Digital Transformation of Internship Supervision and Evaluation: A Case Study of a Selected Department of a State University in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Digital transformation has become the trend in almost every industry nowadays which can also be adopted to improve the productivity of the processes in the higher education sector. It was evident from the literature that it lacks studies to identify how digital transformation using information systems could be adopted to improve the internship supervision and evaluation processes of universities, particularly in Sri Lanka. This research was carried out to identify the limitations of manual internship supervision and evaluation of undergraduates and to develop an information system to digitally transform the internship supervision and evaluation process to avoid such limitations. Department of Information Technology in the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura was chosen as the case for the study. Semi-structured interviews and document observations were used to identify the limitations of the manual process. The tediousness of manual document maintenance, the difficulty faced by interns in visiting the university frequently for document submissions while interning, and the lack of a common platform to coordinate with process stakeholders were identified as limitations. Thereafter a web-based information system was developed, termed ISES, that avoids those limitations by maintaining a training record book, submitting progress reports digitally, creating a common platform to co-ordinate all parties, and facilitating e-mail notifications to ensure better communication. ISES was later validated by interviewing the same users. This study adds novel findings to the theory area which lacks how digital transformation could facilitate effective internship supervision and evaluation in higher education institutes. As a practical implication, the ISES system developed as a result of this study could be adopted by any higher education institution that offers internships as a course in their degree programs to manage the supervision and evaluation process effectively.

Keywords: **Digital transformation, information systems, web-based information system, internship, internship supervision and evaluation**