

Digital-era correspondence management: a case study at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

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Abstrak

Perkembangan teknologi digital berdampak pada pemanfaatan layanan persuratan di instansi pemerintah, termasuk UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis manajemen persuratan era digital pada UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, dengan diwakili Fakultas Dirasat Islamiyah, Fakultas Dakwah dan Ilmu Komunikasi, dan Subbagian Tata Usaha dan Rumah Tangga Bagian Umum Biro Administrasi Umum dan Kepegawaian. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus, melibatkan pegawai yang mengelola persuratan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Data dianalisis menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman yang meliputi pengumpulan, reduksi, penyajian, serta penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa alur surat masuk dan keluar pada UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta telah sesuai dengan Keputusan Menteri Agama Nomor 9 Tahun 2016 tentang Pedoman Tata Naskah Dinas, dengan perbedaan pada tingkat pemanfaatan layanan digital di tiap unit kerja. Rekomendasi penelitian menekankan perlunya sistem persuratan digital yang terintegrasi, penerapan disposisi online, tanda tangan elektronik, serta pengiriman surat resmi internal untuk mendukung efektivitas, efisiensi, dan penerapan paperless office.

Kata kunci : digitalisasi; paperless office; persuratan; tata naskah dinas

Abstract

The advancement of digital technology has influenced the utilization of correspondence services in government institutions, including UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. This study aims to analyze digital-era correspondence management at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, represented by the Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah, the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences, and the Subdivision of Administration and Household Affairs, Bureau of General Administration and Personnel. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method, involving staff directly managing correspondence through interviews, observations, and document analysis. Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's model, including data collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the flow of incoming and outgoing letters at UIN Syarif

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Citation in APA style: Noviyanto, T.S.H., & Bayina, A.P. (2026). Digital-era correspondence management: a case study at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. *Jurnal Informasi dan Komunikasi Administrasi Perkantoran*, 10(2), 167-181. <https://dx.doi.org/10.20961/jikap.v10i2.112173>

Hidayatullah Jakarta complies with the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 2016 concerning Guidelines for Official Correspondence, with variations in the extent of digital service utilization across units. The study recommends the establishment of an integrated digital correspondence system, the adoption of online disposition, electronic signatures, and official internal letter delivery to enhance effectiveness, efficiency, and the implementation of a paperless office.

Keywords: digitalization; correspondence administration; official document management; paperless office

Received December 06, 2025; Revised January 21, 2026; Accepted February 28, 2026; Published Online March 02, 2026

<https://dx.doi.org/10.20961/jikap.v10i2.112173>

Introduction

The proliferation of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the nature of communication and interaction within and across organizations. Social media platforms and electronic mail have become ubiquitous channels for organizational communication, a trend that has accelerated significantly across both private and public sectors (Darmansah et al., 2024a). Within governmental organizations, the momentum toward digital communication intensified considerably following the COVID-19 pandemic (Novchi et al., 2022), as the exigencies of remote work and the broader imperative of digital transformation compelled institutions to adopt information technology-based communication platforms on an unprecedented scale (Senja et al., 2025). These dynamics have, in turn, exerted sustained pressure on governments to reform administrative systems and to leverage digital services more strategically in pursuit of enhanced public governance (Fauziah et al., 2023; Mulyani et al., 2023).

Among the administrative functions most profoundly affected by digital transformation is organizational correspondence management. Official letters remain an indispensable medium for communicating policy decisions, directives, and formal information within government institutions. Beyond their informational function, official letters serve as authentic evidentiary records, organizational barometers, and institutional representatives constituting the formal basis for administrative decision-making. Effective correspondence management, encompassing the reception, recording, distribution, and control of documents, is widely recognized as a strategic enabler of organizational transparency, efficiency, and accountability (García et al., 2025; Darmansah et al., 2024b). Poor handling of official correspondence not only undermines organizational reputation but can also reflect negatively on the broader government apparatus, as correspondence addressed to a public institution is, in essence, a proxy for the state's administrative credibility (Mahmoudi & Najim, 2024).

