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Library Management as a Learning Resource at State Vocational School 7 Makassar

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ABSTRACT

A library is a place where students can access reading and information resources and is a crucial component and indicator of institutional quality, including in schools. School libraries should meet standards that support students' learning needs and comply with curriculum requirements, making effective library management essential. This study aims to analyze library management as a learning resource at SMK Negeri 7 Makassar. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and document analysis, and were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that: (1) Planning has been implemented comprehensively by involving stakeholders and including short- and long-term plans; (2) Organizing still faces obstacles related to the institutional structure and limited professional human resources in information technology; (3) Directing has been implemented through effective leadership and integration with the learning process, although improvements are needed in accessibility; and (4) Controlling is effective through continuous evaluation and a structured monitoring system. Overall, library management at SMK Negeri 7 Makassar has demonstrated its function as a learning resource, although improvements are needed, particularly in organizational structure and service accessibility.

Keywords: library management; school library; learning resources

INTRODUCTION

The library plays an important role in supporting the learning process, especially for students. A library is a facility that serves as a center for information and learning resources for students and staff in a school environment. (Bernier, 2019; Korobili-Xantinidou et al., 2003; Nasaruddin et al., 2024) School libraries play a vital role as a mandatory component in supporting student learning activities. As centers of learning, libraries provide collections relevant to teachers' instructional materials and the applicable curriculum. In line with this view, Hamzah (Nur & Fritantus, 2021; Suleiman et al., 2018; Tsekea et al., 2026) defines a library as "a place where a number of literature (books) are gathered for students who thirst for knowledge." Thus, the role of libraries is not limited to providing reading materials but also extends to supporting an information-rich and inspiring learning environment. The importance of this library function is also reinforced in Article 1 of the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 43 of 2007 concerning Libraries. The law states that "A library is an institution that manages a collection of written works, printed works, and recorded works professionally with a system that is useful to meet the educational, research, preservation, information, and recreational needs of its users."

A library cannot function optimally without adequate management. Without an effective management system, library collections may become disorganized, difficult to access, and less

useful as learning resources. The absence of a professional management system may cause libraries to lose their function as centers of learning and become mere storage spaces that are rigid and unattractive to visitors. Consequently, students' interest in reading may decline, information retrieval may become more difficult, and the library's role as a curriculum supporter and source of knowledge may not be fully realized.

Management is a process that includes planning, organizing, directing, and controlling resources effectively and efficiently to achieve certain goals. Management can be defined as "the process of planning, organizing, leading, and supervising the work of an organization to achieve its goals" (Burke, 2013; Garad et al., 2025; Nickols, 2016). Management is a series of activities based on planning, organizing, mobilizing, and supervision that aim to utilize existing resources effectively to achieve predetermined organizational goals. (Digdowiseiso, 2022; Lockwood, 2012; Vacik et al., 2014) Thus, management is not only about organizing but also about ensuring that all resources are utilized optimally to realize the established vision and mission.

School libraries are expected to support the smooth teaching and learning process, thereby achieving educational goals. This goal focuses on students' personal development, including fostering sustainable learning independence, problem-solving, and increasing social awareness. The existence of libraries in schools plays a crucial role, given that classroom learning is often limited and incomplete, often serving only as a catalyst for students' development. One way to address these limitations in the teaching and learning process is by providing students with easily accessible information.

A good library is one that meets students' learning needs and is equipped with adequate facilities, because an inadequate library may result in fewer visitors. A library with complete facilities can encourage students to read. The library is an appropriate place for students to study, including during their free time at school, and students should be encouraged to read in the library. Adequate facilities can make students comfortable and foster their interest in reading. According to Niswaty (2020, p. 72), Han et al., (2021); Nurhayati et al., (2024); Wang and Jia, (2024) A library is a source of information and knowledge, synonymous with the storage and collection of library materials, both books and non-books. School libraries are beneficial because they assist students and teachers in completing assignments during the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, a school library can support independent learning and reduce students' reliance on information sources of uncertain origin.

Librarians play a central role in the operationalization of the library's strategic functions. As professionals, librarians not only manage collections but also serve as learning facilitators, bridging information resources with user needs. From a managerial perspective, librarians act as agents who systematically implement library management processes, from collection planning and organizing service systems to evaluating the use of information resources. In this regard, school libraries are typically staffed by more than one staff member, with several teachers acting as facilitators who guide students as readers.

