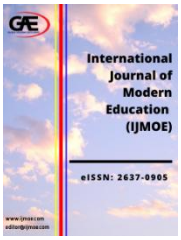
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ADOPTION OF ERMS IN BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS: AN EVOLUTIONARY REVIEW

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Abstract:

The rapid transition from paper-based recordkeeping to digital information environments has increased the importance of Electronic Records Management Systems (ERMS) for supporting efficient records management, accountability, information accessibility, regulatory compliance, and organizational performance. Despite growing dependence on electronic records, knowledge concerning how ERMS adoption research has evolved remains fragmented, limiting understanding of its historical development, changing research priorities, and persistent adoption challenges. This chronological review therefore examines the development and evolution of ERMS adoption literature and identifies major changes in research focus across different periods. A systematic advanced search was conducted using the Scopus database with the main keywords "ERMS," "electronic records management system," and "records management," followed by predefined eligibility criteria to identify relevant publications. The search and screening process produced 55 primary publications covering 2008–2025. Based on annual publication distribution and observable changes in research productivity, the literature was organized into three chronological phases: Early Re-search Expansion and Consolidation (2008–2013), comprising 31 publications (56.4%); Research Dormancy and Limited Development (2014–2019),

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comprising six publications (10.9%); and Research Resurgence and Contemporary Reorientation (2020–2025), comprising 18 publications (32.7%). The chronological synthesis indicates a transition from early emphasis on system implementation, records capture, user training, organizational support, and usability toward more theoretically informed investigation of adoption determinants, followed by renewed attention to digital transformation, interoperability, cloud-based environments, security, business continuity, accountability, and emerging technologies. Overall, ERMS adoption has evolved from predominantly operational implementation concerns toward a multidimensional organizational issue involving technological, human, managerial, and institutional factors. In contrast, persistent implementation and utilization challenges indicate important opportunities for future research.

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Keyword:

ERMS, Electronic Records Management System, Records Management

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Introduction

Adoption of Electronic Records Management Systems in business organizations has become a strategic necessity because digital transformation has sharply increased the volume, speed, and organizational dependence on electronic information. Organizations now rely on digital systems to conduct routine operations, coordinate workflows, and manage growing bodies of records that are essential for service delivery, compliance, and performance (Hawash et al., 2023; Talo & Emanuel, 2025; Tambovcevs & Tambovceva, 2022). ERMS is designed to create, manage, store, retrieve, secure, and dispose of records throughout their lifecycle, giving organizations a structured mechanism for controlling documents, emails, spreadsheets, scanned files, and other forms of business evidence (Hawash et al., 2023; Mukred et al., 2021). Across the literature, ERMS is consistently described as more than a storage application; it is an information governance tool that supports accountability, transparency, business continuity, and more effective service delivery when records must be accurate, accessible, and protected (Campbell, 2016; John et al., 2026; Hawash et al., 2020; Mukred, Yusof, & Alotaibi, 2019). Organizations adopt ERMS largely because unmanaged or manually managed records create operational risks, including information loss, weak retrieval, storage inefficiency, and difficulty meeting legal or policy obligations (Hawash et al., 2019; Hawash et al., 2020; Hawash et al., 2023). In sectors that generate intensive documentation, such as oil and gas, education, healthcare, and public administration, ERMS adoption is linked to the need to improve records quality, reduce delays, and ensure that reliable information is available when managers need to act (Arsyam et al., 2024; Hawash et al., 2023; Maturo, 2025; Mukred, Yusof, Alotaibi, et al., 2019). The literature therefore frames ERMS adoption as part of a broader shift from fragmented, legacy, and paper-heavy recordkeeping toward integrated digital management that

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strengthens both daily operations and strategic control (Hawash et al., 2020, Hawash et al., 2023; John et al., 2026; Mukred et al., 2018).

The expected value of ERMS adoption in business organizations is both operational and strategic. Studies report that ERMS improves information clarity, speeds record delivery, facilitates sharing, reduces storage burdens, and supports easier access to reliable records across the organization (Arsyam et al., 2024; Hawash et al., 2020, 2023; Mukred, Yusof, Alotaibi, et al., 2019). It also strengthens workflow management by centralizing records in one location, supporting revision control, enabling retention scheduling, and allowing managers to track actions and responsibilities more systematically(Hawash et al., 2023). Several studies connect these capabilities to higher organizational performance, better decision-making, improved productivity, and stronger competitiveness because records can be created faster, retrieved more easily, and used more effectively to support planning and service execution (Hawash et al., 2023; Mukred et al., 2021; Mukred, Yusof, & Alotaibi, 2019). ERMS is also associated with reduced risk of record misplacement, stronger backup protection during emergencies, and better support for business continuity, especially when employees must work remotely or during crisis conditions such as the COVID-19 period (Hawash et al., 2022; Hawash et al., 2023). In this sense, ERMS adoption aligns with the wider organizational objective of building resilient digital infrastructures that sustain operations, preserve institutional memory, and support data-driven management (Arsyam et al., 2024; Hawash et al., 2022; Mehta, 2025). However, the evidence also shows that these benefits are not automatic. Organizations realize the full value of ERMS only when users accept the system, understand its purpose, and incorporate it into routine work, because technology that is formally installed but not absorbed into practice often fails to deliver its promised return (Campbell, 2016; Mukred et al., 2021; Mukred, Yusof, & Alotaibi, 2019).

