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Ethical Use of Social Media in Student Teacher Communication with Special Reference to Whatsapp Groups in Pune Colleges

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Abstract

The study is done to find the ethics used while using Whatsapp as a mode of communication in colleges. The easy operations of this App have made it very popular amongst youth and other generations. It is also important that this mode of communication is operated systematically and follows ethical rules so that the right messages are circulated amongst the youth. The study aimed at finding the preference of use of Whatsapp in colleges and whether all the ethical rules are maintained .The survey done in various colleges of Pune showed the result of Whatsapp being preferred by number of respondents and that people find it time saving and good communication mode as it is fast and lot of information can be shared. From ethical point of view there are still gaps in understanding about not forwarding any fake messages. So the study suggests that more awareness about Whatsapp ethics should be spread in colleges where there are official groups.

Keywords: *Whatsapp, App, Ethics*

Introduction:

Founded in the year 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koun Whatsapp is a freeware messaging system. In today's world it has become a trend as mode of communication also added advantages are that it can send text, voice calls, videos, images and other media documents. Whatsapp is grown in multiple countries and also various organizations. In February 2017, Whatsapp crossed 200 million

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monthly active users in India.

It has also becoming a popular way of communication amongst youngster, and because of the popularity even is used in many colleges as a communication tool. The Whatsapp group chat is a part of our culture today. For any information organizations are using these Apps. But there is some dark side to it: the data privacy is not guaranteed. The files exchanged can be easily transferred to anyone else.

Social media is interaction among people, through which people exchange messages, videos, audios and ideas in virtual communities and network. With Whatsapp messenger it's easier to communicate with people .People can chat with others in spite of distances. In higher education, Whatsapp is used for the enhancement of discussions and sharing information among students and their lecturers. Its use is increasing day by day hence it is important to also understand ethics in using such Apps. Youth should be also educated about ethical use of Whatsapp and other social media networks. The Maharashtra government is also creating awareness regarding ethical use of such Apps .The admin on the Whatsapp group is for any kind of communication on the Whatsapp group whether official or unofficial. The admin is also held responsible for any wrong forwards, messages on the groups but ultimately it should be responsibility of all the group members.

Objectives:

- To find awareness and availability about Whatsapp groups in colleges.
- To study attitude of students and faculty towards Whatsapp group.
- To find the reasons for preference and non-preference.
- To study the perception of faculty and students with respect to ethical use of Whatsapp group in colleges.

Literature Review

*(Gasaymeh 2017)*As per study the use of Whatsapp students in colleges is on daily basis. It has been observed that the use of Whatsapp app for educational purpose is comparatively less. The use of Whatsapp is done in educational institutes now a day to make communication easy and affordable. They had positive feelings and intentions about using Whatsapp in their formal learning if it was introduced.

As the author writes that the use of Whatsapp in institutes can make communication fun, easy and useful. The students' responses suggest that they would accept the use of Whatsapp in their learning. However, the students are not sure about the effect of the use of Whatsapp for educational purposes on their social lives.

*(Kootbodien 2017)*The author writes that the interaction amongst people is on constant increase. The present day scenario shows that Whatsapp has an important way of communication. The said paper has studied the perception of Abu Dhabi university students about use of Whatsapp in university. Many students had various perceptions about Whatsapp replacing face to face communication. There are miscommunications found when using the application; however the results vary mainly between genders.

(Radhi Alshammari 2017) The SMS was a messaging tool which is effective communication tool has become less popular than Whatsapp .the students of various colleges have shown inclination towards use of Whatsapp in colleges. In spite of positive response for Whatsapp some faculty respondents have expressed reservations towards its use. The paper suggest that , increasing the informal, anywhere-anytime learning supported by mobile learning must be tempered with guidelines for students regarding faculty contact hours and response times to allay faculty fears and encourage greater student autonomy.

(Renu Lohitashwa 2015) Research suggests that Whatsapp communicating with students is slightly advantageous. But at the same time the learning traditional way cannot be replaced by Whatsapp. It can only supplement the learning process to be faster and help students learn things easily.

(M 2017) In today's world with technology development various apps are available in the market and Whatsapp is one of it. This app has lot of convenient features.it is famous worldwide and popular amongst youth. (Suzanne Stone 2018) Whatsapp is used in many areas and does offer students a mode of communication and also gives an opportunity for sense of connection.

