



ISSN 2278 – 0211 (Online)

Regulating Content for Effective Communication: A Case of WhatsApp Group Administrators in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of regulating WhatsApp group content on effective communication. The study was guided by Kurt Lewin's Gatekeeping theory. A case study research design was used. The study population comprised all the WhatsApp group administrators in Nairobi County. Convenience sampling was used to identify WhatsApp group administrators who were available and willing to participate in the study. The researcher interviewed one WhatsApp group administrator from each of the 17 constituencies in Nairobi County, totaling a sample size of 17 respondents. Data were collected using in-depth interviews. After the completion of data collection, qualitative data were coded and analyzed for themes and sub-themes. Finally, the researcher made possible and plausible explanations of the findings. Study findings revealed that most of the study respondents were WhatsApp group administrators of family, friends, class, and church groups. These groups were mainly for sharing information, uniting members, and fundraising. Family and friends' WhatsApp groups were open to a variety of information. Members were allowed to discuss each other's well-being and share religious, political, entertaining, birthday, and congratulatory messages. All church groups only allowed members to share religious information, while in class WhatsApp groups, teachers and parents were allowed to share information on students' well-being and academic activities. Insults, vulgar language, and pornographic information were unacceptable WhatsApp group content. Written rules were used to regulate WhatsApp group content. The rules were often re-shared when a member posted unacceptable content. The administrator further contacted the defiant member to point out the mistake, warn and request the deletion of the message. Implementation of WhatsApp group regulations led to effective communication among members. This study recommended that WhatsApp group administrators should pin group regulations for easy access.

Keywords: Regulating, WhatsApp group content, effective communication, administrators

1. Introduction

Communication is essential in maintaining healthy relationships among people. Through communication, people can share ideas, opinions, and expectations effectively. Recently, new communication tools have been used due to technological advancements (Doğan, 2019). People use technology for communication because it has come in handy in facilitating the smooth transmission of information (Alhadlaq, 2016). With the invention of internet and mobile communications, the nature of communication has changed significantly over the past few decades (Deane et al., 2016).

WhatsApp is a communication technology. It is a smartphone application that functions on nearly all types of devices and operating systems, enabling various means of individual and group communication (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014). The application has become the most popular messaging platform worldwide (Jayanthi & Sheshasaayee, 2015). It has more than a billion users and is rated as the most frequently downloaded application in more than 127 countries (Aharony, 2015; Cohavi, 2013). Cathcart (2021) estimated the exchange of 100 billion messages on the WhatsApp platform per day, and more than 100 million voice calls are made through this application (Tzuk, 2013). WhatsApp is free and easy to use. It offers messaging and calls in a simple, safe, and reliable way. The operation scheme makes the app accessible to various people of different ages and backgrounds. WhatsApp enables communication with anyone who possesses a Smartphone that has been installed with the application and an active internet connection (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014).

Technically, WhatsApp is viewed as a social network application that allows people to access information rapidly (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014). The App allows users to send and receive information, including text, emoticons, images, voice notes, videos, and weblinks, while offering users a relatively high level of privacy (Addi-Racah & Yemini, 2018). The application also enables the participants to receive an alert for each message sent or to mute the incoming alerts for a duration of 8 hours, a day, or a whole week (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014).

One of the unique features of WhatsApp is the option to create a group and communicate within its boundaries (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014). WhatsApp groups are formed to communicate with people who share common interests. The

app enables users to communicate asynchronously in groups that are created spontaneously or those that exist over a long period (Seufert et al., 2016). According to Seufert et al., group communication is a conversation of a fixed group of users who can equally participate in the dialogue. Group-based communication has adopted instant messaging, and people use WhatsApp to keep in contact with family and friends, as well as for information, entertainment, and academic work (Fernandez-Robins et al., 2019; Irfan & Dhimmarr, 2019; Figueroa et al., 2018; Sultan, 2014). Similarly, Baishya and Maheshwari (2019) noted that WhatsApp not only helps people to communicate but has also provided a platform for people to exchange information relating to academics, news, politics, and so forth.