For that reason, the literature treats ERMS adoption as a socio-technical and organizational change process rather than a purely technical purchase. Research across multiple sectors identifies three broad categories of adoption factors: human or individual factors, organizational factors, and technological or environmental factors (Mukred et al., 2018; John et al., 2026). Reviews and framework studies further specify recurring determinants such as relative advantage, compatibility, management support, organizational readiness, training, facilitating conditions, policy, trust, security, and government regulation (Bizi et al., 2025; Hawash et al., 2020; Mukred et al., 2021). Among these, top management support appears especially central because leadership commitment sets priorities, mobilizes resources, and signals that ERMS is an enterprise-wide initiative rather than a peripheral IT tool (Mukred et al., 2021; Talo & Emanuel, 2025). Implementation studies also stress planned projects, change management, business process analysis, infrastructure investment, and policy formation as necessary conditions for sustainable adoption. At the same time, organizations in developing contexts face additional constraints, including financial limitations, weak policy enforcement, limited infrastructure, data integration problems, high implementation costs, and shortages of skilled personnel, while even mature organizations continue to struggle with interoperability, metadata standardization, legacy migration, and resistance to data-driven change (Arsyam et al., 2024; John et al., 2026; Mehta, 2025). Regulatory alignment also matters because effective policies and laws guide implementation, compliance monitoring, accessibility, and staff awareness in records governance (Hawash et al., 2020; Maturo, 2025). Overall, the research suggests that adoption of ERMS in business organizations succeeds when governance frameworks, technical capabilities, and organizational culture are aligned, and when firms treat

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records management as a strategic capability that underpins performance, continuity, compliance, and competitive resilience (Bizi et al., 2025; John et al., 2026).

Materials and Methods

Data Collection

The rapid digital transformation of business organizations has fundamentally reshaped the creation, capture, storage, retrieval, preservation, and governance of organizational records, increasing the strategic importance of Electronic Records Management Systems (ERMS). ERMS provide structured mechanisms for managing electronic records throughout their lifecycle while supporting information accessibility, regulatory compliance, accountability, organizational continuity, risk management, and evidence-based decision-making. Despite these benefits, the adoption of ERMS within business organizations remains uneven and is influenced by interconnected technological, organizational, managerial, regulatory, and human factors. Understanding how scholarly attention to ERMS adoption has developed over time is therefore essential for identifying shifts in research priorities, emerging adoption determinants, persistent implementation challenges, and underexplored areas requiring further investigation. Accordingly, this chronological review systematically traces the evolution of research on ERMS adoption in business organizations, using a single-step data collection approach in the Scopus database. Scopus was selected as the primary source for its extensive coverage of peer-reviewed scholarly literature and its structured bibliographic information, enabling the identification of relevant, high-quality publications within a consistent retrieval environment. A predefined search strategy incorporating ERMS, adoption, and business-organization-related terms was applied, followed by systematic assessment of retrieved publications against established relevance and eligibility criteria. Such rigorous and transparent data collection is particularly critical in chronological reviews, as inconsistencies in database selection, search terminology, eligibility criteria, or publication screening can distort the apparent development of a research field. By applying a reproducible and systematic retrieval procedure, this study strengthens the reliability and validity of the evidence base. It enables more meaningful interpretation of temporal patterns, intellectual developments, research gaps, and future directions in ERMS adoption research.

Table 1: The Specification for Primary Data Searching.

