on the integration of human, material, and administrative resources. An appropriate division of labor alone cannot guarantee effective service if collections, facilities, and administrative systems remain inadequately organized.

The findings concerning limited staffing and unequal workload distribution are consistent with Sari (2024), who found that shortages of skilled human resources may result in imbalanced workloads and affect the timeliness of library services. The findings also correspond with Zulfia (2023), who identified limitations in facilities and infrastructure as important constraints in manual circulation services. The present research supports these earlier findings while demonstrating that human-resource limitations and infrastructure constraints interact with one another in shaping the effectiveness of organizational arrangements.

The actuating function produced comparatively more positive findings. The study indicates that staff are directed and motivated through leadership, hierarchical supervision, communication, and professional guidance. Personnel are encouraged to provide services in a friendly, polite, responsive, and user-oriented manner. This corresponds to Terry (2021) conceptualization of actuating as the process of mobilizing organizational members to work

willingly and seriously toward shared objectives. Hayati et al. (2019) similarly emphasize that effective leadership involves providing direction, establishing communication, developing motivation, and creating a supportive working environment.

The effectiveness of actuating is particularly visible in users' perceptions of librarians' interpersonal performance. All three user informants described librarians as friendly, polite, responsive, and willing to assist users when they experienced difficulties. These findings suggest that managerial direction and staff development have been successfully translated into observable service behavior. The finding supports Alponsius Deomedes et al. (2023), who reported positive user perceptions of librarians because of their responsiveness, communication, and willingness to assist users. The similarity between the two studies indicates that interpersonal interaction represents an important dimension of librarian performance, even when the underlying service system remains constrained.

However, positive interpersonal performance has not been accompanied by equivalent technical efficiency. Borrowing and returning transactions are still largely recorded manually in circulation registers, making administrative processes relatively slow. Although computers are already used for activities such as membership registration and collection searching through the OPAC, these technologies have not been fully integrated into circulation transactions. The study therefore reveals a dual condition: librarians demonstrate positive service attitudes, while the operational system limits the speed and efficiency of their work. Purnama et al. (2020) explain that actuating concerns not only motivation and direction but also the effective and efficient implementation of work processes according to established standards. Thus, positive motivation alone cannot compensate for structural limitations embedded in the service system.

This finding is consistent with Zulfia (2023), who reported that manual circulation systems may slow service processes and reduce work efficiency. However, the present study provides an additional interpretation by showing that reliance on a manual system should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of poor librarian performance. Rather, interpersonal performance may remain strong even when technical efficiency is constrained by the system. This distinction between interpersonal and technical dimensions of performance represents an important contribution of the present study to understanding librarian performance in manually operated circulation services.

Regarding controlling, the findings indicate that the library conducts periodic monitoring and evaluation, particularly at the end of each month. Control activities include reviewing staff duties, monitoring collection conditions, examining service reports, and evaluating circulation activities. A suggestion box is also available to collect feedback from library users. These practices correspond to Terry (2021) view that controlling ensures organizational activities remain aligned with established plans and standards. Purnama et al. (2020) further explain that controlling encompasses monitoring, evaluation, identification of deviations, and corrective action.

Nevertheless, the main weakness of controlling lies in the follow-up stage. The findings show that monitoring and problem identification are stronger than corrective action. Several issues identified during evaluation, including aspects of administrative procedures and SOP implementation, have not been fully resolved. This indicates that evaluation by itself does not necessarily improve service quality. The effectiveness of controlling depends on an organization's capacity to translate evaluation findings into concrete, documented, and sustainable corrective measures.

The absence of late-return penalties also demonstrates that the effectiveness of corrective action is influenced by institutional authority. The policy concerning the non-implementation of fines is related to the policy of the Pariaman municipal government, which limits the library's authority to independently impose sanctions. This finding highlights the influence of external policy conditions on internal management effectiveness. Melianti & Priyadi (2021) indicate that fines or sanctions may function as mechanisms for encouraging compliance with library borrowing regulations. However, in the present context, the library's ability to apply such a mechanism is constrained by government policy. Accordingly, strengthening the controlling function requires alternative compliance mechanisms that remain consistent with existing institutional authority and regulations.

The findings also indicate that controlling has not fully resolved problems identified within the other management functions. Human-resource limitations and inconsistent implementation of duty schedules, for example, remain evident despite periodic monitoring. This indicates that management functions are interdependent rather than sequentially isolated. Problems emerging during planning and organizing can persist if controlling does not produce effective corrective measures.

In comparison with previous research, the findings reveal a consistent pattern while also offering a contextual extension. Zulfia (2023) and Sari (2024) both emphasize the importance of human resources, facilities, and financial resources in supporting circulation services. The present study supports these findings but extends them through the POAC framework by demonstrating how resource constraints influence different management functions in distinct ways. Likewise, the positive perceptions of librarian performance reported by Alponsius Deomedes et al. (2023) are reinforced by the present findings, particularly regarding librarians' friendliness, responsiveness, and communication. However, this study adds that positive interpersonal performance may coexist with limited technical efficiency when the organizational system remains predominantly manual.