Based on observations conducted at SMK Negeri 7 Makassar from September 2 to 8, 2024, interesting issues were identified that warrant further study, related to the library's poorly organized condition. The main issues identified include: the library's cluttered physical condition, with books scattered without a clear organization system; some printed textbooks stored in book bags in the library, making it difficult for students to find learning materials; and the lack of a book borrowing system, which allows students to borrow books freely without supervision from library staff. This condition is caused by suboptimal library management that does not function in accordance with its function as a learning resource. Therefore, efforts are needed to improve comprehensive library management to support the effectiveness of learning activities at SMK Negeri 7 Makassar. This problem serves as the

background for a more in-depth study of library management as a learning resource at SMK Negeri 7 Makassar. The results of this study are expected to contribute to improving the quality of the library management system at SMK Negeri 7 Makassar, as well as at other schools as an external reference model.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design based on field observations, interviews with informants, and documentation. This approach was chosen to understand the phenomena occurring in the field in depth. Descriptive research aims to analyze the data obtained and describe a situation objectively according to the facts found in the field. Operationally, observations were conducted by examining library conditions, including book circulation, interactions between students and librarians, and other relevant aspects. Interviews were then conducted with librarians, subject teachers, and two student library users to obtain data relevant to the research objectives.

This research focuses on library management as a learning resource at SMK Negeri 7 Makassar, with the main subjects being librarians, subject teachers, and students, as well as the principal as a supporting informant. Five informants participated in the study. The research indicators were based on the framework described by Apriwulan et al.,(2025); Korobili-Xantinidou et al., (2003); Malekani & Mubofu, (2023) regarding the steps in library management, namely planning, organizing, directing, and controlling.

The research stages consisted of orientation, data condensation, and selection. The study relied on primary data obtained through observation and interviews, while secondary data served as supporting data, such as books and articles related to the research. The research instruments included interview guidelines, cameras, voice recorders, and field notes. Data validity was checked using source, time, and technique triangulation. Data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, namely data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification.

The fieldwork procedure consisted of observation, interviews, and documentation. The observation period was 2–8 September 2024. During this period, the researchers observed the physical condition of the library, book circulation, interactions between students and library staff, and other service-related conditions. Interviews involved five informants consisting of the principal, head librarian, subject teachers, and student library users. The actual number of interview sessions and the duration of each session should be inserted based on the field notes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Planning

The planning function refers to the process through which library staff and other stakeholders determine goals, strategies, and activities for effective and efficient library development and management. Field research revealed that the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library involved various parties in its planning process, including the principal, head librarian, teachers, and students. The planning process included establishing goals, strategies, and activities for library development and management. However, several obstacles remained in implementation. The principal expressed commitment to library development, while the head librarian explained plans to procure fiction books, improve facilities, and increase

staffing. The main obstacles were reliance on BOS funds, slow processes, and a limited staff of only two.

Teachers proposed expanding the book collection and improving facilities, while students desired more non-textbook materials and seating. Observations revealed a collection dominated by textbooks, an old but air-conditioned building, and limited seating capacity. Overall, the planning was sound, but implementation requires greater support, particularly in terms of budget and human resources. Planning is an important management function in library management as a learning resource. (Gunarathna, 2024; Kim & Yang, 2022; Meier, 2024) State Vocational School 7 Makassar has a library with characteristics that support the standardization of library management. Erginel & Şentürk, (2015); Fails et al., (2009); Madumere & Ekwelem, (2020) The planning stage is the initial stage in managing a library. Prastoyo explains that planning is the process of determining goals, strategies, and steps to develop and manage a library effectively and efficiently.

The findings indicate that the main planning problem is not the absence of planning but the limited capacity to convert plans into learning-resource improvements. Dependence on BOS funding and the small number of staff constrain the procurement of non-textbook collections and facility development. This creates a chain of consequences: limited resources restrict collection diversity and service capacity, which in turn limits students' opportunities to use the library for independent and curriculum-related learning. Thus, planning quality should be understood not only from the existence of short- and long-term plans but also from the alignment between planned programs, available resources, and users' learning needs.