A WhatsApp group administrator is the person who creates a group for discussion and sharing information by adding or deleting members (Arora & Singh, 2022; Venter et al., 2020). Every chat group has one or more group administrators who control the participation of members (Arora & Singh, 2022). In a WhatsApp group setting, the administrator does not have prior knowledge of what will be published until it is shared in the group. In addition, the administrator does not have the power to regulate, moderate or censor the content before it is posted in the group (Arora & Singh, 2022). However, administrators can be considered responsible for all content posted, even if it originated from other group members, with or without the administrator(s) approval (Sadlier & Harrion, 2019). According to Venter et al. (2020), in cases where unacceptable content is shared in the group, the administrator would need to act decisively by commenting on the inappropriateness of the post, deleting the post, or removing the offending member from the group. Further, WhatsApp group administrators should regularly post guidelines on the group chat for the members to read and implement.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Gatekeeping Theory

Kurt Lewin (1890-1947), a German psychologist and pioneer in social psychology, coined the word 'Gatekeeping' in his studies. Lewin first instituted the gatekeeping theory in 1943. Gatekeeping is the process through which information is filtered for dissemination. The gatekeeper decides which information should move to the group or individual and which one should not. Through the decision-making process, the gatekeeper removes unwanted, insensible, and controversial information (Shoemaker et al., 2017). According to Roberts (2005), when information is unfiltered, it will create community-based media, leading to the spread of rumor and last-minute political ambush. Therefore, gatekeeping helps to control society or a group by letting information on the right path (Shoemaker et al., 2017).

Many events occur in the world every day, but only a few of them become news items. In the traditional news media, editors play a vital role in deciding the news items that will be published and those which will not (Shoemaker et al., 2017). Various media outlets, therefore, have their own rules, ethics, and policies that guide the decision on the news stories to be published and in which manner (Lighare, 2019).

Figure 1 shows how the many available messages are reduced in number and transformed into fewer messages according to the gatekeeper's decision.

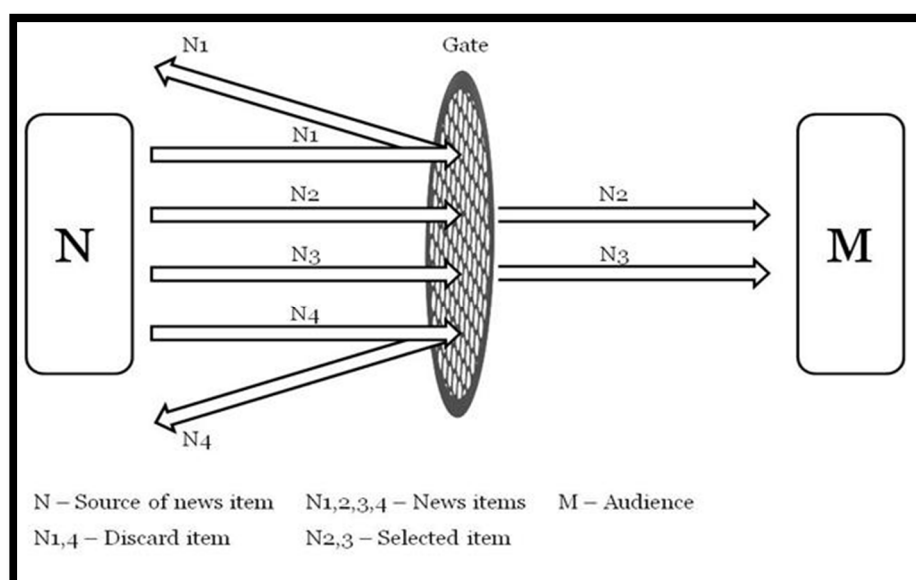


Figure 1: Gatekeeping Model

Note: Adapted from 'Gatekeeping Theory,' in *Businesstopia* by Shraddha Bajrachrya, January 6, 2018.
<https://www.businesstopia.net/mass-communication/gatekeeping-theory>

In figure 1, N is the news source. N2 and N3 are selected news. N1 and N4 are discarded news items that could be unimportant or uninteresting. The audience, therefore, only gets to read, listen and/or watch N2 and N3 as the other two (N1 and N4) are not selected by the editor. M is the audience.

