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Faculty achievements amplifier platform: A data-secure solution for enhancing faculty recognition within higher education institutions

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Key words: Higher education institutions, Faculty recognition, Data security, ISO/IEC 25010 standards, UTAUT model, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Recognizing faculty achievements in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) fosters an environment of innovation and excellence. This study focuses on developing the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform for State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Philippines, emphasizing data security and user-friendly design to promote faculty recognition and collaboration. The study employed a developmental research methodology to design and develop the platform. It then utilized a descriptive research approach to assess its adherence to ISO/IEC 25010 standards and evaluate its acceptability based on the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model. Findings indicate the platform's strong adherence to ISO standards, demonstrating high software quality and meeting user expectations. It also received positive acceptance across UTAUT constructs, suggesting its effectiveness in enhancing faculty recognition and collaboration. The study concludes that the platform meets high-quality standards and enjoys broad user acceptability. Recommendations include regular updates based on user feedback and integrating advanced features to support academic innovation and recognition further. This study highlights the transformative potential of secure, user-friendly digital platforms in educational settings.

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INTRODUCTION

In Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), recognizing faculty accomplishments is essential for cultivating a culture of excellence, collaboration, and innovation (Bodner and Murphy, 2012; Benito *et al.*, 2018; Brennan, 2015). Effective recognition enhances faculty morale, motivates continued scholarly efforts, and supports valuable contributions to their fields. However, traditional methods of showcasing faculty achievements often suffer from inefficiency and fragmentation, failing to provide a comprehensive platform for displaying and leveraging these contributions. Safin and Kiner (2020) highlight the necessity of a centralized system to address these challenges, especially as universities prioritize faculty engagement, retention, and recognition.

This research is vital as it seeks to enhance the methods used to recognize and motivate faculty members within State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Philippines. Improving faculty recognition benefits faculty morale and institutional satisfaction (Sahl, 2017), leading to better educational outcomes and a stronger academic community.

Furthermore, strong recognition systems support institutional goals of retaining top talent and promoting a collaborative academic environment. The study addresses a pressing need for modern, efficient, and secure methods to manage and showcase faculty achievements by developing a data-secure and user-friendly platform.

Our knowledge and available tools for effectively recognizing faculty accomplishments securely and efficiently are needed. Existing systems are often fragmented and fail to provide the comprehensive functionalities academic institutions need. A unified platform tailored to the specific needs of academia is necessary for the effective recognition and motivation of faculty members, undermining the potential for promoting an environment of excellence and collaboration.

This study aims to design, develop, and deploy the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform to fill this gap. The platform offers features such as profile creation and management, achievement showcasing, progress tracking, social integration, faculty performance evaluation, and strong data security measures.

This study focuses on designing, developing, and evaluating the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform within the context of SUCs in the Philippines. While it aims to address critical aspects of faculty recognition and data security, the research is geographically limited to the Philippines and does not extend to other HEIs globally. Additionally, it only covers some possible functionalities of faculty recognition systems, concentrating on the most important features identified through preliminary research and user feedback.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework:

The study's theoretical and conceptual framework, as shown in Fig. 1, helps explain the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform's design, development, and deployment in academic institutions.

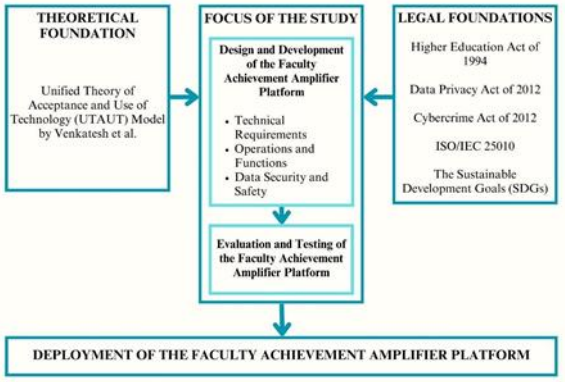


Fig. 1. Theoretical and conceptual framework of the study

It guides the research toward its objectives, ensuring alignment with theoretical principles, legal requirements, and the needs of the educational community. Based upon the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) Model by Venkatesh *et al.*, the research aims to analyze faculty members' acceptance and utilization of the platform, considering factors such as performance

expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Additionally, the study adheres to various legal frameworks, including the Data Privacy Act of 2012, implemented to safeguard citizens' personal information and prohibit unauthorized disclosure of data (Ching *et al.*, 2018). Integrating its principles into the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform ensures faculty members' data privacy.