(Kehinde Funmilayo Mefolere 2016) the information technology which allows easy and fast information transfer through Facebook twitter and whatsapp happens anywhere and anytime the information communicated through these social media can be stored retrieved anytime and it's easy to access because of such apps information is becoming intertwined with our daily lives and this could either enhance productivity, efficiency and intelligence or make users vulnerable to its side effects. It should also be noted that these media possess a contagious and outreaching influence which the conventional media lack. Now these days the WhatsApp is also seen as a relatively new tool in education with some positive characteristics as previous technological tools that are implemented, Research has proven that WhatsApp may generate noticeable improvements in consumer's lives but may simultaneously cause serious social and personal problems, including addiction to these applications.

The challenge here, as author pointed out, is that the uncensored nature of these social media and social networking apps, means that „lies“ and „half-truth“ can reach a million people in just 2(two) simple hops. Distrust of the people for government means that these stories might do a lot more damage before they are salvaged because such stories will be believed a lot easier than official positions. So there is scope to study the advantages and disadvantage of using these apps.

Research Methodology

1. Data collection: The primary data which was required for this research was collected using the following technique:

Questionnaire: A questionnaire with straight forward and relevant questions was drafted and sent over to the sample to obtain their response.

2. Sample technique

The population was 138 no of Students and faculty of various Colleges. With due consideration to

the fact that the study is based on colleges where Whatsapp is used in various colleges. Apart from the above mentioned other secondary data was collected from various journals books and internet.

Observation and Discussion

The use of whatsapp in colleges is becoming very popular. It's considered an easy communication channel. An app which is helpful in sending instant messages to many at one time. The use of whatsapp is fine but it should pass the right messages to right people. Misuse of whatsapp should be discouraged at the initial stage otherwise such a good app will become threat to the users. The study is intended to understand whether the ethics of using these apps are clear to the users or not?

Data Analysis

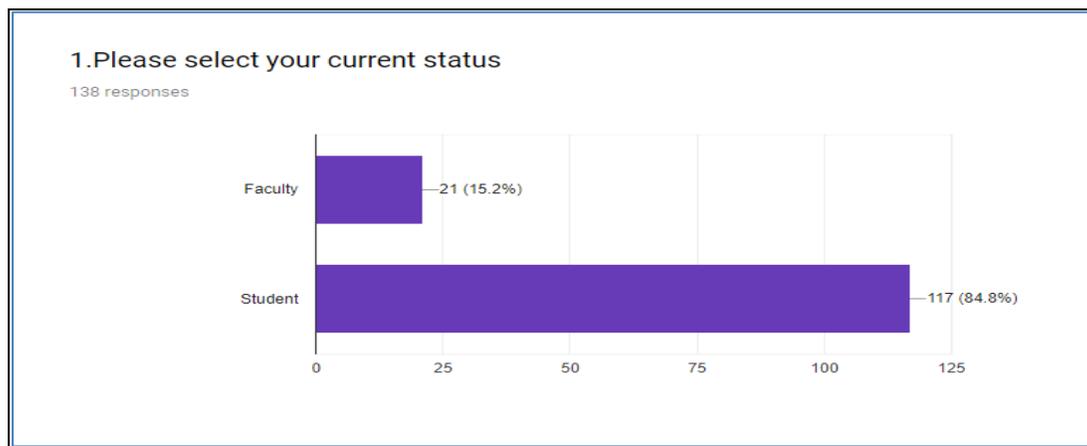


Figure 1: Status of respondents.

From 138 responses 21 are faculty members and 117 are students from various Hotel management colleges from Pune.

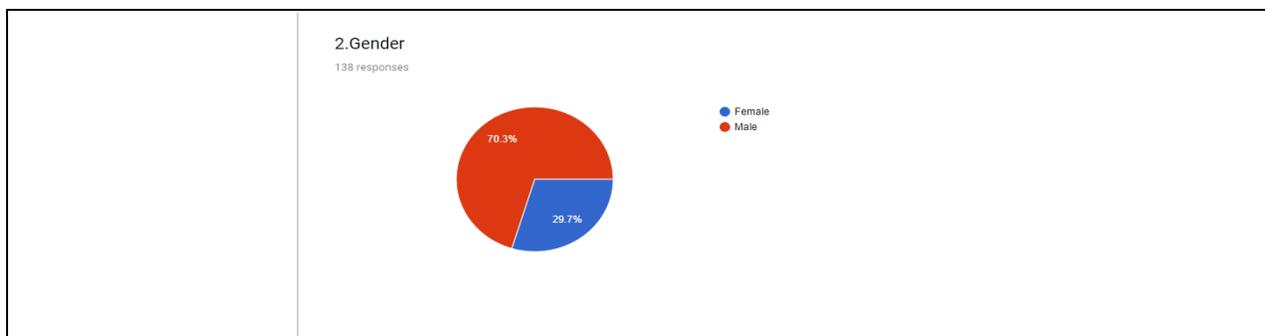


Figure 2: Gender

Out of 138 Respondents 70.3% are Male and 29.7% are Females.

