



Integration of whatsapp group in academia: A case study on Tripura Institute of Technology

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The paper investigates how WhatsApp groups are used in the context of education. It looks at the benefits of WhatsApp groups for education. The research' findings indicate that these groups mostly serve educational purposes. However, in addition to scholastic uses, students often utilise this site for enjoyment, extracurricular activities, and wishes and congrats. The findings also indicate that the teacher's presence considerably affects the group discussion. Students acknowledged that these WhatsApp groups can occasionally be time-consuming and burdensome, but they also accepted that this was unavoidable given that group members could also engage in social interactions and extracurricular activities in addition to receiving important information about classes, exams, holidays, etc. several studies have been conducted on the use of whatsapp in academia; eventhough there are conflicting results about WhatsApp's effects on students' academic performance, these studies show that WhatsApp at present and significant in the setting of education.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of students' use of Whatsapp instant Messaging app for learning and to increase students' accomplishment (exam performance). WhatsApp is a smartphone application that works on virtually all current devices and operating systems. All higher students utilise these methods to increase their accomplishment, performance, and the amount of knowledge gained, as well as their motivation to prepare in large or small groups. Being in a generally synchronous group work and having diverse and instant knowledge motivates and excites students to study and be in media that is suitable and simple to learn. Traditional test preparation and instant messaging may result in different exam success scores. This study includes a review of the literature as well as an experiment. This study includes a review of the literature as well as experiments and data analysis, which led to additional experiments and implementations. The results of this study's findings on the integration of technology into course curricula show a variety of impacts.

Keywords : *WhatsApp, whatsapp group, WhatsApp in education, social networking*

Introduction :

Digital tools like social networking and more recent instant messaging platforms are drastically altering the way people communicate, and their introduction has had a big influence on how kids learn and how teachers instruct (Griesemer, 2014). Over the past ten years, digital communication between student groups and between students and professors has grown in popularity through a variety of platforms, including WhatsApp lately. Each of these technologies has unique qualities that affect how well suited it is for educational purposes (Calvo, Arbiol & Iglesias, 2014). WhatsApp is a smartphone software that works with almost all types of mobile phones and



operating systems. The makers of this programme, which has been available since 2010, stated that it was created to replace the current SMS platform with a system that is free and ad-free.

In 2009, former Yahoo workers Brian Acton and Jan Koum launched WhatsApp, the social networking platform with the highest rate of growth. The app serves as a texting tool. In addition to ordinary messaging, the programme offers a number of other choices. A person can be called or video called, if user so chooses. Additionally, user have the choice to update and share his stories as status. The user may also create groups using the WhatsApp function so that he can communicate with a large number of individuals at once. WhatsApp has given users a place to exchange knowledge about academia, current events, politics, and other topics in addition to facilitating communication. WhatsApp is a crucial tool for the academic community to communicate information about studies and academic activities. Recently, WhatsApp groups—another feature of the app—have gained a lot of popularity in educational settings. Most often, each student has an own WhatsApp group for their classes, departments, batches, etc. The benefits and costs of these academic organisations are explored in the current study. It also looks at how the instructors' participation in these groups may change the way they chat.

The main objective of the study is to understand the significance and usage of educational WhatsApp groups (such as department, class, and course), as nearly every educational institution now has its own WhatsApp group. The main focus of the paper is the benefits of using whatsapp in higher education with TIT chosen as a case study.

Literature review

(Pence, 2007) The development of educational mobile solutions that can assist students in creating and sharing knowledge for learning on computers or mobile devices has significant promise. With every passing year, social media have a greater impact on teaching learning environments. Message Applications can help students remember course material and have a positive impact on group projects, discussions, and writing.

(Minsheu & Anderson, 2015) A broad group of interested people may participate in making content via WhatsApp and can come together online to exchange expertise, information, resources, and opinions. In the whirlwind of fast technological development, teacher education institutions may either take the lead in transforming education or fall behind. Pre- and in-service teachers must be proficient in using these cutting-edge technologies for learning if education is to fully benefit from ICTs in learning.

(Bouhnik and Deshen, 2014:22) Although WhatsApp is a relatively new educational tool, it has many of the same beneficial traits as previously used technology tools. However, it appears that WhatsApp has certain contemporary qualities that motivate teachers and students to utilise it to improve learning

(Abdullah and Al-Daboubi 2014) in their research, sought to determine how social networking sites affected university students studying applied sciences. Their findings revealed that students typically spent two to three hours each day on social networking websites.

