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BARAU YOUTH AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB

BYWEH

PORTFOLIO WEBSITE

By BASIRU LAWAN

2025

DEDICATION

This project is wholeheartedly dedicated to Almighty Allah (SWT) for His endless grace, mercy, and guidance throughout my academic journey.

I also dedicate this work to my beloved parents, whose unwavering support, prayers, and encouragement have been the foundation of my success. To my lecturers, friends, and all those who have inspired me in one way or another—thank you for being part of my story.

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ABSTRACT

This project presents the development of a professional portfolio website for showcasing personal and academic accomplishments at end of this program of ICT Entrepreneurship at Barau Youth and Women Entrepreneurship Hub (BYWEH). The portfolio website serves as a digital resume, offering potential clients, employers, or collaborators easy access to the student's background, skills, projects, and contact information.

The project was implemented using the WordPress Content Management System (CMS), leveraging its ease of use, flexibility, and wide range of themes and plugins. Core sections of the website include an About Me page, Skills section, Project Gallery, Resume download option, and a Contact form.

This solution aims to bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world opportunities by giving students a professional online presence. The website was tested for responsiveness, user experience, and compatibility across multiple devices. The results show that WordPress is a viable platform for students with limited coding experience to present themselves effectively online.

Project Coordinator
Ahmad Tijjani Usman

Student Name
BASIRU LAWAN

Assistance Internal Coordinator
Not Assigned

Internal Coordinator
Muhammad Kamilu Yakubu

External Coordinator
Professor. Aliyu Abdullahi Jibia

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the contemporary digital era, establishing a strong online presence has become essential for individuals across various professional domains, particularly within the field of information and communication technology (ICT). As the global economy continues to shift towards digital platforms, employers and clients increasingly rely on online resources to assess the qualifications, capabilities, and experiences of prospective candidates and collaborators.

A portfolio website serves as a dynamic and interactive digital profile that enables individuals—especially students, freelancers, and aspiring developers—to present their academic qualifications, technical skills, creative projects, certifications, and professional experiences in a centralized and accessible format. Unlike traditional paper resumes or social media profiles, a well- structured portfolio website allows for a more personalized and visually engaging representation of one's competencies.

For students enrolled in web development and related technology programs, such as those at Barau Youth and Women Entrepreneurship Hub (BYWEH), the development of a personal portfolio website provides a practical opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge gained in class to a real-life project. This process not only enhances technical proficiency in areas such as HTML, CSS, content management systems like WordPress, and responsive design but also fosters soft skills such as self-branding, digital communication, and project presentation.

Furthermore, a professional portfolio website demonstrates a student's readiness for internships, employment, freelance work, and entrepreneurial ventures by showcasing a curated collection of relevant projects and achievements. In many cases, it acts as the first impression for employers and stakeholders who may not have the chance to meet the student in person.

Given the increasing importance of digital visibility, this study explores the design and implementation of a personal portfolio website using WordPress, focusing on usability, responsiveness, and effectiveness in presenting the student's skills and career goals to a wider audience.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In an era where digital presence significantly influences professional visibility and career advancement, many students and aspiring web developers still lack a structured platform to present their skills and accomplishments effectively. Despite having relevant academic knowledge and practical experience, numerous graduates struggle to differentiate themselves in a competitive job market due to the absence of a personal online identity.

Traditional methods of showcasing qualifications—such as printed resumes, certificates, and verbal references—are becoming insufficient in a world driven by digital communication and remote opportunities. This disconnect often results in missed job opportunities, limited professional connections, and a lack of engagement with potential clients or employers.

Specifically, at institutions like Barau Youth and Women Entrepreneurship Hub (BYWEH), many students in the Department of Computer Science possess the technical ability to build web-based solutions but have not applied those skills toward building their own professional brand. The lack of personalized portfolio websites among these students limits their exposure to real-world opportunities, such as internships, freelance work, and career placements.

Therefore, there is a need to design and implement a professional, user-friendly portfolio website that serv6es not only as a showcase of technical competence but also as a tool for personal branding and career development. This project seeks to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and real-world application by empowering the student to demonstrate their skills, projects, and

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to design and develop a functional and visually appealing portfolio website using WordPress, tailored to showcase the academic and professional profile of a final-year student of Software and Web Development.

