**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

* 1. **Background of Study**

The Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC) Application is an innovative and comprehensive system threat aims to revolutionize how the university manages disciplinary cases. It's designed for simplicity and efficiency, enabling the committee to easily create, organize, and analyze cases without constantly dealing with paper documents. The app introduces features like scheduled hearings, enhancing transparency between offenders and SDC members. Specifically crafted for disciplinary processes, the application offers real-time updates, secure document storage, and communication tools. By embracing advanced technology, it not only simplifies administrative tasks but also guarantees a fair and effective resolution of disciplinary matters. Ultimately, the SDC Application contributes to creating a positive learning environment for all students by promoting transparency and accountability in the disciplinary process.

The primary issue the SDC Application aims to address is the inefficiency and drawbacks associated with the traditional, paper-based management of disciplinary cases within the university. This includes challenges such as time-consuming case resolution processes, error-prone documentation, limited accessibility to case information, poor transparency in case tracking, inefficient communication, difficult retrieval of information, and environmental concerns.

With the rising number of cases as the university grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to manage disciplinary cases using the traditional paper-based model, there is need for a faster, friendlier, less cumbersome and generally a more reliable system. The SDC Application seeks to address this concern by providing an innovative solution that leverages modern technologies (in the t3stack) to simplify case creations, resolutions, information retrieval, enhanced communication etc.

Multiple literature has been published on the importance of the Student Council in educational institutions, their responsibility in addressing indiscipline and constructing/updating what is popularly known as the Student Handbook. Discipline management are essential to successful schools (Blandford, 1998).

The implementation of the SDC Application is anticipated to have a profound impact on the university's disciplinary processes and overall learning environment. The transition to a streamlined, technology-driven system is expected to enhance efficiency, transparency, and fairness in managing disciplinary cases. Real-time updates and communication tools will facilitate quicker responses to issues, leading to more timely and effective resolutions. Ultimately, the positive outcome of this study would contribute to creating a conducive learning environment for all students, where disciplinary matters are handled with increased effectiveness and transparency amongst the academic/administrative.

* 1. **Statement of Problem**

The challenge is the inefficiency inherent in traditional, paper-based methods for managing disciplinary cases within the university. These outdated methods are time-consuming, difficult to manage, lack transparency, and hinder the prompt and effective resolution of disciplinary matters. The problem occurs mainly when the school is in session, be it the 1st or 2nd semester. It can be either inside or outside the school premises. In either case, a case is usually created by having offenders fill out a statement form, which is then sent to the Student Affairs office. The problem currently affects offenders who may not be aware of when their cases have been created or when a hearing is scheduled. Additionally, the Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC) members face challenges with the current mode of execution. This problem is addressed by implementing an SDC Application, involving students and SDC committee members in the design process to ensure it meets their needs and overcomes current challenges. The application aims to enhance transparency, efficiency, and the overall disciplinary process.

There happens to not be any proposed solution for this problem other than the traditional paper-based method. My proposed solution is the development and implementation of the SDC Application, a digital platform tailored for efficient management of the SDC disciplinary cases instead of the current method of managing these cases.

**Principles and Theories:**

1. User-Centered Design: User-Centered Design (UCD) is a multidisciplinary design approach that relies on user participation to enhance comprehension of task and user requirements, as well as iterative design and evaluation (Mao et al., 2005). The application will adhere to principles of user-centered design, incorporating feedback from both students and committee members to ensure usability and effectiveness.

2. Agile Methodology: Agile software development methodologies have been widely adopted and experimented with as it has been found to be a great practice better applications (Esfahani & Yu, 2010). The development process will follow agile principles, allowing for iterative improvements based on continuous feedback and evolving needs.

3. Transparency and Accountability: The application aligns with principles of transparency and accountability in organizational management, providing clear communication channels and documentation throughout the disciplinary process.

4. Technology Adoption Theory: The users are more likely to embrace effective use of new technologies if it is perceived as easy to use, provides clear advantages, and enhances their current practices.

5. Conflict Resolution Theories: The application's features for scheduled hearings and opportunities for appeal draw on principles of conflict resolution theories, aiming to facilitate fair and effective resolution of disciplinary matters.

