



**APPRAISAL OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LEARNING OF
NON MAJOR ELECTIVE SUBJECT THROUGH WHATSAPP
BY URBAN UNDER GRADUATE STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

Whatsapp is a smart phone application that operates on most of the operating systems and devices. The WhatsApp can be used as a teaching learning tool and appraisal of its effectiveness among student community in this viewpoint can be an application oriented research. In this connection, the present research was devoted to use WhatsApp as an educational tool for teaching and learning the NME subject. It was also devoted to gain knowledge of its effectiveness as an educational tool among the urban undergraduate student community. In the present research, the WhatsApp group of students was formed and the NME resource modules were posted periodically to them. The students learnt the educational contents of NME subject and participated in the attitudinal and achievement tests. All the students invariably opined that the WhatsApp would be effectively used in the teaching learning process of NME subjects. The research results showed that the academic achievement scores of the students in NME subject varied from 56.0% and 72.0% with an average of 66.2%. The research results also showed that the academic achievement scores of the students in NME subject had the standard deviation of 8.62. As these were positive correlation among the attitudinal status, academic achievement and educational process through social media, it could be concluded that the social media would be effectively used among student community in the teaching learning process of NME subjects.

Keywords: Attitudinal status – Academic scores – teaching and learning of NME subject – Impact of Whatsapp on student community.

INTRODUCTION

Digital lives offer evidence that the youths' lives are increasingly played out on digital platform and social network is at its centre (Jisha and Jebakumar, 2014). It has been reported that the social media had the capacity to send, receive and discuss the educational contents. It has also been reported that the social media had the potential to enhance the teaching learning process at all levels of education (Krishnan et al., 2015). At this juncture, it would be essential to find out the feasibility of whatsapp to communicate and discuss the educational contents pertaining to a non major elective (NME) subject. In addition, it would be essential to find out the effectiveness of the learning of NME subject by student community through whatsapp. In this connection, the present research work was extensively carried out and the research outcomes have been documented in this research paper for the benefit of student community, teaching fraternity and users of social media.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the present research work, the resource modules on the topics like introduction on new media, application of new media, ethics of new media, usage of new media and impacts of new media were prepared (Ambasht, 1990). Each topic of these resource modules comprised text parts, figures and photographs and they were shared for teaching and learning the NME subject namely NEW MEDIA offered by the Department of Visual communication, The American College (Autonomous), Madurai, Tamil Nadu.

The WhatsApp group was formed and it consisted of twenty five under graduate students studying in the college. These students were from different disciplines like English, Tamil, Commerce, Business Administration and Physical Education. The prepared resource modules were posted periodically by the group admin to these students for teaching and learning the NME subject. These students could interact with group admin and also within the group not only through the direct phone calls but also through posting

questions and getting clarified. In continuation, the attitudinal status and academic performance of the participatory students were evaluated.

The researcher conducted two tests for assessing the attitudinal status and academic performance of the chosen urban under graduate students (Cohen et al., 2011). The first test was ‘Attitudinal Test’, whereas the second test was ‘Achievement test’. The first test had the questionnaire with 10 questions and it was developed on a four point Likert type scale responses of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The second test had the questionnaire that consisted of twenty five multiple choice questions with four response type options with only one correct answer (Rajni Jain and Sujeet Jain, 2016). These two tests were conducted and the attitudinal status as well as achievement of the students was assessed through their responses and answers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the present research investigation, the feasibility of WhatsApp as an educational tool in the teaching and learning process of the basics of new media was explored. In

addition, the impact of the teaching and learning process through WhatsApp on the basis of the academic achievement of chosen undergraduate students in an urban area was explored. The Table 1 presents the profile of student respondents, whereas Table 2 and Table 3 present the attitudinal status and academic achievement of the same student respondents.

Table 1
Profile of student respondents

Profile	Description
Age	18 years
Academic level	B.A First year
Academic course	English, Tamil, Commerce, Business Administration and Physical Education
Category of students	Urban students
Mostly used social media	WhatsApp, Facebook and and Twitter
Purposes for using social media	Communication, Entertainment and sharing of information
Average time spent	One hour daily
Average years of usage	Two years

Table 2
Attitudinal status of student respondents

Statements	Response (%)			
	A	S A	D A	S DA
Study through SM is easy	70	30		
Study through SM is interesting	70	30		
Study through SM is effective	70	30		
Module has suitable contents	60	40		
Module is Delivered in time	60	40		
Module is easy to learn&self explanatory	60	40		
Module is useful and it has social relevance	50	50		
Achievement can be assessed by subjective questions			80	20
Achievement is impossible through study by social media			80	20
WhatsApp is an opt tool to teach NME course	70	30		

Table 3
Achievement of student respondents

Profile of student respondents	Marks
Minimum	56.0%
Maximum	72.0%
Average	66.2%
Standard deviation	8.62

In the present investigation, a group in WhatsApp was specifically created with twenty five undergraduate students from the

undergraduate major disciplines of Tamil, English, Commerce, Business Administration and Physical Education. A total of five resource materials exclusively on the topics of introduction on new media, application of new media, ethics of new media, utilization pattern of new media and impacts of new media were posted to them. The students in the group interacted with each other in order to share their knowledge that acquired from the resource materials. They also interacted with the group admin for getting their doubts clarified. In continuation, their academic performance in the NME subject of new media was assessed.

As the selected group was first year undergraduate students, their age was mostly 18. They had urban background and so they had good experiences in using the social media like WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter for communication, entertainment and sharing current affairs. The average time spent by them in social media was one hour and their average year of usage of these social media was around two years.

The WhatsApp was selected as a tool to teaching and learning process due to its features like easiness for usage, feasibilities to chat and group chat, facilities to send and receive the multimedia messages, quickness in updating the status and uploads of photos, great speed and elimination of geographic constraints for the existence of sender and receiver (Michael Karikari Appiah, 2016). The urban students were selected due to their affordability to smart phones, exposure to usage of social media and continuous utilization of social networking tools to communicate with their friends and relatives (Manjunatha, 2013). The NME subject was specifically selected for the teaching learning process due to the availability of theory part in the educational content in NME syllabus, non-availability of practical in the educational content in NME syllabus and heterogeneous nature of student community involved in learning the NME subject.

The attitudinal status of the students was assessed through the questionnaire method. In this assessment, the selected group of students specifically stated that the

learning through social media was simple, stirring and also successful. They also specifically stated that the resource materials were observed to be easy to learn, self explanatory and they had opt texts, figures and photos. The feedback by the students revealed that the research materials were delivered periodically and the doubts were clarified systematically. It also revealed that the resource materials were beneficial to them and the resource materials had high social relevance.

The knowledge obtained by the students was assessed through objective questions and the achievement was evaluated. The research results showed that the academic achievement scores of the students varied from 56.0% and 72.0% with an average of 66.2%. The research results also showed that the academic achievement scores of the students had the standard deviation of 8.62. It was obvious from these research results that the selected students secured first class marks as an average. It was also obvious from these research results that the students secured marks with the minimum range of variation from the mean value

of the mark of 66.2%. All the students invariably opined that the social media would be effectively used in the teaching learning process of NME subjects.

As these were positive correlation among the attitudinal status, academic achievement and teaching and learning process through social media, it could be concluded that the social media would be effectively used in the teaching learning process of NME subjects.

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