According to Tawiah, Nondzor, and Alhaji's (2014) research, students prefer using the WhatsApp app for daily communication over mobile voice calls.

Amanullah and Ali (2014), who discovered that WhatsApp was the preferred mobile messaging app among university students.



According to a 2014 research by Ahad and Lim, the majority of undergraduate students use WhatsApp for longer than three hours each day. And although most of the students found WhatsApp to be quite helpful for group discussions and engagement, some of them considered it to be very detrimental to their academic performance.

Yeboah and Ewur (2014) gathered data from 550 students, and their findings revealed that WhatsApp had a detrimental influence on pupils, distracting them from their academics and leading to issues with language usage, including spelling and grammar.

Methodology

Previous studies have demonstrated how different social networking platforms, such as WhatsApp, have an impact on college and university students' personal, social, and professional life. The ability to communicate in groups and WhatsApp's phone friendliness give it the edge over rival apps and websites. Using WhatsApp groups at institutions is becoming increasingly crucial and, in some cases, inevitable as more formal and informal information is shared over WhatsApp. Given that nearly every educational institution now has its own WhatsApp group, the current study focuses on the significance and operation of educational WhatsApp groups (e.g., departments, classes, and courses).

The paper mainly focuses how WhatsApp groups in TIT have benefited the students in academics.

During the academic year 2021–2022, a survey created in Google Form was distributed to our institution's students in an effort to gather information about the use of WhatsApp in higher education. A total of 745 out of 1019 students replied to the survey, for a response rate of 73.11%. Microsoft Excel was used to analyse the acquired data.

Table-1 students' data collected during 2021-22

Department	Total number	No. of respondents	Percentage
ECE	247	230	93.11
CSE	256	210	82.00
ME	265	149	56.22
EE	251	156	62.15

6. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

745 students responded to the survey, and all of them (100%) said they had access to the internet and a cell phone. It was established if respondents were familiar with social media sites in a subsequent survey. Positive responses came from all respondents (100%) All of the respondents, it can be assumed, have access to the internet on their mobile devices and are familiar with social networking sites.

Table-2 Favourite social media platforms

Social media platform	Frequency	Percentage
Google Classroom	712	95.57



Whats app	745	100
Facebook	723	97
Twitter	227	30.46
Youtube	725	97
Telegram	281	37.71

Table-2 offers us a sense of the most popular social media sites among the students of our institution. Given that all students use WhatsApp, it is obvious that it is the most popular. Youtube placed second, closely followed by whatsapp in third place.

Table-3 Student’s engagement in social media daily

Response	Frequency	Percentage
More than 3 hours	528	70.87
Between 2 to 3 hours	114	15.30
Less than 2 hours	103	13.83

Table-3 gives an insight into the time spent by students of our institution using whatsapp messaging service. It is clearly inferred that majority of students use whatsapp for more than three hours daily. 15.30% students have responded that they use whatsapp between two and three years while 13.83% use whatsapp less than two hours.

Table-4 activities on whatsapp

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Chatting	725	97.31
Class activities discussion	731	98.12
Share video links for academic activities	703	94.36
Submit assignments, classwork	634	85.10

Table-4 highlights the use of whatsapp by the students of our institution. It can be seen that 97.31% of the respondents use whatsapp for chatting. Every class and each subject have their own WhatsApp group where the teachers post the lecture plans, assignments and other learning materials from time to time so that the learners have easy access to them. 98.12% have answered that they use whatsapp for submitting classwork and other learning assignments. 94.36% have responded that they use for sharing different videos related to academics while 85.10% have said that they use whatsapp for classwork and assignment submission

Table-5 Academic improvement using whatsapp

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	363	48.72
No	195	26.17
May be	187	25.10



Table-5 shows that 48.72% of students from our Institution agree that their academic performance has been improved with the use of whatsapp and 26.17% answers in the negative while 25.10 were not sure about the same.

7. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to look into the potential benefits of social media in higher education. These online social tools offer numerous educational benefits. Our study found that WhatsApp improves student-to-student and student-teacher communication and interaction. Teachers and students can now communicate during and between lessons thanks to these platforms. whatsapp has proven to be useful in establishing a virtual learning environment outside of classrooms. Social media applications also have the added benefit of encouraging collaboration among teachers and students because they provide a platform for communication.

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