

## **Effectiveness of Using WhatsApp Application in EFL Classes at University level**

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### **Abstract**

*The aim of this study is to investigate —to what extent WhatsApp application is used in EFL classroom and EFL groups. The study adopted the descriptive analytical method. The sample consisted of ten (10) EFL teachers from Sudan University of Science and Technology and twenty (20) ICT experts and technicians. A questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting the data and the data was analyzed by using (SPSS) statistical packages for social sciences program. The study has reached many important results: WhatsApp application indeed, is very supportive and quick for sharing information in EFL classes and EFL groups. Learning and teaching using media generally and social media particularly can make students more interactive and feel happy. WhatsApp groups can make it easier for learners to increase academic and social interaction between teachers and students. Based on the findings the study recommended that; Teachers should encourage students to use WhatsApp application because it is very quick and supportive for sharing information, teachers should use WhatsApp application and media because they make students more interactive and feel engaged and happy. Moreover, students should develop WhatsApp groups because this will increase students' academic and social interaction among themselves and their teachers as well.*

**Key words:** *WhatsApp, WhatsApp groups, academic, social interactions, supportive.*

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### **I. Introduction**

Using media in learning is indispensable for obtaining a maximum learning process Mahun, (2012). In this era, electronic media has become a very important requirement in the learning process. Currently the Covid-19 outbreak has hit almost every country in the world. This has caused major changes to occur in the economics, health and education. Online learning or study from home (SFH) is widely spread and replaced the vivid and real learning. One of the media commonly used in this case is the WhatsApp application.

WhatsApp is an application that is use that is useful for social communication. This media requires the internet to send messages, photos, videos, sound recording, files and links to websites. In the WhatsApp application there is also a group feature which can be a place for group learning in FFL classroom. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to investigate to what extent WhatsApp is used in EFL classes.

#### **1.1 Statement of the Problem:**

WhatsApp can be distracting to students. The temptation to chat with friends may override its use for educational purposes. Students need to be aware of this and parents and teachers have to help students make effective use of smart phones for innovating learning methods. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to investigate to what extent WhatsApp is used in EFL classes.

#### **1.2 Objectives of the study:**

- 1) Investigate students' perception about the use of WhatsApp in learning.
- 2) Exploring the development of academic EFL knowledge through using WhatsApp.
- 3) Investigating students' different attitudes towards using WhatsApp in learning.

#### **1.3 Questions of the study**

The study has the following questions:

- 1) What is students' perception about the use of WhatsApp in learning?
  - 2) To what extent can WhatsApp contribute in the development of academic EFL knowledge?
  - 3) What are students' different attitudes towards using WhatsApp in learning and teaching English.
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#### **1.4 Hypotheses of the study:**

The study has the following hypotheses:

- 1) Most students agree on using WhatsApp.
- 2) Using WhatsApp in academic progress can contribute in the development of the academic knowledge.
- 3) Students feel happy and more interactive when using WhatsApp in learning and teaching.

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

Learning and teaching via media and particularly WhatsApp make students more interested and interactive. Moreover, the study will be beneficial to those who prefer to work in group. WhatsApp group can make it easier for learners to increase academic and social interaction between teachers and students. Thus, learning becomes easier and more interesting than the traditional classroom.

#### **1.6 Methodology of the study:**

The type of this research is qualitative research. Qualitative research is research with procedures that produces descriptive data in the form of writings. The researcher used two tools for collecting data a questionnaire for (10) EFL teachers at university level from (Sudan University for Science and Technology) and interview with (20) ICT experts and technicians. The data of this study will be analyzed with statistical packages for Social Sciences Program (SPSS).

#### **1.7 Limits of the study**

The study is limited to using WhatsApp application in EFL classes at university level –Sudan University for Science and Technology during the academic year 2023.

#### **1) WhatsApp and English Teaching and Learning**

Teaching is communicating, sharing, upgrading and updating. Teaching happens when there is way communication between teachers and class students. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has been hijacked by digital devices. Our students are netizens held captive by these digital tools. Their range of knowledge in using these digital is mind boggling. In order to match a long with our students, we need to match them stride for stride.

