TUTOR and TUTEE: back to solitary gateway

DR. KUMUD SAXENA[1], RITU SHREE[2], SATYAM SINGH[3], SHREYA YADAV[4], TUSHAR AGGARWAL[5]

[1]Head of the department, Information Technology Department, NIET, Greater Noida

[2]Student, B.Tech (Information Technology), NIET, Greater Noida

[3]Student, B.Tech (Information Technology), NIET, Greater Noida

[4]Student, B.Tech (Information Technology), NIET, Greater Noida

Abstract-. Student Information Management System (SIMS) provides a simple interface for maintenance of student information. It can be used by educational institutes or colleges to maintain the records of students easily. The creation and management of accurate, up-to-date information regarding a students' academic career is critically important in the university as well as colleges.Student information system deals with all kind of student details, academic related reports, college details, course details, curriculum, batch details, placement details and other resource related details too.

I. BACKGROUND

˘Gaining knowledge, learning new science and contributing to the society by continuously sharing the experience and knowledge we have are no longer limited to the boundaries of a class room. Currently, the number of those who can access the Internet is dramatically increasing even in countries with poor economic performances.

That has led to acceleration in producing and transforming information processes.

Universities are considered mainly among the top learning institutions which growingly deal with various types of specializations and sciences. It is recommended for each and every university to ease the access into the scientific articles, researches and latest knowledge updates for its students. This could be achieved by designing and having an online website which is usually subscribed to many other research websites. In addition, and as a response to the growing number of university enrolled students, there is a basic need to organize the information related to the different students' affairs and to enable them doing their important activities. Thus, a sub university website called student supporting system or student portal usually exist in most of universities websites. Some of the utilities students can do are; adding and dropping courses, checking exams' results, checking the confirmation slip, reviewing the study plan and many other things.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Students who have done their bachelor degree in international Islamic university- Malaysia (IIUM) and then joined Graduate School of Management (GSM) to complete their master degree can experience the different level of performance of their student portals. Many of them believe that their current student portal performance is not up to their expectation. Additionally, there are some complains about IIUM student portal services which have been shared on Facebook.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

In our competitive world, every organization is recommended to have core competencies where it can offer something different and unique compared to other rivals. This factor might result in attracting more customers eventually contribute to the achievement of organization's goals. There are many private and governmental universities and schools in Malaysia, and to ensure sustainability and growth for them, huge concerns should be paid to the quality management in order to satisfy the customers' needs as much as possible. One of the general universities students' needs is to have an effective, yet, a friendly user student supporting system. If this need is continuously not being fulfilled in a good way, a school's reputation might be negatively affected; this is especially with the availability of other good alternatives. If GSM administration keeps their current student portal as it is and does not work on improving it, there are possibilities of a decline in the number of students who are thinking to join this institution in the near future as they would be advice by their senior friends. Thus, this research is very important for GSM management in order to realize the undesirable consequences they may have in case their student supporting system remains the same.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research is trying to answer the following questions:
1- How student portal service performance is being perceived by its users in IIUM and GSM?

2- How student's perception regarding current student portal would affect your advice to other new students who consider enrolling in your university?

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

People in general and even some studies tend not to clearly being aware of the differences between data, information and knowledge (Bigliardi, 2010). Data and information in particular are often used as synonymous terms. However, data has no functionality or benefits unless human interpretation is being involved in transferring these data into information that is useful and has functionality. Furthermore, information aims at reducing the level of uncertainty by making people informed and having knowledge about things, from this point it can be said that information is knowledge but not all knowledge is information (Borglund, Engvall, 2014). Different authors have different views when it comes to distinguish between information and knowledge. According to Bigliardi, Galati, Petroni (2014), knowledge is

information where it is considered as seeds that aim eventually to modify or change events or something, as well as changing human being either to the better or even to the worse. Quintane Casselman Reiche and Nylun (2011) believe that there are no differences between ideas, information and knowledge if we talk about organizational and institutional level. Knowledge in the organization is the existing information and the existing information comes through ideas.

Knowledge management in learning institutions is the process of making use of shared lessons, practices, activities, procedures and materials related to the stakeholders' interest or students' affairs efficiently (Massingham, 2014).

VI. INSTITUTIONAL PORTAL

It has done a study on Shanghai Jiao Tong University Library aimed to assess its integrated services, functions and resources to meet information needs for students. They came out with a framework that summaries the roles of student portal and its importance in delivering needed information and knowledge to students .The framework consists of four elements which are; Library services, Subject services, Feedback and future work and Personalization services in which the last eases for students to get information related to their study affairs such as course administration and grades checking. It have established a conceptual model of web portal for the University of Tébessa in Algeria. In explaining this model, they regarded three main functions for the student portal. The first is information portal where it enables students to access documents, articles, case studies and external and internal database. The second function is the application portal which provides students with their information profile. The third is standby portal. Its objective is to make students able to enhance the database.