Similarly, the Cybercrime Act of 2012 addresses cybersecurity concerns, aligning with the study's focus on information security (Heffron, 2014). Establishing the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) under the Higher Education Act of 1994 aims to enhance education accessibility and quality (Manuel, n.d.). The study adheres to CHED guidelines, mainly using approved evaluation instruments for faculty performance, particularly the JC no—three series 2022. Additionally, the study considers ISO/IEC 25010's software quality attributes, ensuring the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform meets industry standards (Kovács and Szabados, 2013). Furthermore, this research aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reflecting its commitment to promoting sustainable development within academic institutions. It precisely aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) by enhancing the quality of education through a culture of recognition and collaboration.

Recognizing and motivating employees also promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth, supporting SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). The development of innovative solutions like the "Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform" reflects a commitment to fostering innovation (SDG 9) and reducing inequalities (SDG 10) within academic communities. Moreover, the platform creates more inclusive and sustainable academic environments (SDG 11) by fostering collaboration and enhancing transparency.

Finally, by promoting fair and transparent institutional practices, the research builds solid and accountable institutions (SDG 16), thereby supporting peace and justice.

The study's focus encompasses two key phases: the design and development of the "Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform" and its subsequent evaluation and testing. The study defines the platform's technical requirements, operational functionalities, and data security measures in the design and development phase. It also outlines operational features such as profile creation and progress tracking and implements robust data security protocols to safeguard faculty achievements and evaluation data.

Following the design phase, evaluation and testing assess the platform's overall quality and acceptability. The study gathers insights into user satisfaction and system performance through user testing, surveys, and feedback mechanisms, ensuring the platform satisfies user expectations.

The anticipated output of the study is the successful deployment of the "Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform" within the academic institution. This deployment involves the platform's seamless integration into existing infrastructure, user training, and ongoing support to ensure effective utilization. The platform aims to provide faculty members with a user-friendly and efficient tool for showcasing their accomplishments, fostering collaboration, and enhancing institutional recognition while prioritizing robust data security and safety measures to safeguard sensitive information.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a combination of developmental and descriptive research methodologies. The study utilized a developmental research methodology to design and develop the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform. This approach ensures that the platform is systematically constructed, tested, and refined based on iterative feedback from its intended users, thus enhancing its functionality, usability, and overall effectiveness.

Additionally, the descriptive research approach focuses on gathering numerical data to analyze the effectiveness and acceptance of the platform among faculty members. The study was conducted at Jose Rizal Memorial State University (JRMSU)-Katipunan Campus, with seventy (70) respondents consisting of 41 regular faculty members, 23 visiting lecturers, and 6 IT professionals. These participants were selected based on their direct engagement and experience, essential to developing and utilizing the platform. The study gathered data using surveys and structured questionnaires adapted from Urera Jr. and Balahadia (2019) and Lescevica, Ginters, and Mazza (2013). These instruments were designed to capture specific aspects of the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform, such as compliance with quality standards and acceptability.

Following ethical standards, the study protected respondents' rights, privacy, and confidentiality. Every participant gave informed consent and remained anonymous during the study. The study also adhered to relevant ethical standards and obtained authorization from university authorities to conduct the research. Data analysis used are weighted mean and standard deviation. These statistical treatments allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the survey responses, enabling the researcher to identify trends, assess the platform's performance, and evaluate respondents' perceptions.

This study provided a structured and ethical approach to gathering and analyzing data, ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings regarding the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform and its acceptance within the academic community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The Design and Development of the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform

The fundamental components that supported the design and development of the platform were the technical requirements, operations and functions, and data security and safety.