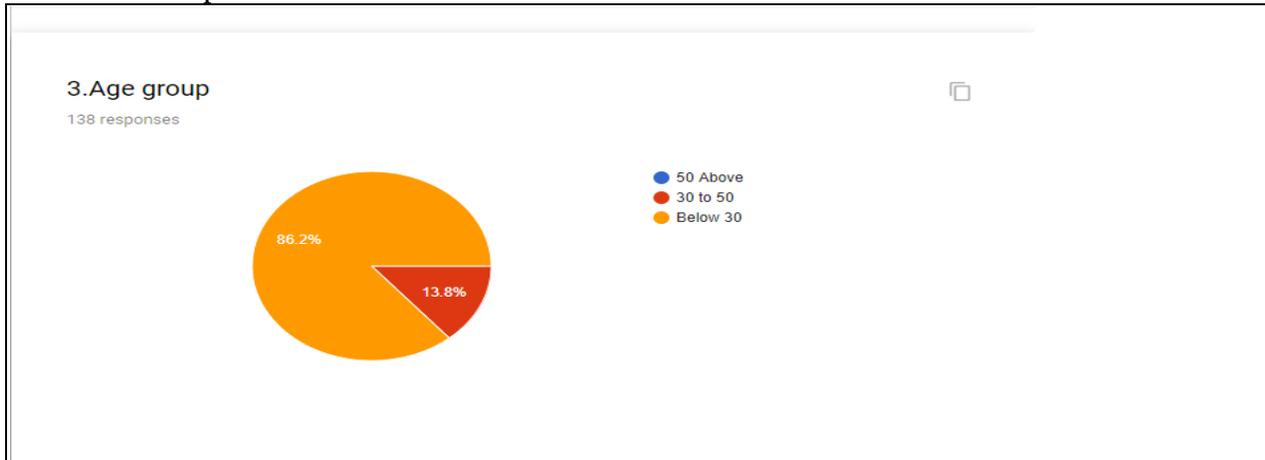


Figure 3: Age group

Figure 3 Shows the age group of sample 86.2% fall in the age group of below 30 and 13.8% are of 30-50 age group.

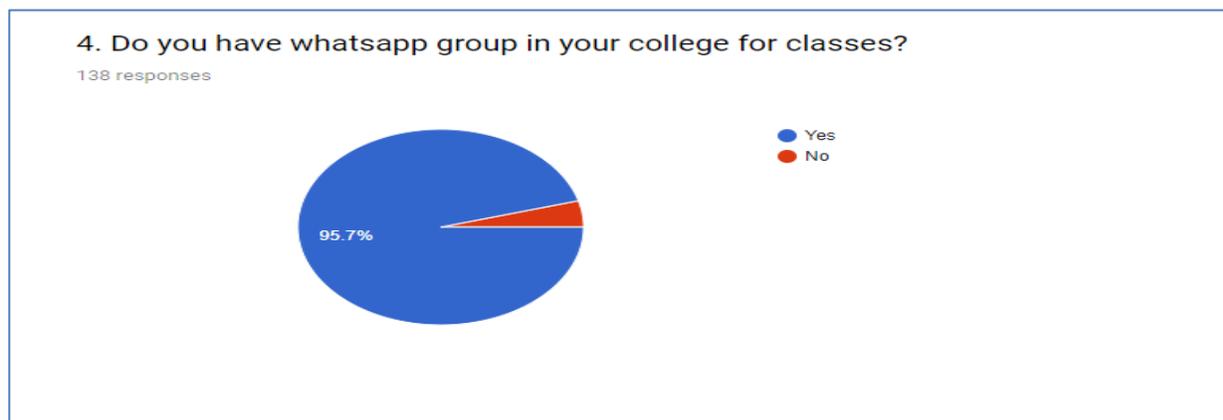


Figure 4: Presence of whatsapp group

The graph shows 95.7% have Whatsapp group in colleges for various classes.

