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3.2 Design And Implementation of A Web-Based Faculty Information System

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ABSTRACT

Although Information Systems (IS) are valuable elements for organizations, the private and public sectors in Sri Lanka are reluctant to use IS for decision making, organizing and classifying data, processing transactions, and for many other activities. This is caused by the lack of computer literacy and conventional attitudes of the majority of the Sri Lankan community. Even in the higher education institutions in Sri Lanka, majority of both staff and students who are well aware of information technology, rely on conventional ways of handling information. One major reason for the above issue is lack of availability of application software well suited for their needs. On one hand, such types of software are rarely used by institutes because of their high cost; on the other hand, they are highly organization dependent. Hence steps have been taken to build a Faculty Information System (FIS) for the Faculty of Science, University of Kelaniya. The FIS was developed in a network environment, with the active participation of all those involved by means of continuous dialogues with the aim of both promoting and demonstrating its benefits and by catering to the different needs arising from the faculty community. The FIS consists of three major subsystems, namely FIS Web Based Subsystem (FISW), FIS Intranet Sub System (FISI) and FIS Examination Sub System (FISE). FISW provides www access to FIS users at any time from anywhere. FISI enables the capability of access to FIS via the Faculty office local area network with security restrictions. FISE processes the examination data in a highly secured environment which is separated from both FISW and FISI. FISI and FISW eventually connect with FISE under security restrictions as required. It is clear that development of this type of tool has social, cultural and technological dimensions. What we planned is one thing, what happened in reality and how the stake holders respond to the tool is another. An evidence of the neediness of this type of tool to the faculty is the number of accesses, 41784, in two years. The above figure is not a complete measure of acceptance of FIS. To detect its defects and limitations, in addition it is necessary to take into account the number of pages requested by each registered user in the FIS. These statistics can be used to enhance the features of FIS.