Technical Requirements

A comprehensive technical needs assessment served as the basic specifications for the platform's design and development. This strategic approach ensured that the platform's core technical parts were addressed and the practical elements required for its effective implementation and user engagement were extensively considered.

System Design: System design is a complex process that entails the imaginative integration of scientific principles, human requirements, and logic to create objects with defined functions (White, 1998). It is an essential component of systems engineering that requires a thorough grasp of the design process and the application of numerous methods, strategies, and resources that support it. The system design principle can be applied to creating multi-functional products, as demonstrated in the design of a kid's product (Wen, 2001). According to Bonnema (2011), a technique called FunKey Architecting might be helpful for system architects during the early stages of design. Systems architecting is a process that entails the distribution of a system's top-level functions and performance.

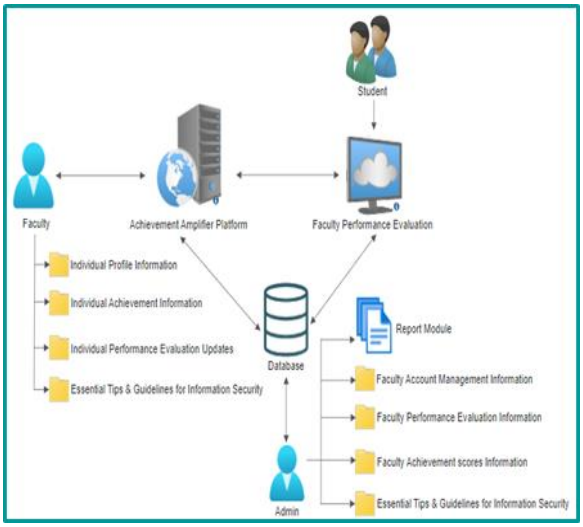
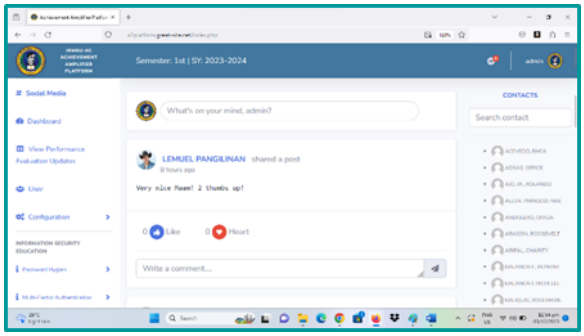


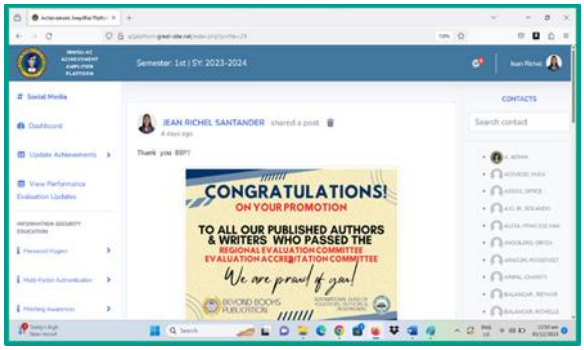
Fig. 2. System architecture

Fig. 2 shows the system architecture diagram, which illustrates that the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform is a web-based application with numerous components.

User accounts management, facilitating the faculty performance evaluation, and generating reports are the significant roles played by the platform administrator. Each faculty member has log-in details once the admin registers them in the platform. The faculty can then log into the system and create and manage their profile and achievements in instruction, research, extension, and professional development. The faculty can also monitor their progress, showcase their achievements, and interact with their peers. During the evaluation process, the admin opens the evaluation and shares the evaluation link with the students and supervisors.



a. dmin account: Home page



b. Faculty account: Home page

Fig. 3. The Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform Homepage

While the evaluation is ongoing, both the admin and the faculty can track the progress or status of the evaluation. Once the evaluation is done, the admin closes the evaluation and generates the reports, namely the summary of ratings for both the students and the supervisor and the summary of comments. The platform also offers an essential feature, which is information security education.