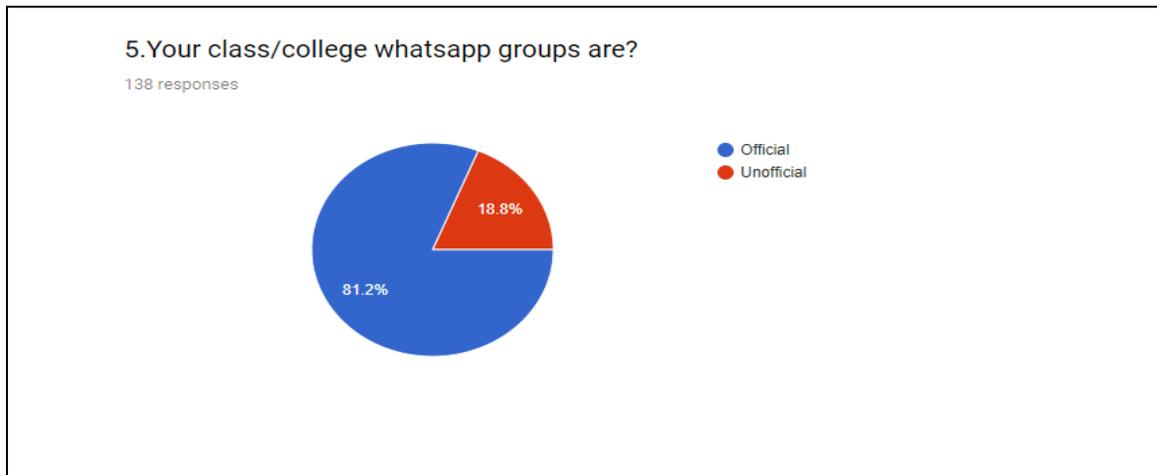


Figure 5: Whatsapp group

In all 81.2% of respondents have official Whatsapp groups for their college and classes and 18.8% are unofficial Whatsapp groups.

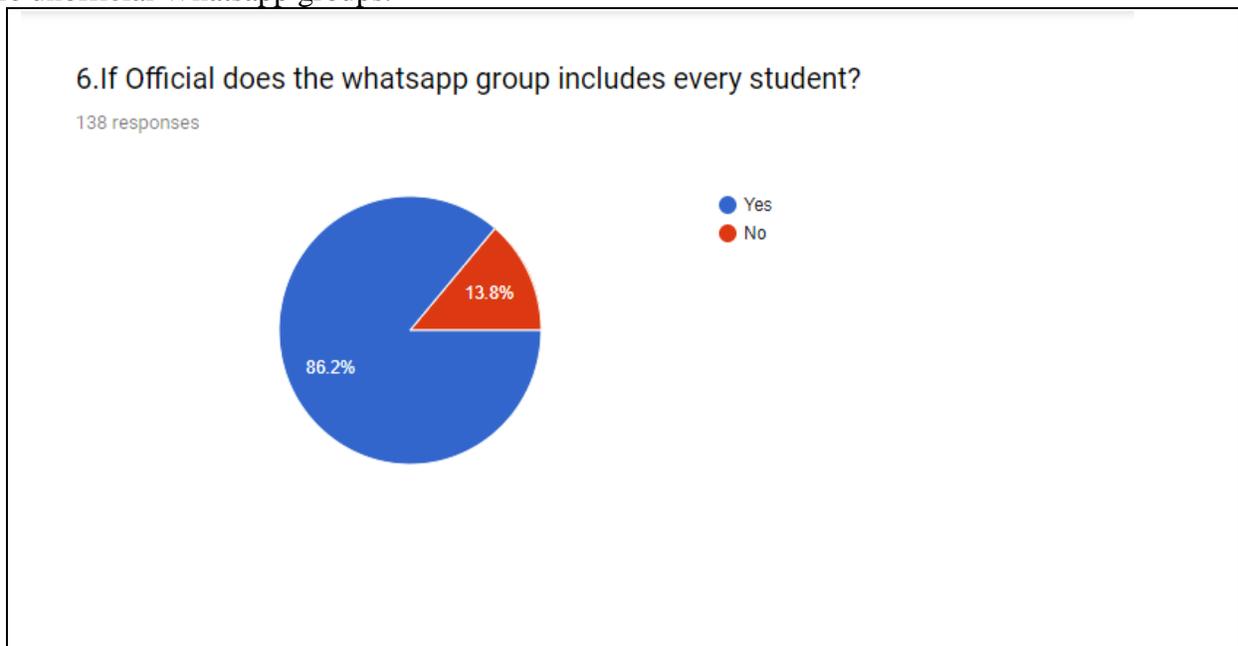


Figure 6: Official in whatsapp group

86.2% confirm of inclusion of all students in the Whatsapp group whereas 13.8% have said that every student is not the group member.