Keyword	erms, electronic records management system, records management
Inclusion	Article, Journal, English and social science, final stage
Exclusion	Besides social science area, review article, other languages, in press
Final Search String (Scopus)	TITLE-ABS-KEY ((ERMS OR "Electronic records management system")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE , "final")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2006") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2007") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2008") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2009") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2010") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2011") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2012") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2013") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2015") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2016") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2017") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2018"

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	) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2019") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2020") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2021") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2022") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2023") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2024") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2025") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2026")) AND (LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Erms") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Records Management") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Electronic Resource Management Systems") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Electronic Records Management Systems") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Electronic Records Management System") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Electronic Records") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Electronic Resource Management System (erms)") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Electronic Records Management") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Electronic Resource Management System") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Electronic Records Managements") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Document Management") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Database Management Systems") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Erm"))
Number of Primary Article	55

Source: Author's own compilation

The data collection strategy was designed to establish a focused, methodologically consistent evidence base for examining the chronological development of research on Electronic Records Management Systems (ERMS) in business organizations. A single-step search was conducted in the Scopus database using the core terms "ERMS" and "Electronic records management system," supplemented by records-management-related indexing terms to capture variations in terminology used across the literature. To strengthen the relevance and comparability of the retrieved studies, the search was restricted to journal articles published in English, classified within the Social Sciences subject area, and recorded as final-stage publications. These restrictions were justified on both conceptual and methodological grounds. Journal articles generally represent peer-reviewed and comparatively mature scholarly outputs. At the same time, the Social Sciences restriction aligns the review with the organizational, behavioral, managerial, governance, and information-management dimensions of ERMS adoption rather than its purely technical or engineering characteristics. Limiting the analysis to English-language and final-stage publications further reduces inconsistencies arising from provisional, duplicated, or incomplete records. Review articles, publications outside the Social Sciences, non-English studies, and in-press items were excluded to ensure that the analysis was based primarily on original empirical and conceptual contributions. Applying these criteria produced a final dataset of 55 primary articles, which constitutes the analytical corpus for tracing the development of ERMS research over the period covered by the search.

The identification of 55 primary articles suggests that ERMS adoption constitutes a relatively specialized but sustained area of scholarly inquiry rather than a highly saturated research domain. This result is important because the restricted corpus allows the chronological review to identify changes in research emphasis with greater conceptual clarity, including shifts from early concerns with electronic recordkeeping, document control, and system implementation

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toward broader issues of organizational readiness, user acceptance, governance, regulatory compliance, information security, digital transformation, and long-term records preservation. The rigorous filtering process also enhances the reliability and interpretability of temporal patterns, as the included studies share comparable publication characteristics and disciplinary orientations. Nevertheless, the final search structure requires careful interpretation. Some indexed terms, particularly "Electronic Resource Management System(s)," may also be used in library and information-resource management contexts and therefore require manual relevance checking to avoid conceptual contamination with electronic records management. Similarly, the explicit year limitations should be verified, as 2014 does not appear in the stated Scopus string. The absence of a year from the retrieval syntax could artificially create a publication gap that may later be misinterpreted as a decline in scholarly activity. Thus, the final corpus of 55 articles is defensible as a high-quality foundation for chronological analysis, provided that title-and-abstract relevance screening is applied consistently and the temporal search parameters are validated before interpreting trends, phases, or apparent discontinuities in ERMS adoption research.

Data Clustering

Chronological clustering provides a systematic analytical approach for examining the development, continuity, and changing intensity of scholarly attention within a research domain over time. In this review, publication data on the adoption of Electronic Records Management Systems (ERMS) in business organizations were retrieved from Scopus, a comprehensive bibliographic database, using predefined keywords and an advanced search strategy designed to identify relevant scholarly publications. Rather than treating annual publication counts as isolated observations, the studies were grouped into meaningful temporal phases based on observable variations in publication year, volume, continuity, and changes in research productivity. Such clustering is particularly important in a chronological review because research fields rarely develop in a uniform or linear manner; instead, they may experience periods of rapid expansion, consolidation, stagnation, decline, and subsequent resurgence in response to technological, organizational, regulatory, and societal developments. Grouping publication output into temporal clusters therefore facilitates the identification of turning points and broader trajectories that may be less apparent from year-by-year examination alone. Moreover, this approach enhances the interpretability of publication patterns by providing a structured basis for comparing the intensity and evolution of ERMS scholarship across different periods. In the context of ERMS adoption, chronological clustering can further illuminate how scholarly attention has shifted alongside developments in organizational digitalization, electronic recordkeeping, information governance, regulatory compliance, and emerging digital technologies. Consequently, clustering publications by temporal distribution and research productivity provides an analytical foundation for interpreting the historical progression of the literature and identifying periods of scholarly concentration, limited development, and renewed research attention.

