

# The Use of Whatsapp Application in Learning Evaluation Activities During Covid-19 Pandemic

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**Abstract**—Learning evaluation activities are very important to determine the development of student learning and have been carried out directly in the form of a written test (paper-based test). However, during the Covid-19 pandemic, this activity could not be carried out directly as usual due to government and campus policies regarding work from home and study from home. It is recommended that all series of learning activities including evaluation activities be carried out online from home. The WhatsApp application is the platform most widely used in online learning evaluation. The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of lecturers and students regarding learning evaluation activities that have been carried out online using the WhatsApp platform. In addition, it is also to find out how the implementation mechanism is applied when online evaluation uses the application. This research employed a qualitative descriptive study. The research subjects were lecturers and students at the University of Samawa. This research was conducted after the Final Even Semester Examination in the academic year 2019/2020. The research data collection instrument was in the form of a questionnaire with a Likert scale and also interviews. The results indicate that the WhatsApp application can support online learning evaluation activities even though the implementation process is not optimal.

**Keywords**—whatsapp, learning evaluation, covid-19 pandemic

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has a huge impact on various areas of life, including the field of education. The Indonesian government has implemented policies for social distancing and avoiding crowds since the beginning of March 2020. Educational institutions including universities must implement work from home and learn from home. Schools and campuses throughout Indonesia are forced to take holidays even though the learning process still has to take place using an online system. The learning process, which is usually carried out using a face-to-face system, must be eliminated. All of this was done in order to break the chain of spreading the Covid-19 virus. This online learning activity really demands independent learning from students [1].

In every learning process, evaluation is a very important to do. Learning evaluation can provide an overview of

students' level of mastery of learning materials and also about their learning difficulties [2]. So far, this evaluation activity has been carried out directly in the form of a written test (*paper-based test*). However, in the Covid-19 pandemic situation, this method of evaluation is not possible. Therefore, all educators are advised to use the *online* learning evaluation method.

Basically, *online* learning valuation offers several advantages, such as: 1). the analysis of the items can be done directly; 2) students can see the test results directly; 3) examiners do not need to make manual corrections; 4) the existence of scrambling questions and answer choices makes students unable to work together in solving questions so that cheating behaviour can be avoided [3].

There are several platforms that can be chosen to carry out online learning evaluations. Some of them are Google Forms, Quizizz, Learning Management System (LMS), Moodle, Google Classroom, Edmodo, Schoology, and so on. Each platform offers a variety of advantages, but the problem is that it takes a long time to learn about these platforms. If we understand how to use it properly, it is possible to have a positive impact in the learning evaluation process as described in Mastuti's research [3]. However, both educators and students do not necessarily understand how to use these platforms. There is no time, the learning process and learning evaluation must continue. So that, the majority of educators, particularly at Samawa University, chose to use the WhatsApp application to carry out the learning process and evaluation [4]. This is due to WhatsApp is already familiar, easy to use, and being used in almost all lecturer's and student's smartphones.

The use of the WhatsApp application or commonly called as WA has risen sharply in the international world. This is in line with the opinion of Indriani & Suliworo [5] that the use of WhatsApp is increasing from year to year. WhatsApp is an instant messaging technology as Short Message Services (SMS) which is assisted with Internet data, which has a variety of interesting features. Not only can be used to send text messages, but also can be used to send photos, videos, voice messages, maps, contacts, and also various types of documents. WhatsApp can also be used to make voice calls (voice calls) and video calls (video calls). In the WhatsApp

application, a discussion group can be created which can accommodate up to 256 members. In this group, all members can discuss and exchange information by online. These various features make many educators use the WhatsApp application to support the learning process, because it allows educators to communicate with students easily by online. The WhatsApp application can be used as e-learning because it has the characteristics of collaborating and sharing [6]. Learning by utilizing the WhatsApp may have an impact on increasing the motivation of learners [5]. In addition, it can also improve learning activities and student learning outcomes [7].

The WhatsApp application has been used not only during the learning process, but also in the process of evaluating learning outcomes. In this study, we want to investigate how perceptions of lecturers and students who have carried out the online learning evaluation process using WhatsApp. In addition, we also want to know how mechanisms are implemented and what are the advantages and obstacles experienced during the process.

## II. METHODS

This research was a qualitative descriptive study. The research subjects were lecturers and students of the University of Samawa. This research was conducted after the Final even Semester Examination in the 2019/2020 school year. The sample of lecturers and students was selected using purposive sampling technique [8]. Purposive sampling is a technique of sampling data sources with certain considerations. In this study, the consideration is that lecturers and students have experience running and participating in online learning evaluation activities through the WhatsApp application. There were 30 lecturer and 70 students as respondents who were also selected based on the representation of each faculty at Samawa University.

