JISIP (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Pendidikan)
Vol. 10 No. 4 November 2026
e-ISSN : 2656-6753, p-ISSN: 2598-9944
DOI: *10.36312/jisip.v10i4.11606/http://ejournal.mandalanursa.org/index.php/JISIP/index*

Implementation of Digital Records Management at the Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning of West Sulawesi Province

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Article Info
Article history:
Received: 24 Agustus 2026
Publish: 1 November 2026

Keywords:
Digital Records Management;
Electronic Archives;
Public Administration; Information Systems;
West Sulawesi Province.

Abstract
This study examines the implementation of digital records *management at the Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning of West Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. It focuses on four dimensions: system usage, accessibility, reliability, and security. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, with data collected through interviews, observation, and document analysis. The data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña framework, which involves data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings indicate that the use of the Si-pemimpin application supports digital correspondence processing, document retrieval, and administrative coordination. Digital access facilitates faster retrieval of records, while standardized classification procedures contribute to more structured records management. However, implementation challenges remain, particularly employees' adaptation to digital workflows, unstable internet connectivity, and difficulties uploading large technical documents. Security and accountability also require continuous attention through appropriate access controls and reliable backup procedures. This study highlights that effective digital records management depends not only on the availability of an application but also on organizational commitment, employee capacity, standardized procedures, and adequate technological infrastructure. Strengthening staff training, improving network capacity, and periodically evaluating records management procedures are recommended to support sustainable digital transformation in regional government institutions.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has encouraged public sector organizations to transform conventional administrative processes into more integrated and digitally supported systems. One important area of this transformation is records management, which plays a fundamental role in maintaining institutional memory, supporting administrative accountability, and ensuring the availability of reliable information for organizational decision-making. In government institutions, records are not merely administrative documents; they also serve as evidence of activities, support coordination among organizational units, and provide information required for supervision, evaluation, and public accountability. Consequently, effective records management requires

an organized system that enables documents to be stored, classified, retrieved, maintained, and protected throughout their life cycle.

Digital records management offers opportunities to improve administrative efficiency by facilitating document storage, accelerating information retrieval, reducing dependence on physical storage facilities, and strengthening information security. Nevertheless, the implementation of a digital system does not automatically guarantee effective records management. Its performance also depends on how employees use the system, the accessibility of records, the reliability of technological infrastructure, and the adequacy of security mechanisms. These aspects are particularly important in public organizations, where administrative documents may contain sensitive information and serve as official evidence of government activities. Digital transformation in the public sector therefore requires more than technological adoption; it also involves organizational commitment, employee adaptation, appropriate procedures, and compliance with applicable records management regulations.

These challenges are relevant to the Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning (Dinas Pekerjaan Umum dan Penataan Ruang, PUPR) of West Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. The department manages administrative activities associated with infrastructure development, interagency coordination, project supervision, correspondence, and personnel administration. Such activities generate various records that must be organized and made available to authorized personnel when needed. The growing administrative demands associated with these functions underscore the importance of a records management system that supports accurate documentation, timely information retrieval, and accountable administrative processes. Within this institutional context, digital records management is expected to facilitate the handling of incoming and outgoing correspondence, official memoranda, leadership dispositions, and other administrative documents. Its practical contribution, however, needs to be examined through the actual implementation processes and the experiences of personnel who interact with the system.

Previous studies have examined electronic records management in different institutional settings. Aihunan, Ohoiwutun, and Ufi investigated electronic records management at PT PLN (Persero), Maluku and North Maluku Regional Main Unit, and reported improvements in work efficiency, information access, and document-loss prevention [1]. Hajar and Dwiridotjahjono examined the SEMAR records management information system at PT Petrokimia Gresik and highlighted its contribution to document retrieval and employee productivity [2]. Fitriani et al. examined electronic records management at the Secretariat of the Regional House of Representatives of South Sumatra Province and identified improvements in work quality, administrative efficiency, time utilization, and employee collaboration, alongside challenges involving technological proficiency and data security [3]. Collectively, these studies indicate that records management effectiveness is associated with administrative processes, technological support, and the organizational context in which digital systems are implemented.

