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The Lecturers' Views towards “Mentorship360Hub”

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the viewpoints of university lecturers on Mentorship360Hub, a novel mentorship platform introduced to address the time constraints inherent in mentorship programs. Recognizing the demanding schedules of both mentors and mentees, this study focuses on the implementation of Mentorship360Hub in a university located in Selangor. This study explores the perspectives of the lecturers regarding Mentorship360Hub, an innovative mentorship platform designed to enhance academic and professional development. This study utilized semi-structured interviews with fifteen university lecturers experienced with Mentorship360Hub, selected for their involvement in mentorship activities and familiarity with the platform. Interviews covered usability, benefits, challenges, and improvement suggestions, focusing on how Mentorship360Hub addresses time constraints in mentorship programs. Data was transcribed using Otter.ai and analyzed thematically with NVivo to identify key themes and insights. Inter-rater reliability was assessed to ensure consistency in assessments. The study underscores Mentorship360Hub's beneficial influence on academic institutions, enhancing mentorship access and communication while providing scheduling flexibility, although it encounters challenges like platform unfamiliarity and the need for improved training. Overall, Mentorship360Hub plays a significant role in supporting students' success, but improvements in user experience and training resources are necessary for its continued effectiveness. These findings provide valuable insights for educators, administrators, and developers aiming to enhance mentorship initiatives within academic settings, stressing the significance of tailoring platforms to lecturers' distinct needs and preferences for successful and enduring implementation.

Keywords:

Mentorship360Hub; mentor; mentee;
learning

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1. Introduction

Traditional mentorship programs have long been recognized as essential components of academic and professional development, providing valuable guidance, support, and networking opportunities for students as explored by previous authors [1-3, 11]. Academic advising serves as a vital resource within higher education institutions, aiding students in successfully navigating their educational paths. Advisors play a crucial role in monitoring students' academic advancement and suggesting opportunities that can enrich their experience, improve retention rates, and facilitate timely graduation [13,17,21]. However, according to several authors [3-5,16,18,19,20], these programs frequently face significant hurdles, particularly concerning the time constraints inherent in both mentors' and mentees' schedules. In academia, Mills [14] highlighted that lecturers and students alike juggle numerous responsibilities, finding the time for meaningful mentorship interactions can be a daunting task.

Mentorship360Hub, an innovative solution designed to tackle these challenges head-on. By leveraging technology and reimagining the mentorship paradigm, Mentorship360Hub aims to revolutionize the way mentorship is conducted within academic institutions. Through its streamlined approach and user-friendly interface, the platform seeks to overcome the traditional barriers of time and accessibility, making mentorship more convenient and efficient for all parties involved (see Figure 1). One of the key advantages of Mentorship360Hub lies in its ability to transcend geographical boundaries and time constraints. Unlike traditional face-to-face mentorship models, which often require participants to meet in person, Mentorship360Hub offers a virtual platform where mentors and mentees can connect and engage regardless of their physical locations. This not only enhances accessibility but also enables mentorship to occur asynchronously, accommodating the busy schedules of both mentors and mentees. Furthermore, Mentorship360Hub provides a structured framework for mentorship interactions, offering tools and resources to facilitate communication, goal-setting, and progress tracking.

Overall, Mentorship360Hub represents a paradigm shift in the way mentorship is conceptualized and implemented within academic settings. By addressing the time constraints inherent in traditional mentorship programs and harnessing the power of technology, Mentorship360Hub holds the potential to enhance student success, foster professional growth, and ultimately enrich the academic experience for all stakeholders involved. Therefore, this study looks at how Mentorship360Hub, a new mentorship platform, is being used at a university in Selangor. The findings of this study will help educators, administrators, and developers make mentorship programs better suited to lecturers' needs, ensuring they work well and last.