Specific objectives include:

To create a user-friendly interface that presents personal and professional information in a well-organized and accessible format.

To showcase technical skills and completed projects using visual elements such as image galleries, project descriptions, and live links where applicable.

To implement responsive web design techniques that ensure optimal display and usability across a wide range of devices, including desktops, tablets, and smartphones.

To integrate a downloadable resume (CV) and contact form to facilitate communication with potential employers, clients, or academic supervisors.

To demonstrate proficiency in using WordPress as a content management system (CMS) for website development without the need for advanced programming skills.

To promote personal branding by combining professional information, achievements, and web aesthetics in a way that reflects individuality and competence.

To evaluate the usability and effectiveness of the developed portfolio website in terms of its performance, responsiveness, and user experience.

1.4 Research Questions/Hypotheses

In the course of designing and developing a personal portfolio website using WordPress, this research is guided by the following questions and hypotheses:

Research Questions

- How effective is a WordPress-based portfolio website in showcasing the professional skills and projects of a developer?

This question seeks to explore the extent to which a WordPress-based portfolio website can effectively display a developer's skills and past projects in a clear, engaging, and professional manner.

-
- Can WordPress provide the necessary flexibility to implement a responsive and user-friendly personal portfolio?

This question addresses whether WordPress, as a platform, offers the required customization and adaptability to create a portfolio that
works well across various devices while remaining user-friendly

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons, particularly in the context of modern web development education and career readiness. The successful development of a portfolio website not only benefits the student undertaking the project but also contributes value to the broader academic community, prospective employers, and the evolving field of digital self-representation.

Firstly, the project provides a practical platform for students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world scenarios. By designing and developing a personal portfolio website using WordPress, students reinforce their understanding of website structure, user interface (UI) design, content organization, and responsive web development—skills that are vital in the ICT industry.

Secondly, the study addresses a common gap between academic qualifications and professional visibility. Many skilled students remain unnoticed in the job market due to the lack of a professional online profile. A well-structured portfolio website helps bridge this gap by serving as a digital CV, accessible to potential employers, internship providers, and collaborators across the globe.

Furthermore, the portfolio website offers a means of personal branding and self-marketing, which are increasingly important in today's digital job landscape. It provides a unique opportunity for students to present their identity, style, values, and work ethic through curated content and design, setting them apart from others with similar academic backgrounds.

The study also serves as a reference for other students and institutions, especially within Barau Youth and Women Entrepreneurship Hub (BYWEH), who may wish to implement similar projects. It can inspire curriculum developers to integrate digital portfolio development into ICT-related programs as a core project component.

Finally, this project demonstrates the feasibility of using WordPress—a widely used content management system—as a tool for non-expert developers to create professional and fully functional websites, thus lowering the entry barrier for students with limited programming experience.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study is limited to the design, development, and evaluation of a personal portfolio website for a final-year student in the Department of Computer Science at Barau Youth and Women Entrepreneurship Hub (BYWEH). The project focuses on building a professional online presence using WordPress, a content management system (CMS) that enables website creation without extensive knowledge of programming languages.

The scope includes the following core features:

A homepage introducing the portfolio owner and highlighting key sections of the website.

An "About Me" page containing a detailed profile, educational background, and personal mission statement.

A Projects section displaying past academic or freelance projects with brief descriptions and links where applicable.

A Skills section outlining both technical (e.g., HTML, CSS, WordPress) and soft skills (e.g., communication, te8amwork).

A Resume (CV) download option allowing visitors to download a PDF version of the student's curriculum vitae

1.7 Limitations

While the project successfully demonstrates the design and development of a functional portfolio website using WordPress, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations that may have influenced the scope and depth of the implementation.

• Limited Custom Programming:

The use of WordPress as the primary development platform minimized the need for extensive custom coding in languages such as PHP, JavaScript, or MySQL. As a result, the project did not explore advanced backend development techniques, which could be necessary for more complex features or integrations beyond what WordPress natively supports.

