



Students' Perception on the Use of Apps and Whatsapp as a learning tool to clear pre-employment screening process

Dr.M.Sudhadevi,

Assistant Professor of English,

Sri.S.Ramasamy Memorial College of Arts and Science, Sattur.

Abstract

WhatsApp is a popular teaching and learning tool, a free messenger application that works across multiple platforms like iPhone and android phones, and this application is being widely used among students to send multimedia messages like photos, videos, audios along with simple text messages. Most of the students nowadays are already exposed to this application and used it often for the purpose of communication. Thus, it drew my interest to conduct this study and practise the use of WhatsApp application .The prime objective of this paper is to improve final year students' communication skills to clear pre-employment screening process using Whatsapp as a tool so that they will be able to face other stages in interview process are academic and professional excellence, intra and interpersonal skills and societal traits which is part of the recruitment process in India.This study also explores the needs to change the existing education design of English Language Teaching and Learning process.Hence there was a large gap existing between the skill requirements and employment. Data were gathered from 25 final year under graduate students'from different streams who are from five different districts such as Virudhunagar, Thirunelvelli, Madurai, Coimbatore and Chennai via a set of questionnaires.A pilot study was also been conducted on 25 respondents in order to know the reliability of the instruments in this research. A quantitative data were collected and the result accumulates the total size of the sample together with the percentages of returns. The data is summarized to identify the usefulness of the learning tool to the students. The findings of the study suggested that the use of WhatsApp is significant in helping the students learning the language better and enhancing their proficiency in using the English language. This study implies that the usage of WhatsApp should be encouraged to the students and institutions should provide internet facilities as a top priority in today's education.



Key words: Whatsapp, multimedia messages, pre-employment screening and societal traits.

Introduction:

It is a little hard to believe, but WhatsApp can be used as a learning tool. Some of the popular messaging app's attributes make it an ideal solution for teachers and students. The underlying purpose of WhatsApp is to facilitate communication, and at its most basic level, education is nothing but communication. WhatsApp can provide a channel through which teachers can achieve faster and more seamless communication with their students. It can also increase the level of communication between students and create another venue for learning. WhatsApp has grown in popularity due to its benefits such as, being able to send real-time messages to an individual or groups of friends simultaneously, low-cost, and privacy. Though there are a lot of instant messaging applications that can operate on mobile devices, it is seen that WhatsApp application is one of the most favored mobile based applications. Hence I decided to use WhatsApp to enhance students' communication skills to clear pre-employment screening as it is the most common App used between the students, it doesn't need to have computer, it is attainable and does not cost much. I thought of using WhatsApp to facilitate and create an avenue for learning and communication as well, as it is the most common App to the students, and they always have their mobile phones and smart phones in their hands, beside it is cheap to activate the App. After getting the students' approval to use WhatsApp for learning when they are out the class, I created two groups which the students named, "SRNMC techclass" and "SRNMC techtest" I started opening discussions for the groups, uploading videos, audios, and chart. This paper examined advantages of WhatsApp as a Teaching Learning tool, needs of the changing methodologies of faculty members, and materials and methods used in conducting this study. The data were collected through various aspects; the students' attitude towards WhatsApp and how they perceive the application and its convenience/ ease of use, the usefulness of WhatsApp and the behavioural intention towards WhatsApp. Based on such a discussion, the results were displayed in the form of tables. Besides, the study also provides some implications and recommendations to several practitioners. It is hoped that this study will bring out WhatsApp as teaching learning tool.



Advantages of WhatsApp as a Teaching Learning tool

WhatsApp is a Mobile Instant Messaging (MIM) application made available to the public for the first time in 2009. Within several years, WhatsApp gained incredible popularity in many countries around the world. At the beginning of 2016, WhatsApp reported that one in every seven people on the globe uses the application (compared to 700 million users of Facebook Messenger). In Israel, around 93% of adults use the application, and the average number of WhatsApp messages teenagers receive stands at around 500 per day (Rosenberg, 2016). WhatsApp has a number of advantages that all educators need to be aware of: WhatsApp can be used to send videos, audio messages, and pictures. It can be used on a wide variety of phones, including Android, Windows Phone, BlackBerry 10, Nokia S40, iPhone, Blackberry, and Nokia S60 devices. That means it can be used by persons with the most commonly available phones. WhatsApp can be used to reach students via the technology they are most familiar with: their phones. Not every student has access to a computer, but almost everybody has a smartphone these days. This makes WhatsApp an ideal solution for educators working with lower-income students. WhatsApp can be used to reach students and parents that do not utilize other communication methods, such as landline telephones and email, because most of those people have phones. That makes the solution a good means of reaching working-class parents. Technology is developing rapidly, and it seems there is an app for just about anything these days, and education is no exception. If you try searching for “educational product reviews” on Google, there are approximately 35,300,000 results the search engine comes up with. Amazon.com offers around 14,000 educational apps and games, and the App Store features over 80,000 educational apps, as stated by Apple. By using WhatsApp, a teacher can integrate the classroom and the real world and make education part of the students’ lives. All educators need to utilize WhatsApp in and out of the classroom is a little creativity and imagination. When used properly, WhatsApp can bring social media into the classroom and the classroom into social media.

