

**WHATSAPP AS A SOCIAL MEDIA TOOL FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN TERTIARY INSTITUTION IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF NUHU BAMALI POLYTECHNIC ZARIA KADUNA STATE**

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**Abstract**

*This study examined WhatsApp utilization for education purposes which is the research topic WhatsApp as a social media tool for teaching and learning in tertiary institution in Nigeria (A case study of Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic Zaria Kaduna State) students. Quantitative survey research was adopted for the study. The population consists of 40 Academic staff and 300 polytechnic students. Two research questions were developed for the studies, the instruments for data collection was a structured questionnaire which was validated by three lecturers from Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic Zaria to check for accuracy and straight forwardness of the instruments, Questionnaires were employed as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was administered randomly to staff and students. Four point Likert scale was use with rating from Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD), Average was use any item with a score below 3.00 is not needed while a score range above 3.00 and above is considered needed. The entire questionnaires administered were duly filled and retrieved given a high response rate of 100%. Data collected were coded and analyzed on SPSS version 22 and presented in tables. Findings revealed that students of Nuhu Bamali polytechnic Zaria don't have access to the internet and free Wi-Fi for research and Educative purpose. The study also postulates that students who spend more time on social media are likely to perform poorly in their academic activities than those who do not. The study recommends that students should decrease attitude of*

visiting other sites, rather places for educative purposes and research that will advance their academic and widen their brain to meet the demand of twenty first century standard and be current in their field of study.

### **Background to the study**

When a person imparts information or skills to another, it is common to describe the action as teaching. Imparting may mean to share experiences or communicating information, for instance, lecture. Teaching is regarded as both an art or science. Grasha & Anthony (2010) define Teaching as a set of events, outside the learners which are designed to support internal process of learning. In the words of Teaching is arrangement and manipulation of a situation in which there are gaps or obstructions which an individual will seek to overcome and from which he will learn in the course of doing so, Teaching or Instruction is outside the learner. “Teaching is intimate contact between a more mature personality and a less mature one which designed to further the education of the latter” Barton & Smith (2000), it could be further expressed by the researcher that the concept of teaching by an equation, “Teaching is learning as selling is to buying” Learning is internal to learners. You cannot motivate others if you are not self -motivated. Motives are not seen, but, Behaviors are seen. Learning is both a motive and behavior but only behavior is seen, learning is internal, performance is external. Which will lead to change in behaviour.

Learning is about a change: the change brought about by developing a new skill, understanding a scientific law, changing an attitude. The change is not merely incidental or natural in the way that our appearance changes as we get older. Sequeira (2012) define Learning as a relatively permanent change, usually brought about intentionally. Generally, with all learning there is an element within us of wishing to remember and understand why something happens and to do it better next time. Teaching has to do with imparting knowledge and learning is a positive change in behaviour of the learner, which lead to teaching and learning in an academic institution of learning to help the learner or novice.

Tertiary institution is advance level of institution above secondary school that could be Polytechnic, college of Education, University as the case may be were academic activities are carried out and there is always interaction between students and lecturers vice versa.

Social media has emerged to be one of the most vital communication means. It exist so as to ease communication among people regardless of the expanse, making it open to people to easily share information, files and pictures and videos, create blogs and send messages, and conduct real-time conversations. These systems are referred to as social, simply because they allow communication with friends, course mates, teachers, project supervisors, lecturers, so easily and effectively. Social media which are a form of electronic communication that has become the highest activity on the internet.