Teachers need to be constantly and regularly in touch with students. The digital world has opened the door to instant communication widely. One of the most effective tools of this media is using WhatsApp application in learning and teaching.

<https://id.techinasia.com/comScore-whatsapp-adalah-uplikasi.di-indonesia>.

#### **II. Definition of WhatsApp:**

Is one such free application that put to good use with some innovative activities to get students' attention and interest. keep in touch with student, parents through the class WhatsApp group. Most of students own smart phones but the other few are connected to the class group with their parent's smart phones. WhatsApp is an excellent medium to communicate with students out of class. It is now easier to share texts, images, videos and audios.

<https://id.techinasia.com/comScore-whatsapp-adalah-uplikasi.di-indonesia>.

#### **3. Ways in Which WhatsApp is used in teaching**

- 1) updating students who missed lectures.
  - 2) Send assignments questions based on texts.
  - 3) Send writing skill tasks before sending them check every detail like layout, relevant vocabulary uses of CODER and such other things in the classroom.
  - 4) Through WhatsApp you can send questions a long a long with the tips already discussed in class.
  - 5) WhatsApp is a great means to share images and videos related to certain topic in English lesson.
  - 6) Teacher can send a cross common errors committed in English. This helps students to practice correct English usage.
  - 7) Teachers can use WhatsApp to send interesting information on topic beyond the texts. For example, picking up sentences from the text and make students correct mistakes deliberately made by teacher.
- <https://id.techinasia.com/comScore-whatsapp-adalah-uplikasi.di-indonesia>.

#### **4. Ground rules when using WhatsApp**

- 1) No good morning / good night messages.
- 2) No personal messages.
- 3) No forwarded relevant information messages.
- 4) No sharing of activities of one group with other groups (Creates Confusion among students of other classes).

### III. Blended learning

Currently, one of the most widely used learning is blended learning. Blended learning is the educational approach that compiles online educational material and online interaction with traditional classroom methods of traditional place based. It calls for the bodily presence of each instructor and student, with view features of student management over time, place, direction, or pace, (Mims – word, 2016), (Friesen, 2012) while scholars still join "brick and mortar" colleges with the instructor exists, direct lecture room performances are mixed with computer-mediated pursuits concerning content material and start. Siemens, (2015) mixed discovering is additionally used in professional advancement and education settings. (Lothridge 2013). Combined instruction is reportedly more effective than only direct or simply online categories combined researching methods can additionally result in high degrees of student fulfillment more co-operative than direct learning. (Sarite Peci, 2015). Using a mixture of electronic instruction and one –on-one face time, scholars can work on their own with new ideas that accessible lectures up to follow into and individual agreement schools who may need personalized attention – Rather than gambling to the lowest average denominator as they would in a traditional lecture room. Academic can now modernize their teaching to assist all scholars to grasp their full talents: integrating the asynchronous internet verbal exchange era into better education classes serves to "facilitate a simultaneous impartial and collaborative researching experience" (Garrison, 2004). This combination is a big contributor to student self-importance and achievement in such lessons.

#### 3.1 Sample of the study

The sample of this study consisted of (10) Sudanese EFL teachers at university level – Sudan university for Science and Technology and (20) ICT experts and technicians from UNISCO institute and the Academy of Health Science who teach ICT as a major specialization.

#### 3.2 Tools of data collection

There were two procedures which were followed in collecting the data for this study. They were a questionnaire for EFL teachers and an interview with some ICT experts and technicians.

#### 3.2 Validity and reliability

To test the reliability of the questionnaire Pearson's correlation is used the statistical treatment.