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Needs of the changing methodologies of faculty members

English as a language plays a vital role in shaping one's personality. Starting from academia to industry the necessity of English is inevitable. The need of the hour is to have certain modifications in the English Language educating system which will address the needs of the changing economy and take suitable measures at providing mandatory training in communicative English with a view to have the youngsters gainfully employed. This will ultimately benefit all the stakeholders, industry, government and economy by increasing the productivity and resulting in a higher GDP of the nation. The Indian GDP growth is stable compared to world countries. The Indian economy is the third largest economy. In spite of the unemployment rate is also very high. Unemployment Rate in India increased to 3.52 percent in 2017 from 3.51 percent in 2016. There are around 31 million unemployed Indians seeking jobs now—the highest since October 2016, according to a report published on Feb. 27 by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), a think-tank that tracks business and economic data. Many graduates in India are found to be unemployable due to their poor communication skills and lack of confidence. The expectations of employers are very high compared to current skill abilities of fresh graduates. Moreover, it has been found that the methodologies of faculty members need to be enhanced as large number of students want more interactive sessions to improve their language skills.

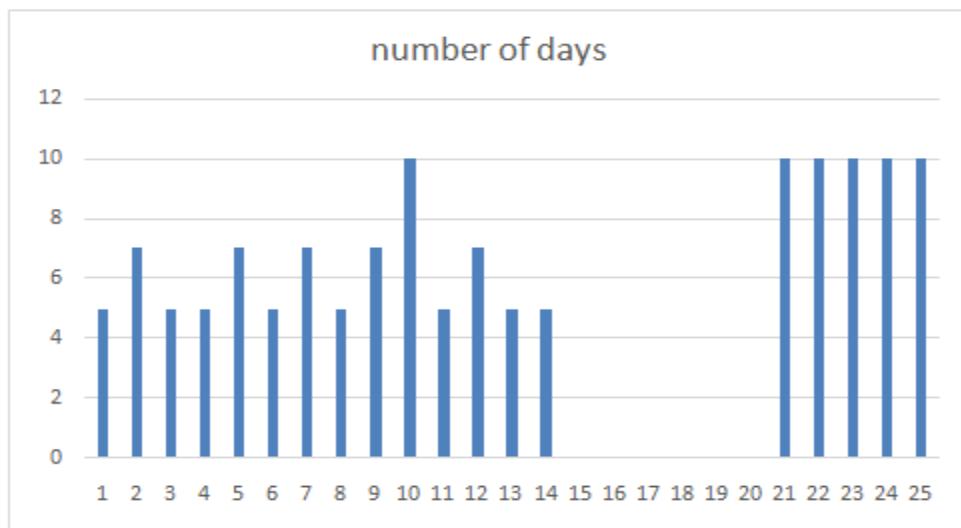
As English communication skill is one of the most important employability requirements in modern India, candidates are expected to voice their ideas in English without any ambiguity and fear but it has been identified that many final year students are still lacking confidence to face their campus placements that are to take place in their final year of study. The teaching fraternity has been struggling to enhance students' communication skills from the time of British. In spite of these efforts, lack of ability to communicate in English Language has been an incessant challenge for many students in India.

Materials and methodologies

This prospective ananalytical interventional study was conducted with the help of 25 final year under graduate students' from different streams who are from five different districts such as