The gatekeeping theory is ideal for this study because it seeks to examine how quintillions of information are filtered into fewer messages by a gatekeeper. The gatekeeper selects information according to relevance and importance

before it gets to the audience. Contrary to the gatekeeping theory, in a WhatsApp group setting, the administrator does not have prior knowledge of what will be published until it is shared in the group. In addition, the administrator does not have the power to regulate, moderate or censor content before it is posted in the group (Arora & Singh, 2022). This study, therefore, will examine how administrators, who act as gatekeepers, moderate shared content in WhatsApp groups.

3. Literature Review

3.1. WhatsApp Group Uses and Content Shared

WhatsApp groups are formed to communicate with people who share common interests, and members can equally participate. People use WhatsApp to keep in contact with family and friends, as well as for information, entertainment, and academic work (Fernandez-Robins et al., 2019; Irfan & Dhimmarr, 2019; Figueroa et al., 2018; Sultan, 2014). Similarly, Baishya and Maheshwari (2019) noted that WhatsApp not only helps people to communicate but has also provided a platform for people to exchange information relating to academics, news, politics, and so forth.

In the school context, the use of social media such as Facebook, e-mail lists, or websites is common. Many schools employ digital means, and some establish their own social networking site through which they can create groups to connect with parents, share learning materials, and post updates about events (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Olmstead, 2013). On the same note, Bouhnik and Deshen (2014) stated that class WhatsApp groups are used for four main purposes:

- Communicating with students,
- Nurturing a social atmosphere,
- Creating dialogue, and
- Encouraging sharing among students and as a learning platform

Baishya and Maheshwari (2019) explored the uses of WhatsApp groups in the education context. Findings indicated that in the field of academics, WhatsApp plays an essential role in the exchange of information regarding studies and academic events. Regarding the content of WhatsApp group chats from two departments of Sikkim University, findings showed that the groups shared formal and informal content. The thematic content analysis of the chats revealed that the conversations in the groups were classified under six major themes, namely:

- Regular academics,
- Exams and evaluation,
- Wishes and greetings,
- Extracurricular activities,
- Entertainment and
- Other information
- Information on regular academics included:
 - Texts of class-related information,
 - Sharing of notes, materials,
 - Journals and articles,
 - Class timing,
 - Registration,
 - Admission notice,
 - Discussion questions, etc

The theme of examination and evaluation included texts on exam information and routine, results, term papers, presentations, syllabus, marks, assignment submission dates, seasonal topics, practical dates, form fill-up, and so forth. Extracurricular activities had texts such as Ethnic day celebration, picnic planning, voting, election, annual fest, farewell discussion, awareness program, mental health day preparation, the election of a departmental representative, and so forth. Entertainment chats included jokes, advertisements, music, photos, videos, holidays, and food discussions. Wishes and greetings included texts related to wishes like good morning, good night, friendship day wishes, independence day wishes and sharing pictures, congratulatory messages, children's day wishes, and various festival wishes, including: Diwali, Durga Puja, Christmas, Eid, and so forth. Other information included texts on social issues such as the Gorkha land movement, political issues, contact numbers, seminar information, non-academic scholarship/ fellowship, university bus timing, and so forth.

Among people with different cultural backgrounds, namely, the alumni of the Ship for Southeast Asia and Japanese Youth Program (SSEAYP) batch 89, Turistiati (2020) analyzed the use of WhatsApp groups as a medium for maintaining intercultural friendships. This research used a case study approach, and data were collected through direct observation of the texts, pictures, emoticons, and videos shared in the WhatsApp group. Findings showed that the respondents exchanged information about their personal and families' conditions, expressed birthday wishes, congratulated each other's achievements in studies or works, congratulated religious celebrations, fundraised for certain events, and coordinated reunions.