The research data collection instrument was in the form of questionnaire with a Likert scale and also interviews. The questionnaire was made using google form and distributed via WhatsApp to lecturers and students who were potential respondents. There are 4 scales used in the questionnaire, namely, Scale 1 (Strongly disagree), scale 2 (disagree), scale 3 (agree), and scale 4 (strongly agree). The data analysis from this questionnaire used the formula for calculating the average value. Interviews were conducted with respondents to find out their responses through Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Applied Mechanism of Learning Evaluation*

WhatsApp is one of the instant messaging applications which has some features, namely gallery, contacts, camera, audio, location, file, document, and even video. This application facilitates social interaction with the closest people you want and is medium of exchanging knowledge and insights between WhatsApp users.

At the time of the Covid-19 pandemic, when learning was not possible in the classroom with a face-to-face system, the use of the WhatsApp application was an alternative to carry out the entire series of online learning including learning evaluation activities. Various forms of mechanisms

in online learning evaluation are implemented by lecturers. Based on the results of observations and interviews with respondents, it was found that the mechanism of learning evaluation carried out by the lecturers was as follows.

1. Lecturers or students make a group for each subject, which consists of the lecturer who leads the course and all the students who take the course.
2. Determining the schedule of evaluation activities for each subject and follow the schedule published by the campus or make a joint agreement between lecturers and students.
3. During evaluation hours, lecturers and students are required to be online on WhatsApp.
4. The evaluation activity begins with checking the attendance of students. Students take attendance by writing their name in the group according to the sequence of their presence number in class. Each student has a maximum of 30 seconds to write their name in the group as proof of their attendance. Those who do not write their names are considered absent.
5. After the attendance check was carried out, the questions began to be given by the lecturer.
  - If the questions are in the form of descriptions, then the questions are given by the lecturer entirely through text messages in groups, through pictures or through voice notes (voice messages). Then students are given the opportunity to answer these questions via text messages, type directly in the group or type first on Ms. Word then the file is sent back to the WA group.
  - If the questions are in the form of multiple choice, usually the questions will be created in google form first, then the link will be shared with students in the WhatsApp group.
  - There are also lecturers who give evaluation questions in the form of scramble questions, where the questions will be given one by one in the form of text or pictures or voice notes. Then students will also answer directly in the group in the form of text, pictures, or voice notes. The lecturer stipulates that every single question given can only be answered by one to two students. Students who successfully answer the questions will be given an asterisk as an award for their value which will then be converted into a grade for that student. Students who have received five stars may stop answering questions (giving the opportunity to their friends who don't have many stars. In this type of evaluation, student engagement in learning evaluation activities is very good.
  - If the evaluation questions are in the form of a project, (for example a writing project, designing tools, posters, and videos) then the problem is given via WhatsApp, then students read the instructions carefully and start working on the project they are assigned to. If the project is in the form of writings or posters, then students must collect it again via the WhatsApp group, if it is a video, it must be uploaded to Youtube, then the link is given via the WhatsApp group. If it is a design tool, the tool design description

document file must be collected in the WhatsApp group.

6. Students who do not provide the answer until the agreed time are considered absent / not taking the exam / have no score.

*Lecturers and Students' Perceptions on Online Evaluation by Using WhatsApp*

Based on the results of the analysis of a questionnaire distributed to lecturers and students via Google Form, several perceptual responses were obtained which are presented in Table I.

TABLE I. PERCEPTION OF LEARNING EVALUATION IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH WHATSAPP

Statement	Average Perception	
	Lecturer	College student
Learning Evaluation via WhatsApp is more effective than direct evaluation with face to face.	Disagree	Disagree
Learning Evaluation via WhatsApp is more interesting than direct evaluation with face to face.	Disagree	Disagree
Learning Evaluation via WhatsApp is easier to do than face-to-face evaluation.	Disagree	Disagree
Learning Evaluation via WhatsApp is not limited by space, distance and time	Agree	Disagree
Learning Evaluation via WhatsApp can be reached by all students	Disagree	Disagree
The questions in the learning evaluation via WhatsApp are appropriate and relevant to the lecture material	Agree	Agree
The time duration given by the lecturer to work on the evaluation questions is appropriate	Agree	Disagree
Lecturers provide feedback on student assignments in learning evaluation via WhatsApp	Agree	Agree