According to Kim and Kim, (2010) “Social media are the emerging digital communication channels which create a user oriented information sharing ground where any people can generate or subscribe information content as both information provider and consumer”. Buettner, (2016) sees social media as “computer mediated tools that allow people or companies to create, share exchange information, career interest, ideas, pictures/ virtual communities and networks” Andreas and Micheal (2010) asserts that “social media is a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of web and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content”. Kietzmann and Hermkens (2011) elaborates on this, stating that “social media depends on Mobile and Web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. They introduce substantial and pervasive changes to communications

between communities and individuals". In contribution, Ganiyu, and Akinreti, (2011) assert that "the emergence of social media has increase interactivity among people, making them to be producers and consumers of information in a simultaneous manner". Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, 2go, WhatsApp, Instagram, Telegram, twitter. Have brought tremendous improvement in the communication system which enhances learning, it has provided different entertainment functions which serve as a tool for social change and fast exchange of information. With the aid of the internet students can form their own page, access to news and lectures notes via email sent to him/her by a lecturer.

Technology is really changing the modern day educational landscape. Internet technology has shifted teaching and learning from its static state to a more dynamic and mobile platform in the sense that information and knowledge available to both teachers and learners are no longer tied to the boundaries of classroom environment but can be acquired anywhere, even on-the-go. Internet has been found to hold vast array of information that are accessible and retrievable just at the click of buttons without any restriction in respect to someone's location. However, the social network that is of interest in this study is WhatsApp.

WhatsApp is a mobile application used for instant messaging purposes to replace the normal phone short messages (SMS) because of its capacity to send large volume of messages and media files unlike the SMS. WhatsApp came into existence in the year 2009 and has become the most popular social media applications used by mostly the young people for communication (Fawzi, 2015). WhatsApp is usually installed from Google play store or an apple store into smart, android or window phones. It can also be accessed directly from web using the window PC or laptop. Once WhatsApp application is installed, users can then create their personal WhatsApp account which will be visible to other WhatsApp users in their phone contact lists upon synchronization. Users can start communication with people in their lists or invite new users to WhatsApp. WhatsApp therefore enable two people to chat and make video or voice call, and groups of people to make group chat using internet/Wi-Fi connection or data charges. The interesting features of WhatsApp are its ability to encrypt messages so as to secure calls and chats from being visible to third parties or non-group members; enable users to add media files when chatting; to indicate when other users are online and the last time he/she visited WhatsApp, and when chat messages are not delivered, delivered and read. WhatsApp has many features that can make it attractive and be of significant in teachers' method of teaching, students' methods of learning, and the way students and teachers interact, communicate and collaborate within and among themselves and learning contents in the modern day classroom. WhatsApp utilization for education purposes which is the research topic WhatsApp as a social media tool for teaching and learning in tertiary institution in Nigeria (A case study of Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic Zaria Kaduna State)

### **Statements of the problem**

WhatsApp has recently been a common tool used among today students for communication and chatting with friends, peers and relatives. Its commonality may possibly result out of its easy installation as mobile application on mobile devices which these students move around with. Educators are beginning to explore its potentials toward seeing how it can help students particularly during these pandemic of Convid 19, where by schools are close, any meeting of people face to face was prohibited by governments and social distance must be maintain, and also situation of hardship in which the country is facing now, most student due to economic situation do not resume school on time and those outside the campuses a times find it difficult to attain classes regularly, Only social media teaching and learning could be carried out in terms like these, in which communication would have to be online and WhatsApp is a social media platform were teaching and learning can take place without students and lecturers meeting face to face. Therefore, social media learning through WhatsApp will provide a solution to the problem mention above.

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### **The purpose of the study**

The study ought to determine the following:

1. To determine if lecturers and students possess Internet-enabled mobile phones for WhatsApp application in teaching and learning.
2. To determine the extent to which lecturers and students utilize WhatsApp account in teaching and learning.

### **Research Questions**

Two research questions were developed to guide the studies?

1. To what extent do lecturers and students possess Internet-enabled mobile phones for WhatsApp application in teaching and learning?
2. To what extent do lecturers and students utilize WhatsApp account in teaching and learning in the classroom? **Significance of the Study**

The study will be of benefit to National university commission, National Board for Technical Education, National commission for colleges of Education and other policy makers.

The study will also be an eye-opener for school authorities/administrators, policy makers and implementors on the need to integrate new technologies in the school curriculum.

