



EXPLORING RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATION READINESS FOR THE ADOPTION OF A HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

This study examined record management practices and organizational readiness for implementing a Human Resource Information System (HRIS) among employees in the Bohol Island State University (BISU) system. It sought to provide insight into the following: (1) the informants' experiences in managing human resource records through manual filing; (2) the challenges encountered and the strategies employed to mitigate them; (3) the informants' readiness to implement HRIS and the training or support they considered necessary; (4) the informants' aspirations for improving records management within their office; and (5) the recommendations that can be derived from the study's findings. This study employed the qualitative phenomenological technique. Through purposive sampling, we recruited thirteen (13) people from the six BISU campuses to be informants. These included HR directors, campus HR officers, and administrative staff. Each person was interviewed separately using a validated semi-structured interview guide. We employed Colaizzi's methodology for assessing phenomenological data to examine the information. The findings were encapsulated in four principal themes: (1) Navigating the Burden of Manual Records Management, which talks about the realities of filing every day and how digital supplements are used informally; (2) Overcoming Challenges in Human Resource Records Management, which talks about how time-consuming, confidential, and logistical barriers between campuses can be; (3) Aspiring Toward Digital Transformation in HR Records, which talks about how everyone wants paperless systems; and (4) Gauging Readiness and Building Capacity for HRIS Adoption, which talks about how different levels of readiness with data privacy gaps and unreliable internet are the main barriers. The study says that BISU should focus on drafting and approving

a Data Privacy Manual that complies with Republic Act No. 10173, allocating funds for HRIS infrastructure such as high-speed scanners and stable internet access, providing HR staff with orientation and hands-on training across all six campuses, and starting by digitizing priority records at all six campuses.

Keywords: *Record Management, Organizational Readiness, Human Resource Information System, Phenomenological Study, HRIS Adoption, BISU*

INTRODUCTION

Record management practices and organizational readiness for technology-driven systems have become central concerns in human resource management. The Human Resource Information System (HRIS) is a technology-driven platform that collects, stores, manages, and retrieves employee-related data. Bangura (2024) described HRIS as a strategic system that enables the centralization, automation, and optimization of core HR functions, while Abuhantash (2023) affirmed that it improves HRM strategies by streamlining data management and increasing workflow efficiency.

Emphasized that dependence on traditional HR systems results in data duplication, retrieval inaccuracies, and document loss challenges, especially pronounced in public sector organizations where infrastructure and funding are limited Armstrong (2021). Established that HRIS enables centralized digital storage, reducing physical storage needs and minimizing data loss Kavanagh & Johnson (2018). Confirmed that institutional logics and top management commitment are critical determinants of successful HRIS adoption, affirming that organizational readiness is as important as technological infrastructure. Naveed et al., (2021).

Found that records control in state universities, including archiving, inventorying, and disposal, remained poorly practiced Sebucao-Orias (2023). documented that implementation challenges, including system compatibility, data migration, and personnel preparedness, remained significant barriers to digital transition Wagan et al. (2025). Similarly, manual methods in Philippine universities often result in document loss and inaccurate retrieval in high-volume environments. Purcia and Velarde (2022)

The Bohol Island State University (BISU) system, which operates across six campuses in Bohol, continues to manage employee records manually, including 201 files, daily time records, leave applications, payroll, and appointment papers. The resulting challenges of document misplacement, retrieval delays, storage limitations, and confidentiality risks significantly affect HR efficiency and service delivery. Davis (1989) established through the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that HRIS adoption is governed by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use — meaning that even a well-designed system will fail without adequate personnel preparation. Additionally, Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012, requires that a data privacy policy framework be in place before any digital records system can be responsibly deployed.

While existing studies have examined HRIS implementation in various contexts, no published qualitative study has specifically explored the record management practices and organizational readiness of HR personnel in a Philippine multi-campus state university. Sikira and Mishael (2024) noted that HRIS effectiveness depends largely on how well the system aligns with organizational needs and user capacities, a dimension that existing quantitative and single-campus studies have not addressed.

This study, therefore, explored record management practices and organizational readiness for the adoption of a Human Resource Information System (HRIS) among employees at the Bohol Island State University (BISU) system; to provide evidence-based guidance for policy development, capacity building, infrastructure investment, and a phased HRIS implementation plan tailored to the specific institutional needs of BISU.

Literature Background

The integration of information technology into human resource management has evolved significantly over the past decades, transforming HR from a largely administrative function into a strategic organizational asset. Agrawal and Parmar (2020) revealed that organizations are increasingly adopting HRIS to collect, store, and analyze personnel data, with the system playing a pivotal role in improving business competitiveness and operational efficiency. Panjaitan (2023) Similarly, it is affirmed that HRIS has the potential to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of HRM by optimizing functions in the areas of planning, recruitment and selection, development, performance evaluation, and compensation.

In the context of records management specifically, HRIS has been recognized as a powerful tool for centralizing and organizing employee information. Kavanagh and Johnson (2018) explained that HRIS enables organizations to store, update, and retrieve employee records in a centralized digital platform, reducing the need for physical storage and minimizing the risk of data loss. Gawande (2022) further established that an effective employee record management system is particularly useful in maintaining leave records and centralizing information to make it easier to track and manage employee transactions. These capabilities stand in sharp contrast to the limitations of manual filing systems, which are time-consuming and more prone to human error.

The persistence of manual records management in public sector institutions, particularly in developing countries, has been well-documented. Duruin and Siddayao (2024) found that the absence of a coherent records management program leads to significant delays in decision-making and diminished organizational performance. In the Philippine setting, Sebucao-Orias (2023) assessed records management practices in a state university and found that while basic procedures were generally upheld, records control, including archiving, inventorying, and disposal, remained poorly practiced.