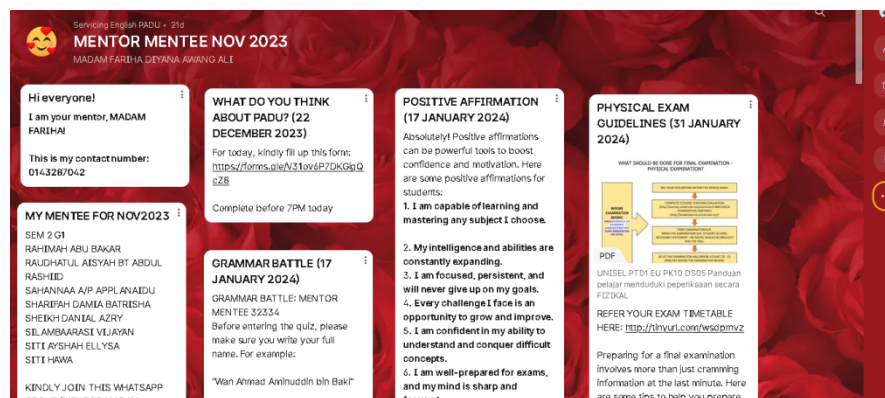


Fig. 1. Mentorship360Hub front page

2. Literature Review

Mentoring plays a crucial role for foundation students as it serves as a transitional platform before they progress to their degree courses, with guidance from mentors essential for helping students reach their academic goals and pursue their educational or career ambitions as highlighted in the previous studies [5-7]. However, traditional mentor-mentee relationships, though valuable, often encounter significant challenges as mentioned in the previous studies [8,9,10,16]. These include limited accessibility, especially in larger academic institutions, leading to mismatches in expertise or availability as claimed by the previous researchers [18,19]. Previous study established that time constraints on both mentors and mentees hinder consistent communication and meeting scheduling [2]. Unequal power dynamics may inhibit open communication and autonomy for mentees. Additionally, limited diversity in mentorship pairings can result in inadequate support for

underrepresented groups as pointed out by Pollard and Kumar [19]. The absence of a formal structure in many traditional mentorship programs leads to unclear goals and outcomes. Moreover, resistance to change within established mentorship frameworks impedes innovation and the integration of new tools. Overcoming these obstacles necessitates a shift towards more flexible, inclusive, and technology-driven approaches as reviewed by several authors [12,15]. By embracing digital platforms, implementing structured frameworks, promoting diversity, and fostering open communication, organizations can enhance the effectiveness and equity of mentorship experiences for all participants as highlighted by Montgomery [15].

Mentorship360Hub is leading the charge in transforming mentorship within academic institutions. By leveraging cutting-edge technology, Mentorship360Hub aims to revolutionize traditional mentorship models, connecting students and lecturers seamlessly through advanced matching algorithms. The platform offers a comprehensive set of tools, including goal-setting frameworks, progress tracking, curated content libraries, and discussion forums, empowering participants to navigate their mentorship journeys effectively. With Mentorship360Hub's Profile Management feature, users can create detailed profiles, showcasing their expertise, career goals, and availability preferences. The platform also facilitates mentorship through virtual meeting rooms, asynchronous communication tools, and file sharing capabilities, fostering collaboration and knowledge transfer. Additionally, Mentorship360Hub provides robust goal-setting tools that ensure objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART). Users can define clear goals, track progress, and receive guidance and support from mentors, ultimately enhancing the mentorship experience. In conclusion, Mentorship360Hub offers a dynamic and comprehensive platform to overcome the limitations of traditional mentorship programs. Academic institutions are encouraged to embrace Mentorship360Hub to foster meaningful connections, support professional growth, and nurture talent within their communities. With a commitment to continuous innovation, Mentorship360Hub aims to optimize the mentorship experience and shape the future of mentorship facilitation.

2. Methodology

The research methodology for this study involves conducting semi-structured interviews with fifteen university lecturers who have utilized Mentorship360Hub. Participants were selected based on their experience with the platform and their involvement in mentorship activities within academic institutions. The interviews explored various aspects of the lecturers' experiences with Mentorship360Hub, focusing specifically on its effectiveness in addressing time constraints commonly encountered in traditional mentorship programs. Interview questions covered topics such as usability, perceived benefits, challenges encountered, and suggestions for improvement was adapted from Dobie *et al.*, [5]. After collecting data from the participants, all the scripts were transcribed using Otter.ai software. The data collected from the interviews was analyzed thematically to identify key themes, patterns, and insights regarding the efficacy of Mentorship360Hub using NVivo software. Once the patterns and themes were identified, relationships between different elements within their datasets were then explored. Inter-rater reliability was also performed to determine the extent to which raters' assessments align with each other.

