



## USING SOCIAL NETWORK AS AN EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT TOOLS A CASE STUDY OF USING WHATSAPP IN PRINCESS NOURAH UNIVERSITY

Dua' Abdalltef Nassar  
Princess Nourah Bint Abdellrahman University  
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA  
[Nassar\\_doua@yahoo.com](mailto:Nassar_doua@yahoo.com)

### Abstract

Nowadays, Social network has explosive growth around the world and especially among adults. This encourages educators to use these technologies as learning tools, and encourage student to participate in online classroom. Students use it to communicate with other colleagues, and share news, courses resources, and ideas. This paper was conducted in fall of 2015 at the college of computer and information system of Princess Nourah Bint Abdullrahman University. The study uses the WhatsApp as a tool to enhance the review courses for 100 students distributed in four sections. The results show that student encouraged to review the course, save studying time, and get higher score than others.

**Keywords:** Social Network, WhatsApp, E-learning.

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last years, the higher education has evolved the technology to get an effective learning. Students were labeled as digital natives, who spent their time using technologies like cell phones, computers, and other tool from digital ages. (Prensky, 2001) From this point, a great emphasis must be placed in using technologies within learning process (Dunn, 2013), and increase the interaction and engagements level between instructors and students. (Laird and Kuh, 2005; Blaschke, Porto & Kurtz, 2010; Jungo, Heiberger & Loken, 2011)

Social media is one of the technologies, which rises within education in or out classrooms. (Pearson, 2010; Seaman & Tinti-Kane, 2013) There were over 80% of faculty who are using social media with at least one account (Person, 2010), and 41% of them use it as a teaching tools. (Seaman and Tinti-Kane, 2013). The emergence of social networks encourage students to be active in learning and research, giving them the opportunity to develop collaboration and communicating skills, and creating a learning environment to be self-directed learners. It forced the instructors to think in a different way for teaching, share ideas and resources with students, and give students feedback about their work.

WhatsApp is one of an instant messaging application used for smart phones. It is superior alternative to SMS messaging. WhatsApp founded to be beneficial way for learning. It increases student participation in face-to-face and distant contexts between students and other students, and instructors (Makoe, 2010; Bere, 2013; Johnson et al., 2015).

This study addressed two main questions about the using social network in the higher education and its effectiveness on the learning process. The use of technology in higher education encourage student to learn and provide an exciting learning environment (Pitler, Hubbell & Kuhn, 2012).



## METHOD

The research study was designed to address two main questions:

- ✓ Can the social Network be used as a tool to enhance and support the learning process?
- ✓ How social network effect the learning process?

This research adopted the qualitative method which used incorporated with use a case study methodology. The case site used in this study is one of the public Saudi universities, named Princess Nourah Bint Abdellrahman. The study done on the department of information system for IS333D course titled Multi-tier application development. Four sections of students were involved in the study as an experimental group. The average number was about 25 students in each section.

Before the end of the fall 2015 semester, a review process starts with students using a WhatsApp application. WhatsApp was chosen because of the publicity of it between students in Saudi Arabia especially at the exams period. To start the review, a coordinator was chosen for every section to build a group contains all the students. The review process took about 10 days. Some chapters were divided into two parts and the others taken as a whole. Every day within the review process, three questions were sent to the four groups (for each section) at 8:00 Pm. The student starts answering questions in different way, using computer, hand writing, or using the WhatsApp chat box. For the first two ways students photo the answers and sent it to me. An evaluation for the answer started when the first answer received. The evaluation depends on sending the correct answers for the questions beside the time needed, the first received is the winner. After reviewing duration completed, the winner group in every section was announced for all.

At the end, different questions were asked for all students in four sections, the coordinator asked questions and collect the answers:

- ✓ Did you benefit from the review process? If yes specify how?
- ✓ Do you think you need along time to study IS333D course before the exam?
- ✓ What is the percentage of your course understanding?
- ✓ Do you like this way to review your courses?

## FINDINGS

The experimental group (100 undergraduate students) used WhatsApp to review IS333D course. 90% of them answered four questions asked when the review process completed. For the first question; did you benefit from the review process? If yes specify how?; different answers were received all of them talking about their benefits. Some answers were chosen. They said:

“Really, I reviewed the course very well, I’m happy to do it before the exam time. It is the first time I did it early”

Student 1

“I learned a lot of things how to take advantage of my time, and what is the mean of time to put the answers....study hard, answer very fast then you are the winner”

Student 2

“I learned how to think, and answer faster than before... this happen when you study hard before you start”

Student 3

The second question was Do you think you need along time to study IS333D course before the exam?, all students said no. One of the comments came with the following:

“ you made this course as drinking a cup of coffee....very easy to study in the exam day “

Student 4



For the third question, which was about the percentage of the course understanding, the average for students was 87%. The final question was if the students prefer this way or not? The answers at most were preferred this way and some student comments were as follows:

“what’s a lovely way we really like it.... Its encourage us to study hard, collaborate with each other to get the right answer on time”

Student 5

“Using WhatsApp for review attracts most of us, it is a valuable tool to use in learning “

Student 6

“We hope all teachers use the same way to review ....we learn a lot”

Student 7

“I like using WhatsApp, please use it all the time.... It make the learning process fun ”

Student 8

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Two questions were considered in conducting this case study research:

- ✓ Question 1: can we use the social Network as a tool to enhance and support the learning process?
- ✓ Question 2: How social network affect the learning process?

Regarding using social networks as a tool to enhance and support the learning process (Fusch, 2011; Blaschke, 2014), the findings and students final exam results confirmed that it is one of the best and important ways to be used. Researcher presented that social media have many benefit and affect the learning process which is approved in our study (Blaschke , 2014) .The benefits are:

- ✓ Increased the communication and collaboration skills between students (when they work as groups). (Barhoumi & Rossi, 2013; Blaschke , 2014)
- ✓ Student learned how to make a time management and get result in a shortest way.
- ✓ Using social media increased student’s motivation and encouraged them to study hard (Pitler, Hubbell & Kuhn, 2012), reviewed in early time, and get a higher scores in the exam.
- ✓ It enhanced the interaction between students and instructors (Gleason, 2012; Blaschke , 2014).

The use of WhatsApp, provides students enhance the education process. It has a positive reflection on the students, which support them to share information and collaborate with each other.

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