Students' Perception On The Use Of WhatsApp Application As A Media For Online Learning

Latif Abdul Muis[a]*, Syafrizal Syafrizal[b], Ezis Japar Sidik[c], Nurhaeda Gailea[d]

[a-d] Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Banten, indonesia

Article Info	Abstract
	This study aims to investigate the perception of the use of WhatsApp applications as a medium for online learning. The researcher used a descriptive qualitative survey. Questionnaires and interviews were used as data collection techniques The objectives of the research are to know the Students' Perceptions of the Use of WhatsApp applications as a Medium for Online Learning., and to know the benefits and difficulties of using WhatsApp applications as a media for online learning. Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of WhatsApp has advantages and disadvantages. Most of the students agreed that learning through WhatsApp is more flexible but on the other hand, they hard to understand the material. .

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st-century, education underscores the importance of students possessing critical thinking skills, the capacity to relate knowledge to real-world scenarios, proficiency in information technology, and the ability to communicate and collaborate effectively. Attaining these skills necessitates the application of suitable learning methods that focus on mastering both content and skills. Besides selecting the appropriate learning approaches, the role of media and educational resources is crucial in ensuring an effective teaching and learning process.

Mobile phones are extensively employed as educational tools, offering both educators and students opportunities for innovative instruction (Sharples & Vavoula, 2007). Their characteristics enable students to engage in lessons, accessing educational materials beyond regular class hours, facilitating learning at any location and time. This mobile learning (m-learning) approach is less disruptive than other technologically facilitated learning methods. WhatsApp, a widely-used instant messaging application, has gained popularity, fostering student engagement. Through features like image attachments, video sharing, web links, and more, students freely express thoughts, while teachers respond to questions, introduce new topics, or pose inquiries (Dunlap J.C, 2006).

The affordability of communicating through social networking sites, facilitated by Wi-Fi and cellular data connections, allows students to engage with teachers and peers in real-time. WhatsApp proves cost-effective and efficient, enabling communication with a large number of students simultaneously (Guglielmo Trentin & Manuela Repetto, 2013). The application facilitates group discussions among classmates, ensuring direct responses and effective communication. This real-time interaction not only enhances communication but also ensures the timely dissemination of learning-related information, preventing students from missing out. In the context of teaching English, a subject often perceived as mundane, educators play a crucial role in making it interesting. WhatsApp emerges as a valuable tool in this effort, fostering a love for learning English by injecting creativity and making the subject enjoyable for students.

Many students previously expressed dissatisfaction with traditional classroom learning, finding it dull and stress-inducing. Consequently, researchers are exploring innovative approaches to teach English that not only make the learning experience enjoyable but also encourage continued learning beyond the classroom through smartphone applications. In this particular study, the focus was on understanding students' perceptions of utilizing WhatsApp for English teaching.The school had already incorporated WhatsApp into its educational strategies at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, aligning with government regulations mandating online learning for three months.

However, certain communication challenges and information dissemination issues have emerged. Parents without WhatsApp face difficulties accessing updates on their children's academic progress. Similarly, students who are not active on or do not use WhatsApp encounter obstacles in receiving crucial learning-related information. Group discussions on WhatsApp also suffer from passivity, diminishing the effectiveness of the discourse. Despite the convenience WhatsApp provides for communication among schools, teachers, and students, the researcher noted instances of miscommunication or misunderstanding, undermining the optimal dissemination of learning information through this platform. Therefore, this study aims to probe the students' perception of the use of WhatsApp applications as a medium for online learning.

METHOD

This study falls under the classification of qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative research is defined by its aim to understand qualitative aspects of social life, employing methods that generate words instead of numerical data for analysis (Patton & Cocharn, 2002). In this context, qualitative research is utilized to describe and sample from the population, employing interviews as a tool for data collection.

The researcher selected SMK Negeri 4 Pandeglang as the study setting to investigate students' perceptions of the WhatsApp application in English learning for 11th-grade students. This choice was motivated by the importance of understanding how students at this educational level perceive the use

of WhatsApp in English education, given the foundational nature of English learning in their basic education. The research focused on eleventh-grade students at SMK Negeri 4 Pandeglang, specifically the 11th Grade Computer and Engineering (TKJ) class in the odd semester. This class, consisting of fifteen students, was chosen because of the prevalent use of WhatsApp in teaching English. The selection was based on the consideration that students in this class frequently employ WhatsApp, making it a suitable subject for the research.

