



“Students’ Grievance System for Educational Institutions”

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Abstract: *This paper looks at the development and implementation of a student grievance system in universities. It examines the benefits for students and educational organizations, as well as the challenges faced by establishing and maintaining an effective system. We also highlight and show that such a system is necessary. A comprehensive review of existing literature, together with case studies of working complaints systems in educational establishments, forms the basis for the development of the system. The paper also provides an overview of how a student complaint system should be structured and the general approach to its design, which calls for explicit ideas, effective communication, established reporting systems, trained experts as well as a proper procedure relating to complaints. Studies have shown that an effective redress system for students can greatly improve the overall student experience and help educational organizations increase their popularity with the general public. The paper describes how an efficient student grievance system can be built and operated by academic institutions, as well as colleges and universities.*

Key words: *Student’s Grievance System, Rising Complaint, Web application, grievance system, Educational Institution, Department, College, University.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In this research paper we will talk about the importance of students’ grievance system and how they help improve the students’ learning environment, we will also talk about its design and framework as well as its development methodology. For all institutions to be able to apply this idea, we will also show the results of our work. In the academic setting, students may be confronted with a variety of challenges such as poor educational progress, disciplinary problems, unequal treatment, and other issues which affect their learning experience. To address these issues, universities and colleges must set up a system of complaints that provides the opportunity for students to raise their concerns and request assistance or guidance directly from staff members.

In order to promote transparency, fairness, and accountability in the handling of student complaints, the student complaint system is an essential element of academic institutions. Several elements, such as a complaint lodging portal, channels for communication and complaints handling process, form a part of the Students’ Grievance System. It provides a platform for students to submit their complaints about academic, personal or administrative issues that have an impact on the learning environment. Therefore, for academic institutions to have a conducive learning environment, the effectiveness of complaint procedures is crucial. An effective system will provide students with the confidence and trust needed to gain a positive learning experience. By contrast, an inefficient system may lead to an unfavourable educational environment that leads to deterioration in quality of education and institution reputation.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to ensure that students’ voices are heard, and their concerns are taken care of promptly and fairly, the Student Grievance System plays an important role. Institutions can detect and solve systemic problems that may be affecting more than one student through the introduction of an efficient complaints process, resulting in a higher level of educational quality. The implementation of an efficient grievance system has, however, its own set of challenges. Due to fears of repercussions and other discrimination, students may hesitate to come forward with their complaint when they are vulnerable or discriminated against. The creation of an environment in which students can feel comfortable and unafraid to speak up without fear is thus essential.

The management of complaints in a fair and timely manner is another challenge. Students may lose confidence in the system and choose not to report anything in the future if complaints are not dealt with in a timely and fair manner.

Institutions can introduce a portal for complaints, or an application that allows students to share their problems easily, in order to overcome this challenge. Proper training of staff about how to resolve complaints in these platforms and the development of specific guidelines for dealing with various types of complaints is also advised. It is important to obtain student feedback on the efficiency of the redress system so as to achieve its success. Institutions can ensure that the system helps students and supports a safe and inclusive educational environment by actively seeking feedback and making necessary improvements.

In addition, students should be provided with clear and simple information on the grievance procedure so that they are aware of their rights and understand what it takes to take advantage of this system. It is also essential that the staff are trained to be able to resolve disputes professionally and impartially. Such training shall include communication, dispute resolution and empathy courses as well as an awareness of issues such as implicit bias and discrimination. To address the challenges of fear and retaliation, it is important to establish a culture of trust and support within the institution. This can be achieved through measures such as anonymous reporting, protection against retaliation, and support services for students who have experienced trauma.

