Undergraduate Students’ Satisfaction with the Use of Web Portals

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ABSTRACT

This study examined undergraduate students’ satisfaction with web portals and considers the benefits of using the portal and the problems associated with the use of portal. A pure quantitative method using descriptive survey approach is adopted. A questionnaire was used for data collection. Collected data was analysed using percentages and frequency count; multiple correlation and regression. The results reveal that students were generally satisfied with the e-portal system with, 89.3% indicating they were adequately satisfied, satisfied, and moderately satisfied. On the other hand, 11.1% had little satisfaction with the portal. Information/content quality, system quality, and ease of use were indicated to determine users’ satisfaction. Furthermore, the entire user satisfaction dimensions positively and significantly correlate with and predict students’ satisfaction with the web-portal. The study concluded by pointing out the implications and the recommendations based on the findings for the improvement of the students’ web portal.

Keywords: Information System, Internet, Intranet, Nigeria, System Satisfaction, Undergraduate Students, University of Ilorin, Users’ Satisfaction, Web Portal

INTRODUCTION

A portal is an application that primarily integrates the organisation’s information and provides users with a single interface. A student portal is a web-based interface to access personalized information, resources, applications, and education/academic options with which students can reach a range of internal and external sources through a network connection in a password-protected setting. The use of portals by university students has been growing steadily and – despite many restrictions such as information technology (IT) budgets – investments in portal solutions are still growing. As it has been observed, portal projects are usually complex, time and cost-consuming, and entail a high failure risk. Notwithstanding, the university of Ilorin Nigeria has embarked on the initiative of creating portal for all her students for the past five years and lots of resources have been invested on the project and students have been enjoying the benefits. However, since its creation; there has been no attempt to examine whether or not students are satisfied with the

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portal. If this is done, it is assumed the results will lead to better improvement and use of the portal.

The assessment of portal benefits is, however, often problematic, since common cost-benefit analysis methods do not take intangible impacts and intervening environmental variables into account. Similarly, measuring the success of information systems (IS) of which a portal is part and understanding the return on investments in IT is the focus of a large and growing body of research (Dehning & Richardson, 2002). Success of IS cannot be attributed to a single factor but rather to many including user satisfaction, user acceptance, system quality, service quality, etc.

Enormous benefits and advantages are associated with the implementation of a university portal. Karim and Masrek (2005) noted that portal implementations are helpful in helping enterprises achieve organizational effectiveness. According to Eisler (2003) other than providing a personalized and customizable user interface for accessing both internal and external information, a portal also provides the opportunity to create gateways to information and points of access for constituent groups. Bajec (2005) noted that today, almost all universities are either developing or purchasing portal solutions for their needs. Despite the growing interest in universities adopting portal technologies, studies addressing the issues of portal satisfaction are still very limited. Moreover, there are none or limited studies examining users’ satisfaction with e-portal. Extant literature has revealed several studies investigating employees’/staffs’ portal. However, evaluation and investigation of students’ portal have been neglected. Since the University of Ilorin has invested huge resources on the provision of portals for all her students, it is important to find out whether or not these students especially the undergraduate ones who constitute the majority are satisfied with its use.

The bulk of the studies that were found in the literature were mainly concerned with reporting the experiences of developing a university portal or setting plans and strategies for its development (see Jafari, 2003; Eisler, 2003; Thomas, 2003; Campbell & Aucoin, 2001; Frazee, Frazee, & Sharpe, 2003; Bishop, 2003). Hence, the purpose of this study is to examine the undergraduate students’ satisfaction with their web portals. It is expected that the outcomes from the study will lead to improvement and management of web portal for more functionality and efficiency at the university. In terms of contribution, it is expected that to advance the theoretical development in the area e-portal/information system in general and present a basis for further research in this field.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Web/E-Portal

The concept of an Internet Portal is a relatively recent phenomenon. It is seen as collection of information and services of an enterprise or as a community accessible to members through a single secure and customisable Web site. Relevant to internet portal is an enterprise portal. This is described as a user-centric enterprise-wide web-based system that incorporates a sophisticated integration of all types of information content and services (Harza, 2002). As a core organisational information system, it is often an internally developed and designed to suit the particular needs of organisational stakeholders (employees, clients, customers) (Kim, Chaudhury, & Rao, 2002). A campus portal otherwise refers to as students portal is an instance of an Enterprise Portal in a tertiary educational institution.

Portal applicable to tertiary institution of learning are usually referred to as ‘campus portal’. Campus portals were pioneered by UCLA in 1999, followed by similar systems at the University of Washington and the University of Buffalo (Moskowitz, 2001). Roberts-Witt (1999) claimed that there are three types or portals. These are: Data Portals which is concerned
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[www.igi-global.com/chapter/european-quality-observatory/17898?camid=4v1a](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/european-quality-observatory/17898?camid=4v1a)