

# Whatsapp Use among Adolescents in Pandemic Era-Covid-19: Whatsapp as a Supportive Technology in Education?

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## ABSTRACT

Social networking has amplified in this pandemic period as the youngsters are forced to immerse in social networking. In this crisis situation, adolescents get in touch with others mainly through social networking. Whatsapp is an up-to-the-minute application that is far and wide used as a medium of interaction. The main purpose is for communication, interaction and learning. Increased and extensive use of Whatsapp will lead to addiction. Various psychiatric co morbidities are associated with addictive behaviour. The present study focused on Whatsapp use in middle adolescent students. AIM: The main aim of the study is to elicit out the constructive and destructive usage of social networking and there by evaluate the chances of addictive tendency in the teenagers. The participants were 500 middle adolescent students. WhatsApp use behaviour scale was used as tool. RESULTS: The study finding showed that the preferred social networking site among the adolescents is WhatsApp (73%) and the main purpose of using Whatsapp was for chatting (50%).

**Keywords:** WhatsApp, WhatsApp use behaviour, social media addiction, social networking, adolescents, students.

## 1 Introduction

WhatsApp in education can be promoted as a supportive technology or not is of great concern in the midst of educators and mental health professionals. Virtual technology altered and melded people in various ways. Social networking is incredibly trendy and admired by the youngsters, chiefly due to their attractive features to meet their needs. It has become one of the vital ingredients of the daily life. Now- a-days, WhatsApp is becoming a mere instant messaging tool by unlocking new opportunities for intimate communication to enable the creation of micro-communities, and to richly support social practices such as collective life logging and reminiscing.[1]

Date	Users	Population
December, 1995	16 millions	0.40%
July, 2000	359 millions	5.90%
December, 2000	361 millions	5.80%
June, 2005	938 millions	14.60%
December, 2005	1,018 millions	15.70%
Sept, 2010	1,971 millions	28.80%
June, 2012	2,405 millions	34.30%
Dec, 2015	3,366 millions	46.40%
June, 2017	3,885 millions	51.70%
Dec-17	4,156 millions	54.40%
Dec-18	4,313 millions	55.60%
Mar-19	4,383 millions	56.80%

## 2 Objectives

To find out the preferred social networking site.  
To explore the purpose of social networking in WhatsApp.

## 3 Method

**Research Design:** The present study design is mixed research design

**Sample:** The sample consists of 500 students who use WhatsApp. Middle adolescents of age group 15-17 years (Std X, XI, XII) were the participants of the present study.

Sampling: Stratified sampling method was used.

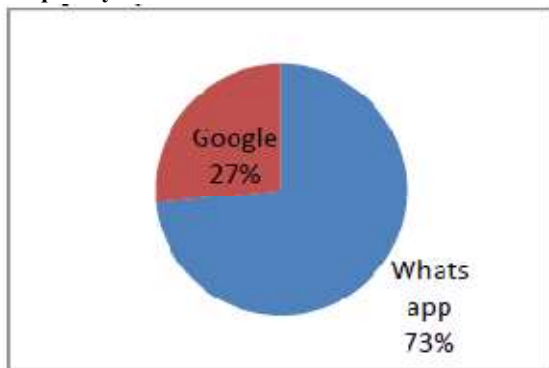
**Tools:** The following tools were used:

**WhatsApp Use Behavior Scale [4]** - A 24 items scale that trial the extent of WhatsApp Use Behavior. A part of the tool is used for the present study. Elevated scores indicate addictive patterns of WhatsApp Use. The scale is having reliability value of 0.68 and is having ample content validity.

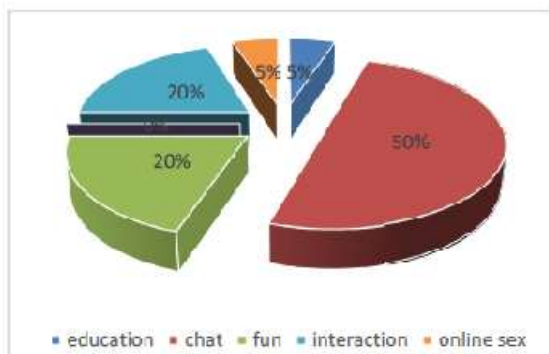
**Procedure for Data Collection** - In order to collect the data from students, prior permission was taken from the Directorate of General Education, Trivandrum, School authorities. Consent was obtained from the parents and students. The students were met in their own classes. A pithy opening concerning the reason of the study was given and then the tools were circulated. Confidentiality and anonymity was ensured, the doubts were empty.

## 4 Results and Discussion

### Frequently Used Site in Internet



### Purpose of Internet Use



The study finding shows that the preferred site among the adolescents is WhatsApp (73%) and the second preferred site was Google (27%). WhatsApp is the most preferred site in social networking.[5] Why youngsters prefer this app is that, it is latest, at ease, supple and can be used for various purposes.[5] The main purpose of using WhatsApp among the participants in this study was

for chatting(50%),fun(20%),interaction(20%),education(5%),and online sex(5%). Social networking has a bright side as well as a dark side. WhatsApp has both positive and negative side.[6]

Even though it has positive impacts like knowledge gain, entertainment, time pass, reducing boredom, anxiety, stress and sad mood it has negative impacts like physical problems -neck pain, shoulder pain, wrist pain, eye strain and ear problems due to the use of head phones. It has psychological impacts like increased anxiety when not able to access social networking, increased expense, not able to concentrate in daily routine, spiritual life and sleep issues were common among the adolescents. Social, physical, and psychological problems are common in increased use of whatsapp. [7]

Augmented and widespread use of WhatsApp will lead to addiction. Various psychiatric co morbidities are also seen in addictive behavior. Addictive pattern can change the attitude and behavior of the future citizens.

Whatsapp is having a negative impact on the students performance, in a study conducted in tertiary institutions in China. [8] Whatsapp as learning tool is favourable to both students and mentors, but etiquette has to be maintained.[6]

## 5 Summary and Conclusion

The present study was done among middle adolescent students studying in Std X, XI and XII, who make use of Whatsapp, provides a clear picture of the extent of purpose of Whatsapp Use. If whatsapp is used in a productive manner, it helps in learning in the education sector. The authorities should be aware of the negative impacts of Whatsapp use and should conduct classes to prevent behavioural addiction among students and ultimately this will improve academic performance and achievement, there by productive citizens can be renowned.

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