
An Analysis of Students' Barriers to Online Learning Using WhatsApp During the Pandemic of Covid-19.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to identify what are the major barriers that students mostly faced when they use WhatsApp as a platform to attend an online learning process. The subject of this study was 52 undergraduate students from the English Education Department of Halu Oleo University who enrolled in the academic year 2020/2021. This research used a descriptive research design. The data of this research were collected through the questionnaire of students' barriers to online learning that was adapted from Muilenburg and Berge (2005) and also an interview. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics to find out what is the major barrier that most students faced when they used WhatsApp as a platform to attend an online learning class. The result shows that the majority of students in the sixth semester of the English Education Department of Halu Oleo University students feel impacted by five out of eight-factor barriers that showed in an online learning process using WhatsApp. Among the five factors barriers that students feel impacted, learner motivation has the higher positive responses which indicate that learner motivation becomes the major factor barrier that most students faced when online learning using WhatsApp is implemented. Overall positive responses to learner motivation factor barriers are 90.4%. Meanwhile, the negative responses were only 9.6%.

Keywords:

Students' Barriers, Online Learning, WhatsApp.

1. Introduction

Education is a process of a person or group changing attitudes and procedures to mature themselves and others through teaching efforts. According to Ivan Illich, as cited in Soyomukti (2011) Education is the process of offering access to various situations that aim to empower them by dealing with issues such as awareness, enlightenment, empowerment, and behavior change. Commonly, the education process is always conducted in the classroom, but the situation at the moment forced the learning process should be done from home because there is covid-19 pandemic.

Covid-19 is an infectious disease that occurred in Wuhan, China in December 2019. World Health Organization (WHO) declared a pandemic from the beginning of March 2020 (WHO, 2020), because the spread of this disease is very fast. So, the government decides to set

several rules to stop the spread of the disease. One of the policies is to work from home, which means all of the activities including the educational process should be done from home and the only way to keep the education still occurring is through online learning.

Online learning is a learning method that is often used by teachers today. Along with the times, and the development of technology is increasing, online learning is an option to provide new ways of teaching and to make the methods often used by teachers less monotonous. Lecturers/teachers should more often use intrinsic motivation strategies to motivate students, as well as extrinsic motivation strategies in the online learning process because some students are more motivated by external techniques (Malone, 1981).

Khan (1997) defines online learning as the innovative approach to providing commands to the controlled audience with the Web as the media. Online learning cannot be separated from students' barriers. Students' barriers might happen when online learning is implemented. Students have their barriers in the online learning process because they have to adapt to the new learning system. The online learning operational system should be simple to use, effective, and capable of facilitating a variety of factors such as interactions with students and their parents, infrastructure, the ability to operate online learning, meeting, the need of the learning process, and the student's barriers (Hodges, Moore, Lockee, Trust, & Bond, 2020).

The era of a pandemic of Covid-19 forced people to be able to deal with the existence of an online system because face-to-face meeting between people has been limited as well to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 outbreak. Almost all aspects of life were running by using online platforms including the teaching and learning processes. In the last six months, education in Indonesia was running online. Many platforms were used such as Zoom Cloud Meeting, Google Meet, Google Classroom, WebEx, WhatsApp, Email, Edmodo, Nice Net, etc. The most popular platforms used in online learning today are Zoom Cloud Meeting, Google Meet, and WhatsApp. When the application is used, the barriers are unavoidable because of their weakness like bad internet connection, ineffective communication between fellow students, etc. In this research, the researcher focused on WhatsApp only.

WhatsApp is a multi-platform application that allows users to send and receive PDF, Doc, XL, PPT, and JPG files, as well as video and audio files. Jubilee Enterprise in Anwar and Riadi (2017) stated that WhatsApp is a chat application that allows users to send text messages, images, sounds, locations, and videos to others through any type of smartphone. Ta'amneh as cited in Ahmad (2018) also stated that WhatsApp is a mobile app that allows users' existing internet data plan to help them communicate and interact and connect with others. In addition, Sanjaya as cited in Setiawan, Sale, and Suhartini (2021) stated that the majority of users are interested in using the WhatsApp application because it facilitates them to share information in the form of audio, video, and images. The use of WhatsApp as an online learning media is cannot be denied the benefits for students, teachers, and lecturers in carrying out the teaching and learning process during the Covid-19 pandemic, but WhatsApp implementation has advantages and disadvantages of its own.