User Interface: On the technical front, the platform adopts a user-centric approach, prioritizing accessibility and usability. The User Interface (UI) design, characterized by its intuitiveness, ensures a seamless user experience through visually appealing graphics and streamlined navigation. With a responsive design, users can access the platform effortlessly, anytime and anywhere, using any device.

The Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform Homepage is shown in Fig. 3, with different interfaces for faculty and administrators indicated by (a) and (b), respectively. The Configuration Module and the User Module are the two unique modules in the admin account. On the other hand, the faculty account contains the faculty-only Update Achievements Module.

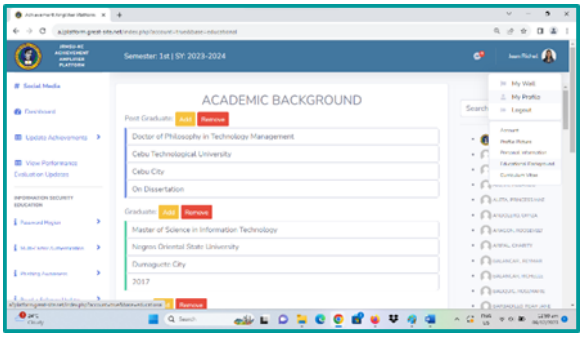
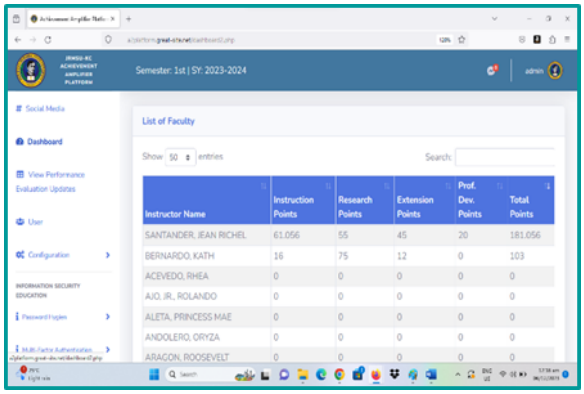


Fig. 4. Admin and faculty account: Profile management

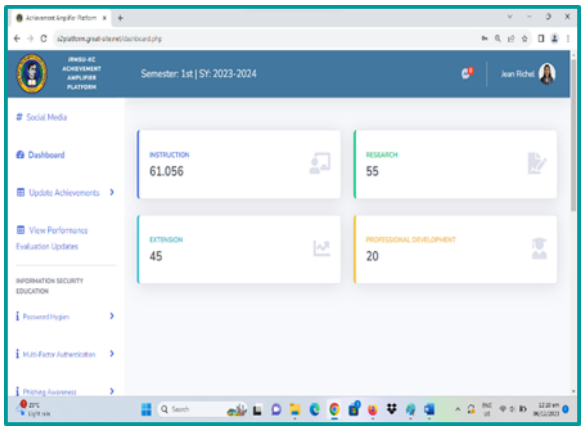
The Profile Management Module, as shown in Fig. 4, is a component where users input their details, academic background, achievements, and skills. This module serves as a comprehensive repository for user information, allowing individuals to create a detailed profile that reflects their academic and professional journey. Additionally, it offers the practical functionality of generating a printable curriculum vitae, streamlining the process for users who wish to capture and present their achievements in a traditional and professional format.

The Dashboard Module, depicted in Fig. 5, is a centralized hub for faculty members to monitor and track their earned scores or points derived from their respective achievements.

The module is designed with distinct functionalities for both admin and faculty accounts.



a. Admin account: Dashboard



b. Faculty account: Dashboard

Fig. 5. The dashboard module

For administrators, the Dashboard provides a comprehensive view of the faculty members, presenting a ranked list based on their accumulated points. This feature gives administrators a holistic perspective on faculty performance and accomplishments. On the other hand, faculty members accessing the platform through their accounts have a tailored view where they can exclusively observe their points. This personalized view ensures that faculty members can focus directly on their progress.

The Update Achievements Module, shown in Fig. 6, is an important function enabling faculty members to easily add, update, or remove their achievements from the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform. This dynamic interface module gives faculty members an easy-to-use area to manage their achievements and add supporting documents. In addition to being easy to use, this module has an automated point computation system built in, which makes it simple to measure and assess the relevancy of each achievement.