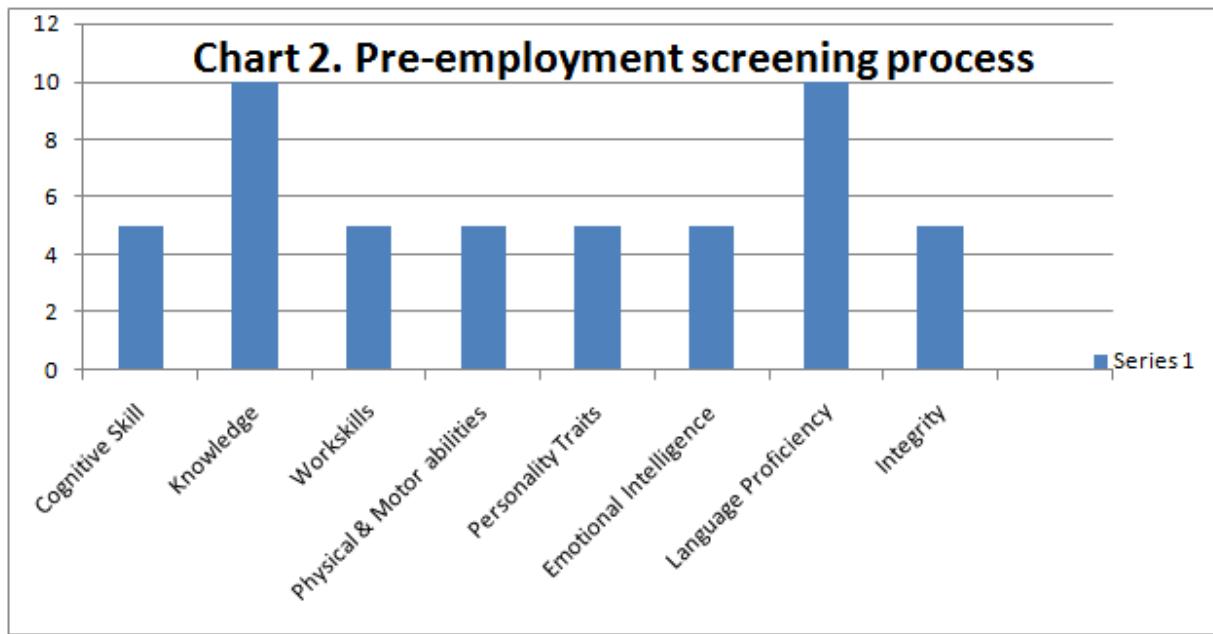
Virudhunagar, Thirunelvelli, Madurai, Coimbatore and Chennai via a set of questionnaires. “SRNMC studygroup” and “SRNMC techtest” are formed, the purpose of former one is to send lessons in the form of audia and video and the later is for testing students’ performance. Fifty pre-employment interview questions were posted for prior practice of the students in five modules to screen their cognitive abilities, knowledge, work skills, physical and motor abilities, personality, emotional intelligence, language proficience and even integrity to clear mock telephone interview. Eight samplers took 5 days to complete the five modules, five samplers for 7 days, six samplers for 10 days and six samplers became inactive due to lack of self-confidence. The inactive samplers were boosted and motivated to perform well by sending extra lessons in the form of videos which was shown below in bar chart.

Chart 1. Time taken to complete five modules

Twenty five samplers were attended mock telephone interview with the help of eight HR interviewers from different parts of Tamil Nadu and feedback about their performance were also produced by HR interviewers which was really useful for fresh under graduate students who have chosen as sampling for this study. Pre – employment screening process was done by HR interviewers with 50 marks each. Eight marks for cognitive ability test, ten marks for subject knowledge, five marks for work skills, five marks for phusical and motor abilities, five marks for



