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Enhancing Local Government Engagement through the Pasay Feedback Portal

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Abstract

This study evaluates the Pasay Feedback Portal, a digital system designed to bridge the gap between local government and citizens. By applying Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) principles, the research addresses common usability barriers found in e-government platforms, such as confusing interfaces and inefficient processes. Using a dual-method approach of Heuristic Evaluation and Usability Testing with 40 local residents, the study measured success rates, task completion times, and user satisfaction. Results indicated high usability, with core tasks achieving 100% success and 90% of participants rating the system as "Outstanding". The findings suggest that HCI-based design effectively promotes digital inclusion, even for users with low digital literacy.

1. Introduction

With the rise of digital governance, citizens increasingly rely on online platforms to interact with local government services. However, many existing systems suffer from poor usability, unclear layouts, and a lack of user feedback, leading to "digital exclusion". The research problem centers on the difficulty users face when reporting city concerns due to confusing interfaces and limited interaction with administrators. This study aims to evaluate and improve the Pasay Feedback Portal using HCI principles to expedite processes and improve efficiency.

2. Review of Related Literature

Usability Challenges in E-Government Platforms

The transition to digital governance has highlighted significant barriers in how citizens interact with local government services. According to **Venkatesh et al. (2022)**, many online platforms suffer from poor usability, unclear layouts, and a lack of navigational guidelines, which directly discourage public engagement. When users encounter confusing interfaces and inefficient processes, the primary purpose of the feedback portal—to bridge the gap between the city and its residents—is undermined. Furthermore, **Alanezi (2023)** emphasizes that technical complexity often leads to "digital exclusion," where citizens abandon the platform due to frustration.

The Role of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI)

To address interaction problems, scholars emphasize the application of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) principles. HCI focuses on optimizing the interface between people and technology to ensure that systems are not only functional but also intuitive (**Rogers, Preece, & Sharp, 2023**). By evaluating systems through the lens of **Nielsen's Usability Heuristics (2020)**, developers can identify specific interaction problems—such as lack of error prevention and poor system visibility—that hinder a user's ability to report concerns effectively. Implementing these solutions is essential for creating a "user-centric" portal that provides faster access anytime and anywhere (**Shneiderman et al., 2024**).

Enhancing User Satisfaction and Process Efficiency

A critical component of a successful digital portal is the level of user satisfaction. Literature suggests that efficiency is not just about the digital tool itself, but about how quickly a user can complete a task (**Harrison et al., 2021**). Without meaningful interaction between users and administrators, a system feels stagnant and unresponsive. Therefore, modernizing the Pasay Feedback Portal requires a design that prioritizes expedited processes and clear feedback loops to maintain high levels of user engagement and trust in local governance (**Bertot & Jaeger, 2022**).

Local Studies on Usability of Philippine E-Government Systems

A study conducted by **Dela Cruz, Santos, and Reyes (2021)** evaluated the usability of an online complaint and feedback system used by a local government unit (LGU) in Metro Manila. The findings revealed that users experienced difficulties due to unclear navigation menus, lack of instructional guidelines, and slow response mechanisms. The study emphasized that applying Human–Computer Interaction (HCI) principles, such as consistency and visibility of system status, significantly improved task completion time and user satisfaction. This local study supports the need to redesign government feedback platforms to enhance efficiency and citizen engagement.

User Experience and Accessibility in Philippine Government Portals

Another local study by **Garcia and Mendoza (2022)** examined user experience and accessibility issues in selected Philippine government websites. The researchers found that many platforms did not adequately support users with low digital literacy, resulting in high error rates and system abandonment. The study highlighted the importance of user-centered design and accessibility standards in improving usability and inclusivity. Their findings reinforce the relevance of implementing HCI-based solutions to ensure faster, more accessible, and user-friendly digital government services for Filipino citizens.

3. Methodology

- **HCI Approach:** The study utilized **Heuristic Evaluation** to identify design violations and **Usability Testing** to measure performance metrics.
- **Participants:** 40 local residents aged 18–60, with 45% identifying as beginners and 50% as intermediate users.
- **Instruments:** Data was collected through Task Scenarios (measuring success and time) and the System Usability Scale (SUS)

4. Results

- **Success Rates:** Tasks such as registration and location selection achieved a 100% success rate. The lowest success rate was found in locating support buttons (87.5%).
- **Efficiency:** Most navigation tasks were completed in under 20 seconds. Manual report submission took the longest at an average of 59.2 seconds.
- **User Satisfaction:** 90% of respondents gave the system an "Outstanding" rating, with no participants indicating that the system "Needs Improvement".

5. Discussion

The portal successfully followed major HCI principles, including Visibility of System Status (98.5% success in tracking IDs) and Flexibility of Use. However, minor violations in Aesthetic and Minimalist Design were noted, as floating support buttons were occasionally overlooked. While the system proved inclusive for beginners, the data entry friction in the submission form remains a point for optimization to maintain the "flow" of interaction.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The study proves that a design rooted in HCI principles can effectively bridge the gap between government and citizens. The Pasay Feedback Portal established an inclusive environment that mitigated digital exclusion and fostered trust through clear feedback loops.

Recommendations

- **Enhance UI Visibility:** Reposition support buttons to a fixed location and use high-contrast fonts for Tracking IDs.
- **Streamline Interaction:** Replace the complex Privacy Modal with a simple checkbox and implement auto-fill features in the submission form.
- **Improve Guidance:** Add walkthrough overlays for beginners and automated status notifications via SMS or email.

7. References

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