



FULFILLING SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP NEEDS – A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY ON USERS OF WHATSAPP

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Abstract:

All human beings are born with needs and there are several needs emergent throughout the life span of all human beings; they spend their majority of the time in fulfilling their needs and this process continues till their death. Human beings needs may be different at different times in their lives. Fulfilling the needs is necessary for healthy growth and development of human beings. The innovation and technology, in addition to fulfilling the needs of human beings also brings change in the need fulfilment mechanism. Internet usage are becoming very common among the urban and educated population; it automatically changes the mode of need fulfilment, especially belongingness and love needs; satisfaction of these needs are important in order to feel supported and accepted, and preventing problems such as loneliness, depression and anxiety and several psychological problems.

It is a known fact that the needs of the students are different from other segments of the people; several needs of them are fulfilled by their parents and they do not feel such things as needs, and their needs are generally related to studies, friends, entertainment, romance, relationship and so on; and there is a possibility that using of WhatsApp can contribute to fulfil the needs. However, there are several researches about the use of WhatsApp and its negative impact on academic performance of the users, and WhatsApp dependency among the students. Academics alone cannot be a parameter to measure progress or success of students; students who are having better academic records, but do not have better relationship with family, friends and community will not be called successful. The prevailing dependency among the students such as drug dependency, alcohol consumption and use of tobacco are more dangerous that affect their performance, health and ruin their whole life. However, dependency such as cinema, TV, FM Radio and social media have some positivity in them; these dependency are based on the purpose of using and the time and money that the user spent for it; here the users are not to discontinue of using them but has to use them with appropriate purpose with some time and money allotments and without affecting their roles and tasks. As the researcher sensed that the use of WhatsApp contributes to strengthen and maintain healthy relationship and social tie with friends, family and community, and diverse perception among the students about the WhatsApp dependency, the researcher highly focused and directed the research to look into the use of WhatsApp in contributing to fulfilling the belonging and love needs, and perception of students about the WhatsApp dependency.

Key Words: Dependency, Awareness, Belongingness and Love Needs, Needs of Students, Social Fabric & Parameters.

1. Introduction:

All human beings are born with needs and there are several needs emergent throughout the life span of all human beings; they spend their majority of the time in fulfilling their needs and this process continues till their death. Though the term needs are very often defined as goods or services that are required for human beings, the needs have a much broader concept that includes physical and psychological needs.

As per the Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, needs of human beings are classified into five categories; biological and physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs. If any human being fails to fulfil the needs, he/she will end up in crises or develop maladaptation to tackle the crisis that will affect the healthy growth of personality. As per the research of the John Bowlby, clearly indicated that child attached with the mother or care giver for fulfilling their physical and psychological needs and as the child grows, the needs and need fulfilling mechanism also grow and is different from the earlier childhood stage; though the child in the earlier stage highly depends upon parents and primary care givers to fulfil the needs, as the child grows, learns several social skills and mechanism to fulfil the needs on its own and with the help of others. So, the need is always there in every human beings but differ among themselves in degree as well as in the type and their need fulfilling strategy and mechanism also differ among themselves. The need fulfilling mechanism is influenced by several factors; which can be broadly categorized into internal factors and external factors. Internal factors are a cluster of factors such as attitudes, belief, perception, learning, income and motivation; the external factors are family, religion and community influence, culture, political and economic.

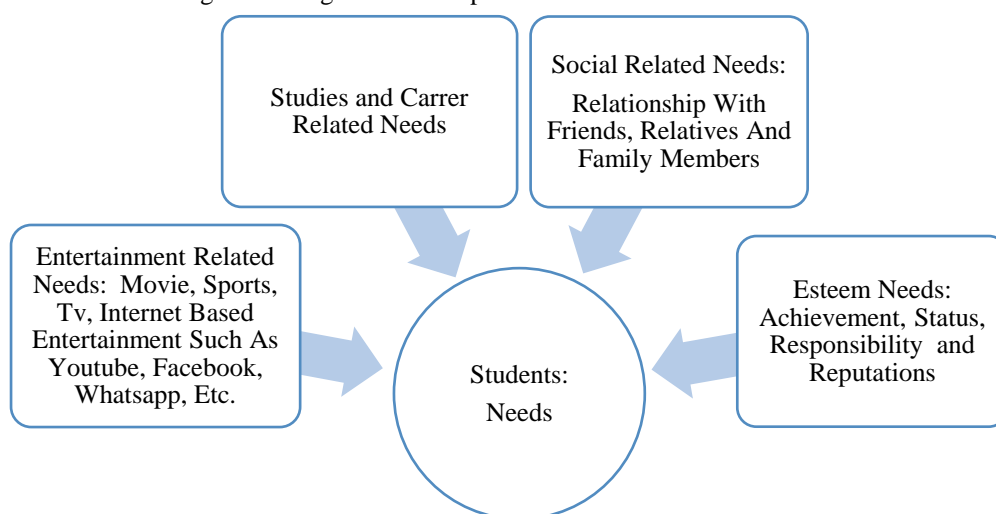
Belongingness and love needs are important like the biological needs. Satisfaction of these needs are important in order to feel supported and accepted; they help in preventing problems such as loneliness, depression and anxiety and several psychological problems. Human beings can find encouragement when they