Referring to the results of interviews and observations (supporting evidence), it can be concluded that library planning has been implemented with the involvement of various parties, including the principal, head librarian, teachers, and students. The head librarian has created a digital planning document comprising both short-term and long-term plans (stored on a laptop). One important component of planning is determining library objectives. The planning for SMK Negeri 7 Makassar includes procuring books according to the curriculum, adding fiction books, improving facilities, renovating old buildings, and planning to add library staff. (Korobili-Xantinidou et al., 2003; Nasaruddin et al., 2024; Nur & Fritantus, 2021) This section includes steps for library development and strategies. However, limitations remain, particularly regarding the limited procurement of non-textbook materials due to reliance on BOS funds and the limited workforce. Forbes & Keeran, (2020); Lasig et al., (2025); Nickols, (2016) The purpose of planning is to increase the likelihood of achieving goals in the future. These planning constraints provide a basis for improving future planning. Thus, library planning at SMK Negeri 7 Makassar can be improved by strengthening the alignment between planned programs, available resources, and users' learning needs.

Organizing

The organizing function refers to the process by which library staff structure various library components, such as collections, facilities, human resources, and work systems. Based on the research findings, organizing at the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library has been implemented despite limited resources. The principal stated that library staff are essential for managing book circulation and serving students, with the current number of staff limited to two and teachers sometimes providing voluntary assistance. The principal explained that books are grouped by subject because of the predominance of subject-related books, while the lending system is still managed manually because of limited technological competence among staff. Coordination with subject teachers occurs primarily for curriculum-aligned book recommendations, although this is not routine. Library programs such as socialization and

new student orientation have been held, but the main challenges are the limited collection of supporting books and the low level of student reading interest.

From a student perspective, the maintenance and comfort of the rooms were considered good, with air conditioning, although the researchers observed that the air conditioning was not functioning during the visit. The lending system uses a certificate, with fines imposed for lost or damaged books. Overall, the library organization operates by utilizing existing resources but requires improvements in the digitization of the library system and the addition of non-textbook collections.

Organizing is one of the four important management functions for measuring the effectiveness of library management as a learning resource. Organizing is the second management function after planning. Organizing is the process of structuring various library elements, including collections, human resources, facilities, and work systems, so that they can operate effectively and achieve stated goals. (Anatoliiovych & Antonovych, 2021; Bekbayeva et al., 2022; Karlsson, 2004)

The data analysis shows that organizing at the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library still faces obstacles, particularly the limited number of library staff. Although the standard number of school-level library staff is reported to be two people, according to the head of the library, one additional staff member with IT expertise is still needed. This also indicates that the library does not yet rely on computer-based systems. Subject teachers also commented that the library lacks supporting books. Nevertheless, library operations continue through a division of roles with subject teachers.

More critically, the organizational limitations are interconnected rather than isolated. The limited number of personnel and the absence of a formal organizational structure make the distribution of responsibilities dependent on voluntary assistance from teachers. At the same time, limited technological competence contributes to the continuation of manual lending procedures. The combination of these conditions affects accessibility because services depend heavily on staff availability and manual processes. Consequently, the library may continue to operate, but operational continuity should not be equated with optimal service effectiveness: when human resources, organizational structure, and technology are not aligned, the library's capacity to function as an accessible learning resource is reduced.

Organizing is the activity of establishing a working relationship structure so that members of the organization can interact and collaborate to achieve organizational goals. Currently, the library of SMK Negeri 7 Makassar does not have a formal organizational structure, although it has two staff members. The head librarian still needs an employee skilled in computerization. This is reinforced by the involvement of subject teachers who voluntarily assist the librarian. (Dias da Silva, 2019; Halushchak & Halushchak, 2015; Zeier, 2021) This means that the library organization at SMK Negeri 7 Makassar is still not optimal. Anatoliiovych & Antonovych, (2021); Waring & Wainwright, (2000); Yusuf & Widyawati, (2022) Organization involves arranging various library elements, one of which is the library collection. According to subject teachers, supporting textbooks are still considered inadequate.

In conclusion, the organization of the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library remains limited in terms of human resource development. Consequently, the organizational structure remains informal. Staffing gaps are still addressed through voluntary assistance from teachers. Furthermore, there are no IT staff members dedicated to the library. In addition to human resources and technology, several necessary library items are still lacking, such as supporting textbooks. However, in terms of operations, the library is able to address these deficiencies and continues to function.

Directing

The directing function refers to the process of mobilizing, motivating, and guiding human resources to collaborate effectively to achieve library goals. Based on the research findings, the implementation of the directing function at the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library demonstrates institutional commitment but is not yet fully structured. The principal emphasized the importance of professionalism in library management and responsiveness to input on collection and facility development. Operationally, the head librarian implemented a directing strategy through collaboration with teachers, requesting the integration of learning assignments with the library collection, particularly for specific subjects such as bibliography writing. The directing function was also implemented through a structured loan mechanism, with a stamped statement covering collection maintenance obligations and fines for violations. This mechanism was implemented in stages according to grade level, with the requirement that prior loan obligations be fulfilled before access to subsequent services.