The study will be of benefit to Network providers because much gain due to buying of data by those involve.

### **Methodology**

#### **Design of the study**

The study adopts a descriptive survey research design, which is meant to receive responses from the respondent, to collect and analyze data based on the variables. This is appropriate for this study because the study involved the collection of quantitative data.

#### **Area of the Study**

The study was carried out in Kaduna State, but Zaria in particular in Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic. Kaduna state occupies almost the entire mid central portion of the northern parts of Nigeria and shares boundary with Zamfara, Katsina, Kano, Niger, Bauchi, Nasarawa and plateau state and federal capital territory to the south west.

#### **Population for the Study**

The population for this study comprised of 40 Academic staff and 300 students from Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic Zaria, 150 from Main campus and 150 from Annex Campus.

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

Simple random sampling was used to sample the 300 students from both campuses, there will be no sampling, because the population can be handled by the researchers

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

The instruments used for data collection was a structured questionnaire which comprises of two sets of items, Section A is personal information of the researchers, and section B questions to be answered. The items were based on four points scale worded as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, agree (A) 3 points, disagreed (D) 2 points, Strongly Disagreed (SD) 1 point, the instruments for data collection are in two, Lecturers questionnaire and that of students.

### **Validation of the Instrument**

The structured questionnaire was face validated by three experts. The three validators were from the Departments of Education Technical Nuhu Bamali polytechnic Zaria Kaduna state, the expert's correction and the suggestion were inserted and modified to produce the final copy of the instrument.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

A trial testing of the instruments was carried out for the purpose of determining the internal consistency of the questionnaire in Kaduna Polytechnic to 50 randomly selected students, Kaduna polytechnic was used because it is close to the study area and believed to have the similar characteristics. Cronbach Alpha reliability technique was used for obtaining the internal consistency of the questionnaire

## **DATA PRESENTATION AND RESULTS**

### **Research Question 1.**

To what extent do lecturers and students possess Internet-enabled mobile phones for WhatsApp application in teaching and learning?

Table 1.1 Mean responses on to what extent do lecturers and students possess Internet-enabled mobile phones for WhatsApp application in teaching and learning? Lecturers Questionnaire

S/N	Items examining the extent to which lecturers possess Internet-enabled Smart phones for WhatsApp application in teaching and learning	MEAN	REMARKS
1	Do you have a Smart phone?	3.00	AGREED
2	Is your Smart phone connected to the Internet?	3.10	AGREED
3	Is your Smart phone with operating system and version from version 6 upward.	4.00	AGREED
4	Are you and majority of your colleagues with smart phones	3.50	AGREED
5	Are the phones WhatsApp Enabled	3.00	AGREED
6	Are the phones 3G/4G/5G Enabled	3.00	AGREED

7	Have you being in any WhatsApp group	3.50	AGREED
8	Do discussion in a group via WhatsApp interesting.	3.00	AGREED
9	Do each group you belongs have its aims and objectives.	3.50	AGREED
10	Are the aims and objective strictly adhere too	2.00	DISAGREED

Table 1.1 shows that item 1 to 9 were agreed with a mean score of 3.00 and above only item 10 was disagreed with a mean of 2.00, which signifies item 1 to 9 were really needed for improvements.

Table 1.2 Mean responses on to what extent do lecturers and students possess Internetenabled mobile phones for WhatsApp application in teaching and learning? Students Questionnaire

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	REMARKS
1	Are your lecturers with smart phones	3.00	AGREED
2	Do student in your class have smart phones	3.50	AGREED
3	Are your mobile phones connected to the internet	4.00	AGREED
4	Are the phones WhatsApp enabled	3.00	AGREED
5	Are the software versions most recent or outdated	3.00	AGREED
6	Are the phones 3G/4G/5G Enabled	3.00	AGREED
7	Have you being in any WhatsApp group	3.50	AGREED
8	Do discussion in a group via WhatsApp interesting	3.50	AGREED
9	Do each group you belongs have its aims and objectives	4.00	AGREED
10	Are the aims and objectives of the groups strictly adhere too	2.00	DISAGREED

Table 1.2 shows that item 1 to 9 were agreed with a mean score of 3.00 and above only item 10 was disagreed with a mean of 2.00, which signifies item 1 to 9 were really needed for improvements. **Research Question 2**

To what extent do lecturers and students utilize WhatsApp account in teaching and learning in the classroom?