Jailobaev et al. (2021) investigated the role that WhatsApp played in research. Two studies were conducted in two countries. The first study was conducted on health care services for children in Abkhazia. The second study was conducted on poverty reduction in rural parts of Kyrgyzstan. Results indicated that WhatsApp group content comprised emojis, which group members widely used to express their emotions and support each other. In fewer instances, group members also shared humorous videos and infographics and made jokes. Sharing audios, pictures, and videos from the field made the process visual for all team members and allowed them to understand the data collection process more deeply.

In Turkey, Kocak and Vergiveren (2019) conducted a study to reveal the contents and practices of extensive use of group-based communication in the context of genders and X, Millennials, and Z generations' behaviours. A questionnaire survey was conducted among 633 individuals having a range of backgrounds in Turkey. In the context of contents, findings revealed that 73.6% of participants declared that the most frequently shared contents were about professional subjects, both educational or business areas, followed by personal issues and events (55.1%), chain-messages (caricatures, videos, photos, celebration messages) (52.2%) and gossips (44.5%).

A study on improving communication efficiency within an orthopaedic surgery team using WhatsApp smartphone messaging was carried out by Ellanti et al. (2017). Findings indicated that the vast majority of messages (92.7%) were related to patient care. This included updates on new admissions, results of investigations, the progress of patients, and their treatment options. Further (4.9%) messages were administrative, dealing with staffing and scheduled changes, and so forth, while the remaining (2.4%) messages were related to academic activities, such as teaching and research meetings. A total of 3.5% multimedia messages were sent, including images of radiographs and wounds.

3.2. Mechanisms of Controlling WhatsApp Content for Effective Communication

With the emergence of the Internet, social networking platforms, and smartphones, the focus of gatekeeping shifted from traditional media editors, producers, reporters, and directors to the public (the gated) (Brems et al., 2017). Information does not remain in the hands of a specific group of individuals, and conventional gatekeepers no longer have as much control over the content as they had in the past (Bennett, 2004). In the digital era, anyone accessing the internet can produce and disseminate content on social media by using traditional content as a reference, package it using digital media and release it on the internet without understanding the quality of the content used. (Brems et al., 2017; Sulianta, & Supriatna, 2019)). According to Sulianta and Supriatna, most people make and launch digital information by just digitizing it without considering other important factors. As a result, there is an abundance of non-quality content that does not have a positive contribution to society.

Further, with the development of new communication technologies, the nature of communication channels, production, and sharing of information has changed (Pałka-Suchojad, 2021; Potnis & Tahamtan, 2021). For instance, every day, millions of users across the world seamlessly upload and share quintillions of information in the form of videos, text, audio, and images on social media. This high volume of different information shared with high velocity on social media leads to 'information overload' (Tang et al., 2019), making it challenging for users to benefit from relevant information. To make users better process and benefit from the high volume of variant information, it is now possible for anyone to be a gatekeeper (Potnis & Tahamtan, 2021). Consumers and producers of information often take over the role of gatekeepers in deciding what is worth publishing and sharing (Pałka-Suchojad, 2021).

In a WhatsApp group setting, the administrator does not have prior knowledge of what will be published until it is shared in the group. In addition, the administrator does not have the power to regulate, moderate or censor the content before it is posted on the group (Arora & Singh, 2022). However, in cases where unacceptable content is shared in the group, the administrator would need to act decisively by commenting on the inappropriateness of the post, deleting the post, or removing the offending member from the group. Further, Venter et al. (2020) recommended that WhatsApp group administrators should regularly post guidelines on the group chat for the members to read and implement.