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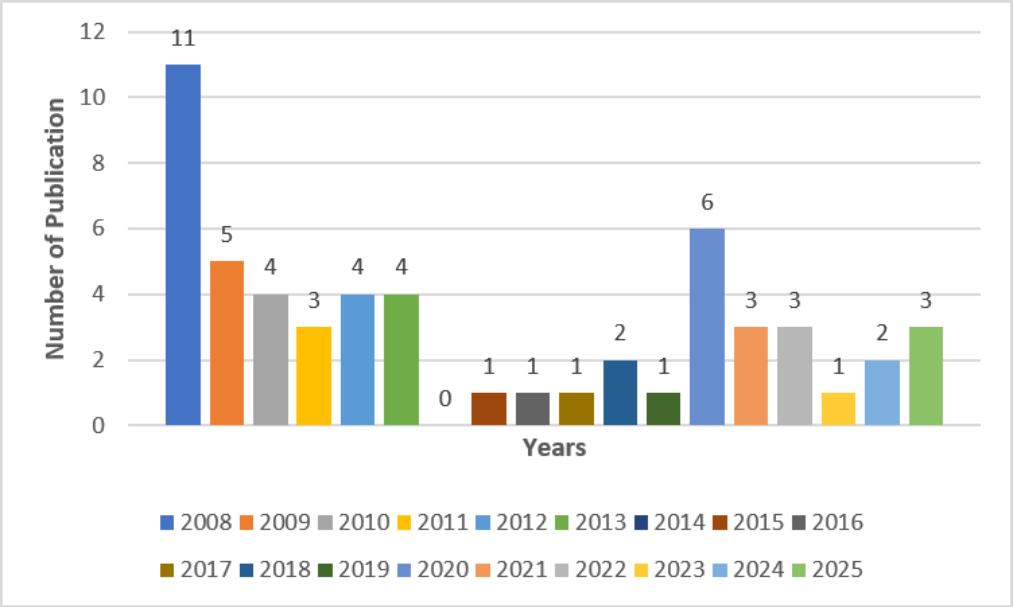


Figure 1: Number Of Publications About Adoption Of ERMS

Source: Author's own compilation

Figure 1 shows the number of documents on the adoption of ERMS in business organizations. Based on the distribution of the 55 Scopus-indexed publications from 2008-2025**,** the publication trajectory can be meaningfully divided into three chronological phases**.** Rather than dividing the 18 years into equal intervals, the phases should reflect observable changes in publication intensity and continuity. The data indicate an early period of comparatively high activity followed by decline, a prolonged period of limited scholarly output, and a later period characterized by renewed but fluctuating research attention. This trend-based classification is more appropriate for a high-impact chronological review because it captures changes in the development and scholarly momentum of ERMS research.

The first phase, covering 2008-2013, represents the period of early research expansion and consolidation in ERMS scholarship. This phase contains 31 publications (56.4% of the total dataset)**,** making it the most productive period identified in the review. Research activity was particularly pronounced in 2008, when 11 publications were recorded, the highest annual output across the entire study period. Publication output subsequently decreased to five articles in 2009, four in 2010, three in 2011, and four each in 2012 and 2013. Although this trajectory indicates a decline from the exceptional level observed in 2008, the continued production of three to five publications annually demonstrates sustained scholarly engagement with ERMS. The concentration of more than half of all identified publications within these six years suggests that ERMS had already emerged as a significant area of inquiry associated with the transition from conventional records management toward electronic recordkeeping environments. Accordingly, this phase may be interpreted as a period in which the conceptual, technological, organizational, and governance foundations of ERMS research were being established and consolidated. The declining trajectory after 2008 should therefore not necessarily be interpreted as diminishing relevance; rather, it may indicate movement from an initial concentration of scholarly attention toward a more established but specialized research domain.

The second phase, spanning 2014-2019, can be characterized as a period of research dormancy and limited development**.** Only 6 publications (10.9%) were identified over these 6 years,

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representing the lowest level of research productivity across the 3 phases. Most notably, no publications were recorded in 2014, followed by only one publication each year between 2015 and 2017. A modest increase to two publications occurred in 2018 before output returned to one publication in 2019. This sustained low level of productivity marks a clear structural transition from the relatively intensive publication activity of 2008-2013. From a chronological perspective, this phase is important because periods of low publication activity can reveal the changing position of a research topic within a broader disciplinary landscape. One plausible interpretation is that ERMS had become increasingly embedded within adjacent areas such as electronic document management, information governance, enterprise information systems, digital preservation, and broader digital information management, potentially dispersing ERMS-specific scholarship across alternative terminology. Consequently, this phase should not be automatically interpreted as indicating a decline in the organizational importance of electronic records management. Instead, the evidence demonstrates that explicit ERMS-focused publication activity within the defined Scopus search boundaries remained comparatively limited during this period.

