Utilization of WhatsApp in English for Islamic Education Learning as a Media of Communication between Lecturers and Students

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Abstract

This study aimed at finding out the utilization of WhatsApp in English for Islamic Education learning as media of communication between lecturer and students during the online learning in English for Islamic Education Study Program. The research method used is a quantitative method in the form of a survey, namely research in which the main source of data and information is obtained from a large number of respondents. The data source is Islamic Education Study Program IAIN Palopo students, as many as 53 students, namely those who are willing to fill out a questionnaire, which is uploaded via the google form application. The results of the study revealed that in general students stated; (1) use WhatsApp to communicate and learn with lecturers; (2) WhatsApp makes it easier for him to communicate with lecturers and support learning activities; (3) students feel that WhatsApp makes it easier for them to communicate and support learning activities compared to other online media; and (4) using WhatsApp to send materials and assignments to lecturers. The ease of using WhatsApp makes students feel helped by this application and is one of the important means of communication and is liked by students.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic; WhatsApp as Media Communication; English for Islamic Education Study Program Learning

Introduction

The most accessible communication media today is online media. Communication in the past took a long time to convey messages but nowadays with technology everything has become very close and without distance. The development of online media has now made great progress (Narti, 2017). In fact, education today relies on online media. Online media makes it easier for students to share assignments or find out the material given by lecturers without having to bother to print assignments and make it easier to communicate without being limited by distance. Education and communication are two fields that cannot be separated from family and society.
Education today is the key for a nation to be able to prepare for the future, improve and develop human resources and has the function and potential to make preparations for changes in society according to the demands of the times. It is supported by the opinion of Tambak (2013: 5) which suggests that education emphasizes the important efforts to maintain, maintain, and develop the existence of the community. So, it can also be seen that education cannot be separated from communication media.

Communication is the process of delivering messages between individuals. The message can be in the form of verbal behavior such as speech, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as facial expressions, while simply communication can be interpreted as the process of conveying messages by the communicant to the communicator either directly or indirectly. Communication is the process by which individuals relate to other people in groups, organizations, and society. This relationship aims to create and use information sourced from the environment in order to understand shared humanity (Liliweri, 2011:124).

In addition, the communication function can also be seen from the explanation of Mulyana (2017) who suggests the communication function, namely: (1) The function of social communication, namely communication implies that communication is important for building one’s self-concept, self-actualization, for survival, obtaining happiness, avoid pressure and tension, among others, through entertaining communication, and fostering relationships with other people. (2) The function of expressive communication, namely communication that does not automatically aim to influence others, but can be done as long as the communication becomes an instrument to convey one’s feelings (emotions). (3) The function of ritual communication, is communication aimed at their commitment to their family, community, ethnic, nation, state, ideology or religious traditions. (4) The function of instrumental communication is communication that has a general purpose to inform, invite, encourage, change attitudes and beliefs, and change behavior or actions and also to entertain.

Communication media affect aspects of human life. The most popular communication media used among students is social media as a means of communication between friends and with teachers and other people with use in learning. In fact, lecturers as motivators and educators in teaching and learning activities are ideally able to consider learning time. In addition to facilitating the delivery of messages or information effectively and efficiently, communication media also serves to increase the attractiveness of the information to be conveyed. So that it further improves, improves and renews its standard of living along with the development of an increasingly advanced civilization (Narti, 2017).

Almost all activities of students and lecturers in communicating are assisted by smartphones, both from sending messages and calling to other things, such as chatting, games, and other activities. Smartphones can be carried by students wherever they go. The presence of smartphones makes a lot of people pop up online messaging application. The application presents a variety of interesting features with all the advantages that aim to attract users.

Social media is one of the media where users can find information, communicate with each other and make friends online. As is known, the variety of
social media, namely Facebook, Twitter, Line, BBM, WhatsApp, Instagram, Path, LinkedIn, Snapchat and several other social media (Trisnani, 2017). The use of WhatsApp as an online media in the world of education is increasing every year along with the increasing need for lecturers and students to interact with each other or a group of people who are physically distant. WhatsApp is available on smartphones that are used as a communication medium. Meanwhile, the WhatsApp application can be downloaded for free through the Playstore. Using WhatsApp which is already connected to an internet connection, students can easily communicate non-stop which allows them to send text messages, pictures to videos to each other. Even though it is an instant messaging application, there is something unique about WhatsApp, namely the contact recognition system, verification and message sending is still done through a mobile number that has been registered beforehand.