Despite these contributions, several aspects warrant further examination. First, previous studies have largely focused on private-sector organizations or particular government institutions whose administrative characteristics may differ from those of a provincial public works department. The organizational context of the West Sulawesi Provincial Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning presents a specific setting in which administrative records support infrastructure-related functions, interdepartmental coordination, and official decision-making. Second, research findings concerning efficiency and employee performance do not necessarily explain how digital records management operates in day-to-day administrative practice. Understanding implementation requires attention to actual system utilization, access to records, system reliability, and the protection

of information. Third, the institutional and regulatory context should be considered when assessing digital records management in regional government. In West Sulawesi Province, Governor Regulation No. 23 of 2023 is identified in the research framework as a relevant regulatory reference for records classification, retention schedules, and the security and access classification of dynamic records. Examining implementation in relation to these dimensions can provide a more context-sensitive understanding of digital records management in local government.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in its context-specific examination of digital records management at the West Sulawesi Provincial Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning through four interconnected dimensions: system usage, accessibility, reliability, and security. Rather than concentrating exclusively on the statistical relationship between digitalization and employee performance, the study adopts a descriptive qualitative perspective to investigate how the system is implemented and experienced within the organization. This approach enables the analysis to consider both the operational dimensions of the digital system and the organizational conditions that shape its implementation. By bringing these dimensions together within a regional government institution, the study seeks to extend the discussion of digital records management beyond general claims about administrative efficiency and toward a more detailed understanding of implementation practices and challenges. The novelty is therefore situated in the institutional context and the integrated analytical focus, rather than in claiming that digital records management or its individual dimensions have never been studied before.

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Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the implementation of the digital records management system at the West Sulawesi Provincial Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning by examining how the system is used, how authorized personnel access records, how reliably the system supports records management activities, and how records security is maintained. The study is also intended to identify implementation challenges and provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening digital records management in regional government administration.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to examine the implementation of the digital records management system at the Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning (PUPR) of West Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. A qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to understand implementation practices, user

experiences, organizational procedures, and operational challenges within their actual institutional context. Rather than testing statistical relationships between variables, the research focused on describing how the digital records management system was utilized and managed in everyday administrative activities. The research design followed the qualitative descriptive tradition, which emphasizes a systematic and context-sensitive account of a phenomenon based on information obtained from relevant participants and supporting evidence [5].

The implementation of the digital records management system was examined through four analytical dimensions: system usage, accessibility, reliability, and security. These dimensions guided the preparation of data collection instruments, the organization of the empirical material, and the interpretation of the findings. The research was conducted within the organizational setting of the West Sulawesi Provincial Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning, where digital records management supports correspondence, document administration, and the retrieval of official information.

2.2. Research Participants and Data Sources

The study involved eight informants selected through purposive sampling. This technique was used to identify individuals with relevant responsibilities, knowledge, and direct experience in the implementation and management of digital records within the institution. The informants consisted of the head of the department, the department secretary, the head of the General Affairs and Personnel Subdivision, and five personnel responsible for records management in the Highways, Human Settlements, Water Resources, Construction Services, and Spatial Planning divisions.

The selection of these participants was intended to capture perspectives from both the managerial and operational levels. Their involvement enabled the study to examine institutional policies, administrative practices, system utilization, and implementation challenges from different organizational positions. Purposive sampling is appropriate for qualitative research when participants are selected according to their ability to provide information relevant to the research objectives [5].

The research utilized primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews and observations involving personnel responsible for or directly engaged in digital records management. Secondary data were collected from relevant institutional documents, administrative records, reports, applicable regulations, and scholarly publications. These complementary sources were used to develop a contextual understanding of the system and to compare participants' accounts with available documentary and observational evidence.

2.3. Data Collection Procedures

Data collection involved three principal techniques: in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The techniques were applied to obtain complementary information about the implementation of digital records management and to strengthen the credibility of the resulting analysis. The procedures were organized into the following stages.