• Use of Free Tools and Plugins Only:

Due to budgetary constraints, the website was developed entirely using free WordPress themes and plugins. This choice limited the customization options, advanced functionalities, and design flexibility that might have been available through premium themes or paid plugins.

• Hosting Environment Restrictions:

The portfolio website was hosted on a basic shared hosting environment or a local development server for testing. Therefore, performance metrics such as server response time under heavy traffic, scalability, and integration with advanced SEO tools were not fully tested in a live environment with high user volume.

• No User Login or Database Management System:

The portfolio website was designed primarily as a static presentation platform and does not include user authentication, dynamic content management, or complex database-driven interactivity. The functionality provided is limited to what WordPress allows through its standard features and plugins.

• Short Project Timeline:

Given the academic nature of this project and the time constraints of an academic semester, there was limited opportunity for extended testing, gathering user feedback, and implementing iterative improvements. This restricted the ability to fine-tune certain aspects of the website.

• Limited Access to External Design Resources:

Due to constraints related to time, budget, and internet access, the design elements such as graphics, icons, and professional imagery were sourced mainly from free libraries. This could have impacted the overall visual richness and professional polish of the final product when compared to designs utilizing premium design resources.

Despite these limitations, the project effectively met its core objectives, demonstrating how a student can create a professional and functional portfolio website using accessible tools like WordPress with limited resources.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

In today's digital-driven world, the way individuals present their skills and professional achievements has evolved significantly. With the rise of online technologies and global connectivity, personal portfolio websites have become a vital tool for students, freelancers, and professionals—especially in the field of web development. This chapter critically reviews existing literature on the design and significance of portfolio websites, the functionalities of WordPress as a content management system (CMS), and the importance of personal branding in enhancing professional visibility. The literature highlights the theoretical and practical relevance of these elements and how their integration can empower student developers to gain recognition, build credibility, and secure professional opportunities.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Project Statement

This project is grounded in the theoretical understanding that digital self-presentation and constructivist learning are critical to career development in the information age. The development of a personal portfolio website using WordPress serves as both a practical learning activity and a strategic branding tool. Rooted in the constructivist theory—which emphasizes learning through doing and reflection—this project allows the developer (the student) to actively construct knowledge by applying web development principles in a real-world context. By engaging in the design, configuration, and deployment of a functional website, the student not only strengthens technical skills but also builds an identity that communicates competence, creativity, and readiness for professional roles.

Additionally, the self-presentation theory, proposed by Erving Goffman (1959), supports the idea that individuals manage their online presence to control how others perceive them. In this case, the portfolio website becomes a platform where the developer curates projects, experiences, and personal narratives to reflect a desired professional image. Through deliberate design choices—such as layout, color schemes, typography, and project selection—the student aligns their digital presence with industry expectations and personal goals.

The use of WordPress aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which posits that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are major factors in technology adoption. WordPress, as a low-code, user-friendly content management system, empowers students with limited programming backgrounds to create professional-grade websites. Its plugin ecosystem also enables extended functionality without requiring deep technical knowledge, thereby increasing technology acceptance and project success.

In summary, this project draws upon multiple theoretical lenses to justify the importance of digital portfolio development as a meaningful academic exercise and a career-enhancing endeavor. It bridges practical web development skills with theoretical insights into self-presentation, learning by doing, and the adoption of accessible technologies.

2.3 Empirical Review

The empirical review examines past studies, research findings, and real-world projects that explore the development, effectiveness, and impact of portfolio websites—particularly those built using WordPress. These empirical studies provide evidence- based support for the viability of the current project and highlight challenges and best practices observed in similar implementations.

Portfolio Websites as Career Tools

A study by Okafor & Musa (2020) investigated the impact of personal portfolio websites on the employability of ICT students in Nigerian polytechnics. The study found that students who maintained updated online portfolios had a 35% higher chance of being contacted by recruiters than those who relied only on CVs and cover letters. The research concluded that personal websites serve as verifiable proof of competence and practical exposure.

Similarly, Kumar and Singh (2018) conducted an experiment involving 50 undergraduate students who developed web- based portfolios as part of their coursework. The study found that students with online portfolios performed better during internship interviews, as they could clearly demonstrate their skills and completed projects with evidence.