Shepherd and Yeo (2003) established foundational arguments for records management reform, noting that traditional paper-based practices involve labor-intensive processes that compromise retrieval efficiency and storage effectiveness. These

challenges are amplified in multi-campus institutions where records must be coordinated across geographically dispersed units. Laudon and Laudon (2020) emphasized that digital information systems improve accessibility, enhance data accuracy, and support better organizational decision-making, precisely the outcomes that institutions transitioning from manual systems seek to achieve.

Employee perceptions and acceptance of new technology remain among the most critical determinants of HRIS implementation success. Davis (1989) established through the Technology Acceptance Model that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are the primary factors influencing users' acceptance of information systems. Shahreki and Lee (2024) found that HRIS adoption in emerging market organizations is significantly shaped by user acceptance dynamics, while Maamari & Osta (2021) demonstrated that successful HRIS implementation is associated with increased job involvement, job satisfaction, and employee engagement.

The role of organizational support and training in facilitating HRIS adoption has also been widely examined. Naveed et al. (2021) found that in public organizations, institutional logics and leadership support are critical determinants of HRIS adoption, with top management commitment being particularly influential. Bondarouk and Ruel (2009) Similarly, it was noted that electronic human resource management systems enhance HR functions by improving communication, data management, and service delivery, but only when accompanied by adequate training and change management support.

Data security and privacy governance represent additional layers of complexity in HRIS implementation. Andoh et al. (2023) found that employees' perceptions of the security and appropriate use of HR records significantly influence their attitudes toward digital records management systems. Any transition from manual to digital HR records management must therefore incorporate data privacy protocols, consent mechanisms, and security infrastructure as foundational components. Within the specific context of higher education institutions, HRIS adoption has gained increasing attention as universities seek to modernize their administrative operations and meet accreditation standards. Wagan et al. (2025) documented the digital transformation of records management in a Philippine private HEI and found that, while efficiency gains and accuracy improvements were evident, implementation challenges, including system compatibility and data migration, remained significant. Enihe et al. (2023) proposed an employee management system for universities that centralizes personnel records and automates leave management, demonstrating the practical applicability of HRIS solutions in higher education settings.

Research Questions

This study sought to explore Record Management Practices and Organization Readiness for the Adoption of a Human Resource Information System for employees at Bohol Island State University (BISU).

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of the informants in managing human resource records through manual filing in the performance of their duties?
2. What challenges do the informants encounter in managing human resource records manually, and how do they address these challenges?
3. How ready are the informants to adopt a Human Resource Information System (HRIS) to enhance records management, and what support or training do they consider necessary?
4. What are the aspirations of the informants for improving records management in their office?
5. What recommendations can be proposed based on the results of the study?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically a phenomenological approach, to explore record management practices and organizational readiness for the Adoption of a Human Resource Information System for employees at the Bohol Island State University (BISU) system. The qualitative approach was appropriate given the study's focus on understanding the lived experiences, perceptions, and challenges of HR personnel in their daily records management work.

The phenomenological design enabled the researcher to examine how individuals experience and interpret manual records management from their own perspectives. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) method of phenomenological data analysis, which follows seven sequential steps: (1) familiarization, wherein the researcher read and re-read all interview transcripts to gain a holistic understanding of the participants' experiences; (2) extraction of significant statements, wherein verbatim phrases and sentences directly relevant to the phenomenon were identified from each transcript; (3) formulation of meanings, wherein the researcher derived meanings from each significant statement to interpret the underlying ideas expressed by the informants; (4) clustering of formulated meanings into themes, wherein statements with similar meanings were grouped together to form cluster themes; (5) development of emergent themes, wherein the cluster themes were further synthesized into broader emergent themes that captured the overall essence of the lived experience; (6) construction of an exhaustive description, wherein the researcher integrated all emergent themes into a comprehensive narrative that described the phenomenon as a whole; and (7) validation of findings, wherein the interpretations were verified against the participants' original responses to ensure that the essence of their experiences was faithfully and accurately represented.

Environment and Participants

The study was conducted across the six campuses of the Bohol Island State University (BISU) system, with a specific focus on the Human Resource Management Offices (HRMO) at each campus. These offices serve as the primary organizational units

responsible for managing employee personnel records, including filing, storage, retrieval, and updating.

The participants of this study consisted of thirteen (13) selected personnel who are directly involved in human resource records management across the six BISU campuses. These included HR directors, campus HR officers, and administrative staff assigned to handle employee records. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants, ensuring that all selected informants had direct, relevant experience in managing HR records.

Summary of Research Informants

Campus	HR Director	HR Personnel	Total
Tagbilaran Campus	1	2	3
Balilihan Campus	1	1	2
Bilar Campus	1	1	2
Calape Campus	1	1	2
Candijay Campus	1	1	2
Clarín Campus	1	1	2
Total	6	7	13

Data saturation was reached by the time the 13th interview was completed. The first five informants from Tagbilaran Main Campus and Clarín Campus generated all four major emergent themes of the study. The middle interviews from IDI6 to IDI10, conducted at BISU-Calape, BISU-Bilar, and BISU-Candijay, confirmed and reinforced what had already been established rather than introducing new themes. The final three interviews, IDI11, IDI12, and IDI13, from BISU-Balilihan and BISU-Candijay, were largely consistent with all previous informants. At that point, no new significant statements were emerging that could not be accommodated within the existing cluster themes, and data collection was concluded.

Instruments

Data were gathered using a semi-structured interview guide developed by the researcher. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit in-depth responses about the participants' experiences, challenges, aspirations, and readiness to manage human resource records. The open-ended format facilitated rich, participant-driven narratives consistent with the phenomenological tradition.

