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The Impact of a Mobile App on Student-Alumni Communication and Engagement: A Case Study

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Abstract: ***The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of a mobile application that connects college students and alumni on their communication, networking, and career development. The app was developed by a team of students as a novel idea to foster strong alumni relations and provide mentorship opportunities for current students. The study used a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from surveys and qualitative data from interviews. The surveys were conducted before and after the app was launched, and the interviews were conducted after the app was used for three months. The results showed that the app was beneficial to both students and alumni, as it increased their frequency and quality of communication, enhanced their sense of belonging and community, and improved their skills and experiences. The paper discusses the implications, limitations, and recommendations of the study for future research and practice.*** *(Abstract)*

Keywords: Alumni relations, Improved skills, Social media, Alumni, Skill development, Experience, Community, Mobile application, Case study.

I. INTRODUCTION

Alumni are valuable assets for any educational institution, as they can provide support, guidance, and resources for current and prospective students. However, maintaining an engaged and active alumni community can be challenging, especially in the digital age, where alumni are dispersed across different locations and platforms. Therefore, it is important to find innovative and effective ways to connect alumni with students and foster a sense of belonging and loyalty. One of the potential solutions is to use mobile technology, which has become ubiquitous and accessible in recent years. Mobile apps can offer various benefits for alumni relations, such as convenience, personalization, interactivity, and feedback [1]. However, there is a lack of empirical research on how mobile apps can influence the communication and engagement of alumni and students, and what factors can affect their adoption and usage. To address this gap, this paper presents a case study of a mobile app that was developed by a team of students as a novel idea to establish a connection between college students and alumni. The app was designed to provide a platform for student-alumni communication, networking, and mentorship, and to enhance the alumni experience and involvement [1][2]. The paper aims to answer the following research questions:

1) How does the app affect the communication and engagement of students and alumni?
2) What are the benefits and challenges of using the app for students and alumni?
3) What are the factors that influence the adoption and usage of the app by students and alumni?

II. METHODOLOGY

1) To gather data for our research, we conducted two surveys - one before the app was launched and another after the app was deloyed. The first survey was distributed among college students to gather information about their general skills and experiences, as well as their views on an app that could facilitate communication with alumni. The second survey was taken after the app was available to students, and it aimed to collect their feedback and assess the impact of the app on their experiences.

2) Survey before the app deployment

For this survey our objective was to gather information regarding the current skillset and the way they view their future and their job opportunities, also to gauge the abilities of the students to communicate with others.

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3) Survey after the app deployment

To review the effect that the app had on the student lives and their confidence after they were able to communicate with their seniors and alumni who are working in the industries that they aspire to be in one day.

III. OBJECTIVE

The proposed system (App) was created with the objective to enrich the skills and the abilities of Current students and to develop their knowledge regarding the requirements and the expectations of the industries that they aspire to work in the future. The app was developed with the goal of scalability in mind and can be utilized by any and all institution that can be included in the wide umbrella of the education system [3].

A. Results

The results of the first survey are as follows:

B. Survey 1 (before the app deployment)

- The first survey consisting of just over 1100 responses, revealed that majority of the students were not aware of the benefits of connecting with alumni. Only 0.6% of the respondents reported having any communication with alumni during their college years. Most students over 99% did not use any social media platforms for learning or educational purposes [4]. However, when asked about their views on an app that could enable them to connect with alumni, 99% showed interest in such a platform.