Here the researcher followed and applied the "product-moment" correlation (Pearson's) by means of the split plot and the formula is.

$$R = \frac{40(61356) - (2250168)}{\sqrt{40(59880 - 2143296)(63615 - 2362369)}} = 0.95$$
$$R = \frac{N(\sum Xy - \sum X \sum Y)}{\sqrt{N(\sum X^2) - (\sum X)^2(\sum y^2) - (\sum XY)^2}}$$

Where:

R: Reliability of the test

N: Number of all items in the test

X: Odd marks

Y: Even marks

Σ: Sum

N: 40

$$Relia = 2 * r / I + r$$

$$Kalo = \sqrt{reliability}$$

$$\sum Xy = 61356$$

$$\sum X \sum y = 2250168$$

$$\sum X^2 = 59880$$

$$\sum X^2 = 63615$$

$$(\sum X)^2 = 2362369$$

$$R = 40(61356) - 2250168$$

$$R = \frac{N(\sum Xy) - (\sum X \sum y)}{\sqrt{N((\sum X^2) - (\sum X)^2)(\sum Y^2) - (\sum XY)^2}}$$

$$R_{lia} = 2*r/1+r = (2*0.95)/(1+0.95) = 0.98$$

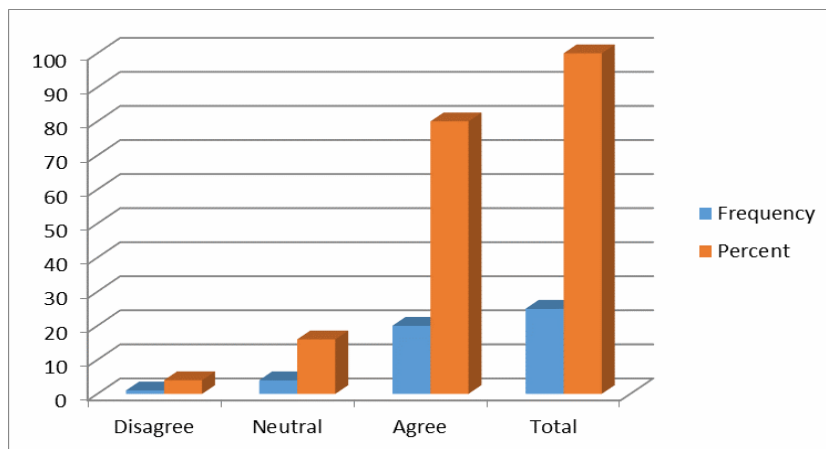
$$(\sum X)^2 = 2143296 = \sqrt{0.98} = 0.99$$

The calculated coefficient of correlation reached 0.95 which indicates agreement in results for reliability. This shows that this instrument of the test as a whole is reliable and stable.

#### IV. Data Analysis and Discussion

**Table (4.1) Using WhatsApp and discussion.**

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	4.0
Neutral	4	16.0
Agree	20	80.0
Total	25	100.0



The statistical analysis of table (1) shows that the respondents (80%) agree with the statement, (16%) are neutral and (4%) of them disagree that using WhatsApp is very beneficial as a learning media. Therefore, this statement is accepted.

**Table (4.2) Teaching and learning activities via WhatsApp tend to be More interesting.**

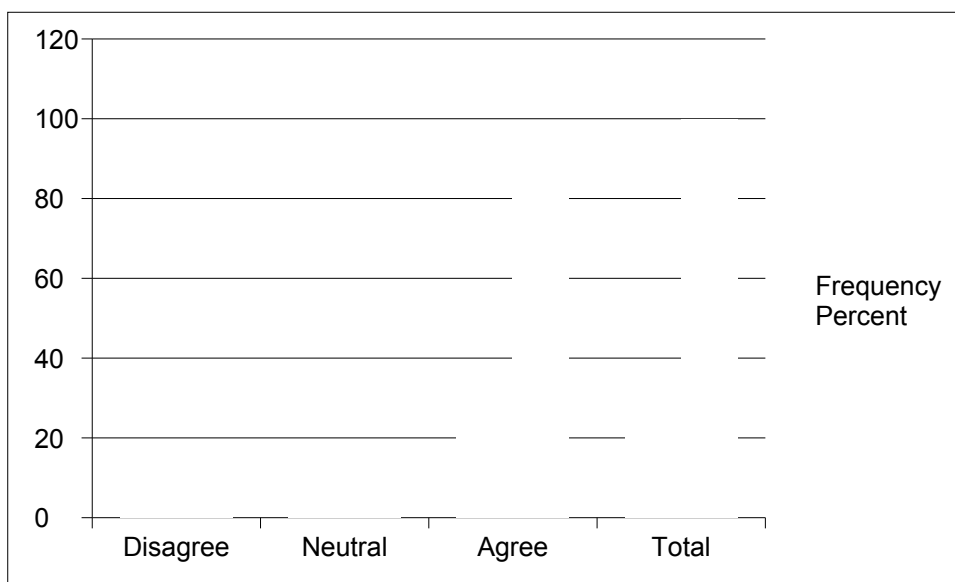
	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	8.0
Neutral	4	16.0
Agree	19	86.0
Total	25	100.0