Theoretically, the findings reinforce the relevance of George R. Terry's management framework for analyzing library service management. The four POAC functions operate as an interconnected managerial system rather than as independent components. Limited participation in planning can affect organizing; weaknesses in organizing can increase workload imbalances; and inadequate systems can constrain the outcomes of actuating. Meanwhile, insufficient corrective action within controlling may allow previously identified problems to persist. This suggests that improving librarian performance requires integrated managerial intervention rather than isolated improvements in individual staff motivation or behavior.

The practical implications are equally important. Library management needs to increase frontline staff participation in planning, align staff competencies with assigned responsibilities, improve adherence to work schedules, strengthen internal coordination, and accelerate the integration of digital technologies into circulation transactions. Evaluation findings should be transformed into documented action plans rather than remaining limited to routine monitoring. For librarians, professional development needs to be accompanied by improvements in the systems within which they work. At the policy level, support for adequate staffing, budget allocation, infrastructure, and digital transformation is essential for strengthening circulation services in regional public libraries.

The study nevertheless has several limitations. First, it employed a qualitative approach with five informants consisting of a head of the library division, a circulation staff member, and three library users. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted as a contextual account of circulation management at the research site rather than as statistically

generalizable evidence applicable to all public libraries. Second, the study relied on interviews, observations, and documentation, meaning that the interpretation of findings was dependent on the information accessible through the selected informants and the conditions observed during the research period. Third, the study specifically examined circulation services operating predominantly through a manual system. Therefore, its findings should be applied cautiously to libraries where circulation processes have already been fully integrated through digital systems.

Despite these limitations, the principal contribution of the study lies in demonstrating that librarian performance in manual circulation services is shaped by the interaction between human resources, organizational management, and service technology. Librarians at the research site demonstrate strong interpersonal performance, but their technical effectiveness is constrained by manual procedures and limited supporting resources. Therefore, improving circulation service performance cannot depend exclusively on staff training, supervision, or motivation. It requires simultaneous improvements in planning, work organization, digital system integration, and controlling mechanisms accompanied by concrete corrective action. This systemic perspective distinguishes the present study from a purely individual assessment of librarian performance and emphasizes that the optimization of circulation services is fundamentally a managerial and organizational issue.

CONCLUSION

This study on Librarian Performance in Circulation Services: An Examination of Management Practices and Challenges in a Manual System at the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service demonstrates that circulation services have incorporated the four management functions proposed by George R. Terry—planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling—although their implementation remains less than optimal. Planning is reflected in the development of service schedules, task allocation, human resource planning, and the institution's long-term direction toward service digitalization. Organizing is implemented through the distribution of responsibilities among librarians, honorary staff, and administrative personnel. Actuating is demonstrated through leadership, guidance, staff development, communication, and efforts to encourage positive service behavior. Controlling is conducted through periodic evaluations, monitoring of staff responsibilities

and collection conditions, implementation of service procedures, and the use of user feedback as an evaluation input. Nevertheless, gaps remain between formal management arrangements and their operational implementation, particularly in communicating plans to frontline staff, ensuring equitable workload distribution, maintaining staff attendance according to schedules, and translating evaluation findings into consistent corrective actions.

The findings further indicate that the challenges affecting circulation services cannot be attributed solely to individual librarian performance but are closely associated with organizational and system-level conditions. Limited financial resources, insufficient numbers and competencies of human resources, inconsistent implementation of staff schedules, manual transaction recording, suboptimal collection arrangement, limitations in information retrieval, and incomplete membership administration collectively constrain service effectiveness. At the same time, librarian performance demonstrates a dual character. In terms of interpersonal service, librarians are perceived positively by users because they are courteous, responsive, approachable, and willing to assist users in meeting their information needs. However, their technical and administrative performance remains constrained by the manual circulation system, which slows borrowing and returning procedures and limits the efficiency of administrative work. These findings therefore address the research focus by demonstrating that librarian performance should not be evaluated independently of the managerial structures and service systems within which librarians perform their duties.

Theoretically, this study contributes to library management research by demonstrating the applicability of George R. Terry's POAC framework for examining circulation service management in a regional public library while highlighting the interconnected relationship between managerial functions and librarian performance. Practically, the findings provide an empirical basis for the Pariaman City Library and Archives Service to strengthen internal communication, improve workload distribution, enhance supervision, and ensure systematic follow-up of evaluation results. Accelerating the digitalization of circulation transactions, improving collection organization and OPAC utilization, and strengthening the availability of competent librarians are important measures for improving service effectiveness. Future research may extend the investigation to other library services, such as reference or collection development, or employ quantitative approaches to measure more systematically the relationship between librarian performance, service quality, and user satisfaction.

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