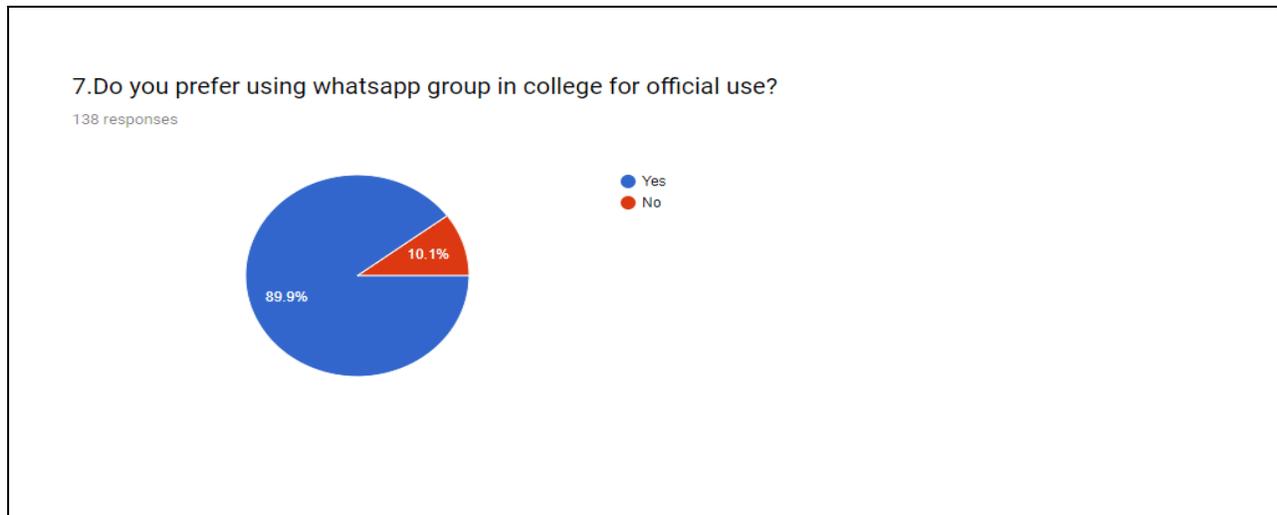


Figure 7: Preference

From 138 Responses 89.9 % prefer using Whatsapp groups whereas 10.1% don't have the preference for Whatsapp group.

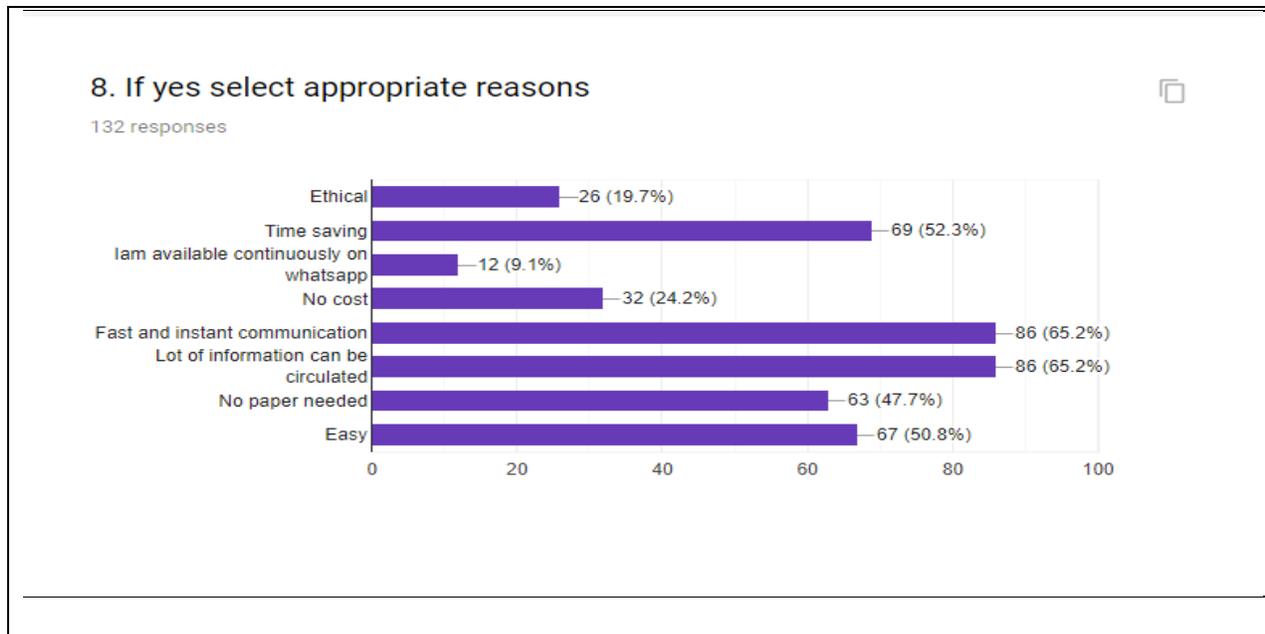


Figure 8: Whatsapp preferences by the respondents

This graph shows the reason for Whatsapp preferences by the respondents. Maximum reasons i.e. 86% responses are for fast and instant communication and that Whatsapp can circulate a lot of information. 69% response for time saving 67% say that it is easy, 63% responses for a reason that no paper needed. 32% think reason for their preference is that Whatsapp has no cost, 26% of respondents think its ethical and 12% prefer Whatsapp because they are continuously available on

Whatsapp.