Although WhatsApp is an instant messaging application, there are other advantages of WhatsApp. So, the contact recognition system, verification and message sending are still carried out through the mobile number that has been registered beforehand. Hartono (2012: 100) also stated that WhatsApp is a cross-platform messaging application that allows users to exchange messages without SMS fees, because WhatsApp uses the same internet data package for email, web browsing, and others. WhatsApp application uses 3G/4G or WiFi connection for data communication. By using WhatsApp, users can chat online, share files, exchange photos and others.

This WhatsApp application is an internet-based instant order application which was introduced on February 24, 2009 by two former Yahoo Inc employees, namely Brian Acton and Jan Koum. Acton and Koum have developed the application because they realize that the WhatsApp application is an application that is able to become a medium for today’s humans to communicate and interact other than as a medium for disseminating information. WhatsApp has been working for almost ten years. With a savings of 400,000 US Dollars earned while working with Yahoo, Koum invited his colleague Alex Fishman to talk about the App Store. Koum feels this base has good potential. Fishman then helped Koum in his search for an iPhone application builder named Igor Solomennikov who was from Russia (Gelles and Goel, 2014).

For students, this WhatsApp application can also be used to create WhatsApp Groups (WAG) consisting of lecturers and students who have the same interests. WhatsApp Group is a virtual classroom that facilitates each member to communicate with fellow members in it, inviting only goodness and relating to lecture material, besides that students and lecturers can also use WhatsApp to convey in the form of writings by students/lecturers who can be posted to social media and shared in the form of messages in online messaging applications. Utilization of group facilities on social media is used as a medium for delivering or disseminating information to all members in the group. The use of WhatsApp Groups will make it easier for users to convey information quickly, for example information about lecture assignments, exam schedules, or other information. The use of social media is expected to be able to assist the learning process and facilitate interaction between lecturers and students. Effective and fast communication will facilitate the process of delivering learning.
Supported by the results of research by Harahap & Kurniawati (2018) regarding persuasive communication, namely inviting in the form of words of invitation to join the discussion. The form of invitation that is conveyed in informal language or colloquial language is using a very simple greeting jargon "Muslim sholcan (pious and beautiful) just be quiet". This form of greeting creates an atmosphere of intimacy in the group chat and shows that there is no communication distance between the cleric and the group chat members. In the discussion, apart from inviting members to join the discussion, the ustadzah also invites members to ask questions about the theme being discussed.

The phenomenon of the development of smartphones in Indonesia also invites other phenomena for the smartphone user community. Nowadays, short messages which are better known as SMS (Short Message Service) have started to be abandoned. In Indonesia, the most popular and the first chat service application based on Android, Blackberry, and iPhone is WhatsApp. This application is a paid application for iPhone users but free for Android and Blackberry users. In addition, the WhatsApp application is one of the media for communication that is used by all groups, especially among students and lecturers who cannot be separated from the need to communicate.

One of the communication media as a source of information that is often used by students and lecturers is WhatsApp. Lecturers and students use WhatsApp because the WhatsApp application makes it easier to convey information and is more effective and is also used as a medium of communication between lecturers and students when giving materials/tasks.

The use of WhatsApp makes it easier for lecturers to control student learning activities outside of teaching hours. So, the use of WhatsApp really must be done in the current era of globalization because basically the WhatsApp application is intended to help or facilitate human activities. So, by utilizing the WhatsApp application, it is very helpful in communication activities between students and lecturers, and vice versa.

This is in accordance with the strategy of using social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter and so on. These various social media facilities are an effective alternative in an effort to connect between individuals so that harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships can be established (Syaifullah, 2019).

The important thing in this WhatsApp application among users of this application will get the influence of the communication process, because with the establishment of interpersonal communication it can be closer and easier to communicate. The WhatsApp application can provide convenience in interacting and communicating because through this WhatsApp application it will be easy for a person to add more friends and it is definitely easier for users to get to know each other. WhatsApp is also used to establish social relationships among the desired people on the condition that they must be connected to this application.

Therefore, students use WhatsApp social media as a means of communication. With the use of the WhatsApp application, students are expected to be able to follow lecture materials and do assignments seriously. The use of the WhatsApp application is expected to be able to control student learning activities, as
revealed by Suryani (2017: 15) saying that utilization is an activity using processes and resources for learning. The utilization function is very important because it discusses the relationship between students and the learning system.