3. Results

The themes emerged from the analysis of the viewpoints of university lecturers on Mentorship360Hub are perceived benefits of Mentorship360Hub, challenges and limitations, role of

Mentorship360Hub in academic, user experience and interface design and recommendations for improvement.

3.1 Perceived Benefits of Mentorship360Hub

As shown in Table 1, the theme of "Perceived Benefits of Mentorship360Hub" encompasses several positive aspects of the platform as identified by the university lecturers. One sub-theme is the improved accessibility to mentorship opportunities that Mentorship360Hub offers. Lecturers appreciate how the platform facilitates easier access to mentoring resources and connections for students, regardless of their physical location or time constraints. For example, Lecturer 16 noted that Mentorship360Hub allows students to seek mentorship support conveniently from anywhere, while Lecturer 5 highlighted how the platform removes barriers to access by providing a centralized hub for mentoring activities. This enhanced accessibility not only expands opportunities for students to engage in mentorship but also promotes inclusivity and equity in accessing support and guidance. Additionally, Mentorship360Hub facilitates enhanced communication between mentors and mentees, functioning as a centralized platform for exchanging messages, sharing resources, and discussing goals and progress. This streamlined communication process fosters more meaningful and productive mentorship relationships. For instance, Lecturer 9 emphasized how the platform allows for seamless communication between mentors and mentees, facilitating regular interactions and feedback exchanges. Similarly, Lecturer 11 highlighted the platform's role in promoting ongoing dialogue and collaboration, leading to deeper engagement and enhanced learning outcomes. Furthermore, Mentorship360Hub offers increased flexibility in scheduling mentorship sessions, enabling mentors and mentees to coordinate meetings at times that align with their schedules. This flexibility eliminates the constraints of traditional face-to-face meetings, as noted by Lecturer 19, who emphasized how the platform allows for meetings to be scheduled conveniently, regardless of geographical location or time zone differences. Additionally, Lecturer 3 highlighted how this flexibility enables more frequent and convenient interactions between mentors and mentees, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness and accessibility of the mentorship experience. By accommodating diverse schedules, Mentorship360Hub facilitates greater engagement and participation, leading to more meaningful mentorship relationships and improved outcomes for both parties involved.

Table 1
 Theme 1 (Perceived benefits of Mentorship360Hub)

Sub-themes	Examples
Improved accessibility to mentorship opportunities	<p><u>Excerpt 16, L16</u> <i>"As a lecturer, the platform allows for more flexible scheduling of mentorship sessions, accommodating the busy schedules of both mentors and mentees. Additionally, Mentorship360Hub provides a centralized hub where students can easily connect with mentors from diverse backgrounds and expertise areas, enhancing the likelihood of finding a suitable mentor-match. This increased accessibility fosters a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, empowering students to seek guidance and support tailored to their individual needs and aspiration"</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt 5, L5</u> <i>"I find that Mentorship360Hub greatly enhances the accessibility to mentorship opportunities for both myself and my students. The platform's user-friendly interface and convenient scheduling options make it easier for me to connect with mentees and provide guidance,</i></p>

Enhanced communication between mentors and mentees	<p><i>even amidst my busy schedule. Additionally, Mentorship360Hub allows students to easily reach out to me for mentorship, eliminating the barriers of time and physical location. This improved accessibility not only fosters more meaningful mentorship relationships but also promotes a culture of support and collaboration within the academic community”</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt 9, L9</u></p> <p><i>“Through features such as virtual meeting rooms and asynchronous communication tools, mentors and mentees can engage in meaningful discussions, share insights, and provide guidance more efficiently than traditional face-to-face meetings. Additionally, the platform's messaging features enable quick and convenient communication, facilitating ongoing support and collaboration between mentors and mentees”</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt 11, L11</u></p> <p><i>“The platform facilitates more frequent and convenient interactions, allowing for timely guidance and support. Mentees can easily reach out to their mentors with questions or concerns, fostering a collaborative learning environment. Moreover, Mentorship360Hub's communication features, such as forum, facilitate richer and more meaningful discussions, leading to deeper mentorship relationships and greater academic and professional growth for mentees”</i></p>
Increased flexibility in scheduling mentorship sessions	<p><u>Excerpt19, L19</u></p> <p><i>“I appreciate the increased flexibility in scheduling mentorship sessions offered by Mentorship360Hub. This flexibility allows me to better accommodate the busy schedules of both mentors and mentees, ensuring that meaningful mentorship interactions can take place at convenient times for all parties involved. It also enables me to effectively balance my mentoring responsibilities with other professional commitments, ultimately enhancing my ability to support students' academic and professional development journeys”</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt 3, L3</u></p> <p><i>“I value the enhanced scheduling flexibility offered by Mentorship360Hub for mentorship sessions. This flexibility enables me to accommodate the varied schedules of mentors and mentees more effectively, facilitating the identification of mutually convenient meeting times. Moreover, it alleviates the logistical hurdles typically encountered with organizing in-person meetings, including the search for suitable meeting locations and the constraints associated with traveling”</i></p>