According to table (2) (80%) of the respondents agree with the statement, (16%) of them are neutral and (8%) of them disagree. The highest number of the respondents agree with the statement. So, this statement is accepted.

**Table (4.3) WhatsApp groups can make it easier for learners to increase academic and social interaction between teachers and students.**

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	4.0
Neutral	3	12.0
Agree	21	84.0
Total	25	100.0



According to the statistical analysis of table (3). The majority of the respondents (84%) agree with the statement and (12%) are neutral (4%) of them disagree. This emphasis WhatsApp groups can make it easier for learners to increase academic and social interaction between teachers and students. Thus this statement is accepted.

**Table (4.4) WhatsApp is very supportive and quick for sharing information**

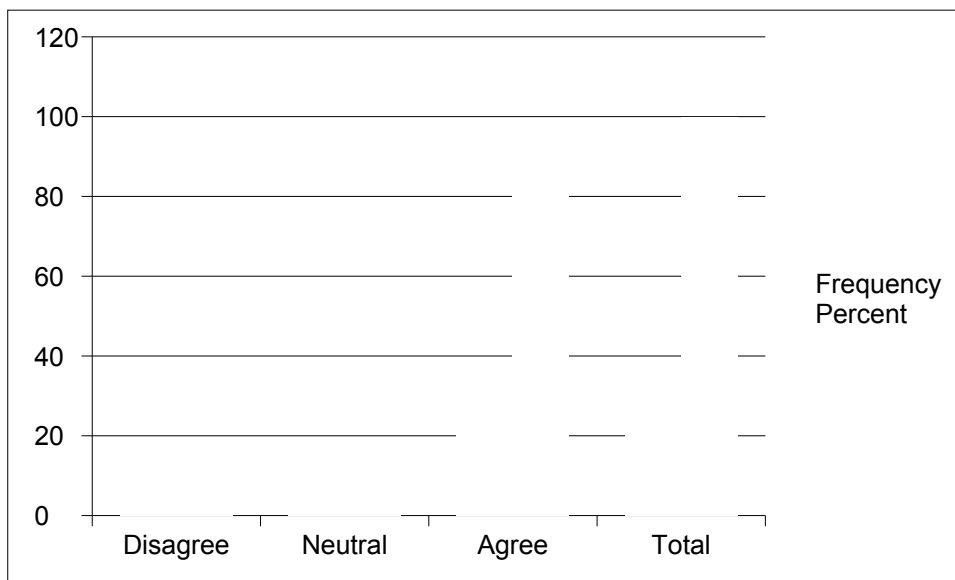
	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	4.0
Neutral	3	12.0
Agree	21	84.0
Total	25	100.0



Table (4) shows that (88%) of the respondents agree that WhatsApp is very supportive and quick for sharing information. Whereas, (12%) of them are neutral and (8%) only disagree with the statement. This emphasizes that the statement is accepted.