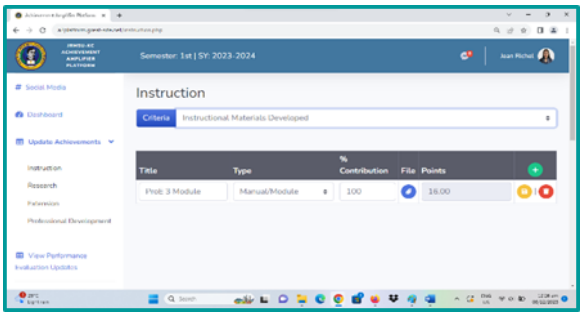
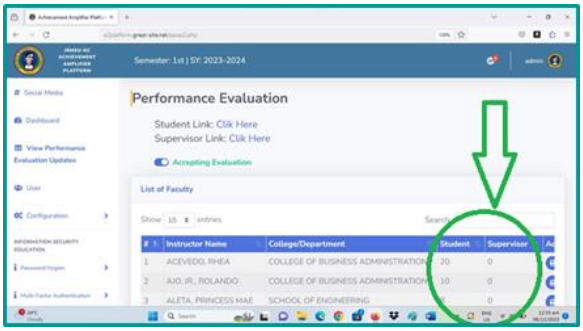
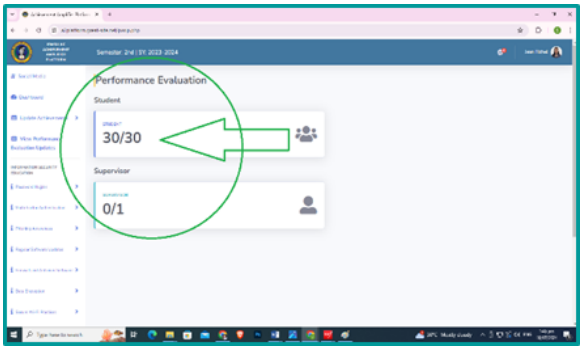


Fig. 6. Faculty account: Update achievements

The View Performance Evaluation Updates Module shown in Fig. 7 is a central hub where users can get updates and real-time status about ongoing evaluations. This module gives administrators the option to open or close assessments easily. Administrators can also quickly copy the evaluation link that can be effectively distributed to supervisors and students.



a. Admin account: View performance updates



b. Faculty account: View performance updates

Fig. 7. The view performance evaluation updates module

The User Management Module provides administrators with a range of features that enable

them to manage user accounts quickly, as illustrated in Fig. 8. The administrator can efficiently create new users, edit existing profiles, and deactivate accounts as necessary.

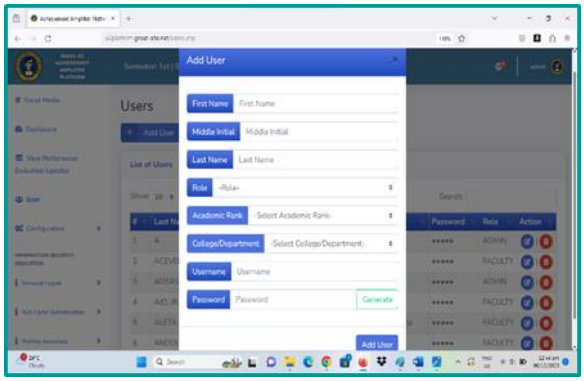


Fig. 8. Admin account: User management

Maintaining the platform's user base is made more accessible by the User Management Module, allowing administrators to add, edit, and remove users.