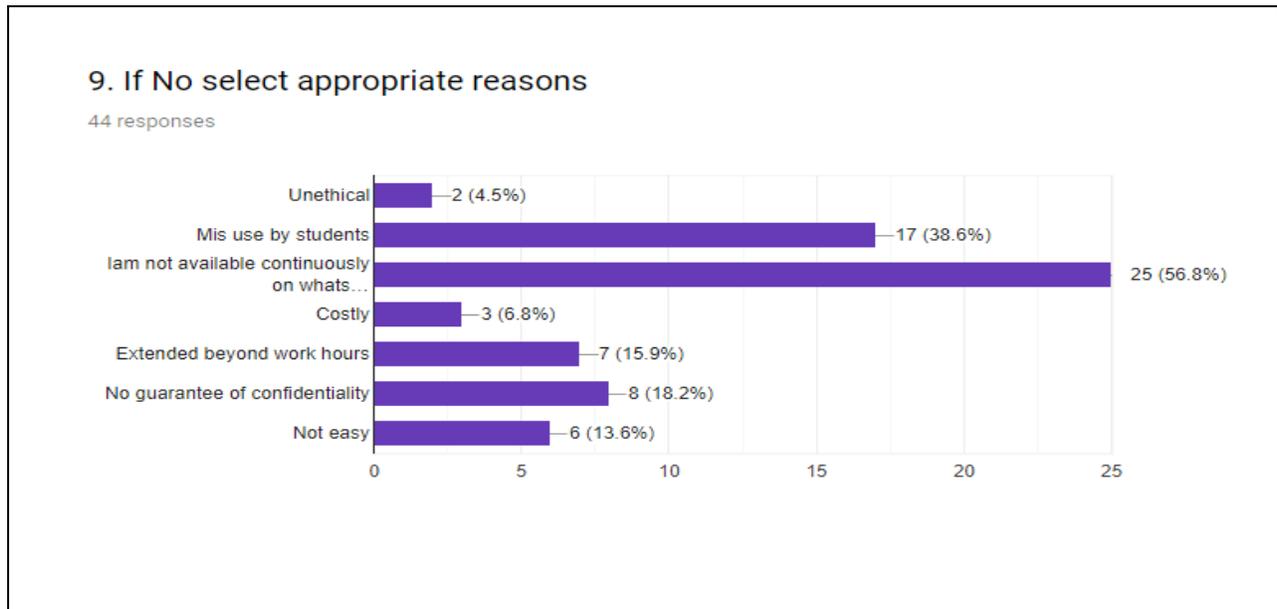


Figure 9: Reasons of not having preference

The 56.8% of respondents say that their reason for not having preference for Whatsapp is that they are not continuously available on whatsapp. 38.6% response is for the reason that Whatsapp can be mis used by students. 18.2% think there is no confidentiality whereas 15.9% think that they are on work beyond work hours and only 4.5% say that it is unethical to use Whatsapp.