An analysis on the use of WhatsApp groups as a medium for maintaining intercultural friendships among people with different cultural backgrounds, namely, the alumni of the Ship for Southeast Asia and Japanese Youth Program (SSEAYP) batch 89, was conducted by Turistiati (2020). Findings revealed that to maintain their friendship, the WhatsApp group members implicitly agreed to an unwritten rule that they must respect each other and be tolerant and open-minded. They also agreed that topics related to politics and religion were not to be posted and discussed in the group, except for greetings on religious occasions. In addition, humor that caused unnecessary laughter and pictures and videos that were pornographic or demeaning to women would not be posted in the group. Also, the discussion about football was not to be too deep to avoid fanaticism with certain teams or players, which would result in division or enmity among the group members.

Baishya and Maheshwari (2019) conducted a study whose last objective was to determine the influence of a teacher's presence in a WhatsApp group conversation. The outcomes of the study revealed that when a teacher was a part of any academic WhatsApp group, the communication became more formal and restricted. Students did not text much; thus, there was no information overload. The presence of the teacher in the group also reduced conflict among classmates because they had to behave and respect the teacher.

Using a case study research design, Mhindu (2020) sought to establish the success, challenges, and prospects of using the WhatsApp platform for teaching and learning during COVID-19 in Zimbabwe. Findings revealed that some WhatsApp group members abused their privilege of being in the group to communicate issues that were irrelevant to the purpose of the group. Among the irrelevant posts highlighted by the participants were religious, political, and pornographic materials. From the responses, it was clear that the group administrators were not strict on disruptive elements, and that is why some members continued to send irrelevant posts. To improve the use of WhatsApp for teaching and learning, one respondent suggested that ground rules should be set to control the behavior of members so that they keep to the group purpose. In addition, members should be made aware of the consequences of breaking ground rules, such as removing unruly elements from the group. It was further noted that if the suggestions given above were followed, WhatsApp group communication for academic purposes would be very successful.

Attalla et al. (2020) conducted a study among staff at the medical and health life science cluster, Management and Science University, Malaysia, to determine their reflections regarding WhatsApp usage for organizational communication. Findings showed that to ensure the effectiveness of communication through WhatsApp, the organization should put

specific announced rules for the time of usage and content of messages. Further, the staff should be trained on the responsible usage of the platform.

4. Methodology

A case study research design was used to examine the effect of regulating WhatsApp group content on effective communication. This study was carried out in Nairobi County, Kenya. According to Conversocial (2021), Kenya is the country with the highest WhatsApp penetration (97%), followed by South Africa (96%), Nigeria (95%), Argentina (93%), and Malaysia (92%). Further, Nairobi is a cosmopolitan and multicultural city that has the second-fastest internet in Kenya, with a mobile upload speed of 13.27 Mbps (Oluwole, 2021). Nairobi County is divided into 17 constituencies, namely: Westlands, Dagoretti North, Dagoretti South, Langata, Kibra, Kasarani, Roysambu, Starehe, Ruaraka, Mathare, Embakasi North, Embakasi East, Embakasi South, Embakasi West, Embakasi Central, Makadara and Kamukunji (Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission [IEBC], 2013). All the constituencies in Nairobi were included, such that the findings of the study formed a representative section of the entire country.

The population of this study comprised all the WhatsApp group administrators in Nairobi County. Of importance to note is that the researcher found no official statistics on the number of WhatsApp groups and WhatsApp group administrators in Nairobi County. The target population was WhatsApp group administrators who were creators of a group(s) and were 36 years and above in Nairobi County. A report on the Kenyan social media landscape: trends and emerging narratives, 2020 by Wamuyu (2020) showed that WhatsApp is the most used social media among people who are 36 years old and above.

Convenience sampling was used to identify WhatsApp group administrators who were available and willing to participate in the study. The researcher interviewed one WhatsApp group administrator from each of the 17 constituencies in Nairobi County, totaling a sample size of 17 respondents. Data were collected using in-depth interviews. After the completion of data collection, qualitative data were coded and analyzed for themes and sub-themes. Finally, the researcher made possible and plausible explanations of the findings.

