

## Using facebook and whatsapp to leverage learner participation and transform pedagogy at the open university of Indonesia

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### Abstrak

Facebook (FB) and WhatsApp (WA) have become the “communication portal” for social networking, which has rapidly transformed the way people communicate and stay connected. From an educational perspective, social networking sites have received ambiguous review. Some studies have shown that the use of FB is becoming more widespread in language learning and it can be an effective tool. FB is not only easy to use, but it also helps encourage autonomous learning within a social environment for students and puts control for learning into the students’ have. This article focuses on the social netwotking site, FB, WA application within the context of UT. It attempts to shed light on an information-sharing activity conducted via online discussion using FB and WA groups and involving distance learning students. This study investigated student’s participation in the online discussion and their feedback on the use of FB’s and WA’s forums as the platform for the activity. FB and WA were adopted for supporting an online tutorial at the Open University of Indonesia with a view to highten tutor-student and per-based participation, and enhance pedagogical delivery and inclusive learning in formal and informal spaces. The findings suggest FB and WA transformed pedagogy by fostering social constructivist environments for tutor-student and peer –based co-contruction of knowledge. The teacher’s role was transformed from an instructor to a facilitator and mentor providing guidance on demand. Student roles were also transformed from information receivers to information generators, collaborators, information organizer/seekers/givers, critical thinkers and group leaders. However, the challenges of using Facebook and WhatsApp included tutor’s resentment of the merging of academic and family life occasioned by WhatsApp consultations after hours.