3.2 Challenges and limitations

The theme of "Challenges and Limitations" encountered by university lecturers in implementing Mentorship360Hub encompasses various issues identified by lecturers during their experience with the platform. Table 2 illustrates varying perspectives among lecturers regarding Mentorship360Hub. While some lecturers, as exemplified by Excerpts 8 and 17, expressed satisfaction with the platform's smooth functionality and reliability, others, such as those represented in Excerpts 12, 1, and 19, highlighted concerns regarding the unfamiliarity of Mentorship360Hub compared to traditional mentorship methods, skepticism about its effectiveness, and the need for adequate training and support. Notably, Excerpt 7 also underscores the importance of structured training sessions, user manuals, and dedicated support teams to address technical queries and enhance user confidence. These challenges and limitations underscore the importance of addressing technical proficiency,

resistance to change, and the provision of comprehensive training and support resources to facilitate successful implementation and adoption of Mentorship360Hub within academic institutions.

Table 2

Theme 2 (Challenges and limitations)

Sub-themes	Examples
Technical Issues	<p><u>Excerpt 8, L8</u> <i>"I have not encountered any significant technical issues while using the platform. This smooth experience has allowed me to focus on the mentorship process without disruptions or delays. I appreciate the platform's stability, which enhances the overall effectiveness of mentorship sessions and contributes to a positive user experience for both mentors and mentee"</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt 17, L17</u> <i>"I am pleased to tell you that no significant technical issues were encountered during the implementation of Mentorship360Hub. The platform operated smoothly and reliably, allowing for seamless navigation and interaction. This absence of technical challenges contributed to a positive user experience for both mentors and mentees, enabling us to fully leverage the platform's functionalities without disruption"</i></p>
Resistance to Change	<p><u>Excerpt 12, L12</u> <i>"I can see that some senior lecturers express concerns about the unfamiliarity of the platform and are hesitant to depart from traditional mentorship methods they are accustomed to. There may be skepticism about the effectiveness of Mentorship360Hub compared to established mentorship practices"</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt 1, L1</u> <i>"Some lecturers especially the seniors like me wonder the effectiveness of Mentorship360Hub compared to traditional face-to-face interactions. For me, I feel more comfortable with the existing mentorship practices"</i></p>
Training and Support Needs	<p><u>Excerpt 19, L19</u> <i>"Personally, one of the challenges I encountered in implementing Mentorship360Hub was the need for adequate training and support. While the platform offers promising features, navigating its functionalities effectively required a certain level of technical proficiency and familiarity. Unfortunately, the training resources provided were limited, and there was a lack of comprehensive guidance on utilizing all aspects of the platform"</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt 7, L7</u> <i>"While the platform offers innovative features for mentorship, navigating its functionalities effectively required additional guidance and assistance. Specifically, having access to structured training sessions or user manuals would have been beneficial in familiarizing myself with the platform's capabilities and best practices for mentoring. Plus, having a dedicated support team or help desk available to address technical queries or troubleshoot issues would have alleviated concerns about using the platform confidently"</i></p>