The global shift toward digital correspondence systems in higher education institutions underscores the strategic significance of this transformation. Research at the National Defence University of Malaysia demonstrates that the adoption of paperless systems not only reduces dependence on physical documents but also enhances archival security, operational efficiency, and cost containment outcomes that are substantially mediated by organizational support, particularly in the domains of information technology, management engagement, and collegial reinforcement (Mohamed et al., 2020). Parallel findings from Saudi Arabian universities indicate that e-administration significantly elevates the quality of educational services (Assiri, 2023). More broadly, digital transformation in document management and organizational administration has been shown to accelerate work processes, sustain service continuity, and strengthen coordination and accountability across public sector contexts (Shao et al., 2023). These converging findings affirm

that the digitalization of correspondence has become a global standard in modern administrative practice.

UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, a state Islamic university under the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2013), has pursued ongoing digital innovation across its administrative functions. The university has launched the Electronic Integrated Management System for Islamic Higher Education (E-Semesta; <https://e-semesta.uinjkt.ac.id/>), intended to serve as an integrating platform for existing digital systems and to represent an effective transformation of service delivery through digital infrastructure (Lisnawati et al., 2023). Notwithstanding these efforts, field-level implementation reveals that full digital integration of correspondence management remains an unresolved challenge. Correspondence handling currently operates through a hybrid of conventional and digital modalities, relying on legacy systems not yet fully superseded by newer platforms.

For instance, the Subdivision of Administration and Household Affairs of the Bureau of General Administration and Personnel continues to receive physical letters from faculties, which are subsequently scanned for archiving and recorded through the Academic Information System (AIS; <https://ais.uinjkt.ac.id/>). This system functions as the platform for recording and distributing disposition instructions from institutional leadership to responsible staff. The heterogeneity of work units across UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta has further produced a multiplicity of unit-specific correspondence procedures, which have developed organically and without centralized coordination, resulting in considerable variation in correspondence management practices across the institution.

Prior research on digital correspondence management in government institutions has predominantly examined discrete aspects of technology implementation such as the adoption of e-office applications, archival digitalization, or the effectiveness of electronic correspondence systems in enhancing administrative efficiency. However, much of this literature treats technology as the primary unit of analysis and does not systematically explore variations in digital correspondence practices across multiple work units within a single institution. This gap is particularly salient in the context of state Islamic universities, which present distinctive organizational, regulatory, and cultural characteristics. The present study aims to address this gap by conducting an in-depth case study of digital correspondence management at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, with the specific objectives of: (1) mapping the flow of incoming and outgoing mail management across representative work units; (2) assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of digital correspondence services; and (3) identifying the principal challenges confronting digital correspondence management in this institutional context.

Correspondence management is defined as the systematic set of activities involved in handling official letters in accordance with established procedures and organizational norms. This process encompasses the recording of incoming mail, the conduct of official correspondence, the registration of outgoing mail, letter delivery, and archival storage (Barthos, 2018). Within the public sector, the management of official correspondence assumes particular significance, as the handling of a letter addressed to a government institution is tantamount to managing a portion of governmental responsibilities. Meticulous correspondence management thus reflects organizational integrity and reinforces public confidence in state institutions.

The stages of incoming mail management, as prescribed by the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 2016 on Guidelines for Official Correspondence Administration, comprise: (1) Reception; (2) Recording; (3) Assessment; (4) Sorting; (5) Processing; and (6) Storage. The corresponding stages for outgoing mail management are: (1) Processing; (2) Recording; (3) Duplication; (4) Delivery and Security; and (5) Storage (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2016). These regulatory stages constitute the normative framework against which correspondence practices at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta are evaluated in the present study.

Digitalization represents a fundamentally new set of capabilities that is reshaping business processes, governmental functions, and everyday organizational life. In the public sector, information technology has emerged as a principal mechanism for improving service quality, enhancing accessibility, and enabling more agile and cost-effective service delivery (Alamsyah et al., 2025). E-government initiatives, broadly understood as the application of digital technologies to

governmental functions, have been extensively documented as catalysts for simplifying bureaucratic processes, reducing costs, accelerating service delivery, and ultimately improving citizen-facing outcomes (Tambunan & Dompok, 2025).