In this research, the data collection techniques used by the researcher were using questionnaires and interviews to be able to answer the research question. In this study, the researcher used a technique of data analysis based on (Miles & Saldana, 2014), suggesting three stages that must be done in analyzing qualitative research data namely (1) Data Condensation (2) Data Display (3) Drawing Conclusions and Verifiation

The first step was Data Condensation, it means the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data which contains field notes or transcript.The Second step was data display by organizing, compressing and assemblying any information that permits conclusion drawing and the action. Data presentation was used to further improve case understanding and as a reference for taking action based on the understanding and analysis of the data presentation (Miles & Saldana, 2014). Finally, drawing conclusion and verification were carried out. Conclusions were also commonly referred to as the results of a study that answers the focus of the study. The initial conclusions expressed were provisional, and was changed if there was no strong evidence found to support the next stage of data collection. If the conclusions put forward at an early stage were supported by valid and consistent evidence when the researcher returns to the field to collect data, then the conclusion put forward were credible conclusions. In this srage, the researcher was making a conclusion. The conclusion is a form of thick description. The conclusion is the answers of the researcher problems that have been formulated Research Procedure

RESULT

Based on Questionnaires with 10 questions, 15 respondents and total 150 responses: 63% Positive perception and 37 % Negative perception.
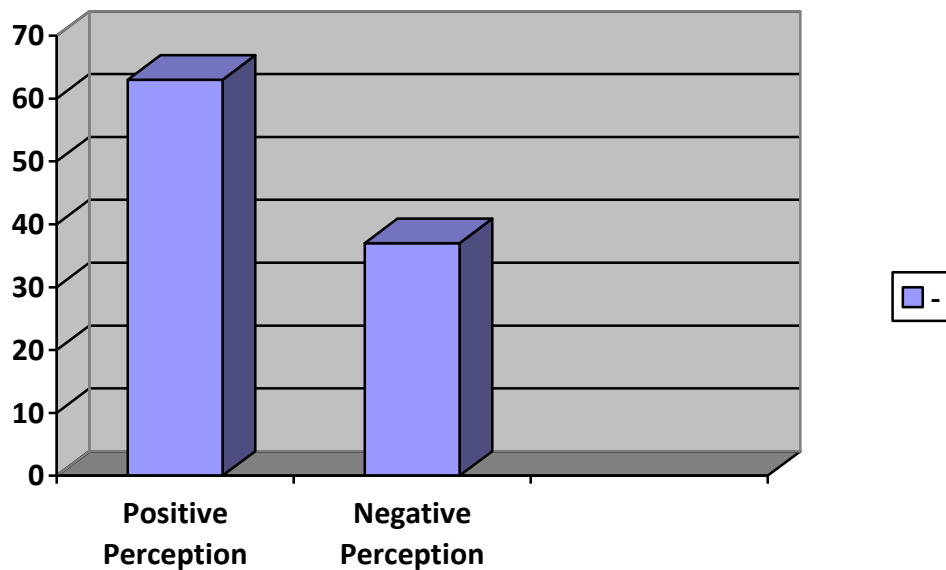
Figure 1. Students Perception on the use of WhatsApp Aplication as a media for online learning

While, the data from the interview showed the majority of students used whatsapp very often as communication tool. It indicates that WhatsApp is very important to the students as their communication tool. As a respondent stated that: "I'm using whatsapp as my main online communication with my friend and I usually use whatsapp as communication tool". (Q1, R12)

Moreover, the most students answered that they use whatsapp as learming since the pandemic covid-19 begin. As a respondent said that "I use whatsapp as learming tool since covid-19" (Q2, R7). Apart from that, some students also said that learning trough whatsapp is interesting because it's a whole new experience. One of the participants stated: "…im excited to learn in new platform" (Q3, R1) and another participants also added that "…It's a new experience for me" (Q3, R2).

Regarding the advantages of using WhatsApp for online learning, most of them feel that WhatsApp has a lot of advantages. One of the participants said that: " …It helps me to learn anywhere (Q4, R36). While another participant also stated: "…I feel like learning in whatsapp is more fun becsase we can say whatever we want without being shy" (Q4, R1). Moreover, they feel motivated to learn English more after learning via WhatsApp in class. Based on the findings most of the participants did feel more motivation to learn English. As one of the participants stated: "…Yes, I feel motivated to learn more" (Q5, R2) and some other participants also added: "…Of course, I need to learn English" (Q5, R27)

DISCUSSION

This study investigates the perceptions of SMKN 4 Pandeglang students regarding the use of the WhatsApp application for online learning. The research delves into the benefits, drawbacks, and impacts of utilizing WhatsApp for learning based on the experiences of 15 participants, including both

teachers and students. The researcher employed interviews and questionnaires to gather opinions from individuals who have used WhatsApp as a tool for learning. The focus was on understanding students' perspectives on the application's role in online learning.