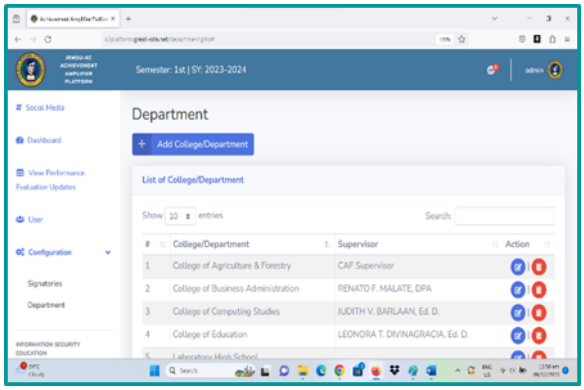


Fig. 9. Admin account: Configuration

The Configuration Module, shown in Fig. 9, allows administrators to monitor and control significant components of the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform easily. It serves as the control center for managing PASIP report signatories and configuring colleges or departments within the system.

Fig. 10 shows the Information Security Education Module as a gateway for users to access essential insights, tips, and guidelines about information security. It acts as an interactive hub where users can empower themselves with knowledge of best practices for safeguarding sensitive information.

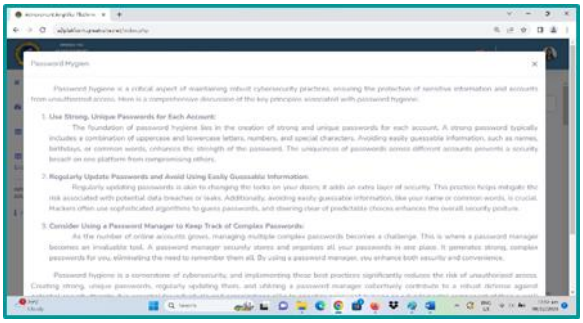


Fig. 10. Admin and faculty account: Information security education

Key features: The platform provides various features specifically designed to enhance and highlight faculty performance. These include the following:

1. Profile Creation and Management: empowers users to create and personalize their profiles, reflecting their unique accomplishments and skills.
2. Achievement Showcase: facilitates easily showcasing accomplishments in various media types, such as text, images, videos, and documents.
3. Progress Tracking: provides a dynamic visual representation of individual achievements, increasing drive and a sense of success.
4. Social Integration: enables users to connect and interact with each other through activities such as liking, commenting, and sharing accomplishments.
5. Faculty Performance Evaluation: facilitates faculty performance evaluation efficiently, consistently, and fairly across different colleges and departments in the University.
6. Information Security Education: creates a security-conscious culture within the institution and among individuals by equipping employees with the knowledge needed to protect sensitive information, lowering the chance of security breaches and cyberattacks.
7. User Authentication and Authorization: provides different user roles with varying levels of access and permissions.
8. Privacy, Security, and Data Protection: ensures that faculty achievements and evaluation data are secured and protected from unauthorized access through strong security measures and access controls.

Operational functionalities and processes

Fig. 11 displays the Use Case diagram, which provides a thorough visual illustration of the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform's capabilities and functionalities.

