

## Students' Perception of The Implementation of Blended Learning at Junior High School

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana persepsi siswa terhadap penggunaan *WhatsApp* untuk mendukung *blended learning* di SMPN 1 Motui. Desain pada penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif menggunakan instrumen angket dan wawancara. Dalam mengumpulkan data melalui angket peneliti menggunakan lembaran angket dengan dua skala *yes/no* yang di sebar keseluruh siswa dalam satu kelas dan mewawancarai siswa sebanyak 6 orang. Subjek pada penelitian ini adalah 23 siswa kelas IX. Hasil angket menunjukkan bahwa siswa memberikan persepsi positif terhadap penggunaan *WhatsApp* sebagai media pembelajaran. Siswa merasa nyaman belajar dengan menggunakan media *WhatsApp* dalam proses pembelajaran. Adapun hasil wawancara mengungkapkan bahwa guru menggunakan *WhatsApp* untuk mengirimkan materi pembelajaran berupa *file* dokumen, sedangkan siswa mengirimkan tugas berupa *file*, teks dan gambar serta siswa mengisi daftar hadir. Namun, ada juga tantangan dalam menggunakan *WhatsApp* diantaranya koneksi jaringan yang tidak stabil, kuota internet yang terbatas juga tidak memiliki *handphone*. Penelitian ini juga mengungkapkan bahwa dengan menggunakan *WhatsApp* dapat memberikan kemudahan bagi siswa diantaranya: 1) siswa dapat belajar dari jarak jauh dimana pun dan kapan pun, 2) dapat menyampaikan/menerima informasi materi pembelajaran, 3) mudah mengirimkan tugas, 4) dapat dengan mudah berinteraksi dengan guru atau teman sekelasnya, 5) dapat meningkatkan sikap positif dan hasil belajar siswa di kelas.

**Kata Kunci:** *persepsi siswa; pembelajaran campuran; whatsapp*

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine how students perceive the use of *WhatsApp* to support blended learning at SMPN 1 Motui. This study aims to determine how students perceive the use of *WhatsApp* to support blended learning at SMPN 1 Motui. The design in this research is descriptive qualitative using a questionnaire and interview instruments. In collecting data through questionnaires the researcher used a questionnaire sheet with two *yes/no* scales which were distributed to all students in one class and interviewed 6 students. The subjects in this study were 23 students of class IX. The results of the questionnaire showed that students gave a positive perception of the use of *WhatsApp* as a learning medium. They feel comfortable learning by using *WhatsApp* media in the learning process. The results of the interview revealed that teachers use *WhatsApp* to send learning materials in the form of document files, while students send assignments in the form of files, text and picture and students fill out the attendance list. However, there are also challenges in using *WhatsApp* including unstable network connections, limited internet quota and not having a mobile phone. This study also revealed that using *WhatsApp* can provide convenience for students including: 1) students can learn remotely anywhere and anytime, 2) can convey/receive information on learning materials, 3) easily send assignments, 4) can easily interact with teachers or classmates, 5) can increase positive attitudes and student learning outcomes in class.

**Keywords:** *student's perception; blended learning; whatsapp*

## INTRODUCTION

The existence of the Corona Virus or COVID-19 has a huge impact on the world of education. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia issued a policy by replacing the teaching and learning process with an online system. In addition, several regions (Green Zones) in Indonesia are trying to implement a face-to-face learning process by integrating online learning with the condition of implementing health protocols. This condition forces teachers and students to master technology media in the implementation of blended learning. In other words, technology plays an important role in the learning process. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has the power to increase access and improve quality of education (Raja and Nagasubramani, 2018 p. 34). In addition, Finger & Trinidad (2002) in Ghavifekr and Rosdy (2015) state that the technology-based teaching and learning process provides various interesting ways, including educational videos, stimuli, data storage, database use, mind mapping, guided discovery, and brainstorming, Music, World Wide Web (www), which will make the learning process more meaningful (p. 176). The importance of focusing on blended learning is to combine technology with learning. Combining Internet technology and face-to-face interaction can improve pedagogy and easier access to information (Bonk & Graham, 2004 as quoted in Anggraini, 2019). In other words, blended teaching can foster independent and collaborative learning experiences

In international context study towards blended learning have many advantages. Rahim (2019) find is the use of blended learning approach can support provides a flexible language learning platform, endorse academic achievements of the learners, and influences EFL education. Other research conducted by Alrouji (2020); Ahmed (2019); Ebadi & Ghuchi (2018); Milad (2017) reported that learning by using blended learning increase students' motivation, develop reading, writing competencies, vocabulary, and translation skills.