achieve emotional connections with family, friends, social groups, partners, colleagues and others. People often need a sense of belongingness so that they feel that they are not isolated. Belongingness and love needs are met in a variety of ways. Families meet the needs of children, but later in life, partners, friends and co-workers further meet such needs. Joining groups, such as a church or athletic team, also help them to meet these needs.

The innovation and technology, in addition to fulfilling the needs of human beings also brings change in the need fulfilment mechanism; technology innovation has created different avenues to fulfil several needs of human beings, including belongingness and love needs. Internet facilities consisting of interconnected networks using standardized communication protocols. People communicate over the internet in a number of other ways such as electronic mail (email), internet telephony, instant messaging, video chatting or social media. The use of WhatsApp, using the internet facilities, is becoming one of the most common mode to attain the belongingness and love needs; use of WhatsApp became common among urban and educated, even less educated, human beings to fulfil their belongingness and love needs. However, if WhatsApp is used always without any self-control and self-regulation it will lead to several problems.

It is a known fact that the needs and goals of the students are different from other segments of the people; several needs of them are being fulfilled by their parents and they do not feel such things as needs. Their needs are generally related to studies, friends, entertainment, romance, relationship and so on.

Figure 1: Diagrammatic Representation of Students Need



If each and every need of the student is studied, WhatsApp can help students to fulfil their needs, provided they have to use it appropriately. However, there are several researches about the use of WhatsApp and its negative impact on academic performance of the students. Academics alone cannot be a parameter to measure progress of students; students who are having better academic records, but do not have better relationship with family, friends and community will not be called successful. There are several performers who contribute much to their own life but failed to do anything to others such as family, friends, and community, which is almost zero. So, the parameters to measure the success and progress has to be in broader terms; the other factors such as healthy relationship with other fellow students and teachers, healthy relationship with family, friends and community, general knowledge about diverse fields such as health, sports, social issues and problems, the level of participation with the community in dealing with the problems and issues, the level of performance in exercising the leadership in several available occasions, the level of innovation and enterprising, the level of most valuable quality of altruism, sympathy and compassion and the level of desire to help the needy and poor.

Dependency is a type of behaviour problem that compels human beings to behave in certain ways though they know they bring them harmful consequences. When we talk about the WhatsApp dependency among the students, we must have more clarity about the general prevailing dependency among the students. The general dependency among the students can be categorized into dangerous and non-dangerous; drug dependency, alcohol consumption and use of tobacco are more dangerous that affect performance, health and ruin their whole life; here the matter is not related to how much is taken and how much time is spent because each and every intake is dangerous for health of the users. The WhatsApp and internet related dependency are less dangerous than other modes of dependencies if we compare them with other common dependencies prevailing among the students, such a smoking, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, etc. And if we measure other positive contributing components such as cooperativeness, motivation, extending moral support for friends, higher level tolerance for different ideas, religious tolerance, participate with the locals in showing solidarity, etc. are high among the users of WhatsApp. WhatsApp can be used as a tool to avoid or at least reduce the dangerous dependency such as alcohol, tobacco and dough among the students. The common prevailing dependency

among the students are generally related to the depression, anxiety, feeling of loneliness and boredom; and another reason for the dependency is also related to learned behaviours from peers. So, becoming involved in healthy entertainment and relationship with the use of WhatsApp, students have better opportunity to cope up with their depression, anxiety, feeling of loneliness and boredom and even resist the wrong influence from peers.

2. Review of Literatures:

In any study the review of the previous studies are important for getting a better understanding of the problem, objectives, methodology applied in those studies and to identify the unexplored areas of the field of the study under consideration. In this regard, review of some of the studies relevant to the present study had being undertaken and presented below.