The interview guide was reviewed and approved by the university academic panel before data collection.

Procedure

Before conducting the study, a formal request letter was submitted to the Campus Directors' Offices of BISU to obtain permission to conduct the study. Upon approval, coordination with the concerned offices and campus personnel was made to facilitate the identification of potential participants.

The researcher developed a semi-structured interview guide based on the research objectives. The interview questions focused on participants' experiences, challenges, aspirations, and readiness in managing human resource records. The instrument was reviewed and approved by the academic panel and evaluated by experts to ensure its validity and relevance.

Data were collected through face-to-face and online semi-structured interviews with the selected participants. Before the interview, informed consent was secured, and the purpose of the study was explained. With the participants' permission, responses were documented through note-taking and audio recording to ensure accuracy. Each interview allowed participants to express their experiences and perspectives on records management freely.

All recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The transcriptions ensured that participants' exact words were preserved, which is essential for qualitative analysis. These transcripts served as the primary data for analysis.

RESULTS

Development of Cluster Themes with Emergent Themes

CLUSTER THEMES	EMERGENT THEMES
1. 1.1 Systematic Yet Burdensome Filing Routines	<i>Navigating the Burden of Manual Records Management</i>
2. 1.2 Vulnerability of Physical Records to Environmental and Spatial Constraints	
1. 2.1 Time Consumption and Workload Accumulation	<i>Overcoming Challenges in Human Resource Records Management</i>
2. 2.2 Confidentiality Risks and Document Security Vulnerabilities	
3. 2.3 Inter-Campus and Logistical Barriers	

<p>1. 3.1 Institutional and Individual Readiness for HRIS Adoption</p> <p>2. 3.2 Barriers and Constraints to Full HRIS Readiness</p> <p>3. 3.3 Training and Support Needs for HRIS Adoption</p>	<p><i>Gauging Readiness and Building Capacity for HRIS Adoption</i></p>
<p>1. 4.1 Aspiring for Digital Tools and Paperless Systems</p> <p>2. 4.2 Transforming HR Records Management through HRIS</p>	<p><i>Aspiring Toward Digital Transformation in HR Records Management</i></p>

DISCUSSION

The themes that emerged from the data gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews with thirteen (13) informants from the six campuses of the Bohol Island State University (BISU) system. Following Colaizzi's (1978) method of phenomenological data analysis, the interview transcripts were systematically analyzed to extract significant statements, formulate meanings, and organize these into cluster themes and emergent themes that capture the lived experiences of HR personnel in managing human resource records and their readiness for HRIS adoption. The objective is to address the four research questions guiding this study.

The first part presents the informants' experiences with managing human resource records through manual filing. The second part discusses the challenges encountered in managing human resource records manually and how they were addressed. The third part presents the informants' readiness to adopt an HRIS and the training or support they considered necessary. The fourth part presents the informants' aspirations for improving records management in their respective offices.

1. Experiences of the Informants in Managing Human Resource Records through Manual Filing

The first part presents the informants' experiences in managing human resource records through manual filing, as revealed by two cluster themes derived from significant statements across all 13 informants. These themes are: (1) Systematic Yet Burdensome Filing Routines, and (2) Vulnerability of Physical Records to Environmental and Spatial Constraints. Together, these themes illustrate how HR personnel navigate the daily demands of manual records management through structured routines, personal initiative, and informal digital supplements while remaining exposed to physical and spatial vulnerabilities that threaten the integrity and security of HR records.

Experiences of the Informants in Managing Human Resource Records through Manual Filing

SOP	Responses	Codes	Theme
Experiences of the Informants in Managing Human Resource Records through Manual Filing	"I will not put label on the folder of the documents, what I put there is only a code — that code has a corresponding meaning in my computer, so I alone can access it. If someone tries to steal the documents, they cannot find what they are looking for, especially the 201 file, because I labeled it with a code." (IDI1:SS1)	Use of personal coding system to protect confidentiality of 201 files	Systematic Yet Burdensome Filing Routines
	"We have a procedure we follow. Once the applicant submits all the documentary requirements, aside from the steel cabinet which only I can access, I also have scanned copies uploaded to Google Drive because I do not have a hard drive yet." (IDI2:SS4)	Supplementing physical filing with informal digital backup through Google Drive	
	"My routine is: first week, I focus on DTR and payroll; second to third week, I start filing leave documents into individual envelopes." (IDI5:SS16)	Structured weekly filing schedules for different HR document types	
	"In manual filing, since I am new with the university, most of the time I am familiarizing their culture and system. But later on, as months went by, it became okay." (IDI3:SS9)	Adjustment period for newly assigned HR personnel in familiarizing filing systems	
	"Our office is small but our files are many, so we reached the point where archived documents ended	Insufficient HR office space forcing archived	Vulnerability of Physical Records to Environmental

	up being placed in the cashier's office and in the supply office." (IDI8:SS23)	documents into other offices	and Spatial Constraints
	"During Typhoon Odette, our files got wet. We kept going back and forth, forwarding the records to the office for archiving. Then some records also got lost in the other office." (IDI4:SS11)	Physical damage and loss of HR records due to natural disaster (Typhoon Odette)	
	"Manual filing most affects the work especially if there are too many documents and you have a little space to store those documents — they might get shuffled and wrongly misplaced most of the time due to inadequate storage areas." (IDI12:SS35)	Document misplacement and shuffling due to inadequate physical storage capacity	

Lived Experiences of the Informants in Managing Human Resource Records through Manual Filing

Theme 1: Systematic Yet Burdensome Filing Routines

The first theme, systematic yet burdensome filing routines, reflects how HR personnel across all six BISU campuses have developed structured yet labor-intensive approaches to managing employee records. Most informants described organized filing systems using steel cabinets, labeled 201 files, alphabetically arranged folders, and employment-status-based sorting. Despite the presence of these structures, maintaining them demands significant personal time and effort, particularly when layered on top of other concurrent HR responsibilities. Armstrong (2021) emphasized that reliance on traditional HR systems often results in inefficiencies and an increased risk of inaccuracies. These challenges are especially pronounced in public sector organizations with limited technological infrastructure.