Lastly, in order to ensure that students' needs are met while dealing with any new issues which arise, there is a need for the grievance system to be regularly evaluated and monitored. This can be achieved through feedback mechanisms, regular data collection on complaints and benchmarking of best practice in the sector. Therefore, we need to create a system that can cope with the changes in needs. To accomplish this, a proper designing methodology and various tools and techniques are required. Also, it is important to calculate the budget and take into account any required resources essential for the system. Also, it is important to consider the requirements of additional resources as the system grows. Overall, an effective grievance system is crucial to promoting a safe and supportive learning environment for students. By implementing the measures outlined above, educational institutions can ensure that their grievance system is transparent, accessible, and responsive to the needs of students [1].

III. CURRENT SYSTEM VERSUS NEW WEB/APPLICATION BASED SYSTEM.

In this section we will discuss the benefits of modern systems built with advanced technical solutions, such as apps and websites. Then we will also demonstrate how these systems surpass their present conventional pen and paper-based counterparts [1].

CURRENT SYSTEM.

The current system for addressing students' grievances is entirely pen and paper based. The following steps shows us the general process a student would typically take to file a complaint or grievance:

1. The student needs to visit the appropriate department in their college that deals with their particular concern, for example: The Fees and Accounting Department deals with fee related concerns, Library Department deals library membership related concerns or availability of books, the Examination Department deals with exam paper or exam timetable related concerns, so each have their own specific role and set of procedures to follow.
2. The next step for the student is to write an application stating their grievances and submit it to the office of the departmental clerk of the respective department
3. After submitting a grievance, there is a delay period where the clerk investigates the problem and devises an appropriate course of action.
4. Then the student is required to visit the department again for a response to their grievances.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE CURRENT SYSTEM.

1. Because it requires constant administration and storage of physical documents, this approach is slower and more labor intensive.
2. The physical application copy can also get misplaced or even lost. Thus, leading to further loss of time.
3. Students may have to wait for a response for extended lengths of time. Or perhaps they might not even get a response.
4. Because students are frequently not reached, they must physically go and search for the solutions.
5. If a student's grievance application is rejected due to some errors or misplaced documentation, they might have to wait for a longer period before submitting it again.

WEB/APPLICATION-BASED SYSTEM CURRENT SYSTEM.

In this paper we are stating the proper development of the students' grievance system using web-based technologies, thus we will discuss some formal procedures that a student would have to take. With the server serving as the main repository for all data, the new system's design enables effective data storage and retrieval. With the website or app interface, students can effortlessly submit their complaints, ensuring that the relevant department receives them immediately and takes appropriate action [2].

The following are the standard actions that students must take to get their grievances addressed:

1. Students must complete out the registration form on the portal with their information, including name, email, contact information, college name, college ID, university name, branch, and year, in order to create an online account.
2. After registering, students can login to their accounts by entering their email address and password.
3. For Students to lodge a complaint. They need to go to the "Lodge Complaint" area in the menu after logging into their respective accounts.
4. Then the student can choose the department they have a problem with in the Lodge Complaint area, such as the Finances department or the Library Department, or they can opt to file a complaint at the college or university level. If a student has a complaint about the Finances department, they can further categories it based on the specific problem, such as fees, exam fees, scholarship form fee, etc.
5. After writing up their individual complaint in text form, students can attach any supporting materials in PDF format before selecting the "Submit" button. If desired, they may also decide to keep their complaint anonymous by toggling the check box which says "Remain Anonymous".
6. Then the submitted complaint is visible on the respective department, college or university admin portal.
7. After that, the administrator, who is often an employee with training, can formulate an appropriate response for the student.
8. Generally, this would be enough for addressing grievances, but many times there are any inconsistencies or errors in the submitted documents. Thus, the admin can write a remark for the student for any required changes.

THE WEB/APPLICATION-BASED SYSTEM OFFERS NUMEROUS BENEFITS.

In this section we will see some of the major benefits a web/application-based system can offer. In contrast to the traditional pen and paper-based system [2].

1. Students, from wherever they are, can immediately submit their complaints.
2. Secondly, the system provides secure storage of complaints and enables them to be retrieved at any time.
3. Administrators may group complaints by date, time and category in order to make the management of complaints easier.
4. Students may check their email alerts or visit this website to see what is happening with their submitted forms.
5. If a student accidentally files an incorrect application, they are able to update it on their own.