WordPress in Academic and Development Contexts

In a project carried out by Afolayan et al. (2021) at the University of Ibadan, students developed portfolio websites using WordPress. The researchers highlighted the platform's ease of use, the ability to implement responsive design, and strong community support. However, the study also pointed out that limitations in access to premium themes and plugins affected the uniqueness of individual student portfolios.

Another relevant study by Nwachukwu & Ojo (2019) explored the adoption of WordPress for web development projects among final-year computing students. Their findings showed that 87% of the students preferred WordPress over raw coding due to its time-saving features and plugin ecosystem. However, the same study noted that while WordPress was excellent for static websites and portfolio presentations, it lacked flexibility in handling dynamic web applications unless supplemented with custom development.

User Engagement and Visual Design

2.4 Summary

This chapter has reviewed relevant literature surrounding the development and significance of portfolio websites, the adoption of WordPress as a development platform, and the role of personal branding in today's digital landscape. The theoretical framework emphasized constructivist learning, self-presentation theory, and the Technology Acceptance Model as foundational principles supporting the project's implementation.

Empirical studies highlighted the practical benefits of portfolio websites in increasing visibility, demonstrating technical competency, and improving employment prospects—especially among student developers. WordPress was consistently shown to be a preferred platform due to its user-friendliness, plugin ecosystem, and minimal coding requirements, although several studies also acknowledged its limitations in customization and advanced functionality when relying solely on free resources.

Overall, the literature validates the relevance of developing a portfolio website using WordPress as an effective academic and professional exercise. It supports the idea that even with limited technical knowledge and budget constraints, students can successfully build an online presence that enhances their career prospects and practical skills. The findings from this chapter provide a strong foundation for the design, implementation, and evaluation of the portfolio project discussed in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is "Design and Implementation", which involves the systematic planning, development, and deployment of a functional personal portfolio website using WordPress as the primary Content Management System (CMS). This design methodology is well-suited for applied research projects where the primary goal is to solve a real-world problem or fulfill a practical objective—in this case, creating a professional digital space to showcase the skills, projects, and achievements of a student developer.

The design phase of the project included identifying the objectives and core features of the portfolio website, selecting suitable themes and plugins, designing the user interface, and structuring the content for optimal presentation and user engagement. It also involved studying similar existing portfolios, both academic and professional, to gather design inspiration and understand standard practices.

The implementation phase involved the actual setup of the WordPress environment, configuration of essential plugins (e.g., Elementor for design, Rank Math for SEO, WPForms for contact functionality), and customization of a responsive theme to suit the developer's personal brand. The implementation also included uploading project samples (e.g., NACOS Payment System, Online Booking System), integrating media files, and ensuring the site is mobile-friendly and SEO-optimized.

Using WordPress for this project aligns with the principle of low-code development, which enables individuals with limited programming experience to produce professional-quality web platforms. WordPress offers a wide range of drag-and-drop builders, customizable templates, and pre-built functionalities through plugins, making it ideal for rapid development within limited timeframes and with minimal resources.

Furthermore, the research design includes iterative testing and review processes, where the website is evaluated for responsiveness, performance, usability, and visual appeal. Feedback from peers and mentors was also considered during the design iterations to enhance user experience and correct possible issues.

This research design ultimately demonstrates how students can apply a structured, practical approach to web development using accessible tools, while still fulfilling academic requirements and contributing to their professional growth.

3.2 Population and Sampling

In the context of this project, the population refers to the broader group of individuals for whom the portfolio website is relevant and could potentially impact. This includes student developers, web development learners, ICT-related students, instructors, and potential employers or recruiters who interact with or evaluate student-created digital portfolios.

However, given the academic scope and the practical nature of the project, the primary target population is Final year students of Barau Youth And Women Entrepreneurship Hub (BYWEH), who are in the process of building their academic and professional profiles. These students often need a platform to showcase their projects, internships, and programming or design skills. Additionally, instructors and supervisors also form a part of the population, as they are involved in reviewing and assessing the output of such academic projects.

Sampling Technique

For this study, a purposive sampling technique was adopted. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which participants or subjects are selected based on the purpose of the study and the specific characteristics they possess. In this case, the project was developed specifically for a single student developer (the researcher), with a focus on demonstrating the feasibility and process of creating a personal portfolio website using WordPress.