From the teachers' perspective, directing was provided through references to learning materials relevant to the library collection, guidance on catalog use, and integration into learning assignments. However, teachers acknowledged that this integration was not yet structured in formal lesson plans and remained contextual. Motivational programs such as awards and reading competitions were implemented, although they were not sustained. Student perspectives revealed variations in their experience of guidance. 12th-grade students reported rarely receiving direct guidance from teachers, while 11th-grade students reported limited library access. Researchers' observations confirmed low student library visits, partly due to Field Work Practice (PKL) activities. Overall, the directing function has been implemented through various mechanisms but has not been optimal because of the lack of formal structure, limited systematic coordination between teachers and librarians, and operational constraints such as irregular visiting schedules and prioritization of PKL activities.

Directing, or actuating, is the third management function in library management. It involves moving, motivating, and guiding human resources to work effectively toward library goals, including leadership, communication, and coordination so that library staff can work optimally. (Lv, 2019; Martinelli, 2015; Nickols, 2016)

According to the data analysis, the directing function at the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library is relatively good, based on Prastoyo's statement (2018, p. 32) that directing is a process of mobilizing resources. The principal of SMK Negeri 7 Makassar acts as a driving force by emphasizing professionalism among library staff so that library management can operate effectively. This reflects a form of participatory leadership that prioritizes two-way communication, including accommodating staff input regarding collection and facility needs, such as requests for book procurement or AC repair.

According to the cited studies, motivation is an encouragement to carry out work that is important for an organization because it influences employee performance. (Alsadoon, (2022; Korobili-Xantinidou et al., (2003); Smith, (2015) In the context of the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library, the principal frequently motivates librarians and teachers to uphold professionalism. Consequently, the library receives positive recognition from the principal for its performance. In addition to external motivation, the library frequently encourages students to read in the library. Subject teachers also motivate students by offering awards for successfully completing library-integrated assignments.

The directing function therefore shows a gap between technical service provision and active use of the library as a learning resource. Teachers and librarians have connected library materials with assignments, but the integration remains contextual rather than systematically embedded in learning activities. This helps explain why students can receive assistance when searching for books while still reporting limited encouragement or access to the library. In

other words, guidance is provided at the operational level, but its effect on sustained student participation is constrained by accessibility, irregular visits, and limited coordination. Strengthening the role of the library as a learning resource consequently requires not only staff motivation but also a more systematic relationship between teachers' learning activities, librarian guidance, and students' routine use of library resources.

Furthermore, guidance and mentoring are also provided by librarians and subject teachers affiliated with the library. Guidance refers to direction or assistance provided to a person being mentored. Teachers serve as mentors who guide students in developing their potential (Pohan, 2019). Guidance is provided by the head librarian, who coordinates with subject teachers and utilizes their role in integrating the library with student assignments. For example, students are guided to use the library's collections to create bibliographies or summarize reading material. Teachers also assign tasks based on the library's collections and engage students in discussions. Teachers and librarians also hold competitions focused on reading or relevant topics at specific times. The head librarian regulates the lending system through written notices, fines, and manual data collection, supporting student discipline in managing books.

From the students' perspective, the guidance provided was perceived as limited. Some students reported receiving little encouragement to use the library, although they still received assistance from staff when searching for books. Some students also felt that library access was limited for learning activities. The researchers' observations supported this statement, with relatively few students visiting the library, although this was partly influenced by students undergoing internships.

In conclusion, the directing function at the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library has been implemented by the principal, head librarian, and subject teachers in terms of mobilization, motivation, and guidance. However, from the students' perspective, guidance remains suboptimal because students report limited encouragement to visit the library and restricted access. Although students receive technical assistance when searching for books, their participation in library activities remains limited.

Controlling

Regarding the controlling function, control is defined as the process of evaluating and supervising all library activities to ensure that operations align with established plans. This function includes performance monitoring, problem identification, and addressing deviations in library management. Based on the research findings, the controlling function at the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library has been implemented through several evaluation and monitoring mechanisms. The principal assessed the performance of two library staff members positively despite limited resources. In terms of monitoring, the principal checked book circulation by observing classrooms to identify missing or unreturned books. A control system was also implemented through fines and reprimands for students who damaged or failed to return books on time. A school literacy program has been implemented, but it is not conducted routinely and is limited to special occasions, such as National Book Day. Evaluation of library utilization revealed that student visits depended on teacher assignments, indicating that library use remained largely reactive.