IV. SYSTEM FRAMEWORK

We will now examine the basic framework and structure of our system in this section. In addition, this framework is supplemented by other complementary elements that we may use to enhance our system's functionality and capabilities [1][2].

Our Students' Grievance System has two parts, one for students and another for staff members or admins in this scenario. In the upcoming subsections we will discuss these two categories [3].

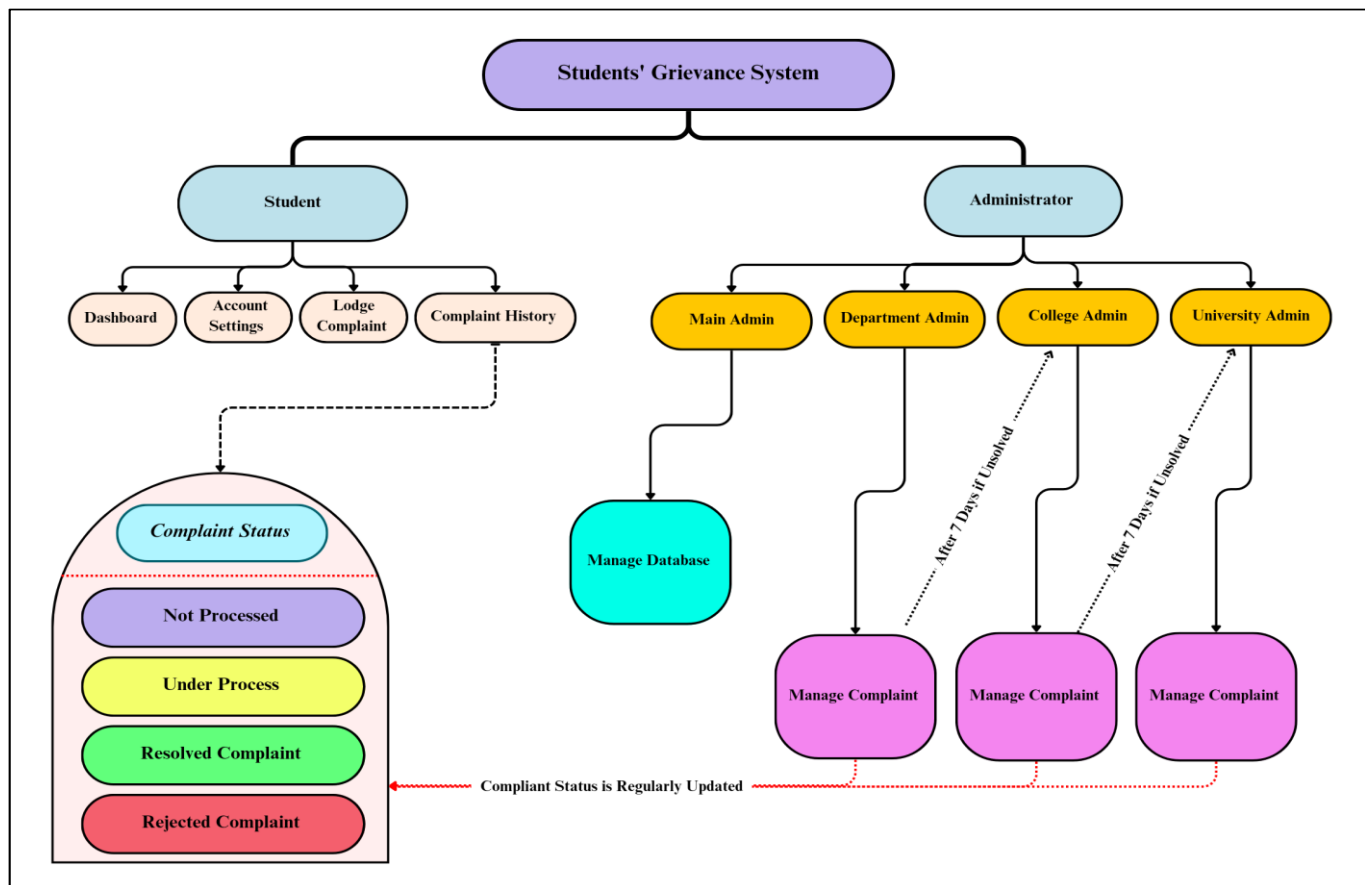


Figure 1: Framework of Students' Grievance System

STUDENTS SECTION.

