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## **Contours of whatsapp culture among the college students of Jaipur: A Sociological Analysis**

**Dr. Binu Singh**

Assistant Professor(Visiting), Department of Architecture,  
The Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara

### ***ABSTRACT***

*The dictum man is a social being can be redefined as 'man is a cultural being'. In the words of MacIver and Page, culture is "the realm of styles, of values, of emotional attachment, of intellectual adventures". Whatsapp messenger is a cross-platform instant messaging application that allows users to exchange text, images, videos and audio files. In addition it provides group chatting and location sharing option. So, it has become a major platform for youth to be connected to society and whole world. It has become the most effective medium for the flow of information and ideas. Since there is lot of going on with the help of this app Whatsapp is defining new lines of culture of sharing messages of greeting festivals, outing with friends and family also daily happening of life. This paper analyses new contours of whatsapp culture followed by the college students of jaipur . The present study is an attempt to know the impact of whatsapp on their cultural values with reference to college girls of Jaipur, India. This empirical study has been conducted upon 100 respondents and questionnaire sent through whatsapp was used as tool for data collection.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Whatsapp, culture, chatrooms, social media, Display Pic, Status*

**INTRODUCTION:** The world is every changing due to the advancement in the realm of science and technology. These days it is hard to escape from presence of technology. Prior to all technologies there were two main ways in which people communicate using media. The first one was public broadcast media such as television,

radio and newspapers. The other one was dyadic communication. Technology is evolving at a very fast rate, and what most people did not even think could be real a few years ago, is now become a reality. Whatsapp is one of these changes in technology that is commonly used on android mobiles. Whatsapp came in 2009 and in



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May 2014, it crossed 50 million monthly active users in India, which is also its largest country by the number of monthly active users.<sup>2</sup> In October 2014, whatsapp crossed 70 million active users in India. About 96.38 Lakh users are accessing Internet through mobile. This application is available for iphones, anroid, windows phone. It is popular because there is no cost message friends and family other than the Internet data plan users already have on their phones. New data plans like Jio made Internet on phone more popular. As according to Times of India, there are 100 million subscribers till April , 2017. With whatsapp messenger, communication through mobile phones has become easier, faster and cheaper. It is less expensive as compared to the normal phone messaging. An individual can chat with friends and family overseas through whatsapp without having to incur global SMS charges. The provision and access to learning material anywhere, anytime, and in various formats has potential to enhance their cultural values and learning capacities about things around them. Keeping the above in mind it is necessary to analyze the contours of cultural life the college students are enjoying through online media i.e. Whatsapp

#### OBJECTIVES:

- The main aim of the study is to examine usage capacity of Whatsapp

messenger among the college girls of Jaipur.

- The next objective of this paper is to investigate how it is enhancing their cultural values. Also to see how they are able to reinforce the new ideology due to intensity of new values attached to their daily lives.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE :** Whatsapp is an application of social media therefore literary review of this paper can also be covered herewith.

**Cox&Rethman(2011)** Social media can be defined as forms of electronic communication through which user can interact among people freely and can share, exchange and discuss the Information, ideas, personal message and other content between each-other such as using a multimedia messages, personal words, pictures, video and audio, and utilizes online platform only by connecting to the Internet.

**Dr.Neelamalar&P.Chitra,AnnaUniversity (2009)** They conducted a study to identify the issues regarding the youth's social networking usage and the resultant impact on their social interactions. The sample size was 100 [50 teens 17-19yrs and 50 youths 20-22yrs]. The findings of the study include 98 % number of people who are the



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members in social networking sites in which 68% are strangers, 7% are those who have very intimate relationship with their online friends (strangers) and 20% are good friends with the virtual strangers. Thus it is a positive indication that Indian youth are not only techno-savvy and socially active, but they also possess social consciousness.

(Oberst, 2010). Schill (2011) states that the social media sites encourage negative behaviors for teen students such as procrastination (catching up with friends), and they are more likely to drink and drug. However, every day, many students are spending countless hours immersed in social media, such as Facebook, MySpace, World of Warcraft, or Sim City. At first glance this may seem like a waste of time; however it also helps students to develop important knowledge and social skills, and be active citizens who create and share content. At present, whether social media is favorable or unfavorable, many students utilize these sites on a daily basis. As social media sites continue to grow in popularity it is our belief that technology is a vital part of today's student success equation

**Dr. Avni Maniar and Ms. Annal Modi university of Baroda, Gujarat (2013)** A mini research was conducted on 30 college going students of Baroda. The findings of this study revealed that high majority of them possess smart phones and Giga byte Internet plan. All of them used Whatsapp for

chatting with their contacts. They also used this application for sharing audio and video files. The purpose behind using this app was keeping connectivity between their friends and relatives. Hence, this application is popular amongst in users.

**Karen church and Rodrigo de Oliveira, Munich German (2013)** were conducted telephonic research to explore those factors which influence the acceptance, usage and growing popularity of such MIM application rather than SMS. For this research, various countries are involved including Finland, Norway, Japan, UK and the USA and the finding of the research shows significant impacts of this upon the people of these countries and the reasons for migration to such MIM applications. The nature and intent of WhatsApp messages tend to be more social, informal and conversational in nature. While SMS is seen more privacy preserving, more formal and generally more reliable evidence that shows that no technology is a substitute for this.

**Baran (2010)** Study shows that social networking sites are quite appropriate for the harmony of the teachers and students. Such tool can allow them to share knowledge in formal education context.