In the English Department Students Association of Halu Oleo University, most of the students felt a lack of interaction among the students and also with the teacher and that makes a lack of collaboration about the course material in the teaching and

learning process. According to Kusuma and Hamidah (2020), some students have complained about the lack of interaction with their fellow students or lecturers when using WhatsApp as a platform to learn, and also the lecturers often give an assignment that makes the students feel overwhelmed by these assignments.

The reason why the researcher decide to take this research is that from what the researcher got through the observation and also the result of some previous research shows that there are barriers regarding the application that is used in online learning towards learning and teaching process. The researcher investigated what is the major barriers that most students faced when they attend an online class via WhatsApp.

What makes this research become very special or different from the previous research in this research was not just focused on investigating the barriers in online learning, meanwhile it also investigated the barriers the students that they faced when they use an application or platform in online learning, in this case, is WhatsApp.

2. Methods

The design of this research was descriptive research. Descriptive means that the researcher needs to collect the data and describe what happens in the field and the result was in a form of an explanation of words that would be supported by results in the form of tables. According to Suryabrata (2014), the objective of descriptive research is to enhance facts in a systematic, factual, and correct manner. As well as, Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) said that descriptive design is a method used to explain, analyze and classify things through different techniques, such as observation, questionnaires, and interviews. The researcher conducted this research on Undergraduate Students at English Department in Halu Oleo University who have joined and are joining online courses via WhatsApp. The subject of this research were 52 undergraduate students of the English Department of Halu Oleo University found in one class only who enrolled in the academic year of 2020/2021.

The instruments of the study were questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was the primary data to determine the major barriers that students feel impacted when using WhatsApp in online learning, while the interview was the secondary data to clarify the students' answers to the questionnaire. The questionnaire is adapted from Muilenburg and Berge's (2005) students' barriers to online learning: A factor analytic study, divided into eight barriers factors: (a) Administrative/Instructor Issues, Social Interaction, Academic Skills, Technical Skills, Learner Motivation, Time and Support for Studies, Fees/Cost and Access to the Internet, and Technical Problems.

To make it easier to determine how impactful the factor barriers are, the responses data result is classified into two, namely positive responses, and negative responses. *Positive responses* are the combination of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses, and *negative responses* are the combination of "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" responses Louis Thurstone (in Aini, Zuliana, & Santoso, 2018). Positive responses become the basic consideration in determining how impactful every single factor is to students' barriers to using WhatsApp as a platform to attend an online class.

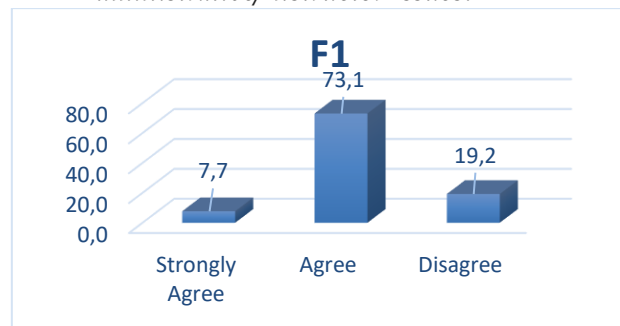
To analyze the data, the researcher employed Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 for Windows in the menu Descriptive Statistic that was used as an assistant for the data calculation. Descriptive statistics is a technique that is used to describe an object of the study through a sample or population without any manipulation. Descriptive statistics include means, frequency, standard deviation, and the percentage used to find students' perceptions of the implementation of a scientific approach.

3. Result

3.1 Administrative/Instructor Issues

This issue was identified by nine different statements in the questionnaire to see how impactful this issue is to become one of the barriers to students in online learning using WhatsApp. fifty-two students received the questionnaire with the result shown below.