Within organizations, effective Document Management Systems (DMS) support transparency in administrative processes and contribute to enhanced organizational efficiency and decision-making effectiveness (Zabukovšek et al., 2023). The success of digital correspondence systems, however, is not reducible to technology alone; it is substantially contingent on human resource capacity, organizational culture, and policy support. Research consistently demonstrates that sustainable digital service transformation requires ongoing investment in human resources through training, clear accountability structures, and leadership commitment rather than relying solely on the availability of technological infrastructure (Waruwu et al., 2025).

Research Methods

This study was conducted at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, with research sites selected on the basis of their relative autonomy in developing digital correspondence services. The selected units were: (1) the Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah; (2) the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences; and (3) the Subdivision of Administration and Household Affairs of the Bureau of General Administration and Personnel. Data collection was conducted from July through September 2025, with field interviews and observations carried out during August 2025 and document analysis completed in September 2025. A qualitative research design employing a case study method was adopted, consistent with the epistemological orientation of building theoretical propositions grounded in real-world phenomena and events as they unfold in natural settings (Moleong, 2017). This approach was selected for its capacity to yield contextually rich, in-depth understanding of complex administrative practices across multiple organizational units.

Participants were recruited through purposive sampling, selecting individuals with direct knowledge, practical experience, and operational responsibility for correspondence management, and who were accessible to the research team (Sugiyono, 2022). Inclusion criteria required that participants be Civil State Apparatus (ASN) occupying operational or functional positions with direct involvement in correspondence services. Structural officials without direct operational functions were excluded. A total of four informants participated: two ASN Operational Service Managers (Jabatan Pelaksana) from the Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah; one ASN First-Level Functional Archivist (Arsiparis Ahli Pertama) from the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences; and one ASN First-Level Functional Archivist from the Subdivision of Administration and Household Affairs, Bureau of General Administration and Personnel.

Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews and structured observations. Interviews were designed to elicit participants' experiences across the stages of correspondence management covering mail flow, the effectiveness and efficiency of digital services, and challenges in digital correspondence management. Interview guides for incoming and outgoing mail, respectively, are presented in Table 1 and Table 2. Observations focused on the actual processes of receiving, recording, routing for disposition, and dispatching official correspondence, using standardized observation sheets to facilitate comparison with interview data. Secondary data were obtained through document analysis of standard operating procedures (SOPs), incoming and outgoing mail archives, and documentation of digital correspondence services in use, serving to corroborate and contextualize findings from interviews and observations. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, encompassing data collection, reduction (selecting, focusing, and condensing data using NVivo 12), data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification.

Data validity was ensured through triangulation of both techniques and sources (Sugiyono, 2022). Technical triangulation involved cross-referencing findings from interviews, observations, and document analysis. Source triangulation involved comparing information across informants from different work units, thereby ensuring the consistency and credibility of the data. It is acknowledged that this study is subject to methodological limitations. First, the research encompassed only those work units that had independently developed digital correspondence services, and therefore does not fully represent all units at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Second,

the qualitative case study design limits the generalizability of the findings beyond the immediate research context. Nonetheless, the study provides detailed, contextually grounded insights into digital correspondence management practices that can serve as a substantive reference for institutional development within Islamic state universities.

Table 1
Interview Guide for Incoming Mail Management

Stage (Incoming Mail)	Interview Guide (Based on Sub-Research Questions)		
	Mail Management Flow	Effectiveness and Efficiency of Digital Services	Digital Management Challenges
Reception	Incoming mail reception process	Digital services used for receiving incoming mail	Obstacles in using digital services for incoming mail reception
Recording	Recording of incoming mail	Integration of incoming mail recording in the mail agenda with disposition sheets	Recording workload
Assessment	Assessment of incoming mail	Accuracy in determining the routing of incoming mail	Feature limitations
Sorting	Delivery of incoming mail based on disposition	Disposition tracking	Disposition delays
Processing	Follow-up of incoming mail	Processing progress tracking	Processing delays
Storage	Storage and filing of incoming mail	Digital archive and retrieval	Obstacles in digital archive management