From a user perspective, students identified several obstacles to library access, including policies restricting unscheduled visits and a limited book collection. However, field observations indicated positive interactions between librarians and users, with a relatively comfortable library atmosphere. The research findings identified development needs in several areas: expanding service accessibility, strengthening sustainable literacy programs, expanding library collections, and enhancing human resource and technology capacity.

Overall, the controlling function has been implemented but still requires refinement to achieve optimal library management standards.

The controlling findings also reveal an important distinction between monitoring the circulation of materials and evaluating the effectiveness of the library as a learning resource. Monitoring whether books are returned and whether rules are followed protects the collection, but it does not by itself show whether students can access appropriate resources easily or whether library use contributes to learning activities. The finding that visits depend on teacher assignments indicates that utilization remains reactive. Therefore, control should be linked to service indicators such as accessibility, adequacy of collections, frequency of student use, and integration with learning activities. This broader control perspective would allow evaluation results to feed back into planning, organizing, and directing, creating a continuous management cycle rather than a control process focused mainly on preventing loss or damage to collections.

The controlling function is the fourth management function in library management. It involves evaluating and supervising library activities to ensure that operations are implemented in accordance with established plans, including monitoring performance, identifying problems, and making improvements when deviations occur. (Arega & Hunde, 2025; Bernier, 2019; Moreno et al., 2022)

The data analysis indicated that the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library was able to implement library management as a learning resource effectively in terms of controlling. Controlling consists of two aspects: evaluation and supervision. Regarding evaluation, the principal stated that the library had not received complaints indicating that library services disrupted students' learning. Furthermore, the library staff were considered professional, even though there were only two of them. (Bargal et al., 2024; Bernier, 2019; Tsekea et al., 2026)

Subject teachers also assessed that the library provided good service despite limitations in the collection and service hours. While some students were satisfied with the book-lending service, others felt that access remained limited and the collection was inadequate. This indicates that evaluation of library management is ongoing, but several areas for improvement remain. A systematic and structured evaluation process is needed to assess activities, performance, procedures, and outcomes against established criteria. Identifying areas for improvement should not be interpreted as evidence of ineffective control; rather, it is part of an evaluation process that measures library performance and provides a basis for improving management quality.

Supervision ensures that management processes are carried out so that organizational goals, objectives, and tasks are implemented in accordance with applicable plans, policies, instructions, and provisions. (ALTUNTAS & Mutlu, 2021; Li, 2010; Maskur et al., 2018) The head librarian stated that supervision is carried out by monitoring book circulation and ensuring that books are not lost and are returned on time. If violations occur, students are given sanctions in the form of fines and guidance on the importance of taking care of books. Supervision is also carried out by checking books in classrooms, not only in the library. In addition, library staff maintain student discipline through rules for borrowing and returning books. This is reinforced by direct observations by the researchers, who found that library staff actively interacted with students in the context of services and daily communication. Thus, the controlling function in the management of the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library has been implemented effectively.

CONCLUSION

Taken together, the four management functions show that the library's effectiveness as a learning resource depends on the interaction among human resources, organizational structure, technology, service accessibility, and educational use. Planning provides direction, but limited resources constrain implementation; organizing determines whether people, responsibilities, and technology can support daily services; directing connects library services with teachers and students; and controlling determines whether these processes are evaluated and improved. The central issue is therefore not simply whether each management function exists, but whether the functions operate as an integrated system that enables students to access and use appropriate learning resources. The findings suggest that strengthening human-resource capacity, formalizing organizational responsibilities, improving technology-supported services, and widening access should be addressed together because weaknesses in one dimension can reduce the effectiveness of the others.

Based on an analysis of four library management functions, it can be concluded that the SMK Negeri 7 Makassar Library has demonstrated its function as a learning resource. Three management functions demonstrate adequate implementation: (1) Planning has been implemented in a participatory manner, involving stakeholders and encompassing short- and long-term plans; (2) Directing has been implemented through leadership and integration with the learning process; and (3) Controlling functions through ongoing evaluation and monitoring mechanisms. However, the Organizing function still requires significant improvement, particularly in strengthening the institutional structure, adding competent human resources in information technology, and enriching the collection of non-textbook materials.

Overall, the library has demonstrated its function as a learning resource, although improvements in organizational aspects are still needed to achieve more effective management. These findings recommend resource allocation and human resource capacity development to strengthen the library's function as a center for continuous learning.

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