**Tsai and Lin (2012)** suggest that Internet addiction is an important concern among adolescents. In their study of 700 Taiwanese high school students, 88 were deemed Internet addicts according to the Internet



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Addiction Scale which conducted for high school students in Taiwan (IAST). Current research indicates that ego-identity achievement in middle school students is negatively related to pathological and extreme Internet use. This research says that these students are getting addicted to internet which is the serious problem for the adolescents in present age.

**METHOD OF STUDY:** Participants consisted of 100 college students of renowned girls college of Jaipur, rajasthan College. A convenient purposive random sampling method was used to acquire the sample. Among the participants, 90% were between the ages of 18-23. Of the college students sampled, 61% were urban while 39% were of rural background. Volunteer students from various classes helped in completing the study. These volunteers were supposed to collect the phone numbers of those students who had Whatsapp messenger on their phone. Random selection of classroom was done to collect the sample. The soft copy of written questions was created to collect the data. Questions in the survey included the following areas: demographics, extent of usage of social media and effect on cultural values. The questionnaire was send to the respondents through Whatsapp messenger and expected a reply through the same media. The questions on the instrument were

designed to satisfy the research questions as set forth in the introduction of this study. Therefore, the questionnaire was considered to have content validity.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION:** The research indicated that college students love to send and receive messages from their family and friends. The situation is like they live and breathe through these virtual communication medium. It can be inferred from the fact that 90% of responded to the questionnaire sent through whatsapp. The cultural norms and values makes us who we are, what we feel connected to and how we behave. “The day starts with whatsapp and ends with Whatsapp”, said one of the respondents. This is not for one respondent but with most of them(86 %). As per Indian culture we love to greet our elders, friends and family, so the new way of doing the same is through Whatsapp (87%). They are sending good morning and good night messages on daily routine and during festivals they find it the best way to show their feelings and gesture of wishing through Whatsapp (95 %). Their Display Picture is again the best way of showing their daily happenings in life (92 %). The messaging is not limited to friends but to family and neighbourhood too. The whatsapp is now part of their life. they are spending more time on whatsapp.

Hours Spend on Whatsapp (total)	Percentage
More than 3 hours	71%



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More than 6 hours	25 %
More than 9 hours	10%

When asked how many times they log on to Whatsapp

Frequency of log in (per day)	Percentage
20 times a day	69 %
40 times a day	15%
More than 40 times	16%

When it comes to sharing content, they love to chat in person, in groups, love to send videos of various issues like hilarious, social issues, enjoy sharing cultural vibes and festivity and latest happening in society. So, it can be said that Whatsapp messenger is helping to retain our family bond and in fact made the bond more affectionate.

Content shared Through Whatsapp	Percentage
Chatting (individual and group)	79%
Sharing image files GM, GN and Festivals	85 %
Sharing content on cultural diversity	79 %
Sharing content on latest happening	89 %
Changing Display pic as per festivals and latest happening in life	80 %
Keep the location mode on	67 %

. One of the aspects of culture is social interaction between people. So Whatsapp messenger has taken a big role in social interaction. There is no need to ask the person about what they are doing, their status of display picture depicts and a quick message can bring the latest updates. This leads to less 'real-life' or physical contact. The media provides a medium through which pre-existing sentiments can gain greater clarity, expression and meaning. It provides a medium for the kind of interaction which can throw up new ideas, new symbols, new rituals, and new identities. The world has come closer with the possibility of interaction anywhere in the world just a few click away. If they happen to meet or interact with new friends and ask for contact information, the likely response would be: *Are you on Whatsapp?*



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Interaction with	Percentage
Friends	60%
Family	60%
Acquaintances	40%
College update groups	60%

Whatsapp messenger is excellent avenue for introverted people to find a comfortable setting to interact.

Questions	Percentage of respondents who said yes
Are you able to express things more clearly on messenger which you cannot say face-to face with friends and family	85 %
Are you able to resolve issues with friends and family by communicating through messenger	70 %

So, it can be said that Whatsapp messenger is able to help and improve face to face communication. It is allowing the youth of jaipur to build trust, clearly articulate ideas and minimize misunderstanding. It is transforming traditional method and revolutionizing the way we communicate with one another.

But will it replace face-to-face communication? Answer is no, it is just a cherry added to the cake. The sociability of girls of jaipur is very good and this is just a added advantage to their social interaction. Whats app messenger often becomes a place for designating intimate relationships (ties of kinship, close friends, couples). It works like fictive kin where many people come to be seen as cousins (even though no biologically

related) in the tradition of extend families and caste. So it can be used as the idiom to express how far these girls have travelled on this scale of intimacy. But to bring this intimacy level there is way of official verification. In the study, it was found that relatively close and intimate communications took place on whatsapp. On the other hand, as the most public platform, is the place where family and kinship ties are consciously performed to audience of non family contacts. For instance, a Status update on messenger of an engagement is usually followed by many comments and replies from family members, even though all of them have already sent congratulatory wishes via phone calls or in face to face situation before posting.



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**CONCLUSION:** Whats app messenger is becoming popular and effective what of communication among the college girls of jaipur. To be updated in life means to be on Whats app and other social media sites. It is a supplementary to enjoy the cultural vibes and social interaction. Social media also

offer new and innovative ways to communicate with other individuals in a quick manner. The brief conclusion can be clearer by the cartoon below.



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