In a review of research on the effects of blended learning on education in the national context also has many advantages. Rerung (2018) reported that the use of blended learning can help students during the learning process. Sujannah, Cahyono and Astuti (2020) reported that the implementation of blended learning using Google Classrooms had a positive effect on the writing skills of EFL students. Anggraini (2019) found that the Implementation of blended learning could improve a significant influence on the students' achievement. However, in other studies related to the implementation of blended learning approach has the contribution about 11% in improving the students' speaking skill achievement (Handayani, et. al, 2019)

Based on the results of observations that have been made in one junior high school in North Konawe, especially SMP Negeri 1 Motui, not all teachers apply blended learning (BL) in the learning process. Only a few teachers use Blended Learning (BL) when teaching. The teachers stated that Blended learning is good for students because it provides a variety of new methods for students while learning. In addition, students can express their learning styles and make them more independent when studying. Blended learning is also an alternative way for teachers to deliver material to students, especially during a pandemic. The application of Blended learning can be done in all subjects, especially English. The

blended learning model that is applied in the classroom uses a face-to-face driver where face-to-face meetings are more important and online as the support. To support the online learning process, this school uses a digital platform, namely the Zoom meeting application and WhatsApp. The most used platform is WhatsApp. However, students' perceptions of the use of blended learning have not been studied in this school.

Based on the background of the phenomenon and the platform used, researchers are interested in knowing how students perceive the use of WhatsApp to support Blended Learning.

## METHOD

This study used a qualitative descriptive method to describe the data collected in the field. Descriptive qualitative method is appropriate for this research as Sugiyono (2012) stated that descriptive problems formulation guided the writer in exploring and capturing the social situation to be studied thoroughly, widely, and intensively. The subject of this research was students at SMPN 1 Motui. The participants in this study only consisted of one class, namely class IX, totalling participants 23 students. The purposive sampling techniques was used to select subjects. Data was gathered using questionnaire and interview. The data analysis technique used in this study was based on Sudjana (2001) theories for questionnaire and Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) theories for interview, which indicate that data analysis consists of three steps: data condensation, data display, conclusion drafting or verification, and be equipped with data triangulation.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### FINDINGS

Based on the data obtained from questionnaire and interview, the researcher found student's perception of the use of WhatsApp to support blended learning in SMPN 1 Motui.

#### Access to Material through WhatsApp in Blended Learning

Table 1. Access material trough WhatsApp in Blended Learning

No	Access to Material through WhatsApp in Blended Learning	Frequency	
		Yes	No
1	Learning activities can be accessed via WhatsApp at time convenient for me.	74%	26%
2	I can search online material at location suitable for me.	65%	35%
3	Time is saved when I use online mode of learning.	70%	30%
4	I feel facilitated to work at my own pace for achievement of learning objectives.	74%	26%
5	Its my own decision how much to learn in a specific period.	57%	43%
6	I make my own timetable for learning trough online tools.	61%	39%
7	The flexible helps me to accomplish my learning goals.	61%	39%
8	The flexible helps me to explore my own area of interest.	52%	48%

Based on the data of questionnaire from these subscales, it shows students' perceptions regarding interactions through WhatsApp in the application of Blended Learning. The highest frequency of positive responses shows students'

perceptions regarding interactions through WhatsApp in the application of Blended Learning in learning. The highest frequency of positive responses was related to two-statement statements (91%). "I have freedom to ask my teacher what I do not comprehend online study material/ My peers show a positive attitude towards me" The statement that most students disagree with is "I participate in peer-evaluation on regular basic" (35%). It can be concluded that students understand that learning can be accessed through WhatsApp comfortably. By using WhatsApp they can learn anywhere and anytime. WhatsApp helps work at their own pace to achieve learning goals.

This is confirmed by the result of interview. Based on the results of interviews that have been carried out with students using WhatsApp in the learning process, where students can also receive material that has been given by the teacher. The material sent by the teacher can be in the form of document, audio, text and video files. This is in accordance with the conclusion of the interview with student 1 that:

*"Yes Miss. We use WhatsApp to learn, like we take attendance there, send assignments to teachers and usually teachers send materials via WhatsApp."*

The results of the interview also found that there were several obstacles experienced by students in accessing the material, including not having a phone, unstable network, and running out of internet quota.