The use of WhatsApp makes it easier for lecturers to control student learning activities outside of lecture hours, therefore students both in class and outside the classroom must use social media (WhatsApp Group / WAG) in learning. So, the use of the WhatsApp application must be done in the current era of globalization. Because basically the WhatsApp application is intended to help or facilitate student activities. So, using WhatsApp is very helpful in communication activities between lecturers and students and vice versa. Process of using media

The social interaction can be in the form of students asking about assignments or materials given by the lecturer, or lecturers informing important assignments or materials.

The WhatsApp application has many supporting features in it. According to Brata (2010) WhatsApp features that can be used by its users are:

a. Signs that the message was successfully sent, received, and read
b. Can send documents in the form of photos, videos, audio, locations, and contacts
c. View Contact, users can see if other users have a WhatsApp account by viewing the contact from their smartphone.
d. Avatar, avatar is WhatsApp user profile photo
e. Add conversation shortcut, multiple chats can be added shortcut to home screen
f. Email Conversation, can send all chats via email.
g. Forward, a feature to forward / resend messages that have been received
h. Smile Icon, a large selection of emoticons such as human expressions, buildings, weather, animals, musical instruments, cars, and others.
i. Call / Call, to make voice calls with other users.
j. Video Call, in addition to voice calls, users can also make video calls
k. Block, to block someone else's number.
l. Status, serves to notify other contacts that the user willing or not willing to have a chat (chat).

So, it can be seen that the WhatsApp application has many features to make it easier to communicate and support learning activities.

The use of WhatsApp as a communication strategy is based on the existence of human traits that like to socialize and communicate. Along with the development of communication technology, the gathering of people no longer has to be physical, people can take advantage of technology to be able to keep in touch both personally and in groups at the same time or simultaneously without having to meet. Many students also use WhatsApp as a means of communicating with their classmates as well as their families and lecturers. With the use of WhatsApp, it has a good impact as a supporter of student learning activities.

It is also supported by research conducted by Raihan (2019) which suggests that the WhatsApp application is also seen as an appropriate medium for disseminating the content of da'wah, especially in groups of WhatsApp application users in the family. Besides being able to be monitored by the group leader, the WhatsApp application provides a function to ensure that every message sent is read
by group members. In addition, the head of the family who acts as the head of the group may also ensure that each member of the group responds to each of the contents of the da’wah content that is sent to ensure that the group’s members are not dishonest when dealing with the contents of the da’wah. So, considering WhatsApp is an online medium that is widely used by students in communicating and supporting lecture activities. Therefore, this study, aims to determine the use of WhatsApp as a medium of communication between lecturers and students in supporting learning activities.

**Method**

The research method used is a quantitative method in the form of a survey, namely research in which the main source of data and information is obtained from a large number of respondents. The data source is Islamic Education Study program at IAIN Palopo students who are following the English for Islamic Education online classroom, as many as 53 students, namely those who are willing to fill out a questionnaire, which is uploaded via the google form application. The questionnaire is a data collection technique by giving a set of written statements to the respondents to be answered by Sugiyono (2015). This research instrument contains aspects of the use of WhatsApp as a medium of communication between lecturers and students in supporting learning activities. This implementation time starts March 25, 2020 until April 3, 2020. The data analysis technique was carried out by utilizing descriptive statistics, using the percentage formula. After being classified, it is described in a pie chart, the data obtained from the respondents, analyzed and then drawn conclusions.

**Findings and Discussion**

There are several aspects of important questions raised to respondents in knowing how to use WhatsApp by students in communicating with lecturers for learning activities. The use of WhatsApp by students to convey something to the lecturer can be seen in Figure 1 below:

![Figure 1. Using WhatsApp to Communicate with Lecturers](image)

The research data illustrates that as many as 53 students as survey objects stated "using WhatsApp to communicate with lecturers", from that statement as
many as 18 people (34%) stated always, and 17 people (32.10%) chose often. There is not a single student (0%) who does not use WhatsApp to communicate with lecturers. This reveals that among students, many have used WhatsApp to communicate with lecturers, so WhatsApp has a great influence on supporting learning activities and lectures. WhatsApp is not only used to send messages, but is also used to make calls, send video and audio without any size limit. The fact that there are no students who don’t use WhatsApp with students lately is due to government policies to stay at home, work from home, social distancing, and study online (Government Regulation No. 11 of 2020 concerning Determination of Public Health Emergency). Regarding the new corona pandemic (covid 19).