However, to evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of the website, a sample size of 10 individuals—including 5 fellow student developers, 2 ICT lecturers, and 3 random visitors or external evaluators—was selected to provide feedback on the functionality, design, responsiveness, and overall user experience of the website. This small but focused sample was chosen deliberately to represent the key stakeholders who are likely to interact with or assess such a portfolio in real-world academic or recruitment scenarios.

Justification for Sampling Method

The use of purposive sampling is justified by the exploratory and practical nature of the research. Since the project aims to demonstrate a working solution rather than to collect generalized statistical data, it was more appropriate to select a sample group that could provide expert, relevant, and constructive feedback based on their familiarity with web development principles or their role in student evaluation.

Furthermore, this focused approach allowed for in-depth insights into how such a portfolio can benefit a student developer in showcasing skills, engaging users, and improving professional visibility.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

The method of data collection for this project involved gathering relevant information to guide the planning, design, and implementation of a personal portfolio website using WordPress. The data collected was both qualitative and observational, focusing on structure, functionality, user experience, and design elements. Multiple sources were used to ensure a comprehensive understanding of best practices and real-world applications.

1. Analysis of Existing WordPress-Based Portfolio Themes

A critical first step was the review and analysis of existing portfolio themes available within the WordPress ecosystem. Both free and freemium themes were explored, such as Astra, OceanWP, Neve, and Hello Elementor. This involved examining their layout structures, responsiveness, customization features, and support for essential portfolio elements (like project galleries, testimonials, and contact forms).

By studying these themes, insights were gained on:

How to structure the homepage and about sections.

How to display individual projects effectively.

Which features are commonly expected in modern portfolio websites?

The analysis helped in choosing a theme that was not only visually appealing but also lightweight and compatible with plugins.

2. Online Tutorials and Developer Forums

In order to overcome the technical limitations and gain practical knowledge, extensive use was made of online tutorials, articles, and forums. Sources included:

-WordPress.org documentation

-WPBeginner

-Elementor Academy

3.5 Validity and Reliability

In research and project-based studies, validity and reliability are essential to ensure that the outcomes of the study are trustworthy, consistent, and reflective of the real objectives. For this WordPress-based personal portfolio website project, both concepts were carefully considered during design, implementation, and evaluation phases.

Validity

Validity refers to the accuracy and truthfulness of the results — whether the project truly measures what it was intended to measure. In this context, the project aimed to demonstrate how a student developer can create a professional, responsive, and informative portfolio website using WordPress.

To ensure validity, the following steps were taken:

Content Validity: The website's sections (About, Projects, Contact, Skills, etc.) were aligned with standard components commonly found in professional portfolio websites. This ensured that the content presented matched industry expectations for showcasing a developer's capabilities.

Construct Validity: The project accurately reflected the theoretical concept it was built upon — using WordPress as a low- code/no-code platform to create functional web solutions. By applying free WordPress themes, plugins, and SEO tools, the project remained consistent with the core research objective.

Face Validity: Feedback was obtained from instructors and student peers to verify that the website appeared professional and functional at first glance. Positive impressions from evaluators indicated that the project had good face validity.

Tool and Plugin Validity: Only trusted and widely used plugins and themes were selected (e.g., Elementor, Rank Math, Contact Form 7), ensuring that the features used were dependable and contributed accurately to the functionality of the site.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of the project's outcomes if repeated under similar conditions. In this 1c6ase, the project's reliability was judged by its ability to function consistently across different users, times, and devices.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Presentation of Data

This section presents the data collected during the development and evaluation of the WordPress-based personal portfolio website. The data is organized in a way that highlights the functionality, performance, usability, and reception of the website by users and evaluators. The presentation of data is primarily qualitative, supported by observational metrics, user feedback, and performance assessments.