3.3 Role of Mentorship360Hub in Academic

As shown in Table 3, the excerpts provided collectively emphasize the significant role of Mentorship360Hub in fostering various aspects of students' academic growth and advancement. Excerpts 7, 14, 12, and 15 highlight how the platform contributes to improvements in academic performance through personalized guidance, targeted feedback, and goal-setting exercises, ultimately enhancing students' understanding of course materials and study habits. Additionally, Mentorship360Hub creates a supportive learning environment where students feel empowered to ask questions, explore new ideas, and develop critical thinking skills through regular interactions with mentors. Moreover, the platform serves as a valuable resource for career guidance, offering structured frameworks for mentors to share expertise, insights, and networking opportunities tailored to individual student interests and aspirations. Furthermore, Excerpts L1 and 20 emphasize how Mentorship360Hub facilitates meaningful dialogue, articulation of thoughts and ideas, and the development of communication skills, ultimately empowering students to excel in both academic and professional settings. Overall, Mentorship360Hub plays a pivotal role in driving students' academic success and professional development by equipping them with the skills and resources needed to thrive in their educational and career pursuits.

Table 3

Theme 3 (Role of Mentorship360Hub in academic)

Sub-themes	Examples
Improvements in academic performance	<p><u>Excerpt 7, L7</u> <i>"I've observed noticeable improvements in academic performance among students who have actively engaged with Mentorship360Hub. Through personalized guidance, targeted feedback, and goal-setting exercises facilitated by the platform, students have demonstrated enhanced understanding of course materials, improved study habits, and increased confidence in their academic abilities"</i></p>
	<p><u>Excerpt 14, L14</u> <i>"Mentorship360Hub fosters a supportive learning environment where students feel empowered to ask questions, seek clarification, and explore new ideas. Through regular interactions with mentors, students gain valuable insights, develop critical thinking skills, and enhance their understanding of course materials"</i></p>
Career guidance and mentorship	<p><u>Excerpt 12, L12</u> <i>"I find Mentorship360Hub to be invaluable in providing career guidance to students. The platform offers a structured framework for mentors to share their expertise, insights, and advice on various career paths and opportunities. Through Mentorship360Hub, I can connect with students on a deeper level, offering personalized guidance tailored to their individual interests, skills, and aspirations. "</i></p>
	<p><u>Excerpt 15, L15</u> <i>"By leveraging Mentorship360Hub, I can guide students through various career pathways, share industry insights, and provide valuable networking opportunities. Additionally, the platform enables ongoing communication and feedback, allowing for continuous refinement of career plans and strategies. "</i></p>
The development of transferable skills	<p><u>Excerpt L1, L1</u> <i>"The platform provides a structured framework for mentorship interactions, encouraging mentees to articulate their thoughts, ask questions, and engage in meaningful discussions with their mentors.</i></p>

Through regular communication via Mentorship360Hub, students have the opportunity to enhance their written and verbal communication skills, as well as their ability to express ideas clearly and concisely”

Excerpt 20, L20

“ I think students have the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue, articulate their thoughts and ideas, and actively listen to feedback and guidance from their mentors. This process not only enhances their ability to communicate effectively but also builds their confidence in expressing themselves in academic and professional settings”

3.4 User Experience and Interface Design

The provided excerpts shown in Table 4 collectively illustrate the positive reception of Mentorship360Hub's user experience and interface design among university lecturers. Excerpts 12, 6, 2, and 18 highlight the platform's intuitive navigation, user-friendly layout, and clear instructions, which contribute to an enhanced user experience. Users find it easy to navigate through different sections, access resources, schedule mentorship sessions, and engage with mentors effectively. However, Excerpts 14 and 13 suggest areas for improvement, such as incorporating more interactive features like discussion forums, providing comprehensive training and support resources, and implementing robust data analytics functionalities. These suggestions aim to further enhance the platform's effectiveness and personalize the mentorship experience for both mentors and mentees. Overall, the excerpts emphasize the importance of continuous refinement to meet the evolving needs of users and ensure an optimal user experience.