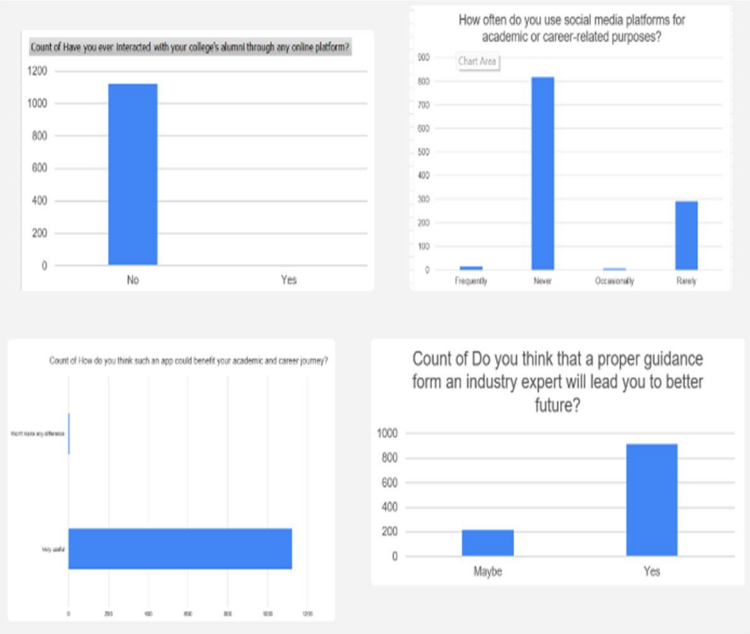


Figure 1

C. Survey 2 (After the app deployment)

- After the app was deployed, the second survey consisting of just over 150 responses (dues to a low user testing base) showed a significant increase in the number of students who had communication with alumni. On average 58% of the respondents reported connecting with alumni through the app. Moreover, 90% of the students reported that the app had a positive impact on their overall college experience.
- The app also provided students with the opportunity to learn new skills and gain valuable insights from alumni. 75% of the students reported that they had received useful advice from alumni through the app. In addition, 72% of the respondents reported that the app had helped them in their career planning and job search.
- Furthermore, the app also facilitated networking opportunities for both students and alumni. 58% of the respondents stated that they had made new connections through the app, and 65% - 70% believed that the app had expanded their professional network.

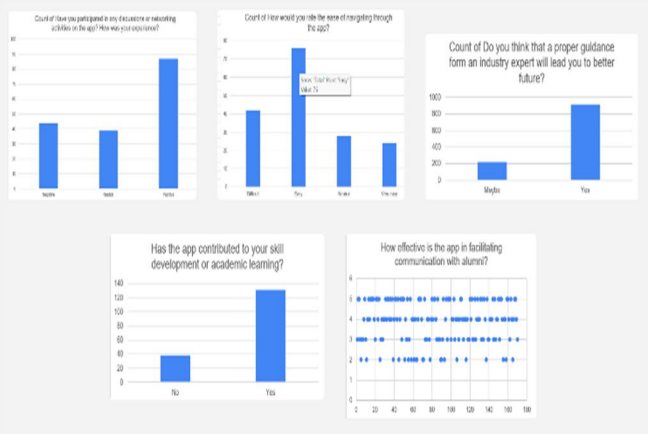


Figure 2

IV. FINDINGINS AND CONCLUSION

A. Findings

The findings of our research indicate that the app has had a positive impact on student-alumni communication and engagement. It has provided a convenient and efficient platform for students and alumni to connect, share experiences, and build relationships. The app has also helped in bridging the gap between college students and alumni, making it easier for them to access the benefits that alumni have to offer.

Moreover, the app has also enabled students to gain new skills and insights from alumni, which can greatly improve their academic, skill and career prospects. By providing networking opportunities, the app has also helped in expanding students' professional networks, which can be beneficial in their future endeavours.

B. Conclusion

In conclusion, our research has shown that the app has successfully facilitated communication and engagement between college students and alumni. It has had a positive impact on students' college experiences and has provided them with valuable resources and connections. The app has also proved to be beneficial for alumni, as it has provided them with a platform to give back to their alma mater and stay connected with the younger generation.

Further research can be conducted to explore the long-term effects of the app on student-alumni relationships and to assess its impact on alumni engagement with their alma mater. Additionally, the app can be improved and expanded to include more features that can enhance the overall college experience for students and alumni.

Overall, the app has proven to be a valuable tool for bridging the gap between college students and alumni and has the potential to be implemented in other educational institutions to create stronger connections and opportunities for both parties.

