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Online Forum Activity Management

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ABSTRACT: The research findings indicated that most participants had a favorable view of asynchronous discussion forums. Importantly, engaging in these forums improved various aspects of students' learning, such as critical thinking, reflection skills, and emotional involvement. However, the study also identified challenges associated with online discussion platforms. The interaction and collaboration within these forums, as well as active learning in blended courses, were found to contribute to enhanced academic performance. Furthermore, statistical analysis demonstrated a positive correlation between student participation in online forum activities and their final course grades, although no significant relationship was found with their overall grade point average. It offers a structure for enhancing the department's information literacy program, particularly focusing on engaging students in active learning to boost their digital literacy skills. The study emphasizes the vital role of teacher guidance in motivating student interest and involvement in online forums. Additionally, it suggests implementing improved communication channels between management and students' guardians through email, SMS, and push notifications to address these issues effectively.

KEYWORDS: Discussion forum, Management education, Learning keyword, Online discussion forum, Interactive learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

Online forum activities have become integral to university education, seamlessly blending into traditional classroom settings to enhance the teaching and learning experience. By incorporating these activities into courses, educators create a dynamic social online environment where students can engage with course materials and each other. This integration fosters collaborative learning and provides students with opportunities to deepen their understanding of the subject matter. In essence, online forum activities serve as a catalyst for enriching the educational process within the digital landscape of contemporary academia.

The collaborative nature of online forum activities significantly enhances students' learning skills and relationships. Those engaged in online forums show a slightly higher social influence within their peer groups compared to those without access to such activities, even though both groups use the learning management system. Technology has become indispensable for today's educators and learners, influencing reading habits, access to information, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Information and communication technology profoundly affects students' access to information, either amplifying or diminishing the level of information available to them. Distance learning further emphasizes the importance of technology in education, shaping the way students interact with content and each other.

Online forums are a type of active learning where students interact through discussions, idea sharing, and collaborating with peers. These platforms allow for asynchronous communication, meaning students can participate at their own convenience, promoting deeper thinking and analysis. Additionally, forums foster collaborative learning as students collectively build knowledge and offer feedback to each other. In essence, engaging in online forum activities enhances students' interaction with course content and fellow classmates, creating a more dynamic and rewarding learning environment. The primary aim of education is student achievement, typically measured by their grades on tests. Research acknowledges the impact of using online discussion forums on student achievement. These studies suggest that engaging in online forum activities correlates with improved student performance. Active participation in online forums involves creating new discussion topics and responding to posts from both instructors and peers. However, a review of existing literature reveals varying findings regarding the link between student engagement in online forums and their academic success.

II. RELATED WORK

The study on the effectiveness of online discussion forums for interactive learning and communication would analyze how these forums improve learning through peer-to-peer interaction, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. [1]. It might compare forums with traditional classrooms or other online learning methods. The literature review would likely explore factors affecting engagement and participation in these forums, like forum design, instructor involvement, and student motivation, as well as strategies to boost participation and maintain a sense of community. Scholars may also investigate how online forums align with cognitive and social constructivism theories, emphasizing active learning, social interaction, and knowledge building. Additionally, researchers might address challenges and limitations such as privacy concerns, discourse quality, and unequal participation.[2]. This literature review delves into various studies examining online discussion forums, focusing on their role in education and the library domain. Puijze et al.[3]. analyzed a significant number of posts on an LIS forum, finding that most messages were either announcements or for information dissemination. [5], Beratzen studied a local government forum in Norway, discovering that it lacked new ideas in popular discussion threads. While many studies have explored online forums in diverse areas, few have focused on libraries, suggesting a need for more research in this field. Another area of focus is understanding how online forums affect student learning, including interventions to address participation inequality and shallow interactions, as well as fostering a positive online learning environment.

III. METHODOLOGY

Online forums facilitate communication and engagement through a structured format. Typically, forums have a hierarchical organization, with main categories containing sub-categories, and within these, users initiate discussions by creating threads and responding to existing ones. Management tools, such as moderators, ensure order and oversee content. Users can either post anonymously or after registering, and they have the ability to create new threads or reply to others. Features like quoting facilitate smoother conversations. Notifications keep users engaged by alerting them to replies. Search functions allow users to find relevant discussions easily. Some forums employ reputation systems to acknowledge active and helpful participants, encouraging continued engagement. Additional features like polls, attachments, emojis and private messaging further enhance the user experience, catering to diverse needs.