Consistent with the incoming mail protocol, interviews regarding outgoing mail management were also conducted across each stage, structured by the sub-research questions. The interview guide for outgoing mail is presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Interview Guide for Outgoing Mail Management

Stage (Outgoing Mail)	Interview Guide (Based on Sub-Research Questions)		
	Mail Management Flow	Effectiveness and Efficiency of Digital Services	Digital Management Challenges
Processing	Preparation of outgoing mail drafts	Digital services used for drafting outgoing mail	Obstacles in using digital services for mail preparation
Recording	Recording of outgoing mail	Integration of signed letters with the outgoing mail agenda	Obstacles in recording outgoing mail
Duplication	Duplication after signing	Duplication of electronically signed letters	Regulations or work habits not yet fully digital
Delivery and Security Storage	Packaging and delivery of mail Storage and filing of outgoing mail	Tracking of dispatched letters Digital archive and retrieval	Absence of tracking features for sent mail Difficulty retrieving archives; irregular uploading to digital services

Results and Discussion

Research result

Based on the interviews and observations conducted at the three representative work units of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, a comprehensive picture of the correspondence management flow emerged. The findings reveal distinct characteristics and practices in how each unit handles both incoming and outgoing mail, reflecting the heterogeneous digital environment of the institution. While all units broadly adhere to the normative stages prescribed by the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 9 of 2016, significant variation was observed in the extent and nature of digital service utilization. A summary of incoming mail management across the three units is presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Summary of Incoming Mail Management Across Representative Work Units

Stage (Incoming Mail)	Representative Work Units		
	Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah	Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences	Rectorate – Subdivision of Administration and Household Affairs, AUK Bureau
Reception	-Physical (in person) -Digital via WhatsApp	- Physical (in person) - Digital via WhatsApp	- Physical (in person) - Digital via WhatsApp/Email
Recording	-Incoming mail recorded in a Spreadsheet, as used by other work units at UIN	- Incoming mail recorded in SAPSIPDAKOM	- Incoming mail recorded in AIS
Assessment	-Physical letters with disposition sheets forwarded to the Head/relevant official	- Physical letters with disposition sheets forwarded to the Head/relevant official	- Physical letters with disposition sheets forwarded to the Head/relevant official
Sorting	-After manual disposition, letters are forwarded to the next official or directly to the responsible employee	- After manual disposition, entries are re-input into SAPSIPDAKOM - No automatic notification feature for pending dispositions	- Disposition notes re- entered into AIS by the mail handler - No automatic notification feature for pending dispositions
Processing	-Letters acted upon by the responsible employee, without digital tracking	- Letters acted upon by the responsible employee; digitally tracked in SAPSIPDAKOM - No automatic notification for unprocessed mail	- Letters acted upon by the responsible employee; digitally tracked in AIS - No automatic notification for unprocessed mail
Storage	- Physical archives stored by field - Digital archives stored in Drive.	- Physical archives stored by subject classification - Digital archives stored in SAPSIPDAKOM.	- Physical archives scattered across responsible employees - Digital archives stored on local computers due to limited AIS storage capacity

A summary of outgoing mail management across the three representative work units is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4
Summary of Outgoing Mail Management Across Representative Work Units

Stage (Outgoing Mail)	Representative Work Units		
	Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah	Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences	Rectorate – Subdivision of Administration and Household Affairs, AUK Bureau
Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outgoing mail drafted based on head's disposition - Draft prepared using Microsoft Word; student letters (Active Status, Good Conduct, Parent, Lost Student ID) processed via El Afdi service (https://s.id/elafdi) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outgoing mail drafted based on head's disposition - Draft prepared using Microsoft Word; student/faculty requests processed via SIMPERDAKOM with standardized templates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outgoing mail drafted based on head's disposition - Draft prepared using Microsoft Word, then signed manually or digitally via the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Electronic Signature (TTE Kemenag) service
Recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter signed, assigned a number, and recorded in a spreadsheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter signed, assigned a number, and recorded in SAPSIPDAKOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter signed and recorded in SITUS - For TTE letters, the number is assigned prior to electronic signing
Duplication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performed when needed for internal distribution or archiving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performed when needed for internal distribution or archiving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performed when needed for internal distribution or archiving
Delivery and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal mail delivered physically in folders between units - External mail more often delivered by faculty driver - Digital delivery predominantly via WhatsApp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal mail delivered physically in folders between units - External mail via postal service, online transport, as required - Digital delivery predominantly via WhatsApp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal mail delivered physically in folders between units - External mail more often delivered by staff or via postal service - Digital delivery predominantly via WhatsApp
Storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical archives stored by responsible employee by field - Digital archives stored in Drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical archives stored by subject classification - Digital archives stored in SAPSIPDAKOM and SIMPERDAKOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical archives stored by responsible employee by field - Digital archives stored in SITUS

