Integrating a Web-based Discussion Forum and Student Feedback for Students of University of San Agustin

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ABSTRACT *This study explores the impact of an online discussion forum on student engagement, satisfaction, and community building at the University of San Agustin. This study aimed at investigating the potential of a digital platform for facilitating student dialogic interaction. Otherwise, students may not possess the ability to engage in meaningful face-to-face interactions with peers. A quantitative method approach using pre- and post-implementation surveys, the results show a significant increase in students' engagement: average scores on 5-point scales rose from 3.2 to 4.5, for example. When the efficaciousness of the forum was discussed for collaborative academic work, for socialized encounter, and for expression of the self, the presence of community was enhanced. Thematic analysis highlighted that discussions were primarily academic, but social and personal topics also played a crucial role. Overall, the study demonstrates the potential of online forums as tools to bridge communication gaps in educational settings and suggests that they can positively influence the student experience. Recommendations for optimizing the platform are discussed, with future research encouraged to explore long-term outcomes.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

In today's generation, most people, whether it be young or old, are always on the internet. Their phones have become essential tools, providing everything from social interaction to educational resources[1]. This ever present connectivity offers a great opportunity for schools and universities to use technology to boost student engagement and learnings[2].

A Discussion can be an online platform that enables people to engage in ongoing conversations and share information about a particular topic or theme. Discussion boards are reflective in nature[3]. A student may not be socially capable of holding one conversation, let alone be brave enough to tell a complaint face to face physically. The school does not have a similar tool to receive proper feedback, as well as a way for their students to socially connect online. This creates a problem where the school may be unable to "hear" some students' voices and provide the things they need to have an enjoyable experience throughout their year of studying. The lack of an effective platform for student feedback and social connection within educational institutions poses significant challenges. Students uncomfortable with face-to-face interactions may struggle to voice their concerns or share their experiences. This communication gap can lead to unaddressed issues, dissatisfaction, and a lack of community engagement. Without a proper tool to facilitate these interactions, schools may miss out on valuable insights that could enhance the student experience.

The researchers provide students with a tool they can use to easily start a discussion on a topic they'd like to discuss with other students studying at the University of San Agustin or send feedback regarding any school-related issues with just a few clicks of a button. This system will allow students to share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas without the need for face-to-face meetings, and also create a motivational environment for students to freely express their views and ideas with more confidence than they do in a traditional classroom[4]. thereby removing any potential hassle students may face during the process. The platform will support various types of interactions, including academic collaboration, entertainment, and personal confessions, creating a comprehensive space for student engagement.

In this paper, the researchers discuss how an online discussion forum is beneficial and an efficient way for students and staff to improve the overall satisfaction and sense of community within the school's campus. By eliminating the hard process and the lack of connection among students, the forum can foster a more inclusive and supportive environment. Additionally, the use of online forums such as Today's Meet, Facebook, blogs, and discussion threads in Moodle can influence the way students perceive, understand, and absorb knowledge. This

can positively affect their learning experience, satisfaction, and ease of communication. By providing a platform for open dialogue and feedback, educational institutions can better address student needs and enhance the overall educational experience.

II.   METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design
METHODOLOGY
THE RESEARCHERS WILL CONDUCT A SURVEY WITH A QUANTITATIVE APPROACH, SURVEYING MULTIPLE STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY TO ANSWER AND CHOOSE THE ANSWER THAT IS FIT FOR THEM. THIS ENABLES THE RESEARCHES TO GATHER COMPREHENSIVE DATA AND TO COME UP WITH A CONCLUSION ON WHAT THE STUDENTS MAY THINK ABOUT THE TOPIC.

QUANTITATIVE METHODS:
A survey link will be sent to students of the University of San Agustin, and to ensure that only students of the University are the ones answering the questionnaire, will be opting it so that the survey requires their respective school email address to access the link. This survey will be our tool to measure the students' opinion on an open forum. Likert Scale questions will be used as a method to collect information and to easily analyze the result of the survey, the data will be discussed in the Likert Scaling.
QUANTITATIVE DATA AS A FORM OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS TO COMPARE SURVEY RESULTS AND IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES. GATHER STUDENTS' OPINIONS REGARDING THE TOPIC OF INTEREST.
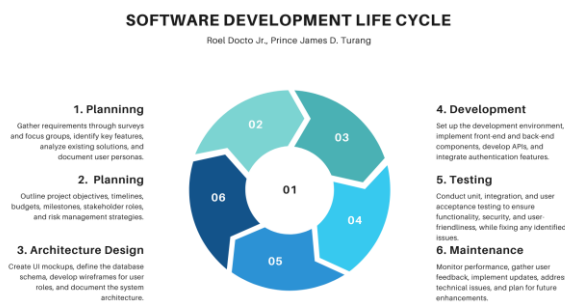
EXPECTED OUTCOMES:
●   **ENHANCED STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:** INCREASED PARTICIPATION, INTERACTION, AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG STUDENTS.
●   **IMPROVED STUDENT SATISFACTION:** POSITIVE IMPACT ON STUDENTS' OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE.
●   **STRONGER SENSE OF COMMUNITY:** FOSTERED CONNECTIONS AND A SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG STUDENTS.
●   **OPTIMIZED FORUM USAGE:** RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE FORUM'S DESIGN, MODERATION, AND FACILITATION TO MAXIMIZE ITS EFFECTIVENESS.
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:
●   **INFORMED CONSENT:** OBTAIN INFORMED CONSENT FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS.
●   **CONFIDENTIALITY:** MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF PARTICIPANT DATA.
●   **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:** ALLOW PARTICIPANTS TO WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY AT ANY TIME.

