WHATSAPP MESSENGER FOR EDUCATION: ATTITUDE, PERCEIVED EASE OF USE AND RETENTION LEVEL AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE UNIVERSITIES, NIGERIA

AFEEZ ABIOLA HAMZAT[1], ADESHINA COKER[2]
[1]Al-Hikmah University, Nigeria, [2]University of Ilorin, Nigeria
e-mail: hamzatafeez01@gmail.com, adeshinacoker45@gmail.com

ABSTRAK
Penggunaan media sosial untuk pendidikan tidak boleh terlalu ditekankan karena manfaatnya sangat besar. Sebagai salah satu media sosial terintegrasi untuk pendidikan, WhatsApp messenger merupakan aplikasi pesan instan yang berjalan pada smartphone dan perangkat berbasis web yang memungkinkan penggunanya bertukar informasi melalui berbagai bentuk media (Sahu, 2019). Banyak orang tampaknya mengetahui WhatsApp messenger dan penggunaannya. Oleh karena itu penelitian ini menyelidiki sikap, persepsi kemudahan penggunaan dan tingkat retensi WhatsApp messenger untuk pendidikan di kalangan mahasiswa S1 Universitas Negeri Kwara dan juga menyelidiki persepsi kemudahan penggunaan WhatsApp messenger oleh siswa berdasarkan gender sekolah. Studi ini mengungkapkan bahwa sikap mahasiswa sarjana terhadap penggunaan WhatsApp messenger untuk Pendidikan di Universitas Negeri Kwara adalah positif, persepsi kemudahan mahasiswa sarjana dalam menggunakan WhatsApp messenger untuk pendidikan adalah positif, tingkat retensi mahasiswa sarjana dalam menggunakan WhatsApp messenger untuk pendidikan tinggi, dan tidak terdapat perbedaan yang signifikan dalam persepsi siswa tentang kemudahan penggunaan WhatsApp messenger untuk pendidikan berdasarkan gender.
Kata Kunci: Situs Jejaring Sosial, Media Sosial dalam Pendidikan, WhatsApp Messenger, Sikap, Persepsi Kemudahan Penggunaan dan Tingkat Retensi.

ABSTRACT
Social media usage for education can never be overemphasized as its rewards are enormous. As one of the integrated social media for education, WhatsApp messenger is an instant message application that runs on smartphone and web-based devices that enables users to trade information via various media form (Sahu, 2019). Many people seem to be aware of WhatsApp messenger and its use. This study therefore investigated the attitude, perceived ease of use and retention level of WhatsApp messenger for education among undergraduate students of Kwara State universities and as well investigated the students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp messenger based on school gender. The study revealed that undergraduate students' attitude towards using WhatsApp messenger for Education in Kwara State universities is positive, the undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp messenger for education is positive, the undergraduate students' retention level in using of WhatsApp messenger for education is high, and there is no significant difference in students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp messenger for education based on gender.
Keywords: Social Networking Sites, Social Media in Education, WhatsApp Messenger, Attitude, Perceived Ease of Use and Retention Level.

INTRODUCTION

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are well-known among undergraduate students nowadays. Social Networking Sites among undergraduate students suggest that they are befitting and valuable tools that could be used for educational purposes (Gasaymeh, 2022). Therefore, social

media are technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders (Bryer & Zavatarro, 2021). Furthermore, some of the most popular social media for education are WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter (Devi & Tevera, 2019). Ahad and Lim (2019) found that WhatsApp messenger is popular among undergraduate students, and they use it every day.

WhatsApp messenger is an instant message application that runs on smartphone and web-based devices that enables users to trade information via various media form (Sahu, 2019). The use of WhatsApp messenger in education does not necessarily require special infrastructure as undergraduate students own the smartphones to use and they can download WhatsApp application on their phones for free. It is used for teaching and learning to bridge the digital divide among students Gasaymeh (2022). Furthermore, it is easy to form groups on WhatsApp, it can be used for private discussion and can be used to communicate without location and time bounding, and obviously, it is commonly used by undergraduate students in the world (Tang & Hew, 2022). However, Malecela (2021) believed that some of the limitations of using WhatsApp messenger are; it did not involve face-to-face communication, there was a risk of miscommunication, it was time consuming, it was dependent on Wi-Fi connections etc.