Table 2.1 Mean responses to the research question to what extent do lecturers and students utilize WhatsApp account in teaching and learning in the classroom? Lecturers Questionnaire.

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	REMARKS
1	Do you have Installed WhatsApp on your Smart phone?	4.00	AGREED
2	Can you send and receive electronic messages via your WhatsApp?	4.10	AGREED
3	Can you send an Audio message via WhatsApp?	3.50	AGREED

4	Can you upload and download information (attachments) to and from your WhatsApp?	3.10	AGREED
5	Can you transfer or receive information through Xender to another Smart phone?	3.50	AGREED
6	Have you ever submit any documents through WhatsApp for academic purpose?	3.00	AGREED
7	Have the internet being helpful for academic research purposes using your smart phones?	3.00	AGREED
8	Have you been downloading documents from your smart phones for instructional activities? E.g. PDF Documents, Power points slide etc.	4.00	AGREED
9	Social media has being helpfully for academic purpose, Do you agree to that ?	3.50	AGREED

Table 2.1 shows that item 1 to 9 were agreed with a score mean of 3.00 and above, which signifies it was strongly needed.

Table2.2: Mean responses to the research question to what extent do lecturers and students utilize WhatsApp account in teaching and learning in the classroom? Students Questionnaire.

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	REMARKS
1	Do you have WhatsApp on your Smart phone?	4.00	AGREED
2	Can you send and receive electronic messages via your WhatsApp?	4.00	AGREED
3	Can you send a group message via WhatsApp?	3.50	AGREED
4	Can you upload and download information (attachments) to and from your WhatsApp?	3.00	AGREED
5	Can you transfer or receive information through Xender to another Smart phone?	3.00	AGREED
6	Have you ever submit any documents through WhatsApp for academic purpose?	3.50	AGREED
7	Have the internet being helpful for academic research purposes using your smart phones?	4.00	AGREED
8	Have you been downloading documents from your smart phones for instructional activities?	3.00	AGREED
9	Social media has being helpfully for academic purpose, Do you agree to that ?	3.00	AGREED

Table 2.2 shows that item 1 to 9 were agreed with a score mean of 3.00 and above, which signifies it was strongly needed.

### **Discussions of the findings**

Research question 1 The findings shows that items 1 to 9 were agreed for both the two questionnaire Is your Smart phone with operating system and version from version 6 upward, Are you and majority of your colleagues with smart phones, Are the phones 3G/4G/5G Enabled and are your lecturers with smart phones, do student in your class have smart phones, are your mobile phones connected to the internet, Are the software versions most recent or outdated, Are the phones 3G/4G/5G Enabled, do each group you belong have its aims and objectives all these items were agreed and are in line with Gachago, Strydom, Hanekom, and Simons (2015) wondered and stated thus: “while literature continues to promote mobile learning and, in particular, the use of mobile phones for teaching and learning in blended and open distance learning (ODL) to bridge the digital divide, many lecturers still struggle to understand and engage with it to support their teaching practices.”. Item no 10 has a score mark of 2.00 which signifies disagreed, Are the aims and objectives of the groups strictly adhere too, most of the group messaging platform has rules and regulations guiding them in which majority upload information and post comments and videos outside the guide lines. Zhao and Cziko (2001) stated that lack of obeying rules and regulation of messaging platforms lead too many in the group inactive and won’t be participating in discussion.