**Table (4.5) There are still obstacles face teachers when using WhatsApp, such as teachers can no observe directly and learning is not optional.**

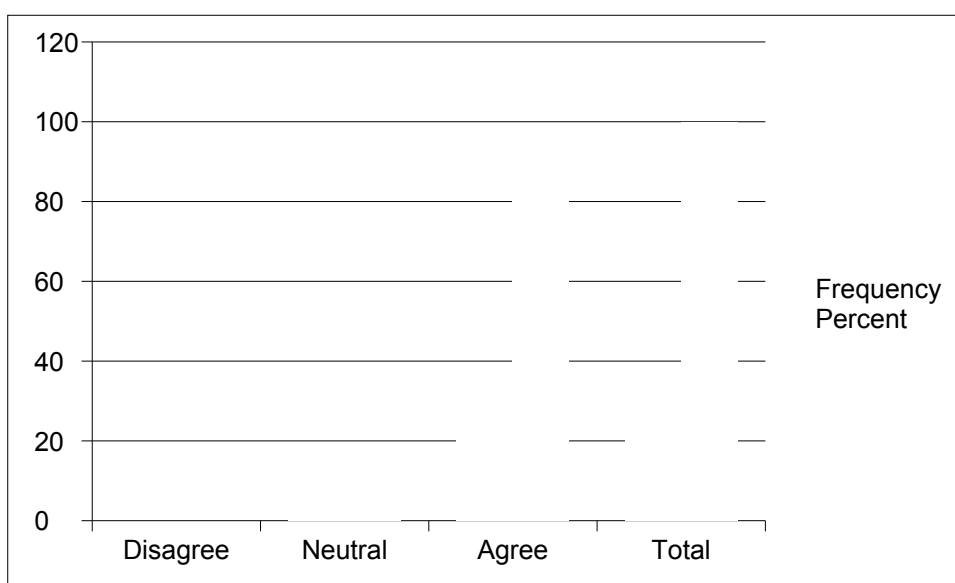
	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	8.0
Neutral	2	8.0
Agree	21	84.0
Total	25	100.0



It is clear from the above table (8%) disagree with the statement, (8%) are neutral and the majority of the respondents (86%) agree that there are still obstacles face teachers when using WhatsApp such as, teachers cannot observe directly and learning is not optional. Therefore, this statement is accepted.

**Table (4.6) Learning and teaching by using media can make students more interactive and feel happy**

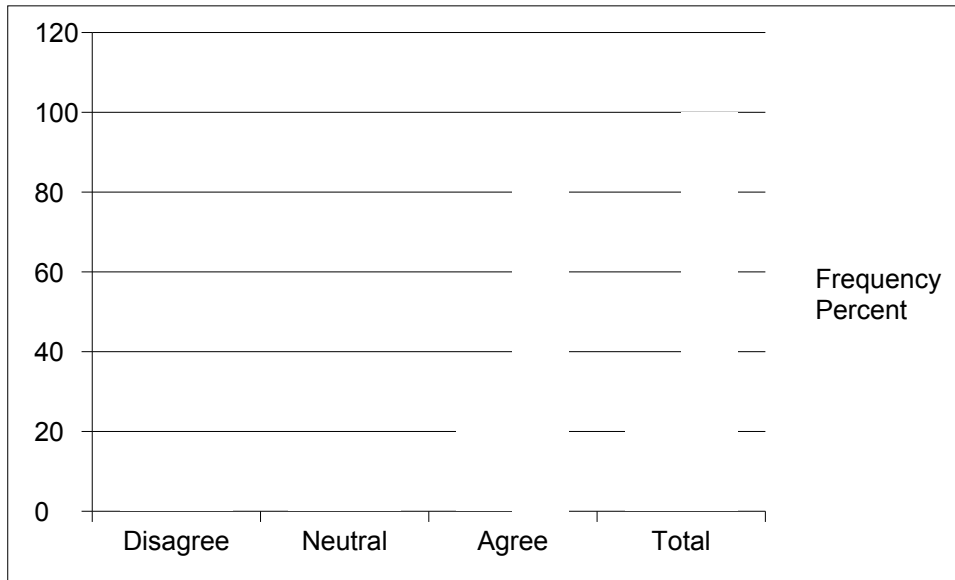
	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	0	0.0
Neutral	3	12.0
Agree	22	88.0
Total	25	100.0



According to table (6) most respondents (88%) agree that learning and teaching by using media can make students more interactive and feel happy. While (12%) of them are neutral. Therefore, this statement is accepted.