5. Findings and Discussion

5.1. Demographic Information

The majority of the respondents were females. This indicates that a great number of females are WhatsApp group administrators. In terms of age, most of the WhatsApp group administrators ranged between 36-39 years, while minorities were between 40-49 years and 60-69 years. The age of the study respondents shows that they were all adults. In addition, all the respondents were married and were WhatsApp group administrators of 3-5 groups. This indicates that people communicate for a variety of reasons.

5.2. Categories of WhatsApp Groups Formed

Most of the study respondents are administrators of family, friends, school, and church WhatsApp groups. Family and friends WhatsApp groups are mainly formed for fundraising, sharing information, uniting members, and coordinating reunions. School WhatsApp groups enable teachers and parents to discuss students' wholistic well-being, while church WhatsApp groups are created for religious and welfare purposes.

Findings of this study revealed that the majority of the respondents were administrators of family, friends, school, and church WhatsApp groups, respectfully. These groups were mainly for sharing information, uniting members, and fundraising. In line with these study findings, Fernandez-Robins et al. (2019), Irfan and Dhimmar (2019), Figueroa et al. (2018), and Sultan (2014) stated that group-based communication has adopted instant messaging, and people use WhatsApp to keep in contact with family and friends, as well as for information, entertainment, and academic work. Similarly, a study by Turistiati (2020) revealed that the purpose of creating the alumni of SSEAYP Batch '89 WhatsApp group was to:

- Maintain an intercultural friendship,
- Share personal and family conditions,
- Congratulate on birthdays, religious events, and wedding anniversaries,
- Share achievements in studies or works,
- Send invitations to various events and
- Coordinate occasions such as reunions

5.3. Acceptable WhatsApp Group Content

In most of the family WhatsApp groups, information on members' welfare, birthday wishes, and religious and congratulatory messages are predominantly acceptable content. However, respondent (8) said:

My family WhatsApp group is open to all information. We can share information on personal, career, or professional life, birthdays, politics, and so forth. The group is very liberal in terms of content because members want to be together as a family and know how everyone is fairing (Participant 8).

On the same note, respondent (6) said:

In both nuclear and extended family WhatsApp groups, we seek advice from one another and share welfare, political and religious information. However, when we share political information, we do not go to the extreme by being mad with a certain political candidate (Participant 6).

Similar to family WhatsApp groups, most of the friends' groups allow members to discuss each other's well-being and share political, religious, and entertaining messages. However, in all the church groups, members are only allowed to post and discuss topics related to church activities and members' welfare. While in class WhatsApp groups, teachers and parents are allowed to share information on students' academic performance, assignments, discipline, motivation, and registration for the national examination.

This study revealed that most of the family and friends' WhatsApp groups were open to various information. Members were allowed to discuss each other's well-being and share religious, political, entertaining, birthday, and congratulatory messages. This finding is in tandem with that of Turistiati (2020), who found that members of the alumni of SSEAYP Batch '89 WhatsApp group were allowed to exchange greetings, information about their personal and families' conditions, express birthday wishes, and congratulatory messages. However, all church and class WhatsApp groups were restrictive regarding the content members could share. Baishya and Maheshwari (2019) indicated that in the field of academics, WhatsApp plays a very important role in the exchange of information regarding studies and academic events. Probably, church and class WhatsApp groups restrict content that can be shared with the intention to make members focus on the group purpose.

5.4. Unacceptable WhatsApp Group Content

All the respondents asserted that insults, vulgar language, and pornographic information are unacceptable in all WhatsApp groups. For example, respondent (12) said, *'Sexual content is unacceptable, especially where parents and children belong in the same WhatsApp group.'* Further, in some family WhatsApp groups, political information is unacceptable because it can split members along political lines. *'In my family WhatsApp group, we do not share political content because we realized it is breaking the family apart. In the past, members who had divergent political views were getting emotional,'* said participant (17). Members of class WhatsApp groups were not allowed to share advertisements, and political and religious information, while unacceptable content in church WhatsApp groups was unreligious information.