Concept of Whatsapp Messenger for Learning

WhatsApp messenger is described as a free, easy to use, convenient, fast, personal modality of communication platform (Joicy & Sornam, 2018). Gachago, Strydom, Hanekom, Simons, and Walters (2020) argued that WhatsApp messenger is used in advance education to encourage reflection, create immediate connections, and aid coordination in both formal and informal learning. Chipunza (2023) found out that WhatsApp was a useful electronic tool to facilitate information sharing among university students on a range of subjects related to the courses that they were studying. Chipunza (2023) connoted that "WhatsApp served as a tool for bridging access to learning resources, rendering peer-based and hierarchical support, leveraging on-task behavior and enhancing meaningful context-free learning" (p. 336). Tarighat and Khodabakhsh (2021) found out that WhatsApp can be useful in language assessment. Students can use WhatsApp to record their speech and share their recordings with their teachers and other students. Alsaleem (2023) examined the effect of the use of WhatsApp on English as Foreign Language (EFL) students in written vocabulary tasks in Saudi Arabia. Akinlosotu (2021) described relevant factors influencing the utilzation of Whatsapp among undergraduates of Economics in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma as; cognitive needs, affective needs, social-integrate needs and tension release needs (p.295).
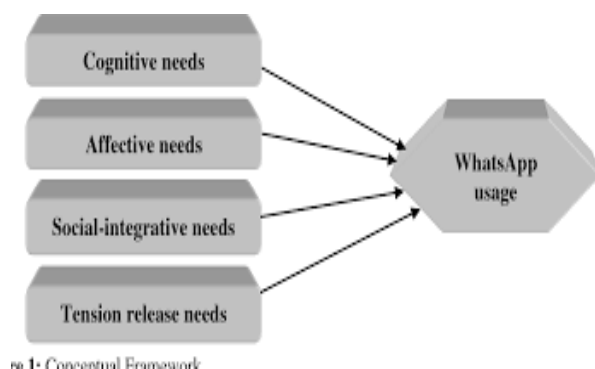

Figure 1: Predictors of WhatsApp Usage by Undergraduate Students Source: Akinlosotu (2021)

Students' Attitude, Perceived Ease of Use and Retention Level on Using WhatsApp Messenger

Literatures have revealed that many research variables such as; attitude, pereceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, retention level, awareness among others determine how technologies usage could be rated among students. Al-Mashaqbeh and Al-Mashaqbeh (2018) showed that students' attitudes toward the use of WhatsApp messenger for instructor-learners, learners-learners, and learners-contents dialogues were all at high level. Wolfgang, Christian, Peter and Hendrik (2020) connoted that students attitudinal behavior towards use of technologies differs based on their respective location. Also, Malecela (2021) discovered that students believed WhatsApp messenger could be helpful for them in learning through facilitating, conversations with teachers and other students, collaborative learning, and accessibility to other educational information. These connote that students portray positive attitude towards use of WhatsApp messenger for learning.

The use of WhatsApp messenger for learning by students seems to be unlimited. Students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp messenger in educational processes has been observed in different literatures. Gasaymeh (2022) revealed that students are well-known users of smartphones and WhatsApp. They had positive perceive ease of use of WhatsApp to support their learning. Also, the use of WhatsApp in higher education does not require costly infrastructure for the students or their universities, as the students have the necessary software and hardware (smart phones) in their hands all the time. This implies whatsapp messenger is perceived to be easily used among the students. So (2016) found out that undergraduate students that use WhatsApp for learning had positive perceived ease of use as its used to support their learning in the institution. Also, Ngaleka and Uys (2023) reported that WhatsApp can be used to facilitate mobile learning as students perceived using the platform is easier.

Student's retention level on using technology platforms for learning can't be uprooted from literature review. Al-Mashaqbeh and Al-Mashaqbeh (2018) discovered that students that use WhatsApp messenger for learning quickly recollect the definition of terms and outlook of a concept. Alghamdi, Rajab and Rashid (2016) looked into the use of WhatsApp messenger as a learning apparatus for distance learners and it was discovered WhatsApp promotes collaborative learning and this makes students to easily recall whatever that was discussed among them online.

Students' Gender and Use of WhatsApp Messenger in Education

Students' gender factor may or may not influence the use of any technologies in education. Atan, Azli, Rahman and Idris (2020), stated that the non-existence of gender disparity is revealed when male and female students are in learning environment that necessitates the frequent use of precise learning applications on their smart phones or other mobile devices to support their learning activities.

However, Hargittai (2018) reported that males demonstrate more favorable attitudes towards online-based learning than females. Ramayah and Osman (2020) revealed that male students use their designed course websites more than female students, which is done mostly through their phones. Although the gender disparity level in technologies and their platforms' use seem to have narrowed to the point of non-existence.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design was used to examine Undergraduate Students' Attitude, Perceived Ease of Use and Retention Level on WhatsApp Messenger for Education in Kwara State Universities. The total number of the respondents used as sample was 258. Students from University of Ilorin, Nigeria; Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin; and Kwara State University,

Malete, were used as samples for this study. The data collection for this study was done using researcher designed questionnaire. The mean and percentage were used to answer the research questions 1-3. Hypothesis 1 was tested using independent sample t-test at significance level equals 0.05.