First, the researcher identified the research focus and reviewed relevant literature and institutional regulations concerning digital records management. This stage provided the conceptual basis for developing the interview guide and observation framework.

Second, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with the eight purposively selected informants. The interviews explored the use of the digital records management system, the process of accessing and retrieving documents, the reliability of system operations, security arrangements, and difficulties encountered by personnel. Interviews allowed participants to explain their experiences and practices in their own terms.

Third, observations were conducted to examine records management activities and the practical use of the digital system within the institutional environment. Observation was

intended to complement interview accounts by providing contextual information about the processes through which records were handled and accessed.

Fourth, documentary evidence was examined to identify relevant administrative procedures, records management practices, and regulatory requirements. Documents were considered alongside interview and observation data to identify areas of agreement, differences, and information requiring further clarification.

Finally, the collected materials were organized and prepared for qualitative analysis. The sequence of data collection and analysis followed an iterative process, allowing emerging information to inform subsequent interpretation and comparison. The use of multiple collection techniques is consistent with qualitative research practices that seek to develop a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon through different forms of evidence [5].

2.4. Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed descriptively using the interactive model of qualitative data analysis developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña [6]. This model comprises three interconnected analytical activities: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The activities were not treated as strictly linear stages; rather, they informed one another throughout the analytical process.

Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, and organizing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. The material was reviewed in relation to the research objectives and the four analytical dimensions: system usage, accessibility, reliability, and security. Information that was relevant to the research questions was retained and organized, while redundant or unrelated material was set aside without disregarding evidence that might challenge emerging interpretations.

Data display involved arranging the condensed information in a structured and accessible form. Interview statements, observation notes, and documentary evidence were organized according to the analytical dimensions. This arrangement enabled comparisons across informants and data sources, facilitating the identification of recurring patterns, differences in experience, and implementation issues requiring further examination.

Conclusion drawing and verification involved interpreting the organized data to develop answers to the research question. Preliminary interpretations were checked against the available evidence from interviews, observations, and documents. This process was intended to ensure that the conclusions were grounded in the collected data and that inconsistencies were considered before the final interpretations were established.

The analytical process was conducted by repeatedly moving between the collected evidence, the four analytical dimensions, and the emerging interpretations. The resulting analysis was used to describe how the digital records management system was implemented, the extent to which its principal functions supported records management activities, and the challenges encountered within the organization.

2.5. Data Credibility and Verification

To strengthen the credibility of the findings, the study used source and technique triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from informants occupying different organizational positions. Technique triangulation involved examining whether information obtained through interviews was consistent with observations and relevant documentary evidence. When differences occurred, the information was reviewed in context rather than automatically treating one source as definitive.

The verification process also involved checking whether the interpretations were supported by evidence relevant to the four analytical dimensions. This procedure was intended to reduce dependence on individual statements and provide a more balanced

account of digital records management implementation. In qualitative research, triangulation and systematic verification contribute to the trustworthiness of interpretations by allowing researchers to examine a phenomenon through multiple sources and forms of evidence [6].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1.1 Research Results

The findings presented in this section describe the implementation of the digital records management system at the Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning (PUPR) of West Sulawesi Province. The analysis is organized around four dimensions: system usage, accessibility, reliability, and security. These dimensions provide a framework for examining how the digital system supports administrative activities, facilitates document retrieval, maintains operational consistency, and protects official records.

Based on the research account contained in the thesis document, the digital records management process primarily utilizes the Si-pemimpin application for electronic correspondence and administrative dispositions. The system is described as supporting coordination between the department's leadership, secretariat, and technical divisions. The findings also indicate that the implementation has generated operational benefits while presenting challenges related to employee adaptation and technological infrastructure.