The third phase, covering 2020-2025, represents a period of research resurgence and contemporary reorientation. A total of 18 publications (32.7%) were identified, three times the output recorded during the preceding phase. The transition is particularly evident in 2020, when publication output increased sharply from 1 article in 2019 to 6, the second-highest annual publication count after 2008. Although subsequent productivity fluctuated three publications each in 2021 and 2022, one in 2023, two in 2024, and three in 2025 the continued publication activity indicates renewed scholarly engagement with ERMS. This resurgence can reasonably be situated within the wider acceleration of organizational digitalization, remote and distributed working environments, information governance requirements, cybersecurity concerns, regulatory compliance, cloud-based information management, and organizational digital transformation. Importantly, however, the pattern represents a resurgence rather than uninterrupted growth, as annual publication numbers remained variable after the 2020 peak. This distinction provides a more defensible interpretation of the evidence. The phase therefore reflects not only an increase in publication volume but also a potential reorientation of ERMS scholarship toward contemporary organizational challenges, in which electronic records are increasingly regarded as strategic information assets that support accountability, compliance, continuity, transparency, and digital business operations.

Result and Discussion

Phase 1: Early Research Expansion and Consolidation (2008-2013)

During the early part of Phase 1, particularly 2008-2009, research concentrated strongly on implementation conditions, system usefulness, information capture, user participation, and organizational effectiveness. Gunnlaugsdottir (2008) found that successful ERMS implementation depended substantially on managerial support, cooperation between records management and information technology personnel, adequate user training, and employee participation in adapting classification structures. These findings positioned adoption as an organizational process rather than a purely technical installation exercise. Similarly, Zinner Henriksen & Viborg Andersen (2008) reported improvements in efficiency, transparency, accountability, decision-making, and public service delivery following the introduction of ERMS, although inadequate training, interface design, organizational power, and control restricted implementation success. Gunnlaugsdottir (2008) also identified weaknesses in actual

records capture, particularly the failure to incorporate email and several other record types into formal systems, demonstrating an early gap between technical capability and employee practice. Wheeler (2008) further emphasized organizational learning, long-term planning, flexibility, and staff competence as necessary for sustainable digital information management. By 2009, attention increasingly shifted toward system performance and human interaction. Hsu, Chen, and Wang (2009) showed that ERMS efficiency varied across agency levels and organizational functions, while user satisfaction increased with efficiency. Gunnlaugsdottir (2009) reinforced the importance of training and employee participation, finding that greater involvement in classification design improved confidence, perceived usability, and effective system use. Walker (2009), however, demonstrated that cost remained an important adoption barrier, particularly where institutions relied on spreadsheets because formal ERMS solutions were financially difficult to maintain.

Between 2010 and 2011, the literature moved from basic adoption questions toward implementation fit, organizational context, workforce requirements, and alternative system configurations. Hartnett, Price, Smith, and Barrett (2010) illustrated that ERMS implementation could involve repeated failures before an appropriate system was identified, suggesting that technological selection needed to align closely with institutional requirements. Foscarini (2010) argued that conventional records-management approaches were insufficient when organizational activities, actors, structures, and recordkeeping practices were treated as stable technical elements. This discussion expanded ERMS research toward socio-organizational interpretations of records creation and use. Murdock (2010) found that employment requirements for electronic-resource personnel had changed only marginally despite substantial changes in digital collections and management technologies, indicating a possible mismatch between system development and workforce preparation. During 2011, Henttonen & Kettunen demonstrated that ERMS use was closely associated with organizational structure and functional classification. Employees generally used limited portions of classification schemes, whereas individuals at higher organizational levels accessed broader functional categories. The findings supported the possibility of user profiles, contextual classification, and system designs that learn from prior usage patterns. Gustafson-Sundell (2011) similarly emphasized that local organizational conditions could determine implementation success or failure, while Milczarski & Garofalo (2011) showed that hosted open-source services could provide greater functionality under limited financial conditions.

By 2012-2013, the research focus shifted to sustainability, integration, classification flexibility, resource constraints, and open-source solutions. McMullen (2012) demonstrated that technology did not remove the need for adequate staffing; rather, continued maintenance created additional demands under restricted budgets. Katuu (2012) found that South African institutions had accumulated substantial implementation experience in enterprise content management, with records management, document management, and imaging forming common application modules. However, further evaluation of proprietary and non-proprietary systems remained necessary. Bak (2012) challenged assumptions underlying paper-based classification and proposed more dynamic, item-level approaches for electronic records. In 2013, Jensen reported that a comparatively simple Google Sites solution improved workflow after previous systems proved unsuitable. In contrast, Hartnett, Beh, Resnick, Ugaz and Tabacaru (2013) and Mi & Wang (2013) documented renewed interest in open-source CORAL implementations. Collectively, these studies indicate that the 2008-2013 period progressed from foundational implementation concerns toward greater recognition of organizational fit,

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user capability, affordability, adaptable classification, interoperability, and sustainable system choice.