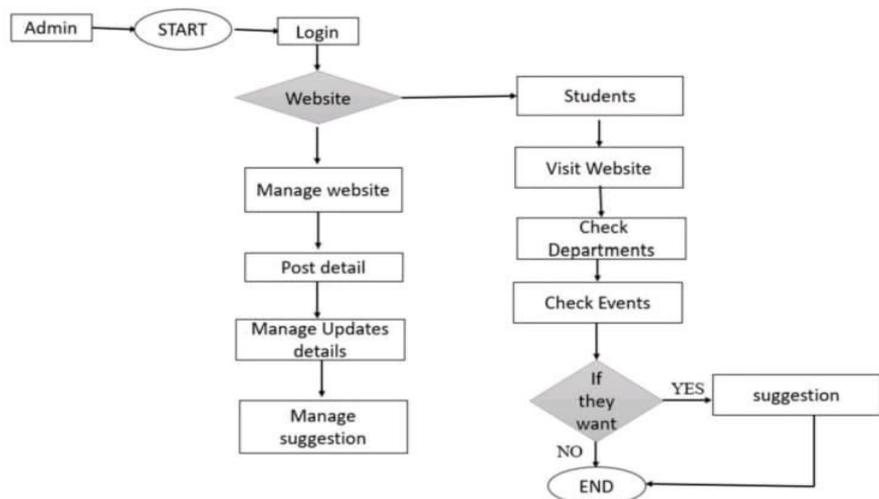


Fig.5.1:- ER-Diagram of Activity diagram of Forum management

(a)

Technologies-

HTML(Hypertext Markup Language):

HTML creates the basic layout of the forum. This includes elements like the list of discussion topics, individual threads, and user information. Content display HTML displays the content of the forum posts, including text, images, and links. User interaction while HTML doesn't handle the interactivity itself, it can be used to create forms for users to submit new discussion topics or replies. These forms would then be processed by server-side scripting languages like PHP or Python. In essence, HTML provides the building blocks for the visual presentation of the discussion forum, while other technologies manage the functionalities like user accounts, post creation, and data storage.

CSS(Cascading Style Sheets):

CSS defines the look and feel of the forum. It controls aspects like font size, color, background images, spacing, and layout. This creates a visually appealing and user friendly experience for navigating threads, posts, and replies. Readability CSS can improve readability by differentiating elements like titles, usernames, and content. For instance, using bold fonts for titles or different colors for usernames makes it easier for users to scan information. Customization some forums allow users to customize the look of their experience through CSS themes. This can enhance user engagement by giving them a sense of control over the forum's appearance.

JavaScript:

JavaScript is a scripting language used to develop web pages. Developed in Netscape, JS allows developers to create a dynamic and interactive web page to interact with visitors and execute complex actions. It also enables users to load content into a document without reloading the entire page. Most websites use JavaScript for validation and to support external applications, including PDF documents, widgets, flash applications. Some of the world's largest tech companies use JavaScript to better the user experience. Some famous websites built by the use of JavaScript are Google, YouTube, Facebook, Wikipedia, Yahoo, Amazon, eBay, Twitter, and LinkedIn, to name a few. Web Applications Various JavaScript frameworks are used for developing and building robust web applications.

PHP(Hypertext Preprocessor):

PHP plays a central role in building the backend functionality of online discussion forums. Processing User Actions: When a user creates a new post, replies to a comment, or edits their content, PHP scripts handle those actions. It interacts with the database to store the new information or update existing content. Managing Threads and Posts: PHP organizes forum discussions into threads with individual posts. Scripts handle creating new threads, displaying existing ones, and ensuring proper nesting of replies. User Accounts and Authentication: If your forum has user accounts, PHP handles user registration, logins, and enforces access permissions for different user roles.

Database:

Storing User and Post Data the database stores information about users (usernames, passwords, profiles) and all the discussion content (posts, replies, threads). This allows users to revisit past discussions and keeps the forum running even if the software is restarted. User Management Permissions and user roles (admin, moderator, regular user) are typically stored in the database. This controls what actions users can take (posting, editing, deleting) within the forum. Search and Filtering databases allow efficient searching and filtering of discussions based on keywords, authors, or categories. This helps users find relevant information quickly.