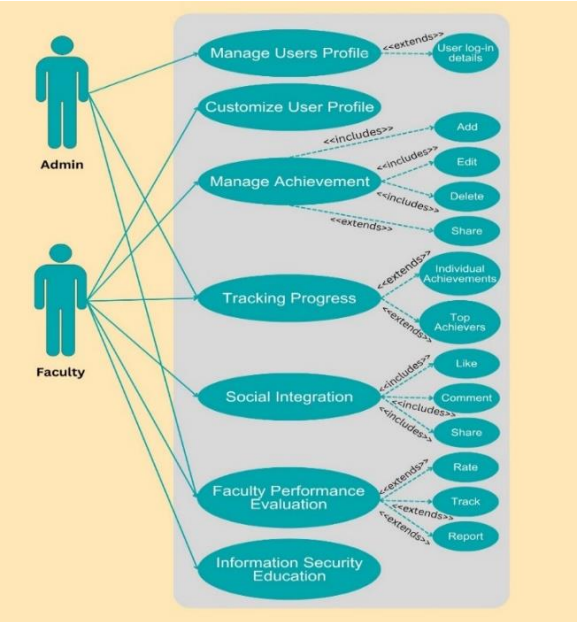


Fig. 11. The use case diagram of the faculty achievements amplifier platform

The use case diagram provides a holistic overview of the platform's functionalities, illustrating its responsiveness to user needs through interconnected modules within the system boundary. It is essential to comprehend the system's operations from the user's standpoint by outlining actors, use cases, and their relationships. Drawing on established methodologies (Gopalakrishnan *et al.*, 2011; Ab Hamid *et al.*, 2007; Seidl *et al.*, 2015), it explains the interactive features of the platform, showcasing external entities engaging in diverse use cases. This representation captures the interactions between users and the system, thereby clarifying the flow of actions within the platform. Moreover, the diagram facilitates understanding the system's communication dynamics with its environment, outlining how it interfaces with external elements through actors and use cases. Such insights are invaluable for system designers, developers, and stakeholders, providing a comprehensive understanding of user-system interactions and facilitating informed decision-making throughout the development and implementation phases.

The activity diagram shown in Fig. 12 serves as a visual narrative of the dynamic user interactions within the Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform. It illustrates an easy workflow for faculty members when they log in using their provided credentials. After gaining authentication, the faculty can perform a variety of empowering actions.

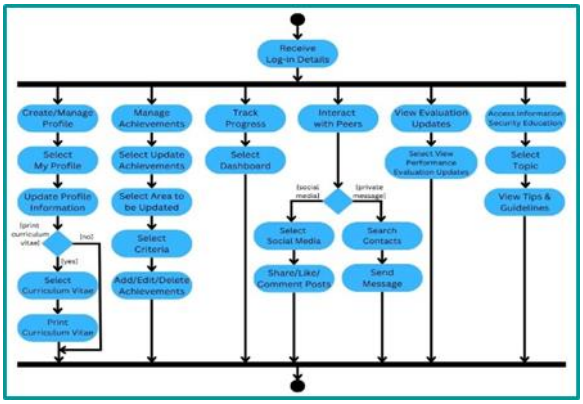


Fig. 12. The faculty achievements amplifier platform's activity diagram

The first node is creating and managing profiles, empowering faculty members to personalize digital identities. This feature allows them to create and compile their professional achievements and skills. The next node, the management of achievements, provides a space for faculty to effortlessly showcase their achievements through various media formats, reinforcing a culture of recognition and celebration. Tracking progress offers a visual representation of accomplishments. It is a motivational tool that fosters a sense of accomplishment and encourages continuous improvement. The node dedicated to interacting with peers amplifies collaboration and community building, facilitating likes, comments, and shared achievements. The diagram also illustrates the faculty's ability to stay informed when viewing evaluation updates through the node. This feature streamlines and enhances the faculty performance evaluation, ensuring transparency and efficiency. Additionally, the platform acknowledges the critical importance of information security with a dedicated node for accessing information security education. Faculty members can stay abreast of best practices, contributing to a security-conscious culture within the academic community.

Data security and safety

It is imperative to prioritize the protection and integrity of users' data during the platform's establishment and deployment. Strong security measures, access controls, and secure authentication methods are implemented to safeguard sensitive information. Password authentication helps ensure that only authorized people can access the platform and its tools. Users are granted access only if the password they enter matches the pre-established credentials associated with their account. Data access is also strictly regulated, using role-based permissions to ensure only individuals with authority can view and update specific data.

The faculty achievements amplifier platform's adherence to ISO/IEC 25010 software quality standards

The results of the user's evaluation of the platform's adherence to the standard are presented in Table 1. In evaluating the platform's adherence to ISO/IEC 25010 standards, the respondents thoroughly assessed and validated it according to its intended purpose, functions, and capabilities. Table 1 summarizes key quality characteristics of the platform as perceived by users.

Table 1. Users' perception of the platform's adherence to ISO/IEC 25010 standards

Quality characteristics	Mean	SD	Description
Functional suitability	4.42	0.05	Excellent
Performance efficiency	4.33	0.13	Excellent
Compatibility	3.94	0.13	Very good
Usability	4.06	0.35	Very good
Reliability	4.03	0.09	Very good
Security	4.08	0.31	Very good
Maintainability	3.66	0.38	Very good
Portability	4.27	0.06	Excellent