Based on the summaries of incoming and outgoing mail management across the three work units, the interconnections among the stages of the correspondence process can be identified,

spanning from the reception or drafting of letters, through recording, processing, to archival storage. These relationships are mapped in the project flow chart presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Project map of the incoming and outgoing mail flow at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

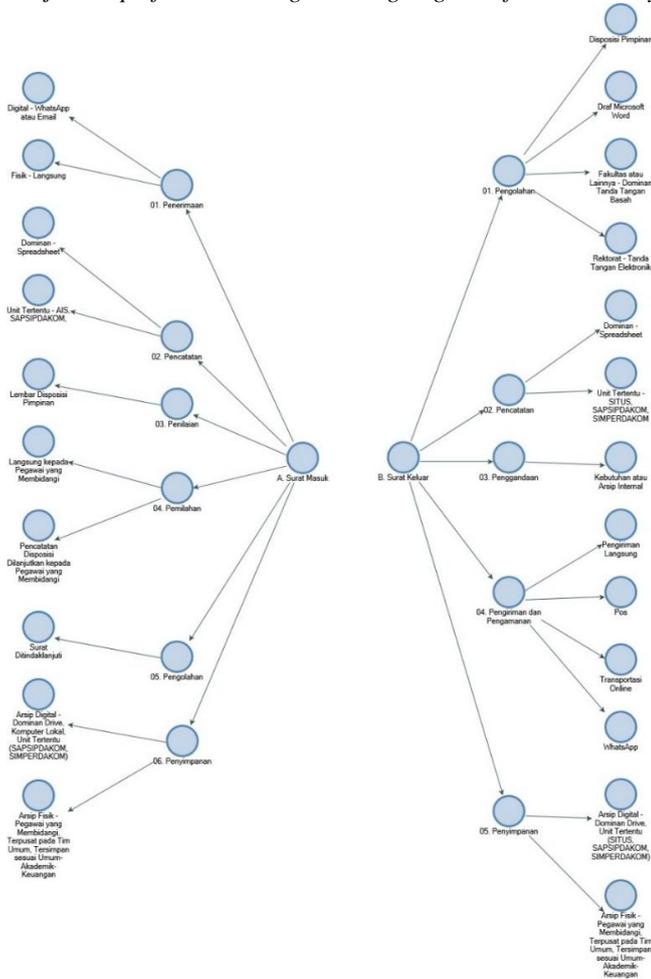


Table 5

Digital Services Supporting the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Incoming Mail Management

Digital Service Finding (Incoming Mail)	Number of Supporting Quotations	
	Efficiency	Effectiveness
AIS	2	3
Drive	0	2
Email	0	2
SAPSIPDAKOM	2	9
SIMPERDAKOM	1	2
Spreadsheet	6	1
WhatsApp	4	7

The digital services deployed across the three work units contribute meaningfully to the efficiency and effectiveness of correspondence management. Efficiency, in this context, refers to the capacity to deliver services without wasting time, effort, or financial resources, while

effectiveness denotes the degree to which services achieve their intended organizational objectives. Themes and patterns derived from the interview data, corroborated by observations and analyzed using NVivo 12, are presented for incoming and outgoing mail in Table 5 and Table 6, respectively.

