USAGE OF WHATSAPP AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS IN COIMBATORE CITY

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ABSTRACT Growth of technology has enabled internet to be available in variety of platforms like computers, laptop, mobile phones, tablets pc's etc. Smartphone development has led to development of mobile operating systems like IOs by the Apple phone manufacturers which are exclusive to Apple's IPhone users.

Android mobile phones operating system developed by Google is available in mobile phones manufactured by almost all other mobile handset manufacturers. After the android mobile operating system was developed and introduced in the market the Smartphone was became affordable to many users who were until were not able to afford high cost of Apple phones.

WhatsApp, on the other hand, has remained the conventional instant messaging app with not so many significant updates other than voice calls and improved sharing features. There are rumors of the app adding video calling support as well. Both owned by Facebook, it will be interesting to see which of the two apps take over the instant messaging space in the near future.(published: June 23,2016)

INTRODUCTION:

India in recent times has seen entry of new mobile phone operators and India now being technologically advanced to provide 4g mobile services which means high speed mobile internet and other services through mobile phones. Cost of mobile internet has also reduced due to competition among the mobile service providers Social media usage in India has increased to a huge proportion that it is now a daily activity like eating and sleeping. Growth of internet has made the technology to be available in a variety of platform like, computers, laptops, mobile phones, Tablet PCs etc. The growth of mobile phone has also led to the invention of many mobile operating platforms like android by Google, IOs from Apple, and Windows OS for mobiles from Microsoft.

Cost of internet on mobile phones has also reduced due to competition among mobile internet service providers. This has also led to increase in use of mobile internet. Mobile application developers have developed a variety of applications.

According to a study "India, a growth opportunity for App developers" 97 percent of Smartphone users in India use a communication app and among them WhatsApp is being used by 96 percent of the users.

Instant messaging app WhatsApp is the most popular messaging app all over the world and is used in 100 countries, or 55.6 percent of the world, a new report said on Wednesday. The countries include India, Brazil, Russia and many other countries in south America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania. WhatsApp currently has over one billion monthly active users. In India, 70 million people use the messaging service.

Earlier this year Facebook-owned WhatsApp announce done billion active global users. India had accounted for 100 million users, making it one of the top markets for WhatsApp. According to a report from Jana, WhatsApp is now installed on 95 percent of the smart phones in India.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:
PRIMARY AIM:

The study intends to find about the usage of whats App among college student in Coimbatore city. The study is focused on WhatsApp messenger used by college student in Coimbatore.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

• To find out pattern of WhatsApp usage among college students in Coimbatore.

• To find out awareness and usage of various features of WhatsApp messenger.
• To find out problems faced by college students while using WhatsApp.

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM:

Instant Messaging has become a major tool for communication among users of smart phones after the internet was made available on the phone and with cost of mobile internet becoming affordable day it has brought in affordability along with it. Affordability was a major factor for poor adaption of smart phones and various applications which were available with the Smartphone. Exchange of messages is faster and nature of messaging has changed from mere text to include pictures, audio and video.

This change in information exchange has also brought many aspects of communication opportunities which are yet to be explored or need more insight as the application is evolving to bring communication more personal and wider at the same time. Through the understanding we get through this study may be used to further expand the usability of the application among the college students effectively. Thus "Usage of WhatsApp among college students in Coimbatore can be understood from the following statement of the research problem "WhatsApp usage among the college students"

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

There is a need for analytical study in order to understand the student uses and gratification of messaging applications in mobile phones with reference to WhatsApp messenger. The problem is that there are several factors that may constraints students the usage of messaging applications and consequently impede their learning experiences. It is important to understand how and why students use messaging applications in mobile phones including messaging patterns, individual preferences, overwhelming response to message through WhatsApp was considered.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

The sampling method adopted for the study is stratified random sampling. Stratified random sampling means that every student of the population has an equal chance of being in relation to their proportion of the total population. It is a mixture of random selection and purposive sampling.

SAMPLE SIZE:

The sample size of the study is 200 students from two different Arts and Science colleges located in Coimbatore. From that 92 students are studying under graduation programme in different science

subjects. 48 students are studying under graduation programme in different arts subject.

DATA COLLECTION METHOD:
Primary data were collected through a survey. Questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. A questionnaire consisting of 'closed ended' questions and required scales were also used to collect the data. The respondent's opinioned scales were used to measure the usage pattern of WhatsApp messenger among the study population at an individual level, between the friends and groups.

DATA ANALYSIS:
The data obtained from the questionnaire were codified and tabulated according to the variables used in the study considering the objectives, method of analysis. For much of data percentage analysis was done.

