

WhatsApp - A Stress Relieving Knowledge Sharing Tool

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Abstract

In this contemporary society, stress and depression became the serious problem for many youngsters. All are busy with their own commitments; they often don't find time for their family, relatives, and friends. Due to the development in technology this gap has cut. They can get in contact with their kith and kin via various chat applications which are free of cost and just required the least amount of internet package which makes life easier rather than to spend a huge amount in making calls and messages. There are a huge number of mobile applications available in the market, among them, WhatsApp is one of the most favourite application among youngsters. This is not only used for chatting but also got other varied functions.

The main aim of this paper is to find out the role of WhatsApp to reduce youngsters' stress in the field of education. The study is focused on 50 graduate students who were in contact with me through WhatsApp. The result of the statistical analysis revealed that the social media application, especially WhatsApp helps the youngsters to use the chat application in a beneficiary way and relieve themselves from the traditional classroom atmosphere.

Introduction

Today in the busy world, we can notice a change in every second. Therefore life is getting more complicated at every point and the term stress became an unavoidable part of life. Out of ten, seven people undergo physical and emotional symptoms due to stress. Especially, youngsters are distracted by various issues like love affairs, bad habits, friends and electronic devices and they fail to concentrate on their studies. Assignments are a minor

task given to youngsters to check their creativity, writing skills and hidden talents within them. But generally, we can see them taking much strain at the last date of submission they just copy their assignments from their friends or download it from the internet. The real value of assignments is missing. Once the assignments and projects are not done properly, they fail or get minimum marks in their examination.

Today's digital age made life very comfortable; it's really hard to separate students and Smartphones. Though Smartphones are considered as the medium of distraction, it can be used as a beneficiary education tool that may reduce the stress of the students to a certain level.

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a popular Smartphone application that works on mobile devices and operating systems (Jadhav, Bhutkar, & Mehta, 2013). WhatsApp Inc. was created in 2009 by two persons named Jan Koum and Brian Acton, who worked together at Yahoo for 20 years. This application has come into the market since 2010. WhatsApp uses 2G or 3G or 4G or Wi-Fi Network connection to send messages to friends and family as free of charge in an advertisement free environment. Over the last two years, WhatsApp has become very popular and rated as the most downloaded application by more than 500 million users.

As WhatsApp can connect us to the society and the world, it has become an effective medium for the flow of information and ideas. This empirical study has been conducted upon 50 contacts and questionnaire was broadcasted to them.

WhatsApp as a beneficiary tool

Most of the graduate students have been addicted to adopting new instructional technology tools in their learning to construct knowledge (Prensky, 2001). They use various educational mobile learning technologies, computer gadgets, electronic devices, and ICT tools support their campus learning (Wylie, 2015). The transmission of text-based messages and general information through the use of mobile social applications such

as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other application devices are more and more frequent at universities and all tertiary education institutions (Amry, 2014).

WhatsApp, the most familiar application used by the majority of people, youngsters, and adult learners. Castells (2007), rightly quoted the main purpose of using WhatsApp is for communication and to stay connected with all. Though the students are willing to use text and instant messages as an ideal educational learning for academic purposes, still many users consider WhatsApp as a social network and as a chatting platform and very few people think how effectively this application used for education. There are people who think it as a negative about using mobile phones. They feel text messaging commit numerous errors like spelling errors, grammatical errors, and sentence structure etc. If the user takes it in a positive approach he or she can find its greatest benefits of easy accessing, reviewing, updating and editing learning material any time and anywhere. In addition, it allows for an option to select learning materials from plenty of course, offered online with the learner needs and it also makes the easier distribution of courses material. They can also share links to the web address to their friends for their references. This type of learning reduces stress and increases satisfaction among learners. Traditional classroom facilitates high levels of emotional understanding, while the flexibility of online components can motivate students to complete academic tasks. WhatsApp features help in sharing audio and video files. It also facilitates in sharing even the file which is in the PDF format. This type of advantages enables the users to learn their subjects in an easy way. WhatsApp has become the “communication portal” for social networking, which has rapidly changed the way people communicate (Susilo, 2014).

Instructors and the students can create groups and post their queries on any subjects and send it across to all people through a broadcast or start a meaningful discussion on concepts they need better understanding. Even with WhatsApp, the learning and information sharing happen in the comfort when we are in bed. This type of WhatsApp method encourages students and helps them to get a better understanding.

The objective of the study is to identify the role of WhatsApp in reducing stress among the college students and adopt a new innovative method outside the classroom.

Distribution of Participants by field and year of study

Field of Study	Frequency	Percentage (%)
English	18	36
Bio-Science	15	30
Commerce	17	34
Total	50	100

As an initial step of the survey, the researcher sent the questionnaire via WhatsApp group broadcasting. The Questionnaire includes some of the basic personal information about the participants like name, gender, field of study, year of the study and a few questions were based on the usage of WhatsApp and its role in the field of education

Study Design and Data Analysis Methods

The study followed a case study and exploratory research designs where data were collected from a sample of respondents from a defined population as explained above. The data were analyzed using mainly quantitative data analysis using Microsoft Excel table and graphs.

Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Girls	22	44
Boys	28	56
TOTAL	50	100

Results indicated that the participants were comprised of 44% girls and 56% boys. This representation reflects that both genders possess equal opportunities to learn. The age group of all the participants was between 19 and 23.

Distribution of Participants by field and year of study

Field of Study	Frequency	Percentage (%)
English	18	36
Bio-Sciences	15	30
Commerce	17	34
Total	50	100

Results indicated that 36% of the participants were from English majors while students in Bio-Science and Commerce were 30% and 34% respectively. All participants have already picked their academic majors starting their first semester and most of them have selected traditional majors. These participants were regular users of WhatsApp. They stay connected with their friends and relatives through WhatsApp.

Question 6-10 on the questionnaire sent to the participants showed positive attitudes towards adoption of WhatsApp. The results indicated that 83 % of the participants (either agree or strongly agree) acknowledged that WhatsApp as an important educational tool. 80% of the students posted that WhatsApp enabled them to share information and comment ideas with peers. Another 83.3% felt that WhatsApp had greatly increased their learning interests and motivation. 90% of the participants stated that WhatsApp helped to learn better and it helped in stress- reducing factor and helped them to interact with their instructor freely without any inferiority complex better than in a classroom atmosphere. In addition to this information, participants added they were able to do their assignments, seminars and were able to perform their exams well. Along with text messages, audio and video file helps the participants to gain clear knowledge about the subject matter.

Conclusion

This research evidently reveals the effectiveness of WhatsApp in the reduction of stress in comparison with traditional classroom atmosphere. These types of mobile learning methodology help the students to create a learning community and to do their assignments and perform well in their examination without any stress.

Learning is becoming more personal, ubiquitous, long-lasting compared to formal education. It also initiates co-operation and collaboration between students for self- improvement and knowledge sharing.

Works Cited

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