As shown in Table 5, Spreadsheet emerged as the most dominant service in the Efficiency dimension, primarily because it is easy to use and cost-free. WhatsApp followed as the second most efficient service, enabling rapid receipt and communication of incoming mail. In the Effectiveness dimension, SAPSIPDAKOM recorded the highest frequency of supporting quotations, followed by WhatsApp and AIS, indicating that these services were most instrumental in achieving correspondence management objectives. Services such as SIMPERDAKOM, Drive, and Email contributed more modestly to both dimensions: Email supported mail reception, and Drive supported archiving, but neither generated significant efficiency gains. Overall, SAPSIPDAKOM, AIS, and SIMPERDAKOM tended to be rated more highly for effectiveness, while Spreadsheet and WhatsApp were perceived as more efficient, with WhatsApp notable for balancing both dimensions.

Table 6
Digital Services Supporting the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Outgoing Mail Management

Digital Service Finding (Outgoing Mail)	Number of Supporting Quotations	
	Efficiency	Effectiveness
Drive	0	3
El Afdi	1	1
SAPSIPDAKOM	0	3
SIMPERDAKOM	3	3
SITUS	2	3
Spreadsheet	0	3
TTE Kemenag	4	1
WhatsApp	7	7

As demonstrated in Table 6, WhatsApp dominated both the Efficiency and Effectiveness dimensions of outgoing mail management, enabling rapid, cost-effective, and direct distribution to intended recipients. TTE Kemenag (electronic signature service) and SIMPERDAKOM also featured prominently in the Efficiency dimension, as they substantially accelerate the signing process. Drive, SAPSIPDAKOM, SIMPERDAKOM, SITUS, and Spreadsheet were more strongly represented in the Effectiveness dimension, reflecting their role in ensuring systematic recording and archiving of outgoing correspondence. Taken together, TTE Kemenag enabling rapid electronic signing and WhatsApp enabling direct and immediate delivery emerged as the most efficient services, while simultaneously contributing to effective mail delivery. The centrality of WhatsApp as a digital service across both incoming and outgoing correspondence management is further illustrated in the word tree visualization generated from NVivo 12 analysis, presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Word tree depicting WhatsApp as a digital service widely perceived to support efficiency and effectiveness across correspondence management stages at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