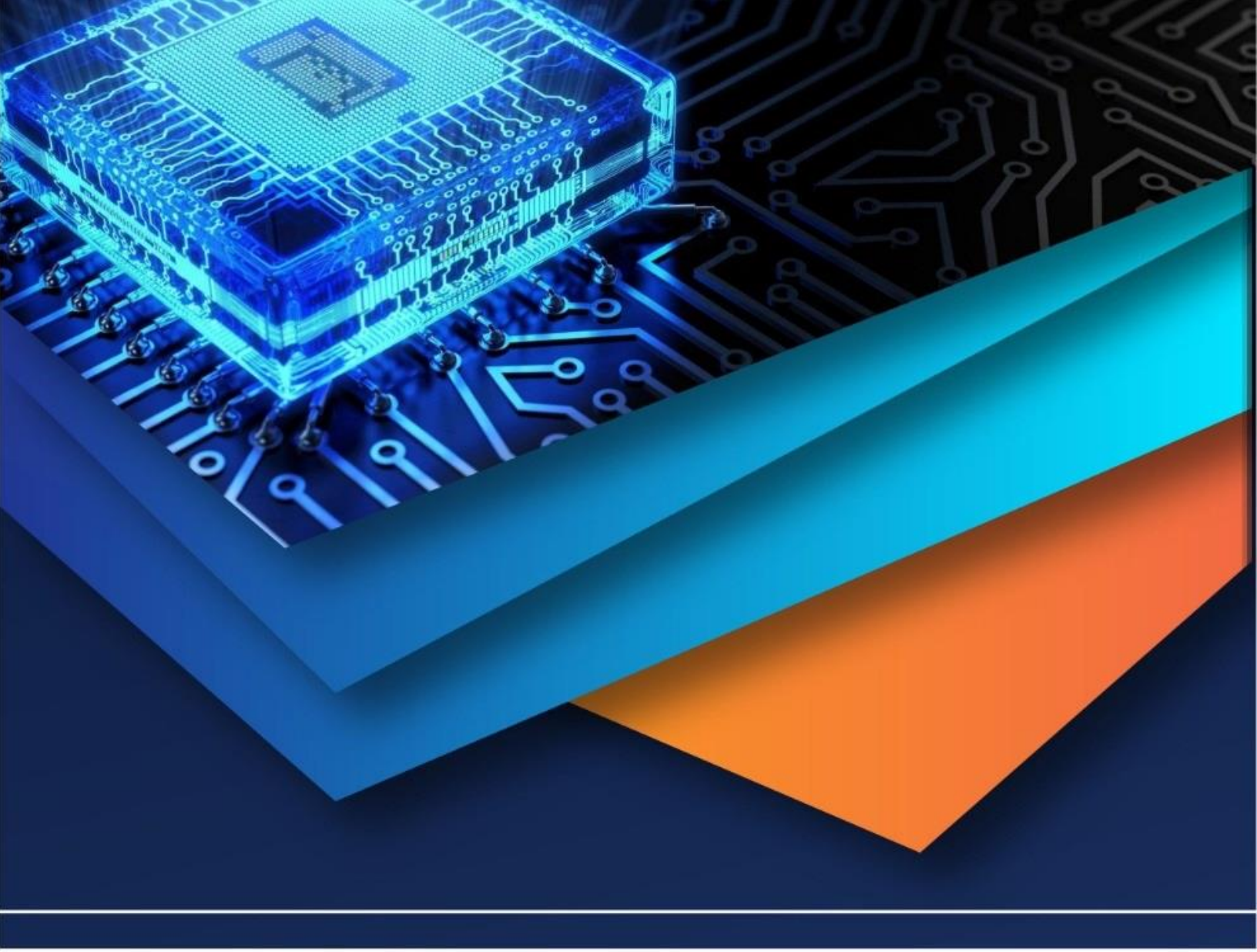
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