* 1. **Research Question**

How can the implementation of the Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC) Application enhance the management of disciplinary cases within the university, addressing the current limitations of the paper-based system and fostering transparency, efficiency, and fair resolution?

The study aims to investigate the effectiveness of introducing a digital platform to streamline disciplinary processes, with a focus on user experience, transparency, and accountability. The primary purpose is to identify and implement improvements that contribute to a more efficient and equitable management of disciplinary cases, ultimately creating a conducive learning environment for all students.

**1.4 Aim and Objectives**

**Aim:**

To enhance the management of disciplinary cases within the university through the implementation of the Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC) Application, fostering transparency, efficiency, and fair resolution.

**Objectives:**

1. To design a user-friendly and efficient Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC) Application tailored to the needs of the disciplinary process.

2. To implement the SDC Application as a digital platform for creating, organizing, analyzing and scheduling hearings for disciplinary cases within the university.

3. To integrate features that allow real-time updates, secure document storage, and communication tools within the SDC Application.

4. To determine the impact of the SDC Application on transparency, efficiency, and fair resolution in managing disciplinary cases.

5. To investigate the experiences and feedback of both SDC committee members and offenders regarding the usability and effectiveness of the SDC Application.

6. To evaluate the scheduling functionality of the SDC Application in enhancing transparency and fairness in disciplinary hearings.

7. To compare the efficiency and effectiveness of the SDC Application with the traditional paper-based system in resolving disciplinary matters.

* 1. **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study lies in its potential to revolutionize the management of disciplinary cases within the university setting, addressing critical challenges associated with the traditional paper-based systems that is the current standard. The implementation of the Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC) Application is set to bring about several noteworthy impacts:

1. Efficiency Enhancement: The SDC Application is expected to streamline administrative tasks, allowing for the swift creation, organization, and analysis of disciplinary cases. This efficiency improvement is crucial in promptly addressing disciplinary issues, fostering a safer and more conducive learning environment.

2. Transparency and Accountability: By introducing features such as real-time updates, secure document storage, and communication tools, the SDC Application aims to enhance transparency in the disciplinary process. This transparency not only builds trust among stakeholders but also ensures accountability in the resolution of disciplinary matters.

3. Fairness in Disciplinary Proceedings: The scheduling functionality of the SDC Application provides a structured and transparent approach to disciplinary hearings. This ensures that offenders are well-informed about the process, promoting fairness and adherence to due process, which is essential in upholding justice within the academic community.

4. User Experience Improvement: The study seeks to gather feedback from both SDC committee members and offenders to refine and optimize the application. This user-centric approach ensures that the SDC Application is not only efficient but also user-friendly, contributing to a positive experience for all stakeholders involved.

5. Technological Advancement in Education: The adoption of an innovative digital solution for disciplinary management aligns with the broader trend of integrating technology into educational processes. This study contributes to the advancement of technological applications in educational institutions, setting a precedent for the modernization of administrative processes.

**1.6 Scope of Study**

The scope of this study is centered around the implementation and impact assessment of the Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC) Application within the university environment. The study encompasses the development, deployment, and evaluation phases of the application. The geographical scope is limited to the university campus, where the application will be tested and refined based on user feedback.

Note:

1. Application Development: The study involves the design, development, and deployment of the SDC Application, ensuring its compatibility with the existing university systems.

2. User Feedback and Refinement: Feedback from both SDC committee members and offenders is a crucial aspect. The study includes mechanisms for collecting, analyzing, and incorporating feedback to enhance the application's functionality and user experience.

3. Evaluation of Impact: The study assesses the impact of the SDC Application on the efficiency, transparency, and fairness of the disciplinary process. Key performance indicators will be used to measure the success of the application.

4. In-Campus Cases: The study is confined to disciplinary cases that occur within the university premises. Cases related to off-campus incidents fall outside the scope of this research.

5. Legal Framework: While the application aims to enhance fairness in disciplinary proceedings, the study does not delve into the legal intricacies associated with disciplinary matters.

6. External System Integration: The scope is limited to the standalone functionality of the SDC Application within the university's administrative framework. Integration with external systems is excluded from this study.

**References**

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