### Interaction With WhatsApp in Blended Learning

Table 2. Students Interaction through WhatsApp

No	Interaction through WhatsApp	Frequency	
		Yes	No
1	I like to communication with my class via WhatsApp.	74%	26%
2	I have to be self-disciplined toward the use WhatsApp in blended learning.	74%	26%
3	I have freedom to ask my teacher what I do not comprehension online study material.	91%	8%
4	I have freedom to take help from other class follows trough WhatsApp.	48%	52%
5	Other class fellows respond quickly to my queries.	74%	26%
6	I participate in self-evaluation on regular basic.	61%	39%
7	I participate in peer-evaluation on regular basic.	35%	65%
8	My peers show a positive attitude towards me.	91%	9%

From these subscales, it shows students' perceptions regarding interactions through WhatsApp in the application of Blended Learning. The highest frequency of positive responses shows students' perceptions regarding interactions through WhatsApp in the application of Blended Learning in learning. The highest frequency of positive responses was related to two-statement statements (91%). "I have freedom to ask my teacher what I do not comprehend online study material/ My peers show a positive attitude towards me" The statement that most students disagree with is "I participate in peer-evaluation on regular basic" (35%). It means

application is a flexible communication mode that has the freedom to not depend on the time and place.

This is confirmed by the result of interview. Based on the results of interviews that Students can easily interact with the teacher to request online materials that they don't understand whenever they want. On the other hand the positive attitude shown by students, they help each other with problems experienced by their classmates. WhatsApp learning process is used by students to facilitate communication with the teacher. This is in accordance with the conclusion of the interview with student 6 that:

*"Usually, I like to ask my friends about the material that I don't understand. If they don't understand, I ask the teacher via WhatsApp."*

Based on the results of interviews that have been conducted with students, the use of WhatsApp in the learning process awakens students' positive attitudes. This is in accordance with the conclusions of interviews conducted with students 6 that:

*"Yes, my friends, they like to help me because they usually like to ask me if there is something they don't understand too."*

Based on the results of the interviews above, the researchers found several points from students' perceptions regarding interactions carried out via WhatsApp, including: 1) students easily communicate with teachers and classmates, 2) increase their caring to help each other. So it can be concluded that the use of WhatsApp can increase student interactions and positive attitudes.

### **Response to study Material through WhatsApp in implementing Blended Learning**

Table 3. Students response to study material through WhatsApp

No	Response to Study Material through WhatsApp	Frequency	
		Yes	No
1	WhatsApp help me interact with class fellows and the teacher asynchronously.	78%	22%
2	I feel a sense of achievement, motivation, and satisfaction in this learning.	57%	43%
3	I enjoy doing assignments in this learning.	83%	17%
4	It is my opinion that can learn more in this learning.	78%	22%
5	WhatsApp in Blended Learning helps in organizing learning group.	70%	30%
6	It is easier to work cooperatively with other group member.	52%	48%
7	WhatsApp in blended learning retains my interest throughout the course of learning.	52%	48%
8	I feel boredom towards the end of assignment completion.	43%	57%

From this subscale, it shows the student's response to using WhatsApp in the application of Blended Learning in learning. The highest frequency of positive responses is related to the statement "I enjoy doing assignments in this learning" (83%). The statement that the students most disagreed with was "I feel boredom

towards the end of assignment completion" (43%). It means mostly student agree that the WhatsApp application is flexible. Students like learning using WhatsApp because it can learn anywhere and anytime. So, they are comfortable working on tasks with their own abilities and speed. With this they can also maintain their mood until the end of the task settlement

This is confirmed by the result of interview. From the results of the interview, it was found that several reasons students like learning to use WhatsApp, namely it is easy to understand its use, cost-efficient and supports distance learning anytime and anywhere.