The following research questions were answered:

i. What is the undergraduate students' attitude towards using WhatsApp Messenger for Education in Kwara State Universities?
ii. What is the undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education?
iii. What is the undergraduate students' retention level in using WhatsApp Messenger for Education?
iv. What is the undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education based on gender?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Based on research question iv), the following corresponding null hypothesis was tested in this study.

H_{01}: There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education.

DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis and results gotten from the data collected from respondents based on research questions and research hypotheses are as follow;

Table 1: Percentage of Respondents Based on Gender.

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	130	50.4
Female	128	49.6
Total	258	100.0

Table 1 reveals that male formed the highest number of the respondents with 130 (50.4%).

Research Question 1: What is undergraduate students' attitude towards using WhatsApp Messenger for Education in Kwara State Universities?

Table 2: Students' Attitude towards using WhatsApp Messenger for Education.

S/N	Items	Mean ($\bar{X}$)
1	WhatsApp messenger is a good platform for knowledge sharing	2.81
2	WhatsApp messenger enables me to academically engage with friends any time.	3.44
3	WhatsApp messenger increases my confidence level during class activities	2.65
4	WhatsApp messenger enables students' collaboration on project.	3.27
5	WhatsApp messenger allows discussions to be revisited in the future.	3.70
	Grand Mean ($\bar{X}$)	3.17

Table 2 reveals the undergraduate students' attitude towards using WhatsApp messenger for Education in Kwara State Universities. The grand mean score was 3.17. Using

2.5 as the average benchmark, it can be deduced that the undergraduate students' attitude towards using WhatsApp messenger for Education in Kwara State universities is positive.

Research Question 2: What is the undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education?

Table 3: Students' Perceived Ease of Use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education

S/N	Items	Mean ($\overline{X}$)
1	I operate my WhatsApp Messenger account by myself easily.	3.61
2	Sharing of educational media files is simple on WhatsApp Messenger.	2.83
3	Downloading of files and other resources is easy on WhatsApp Messenger.	2.72
4	Connection to WhatsApp Messenger online is easy.	2.43
5	WhatsApp Messenger for Education can be used conveniently even at home.	3.58
	Grand Mean ($\overline{X}$)	3.03

Table 3 reveals the undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education. All items, except for item 4 tested positive. However, the grand mean score was 3.03. Using 2.5 as the average benchmark, it can be deduced that the undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education is positive.

Research Question 3: What is the undergraduate students' retention level in using WhatsApp Messenger for Education?

Table 4: Students' Retention Level in Using WhatsApp Messenger for Education

S/N	Items	Mean ($\overline{X}$)
1	I always remember lectures received on WhatsApp Messenger.	3.21
2	I do solve related problems after class done on WhatsApp Messenger.	2.72
3	I always pass any test conducted on topics taught via WhatsApp Messenger.	2.55
4	I easily recall images of concepts taught through WhatsApp Messenger.	2.66
5	Videos of topics treated on WhatsApp Messenger make me easily practice the concept.	3.52
	Grand Mean ($\overline{X}$)	2.93

Table 4 reveals the undergraduate students' retention level in using WhatsApp Messenger for Education. The grand mean score was 2.93. Using 2.5 as the average benchmark, it can be deduced that the undergraduate students' retention level in using WhatsApp Messenger for Education is high.

Testing of Hypothesis

H_{O1}: There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education.

To determine null hypothesis 1, independent sample t-test was carried out. The results are as shown in table 5.

Table 5: Independent sample t-test on undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education based on gender.

GENDER	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	t	Sig.(2 tailed)	Decision
MALE	130	3.08	0.25	256	-0.62	0.36	Not Rejected
FEMALE	128	3.15	0.29				
TOTAL	258						

Table 5 shows that there was no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education. This is reflected in the result: t $(256) = -0.62$, $p>0.05$. Thus, the hypothesis was not rejected. By implication the stated null hypothesis was established thus: There is no significant difference

Jurnal P4I

between male and female undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education.

CONCLUSION

This research looked into the undergraduate students' attitude, perceived ease of use and retention level on WhatsApp messenger for Education among Kwara State Universities. The result obtained revealed that undergraduate students' attitude towards using WhatsApp messenger for Education in Kwara State Universities is positive. The undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education is positive. The undergraduate students' retention level in using WhatsApp Messenger for Education is high. It was also concluded based on the findings of the result that there was no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students' perceived ease of use of WhatsApp Messenger for Education.