Phase 2: Research Dormancy and Limited Development (2014-2019)

Phase 2, covering 2014-2019, represents a period of relatively limited publication activity. Still, the available studies show an important shift from basic implementation concerns toward more focused investigation of user behavior, workflow integration, and technology adoption factors. No study was identified for 2014 in the supplied dataset. In contrast, the 2015 study by Isa, Ismail, Nordin, and Saman focused on information-seeking behavior among information technology professionals using an electronic records management system. The findings demonstrated that system under-utilization was associated with weak alignment between the formal metadata classification structure and actual user search behavior. Employees preferred individually developed retrieval practices rather than the prescribed system structure, while insufficient training further reduced meaningful use. This result indicated that technical familiarity with information technology did not automatically translate into effective ERMS utilization. Organizational policies, practical guidance, training, and enforcement were therefore identified as important conditions for improving information retrieval practices, and in 2016, a more operationally oriented application of CORAL for serials acquisitions management. The pilot implementation improved earlier workflow arrangements and supported the coordination of complex ordering activities and multiple handoffs. Compared with the 2015 study, this contribution shifted from analyzing individual information behavior to examining ERMS as a practical workflow-support mechanism that can improve coordination and process visibility.

Research published during 2017-2018 became more theoretically and methodologically developed, with stronger emphasis on behavioral intention, system quality, institutional performance, and complementary workflow tools. Mosweu, Bwalya, and Mutshewa (2017) applied a modified Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology framework to investigate adoption and usage of a document workflow management system in Botswana. The four principal UTAUT constructs explained 55% of the variance in behavioral intention, while technophobia, negative attitudes, perceived complexity, and incompatibility with existing systems emerged as major barriers. This study marked an important development because adoption was no longer treated primarily as an implementation outcome; instead, it was examined in terms of measurable behavioral and technological determinants, and in 2018, this line of inquiry was extended using a mixed explanatory design. System quality, information quality, service quality, and security showed significant positive relationships with successful ERMS adoption, thereby contributing to improved institutional performance. Expert interviews supported the quantitative findings and strengthened interpretation of the proposed model. In the same year, McLean & Canham examined Kanban as a complementary framework for managing electronic resource workflows. Reduced email communication and improved due-date tracking were reported, with no major disadvantages identified. The findings suggested that effective electronic-resource management could also depend on combining ERMS with auxiliary workflow tools rather than relying on a single standalone platform.

By 2019, the literature had advanced toward a more integrated, taxonomic understanding of ERMS adoption. Mukred, Yusof, Mokhtar, and Fauzi synthesized findings from more than 100 earlier studies and six established theories to construct a framework organized within the technology-organization-environment perspective. Eleven factors were grouped into

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technological, organizational, and environmental dimensions and subsequently validated by experts. This development indicates that Phase 2, despite comparatively low publication volume, contributed to conceptual consolidation by moving ERMS scholarship from isolated implementation problems toward theoretically structured adoption frameworks. Across 2015-2019, the main pattern shows an increasing recognition that successful ERMS adoption depends on the interaction among user behavior, training, system compatibility, information and service quality, security, organizational procedures, and environmental conditions.

Phase 3: Research Resurgence and Contemporary Reorientation (2020-2025)

The opening period of Phase 3, covering 2020–2021, shows a clear reorientation of ERMS research toward digital transformation, system quality, functional compliance, workforce capability, and access continuity. Oza & Prajapati (2020) found generally positive perceptions of the CORAL system, although limited vendor support and shortages of skilled personnel reduced wider utilization. Yang, Du, and Shi (2020) demonstrated that transition-oriented ERMS could reshape records management practices and expectations, with information quality emerging as an important challenge influencing digital transformation. Ilmi & Mayesti (2020) similarly reported that academic archival systems did not fully satisfy international functional standards because institutional units were insufficiently prepared, while legal frameworks, resource readiness, user orientation, and usability were necessary for effective implementation. Heaton (2020) reinforced the value of systematic evaluation against established functional requirements, indicating that local assessment can expose common system limitations and areas for improvement. Netshakhuma (2020) further revealed a gap between archival legislation and actual implementation, showing that formal regulatory provisions alone were insufficient without effective operational compliance. By 2021, the effects of COVID-19 became more visible. Netshakhuma (2021) found limited digitization strategies, restricted online accessibility, and inadequate digital skills among archival personnel. Xiao, Xu, and Liu (2021) added a security dimension, identifying weaknesses in risk awareness, disaster recovery, technical capabilities, and understanding of electronic records, and recommending regular risk assessments, stronger backup arrangements, new technologies, and expanded technical education.