Johnson Yeboah & George Dominic Ewur (2014), Lecturers, School of Business, Marketing Department, Takoradi Polytechnic, Takoradi, Ghana, conducted a study on “the Impact of Whatsapp Messenger Usage on Students Performance in Tertiary Institutions in Ghana”. The study was carried out on the based on the sample of 50 students from five tertiary institutions and 500 questionnaires were administered to collect responses from them. The study revealed that Whatsapp instead of making communication easier and faster thereby enhancing effective flow of information and idea sharing among students, rather has impacted negatively on the performance of tertiary students in Ghana. The study among other things unveiled that Whatsapp takes much of students study time, results in procrastination related problems, destroys students’ spellings and grammatical construction of sentences, leads to lack of concentration during lectures and academic preparation and distracts students from completing their assignments and adhering to their private studies time table.

Prof. Sunita Singh and Prof Seeza Franklin (2015), a study on “Whatsapp- Messenger Fever on Students” consists of students in Graduate/Post Graduate institutions in Mumbai and five hundred (550) representatives from five Graduate/Post Graduate institutions were surveyed and found that the majority of the students [72% of the total number of Respondents] use whatsapp on their mobile phones for chatting with friends on different issues rather than academic work, only 7% of the respondents use the application for academic work, 12% of the respondent use mainly for general information and 9% of the respondent use it for family issues.

Sagar Deshmukh’s (2015) study on “Analysis of Whatsapp Users and Its Usage worldwide”. The researcher attempt to analyze and identify number of users who use the Whatsapp messenger in daily routine basis and the type of communication medium people prefer in Whatsapp application e.g. Texting, Audio Message or Calling. The data collected from google and rough estimates about the users using Whatsapp, based on calculations made till the year 2015. The study indicated the number of users of Whasapp worldwide was 750 million, each month additional of 20 million users add to this users group and all the users from age group of 17 to 65+ years. Almost 18% of users are of the age group 17-25, which includes college students who mostly use whatsapp service for college groups and friends chatting, 29% of users are of the age group 26-35, which includes the professionals working in the industry or higher post-graduates and fresher, the use of whatsapp in this age group is generally for stay in touch groups on whatsapp, who are graduated and working in companies, allows them to contact them through whatsapp anytime, 24% of users are of the age group 36-45, which includes business professionals; this allows them to connect to business colleagues whenever required, 11% of users are of the age group 46-55 and 13% are of users of age group 56-65, these users use whatsapp on limited basis, 5% of users are of age group 65+ years, users in this category use Whatsapp mostly for emergency purposes. Regarding average number of messages sent by the user per day and type of messages sent, Whatsapp maximum used for sending text messages, secondly for callings, thirdly for audios and finally for videos.

Jisha.K and Jebakumar (2014) conducted a study on ‘Whatsapp: A Trend Setter in Mobile Communication among Chennai Youth’. The study used online survey method and restricted to youngsters in Chennai region, the population under study was youth, especially college going students in Chennai, India and researcher used judgmental sampling of 100 college students in the age group of 18-23, 50 boys and 50 girls those who are college going in Chennai region. The study found that the youngsters remain online 24/7 to access Whatsapp, thereby getting in touch with their friends without missing any single message, all the respondents agreed that they use their mobile phone full time to access Whatsapp, 96 out of 100 respondents rated mobile as a necessity of their life, majority of youngsters use Whatsapp to chat with friends followed by relatives, majority of the youngsters agreed that they converse with more than 15 people in a day through Whatsapp, majority of respondents maximum rated the features of Whatsapp like instant messaging, group texting and updating profile image and status on a regular basis and second ratings is for the usage of unlimited audio files and video files.

3. Methodology:

Objectives of the Study: The present study is undertaken with the following specific objectives.

- ✓ To study the level of purposes, advantages and disadvantages of using WhatsApp.

- ✓ To find out the association between the students of rural and urban areas and male and female students in using WhatsApp for fulfilling social relation with family, relatives and friends.
- ✓ To find out the association between the students of rural and urban areas in spending time for using WhatsApp.

Hypothesis:

- ✓ There may be association among the students of rural and urban areas in using WhatsApp for fulfilling social relation with family, relatives and friends.
- ✓ There may be association among gender in using WhatsApp for fulfilling social relation with family, relatives and friends.
- ✓ There may be association between domiciles and hours of spending time for using WhatsApp.

Sources of Data and Data Collection:

The universe of the study is all college students of Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli. All the MSW students from the selected cluster were taken as sample. Data were collected from the selected 43 MSW students of Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli through well formulated and relevant questionnaires.

Limitations of the Study:

The present study undertaken has the following limitations.