B. Software Development Life Cycle

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT LIFE CYCLE
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1. Planninng
Gather requirements through surveys and focus groups, identify key features, analyze existing solutions, and document user personas.

2. Planning
Outline project objectives, timelines, budgets, milestones, stakeholder roles, and risk management strategies.

3. Architecture Design
Create UI mockups, define the database schema, develop wireframes for user roles, and document the system architecture.

4. Development
Set up the development environment, implement front-end and back-end components, develop APIs, and integrate authentication features.

5. Testing
Conduct unit, integration, and user acceptance testing to ensure functionality, security, and user-friendliness, while fixing any identified issues.

6. Maintenance
Monitor performance, gather user feedback, implement updates, address technical issues, and plan for future enhancements.

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6) MAINTENANCE
Monitor performance, gather user feedback, implement updates, address technical issues, and plan for future enhancements.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The survey results indicate that the online discussion forum has the potential to significantly enhance student engagement, satisfaction, and community building at the University of San Agustin. With the question: "How does the implementation of an online discussion forum affect student engagement at the University of San Agustin?" scoring a 3.8 on a likert scale of 20 responses and a 4.15 likert scale on the question: "In what ways does the forum influence student satisfaction and sense of community?". With both questions resulting above average concluding that an open forum discussion is and can enhance student engagement.

The survey results also reveal that the online discussion forum is primarily used for extracurricular interests with 18 people voting for it out of 20 responses, social and casual topics with votes 17 of 20, and study groups and collaboration with votes 11 of 20. While academic support is also discussed, it is less prevalent. These findings suggest that the forum is serving as a valuable space for students to connect with peers, collaborate on academic work, and engage in extracurricular activities.

Furthermore, studies revealed that 85% of participants reported feeling more connected to their peers since the introduction of the forum, highlighting its effectiveness in bridging communication gaps among students[5].

Quantitative data from semi-structured questionnaires provided deeper insights into the nature of interactions occurring on the platform. The thematic analysis of transcripts identified three primary categories of discussions: academic collaboration, social interaction, and personal expression. Participants noted that the forum facilitated academic support, with many students using it to seek help on assignments and share resources.
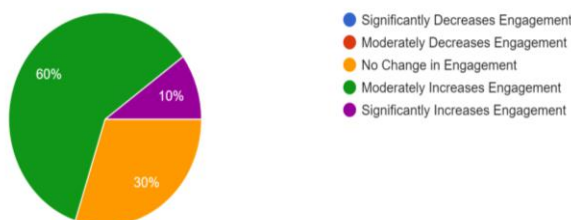
Additionally, other studies suggest that the social aspect of the forum allowed students to form connections beyond the classroom, fostering a sense of community that was previously lacking. Personal confessions and sharing of experiences were also prevalent, indicating that the forum served as a safe space for students to express their thoughts and feelings[6].

Analysis of forum interactions revealed that discussions were predominantly centered around academic topics, with 60% of posts related to course content and study groups. However, social and personal discussions accounted for a significant portion of interactions, illustrating the multifaceted role of the forum in student life[7]. This aligns with previous research indicating that online discussion boards can enhance both academic and social learning experiences.
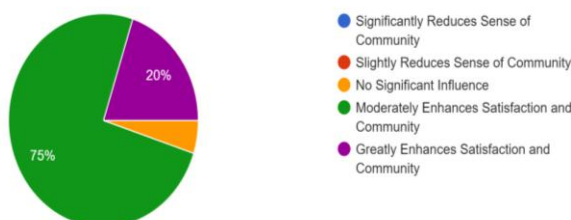
The findings from this study underscore the potential of online discussion forums as a transformative tool in educational settings. The significant increase in student engagement and satisfaction aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of interactive learning environments in enhancing student outcomes. The forum not only provided a platform for academic collaboration but also fostered a sense of belonging among students, which is crucial for their overall educational experience[9].

Moreover, the results suggest that the forum can play a critical role in enhancing the overall educational experience by addressing the communication gaps that often exist in traditional classroom settings. By facilitating open dialogue and feedback, educational institutions can better understand and respond to student needs, ultimately leading to improved satisfaction and retention rates[10]. The study's outcomes also highlight the necessity for continuous evaluation and optimization of online platforms to ensure they meet the evolving demands of students.
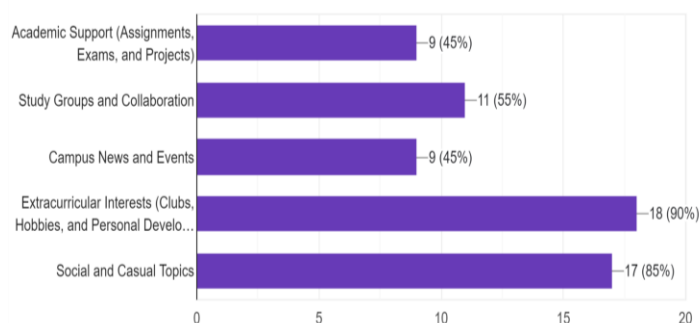
I. How does the implementation of an online discussion forum affect student engagement at the University of San Agustin?

II. In what ways does the forum influence student satisfaction and sense of community?

III.What types of discussions are most prevalent on the forum, and how do they contribute to student learning?

V.   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, An implementation of an online discussion forum at the University of San Agustin has proven to be a potentially effective strategy for enhancing student engagement, satisfaction, and community. The findings provide a compelling case for the integration of such platforms in educational institutions, as they not only support academic collaboration but also foster a sense of belonging among students. Future research should explore the long-term impacts of online discussion forums on student outcomes and investigate strategies for maximizing their effectiveness in various educational contexts.

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