Several informants supplemented their manual systems with informal digital practices such as uploading scanned documents to Google Drive, reflecting a proactive effort to bridge manual and digital approaches despite the absence of an institutionalized system. As one informant shared:

"I will not put label on the folder of the documents, what I put there is only a code — that code has a corresponding

meaning in my computer, so I alone can access it. If someone tries to steal the documents, they cannot find what they are looking for, especially the 201 file, because I labeled it with a code."
(ID11:SS1)

Another informant similarly described a structured yet personally demanding filing routine supplemented by informal digital backup:

"We have a procedure we follow. Once the applicant submits all the documentary requirements, aside from the steel cabinet which only I can access, I also have scanned copies uploaded to Google Drive because I do not have a hard drive yet." (ID12:SS4)

A newly assigned HR officer also described the learning curve inherent in adapting to an unfamiliar manual system. As stated by one informant: "In manual filing, since I am new with the university, most of the time I am familiarizing myself with their culture and system. But later on, as months went by, it became okay." (ID13:SS9 Campus HR Officer, Tagbilaran Campus). These accounts collectively reflect the resourcefulness and dedication of BISU HR personnel in maintaining functional records management systems despite structural limitations. At the same time, they underscore the unsustainability of relying entirely on individual initiative to compensate for the absence of a unified institutional records management platform.

Theme 2: Vulnerability of Physical Records to Environmental and Spatial Constraints

The second theme, vulnerability of physical records to environmental and spatial constraints, captures the structural risks inherent in paper-based records management. Informants described how insufficient storage space, open office environments, and exposure to natural disasters posed persistent threats to the integrity and security of HR records. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) established that traditional paper-based records management involves labor-intensive processes that compromise retrieval efficiency and storage effectiveness challenges that are amplified in multi-campus institutions where records must be coordinated across geographically dispersed units.

At BISU Bilar, the HR office's small size relative to the volume of records it manages led to archived documents being stored outside the HR office. As one informant described:

"Our office is small but our files are many, so we reached the point where archived documents ended up being placed in the cashier's office and in the supply office. At least the active documents are kept here and well taken care of." (ID18:SS23)

The consequences of physical vulnerability were most dramatically illustrated at BISU Clarin during Typhoon Odette, when HR files were damaged, and some records were permanently lost.

"During Typhoon Odette, our files got wet. We kept going back and forth, forwarding the records to the office for archiving. Then some records also got lost in the other office."
(IDI4:SS11)

Informant 12 further identified inadequate storage as the primary driver of document misplacement: "Manual filing most affects the work, especially if there are too many documents and you have a little space to store those documents, they might get shuffled and wrongly misplaced most of the time due to inadequate storage areas." (IDI12:SS35). These experiences underscore the fundamental fragility of physical records management and the urgent need for a digital system with cloud-based backup to protect against data loss from natural disasters and spatial constraints.

2. Challenges Encountered in Managing Human Resource Records Manually

The second part presents the challenges informants face in managing human resource records manually, as revealed through three cluster themes. These themes are: (1) Time Consumption and Workload Accumulation, (2) Confidentiality Risks and Document Security Vulnerabilities, and (3) Inter-Campus and Logistical Barriers. Together, these themes reveal that the challenges facing BISU HR personnel are not isolated personal difficulties but systemic institutional problems rooted in the structural inadequacies of the manual records management system.

Challenges Encountered in Managing Human Resource Records Manually

SOP	Responses	Codes	Theme
Challenges Encountered in Managing Human Resource Records Manually	"Backlogs, Ma'am. Because when filing, there are still other tasks to do, so everything just piles up into a backlog." (IDI6:SS19)	Chronic backlogs from overlapping HR responsibilities	Time Consumption and Workload Accumulation
	"For contracts, before transmitting the requirements to BISU Main, I scan each document individually — one by one — so that in case anything gets lost, I still have a copy." (IDI7:SS21)	Time-consuming one-by-one scanning of documents before inter-campus transmittal	

	<p>"It is a timeline. I cannot finish it in the given deadline because it is manual, and I am the only one in charge. For me, it is critical and not easy at all." (IDI13:SS38)</p>	<p>Acute workload pressure on sole HR staff managing an entire campus alone</p>	
	<p>"If there are errors, the tendency is for the work to be done over and over again because you still have to search for things, and sometimes there are delays." (IDI11:SS32)</p>	<p>Errors in manual records causing repeated rework cycles and cascading delays</p>	
	<p>"In managing records manually, errors are inevitable. Documents must be placed in a safe space because HR documents are confidential. If just left on the table, we cannot control who accesses our offices. It is very difficult to keep confidential documents secure." (IDI10:SS28)</p>	<p>Inability to control access to confidential HR documents in open shared offices</p>	<p>Confidentiality Risks and Document Security Vulnerabilities</p>
	<p>"For 201 files, there are recurring documents like the annual medical requirements that keep being added. The 201 files are already very thick and there is no room to remove documents from them." (IDI8:SS24)</p>	<p>201 files growing unmanageably thick from annually recurring document requirements</p>	
	<p>"The main struggle is the distance between our offices. Sometimes documents are sent through a driver and by the time they arrive, they are no longer complete — some documents are missing." (IDI2:SS5)</p>	<p>Documents arriving incomplete during inter-campus transmittal through drivers</p>	<p>Inter-Campus and Logistical Barriers</p>