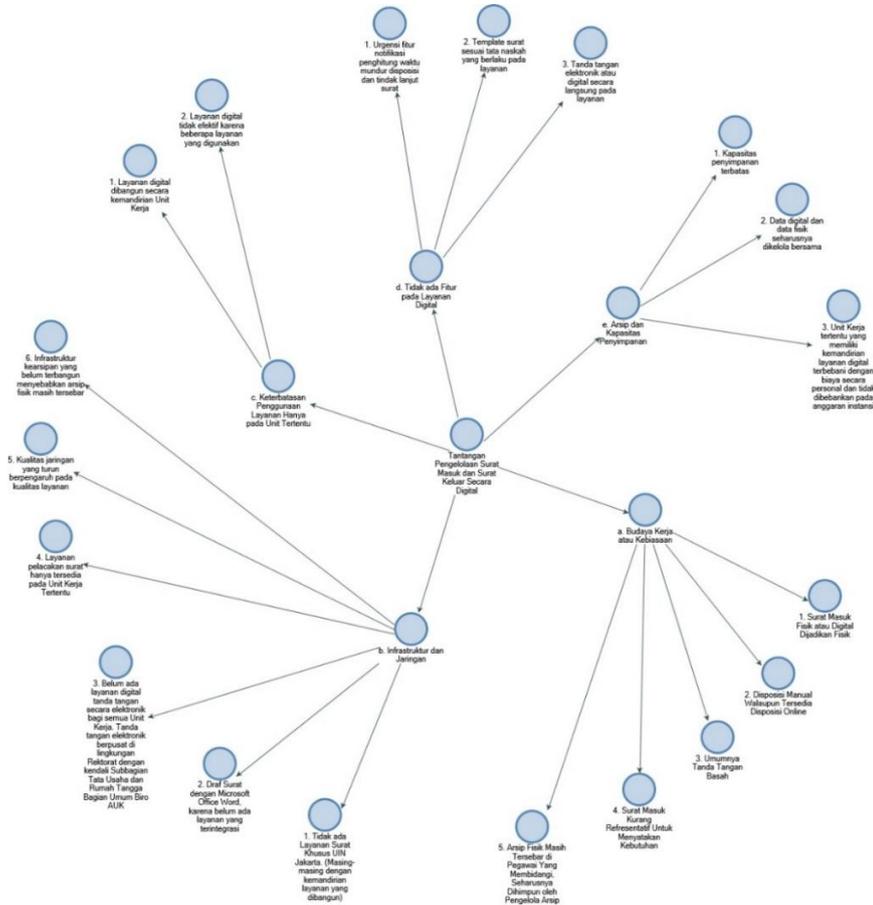
Figure 2

Word tree depicting WhatsApp as a digital service widely perceived to support efficiency and effectiveness across correspondence management stages at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta



Based on the analysis of interview findings supported by observations, five principal categories of challenges in digital correspondence management were identified at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. These challenges are mapped in the project chart presented in Figure 3 and comprise: (1) work culture and institutional habits; (2) infrastructure and network limitations; (3) restricted digital service access limited to specific units; (4) absence of required features in existing digital platforms; and (5) archival and storage capacity constraints.

Figure 3
Project map of challenges encountered in digital incoming and outgoing mail management at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta



Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that correspondence management at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta reflects a diverse and fragmented landscape of digital practices across work units. The Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah operates through relatively basic tools primarily a spreadsheet supplemented by Google Drive while the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences has developed institutional applications (SAPSIPDAKOM and SIMPERDAKOM) for recording and archiving. At the rectorate level, the Subdivision of Administration and Household Affairs of the AUK Bureau integrates AIS, SITUS, and TTE Kemenag. Despite this variation, the fundamental stages of correspondence management remain consistent across all units, in accordance with the provisions of the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 9 of 2016. Differences pertain primarily to the extent to which digital tools are mobilized within each stage of the management process.

In the reception stage, all three units receive both physical and digital correspondence. At the recording stage, however, variation is more pronounced. The Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah relies on a simple spreadsheet linked to Drive a practice typical of most work units across UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta while the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences employs SAPSIPDAKOM, and the rectorate uses AIS. This variation resonates with findings by Andani et al. (2023), who observed that correspondence management in Indonesian government institutions is frequently not fully digitalized, and that standardization of administrative correspondence services

constitutes a critical institutional priority. Within UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, the coexistence of multiple, non-integrated recording systems across units underscores the urgency of developing a unified digital infrastructure that enables cross-unit visibility and measurability of correspondence flows.

At the assessment stage, leadership across all units continues to favor manual disposition, despite the availability of online disposition features in SAPSIPDAKOM and AIS. This behavioral pattern reflects entrenched institutional habits that have not yet yielded to available digital affordances. As Josilina and Prathama (2024) demonstrated, the adoption of digital correspondence innovations that facilitate user-friendly monitoring of disposition flows is a prerequisite for users to progressively shift away from manual practices. The persistence of manual disposition, even in the presence of functional digital alternatives, signals a need for targeted interventions in change management and digital culture development.

The sorting and processing stages reveal a broadly consistent pattern across units: letters are routed from the disposition process to the relevant official or directly to the responsible staff member. Tambunan and Dompok (2025) argue that e-government platforms should be understood not merely as administrative instruments but as enablers of a simplified, cost-effective, and accelerated bureaucratic culture. The selective digital tracking visible in SAPSIPDAKOM and AIS at two of the three units represents an important step in this direction, though the absence of automatic notification features continues to hamper timely processing.

Storage practices exhibit the most pronounced inter-unit variation. The Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah relies on Drive for digital archiving, the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences archives digitally within SAPSIPDAKOM under subject classification, while the rectorate is constrained by AIS storage limitations, resulting in digital archives being maintained on local computers and physical archives remaining decentralized across individual staff members. These conditions reflect broader structural challenges in institutional archiving that exceed the capacity of any individual unit to resolve independently.