Graph 1. *The Percentage of Barrier Factors in Administrative/Instructor Issues.*

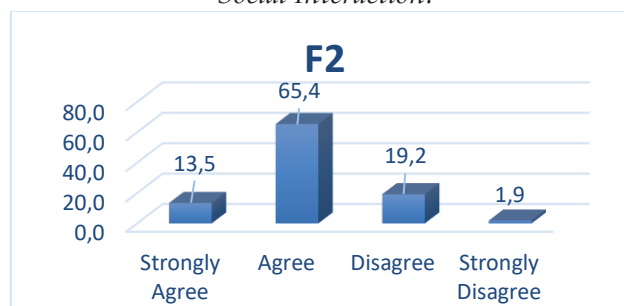


Based on the graphic above, it shows that most students give positive responses toward the issue of administrative/instructor with a percentage number of 80.8%. Meanwhile, just about 19.2% give negative responses to all the statements in this issue session. It means this issue quite impacted the way how students attend online classes through WhatsApp.

3.2 Social Interaction

The factor of social interaction has 5 statements to see students' responses toward the existence of this issue and how impactful this factor is toward their online class through WhatsApp. The questionnaire is still received by fifty-two students of the English Department and their responses to every single statement are delivered below.

Graph 2. *The Percentage of Barrier Factors in Social Interaction.*

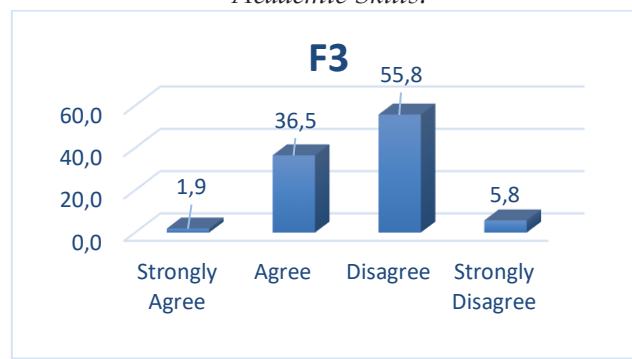


The graph above shows that 78.9% of students give positive responses and the rest give negative responses. To compare the two, all students tend to respond positively to the statements which also picture that this social interaction also becomes trouble for them to have online learning effectively.

3.3 Academic Skills

This aspect relates to students' perceived difficulties with online learning as a result of a lack of academic skills in areas such as writing, reading, or communication. Six barriers are included in this factor namely: lack of language skills, lack of writing skills, lack of reading skills, lack of typing skills, lack of communication skills, and students who feel shy or lack confidence in online learning via WhatsApp.

Graph 3. *The Percentage of Barrier Factors in Academic Skills.*

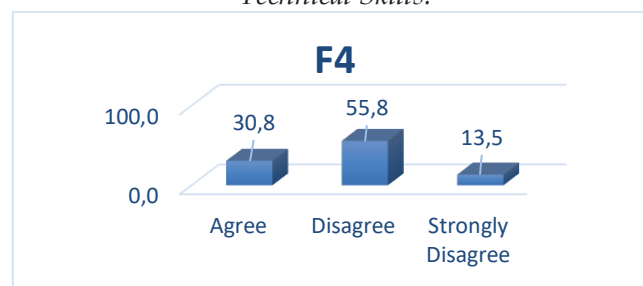


The graph above shows that 61,6% of students respond negatively to all the statements under the issue of academic skill. It is also about 38,4% respond to all the statements positively. To compare, negative responses are higher which indicate that students have good confidence when they attend class through WhatsApp, and also it shows that they have good reading, speaking, and also writing skill as well as a communication skill.

3.4 Technical Skills

The technical skills component comprises four statements to see how students react to the existence of this problem and how important this aspect is to their online class via WhatsApp. fifty-two students from the English Department had completed the questionnaire, and their responses to each statement are listed below.