- ✓ As the study has been carried out among students of social work, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, the finding of the study reflects the students from the university alone. So, the students from rural and metropolitan colleges may not have similarity in the purpose of using, time spending, etc.
- ✓ The study may not reflect the students of other degrees, especially students of Management, Engineering and Medicine.
- ✓ The samples selected from the beneficiaries are from a single region i.e., from Tamil Nadu and other State students are not taken in the study.
- ✓ As the sample is from one region the finding of the study cannot be used for generalizing to the whole India.

4. Findings:

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents by their Gender and Domicile

Variables	Frequency (n=43)	Percentage (100%)
Gender		
Male	14	32.6
Female	29	67.4
Domicile		
Urban	23	53.5
Rural	20	46.5

Based on the above classification of respondents, 67.4 percentage of the respondents are female and 32.6 percentage of the respondents are male; and 53.5 percentage of the respondents are from urban and 46.5 percentage of the respondents are rural area.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents are hours of using whatsapp

Hours	Frequency (n=43)	Percentage (100%)
1.00	13	30.2
2.00	9	20.9
3.00	8	18.6
4.00	2	4.7
5.00	9	20.9
6.00	2	4.7

The above table reveals that 30.2 percentage of the respondents have been using WhatsApp for 1 hours in a day, 20.9 percentage of the respondents have been using WhatsApp for 2 hours in a day, 18.6 percentage of the respondents have been using WhatsApp for 3 hours in a day, 4.7 percentage of the respondents have been using for WhatsApp 4 hours in a day, 20.9 percentage of the respondents have been using WhatsApp for 5 hours in a day and 4.7 percentage of the respondents have been using WhatsApp for 6 hours in a day.

On an average the respondents have been using WhatsApp for 2.79 hours in a day.

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents' purpose of using whatsapp

Timings	Education-News-Current Affairs	Enhance Knowledge and Skill	Entertainment	Relationship	Depression-Anxiety-Uncomfortable Situation	Feeling Boring and Loneliness	Communicating with Friends and Family
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Degree of use	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Minimum	12	27.9	13	30.2	12	27.9	11	25.6	11	25.6	9	20.9	7	16.3
Moderate	14	32.6	13	30.2	11	25.6	11	25.6	20	46.5	12	27.9	12	27.9
Maximum	17	39.5	16	37.2	19	44.2	20	46.5	10	23.3	17	39.5	22	51.2
Total	43	100	42	98	42	98	42	98	41	95	38	88	41	95

The above table shows the purpose and the level of using WhatsApp. Regarding use WhatsApp for education, news and current affairs, 100 % of the respondents use for this purpose and out of these 100 % , 27.9 % use minimum, 32.6 % use moderate and 39.5 % use maximum; regarding use of WhatsApp for enhance knowledge and skill, 98 % of the respondents use WhatsApp for this purpose and out of this 98 % , 30.20 % use minimum, 30.2 % use moderate and 37.2 % use maximum; regarding use of WhatsApp for entertainment, 98 % respondents uses for this purpose and out of this 98 % , 27.9 % use minimum, 25.6 % use moderate and 44.2 % use maximum; regarding use of WhatsApp for relationship, 98 % of the respondents uses for this purpose and out of this 98 % , 25.6 % use minimum, 25.6 % use moderate and 46.5 % use maximum; regarding use for WhatsApp in depression, anxiety and uncomfortable situation, 95 % use for this purpose and out of this 95 % , 25.6 % use minimum, 46.5 % use moderate and 23.3 % use maximum; regarding use of WhatsApp in feeling of lonely and boring situation, 88 % use for this purpose and out of this 88 % , 20.9 % use minimum, 27.9 % use moderate and 39.5 % use maximum; regarding use of WhatsApp for communicating with friends and family, 95 % use for this purpose and out of this 95 % , 16.3 % use minimum, 27.9 % use moderate and 51.3 use maximum.

Table 4: Distribution of the respondent's opinion of Advantages and Disadvantages of whatsapp

Opinion	Frequency (n=43)	Percentage (100%)
Advantages		
Education – Profession – Career	26	60.5
Knowledge - News – Current Affairs	33	76.7
Entertainment	31	72.1
Relationship Maintain	21	48.8
Disadvantages		
Waste Time And Money	31	72.1
Affect Education And Career	8	18.6
Lead To Dependency	18	41.9
Rumor And Misused	12	27.9

Finding:

The above chart and table clearly indicated the opinion of respondents about the advantage and disadvantages of using WhatsApp, 60.5 % considered WhatsApp is advantage for education, profession and career, 76.7 % considered WhatsApp is advantage for knowledge, news and current affairs, 72.1 % considered WhatsApp is advantage for entertainment and 48.8 considered WhatsApp is advantage for relationship maintain. 60.5 % considered WhatsApp is disadvantage because of waste time and money 18.6 % considered WhatsApp is disadvantage because of the affect in education and career, 41.9 % considered WhatsApp is disadvantage because it lead to dependency and 27.9 % considered WhatsApp has disadvantage because it may be used for rumour and misuse.