The research question prompted participants to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing WhatsApp for online learning. While all participants acknowledged the cost-free aspect and the flexibility of learning anywhere and anytime, there was a unanimous expression of reduced interest in using WhatsApp for learning. Students perceived that it didn't enhance their motivation in teaching and learning, describing the experience as boring with low student participation. Additionally, students faced challenges in understanding teaching materials, and some encountered difficulties, like poor internet connection, particularly those residing in villages.

WhatsApp serves as a tool aiding students in online learning activities. The research involved interviews to understand students' perceptions of WhatsApp's role in the learning process and as an assessment tool for score recording. The discussion draws on the insights gathered from six participants, comprising both teachers and students. The researcher uncovered diverse opinions and responses, shedding light on the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing WhatsApp for online learning. These findings contribute to addressing the research question posed in the study.

The research findings indicate that students perceive the use of the WhatsApp application in online learning as a medium with both benefits and drawbacks. While it could serve as a solution for teaching and learning in certain situations, all participants unanimously agree that learning through this application lacks interest. From the responses, three key opinions emerge: WhatsApp is considered an easy and practical learning platform, but it may sometimes diminish student motivation and lead to struggles in understanding the material. Despite these concerns, participants acknowledge the application as an accessible and practical alternative during online learning.

WhatsApp serves as a user-friendly platform facilitating quick information access for students and teachers, aligning with the observations of a prior study (Barhoumi, 2015) highlighting its convenience for chatting, expressing emotions, and supporting teaching and learning. Despite its perceived ease of use, a majority of participants express a decline in motivation during learning via WhatsApp, attributing it to dissatisfaction with outcomes. Many students feel disinterested and bored, finding it challenging to comprehend the material due to teachers' brief explanations and focus solely on key points, often followed by assignments. The application, lauded for its practicality and user-friendliness (Alenazi, 2018), is seen as a potential solution for online education, yet students note that it can induce boredom, lack of motivation, and difficulties in understanding the material.

The research inquiry focused on examining the pros and cons of WhatsApp experienced by students. Students acknowledged the advantages in online learning, citing convenience as they can study anytime and anywhere using WhatsApp, as supported by (Moro, 2016). The application facilitates immediate feedback on assignments, aiding students in comprehension. Additionally, WhatsApp contributes to cost savings in online learning, aligning with Thani's (2018) perspective on

reduced travel and labor costs. The study affirms that WhatsApp eases financial burdens on students and enhances material understanding in distance learning. Accessibility is emphasized, with the application accessible from smartphones or computers, fostering a user-friendly and practical learning environment according to (Barhoumi, 2015).

Nonetheless, the study revealed challenges associated with using WhatsApp for online learning. Students faced difficulties, especially in areas with poor internet connectivity, commonly experienced in rural student life. Stable internet connection emerged as crucial to overcoming this obstacle. Limited interaction space also posed challenges, hindering students and teachers from freely engaging in learning activities. The absence of options for interaction and restricted time for studying contributed to difficulties in material comprehension. The effectiveness of online learning is contingent upon a robust internet connection, crucial for accessing learning content and activities, though this may lead to quick depletion of data packages.

Another drawback highlighted by students in WhatsApp-based learning is the disturbance of concentration. Many students expressed challenges in maintaining focus during the learning process, often getting distracted by various activities even while at home. The presence of others around, especially in crowded settings, was identified as a factor affecting concentration negatively. However, it was noted that the extent of this issue varied among students and was influenced by individual behaviors.

In summary, the research findings indicate that the implementation of WhatsApp in education comes with both advantages and disadvantages. While WhatsApp serves as a convenient and widely used learning platform, students face challenges that impact their experience. Notably, there is a risk of decreased motivation and interest, potentially leading to boredom. Unclear explanations from teachers contribute to difficulties in understanding the material. The limitations of interaction options, constrained by time and situations, result in a restricted learning environment. Furthermore, the disadvantage of poor internet connection, particularly affecting students in rural areas, can disrupt the learning process. The stability of internet connectivity is crucial for effective use of WhatsApp in learning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions in the previous chapter, In conclusion, students' perceptions of using WhatsApp for online learning vary, reflecting diverse opinions and responses regarding its advantages and disadvantages. The study underscores the financial benefits of online learning through WhatsApp, alleviating the financial burden for both students and teachers by eliminating the need to travel extensively. Additionally, the accessibility of WhatsApp, accessible from both computers and smartphones, contributes to its advantages, enabling learning anytime and anywhere.