Graph 4. *The Percentage of Barrier Factors in Technical Skills.*

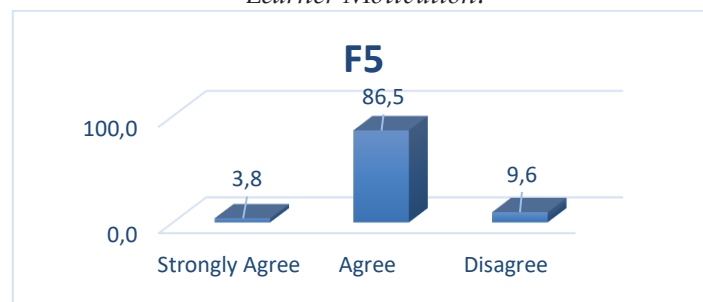


According to the graph above, 69.2 % of students respond negatively to all statements related to technical skills. And just around 30.8% answered that responds positively to the statements. Negative replies are higher, indicating that students who attend an online learning class using WhatsApp do not feel impacted by factor barriers to technical skills.

3.5 Learner Motivation

Students' reactions to the existence of this issue and how significant this factor is in their online class over WhatsApp are measured using five statements in the learner motivation factor. Respondents are still the same and their responses to this barrier are shown in the graphic below.

Graph 5. *The Percentage of Barrier Factors in Learner Motivation.*

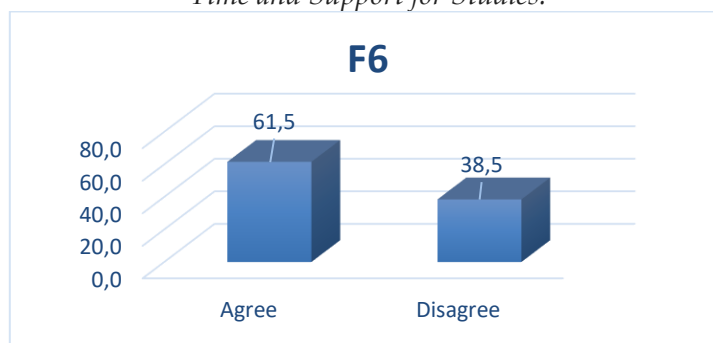


According to the graph above, the majority of students respond positively to the factor barrier to learner motivation, with an overall rate of 90.4%. Meanwhile, only just 9.6% of respondents expressed that they disagree with all of the statements in this factor barrier. By seeing the result, most of the respondents in this research have no high motivation when they have to use WhatsApp in learning.

3.6 Time and Support for Studies

Students' opinions about Time and support for studies; inquiries about opinion opinions on whether are lack of time or support from family, or friends are impactful as a factor barrier to their online learning using WhatsApp. This factor barrier was presented in four statements in the questionnaire and the results are shown below.

Graph 6. *The Percentage of Barrier Factors in Time and Support for Studies.*

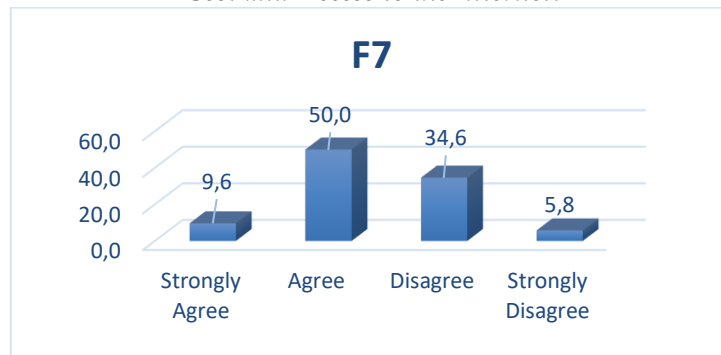


According to the graph above, 61.5% of students respond positively, while the remaining students respond negatively. To compare both, all students tend to respond positively to the statements, implying that the factor barrier of time and support for studies seem to be quite impactful for them to participate properly in online learning classes using WhatsApp.

3.7 Cost and Access to the Internet

In terms of cost and access to the internet, the students were asked three statements in the questionnaire to find out how impactful the cost to join online learning is and also if accessing the internet can cause an issue to join online learning using WhatsApp. The data are also delivered to fifty-two students and the results are shown below.