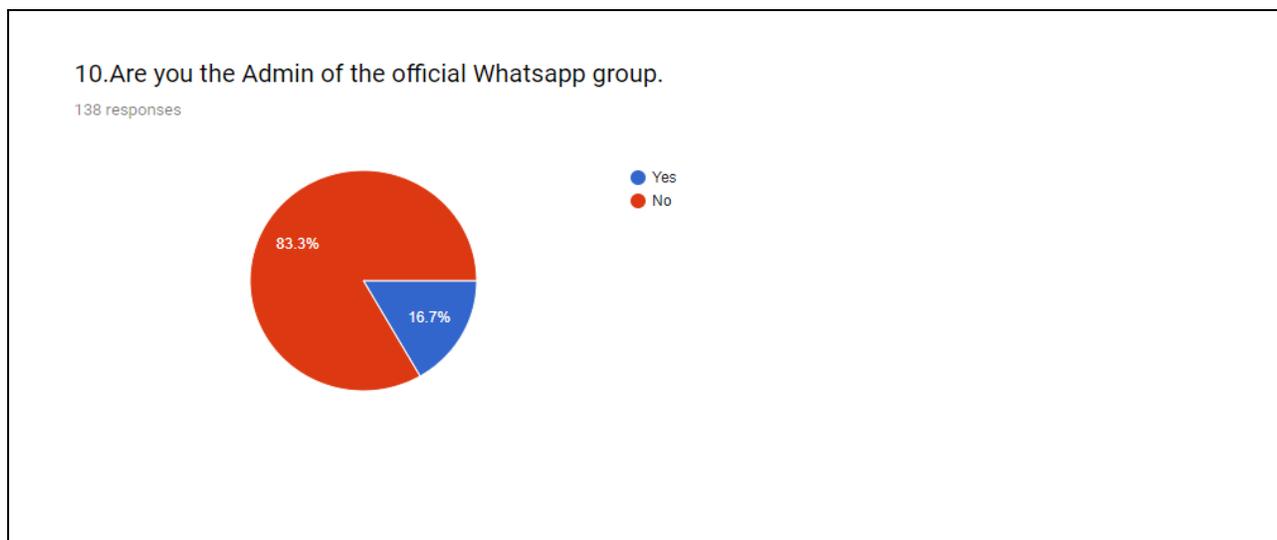


Figure 10: Admin of whatsapp group

About 83.3% are not admin of Whatsapp group on the other side 16.7% are admin.

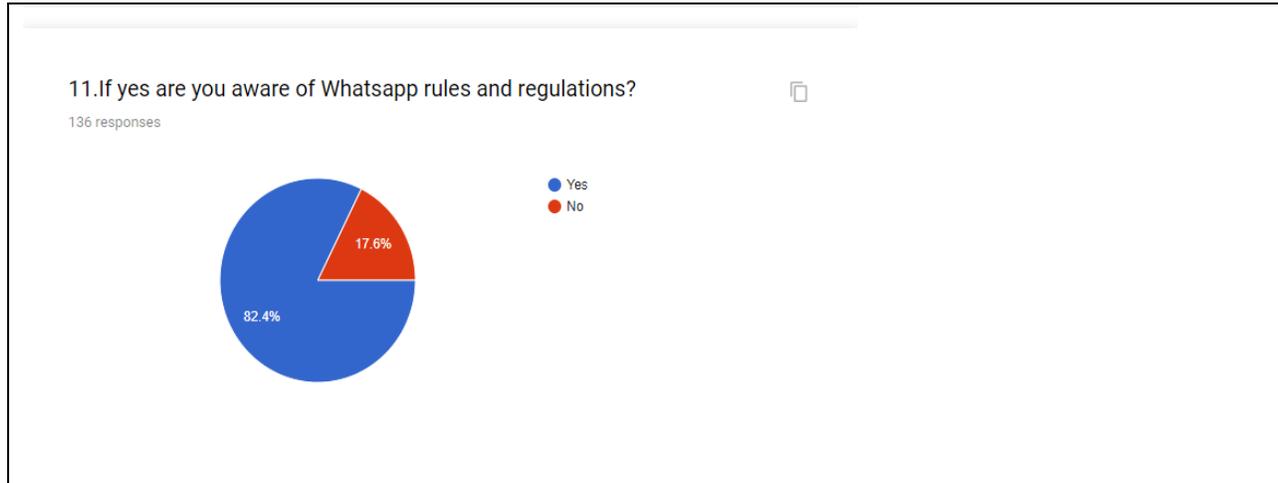


Figure 11: Awareness of rules

With regards to awareness about admin rules and regulation 82.4% are aware and 17.6% are not aware.

