

## The Impact of WhatsApp Groups as Supportive Technology in Teaching

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**Abstract :** With the advent of internet technologies, students are increasingly turning toward social media and cross-platform messaging apps such as WhatsApp, Line, and WeChat to support their teaching and learning processes. Although each messaging app has varying features, WhatsApp remains one of the most popular cross-platform apps that allow for fast, simple, secure messaging and free calls anytime, anywhere. With a plethora of advantages, students could easily assimilate WhatsApp as a supportive technology in their learning process. There could be peer to peer learning, and a teacher will be able to share knowledge digitally via the creation of WhatsApp groups. Content analysis techniques were utilized to analyze data collected by closed-ended question forms. Studies demonstrated that 98.8% of college students (n=80) from the Monash University foundation year agreed that the employment of WhatsApp groups was helpful as a learning tool. Approximately 71.3% disagreed that notifications and alerts from the WhatsApp group were disruptions in their studies. Students commented that they could silence the notifications and hence, it would not disturb their flow of thoughts. In fact, an overwhelming majority of students (95.0%) found it enjoyable to participate in WhatsApp groups for educational purposes. It was a common perception that some students felt pressured to post a reply in such groups, but data analysis showed that 72.5% of students did not feel pressured to comment or reply. It was good that 93.8% of students felt satisfactory if their posts were not responded to speedily, but was eventually attended to. Generally, 97.5% of students found it useful if their teachers provided their handphone numbers to be added to a WhatsApp group. If a teacher posts an explanation or a mathematical working in the group, all students would be able to view the post together, as opposed to individual students asking their teacher a similar question. On whether students preferred using Facebook as a learning tool, there was a 50-50 divide in the replies from the respondents as 51.3% of students liked WhatsApp, while 48.8% preferred Facebook as a supportive technology in teaching and learning. Taken altogether, the utilization of WhatsApp groups as a supportive technology in teaching and learning should be implemented in all classes to continuously engage our generation Y students in the ever-changing digital landscape.-

**Keywords :** education, learning, messaging app, technology, WhatsApp groups

**Conference Title :** ICCETM 2019 : International Conference on Chemistry Education and Teaching Methods

**Conference Location :** Tokyo, Japan

**Conference Dates :** December 04-05, 2019