Communication that takes place between students and lecturers sometimes has obstacles, especially psychological barriers, such as anxiety to ask questions that are not understood. Related to that, research data distributes as figure 2 below:

From the data above, it can be seen that from 53 respondents starting from the most, 25 people (47.20%) chose to sometimes feel anxious when asking the lecturers, and 12 people (22.60%) chose to feel anxious often. There were 9 people (17%) who stated that they always felt anxious, and there were the same numbers for rarely and never, namely (6.6%). According to the data obtained, almost some students feel sometimes and only a small portion are not anxious, namely 6.6%. Based on these data, it proves that psychological barriers also affect communication between lecturers and students when asking assignments that are not understood.

Direct communication with someone who is respected as well as a lecturer for students is not an easy thing. This condition makes students prefer to communicate through online media. To view the research data, it can be seen in Figure 3, as follows:
In the results of the research data, 53 students were obtained as survey objects who stated that they "prefer to communicate via WhatsApp rather than face to face with lecturers". The results obtained from the statement as much as 43.40% or approx. 23 people choose to sometimes prefer to communicate via WhatsApp rather than face to face with their lecturers. Never prefer WhatsApp over direct communication amounted to 18.90%. This revealed that most of the students preferred to communicate directly with their lecturers rather than through WhatsApp.

Many things can be done by students using the WhatsApp application. The following data illustrates whether there are restrictions for students in their use, namely for status updates.

Based on the statement that has been submitted to the respondents as many as 53 students as the object of the survey stating "The use of WhatsApp is only for status updates". From these statements, 49.10% or about 26 people chose rarely with the statements submitted. There are 28.30% stated that they only occasionally update the status. This reveals that students rarely use WhatsApp only for status updates. This proves that WhatsApp has other more important benefits, namely to
communicate with friends, family or with lecturers. Students not only use WhatsApp as a means of communication with friends, but with the WhatsApp application students can take online lectures seriously. Online learning provides an opportunity to increase the use of WhatsApp for learning activities. The following data illustrates how students use WhatsApp for sending lecture materials given by lecturers.

![Figure 5. Sending Materials Provided by Lecturers via WhatsApp to Other Friends](image)

Based on the data obtained, about 28.30% or as many as 15 students chose frequently from the statements submitted and 17% or as many as 9 students always chose from the statements submitted. According to the data obtained, students often convey the material given by my lecturer via WhatsApp to their friends. It can be concluded that, 28.30% of students often convey material given by lecturers to their friends in order to support lecture activities. WhatsApp is considered important to support their lecture activities, one of which is delivering lecture material so that students feel helped by this WhatsApp application. Behavior and etiquette in communicating are the main keys for good communication. Even though WhatsApp makes it easier for students to interact and share information in WhatsApp Groups. Students are required to pay attention to language and ethics when communicating. This is an obstacle for students to write messages addressed to lecturers, related to this, can be seen in Figure 6 below:

![Figure 6. Difficulty in Composing and Using Good Words When Asking About Ununderstood Materials or Assignments via WhatsApp](image)
Obtaining data based on the pie chart which states "Confused in compiling and using good words when asking my lecturer about material or assignments that I do not understand through WhatsApp", as many as 12 people (22.60%) or choosing frequent statements. There are 37.70% who sometimes have difficulty in composing good words when asking material that is not understood. This can be interpreted that when students want to communicate with lecturers, they are still confused about using good words in conveying them, students sometimes prefer to speak directly to the lecturer rather than via WhatsApp because they feel that the words they want to convey are not suitable or can offend the lecturer concerned. Good morals or polite behavior is still a very important factor in communicating to lecturers, this makes students confused in composing words when they want to ask lecturers regarding material or assignments that they do not understand via WhatsApp.

Many lecturers give assignments to students using the WhatsApp application. The following data illustrates that the assignments given by lecturers via WhatsApp are they sharing them with their friends.