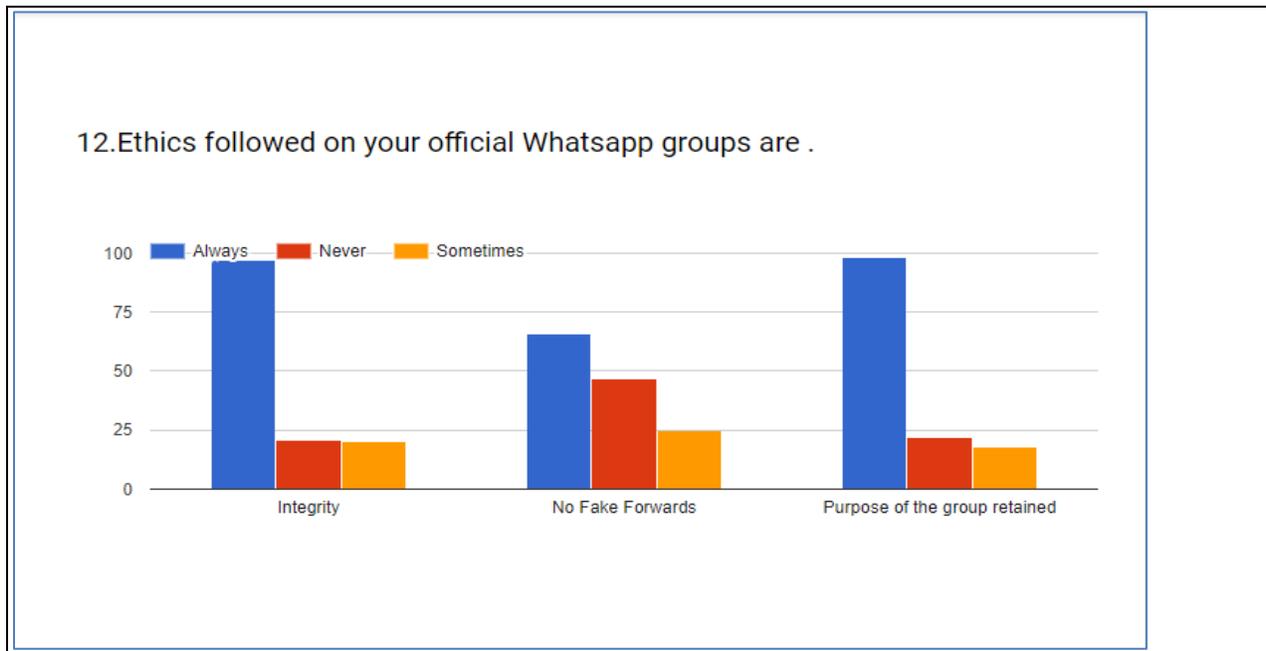


Figure 12: Ethics in whatsapp group

As per the graph 97 respondents said that Integrity is always maintained, 21 said never maintained and 20 said that it is sometimes maintained on Whatsapp group. On the parameter of No Fake Forwards 66 said always this ethic is maintained, 47 said never maintained and 25 said it is

sometimes maintained. The parameter of purpose of the group retained 98 respondents said it is always maintained, 22 said never maintained and 18 said sometimes maintained.

Findings:

To find awareness and availability about Whatsapp groups in colleges – The finding suggest that 95.7% respondents are aware of Whatsapp groups in their colleges. In all 81.2% of respondents have official Whatsapp groups for their college and classes and 18.8% are unofficial Whatsapp groups. 86.2% confirm of inclusion of all students in the Whatsapp group whereas 13.8% have said that every student is not the group member. The findings suggest that there is awareness of the App and also it is used as official App in various colleges.

To study attitude of students and faculty towards Whatsapp group and to find reasons for preference and non-preference- From 138 Reponses 89.9 % prefer using Whatsapp groups whereas 10.1% don't have the preference for Whatsapp group. There are many people who prefer the use of this App in colleges. This shows the popularity of Whatsapp as a mode of communication. Maximum reasons i.e. 86% responses are for fast and instant communication and that Whatsapp can circulate a lot of information. 69% response for time saving 67% say that it is easy, 63% responses for a reason that no paper needed. 32% think reason for their preference is that Whatsapp has no cost, 26% of respondents think its ethical and 12% prefer Whatsapp because they are continuously available on Whatsapp. Also when researched 56.8% of respondents say that their reason for not having preference for Whatsapp is that they are not continuously available on Whatsapp. 38.6% response is for the reason that Whatsapp can be mis used by students. 18.2% think there is no confidentiality whereas 15.9% think that they are on work beyond work hours and only 4.5% say that it is unethical to use Whatsapp.

1. To study the perception of faculty with respect to ethical use of Whatsapp group in colleges- The findings suggest 97 respondents believe that Integrity is always maintained as an ethic in the use official Whatsapp, 21 feel it is never maintained and 20 respondents are unsure about integrity on Whatsapp group. On the parameter of No Fake Forwards 66 respondents think that it is always maintained, 47 think never maintained and 25 commented that it is sometimes maintained. The parameter of purpose of the group retained 98 respondents said it is always maintained, 22 said never maintained and 18 said sometimes maintained. So it shows that though Integrity and purpose of the group is maintained but there is less awareness and understanding of miss using the App and sending fake forwards, as in the study in all 37% of the respondents confirm that the ethics of no fake forwards are never maintained.

Conclusion:

The study suggest that maximum faculty and students are aware about usage of Whatsapp groups in their colleges and are a part of it. Mostly all colleges have official Whatsapp groups which are used for various classes. Also people prefer Whatsapp group for various reasons. A good number

of people have said that their official Whatsapp group maintain integrity and use the facility only for teaching learning purpose. Yet there are many people still think that no fake forward ethic is not well maintained in the groups.

Recommendations:

On basis of the research study it can be recommended that the member who joins the group can first do an undertaking of not forwarding any fake messages or any unrequired files in the group. This can be done by restricting addition of the member till the undertaking is submitted on the group. This will bring in responsible use by Whatsapp members.

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