The middle period, particularly 2022-2023, shifted attention to business continuity, interoperability, cloud-enabled adoption, institutional competency, and the ongoing gaps between electronic and paper-based record environments. Hawash, Yusof, Mokhtar, and Mukred (2022) emphasized that ERMS supports remote access, off-site work, authorization control, and organizational continuity during crises. Dişli & Külcü (2022) found that interoperability problems were influenced more strongly by organizational and administrative conditions than by legal or technical barriers, suggesting that coordination and institutional arrangements became central adoption concerns. Mukred, Yusof, Al-Moallemi, Mokhtar, and Hawash (2022) provided stronger quantitative evidence through PLS-SEM, showing that ERMS and cloud-related factors significantly influenced behavioral intention and that ERMS implementation positively affected educational institutional competency. This period therefore reflects increased methodological sophistication and a stronger relationship between adoption and measurable organizational outcomes. In 2023, however, Malekani & Mubofu showed that basic record-keeping weaknesses persisted in some developing-country contexts. Inadequate storage facilities, lack of ERMS, insufficient space, limited professional skills, and weak internal training continued to restrict effective personnel records management. The result demonstrates that technological advancement across the field remained uneven, with some

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institutions moving toward cloud-enabled systems while others continued to struggle with fundamental recordkeeping infrastructure.

The recent period of 2024-2025 indicates further diversification toward governance, emerging technologies, accountability, user performance, and purpose-built ERMS solutions. Muntanga & Bwalya (2024) found that although 76% of surveyed Zambian government bodies maintained electronic records, only 9.5% had deployed commercial electronic document and records management software. Funding limitations, weak policies and standards, inadequate ICT infrastructure, insufficient qualified personnel, limited management support, and corruption remained major barriers. Chakraborty, Shukla, and Upadhyay (2024) extended the discussion toward artificial intelligence, indicating increasing interest in applying AI tools to complex electronic-resource licensing processes. In 2025, Oktarina, Suryanto, Permana, and Saeroji reported high ERMS quality, strong document availability, faster retrieval, improved archivist performance, and enhanced accountability and transparency. Clemence, Luambano, and Mwantimwa (2025), however, found that adoption did not necessarily ensure effective utilization, as human, organizational, technological, and regulatory constraints continued to sustain paper-based practices. Libadia, Botangen, Lucero, and Tecson (2025) demonstrated a more application-oriented approach through a tailor-made web ERMS that received positive evaluations for usability, reliability, security, and data management efficiency. Overall, Phase 3 reflects a shift from digital transition pressures toward integrated concerns including resilience, interoperability, cloud adoption, security, accountability, AI-supported processes, and customized system development.

Conclusions

This chronological review examined the evolution of research on the adoption of Electronic Records Management Systems (ERMS), with particular attention to the development of knowledge concerning organizational adoption, implementation, utilization, and emerging digital practices. The review covered publications from 2008 to 2025, systematically retrieved from the Scopus database using advanced searches based on the principal terms "ERMS," "electronic records management system," and "records management." After applying predefined eligibility criteria, 55 primary publications formed the final analytical dataset. Rather than examining the literature as a single body of knowledge, publication output and research development were organized chronologically to identify changes in scholarly productivity, research focus, methodological orientation, adoption concerns, and technological development. This approach provides a temporal understanding of how ERMS research has progressed and how organizational requirements surrounding electronic records have changed within increasingly digital environments.

The chronological distribution revealed three distinctive developmental phases. The first phase, Early Research Expansion and Consolidation (2008-2013), accounted for 31 publications (56.4%) and represented the strongest concentration of research activity. Scholarship during this period was mainly concerned with fundamental implementation issues, including system selection, records capture, classification, usability, employee training, managerial support, organizational readiness, workflow requirements, and the suitability of ERMS for institutional operations. The second phase, Research Dormancy and Limited Development (2014-2019), contained only six publications (10.9%), indicating a substantial reduction in explicit ERMS-focused research. Despite lower productivity, this period contributed to conceptual development by giving greater consideration to behavioral intention, system compatibility,

technology acceptance, information and service quality, organizational conditions, and structured adoption frameworks. The third phase, Research Resurgence and Contemporary Reorientation (2020-2025), comprised 18 publications (32.7%) and demonstrated renewed research interest. During this period, ERMS scholarship expanded toward digital transformation, interoperability, cloud environments, cybersecurity, remote access, business continuity, accountability, regulatory requirements, system integration, and increasingly sophisticated digital technologies.