DBMS applications:

Applications where we use Database Management Systems are:

Telecom: There is a database to keeps track of the information regarding calls made, network usage, customer details etc. Without the database systems it is hard to maintain that huge amount of data that keeps updating every millisecond.

APIs (Application Programming Interfaces):

APIs can be used for various purposes in managing online discussion forum activity. Advanced Content Moderation APIs can go beyond just flagging content. They can integrate with natural language processing (NLP) tools to detect offensive language, hate speech, or bullying behaviour. Sentiment analysis via APIs can help identify potentially volatile threads that moderators should prioritize. APIs can be used to automate workflows.

IV. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

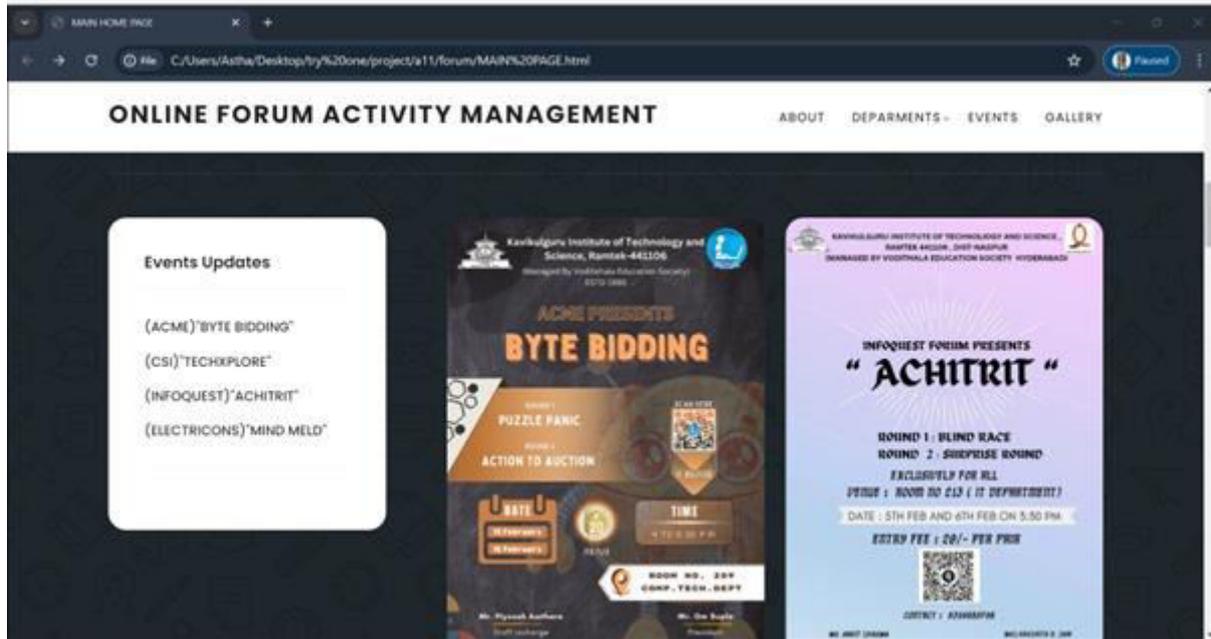
Figures shows the results of Login page for the admin in this term. Figs (b), (c),(d),(e),(f),(g),(h) shows the original image. In this fig (b) Login page for the admin and fig (c) Forum Home Page and fig (d) and fig (e) Forum event Furthermore, fig (f) Forum Gallery ,also fig (g) and (h) Forum Department.