![Figure 7. Sharing Tasks Given by Lecturers to Friends via WhatsApp](image)

Based on the data obtained, it shows that of the 53 students who stated "sharing the assignments given by the lecturer to friends via WhatsApp", as many as 43.40% or as many as 23 people chose often. For answers always and sometimes the same percentage is obtained, which is 20.80%. If the answers are always and often send assignments to friends, more than half of the students do it, which is 63.20%. This can be interpreted that students often share assignments given by the lecturer to their friends. WhatsApp, which is supported by private and group chat features, makes it easier for students to convey information related to assignments given by lecturers in the form of text/files, images, audio and video.

Applications that are more effective and efficient are the most widely used. Related to that, how students evaluate the use of WhatsApp compared to other online media can be seen in the following figure:
Based on the data obtained as many as 43.40% or as many as 23 people chose frequent statements and as many as 30.20% or as many as 16 students stated always. Only a small proportion stated never and rarely, namely 5.60%. This can be interpreted that students feel WhatsApp makes it easier for them to communicate and support learning activities compared to media other online. Various WhatsApp supporting features to communicate, such as video calls, sending messages, recording voices and others make it easier for students to communicate.

This is also in accordance with research conducted by Anggraini & Djaatmiko (2019) which concluded that in the use of social media (WhatsApp group) the expected goal is indeed towards a better direction, in this era, gadgets are indeed very attractive to students. Therefore, homeroom teachers are required to be creative and innovative in carrying out learning, with the use of social media (WhatsApp group) which is expected to increase students' interest in seeing and reading the teaching materials being studied. By using the WhatsApp application social media, student learning activities when outside school hours can be controlled directly by educators (teachers). Seen by the active teacher in reminding students to learn and just convey information to students. The use of the WhatsApp application has a positive impact on the value of student learning outcomes at school, namely an increase in student grades, student activity in the classroom and many students who use the WhatsApp group to conduct learning discussions outside of school hours, this can be seen from their activeness.

In addition, there are also many positive impacts during the use of the WhatsApp application which can be seen from the following data.
Based on the statements that have been submitted, there are 53 students as respondents who stated that the WhatsApp application had a positive impact on my learning activities and supported the improvement of my communication with lecturers. From the data, it is known that 47,20% or about 25 people stated that they often stated the statement submitted and 24,50% or as many as 13 people stated that the statement was always given. This revealed that more than 70% of students stated that the WhatsApp application had a positive impact on their learning activities and supported the improvement of their communication with lecturers. Optimal use of WhatsApp and its use is one of the reasons students choose frequently to submit statements.

It is also supported by the results of research by Eka, et al (2018) which revealed that of 38 students around 50% or 19 students stated that WhatsApp media made it easier to communicate in lectures. Various things can be done by students with the WhatsApp application, especially in learning activities, the following data illustrates how to use WhatsApp to communicate and send assignments.
In the results of the data research, it can be seen that students' statements only use WhatsApp to communicate with lecturers and send submitted assignments as many as 30% or 16 people choose often and 40% or as many as 21 people choose sometimes. So, it can be seen that 30% of students often use WhatsApp to communicate with lecturers and send assignments. The features in WhatsApp make it easier for students to send files or their assignments, making it easier for them to communicate with lecturers.

In addition, there are as many as 40% of students sometimes use WhatsApp to communicate with lecturers and send assignments. This is because some students prefer to directly communicate with lecturers. Lecturers and give assignments because they feel more effective and can establish close communication with lecturers.

Conclusion
The results of the study revealed that in general students stated; (1) use WhatsApp to communicate and learn with lecturers; (2) WhatsApp makes it easier for him to communicate with lecturers and support learning activities; (3) students feel that WhatsApp makes it easier for them to communicate and support learning activities compared to other online media; and (4) using WhatsApp to send materials and assignments to lecturers. The ease of using WhatsApp makes students feel helped by this application and is one of the important means of communication and is liked by students.

In fact, several obstacles were found for students in communicating with lecturers via WhatsApp, which were related to politeness considerations, so that some students had difficulty composing good, appropriate and appropriate words to lecturers. This makes some students prefer direct communication compared to using WhatsApp. Another positive thing that is known through this research is that only a small number of students use WhatsApp for status updates, because the main use of WhatsApp is to facilitate communication between individuals, and between individuals and groups, as well as between groups and groups.

References


Peraturan Pemerintah No. 11 Tahun 2020 tentang Penetapan Kedaruratan Kesehatan Masyarakat.