	<p>"That document requires many signatories, which is why it really takes so much time. That is truly the biggest challenge." (IDI2:SS6)</p>	<p>Multiple required signatories from different campuses causing significant processing delays</p>	
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Challenges Encountered by the Informants in Managing Human Resource Records Manually

Theme 1: Time Consumption and Workload Accumulation

The first theme, time consumption and workload accumulation, was the most universally and emphatically cited challenge across all thirteen informants. Manual filing is inherently time-intensive, and when it is layered on top of other concurrent HR responsibilities, such as payroll processing, DTR checking, leave monitoring, and document transmittal, the result is chronic backlog accumulation. Purcia and Velarde (2022) found that manual record-keeping methods frequently lead to data duplication, document loss, and retrieval inaccuracies, particularly in high-volume environments such as universities. Errors in manual records compound this problem further by requiring rework, extending the time burden and increasing the likelihood of further mistakes.

Informant 6, described the inescapable reality of backlogs in the most direct terms:

"Backlogs, Ma'am. Because when filing, there are still other tasks to do, so everything just piles up into a backlog."
(IDI6:SS19)

The time-consuming practice of individually scanning every document before transmittal to the Main Campus was described by Informant 7:

"For contracts, before transmitting the requirements to BISU Main, I scan each document individually — one by one — so that in case anything gets lost, I still have a copy."
(IDI7:SS21)

The acutest expression of time pressure came from Informant 13, who manages an entire campus's HR records alone: "It is a timeline. I cannot finish it in the given deadline because it is manual, and I am the only one in charge. For me, it is critical and not easy at all." (IDI13:SS38). The cascading effect of errors was further described by Informant 11: "If there are errors, the tendency is for the work to be done over and over again because you still have to search for things, and sometimes there are delays." (IDI11:SS32). These accounts collectively demonstrate that time spent on manual record management is not a matter of individual inefficiency but a structural consequence of the volume, complexity, and isolation inherent in the system.

Theme 2: Confidentiality Risks and Document Security Vulnerabilities

The second theme, confidentiality risks and document security vulnerabilities, captures the persistent difficulty of protecting sensitive HR records in open, shared office environments. HR records, particularly 201 files, SALN documents, and screening results, contain highly sensitive personal information. When HR offices are not exclusively occupied by HR personnel, controlling who enters and accesses physical documents becomes nearly impossible. Andoh et al. (2023) found that employees' perceptions of the security and appropriate use of HR records significantly influence their attitudes toward digital records management systems, confirming that confidentiality concerns are a critical driver of the need for HRIS.

Informant 10 articulated this concern with particular clarity:

"In managing records manually, errors are inevitable. At the same time, documents must be placed in a safe space because HR documents are confidential. If just left on the table, we cannot control who accesses our offices. It is very difficult to keep confidential documents secure." (IDI10:SS28)

Informant 8 described the compounding challenge of thick 201 files that grow continuously due to annually recurring document requirements:

"For 201 files, there are recurring documents like the annual medical requirements that keep being added. The 201 files are already very thick and there is no room to remove documents from them." (IDI8:SS24)

These findings underscore the structural inability of manual records management to ensure adequate confidentiality and the limitations of document security, which only a digital system with access controls, audit trails, and data encryption can adequately address.

Theme 3: Inter-Campus and Logistical Barriers

The third theme, inter-campus and logistical barriers, reflects the unique challenges arising from BISU's multi-campus structure. The physical transmission of HR documents across six geographically distributed campuses introduces logistical risks absent in single-campus institutions. Documents routed through drivers or messengers frequently arrived incomplete. Signatures from multiple authorized officials had to be collected from different locations, which caused delays. Palcullo and Seelakate (2025) noted that poorly managed records scattered across various departments can delay decision-making and compromise institutional performance. These findings are directly reflected in the experiences of BISU HR personnel.

Informant 2 at the Main Campus described the core of this challenge:

"The main struggle is the distance between our offices. Sometimes documents are sent through a driver and by the time they arrive, they are no longer complete some documents are missing. This is even worse for other campuses."
(ID12:SS)

The challenge of multiple signatories was identified as the single most difficult logistical aspect of document processing: "That document requires many signatories, which is why it really takes so much time. That is truly the biggest challenge." (ID12:SS6). Despite these difficulties, Informant 4 at BISU Clarin expressed pragmatic resilience: "There is always a chance that a file will get lost, but there is always a way to recover it." (ID14:SS12). This perspective, while reflecting the resourcefulness of HR personnel, also highlights the reactive rather than preventive nature of manual records management, a reality that only a structured, technology-driven solution can fundamentally address.

3. Readiness of the Informants to Adopt HRIS and Training or Support Needs

The third part presents the informants' readiness to adopt a Human Resource Information System (HRIS) and the training or support they considered necessary. Three cluster themes emerged: (1) Institutional and Individual Readiness for HRIS Adoption, (2) Barriers and Constraints to Full HRIS Readiness, and (3) Training and Support Needs for HRIS Adoption. Together, these themes reveal that while the will to adopt HRIS is genuine and strong across all campuses, concrete institutional action on specific prerequisites is essential before full implementation can succeed.