Based on Table I. It shows that the average lecturer and student "Disagree" with the statement of learning evaluation through WhatsApp is more effective than direct evaluation of learning through face to face. Likewise, with the statement that evaluating WhatsApp learning is more interesting and easier to do when compared to online learning evaluations, the average lecturer and student also answered disagree. This shows that the use of the WhatsApp application in learning evaluation activities is deemed ineffective, not more interesting and also not easy to do. This is because many students use social media other than WhatsApp during class hours, so that the learning discipline of students becomes weak and does not focus on following learning [9]. This still needs some improvement in the implementation process. Learning evaluation using WhatsApp is not limited to space, distance and time. The majority of lecturers agree with this statement, but not the students. According to students, the use of this application in online learning evaluation is indeed not limited in distance and space but not limited in time yet, because in reality, the time given by the lecturer during

online evaluation is very limited. Evaluation of learning using WhatsApp is still not accessible to all students. This may be because there are still students who do not have smartphones, they live in the village where there is no internet signal, or they cannot afford internet quota. This is in line with research conducted by Fathurrahman [10] which states that not all students have sufficient internet quota, especially for those who in middle to lower economic conditions who are still having difficulty meeting primary needs. However, there are some students who do not have the tools to conduct online learning such as smartphone nor computer.

On average, lecturers and students feel that the questions given by the lecturer during the evaluation of learning via WhatsApp are appropriate and relevant to the lecture material. Regarding the time allocation for the evaluation test, the average lecturer admitted that the time given to students was quite appropriate. However, it is different with students, they feel that the time given is not suitable and too short. On average, lecturers and students agree with the lecturer's statement of providing feedback on student assignments. This feedback is provided directly through the WhatsApp group.

*Advantages and Constraints of Learning Evaluation via WhatsApp*

Based on the results of in-depth interviews with respondents, data was obtained about the advantages and constraints of implementing learning evaluation through WhatsApp as follows.

*1. Advantages*

- The WhatsApp application is already familiar, easy to use by everyone, it is usually in the default application for every smartphone. This means that this application has been installed on all smartphones, both lecturers and students, so there is no need to download new applications for online learning evaluation activities.
- The internet data uses by WhatsApp application less than other applications. However, some telecommunication providers offer free internet access on WhatsApp.
- The features in WhatsApp are sufficient to support online learning evaluation activities. Like being able to create subject groups consisting of lecturers and all students, it is possible to send messages, discuss, and share documents. For students, WhatsApp allows them to communicate with their friends and lecturers, send their assignment document files, while for lecturers, the use of WhatsApp can make it easier for lecturers to save the results of student assignments.
- The WhatsApp application can be accessed not only using a smartphone, but can also be accessed using a computer with the WhatsApp web feature. With WhatsApp web, both lecturers and students can easily send document files on their computers to the WhatsApp group.
- Delivering feedback by lecturers is easier to do. Can directly from the smartphone. No need to spend a lot of ink and paper. Students can also receive feedback from their assignments directly.

- Learning evaluation using WhatsApp is more flexible, can be done anywhere, anytime as long as you have an internet data connection.

## 2. Constraints

- The WhatsApp application requires a smartphone, signal, and internet data connection. It cannot be denied that these three things become obstacles in every online-based activity, where not all Samawa University students have smartphones. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Samawa University implemented a policy study from home. As a result, some students have to return to their hometowns which incidentally do not have internet signal. Even if there is a signal, the next problem is the internet data connection, where not all students can afford to buy internet data. Especially students who come from families with middle to lower economies. As a result, they cannot participate in learning activities and also online learning evaluations.
- Even if students can succeed in taking part in online learning. Sometimes students still have difficulty adjusting their time to carry out learning activities and learning evaluations. Because there are always distractions when they learn from home. Either from his family or from the surrounding environment. The students become cannot concentrate during learning nor evaluation process.
- When conducting online evaluations via WhatsApp, lecturers cannot control students whether they work alone or in groups, or whether they open books or close books.
- Sometimes lecturers cannot ensure that students have read (read) the message / assignment carefully. It could be that students miss an important task in the group, because they only open WhatsApp groups, without reading previous discussion chats.

Lecturers need a large enough memory to store assignment files from students when there are many students who send their assignments via WhatsApp, therefore, the lecturer needs a large enough memory on his smartphone.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the WhatsApp application is a suitable application to support the learning evaluation process because of the various advantages, however, it is still not effective in its implementation due to various technical constraints. Thus, it is necessary to hold improvements in the implementation process.

Researchers also suggest the following points:

1. To anticipate students working in groups in online learning evaluation via WhatsApp, questions should be made in the form of case studies, which require deep analysis of individual students, so that group working can

be minimized. Even if they have to open a book, students still have to analyze the case first so that it can be solved.

2. Both lecturers and students have to give training first about the online learning process by using the WhatsApp application, so that the implementation can be more optimal.

The government may need to pay attention and provide assistance to underprivileged regions, universities and students so that they can continue to take part in the whole series of online learning including the evaluation activities.

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