Not all different located universities have the same willingness to have student portal. Some of universities do not have at all any student supporting system. A study was conducted to examine the usage of student portal for the Southern African Development Community universities. The

finding of this study was that every one out of ten universities has a student portal. The remaining universities have only general websites which aim at attracting new students to be enrolled in their universities . However, the case is different in Malaysia where most of the universities have student portal. It have specifically taken the University of Technology MARA in Malaysia as case study to evaluate the effectiveness of library portal in providing the services for its students. The study administrated that library portal met the students' expectations in terms of providing accurate, reliable, timely and comprehensive information.

It has conducted a study in Oman to investigate the impacts of having corporate portal in academic institutions on their performance. The study's result based on questioners being distributed among the institutional academic instructors. The researcher had six hypotheses which assumed that the portal usage will eventually result in enhancing effectiveness, efficiency, innovation, learning, adaptability and satisfaction of the learning institutions. All of these hypotheses were supported after conducting the research. On other the other hand, some studies have showed that having student portal does not necessarily imply the good performance of learning institutions. A comparative study was conducted on three Iranian universities to assess the impact of using student portal on the general universities performance. The study results were considered as shocks for researchers as they found that the awareness of students in these three universities was less than the average universities students' awareness in terms of using integrated digital portal. The both factors, training students on how to properly use supporting system plus providing a proper student portal will contribute to enhance the university performance (Babalhavaeji an Anaraki, 2013).

VII. FEATURES REQUIRED

Universities' Students look for portals that bring together different sources of information related to their affairs and matters and be easy to access (Singh and Mahajan, 2010). Many beneficial lessons were gained from the research that was conducted on Tébessa portal. They have found that there are other interesting feathers to gain in the future, one of these features is the adaption to all students profiles and easing the access for all authorized users to integrate into scalable system. They intended to have this feature as the Tébessa portal had no specific online storage related to their personal information and integration.

A wide study was done in Emirate University to examine the preferences that students seek in regards to the course administration. The study indicated that students want to easily access the web by keying in the user name and password once, add and drop courses, receive notification related to courses from instructors and administrators, easy to save information and updates, uploading material related to courses and lastly being able to modify information in your profile (Zaneldin, 2011). Nevertheless, (Neubauer and Piguet, 2009) in their study

concluded that there is no clear and particular standards for required student portal features. They believe that users themselves are the only people who should decide on the features and portal design required. Users' opinions and needs should be taken from the users directly via different instruments such as interviews or questionnaires.

VIII. STUDENT SATISFACTION

(Masrek, Jamaludin and Mukhtar, 2010) explained in their study that a student satisfaction refers to the level of the pleasure or displeasure that a student feels when his/her needs being met or not. The more fulfilled students' needs are the higher level of satisfaction students have. The study showed that UiTM students got more satisfied with the library portal because it helped them to more improve and increase their study productivity and performance. Students in general do not concern about instruments being used to achieve their requirements as much as they concern about getting things achieved. The strongest element of having students satisfied in School of Nursing and Midwifery is the good perception that students had toward the academic staff who is interested in helping their students throughout their learning progress. Achieving student needs increase their satisfaction level as well as their productivity (Smith and Rogers, 2011).

Universities students' needs can be explained in many different aspects. They might be related to the human factor or even to technological one. A study was conducted in Bangladesh to assess students' satisfaction in two public universities in regards of the usage of the electronic information resources. The finding administrated that all students are not satisfied at all about their supporting academic system. They identified several main problems which embodies in the very limited number of computers and having very poor IT infrastructure. Lacking to provide the required basic electronic needs had led to have students much less capable to access the library and student portal. The consequences of the above mentioned factors have made student unwilling and unsatisfied to use the information sources (Ahmed, 2013). However, the results of another study which aimed basically to evaluate the level of postgraduate students were totally different compared with two examples mentioned of Bangladeshi universities. (Ahmed and Amjad, 2014) conducted their study in two Pakistani universities. The results clearly showed that more than 80% were very satisfied with the information sources systems. The study emphasizes that the more the students satisfied is the more a university productive.

IX. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study aims to broaden our knowledge about the quality performance of student portal among students. Initially, It is concerned to compare the different student portal performances of International Islamic University- Malaysia (IIUM) and the Graduate School of Management (GSM) by interviewing users (students) of both student portals.