Table 4
Readiness of the Informants to Adopt HRIS and Training or Support Needs

SOP	Illustrative Vignettes	Codes	Theme
Readiness of the Informants to Adopt HRIS and Training or Support Needs	"I coordinated with experts in Bilar. Last March 2, 2026, we had a level-two meeting where I presented HRIS features. Though recommended for PRIME-HRM Level 2 Bronze Award, we will not stop there — we are aiming for Levels 3 and 4." (ID11:SS3)	Active institutional planning and coordination for HRIS implementation at leadership level	Institutional and Individual Readiness for HRIS Adoption
	"Very ready! (laughs) We really want it because it would save time and improve accuracy." (ID16:SS20)	Strong personal enthusiasm and unqualified readiness for HRIS adoption	

<p>"We are always open for changes. Innovation is one of the answers — we need to be adaptable because we are now in the 21st century where computer technology is fast rising. We should not limit our horizon." (IDI10:SS30)</p>	<p>Openness to innovation and adaptability as a philosophy of institutional readiness</p>	
<p>"We are ready, knowing the advantage of technology. But we will not completely remove the manual process in filing — we are open to both systems." (IDI4:SS14)</p>	<p>Pragmatic dual-system readiness: embracing HRIS while retaining manual as safety net</p>	
<p>"I am personally looking forward to HRIS because it would lessen the burden. But the main obstacle is the internet — at our campus, every 4 PM or quarter to 4, the internet cuts off completely." (IDI2:SS7)</p>	<p>Unreliable internet connectivity as the most critical infrastructure barrier to HRIS adoption</p>	<p>Barriers and Constraints to Full HRIS Readiness</p>
<p>"The number one question even for the DTR system is data privacy. We even drafted an MDA for that, but it still needs approval from everyone." (IDI8:SS25)</p>	<p>Absence of approved data privacy policy framework as the primary unresolved prerequisite</p>	
<p>"At minimum, orientation on the nature of HRIS — what its function is, what it is for, what it contains. Because it cannot simply be deployed without employees having any idea." (IDI2:SS8)</p>	<p>Basic HRIS orientation as the most fundamental training need before deployment</p>	<p>Training and Support Needs for HRIS Adoption</p>
<p>"Basic orientation first. Since the system involves data, consent collection in favor of the Data Privacy Act is necessary. It is important</p>	<p>Data privacy awareness and individual employee consent</p>	

	that employees know about it and that their consent is also sought." (IDI9:SS26)	collection as integral training components	
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Readiness of the Informants and Training or Support Needs for HRIS Adoption

Theme 1: Institutional and Individual Readiness for HRIS Adoption

The first theme, institutional and individual readiness for HRIS adoption, reflects the strong and consistent current of enthusiasm and preparedness for digital transition that ran through the responses of all thirteen informants. Most expressed personal willingness, institutional awareness, and a clear belief in the advantages of HRIS over the current manual system. Davis (1989) established, through the Technology Acceptance Model, that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are the primary factors influencing users' acceptance of information systems, and both dimensions were well articulated by the informants in their expressions of readiness.

At the institutional level, the HR Director at the Main Campus had already taken concrete steps toward HRIS implementation, as described below:

"I coordinated with experts in Bilar. Last March 2, 2026, we had a level-two meeting where I presented HRIS features. Though recommended for PRIME-HRM Level 2 Bronze Award, we will not stop there we are aiming for Levels 3 and 4."
(IDI1:SS)

Informant 6 expressed the most immediate and unqualified readiness:

"Very ready! (laughs) We really want it because it would save time and improve accuracy." (IDI6:SS20)

Informant 10 grounded her readiness in a broader philosophy of institutional adaptability: "We are always open to changes. Innovation is one of the keys to our adaptability, as we are now in the 21st century, where computer technology is rapidly advancing. We should not limit our horizon." (IDI10:SS30). Informant 4 at BISU Clarin articulated a pragmatic dual-system approach: "We are ready, knowing the advantage of technology. But we will not completely remove the manual process in filing, we are open to both systems." (IDI4:SS14). These responses collectively confirm that readiness for HRIS adoption at BISU is not merely aspirational but grounded in institutional momentum and personal commitment.

Theme 2: Barriers and Constraints to Full HRIS Readiness

The second theme, barriers and constraints to full HRIS readiness, documents the specific institutional and infrastructural gaps that must be resolved before HRIS implementation can proceed. Despite the broad personal readiness expressed by informants, two critical prerequisites remained unresolved at the time of data collection: the absence of an approved BISU Data Privacy Manual and unreliable internet connectivity at several campuses. Naveed et al. (2021) found that, in public organizations, institutional logics and leadership support are critical determinants of HRIS adoption, confirming that readiness alone is insufficient without corresponding institutional action to address structural barriers.

Informant 2 identified internet connectivity as the most critical infrastructure barrier at the Main Campus:

"I am personally looking forward to HRIS because it would lessen the burden. But the main obstacle is the internet at our campus, every 4 PM or quarter to 4, the internet cuts off completely."
(ID12:SS7)

Data privacy emerged as the foremost concern even for the DTR system already in development:

"The number one question even for the DTR system is data privacy. We even drafted a Memorandum of Data Agreement (MDA) for that, but it still needs approval from everyone."
(ID18:SS25)

Informant 12 offered an honest self-assessment of her campus's current operational readiness: "We are not yet fully ready, but we are gearing toward actualizing the full implementation of digitalization so that manual documents can be removed." (ID112:SS37). These findings make clear that the barriers to HRIS adoption at BISU are not rooted in employee resistance but in specific, addressable institutional gaps — precisely the kind of gaps that a structured action plan can resolve.