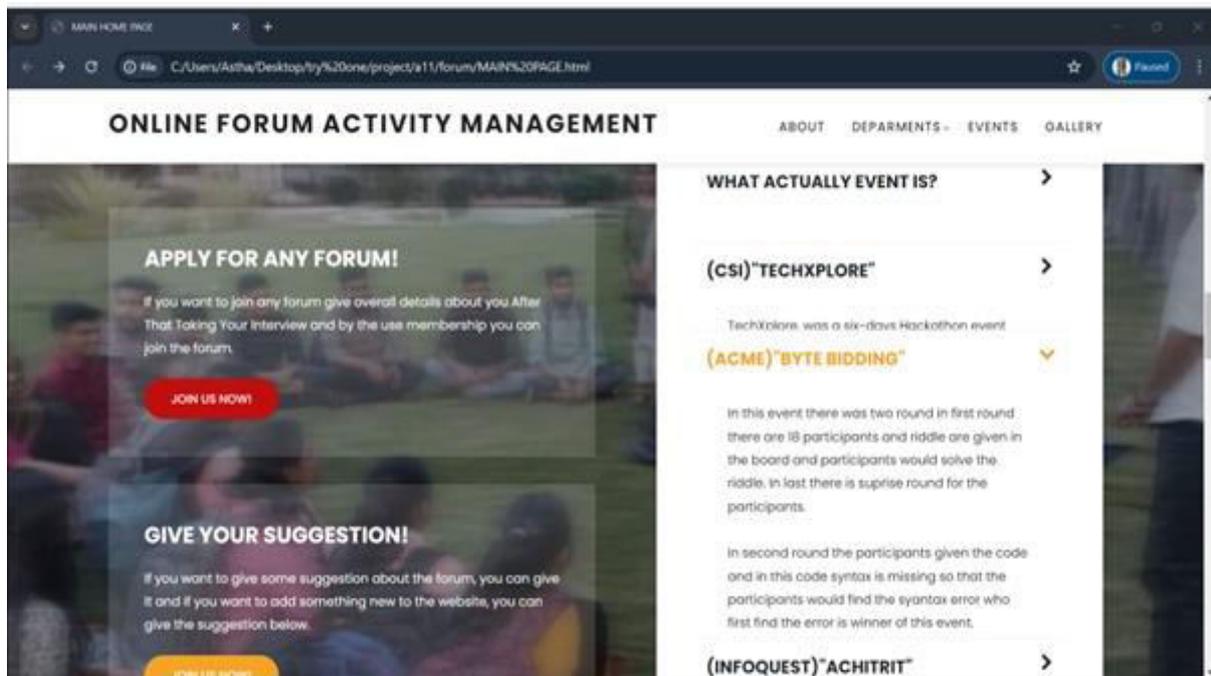
(b)



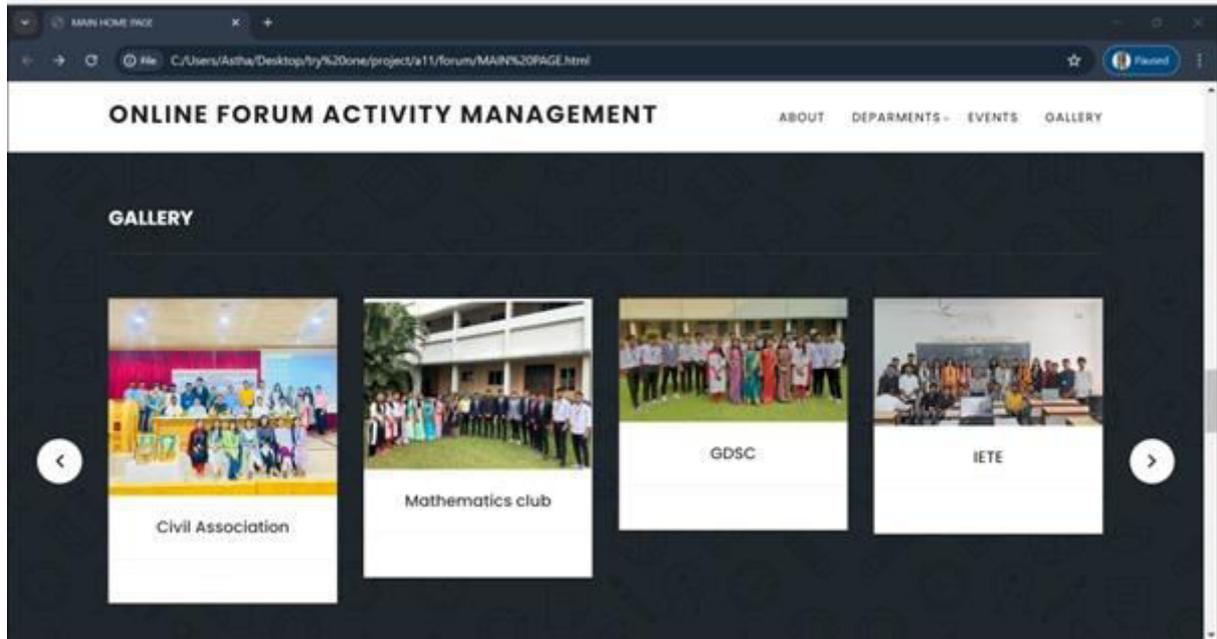
(c)