Population and Participants

The participants of this research are 40 students. 20 of them are currently master students in graduate school of management (GSM). They use a student portal that is created for GSM students only. The other 20 students are undergraduate students currently studying in faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. They are using a student portal that has been created for all IIUM students. That is why we find it logical not to specify our study for post-graduate students only. This is because we are mainly concerned about the usage of both student portals regardless of the academic level of students.

This study applied the quantitative method where Questionnaire survey was designed and distributed among a random sample. This survey contains questions that analyze the perception of students towards their student portal and provides answers which are based on their own understanding and experience.

Data Collection

Pilot test of 4 students was done where the questionnaire survey was improved 4 times. The final draft involve 25 items that basically aim to get answers related to the student portal performance, the students' feedback given to management and the impact of having good or bad student's portal on new students who think of where to enroll for their undergraduate and master studies. The questionnaire survey was printed on 2 pages and distributed as hard copies. We approached some students who were having group discussions and other students sitting in the GSM resource room. It took almost 5 minutes from each participant to fill up the survey.

Data Analysis

In this research, we used SPSS software as an instrument to analyze collected data. We did key in all data into the SPSS software and we managed to find the *Significance*, *Mean* and *Standard Deviation* of every item included in the survey questionnaire.

Data measurement scale

Among the 25 items included in the survey, there were 11 items assessing the quality services in the two comparative institutions. Participants had to choose on how good each service is based on the 5 scales which are very good, good, average, bad and very bad. Another 10 items used the same 5 scales but this time to assess how important each service is to them. The scale starts with very important followed by, important, average, unimportant and very unimportant. The remaining items were formed in a way that can be answered as Yes or No answers.

Findings

H_1: student portal of GSM does not meet its users' expectations.

Answers obtained from our designed questionnaire answered all questions stated in the problem statement. Moreover, we had to ask our respondents some related questions which we believe would help us in making our analysis and come up with a meaningful conclusion. The frequency of using students' portals among IIUM students tends to be more than that of GSM students in a daily basis (15% against 5%). Results show an equal response from students in both institutions when it comes to weekly use of student portal (45% each). The percentage of IIUM students who use their student portal in a

monthly basis is 8% which is quite higher than that of GSM students who have a percentage of 6% only. Finally, GSM tend to have some students who actually refer to their student portal once per trimester which cannot be applied on IIUM students because all of them actually tend to use their portals more than one time per semester. In conclusion, IIUM students have the tendency of using their student portals more than GSM students. This is based on the percentage obtained from daily using basis.

The second part of our questionnaire measures how IIUM and GSM students perceive various services provided in their students portals. The table below shows how different attributes are graded by students from both institutions. For illustration,

the availability of examination timetable for IIUM students' respondents has a *Mean* of 3.90 out of 5.00 which is quite different than GSM students' respondents who have a *Mean* of 3.00 out of 5.00. Another illustration is in terms of the ability to add and drop courses provided in student portals, whereas, IIUM students have a *Mean* of 2.15 out of 5.00 and GSM students have a *Mean* of 3.60 out of 5.00 which shows significant different perceptions over this particular service. In conclusion, IIUM respondents show a *Mean* of 3.55 out of 5.00 as their own overall perceptions on IIUM student portal quality and GSM respondents show a Mean of 3.30 out of 5.00 of their own.

X.   CONCLUSION

Quality of student portal services provided for IIUM as well as GSM students have a significant impact on how students perceive their educational institution at large. Technical factors such as; type of service provided as well as managerial factors such as; reacting to feedback received from students are critical in shaping students' overall perceptions on their respective institution. This is so because student portals are essential for all students to be used one time or another and the experiences they go through when using them usually lasts for long. It is important for IIUM as well as GSM to better their understanding of the services needed by their students, creating an encouraging system for feedback to be given by students and finally making

use of received feedback the most effective and efficient way possible.

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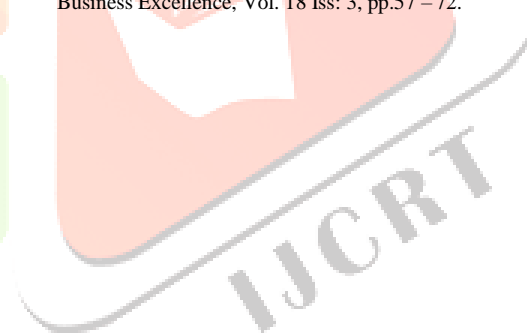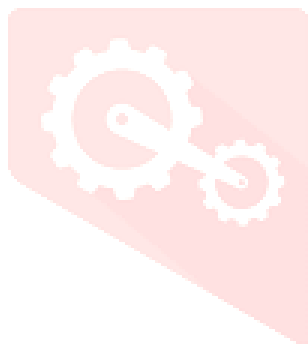
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