REFERENCES

Ahad, A. D., & Lim, S. M. A. (2019). Convenience or nuisance? The 'WhatsApp'dilemma. Procedia- Social and Behavioral Sciences, 155, 189-196.

Akinlosotu, T. N. (2021). Predictors of WhatsAPP 'Consumption' among undergraduate students of Economics in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. An *International Multi-disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, *10(*3), 290-301. ISSN 1994-9057 (Print) ISSN 2070-0083 (Online)

Alghamdi, E. A., Rajab, H., & Rashid Shah, S., (2021). Unmonitored students self -created WhatsApp groups in distance learning environments: A collaborative learning tool or cheating technique. *International Journal of Research Studies in Educational Technology, 5(2)*, 71- 82.

Al-Mashaqbeh, I. F. & Al-Mashaqbeh, A. F. (2018). Learning Dialogue through WhatsApp Messenger: Students' Experience and Attitude. In International Journal Social Science & Education, 8(2), 17-28. ISSN: 2223-4934 E and 2227-393X Print

Alsaleem, B. I. A. (2023). The effect of "Whatsapp" electronic dialogue journaling on improving writing Vocabulary Word Choice and Voice of EFL Undergraduate Saudi Students. *Arab World English Journal, 4(*3), 213-225.

Atan, A., Azli, N., Rahman, Z., & Idris, R. (2020). Computer in distance self-perceived computer competence. *Journal of Educational Media, 3*(27), 123-135.

Bryer, T. N., & Zayatamo, S. G. (2021) The effect of newcomer involvement in work related activities: a longitudinal study of socialization. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79, 211–223.

Chipunza, P. R. C. (2013). Using mobile devices to leverage student access to collaboratively-generated resources: A case of WhatsApp instant messaging at a South African University. In International Conference on Advanced Information and Communication Technology for Education ICAICTE.

Devi, T. S., & Tevera, S. (2019). Use of social networking site in the University of Swaziland by the health science students. A Case study in *Jounal of Information Management, 1(1)*, 19-26

Gachago, D., Strydom, S., Hanekom, P., Simons, S., & Walters, S. (2020). Crossing boundaries: lectures' perspectives on the use of WhatsApp to support teaching and learning in higher education. Progression, 37(1), 172-187.

Gasaymeh, A. M. (2022). University Students' use of Whatsapp and their Perceptions Regarding its Possible Integration into their Education. In *Global Journal of Computer Science and Technology*: *G Interdisciplinary,* 17(1), 1-10.

Hargittai, E. (2018). The Digital reproduction of inequality. In D. Grusky (Ed.), *Social Stratification*. CO: Westview press.

Joicy, A. J. & Sornam, S. A. (2018). Perception of WhatsApp Usage among Students of College of Excellence: A Case Study. In *Indian Journal of Information Sources and Services*, *8(1)*, 73-78, ISSN: 2231-6094

Malecela, I. O. (2021). Usage of Whatsapp among Postgraduate Students of Kulliyyah of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia. *International Journal of Advanced Engineering Research and Science, 2(5),* 1-10.

Ngaleka, A., & Uys, W. (2023). M-learning with whatsapp: A conversation analysis. In International Conference on e-Learning (p. 282). Academic Conferences International Limited.

Ramayah, T., & Osman, M. (2020). *Complementing classroom teaching with an internet course website: Does gender and race matter.* Proceedings of the 5th South East Asia Association for institutional research conference, September 14th-16th. *Westin Resort Nusa Dua, Bali*. Indonesia.

Sahu, S. (2019). An Analysis of WhatsApp Forensics in Android Smartphones. In *International Journal of Engineering Research, 3(5*), 349-350.

So, S. (2021). Mobile instant messaging support for teaching and learning in higher education. The Internet and Higher Education, 31, 32-42.

Tang, Y., & Hew, K. F. (2022). Is mobile instant messaging (MIM) useful in education? Examining its technological, pedagogical, and social affordances. Educational Research Review. Retrieved from http://www.science direct.com/science/article/pii /S0747563216305039

Tarighat, S., & Khodabakhsh, S. (2021). Mobile- Assisted Language Assessment: Assessing speaking. Computers in Human Behavior, 64, 409- 413.

Wolfgang, R., Christian, M., Peter, B. S., & Hendrik, D. (2020). *Understanding the meaning of awareness in Research Networks*. Retrieved from http://ceur-ws.org/Vol-931/paper1.pdf