STATISTICAL TOOLS:
• Weighted Average Analysis

Table No. 1: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION - WEIGHTED AVERAGE ANALYSIS

Safety Measures in WhatsApp		
Opinion	Weighted average score	Rank
Do you believe WhatsApp is safe place for you to display personal Information?	450	1
Do you think that your photos , materials, details etc…, might be Illegally used by internet hackers?	405	3
Do you think your personal information is misused?	448	2
Do you think WhatsApp is taking away your time?	388	5
Do you make alterations in your private area in your WhatsApp Account?	392	4

From the above table 1 it is inferred that WhatsApp is safe place for you to display personal information ranks first with the scores of 450, personal information misused and photo, materials are illegally used by internet hackers places the 2nd and 3rd rank, alteration in your WhatsApp private account and WhatsApp taking away your time places 4th and 5th position.

Thus it concludes that WhatsApp is safe place for you to display personal information ranks first with the scores of 450.

Table No: 2

Issues you discuss with your friends and groups in WhatsApp		
	Weighted average score	Rank
Religious Issues	319	17
Election Related Issues	417	7
Sports News	458	5
Corruption in Politics	392	9
Price Rise in Petrol	382	11
Price rise of food materials	407	8
Job opportunities	439	6
Recent Development in IT	347	15
Education	480	2
Status of Educational institution	465	4
Today's trends in Fashion	513	1
Pollution of the earth, water	380	12
Poverty of people	385	10
Caste Discrimination among people	338	16
Child Labour	365	13
Spend much time on sharing cinema	473	3
Think of agricultural development	360	14

From the above table2 it is inferred that today's trends in fashion ranks first with the course of 513, education and spend much time on cinemas places 2nd and 3rd rank status of education institutions and sports news places the 4th and position.

Thus concludes that today's trends in fashion rank first with the course of 513

FINDINGS:
• The weighted average analysis conclude that in safety measures in WhatsApp the WhatsApp is safe place for you to display personal information scores 450 and rank 1st position.
• The weighted average analysis concludes that in Issues you discuss with your friends and groups in WhatsApp today's trend in fashion scores 513 and be in 1st position.

SUGGESTIONS :
• Changes in tools for communication can alter the possibility of the impact of the tools over factors from psychological to economical among the users.
• Future researchers can study the long term impacts psychological, sociological and society level impacts of WhatsApp.
• The effected of prolonged WhatsApp usage may be studied in the future for its sociological, psychological and economic impact.
• Changes which occur in interpersonal communication among individuals and therefore the effect it might have on the individual shall be studied.
• The need for WhatsApp is relevant today which may change in future which also needs to be studied in future.
• Though many other similar communicating mobile applications are available WhatsApp remains the top messaging application
• The reason behind this preference towards WhatsApp among other similar messaging applications may be studied.

CONCLUSION:
The respondent's economy plays an important role in accessibility of mobile internet. Mobile data is the primary access point of mobile internet for using WhatsApp among the students. Students also who use WhatsApp consume other media especially television more than any other media which might lead to information deficit as the respondents may miss out information which are provided through other media.

Current events are discussed most by the students through WhatsApp. When it comes to safety of information shared through WhatsApp many of the respondents believe that the information shred through WhatsApp will be safe. Respondents engage themselves in using WhatsApp due to which they feel that their time is consumed by WhatsApp. Religious issues are discussed by the students in WhatsApp which implies that students are also involved in discussions on WhatsApp which implies that cinema is an important media in influencing discussions.

An important outcome of the study is that most of the study population believes information shared through WhatsApp will not be misused which shows a positive attitude towards the application. However most of the respondents have said they control their contact information from being viewed by others. Profile picture is an important for many respondents and most of them display their own profile picture. This identification without any hesitation and changing the profile picture is a frequent event which encourages them to take more pictures themselves.

Respondents also look for profile pictures of other to investigate the best picture among their friends. Sports and politics are often the subjects of discussion of the respondents through WhatsApp. It is surprising to learn that job opportunities are one of the least discussed subjects on WhatsApp. The respondents being students this is a surprising finding. Fashion is a major discussion points

which means the importance of fashion is high among the students. Social events like caste and child labour are not discussed by students which means WhatsApp is not a platform for social discussions hence a change in societal structures. Cinema is the most discussed topic among all others which indicate that cinema is an influential medium on WhatsApp. Education is not a major subject of discussion among the students which is a worrying trend, Poverty is the least discuses subject among the students which means that social factors are not discussed very much through WhatsApp but factors such as and entertainment and time pass activities are discussed among the students.

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