**Table (4.7) Students can capture materials easily via WhatsApp**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	4.0
	Neutral	2	8.0
	Agree	22	88.0
	Total	25	100.0

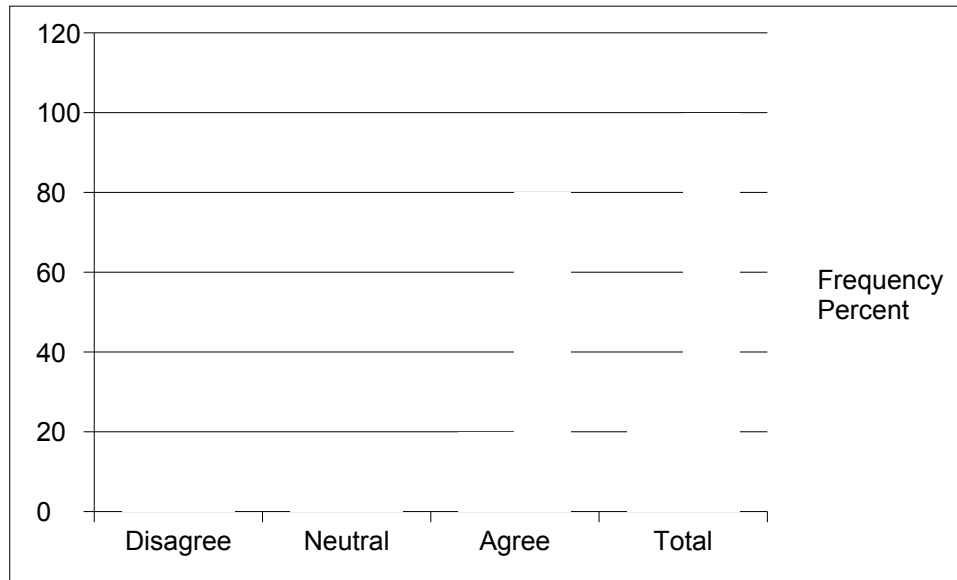


The above table shows that (8%) are neutral, (4%) only disagree with the statement, while the highest numbers of the respondents (88%) agree with the statement that EFL students can capture materials easily via WhatsApp. Thus this statement is accepted.

**Table (4.8) Poor internet network, full cell phone memory and lack of understanding of the materials represent great obstacles**

		Frequency	Percent
	Disagree	1	4.0
	Neutral	4	16.0
	Agree	20	80.0
	Total	25	100.0





The statistical analysis of this table (8) shows that the majority of the respondents (80%) agree with the statement, (16%) are neutral and (4%) only of them disagree that poor internet network, full cell phone memory and lack of understanding of the materials represent great obstacles. So, this statement is accepted.

#### V. Conclusion

The teachers remained active in providing material at each meeting through WhatsApp media. In this case communication and interaction between teachers and students continue to run online through WhatsApp media despite all the advantages and disadvantages that can be found in the online learning process.

No matter how great the progress of learning technology is, conventional learning is still needed, in this case face to face learning is the best learning experience ever and is difficult to replace by any technological advances. The teachers make special rules in the class that students are encouraged to stay active and respond to the teachers in the group.

Online learning will remain attached to the various advantages of each online media used. The offline system is difficult to replace by any technology.

#### 5.1 Findings

The study has the following findings:

- 1) WhatsApp is very supportive and quick for sharing information in EFL classes.
- 2) Learning and teaching using media can make students more interactive and feel happy.
- 3) WhatsApp groups can make it easier for learners to increase academic and social interaction between teachers and students.
- 4) Students can capture materials easily via WhatsApp.
- 5) Teaching and learning activities tend to be more interesting via a WhatsApp.

#### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings the study recommended the following:

- 1) Teachers should encourage students to use WhatsApp because it is very quick and supportive for sharing information.
- 2) Teachers should teach via WhatsApp and media because they make students more interactive and feel happy.
- 3) Students should make WhatsApp group because they increase academic and social information between teachers and students.
- 4) Students should make use of WhatsApp so as to capture materials easily.
- 5) Teachers should make activities more interesting and this occur by using WhatsApp.

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