Findings of this study revealed that insults, vulgar language, and pornographic information were termed unacceptable content. Topics related to politics were unacceptable in some of the family WhatsApp groups because they were believed to cause division among members. Members of class and church WhatsApp groups were not allowed to post and discuss content not related to academics and religion, respectively. These findings are in agreement with those of Turistiati (2020), which revealed that to maintain friendship among people with different cultural backgrounds, topics related to politics and religion were not to be posted and discussed among the alumni of SSEAYP Batch '89 WhatsApp group. In addition, humor that caused unnecessary laughter and pictures and videos that were pornographic or demeaning to women was unacceptable. Posting and discussing football games was to be avoided because it could trigger fanaticism with certain teams or players, resulting in division or enmity among members.

5.5. Regulation of WhatsApp Group Content

Most WhatsApp groups have written rules that are often re-shared when a member shares unacceptable content. In such instances, the administrator contacts the unruly member to inform him/her about the offensive content posted. The defiant member is then warned against repeating the same mistake and told to pull down the content. All respondents also stated that they are usually reluctant to remove offending members from the group due to various reasons. For example, respondent (3) said, *'I have often seen offending members apologize and delete unacceptable content, without my intervention, when they realize their mistake.'*

Respondent (1) said:

In the men's church WhatsApp group, I don't remove members who post unacceptable content because it's like judging someone. In church, we are taught to forgive one another and live by example. Instead, I send a personal message informing the member that he has posted unacceptable content, which he should pull down (Participant 1).

On the same note, respondent (5) said:

When someone sends unacceptable content in the WhatsApp groups, I don't remove the member from the group because we need the person. However, I can remove a member who pays no heed to warnings given in the past and continuously posts offensive information (Participant 5).

The study showed that most of the WhatsApp groups had written rules that were often re-shared when a member posted unacceptable content. Further, results revealed that whenever unacceptable content was shared, the administrator contacted the defiant member to point out the mistake and request deletion of the message. The member was also warned against repeating the same mistake. In line with this study finding, Attalla et al. (2020), Mhindu (2021), and Venter et al. (2020) recommended that to ensure effective communication among members of a WhatsApp group, administrators should:

- Set and regularly post guidelines in the group chat for the members to read and implement, and
- Create awareness of the consequences of breaking the ground rules, such as removing unruly members from the group

Venter et al. (2020) noted that in cases where unacceptable content is shared, the administrator would need to act decisively by commenting on the inappropriateness of the content, deleting the post, or removing the offending member from the group. Contrary to Venter et al. assertion, this study's findings revealed that most of the WhatsApp group administrators were reluctant to remove defiant members from the group. Probably the WhatsApp group administrators are understanding, patient and accommodative.

6. Conclusion

This study revealed that most of the respondents were administrators of family, friends, school, and church WhatsApp groups, respectfully. Family and friends' WhatsApp groups were open to a variety of information. Members were allowed to discuss each other's well-being and share religious, political, entertaining, birthday, and congratulatory messages. However, all church and class WhatsApp groups were restrictive regarding the content members could share. Church groups only allowed members to post and discuss topics related to their welfare and church activities.

In contrast, teachers and parents were allowed to share information on students' welfare and academic activities in class WhatsApp groups. Insults, vulgar language, and pornographic information were termed as unacceptable content. Political information was also unacceptable in some of the family WhatsApp groups. Members of class and church WhatsApp groups were not allowed to post and discuss content not related to academics and religion, respectively. Most of the WhatsApp groups had written rules that were often re-shared when a member posted unacceptable content. Further, the administrator contacted the defiant member to point out the mistake, warn and request the deletion of the message. Implementation of WhatsApp group regulations led to effective communication among members.

7. Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that WhatsApp group administrators should pin group regulations for easy access.

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