Based on the results of interviews that have been conducted with students, the use of WhatsApp in the learning process can save time and costs. This is in accordance with the conclusion of the interview conducted with student 1 that:

*"Yes I like. Because if there is material sent by the teacher via WA, I just open it via Smartphone. I don't have to come to school with a photocopy again, that's material."*

Based on the results of interviews that have been conducted with students, the use of WhatsApp in the learning process can support distance learning. This is in accordance with the conclusion of the interview that was carried out with student 5 that:

*"Yes, I like it, Miss. Because it's easy to understand how to use it. In my opinion, if I study using WA, I can study anywhere and anytime. I can also send assignments to the teacher via WA without having to go to school. Sending assignments can use VN (voice note) or not, I just type it in WA and then I send it to the teacher."*

### Result of using WhatsApp in Implementing Blended Learning

Table 4. The results of using WhatsApp in student learning

No	Result use WhatsApp	Frequency	
		Yes	No
1	Learning objective are clearly state in each online assignment.	87%	13%
2	The organization of online assignment is easy to follow.	78%	22%
3	The structure of assignments provides a focus for learning to me.	74%	26%
4	Learning outcomes of assignments are stated clearly and concisely.	91%	9%
5	Online and face to face active are planned systematically.	74%	26%
6	Content is appropriate to be taught through WhatsApp.	43%	57%
7	Presentation of content is clear.	83%	17%
8	WhatsApp helps me to assess and enhance my learning.	91%	9%

From this subscale, it shows students' perceptions of the results of using WhatsApp in the application of Blended Learning in learning. The highest frequency of positive responses (91%) in affirmations related to the two statements "Learning outcomes of assignments are stated clearly and concisely/

WhatsApp helps me to assess and enhance my learning". The statement that students most disagree with is "Content is appropriate to be taught through WhatsApp" (43%). It can be concluded that the WhatsApp application with clear learning outcomes they also feel that WhatsApp helps to assess and improve learning.

This is confirmed by the result of interview. From the interview results it was found that students said that the value obtained while using WhatsApp was good and increased. It means the use of WhatsApp is effective and able to support face-to-face learning. The researcher found that most students (5 out of 6) stated that their learning scores increased when studying using WhatsApp. This is in accordance with the conclusions of interviews that have been carried out with students 5:

*"The result of my study, It's good. While learning to use WA, my grades are good."*

## **DISCUSSION**

This study was conducted to investigate the student's perception of the use of WhatsApp to support blended learning in SMPN 1 Motui by conducting observations, distributing questionnaires and interviews that have been described, and supported by documentation. It can be seen based on the 4 aspects adapted from Chang and Fisher (2003) by Aurangzeb (2018), the students showed positive perception.

On the other hand, although WhatsApp provides convenience for its users and the features really support the learning process, the use of WhatsApp at SMPN 1 Motui, especially in class IX, also has advantages and disadvantages. The advantages, WhatsApp can help students in terms of communicating with teachers, conveying information and assisting students in obtaining and collecting assignments. This can happen because the time that teachers and students have in class is limited, causing teachers and students to use WhatsApp as a forum that can maximize the learning process. While the drawback is that not all students at the school can access WhatsApp. This is because some students do not have mobile phones.

Firstly, with regard to access to material through WhatsApp, from the result questionnaire, students state that learning activities can be accessed through the WhatsApp. This statement is strengthened by the results of research conducted by Amry (2014) which says that WhatsApp groups can be a mean of make certain announcements, share ideas and learning resources, and support online discussions. From the interview excerpts, it was found that the WhatsApp application was used in the learning process, among others, as a medium of communication between teachers and students, delivering learning information and receiving/sending assignments by utilizing the features available on the WhatsApp application. In its use, WhatsApp can help students fill out attendance lists, obtain materials, send assignments and study easily remotely anywhere and anytime. Based on the results of questionnaires and interviews and strengthened by documentary evidence, in filling out the attendance list, the teacher gives attendance orders to students then each student fills out the attendance list in the form of writing his name on the list of names who follow the learning process via

WhatsApp. In addition, the material and assignments given by the teacher can be in the form of document files, images, and audio. The material that has been given by the teacher will be read by students and the teacher will give task orders to students then students send the results of their assignments in the form of photos. In addition, students can also send their assignments in the form of a word file. This is reinforced by Pangestika (2018) which reveals that "WhatsApp features used include group chat, photos, videos, voices, messages and documents. The WhatsApp group feature is used by the school to disseminate information to teachers and staff. While the use of group chat by students to share information about learning materials, disseminate information and discuss.