Table 1. Summary of Digital Records Management Implementation

Analytical dimension	Main findings reported in the research document	Identified challenges
System usage	The Si-pemimpin application supports incoming and outgoing correspondence, digital dispositions, and administrative coordination.	Some senior employees require additional guidance in adapting to digital procedures.
Accessibility	Digital registration, document scanning, metadata entry, and keyword-based searches facilitate document retrieval.	Access to electronic records depends on the availability of the system and users' familiarity with its functions.
Reliability	Document registration and classification are organized according to administrative requirements and the cited regional regulation.	Network bandwidth limitations and upload failures involving large technical files affect operational continuity.
Security	User authentication, role-based access restrictions, and scheduled data backups are described as mechanisms for protecting official records.	The effectiveness of these mechanisms requires ongoing monitoring and verification.

Source: Research findings as presented in the thesis document, reorganized by the authors.

3.1.2. System Usage

The findings indicate that system usage is supported by management commitment and the incorporation of digital procedures into routine administrative activities. The Si-pemimpin application is described as the primary platform for processing incoming correspondence, internal memoranda, and leadership dispositions. The department's leadership has emphasized the use of the application as part of the transition from paper-based administrative procedures to digital workflows.

At the operational level, the process begins when incoming correspondence is received and registered by the relevant administrative personnel. Physical documents are scanned, and information such as document number, date, subject, originating institution, and

classification is entered into the system. The electronic document is then uploaded for review and disposition by the authorized official. Following disposition, the document is distributed electronically to the relevant unit or division.

The research document describes a reduction in the administrative time required to distribute correspondence. According to the account attributed to the department secretary, a process that previously took approximately one to two days because physical disposition sheets had to be circulated between offices could be completed in less than 15 minutes through the digital workflow. This account suggests that digital processing can reduce delays associated with manual document circulation.

The system is also described as operating alongside other administrative applications, including personnel and performance management systems. Nevertheless, the transition has not entirely eliminated the need for employee assistance. Some senior personnel reportedly remain more comfortable with physical documents and handwritten signatures, making additional guidance necessary when accessing digital dispositions and downloading electronic files.

Overall, the reported findings suggest that system usage is supported by managerial direction and routine administrative procedures, although the degree of adaptation among employees remains an important consideration.

3.1.3. Accessibility

Accessibility concerns the ability of authorized users to locate, retrieve, and use records when required for administrative activities. The findings indicate that the digital records management process facilitates access through electronic registration, metadata recording, document storage, and keyword-based searching.

Under the digital workflow, documents are recorded using identifiable information, including document numbers, dates, subjects, and originating institutions. These data provide reference points for locating records without relying exclusively on physical files and manual registers. The system is therefore described as helping personnel retrieve correspondence and administrative documents needed for coordination, reporting, and decision-making.

The thesis document reports that digital searching can reduce document retrieval time from hours or days under manual procedures to seconds in routine cases. The reported improvement is particularly relevant to administrative tasks that require the rapid retrieval of previous correspondence, supporting documents, or records needed for evaluations and audits.

However, accessibility should not be understood solely in terms of search speed. It also depends on whether personnel have appropriate user permissions, understand the search functions, and can access the system when needed. Accordingly, the benefits of electronic retrieval need to be considered alongside the availability of technical infrastructure and the capacity of employees to use the application effectively.

The findings suggest that digital records management can facilitate information retrieval and administrative coordination, provided that records are registered consistently and remain accessible to authorized users.

3.1.4. Reliability

Reliability relates to the consistency of system operations and the dependability of records management procedures. The findings describe the use of document registration and classification practices intended to ensure that official records can be identified and retrieved systematically. The research document also relates these practices to West Sulawesi Governor Regulation No. 23 of 2023, which it identifies as a relevant regulatory reference for records classification, retention, and access security.

Structured registration can support the reliability of records management by reducing ambiguity in document identification and helping personnel locate the appropriate records. Consistent metadata and classification practices are particularly important in a technical department, where administrative correspondence may be associated with infrastructure projects, contracts, maps, technical reports, and other supporting documentation.

Despite these procedural arrangements, the research document identifies technical constraints involving internet bandwidth during busy periods and unsuccessful uploads of large files. Examples include geographic information system (GIS) maps and extensive project documentation. These problems indicate that the reliability of digital records management depends not only on administrative procedures but also on network capacity, file-processing capabilities, and the availability of supporting equipment.