Several patterns across the three phases demonstrate the gradual maturation of ERMS research. Early investigations were predominantly concerned with whether electronic systems could successfully replace or complement conventional recordkeeping processes and how users could be encouraged to adopt such systems. Later studies increasingly recognized adoption as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by interactions among technological characteristics, individual behavior, organizational resources, institutional arrangements, and external conditions. Methodological development also became more evident through the use of behavioral theories, quantitative modeling, mixed-methods approaches, case studies, expert validation, and structured technology-adoption frameworks. More recent research further extends this development by considering cloud-enabled records environments, web-based systems, security and interoperability, alongside emerging interest in artificial intelligence-supported activities. The emergence of AI applications, particularly within complex information and electronic resource workflows, suggests a new direction in which automation and intelligent technologies may complement traditional ERMS functions. Nevertheless, the evidence also demonstrates that technological advancement alone does not ensure successful adoption, as training deficiencies, inadequate infrastructure, financial constraints, policy weaknesses, interoperability problems, organizational resistance, and insufficient management support continue to influence implementation and effective utilization.

The literature's chronological organization is an important contribution of this review. Unlike a conventional thematic synthesis, which primarily groups studies by conceptual similarities, the time-based approach shows when particular research concerns became prominent, declined, or re-emerged under changing organizational and technological conditions. The high–low–resurgence publication pattern would be less apparent if the literature were examined without temporal differentiation. Chronological clustering also reveals the transition from implementation-oriented research to behavioral and organizational explanations, and subsequently to digitally integrated, technology-intensive environments. Consequently, the three-phase structure provides a systematic perspective for understanding both continuity and transformation within ERMS scholarship. It further demonstrates that periods of lower publication productivity should not automatically be interpreted as a lack of development, since conceptual refinement and theoretical consolidation may occur even when publication volume remains limited.

The findings have practical implications for organizations considering adopting, upgrading, or integrating ERMS. Effective implementation requires more than technological acquisition and should incorporate organizational readiness, management commitment, employee participation, continuous training, information quality, appropriate classification structures, security controls, regulatory compliance, interoperability, and sufficient technological and financial resources. Organizations should also evaluate ERMS as part of broader digital transformation and information-governance strategies rather than as isolated recordkeeping applications. Future system development may increasingly incorporate cloud technologies,

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intelligent automation, AI-assisted classification and retrieval, advanced security mechanisms, and integration with wider organizational information systems. From a research perspective, greater attention is required to examine how these emerging technologies influence user acceptance, records authenticity, privacy, accountability, system trust, organizational performance, and long-term digital preservation. Comparative research involving different industries, organizational sizes, institutional environments, and developed and developing economies would further strengthen understanding of contextual differences in ERMS adoption.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. The review relied exclusively on Scopus, so relevant studies indexed only in other databases may not have been included. Predefined keywords and database indexing terminology also determined the retrieval process; consequently, relevant research using alternative concepts such as electronic document and records management, enterprise content management, digital recordkeeping, or related information-governance terminology may have been overlooked. Restricting the analysis to the 2008-2025 period further limits interpretation beyond that timeframe. In addition, the acronym ERMS can represent concepts unrelated to electronic records management in certain disciplines, emphasizing the importance of careful relevance screening. Future reviews could integrate Scopus with Web of Science and other established databases, broaden terminology, incorporate interdisciplinary evidence, and compare chronological patterns across sectors and geographical regions. Empirical studies should also investigate ERMS adoption within real organizational situations and examine the long-term effects of AI, cloud computing, automation, interoperability, and evolving regulatory requirements.

In conclusion, the chronological evidence demonstrates that ERMS research has developed through identifiable periods of expansion, limited activity, and contemporary resurgence, accompanied by substantial changes in research priorities and technological context. ERMS has progressively moved beyond its earlier role as an operational recordkeeping solution toward a broader organizational infrastructure that supports information governance, accountability, continuity, security, and digital transformation. Persistent human, organizational, technological, and regulatory barriers nevertheless demonstrate that effective adoption remains an evolving research and management challenge. Chronological reviews are therefore valuable for capturing the dynamic character of scientific development, as time-based analysis reveals not only what knowledge exists but also how research priorities, methods, technologies, and practical concerns change across periods. Such understanding provides an evidence-based foundation for directing future ERMS research, supporting responsible technological innovation, and strengthening sustainable electronic records management within increasingly digital organizations.

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