Outgoing mail management displays a similarly varied picture. All units draft letters based on leadership disposition using Microsoft Word. The Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah supplements this with the El Afdi service for student-related correspondence, while the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences deploys SIMPERDAKOM with standardized templates for student and faculty requests, and the rectorate has begun utilizing TTE Kemenag for digital signing. Recording of outgoing mail follows unit-specific practices, with the Faculty of Dirasat Islamiyah using spreadsheets, the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences using SAPSIPDAKOM, and the rectorate using SITUS. Despite the digital recording systems in place, the physical delivery of official letters particularly to the rectorate via physical folders remains the norm across all units, a practice that highlights the persistent gap between the availability of digital channels and their institutionalization in formal correspondence protocols.

WhatsApp occupies a distinctive position in the digital correspondence ecosystem of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. It is the only digital service used universally across all work units and is consistently perceived as both efficient and effective. As Informant 1 noted: "For the most part, people still rely on the free spreadsheet. It's more economical" (Informant 1, Interview 01/FDI/08/2025, August 8, 2025). This finding aligns with Yahya and Dirgantara (2022), who documented WhatsApp's widespread adoption as an organizational communication tool in Indonesian government offices, attributing its prevalence to its speed, directness, and accessibility for inter-staff communication. Despite being an informal channel, WhatsApp functions as a de facto official communication medium, with users maintaining records and archives of correspondence transmitted through the platform.

The principal challenges identified in this study work culture, infrastructural limitations, restricted access, absent digital features, and storage capacity are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. The predominance of paper-based practices in a digitally enabled environment is consistent with Zabukovšek et al.'s (2023) finding that Document Management System implementation is frequently underutilized because users persist in printing documents even when digital versions are available. Effective DMS implementation demands not only technological optimization but also deliberate transformation of staff work habits. Furthermore, the finding that digital services are primarily oriented toward recording and tracking rather than providing a

comprehensive, integrated correspondence management experience reflects a broader gap between digital availability and genuine operational integration. This gap is consistent with Waruwu et al.'s (2025) conclusion that successful digital public service transformation is contingent on sustained investment in human resource development and institutional accountability, not solely on the deployment of technology. Consistent and institutionally mandated utilization of available services across all work units would substantially enhance the orderliness and effectiveness of digital correspondence management at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that correspondence management at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta in the digital era is formally aligned with the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 9 of 2016, governing both incoming and outgoing mail procedures. Digital services have been integrated into institutional correspondence practices, with WhatsApp as the most pervasive tool, supported by a range of platform-specific systems including Spreadsheet, SAPSIPDAKOM, SIMPERDAKOM, SITUS, and TTE Kemenag deployed variably across units. However, implementation remains partial, fragmented, and insufficiently integrated at the institutional level. The primary challenges identified work culture and behavioral inertia, infrastructural deficiencies, limited digital platform features, and paper-dominant habits collectively indicate that digital correspondence management at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta has not yet reached its full operational potential. These findings underscore the need for strengthened institutional policy, systemic integration of digital correspondence infrastructure, and centralized coordination to achieve more effective and efficient practice. Based on these findings, this study recommends the establishment of a fully integrated digital correspondence system across UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, incorporating features for online disposition, electronic signatures, and adequate storage capacity. Beyond technology provision, policy commitment and leadership support in cultivating a paperless office work culture are identified as indispensable for optimizing digital correspondence management. This study contributes to theoretical understandings of digital correspondence management by affirming that the effectiveness of technology adoption is conditioned by system integration, organizational cultural readiness, and institutional policy support. These findings confirm that digital correspondence management constitutes a socio-technical system in which human and organizational dimensions are as consequential as the technologies deployed. This study is subject to limitations, including its focus on a subset of work units that had independently developed digital correspondence services, and the inherent constraints on generalizability associated with qualitative case study methodology. Additionally, the study did not quantitatively measure the efficiency and effectiveness gains attributable to specific digital services. Future research is therefore encouraged to adopt quantitative approaches to evaluate the performance of digital correspondence systems more objectively, in support of sustainable paperless office implementation.

Acknowledgment

This research was funded by a 2025 grant from the Research and Publication Center of the Research and Community Service Institute (LP2M) of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

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