The document describes file compression and plans to improve scanning capacity as possible responses to these constraints. Such measures may help reduce file sizes and improve the efficiency of document digitization. Their effectiveness, however, should be assessed through actual operational records rather than assumed from the proposed solutions alone.

The findings therefore indicate that procedural standardization supports the reliability of records management, while technical limitations remain a potential source of disruption.

3.1.5. Security

Security concerns the protection of records against unauthorized access, disclosure, loss, and damage. The findings describe several mechanisms used in the digital records management environment, including individual user accounts, authentication, role-based access restrictions, and routine data backups.

According to the research document, access to sensitive correspondence is restricted according to users' roles and responsibilities. Documents classified as confidential or otherwise restricted are intended to be available only to authorized officials. This arrangement is designed to reduce the risk of unauthorized disclosure and ensure that access to official information follows administrative authority.

The document also reports the use of centralized backups and additional local storage. These mechanisms are intended to provide recovery options if the central system experiences a technical failure or data loss. From a records management perspective, access controls and backup arrangements serve different but complementary purposes: access controls help protect confidentiality, whereas backup and recovery procedures support the preservation and availability of records.

Nevertheless, the existence of these mechanisms does not, by itself, establish that information security is fully effective. Their adequacy depends on how user permissions are managed, how often backups are tested, whether restoration procedures work as intended, and how system activity is monitored. These aspects should be verified through technical documentation and direct evidence from the institution.

The reported findings suggest that security has been incorporated into the digital records management process through access restrictions and backup arrangements. Continuous monitoring and periodic evaluation remain important to ensure that these measures function as intended.

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. Management Commitment and Organizational Adaptation in System Usage

The findings suggest that management commitment is an important organizational condition supporting the implementation of digital records management. The use of the Si-pemimpin application for correspondence and administrative dispositions indicates that digital procedures have been incorporated into the department's administrative workflow.

The reported reduction in correspondence distribution time also suggests that electronic processing can reduce delays associated with physical document circulation.

This finding is consistent with the broader perspective of electronic governance, which emphasizes the importance of leadership, organizational readiness, and changes in administrative procedures when public institutions adopt digital technologies [7]. Technology adoption requires institutional direction so that employees understand not only how to operate an application but also how its use relates to official procedures and responsibilities.

The findings also highlight the role of employee adaptation. Some personnel reportedly continue to prefer physical documents or require assistance when using the digital system. This suggests that the transition involves both technological and behavioral changes. A system may be formally available and required by management, yet its practical benefits depend on whether users can operate it confidently and consistently.

Consequently, digital records management should be accompanied by continuous technical assistance, practical training, clear operating procedures, and periodic evaluation of user needs. These measures may help reduce differences in digital proficiency and strengthen the consistency of administrative practices across organizational units.

3.2.2. Accessibility and Administrative Efficiency

The findings indicate that electronic registration, metadata recording, and digital searching can facilitate the retrieval of records needed for administrative coordination, reporting, and decision-making. Compared with the manual search of physical files, a structured digital system can provide a more direct route to locating documents, particularly when records are indexed consistently.

The reported reduction in retrieval time is important because delays in locating official documents may affect the preparation of reports, the verification of administrative decisions, and responses to requests for information. Faster retrieval can therefore support administrative responsiveness and reduce the time personnel spend searching for records.

This interpretation is consistent with the general objectives of electronic records management, which include improving access to information and supporting more efficient administrative processes. The findings also align with the study by Fitriani et al. [3], which reports improvements in administrative efficiency associated with electronic records management.

Accessibility also depends on the quality of metadata, the consistency of document registration, and the availability of authorized access. An electronic document may remain difficult to retrieve if its metadata are incomplete or inconsistent. Maintaining clear registration standards is therefore as important as providing a search function.

3.2.3. Reliability, Standardization, and Technical Infrastructure

The findings show that reliability has both an administrative and a technical dimension. Administrative reliability is supported by systematic registration, document classification, and the application of consistent metadata. Technical reliability, by contrast, depends on the stability of the network, system availability, file-processing capacity, and supporting equipment.