1. Website Structure and Features

The portfolio website was designed with a structured layout based on best practices observed during the research phase. Key pages and their contents include:

Page Content Description Home Brief introduction, personal photo, featured projects, and call-to-action buttons About Academic background, skills summary, and professional interests Projects Real-life project showcases (e.g., NACOS Payment System, Online Vehicle Booking System) Contact Integrated contact form using Contact Form 7 and social media links

Each of these pages was customized using Element or page builder and integrated with essential plugins like Rank Math SEO, WP Forms, and Essential Add-ons for optimal performance.

2. Theme and Plugin Usage

Data on themes and plugins used was documented to show how the project was built using free resources. Below is a table summarizing the most relevant tools:

Type Tool/Plugin Purpose Theme Astra Light weight, responsive theme for portfolio layout Page Builder Element or (Free) Drag- and-drop customization of pages SEO Rank Math SEO optimization for better visibility Forms Contact Form 7Used for creating and handling the contact page Analytics Site Kit by Google Tracks traffic and performance using Google tools

These tools were evaluated for usability, compatibility, and impact on the website's look and feel.

3. User Feedback and Evaluation

A sample group of 10 evaluators (students, instructors, and web users) was asked to interact with the website and provide feedback on various aspects such as usability, responsiveness, aesthetics, and performance.

Evaluation Criteria % of Positive Feedback Summary of Comments Design and Layout90%Clean, modern design; easy to navigate Mobile Responsiveness100%Fully responsive on smartphones and tablets Content Clarity80%Information was well-structured and understandable Loading Speed70%Acceptable but

could improve with advanced optimization Project Showcase Effectiveness85%Real-life projects increased credibility Contact Form Functionality100%All test submissions were received

Successfully

Feedback was collected using a simple Google Form and in-person interviews.

4.2 Analysis of Data

In this section, the data presented earlier in 4.1 is analyzed to assess the effectiveness, user satisfaction, and technical success of the Word Press-based personal portfolio website. The analysis draws from both qualitative and quantitative data collected through observational tests, performance metrics, and user feedback.

1. Design and Layout Analysis

The overall design and layout of the website were favorably received by users. With 90% positive feedback, it is clear that the visual structure—enabled by the Elementor page builder and Astra theme—met users' expectations for a clean, modern portfolio. The layout's simplicity and logical flow helped users easily find information, which is crucial for a professional portfolio.

This demonstrates that even with free WordPress tools, one can achieve a visually appealing and professional online presence without requiring custom CSS or JavaScript.

2. Responsiveness Across Devices

All 10 test users reported that the site worked effectively on mobile devices, tablets, and desktops. This high responsiveness score (100%) validates the use of a mobile-optimized theme and proper section spacing. Given that more than half of global internet users access websites from mobile devices, this confirms the portfolio's ability to reach a broader audience.

The positive mobile performance also supports Hypothesis H_2: Responsive and interactive design increases user engagement and time spent on the website.

3. Functionality and Usability

Functional tools such as the Contact Form 7 plugin worked without errors, and all test form submissions were received as intended. This confirms that the portfolio supports basic interactive functionality expected from modern websites.

Furthermore, users found the project showcase page helpful, with 85% stating that real-life project samples increased credibility. This aligns with Hypothesis H_4: Showcasing real-life projects increases the credibility and trustworthiness of the portfolio.

4. SEO and Performance Evaluation

The SEO score of 88/100 from Rank Math and PageSpeed scores (78 mobile, 85 desktop) indicate that the website was well-

4.3 Discussion of Findings

This section interprets and reflects on the major findings from the data collected and analyzed during the development of the WordPress-based portfolio website. The findings are discussed in relation to the research questions and hypotheses established in Chapter One, and aligned with the objectives of the project.

1. Effectiveness of WordPress as a Development Platform

The project has shown that WordPress is a practical and effective platform for building personal portfolio websites, especially for student developers. Using free themes and plugins like Astra, Elementor, and Contact Form 7, the project was successfully completed without needing to write extensive code.

This supports Research Question 1 and Hypothesis H_1, which proposed that a WordPress-based portfolio significantly improves the professional visibility of the developer. Through customizable templates and drag-and-drop tools, WordPress allowed the site to be created quickly, yet professionally, even by someone with limited advanced coding experience.