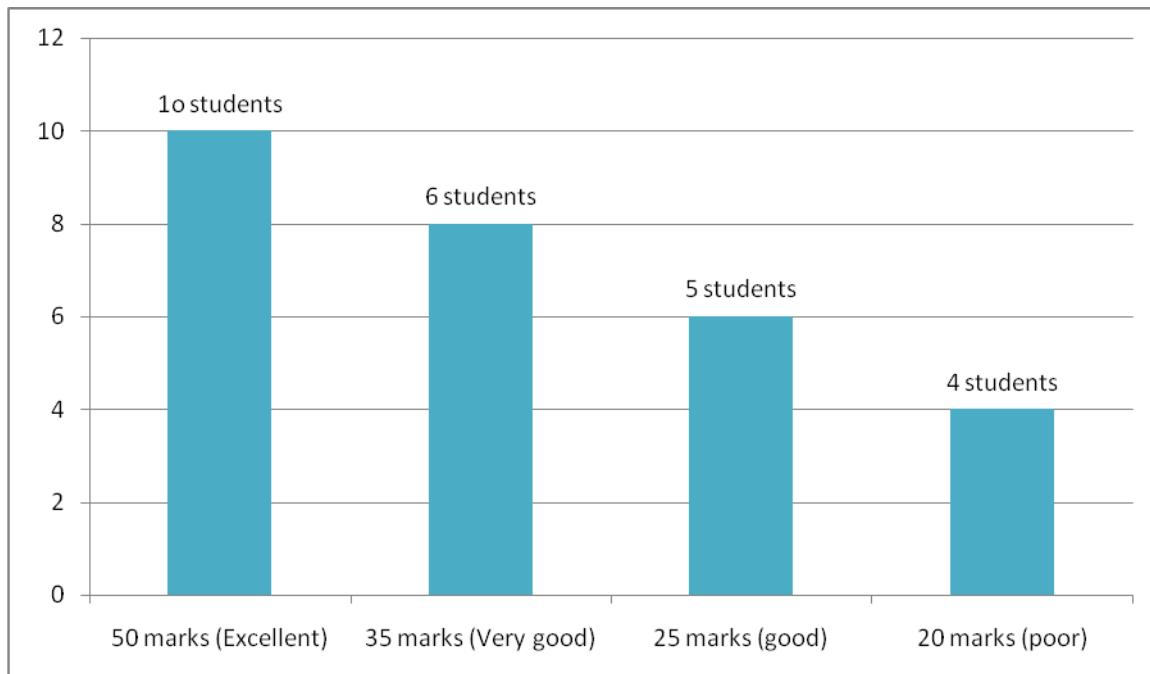
pernolity traits, five marks for emotional intelligence ten marks for language proficiency and five marks for integrity.



HR interviewers highlighted that ten samplers were excellent performers out of 25, six were very good performers, five were good performers and four were poor performers. Very good, good and poor performmers were tried to become excellent peformers after attending number courses on Grammar, Fluency and Pronunciation, Content and Consistency, Accent and Creativity and Body Language with the help many free educational Apps.



Chart 3. HR Interviewers' feedback



Discussion

WhatsApp has advantages over other technological tools employed by the education system, such as low cost, simplicity, accessibility, efficiency, and natural language. Interaction between students, sharing learning material, easy accessibility to learning material, High Interaction with facilitator and Doubts immediately cleared were the other educational advantages of WhatsApp. Earning through WhatsApp has educational benefits like immediate feedback to the problem; learning on move; deeper clarity on issues; revision of previously learned topics; learning from others problems; healthy discussions; and availability of learning material all the time. WhatsApp enables learning beyond the classroom's borders and the high availability of teachers to the students' questions can potentially enhance the learning Process. It also enables easy and quick transference of links to study materials Combination of medium like videos, pictures and voice notes along with constant availability of facilitator and learning anytime anywhere, has made WhatsApp a new and convenient tool for teaching learning activity.



Conclusion

Influence of social media such as WhatsApp is tremendously increased among students. The query aroused was whether such a familiar platform could be used as a learning tool. This research answered this query because WhatsApp can prove to be highly advantageous and enhance learning in undergraduate students when used in supplementation to the conventional learning methods. If social media can be effectively used for unambiguous communication, it could have been modified as a learning tool, especially for undergraduate students. Therefore, a question aroused if the social media such as WhatsApp can alternatively be resourced effectively to teach employability skills in the changed milieu. On the light of the present study and information gathered from other researches, we put forward few suggestions while introducing novel methods into education. First, educators should make students aware about safe and healthy usage of social media and should be able to limit discussions toward respective subjects. Proper institutional guidelines for social media behavior may ensure the above-mentioned objectives. Discussions at a leisure pace will encourage even slow learners to follow. Group members should be encouraged and there should be an open mindedness so that everyone can raise their doubts without hesitation.

WhatsApp is much quicker and more convenient way to interact with people which enhance the effective flow of messages and ideas among youth. Indeed intensity of whatsapp is very high among youth because it reduces calling and SMS costs. Therefore its primary objective and hypothesis evidently accepted. The main goal of this paper is to find out impact of whatsapp on education. The use of WhatsApp in the process of English learning to train students' critical thinking skills conceptually can be declared worthy of being applied in the classroom. Technical obstacles arise due to the use of WhatsApp i.e. time consuming and eyestrain. Besides, the use of WhatsApp also takes a huge memory of the smartphone. The constraint is overcome by limiting the duration of learning time to just 100 minutes. The use of WhatsApp is effective because it trains students' critical thinking skills through the elements of analyzing, evaluating, applying, generating ideas, and expressing ideas, with which the categories are measured by clarity,

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accuracy, relevance, depth, and logic indicators. Moreover, it also gets a positive response from students. Learning by using WhatsApp can be used to train students' critical thinking skills.

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