Theme 3: Training and Support Needs for HRIS Adoption

The third theme, training and support needs for HRIS adoption, reflects the unanimous agreement among all thirteen informants that adequate orientation and training are non-negotiable prerequisites for successful HRIS implementation. The most commonly cited need was basic orientation on the nature, purpose, and functions of HRIS, ensuring that employees understand what the system is and how it works before they are asked to use it. Bondarouk and Ruel (2009) similarly noted that electronic HR management systems enhance HR functions only when accompanied by adequate training and support for change management. Informant 2 emphasized the fundamental necessity of orientation before any deployment:

"At minimum, orientation on the nature of HRIS — what its function is, what it is for, what it contains. Because it cannot simply be deployed without employees having any idea. Even the current repository is not known to everyone."
(ID12:SS8)

Informant 10 prioritized system-specific training for HR personnel as the most critical form of preparation: "The training that must be implemented is the system itself the institution would train HR employees on the nature of HRIS, how to deal with it, the common problems and the advantages when it will be implemented." (ID10:SS31). Informant 9 at BISU Bilar added the dimension of data privacy compliance:

"Basic orientation first. Since the system involves data, consent collection in favor of the Data Privacy Act is necessary. It is important that employees know about it and that their consent is also sought." (ID19:SS26)

These responses confirm that training for HRIS adoption at BISU must be phased, comprehensive, and legally grounded beginning with basic orientation, progressing to system-specific hands-on training, and integrating data privacy compliance and consent collection as foundational components.

4. Aspirations of the Informants for Improving Records Management

The fourth part presents the informants' aspirations for improving records management in their respective offices. Two cluster themes emerged: (1) Aspiring for Digital Tools and Paperless Systems, and (2) Transforming HR Records Management through HRIS. Together, these themes reveal that the informants' aspirations are not passive wishes but active institutional and personal commitments — grounded in concrete steps already being taken and in a clear, shared vision of what HRIS can deliver.

Aspirations of the Informants for Improving Records Management

SOP	Illustrative Vignettes	Codes	Theme
Aspirations of the Informants for Improving Records Management	"When we incorporated Google Drive and Google Sheets — not necessarily high technology — I can access documents easily without contacting staff." (ID11:SS2)	Informal adoption of Google tools enabling faster, remote document access	Aspiring for Digital Tools and Paperless Systems
	"The solution is paperless processes — because we practice 7S and we cannot do justice to 7S if we still	Aspiration for paperless records management	

	<p>have a lot of paper documents." (IDI10:SS29)</p>	<p>aligned with 7S workplace standards</p>	
	<p>"We actually have Google Drive in HR. We have been scanning and uploading documents so that files can be easily found without rummaging through folders." (IDI4:SS13)</p>	<p>Active scanning and uploading practice underway as concrete step toward digital transition</p>	
	<p>"This was also what we discussed — to digitalize. That is our plan: to hopefully lessen the papers stored here." (IDI9:SS27)</p>	<p>Institutional plan to digitalize records as a way to reduce physical footprint</p>	
	<p>"The aspiration is simple, Ma'am — just stop manual filing." (IDI11:SS33)</p>	<p>Strong collective desire to completely eliminate manual filing from HR operations</p>	<p>Transforming HR Records Management through HRIS</p>
	<p>"Since the trend is full digitization, our goal is for all documents, all HR processes and forms to go digital — so we have less clutter and everything is online." (IDI12:SS36)</p>	<p>Comprehensive goal for full digitization of all HR documents and processes university-wide</p>	
	<p>"Maybe HRIS — because as of now we do not have it yet. That is why our AO is planning to have a new instructor implement the DTR system so faculty and employees will no longer have to write everything manually." (IDI13:SS39)</p>	<p>DTR system implementation as a concrete stepping stone toward full HRIS adoption</p>	

Aspirations of the Informants for Improving Records Management

Theme 1: Aspiring for Digital Tools and Paperless Systems

The first theme, aspiring to digital tools and paperless systems, reflects the proactive orientation of BISU HR personnel toward the digital transition, an orientation already manifest in concrete actions. Many informants had already begun using Google Drive for document scanning. They shared spreadsheets as informal digital supplements to their manual systems, demonstrating that their aspirations are not merely wishful but grounded in action. Laudon and Laudon (2020) emphasized that digital information systems improve accessibility, enhance data accuracy, and support better organizational decision-making, precisely the outcomes that BISU HR personnel are already beginning to experience through their informal digital practices.

Informant 1 described how the adoption of Google tools had already improved document access:

"When we incorporated Google Drive and Google Sheets not necessarily high technology, I can access documents easily without contacting staff."
(ID11:SS2)

Informant 10 linked the aspiration for paperless systems to an existing institutional commitment to 7S workplace standards:

"The solution is paperless processes because we practice 7S and we cannot do justice to 7S if we still have a lot of paper documents." (ID110:SS29)

Informant 4 described the active scanning and uploading practice already underway: "We actually have Google Drive in HR. We have been scanning and uploading documents so that files can be easily found without rummaging through folders." (ID14:SS13). Informant 9 at BISU Bilar similarly expressed an institutional plan to reduce the physical footprint of records: "This was also what we discussed to digitalize. That is our plan: to hopefully lessen the papers stored here." (ID19:SS27). These actions signal that BISU HR personnel are not passive recipients of institutional change but active agents of digital transition working within their current means.

Theme 2: Transforming HR Records Management through HRIS

The second theme, transforming HR records management through HRIS, captures the deepest and most forward-looking aspirations of the informants. At this level, aspirations moved beyond informal digital tools toward a clear, concrete vision of full HRIS implementation as the ultimate transformation of HR records management at BISU. Several campuses were already beginning to move in this direction through planning, coordination, and the commissioning of initial digital systems such as a DTR system. Wagan et al. (2025) documented that while digital transformation in higher education institutions in the Philippines brings efficiency gains and accuracy improvements,

implementation challenges must be proactively addressed — underscoring the importance of the phased approach favored by the informants.