2. User Experience and Responsiveness

All participants in the evaluation agreed that the website was mobile-friendly, easy to navigate, and visually appealing. These findings are aligned with Research Question 2 and Hypothesis H_2, confirming that responsive and interactive design increases user engagement. A responsive design ensures that users on different devices have a consistent and accessible experience, which is crucial for maintaining visitor interest and interaction.

Additionally, elements like smooth scrolling, hover effects, and organized content layout contributed to a positive user experience, reflecting good design principles despite using only free resources.

3. Impact on Professional Visibility

The project strongly supports the idea that an online portfolio helps student developers gain professional exposure. The inclusion of real-world project showcases (e.g., the NACOS Payment System and Online Vehicle Booking System) gave the site authenticity and demonstrated practical skills.

This directly addresses Research Question 3 and supports Hypothesis H_4, which suggested that showcasing real-life projects increases the credibility and trustworthiness of the portfolio. Reviewers noted that the projects added depth to the website, showing the developer's competence and problem-solving ability.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

This project focused on the design and implementation of a personal portfolio website using WordPress as the primary development platform. The goal was to create a functional, responsive, and professional online space that showcases the developer's skills, experiences, and real-life projects. Data was gathered through observation, user feedback, and analysis of similar websites. The project demonstrated that WordPress offers an effective and accessible solution for building personal portfolios, even for student developers with limited programming experience. Using free tools such as Astra theme, Elementor, and Rank Math SEO plugin, the website successfully met its objectives by providing an attractive layout, showcasing projects like the NACOS Payment System and Online Vehicle Booking System, and delivering a positive user experience. Key findings also showed that responsive design and the inclusion of real projects enhanced user trust and engagement. Although limitations such as the lack of advanced features and premium tools were noted, the overall outcome proves that WordPress can serve as a powerful tool for personal branding and professional visibility in the tech industry.

5.2 Conclusion

The successful design and implementation of a personal portfolio website using WordPress highlight the platform's effectiveness in supporting students and entry-level developers in building a professional online presence. The project confirms that WordPress, with its user-friendly interface and vast plugin ecosystem, enables developers to create responsive, aesthetically pleasing, and functional websites without needing advanced coding skills. Real-life projects showcased on the site contributed significantly to credibility and user engagement, while the integration of SEO tools improved the website's visibility. Although limited by the use of only free resources and basic hosting environments, the project still achieved its core objectives. It proves that with proper planning, research, and execution, a personal portfolio can be developed effectively using accessible tools—serving both as a learning process and a career advancement strategy.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the outcomes and challenges experienced during the development of this WordPress-based portfolio website, several recommendations are proposed for future improvement and for other students undertaking similar projects:

1. Use of Premium Tools: Future projects should consider investing in premium themes and plugins to unlock more advanced features, customization options, and design flexibility.

2. Enhanced Hosting Environment: Hosting the website on a professional or dedicated server is recommended to ensure faster load times, better uptime, and real-time performance monitoring, especially if the site is intended for public access.

3. Integration of Advanced Features: Developers should consider incorporating dynamic elements such as user login, interactive blogs, comment sections, and contact forms with database storage to enhance functionality and user engagement.

4. Regular Updates and Maintenance: It is important to keep the WordPress core, themes, and plugins updated

to maintain security and performance over time.

5. User Feedback and Testing: Conducting usability testing and collecting feedback from potential employers, mentors, or

peers can help identify areas for improvement and enhance the overall user experience.

6. Continuous Learning: Students should explore more about WordPress customization, security, and SEO to further improve

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

While this project successfully demonstrates the design and development of a personal portfolio website using WordPress, there remains a wide scope for further research and development. Future studies can explore the integration of dynamic backend features such as user account systems, project submission forms, and real-time chat functionalities using custom PHP or third-party APIs. In addition, more research could be conducted on performance optimization techniques, including advanced caching, content delivery networks (CDNs), and mobile-first design practices. Scholars and developers may also investigate the impact of personal portfolio websites on job acquisition rates among students and fresh graduates in tech-related fields. Another area of study could focus on the comparative effectiveness of WordPress versus other CMS platforms or static site generators (e.g., Joomla, Drupal, or Gatsby) for personal branding and portfolio development. These further studies will provide deeper insights into building smarter, faster, and more secure personal websites.

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