Table 4

Theme 4 (User experience and interface design)

Sub-themes	Examples
Ease of navigation	<p><u>Excerpt 12,L12</u> <i>“I've found that Mentorship360Hub's navigation is intuitive and user-friendly, which greatly enhances the overall user experience. The platform provides a structured framework for mentorship interactions, making it easy for mentees to navigate through different sections, access resources, and engage with their mentors effectively. The layout is clear and organized, allowing users to quickly find the information they need and navigate between various features seamlessly”</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt 6, L6</u> <i>“I think Mentorship360Hub offers a user-friendly interface that facilitates easy navigation for both mentors and mentees. The platform's intuitive layout and clear menu options make it simple for users to access the various features and functionalities available. Whether it's updating profiles, scheduling mentorship sessions, or accessing resources, navigating through Mentorship360Hub is straightforward and efficient”</i></p>
Clarity of instructions	<p><u>Excerpt 2, L2</u> <i>“As a lecturer, I have found that Mentorship360Hub provides clear and concise instructions, which greatly facilitate the mentorship process for both mentors and mentees. The platform's user-friendly interface and well-structured guidance enable users to navigate seamlessly through the various features and functionality”</i></p>

Suggestions for improving the platform	<p><u>Excerpt 18, L18</u> <i>“Whether it's setting up mentorship sessions, sharing resources, or tracking progress towards goals, the instructions provided within Mentorship360Hub are intuitive and easy to follow. This clarity ensures that both mentors and mentees can fully leverage the platform's capabilities to enhance their mentorship experiences effectively”</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt L14, L14</u> <i>“I believe there are several areas where Mentorship360Hub could be further improved to enhance its effectiveness and user experience. Firstly, incorporating more interactive features such as discussion forums or virtual collaboration spaces could promote greater engagement and participation among mentors and mentees, facilitating richer learning experiences and knowledge sharing. Additionally, providing more comprehensive training and support resources for users, including tutorials, user guides, and troubleshooting assistance, would help address any technical challenges and ensure that all stakeholders can maximize the platform's capabilities”</i></p> <p><u>Excerpt 13, L13</u> <i>“ I think we need to implement robust data analytics and reporting functionalities to enable educators and administrators to track the impact and outcomes of mentorship activities more effectively, allowing for continuous refinement and optimization of the platform. Furthermore, enhancing the platform's customization options to allow for tailored mentorship experiences based on individual preferences and goals would further personalize the learning journey for students and mentors alike. ”</i></p>
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4. Conclusions

The four themes identified provide a comprehensive overview of the implementation and impact of Mentorship360Hub within academic institutions. Firstly, the theme of "Perceived Benefits of Mentorship360Hub" highlights the positive aspects of the platform as identified by university lecturers. The platform's improved accessibility to mentorship opportunities is noted, allowing students to seek support conveniently from anywhere and promoting inclusivity in accessing guidance. Additionally, Mentorship360Hub facilitates enhanced communication between mentors and mentees, fostering more meaningful relationships and productive interactions. The platform's flexibility in scheduling mentorship sessions further enhances engagement and participation, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for students. On the other hand, the theme of "Challenges and Limitations" sheds light on the obstacles encountered by lecturers during the implementation of Mentorship360Hub. While some express satisfaction with the platform's functionality, others voice concerns about its unfamiliarity compared to traditional methods, skepticism about its effectiveness, and the need for adequate training and support. Addressing these challenges is crucial to ensure successful implementation and adoption within academic institutions.

Moving on to the theme of "Role of Mentorship360Hub in Academic," the excerpts demonstrate the platform's significant impact on students' academic growth and advancement. Mentorship360Hub contributes to improvements in academic performance through personalized guidance, fostering a deeper understanding of course materials, and promoting critical thinking skills. Additionally, the platform serves as a valuable resource for career guidance, offering tailored support and networking opportunities to students based on their individual interests and aspirations. Finally,

the theme of "User Experience and Interface Design" focuses on the usability and user experience of Mentorship360Hub. While the platform receives praise for its intuitive navigation, user-friendly layout, and clear instructions, suggestions for improvement are also highlighted, such as incorporating more interactive features and providing comprehensive training and support resources. These insights underscore the importance of continuous refinement to meet the evolving needs of users and ensure an optimal user experience.

Overall, Mentorship360Hub plays a significant role in supporting students' success, but improvements in user experience and training resources are necessary for its continued effectiveness. The findings offer valuable guidance for optimizing mentorship initiatives within academic institutions, emphasizing the importance of aligning such platforms with the needs of lecturers and students for sustained success.

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