Research question 2 Items 1 to 9 were strongly agreed by the respondent on both side, and have a score mean of 3.00 and above, in which all the items Do you have installed WhatsApp on your Smart phone, Can you send and receive electronic messages via your WhatsApp, Can you send a group message via WhatsApp, Can you upload and download information (attachments) to and from your WhatsApp, Can you transfer or receive information through Xender to another Smart phone, Social media has being helpfully for academic purpose, Do you agree to that , Have you being downloading documents from your smart phones for instructional activities, were all agreed upon which is in agreements with Barnes, et al, (2013) that the use of WhatsApp is personalized than academic activities.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

For appropriate digitization of education in this part of the world, the researchers' recommend among others, that :-

- lecturers' and students' should purchase Internet-enabled phones for effective utilization of WhatsApp instant messaging in teaching and learning process.
- The school should provide training opportunities for both lecturers and students to enhance their skills/competencies on the efficient use of mobile phones, and particularly the WhatsApp instant messaging.
- The polytechnic should as a matter of priority assist the lecturers through loans to provide high-quality mobile phones that are Internet-enabled for effective browsing with 5G enabled. The polytechnic in particular, should source for companies, private organizations, individuals' within the school, the two co-operative societies and outside the polytechnic community to help provide Internet-enabled phones for both lecturers and students in the school.
- The school should as well, send lecturers and students for training to enhance their skills/competencies on the efficient use of social media for academic activities, and particularly the WhatsApp instant messaging.

- The polytechnic should as a matter of policy adopt the use of WhatsApp instant messaging by making it compulsory for teaching and learning.
- The lecturers should as a matter of priority engage the students academically by constantly giving them assignments through WhatsApp instant messaging. This recommendation has been supported by researchers. For instance, Dougherty (2012) declared that “assignments create teaching and learning opportunities to think and learn about ideas, topics, events, and questions—about specific content in the curriculum”, and “a well-crafted assignment ensures that instruction will provide students with a goal and the power to get there, enabling them to engage in rigorous and interesting academic contexts as they acquire the content and skills necessary to participate in academic coursework.” Most importantly, the scholar stressed further that, “a well-crafted assignment takes into account what students can handle, while simultaneously stretching them. It clearly states the immediate goal and articulates the challenge in terms students can understand.” In addition, the author stressed that, “it tells students what to do and how well to do it. Assignments are also aligned to long-term goals, whether those goals are building toward proficiency on assessments or college and workplace readiness.”
- Consequently, in order to disengage them from negative aspects of social media which influence their studies, the lecturers should also provide time for face-to-face academic and/or social interactions in order to minimize students’ involvement in infantile (chatting) activities on WhatsApp group. These methods will to a large extent reduce or remove most of the times used on infantile and negative aspects of social media that influence students’ academic work. Research findings by Rambe and Bere (2013) revealed that the use of mobile instant messaging leverage learner participation and transform pedagogy at a South African University of Technology also Hanekom, Simons and Walters (2015) as well, revealed that learners achieved great improvement in reading comprehension, promote teaching and learning in blended and open distance learning, and learners' motivation also increased towards learning.

### **Conclusion**

The world has gone digital in almost all aspects. With modern technological advances, most countries of the world have started embarking on the digitized education system, and Nigeria as a country, especially at this time of democratization of education and subsequent admission quandary in recent times, cannot afford to remain behind and watch the world as their education system go digital. As a result, WhatsApp as one of the technological Breakthrough must be fully embraced for efficient electronic teaching and learning in Nigerian schools. The polytechnic at large must provide the needful; create substantial awareness and adequate training to enhance electronic education delivery in this part of the world in order to race with time. In spite of the fact that the study revealed that majority of the lecturers and students possess Internet-enabled mobile phones, they are not tailored purely for academic purposes. WhatsApp mobile application technology has been found to be one of the beneficial ways for learning. Hence, there is a need to utilize this platform for academic use (Rambe & Bere,2013).

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