The classification practices described in the research document are linked to West Sulawesi Governor Regulation No. 23 of 2023 [4]. A consistent classification framework can help ensure that records are organized according to identifiable categories and handled in accordance with institutional requirements. This is particularly important in a public works department, where records may include project correspondence, technical drawings, contracts, and other documents with different operational and administrative purposes.

The findings in this study reinforce the importance of adequate information technology facilities for reliable records management. Infrastructure should be considered part of the implementation process rather than merely a background resource. [8].

Practical improvements may include reviewing network capacity, establishing appropriate file-size and file-format guidance, improving scanning equipment, and monitoring failed uploads. Such measures should be accompanied by clear procedures for confirming successful uploads and retaining appropriate records of technical incidents. These actions would help strengthen the continuity and dependability of digital records management.

3.2.4. Information Security and Institutional Accountability

The reported use of authentication, role-based access restrictions, and data backups indicates that the institution has incorporated several security-related practices into its digital records management process. These practices are relevant because official records may contain confidential administrative information, personnel data, and documents associated with public infrastructure projects.

Role-based access restrictions can help ensure that users access only the information required for their responsibilities. This supports the principle that access to records should be governed by authorization and applicable classification requirements. In addition, backup arrangements may reduce the risk that records become permanently unavailable following technical failure or accidental data loss.

These mechanisms should nevertheless be understood as components of a broader information governance framework. Effective security also requires periodic review of user permissions, appropriate password and authentication practices, monitoring of access activity, protection of backup copies, and testing of recovery procedures. The presence of backups does not guarantee successful recovery unless the institution periodically verifies that the stored copies can be restored and that the recovered records remain complete.

The findings therefore suggest that digital records security is not exclusively a technical matter. It also requires clearly assigned responsibilities, consistent procedures, employee awareness, and institutional oversight. Integrating these elements can help strengthen the protection, availability, and accountability of official records.

3.2.5. An Integrated Perspective on Digital Records Management

Taken together, the four analytical dimensions show that digital records management should be understood as an integrated organizational process rather than simply the introduction of an electronic application. System usage reflects the extent to which digital procedures are incorporated into daily work; accessibility concerns the ability to locate and use records; reliability concerns the consistency of administrative and technical operations; and security concerns the protection and controlled availability of information.

The dimensions are interdependent. Consistent system usage supports the registration of records, while accurate registration improves accessibility. Reliable infrastructure helps ensure that records can be uploaded and retrieved when required, and appropriate security controls help ensure that access is provided only to authorized users. Weakness in one dimension may consequently limit the benefits achieved in another.

In the context of the West Sulawesi Provincial Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning, the findings reported in the thesis document point to two complementary priorities. The first is to consolidate organizational practices through employee training, consistent metadata entry, and clear administrative procedures. The second is to maintain the technical conditions necessary for dependable operation, including network performance, document-processing capacity, access controls, and tested backup arrangements.

The study's contribution lies in examining these dimensions together within a regional government institution. Rather than assuming that digitalization automatically produces effective records management, the analysis highlights the importance of considering organizational commitment, employee capabilities, information accessibility, technical reliability, and security as connected elements of implementation. This perspective can inform institutional efforts to improve digital records management while preserving the accountability and integrity of government documentation.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of digital records management at the Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning of West Sulawesi Province supports administrative coordination, information accessibility, and more structured records governance through the Si-pemimpin application. The implementation is reflected in four interrelated dimensions: system usage, accessibility, reliability, and security. Although digital correspondence processing and document retrieval have become more efficient, challenges remain in employee adaptation, internet connectivity, and the handling of large technical files. Therefore, sustainable implementation requires stronger management commitment, continuous employee training, standardized records classification and metadata procedures, improved technological infrastructure, and periodic evaluation of access controls and data backup mechanisms. These findings emphasize that digital records management is not merely a technological change but an integrated institutional process that depends on organizational readiness, employee capacity, consistent procedures, and reliable infrastructure. Further research should examine implementation in other government institutions and assess system performance using systematic operational indicators.

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