Moreover, the disadvantages of using WhatsApp for online learning include challenges in understanding material due to unclear explanations, frequent errors caused by poor internet connections, limited interaction space in online classes, and constraints on time for content explanation. The need for a stable internet connection poses issues, leading to quick depletion of data packages and limited internet availability for learning. Additionally, passive support for learning compared to traditional methods and disturbances in students' concentration further hinder the effectiveness of WhatsApp in education. Despite its advantages, the researcher concludes that WhatsApp may not yield optimal results for achieving learning goals, with students facing difficulties impacting their overall achievement. Consequently, students perceive the use of WhatsApp for online learning as ineffective, primarily due to challenges in understanding the material.

REFERENCES

A S Hornby. (2000). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary.* Oxford University Press.

Abaidoo, N., & Arkorful, V. (2014). The Role of E-Learning, The Advantages and Disadvantages of Its Adoption in Higher Education. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 397–410.

Abbad, M. , M. (2009). Looking under the Bonnet: Factors Affecting Students Adoption of E-learning Systems in Jordan. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*.

Adam S, & Syastra M.T. (2015). The use of information technology-based learning media for grade 10th high school students in Batam. *CBIS*, 78–90.

Alenazi. (2018). WhatsApp Messenger as a Learning Tool: An Investigation of Pre-Service Teachers' Learning without Instructor Presence. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 1–8.

Alvonco, J. (2014). *Practical Communication Skill*. Elex Media Komputindo.

Ananga, P. (2020). *Pedagogical Considerations of E-Learning in Education for Development in the Face of COVID-19*.

Anggoro, T. (2009). *Metode Penelitian*. Universitas Terbuka.

Arikunto, Suharsimi. (2010). *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktik*. Rineka Cipta.

Barhoumi, C. (2015). *The Effectiveness of WhatsApp Mobile Learning Activities Guided by Activity Theory on Students' Knowledge Management*. Anadolu University.

Bimo Walgito. (2004). *Pengantar Psikologi Umum*. Andi.

Borstorff, P. C., & Lowe, S. L. (2007). Student Perceptions and Opinions Toward e-Learning in the College

Dedi Jasrial. (2019). Utilizing WhatsApp application for teaching English language: Why and how? *International Seminar and Annual Meeting BKS-PTN Wilayah Barat*.

Djaali. (2008). *Psikologi Pendidikan*. CV Pendoman Ilmu Jaya.

Dunlap J.C. (2006). *Using Guide Reflective Journaling Activies to Capture Students' Changing Perception.Tech trends*.

Guglielmo Trentin, & Manuela Repetto. (2013). *Using Network and Mobile Technology to Bridge Formal and Informal Learning*.

Izyani binti Mistar. (2016). Students' Perception On The Use Of WhatsApp as A Learning Tool in ESL Classroom. In *Journal of Education and Social Sciences* (Vol. 4).

Koentjaraningrat. (2011). *Pengantar Antropologi*. Rineka Cipta.

Mbukusa, N. R. (2018). Perceptions of Students on the Use of WhatsApp in Teaching Methods of English as Second Language at the University of Namibia. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*.

Meenakshi Thanji, S. V. (2018). *A study of benefits and limitations of e-learning - A learners perspective*.

Miftah Toha. (2011). *Perilaku Organisasi Konsep Dasar dan Aplikasinya*. Rajawali Grafindo Persada.

Miles, M. B. H. A. M., & Saldana. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis, A Methods Sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Milman, N. B. (2015). *Distance Education* (2nd ed.).

Moleong. (2011). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Rosda.

Moro, H. (2016). *Pengaruh Penggunaan Whats Apps Messenger terhadap prestasi belajar Mahasiswa kelas KKH di PBIO FKIP UAD*.

Noer Intan BR Gurusinga. (2018). *The Contribution of Chat Using WhatsApp on the Student's Ability to Develop English Writing Sixth Semester of English Department at UINSU*. UINSU.

Nur Lia Pangestika. (2018). *Pengaruh Pemanfaatan Media Sosial WhatsApp Terhadap Penyebaran Informasi Pembelajaran di SMA Negeri 5 Depok*. FITK UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

Patton, M., & Cocharn, M. (2002). A Guide to Using Qualitative Research Methodology. *Médecins Sans Frontières*.

Richard H, & Haya A. (2009). *Examining student decision to adopt web 2.0 technologies: theory and empirical tests. Journal of computing in higher education*. 183198.

Sharples, M. , T. J. , & Vavoula, G. (2007). *A Theory of Learning for the Mobile Age*. SAGE.