Functional Suitability, Performance Efficiency, and Portability are rated as "Excellent" with high mean scores (4.42, 4.33, and 4.27, respectively) and low standard deviations, indicating consistent high performance in these areas. Compatibility, Usability, Reliability, Security, and Maintainability received "Very Good" ratings with mean scores ranging from 3.66 to 4.08 and slightly higher standard deviations, suggesting some variability but overall strong performance. The adherence of the platform to the ISO standard emphasizes its strong quality across essential dimensions such as functionality, efficiency, and adaptability. It implies that users can rely on the platform to perform effectively in diverse operational environments, ensuring stable and efficient operation. However, acknowledging room for improvement in maintainability suggests that while the platform excels in core functionalities, future updates or modifications may require more effort than optimal. Despite this, the consistently high scores and low variability indicate a reliable product (Dolai and Shenmare, 2022), promising dependability over time and minimizing disruptions in use. Such reliability is crucial for enhancing user satisfaction and operational efficiency, aligning with the importance highlighted in McNamara and Kirakowski's (2011) research on developing user-friendly and reliable products. While improvements in maintainability are identified, the software's adherence to ISO standards reinforces its credibility and usability, supporting both user satisfaction and efficient operations in various contexts.

The level of acceptability of the faculty achievements amplifier platform

Table 2 illustrates platform users' UTAUT acceptance ratings. The platform's acceptability was assessed using UTAUT constructs. Mohamed, Sharif, Muhayiddin (2021), and Imtiaz (2018) note that the UTAUT paradigm is well-known for studying how people use new technologies.

Table 2. User's Perception of the Platform as to UTAUT Constructs

UTAUT Constructs	Mean	SD	Description
Performance expectancy	4.24	0.05	Highly acceptable
Effort expectancy	4.38	0.05	Highly acceptable
Social influence	4.20	0.01	Acceptable
Facilitating conditions	4.17	0.23	Acceptable

It indicates positive user perceptions of the platform. The Performance Expectancy (mean: 4.24, SD: 0.05) and the Effort Expectancy (mean: 4.38, SD: 0.05) are perceived as highly acceptable. It suggests that users see the platform as highly effective and easy to use, essential for user satisfaction and continuing

engagement. The scores for Social Influence (mean: 4.20, SD: 0.01) and Facilitating Conditions (mean: 4.17, SD: 0.23) are acceptable, indicating that users experience a positive social desire to use the platform and generally find the tools and support they require. The high mean scores across all constructs suggest a strong potential for user acceptance and continued platform use. However, the variability in Facilitating Conditions highlights a need for improved and more consistent support mechanisms to ensure all users feel adequately supported, which could further enhance overall satisfaction and utilization rates. While the platform is generally well-received, addressing the inconsistencies in support could maximize its effectiveness and user retention.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The study highlights the importance of faculty recognition and introduces the "Faculty Achievements Amplifier Platform" as a solution to current challenges. The findings reveal that the platform, designed with user-centric and intuitive functionalities, effectively amplifies faculty achievements and fosters a culture of recognition, collaboration, and innovation. The platform's features, such as profile creation, achievement showcasing, and social integration, align with SDGs, legal frameworks, and industry standards, ensuring data privacy, security, and usability. The platform's conformity to the ISO/IEC 25010 standard and its overall high level of acceptability across all constructs demonstrate its potential for widespread adoption and long-term user satisfaction.

The platform offers a comprehensive and continuous recognition system, addressing the inefficiencies of traditional methods. By providing a structured and visible recognition process, the platform can boost faculty motivation and retention, ultimately supporting institutional goals of promoting quality education, innovation, and sustainable practices. These advancements can significantly enhance faculty morale, retention, and collaboration within academic institutions, thereby contributing to a culture of excellence.

Future research is essential to investigate the long-term effects of the platform on faculty engagement and institutional performance. It should explore the scalability and adaptability of the platform across diverse academic environments. Expanding the scope of user feedback to capture a broader audience's reception will provide more comprehensive insights into the platform's effectiveness. Longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the platform's impact over time, ensuring its sustainability and relevance. Additionally, exploring additional features to augment functionality and user experience will be crucial for continuous improvement and adaptation to evolving academic needs.

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