Graph 7. *The Percentage of Barrier Factors in Cost and Access to the Internet.*

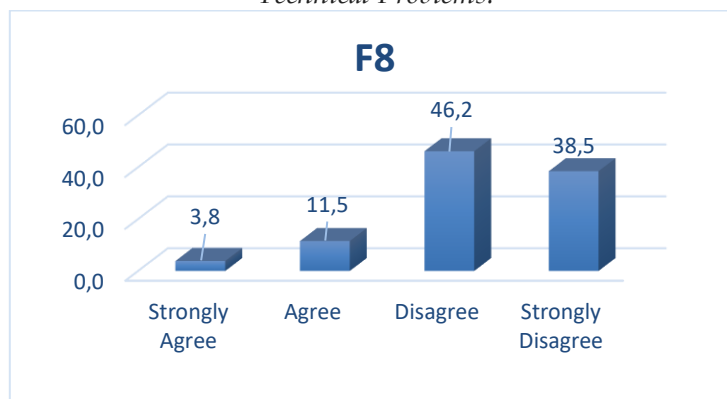


The graph above shows that 59.6% of students give positive responses, meanwhile 40.4% of students give negative responses. From the number, it is quite clear that many students still admitted that cost and access to the Internet are still becoming their major problems to attend an online class.

3.8 Technical Problems

This factor barrier only consists of two statements in the questionnaire that are used to see how the impact of technical problems in online learning using WhatsApp. And the data from fifty-two students' answers are presented in the last graphic below.

Graph 8. *The Percentage of Barrier Factors in Technical Problems.*



According to the graph above, 84.7% of students disagree with all statements in the factor of a technical problem. And 15.3% of students responded positively to statements in the survey. Negative responses are higher, implying that students who attend an online learning class via WhatsApp didn't feel impacted by the factor barrier of technical problems.

4. Discussion

According to the finding of the research, it found that "Learner Motivation" become the factor of barrier that impact students the most. 90.4% of respondents, gave responded to all the negative statements positively. The data showed that they tend to lack motivation when they have to learn through WhatsApp because online learning through WhatsApp were mostly just short messages, and students feel that there is no audiovisual from the lecturer or the instructor that making online learning through WhatsApp incredibly bored, so most of them tend to postpone all the assignments given by the lecturer. The students also said that they tend to finish an assignment late because lack of direct pressure from the teacher and also the environment of learning and teaching process is not as good as in a direct classroom. In fact, in reality, when the students attend the class through online platforms, their attention is not 100% on the learning process, students claimed that they just connect their account to the learning classroom and then leave it without paying more attention to the teacher or lecturer.

The results above are related to Kim and Frick (2011), when students solve real-world problems or participate in authentic learning activities in the classroom, they are more likely to be motivated. Motivation also comes from other things and comes from ourselves. And in this situation lack of motivation from other things impact students because they have no friends to motivate them when they have an online class. The result and the fact above also relate to the theory delivered by Yasmin as cited in Fadillah (2018) who said that extrinsic motivation is a learning activity that comes directly from a person's encouragement and needs that are not directly related to their learning activities.

This motivation grows as a result of outside encouragement, such as encouragement from others, and so on. In another statement Usman as cited in Yuniastuti (2013) also states that extrinsic learning motivation arises as a result of the individual responding to an invitation, command, or force by others, causing him to do or learn something.

In conclusion, as social creatures, we do need support or motivation from others to achieve more in our lives, either from our parents, teachers, and even friends. The lack of motivation in the era of online learning via WhatsApp should become the main object to take care of to overcome that barrier.

5. Conclusion

There are eight factors barriers identified by the previous researcher, those factors barriers are administrative/instructor issues, social interaction, academic skills, technical skills, learner motivation, time and support for studies, cost and access to the internet, and technical problems. Based on the result of this research, shows that

students feel impacted by five out of eight-factor barriers shown in an online learning process using WhatsApp. Among the five factors barriers that students feel impacted, learner motivation has the higher positive responses which indicate that learner motivation becomes the factor barrier that most students faced when online learning using WhatsApp is implemented. Overall, positive responses to learner motivation factor barriers are 90.4%. Meanwhile, the negative responses were only 9.6% which lead result into the conclusion that learner motivation is the main factor that affected students when online learning is implemented through WhatsApp in the English Education Department of Halu Oleo University.

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