(d)



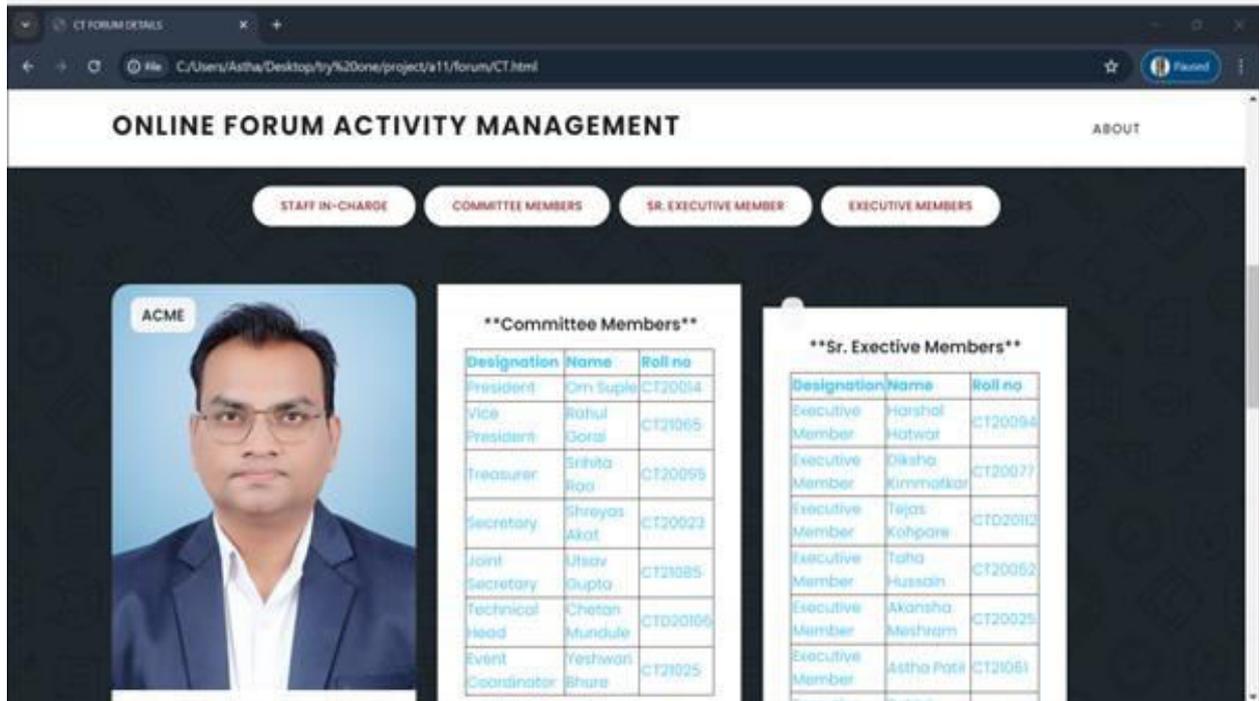
(e)



(f)



(g)



(h)

V. CONCLUSION

The proliferation of new computer technologies and Information Technology, related innovations, learning and interaction of individuals are gradually taking advantage of these technological developments. Having discussed the structure and some of the features that are present in a forum which makes it a better choice for effective communication among members, it is therefore important that lecturers and students who have regular discussions be advised to take advantage of the flexibility that forums provides. With the introduction of forum for student- lecturer interaction, communication between these groups of people become easier as students will be able to participate in the online discussion and contribute their opinion in any subject matter of their choice without being shy or afraid of making contributions to topics of discussion. Online discussion forum presents opportunities for interactive learning, inquiry-based learning, and student knowledge acquisition and creation. The Online discussion forum presented in this study proved very effective in interactive learning and communication among students and their teachers. However, for online discussion forum to be more impactful, there is need for increased student and teacher participation to enhance greater productivity. Given the relative impact of online forum activity, teachers have to devote more time to attend to student queries on the platform and also do more to facilitate or coach discussions and interactions on the forum.

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