Besides that, the use of WhatsApp in the learning process, there are still obstacles experienced by students including unstable internet network connections and running out of quota. However, there is also a solution to this problem. The first problem is an unstable internet network, as conveyed by Lestari (2021) state that "signal disturbances that occur during online learning will make WhatsApp difficult to access". Through interviews with students, it is known that the solution is to find a place that can stabilize the network or use an H+ (3G) network. The second problem is not having internet quota. This is due to the high cost of buying internet quota, as conveyed by Asrul and Hardianto (2021) state that "the use of internet quota becomes a barrier for students to always be active at the start of online learning." Through interviews with students, it was found out that the solution was to ask friends for a hotspot Wi-Fi and use quotas from the government. This is as KEMENDIKBUD (2020) says that "the limited availability of internet data packages for educators and students has so far been one of the obstacles faced during distance learning. The solution is that the Ministry of Education and Culture and other stakeholders provide internet quota subsidies for students, teachers, students and lecturers every month."

Regarding the aspect of interaction through WhatsApp, from the results of questionnaires and interviews, the use of WhatsApp is its flexible mode of communication which has no time bound freedom. Students can communicate easily with friends or with teachers to ask online materials they don't understand whenever they want. From the problems that have been experienced by students in using WhatsApp, they can foster an attitude of mutual help, meaning that students can give each other a positive attitude. Researcher can conclude that using WhatsApp can increase positive attitudes and make it easier for students to communicate with teachers and increase interaction in learning. This is reinforced by the results of research conducted by Mackay, et al. (2021) which says that "WhatsApp is used to maintain and increase interaction in the learning process. Interaction in the use of WhatsApp occurs in two categories, namely administrative and social. In addition, Familiarity with the tool is easy to use and student feedback is positive."

Regarding the aspect of responding to material via WhatsApp, from the results of questionnaires and interviews, students said that they felt comfortable doing the task until it was finished. Students feel comfortable because they can complete assignments at their own pace and ability by taking advantage of WhatsApp features. On the other hand, they like blended learning using WhatsApp because it is easy to understand, inexpensive and supports distance learning



whenever and wherever they want. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Anugrahana (2020) which revealed its findings, that teachers use WhatsApp facilities as learning media on the grounds that the WhatsApp application is easy to access and operate, practical, easy to understand by students and materials and questions can be easily obtained by students.

The last, with regard to Result of Using WhatsApp, from the results of questionnaires and interviews, students say that they feel more comfortable when working in Blended Learning. Students feel more focused and comfortable when doing online assignments at their own pace so that the results can be stated clearly and concisely. Students also say that the value obtained in learning increased while using WhatsApp. With this, WhatsApp applications are effective in enhancing learning. Other evidence comes from Susilawati and Supriyatno (2020) in their research they found a significant increase in learning outcomes through the use of WhatsApp. They also concluded that through WhatsApp can increase students' learning motivation.

The WhatsApp application is used to support the distance learning process in blended learning. The use of the WhatsApp application in the learning process has both positive and negative sides. The negative side is that there are still obstacles experienced by students in accessing the material, this is because student don't have mobile phone. While the positive side is that its use is effective because teachers can take attendance, share learning materials/tasks to students via WhatsApp. So that the materials and assignments sent by the teacher are stored on their mobile devices and can be accessed easily anywhere and anytime. WhatsApp also supports communication between teachers and students or classmates. This means that students can interact with teachers at any time via WhatsApp. On the other hand, the use of WhatsApp can also improve student learning outcomes. So, the conclusion is that the use of WhatsApp provides several benefits for students including being able to study anywhere and anytime, making it easier for students to get information about learning materials, collecting assignments, facilitating communication with teachers, and improving student learning outcomes.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the respondents in this study gave positive perceptions about the use of WhatsApp as a tool to support blended learning. This can be seen from the student questionnaire, they are comfortable in learning when using WhatsApp as a learning medium. The results of the interview show that the ease that students feel with the WhatsApp feature and also easy to use, easy interaction with teachers, low costs make students comfortable in following the learning process. However, there are also challenges in using WhatsApp including unstable internet network, running out of internet quota and don't have a mobile phone. So, it can be concluded that the use of WhatsApp is a tool that really helps students and supports the blended learning process from a distance where students can learn anywhere and anytime in terms of filling out attendance lists, conveying/receiving information on learning materials, sending assignments, and making it easier for students to learn. communication and increasing interaction with teachers, increasing students' positive attitudes and improving student learning outcomes in class IX of SMP Negeri 1 Motui.

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