Informant 11 at BISU Balilihan expressed this aspiration with disarming directness:

"The aspiration is simple; Ma'am just stop manual filing."
(ID11:SS33)

Informant 12 articulated a comprehensive institutional goal of full digitization:

"Since the trend is full digitization, our goal is for all documents, all HR processes and forms to go digital — so we have less clutter and everything is online." (ID12:SS36)

Informant 13 described concrete plans already underway at her campus: "Maybe HRIS, because as of now, we do not have it yet. That is why our AO is planning to have a new instructor implement the DTR system so faculty and employees will no longer have to write everything manually." (ID13:SS39). Most informants favored a transitional approach, adopting HRIS while retaining manual records as a safety backup during the implementation period. This balanced perspective reflects the pragmatic awareness of BISU HR personnel of the risks and realities of institutional change, and their commitment to ensuring the continuity of HR services even as the systems that support them are transformed. Their aspirations are not only technologically feasible but already partially underway, making full HRIS implementation at BISU not a distant ideal but a reachable institutional goal.

Conclusions

Manual records management at BISU remains largely functional due to the dedication and resourcefulness of HR personnel; however, it is fundamentally inefficient and unsustainable given the increasing volume of HR transactions and the demands of ISO and PRIME-HRM accreditation standards. The challenges encountered in manual records management, particularly time consumption, confidentiality risks, document loss, and inter-campus logistical barriers, are systemic in nature and cannot be adequately resolved through manual workarounds alone, making a structured, technology-driven solution such as HRIS necessary.

BISU's readiness to adopt HRIS is present but uneven across campuses, and critical prerequisites, particularly a data privacy policy framework and stable internet infrastructure, must be addressed before full HRIS implementation can be realized. The training and support needs identified by the informants reflect a phased approach to HRIS adoption, beginning with basic orientation and system familiarization, progressing to hands-on training and data privacy compliance, and ultimately evolving toward competency-based development integrated with HRIS analytics.

Finally, the aspirations of the informants closely align with the university's vision as a premier science and technology institution, as their desire for a paperless, digitized HR records system is technologically feasible and is already partially underway through ongoing DTR digitization and HRIS feature planning.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. For the BISU Administration. The administration is strongly encouraged to prioritize the development and approval of a BISU Data Privacy Manual in compliance with Republic Act No. 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012). This policy framework is a critical prerequisite for HRIS implementation. Additionally, the administration should allocate a dedicated budget for HRIS infrastructure, including high-speed scanners, stable internet connectivity across all campuses, and HRIS software licensing or development.
2. For the Human Resource Management Office (HRMO). The HRMO is recommended to develop an HRIS implementation plan that begins with digitizing priority records (DTR, 201 files, leave records, payroll) and progressively expands to cover all HR functions. A records inventory and classification system should be established before digitization. The HRMO should also standardize filing protocols and coding systems across all campuses to ensure consistency in data migration.
3. For HR Personnel. HR personnel across all campuses are encouraged to proactively build their digital competencies, particularly in computer literacy and data management. Personnel should actively participate in HRIS orientations and training sessions. In the interim, best practices in manual filing, proper labeling, coding, and regular document inventory should be maintained to ensure continuity during the transition period.
4. For the IT Department and System Developers. The IT department is recommended to assess and upgrade the internet infrastructure across all BISU campuses. System developers should ensure that the HRIS platform is user-friendly, accessible across devices, and equipped with robust data security features, including access control, data encryption, and audit trails. A cloud-based backup system should be integrated to prevent data loss.
5. Future Researchers are encouraged to conduct follow-up studies on the actual implementation and effectiveness of HRIS once deployed at BISU. Quantitative studies measuring the impact of HRIS on HR efficiency, data accuracy, and employee satisfaction complement the qualitative insights generated by this study.

Proposed Action Plan for Exploring Record Management Practices and Organizational Readiness for the Adoption of a Human Resource Information System

#	Action	Responsible	Timeline	Resources Needed
1	Draft and approve BISU Data Privacy Manual	HRMO, DPO, Legal Counsel	1st Sem, SY 2025-2026	Legal consultation, Board approval
2	Conduct campus-wide HRIS orientation	HRMO, IT Department	1st Sem, SY 2025-2026	Venue, materials
3	Procure high-speed scanners per campus	Administration, Budget Office	1st Sem, SY 2025-2026	Budget allocation
4	Begin digitization of priority records	HR Personnel, IT Dept.	2nd Sem, SY 2025-2026	HRIS software, scanners
5	Upgrade internet infrastructure across campuses	IT Dept., Admin	2nd Sem, SY 2025-2026	Budget, ISP coordination
6	Conduct hands-on HRIS training for HR personnel	HRMO, IT Department	2nd Sem, SY 2025-2026	Training modules, access
7	Execute Memoranda of Data Agreement (MDA)	HRMO, DPO	2nd Sem, SY 2025-2026	Legal forms, consent docs
8	Full HRIS rollout across all BISU campuses	HRMO, IT Dept., Admin	SY 2026-2027	Full platform, personnel
9	Monitor and evaluate HRIS effectiveness	HRMO, Research Office	Ongoing	Evaluation tools

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The conduct of this study adhered strictly to the ethical standards required in qualitative phenomenological research. All participants were informed of the study's purpose and the voluntary nature of their participation before the interviews. Informed consent was obtained from each informant, ensuring that participation was entirely voluntary and free of coercion or undue influence. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the research process by refraining from disclosing any personal identifiers that could link responses to specific individuals. All informants were referred to using assigned codes rather than their actual names or positions. All data

gathered was used solely for academic purposes and was stored securely to prevent unauthorized access or misuse. Participants were likewise informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time and without any negative consequences to their person or employment. These ethical safeguards ensured that the dignity, privacy, and welfare of all informants were fully protected at every stage of the research process.

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“Bella”

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