Table 5: Association between Domicile and Using Whatsapp for fulfilling social relationship with Family, Relatives and Friends

Domicile	Communication with Family, Relatives and Friends (n=43)			Statistical Inference
	Minimum	Moderate	Maximum	
Urban	3	9	12	$\chi^2 = 1.064^a$ df= 2 0.587 > 0.05 Not significant
Rural	4	4	11	

Finding:

As the test value 1.064 is less than the critical value 5.991 at 5 % significance level, the null hypothesis is not rejected and there is no significant association between the students of rural and urban areas in using WhatsApp for fulfilling social relation related needs.

Table 6: Association between the gender and Using Whatsapp for fulfilling social relationship with Family, Relatives and Friends through Whatsup

Gender	Communication with Family, Relatives and Friends (n=43)			Statistical Inference
	Minimum	Moderate	Maximum	
Male	2	5	6	$\chi^2 = .781^a$

Female	5	7	16	df= 2 0.677>0.05 Not significant
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Finding:

As the test value 0.781 is less than the critical value 5.991 at 5 % significance level, the null hypothesis is not rejected and there is no significant association between male and female students in using WhatsApp for fulfilling social related needs.

Table 7: Association between the domicile and hours of using whatsapp

Domicile	Hours of using (n=43)						Statistical Inference
	1 hours	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	5 hours	6 hours	
Urban	5	5	5	2	6	0	$\chi^2 = 6.124^a$ df= 5 0.294>0.05 Not significant
Rural	8	4	3	0	3	2	

Finding:

As the test value 6.124 is less than the critical value 11.07 at 5 % significance level, the hypothesis is not rejected and there is no significant association among the students of rural and urban areas in spending time for using WhatsApp.

7. Conclusion and Suggestion:

The time spent by the college students in WhatsApp and the purpose of using are the indicators to measure its contribution in fulfilling belongingness and love related needs. Though student community use WhatsApp for entertainment, they also use for other purposes such as education, update news and current happenings, relationship building, communicating with family and friends and many other purposes. So, we cannot rule out the advantages that the users get, though there are several critics remark about dependency and performance declining among the students because of the use of WhatsApp. Still, other advantages associated with the use of WhatsApp and easily available mode to fulfil the human social relational needs, draw more and more users, especially student community, to its folds. So, there is a necessity to have more awareness of the benefits and disadvantages by the users, especially students, parents and teachers. The parents have to use this opportunity to maintain healthy relationship with their children by associating with their WhatsApp groups, though it may not be welcomed by their children; by becoming more connect with the children through WhatsApp, they will be able to influence them and keep their progress on track without affecting their entertainment. The teachers also can play a tremendous role in moulding the behaviour of the students, specially the present generation losing the most cherished ethics and value systems of the earlier years, the healthy relationship with family, friends and communities, altruism, compassion, empathy, and such several value are losing their values. So, being connected with the student community, teachers can be of great help for the student community

The social responsibility of students, parents and teachers is to be given due priority in the timeless busy society, the busy life due to modernisation and globalisation are high among all the human beings, still by spending required time with each other, at least through the use of WhatsApp, they can fulfil some social responsibility, once the parent and teacher communities started doing their social responsibility towards the college going students, we can have a great hope that the growing student community will be not only a performer but live as a healthy and good citizen. The work has to start from the parents and teachers; blaming student community and society without providing adequate contribution for their well-being is not the appropriate thing to do.

The parents and teachers have to be linked with the student community through the WhatsApp and communicate with them and keep their behaviours and attitudes to add more values to the society. They can be contributing factors for the betterment of the community as well as for producing good citizens to the nation. They can focus their communication in the following areas.

- ✓ Education and career related information.
- ✓ Enhancing moral and ethical values.
- ✓ Updating the current affairs and news.
- ✓ Enhancing the critical thinking ability.
- ✓ Enhancing the community cohesion.
- ✓ Tolerance towards other community, religions, opinions and ideas.
- ✓ Enrich the concept of ubiquitous learning.
- ✓ Healthy entertainment.
- ✓ Counter the rumour and social intolerance.
- ✓ Dependency prevention.
- ✓ Use as a social work tool to prevent against the dangerous dependency such as alcohol, drug and use of tobacco.

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