The student section includes an attractive, well-designed site with a robust UI and all of the features needed for submission and management of complaints. The following sections of dashboard, account settings, lodge complaints and complaint history are included on the student side of the website. Dashboard shows general announcements, submitted complaint responses and basic overview of the complaint. General information can be changed by students through their account settings. The lodge complaint section is one of the main parts of the system for students that allows them to file their complaints in writing and make any necessary supporting documents available in PDF format. The complaint history section allows students to check the status of complaints and follow up on them.

ADMINISTRATOR SECTION.

Like the Students section, administrator portals will also have a well-designed and robust UI. This is to ensure a seamless experience. Administrator section is divided into four parts: Main Admin, Department Admin, College Admin and University Admin. The administrator is a qualified staff member generally responsible for administering the system, and answering students' questions. Each administrator has a separate portal, each with its individual login details and passwords to all members of staff. The highest level of power in the system shall be exercised by the main admin. Main admin shall ensure that the system is free from any problems, maintains and checks the database, creates and provides login credentials for other admins at lower levels. Then there are other admins like Department Admins, College Admins and University Admins. All these administrators are in charge of their respective organizations. They are charged with managing and responding to students' complaints.

The lowest level admin in this system is the Department Admin who is situated in the department of a college. If the Department Admin does not provide an answer within seven days, the complaint shall be forwarded to the College Admin. Similarly, where a complaint is not resolved in seven days, it will be forwarded to the University Admin. If the complaint has not been resolved yet. Then the University admin can give a remark to the student to either provide more information or consult other members of staff. It is important to note that these admins need to be well trained and experienced members of staff. Who are attuned to students' problems and challenges. Also, it is suggested that, if possible, the admin accounts should be managed by a small group of at least 2 to 3 people, instead of an individual. This not only reduces the workload, but it's also more efficient. Each member of the group can easily gather information and thus increase credibility. The overall framework of this system is shown in Figure 1.

V. METHODOLOGY

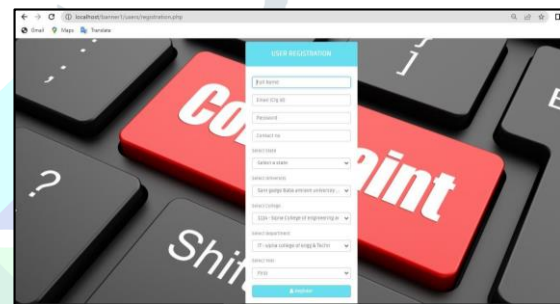
We shall now discuss the methodology, tools and techniques that have been used to develop our system in this section. A thorough system methodology is required to ensure the successful implementation of a web application that enables students to submit their complaints online. The use of HTML, CSS and JavaScript on frontend allows you to create an interactive and user-friendly interface that will enable students to communicate their complaints effectively. In addition, such technologies make it easier for designers to develop and visual responsive designs that would enhance user experience. The same is applied for the administrator's portal, which helps in easier management of the system as well as the upcoming grievances.

The main programming languages used to process most of the data are PHP and JavaScript and MySQL in the backend. These languages can handle the high volume of data in an efficient manner and provide feedback without delay to students. Furthermore, they facilitate efficient data recovery and storage by making it easy to integrate your database with the frontend [6] [7]. We used a four-phase system methodology, for the student grievance system to be developed. The four phases are planning, analysis, designing and implementation. The planning phase comprises defining the system's goals and scope, determining the resources needed, and creating a schedule for the project. The analytical phase identifies opportunities for improvement, evaluates the effectiveness of the present student grievance procedures, and establishes the functional needs. It is very important to note that the system that we are designing does not exceed the budget and system and server costs should satisfy the requirements. The system's architecture, database schema, and user interface are created during the design phase, while system development, testing, deployment, and maintenance are covered during the implementation phase.

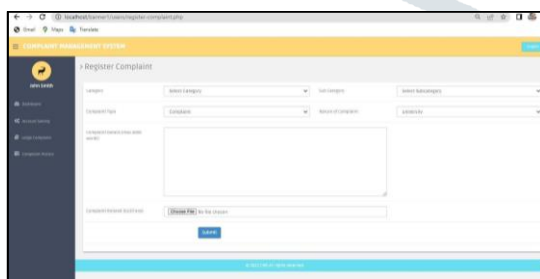
VI. RESULTS.



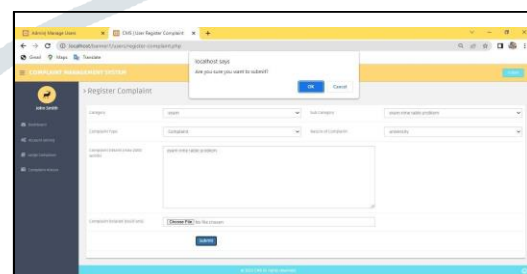
Front Page



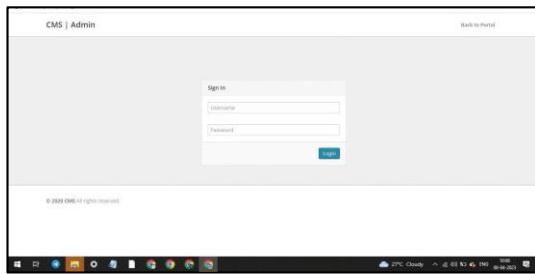
New User Registration



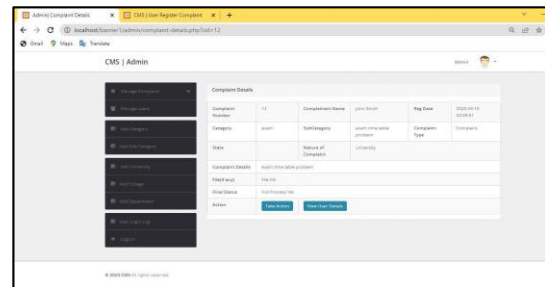
Lodge Complaint Section



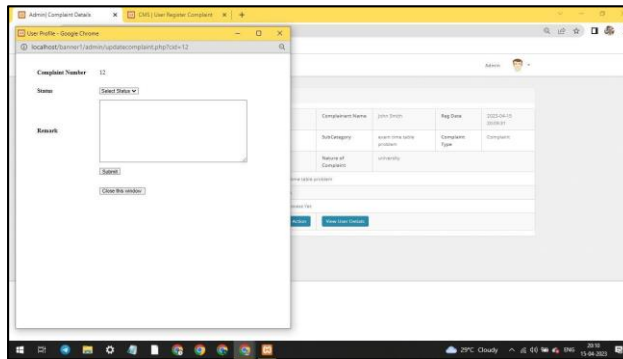
Submit Complaint Prompt



Admin Login



Main Admin



Admin Remark

VII. CONCLUSION

It is evident that a student grievance system is a vital aspect of any educational institution. The provision of channels for students to express their views and complaints, as well as the quick resolution of these issues, is crucial. But to develop such a system is also very challenging and expensive, not to mention its maintenance costs over time. But this type of system has the potential to enhance student satisfaction, improve institutional management, and also increase accountability and transparency, for both students and teachers alike.

It is noted that implementation of such systems can further create a positive learning environment for the students. So not only do the teachers know about various concerns of the students. The student can also freely express their concerns. Thus, investing in the development of students' grievance systems can be a viable investment choice for all types of educational institutions.

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